

HISTORY OF EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

III/1 2008

eum

*The children of tomorrow / will
watch the tears / of the children of
yesterday: / of the barefoot child, /
of the hungry child, / the helpless
child, / the offended, struck, hum-
bled child... / Finally the teacher
will tell them: / «One day these
tears / became an overwhelming
river, / they washed the earth /
from continent to continent, / they
fell like a waterfall: / and so, in this
way, was joy attained».*

I bimbi di domani / rivedranno le
lacrime / dei bimbi di ieri: / del
bimbo scalzo, / del bimbo affa-
mato, / del bimbo indifeso, / del
bimbo offeso, colpito, umiliato...
/ Infine la maestra narrerà: / «Un
giorno queste lacrime / diventarono
un fiume travolgente, / lavarono
la terra / da continente a con-
tinente, / si abbatterono come
una cascata: / così, così la gioia fu
conquistata».

From *La parola «Piangere»* (*The word «To Cry»*),
Gianni Rodari

*This issue of Hecl is dedicated to the children of the earthquake-
devastated province of Sichuan in China, hoping that all the
tears which have been shed will wash the wounds of the hearts
of all those suffering*

**History of Education & Children's Literature
(HECL)**

half-yearly journal / rivista semestrale

Vol. III, n. 1, 2008

ISSN 1971-1093 (print)

ISSN 1971-1131 (online)

© 2008 eum edizioni università di macerata,
Italy

Registrazione al Tribunale di Macerata
n. 546 del 3/2/2007

Editor / Direttore

Roberto Sani

Editorial Office / Redazione

Centro di Documentazione e Ricerca sulla Storia del Libro Scolastico e della Letteratura per l'Infanzia c/o Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Educazione e della Formazione, Università degli Studi di Macerata, Piazz.le Luigi Bertelli (C.da Vallebona) – 62100 Macerata
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fax (39)733 258 5977
e-mail: hecl@unimc.it
web: <http://www.hecl.it>

Publisher / Editore

eum edizioni università di macerata, Palazzo Accorretti, vicolo Tornabuoni, 58 – 62100 Macerata; tel. (39)7332584414, fax (39)733 2584416, e-mail: info.ceum@unimc.it; web: <http://ceum.unimc.it>

Design / Progetto grafico

studio crocevia

Paging & Graphic / Impaginazione e grafica

Quodlibet Edizioni

Printing / Stampa

Litografica Com, Capodarco di Fermo (AP)

Cover Picture / Immagine di copertina

Letizia Geminiani

Finito di stampare nel mese di luglio 2008

ISBN 978-88-6056-034-6

Subscription Fees

Subscriptions (two issues a year) are available both in print version (with full access to the Online version), and in Online-only format.

Subscription Fees per year: Euro countries € 100,00 (institutions), € 60,00 (individuals); non Euro countries € 130,00 (institutions), € 90,00 (individuals); Online subscription: € 80,00 (institutions), € 30,00 (individuals).

Single issues: current issue € 50 (Euro countries), € 70 (non Euro countries); single back issue € 70 (Euro countries), € 80 (non Euro countries).

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Fascicolo singolo: fascicolo corrente € 50 (Paesi dell'area Euro), € 70 (altri paesi); fascicolo arretrato € 70 (area Euro), € 80 (altri paesi).

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Distributor / Distributore

Quodlibet edizioni, Via S. Maria della Porta, 43 – 62100 Macerata; tel. (39)733264965; fax (39)733267358; e-mail: ordini@quodlibet.it

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Abstracts*

Marina Gazzini, *Lay Confraternities and youth education in Renaissance Italy. The Grassi and taverna schools in Milan*

At the end of the XVth century, a few lay confraternities of Milan founded two primary schools, which were called the Grassi School and Taverna School. These institutions became centres where children and young people could meet, socialise and receive education in grammar, mathematics, and religion. If medieval confraternities typically introduced young people to the Christian and urban adult society, the charitable initiative of the Milanese confraternities – the specific foundation of elementary schools – had unique features. The present article focuses on the relationship between youth and lay confraternities in Renaissance Milan from three points of view: characteristics of youth associations; involvement of the largest lay confraternities and the local patriciate in youth education; and the tension between education and social control.

Keywords: Primary Education; Private School; Urban Youth; Youth Organisation; Social Control; Italy; XVIth Century

Elisabetta Patrizi, *Carlo Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan, amongst religious disciplining, pastoral renewal and Christian education (1564-1584)*

The twenty year period of pastoral action of the Milan Archbishop Carlo Borromeo, are examined in the light of the “social disciplining”, that was a basic component of the Reform, and a sign of the evolution of the modern State and society after the Tridentine turning point. The Borromaic pastoral aimed at putting into effects the Tridentine decrees, and in this connection the historical sources testify the impressive confession-building process which took place in the Milanese area. This process ended with the realisation of a series of new models, such as: the *pastor-bishop*, i.e. the bishop-educator and promoter

* Keywords are chosen from the list of descriptors in the European Education Thesaurus (EET-TEE), which has been created by Eurydice in order to facilitate the semantic indexing in databases on education in Europe (<http://www.eurydice.org/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/TEE>).

of a “popular” and active dimension of the Counter-reformation; the new Church, with its hierarchical and centralised organisation, aimed not at abusing, but at disciplining and supporting Christian people; the clergy, which was spread across the territory through churches, parishes, and monasteries as well as secular confraternities, and which merged into spiritual animation, education and assistance towards the faithful.

Keywords: Christian Education; Catholicism; Moral Education; Social Control; Italy; XVIth Century

Alberto Carli, Elisa Mazzella, *Ophelia at the museum. Venuses and anatomical models in the teaching of obstetrics between the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries*

The history of medical education has been deeply affected by the use of wax anatomical models in Italy since the XVIIIth century, when in Bologna’s Archiginnasio and Florence’s Specola two of the most important schools in anatomical ceroplastics were established. Anatomical preparations of Specola are examined from an artistic point of view – i.e. the figures of artists and modellers who operated in Florence. But also the scientific perspective – i.e. the history of medicine – and the didactic perspective, from the point of view of both teachers and pupils such as surgeons and especially of midwives and obstetricians, emerge in all their importance – as clearly manifested by the magnificent *Suppellex obstetricia*. In their quality of scientific, artistic, museological and didactic objects, wax anatomical preparations are one of the most interesting examples of the intertwining between arts and science.

Keywords: Anatomy; Higher Education; Para-medical Instruction; Italy; XVII-XVIIIth Centuries

Giuseppe Bonvegna, *Come educare la nazione? Newman e l’Idea di Università / How to educate the nation? Newman and the Idea of a University*

In the essays which constitute his work *Idea of a University*, the Rector of the Catholic University of Ireland John Henry Newman (1801-1890) clearly manifests his educational proposal, which aims at founding a Catholic education based both on the link between immanent and transcend dimension, and on the liberal ideal of the English *gentleman*. In Newman’s reflection the *educated mind* meets the *religious mind*, a conception which allows to retrace a new and central role of the University. The pedagogical ideal proposed by Newman to his contemporaries was a Catholic ideal, not only because it was complying with the doctrine of the Church, but rather because it was grounded in trusting the “human” in all of its components, and consequently in considering that a well-learned man – i.e. according to the best liberal educational tradition – could freely embrace faith and religion.

Keywords: University; Higher Education; Catholicism; Principles of Education; Ireland; XIXth Century

John Ramsland, *The myth and reality of Point Puer*

Point Puer (Port Arthur, Tasmania) was a small peninsula where boys from 9 to 18 years were housed in a penal colony during the years from 1833 through to 1849. Whilst in use for only a short period, the reformatory devoted to the treatment of young criminals, who were enclosed many miles from their place of birth, left a strong imprint in Australian literature, which has always been sensitive to troubled childhoods, ever since the influence

of Charles Dickens. Especially in his famous novel – first published as a serial in the «Australian Journal» between March 1871 and June 1872 – and entitled *For the term of his natural life*, Marcus Clarke created indelible, emotionally-laden images which produced a long-standing historical myth, strictly woven into popular Australian culture.

Keywords: Juvenile Delinquency; Juvenile Detention; Prison; Social Control; Australia; XIXth Century

Anthony L. Smyrnaiois, *Manuals of conversion: Protestant missionary schoolbooks in Greece during the 19th century*

This paper outlines the enormous printing activity of Protestant missionaries in Greece during the most part of the 19th century. The press, being to a great extent part and parcel of the spirit of Reformation, found its hopeful and happy application to the giant enterprise of protestant missionary societies in Greece and the Mediterranean. The missionaries' letters record that millions of religious books, schoolbooks and tracts were distributed in this area, with the secret aim of converting Eastern Christians to Protestantism. The sleepless printing-presses in Malta, the Ionian Islands, Athens, Syra, and Smyrna, significantly contributed to the advent of a Greek and Ottoman *Gutenberg epoch* in the 19th century; this energetic activity, however, seemed at last to contribute almost exclusively to the enforcement of the literacy of the Greek people.

Keywords: Textbook; Protestantism; Religious Education; Religious Organisations; Printing; Greece; XIXth Century

Fang Weiping, *Western anthropological thoughts and modern children's literature theory in China: the case of Chou Tso-jen*

It is generally agreed that modern Chinese children's literature theory came into its earliest being around the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, and had its progress paralleled by the social-culture revolution then sweeping the whole country. Scientific description of such a period of history would not be achieved without taking into consideration the historical phenomenon called the *Eastward Transmission of Western Learning*. The figure of the writer and teacher Chou Tso-jen (1885-1967) is emblematic of the heavy tempest which was caused by the crash between eastern and western cultures – especially with reference to the influence of anthropological scholars such as Andrew Lang, E.S. Hartland, J.A. MacCulloch –, and whose essays were at best a kind of warming-up for the birth of modern Chinese children's literature theory.

Keywords: Children's and Youth Literature; Fairy Tale; History of Education; Literary History; China; XIX-XXth Centuries

Robert Hampel, *Testing medical students at Harvard, 1870-1930*

The transformation of the medical schools in America is followed through a study of tests taken by students at the Harvard Medical School, which represents a particularly interesting case for historians of medical education because it became the premier medical school in the country after World War I. The analysis focuses on the years from the 1870s, when the pace of curricular change accelerated rapidly, through the 1920s, the decade when the key components of the modern medical school were firmly in place. Throughout those years, most instructors gave short answer final exams requiring recall rather than interpre-

tation, synthesis, or problem-solving. The greatest change, comprehensive exams, addressed the enduring problem of the gap between the pre-clinical and clinical coursework. But the new exams also marked an ambitious effort to treat medical students as graduate students capable of independent and scholarly work.

Keywords: Medicine; Higher Education; Hospital Teaching; Examination System; USA; XIXth Century

Ken Yasuoka, *The policies for a nationalistic education in Japan in the Meiji Period*

With the Meiji Restoration in 1867, Japan finally ended the policy of “national isolation” (*Sakoku*) – which had aimed at rejecting western colonization – and started an epoch of general modernisation in various fields. In this period, the feudal social system was abolished, and western culture was absorbed and harmonised with the traditions. The reflections on education are analysed in depth, from the fundamental code of education which was issued in 1872 onwards, through the following laws and the leading historical figures that developed the new ideas of education. Starting with the enlightened principle of education for all the people, education became a process aimed at modernising the country by developing industrial revolution and international competition; at the same time, the education of uncritical subjects loyal to the state was emphasised to such a point that the nationalistic education is hypothesised to have been the first cause of the atrophy of modern Japan, and of her collapse half a century later.

Keywords: History of Education; Principles of Education; Education System; Government Policy; Nationalism; Foreign Relations; Japan; XIX-XXth Centuries

Mariella Colin, *L'Italie et les Italiens vus par la littérature enfantine, entre Second Empire et Troisième République*

It is well known that the self-affirmation of nationalities – which was especially strong in the XIXth century – also generated in Europe the national stereotypes of identity and alterity. Within this phenomenon, which is typical of the long history of mindsets, some stereotypes of the “Other” have known their own cycles of existence. In the period between the Second Empire and the Third Republic in France (which corresponded to the building of the Italian Kingdom), the French stereotypes of Italy and Italians originated from the tensions and contrasts between the two countries, and were received and made durable by the continuity of children’s literature. The numerous great classics which were written during the so-called “golden age” of French children’s literature, give back to us the mental images of an epoch.

Keywords: Children’s and Youth Literature; Conceptual Imagery; Perception of Others; Foreign Relations; France; XIXth Century

Anna Ascenzi, *The Pigna Paper Mill and the exercise books of the «New Italy» (1870-1960)*

For the very first time this in-depth paper studies the archives of the historic Paolo Pigna Paper Mill in Alzano Lombardo (Bergamo, Italy), which played a leading role in Italian history and culture: so much so that it ended up with fusing its own image to the very market where it operated, that is, the Italian schools. After being taken over by Paolo Pigna in 1867, the great paper mill immediately became known not only for its high-quality produc-

tion but also for keeping abreast of technology and emerging in a sector of the economy, which in the mid-1800s was fragmented into a multitude of small and poorly mechanized artisan workshops. The Author retraces one hundred years of the history of the company and its production for schools: in particular its production of exercise books – a simple but effective and all-pervading medium of iconic-verbal messages (moral, educational, propagandistic, religious, etc.).

Keywords: History of Education; Teaching Aid; Equipment; Publication; Industrialization; Propaganda; Italy; XIXth Century

Giorgio Chiosso, *La stampa scolastica e l'avvento del fascismo / The journals for teachers and the advent of Fascism*

Following a trend which was common to other European countries, in Italy too, the journals for teachers increased after the Unification, until reaching their maximum in the 1920s as regards the number of headings printed and copies sold. The aims were many and different: to help teachers in their daily work; to take part in the school debates, which were connected with the emerging professional identity and the social role of teachers; and finally to defend the “class interests” through the associations’ bulletins. The history of teachers’ journals is rebuilt between 1900 and 1920, together with the portraits of editors, journalists, publishers, intellectuals and politicians, but also through the voices of the elementary school teachers, in the crucial years which saw the birth and the establishing of the Fascist ideology and educational politics.

Keywords: Teacher Role; Periodical; School System; Educational Policy; Fascism; Italy; XXth Century

Dorena Caroli, *Russian and Soviet Schooling: Educational Legacies, Institutional Reforms and National Identities*

The history of schooling has always represented an important area of research for specialists in Russian and Soviet history. Western scholars have gradually shifted their interest from pedagogical theories to the analysis of school systems understood as complex systems of educational norms, institutional aspects and national identity. This was exactly what had happened after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when the Russian experts in education revealed a marked inclination to renew their research topics and methodologies. The main historiographical studies on the Russian and Soviet school systems in a *longue durée* perspective are reviewed, in order to analyse the different – but also the common – features, aims and ideologies which were underneath the changes in educational politics, the educational reforms, the main debates among pedagogues and organisational-didactical aspects of school practices, in the period from the Tsarist Autocracy through to the Soviet government.

Keywords: History of Education; Education System; Pedagogical Theory; Russia; XXth Century

Manuel Ferraz Lorenzo, *Educación y ciudadanía en España hasta 1975: una construcción histórica forjada de equilibrios y dependencias / Education and citizenship in Spain until 1975: a historic construction forged through balances and dependences*

The essay aims at revealing the narrow existing relation between citizenship and education to create the social cohesion necessary destined to fortify certain policies and concrete

models of States. The Spanish case is exemplary in this respect, because it allows us to analyse the evolution and historical adaptation of both concepts to the different necessities of the formation in the power throughout the contemporary stage. A slight analysis is carried out about the general historical-educational antecedents, i.e. the philosophical-literary sources illustrating the changeable concept of citizenship from antiquity to the present day, together with the examination of the Spanish educational legislation aimed at forming the future citizen. The school emerges as the institution which is par excellence destined to cultivate the citizenship, and to make a “generic and polysemic expression” a reality.

Keywords: History of Education; Political Education; Citizen Participation; Educational Legislation; Spain; XXth Century

Laura Detti, *Un autore per adulti o per ragazzi? Ipotesi sulla lingua di Italo Calvino* / *An author for adults or for children? Hypothesis on the language of Italo Calvino*

Considered a brilliant writer for adults and not for children, the great Italo Calvino is however remembered as a “childhood writer”, that is as a careful onlooker of the world, through that “privileged look” which is typical of children. Children in fact come out – as a real constant presence – in the unforgettable pages of Calvino, since children are the protagonists, or the crucial characters, of his tales. Another constant presence is the reminiscence of the juvenile readings, i.e. Calvino-the-child, who always plays along with Calvino-the-adult, writer and reader, in his continuous search for the pleasure of reading a story. The literary and essay writing of Calvino, are analysed from the post-war period to the 1960s, in order to retrace the theoretical and stylistical routes of the writer, and, at the same time, to enlighten the issue of the same definition of literary areas which are destined to childhood and youth.

Keywords: Literature; Story Telling; Writing; Reading; Children’s and Youth Literature; Italy; XXth Century

Diego Erba, *Libri di testo ticinesi. Il Fondo del Centro Didattico di Massagno* / *Ticinese textbooks. The collection of the Didactical Centre of Massagno*

The book collection of the Didactical Centre of Massagno – under the Department of Education, Culture and Sport (DECS) of Canton Ticino – offers the chance to think over the history of educational publishing aimed at the pupils in the public school of the Italian-speaking canton of Switzerland. Since the first publications, which were arranged by the so-called “father of the Ticinese popular education” Stefano Franscini (1796-1857), the Author makes a slight review of Ticinese textbooks, which constitute an outstanding source for studying the history of schools between the XIXth and XXth centuries.

Keywords: Textbooks; History of Education; Public Education; School System; Ticino; Italian-speaking Switzerland; XIX-XXth Centuries

*Essays and
Researches*



Saggi e
Ricerche

Lay Confraternities and youth education in Renaissance Italy. The Grassi and taverna schools of Milan*

Marina Gazzini

1. *The marginal role of youth confraternities in Milan*

During the last centuries of the Middle Ages, youth confraternities were spread over many Italian and European towns. These associations were meeting places where young people could shape moral and spiritual training and socialize¹. But such confraternities were not established in Milan, at least as historical evidences tell us. For the communal period (XI-XIIIth centuries), local narrative sources document the presence of youth groups, belonging to the upper municipal class, which had knightly characteristics². Sometimes, these

* The paper was first published in Italian under the title *Confraternite e giovani a Milano nel Quattrocento*, «Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia», LVII (2003), pp. 65-84. I wish to thank the editor of the review, prof. Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, for his kind permission to publish this material in Hecl, and prof. David M. D'Andrea for his many helpful suggestions.

¹ For an introduction to this vast topic see G.C. Pola Falletti-Villafalletto, *Associazioni giovanili e feste antiche. Loro origini*, 4 vols., Torino, Comitato di difesa dei fanciulli, 1939-1942; J. Rossiaud, *Le confraternite giovanili*, in G. Gemelli, M. Malatesta (eds.), *Forme di sociabilità nella storiografia francese contemporanea*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 1982, pp. 140-176; I. Taddei, *Associazioni giovanili fra tardo medioevo e prima età moderna: metamorfosi di una forma tradizionale e specificità del caso fiorentino*, «Annali di storia moderna e contemporanea», 3, 1997, pp. 225-241. See also G. Levi, J.C. Schmitt (eds.), *Storia dei giovani*, I, *Dall'antichità all'età moderna*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1994.

² As in other coeval contexts: G. Duby, *Dans la France du Nord-Ouest au XII^e siècle: les 'jeunes' dans la société aristocratique*, «Annales ESC», 19, 1964, pp. 835-846; F. Cardini, *Concetto di cavalleria e mentalità cavalleresca nei romanzi e nei cantari fiorentini, in I ceti dirigenti nella*

groups were similar to political paramilitary organizations, as was the case of the *Società dei Gagliardi* (that could be translated as the Vigorous Man Society), that in 1201 picked up the *electi iuvenes*, sons of the feudal families bound to the Nobility Party «hating» the *Populus*, the People's Party, and its society, named *Credenza di Sant'Ambrogio* (Saint Ambrogio Council)³. Even the *Credenza di Sant'Ambrogio* had its paramilitary organization: the *Società dei Forti* (Strong Man Society)⁴, but in this case it was not specifically limited to young members. It should be stated that, in this earlier phase, youth associations were typical expressions of aristocratic entourage⁵. Indeed, young noble and *Populi* paramilitary organizations were often just part of symbolic rituals, reproducing in bloodless combats the opposition of the two leading social parties⁶.

Historical evidence also describes young people of Milan in military training and taking part in sport games and tournaments⁷, in separated locations from adults⁸, but do not specify if these activities were managed inside organized groups. Through military training, young people were introduced to a

Toscana tardo medievale, Firenze 5-7 dicembre 1980, Montecitorio, F. Papafava, 1983, pp. 157-192 (pp. 173 ff.); S. Gasparri, *I 'milites' cittadini. Studi sulla cavalleria in Italia*, Roma, ISIME, 1992, pp. 31 ff. About chivalry see J. Flori, *Chevaliers et chevalerie au Moyen Age*, Paris 1998 (it. tr. *Cavalieri e cavalleria nel medioevo*, Torino, Einaudi, 1999).

³ Galvano Fiamma, *Chronicon maius*, A. Ceruti (ed.), Torino 1896 (Miscellanea di Storia Italiana, 7), pp. 506-773: «tum pars nobilium fecit ex electis iuvenibus unam societatem, que dicta est societas Galiardorum in odium populi et Credentie» (p. 748); «societas Galiardorum nobilibus parentelis confecta» (p. 752).

⁴ *Ibid.* «Facta fuit quedam societas ex popularibus et ex illis de Credentia pro custodia carroceri, que dicta fuit societas Fortium» (p. 764). About birth-day and social composition of *societas Fortium* see F. Menant, *La transformation des institutions et de la vie politique milanaises au dernier age consulaire (1186-1216)*, in *Atti dell'XI congresso internazionale di studi sull'alto Medioevo*, Milano 26-30 ottobre 1987, Spoleto 1989, I, pp. 113-144 (p. 128).

⁵ Popular governments, in fact, limited societates iuvenum and societates militum as well. See E. Crouzet-Pavan, *Un fiore del male: i giovani nelle società urbane italiane (secoli XIV-XV)*, in *Storia dei giovani*, cit., pp. 233-268 (pp. 242-249).

⁶ Galvano Fiamma, *Manipulus florum sive Historia Mediolanensis*, L.A. Muratori (ed.), Mediolani 1727 (Rerum Italicarum Scriptores, 11), coll. 537-740, col. 238: in 1205 *societas Galiardorum* «extra civitatem pugnavit cum populo sine gladio»; both groups «completa pugna, domum redierunt».

⁷ An anonymous source from the first half of the XIVth century states that in «locus ubi nunc est Pratum Communis» since long time «spectaculum erat quoddam magnum spatium, ubi pueri de Mediolano certis diebus conveniebant ad diversos ludos peragendos, qui fiebant pluribus modis, aut de arcubus sagittas emittendo, vel hastas pondere librato iaciendo, vel laterum complexu se invicem prosternendo, vel saltu longiori seu altiori prosiliendo». L.A. Muratori, *Antiquitates Italicae Medii Aevi*, Mediolani 1734, II, diff. XXIX: *De spectaculis et ludis publicis Medii Aevi*, coll. 831-862 (col. 833).

⁸ Galvano Fiamma, *Manipulus florum*, cit., cap. 25, 15: «extra muros civitatis erat Brolium magnum ubi iuvenes in armis et pugnis diversis exercitationis causa conveniebant [...] ex alia parte urbis ex opposito, ubi dicitur Sancta Maria ad circulum, erat hippodromum circi ubi equestres milites sua hastiludia peragebant more romano». About various social, cultural, and political meanings of «battaglie», urban military games, see Gasparri, *I 'milites' cittadini*, cit., pp. 43 ff.; A. Settia, *Comuni in guerra. Armì ed eserciti nell'Italia delle città*, Bologna, Clueb, 1993, pp. 29 ff.

world that was conditional on might and power: warfare was necessary not only for surviving, but also for shaping a personal identity. If transfigured, this training was also a means to confer a physical and moral strength suitable to religious pedagogy. The profession of canonical ideals in the XIth and XIIth centuries, for instance, had an ascetic and military character as well, that gave a great importance to youth education, as children were considered novices to recruit in the Army of Christ⁹.

Although we do not have evidence of youth structured associations even during the seigniorial and the ducal periods (XIV-XVth centuries), we can read in narrative sources interesting episodes of young people playing a leading role: upper class youth raids, made by gangs of sons of elite families (like Matteo II Visconti, Bernabò Visconti, Galeazzo Maria Sforza, Beatrice d'Este and Isabella d'Aragona)¹⁰, or juvenile gangs taking part in violence rituals (remarkable the mistreatments of the dead bodies of Galeazzo Maria Sforza's killers)¹¹, or farcical battles, like those staged in 1500 by two armies of *puti*, each of them led by doubles of the deposed duke of Milan and of the winner king of France¹². None of these groups, however, were permanent associations.

A little more organized seem those companies that troubled Ludovico Maria Sforza. In 1494 the duke wrote to his secretary Bartolomeo Calco that «there are in Milan many gangs of young aristocrats and of other people that, maybe because they cannot disguise themselves, wander in arms at night and go to places where there are dishonest women and then commit improper acts». In order to avoid «disorders and scandals» the duke ordered in a public edict that «in the future, it will be forbidden to every person, no matter which condition or rank, to wander in arms in Milan after the Ave Maria time, except for the officials of ward; transgressors will be punished with a fine of 100 ducats or, in case they couldn't pay, with four rope pulls»¹³. One more time, youth aristocratic associations mixed recreational and political patterns, and were consequently considered something to restrict.

The correction of youth subversion frequently passed through a religious path. Thanks to their fundamental pedagogical role, medieval confraternities

⁹ C. Damiano Fonseca, 'Militia Deo' e 'militia Christi' nella tradizione canonica, in 'Militia Christi' e Crociata nei secoli XI-XIII, La Mendola 28 agosto-1 settembre 1989, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 1992, pp. 343-354 (p. 348).

¹⁰ I am grateful to Francesco Somaini for this information. Numerous episodes are in Bernardino Corio, *Storia di Milano*, A. Morisi Guerra (ed.), Torino, UTET, 1978.

¹¹ *Cronica gestorum in partibus Lombardie et reliquis Italie*, G. Bonazzi (ed.), Città di Castello, 1904-10 (Rerum Italicarum Scriptores², XXII/3), pp. 3-4.

¹² *Diario ferrarese dal 1409 al 1502 di autori incerti*, G. Pardi (ed.), Bologna 1928-37 (Rerum Italicarum Scriptores², XXIV/7), p. 242.

¹³ Archivio di Stato di Milano – hence ASMi – Sforzesco, Carteggio interno, Milano città, 1114. Vigeveno, January 31st, 1494. I owe these precious citations to Nadia Covini. Such behaviours were common in the enclosed urban spaces of medieval Europe: see J. Rossiaud, *La prostituzione nel Medioevo*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1995, pp. 28-29.

could enter this process offering new ethical values to violent practices that nevertheless had prophetic and purifying functions too¹⁴. Between the XVth and XVIth centuries great importance was given to the educational activities of the mendicant orders preachers: the friars tried to reorganize the role of children and of young people inside the society, guiding youthful energy into well-controlled collective practices, like processions, ceremonies, and institutionalized companies¹⁵. In the Renaissance Milan we find just one youth confraternity and it was tied to Bernardino of Siena. In 1421 the new statutes of the *scole Senum et Iuvenum* (confraternities of Old and Young People) that had their centre in the parish of San Giovanni sul Muro in Porta Vercellina (the district of Vercellina Gate) were written under the monogram of the saint (IHS, abbreviation of the greek Christ's name). Since the XIVth century, this church had housed a great number of confraternities, different in name, membership, and purpose. In 1337 documents mention the *scolle sancti Iohannis Baptiste* (confraternities of Saint John the Baptist), in 1419 the *schola pauperum Sancti Iohannis Baptiste supra Murum* (confraternity of the Poor of the parish of Saint John the Baptist on the wall), in 1421 the *scole senum et iuvenum* (confraternities of Old and Young People), in 1464 the *scole senum et divitum* (confraternities of Old and Rich People). All these titles indicate that the parish church became point of reference for different kinds of groups, linked together by different ties – neighbourhood, kinship, age, economic and social condition – but all requiring urban integration and social recognition that could be granted by the religious and socializing community rites of confraternities¹⁶.

Unfortunately, the youth confraternity left very little evidence. We know nothing about its members or their organization, even though we can imagine that, as the members of the other confraternities depending on the church of San Giovanni sul Muro, they were recruited inside the neighbourhood of the same parish. The powerful family Resta da Rho provided leadership of this community. One of its members, the merchant Ambrogio Resta, was related to saint Bernardino. In fact Ambrogio joined the confraternity of the Third Order of saint Francesco, founded in Milan in 1442 following the desire of Bernardino of Siena¹⁷.

The first mention of the *scola iuvenum* of San Giovanni sul muro is dated

¹⁴ A. Zorzi, *Rituali di violenza giovanile nelle società urbane del tardo Medioevo*, in O. Niccoli (ed.), *Infanzie. Funzioni di un gruppo liminale dal mondo classico all'età moderna*, Firenze, Ponte alle Grazie, 1993, pp. 185-209.

¹⁵ O. Niccoli, *Compagnie di bambini nell'Italia del Rinascimento*, «Rivista Storica Italiana», CI, 1989, pp. 346-374 (pp. 362 ff.).

¹⁶ About the history of these confraternities see M. Gazzini, *Solidarietà vicinale e parentale a Milano: le «scole» di S. Giovanni sul Muro a porta Vercellina*, in L. Chiappa Mauri, L. De Angelis Cappabianca, P. Mainoni (eds.), *L'età dei Visconti. Il dominio di Milano fra XIII e XV secolo*, Milano, La storia, 1993, pp. 303-330 (now in Ead., *Confraternite e società cittadina nel medioevo italiano*, Bologna, Clueb, 2006, pp. 227-255).

¹⁷ A. Noto, *Origine del luogo pio della Carità nella crisi sociale di Milano quattrocentesca*, Milano, Giuffrè, 1962.

1421, but in that year the confraternity was already in decline. The *scola senum* suffered the same destiny. At first the neighbours decided to restore both confraternities¹⁸, but just one year later they decreed their suppression as separate societies and their merge into one company, called *scola* of the church of San Giovanni sul muro¹⁹. A few years later there appeared a new confraternity reserved for old people, who was matched this time to another category: the impoverished aristocrats (the *scole senum et divitum* of 1464). The change of title testifies that the neighbours of San Giovanni sul Muro changed their mind and preferred to give pre-eminence to a new kind of intervention, dropping the educational involvement in favour of a charitable one, assigning all spiritual and material resources to the care of old people and of impoverished people, the *pauperes verecundi* (poors ashamed to beg).

As medieval sources show, the Milanese society had youth companies and confraternities, but not as numerous or powerful as those of other cities, like Florence, Turin, and Venice. In these other cities in fact, youth societies shaped public and private rituals, becoming strong elements of local memory²⁰. It is possible that this different development depended on different political situations. Since the mid XIIIth century Milan was ruled by a powerful dominion not very friendly to associations, a dominion that paid much attention to every kind of association capable of creating problems to public order or to challenge established authority. Torriani built gallows against the coming of the Flagellant movement; Visconti restricted constitution and activity of guilds²¹;

¹⁸ Archivio dei Luoghi Pii Elemosinieri di Milano - Azienda di Servizi alla Persona Golgi-Redaeli (ex Amministrazione delle IL.P.P.A.B., ex E.C.A.) – hence ALPEMi –, Statuti, n. 3, edited by Gazzini, *Solidarietà vicinale e parentale*, cit., pp. 326-327. «MCCCCXXI die V augusti in festo gloriose Virginis matris Dei quod appellatur de Nive, scolares infrascripti scholarum Senum et Iuvenum Sancti Iohannis supra Murum in Dei nomine congregati in sacristia ecclesie Sancti Iohannis supra Murum pro restauratione ipsarum cum admodum neglecte hactenus fuerint ordinaverunt ad utilitatem pauperum prout sequitur [...]».

¹⁹ ALPEMi, Statuti, n. 3, edited in Gazzini, *Solidarietà vicinale e parentale*, cit., pp. 327-328. «MCCCCXXII die primo novembris, infrascripti scolares congregati in sacristia Sancti Iohannis predicta ex impositione dicti Lazarini ordinaverunt infrascripta capitula videlicet [...] Hamodo in Dei nomine iamscripte due scole Senum et Iuvenum Sancti Iohannis supra Murum sint et esse intelligantur integraliter unite et una scola solummodo vocentur videlicet scola Sancti Iohannis supra Murum».

²⁰ Famous are the youth confraternities of Florence (I. Taddei, *Fanciulli e giovani. Crescere a Firenze nel Rinascimento*, Firenze, Olschki, 2001), Turin (A. Barbero, *La violenza organizzata. L'Abbazia degli stolti a Torino fra Quattro e Cinquecento*, «Bollettino Storico-Bibliografico Subalpino», 88, 1990, pp. 387-453), Venice (L. Venturi, *Le compagnie della Calza*, «Nuovo Archivio Veneto», XVI, 1908, pp. 161-221, XVII, 1909, pp. 140-233; M. Casini, *I gesti del principe. La festa politica a Firenze e Venezia in età rinascimentale*, Venezia, Marsilio, 1996, pp. 298-304).

²¹ The Visconti were very generous with the powerful guild of merchants. See G. Martini, *L'Universitas Mercatorum di Milano e i suoi rapporti col potere politico (secoli XIII-XV)*, in *Studi di Storia Medievale e Moderna per Ernesto Sestan*, Firenze, Olschki, 1980, 2 vols., I, pp. 219-258. For the difficulty of confraternities in Milan see M. Gazzini, *Confraternite e società cittadina: percorsi di indagine sulla realtà milanese*, «Nuova Rivista Storica», 81, 1997, pp. 373-400 (now in Ead., *Confraternite e società cittadina*, cit., pp. 199-226).

Sforza limited local ruling classes in their traditional representative spaces²². Such urban *milieu* was not suitable to associations, and especially to youth societies that, under games and military activities, could hide social and even political ambitions. But it was not only a problem of political power. Even the Church, usually interested in the pedagogical potential of youth companies, seems to have undervalued in Milan – at least in the Middle Ages – the opportunity for moral and spiritual development of young people²³.

In any case, young people were not forgotten. Milanese patricians, Church and public authorities used lay confraternities to guide children and youth into social and cultural fields that they could easily control, helping the diffusion of the Christian religion and the transition to adulthood. This project passed through an experiment of primary free schools, started in the second half of the XVth century by some of the most important lay charitable confraternities of Milan.

2. Lay charitable confraternities and free education for poor children

In 1482 the Scuola delle Quattro Marie, one of the most important lay confraternities of Milan, executed a legacy of Tommaso Grassi, merchant and banker of Milan. Four years before, he had been judged for usury by the archbishop of Milan and condemned to finance a free school for 250 *pueri* «pauperes et inhabiles ad se manutenendum et ad discendum gramaticham», poor children whose families had insufficient means for giving them lessons in Latin. Tommaso Grassi entrusted the deputies of the confraternity with the school management, the payment of teachers (five *magistri a gramaticha*, one master and four tutors), the pupils selection (Grassi's offspring privileged), and the building maintenance. The school met in a house sited in the parish of San

²² Containment regarded both aristocracy (G. Chittolini, *Dagli Sforza alle dominazioni straniere*, in J. Schell, L. Castelfranchi (eds.), *Giovanni Antonio Amadeo. Scultura e architettura del suo tempo*, Milano, Cisalpino, 1993, pp. 19-35) and bourgeoisie (P. Mainoni, *La Camera dei mercanti di Milano fra economia e politica alla fine del Medioevo*, in C. Mozzarelli (ed.), *Economia e corporazioni*, Milano, Giuffrè, 1988, pp. 57-80).

²³ Only in the XVIth century did the Milanese Church sponsor Christian Doctrine schools, founded in Milan by Castellino da Castello, becoming very famous under the Catholic Reform (cfr. M. Turrini, 'Riformare il mondo a vera vita cristiana': le scuole di catechismo nell'Italia del cinquecento, «Annali dell'Istituto Storico italo-germanico in Trento», VIII, 1982, pp. 407-489; X. Toscani, *Le 'Scuole della dottrina cristiana' come fattore di alfabetizzazione*, «Società e Storia», VII, 1984, pp. 757-781; D. Zardin, *Le confraternite in Italia settentrionale fra XV e XVIII secolo*, «Società e Storia», X, 1987, pp. 81-137, pp. 106-109), and orphanages, like those established in Milan and in other northern towns thanks to Girolamo Miani (A. Bianchi, *Carità e istruzione nell'assistenza agli orfani tra XVI e XVII secolo: gli orfanotrofi dei Somaschi*, in D. Zardin (ed.), *La città e i poveri. Milano e le terre lombarde dal Rinascimento all'età spagnola*, Milano, Jaca book, 1995, pp. 71-100). But also in this case, we are not citing youth associations.

Michele al Gallo in Porta Vercellina. The building, given by the merchant himself, had previously been a tavern, called Taverna della Cicogna (Stork Tavern)²⁴. With the money of the banker the confraternity created a few dowries too. Free schools and dowries were clearly dedicated to young people: Tommaso Grassi – who had increased his wealth and social position thanks to his good relationship with the Sforza dynasty²⁵ – and other leading families of Milan were also interested in childhood and youth²⁶. This attention, as shown by researchers in other contexts, was partly a consequence of the modernizing trend of late medieval governments that tried to enclose people inside new administrative frames: recording birth and deaths let specific characteristics and needs of different age groups to emerge²⁷.

Ten years after the foundation of the Grassi Schools, in 1492, the managers of the Quattro Marie confraternity, together with the deputies of two other important confraternities of Milan, the Consorzio della Misericordia and the Scuola di San Giacomo, decided to assign a legacy left by another banker, Stefano Taverna, and by his wife, Antonia Maggi, to establish a new school. This school should also teach poor people reading and Latin²⁸. The confraternities engaged three teachers, one *magister* and two tutors²⁹, with 50 students each.

²⁴ Grassi's will was drawn up by Antonio Zunico, notary, on 4th September 1473 (original in ASMi, Notarile, Antonio Zunico; certified copy in ALPEMi, Donatori, Tomaso Grassi; edited by G. Barbieri, *L'usuraio Tomaso Grassi nel racconto bandelliano e nella documentazione storica*, in Id., *Origini del capitalismo lombardo*, Milano, Giuffrè, 1961, pp. 311-378, pp. 344-357), and was put into effect after Grassi's death, in 1482. In that year, in fact, the confraternal books started keeping counts of hiring and salaries of *magistri a gramatica* (ALPEMi, Quattro Marie, Mastri, *sub anno*).

²⁵ About Tommaso Grassi's life see Barbieri, *L'usuraio Tomaso Grassi*, cit. About medieval merchants' attitudes towards business and religious affairs see G. Todeschini, *I mercanti e il tempio. La società cristiana e il circolo virtuoso della ricchezza fra Medioevo ed età moderna*, Bologna, Il mulino, 2002.

²⁶ For upper class' interest in childhood see the classic work Ph. Ariès, *L'enfant et la vie familiale sous l'ancien régime*, Paris 1960 (it. tr. *Padri e figli nell'Europa medievale e moderna*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1999). See also the more recent E. Becchi, *Il Medioevo*, in E. Becchi, D. Julia (eds.), *Storia dell'infanzia. I. Dall'antichità al Seicento*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1996, pp. 61-91; G. Albini, *L'assistenza all'infanzia nell'Italia padana (secc. XII-XV)*, in Ead., *Città e ospedali nella Lombardia medievale*, Bologna, CLUEB, 1993, pp. 131-153.

²⁷ Ch. Klapish-Zuber, *Il bambino, la memoria e la morte*, in *Storia dell'infanzia. I.*, cit., pp. 155-181 (pp. 156-159); Taddei, *Fanciulli e giovani*, cit., p. 38.

²⁸ The foundational act of the new school was drawn up by the notary Antonio Zunico, on 15th September 1492 (ALPEMi, Comuni, Milano, Scuole Taverna, file 101). On 23rd October 1520 Taverna Schools obtained by Francesco II the same privileges already granted in 1486 to other *pia loca* of Milan. See L. Prosdocimi, *Il diritto ecclesiastico dello stato di Milano dall'inizio della signoria viscontea al periodo tridentino (sec. XIII-XVI)*, Milano, Edizioni de «L'Arte», 1941 (Milano, Cisalpino-Goliardica, 1973), pp. 277. Stefano Taverna belonged to a leading business family: G. Barbieri, *I mercanti-banchieri Taverna e la lotteria patriottica a sostegno della Repubblica Ambrosiana*, in *Funzionari, mercanti e banchieri alle origini del capitalismo lombardo. Tre storie esemplari*, in G. Taborelli (ed.), *Commercio in Lombardia*, Milano, Mediocredito lombardo, 1987, 2 vols., II, pp. 231-269, pp. 246-254.

²⁹ Tutors helped the master in keeping discipline and in teaching grammar.

They named the new school «Fedeltà» (Fidelity), because they wanted to remember the faithful execution of the charitable wills of Stefano Taverna. But the school was usually known as Taverna School, taking the name of its benefactor, as had happened with the Grassi School. At first the Taverna Schools were sited in a house rented in Porta Comacina, *in contrata solata* (a paved street), next to the building of the Consorzio della Misericordia. But as students increased, in 1497 the chapter of the confraternity decided to buy a bigger house in the parish of San Matteo in moneta, in Porta Vercellina, close to the Grassi School³⁰.

Since the beginning, the management of Grassi and Taverna Schools was entrusted to the charitable confraternities that had received by the merchants land and real estate whose income had to finance the educational experience. But, while Grassi Schools were the business of the Quattro Marie confraternity alone, the Taverna Schools were directed by a chapter composed by six deputies, two of the Misericordia confraternity, two of the Quattro Marie and two of the Scuola di San Giacomo.

Since the last 1480s, the two most important confraternities of Milan, the Scuola delle Quattro Marie and the Consorzio della Misericordia, managed free primary education for at least 400 poor children. If we accept an estimate of the Milanese population of 100,000 inhabitants in the second half of the 1400s³¹, and if we calculate that 40 per cent of the people were under 15 years – as in other pre-industrial societies³² – we have a young population of about 40,000 people, half of whom (20,000) were male³³. A narrow confraternity circle, therefore, took care of about 400 of these 20,000 boys, that is to say of the 2 per cent of Milanese young males. It was indeed a difficult task for char-

³⁰ ALPEMi, Comuni, Milano, Scuole Taverna, file 101, doc. 29th July 1497, not. Antonio Zunico.

³¹ M. Ginatempo, L. Sandri, *L'Italia delle città. Il popolamento urbano tra Medioevo e Rinascimento (secoli XIII-XVI)*, Firenze, le Lettere, 1990, p. 74; G. Albinì, *Guerra, fame, peste. Crisi di mortalità e sistema sanitario nella Lombardia tardomedioevale*, Bologna, Cappelli, 1982.

³² Ch. Klapisch-Zuber, *L'enfance en Toscane au début du XV^e siècle*, «Annales de démographie historique», 1973, pp. 99-122; J.B. Ross, *The middle-class child in urban Italy, 14th to 16th century*, in L. de Mause (ed.), *The history of childhood*, New York, Harper & Row, 1974, pp. 183-228; G. Albinì, *L'infanzia a Milano nel Quattrocento: note sulle registrazioni delle nascite e sugli esposti all'Ospedale Maggiore*, «Nuova Rivista Storica», LXVII, 1983, pp. 144-159; Ead., *L'abbandono ai fanciulli e l'affidamento: il ruolo dell'Ospedale Maggiore di Milano (sec. XV)*, in Ead., *Città e ospedali*, cit., pp. 154-183 (p. 156).

³³ Birth certificate lists and «Dead men books» show that in the second half of the XVth century, at birth, masculinity rate was higher than feminine, but as male deaths were predominant, gender proportion got balanced in a short time. For Milan see Albinì, *L'abbandono ai fanciulli e l'affidamento*, cit., p. 157 ff.; for Padua see F. Bianchi, *La Ca' di Dio di Padova nel Quattrocento. Riforma e governo di un ospedale per l'infanzia abbandonata*, Venezia, Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2005, pp. 134 ff.; for Florence, P. Gavitt, *Charity and Children in Renaissance Florence: the Ospedale degli Innocenti, 1410-1536*, Ann Arbor, UMP, 1990, p. 210, for Perugia, L. Calzola, *Caratteristiche demografiche e modalità di abbandono degli esposti all'Ospedale di S. Maria della Misericordia di Perugia nei secoli XVI e XVII*, in G. Da Molin (ed.), *Trovatelli e balie in Italia (secc. XVI-XIX)*, Bari 20-21 maggio 1993, Bari, Cacucci, 1994, p. 37.

itable institutions: a lot of people to help in a new way, as it was the first time that confraternities, at least in Milan, were engaged in basic education.

In order to understand the role played by confraternities in education, it will be necessary to remember essential aspects of late medieval school organization³⁴. Since the early XIVth century, narrative sources – Bonvesin da la Riva and Galvano Fiamma – testify to the presence in town of school teachers³⁵. But they do not specify if these teachers were engaged by private or by public institutions³⁶. Most probably, in Milan as in other Italian cities, primary education was accomplished inside families, parish churches and workshops. Public authorities in fact endowed secondary education, law studies above all, for their administrative utility, and high cultural activities. The University of Pavia (established in 1361) and the Humanist Academy of Milan (after 1450) contributed in forming citizen, in fostering consent, and in warranting public *decorum*³⁷. Technical teaching had instead an intermittent life. The public *abacus* school (mathematics and business concerns), founded in the 1420s by the duke Filippo Maria Visconti, worked intermittently through the century³⁸, and often

³⁴ For more information see M. Gazzini, *Scuole, libri, cultura nelle confraternite milanesi fra tardo medioevo e prima età moderna*, «La Bibliofilia», CIII, 2001, pp. 215-261; electronic version on «Scrineum. Saggi e materiali on line di scienze del documento e del libro medievali», Biblioteca, <<http://scrineum.unipv.it/biblioteca/biblioteca-gazzini.html>> (accessed: 21st January 2008).

³⁵ Bonvesin da la Riva writes that there were about 70 elementary school teachers and 8 *professores artis gramatice*; Galvano Fiamma mentions 70 *magistri puerorum*, 15 *doctores artis gramatice et loice*, and some *doctores iuris periti qui publicas regunt scholas in iure quos audiunt scolares multi*. A. Viscardi, *La cultura milanese nel secolo XIV*, in *Storia di Milano*, V, Milano, Treccani degli Alfieri, 1955, pp. 569-634 (pp. 585-586).

³⁶ Since the XIVth century, in north and central Italy there were four kinds of schools: the traditional ecclesiastic or monastic school, managed by religious men and designed at first for religious men but after the communal age also open to lay men; the private school, both lay, and in this case managed by free teachers paid by the families of their students, both ecclesiastic, and in this case often managed by the Dominican order able to offer a higher cultural performance; the family tutor; the communal school, promoted and controlled by municipal authorities. A.M. Nada Patrone, *Insegnare e apprendere nel Piemonte del tardo medioevo*, Cavallermaggiore, Gribaudo, 1996, pp. 24-26. First to start a primary public education were little centres, as Moncalieri in Piedmont, where teachers were powerless, or widespread literacy regions, like Tuscany. See C. Frova, *Istruzione e educazione nel Medioevo*, Torino, Loescher, 1973, pp. 99 ff.; Ead., *La scuola nella città tardomedievale: un impegno pedagogico e organizzativo*, in R. Elze, G. Fasoli (eds.), *La città in Italia e in Germania nel Medioevo: cultura, istituzioni, vita religiosa*, Bologna, Il mulino, 1981, pp. 119-143 (p. 143); for Florentine education see Ch. Klapisch-Zuber, *Le chiavi fiorentine di barbablù: l'apprendimento della lettura a Firenze nel XV secolo*, «Quaderni storici», 57, 1984, pp. 765-792; P.F. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy literacy and learning 1300-1600*, London 1989 (it. tr. *La scuola nel Rinascimento italiano*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1991, pp. 80-96).

³⁷ Viscardi, *La cultura milanese nel secolo XIV*, cit.; E. Garin, *La cultura milanese nella prima metà del sec. XV*, in *Storia di Milano*, VI, Milano, Treccani degli Alfieri, 1955, pp. 545-608; Id., *La cultura milanese nella seconda metà del sec. XV*, cit.

³⁸ We have found only a few references: the first regards Amedeo de Lando, f.q. Bartolomeo, *magister abaci*, mentioned in 1428 (C. Santoro (ed.), *I registri dell'Ufficio di Provvisione e dell'Ufficio dei Sindaci sotto la dominazione viscontea*, Milano, U. Alleghretti, 1929, 9.24, pp. 338, 9-78,

only after the insistence of its students³⁹. Civil law teaching, granted by the commune that needed one or two *professores legum* for training its administrative staff⁴⁰, is attested only in 1457 and 1479⁴¹.

Between the medieval and early modern periods, powers ruling over Milan kept a strict watch over education as in other fields of public life⁴². Public authorities fixed teachers' salaries and watched over their morality⁴³, but left private enterprise free to take care of an important collective question like education. It is so remarkable that lay confraternities were considered the most qualified institutions to take charge of education. Lay confraternities of Milan, in fact, not only managed boarding schools⁴⁴, but also shared the development of primary education in the city. This was a very unique task. We cannot find such a situation in Europe, where – following the research of Natalie Zemon

347; 9-190, 364); other news about Amedeo *de Venetiis*, before 1450, Gabriele Pirovano after 1450 (C. Santoro (ed.), *I registri delle lettere ducali del periodo sforzesco*, Milano, Castello Sforzesco, 1961, 1.19, p. 6); Giacomo *de Baylo* in 1452 (*ibid.*, 1.115, p. 20); Gabriele Pirovano again in 1478 (*ibid.*, 4.230, p. 230). They received by municipal officials, following ducal instruction, monthly payments of about 16 florins, deriving from the communal budget.

³⁹ In 1452 the most important members of the merchant guild of Milan asked the duchess Bianca Maria to restore communal abacus teaching, that since the time of her father Filippo Maria Visconti had been attended by many young people. The school had interrupted because of the war. The duchess agreed and nominated Giacomo *de Baylo* teacher of *abacus*. *I registri delle lettere ducali*, cit., 1.115, p. 20.

⁴⁰ J. Verger, *Les universités au Moyen Age*, Paris, PUF, 1973 (it. tr. *Le università del medioevo*, Bologna, Il mulino, 1982, p. 200).

⁴¹ In 1457 the duke of Milan wrote to the public officials Maestri delle entrate straordinarie asking them to pay Giacomo Carcano, tutor in charge with lessons of civil law, 100 gold florins (*I registri delle lettere ducali*, cit., 8.201, p. 340); in 1479 the duke and his wife asked the Vicario and the XII di Provvisione to pay Michele *de Tonsis* 5 florins each month to start teaching of institutions, missing in Milan (*ibid.*, 5.26, pp. 190-191). Since the XIVth century, at least before the foundation of a new general Studium in Pavia (1361), sources testify in Milan *doctores iurisperiti* who kept *publicas scholas* attended by *scholares multi*. See Viscardi, *La cultura milanese nel secolo XIV*, cit., p. 586.

⁴² See G. Chittolini, *Governo ducale e poteri locali*, in *Gli Sforza a Milano e in Lombardia e i loro rapporti con gli Stati italiani ed europei (1450-1535)*, Milano 18-21 maggio 1981, Milano, Cisalpino-Goliardica, 1982, pp. 27-41.

⁴³ Ludovico il Moro reformed the statutes of the guild of «magistri docentes gramaticam et magistri docentes scribere», which had been issued at the time of the duke Gian Galeazzo Visconti and had been revised by his successors. L. Banfi, *Scuola e educazione nella Milano dell'ultimo Quattrocento*, in *Milano nell'età di Ludovico il Moro*, Milano 28 febbraio-4 marzo 1983, Milano, Il Comune, 1983, 2 vols., II, pp. 387-395, p. 392.

⁴⁴ In 1489 the Scuola delle Quattro Marie and the Consorzio della Misericordia charged a boarding school founded in Pavia by Ambrogio Griffi, canon of the cathedral, apostolic protonotary, ducal councillor and also physician. P.M. Galimberti, *Ambrogio Griffi, m. 1493*, in I. Riboli, M. Bascapè, S. Rebora (eds.), *La generosità e la memoria. I luoghi pii elemosinieri di Milano e i loro benefattori attraverso i secoli*, Milano, Amministrazione delle IIPPAB ex ECA, 1995, pp. 85-91. About college schools and their relationship with the Church, especially after the XVth century, see G.P. Brizzi, *Da «domus pauperum scholarium» a collegio d'educazione: università e collegi in Europa (secoli XII-XVIII)*, in *Disciplina dell'anima, disciplina del corpo e disciplina della società tra medioevo ed età moderna*, P. Prodi (ed.), Bologna, Il mulino, 1994, pp. 809-840 (pp. 819 ff.).

Davis – legacies to free schools were lacking⁴⁵. Nor were they in Italy. Venice and Genoa, for instance, had a similar school organization, that we might define “mixed” as committed in part to private enterprise but under public control⁴⁶, and had lively confraternal experiences too⁴⁷, but did not have free schools managed by charitable institutions.

We cannot compare to the Milanese confraternities those hospitals or guilds that took care of the education of children because these children were sons of the members of the guilds or foundlings housed by the hospitals themselves. The XIVth century statutes of the Santa Maria della Scala hospital in Siena decreed that foundlings should learn reading and writing during their residence in the hospital; in 1472 the wool guild of Florence paid a teacher for the sons of its members; in 1486 the textile workers of Genoa engaged a teacher, but instead of giving him money they just ensured him a number of pupils⁴⁸; in the second half of the 1400s the Milanese Ca’ Granda hospital (the local name of the Ospedale Maggiore) helped poor children giving *una tantum* some money to their families to attend private schools⁴⁹.

The charitable confraternities of Milan differed from these experiences because they gave their aid to “external” and not “internal” boys, and because this noteworthy and enduring aid was especially devoted to education (and not

⁴⁵ N. Zemon Davis, *Society and culture in early modern France: eight essays*, London, Stanford University Press, 1975, it. tr. *Le culture del popolo. Sapere, rituali e resistenze nella Francia del Cinquecento*, Torino, Einaudi, 1980: see the essay *L’assistenza ai poveri tra umanesimo ed eresia*, pp. 23-90 (pp. 47, 80).

⁴⁶ G. Ortalli, *Scuole, maestri e istruzione di base tra Medioevo e Rinascimento. Il caso veneziano*, Bologna, Il mulino, 1996. G. Petti Balbi, *L’insegnamento nella Liguria medievale. Scuole, maestri, libri*, Genova, Tilgher, 1979.

⁴⁷ See B. Pullan, *Rich and poor in Renaissance Venice. The Social Institutions of a Catholic State*, Oxford 1971 (it. tr. *La politica sociale della Repubblica di Venezia, 1500-1620*, 2 vols., Roma, Il veltro, 1982²); Id., *Poverty and Charity: Europe, Italy, Venice, 1400-1700*, Aldershot, Variorum, 1994; F. Ortalli, «Per salute delle anime e delli corpi». *Scuole piccole a Venezia nel tardo Medioevo*, Venezia, Marsilio, 2001; E. Grendi, *Le confraternite come fenomeno associativo e religioso*, in C. Russo (ed.), *Società, Chiesa e vita religiosa nell’ ‘ancien régime’*, Napoli, Guida, 1976, pp. 115-186; R. Savelli, *Dalle confraternite allo stato: il sistema assistenziale genovese nel Cinquecento*, «Atti della Società ligure di Storia patria», 1984, pp. 171-216.

⁴⁸ See G. Petti Balbi, *Istituzioni cittadine e servizi scolastici nell’Italia centro-settentrionale tra XIII e XV secolo*, in *Città e servizi sociali nei secoli XII-XVI, Pistoia 9-12 ottobre 1987*, Pistoia, Centro italiano di studi di storia e d’arte, 1990, pp. 21-48 (p. 44); G. Piccinni, *L’ospedale di S. Maria della Scala di Siena. Note sull’origine dell’assistenza sanitaria in Toscana (XIV-XV secolo)*, *ibid.*, pp. 297-324 (p. 302).

⁴⁹ In 1488 the deputies of the Ca’ Granda established to put two boys, until then raised by the hospital *barberius’* wife, into the hands of Agostino *de Camarino*, priest of the church of S. Pietro in Biasca, who should educate them and let them attend a Latin school. In 1493 the deputies deliberated to pay the annual expenses for the education of Prevostone Crivelli’s son, giving to his teacher a salary of 16 imperial *liras*, 6 *brentae* of wine and 3 *modia* of wheat. In 1494 the hospital allocated *amore Dei* 25 *liras* to Giovanni Angelo Resta, son of Isabetta, for attending one year the Latin school, and also wiped out one of his mother’s debts (Archivio dell’Ospedale Maggiore di Milano (hence AOM), Ordinanze Capitolari Generali, book 7, 8 August, 1488; book 8, 5 July, 1493; 2 September, 1493; 4 November, 1494).

also to money, food, and lodging). A sort of new specialization had been born. The deputies of these charitable institutions were in fact often members of the directing board of the Ospedale Maggiore, the greatest *pium locum* of Milan. After the mid XVth century hospital reform and the establishment in 1456 of a new great hospital, the deputies of the chapter of the Ospedale Maggiore were chosen by and between the administrators of the largest lay confraternities of Milan, with the approval of the archbishop and of the duke⁵⁰. The educational intervention of the Ospedale Maggiore was guided thus by the confraternity's administrators, who belonged to Milanese elite families, under the control of highest powers⁵¹. So, when in 1499 the Ospedale Maggiore, following the will of Tommasino Piatti, councillor of Ludovico Maria Sforza and uncle of the court poet Piattino Piatti, founded a new public school with free teaching of Greek, dialectics, mathematics and astronomy, it was as if the management of the Piatti School had been taken by the deputies of the great charitable confraternities⁵².

The Ospedale Maggiore started providing charity in the form of education after the 1480s⁵³, just after the foundation of the Grassi School. An integrated charitable system, joining the greatest *pia loca* of Milan (Ospedale Maggiore, Scuola delle Quattro Marie, Consorzio della Misericordia, Consorzio della Carità, Scuola dell'Umiltà, Scuola della Divinità, Fabbrica del Duomo) had been established by the same organizers. A close number of Milanese patri-cians had made charity work their profession in order to increase personal *sta-*

⁵⁰ The hospital board of directors existed indeed since 1448, at the time of the first reform of hospitals made by Enrico Rampini, archbishop of Milan, and approved by the pope Niccolò V. This reform ratified a union of the hospitals' administrations, before held by clergy, in favour of a new board composed by 22 lay men and 2 religious men. In 1458, pope Pio II authorized the building of a new great hospital and the concentration of the old hospitals of Milan and of the Dukedom, and the hospital board was reduced at 18 lay men and 2 religious. A ducal lieutenant could take part to the board meetings. Deputies were chosen by delegates of the most important *pia loca* of Milan (Consorzio della Misericordia, Scuola delle Quattro Marie, Consorzio della Carità, Scuola della Divinità, Scuola dell'Umiltà, Ospedale della Pietà), and by the highest municipal officials (the Vicario and the XII di Provvisione). Their designation had to be approved by the archbishop with the ducal lieutenant supervising. See P. Pecchiai, *L'Ospedale Maggiore di Milano nella storia e nell'arte*, Milano, Pizzi e Pizio, 1927; G. Albini, *Sugli ospedali in area padana nel '400: la riforma*, in Ead., *Città e ospedali*, cit., pp. 103-127; F. Leverotti, *Ricerche sulle origini dell'Ospedale Maggiore di Milano*, «Archivio Storico Lombardo», 107, 1981, pp. 77-113.

⁵¹ G. Albini, *Gli 'amministratori' dei luoghi pii milanesi nel '400: materiali per future indagini*, in Ead., *Città e ospedali*, cit., pp. 211-256. About urban elites behaviours see C.F. Black, *Early Modern Italy. A Social History*, London-New York, Routledge, 2001, pp. 129-166.

⁵² P. Canetta, *Elenco dei benefattori dell'Ospedale Maggiore di Milano (1456-1886)*, Milano 1887, p. 147. S. Spinelli, *La Ca' Granda (1456-1956)*, Milano, Consiglio degli Istituti Ospitalieri, 1958, p. 106. Banfi, *Scuola e educazione nella Milano dell'ultimo Quattrocento*, cit., p. 393; A. Simioni, *Un umanista milanese: Piattino Piatti*, «Archivio Storico Lombardo», XXXI, 1904, pp. 1-50; 225-301; N. Covini, *L'esercito del duca. Organizzazione militare e istituzioni al tempo degli Sforza (1450-1480)*, Roma, ISIME, 1998, pp. 263 ff.

⁵³ Following the records of the books of the hospital board decisions in the period 1456-1498. AOM, Ordinazioni Capitolari Generali, books 2 (1456-1461), 3 (1461-1464), 4 (1464-1469), 5 (1470-1478), 6 (1477-1483), 7 (1484-1490), 8 (1490-1498).

tus and to safeguard family and class interests. They usually acted according to the duke's will, but sometimes they were looking for space to express independent action⁵⁴. They were also closely tied to the Church, which had a traditional presence in the field of charity⁵⁵. Most brethren were in fact close to the Observant movements, Franciscan above all, or members of the clergy themselves, as Francesco della Croce, metropolitan *primicerius*, deputy of the Consorzio della Misericordia and of the Società dei Protettori dei Carcerati (Prisoners Protectors' Society)⁵⁶. The influence of the cultured *milieu* of the Sforza court was also strong, frequented by some of these "charity operators". In the 1460s, in fact, the ducal court developed a specific pedagogic discussion about the political and cultural plan of the ideal city. In the XVIIth volume of the *Trattato di Architettura* written by the architect Antonio Averlino, known as the Filarete, a few characters – the duke Francesco Sforza, his son Galeazzo Maria, the humanist Francesco Filelfo, Filarete himself – argued about an ideal city, named Sforzinda, which should have two educational buildings sheltering twenty *putti*, poor children of both sexes, in order to avoid the poverty that prevented them from virtuous actions and hence from ideal citizenship⁵⁷. In Renaissance Milan education of poor but talented children was clearly a problem taken seriously by the cultural and political elite in charge.

3. Youth between education and control

Unfortunately, we have little evidence about young people frequenting the schools founded and administered by lay confraternities in Milan. We have no surviving statutes, lists of books, description of literature, or information on disobedience acts⁵⁸. But, above all, we have no evidence left by the children themselves. The evidence for medieval Milanese youth is from an adult perspective. One more time adults are the protagonists. Sources describe adults founding, ruling and guiding youth sociability, children's friendship and patronage bonds, and their professional future. We can, however, use the sources we have

⁵⁴ M. Gazzini, *Patriziati urbani e spazi confraternali in età Rinascimentale: l'esempio di Milano*, «Archivio Storico Italiano», CLVIII, 2000, pp. 491-514 (now in Ead., *Confraternite e società cittadina*, cit., pp. 257-277).

⁵⁵ Albini, *Sugli ospedali in area padana*, cit., pp. 119 ff.

⁵⁶ C. Belloni, *Francesco della Croce. Contributo alla storia della Chiesa ambrosiana nel Quattrocento*, Milano, NED, 1995.

⁵⁷ Young boys would enter the *Archicodorus* and young girls the *Domus honestatis* when six years old, and could remain until twenty years old and even after. Antonio Averlino detto il Filarete, *Trattato di architettura*, A.M. Finoli, L. Grassi (eds.), Milano, Il Polifilo, 1972, p. 494.

⁵⁸ More information is available for the education of special children as the sons of the Sforza family: see M. Ferrari, «Per non mancare in tuto del debito mio». *L'educazione dei bambini Sforza nel Quattrocento*, Milano, F. Angeli, 2000.

to tease out information about the “users” of the free schools managed by lay confraternities and try to understand something about the historical figures of students and what they received from this educational system.

We have, for instance, an interesting source: a description of children frequenting the Grassi School in april 28th, 1495 («descriptione facta ad 28 aprillem 1495 de puti trovati a la schola dicta de Thomaxo Grasso»)⁵⁹. It is a list of names drawn up following a topographical order: about 200 pupils (the number decided by Tommaso Grassi), all boys⁶⁰, living in town, especially in the same neighbourhood of the Grassi School, Porta Vercellina. 52 lived in Porta Vercellina, 49 in Porta Romana, 36 in Porta Orientale and in Porta Tonsa (one next to each other), 25 in Porta Nuova; 44 lack topographical specification but most probably lived in the other two neighbourhoods of Milan, Porta Ticinese and Porta Comacina, that are not mentioned in the document. The list does not include the age of anyone. But as the document calls students *pueri* or *putti* (terms referring both to children and teenagers)⁶¹, and as these boys learned primary education at school⁶², we can suppose that boys were between seven and fourteen years old. Medieval classrooms often included children of different ages since courses did not depend on age⁶³. Boys belonged in part to families of Milan, sometimes very important ones such as the Visconti, Crivelli, Rottoli, Barbavara, Fagnani, Morigia and Grassi of course. In part they came from the *contado*, as some family names indicate⁶⁴. For these families it was important to let their sons receive not only a classroom education but also experience in urban life. We can assume that lay confraternities – sharing ideals and rituals of “civic Christian religion”⁶⁵ – could spread through their schools

⁵⁹ AIMi, Prerogative, Giusepatronati, Scuole, b. 888, fasc. 2. A transcription of the document is in M. Gazzini, *Scuole, libri, cultura nelle confraternite milanesi fra tardo medioevo e prima età moderna*, cit.

⁶⁰ Medieval education was overwhelmingly male: Nada Patrone, *Insegnare e apprendere*, cit., p. 22.

⁶¹ Depending on contexts, *puer* could mean both a child and a teenager, while *putto*, at least in northern Italy, indicated an undetermined age from birth to 14 years, including *infantia* and *pueritia*: see A. Giallongo, *Il bambino medievale. Educazione ed infanzia nel Medioevo*, Bari, Dedalo, 1990; O. Niccoli, *Il seme della violenza. Putti, fanciulli e mammoli nell'Italia tra Cinque e Seicento*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1995; Taddei, *Fanciulli e giovani*, cit., pp. 14-16.

⁶² Usually children started their basic education at six or seven years old, but there was not set age: Nada Patrone, *Insegnare e apprendere*, cit., pp. 42-43.

⁶³ Ariès, *Padri e figli nell'Europa medievale e moderna*, cit., pp. 170 ff.

⁶⁴ Even if we have to be careful about family names drawn from place names, the list enumerates boys that seem coming from the *contado* (Cantù, Saronno, Mortara, Treviglio, Monza, Cremona, Crema, Lodi, Senago, Legnano, Tradate, Gorgonzola), as from more distant places (Locarno, Novara, Piacenza, Bologna, Rome, Istria, Paris).

⁶⁵ R. Rusconi, *Da Costanza al Laterano: la «calcolata devozione» del ceto mercantile-borghese dell'Italia del Quattrocento*, in G. De Rosa, T. Gregory, A. Vauchez (eds.), *Storia dell'Italia religiosa*, 1. *L'Antichità e il medioevo*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1993, pp. 505-536; A. Vauchez (ed.), *La religion civique à l'époque médiévale et moderne (Chrétienté et Islam)*, Nanterre, 21-23 giugno 1993, Roma, ÉFR, 1995.

not only literacy skills but also religious and civic education, perhaps encouraging students to attend devotional ceremonies and community rites.

Teachers and students were chosen by the deputies of lay confraternities. Only a portion of the teachers came from Milan; the rest came from other Italian cities. The teachers were lay but more frequently members of clergy or religious orders. Masters were paid 100/150 florins each year, while tutors 50 florins (one gold florin = 32 imperial *solidi*)⁶⁶. Students were selected through different valuation methods: family income, personal credit, or kinship. The 250 boys admitted at the Grassi School, in fact, had to be poor but clever. Reserved access belonged to the Grassi' and noble but impoverished families.

Some children were recommended by the deputies of Milanese charitable institutions, others by their parents. Aloisio Marliani for instance, deputy between 1482 and 1494 – some years even prior – of the Ospedale Maggiore of Milan, asked Giovanni Antonio Omodei, deputy of the Quattro Marie confraternity, to accept «in the new Taverna School» the little Giovanni Ambrogio da Seregno, living «in San Pietro a l'orto road, Eastern Gate»⁶⁷. At the end of the century a woman in need wrote to the Quattro Marie *spectabiles domini deputati*:

Me, Catelina di Thomasoli de Busti, widow with two school age children, since I do not have means to send them at school, I have to beg your charitable heart to let one of my sons, Iacobo Filippo, enter the Grassi School⁶⁸.

Kinship, brotherhood, patronage, neighbourhood: all ties were important to let young poor people enter new relationship circles, the same groups involved in lay charitable confraternities.

Grassi School's teachers taught *grammatica*, that is to say Latin. This was the second step of primary education: the first was reading and writing⁶⁹. We do not know where students learned the rudiments of literacy: maybe at home, maybe at the same Grassi School that had probably widened its educational task. One note, written at the end of XVth century, undersigned by Grassi's relatives, informs us that «in the Stork house» teachers taught «reading and Latin

⁶⁶ More information about teachers in Gazzini, *Scuole, libri, cultura nelle confraternite milanesi*, cit. A useful comparison in P. Dubuis, *Les écoles en Suisse romande à la fin du Moyen Âge: quelques jalons*, in A. Paravicini Bagliani (ed.), *Écoles et vie intellectuelle à Lausanne au Moyen Âge*, Lausanne, Université de Lausanne, 1987, pp. 95-130.

⁶⁷ AIMi, Prerogative, Giuspatronati, Scuole, b. 888, fasc. 2.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ Primary school was organized in two phases: the elementary level of literacy, two or three years long, preparatory to a higher level, four years long, dedicated to learn Latin grammar and basic mathematics. The elementary level of literacy distinguished three other phases: reading, writing, learning the *Salterio* (the most common prayers and the seven penitential psalms attributed to king David). P. Lucchi, *Leggere, scrivere e abbaco: l'istruzione elementare agli inizi dell'età moderna*, in *Scienze, credenze occulte, livelli di cultura*, Firenze 26-30 giugno 1980, Firenze, Olschki, 1982, pp. 101-119; Nada Patrone, *Insegnare e apprendere*, cit., pp. 42-43.

to poor children»⁷⁰, which were the same lessons taught at the Taverna School, since the beginning⁷¹.

Studying Latin (*grammatica*) had also a business utility. Latin was necessary for understanding contracts and for book-keeping. Still at the end of the Middle Ages, the merchants of Milan kept their private accounts in Latin; in Genoa teaching Latin was required «ad usum mercatorum» (at the use of merchants)⁷². The economic purpose was confirmed when the Grassi Schools started lessons of *abacus* (business math)⁷³. In this way, the education given by these schools helped youth employment in trade and business and made less fortunate young people part of the civic community.

Quattro Marie's account books⁷⁴ inform that schools worked throughout the year. They stopped for short breaks. During times of epidemic and war the confraternity's deputies could often not pay the teachers because they did not succeed in collecting the rent of the real properties given by Tommaso Grassi to finance schools⁷⁵.

We do not have any evidence about teaching methods, topics of lessons, or reading matters. There are no original volumes left, or lists of books bought by confraternities for the schools they managed. But this is not surprising because we have generally little information about medieval Milanese confraternities' books (except for statutes or account-books)⁷⁶. We can suppose – as stated above – that arithmetic and Latin lessons were somehow mixed with moral and religious education. The example of brethren's behaviour was very important in this case⁷⁷.

⁷⁰ AIMi, Prerogative, Giuspatronati, Scuole, b. 888, fasc. 2.

⁷¹ See note 28.

⁷² Petti Balbi, *L'insegnamento nella Liguria medievale*, cit., pp. 56-60. For examples of account books kept in Latin see: T. Zerbi, *Il mastro a partita doppia di un'azienda mercantile del '300*, Como, E. Cavalleri, 1936; Id., *Le origini della partita doppia. Gestioni aziendali e situazioni di mercato nei secoli XIV-XV*, Milano, C. Marzorati, 1952; M. Gazzini, «Dare et habere». *Il mondo di un mercante milanese del Quattrocento (con l'edizione del libro di conti di Donato Ferrario da Pantigliate)*, Milano, Camera di Commercio di Milano, 1997 (electronic version on *Reti medievali* E-book, <http://www.storia.unifi.it/_RM/e-book/titoli/gazzini.htm>, accessed: 21st Januar 2008); L. Balletto, *Battista de Luco mercante genovese del secolo XV e il suo cartulario*, Genova 1979; J. Day, *I conti privati della famiglia Adorno (1402-1408)*, in *Miscellanea di storia ligure*, Genova, Università di Genova, 1958, I, pp. 45-120; J. Heers, *Le livre de comptes de Giovanni Piccamiglio, homme d'affairs génois, 1456-1460*, Paris-Aix-en-Provence, 1961. In other Italian regions, like Tuscany, merchants used vernacular for their writing since XIIIth century.

⁷³ In 1497, after the purchase of a new building for the Taverna School, four classes were opened, three for «reading and Latin» and one «for writing and calculation». AIMi, Comuni, Milano, Scuole Taverna, file 101, doc. 29th July, 1497, not. Antonio Zunico. The example was followed in a short time by the Grassi School. Giulini, *Tommaso Grassi*, cit.

⁷⁴ The Grassi School's accounts were kept by this confraternity.

⁷⁵ Gazzini, *Scuole, libri, cultura nelle confraternite milanesi*, cit., p. 227.

⁷⁶ The first evidence of a confraternal library in Milan is dated 1522 and regards the books of the Compagnia di S. Corona, born in 1497. ASMi, S. Corona, Registri, 1, cc. 258v.-259r, edited in Gazzini, *Scuole, libri, cultura nelle confraternite milanesi*, cit., App. II.

⁷⁷ But we do not have evidence of specific religious education like that testified in Florentine and Bolognese companies of Laudesi. See B. Wisch, D. Cole Ahl, *Introduction*, in *Confraternities and*

Literacy, moral instruction, spiritual education of young people, meeting together between lay and Christian contexts were not an exception, at least in Milan. We can cite other examples. In the 1420s-1430s Amedeo *de Landis*, a lay *abacus* teacher who received a salary by the commune for the will of the duke Filippo Maria Visconti⁷⁸, invited his pupils to enter the observant Franciscan convent of Santa Maria degli Angeli. Amedeo himself taught both arithmetic and Holy Scriptures. For this reason he was accused of heresy by saint Bernardino of Siena, who accused him of leading a scandalous behaviour «with teenagers»⁷⁹. Teaching methods of Amedeo included good examples but also violent manners that were not liked by the parents of his students, some of whom belonged to the same social *milieu* of merchants and nobles that read Holy Scriptures with Amedeo. For all these reasons Amedeo *de Landis* was tried twice: first (1437) he was judged guilty, but in a second trial (1441) he got a complete acquittal, thanks to the support of important members of the Franciscan order and of the Visconti court⁸⁰.

For a later period we can cite Girolamo Miani and his Servi dei Poveri (Servants of Poor) congregation, after known as Somaschi. In the 1540s they founded orphanages all over Lombardy where young people could learn elementary literary skills, Christian Doctrine, and even practice a good work. In Milan they were established, through the good offices of the duke Francesco II Sforza, in the hospital of San Martino, where orphans were looked after by a few people who had decided to live a religious life. While property administration was managed by a group of deputies, some lay men some clergy, all belonging to the aristocratic and bourgeois elite, that followed the diocesan pedagogic lines shown in the catechism schools of Castellino da Castello⁸¹.

the visual arts in Renaissance Italy: ritual, spectacle, image, Cambridge, CUP, 2000, pp. 1-19; Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, cit., p. 356.

⁷⁸ *I registri dell'Ufficio di Provvisione*, cit., 9-78: 27th October 1428; 9-190: 29th June 1433.

⁷⁹ C. Piana, *Un processo svolto a Milano nel 1441 a favore del mag. Amedeo de Landis e contro frate Bernardino da Siena*, in D. Maffei, P. Nardi (eds.), *Atti del simposio internazionale cateriniano-bernardiniano, Siena 17-20 aprile 1980*, Siena, Accademia senese degli Intronati, 1982, pp. 753-792, p. 755.

⁸⁰ Amedeo in fact frequented Antonio Rusconi, Franciscan provincial minister in Milan, who was his confessor and spiritual father, and Antonio da Rho, Minor friar and humanist. They were both close to Filippo Maria Visconti. Zarri, *Aspetti dello sviluppo degli Ordini religiosi*, cit., p. 252; R. Fubini, *Antonio da Rho*, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, III, Roma, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia italiana, 1961, pp. 574-577. Another famous humanist, Giuseppe Brivio, canon of Milan, was the apostolic delegate that in 1441 re-examined the case on order of the pope, giving a final decision in favour of Amedeo. Miglio, *Giuseppe Brivio*, cit.

⁸¹ Bianchi, *Carità e istruzione nell'assistenza agli orfani*, cit. About orphanages in Renaissance Italy see C. Grandi, *Benedetto chi ti porta, maledetto chi ti manda. L'infanzia abbandonata nel Triveneto, secoli XV-XIX*, Treviso, Fondazione Benetton, 1997; N. Terpstra, *Abandoned Children of the Italian Renaissance. Orphan care in Florence and Bologna*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins University Press, 2005; D.M. D'Andrea, *Civic Christianity in Renaissance Italy. The Hospital of Treviso 1400-1530*, Rochester (NY), University of Rochester Press, 2007.

All these cultural and charitable experiences had something in common: the patronage of the urban patriciate that utilized devotional and charitable initiatives to resolve practical questions, influenced by a religious sensibility learned from clergy, preachers and moral literature. Moreover, there was a common connection with humanist circles, with the ducal court, the Church and the Observance movement. Young, lay males were the object of attention. Utopian discussions apart, in practice educational investments were addressed to young boys and not to young girls, even though, in medieval Italian towns, women took part in confraternities and worked⁸². More variety is noted in social origins: students were sons of well-established or new families, from lower or upper classes, frequently impoverished. Meeting places were generally places with a religious affiliation: confraternities, hospitals, or convents. Although individual and collective behaviours were relatively free from control, at least compared to the following Catholic Reform age⁸³, the late medieval Milanese confraternities stressed Christian and civic discipline. Youthful exuberance was repressed. For the Milanese young people, medieval confraternities were places of control rather than sociability.

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⁸² For female religious associations, see C. Casagrande, *Women in confraternities between the Middle Ages and the Modern Age (research in Umbria)*, «Confraternitas», 5, 1994, pp. 3-13; M. Gazzini, *Donne e uomini in confraternita. La matricola del Consorzio dello Spirito Santo di Piacenza (1268)*, «Archivio Storico per le Province Parmensi», IV s., LII, 2000, pp. 253-274; M.T. Brolis, G. Brembilla, M. Corato, *La matricola femminile della Misericordia di Bergamo (1265-1339)*, Roma, EFR, 2001; about women at work see M.G. Muzzarelli, P. Galetti, B. Andreolli (eds.), *Donne e lavoro nell'Italia medievale*, Torino, Rosenberg & Sellier, 1991; A. Groppi (ed.), *Il lavoro delle donne*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1996; G. Piccinni, *Le donne nella vita economica, sociale e politica dell'Italia medievale*, pp. 5-46; R. Greci, *Donne e corporazioni: la fluidità di un rapporto*, pp. 71-91.

⁸³ See M. Sbriccoli (ed.), *La notte. Ordine, sicurezza e disciplinamento in età moderna*, Firenze, Ponte alle Grazie, 1991; *Disciplina dell'anima, disciplina del corpo e disciplina della società*, cit.; Albini, *Carità e governo delle povertà*, cit.

Carlo Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan, in the midst of religious disciplining, pastoral renewal and Christian education (1564-1584)*

Elisabetta Patrizi

The Episcopal governorship of Carlo Borromeo, and specifically the pastoral action and the renovation of the customs and the religious life that he carried out in the archdiocese of Milan in the second half of the Sixteenth century, have recently been object of renovated attention not only by Church historians, but also by scholars who are intent on clarifying one of the most favourite issues of recent religious and social historiography, that is social disciplining¹, as a basic component of the Reform, the evolution of the Catholic Tridentine Church, the building of the modern State and the transformation of the cultural and educational structures of the modern society.

With its complex forms of control over individual and collective habits, the work of Borromeo makes a substantial contribution to the building of a confessional society in the Early modern age; it surely represents, in fact, the “con-

* For a better reader comprehension, quotations of Italian Authors have been translated into English, in addition to giving the original passages in footnotes, together with references. Latin quotations have been left in their original form.

¹ W. Reinhard, *Disciplinamento sociale, confessionalizzazione, modernizzazione*, in P. Prodi (ed.), *Disciplina dell'anima, disciplina del corpo e disciplina della società tra medioevo ed età moderna*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1994, pp. 101-123; A. Prosperi, *Riforma cattolica, controriforma, disciplinamento sociale tra medioevo ed età moderna*, G. De Rosa, T. Gregory, A. Vauchez (eds.), *Storia dell'Italia religiosa*, vol. II, *L'età moderna*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1994, pp. 3-48. For a general picture see R. Po Chia-Sia, *La Controriforma. Il mondo del rinnovamento cattolico (1540-1770)*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2001.

fessional model of Catholicity”, which allows us – within the framework of a research on the educational reflexes of the *confessionalization* (i.e. confession-building) process – «to retrace and assess, in their concrete operational effects, aspects and dimensions of the counter-reformist pedagogical culture which are still widely abandoned – if not completely ignored – by the historians of pedagogy and education»².

The Borromaic pastoral not only gives preaching a leading role and intensifies and promotes the liturgical life and devotional practices, but it also reckons the demand – which was strongly highlighted by the Tridentine – of the clergy for the care of souls, which was firmly linked to the areas where its flock lived; again, it enhanced the role of parents, teachers and employers in the artisan shops, as responsible for the moral and spiritual education of the new generations. And finally, it started a process of sacralization of the territory in order to intensify – also through a rigorous and detailed legislation – the sacralization of the daily life, which had to be brought about again within the rhythms and modalities of the «Church’s time»³.

With Carlo Borromeo, we witness the establishing, in substance, of the true model of the bishop in the care of souls of the Catholic reform, a model where pastoral activities, education and Christian animation follow the same path, in such a penetrating and organic way that they connote an exemplary experience, the analysis of which makes us comprehend the role and the educational work of the Church in the modern society.

When he solemnly entered in Milan on 23rd September 1565, Carlo Borromeo was guided by a unique and great project: to realize the ecclesiastic reform which the Tridentine had approved⁴. He arrived not as an archbishop, but as an envoy of the Pope – something that did not diminish the enthusiasm of the Milanese people. Even though he had left Rome only temporarily in order to preside over the first Provincial Council of his archdiocese, for some time he had steadily matured the desire of residing in his Episcopal venue, a desire that he was able to realize in April 1566: from this date onwards, he would never again leave Milan, except for short periods and for exceptional causes.

The project of rigorously putting into effect the Tridentine decrees, had been developed during the Roman stay (1560-1565)⁵ when the Cardinal’s nephew, as Secretary of State, was able to closely follow the developments of the last

² R. Sani, *Educazione e istituzioni educative nell’Italia moderna (secoli XV-XIX)*, Milano, I.S.U. Università Cattolica, 1999, p. 458.

³ J. Le Goff, *Tempo della Chiesa e tempo del mercante*, Torino, Einaudi, 1977.

⁴ A. Borromeo, *I vescovi italiani e l’applicazione del Concilio di Trento*, in C. Mozzarella, D. Zardin (eds.), *I tempi del concilio. Religione, cultura e società nell’Europa tridentina*, Roma, Bulzoni, 1997.

⁵ P. Paschini, *Il primo soggiorno di san Carlo Borromeo a Roma, 1560-1565*, in Id., *Cinquecento romano e riforma cattolica. Scritti raccolti in occasione dell’ottantesimo compleanno dell’autore*, Roma, Facultas theologia Pontificii Athenaei Lateranensis, 1958.

phase of the Council, and so, open his eyes to the large and diffused state of degeneration of the Church's life, which made it possible for him to foresee hard obstacles in the process of realizing the council reforms' directions.

In Rome – Giuseppe Alberigo writes – Carlo became aware of the strength of the abuse system: it dominated the arrangement of the ecclesiastic world, and its effects contaminated all aspects of the Church's life. Decadence was an enormous force, and everywhere it found partisans and supporters. [...]. The point was not the elimination of some flaws in a healthy body, but the elimination, with a bright and resolute intervention, of a diffused and branched degeneration, which was firm in holding out with all its energies. [...]. Only a rigorous, enduring and widespread fight against each sign of abuse, could have obtained an efficacious and definitive defeat of the abuse practice, and its replacement with a habitual discipline⁶.

To replace abuse with discipline: this was, as well known, the imperative that emerged at the end of the Tridentine. The promoter of this impressive challenge should have been the bishop: not the *episcopus* secular prince, far from the spiritual demands of his diocese, but rather the *pastor* with his exemplary morals, able to lead his faithful towards the *Reformatio Ecclesiae*. Carlo Borromeo absorbed this concept of the Episcopal *munus* during his period in Rome, not only with the Tridentine experience and the attendance at the new religious institutions which animated the Catholic Reform, such as Jesuits, Teatins and Fathers of the Oratory, but also during the crucial meeting with the Archbishop of Braga and primate of Portugal, Bartolomeo de Mártiribus⁷.

⁶ «A Roma, Carlo ebbe modo di rendersi conto della forza raggiunta dal sistema abusivo, che costituiva ormai l'assetto prevalente del mondo ecclesiastico con effetti inquinanti in tutti gli aspetti della vita della chiesa. La decadenza aveva una forza enorme e trovava ovunque partigiani e sostenitori. [...] Non si tratta di eliminare qualche smagliatura di un sistema sano, ma di intervenire con lucida determinazione per eliminare una degenerazione estesa e ramificata, decisa a resistere con tutte le forze. [...] Solo una rigorosa lotta a ogni traccia di abuso, protratta nel tempo ed estesa nello spazio, avrebbe potuto conseguire un superamento effettivo e definitivo della prassi abusiva, sostituendole una disciplina abituale» (H. Jedin, G. Alberigo, *Il tipo ideale di vescovo secondo la Riforma cattolica*, Brescia, Morcelliana, 1985, pp. 125-126).

⁷ Bartolomé de los Mártires (Lisbona 1514-Viana do Castelo 1590; the appellation *dei Martiri* recalls the Church of S. Maria dei Martiri where he was baptized, and it replaced the name of *Vale*, which was adopted in memory of his grandfather), after the novitiate in his native city, took the Dominican habit in 1528. After finishing his studies of philosophy and theology in 1538, he spent a long period teaching in the convents in Lisbon (1538-1557); then he became prior of the convent of Benfica in Lisbon (1557-1558). In 1559 he received the archbishopric in Braga, where he governed zealously and took great care of pastoral visits as an engagement for the evangelization of the people, as testified by the *Catechismo o dottrina cristiana e pratiche spirituali* (15th edition in 1962). He looked after the education of clergy, and founded schools of Moral Theology in many places of the diocese, he instituted the Council Seminar in Campo Vinha (1571-1572); and finally, he wrote doctrinal works, amongst which the *Stimulus Pastorum* (22 editions). From 1561 to 1563 he took part in the Council of Trent and, in order to put into effects the directions of the council, he organized a Diocesan Synod in 1564, which was followed in 1566 by a Provincial Synod. On 23rd February 1582 he renounced the archbishopric and he retired to the Dominican convent of Santa Croce in Viana do Castelo, which arose on his initiative (1561) in order to fur-

Bartolomeo de Mártiribus, who arrived at Rome in the end of September 1563, became for the young cardinal the model to follow, the living example of the pastor totally devoted to the Episcopal ministry, and whose basic characteristics are exposed by the same de Mártiribus in his *Stimulus pastorum*⁸. The treatise, far from the abstractness of the *specula* concerning the ideal traditional bishop, was able to meet the real demands of the epoch and must surely have been counted amongst the readings which played the most significant role in the education of Carlo Borromeo.

The meeting between Bartolomeo de Martyribus and Carlo Borromeo – Alberigo underlines once more – had an intense spiritual dimension, which was centred on the significance of the Council and the necessity of the reform. The Portuguese was able to encourage the Milanese in his ecclesiastic engagement, stimulating his devotion to the Church and the Episcopal service. This was a crucial event, for the ideal which Carlo had of being a bishop. He had surely already met figures of great spiritual commitment, but perhaps he had not yet had the occasion of encountering someone who could illustrate to him the living reality of a bishop devoted to the pastoral ministry, without reservation in evangelical spirit⁹.

«Since that Autumn – Cesare Sponsati writes – the relation with the Church of Milan changed: from a legal bond, it assumed for Carlo Borromeo a new and particular depth, taking the shape of a true nuptial relationship»¹⁰. In fact

ther ecclesiastic studies and preaching. It was there that he died on 16th July 1590. Reckoned and acclaimed by the people with the name of *Saint Archbishop, father of poor and sick*, he was declared Venerable by Gregorius XVI on 23rd March 1845 and in 2001 was proclaimed Blessed. *Hierarchia Catholica Medii aevi sive summorum pontificum, S.R.E. cardinalium, ecclesiarum antistitum series*, 9 vols., Patavii, Il messaggero di S. Antonio, 1898-2001, vol. III, p. 139; E. Lafuente Ferrari, *Iconografía lusitana. Retratos grabados de personajes portugueses*, Madrid, s.n., 1941 (Archivo Biográfico de España, Portugal e Iberoamérica); R. De Almeida Rolo, *Bartolomé de los Mártires*, in *Gran Enciclopedia Rialp: Humanidades y Ciencia*, Última actualización 1991, <http://www.canalsocial.net/GER/ficha_GER.asp?id=217&cat=biografiasuelta> (last access: 17th September 2007).

⁸ Bartholomeus de Martyribus, *Stimulus pastorum ex sententijs Patrum concinnatus, in quo agitur de vita & moribus episcoporum, aliorumque praelatorum, per reverendiss. D.D. Bartholomaeum a martyribus archiepiscopum Bracharensem, & Hispaniae primatem*, Romae, apud Haeredes Iulij Accolti, 1572. In the preface – dedicated to Borromeo – Francesco Cotta explains the title: «Praeterea id fuit causae, quare is pastorum stimulus inscriberetur, proptereaque (ut ego arbitror) eos omnes, qui aliis praesunt, quasi aculeis pungit, ac stimulos eis admovet, ut omni qua possint diligentia, celeritate, industria, ac omnibus denique tam corporis, quam animi viribus, subiectos sibi homines iuvent, tueantur, conservent».

⁹ «L'incontro tra Bartolomeo de Martyribus e Carlo Borromeo ebbe una intensa dimensione spirituale incentrata sull'importanza del concilio e l'urgenza della riforma. Il portoghese riuscì a confortare il milanese nell'impegno ecclesiastico, accedendo o, quanto meno, alimentando in lui la dedizione alla chiesa e al servizio episcopale. Si trattò dunque di un incontro cruciale per l'ideale di vescovo di Carlo. Egli aveva certo già conosciuto uomini di grande impegno spirituale, ma forse non aveva avuto ancora l'occasione di incontrare qualcuno che potesse presentargli in modo tanto compatto e perciò convincente la realtà vivente di un vescovo dedito senza riserve in spirito evangelico al ministero pastorale» (Jedin, Alberigo, *Il tipo ideale di vescovo*, cit., p. 117).

¹⁰ C. Sponsati, *Carlo Borromeo e la tradizione liturgica della Chiesa Milanese*, in Buzzi, Zardin (eds.), *Carlo Borromeo*, cit., p. 37.

it was exactly on the 7th December 1563, the day of S. Ambrogio, that the Episcopal ordination arrived. If the cardinalship (31st January 1560) had been a consequence of his uncle-Pope and represented a tempting occasion for amassing a fortune, the bishopric was the result of a personal journey. The decision matured, as it is known, after the death of the brother Federico, and it was not welcomed by the Pope, who was rather worried about the lack of a future heir for the powerful family Borromeo. The *alter Ambrosius*, as contemporaries called him¹¹, desired to begin his governorship “under the sign” of S. Ambrogio, not only because he had chosen him as patron saint and model, but overall because he wanted to put his ministry in the river-bed of the Ambrosian tradition, as it is shown, for example, by the several publishing initiatives that followed the institution of the Congregation of Rites, publications which aimed at diffusing the Ambrosian Rite across the archdiocese¹².

In the mind of the young cardinal, the Gregorian warning to pastors, which was acknowledged in the pages of the *Stimulus pastorum*, soon became clear and strong

Studeat cor nostrum terrenorum pastorum imitatione succendi, qui hyemales noctes imbribus, gelusque constricti, ducunt per vigilias: ne vel una ovis, et forte non utilis, pereat.

¹¹ Giovanni Pietro Giussano remembers how Carlo «fixed his eyes mainly on S. Ambrogio, whom he had chosen as his Protector; he therefore wanted to be consecrated Archbishop on the day of his ordination. Then it would be clear to everybody that not only did he have a special devotion and greatly venerated him, but that he also imitated him as much as possible. In his history, the Cardinal of Verona calls him the true imitator of S. Ambrogio; and the cardinal Nicolò Sfrondato bishop of Cremona, who later became Pope with the name of Greg. XIII, used to call him the second Ambrogio, and the same is true of Cardinal Baronio in his Annali, and for many others» («fissò gl'occhi principalmente in S. Ambrogio, il quale s'haveva eletto per Protettore; perciò volle essere consecrato Arcivescovo nel giorno della sua Ordinatione. Onde fù osservato da molti come egli non solo fù di lui divotissimo, e l'hebbe in somma veneratione, ma l'imitò anche in tutto quello che poté. Però il Cardinale di Verona lo chiama nella sua historia, vero imitatore di S. Ambrogio; e'l cardinale Nicolò Sfrondato vescovo di Cremona, che fù poi Sommo Pontefice, con nome di Greg. XIII lo solea chiamare un secondo Ambrogio, così lo nomina similmente il Cardinale Baronio ne' suoi Annali, e molti altri». See G.P. Giussani, *Vita di S. Carlo Borromeo* [...]. *Et in questa nostra ultima impressione ampliata di molte cose notabili*, [...], *Con li Ricordi lasciatigli da questo glorioso S. cardinale* [...] *Documenti à Padri di famiglia per il buon governo loro, et Ammaestramenti à i Giovanetti per ben ricevere il Santissimo Sacramento. Et postevi di più la Pace dell'Amore, et gli Atti di contrizione Con due copiose Tavole, l'una de' Capitoli, et l'altra delle cose più notabili*, In Venetia, appresso Giacomo Sarzina, 1615, lib. II, cap. II, p. 35. In his biography of Borromeo, Agostino Valier ends the pages, which are devoted to the parallelism between Ambrogio and Carlo, with these words: «Virtutes, qua in Ambrosio fuerant (ut vero dicam) in Carolo Borromeo mille amplius post annos, renovasse Dominum Deum qui hanc nostram scriptionem legerit, et qui libellos varios, qui de ipso conscripti sunt, evolverint, facilius intelligent». A. Valier, *Vita Caroli Borromei Card. S. Praxedis, archiepiscopi mediolani item opuscula duo Episcopus et Cardinalis ab Augustino card. Veronae conscripta*, Veronae, apud Hieronymum Discipulum, 1586, pp. 59-62.

¹² *Calendario Liturgico* (from 1567), *Salterio* (1574), *Avvertenze [...] ai curati per amministrare il santissimo sacramento dell'eucharestia in chiesa* (1574), *Libro delle litanie* (1579), *Istruttione per celebrare la messa secondo il rito ambrosiano* (1579), *Breviario* (1584). The *Rituale* and the *Messale* came out posthumously, respectively in the year 1589 and 1594.

Quam si insidiator ore mordaci momorderit, quomodo satagunt, quibus cordis anhelant aestibus, in quas voces (ut eruant captum pecus) angustia stimulante prosiliunt, ne a Domino gregis exigit quidquid per incuriam perierit?¹³

Carlo Borromeo believed that his flock should be protected from external dangers, so he did not waste his time: the day after his nomination as archbishop (12th May 1564) of the vast province of Milan¹⁴ he decided, since he was still retained in Rome by the uncle Pius IV, to send his trusted collaborator Nicolò Ormaneto¹⁵ to Milan, in the role of General Vicar of the diocese, and with the task of organizing the first diocesan synod of his long governorship. The synod – which took place from 29th to 31st August 1565 in the Cathedral and in the presence of 1,200 ecclesiastics, was convened in order to introduce the Tridentine to the Milanese diocese, and it ratified and established the main council decrees (residence, reduction of benefits, morality and education of the clergy, pastoral practices).

The zealous archbishop was not satisfied of the results, so he later called a provincial council. Soon after he began the preparations from Rome, and on 15th October 1565 he officially opened the Council which took place under his direct

¹³ Bartholomeus de Martyribus, *Stimulus pastorum*, cit., p. 42r.

¹⁴ «The Ambrosian diocese was at that time one of the vastest and most populated in Catholic Europe. During Borromeo's governorship there were, according to the most reliable statistics, up to 2,200 churches and other sacred buildings, and a diocesan clergy which amounted to 3,352 people, from the canons in the cathedral, to the simple clergymen *incedentes in habitu clericali*. The diocese's territory was mainly on the flat ground but also included hilly areas; it expanded westerly out of the Milan State boundaries, into the Savoy Dukedom and into Monferrato, northerly towards the Canton Ticino, and then towards the Republic of Venice, and Bergamo» (see Borromeo, *I vescovi*, cit., p. 59).

¹⁵ Nicolò Ormaneto (Verona 1515/17-Madrid 1577) served his apprenticeship at the dioceses of Verona as collaborator of the bishop Gian Matteo Giberti; as Wieste de Boer underlined, «in his two year period of work in Milan (1564-1565) he became not only the maker of the Borromeo's programme of reforms, but he gave it the clear shape of Giberti» (W. de Boer, *La conquista dell'anima. Fede, disciplina e ordine pubblico nella Milano della Controriforma*, Torino, Einaudi, 2004, p. 15). Regarding the Verona influences on the Borromaic governorship see E. Cattaneo, *Influenze veronesi nella legislazione di san Carlo Borromeo*, in *Problemi di vita religiosa in Italia nel Cinquecento. Atti del convegno di storia della Chiesa in Italia, Bologna, 2-6 settembre 1958*, Padova, Antenore, 1960, pp. 123-166. Ormaneto, who belonged to a noble family from Verona, studied law in Padua and worked in Verona as a jurist. In 1541 Giberti invited him to Rome, after six years he took the habit and he was entrusted with the diocese of Bovolone. In 1553 he followed the cardinal Pole during his legation in England; back in Italy, he took part in the last phases of the Council of Trent and highly assisted the cardinal Navagero in realizing the first Tridentin reforms in the diocese of Verona. He went to Milan on 7th July 1564, where he remained, as vicar of Borromeo, until April 1566. Later, he was called by Pius V to Rome, in order to work at reforming the Roman Curia. In 1570 he was designated bishop of Padua, but he could not reside in the diocese. In 1572 he set out for Spain, with the thorny charge of nuncio at the court of Philip II. He died in Madrid on 18th June 1577 (see *Hierarchia Catholica*, cit., vol. III, p. 284; F. Ughelli, *Italia sacra sive episcopis Italiae et insularum adiacentium*, 10 vols., Venetiis, Apud Sebastianum Coleti, 1717-1722, vol. V, col. 460; *Enciclopedia cattolica*, 12 vols., Città del Vaticano, Ente per l'Enciclopedia cattolica e per il libro cattolico, 1949-1954, vol. 9, col. 360).

chairmanship¹⁶. In the last 254 years before in fact, no provincial council had been held in Milan – the last one had been celebrated in 1311 – and the occasion represented an important test for the bishop who had announced his wish to apply the Tridentine. As Tolomeo Gallio wrote, on 13th October, to the young archbishop: «You can believe that not only Rome, but almost the entire Europe, are now attentive and staring at [your] actions»¹⁷; and in fact the Como Cardinal was right: with the first provincial council in Milan in fact, the name of Carlo Borromeo, as ideal bishop of the Catholic Reform, began to widespread.

The Council largely focused on the discipline of clergy. With regards to this, statutes in fact contemplated both a *pars destruens*, i.e. the charge of abuses and deficiencies of the Milanese Church, and a *pars construens*, aimed at improving and modeling the conduct of priests through directions and regulations with a primarily pastoral nature; these laws delineated a priestly work centred on the faith (liturgical offices, processions, cult of relics and images, music and chants in churches, sacred representations, sacraments, pastoral visits). In this perspective, and in compliance with the Tridentine Decrees, the directives concerning religious education and spiritual animation were largely considered by the Milanese Provincial Council: from the obligation, for bishops, to institute a prebendary in the chapters both of the cathedral church and of the main collective churches (*collegiali*); the obligation for theologians to explain the Holy Write; to the obligation, for parish priests, to preach on Sundays and Holidays, and to promote the catechism for children on Sunday and holiday afternoons. This last direction is linked to the rigorous laws of the Council concerning the orthodoxy of the *ludi magistri*, which had to adhere to the Pius IV's Bull of 1564 *In sacrosancta*¹⁸ (concerning the profession of faith) and were under the crosscheck of both religious and civilian authorities, which were called upon to cooperate «ut, nulla sumptus sui habita ratione, publicos ludi magistros in urbes, et suae ditionis loca conducant, non minus fidei, et vitae quam doctrinae, et scientiae laude commendatos»¹⁹.

¹⁶ E. Cattaneo, *Il primo Concilio provinciale milanese*, in *Il Concilio di Trento e la riforma tridentina*, *Atti del convegno storico internazionale (Trento, 2-6 settembre 1963)*, Roma, Herder, 1965, pp. 215-275; C. Marcora, *Un concilio provinciale a Milano nel 1468?*, «Memorie storiche della diocesi di Milano», IV, 1957, pp. 279-281.

¹⁷ «[alle sue] attioni lei può ben credere, che non Roma sola, ma quasi tutta la buona Europa sta hora fissa et intenta» (A. Monti, *Lettere inedite di Tolomeo Gallio Cardinale di Como al Cardinale Carlo Borromeo*, «Periodico della Società Storica per la provincia e antica Diocesi di Como», VII, 1889, p. 37).

¹⁸ *Bullarum diplomatum et privilegiorum sanctorum romanorum pontificum : taurinensis editionis locupletior facta : collectione novissima plurium brevium, epistolarum, decretorum actorumque S. Sedis a S. Leone Magno usque ad praesens, cura et studio Aloysii Tomassetti, [poi] Collegii adlecti Romae virorum s. theologiae et ss. canonum peritorum [...]*, Augustae Taurinorum, Seb. Franco et Henrico Dalmazzo editoribus, 1857-1872, 25 vols. (including one volume of Appendix), vol. VII (1862), pp. 323-327.

¹⁹ *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis, tribus partibus distincta. Quibus concila provincialia, conciones synodales, synodi dioecesanæ, instructiones, litterae pastorales, edicta, regulæ confratrum, for-*

The synods had a role of relief during long Borromeo's governorship, which was marked by 11 diocesan synods (1564, 1568, 1572, 1574, 1578, 1579, 1580, 1581, 1582, 1583, 1585) and 6 provincial councils (1565, 1569, 1573, 1576, 1579, 1582). The impressive Borromaic legislation, later collected in the *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis*, influenced not only the Milanese and Northern-Italian reality, but also became a concrete model of pastoral government for the entire Church of the Modern age. As Agostino Borromeo correctly underlines,

the value of the Borromaic councils lay not only on the significance of the concrete goals that they attained, but especially on the fact that those councils were promoted and chaired by the cardinal nephew of the Pope who had resolved the Council of Trent; moreover, a man whose prestige and reputation were growing. Therefore, the contemporaries perceived those councils, especially the former one, as an example to follow, and the related decrees, as a model to imitate²⁰.

This "attention towards the law" can be referred, as Bendiscioli underlines²¹, not only to the juridical education that he received in Padua, or to his closeness to orders such as Teatins and Jesuits, who were accustomed to the rule; but it must be referred to the deep belief, which he pondered during the Tridentine activities, in the law's power of control, which he developed so that neither things, people or situations, within the Church's competence, could be left to arbitrariness.

On the one hand the Milan archbishop tweaked a detailed regulation for the disciplinary reform of the clergy and the people, whilst, on the other, he took care that it was realized through the building of a strong Church, hierarchically organized and centralized. The "almost Pope" – as Panigarola called him²² –

mulae, et alia denique continentur, quae Carolus S.R.E. Cardinalis tit. S. Praxedis, Archiepiscopus egit. Cum privilegio summi Pontificis, Mediolani, apud Pacificum Pontium, 1582, I, De ludi Magisteri, c. 3v. About the reactions after the first provincial council see: C. Marcora, *I primi anni dell'episcopato di S. Carlo Borromeo (1566-1567)*, «Memorie Storiche della diocesi di Milano», vol. X, 1963, pp. 517-617.

²⁰ «l'importanza dei concili Borromai non va fatta risalire unicamente alla rilevanza dei risultati concreti raggiunti, bensì e soprattutto alla circostanza che si trattava di concili promossi e presieduti dal cardinale nipote del papa che aveva concluso il concilio di Trento, un uomo, per giunta, il cui prestigio e la cui fama si andavano diffondendo. Ecco perché la loro celebrazione, ed in particolare quella del primo, fu avvertita dai contemporanei come un esempio da seguire ed i relativi decreti come un modello da imitare» (Borromeo, *I vescovi*, cit., p. 42). For a list of the several editions and compendiums of the *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis* see E. Cattaneo, *La singolare fortuna degli Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis*, «La scuola cattolica: rivista di teologia del Seminario Arcivescovile di Milano», CXI, 1983, 3-4, pp. 191-217.

²¹ M. Bendiscioli, *Politica, amministrazione e religione nell'età dei Borromei*, in *Storia di Milano*, Milano, Fondazione Treccani, 1953-1996, 18 vols., vol. X (1957), pp. 155-159.

²² Panigarola, in his speech for the funeral rites of Borromeo, underlined that the Ambrosian metropolitan belonged to a family «which can be defined a seminar of popes» («seminario di pontefici»). See Francesco Panigarola, *Oratione di fr. Francesco Panigarola minore osservante, in morte, e sopra il corpo dell'ill.mo Carlo Borromeo cardinale di S. Prasseda, et arcivescovo di Milano*, In Milano, per Paolo Gottardo Pontio, 1585, p. 260).

gave life to a pyramidal building: at the top was the archbishop, assisted by trusty collaborators and selected from the non-Milanese areas, in order to avoid conflicts of local interests (Nicolò Ormaneto, Gerolamo Federico Trivulzio, Pietro Galesino, Cesare Speciano, Giovanni Francesco Bonomo, Carlo Bascapè and the Jesuits Giovanni Botero, Benedetto Palmio and Francesco Adorno). At a lower level, as a connection between the centre and periphery, there was a well-structured body of ecclesiastics who were spread across the territory. In the city, which was organized into six gates (i.e. six districts: *sestieri*), there was an ecclesiastic at the helm of each *sestiere*; whilst in the country – all the same divided into six areas – a *vicarius foraneus* controlled each area, and group of parishes were under supervisors, scrupulously selected by the archbishop.

Carlo Borromeo gave life to an oligarchic structure, «in the belief that any movement of renovation should begin from the bishop (the head), then involve the clergy, and from the clergy arrive to the people»²³. In his homilies this conception of the Church is often expressed through the image of the human body: «Vos oculi mei estis, vos aures, vos manus, vos huius cathedrae et Ecclesiae bases ac fulcimenta validiora»²⁴.

The young metropolitan was able to include within such a project several religious institutions, new and old ones, male and female. This was the case, for example, of the Jesuits, whom he immediately entrusted with the direction of the ecclesiastic seminar and the education of the diocese's clergy, and who soon became «a way of ascetic life and at the same time a method of intense action, for the pastoral and the edification, which aimed at gaining proselytes also through the suggestion of the novelty and notoriety»²⁵. In 1570 the Teatins arrived in Milan and they settled first in the Church of *S. Maria in S. Celso*, and then, after 1575, in *S. Antonio*, briefly becoming a crucial point of reference for the religious practice. In the same year Carlo Borromeo made the Fathers of the Oratory come from Rome, with the purpose of involving them in the care of souls, especially of the young – in fact, he remembered their competence and efficacy, which he had known well in Rome whilst attending the Philippine oratory. But the Fathers were against any rigidity and scheming, and so could not accommodate the overarching style of Borromeo, therefore the Oratory project could not take root in Milan.

We must also recall how the S. Prassede cardinal was able to support the religious institutions which were already in the territory, for example in the case of the Barnabites, who had been active in Milan since 1530 and promoters of an apostolate based on preaching and charitable assistance: Borromeo

²³ M. Marcocchi, *L'immagine della Chiesa in Carlo Borromeo*, in Buzzi, Zardin (eds.), *Carlo Borromeo*, cit., p. 25.

²⁴ G.A. Sassi, *Sancti Caroli Borromei Homiliae, nunc primum e mss. codicibus Bibliothecae Ambrosianae in lucem productae*, Mediolani, ex typographia Bibliothecae Ambrosianae, 5 vols., apud Joseph Marellum, 1747-1748, vol. III, p. 384.

²⁵ Bendiscioli, *Politica, amministrazione e religione*, cit., p. 162.

involved them in the popular missions, in the exercises for clergy, as visitors in convents and directors of the schools of the Christian doctrine, but also as animators of the popular devotion of the “Forty hours” (*Quarant’ore*). A further valid support for the campaign of the Milanese church reform was detected by Borromeo in Capuchins, who had been in the city from 1536, and who were involved as visitors in convents and preachers in popular missions, especially in the Swiss valleys. To the same duties a valid support was offered also by the traditional orders that had adhered to the movement of the observance, especially the Franciscans, Dominicans and Hermits of St. Augustine.

With regards to the “religious animation” of the female world, Carlo Borromeo principally entrusted it to the Congregation of the Angelic Sisters of St. Paul (known as the *Angeliche*), and to the Company of Saint Ursula (*Orsoline*). The *Angeliche*, founded in Milan in 1535 with aims similar to those of the Barnabites, even though devoted to enclosure, kept on playing a central role in the Milanese religious life and made the *S. Paolo* Convent a crucial centre of spiritual life. The *Orsoline*, which arose in Brescia in 1536 through the initiative of Angela Merici, arrived in Milan just in the beginning of the borromaic archbishopric: these young “nuns in house” were commanded by the archbishop to live in community, though without enclosure, but on the condition that they practiced religious and primary education for young poor girls and assisted orphans inside the convent.

Just this “will to conform” led Carlo Borromeo to «perceive the disadvantages of the primary dependence – also of Jesuits, Barnabites, Cappuchins – from their respective general Superiors or anyway external to the diocese, and however the difficulty of obtaining from them the necessary cooperation for his opinions»²⁶. For these reasons, in 1578 he founded the Oblates of S. Ambrogio, who after his death were called the Oblates of Saints Ambrogio and Carlo, a congregation of secular priests (just like those of the Jesuits, Barnabites and Teatins), but who were exclusively devoted to the diocese and directly under the archbishop, and therefore faithful executor of his directions.

Cum autem huic congregationi huiusmodi sit propositus scopus, atque finis; illud etiam, ut necessario consequens, recipiatur, oportet, eiusdem congregationis homines, Reverendissimi Archiepiscopi Mediolanensis ecclesiae ministros omnino esse debere, cui scilicet pastoris, speculatorisque officium in hac ecclesia, eiusdemque procuratio, atque gubernatio, ut illius animas ad aeternae salutis iter dirigat, commissa est. Quocirca praecipuum etiam huius congregationis fundamentum, in exquisita, ac plane perfecta erga ipsos Archiepiscopos ecclesiae Mediolanensis obedientia positum esse debet, ad Dei gloriam, et animarum eiusdem ecclesiae salutem impense procurandam, adiuvandamque et promovendam²⁷.

The rules of the Oblates of S. Ambrogio, who Carlo Borromeo from 1579 charged with the education of the diocese’s clergy (instead of the Jesuits), reflect

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

²⁷ *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis*, cit., I, *Institutionum ad Oblatos S. Ambrosii*, cap. I, c. 222r.

the caroline concept of a firmly organized Church, where the bishop is the propulsive and unifying heart, the priests are the “nerves” which connect and support the spiritual life of the people, and the laics are the objective of the action, i.e. the field, the vineyard to look after, the flock to feed. A clear example is offered by the articulated network of secular confraternities²⁸ which spread across the territory: from the Charity Companies for the personal edification and assistance to the poor and sick, to the penitential confraternities for the expiation of the sins of the world and the individual; to the confraternities of inmates and old School of *S. Giovanni decollato alle case rotte*, which arose from the assistance to inmates and those condemned to death; and finally, to the Company of the Holy Sacrament, which aimed, against the Calvinist negation, at reaffirming the reverence to the body of Christ which is in the Host, and at creating “sacred” forms through which to give free play to the demand of feast by the people. Carlo Borromeo developed these entities, but he included them within the parish structures, in this way submitting them to the close control of the clergy, which was charged with the nomination of directors, the supervision of the administration, the choice of confessors and ratification of the religious and assistance initiatives of confraternities.

The ecclesiology of the Ambrosian metropolitan is surely pragmatic: the Church is the body²⁹ where the blood of salvation flows; Christ is the head of this body and the believers are the limbs; the vitality of the body, which depends on the deep union of the limbs with the head, is guaranteed only by bishops and priests, fathers and pastors of souls, and through them the fruitfulness of the *Ecclesia mater* can be realized. The hierarchical Church of Borromeo is not a simple polemic answer to the Protestants: in fact, it originates from the deep belief that, in order to realize the religious renaissance, it is necessary for the priests to strongly engage in empowering their own duty as leaders, so that they become *formae fidelium*, i.e. models and examples to follow, because from them the *salus animarum* invoked by the Tridentine³⁰ descend.

To confirm the importance the young archbishop assigned to the *officium* of the priests, we must underline, amongst his first provisions, the institution of the

²⁸ Regarding the role of the Fraternal orders in reorganizing the life of the Catholic church see: D. Zardin, *Il rilancio delle confraternite nell'Europa cattolica Cinque-Seicentesca*, in Mozzarella, Zardin (eds.), *I tempi*, cit., pp. 107-144; C.F. Black, *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989 (trad. it. *Le confraternite italiane nel Cinquecento*, Milano, Rizzoli, 1992); D. Zardin, *Corpi, «fraternità», mestieri: intrecci e parentele nella 'costituzione' delle trame di base della società europea. Alcune premesse*, in D. Zardin (ed.), *Corpi, «fraternità», mestieri nella storia della società europea*, Roma, Bulzoni, 1998, pp. 9-36 (Quaderni di Cheiron, 7).

²⁹ The image of the Church as the body of the Christ, is a leit motiv of the speeches and homilies of Borromeo. See Marcocchi, *L'immagine*, cit., p. 35 nota 53.

³⁰ G. Alberigo, G.L. Dovetti, P.P. Joannou, C. Leopardi, P. Prodi (eds.), *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum decreta*, Bologna, EDB, 1991, Sessio XXIII (17th sept. 1562), *Decretum de reformatione*, pp. 737-741.

Seminar for the education of the clergy – in total compliance with the directions of the Tridentine³¹. In connection to this, in June 1565 Carlo Borromeo had already charged Mons. Ormaneto with the foundation of a boarding school for young aspirant priests, and to be set under the direction of the Jesuits.

The aim of the seminar – as the archbishop of Milan wrote to his general vicar – should be to raise a good number of sons, in order that they can renovate, little by little, the secular clergy and remedy the great ignorance that exists in this city, and out of it³².

The Seminar, after being initially housed in rooms which had been located in the nearby Church of *S. Vito al Carrobbio di Porta Ticinese*, almost immediately found a stable venue in *S. Giovanni a Porta Orientale*, in the neighbourhood of the *Duomo*. In 1572 it already counted some 150 boarders, who were followed in their education by around fifteen Jesuits. Three years earlier, the same Borromeo had outlined its first regulation «which would have become the base for almost all future regulations of Italian seminars, at the point that it was recovered, in its substance, even by Pius X in the years of the true re-foundation of the seminars»³³. This regulation was: organized into three founding elements such as piety, study and discipline; focused on the individuals' capacities, as well as on the selection of the ruling staff; aimed at delineating a system based on asceticism and humanistic education, without allowing room for fantasy or temptations of the external world; and finally, meant to empower the spiritual dimension and the interiorization of the rule.

As Turchini notes, «the Seminar represents the final step of an educational process, which begins from the school directed by priests, private as well as formally instituted, both in town and in the country, and that is of special interest for the bishop»³⁴. In fact, the far-seeing Milanese archbishop did not only

³¹ A. Prosperi, *Educare gli educatori: il prete come professione intellettuale nell'Italia tridentina*, in *Problemes d'histoire de l'education. Actes des seminaires organises par l'École française de Rome et l'Università di Roma-La Sapienza (janvier-mai, 1985)*, Roma, École française de Rome, 1988; H. Jedin, *Das Bischofsideal der katholischen Reformation*, s.l., s.n., s.d., trad. it. *Il tipo ideale di vescovo secondo la riforma cattolica*, Brescia, Morcelliana, 1950; G.G. Meersseman, *Il tipo ideale di parroco*, in *Il Concilio di Trento*, cit., pp. 27-44.

³² Sani, *Educazione*, cit., p. 468.

³³ M. Guasco, *La formazione del clero: i seminari*, in G. Chittolini, G. Miccoli (eds.), *Storia d'Italia, Annali 9: La Chiesa e il potere politico dal medioevo all'età contemporanea*, Torino, Einaudi, 1986, p. 632. In this connection see: F. Bertani, A. Bernareggi, *Le regole dei seminari milanesi*, «Humilitas. Miscellanea storica dei seminari milanesi», 1928-1938, pp. 101-111; A. Rimoldi, *I documenti della sezione XI dell'Archivio della Curia Arcivescovile di Milano riguardanti le regole di S. Carlo per i seminari milanesi dal 1564 al 1599*, Venegono Inferiore, La scuola cattolica, 1967; Id., *Le istituzioni di san Carlo per il clero diocesano milanese*, «La Scuola Cattolica», XLIII, 1965, pp. 427-458. The text of the rules is available in: *Institutiones ad universam seminarii regimen pertinentes ab illustrissimo et reverendissimo D.D. Carolo S. Praxedi Cardinali, Archiep. Mediolani confectae*, in *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis*, Mediolani, Paulo Pagnonio, 1843-1846, 2 vols., vol. I (1843), *passim* and vol. II (1846), pp. 1005 e ss.

³⁴ A. Turchini, *Sotto l'occhio del padre. Società confessionale e istruzione primaria nello Stato di Milano*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1996, p. 89.

look after the education of the “cadres”, but during his episcopate he caused several seminars to be erected, in order to meet the various demands of education of the clergy in the great Milanese archdiocese. This is well recalled by an enlightened bishop, his contemporary and friend since the time of the *Accademia delle Notti Vaticane*³⁵:

Et non uno Seminario clericorum amplissimo vir Dei contentus fuit, sed plura instituit. Nam clericos adultos, qui in literis progressus non fecerunt in unum locum cogendos decrevit, ut gubernandarum animarum artem edicerent, et mediocri Ecclesiasticarum rerum cognitione imbuti, in Ecclesiasticis moribus instituti ad regendas parochias idonei efficerentur. [...]. Et collegium Papiæ, quod Borromeorum nuncupatum erexit, quod magnificis sumptibus aedificandum curavit, ut in eo è Mediolanensibus, et Papiensibus civibus praeclara in optimis disciplinis in Christiana in primis pietate educarentur. Et Helvetijs paterna cura prospexit diligentissimus Pastor. Et seminarium itidem ad nationis illius usum erexit³⁶.

The Milanese archbishop projected and realized a series of several institutions for the priests' education: from the urban seminaries of *S. Giovanni alle Case rotte* (1568) for the belated vocations; of *Beatae Mariae alla Canonica* (1570) for the clergy of the rural areas; of *S. Maria Folcorina* (1579) for the re-education of priests; to the little seminars of Celana in the Bergamo area (1579), and of *S. Maria della Noce* in Inverigo (1582); from the *Collegio Elvetico* in Milan (1579), for the clergy destined to the Swiss valleys; to the seminar-boarding school of Ascona (1584), for the priests of the Canton Ticino. In the same perspective of the promotion of the cultural and moral level of the Milanese clergy, we must consider the founding of the *Studium di Brera*, established in 1572 close to the former convent of the *Umiliati*, directed by the fathers of the Society of Jesus, and conceived as a university boarding school for the education of good theologians. Together with this large support for the clergy's education through the “official” channels, Borromeo spent a lot of

³⁵ This was Agostino Valier (Venezia 1530-Roma 1606), friend of Borromeo since the years in Rome, who, in his *Vita Caroli borromeo* (cit., pp. 6-7), talks about the Accademia delle Notti Vaticane as a true gymnasium of the virtues and place for the meeting of the most enlightened talents of the time, and which was founded and animated by a young Borromeo, already then busy with fighting against the sloth of the night through the practice of the arts. For the life of Valier see: L. Tacchella, *San Carlo Borromeo ed il card. Agostino Valier (carteggio)*, Verona, Istituto per gli studi storici veronesi, 1972; Archivio storico Curia diocesana, *Agostino Valier: visite pastorali a chiese extraurbane della Diocesi di Verona, anni 1592-1599. Trascrizione dei registri 15-16 delle visite pastorali*, Verona, Archivio storico Curia Diocesana, 2000; Id., *Agostino Valier: visite pastorali a chiese extraurbane della Diocesi di Verona, anni 1565-1589. Trascrizione dei registri 13-14 delle visite pastorali*, Verona, Archivio storico Curia Diocesana, 2001. About the Accademia delle Notti Vaticane see G.A. Sassi, *Noctes Vaticanæ seu sermones habiti in Academia a S. Carolo Borromeo, Romæ Palatio Vaticano instituta*, Mediolani, ex typographia Bibliothecæ Ambrosianæ, apud Joseph Marellum, 1748; L. Berra, *L'Accademia delle Notti Vaticane fondata da San Carlo Borromeo, con tre appendici documentarie*, Roma, Max Bretschneider Libraio Editore, 1915.

³⁶ Valier, *Vita Caroli Borromei*, cit., pp. 33-34.

energy in controlling the great number of aspirant priests, especially coming from the mountain and rural areas, who were traditionally educated by old parsons in parish houses. This concern was however well grounded, since the ante was represented by the same success of the Borromaic project of the new Christianization.

In line with the renovated educational vocation of the Church of the XVIth century, the untiring bishop looked after the education of laity as well. As Grendler explains,

Indeed the Catholic reformers probably devoted more energy and resources to education, than to any other religious or charitable activity. It all came from a single, original impulse, the desire to provide basic religious instruction in order to make men better in this life and to help them attain salvation in the next³⁷.

In this meaning, education becomes synonymous with the rebuilding of society, therefore it is affirmed as one of the principal imperatives that inspired the initiatives of the Church of the Catholic Reform.

In the framework of Borromeo's commitments and attention toward religious and civic education, we must count the *Collegio dei Nobili* (1573), which arose close to the Church of *S. Giovanni Evangelista in Porta Nuova* with the aim of offering an appropriate intellectual and moral education to the scions of the nobles families of Milan, following the model of the *Collegio Romano* and the *Collegio Germanico* in Rome. Always under the episcopacy *miles Christi* another institution addressed to the young people of the upper-class was established – the *Collegio delle Nobili Fanciulle*, which was founded by the Countess Ludovica Torelli di Guastalla (1557), and which was especially devoted to noble maidens fallen into disgrace, and to whose spiritual education a special care was reserved. In addition to these structures, Borromeo in person stimulated the foundation of several schools in convents and in female and male religious houses, but also of special educational institutions such as the *Conservatorio di Santa Sofia* (1574) or the *Pio luogo di Santa Caterina di Porta Nuova* for young “dangerous” girls (*pericolanti*) and for orphans³⁸. The project of the archbishop of Milan was clear:

³⁷ See P.F. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: literacy and Learning, 1300-1600*, Baltimore-London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, c1989, p. 332. For a general picture of the educational institutions of the Counter-reformation, see G.P. Brizzi, *Strategie educative e istituzioni scolastiche della Controriforma*, in A. Asor Rosa (ed.), *Letteratura italiana*, vol. I, *Il letterato e le istituzioni*, Torino, Einaudi, 1982.

³⁸ To comprehend the importance of their action in the field of charity and assistance, which included the «schools that teach pupils for free», see A. Turchini, «*A beneficio pubblico e onor di Dio*». *Povertà e carità nella legislazione e nella pastorale della Chiesa milanese*, in D. Zardin (ed.), *La città e i poveri. Milano e le terre lombarde dal Rinascimento all'età spagnola*, Milano, Jaca book, 1995, pp. 191-251; Turchini, *Sotto l'occhio*, cit.

Nulli hominum generi, nulli sexui, nulli aetati, nulli humanae miseriae vir pius Mediolani non consultum esse voluit. Nam et expositis infantibus, et varijs affectis morbis, et mente captis maxima adiumenta comparavit: et virginibus foeminis ad earum tuendam honestatem providit, et illis, quae corruptae fuissent, ut in viam possent redire, prospexit; et devotis foeminis, quae capucinae nominantur quas in eam civitatem introduxit, ad vitam Angelicam (ut ita dicam) traducendam, santissimi instituti regulis, ominique religiosa disciplina, optime consuluit. Sodalitates vero pias, hortationibus varijs, praeceptis itidem salutaribus ita stabilivit, et auxit, ut Mediolanum schola quaedam Spiritus Sancti, et pietatis, omniumque virtutum veluti officina, coelestis patriae quidam angelus dici potuit³⁹.

A chapter-in-itself is represented by private teachers and communal teachers, who were present in both bigger and smaller villages in order to meet the large need for literacy; they constituted a widespread but evasive mass, which Borromeo could not ignore, if one considers the influence that these teachers could have on the morals and religious habits of the population. Therefore, is comprehensible the continuous and careful control to which they were subjected, especially by the local parish priests: teachers were obliged to show an attestation of their profession of faith, in addition to being periodically examined with regards to their conduct and teaching, as well as to the taught disciplines and textbooks. These entire dispositions had been partly anticipated by the First Provincial Council of 1565, and were reaffirmed in a detailed way by the Third Council of 1573. Angelo Turchini highlights how in the *Tre libri dell'educatione christiana dei figliuoli* of Silvio Antoniano – a work which was ordered and supervised by Borromeo in person⁴⁰ –, the opinion of the Ambrosian archbishop is that

it is up to the bishop to match spiritual paternity with fatherly care: the point is rather on the verification of the “good” qualities of the teacher, summarized in the «plenty of doctrine», in «absolutely honest morals», and in being overall «true Catholics, and sons obeying the Holy See», free from any suspect of heresy, even remote⁴¹.

The bishop must ensure that family and school, specifically the father and the teacher, are engaged in forming «good and Christian customs in children», a formation which, through the discipline of the body, and is able to discipline the soul; and which, through «good manners», aims at assuming a Christian

³⁹ Valier, *Vita Caroli Borromei*, cit., p. 35.

⁴⁰ For a picture of the role played by Borromeo with regard to the genesis of the Antoniano's work – which was published by the printers Sebastiano dalle Donne and Girolamo Stringari in 1584 – see E. Patrizi, *La genesi dei Tre Libri dell'educatione christiana dei figliuoli di Silvio Antoniano nei carteggi del card. Carlo Borromeo*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 1 (2006), n. 2, pp. 313-349.

⁴¹ «al vescovo compete unire la paternità spirituale con la cura paterna: l'accento poggia piuttosto sulla verifica delle “buone” qualità del maestro compendiate nella “sufficienza della dottrina”, nei “costumi integerrimi”, nell'essere soprattutto “veri cattolici, obbedienti figliuoli della sede apostolica” liberi da ogni sia pur lontano sospetto di eresia» (Turchini, *Sotto l'occhio*, cit., p. 65).

habit of mind and behaviour – holding in itself all the strength of the Borromaic gamble-engagement in the project of the Catholic Reform⁴².

«Bishops – Turchini says, always recalling the Borromaic work as a mirror of his pedagogy –, in their role of fathers in spirit and “first teachers of piety and religion”, are requested to actively engage and to take care that “good teachers, especially for teaching poor boys for free”, never be lacking»⁴³. Borromeo’s efforts went in this direction, aiming at promoting the Schools of the Christian Doctrine⁴⁴. The institution, which had already been present in the territory for some decades thanks to the initiative of the priest F. Castellino da Castelli, had the objective of teaching the «Christian living» to «the boys in the streets» aged 4-14. The educational offer was particularly alluring since, in addition to the religious literacy, they promised to teach reading and writing for free. Well aware of the enormous potential, Borromeo reorganized and empowered it in his province, in order to take on a capillary action of catechesis amongst the people. Giussano underlines how the archbishop had cultivated this hard and ambitious project ever since his Roman stay:

moved by a fervent zeal to make great the Holy Faith, and to put Christian morals again in its Church, since he was dealing with the pontifical governorship, he imposed his vicar Ormaneto with looking after the Christian Doctrine, so that he promoted it in every way, and he [i.e. the vicar] did so. And after finding that some good priests had already erected about fifteen Schools, he zealously took care of those and increased them up to thirty. After his settlement in the venue, he particularly looked after it, and in the first Provincial Council decreed that, on Sundays and on Holidays of obligation, all Curates and Pastors of souls should call with the church-bell all the sons of the Parish after their dinner, in order to personally teach them the Christian Doctrine in Church. Then, he convoked all the curates of the community in front of him, and warmly exhorted to devote to this pious work, showing how it was necessary, and that it was their office and duty, as also prescribed by the Tridentine. On the other hand, he called the Artisans, and with a long and efficacious speech he demonstrated how it was important to teach and to raise children well in the Christian discipline and with a fear of God, underlining their crucial role in contributing to the care of souls, which is Apostolic and Divine, and stating that God had prepared a perpetual reward for it. He communicated his will of creating many Schools in Milan and the entire diocese, and of instituting a Congregation of Artisans aimed at caring and managing this great feat. Again, he ordered all

⁴² Cfr. O. Niccoli, *Creanza e disciplina: buone maniere per i fanciulli nell'Italia della controriforma*, in Prodi (ed.), *Disciplina*, cit.; I. Botteri, *Oltre le barriere confessionali: i manuali sul comportamento e i percorsi della loro diffusione nell'esempio degli Avvisi di buone creanze* in Mozzarella, Zardin (eds.), *I tempi*, cit.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ About the Schools of Christian Doctrine see: M. Turrini, *Riformare il mondo a vera vita cristiana: le scuole di catechismo nell'Italia del Cinquecento*, «Annali dell'Istituto Italo-Germanico in Trento», 8, 1982, pp. 407-489; X. Toscani, *Le Scuole della Dottrina Cristiana*, «Società e Storia», 28, 1984, pp. 757-781; P.F. Grendler, *Borromeo and the Schools of Christian Doctrine*, in S. Headley, J. B. Tomaro (eds.), *San Carlo Borromeo: Catholic Reform and Ecclesiastical Politics*, Washington, The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1988, pp. 158-169; A. Bianchi, *Le scuole della dottrina cristiana: linguaggio e strumenti per una azione educativa 'di massa'*, in Buzzi, Zardin (eds.), *Carlo Borromeo*, cit., pp. 145-158; Turchini, *Sotto l'occhio*, cit.

Preachers to recommend the Christian Doctrine, and to urge Family men to take sons to it on all Holidays, showing them the obligation of knowing the things of the Faith, what is necessary to health, and to teach their own family about all of this⁴⁵.

On the one hand Borromeo's intervention toward the Schools of the Christian Doctrine implied a distortion of the original setting of the schools, as a consequence of their subordination to the parish system; on the other, it determined a «capitalization of the catechistic action»⁴⁶. The archbishop in fact set the schools inside his project of reform of the Milanese church, and he changed them into an efficacious tool for the spreading of religious education. The available data help us to comprehend his engagement for affirming the Schools of the Christian Doctrine on the diocesan territory.

The statistics – as recalled by Angelo Bianchi – concerning the end of Borromeo's pontificate, which were published only as appendix of the edition of the *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis* of 1599, testify to 740 schools, where there were even 273 *officiales generales*, 1,726 *officiales particulares* and 3,040 *operarij*, the militant members who served more than 40,000 pupils for about 900 parishes. [...] the picture that emerges from these data, delineates a capillary spread on the territory, the strong compactness of a network of schools that were constantly attended and helped by numerous personnel, and which were therefore able to deeply affect the processes of transmission of the Christian doctrine and, more in general, able to educate large sectors of the population, modifying rhythms and conditions that were destined to overstay in the long run, almost until the limits of the contemporary age⁴⁷.

⁴⁵ «mosso egli da un zelo ardentissimo d'amplificare la Santa Fede, e rimettere i buoni costumi Christiani nella sua Chiesa, fin quando era in Roma occupato nel governo Pontificio impose all'Ormaneto suo Vicario principalmente la cura della Dottrina Christiana, acciò la promuovesse con ogni potere, il quale non mancò d'essequirlo; e trovando che alcuni buoni Sacerdoti n'havevano già erette circa quindici Scuole, egli vi attese con tanta diligenza, che le accrebbe fino al numero di trenta. Venuto poi alla residenza, ne prese cura particolare, e nel primo Concilio Provinciale ordinò con un decreto a tutti i Curati, e Pastori d'anime, che ogni Domenica, e festa comandata convocassero dopo il desinare, con un segno di campana, tutti i figliuoli della Parochia, et essi gli insegnassero in Chiesa la Dottrina Christiana. Fece dipoi chiamare avanti di se tutti i Curati della Comunità, e con calde essortationi li pregò ad attendere a questa pia opera, mostrando l'estrema necessità che ve n'era, e che questo era proprio ufficio, e carico loro, ordinato anche dal Sacro Concilio Tridentino; e li essortò con molto affetto, che non mancassero di porgere tutti li aiuti possibili alli Operaij Laici nel fondar le Scuole, et in ogni altro bisogno. Dall'altro canto fece congregare gl'istessi Operaij, a' quali con un lungo, et efficace discorso, mostrò l'importanza d'ammaestrare, et allevare bene i figliuoli nella disciplina Christiana, e nel Santo timore di Dio, quanto alto, et imminente fusse quest'ufficio di cooperare alla salute dell'anime, che è Apostolico, e Divino; e l'infinito premio, che Dio havea loro apparecchiato; che'l suo desiderio era d'istituire molte Scuole, si in Milano, come in tutta la diocesi, e di formare una Congregatione d'Operaij, iquali havessero particular cura, e governo di tutta questa santa impresa. In oltre ordinò a tutti i Predicatori, che raccomandassero la Dottrina Christiana, et essortassero i Padri di famiglia a condurvi i loro figliuoli in ogni modo tutte le Feste, con mostrar loro l'obbligo, che hanno di sapere le cose della Fede, e ciò che è necessario alla salute, e d'ammaestrare in tutte queste cose la loro propria famiglia» (Gius-sani, *Vita di S. Carlo*, cit., lib. VIII, cap. VI, pp. 364-365).

⁴⁶ Bianchi, *Le scuole della dottrina cristiana*, cit., p. 154.

⁴⁷ «Le tabelle statistiche che riportano dati relativi al termine del pontificato del Borromeo, ma che furono pubblicate solo in calce all'edizione degli *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis* del 1599, atte-

In the service of catechesis, the Milanese archbishop also introduced a preaching renovated with regards to contents and style, as clearly emerges in the *Instructiones praedicationis verbi Dei* published with the decrees of the Third Provincial Council (1573), where he dissociated himself from the vain tradition of precepts, whilst directly pointing at the real needs, defects and emotions of the listeners, in order to directly get in touch with the believers.

Agricolis porro – Borromeo says – si concionabitur, plurimum ad rem proderunt similitudines, ad agro, vinea, frumento, vitibus, lino, cannabi, arboribus, stirpibus allisque agriculturae partibus ductae: itidem eveniet, si alterius conditionis auditoribus apte illas ita accommodabit, ut eorum ordo postulat: qui sane quidam, cum ad certam quandam status sui cognitionem, doctrinamque natura ducantur; tum certe facilius multo trabuntur, si vel a vitae, vel ab artis, vel ab alterius rei, quam profitentur genere documenta sumuntur⁴⁸.

The turning point is clear also in the style: Carlo Borromeo's preaching, deprived of «studied tricks, so that pathos is not a declamatory swelling, rather it is an expression of emotional intensity»⁴⁹, turns out to be plain, anti-baroque, built around biblical and especially evangelical passages, and recited in vernacular, to facilitate the immediate comprehension of the listeners⁵⁰.

The new man – Prodi explains – that Borromeo wanted to shape was a disciplined man, the ordinary Christian who does not emerge in the mass of believers, but who is aware, culturally educated by catechesis from infancy, consolidated in the daily practice of sacraments, nourished by preaching and participation in liturgy and collective praying⁵¹.

Since this new man, colonizer of the renovated *res publica christiana*, does not exist, he must be created and moulded, as says the title of the well-known book of Turchini, «under the father's eyes» («sotto l'occhio del padre»). The father in question cannot be other than the bishop who, as Prodi clarifies,

stano 740 scuole, nelle quali militavano 273 *officiales generales*, 1.726 *officiales particulares* e 3.040 *operari*, al servizio di oltre 40.000 scolari distribuiti fra circa 900 parrocchie. [...] il quadro fornito da questi dati delinea una diffusione capillare sul territorio, la robusta compattezza di una rete di scuole assiduamente frequentate e assistite da numeroso personale, in grado pertanto di incidere profondamente sui processi di trasmissione della dottrina cristiana e, più in generale, di acculturazione di larghi strati di popolazione, determinando ritmi e modalità destinati a permanere sul lungo periodo, fin quasi alle soglie dell'età contemporanea» (*ibid.*, p. 155).

⁴⁸ *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis*, cit., I, *Instructiones praedicationis verbi Dei*, c. 214r.

⁴⁹ S. Giombi, *La predicazione di san Carlo: fonti, metodo, stili*, in Buzzi, Zardin, eds., *Carlo Borromeo*, cit., p. 77.

⁵⁰ Borromeo strongly persists with pastoral preaching in vernacular, as testified by the letter that he sent to Gabriele Paleotti in February 1578, after hearing that the bishop of Bologna was preaching in Latin. Regarding the letter and the comparison between the pastoral style of the two reformer bishops, see P. Prodi, *San Carlo Borromeo e il cardinale Gabriele Paleotti: due vescovi della Riforma cattolica*, «Critica storica», III, 1964.

⁵¹ P. Prodi, *Riforma interiore e disciplinamento sociale in san Carlo Borromeo*, «Intersezioni», V, 2, 1985, p. 277.

in Borromeo, he [the pastor] seems to be closer to an almost physical interpretation of the parable of the good shepherd, who offers his life in favour of the flock, but he is also the careful eye, ready to break off any disbandment [...] or any too personal initiative, finally to prevent any intrusion in the sheepfold⁵².

Amongst the devices of control, which were refined by Borromeo, in the first place is the confession, which assumes an eminently inquisitorial character rather than confessional, and becomes a privileged means for investigating the private sphere and for shaping social behaviour. In the *Avvertenze [...] ai Confessori della città, et diocesi sua* of 1574, the archbishop of Milan provided his army of confessors, changed into agents of mass conversion, a sort of *vademecum* for the good confessor and probing of souls. First of all, confessors should read body language, since it reveals the penitent's nature: e.g. the modest dress was proof of devotion, whilst the luxurious one was proof of scarce inclination to receive penitence. Again: those who spent some time meditating before the confession, were judged more ready to repent, than others who were just arriving «just leaving some worldly activities»⁵³. Furthermore, according to the *Avvertenze*, the confessor should firstly verify the penitent's identity (social condition, work), his spiritual condition (previous confession, penitence, spiritual background), his sins in relation to the moral categories (10 commandments, 7 capital sins etc.). All this was the result of persisting and aggressive questions, so that second thoughts or half-truths were not admitted. The Papal Bull of 15th February 1559⁵⁴ also commanded all confessors to verify the penitents' knowledge regarding heretics, about their activities and prohibited books. If any suspect emerged, before the shrift, the case should be submitted to the Inquisition. In this way confessors became legal officers, bridges between the inner forum of consciousness, and the external forum of Inquisition⁵⁵. After the confession of sins, the penitent would first have to promise to rectify his mistakes, and then the confessor would have to verify that he had kept his word, examining his subsequent behaviour. Moreover, Carlo Borromeo re-enabled the powerful weapon of the “postponed absolution”, offering confessors the choice to give the absolution only after verifying the penitent's rehabilitation. In this connection, we can only guess which social reflex

⁵² Id., *San Carlo Borromeo*, cit., p. 141.

⁵³ «immediatamente partendosi da qualche occupazione temporale» (*Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis*, cit., *Avvertenze di Monsignore Illustriss. Cardinale di S. Prassede Arcivescovo di Milano ai confessori della città, et diocesi sua*, II, c. 231v).

⁵⁴ *Bullarium*, cit., vol. VI (1860), pp. 551-556.

⁵⁵ Adriano Prosperi underlines how «the Tridentine resolutions severely selected the only form of private confession and, in controversy with the Protestant Reform, affirmed the nature of the judiciary act (*actus iudicialis*) of sacramental confession, and affirmed its divine right (*ius divinum*). But they tried to make it a tool for *politia externa* [...] in order to make the *disciplina christiani populorum* efficacious» (see A. Prosperi, *La confessione e foro della coscienza*, in P. Prodi, W. Reinhard (eds.), *Il concilio di Trento e il moderno*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1996).

the postponed absolution could play on the honour of a person. Apart from the postponed absolution, we also find another terrible device: public penitence. Caused by a scandal or a public damage, the public penitence exposed the penitent to public contempt and would force them to stay in the churchyard, for the entire period of Lent, dressed in a sack, barefoot and with a bowed head. «The Borromaic socio-psychology – as Wietse de Boer observes – [...] justifies the authoritarian intervention on the human soul, because of its incurable weakness and vulnerability [...] in defence of what he considers the public good»⁵⁶, in the perspective that in this way, a confessional society would arise.

In the Borromaic project of sanctification of the society, a crucial role is played by the fight «against the pagan forms of the popular culture». The archbishop opposed in fact some «forms of religiousness, which were believed secular or magic, and many lay recreations, which were considered as immoral»⁵⁷, such as: the theatrical representations of a non-religious nature, dancing, playing cards, playing dice, taverns, animal fighting and finally the lay-pagan feast par excellence i.e. carnival. As known, the fight against the carnival of Milan has remote origins. According to the Ambrosian liturgical calendar in fact, it ended even four days after the end foreseen by the Roman Ritual, and therefore it did not end on Tuesday, on the eve of the Ash Wednesday, but rather on Saturday, on the eve of the first Sunday of Lent, which was then celebrated as the «carnival's Sunday»⁵⁸. This fact was so famous that many strangers came to the territory of Milan to enjoy the benefits of this extended and typical Ambrosian carnival. Borromeo was against this tradition ever since the beginning of his governorship, so that in the first provincial Council we can read: «illorum vero damnamus ingluviem, qui primis quinque Quadragesimae diebus, Romanae Ecclesiae more institutis, Mediolanum se conferunt, patriae ritum in ieiunio et ciborum abstinencia fugientes»⁵⁹.

The long carnival period, which begins after Christmas and ends in the week before Easter, represents for the ecclesiastic authority a dangerous scoffing of

⁵⁶ de Boer, *La conquista dell'anima*, cit., p. 48.

⁵⁷ C. Bernardi, A. Cascetta, *Dai «profani tripudi» alla religiosa magnificenza: la ricostruzione del sistema cerimoniale nella Milano Borromaica*, in Buzzi, Zardin (eds.), *Carlo Borromeo*, cit., p. 229. For a general picture of superstitions and beliefs of a magical nature in Carlo Borromeo's epoch, see O. Lurati, *Superstizioni lombarde (e levantesi) del tempo di san Carlo Borromeo*, «Vox Romanica», 27, 1968, pp. 229-249.

⁵⁸ As explained by Laura Bellavite «before Borromeo's designation as archbishop of the city, Carnival ended on the Sunday following the Saturday before Lent, which was rightly called Carnival's Sunday. The origin of the detachment from the Roman use dates back to the papacy of Gregorius Magnus, when the Roman church brought the beginning of Lent forward to Ash Wednesday; Milan, which found itself under the Langobardic rule, could not perceive this influence, therefore it continued according to the Ambrosian tradition. Officially, the Sunday was nominated *Domenica in capite quadragesimae*, but the people called it *carnevali* or *carnevalario*: in brief, only religious people and the most fervent believers used to follow the Roman Ritual» (L. Bellavite, *Il Carnevale a Milano nel Cinquecento*, «Comunicazioni sociali», 1, 1982, p. 8).

⁵⁹ *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis*, cit., I, c. 7v.

the liturgical time, from Christmas through the Epiphany to Lent. It is a sort of collective craziness, made of «dancing, masking, reversal of the sexes, ages and classes, in a convulsive crescendo which culminates in the Mardi Gras, on the same Ash Wednesday and in the first Sunday of Lent»⁶⁰. The mask is the first signal of this reversal of the order, and it is against this reversal that Borromeo launches his attack in the *Memoriale*:

Let masks be banned forever: with those in fact, not only do men want to change, but even to cancel the shape that God gave them. Some go so far in this mad craziness, as to use those ancient metamorphoses and dress themselves as beasts. Damned and abominable masks, beyond any other respect they are, also because they recall our old ruin, provided by the devil who masked himself as a snake. Detestable masks, beyond which men are not ashamed to say bad and dirty words, or to indecently act and behave; wicked masks, adverse against honesty, enemies of gravity, and ruin for all the rules that any good Christian must respect in his soul⁶¹.

The stakes are surely high: the ante is represented by his flock's wellbeing, so Borromeo, waving the banner of the *salus animarum*, engages in a true Crusade against the "fevers" of the carnival season; a Crusade which, between 1573 and 1579, ends in eliminating the carnival of the first Sunday of Lent. The campaign is not painless and in fact it arouses the popular discontent and the anger of the Spanish governor in office, Antonio Guzmán Marquis of Ayamonte, also causing some embarrassment in Rome. The relations between Carlo Borromeo and the Spanish government were always marked by a certain tension, which was due to the fact that the tireless archbishop

was convinced that the civil power should not only abstain from any interference, but it should also support his authority and cooperate – within its competence – in realizing the programme of reform of the ecclesiastic and religious life⁶².

⁶⁰ A. Turchini, *Il governo della festa nella Milano spagnola di Carlo Borromeo*, in A. Cascetta, R. Caprani (eds.), *La scena della gloria. Drammaturgia e spettacolo a Milano in età spagnola*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 1995, p. 532.

⁶¹ «Siano hormai perpetuamente bandite le mascheere, con le quali pare, che gli uomini studijno non solo di trasformarsi; ma di scancellare in un certo modo quella figura che di Dio gli ha data: anzi alcuni vanno tanto innanzi in questa brutta pazia, che representano quelle metamorfosi antiche con trasformarsi in bestie. Maledette, et esecrande maschere oltre ogni altro rispetto, anco perché ci rappresentano la memoria dell'antica nostra rovina, la quale ci procurò il demonio, che s'immascherò da serpente. Abominevoli maschere, sotto le quali si fanno lecito gli huomini di dir parole dishoneste, et sporche, di far gesti, et atti pieni d'impudicitia, scelerate maschere, opugnatrici dell'honestà, inimiche della gravità, et rovina d'ogni custodia, che dentro, et fuori deve havere l'anima d'un buon christiano» (Carlo Borromeo, *Memoriale di Monsignore illustrissimo et reverendissimo cardinale di S. Prassede, Arcivescovo, al suo diletto popolo della Città, et Diocese di Milano*, In Milano, appresso Michel Tini, Stampator del Seminario, 1579, II, cap. VII, pp. 376-377).

⁶² «riteneva che il potere civile avesse non solo l'obbligo di astenersi da ogni invadenza, ma fosse anche tenuto a corroborare la sua autorità e a fornirgli per quanto ad esso competeva, la propria cooperazione nell'attuazione del programma di riforma della vita ecclesiastica e religiosa». See A. Borromeo, *L'Arcivescovo Carlo Borromeo, la corona spagnola e le controversie giurisdizionali*.

The carnival episode opened a clear disagreement. The reply of Gregorius XIII was immediate and, only after a series of direct talks with Borromeo, did he definitely confirm the institution of the “reformed carnival” by the Milan archbishop.

Actually, the carnival was not eliminated at all because, even if in a more controlled and attenuated version, it kept on being part of the system of time-marking through lunar phases and the cycle of the seasons. Beyond the results achieved by Borromeo, this episode shows how the bishop, in the battle against heresy and immorality, did not adopt only the weapons of rigorism and severity, but he also played the card of the “sacred event”, in the framework of which he tried to re-instate each secular space of play and fun. Through this connection, Bernardi and Cascetta have underlined that «in spite of the image of a hard-and-fast reformer and an ascetic, Borromeo’s true religious nature stands out in the assiduous promotion of sacred events»⁶³. Carlo Borromeo is in fact at the same time legislator, inquisitor, ascetic on the one hand, and energetic promoter of the popular forms of religiosity, on the other. This is not a contradiction – as it would seem – but rather, it is the reflex of an epoch, which the cardinal of Santa Prassede condemned, and which at the same time, he tried to merge into. In fact, to the severe image of the Arona’s colossus, or the known representation of S. Carlo with his face sunken by fatigue and fasting, whilst – for a moment – he avoids his daily reading⁶⁴, we should add the image of Borromeo leading a penitential procession, barefoot, with a halter round his neck, burdened with the cross⁶⁵, as well as the picture of the archbishop of Milan who openly professes his devotion to the saints, who goes as a pilgrim, «pilgrim of the Sacred Sindone in Turin, or pilgrim of the Virgin in Varallo, Varese, Saronno, Rho, Tirano o Loreto»⁶⁶.

His religiousness – as Michel De Certeau writes, in his sharp Borromeo’s biography – was not theological, abstract and bare, which was the religiosity which would prevail amongst the French spirituals half a century later [...]. It also testified a sort of almost childish tenderness, that no “doctrine” had touched, and which secretly animated his will, armed by the Episcopal “rights and duties”. The acts of popular devotion represented, for Carlo,

ali a Milano, in Buzzi, Zardin (eds.), *Carlo Borromeo*, cit., p. 262. For the relationship between Carlo Borromeo and the Spanish monarchy see also P. Prodi, *San Carlo Borromeo e le trattative tra Gregorio XIII e Filippo II sulla giurisdizione ecclesiastica*, «Rivista di storia della Chiesa in Italia», 1957, XI, pp. 194-240.

⁶³ Bernardi, Cascetta, *Dai «profani tripudi»*, cit., p. 236.

⁶⁴ The reference is to the painting by Daniele Crespi, entitled *Digiuno di san Carlo* (Milano, Santa Maria delle Passione, olio su tela, 1625 c.a.).

⁶⁵ de Boer, *La conquista dell'anima*, cit., pp. 82-86. Borromeo renders the dramatic period of the plague of Milan (1576-1577) as a divine punishment for the sins of humanity, and this encouraged him to intensify and increase the manifestations of collective piety, so that the city of Milan became a unique, enormous church absorbed in expiating its own sins.

⁶⁶ M. De Certeau, *Carlo Borromeo*, in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, vol. XX, Roma, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1977, p. 267.

appointments and festivals of the heart, together with the masses, from which he was divided by his position. There, he really seemed to be⁶⁷.

This Borromeo, who is intent on receiving the traditional culture in the bosom of the Counter-reformist spirituality, promoted not only pilgrimages, processions, penitential celebrations, moments of collective praying, new and renovated religious festivities, but moreover he worked at transforming the territory «into an organic system of cultural and devotional poles, made of – in addition to traditional ecclesiastical and conventual buildings – religious signs set along the roads, the riverbanks, the widenings of roads, the walls of whatever kind of houses»⁶⁸.

The strong archbishop covered the way of the Christian authenticity, also through the “remodeling” of the urban space, with the aim of continuously offering to people stimulus for praying and faith, together with constant signs of the divine presence in the daily dimension. The city and the diocese become, therefore, also on a material plane, object of a global renovation, so that we can talk about a true process of «sacralization of the territory»⁶⁹.

The Council of Trent had reckoned the pictures’ role in evangelization, underlining the importance of matching with a correct preaching, that was able to highlight their educational function of introducing to the mystery of faith. Carlo Borromeo, in coherence with the Tridentine line, confirms and consolidates in the entire people, the theological value of the picture, and he gains from this conception the extraordinary artistic impulse, which he promotes in his diocese.

He ties – as Maria Antonietta Crippa underlines – in a unique, symbolic, mesh, all the religious places, on a large and small scale; [...] he obtains from the Pope, for the seven basilicas within the Gonzaga’s walls – the Duomo, S. Simpliciano, S. Ambrogio, S. Vittore al Corpo, S. Lorenzo, S. Nazaro – special indulgences; he increases, [...], the stational crosses, the shrines, the chapels; [...] he transforms the road system into a weave of perspective directrixes all oriented toward the sacred, [...]»⁷⁰.

⁶⁷ «La sua religiosità – as Michel De Certeau writes, in his sharp Borromeo’s biography – non era quella teologica, astratta e spoglia, che prevarrà mezzo secolo più tardi fra gli spirituali francesi [...]. Essa attesta inoltre qualcosa come una tenerezza, quasi infantile, che nessuna “dottrina” aveva sfiorato e che abitava in segreto la volontà armata dai “diritti e doveri” vescovili. Le devozioni popolari corrispondevano in Carlo a degli appuntamenti e feste del cuore in mezzo alla folla dalla quale lo separava la sua carica. Là sembrava veramente felice» (*ibid.*).

⁶⁸ M.A. Crippa, *Il profilo sacro della Milano Borromaica*, in *Una Milano sconosciuta. La geografia dei segni sacri da Carlo Borromeo a Maria Teresa d’Austria*, Milano, Strenna dell’Istituto “Gaetano Pin”, 2000, p. 9.

⁶⁹ A. Majò, *San Carlo Borromeo. Vita e azione pastorale*, Milano, Edizioni San Paolo, 2004, pp. 82-89 (Santi e Sante di Dio, 34).

⁷⁰ «Egli stringe in un’unica simbolica maglia tutti i luoghi religiosi, a grande e a piccola scala; [...] ottiene dal papa, per le sette basiliche principali all’interno della mura gonzaghesche – il Duomo, S. Simpliciano, S. Ambrogio, S. Vittore al Corpo, S. Lorenzo, S. Nazaro – indulgenze speciali; moltiplica, [...], le croci stazionali, le edicole, le cappelle; [...] rende il sistema stradale un intreccio di direttrici prospettiche orientate tutte al sacro, [...]» (Crippa, *Il profilo sacro*, cit., p. 18).

The main fulcrum of this renovated urban prospect is represented by the little *domus* where the Eucharist is preserved, the earth of the carolin church, the vanishing point where the look of the believers converge, the concretization of the divine, made human in Jesus Christ. Borromeo puts the art in the service of his pastoral aims and theological vision, so that in the *Instructiones fabricae et suppellectilis Ecclesiasticae* (1577) – treatise where he meticulously faces all the issues related with the religious architecture⁷¹ – he poses a church which becomes unitary space: each obstacle between the believers and the presbytery is removed, the balustrades become see-through, the aisles are eliminated in favour of the unique nave and the tabernacle, central point of the memory and of the deepest meaning of the Christian life, is connected with the high altar.

The Milan archbishop therefore, does not limit himself to embank the negligence in which the ecclesiastic patrimony was, so that the ecclesiastic building would not remain lost in the spaces of the worldly life anymore, nor cemeteries not fenced-in or churches threatening to fall. Moreover, he develops and promotes the educational function of the art in all of its facets: from the *Biblia pauperum* in paintings, to the ephemeral apparatus of processions, to the sacred architecture of sanctuaries and churches, which were built on the model of the *simplex ecclesia*, theorized in the *Instructiones*. With regards to this aspect, the Jesuitical church of *San Fedele*, which was build around thirty years before the *Instructiones*, can be considered as the test-bed of the Borromaic conception of architecture which, in the major churches (*Duomo*, *Santi Barnaba e Paolo*) as well as in the parish ones (*San Raffaele*, *San Sebastiano*), in the convent's buildings as in the boarding schools (*Collegio Borromeo in Pavia*, *Collegio elvetico*, seminary of *Porta orientale*) and hospitals (from the Cremona hospital to the rebuilding of *Lazzaretto*), was characterized by a rationalization of the spaces in function of the pastoral objectives⁷².

Carlo Borromeo did not restricted himself to the liturgical-functional reform of the churches, but he engaged, for example, with building several sanctuaries devoted to the Virgin Mary's cult, which became places for celebrations, processions and pilgrimages. The Virgin held a privileged place in the piety and pastoral of the prelate, so that he never failed to visit sanctuaries devoted to

⁷¹ In the *Instructiones* Borromeo deals with various aspects of the sacred art: «de sacris aedibus, cappellis, altaribus, oratoriis, baptisteriis, sacriis, ceterisque id generis extruendis, tum de vestibis etiam sacris, ornamentis, vasibus, alioque ecclesiastico apparatu». *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis*, cit., *Instructiones fabricae et Suppellectilis Ecclesiasticae*, II, c. 177r. See P. Barocchi (ed.), *Trattati d'arte del cinquecento: fra Manierismo e Controriforma*, 3 vols., Bari, Laterza, 1962, vol. III, pp. 1-151. For a synthetic description of the principal contents of the *Instructiones* see: E.C. Voelker, *Borromeo's Influence on Sacred Art and Architecture*, in Headley, Tomaro, *San Carlo Borromeo*, cit., pp. 172-187.

⁷² See S. Della Torre, *Le architetture monumentali: disciplina normativa e pluralismo delle opere*, in Buzzi, Zardin (eds.), *Carlo Borromeo*, cit; M.A. Crippa, *Il contributo di Carlo Borromeo all'Architettura e all'arte per la liturgia nelle «Instructiones»: un punto di vista attualizzante*, in Mozzarella, Zardin (eds.), *I tempi*, cit., pp. 425-438.

her. In this way, in addition to the pre-existent sanctuaries of Caravaggio and Rho, many others were raised across the entire territory of the diocese: in the Canton Ticino, on the riverbanks of Ceresio, Verbano, Lario, in the Varesotto and Comasco area, in Brianza, in Valsassina and Lecchese.

The ritual dimension of the Milan territory was noticeably enriched by the wonderful series of the Sacred Mounts, a sequence of sacred buildings, at times modest, at times monumental which were built in order to present the places of the life of Jesus Christ, a sort of sacred stable theatre offered for the memory and devotion of the believers. Therefore, on the example of the Sacred Mount of Varallo, were also edified sacred mounts in Arona, Orta, Graglia, Crea, Galliate, Varese, Ossuccio, Griffa, Brisago and Orselina⁷³.

The areas which were under his pastoral care, especially after the plague of 1576-77, became populated with a multitude of sacred place and religious signs: stational basilicas, chapels, shrines, sacred images on the walls of courtyards and little squares, Crosses erected on columns. It was a dense network of bulwarks, working in defence of the faith against the Lutheran heresy, but also as a daily admonition and a widespread manifestation of the link between heaven and earth. The archbishop of Milan aimed at including the spaces of the religious piety with the civic life, within «a great ritual route, almost a great church where the entire population should have addressed to God»⁷⁴. In his project for a religious reform in fact, each situation, act, single fragment of the human life, should be fed on sacred signs, in order to allow the human being – in its nature fragile and concupiscible – to follow, inch by inch, the road for salvation.

In this large and intense engagement for reorganizing the society, writing held a special role. The archbishop systematically resorted to it, for example for orientating clergy toward several issues (preaching, organization of sacred buildings, vestments and altar furnishings, management of the cult places, the offices of the pastoral care, etc.) with the *Instrukiones variae*. But also for educating the less learned clergy and lay people, with the vernacular *Avvertenze*; or for offering precise dispositions to categories such as printers, booksellers, physicians, teachers, through his *Editti od Ordini da osservarsi*. We must also add the abundant *Regole e Statuti*, renovated or written *ex novo*, and designed for the confraternities and congregations. As Giussano, the metropolitan of Milan, observed:

he enriched his clergy and people with many decrees, orders and instructions that were all good and full of God's spirit, and of sacred prudence, as it emerges from his published works and from many manuscripts of preaches, which are wonderfully

⁷³ Majo, *San Carlo Borromeo*, cit., p. 86.

⁷⁴ A. Buratti, *L'azione pastorale dei Borromeo a Milano e la nuova sistemazione urbanistica della città*, in *La città rituale. La città e lo Stato di Milano nell'età dei Borromeo*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 1982, p. 53.

arranged, alike trees, inside the Ambrosian Library in this City, founded for public use by Cardinal Federigo Borromeo. In these works, as in a vivid image, we can see his ardent zeal towards the health of souls, the reform of costumes, the true Christian Discipline. We wish that, together with other works by the same Saint, they could see the light one day: a true Pastoral multitude, a sort of Pastoral forest, that he collected from the Holy Write and the Holy Fathers, during a long time of hard study, in favour and good of the Pastors of the Holy Church⁷⁵.

In the large and variegated Borromeo's production, we also find writings composed for special occasions, such as the Jubilee in Milan of 1576, or the plague in the same year. A work of relief is the *Libretto de i Ricordi, al popolo della Città et Diocese di Milano*, written in December 1577, after the end of the plague, and which stands out as a «our-and-out pastoral programme for lays, [...] addressed to each single believer and especially to those who, by various ways, held educational responsibilities and roles»⁷⁶.

We particularly entrust of everything – we read in the introduction – those who take care of others. But we especially recommend you – family fathers and mothers, and other heads of houses, and masters of shops and workers – to follow those precepts, so that you not only respect and put into effect; but also verify that your children, servants, the entire family, and your employees, all also observe the same precepts⁷⁷.

Carlo Borromeo elaborates a true manual of Christian life that, after recalling the weakness and disposition to sin of the human nature, invites – through refined and reach precepts – the believers to assume their owns responsibilities in front of God, and to lead their entire life inside the framework of a rigorous Christian discipline.

From any thing that you make, you need or you see, you must be able to get good spiritual meanings: farming is hard, but the same is for the cultivation of the soul, and only

⁷⁵ «lasciò arricchito il suo Clero, e popolo di tanti decreti, ordini, et istruzioni, tutti belli, e dotti, e pieni dello spirito di Dio, e di prudenza santa, come appare dalle sue opere stampate, e da molti libri di prediche manuscritti, ordinati con bellissima dispositione, per via d'arbori, che si conservano nella magnifica libreria Ambrogiana di questa Città, fondata ad uso pubblico dal Cardinale Federigo Borromeo; nelle quali, come in una viva imagine, si vede ardere il zelo della salute dell'anime, della riforma de' costumi, et di una vera disciplina Christiana; le quali si può sperare che un giorno verranno in luce, insieme con altre opere dell'istesso Santo, massime una selva Pastorale, ch'egli con lunga fatica, e studio, raccolse dalla Scrittura Sacra, e da Santi Padri, per comodità, e beneficio de' Pastori di Santa Chiesa» (Giussani, *Vita di S. Carlo*, cit., lib. VIII, cap. XXIX, p. 429).

⁷⁶ Sani, *Educazione*, cit., p. 477.

⁷⁷ «Et tutto particolarmente incarichiamo a quelli, che hanno sotto sua cura altri. Però specialmente a voi padri, et madri di famiglia, et altri capi di casa, bottega et lavorieri, quanto possiamo, efficacemente raccomandiamo la totale, et diligente osservanza d'essi ricordi, di maniera che non solo voi gli osserviate, et praticiate accuratamente; ma facciate, che siano da i vostri figliuoli, servidori, garzoni, fameglia tutta, et da altri che dipendano da voi studiosamente essequiti con frutto» (*Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis*, cit., II, *Libretto de i Ricordi, al popolo della Città et Diocese di Milano*, cc. 312v-313r).

with a hard and zealous work can you gain good fruits to offer to God. On a sunny day you will be glad, like of the light that brightens in perpetuity; on a cloudy day you will be sad, like in the eternal darkness; in a flowering garden, you will remember that God likes the souls full of flowers, or which are the colours of the virtue, or how great is the patience of God, whose art is visible in a sole flower or leaf; and so on⁷⁸.

In the days after the tragic period of the plague in Milan, the collective carolin liturgy reached its full form: the impressive increase of the manifestations of devotional piety changed the face of Milan and testified to the new society based on individual and collective behaviours, which reproduced rhythms and forms of the monastic and conventual life.

Come on therefore – as the cardinal of Santa Prassede urges, in his *Memoriale* –, be joyful and enjoy, Milan, the spiritual richness, devote yourself to preachings, sacred lessons, public prayers, processions, forgiveness, confessions, communions: through these means open your heart and let God come in, and fill everywhere with his grace. This joy will be saving grace, all spiritual, not worldly at all. Let it be a joy far from the carnal and sensual nature, a joy not made of debauches, licentious laughing, vain words, empty heart, relaxed tongue, feelings without control, appetites that overcome the mind, reason made blind by prosperity, memory unmindful of God, weakened Christian discipline; but let it be a joy all in God⁷⁹.

This «globally catholic, pious, religiously indoctrinated (with clerical ideals), ordered and organized under the guide of the ecclesiastic education society, ready to bow to God and Church»⁸⁰ was officially promoted as a model, the day after

⁷⁸ «Di ogni cosa, che fa, o occorre, o che vedi, cerca di cavare frutto, et qualche buon senso spirituale, come dal coltivare la terra, con quanta fatica, et diligenza bisogna coltivare la nostra anima, acciò renda buon frutto al Signore. Da un bel giorno di Sole quando diletterà il vedere, l'eterna luce, poichè questa così allegra: et da un giorno nubiloso, et oscuro, che pena sarà stare in quell'eternie tenebre, che così ti attrista un poco di mal tempo: et da un giardino pieno di vaghi fiori, quanto sia bella, et diletta a Dio un'anima ornata di fiori, et varij colori di virtù, et quanto stà la sapienza di Dio, poichè tant'arte si vede in un fiore, ò una sola foglia, et così farai di tutto il resto» (C. Borromeo, *Ricordi ovvero Ammaestramenti Generali dati da S. Carlo Borromeo cardinale del titolo di Santa Prassede; Arcivescovo di Milano per il vivere christiano communemente ad ogni stato di persone. Et particolarmente à Padri è Madri di Famiglia Maestri, ò Capi di Botteghe, et Lavoranti. Di nuovo fatti ristampare per opera di Bortolomeo Benti*, in Giussani, *Vita di S. Carlo*, cit., p. 6).

⁷⁹ «Orsù dunque, rallegrati, et gode, ò Milano dell'abondanza spirituale, dati alle prediche, alle sacre lettioni, alle pubbliche orationi, alle processioni, alle perdonanze, alle confessioni, alle communioni, per questi santi mezzi apri tu, et dilata la bocca del cuor tuo et vi entrerà Dio, et riempirà ogni cosa delle sue santissime gratie. Sarà questa allegrezza parte di ricognitioni, gratia a Dio, ma sia tutta spirituale, ne vi habbia parte alcuna il mondo. Sia lontana da quelle allegrezze disolute dell'huomo carnale, et sensuale, et da quelle, se ben cominciano in spirito, finiscono nondimeno in carne. Sia allegrezza non di crapule, non di risi dissoluti, non di parole vane, non di cuore svanito, non di lingua rilassata ad ogni licenza, non di sentimenti abbandonati da ogni custodia, non di appetiti, che pigliano la briglia di mano alla ragione, non d'intelletto accecato nella prosperità, non di memoria scordata di Dio, non di christiana disciplina snervata, ma per dir tutto in una parola, allegrezza nel Signore» (Borromeo, *Memoriale*, cit., cap. II, pp. 219-220).

⁸⁰ A. Turchini, *La fabbrica di un santo. Il processo di canonizzazione di Carlo Borromeo e la Controriforma*, Casale Monferrato, Marietti, 1984, p. 129.

Borromeo's canonization. As known in fact, in less than 10 years – that is from 1601 through 1610 – the archbishop of Milan was recognized as Saint, and in this way the bishop-pastor became a model of life. Before the canonization bull of 1st November 1610⁸¹, publishings, images, portraits, cult objects, prayers, poems, preachings and religious demonstrations, had been fixing the canons of a model which was being defined in a progressively clear form: Borromeo's life had become the life of the *sanctus vir*, his virtues were the clues of a tormented epoch, and they addressed the piety of the religious and lay individuals, better still they became a point of reference for a «disciplined society and church»⁸² and, last but not least, became the tools for the religious acculturation.

Therefore the fight, made by the Milanese archbishop, for the clericalization of the society, continued along after him, through his myth. He has, in fact, become

the saint [of the] little “average” virtues, such as charity and piety for example, therefore possible to imitate, possible to follow through complying with. It is [...] the model of perfect life, and its key lies in the hand of ecclesiastic institutions. Through Borromeo's figure, a strong ecclesial conformism is required, [...] not only to clergy, but to the great human mass⁸³.

In this way, the example of the life of Carlo Borromeo has turned into a pedagogical device, a means of religious propaganda which exalts the “popular” and active (i.e. not ecstatic) dimension of the Counter-reformation and which, surpassing and contemporaneously receiving the image of the bishop-politician, the bishop-diplomat, the bishop-theologian, the bishop-preacher and, finally, of the bishop-saint, celebrates the model of the bishop-educator, the *pastor*, who promoted a complex and articulated rebuilding of the Church. This one consists of different levels of piety and care, and was able to give life to an experience of collective liturgy, and its inheritance – as well known – had a great influence far beyond the boundaries of the Milan Archdiocese.

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⁸¹ *Bullarium*, cit., vol. X (1867), pp. 643-653.

⁸² Turchini, *La fabbrica di un santo*, cit., p. 129.

⁸³ «santo [delle] piccole virtù “medie”, come carità e pietà ad esempio, perciò imitabili, perciò da seguire conformandosi. È [...] modello della vita perfetta le cui chiavi sono nelle mani delle istituzioni ecclesiastiche. Attraverso la figura del Borromeo si chiede un conformismo ecclesiale convinto, [...] non solo al clero ma anche presso la gran massa umana» (*ibid.*, p. 128).

Ophelia at the museum. Venuses and anatomical models in the teaching of obstetrics between the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries

Alberto Carli e Elisa Mazzella

1. *Wax-flesh*

The wax anatomical models that deeply transformed the study of internal medicine and the very idea of human body in Italy since 18th century and up to the arrival of radiology represent, in their scientific, artistic, museological and, above all, didactic richness, one of the most interesting examples of the intertwining between arts and science. Actually, natural preparations and didactic ceroplastics history dates back to a previous age, and signifies probably the most practical idealization of mankind studying itself as yardstick and measure of a tangible reality. Erwin Panofsky has indeed pointed out the Renaissance epistemological «decompartmentalization» when «natural science branches based on observation and description, such as zoology, botany, palaeontology, physics and most of all anatomy, have undergone a development in direct ratio to the representation techniques improvement»¹. In the same age, theory and practice rejoined overcoming the hindrances «that, during the Middle Ages, kept apart Liberal Arts from Mechanical Arts and separated theoretical knowledge, then perceived as mind's offspring, from the plastic disciplines whose Figurative Arts are a legacy»².

¹ G. Didi Hubermann, *Corpo di cera, circoli viziosi*, in *Encyclopaedia Anatomica*, M. Poggesi, M. v. Düring, G. Didi Hubermann (eds.), Köln-London-Madrid (etc.), Taschen, 1999, p. 66.

² E. Panofsky, *Artiste, savant, génie. Notes sur la "Renaissance-Dämmerung"*, in *L'Oeuvre d'art et ses significations*, Paris, Gallimard, 1969, quoted by G. Didi Hubermann, *Corpo di cera, circoli viziosi*... , cit., p. 66.

Wax has been considered for a long time the best material for anatomical models, not considering here the ancient *ex voto*³ and Christmas cribs traditions, the latter especially popular in southern Italy. The reason could lie in the fact that

every feature [of wax] (plasticity, instability, fragility, heat sensitivity...) inevitably evokes the feeling, or the illusion, of flesh. Sorting out any doubt on this basic anthropomorphism is essential: restricting the perception of wax to a material especially suitable for reproducing the human body appearance (even performing a mould) is not enough. One needs instead to wonder about the more subtle anthropological and morphological correspondence between this material and flesh *simulacra*⁴.

If the outward appearance of organic matter can be regarded as the ever-changing semblance of its inner nature, the transmission of the wax votive item-makers' skills to the great 15th century artists is an educated guess. Nevertheless, «only from the 16th century [...] the sculptors' models and sketches could be preserved from destruction thanks to more advanced [...] techniques»⁵. It's therefore possible to admire today the extraordinary Michelangelo's wax models at the Victoria and Albert Museum of London, being overwhelmed by the three-dimensional representation of bi-dimensional Leonardo da Vinci's anatomical studies. The modern popular destiny of wax-related imaginary has been strengthened and embodied in Curtius, Madame Tussaud or Grévin museums, legitimate constituents of an «anthropological circle» whose every component is somewhat related to human body:

The «believers' flesh» of votive wax items is [...] an evidence of contributors' concerns for their organs, isn't it? Similarly, the «artists' flesh» of the models is basically the visual interest in the relationship between superficial and inner layers of the human body. The scientific flesh of 18th century anatomical wax models is the historical and technical result of these precursors⁶.

Later, during 19th century, the *Scapigliatura*⁷ romantically veristic scalpels hacked, aware of their cruelty, the bourgeois aesthetics, bringing in the lime-light anatomical preparations as modern relics of a laical belief in Positivistic scientism. The French Naturalism literary traits depicted physiology as yard-

³ M. Poggesi, *La collezione ceroplastica del Museo "La Specola"*, in *Encyclopaedia Anatomica*, cit., p. 10. During Renaissance and until 17th century in Florence one could admire a huge number of these items, especially in Orsanmichele and in Santissima Annunziata churches. These *ex-voto* were representations of limbs, whole organs or details, or paintings, objects and even life-size statues.

⁴ G. Didi Hubermann, *Corpo di cera...*, cit., p. 65.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ See A.M. Cavalli Pasini, *La scienza del romanzo. Romanzo e cultura scientifica tra Otto e Novecento*, Bologna, Patron, 1982; L. Nay, *Fantasmî del corpo, fantasmî della mente. La malattia tra analisi e racconto (1870-1900)*, Alessandria, Dell'Orso, 1999; A. Carli, *Anatomie scapigliata. L'estetica della morte tra letteratura, arte e scienza*, Novara, Interlinea, 2004.

stick for elegance and truth, but it's in the 17th and 18th centuries that the analysis of the innermost self becomes anatomy of the soul, suitable for applying the metaphors recalled by body dissection⁸. A whole humanistic and scientific milieu was emerging – anticipating and preparing the age of wax portraits *in interiore homine* (which aimed not only at depicting the body *veritas*, but the soul's one too) – testified by some of the most famous Flemish painters⁹ and by the recalls of many Baroque poems and texts¹⁰. Anyway, it is important to stress that at the present time surgery is naturally perceived as a branch of medicine dealing with the patient's health, and having aims similar to those proper to internal medicine, although fulfilling them with different techniques¹¹. Nevertheless, an actual cultural and social surgery emancipation process started to take place only during the Enlightenment, in the 18th century.

The anatomical survey, with its clear and sharp traits, produced several different outcomes. Fascinatingly, the 18th century wax models are consistent with the coeval or slightly older humanistic culture, able to skilfully navigate its way between scarification and *vanitas* ephemeron¹². In this perspective appears clearly the inspiration of a humanistic-Hippocratic current of thought, lead by *médecins philosophes* aiming at founding a new *medicina mentis*. An ideal background for the Enlightenment culture which would have soon produced the famous Bologna's Archiginnasio and Florence's Specola models, spreading between body and soul investigation, was brewing. The contributions coming from cosmographic anatomy, constantly correlating to astrology, mysticism and occultism (e.g. *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions* and *Anatomy of the World*, both by John Donne) could be easily added to that background. The same goes for the *ad maiorem gloria Dei* anatomy whose one of the most prominent figure was Baltasar Gracián, but, above all, for the encyclopaedic anatomy emerging from the whole set of works titled *Theatrum*, *Theatre*, *Théâtre*, *Teatro*¹³ published in Europe since the 16th until the 18th century, which define once and for all the relation between the “theatre” in its broad meaning and the anatomical theatre, emphasizing a shared metaphor. Among other things, this metaphor entails the ever-changing interpretation of a script. In the anatomical theatre death comes with a horrifying although educational nuance; the corpse plays the

⁸ L. Van Delft, *Frammento e anatomia. Rivoluzione scientifica e creazione letteraria*, C. Imbroscio (ed.), Bologna, Il Mulino, 2005, p. 23.

⁹ In 1632 the Amsterdam Surgeons' Guild commissioned to a young Rembrandt, just arrived from Leyden, one painting destined to become one of his most celebrated, *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp* (1632, Den Hague, Mauritshuis).

¹⁰ G.B. Marino, *Opere scelte di Giovan Battista Marino e dei Marinisti*, G. Getto (ed.), Utet, Torino, 1962.

¹¹ R. Del Buffa, *Ferri per guarire. Lame e strumenti chirurgici dell'Ospedale del Ceppo di Pistoia*, <http://www.stellastellina.org/Museo_ft/html/xxix_mostra.html>, (last access: 1st February 2008).

¹² L. Van Delft, *Frammento e anatomia...*, cit., p. 9.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

leading role and acts as stage at the same time. As a matter of fact, the audience stares at the corpse, but the dissector's hands play on it, as actors on the stage, led by the *praelector anatomiae* as script director. The ultimate meaning of an universal language like the scientific argot of the anatomical theatre is clearly conveyed as well through the pages of the "Book of Nature" (which, according to Galileo Galilei, is written in compliance with the universal mathematics and geometry rules), therefore its pages can summon up anatomical images and vice versa, since, paraphrasing Bartolomeo Dotti verses, a skeleton is a book, in which you can read a man's fate, and its fleeced, bared bones are an evidence of life's rules brought out by death¹⁴. Dotti's verses explain clearly the didactic value of dissection, and, once again, its gestures are viewed as the plain consultation of a flesh-made, three-dimensional book.

Autopsic investigation has always been, therefore, expression of a scientific, artistic and epistemological need that never ceased, for many obvious reasons, to ask relevant practical and pragmatical inquiries, and, above all, ethical and philosophical questions. Anatomy and preservation techniques hence become metaphors of inner speculation and reflection on the "shape" of tangible reality, establishing with it a continuous orphic relation. It could be seen then as a descent leading into the realm of invisible flesh and, at the same time, into the innermost depths of the humanistic thought, able to depict its more obvious metaphor.

2. Ceroplastics as didactics, arts and science

Surgical and medical ceroplastics became more and more relevant as didactic mean when emerged clearly and increasingly the need of a deeper professional training of doctors, surgeons and midwives¹⁵. The academics were getting out from an age of loosening of morals and from the resulting waning of educational academic system, based on theoretical and abstract lessons. The most prominent students, such as Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli in Bologna (1658-1730), longed for scientific investigations, basing the teaching on practical demonstrations. The Science Institute, established by Marsigli himself in 1711, independent from academic institutions, had indeed a room dedicated to anatomy studies, structured as dried preparations library, a further evidence of the tight relation between books and preparations. The renowned collection gathered by Antonio Maria Valsalva (1666-1723) was displayed there.

¹⁴ B. Dotti, *Al signor Giacomo Grandis fisico eccellentissimo e lettor di anatomia*, in G.B. Marino, *Opere scelte di Giovan Battista Marino e dei Marinisti*, cit., p. 248.

¹⁵ B. Dotti, *Per un aborto conservato in un'ampolla d'acque artificiali dal signor Giacomo Grandis fisico anatomico eccellentissimo*, in G.B. Marino, *Opere scelte di Giovan Battista Marino e dei Marinisti*, cit., p. 252: «Questo, *Giacopo* mio, sconcio funesto / cui diè morto natale il sen materno, / se maturo nascea, moria ben presto, / e voi d'intempestivo il feste eterno».

Dried preparations were however very liable to deteriorate, and the need to produce models made of a material lasting yet easily malleable emerged quickly. The academics, wanting to help their students to get a deeper knowledge both in basic subjects (anatomy, physiology, surgical anatomy, zoology, etc.), both in practical matters (clinical teaching of surgery and medicine, obstetrics, etc.), discovered the central role of ceroplastics and wax models. They quickly became an excellent didactic aid, since they allowed the students to recognize better and in greater details the human body structures, to learn by heart the situations occurring in difficult labours and the common surgeries, besides particular pathologic case histories. Moreover, the wax models helped the midwives – traditionally less informed of anatomy than surgeons – to learn better and quickly the basics of obstetrics. It's worth noticing that obstetric wax models dating 17th and 18th century are a crucial turning point in Italian medical and historic culture, since the 18th century marked the end of the restrictions preventing men to attend labours¹⁶. The illustrative value of preparations laid in their availability and accessibility, which enabled learning anatomy without dissecting a huge number of corpses. The wax models never ceased to have their didactic role, becoming a relevant trait of “horror pedagogics” described by Calvino as integral part of Positivism:

Dr. Spitzner's Wax anatomical models Museum has been a major attraction for more than eighty years, since 1856 [...]. It was first established in Paris, as permanent exposition, in strict accordance with the traits of scientific institutions; (eighty items were from the famous Dr. Dupuytren's collection of pathological models) [...] Spitzner's museum dates back to the maximum heights of Positivism, Scientism and “popular pedagogics” [...] of the events then loathed either celebrated as “reality exploration” [...]. One can almost overhear the voice of the guides explaining – according to the chronicles – the “Anatomical Venus”, moving on from the inebriating skin scent to the dark vessels and ganglions tangle, from the nerve network to the skeleton brightness¹⁷.

During the 18th century, in Bologna and Florence, were established two of the most important schools in anatomical ceroplastics. The dissectors from Bologna, whose school was founded in the first half of 18th century, were the virtual fore-runners of the best Florentine artists operating in the Specola, supervised by Felice Fontana (1730-1805), renowned for its skilful modellers, such as Clemente Susini (1754-1814) or Egisto Tortori (1829-1893). Ercole Lelli (1702-1766), painter, sculptor and architect operating in Bologna, made use of his own wax preparations for his drawing teaching. In 1742, thanks to Prospero Lambertini's liberality – a fellow citizen, Lambertini (1675-1758) was elected Pope, ruling as Benedetto XIV – Lelli «crafts a series of wax preparations especially designed for the

¹⁶ G. Armocida, B. Zanobio, *Storia della medicina*, 2nd ed., Milano, Masson, 2002, p. 253.

¹⁷ I. Calvino, *Il museo dei mostri di cera*, in Id. *Collezione di Sabbia*, Milano, Garzanti, 1984, p. 31.

highly esteemed Accademia delle Scienze of Marsilio's institute. His famous myologic statues stand out as matchless items amongst artistic and functional models»¹⁸. The modeller used wax and turpentine-soaked rags and stubbles putting them on actual skeletons; for the soft tissues usually were employed moulds of the actual organs, previously strewn with grease to avoid damages.

Lelli chose as assistant Giovanni Manzolini (1700-1755), who, being unsatisfied of his role, left after three years, continuing to craft ceroplastics at home. And in his very own house he found an excellent aid in his wife Anna Morandi (1714-1774). His favourite pupil developed an astonishing skill in ceroplastics; after his death she could stand in for him, reaching the success he never had known¹⁹. Anna Morandi, who quickly achieved international renown, was asked to teach ceroplastics for the chair of Human Anatomy in Bologna's Archiginnasio. In 1750 the famous professor Giovanni Antonio Galli (1708-1782)²⁰, obstetrics professor, invited her to realize a series of didactic models, featuring the anatomic models of foetus abdominal cavity and foetal appendages, of womb in its different functional stages, of amniotic sac and of placenta. The magnificent *Suppellex obstetricia* was an authentic masterpiece, whose preparation was carried not only by Morandi, but as well by her husband, Manzolini, and Lelli himself. Galli commissioned two machines representing the woman during labour. One of them had a crystal, transparent womb, which could be opened to insert a flexible foetus model. The students pulled out the foetus blindfolded, under the teacher supervision. Thanks to the womb transparency the teacher could watch over the gestures of his pupils²¹. Galli aimed, with his didactic project distinguished by ground-breaking and experimental teaching methods, at filling the gaps in labour care, due to midwives' and surgeons' lack of knowledge. He first used the *Suppellex* at home, where he had established, in 1753, a private school of obstetrics dedicated to surgeons and midwives. Today that school is considered the first course on that matter, and the first obstetrics journal (*Dell'arte ostetricia*) was published in Bologna in 1768. Benedetto XIV²², patron of Bologna aca-

¹⁸ V. Ottiani, G. Giuliani-Piccari, *L'opera di Anna Morandi Manzolini nella ceroplastica anatomica Bolognese*, in *Alma mater studiorum. La presenza femminile dal XVIII al XX secolo*, Bologna, Cleub, 1988, p. 82.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* About Manzolini and his wife see also M. Medici, *Elogio di Giovanni e Anna Morandi, coniugi Manzolini*, in *Memorie dell'Accademia delle Scienze di Bologna*, t. VII, 1858, pp. 3-26, cit.; L. Galvani, *Aloysii Galvani de Manzoliniana supellectili oratio abita in Scientiarum et Artium Instituto cum ad anatomen in tabulis ab Anna Manzolina perfectis publice tradendam aggrederetur anno 1777*, Bologna, Laeli a Vulpe Istituti Scientiarum impressoris, 1777.

²⁰ G.B. Fabbri, *Antico museo ostetrico di Giovanni Antonio Galli*, in *Memorie dell'Accademia delle scienze di Bologna*, serie III, t. VII, Bologna 1872, pp. 129-166; M. Medici, *Elogio di Gian Antonio Galli*, *ibid.*, cit., pp. 425-450; M. Nardi, *La fondazione in Italia delle prime scuole ostetriche*, «Rivista italiana di ginecologia», vol. 38, 11, 1955, pp. 177-184.

²¹ M. Medici, *Elogio di Gian Antonio Galli*, cit., p. 430.

²² G. Martinotti, *P. Lambertini (Benedetto XIV) e lo studio dell'anatomia in Bologna*, Bologna, Azzoguidi, 1911; V. Busacchi, *Benedetto XIV, la medicina, i medici*, «Rivista medica di Bologna», 3, 1957, pp. 599-612.

demics, was convinced to buy Galli's *Suppellex* for one thousand *scudi romani* and donated it to the Istituto delle Scienze. The donation and the subsequent removal of the *Suppellex* from Galli's home put an end to the private courses dedicated to women and surgeons. To fill this lack Galli was appointed professor in Obstetrics, on the initiative of Benedetto XIV, allowing him to continue his teaching in the Istituto delle Scienze.

Anna Morandi reminds of the famous, almost mythical, Alessandra Giliani da Persiceto²³, who could be regarded as the pioneer of women-conducted anatomical research. Anyway, women have had a primary role especially in obstetrics since its foundation. It's worth to remember the renowned Trotula de Ruggiero, senior obstetric of Salernitan school, who dedicated herself to the treatment of women diseases, with reference to age and living standards²⁴, as proved by *De mulierum passionibus, ante, in et post partum, seu de remediis mulieribus*. Only a few fragments of the work, divided into sixty-four chapters, remain nowadays; it contained advices for midwives, with reference to the different labour stages and plenty of pathology notions. Obstetrics underwent some progress between 13th and 15th centuries, thanks to the first universities and the investigation of scientific disciplines, but this wasn't enough to set it free, in its own independence, from surgery, and most of all to dispel the harsh popular prejudice stating that it was a form of witchcraft. As a matter of fact, during Middle Ages and over, doctors couldn't attend the labour; that was a precise task for women, who sometimes, besides being despised, were even sent to the stake²⁵ on the charge of sorcery²⁶. Alessandro Benedetti, from Verona, wrote:

The midwife has to be sturdy, young, careful, naturally inclined to this task and very daring. She has to cheer up the *primipara*, to avoid showing unrestrained desire for money, to be jesting and cheerful, and to be prepared to clear quickly and effectively any hindrance to the regular labour course. She has to be clever, and to avoid to be absent-minded by small talks, and must be quick in fulfilling her tasks, such as knotting the newborn's umbilical cord. She has to be pious, since sometimes the baby seems to be dying: then, if the blood is forced inside the

²³ Alessandra Giliani, young dissector, pupil of Mondino de' Luzzi, died in 1326, aged 19. It's said she had exceptional skills in sculpting blood vessels, after having injected dyes, in order to highlight their course in a detail covering even the thinner branchings.

²⁴ G. De Crescenzo, *Trotula De Ruggiero*, «Salerno Civitas Hippocratica», I, 1-2, 1967, p. 52.

²⁵ R. Rutigliano, «*Poiché impuro era il corpo della donna*». *Il parto nella storia: dai primordi all'affermarsi dell'ostetricia come scienza*, «Gravidanza e parto», 3, 1986, p. 3.

²⁶ Inquisitors believed that any midwife could be regarded as a witch in disguise. The Church cast upon midwives the shadow of witchcraft since 15th century, maybe playing up to pre-existent beliefs and superstitions. This acted as well as justification for a strict surveillance on these women, a trend destined to last for centuries. One reason for this behaviour could be found out in the secrets of midwives' astonishing manual skills, plus their intimate knowledge of women's secrets and the common use of natural remedies and anaesthetics given to the women in labour. It was as well due to a generic fear and awe of labour, and to concerns for babies dying without having been christened. See C. Pancino, *Il bambino e l'acqua sporca. Storia dell'assistenza al parto dalle mammane alle ostetriche*, Milano, F. Angeli, 1984, pp. 28-34.

newborn before knotting the cord, the baby could survive thanks to the nourishment received²⁷.

Obstetrics became a scientific discipline in its own rights, taking roots in accurate morphological and physiological knowledge, only during the Renaissance, when relations between mankind and nature, not regarded anymore as evil and sin root, were analyzed deeper. The ideal bond between mankind and nature led inevitably to observation and the experimental method, getting over magic and aristotelic thought: pregnancy and labour lost their traits of mystical and magical events, to gain the qualities of biologic phenomena. The first book dealing only with obstetrics was published in 1513: *De Swangern Frauen und Hebammen Rosengarten*, by Eucharius Roesslin (? -1526). It's an ultimate guidebook for midwives, written in vulgar complying with the will of Caterina of Saxony, translated into Latin and published all over Europe, exerting a relevant influence on contemporaries. With Giulio Cesare Aranzio (1530-1589) «and his *De humano foetu* begins the study on foetal physiology»²⁸. In 1596 is published in vulgar the first Italian treatise about obstetrics: *La comare o raccogliatrice*, by Scipione Mercurio (1540-1621), a pupil of Aranzio. His work would remain the only Italian publication about the matter until 1721²⁹. Meanwhile, «some women managed to reach relevant status, gaining as well personal renown, working in nurseries and in the first obstetrics schools, publishing works gathering the results of their experience». Louise Bourgeois (1663-1636), Maria de Medici's midwife and pupil of Ambroise Paré (1509-1590), well trained both practically, both in the discipline of labour treatment, is probably the most known. In 1609 Bourgeois published a work asserting the breaking of the amniotic sac to arrest placenta praevia or placenta detaching haemorrhages. «Justine Siegemundin (1648-1705) wrote a treatise translated in several languages. Some obstetricians, even in 18th and 19th centuries, when surgeons became the prominent figures in the labour treatment, still gained celebrity in medicine»³⁰. The first obstetrical innovations, such as the caesarean section³¹, first performed in 1581 by François Rousset and the introduction

²⁷ M.G. Nardi, *Il pensiero ostetrico-ginecologico attraverso i secoli*, Milano, Thiele, 1954, p. 118.

²⁸ M. Cimino, *Storia dell'Ostetricia*, see in *Collezione Ostetrica*, by the Department of Gynecological sciences and CAM (Centre for Museums) of the University of Padua, <<http://www.ginecologia.unipd.it/collezione/Collezione%20Ostetrica.htm>>, last update: 31st January 2008 (accessed: 1st February 2008).

²⁹ These work featured notions both from the most recent and ancient scientific teachings, both from superstitions and occult practises. The anatomical discoveries and the surgery innovations of 16th century laid the foundations of a new scientific research, which medicine and obstetrics would be based on; although, the practical effects on labour treatment and on midwives' culture were limited, and would remain unchanged for a few centuries.

³⁰ G. Armocida, B. Zanobio, *Storia della medicina*, cit., p. 253.

³¹ The Romans issued *Lex Regia*, ascribable to Numa Pompilio, stating that women died during pregnancy or labour would have undergone caesarean section, in order to extract the foetus and try the reanimation. As Christianity and Catholicism spread, the Church showed interest in caesarean section *post mortem matris*, because it allowed to christen those newborn otherwise doomed; however, this

of forceps³² by François Moriceau (1637-1709), had appeared since the 17th century. Mauriceau was the first surgeon working solely as obstetrician, in Hotel Dieu hospital. Still, obstetrics became only partially independent from surgery only during the XVIII century, thanks to English and French doctors such as Levret, Sigault, Baudeloque and White. «In Europe, during the 18th century, the labour treatment, until then regarded only as a female problem, became centre of governments' attention, due to changes in political agenda requiring a better health care. Lawmakers realized the need for an adequate training of midwives and obstetricians, and were established obstetrics schools to limit the *post partum* mortality of mothers and newborns, and to stem the unlawful practice of midwife profession [...]. In Strasbourg Jacques Fried (1689-1769) founded in 1737 a clinical obstetrics course, which took place in the maternity ward he managed, addressed to midwives and medicine students. In Paris the first course, explicitly requested by a group of midwives, although addressed as well to medics, started in 1745. Jean Astruc (1684-1766) was appointed holder of the Obstetrics chair. Meckel founded an obstetrics school in Berlin in 1751. Around 1750, midwives training was enhanced as well in England, [...] where in 1739 was inaugurated the first maternity home». Anyway, concerning England, it's not possible to leave out the basic contributions by William Harvey (1578-1657) with his *Exercitationes de generatione animalium – De partu – de membranis ac humoribus uteri – de conceptione*, distancing his theories from Fabrizio d'Acquapendente (1537-1619) statements.

practice was probably restricted to rare, sporadic cases. Caesarean section became more relevant after the Council of Trent, when was explicitly prescribed by the Church with the religious aim of christening the foetus. *Embriologia sacra* (1745) by Francesco Cangiamila was a decisive factor in the religious campaigning for caesarean section. This work, which clearly requires the legislative government intervention about that issue, contributed to develop a higher interest in this practice. In the second half of 18th, the State showed an increasing interest in the foetus' life as citizen to be protected. Citizens' health, essential for the State greatness, had to be guaranteed using all the necessary means, since the birth and until the death. The caesarean section became then a basic element of state health politics, and came out the idea to practice it as well on women still alive. This surgery, however, was marked by an high mortality, primarily due to haemorrhages and septicaemias. For a general introduction to caesarean section, see N.M. Filippini, *La nascita straordinaria. Tra madre e figlio, la rivoluzione del taglio cesareo (sec. XVIII-XIX)*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 1995; P. Zocchi, *Agli albori del taglio cesareo: interventi in Lombardia nell'età delle riforme*, «Storia in Lombardia», 3, 1999, pp. 5-42; G. Terenna, F. Vannozzi (eds.), *La collezione degli strumenti di ginecologia, ostetricia e pediatria*, Nuova Immagine, Siena, 2002; P. Zocchi, *Nascita immatura e parto cesareo: problemi e paure tra Sette e Ottocento*, in A. Menzione (ed.), *Specchio della popolazione. La percezione dei fatti e problemi demografici nel passato*, Udine, Forum, 2003, pp. 81-104; «Direct observation carried on corpses boosted the studies on female genital anatomy»; F. Vannozzi (ed.), *Nascere a Siena: il parto e l'assistenza alla nascita dal Medioevo all'età moderna*, Siena, Protagon Nuova Immagine, 2005.

³² *Ibid.*: «During the 18th century several forceps models, named after the surgeon who invented or improved them, were widely used». Amongst them, the pedal-driven forceps by Chassagny, or those by Frari, Levret, Smellie. The forceps and similar devices were known, in 18th and 19th century obstetrics, as instruments aiming at saving the mother's life, to the detriment of the foetus' health. Loris Premuda, recalling a quote by Thinne, surgeon for Westminster clinic, wrote «It was better to pierce six foetal skulls than loose a woman». See L. Premuda, *Personaggi e vicende dell'ostetricia e della ginecologia nello studio di Padova*, Padova, Ediz. Attualità di ostetricia e ginecologia, 1958, p. 55.

«In Italy Lucrezia d'Este had already established in Ferrara, in 1580, the Casa di S. Maria del Soccorso for women bearing illegitimate pregnancy [...]. Franci, a priest in Florence, had founded a similar shelter during 17th century [...]»³³. In 1728, Vittorio Amedeo II decreed the creation, in San Giovanni hospital (Torino), of a maternity ward for poor pregnant women. That boosted as well in Italy the midwives' knowledge: the ward supplied the means for practical training³⁴. Obstetrics courses aimed at surgeons opened only in 1758, thanks to the famous surgeon Ambrogio Bertrandi (1723-1765)³⁵, from Piedmont, who allowed the surgeons to attend labours. Luigi Calza (1737-1784), from Bologna, former pupil of Galli, is another relevant example. After having founded in Padova the first obstetrics unit and the attached obstetrics school, he realized the need to supply anatomical models for didactics. On the basis of his teacher's legacy, helped by his pupil Antonio Scarpa (1752-1832), he produced a full obstetric collection made of wax, crystal and clay, outdoing «in sharpness and perfection»³⁶ the one in Bologna, commissioning its execution to Manfredini and Sandri, renowned ceroplastics modellers. «Today, the large original collection (there must have been roughly sixty models) consists of forty polychrome wax models showing physiological and pathological aspects of female genital apparatus, plus various stages of pregnancy, labour and discharge of the afterbirth; twenty-two clay models depict the different foetal presentations and positions, both physiological, both pathological»³⁷. The employment of crystal allowed, amongst other things, the realistic representation of amniotic membrane.

Clay performed an even more practical function, since clay models were not only cheaper, but, above all, less fragile. «They were in fact designed for student manipulation: medics and obstetricians were trained to recognize pathological presentations, labours having particularly severe traits or impossible to be fulfilled naturally, and other abnormalities that, occurring during labour, could harm the foetus' or the mother's life»³⁸. Vincenzo Malacarne (1744-1816), anatomist, drawing up in 1807 the inventory of anatomic museum of Padova, wrote:

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Regarding the creation of midwives schools, see O. Viana, F. Voza, *L'ostetricia e la ginecologia in Italia*, Milano, Società Italiana di ostetricia e ginecologia, 1933; Nardi, *Il pensiero ostetrico-ginecologico nei secoli*, cit.; T. Caffaratto, *Storia dell'ostetricia in Italia. L'istituzione dell'insegnamento alle levatrici*, «Minerva ginecologica», 32, 6/7, 1980, pp. 703-708; Pancino, *Il bambino e l'acqua sporca*, cit.

³⁵ *Opere anatomiche e cerusiche di Ambrogio Bertrandi pubblicate e accresciute di note e di supplementi dai chirurghi Gio. Antonio Penchienati e Giovanni Brugnone*, Torino, Reycends, 1790-1798.

³⁶ P. Selvatico, *Guida di Padova e dei principali suoi contorni*, Padova, Premiata tip. Ed. F. Sacchetto, 1869, p. 364.

³⁷ See Cimino, *Storia dell'Ostetricia*, cit.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

Twenty-four clay female pelvis, and as many foetuses of the same material, in different positions and movable, in order to set them and their limbs in the best position for the labour³⁹.

Later, Loris Premuda wrote:

[...] our regret for the disappearance of many interesting and valuable models that we couldn't track down anymore; we have instead to express our gratitude to our colleague, Professor Antonio De Marchi, currently registrar for Obstetrics, who has taken up the task of restoring the remaining specimens⁴⁰.

3. *Venus naturalis*

If it's likely that the deepest and oldest feelings of mankind are the fear and, at the same time, the appeal for the unknown, it's equally plain that the most unfathomable unknown is represented by the mystery of birth and death, beyond their limited and restricted unprejudiced scientific observation. The latter discloses its manifest dynamics indeed, leaving although several and deeper open questions. During the Enlightenment a mood escaping mind's control, its rules and patterns had been already acknowledged and theorized: «a mood caused by forces transcending rationality [...]. The wonder and the disconcertment felt gazing incommensurable phenomena, difficult to understand, beyond human comprehension»⁴¹. Anatomical wax models of Specola in Florence, coming slightly after Lelli's models and contemporary with Morandi's ones, are actual icons conveying a subtle beauty, on open display, totally exposed, its deepest secrets violated, and, above all, liable to a thorough investigations of its more earthly innermost parts, invisible only apparently. They represent an hidden though eurhythmic counterpoint of tangible reality, a portrait of accurate flesh-mechanisms defining biologic life; regarding the several female models, it's probably possible to give rise to a multivalent hermeneutic guess, inscribed both in the historical and medical analysis (including, as a matter of fact, history of didactics of the discipline itself), both in the examination of collective imaginary, which, depicted in arts and literature, becomes metaphor, or portrait, of life, in its faithful representation or in its transfiguration. The many 18th century models crafted in Felice Fontana and Clemente Susini workshops were a logic, neat counterpoint to the outward appearance,

³⁹ V. Malacarne, *Oggetti più interessanti di Ostetrica e di Storia Naturale esistenti nel Museo Ostetrico della Reale Università di Padova*, Padova, Mainardi, 1807.

⁴⁰ Premuda, *Personaggi e vicende dell'ostetricia*, cit., p. 59.

⁴¹ P. De Vecchi, E. Cerchiari, *Arte nel tempo. Dall'età dell'Illuminismo al Tardo Ottocento*, Milano, Bompiani, 1992, p. 27.

though difficult to approach in their bold opposition against any form of classical and graceful stillness⁴². Hawthorne wrote in his *Diary*:

I left the Uffizi to reach the Museo di Storia Naturale, close to Palazzo Pitti [...]. Amongst the most wonderful items [...] in the museum are the wax models representing every part of the human body. It's a good thing being able to recall the vision of woman's wholeness and beauty, when staring at the inner details of her body exposed here, because at sight they're not beauty at all. But they represent something belonging only to our mortality. The beauty that makes them invisible is our immortal trait, which we'll carry away with ourselves⁴³.

Nevertheless, this overly-refined and scientific expression of beauty subsists on an ideal artistic sensitivity, even if it seemingly tries to slink away from it, since the concreteness of truth «is not intended, searched for, chiselled: it arises alone, naked, beautiful»⁴⁴. It often triumphs coldly, resulting in the awareness that «a body, even Venus' one, after all is only a complex bag, a bag full of organs magnificently inserted into each other. They're liable to dismantling and assembling, [...] and these traits bring a feeling similar to a topological admiration of living beings»⁴⁵. The history of ceroplastics and, in a broader context, of anatomical reproduction and preservation for museologic aims, presents a credible research suggestion that, intertwining with medicine and humanistic disciplines history, casts a light on hints about investigations on their didactic role in the training of Italian doctors and auxiliary personnel. Examining some of the famous anatomical wax statues kept in Specola, in Florence, the first preparation worth discussing of is the reproduction of the whole body of a young woman, with clear and impressive display of lymphatic system and abdominal and thoracic cavities⁴⁶. Her arms, statuesque and well proportioned, hang to her sides, and the palms of the hands are turned downward. The Florentine statue is almost staring backwards, her eyes half-closed. A second preparation, showing a realistic representation of vessels and lymphatic glands in the abdominal cavity, has the same posture⁴⁷. The third preparation is the wonderful dismountable statue named ironically *Venere dei medici* (Fig. 7a-b)⁴⁸ by her author, Clemente Susini. His works convey a macabre and sadis-

⁴² See Z. Kadar, *Sul profilo barocco della cosiddetta "Venere dei Medici" di cera*, in *La ceroplastica nella scienza e nell'arte*, cit.; Didi Huberman, *Aprire Venere...*, cit. See also K. Rosenkranz, *L'estetica del brutto*, R. Bodei ed., Bologna, Il Mulino, 1984.

⁴³ N. Hawthorne, *Diario (1835-1862)*, A. Lombardo (ed.), Venezia, Neri Pozza, 1959, p. 440.

⁴⁴ M. Serao, *Impressionismo*, «Capitan Fracassa», 1883, August 19th.

⁴⁵ G. Didi Huberman, *Aprire Venere...*, cit., p. 87.

⁴⁶ C. Susini, *Vasa lymphatica thoracalis et abdominalis*, polychrome wax, 1782, XXIX, 745, Museo della Specola, Firenze.

⁴⁷ C. Susini, *Vasa mesenterica*, polychrome wax, 1782, XXIX, 747, Museo della Specola, Firenze.

⁴⁸ C. Susini, *Ostetricia* (Venere dei medici), polychrome wax, 1781-1782, III, 968, Museo della Specola, Firenze. See M.L. Azzaroli Puccetti, B. Lanza, *La venere scomponibile*, «Kos», I, 1984, 4, pp. 70-74.

tic eroticism⁴⁹, perpetuating «the tradition of female nudes, although driven beyond the limits admitted at that time: the life-size, her general posture, the intrinsic warmth of wax, her extremely delicate modelling, the skin texture, the bright colours [...], the weird familiarity of silk, pearls, velvet sofa and of her hairs [...]. All these elements contribute to turn the *Venere dei medici* into an icon tempting the visitor to touch her»⁵⁰. So, the refusal of appearance, keeping separate body and skin, or ideal and real, plays a major role in this new collation between arts and science. The Specola's disembowelled Venuses have semblances resembling Canova's works, and, moreover, anticipate the *Woman bitten by a snake*⁵¹ and *The Birth of Venus*⁵². However, wax anatomical models production, although having an important artistic value, was intended to scientific divulgation in its museum forms. Therefore, often were crafted models that could be literally peeled layer by layer, showing all the anatomic details, starting with epidermal integument and reaching the inner organs⁵³. The Specola Venus represents a pregnant woman, although, when entirely reassembled, her condition is not so obvious. She has, instead, a remarkable and pleased feminine grace. Moreover, since its dawn, anatomy regarded female body under a different light than the one cast upon the male body. The dissection of a woman's body was conducted with more care, and with higher respect. The wax Venuses are sheltered by the sheets of glass of their display cabinets, as the water protects Ophelia's body in the famous Millais painting (Fig. 4)⁵⁴. According their creators they remain women still able to keep the deep mystery of life, a mystery that scalp cannot hack, perfectly summoned by their harmonious postures and glance, even displaying *en plain air* their anatomical secrets. Later Italo Calvino would clarify, in a very incisive and literary style: «The very look that gave birth to these models [...] evokes at the same time intimacy and detachment, truth celebration and disdain»⁵⁵. Riolano himself was already suggesting which essences spray on women's corpses, «to avoid accompanying the body dissection with the obscene offence of smells, allowing the woman to keep, even dead, an adequate dignity»⁵⁶.

⁴⁹ See L. Jordanova, *Sexual visions. Images of Gender in Science and Medicine between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Madison, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989, *passim*. E. Bronfen, *Over her dead body. Death, Femininity, and the Aesthetic*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1992.

⁵⁰ G. Didi Huberman, *Aprire Venere...*, cit., p. 87.

⁵¹ A. Clésinger, *Woman bitten by a snake*, marble, 1847, Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

⁵² A. Cabanel, *The Birth of Venus*, oil on canvas, 1863, Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

⁵³ Little anatomical Venuses had been crafted since 16th. They were dismantlable, and made of different materials (wood, ivory...). See P. Rossi (ed.), *Scienza e miracoli nell'arte del '600. Alle origini della medicina moderna*, Milano, Electa, 1998, pp. 191-192.

⁵⁴ J.H. Millais, *Ophelia*, oil on canvas, 1851-1852, Tate Gallery, London.

⁵⁵ I. Calvino, *Il museo dei mostri di cera*, cit., p. 31.

⁵⁶ B. Cozzi, *L'opera museale di Paolo Gorini nel contesto del suo tempo e in una prospettiva storica*, in A. Carli (ed.), *Storia di uno scienziato. La Collezione anatomica "Paolo Gorini"*, Azzano S. Paolo, Bolis, 2005, p. 4; J. Hyrtl, *Manuale di dissezione pratica ossia guida agli esercizi ed ai*

Concerning the Specola wax models, they can be regarded as historical and medical evidences of an outstanding and unreachable view on classical female beauty. The model becomes a *Venus coelestis*, while, on the other hand, the depiction of tangible body, in students' and scholars' opinion, turns it into a *Venus naturalis*, wonderful and beautiful embodiment of solid substance, evidence of the human «fabrica», quoting Vesalius. However, considering the categories of nude and nudity, this subject could become much more complicated. After all, «the *Venere dei medici* is only an icon, a plaything in the hands of scientists. Her *wunderbox* appearance – try to put your hands on her hips, or on her breasts, lift slightly and you'll find immediately her bleeding ribs, the fibrous tissue of muscles, the encapsulated structures, in a few words the visceral inhabitants of this female body – reminding of a gloomy toy, turns equivocally the anatomical truth in a wicked ghost»⁵⁷. Disassembling entirely the Venus body, one can fully expose the sections of right atrium and cardiac ventricles, of stomach and duodenum, and even display the interior of the womb, in which rests a curled foetus – almost fully developed, in stark contrast to its small size.

4. Obstetrics models

The Florentine anatomic ceroplastics school, which, as said above, descends directly from the Bolognese one, started its activity thanks to Giuseppe Galletti (? -1819), surgeon and professor in Obstetrics for the Arcispedale di S. Maria Nuova in Florence. Galletti, after having visited Bologna, was so impressed from the beauty of Lelli and Manzolini wax models that, back in Florence, strived for the creation of a collection including obstetric wax preparations. After several troubles, having met the modeller Giuseppe Ferrini (18th century)⁵⁸ he finally managed to craft a series of earthen models, useful to show the different kinds of labour, both normal, both pathologic, to medicine, surgery and obstetrics students attending the courses in Santa Maria Nuova. Using different kinds of preparations as didactic aids in Obstetrics was not an absolute novelty, regardless of Galli and Manzolini legacy. Abroad, actually, «Marguerite Boursier Du Codudray, who wrote *Abrégé de l'art des accouchements* (1759), used for her practice sessions leather models of female pelvis

preparati anatomici, Bologna, Tip. Del Commercio, 1886, p. 31: «Quod si aestate cadaver mulieris velis dissecare, ne corrumpatur, supra Scordium, Clematidem, Daphnoidem, Thymum recumbens, administretur et peracta letione iisdem herbis sepelietur».

⁵⁷ G. Didi Huberman, *Aprire Venere...*, cit., p. 87.

⁵⁸ In 1771 Ferrini, after the creation of the Museo di Storia Naturale della Specola, the most important, in its kind, in Florence and whole Europe, moved there to work under the supervision of Fontana.

and a ragdoll [...]. While the faculties of medicine opened their maternity homes, allowing the students to be taught practical matters, in the big hospitals grew obstetrics schools moulded to fit the new clinical teaching and science demands, featuring theoretical studies on text-books and wax and wooden models»⁵⁹. Ferrini and Galletti works, dated around 1770, represent the *incipit* of anatomical reproduction in Florence, and today are kept in the Museo di Storia della Scienza in Florence. In 1775 Marquis De Sade could admire their artistic and scientific accuracy, and stated that they deserved to be exhibited in the collection of Pietro Leopoldo, Grand Duke of Tuscany, inaugurated the same year – belatedly, since the ceroplastics workshop, managed by Felice Fontana, was running since 1771:

The prince is building a natural history collection. All the peculiar sections, in my opinion, are well-stocked. The collection of anatomical wax models is worthy and exhaustive. If the Grand Duke would enrich it with the collection owned by the local surgeon Galletti, it would become even greater. That Galletti has a terracotta collection naturally dyed, including all the different kinds of labour [...]. A passage from this surgeon's cabinet to Palazzo Pitti could be built, and the prince could go from here to that famous Galleria covering an internal route, two miles in length⁶⁰.

The many representations of female genitalia, of the different stages of womb during a pregnancy, of foetus and of labour stages stand out amongst the most relevant Florentine anatomical wax preparations. The different and dreadful complications, which can set in during the pregnancy, have been described with great accuracy, and three moulds of extra-uterine pregnancy (namely, intraperitoneal, ovarian and tubal) are particularly impressive (Fig. 3)⁶¹.

Obstetric models of Specola set up a rich and very accurate collection, alternating representations of the womb (its muscles, Fig. 1⁶²; with placenta, Fig.

⁵⁹ G. Armocida, B. Zanobio, *Storia della medicina*, cit., p. 253. M. Poggesi, *La collezione ceroplastica...*, cit., pp. 14-15. «Around 1790 Fontana engaged in another ambitious project, never fulfilled due to its technical difficulties, consisting in a series of anatomical preparations in painted wood, both life-size, both magnified, for didactical use [...]. After some attempts, whose remains are a few pieces, including two whole statues, [...] he had to give up because of the mechanical properties of wood. Besides being less malleable, wood has the drawback of “change” with time, nullifying the work done to craft modular preparations».

⁶⁰ G. Didi Hubermann, *Aprire Venere...*, cit., p. 85. «The information provided by De Sade about the corridor leading from Palazzo Pitti to the anatomist cabinet is very relevant, too [...]. We can deduce that from the Medicean palace, the very heart of political power and culture, branched two axis, two symmetrical entrances. The “Vasari corridor”, on one side, led directly to the artistic treasures enshrined in the Uffizi», where was preserved the celebrated and chaste *Venere dei Medici*, «on the other side a similar passage led to the scientific treasures [...] named La Specola, that is the Nature observatory, its mirror, the *speculum*» where, between 1781 and 1782 Susini gave birth to the *Venere dei medici*, indecent because of the exposition of her deepest nudity».

⁶¹ *Graviditas extrauterina*, in *Ostetricia*, 986, in *Systema urogenitale et genitale*, Museo della Specola, Firenze.

⁶² *Uterus gravidus*, in *Ostetricia*, 1000, *ibid*.

2⁶³; after placenta discharge, Fig. 6⁶⁴; with amniotic cavity, Fig. 8⁶⁵; in its deeper layer, displaying the vessels, Fig. 9)⁶⁶ and of the foetus with depictions of the different stages of vaginal dilatation⁶⁷, as in the case of a very detailed model portraying an exposed womb with expanding external orifice (Fig. 5)⁶⁸. These models were particularly useful, revealing the correspondences between the external and the internal condition of the woman in labour, who was never depicted full-length⁶⁹; the material was, once again, wax. One of these virtual *close-ups* of the Venuses, compared with Susini's masterpiece, suggests similar aims and a corresponding possibility of being disassembled for practical and demonstrative purposes. It's the representation of womb with amniotic cavity, foetus and placenta⁷⁰. Oddly the work resembles a fruit: it's possible to lift the outer integument and the underlying layer, revealing finally the fruit, clearly visible in the placenta, skilfully depicted in its opalescence (Fig. 10). Such models, however, went into greater details, getting as far as the representation of the ovocyte nidation and of the different stages of chorion, embryo and foetus development, until the ninth month of pregnancy. Without entering here into the heart of the matter, it is worth noting the sequence depicting the embryonic development was still stuck to the obsolete *homunculus* theory, stating that the spermatozoon already enshrined the body appearance, though in small-scale.

Florence was a crucial crossroad for Obstetrics, not only thanks to its anatomical collections, but also because of academic teaching of the discipline. Suffice it to say that Giuseppe Vespa (1727-1804), who had attended Paris Obstetrics School, started there his teaching in 1758, just a few months after the institution of the first Italian chair in Obstetrics, in Bologna. Clinical teaching for midwives started in 1773. Vespa must be given credit for the establishment of the *Condotte Ostetriche*, decreeing that any town district would have a midwife and a surgeon available if needed. Two medicine students, selected for their brilliant scores, aided each surgeon. The *Condotte* became as well, besides an important aid in emergency dealing, a didactic reference.

⁶³ *Placenta*, in *Ostetricia*, 979, *ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Uterus post partum*, in *Ostetricia*, 978, *ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Uterus gravidus, Amnion*, in *Ostetricia*, 976, *ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Uterus gravidus*, in *Ostetricia*, 1003, *ibid.*

⁶⁷ See *Vulva*, in *Ostetricia*, 1015, in *Systema urogenitale et genitale*; *Uterus gravidus*, in *Ostetricia* 1016, *ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Uterus gravidus, portio vaginalis uteri, fetus*, in *Ostetricia*, 1014, *ibid.*

⁶⁹ The models represent the abdomen and the groin region. The spread legs are cut off in the midst of the thigh, with realistic details of the cut and the stump. This is a further evidence of the accuracy of the plaster moulds, which were the basis for wax models. However, wax models were usually hollow and filled with rags or other stuffing, and that was one relevant difference between the anatomical preparations such those mentioned above.

⁷⁰ *Uterus gravidus, Placenta, Fetus*, in *Ostetricia*, Deposito 1, polychrome wax, Museo della Specola, Firenze.

The obstetric collection hosted in Flajani room, inside the Museo dell'Arte Sanitaria in Rome, was another relevant example, besides the wax models in Bologna and Florence. The ceroplastic collection was commissioned by Francesco Saverio de Zelada (1717-1801), who was, between 1779 and 1792, Secretary of State of Pope Pius VI. The modeller was Giovanni Battista Manfredini, under the supervision of Carlo Mondini (1729-1803), anatomist from Bologna. Amongst the first wax models commissioned by the cardinal it is worth to describe a very detailed obstetric representation, depicting the womb in its natural size and its growth during the different pregnancy stages, plus several examples of foetal dystocia. The preparations, which had primarily demonstrative and didactic purposes, are thirty-six.

A few decades after the production of obstetrics wax models, the embryological discoveries provided, for the first time, the notions that would have explained in a scientific way the most terrible malformations. The goal was defining the extent of the role played by extrinsic factors versus primigenial embryonic defects in determining the malformations. Since the second half of 18th century, anatomists, theologians and politicians became interested in embryos, and new theories about foetal development changed the representations of foetus in womb and of its relation with the mother's body. This shift led also to a change of the maternal figure: «The maternal body, hybridly hovering between family and society, becomes a container holding not only offspring, or their souls, but as well citizens, sketching the dawning of a new set of relationship between the familiar sphere and the civil and religious one»⁷¹. Until that moment, medical studies had shown a secondary interest in foetus' life. Between 16th and 17th centuries anatomists and obstetricians had only superficially dealt with the life of the foetus in the womb, with the only concerns, if any, about monstrosity and pathology. During the 18th century, specific studies focused on the foetus, and this led to a development of its graphical depiction. The foetus was not anymore portrayed inside the exposed womb, «opened just to show its presence»⁷², but represented separated from the maternal body. Leonardo da Vinci was the unquestioned pioneer of this trend. In this perspective, «the metaphor of the tree and its fruit is inadequate, since the foetus is now regarded as a body in its own rights, comparable to a little plant drawing nourishment from the ground, but clearly separated from it as new and specific individual»⁷³.

The new representation of the foetus and its mother affected a series of

⁷¹ N.M. Filippini, *Il cittadino non nato e il corpo della madre*, in M. D'Amelia (ed.), *Storia della maternità*, Roma, Laterza, 1997, pp. 111-137.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 115.

⁷³ Filippini, *Il cittadino non nato*, cit., p. 117; regarding the tree and fruit metaphor, see J. Gelis, *L'arbre et fruit: la naissance dans l'Occident moderne (XVI^e-XIX^e siècle)*, Paris, Fayard, 1984.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

Fig. 4. John Everett Millais, *Ofelia*, 1851-52 (Tate Gallery, London)

*Wax preparations from the
Museo di Storia Naturale
«La Specola», Florence:*

Fig. 1. Foetus in utero. Geni-
tal and urogenital system.

Fig. 2. Placenta with umbili-
cal cord and baby.

Fig. 3. Ectopic pregnancies.



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

Fig. 5. Opened uterus of a
pregnant woman, with ex-
panding external uterine
orifice

Fig. 6. Uterus with placent-
ta, umbilical cord and foe-
tus. Urogenital and genital
system



Fig. 7a



Fig. 7b

From the Museo di Storia Naturale La Specola, Florence:

Fig. 7a-b. The Venus of Susini. Female body lying down with the representation of blood vessels and lymphatic system. Vasa mesenterica.

Fig. 8. Uterus with amniotic cavity. Urogenital and genital system.



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

Fig. 9. Uterus with blood vessels. Urogenital and genital system.

Fig. 10. Foetus inside the amniotic cavity. Urogenital and genital system.



Fig. 10

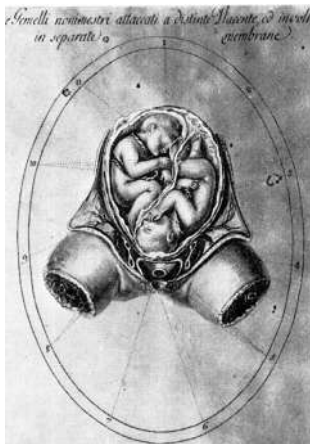


Fig. 11

Fig. 11. Nine months period twins, linked to two placentas and wrapped into separate membranes.

interventions defending foetal and maternal life, bringing on new obstetrics practices.

One of the first initiatives was the caesarean section on dead women, followed by the christening of abortions. In this background the repression of voluntary abortion, carried out with midwives' surveillance, reports of illegitimate pregnancies and authentication of births and deaths, was tightened. The establishment of hospices for women in labour aiming, amongst other things, at training medical personnel and at shaping an accurate task redefinition could be seen as a preventive measure⁷⁴. The traditional role of midwives faded considerably, while the obstetrician-surgeon became more and more central on the labour scene. Finally, at the end of 18th century, two revolutionary techniques were tested: the premature birth and the modern caesarean section.

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⁷⁴ N.M. Filippini, *Ospizi per partorienti e cliniche ostetriche tra Sette e Ottocento*, in M.L. Betri, E. Bressan (eds.), *Gli ospedali in area padana fra Settecento e Novecento*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 1992, pp. 395-411.

Come educare la nazione? Newman e l'*Idea di Università**

Giuseppe Bonvegna

1. Il contesto storico-culturale

Interrogarsi sulla proposta educativa di John Henry Newman così come emerge dall'*Idea di Università*, oltre che costituire l'occasione per accostare una tematica (la natura dell'istituzione universitaria) senza dubbio imprescindibile nell'ambito della ricerca pedagogica, significa anche far luce su uno snodo fondamentale della riflessione di questo grande personaggio: si tratta del momento in cui prese forma definitiva il disegno di elaborare una proposta culturale cristiana per la nazione inglese, che era stato il motivo della sua decisione giovanile di entrare nell'agone intellettuale. Nato a Londra nel 1801, John Henry Newman¹ si formò a Oxford (*Trinity College* e *Oriel College*),

* Il presente contributo costituisce una versione rielaborata del terzo capitolo del libro: *Per una ragione vivente. Cultura, educazione e politica nel pensiero di John Henry Newman*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2008, pp. 131-174.

¹ Per il profilo biografico di Newman, si vedano, tra gli altri, i lavori di Owen Chadwick, di Ian Ker, di José Morales Marín e di Sheridan Gilley: O. Chadwick, *Newman*, Oxford-New York, Oxford University Press, 1983; I. Ker, *John Henry Newman. A biography*, Oxford-New York, Oxford University Press, 1988; J. Morales Marín, *Newman (1801/1890)*, Madrid, Rialp S.A., 1990 (trad. it. *John Henry Newman. La vita (1801-1890)*, Milano, Jaca Book, 1998); S. Gilley, *Newman and his age*, London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1990. Una fonte importante è rappresentata dai trentuno volumi delle *Letters and diaries* (cfr. C.S. Dessain, ed., *The letters and diaries of John Henry Newman*, [XXXI voll.], Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1961), d'ora in poi citati come *LD*. Si vedano anche: A. Moz-

dove, nell'estate del 1833, di fronte all'introduzione dell'*Irish Church Act* (la legge voluta dal governo *Whig* di lord Grey con la quale venivano abolite dodici sedi della Chiesa anglicana in Irlanda), decise di far causa comune con il sodalizio intellettuale che, proprio per reagire a quella legge, si era appena formato tra John Keble, Richard Hurrell Froude, William Palmer, Arthur Perceval e Hugh Rose²; personalità diverse tra loro (tutti si dicevano fieri di essere anglicani ma Keble e Froude, a differenza degli ultimi tre, interpretavano tale appartenenza nei termini cari anche a Newman di un suo ripensamento critico), che si trovarono però unite dalla consapevolezza che la difesa della tradizione dagli attacchi della politica liberale non era più una battaglia procrastinabile. In nome della salvezza del nesso vitale tra religione ed educazione iniziava così il Movimento di Oxford e Newman ne divenne il leader, quando, nel settembre dello stesso anno, diede alle stampe il primo dei *Tracts for the times* (dedicato alla successione apostolica)³, introducendo in tal modo l'idea secondo la quale chi voleva combattere contro la secolarizzazione della Chiesa anglicana doveva utilizzare le armi di una tradizione più ampia dell'anglicanesimo e delle altre confessioni cristiane (compresa quella cattolica romana) e riconducibile alla cattolicità e all'apostolicità della Chiesa dei primi secoli.

Dodici anni più tardi, nel 1845, quando entrò nella Chiesa di Roma, a convincerlo a compiere il grande passo fu l'aver scoperto da un lato (grazie ai suoi studi sulla Chiesa dei Padri) che la pienezza dell'ortodossia risiedeva nella Chiesa cattolica e dall'altro che la Chiesa anglicana, con il vescovato di Gerusalemme del 1841 (l'episcopato di una nuova religione evangelica con a capo vescovi a turno dalla Germania e dall'Inghilterra) stava contribuendo in modo determinante alla propria secolarizzazione; ma non bisogna dimenticare che nemmeno quest'ultimo fatto gli avrebbe probabilmente creato alcun problema di coscienza se egli, fin dal 1833, non avesse impostato tutta la sua proposta culturale attorno all'idea della intrinseca appartenenza della dimensione trascendente e religiosa alla costituzione dell'umano.

La preoccupazione di difendere l'aggancio dell'aspetto mondano e immanente dell'uomo con la dimensione religiosa, trascendente e spirituale avrebbe infatti caratterizzato tutta la seconda parte della sua vita passata in seno alla

ley, *Letters and correspondence of John Henry Newman during his life in English Church*, [III voll.], London, etc., Longmans, Green and co., 1920.

² Su John Keble (1792-1866), Richard Hurrell Froude (1803-1836), William Patrick Palmer (1803-1885), Arthur Philip Perceval (1799-1853) e Hugh James Rose (1795-1838), cfr. le rispettive voci in F.L. Cross (ed.), *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997.

³ John Henry Newman, *Thoughts on the Ministerial Commission, respectfully addressed to the clergy*, in *Tracts for the times. By members of the University of Oxford*, [VI voll.], Oxford, J.G. & J. Rivington & J.H. Parker, 1834, [vol. I]. Delle opere di Newman citate verrà indicata la prima edizione e (nella quasi totalità dei casi) l'edizione utilizzata per le citazioni o soltanto tenuta presente, in quanto è quasi sempre risultata diversa dalla prima; dove esistente, si indicherà anche l'edizione italiana di riferimento.

Chiesa cattolica nella veste di fondatore della comunità inglese dell'Oratorio di San Filippo Neri, fin da quando, tra l'estate e l'autunno del 1850, si trovò impegnato nel progetto di trasformare la missione oratoriana di St. Wilfrid (vicino a Birmingham) nel primo *college* cattolico inglese per soli laici, che si affiancasse a quelli già esistenti di organizzazione mista⁴. Il fallimento di questa iniziativa (dovuto al venir meno della collaborazione da parte degli altri *colleges* e al disaccordo degli oratoriani di Londra) non riuscì comunque a impedire che, in concomitanza con la restaurazione della gerarchia cattolica in Inghilterra voluta da Pio IX con il breve *Universalis Ecclesiae* del 29 settembre 1850, la posizione culturale di Newman si arricchisse della proposta positiva del cattolicesimo come sapere organico in grado di rappresentare un'alternativa alla secolarizzazione della cultura nazionale e della Chiesa anglicana.

La prima grande testimonianza di questo impegno (già in realtà anticipato proprio nell'estate del 1850 in un'interessante parentesi "sociale" contenuta nelle *Lectures on certain difficulties felt by anglicans in submitting to the Catholic Church* dove il modello di civilizzazione dei Paesi cattolici veniva esaltato di fronte alla cultura protestante)⁵ furono le nove *Lectures on present position of catholics in England* del 1851. Qui Newman, mentre rinviogoriva il furore anticattolico di fronte alla prima lettera pastorale di Nicholas Wiseman (primo arcivescovo della restaurata gerarchia cattolica), rivolgeva ai cattolici inglesi un appello per la formazione di una cultura laicale cattolica:

I would aim primarily at organization, edification, cultivation of mind, growth of the reason. I want a laity, not arrogant, not rash in speech, not disputatious, but men who know their religion, who enter into it, who know just where they stand, who know what they hold, and what they do not, who know their creed so well, that they can give an account of it, who know so much of history that they can defend it. I want an intelligent, well-instructed laity; I am not denying you are such already: but I mean to be severe, and, as some would say, exorbitant in my demands, I wish you to enlarge your knowledge, to cultivate your reason, to get an insight into the relation of truth to truth, to learn to view things as they are, to understand how faith and reason stand to each other, what are the bases and principles of Catholicism, and where lie the main inconsistencies and absurdities of the Protestant theory⁶.

⁴ Sui *colleges* cattolici inglesi nell'Ottocento, cfr. E. Norman, *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1984, pp. 158-183.

⁵ Cfr. John Henry Newman, *Lectures on certain difficulties felt by Anglicans in submitting to the Catholic Church*, London, Burns & Lambert, 1850 (cfr. l'edizione del 1901: Id., *Certain difficulties felt by Anglicans in Catholic teaching*, London, etc., Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901, pp. 235-276).

⁶ John Henry Newman, *Lectures on present position of Catholics in England. Addressed to the Brothers of the Oratory in the summer of 1851*, New York, Longmans, Green and co., 1924, p. 390. Cfr. la prima edizione delle *Lectures*: Id., *Lectures on the present position of Catholics in England: addressed to the Brothers of the Oratory*, London, Burns & Lambert, 1851 (trad. it. *Discorsi sul pregiudizio. La condizione dei cattolici*, Milano, Jaca Book, 2000).

Fu forse dopo aver letto la frase immediatamente seguente al brano appena citato che William Bernard Ullathorne, il vescovo di Birmingham nominato all'indomani della restaurazione della gerarchia⁷, cominciò a nutrire seri dubbi riguardo alla visione newmaniana del laicato: «In all times the laity have been the measure of the Catholic spirit»⁸, scriveva il convertito inglese, che otto anni dopo (1859) pubblicò sul «Rambler» (la rivista cattolica, di cui era da poco diventato direttore, fondata nel 1848 da John Moore Capes, sacerdote anglicano convertito al cattolicesimo) un articolo sulla consultazione dei fedeli laici in materia di dottrina (*On consulting the Faithful in matters of doctrine*), attirandosi una denuncia per eresia presentata davanti alla Santa Sede⁹. Egli era consapevole della diffidenza della gerarchia cattolica inglese nei suoi confronti e scelse di dedicare le *Lectures* del 1851 non a Ullathorne (nonostante fosse il suo vescovo), ma all'irlandese Paul Cullen, già rettore del Collegio Irlandese di Roma e arcivescovo di Armagh dal 1849, nel quale nutriva maggiori speranze: poche settimane prima della pubblicazione, Cullen gli aveva infatti offerto di promuovere un'Università cattolica in Irlanda, impresa alla quale Newman (dopo essere stato nominato *Rector of the Catholic University of Ireland* il 12 novembre 1851) avrebbe dedicato il decennio successivo, potendo così nuovamente approfondire la sua proposta culturale, attraverso l'individuazione dei caratteri fondamentali di una cultura cattolica, della quale le *Lectures* del 1851 avevano richiamato l'urgenza¹⁰.

Questa ampia operazione prese forma nella serie di scritti pubblicati nei due volumi che costituiscono l'*Idea di Università*: i nove *Discourses on the scope and nature of university education* del 1852 (indirizzati ai cattolici di Dublino e corrispondenti alla prima parte dell'opera) e i dieci *University subjects*, insieme di conferenze e di saggi occasionali indirizzati agli studenti del nuovo Ateneo e corrispondenti alla seconda parte dell'opera¹¹.

⁷ Su William Bernard Ullathorne (1806-1889), cfr. C. Butler, *The life & times of Bishop Ullathorne, 1806-1889*, [II voll.], London, Burns Oates and Washbourne Ltd., 1926; Ullathorne, William Bernard, in Cross (ed.), *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, p. 1654.

⁸ Newman, *Lectures on present position of Catholics in England*, cit., p. 390.

⁹ Cfr. John Henry Newman, *On consulting the Faithful in matters of doctrine*, «The Rambler», July, 1859, pp. 188-230, poi ripubblicato col titolo: *The orthodoxy of the body of the Faithful during the supremacy of Arianism*, in Id., *The Arians of the fourth century*, London, etc., Longmans, Green and co., 1908, pp. 445-468 (trad. it. *L'ortodossia dell'insieme dei fedeli durante la supremazia dell'arianesimo*, in Id., *Gli ariani del quarto secolo*, Milano, Jaca Book-Morcelliana, 1981, pp. 345-364).

¹⁰ Su Paul Cullen (1803-1878), cfr. M. Zazzetta, *Cullen, Paul*, in *Enciclopedia cattolica*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1948, [vol. I], pp. 223-224.

¹¹ Cfr. John Henry Newman, *Discourses on the scope and nature of university education. Addressed to the Catholics of Dublin*, Dublin, James Duffy, 1852; Id., *Lectures and essays on university subjects*, London, Longman, Brown, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1859. Entrambi gli scritti confluiranno in: John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated I. in nine discourses addressed to the Catholics of Dublin II. In occasional lectures addressed to the members of the Catholic University*, London, Basil Montagu Pickering, 1873 (cfr. l'edizione del

Nella prefazione ai *Discourses* Newman spiegava che il Pontefice, raccomandando alla gerarchia irlandese la costituzione dell'Ateneo¹², aveva avuto in mente non soltanto il mero incremento delle conoscenze o l'abilità professionale (vale a dire il modello culturale del *gentleman*), ma i vantaggi morali e spirituali che da tutto ciò sarebbero potuti derivare¹³. Al fine di coltivare direttamente la ricerca esistevano infatti le accademie letterarie e scientifiche (come la *Royal Society*, l'*Ashmolean Society*, l'*Architectural Society*, l'*Antiquarian Society*, la *Royal Academy for the Fine Arts*, la *British Association*) e non c'era bisogno di dedicare ad essa un'altra istituzione come quella universitaria, che invece doveva avere il compito di insegnare e di educare. Facendo sue le riflessioni del cardinale Hyacinthe Gerdil e ponendosi (secondo Pietro Zerbi) al di fuori della concezione classica dell'Università¹⁴, Newman sosteneva che la differenza tra le Università e le accademie è che le prime insegnano e le seconde scoprono¹⁵: filosofo, pedagogista e teologo savoiardo della fine del Settecento (insegnò etica naturale e teologia morale nell'Università di Torino), il Gerdil riuscì a far valere (grazie alla sua posizione di vescovo di Dibona e successivamente anche alla porpora cardinalizia) di fronte alla cultura del suo tempo idee anti-empiriste in filosofia e anti-rousseauiane in pedagogia (facendosi portavoce di una concezione della scuola finalizzata alla formazione integrale dell'allunno), riprese e riproposte da Newman di fronte all'Inghilterra vittoriana¹⁶.

Nell'ottavo dei discorsi del 1852, però, egli ritrattava quanto aveva scritto nella prefazione e sosteneva che il *gentleman*, grazie ai talenti intellettuali dei

1907: John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, London, etc., Longmans, Green and co., 1907). Trad. it.: *L'idea di Università*, in John Henry Newman, *Opere*, Torino, Utet, 1988, pp. 729-1177.

¹² Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., pp. X-XI.

¹³ «This being undeniable, it is plain that, when he suggests to the Irish Hierarchy the establishment of a University, his first and chief and direct object is, not science, art, professional skill, literature, the discovery of knowledge, but some benefit or other, to accrue, by means of literature and science, to his own children; not indeed their formation on any narrow or fantastic type, as, for instance, that of an "English Gentleman" may be called, but their exercise and growth in certain habits, moral or intellectual. Nothing short of this can be his aim, if, as becomes the Successor of the Apostles, he is to be able to say with St. Paul, "Non judicavi me scire aliquid inter vos, nisi Jesum Christum, et hunc crucifixum".» (*ibid.*, p. XI).

¹⁴ Cfr. P. Zerbi, *John Henry Newman e l'idea di università*, in M. Marcocchi (a cura di), *John Henry Newman*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 1991, pp. 85-102.

¹⁵ «"Ce n'est pas", he says, "qu'il y ait aucune véritable opposition entre l'esprit des Académies et celui des Universités; ce sont seulement des vues différentes. Les Universités sont établies pour enseigner les sciences aux élèves qui veulent s'y former; les Académies se proposent de nouvelles recherches à faire dans la carrière des sciences. Les Universités d'Italie ont fourni des sujets qui ont fait honneur aux Académies; et celles-ci ont donné aux Universités des Professeurs, qui ont rempli les chaires avec la plus grande distinction."» (Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., p. XIII).

¹⁶ Su Hyacinthe-Sigismond Gerdil (1718-1802), cfr. C. Testore, *Gerdil, Hyacinthe-Sigismond*, in *Enciclopedia cattolica*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1951, [vol. VI], pp. 96-99. A lui si deve la stesura della bolla *Auctorem fidei* del 1786 con la quale venne condannato il Sinodo giansenista di Pistoia.

quali era dotato, possedeva una religiosità intrinseca: dire questo non significava certo far cadere del tutto le riserve riguardo al modello culturale protestante (che erano state il motivo di fondo delle precedenti *Lectures* del 1850 e del 1851), ma bisogna comunque consentire con Sheridan Gilley sul fatto che Newman non riuscì a fare a meno di utilizzare il termine *gentleman* e «gave it his own special sense»¹⁷.

2. «*It is well to be a gentleman*»¹⁸: l'educazione liberale

«The educated mind may be said in a certain sense religious», scriveva dunque. Si tratta certamente di una religione *sui generis*, fatta a misura dello spirito colto che la possiede («a religion of its own») e distinta dal cattolicesimo («independent of Catholicism»), ma non per questo separata da esso, in quanto (al contrario) è in grado di condurvi: questo tipo di religiosità, infatti, è una forma di religione della ragione («Religion of Reason») o della civiltà («Religion of Civilization»), cioè una ragione rettamente esercitata («Reason rightly exercised»), presente sia tra i cattolici sia tra i non cattolici come spirito dei tempi («spirit of the age») che influenza gli uomini¹⁹. La cultura, infatti, aiutando a distogliere la mente dalla sensualità, riesce a ottenere un tipo di vittoria sul peccato negata persino alla grazia: se è vero che nulla può agire andando oltre la propria natura («Nothing can act beyond its own nature»), come potrebbe il cristiano sconfiggere l'attaccamento alle cose (cercando di raggiungere il Cielo) se non avesse a portata di mano un espediente («expedient») sufficientemente congeniale alla propria natura («sufficiently congenial and level with our nature») in grado di mantenere su di lui un controllo altrettanto fermo del fascino esercitato dalle cose materiali?²⁰

Ed era senza alcun timore di smentire il giudizio negativo da lui stesso dato nelle *Lectures* del 1851 sulla letteratura di intrattenimento inglese²¹ che Newman parlava della saggezza dei filantropi del suo tempo, i quali avrebbero meritoriamente fornito alle masse ricreazioni intellettuali e decorose («intellectual and honourable recreations»), come le edizioni economiche («cheap literature») e le collane di conoscenze utili e dilettevoli («libraries of useful and entertaining knowledge»). Assieme alle conferenze scientifiche («scientific lectureships»), ai musei («museums»), alle collezioni zoologiche («zoological collections») e ad altro ancora, esse, espandendo la mente e innalzandola in contemplazioni liberali («liberal contemplations»), sarebbero state gli strumenti

¹⁷ Gilley, *Newman and his age*, cit., p. 303.

¹⁸ Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., p. 120.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 180-182.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 184-186.

²¹ Cfr. Newman, *Lectures on present position of Catholics in England*, cit., p. 88.

(«conformi al cristianesimo») dei quali un'epoca progredita («an age of advanced civilization») si serviva per combattere i disordini morali denunciati sia dalla Ragione («Reason») che dalla Rivelazione.

Tutto ciò poteva non comportare alcuna decurtazione della ricchezza dell'uomo perché il sapere, spiegava Newman nel quinto discorso, «is its own reward»²², cioè (quando era autentico) costituiva già esso stesso una ricompensa per l'uomo che lo accoglieva. Se infatti la conoscenza come tale (a prescindere dalle diverse forme che assume), a differenza delle altre attività, è capace di essere il suo proprio fine («Knowledge is capable of being its own end»), ciò è ancora più vero riguardo al sapere universitario; in mancanza di un termine inglese per indicare la coltivazione dell'intelletto come fine a se stessa, Newman scriveva che essa produceva i risultati altamente desiderabili propri della conoscenza filosofica («philosophical knowledge»), dell'arricchimento della mente («enlargement of mind») e dell'illuminazione («illumination»)²³: libertà («freedom»), equilibrio («equitableness»), calma («calmness»), moderazione («moderation»), saggezza («wisdom»)²⁴. Si tratta, in fondo, della libertà dalle finalità pratiche che distingue le conoscenze teoriche da quelle pratiche e produttive e che sta al fondamento della possibilità di sfuggire alla schiavitù dei sensi: il sapere sarà tanto più in grado di distogliere la mente dalla sensualità, quanto più sarà liberale («liberal»), cioè non asservito a finalità che non siano se stesso.

L'educazione del *gentleman*, avendo come contenuto primario le conoscenze teoriche, è dunque un'educazione liberale («liberal education») e Newman (forse consapevole del fatto che l'aggettivo *liberal* poteva andare incontro a fraintendimenti) dedicava tutto il quinto discorso a chiarirne il senso. Nell'espressione non bisogna infatti leggere un cedimento a posizioni «secolariste», quasi che egli, parlando della bellezza di un sapere distinto dalla fede cattolica ed esplicitamente riferendosi all'ideale oxoniense di Università, volesse riabilitare il pensiero liberale contro cui aveva polemizzato (in ambito teologico e politico) prima della conversione. «Liberale», in questo contesto, non significa infatti «antidogmatico», ma soltanto «non servile» («opposed to servile»)²⁵, dove però in «servile» si deve leggere non solo un riferimento al corpo

²² Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., p. 103.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

²⁴ Cfr. *ibid.*, pp. 101-103.

²⁵ «It is common to speak of “liberal knowledge”, of the “liberal arts and studies”, and of a “liberal education”, as the especial characteristic or property of a University and of a gentleman; what is really meant by the word? Now, first, in its grammatical sense it is opposed to *servile*; and by “servile work” is understood, as our catechisms inform us, bodily labour, mechanical employment, and the like, in which the mind has little or no part. Parallel to such servile works are those arts, if they deserve the name, of which the poet speaks, which owe their origin and their method to hazard, not to skill; as, for instance, the practice and operations of an empiric. As far as this contrast may be considered as a guide into the meaning of the word, liberal education and liberal pursuits are exercises of mind, of reason, of reflection» (*ibid.*, pp. 106-107).

fisico, ma anche a qualsiasi finalità esterna alla conoscenza stessa: così anche la caccia alla volpe («fox-chase») è un'attività "liberale", in quanto viene compiuta per se stessa e non in vista di altro; e d'altra parte la teologia perderebbe la propria liberalità (divenendo simile alla filosofia baconiana di cui era intessuta la cultura inglese dell'Ottocento) qualora venisse coltivata solo in funzione del pulpito e del catechismo²⁶.

A quali autori si ispirava Newman nel delineare il modello della *liberal education*? Per sostenere l'universalità del desiderio della conoscenza fine a se stessa citava una frase tratta da *The pursuit of knowledge under difficulties* (1833), opera di George Lillie Craik; ma questa scelta aveva il solo obiettivo di mettere in luce come il sapere teorico fosse valorizzato anche da chi (come Craik) non poteva esserne considerato un apologeta, visto che costui era uno dei principali collaboratori della *Society for promoting the diffusion of useful knowledge*²⁷, quindi assimilabile a un pensiero utilitarista da cui Newman aveva già preso le distanze in un saggio del 1841 dedicato alla critica della *Tamworth reading room*, una sorta di Istituto culturale "laico" aperto da Sir Robert Peel (il politico di tendenza *Tory* nel 1841 al suo secondo mandato governativo) nella cittadina di Tamworth a nord-est di Birmingham²⁸. Era invece alla scuola di Cicerone (*De Officiis*) e di Catone (e non a quella di Craik) che egli sosteneva l'assoluta autonomia del desiderio della conoscenza²⁹: Cicerone e Catone erano rispettivamente l'esempio di un amore e di un odio nei confronti della filosofia greca, ma entrambi, affermando l'esistenza di un sapere fine a se stesso

²⁶ Cfr. *ibid.*, pp. 108-109. Sulla critica newmaniana del liberalismo inteso come antidogmatismo razionalista, cfr. quanto scrive Edward Sillem nell'introduzione al *Philosophical notebook* di Newman (E. Sillem, ed., *The philosophical notebook of John Henry Newman*, [II voll.], Louvain, Nauwelaerts Publishing House, 1969, [vol. I], pp. 22-66; trad. it. *Quaderno filosofico*, in: John Henry Newman, *Scritti filosofici*, Milano, Bompiani, 2005, pp. 633-845). Sulla concezione newmaniana dell'educazione liberale, cfr.: T. Hoeffken, *John Henry Newman on liberal education*, Kirkwood, Maryhurst, 1946.

²⁷ Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., pp. 103-104. Sulla *Society for promoting the diffusion of useful knowledge*, cfr. J.R. Humpidge Moorman, *A history of the Church in England*, London, Adam & Charles Black, 1953, p. 327. Su George Lillie Craik (1798-1866), cfr. A.W. Ward, A.R. Waller (eds.), *The Cambridge history of English literature*, [XV voll.], Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1932, [vol. I], p. VIII; [vol. XII], p. 504; [vol. XIV], p. 502, 612.

²⁸ Cfr. *The Tamworth reading room: letters on an address delivered by sir Robert Peel, Bart, M.P. on the establishment of a reading room at Tamworth*, «The Times», 5, 9, 10, 12, 20, 22, 26, Feb. 1841; le lettere vennero riunite lo stesso anno in un volume: John Henry Newman, *The Tamworth reading room: letters on an address delivered by sir Robert Peel, Bart, M.P. on the establishment of a reading room at Tamworth. Originally published in the Times, and since revised and corrected by the author*, London, John Mortimer, 1841 (cfr. l'edizione del 2004: *The Tamworth reading room – addressed to the editor of the Times. By Catholicus* – in John Henry Newman, *Discussions and arguments on various subjects*, Leominster, Gracewing; Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 2004, pp. 254-305). Su Robert Peel (1788-1850), cfr. E.L. Woodward, *Oxford History of England. The age of reform 1815-1870*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1938, pp. 73-74, 79-82.

²⁹ Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., pp. 105-106.

so, delinearono i contorni di quello che più avanti sarebbe stato chiamato “sapere liberale”.

L'Università non è niente più di questo («nothing more than I have as yet described it»), cioè sapere ed educazione liberale, ma può essere santificata perché la bellezza che traspare dallo studio è una strada verso il Cielo: «We attain to heaven by using this world well, though it is to pass away»; perfezioniamo la nostra natura, non disfacendola, ma elevandola al di sopra di se stessa: «we perfect our nature, not by undoing it, but by adding to it what is more than nature, and directing it towards aims higher than its own»³⁰.

3. *L'idea di Università: «enlargement of mind»*

Traspare dunque il bello dall'istituzione universitaria e da coloro che ne sono i protagonisti. Ciò tuttavia, secondo il convertito inglese, non era per nulla scontato, se decideva di dedicare l'intero sesto discorso a mettere in luce come, alla metà dell'Ottocento, l'idea più diffusa su di essa fosse fondamentalmente sbagliata, in quanto faceva consistere il fine dell'Università in quella acquisizione quantitativa di nozioni dalla quale egli, già durante gli anni oxoniensi, aveva cominciato a prendere le distanze³¹: la sapienza (che nel quattordicesimo sermone universitario del 1841 era stata descritta come ordinato sviluppo del pensiero)³², nel sesto discorso dell'*Idea di Università* veniva posta a contrasto con l'affanno di accumulare conoscenze e descritta nei termini di un allargamento intellettuale molto simile all'atteggiamento religioso, in quanto capace di dare significato unitario alle conoscenze accumulate, nello stesso modo in cui la persona incolta che si volge a Dio riesce a formarsi un giudizio su tutto ciò che le capita.

L'avere solo una parte di questa autentica filosofia («true philosophy») rappresenta infatti lo stato più alto cui possa aspirare la natura sul piano intellettuale, perché permette di elevarsi al di sopra degli influssi del caso («chance») e della necessità («necessity»), dell'ansia («anxiety»), dell'indecisione («suspense»), dell'inquietudine («unsettlement») e della superstizione («superstition»), nomi diversi di quell'irresistibile attaccamento alle cose che costituisce il destino dei più («the lot of the many»). Si tratta in altre parole di avere un intellet-

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

³² Cfr. John Henry Newman, *Wisdom, as contrasted with faith and with bigotry*, in Id., *Sermons, chiefly on the theory of religious belief, preached before the University of Oxford*, Oxford, J.G.F. & J. Rivington & J.H. Parker, 1843. Cfr. in: John Henry Newman, *Fifteen Sermons preached before the University of Oxford between 1826 and 1843*, London, etc., Longmans, Green and co., 1909, pp. 278-311, d'ora in poi citati come US (trad. it. *Quindici sermoni predicati all'Università di Oxford tra il 1826 e il 1843*, in Newman, *Scritti filosofici*, cit., pp. 509-563).

to non parziale e non esclusivo (perché consapevole dell'importanza di non assolutizzare le cose credendole le uniche esistenti), ma nello stesso tempo nemmeno caratterizzato dall'impetuosità del non tendere ad alcuno scopo e del vagare senza meta: intelletto paziente («patient»), raccolto («collected») e maestosamente calmo («majestically calm»). L'accumulo intellettuale, di per sé importante, si inaridisce quando non si lascia inserire in un contesto più ampio che gli dà bellezza e lustro, facendolo diventare autentica «enlargement of mind»: sapere qualcosa non significa soltanto recepire passivamente dei contenuti, ma renderli soggettivamente propri, inserendoli nel contesto di ciò che si conosce già, come seppero fare i grandi Aristotele, San Tommaso, Newton e Goethe, i quali possedevano una visione coerente dell'antico e del nuovo.

Chi non sale al di sopra delle proprie conoscenze generalizzando, facendo ricorso a principi e riducendo a metodo, verrà schiacciato da esse: Newman non poteva che constatare la desolazione del panorama della cultura accademica inglese del suo tempo, la quale, non avendo accolto questa massima, si trovava prigioniera del culto per l'erudizione riscontrabile, ad esempio, nelle opere di storici della Chiesa come Lorenz von Mosheim (teologo, storico ed esegeta luterano tedesco della prima metà del Settecento, autore delle *Institutiones ecclesiasticae* – 1726 –, a motivo delle quali viene considerato il fondatore della storiografia ecclesiastica moderna presso i protestanti) o il teologo giansenista francese della seconda metà del secolo Louis Dupin (professore al Collegio reale di Parigi), la cui monumentale *Nouvelle bibliothèque des auteurs ecclésiastiques* venne posta all'Indice, in quanto negava il primato del Papa, criticava i Padri della Chiesa e dimostrava simpatie per Nestorio; un errore simile si sarebbe registrato nei metodi di istruzione a tutti i livelli (dalla scuola all'Università), che indebolivano la mente con argomenti appresi superficialmente, senza cioè lo sforzo («exertion») necessario a comprenderli fino in fondo, finendo per produrre un sapere meccanico, privo di fondamenta («grounding»), di avanzamento («advance»), di rifinitura («finishing»)³³.

Per quanto lo riguardava, se avesse dovuto scegliere tra una cosiddetta Università («so-called University») che non implicava la residenza degli studenti, né il controllo dei *tutor* e che erogava diplomi a chiunque avesse superato esami su un ampio arco di materie, ed un'Università senza professori ed esami, ma che si fosse limitata a mantenere per pochi anni un certo numero di giovani per poi mandarli via, avrebbe dato la preferenza a quella che aveva fatto meno. L'osservazione suonava certamente paradossale ma Newman era convinto che le scuole pubbliche e i collegi universitari inglesi del Settecento erano riusciti a formare eroi, uomini di stato, scrittori e filosofi (nonostante avessero adottato

³³ Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., pp. 133-143. Su Johann Lorenz von Mosheim (1694-1755), cfr. la voce in *Enciclopedia Italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*, Milano, Treccani, 1934, [vol. XXIII], p. 934; su Louis Ellies Dupin (1657-1719), cfr. C. Angeleri, *Dupin, Louis-Ellies*, in *Enciclopedia cattolica*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1950, [vol. IV], p. 1995.

una formula blanda di cristianesimo e un codice pagano di comportamento) proprio grazie al fatto che studenti provenienti da luoghi diversi risiedevano negli stessi collegi, arricchendosi reciprocamente di nuove idee e punti di vista, in modo tale che riuscivano a vedere il mondo con poca fatica e in un piccolo spazio: si trattava di un processo talmente spontaneo da poter essere definito autoeducazione («self-education») e che si presentava come del tutto incompatibile con il panorama degli studi ottocentesco; di fronte a quest'ultimo, Newman non riusciva a fare a meno di dire che, piuttosto che sottostare alla penosa fatica di apprendere argomenti senza andare a fondo nel loro significato, sarebbe stato meglio non iscriversi all'Università o aggirarsi a caso in una biblioteca prendendo i libri che capitavano sottomano e seguendo le concatenazioni di pensiero suggerite dall'intuito; leggere molti libri, preparare molte materie, assistere a molti esperimenti e frequentare molte conferenze, senza sapere il senso di quello che si stava facendo avrebbe potuto essere nient'altro che un indugiare nel vestibolo della conoscenza («in the vestibule of knowledge»)³⁴.

4. *L'idea di Università: antiutilitarismo*

Newman aveva vissuto in prima persona questi problemi a Oxford, in quanto la sua proposta di riforma del sistema tutoriale a *Oriel College* del 1829-1830 (incentrata sull'approfondimento del rapporto *tutor*-allievo) intendeva in fondo contribuire a colmare una grossa lacuna che, nei primi decenni dell'Ottocento, intorpidiva la vita delle Università inglesi, sommandosi al problema settecentesco della inadeguata formazione religiosa: la non residenzialità degli studenti e lo scarso controllo esercitato dai *tutor*.

Egli, per la verità, si era posto sulla scia di un'altra grande stagione di cambiamento dell'intera Università, che aveva visto (nel primo decennio del secolo) alcune personalità di spicco del mondo intellettuale mettere mano a una serie di riforme intese a potenziare lo studio dei classici e a migliorare il sistema degli esami, rendendoli più rigorosi: John Napleton, Vicesimus Knox, John Eveleigh (*Provost* di *Oriel College*), Cyril Jackson (*Dean* di *Christ Church*), John Parsons (*Fellow* di *Oriel*). Criticata in un articolo della «*Edinburgh Review*» (la rivista dei radicali scozzesi fondata nel 1802) da tre giganti del nord («three giants of the North»)³⁵, il giudice Francis Jeffrey, il predicatore Sydney Smith (due dei fondatori della rivista), il matematico John Playfair, e difesa da due grandi uomini di *Oriel College*, Edward Copleston (filosofo morale, teologo e vescovo di Llandaff che ne sarebbe stato rettore dal 1814 al 1827) e John Davison (teologo di fama, autore dei *Discourses on prophecy* del

³⁴ Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., pp. 145-152.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

1824 e al quale Newman aveva dedicato un saggio nel 1842)³⁶, la prima stagione di riforma oxoniense fu orientata a liberare l'Università di Oxford dalla gabbia dell'utilitarismo educativo, nella quale sembrava essere rinchiusa alla fine del Settecento e alla quale volevano certamente condannarla i polemisti della «Edinburgh Review»³⁷. Oltre al lavoro di Copleston contro Playfair, Jeffrey e Smith (che dalle colonne della rivista scozzese proponevano l'educazione utilitaria in alternativa al potenziamento delle materie classiche al centro delle riforme a Oxford), il primo decennio del secolo vide anche la polemica di John Davison contro Richard Lovell Edgeworth (noto pedagogo di impostazione rousseauiana, autore di *Practical education* scritto assieme alla figlia Maria)³⁸ e contro John Locke: quest'ultimo, condannando in una delle sue ultime opere (i *Pensieri sull'educazione* del 1693³⁹) le materie che i ragazzi studiavano a scuola, in quanto non sarebbero state necessarie alla vita, avrebbe preceduto le proteste della «Edinburgh Review» contro lo studio dei classici posto a fondamento dell'insegnamento a Oxford ai primi del secolo⁴⁰.

Ed era proprio appoggiandosi ai lavori di Copleston e di Davison che Newman, nell'*Idea di Università*, poteva rispondere ampiamente alla critica lockeana alla presunta inutilità dell'educazione intellettuale, mettendo in evidenza come essa, al contrario, avendo come fine il bene consistente nella cultura dell'intelletto, avesse un'utilità simile a quella della medicina che cura la salute del corpo⁴¹. Inoltre, mentre l'utile non sempre è buono, il buono è sempre utile («though the useful is not always good, the good is always useful»), dal momento che, come il bello, non può non traboccare fuori di sé, ed è quindi

³⁶ Cfr. John Henry Newman, *Works of the late Rev. J. Davison*, «The British Critic», XXXI, April 1842, pp. 367-401, poi ripubblicato come *John Davison* (cfr. in John Henry Newman, *Essays critical and historical*, Longmans, Green and co., London, etc. 1907, [vol. II], pp. 375-420).

³⁷ Sulle riforme oxoniensi del primo decennio dell'Ottocento e sui loro promotori, oltre a quanto Newman stesso scrive nella settima conferenza dell'*Idea di Università* (cfr. Newman, *The Idea of a University*, cit., pp. 153-162), cfr. anche: T. Bokenkotter, *Cardinal Newman as an historian*, Louvain, Bibliothèque de l'Université, 1959, pp. 1-9. Su John Playfair (1748-1819), Francis Jeffrey (1773-1850), Sydney Smith (1771-1845) e John Davison (1777-1834), cfr. quanto viene detto in Ward-Waller (eds.), *The Cambridge history of english literature*, cit., [vol. XII]. Su Edward Copleston (1776-1849), cfr. Cross (ed.), *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, cit., pp. 415-416.

³⁸ Su Richard Lovell Edgeworth (1744-1817) e sulla figlia Maria (1767-1849), cfr. Ward-Waller (eds.), *The Cambridge history of english literature*, cit., [vol. XIV], pp. 392-394; Woodward, *Oxford History of England. The age of reform 1815-1870*, cit., p. 457.

³⁹ John Locke, *Some Thoughts concerning Education*, London, Printed for A. and J. Churchill, 1693.

⁴⁰ Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., pp. 156-160.

⁴¹ «I say, if a Liberal Education consists in the culture of the intellect, and if that culture be in itself a good, here, without going further, is an answer to Locke's question; for if a healthy body is a good in itself, why is not a healthy intellect? and if a College of Physicians is a useful institution, because it contemplates bodily health, why is not an Academical Body, though it were simply and solely engaged in imparting vigour and beauty and grasp to the intellectual portion of our nature?» (*ibid.*, p. 162).

creatore di altro bene («productive of good»)⁴²: chi ha ben coltivato il proprio intelletto sarà infatti posto in una condizione ottimale per intraprendere qualsiasi professione con una versatilità e con un successo ignoti ad altri e risulterà capace, di conseguenza, di essere utile alla società; è vero, quindi, che l'educazione liberale rifiuta di assegnare il posto d'onore, nel sapere universitario, alle conoscenze professionali, ma solo per posporle alla formazione del cittadino, che, una volta realizzata, sarà la base per conseguire al meglio anche quelle⁴³.

L'educazione liberale ha allora un fine pratico consistente nel formare buoni membri della società («training good members of society»), nel rendere adatti al mondo («fitness for the world»), nell'elevare il tono intellettuale della società («raising the intellectual tone of society»), nel coltivare lo spirito del popolo («cultivating the public mind»), nel facilitare l'esercizio del potere politico («facilitating the exercise of political power»)⁴⁴; tutto ciò può essere realizzato in Università, a condizione che essa, abbandonando la pretesa di appiattire il sapere sulle conoscenze professionali, promuova una cultura liberale, cioè degna di essere conseguita per se stessa: soltanto l'amore disinteressato per il sapere (e non l'affannosa ricerca dell'utile) apre alla realizzazione pratica e produce autentico progresso pratico nella società⁴⁵.

Il progetto newmaniano di riforma del sistema tutoriale venne realizzato sviluppando proprio questa idea, che il convertito inglese, nel 1852, quando scriveva l'*Idea di Università*, riteneva essere stata al centro delle riforme oxoniensi del 1800-1810. Esse, per quanto fossero riuscite nell'intento di migliorare la qualità degli studi universitari, non avevano ancora toccato la questione del sistema tutoriale, ai cui difetti Newman attribuì il suo fallimento negli esami del 1820: se i *tutor* del *Trinity College* fossero stati più presenti e non lo avessero abbandonato, avrebbe (a suo dire) raggiunto gli *Honours* (i massimi voti)⁴⁶. La cosa non gli impedì (nel 1822) di essere ammesso a *Oriel*, dal momento che il collegio adottava un sistema diverso di selezione dei candidati, privilegiando più l'abilità

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 164.

⁴³ «I say that a cultivated intellect, because it is a good in itself, brings with it a power and a grace to every work and occupation which it undertakes, and enables us to be more useful, and to a greater number. There is a duty we owe to human society as such, to the state to which we belong, to the sphere in which we move, to the individuals towards whom we are variously related, and whom we successively encounter in life; and that philosophical or liberal education, as I have called it, which is the proper function of a University, if it refuses the foremost place to professional interests, does but postpone them to the formation of the citizen, and, while it subserves the larger interests of philanthropy, prepares also for the successful prosecution of those merely personal objects, which at first sight it seems to disparage» (*ibid.*, p. 167).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 177-178.

⁴⁵ Sulla connessione tra teoria e pratica in Newman, cfr. C. Roverselli, *L'educazione negli scritti anglicani di John Henry Newman*, Napoli, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1994; Ead., *Diventare reali: un principio educativo negli scritti anglicani di John Henry Newman*, «Orientamenti pedagogici», XLV, 1998, pp. 997-1012.

⁴⁶ Cfr. H. Tristram, *Classical studies of Newman at Oxford*, in *A tribute to Newman*, Dublin, 1945, pp. 256-258, 264-266.

intellettuale che l'apprendimento mnemonico; ma fu comunque uno dei motivi che lo spinse, una volta diventato *tutor* a *Oriel*, a tentare di migliorare nel nuovo collegio quel sistema che gli era stato di scarso aiuto al *Trinity*. Come nella prima, quindi, anche nella seconda stagione riformatrice (quella promossa da lui) era presente un'istanza antiutilitaristica, dal momento che rafforzare il ruolo del *tutor* significava cogliere tutta l'importanza rivestita dal rapporto personale docente-discente per la formazione integrale dello studente universitario e dunque porsi ancora una volta al di là delle concezioni che riducevano la vita universitaria al mero accumulo quantitativo delle conoscenze.

5. *L'idea di Università: «personal influence»*

Che Newman ritenesse fondamentale l'ancoraggio della sua riforma universitaria a una visione qualitativa e non quantitativa del sapere è dimostrato dal fatto che l'unica opera dove ne parlava in modo piuttosto organico, *The rise and progress of Universities* (raccolta degli scritti pubblicati sulla «Catholic university gazette» di Dublino, la rivista universitaria da lui fondata nel 1854) ruotava attorno all'idea della strumentalità della comunicazione scritta nei confronti del rapporto educativo personale e quindi basato sull'oralità⁴⁷.

Dopo aver detto (per avvalorare la tesi della superiorità dell'oralità sulla scrittura) che il *gentleman* si forma non sui libri, ma nell'alta società («high society») e l'uomo di Stato a contatto diretto con quella sorta di Università della politica («University of politics») che è il Parlamento⁴⁸ e che tutte le più grandi Università (Atene, Parigi, Lovanio, Oxford) sorsero in luoghi già attivi dal punto di vista politico e culturale, tanto che era possibile definirle Università virtuali («virtual Universities»)⁴⁹; Newman spiegava quale, secondo lui, doveva essere, in un modello ideale di Università, il giusto posto da dare all'influenza personale («personal influence») dei professori sugli allievi e alla struttura (leggi, principi, *college*, *tutor*), chiamata disciplina («discipline»).

Riferendosi alla sua esperienza oxoniense di venticinque anni prima, egli osservava che allora i fatti dimostrarono che, mentre l'influenza personale poteva fare a meno del sistema («to dispense with an academical system»), non era vero il contrario, perché se fosse caduta l'influenza personale, sarebbe finita la vita e l'Università si sarebbe trasformata in un inverno artico («an arctic

⁴⁷ Gli scritti vennero poi pubblicati in volume nel 1856 con il titolo *The office and work of Universities* (cfr. John Henry Newman, *The office and work of Universities*, London, Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1856) e raccolti poi nel terzo volume degli *Historical sketches* col titolo di *The rise and progress of Universities* (cfr. *The rise and progress of Universities*, in John Henry Newman, *Historical sketches*, Longmans, Green and co., London, etc. 1909, [vol. III], pp. 1-254).

⁴⁸ Cfr. Newman, *The Rise and Progress of Universities*, cit., pp. 10-11.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-28.

winter»), come stava succedendo appunto a Oxford, quando egli si apprestava a riformare il sistema tutoriale: gli insegnanti non insegnavano più («were cut off from the taught as by an insurmountable barrier»), ognuno viveva chiuso in se stesso, il *tutor* pensava che il suo lavoro consistesse nel trovarsi a una certa ora in un certo luogo e l'allievo nel non mancare all'appuntamento con lui. Il rapporto personale era dunque quella condizione necessaria della vita universitaria che mancava allora (perché regnava invece sovrana soltanto la legge) e della cui imprescindibilità qualcuno si rese conto, mettendosi alla ricerca di veri maestri, i quali conquistarono i cuori degli studenti, proprio perché puntarono tutto l'essenziale non sulla procedura, ma sul rapporto⁵⁰: il *college tutor*, infatti, è una figura istituzionale (riconducibile quindi alla dimensione della *discipline*), ma assolve bene al suo compito solo se cerca un rapporto personale con l'allievo e riesce a creare attorno a sé piccole comunità di studio, dove possano trovare supporto i migliori pensieri e le migliori risoluzioni degli studenti, i quali altrimenti rischierebbero di perdere la fede e la morale trovandosi a contatto con una realtà nuova e grande come quella universitaria⁵¹.

Era l'essenza del suo progetto di riforma del 1829-1830 che, in *The rise and progress of Universities*, attraverso la presentazione nei termini di una "via media" tra il sistema franco-tedesco dei professori (*influence*) e quello inglese dei *college* e dei *tutor* (*discipline*)⁵², veniva proposta come il modello dell'Università ideale, proprio perché in essa la disciplina, lungi dall'ostacolare l'influenza personale, la esaltava al massimo grado. Evidentemente e paradossalmente, Newman dovette sentirsi molto più libero proprio da cattolico che da anglicano nel parlare di una questione che quando era stata da lui proposta alla cultura accademica della Oxford del 1830 era risultata piuttosto "scot-

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 74-76.

⁵¹ «And lastly, obvious as are the deficiencies of that system, as obvious surely is its remedy, as far as human nature admits of one. I have been saying that regularity, rule, respect for others, the eye of friends and acquaintances, the absence from temptation, external restraints generally, are of first importance in protecting us against ourselves. When a boy leaves his home, when a peasant leaves his country, his faith and morals are in great danger, both because he is in the world, and also because he is among strangers. The remedy, then, of the perils which a University presents to the student, is to create within it homes, "altera Trojæ Pergama", such as those, or better than those, which he has left behind. Small communities must be set up within its precincts, where his better thoughts will find countenance, and his good resolutions support; where his waywardness will be restrained, his heedlessness forewarned, and his prospective deviations anticipated. Here, too, his diligence will be steadily stimulated; he will be kept up to his aim; his progress will be ascertained, and his week's work, like a labourer's, measured. It is not easy for a young man to determine for himself whether he has mastered what he has been taught; a careful catechetical training, and a jealous scrutiny into his power of expressing himself and of turning his knowledge to account, will be necessary, if he is really to profit from the able Professors whom he is attending; and all this he will gain from the College Tutor» (*ibid.*, pp. 189-190).

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 181-182; W. Neville (ed.), *My campaign in Ireland, Part I. Catholic university reports and other papers by cardinal Newman of the Oratory*, printed for private circulation only by A. King & Co. printers to the University of Aberdeen, 1896, pp. 33-34, 59.

tante”, ma proprio per questo fondamentale. In quel frangente, egli infatti si rese conto di come le sue idee in materia educativa (nonostante l'Università oxoniense si fosse già in parte riformata da due decenni migliorando la qualità del proprio insegnamento) mettevano in imbarazzo certa cultura poco incline a vedere nel sapere un qualcosa che, riguardando la totalità dell'umano, non poteva non tradursi in rapporti personali e di amicizia.

Si trattava di quella mentalità “liberale” in materia religiosa che caratterizzava il pensiero dei *Noetics* di *Oriel*, cioè il gruppo più “liberale” all'interno del Movimento di Oxford (in quanto non disdegnava di criticare l'autorità), al quale apparteneva, oltre al già citato Copleston, anche il rettore di *Oriel College* Edward Hawkins. Temendo che il progetto di riforma newmaniano avrebbe rafforzato troppo la dimensione religiosa in Università (vista la provenienza ecclesiastica della gran parte dei *tutor*), nel 1830 Hawkins minacciò di non assegnare più alunni a Newman e agli altri tre *tutor* “ribelli” che si erano fatti promotori della riforma assieme a lui: Froude, Joseph Dornford e Robert Isaac Wilberforce (1802-1857); nel giugno dello stesso anno, Newman, Froude e Wilberforce si dimisero dall'incarico⁵³. La successiva nomina (voluta dallo stesso Hawkins) del *noetic* Renn Dickson Hampden al posto che era stato di Newman, aprì la strada alla secolarizzazione nell'antica Università inglese, dal momento che nel novembre 1834 Hampden (dopo essere diventato rettore di *Oriel College*, preside di St. Mary Hall e professore di Filosofia Morale alla cattedra che doveva andare a Newman) sarebbe stato uno dei fautori della proposta rivolta ai capi dei *college* da parte del duca di Wellington (da poco eletto rettore dell'Università di Oxford e già “responsabile” in veste di Primo Ministro della legge sull'Emancipazione cattolica del 1829)⁵⁴ di sostituire il giuramento di fedeltà ai Trentanove Articoli della Chiesa anglicana (fino ad allora necessario per iscriversi in Università) con una dichiarazione secondo la quale l'interessato accettava le dottrine della Chiesa ufficiale⁵⁵: in *Observation on religious dissent*, Hampden, prospettando per l'università lo stesso scenario che l'anno prima lo storico oxoniense di tendenze liberali Thomas Arnold in *Principles of Church Reform* aveva prospettato per la nazione (ammettere nelle chiese anche ebrei, quaccheri e cattolici)⁵⁶, sosteneva che sarebbe bastato allar-

⁵³ Sulla vicenda, cfr.: Mozley, *Letters and correspondence of John Henry Newman during his life in English Church*, cit., [vol. I], pp. 91-201; LD, [vol. I], pp. 273-313, [vol. II], pp. XIII-250; D. Fenlon, *The “Aristocracy of Talent” and the “Mystery” of Newman*, «Louvain Studies», XV, 1990, pp. 203-206.

⁵⁴ Su Arthur Wellesley, duca di Wellington (1769-1852), cfr. J.C.D. Clark, *English Society 1660-1832. Religion, ideology and politics during the Ancien Regime*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000², pp. 527-538; Woodward, *Oxford History of England. The age of reform 1815-1870*, cit., pp. 72-75.

⁵⁵ Su Edward Hawkins (1789-1882) e Renn Dickson Hampden (1793-1868), cfr. le rispettive voci in Cross (ed.), *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, cit., pp. 739 e 733.

⁵⁶ Su Thomas Arnold (1795-1842), cfr. Arnold, *Thomas*, in Cross (ed.), *The Oxford dictionary of the christian Church*, cit., p. 111.

gare i confini dell'ortodossia anglicana per permettere ai «dissenters» di accedere all'università; ricevutane una copia dall'autore, Newman non esitò a esprimergli il suo dispiacere per il fatto che il libro fosse stato pubblicato⁵⁷.

L'illustre cattedratico voleva portare a compimento, a Oxford, lo spirito del progetto di legge governativo sull'abolizione dei *test* religiosi a Oxford e a Cambridge che alcuni mesi prima (agosto 1834), dopo essere passato alla Camera dei Comuni, era naufragato ai *Lords*, ma dovette anche lui rinunciare al suo intento, a causa del voto contrario della maggioranza dei *colleges* di Oxford (maggio 1835). Nel 1852, quando Newman teneva i nove discorsi universitari di Dublino, l'attacco ai fondamenti religiosi del sistema universitario inglese era dunque fallito e le due grandi università avrebbero dovuto attendere le riforme del 1854 e del 1856 e l'*University Test Act* del 1871 (realizzato da William Gladstone, allora al suo primo mandato governativo) per vedere l'abolizione dei *test* religiosi⁵⁸; ma egli volle esprimere nondimeno la sua amarezza per il fatto che quegli uomini saggi che nel corso dell'Ottocento alzarono la voce per salvare le istituzioni educative furono costretti a far buon viso a uno spirito che non avrebbe mai ammesso che una Università è un'*Alma Mater* che conosce i propri figli uno ad uno, non una fonderia («foundry»), una zecca («mint») o un mulino («treadmill»)⁵⁹. Amarezza giustificata certamente dalla percezione dell'enorme ricchezza contenuta nelle riforme del 1800-1810 e nel suo tentativo del 1829-1830, che, non per nulla, egli, nel 1852, riteneva adatti a essere posti a fondamento anche di un'Università cattolica come quella d'Irlanda.

Non potremmo, del resto, stupirci del fatto che Newman proponesse al cattolicesimo d'Irlanda l'ideale universitario oxoniense, in quanto, nel primo discorso dell'*Idea di Università*, si spingeva a sostenere che l'educazione secolare («secular education»), nella quale teologia e scienze vengono insegnate separatamente, poteva in certe situazioni rappresentare il male minore, come dimostrava il fatto che la Chiesa primitiva permise ai propri fedeli di frequentare, per la for-

⁵⁷ A R.D. Hampden, 28th November 1834, *LD*, [vol. IV], p. 371. Due anni dopo, quando il secondo governo *whig* di lord Melbourne (1835-1841), succeduto a Grey, nominò Hampden professore di Teologia a Oxford, Newman si accodò al coro di proteste levatosi nell'antica università e, dopo aver steso un articolo anonimo per smascherare l'eterodossia dei suoi scritti (*Elucidations of Dr. Hampden's theological statements*, W. Baxter, Oxford 1836), si mostrò solidale con la dichiarazione di sfiducia nei confronti del nuovo cattedratico espressa dalla maggioranza dei professori di Oxford riuniti nella *Convocation* (la massima autorità accademica che riuniva tutti i docenti dell'Università ed era sottoposta solo al Parlamento). Su William Lamb, secondo Visconte di Melbourne (1779-1848), cfr. Woodward, *Oxford History of England. The age of reform 1815-1870*, cit., p. 93; cfr. anche il testo della *Convocation*, riportato nel quinto volume delle *Letters and diaries of Newman: Requisition to the vice-chancellor*, Oxford 22 March 1836, *LD*, [vol. V], p. 266.

⁵⁸ Per una panoramica storica sull'intera vicenda a partire dal 1834 cfr. Woodward, *Oxford History of England. The age of reform 1815-1870*, cit., pp. 471-72. Su William Ewart Gladstone (1809-1898), cfr. J. Morley, *The life of William Ewart Gladstone*, [III voll.], London, Mcmillan; New York, The MacMillan Company, 1903.

⁵⁹ Cfr. Newman, *The Rise and Progress of Universities*, cit., pp. 143-145.

mazione profana, le scuole pagane; anche i vescovi irlandesi, continuava Newman, avevano recentemente ritenuto opportuno tollerare che le classi più povere della comunità si formassero nelle scuole nazionali, secondo il sistema dell'educazione mista («mixed education»), un'educazione che, essendo non confessionale, incarnava un ideale ancora più “secolare” e quindi ancora più distante dal cattolicesimo rispetto a quello oxoniense di Università⁶⁰.

Il progetto newmaniano di un Ateneo cattolico in Irlanda (nel quale si condensavano le sue idee sull'educazione nazionale) coincideva dunque con un modello educativo non cattolico? A questa domanda bisogna rispondere negativamente, perché nell'*Idea di Università* il vero significato di *liberal education* non risultava riducibile all'ideale educativo del *gentleman*, ma implicava una dimensione superiore che solo l'inclusione della teologia nel novero delle materie insegnate era in grado di assicurare.

6. *L'idea di Università: «natural theology»*

Nel primo discorso, infatti, subito dopo aver parlato del modello della *mixed education*, Newman aggiungeva che «such a state of things, however, is passing away», perché il Papa aveva deciso, riguardo all'Università, che il piano educativo più conveniente («most expedient») per l'Irlanda dovesse essere non quello che prometteva un insegnamento adatto a quante più confessioni religiose possibili, ma quello migliore in linea teorica («which is abstractly best»), conforme cioè alla dottrina della Chiesa cattolica⁶¹.

In materia religiosa (e la questione educativa toccava molto da vicino la religione), continuava Newman, la suprema regola per i cattolici non era l'argomentazione, ma l'autorità del Papa, che di recente aveva auspicato la creazione, per l'Irlanda, di un sistema universitario autenticamente cattolico, sconfessando così la posizione di una parte dei vescovi irlandesi, che ancora guardavano con favore ai due *college* universitari di Cork e di Galway (ultimo tentativo di *mixed education* in Irlanda), creati da Robert Peel nel 1845 (da quattro anni Primo Ministro al suo secondo incarico) allo scopo di offrire ai cattolici quell'istruzione universitaria alla quale di fatto non potevano accedere nell'unico centro universitario del Paese, il protestante e confessionale *Trinity College* di Dublino⁶². Secondo Newman, però, la recente decisione della Santa Sede sarebbe andata a vantaggio di tutti i cattolici di lingua inglese (e non solo

⁶⁰ Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of the University defined and illustrated*, p. 9.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

⁶² Sulla situazione dell'educazione cattolica irlandese nell'Ottocento e sulla posizione dell'episcopato irlandese nei confronti dei *College* di Peel, cfr. W. Ward, *The life of John Henry, cardinal Newman based on his private journals and correspondence*, London etc., Longmans, Green and co., 1927, pp. 275-276, 305-311.

degli irlandesi) perché avrebbe permesso loro, per la prima volta, di avere un'istruzione superiore coincidente con la dottrina cattolica e dunque quanto mai distante da quel miscuglio di ispirazioni religiose diverse proposto a Cork e a Galway⁶³.

Del resto, nei confronti del sistema educativo vigente in Inghilterra, il mondo cattolico inglese non mancò mai, nel corso dell'Ottocento, di esprimere tutta la sua insoddisfazione: i due *college* irlandesi si inserivano infatti in una lunga tradizione educativa basata sul finanziamento dello Stato e sulla gestione diretta da parte della Chiesa anglicana, la quale proponeva un'istruzione interconfessionale (*undenominational*) e una formula religiosa di *common christianity* ruotante attorno alla lettura della Bibbia; esistevano scuole non statali cattoliche, ma la loro vita sembrava destinata a non fiorire mai, perché gran parte della gerarchia cattolica, a cominciare da Ullathorne e da Wiseman, per salvaguardare l'integrità dottrinale dell'insegnamento, voleva mantenere fino in fondo la loro indipendenza dallo Stato, dimostrandosi quindi scettica sia di fronte alle prime concessioni economiche statali alle scuole non statali (1839), sia di fronte al *Forster Act* del 1870 con il quale, nell'ambito della scuola primaria (attraverso il "dual system"), le *Voluntary Schools* (in gran parte anglicane e cattoliche) venivano poste sullo stesso piano delle *Board Schools* (scuole statali)⁶⁴.

La situazione diventava ancora meno rosea in campo universitario: in mancanza di Università cattoliche, i cattolici potevano frequentare o gli studi superiori nelle *catholic secondary schools* di Stonyhurst e di Oscott (le quali non erano però veri e propri corsi universitari e non avevano una laurea riconosciuta dallo Stato) oppure iscriversi nei *college* delle antiche università inglesi, ma (prima delle riforme della metà degli anni Cinquanta) con l'obbligo di sottoscrivere i Trentanove Articoli della fede anglicana per l'immatricolazione e senza poter continuare fino alla laurea. Esistevano anche *college* cattolici affiliati all'Università statale di Londra (fondata nel 1828 – e riconosciuta nel 1835 – allo scopo di accogliere quegli studenti che non avendo superato il *test* religioso non potevano iscriversi a Oxford e a Cambridge), ma essa in fondo non era altro che il corrispettivo inglese di Cork e di Galway: i due principali ideatori (Henry Peter Brougham e John Russell) si segnalavano infatti per il loro pensiero radicale e utilitarista, essendo Brougham uno dei fondatori della «Edinburgh Review» e della *Society for promoting the diffusion of useful knowledge* (1827) e Russell (tra i capi del partito *Whig* e Primo Ministro dal 1846 al 1858 e dal 1865 al 1866) uno dei più virulenti oppositori della restaurazione della gerarchia cattolica inglese e promotore dell'*Ecclesiastical Titles Act* (1851), con il quale venivano perseguitati i vescovi cattolici che avessero assunto i titoli territoriali delle diocesi anglicane⁶⁵.

⁶³ Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of the University defined and illustrated*, pp. XIV-XV-XVI.

⁶⁴ Sulla situazione della scuola primaria e secondaria in Inghilterra, cfr. Woodward, *Oxford History of England. The age of reform 1815-1870*, cit., pp. 455-469.

Non ci sarebbe mai stata un'Università cattolica in terra inglese, perché tutti i tentativi fatti in questa direzione tra il 1834 e la fine del secolo o fallirono o si tradussero in realizzazioni di brevissima durata, come nel caso del *Catholic University College* di Kensington aperto nel 1875 e sopravvissuto fino al 1882. A fare da freno fu probabilmente la paura della gerarchia cattolica di dar vita a istituzioni che (data la situazione religiosa ed educativa del Paese) avrebbero giocato a favore delle Università statali, come dimostrano le preoccupazioni di Ullathorne: tra il 1860 e il 1863, dopo aver spinto Newman ad aprire un *college* cattolico a Oxford, non volle che egli risiedesse nella culla della sua antica formazione, per paura che avrebbe potuto attirare studenti cattolici in un'Università che cattolica non era; il risultato fu che Newman, già molto scettico per conto suo, lasciò cadere l'iniziativa⁶⁵.

Ma a temere la *mixed education* era Pio IX stesso, il quale (non per nulla) diede la spinta iniziale per la realizzazione dell'Ateneo cattolico irlandese; così, nel 1847, in un breve di Propaganda Fide rivolto ai vescovi irlandesi (confermato l'anno dopo da un altro documento), venivano menzionati i pericoli che i due *colleges* di Peel potevano rappresentare per la fede cattolica e si trovava il primo riferimento al progetto per erigere un'Università cattolica sul modello di quella di Lovanio fondata nel 1834⁶⁷. Adottata all'unanimità nel sinodo dei vescovi irlandesi del 1850 (grazie alla volontà e alla tenacia di Cullen da due anni vescovo di Armagh), la decisione pontificia si tradusse in un progetto concreto, nel quale Newman venne chiamato a ricoprire il ruolo più importante. Il 18 luglio 1851 Cullen gli offrì la presidenza; il 12 novembre dello stesso anno fu acclamato Rettore. I discorsi che sarebbero diventati la prima parte dell'*Idea di Università* e che stiamo analizzando vennero proposti a Newman l'anno dopo da Cullen proprio con l'intento di promuovere l'idea della religiosità dell'istruzione superiore e della sua differenza rispetto all'impostazione dei due «godless colleges» (come li aveva chiamati l'evangelico Robert Inglis, avversario di Peel ed eletto al suo posto nella Camera dei Comuni nelle elezioni del 1829⁶⁸) di Cork e di Galway.

⁶⁵ Su Henry Peter Brougham (1778-1868), cfr. Woodward, *Oxford History of England. The age of reform 1815-1870*, cit., pp. 53-54, 474-475. Sull'Università di Londra, cfr. Norman, *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century*, cit., pp. 292-293; Woodward, *Oxford History of England. The age of reform 1815-1870*, cit., pp. 472-473. Su Lord John Russell (1792-1878) e sulla sua azione di governo, cfr. O. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, [II voll.], London, Adam & Charles Black, 1971?, [vol. I], pp. 232-325; Woodward, *Oxford History of England. The age of reform 1815-1870*, cit., pp. 94-95, 156-177, 290-312.

⁶⁶ Sul tentativo di Newman, cfr. Ker, *John Henry Newman. A biography*, cit., pp. 492-494, 522-526. Sulla situazione dell'educazione universitaria cattolica in Inghilterra nel XIX secolo, cfr. Norman, *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century*, cit., pp. 158-183; Marín, *John Henry Newman. La vita (1801-1890)*, cit., pp. 263-265.

⁶⁷ Cfr. R. Aubert, *Il pontificato di Pio IX (1846-1878)*, in *Storia della Chiesa*, Torino, S.A.I.E., 1969, [vol. XXI/1], p. 252.

⁶⁸ Su Sir Robert Harry Inglis (1786-1855), cfr. P. Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in context: anglican high churchmanship, 1760-1857*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 62.

A essere tramontato, comunque, nei discorsi del 1852, non era solo l'ideale della *mixed education*, ma anche quello dell'esclusività del modello del *gentleman* in campo educativo, in quanto Newman, in linea con la Santa Sede che aveva auspicato un'educazione che fosse non solo liberale ma anche cattolica, non poteva non sottolineare (adducendo a prova le riflessioni di Antony Ashley Cooper, conte di Shaftesbury, sulla perfezione morale) come quella religione della ragione (che caratterizzava la cultura del *gentleman*), per quanto si trattasse di una ragione rettammente esercitata e quindi in grado di condurre al cattolicesimo, non solo non si identificava con esso, ma avrebbe potuto anche opporvisi. Discepolo di Locke sul terreno del liberalismo politico, lord Shaftesbury, in *Characteristics of men, manners, opinions, times* (1711), sosteneva che il cristianesimo era ostile alla virtù morale, perché avrebbe influenzato lo spirito con il timore di Dio e non con l'amore del bene, essendo la virtù nient'altro che una forma di bellezza da perseguire per gusto estetico⁶⁹.

Il *gentleman*, in quanto prodotto della civilizzazione, sarà al massimo la superficie del cristianesimo e la ragione è ovvia («the reason is obvious»): «The world is content with setting right the surface of things; the Church aims at regenerating the very depths of the heart»⁷⁰; la Chiesa (e non l'educazione secondo il modello del *gentleman*) arriva al cuore dell'uomo, proponendo un modello (la santità) che implica una pienezza maggiore rispetto al disgusto per il peccato e alla soddisfazione che possiamo provare nella conoscenza⁷¹. Nessuno quindi più di Newman nell'*Idea di Università*, come osserva Owen Chadwick, ha messo in evidenza il contrasto tra le conquiste dell'intelletto e quelle della fede, cantando le lodi dell'educazione umana, ma al tempo stesso negandole la corona più alta⁷². «“What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?” The tension within the Western inheritance between Hellenism and Judaeo-Christianity, reason and faith, knowledge and religion»: questa, secondo Sheridan Gilley, era la domanda di fondo dell'*Idea di Università*, alla quale Newman, pur riconoscendo il ruolo dell'intelletto, rispose schierandosi «on the side of Christian Revelation»⁷³.

La distanza che separa il *gentleman* dal santo è la stessa che separa il sape-

⁶⁹ Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of a University*, pp. 194-196. Su Anthony Ashley Cooper, terzo conte di Shaftesbury (1671-1713), cfr. Ward-Waller (eds.), *The Cambridge history of english literature*, [vol. VIII], p. 329; [vol. IX], pp. 299-303; cfr. anche L. Zani, *L'etica di Lord Shaftesbury*, Milano, Marzorati, 1954.

⁷⁰ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, cit., p. 203.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

⁷² «The book is very extraordinary in its contrast between the intellect's success and faith; the glory and yet the everlasting insufficiency of mind. It is contrast, not tension. There is no sense of tension. This is one of the elements in the Idea which make it unique. No one ever sang a lovelier song in praise of education for its own sake. And in the same moment no one ever denied so eloquently its natural crown» (Chadwick, *Newman*, cit., p. 56). Su questo aspetto, cfr. anche Ker, *John Henry Newman. A biography*, cit., pp. 384-88.

⁷³ Gilley, *Newman and his age*, cit., p. 302.

re fine a se stesso dal sapere cattolico: il primo può essere davvero libero (e dar vita a un'educazione "liberale") solo se diventa cattolico, se cioè, sulla scorta dell'insegnamento della Chiesa cattolica, si apre alla teologia. *Liberal education*, quindi, in Newman significa non solo libertà da finalità pratiche e allargamento della mente attraverso un sapere qualitativo e non utilitarista, ma anche, come nota il Marín, libertà «dall'indifferenza grazie al collegamento con la teologia»⁷⁴. C'è insomma un cattivo liberalismo che consiste nel criticare il dogma e ce n'è uno buono che consiste nell'accettare la teologia.

Secondo il convertito inglese, dare a essa il ruolo che le competeva nell'ambito del sapere universitario significava ben di più rispetto al far precedere una cerimonia di inaugurazione da una preghiera (come aveva fatto Edward Maltby, vescovo anglicano di Durham, durante il discorso per la posa della prima pietra dell'Università di Londra) o al formulare l'argomento teleologico (come aveva fatto William Paley in *Natural Theology*), riducendo in tal modo la teologia a teologia fisica (*Physical Theology*). Una tale scienza conduce a una concezione di Dio troppo dipendente dalla natura fisica (e non in contraddizione con l'utilitarismo di marca benthamiana difeso dallo stesso Paley in *The principles of moral and political philosophy* del 1785) e quindi all'ateismo, dal momento che non c'è molta differenza tra il dire che Dio non esiste e il dire che non si conosce nulla di certo su di lui⁷⁵. Questa teologia senza trascendenza risultava incompatibile con la concezione analogica che Newman aveva imparato durante gli anni di Oxford alla scuola del teologo anglicano del Settecento Joseph Butler e che riproponeva adesso (la natura è un'analogia del suo Creatore che rimane distinto da essa) e di fronte a essa non poteva fare a meno di ricordare la spiacevole pagina di metafisica («unpleasant page of Metaphysics») di Hume, il quale, nei *Saggi sull'intelletto umano* (1748), sosteneva l'inutilità di una scienza di Dio sulla base della considerazione che l'unica cosa che possiamo sapere di Lui sono i fenomeni naturali⁷⁶.

A una cultura che non ammetteva il valore conoscitivo della dottrina religiosa, il convertito inglese (che nei *Sermoni universitari* aveva già avuto modo di affrontare il tema della conoscenza per testimonianza nella quale consiste

⁷⁴ Marín, *John Henry Newman. La vita (1801-1890)*, cit., p. 269. Cfr. anche: G. Morra (a cura di), *L'eredità di Newman*, Bologna, Istituto per la storia della Chiesa di Bologna, 1992, pp. 33-47; I. Ker, *The idea of a Catholic University*, «Louvain studies», XXI, 1996, pp. 203-215; L. Obertello, *Newman ieri e oggi: l'unità del sapere e l'università*, «Rivista teologica di Lugano», VII, 2, 2002, pp. 169-180.

⁷⁵ «I do not see much difference between avowing that there is no God, and implying that nothing definite can for certain be known about Him» (Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., p. 40).

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* Su Joseph Butler (1692-1752) e sulla sfiducia humeana nelle capacità metafisiche della ragione, cfr. M. Sina, *L'avvento della ragione: "reason" e "above reason" dal razionalismo teologico inglese al deismo*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 1997, pp. 742-745.

⁷⁷ Cfr. John Henry Newman, *Faith and reason, contrasted as habits of mind; The nature of faith in relation to reason; Love the safeguard of faith against superstition; Implicit and explicit rea-*

la fede⁷⁷) intendeva dire non solo che la teologia non poteva essere esclusa dall'insegnamento universitario (perché Dio è oggetto di conoscenza), ma anche che essa doveva avere, nei confronti del sapere universitario, un ruolo architettonico (visto che il suo oggetto di studio è il Creatore dei brandelli di realtà dei quali si occupano le diverse scienze)⁷⁸. Infatti, lungi dall'essere l'estemporaneo prodotto di una crisi religiosa o filosofica o la moda del momento, il discorso teologico pervade tutta la cultura occidentale, riempiendo di sé le riflessioni di grandi intellettuali inglesi del passato. Venivano citati, tra gli altri (oltre a Hooker e a Shakespeare), Bacone e Locke (criticati in altri passi, ma qui "riabilitati"), Ralph Cudworth (uno dei rappresentanti del cosiddetto "platonismo di Cambridge" della seconda metà del Seicento e sostenitore di una posizione filosofica incentrata sull'idea secondo la quale l'unica vera fonte di conoscenza sarebbe la religione cristiana)⁷⁹, Isaac Newton (il quale oltre che di fisica si occupò anche di teologia perché nel suo *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica* del 1687 si oppose al panteismo sostenendo l'esistenza e la trascendenza di Dio)⁸⁰, George Berkeley (filosofo della prima metà del Settecento sostenitore di una posizione filosofica riconducibile a una forma di idealismo soggettivo sintetizzabile nel famoso *esse est percipi*, ma del quale non va dimenticato che era teologo e vescovo anglicano formatosi al *Trinity College* di Dublino)⁸¹, John Milton (poeta favorevole alla causa di Cromwell e all'uccisione di Carlo I e autore, dopo la prigionia scontata durante la restaurazione monarchica, del celebre *Paradise Lost* del 1667, dedicato alle vie attraverso le quali Dio si comunica all'uomo)⁸², Edward Herbert (filosofo deista della prima metà del Seicento sostenitore di idee innate comuni a tutte le religioni)⁸³, Richard Baxter (teologo e vescovo puritano del Seicento, sostenitore della causa del Parlamento durante la Guerra Civile, poi favorevole alla restaurazione monarchica dopo la fine del conflitto)⁸⁴. Per rendersi conto dell'assurdità logica insita nel voler escludere la teologia dal sapere universitario bastava infine notare, secondo Newman, che la massima autorità letteraria del Settecento inglese, il romanziere, critico e lessicografo Samuel Johnson, a dispetto del liberalismo di cui si fregiava per apparire degno di stima di fronte all'anglicanesimo del tempo, non esitò, nel suo *Dictionary of*

son, in *US*, pp. 176-277 (trad. it. *Quindici sermoni predicati all'Università di Oxford tra il 1826 e il 1843*, in Newman, *Scritti filosofici*, cit., pp. 337-507).

⁷⁸ Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., pp. 66-67.

⁷⁹ Su Ralph Cudworth (1617-1688), cfr. Sina, *L'avvento della ragione*, cit., pp. 117-131.

⁸⁰ Su Isaac Newton (1642-1727), cfr. *ibid.*, pp. 422-438.

⁸¹ Su George Berkeley (1685-1753), cfr. *ibid.*, pp. 459-475.

⁸² Su John Milton (1608-1674), cfr. Milton, *John* in Cross (ed.), *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, cit., pp. 1089-1090.

⁸³ Su Edward Herbert (1582-1648), cfr. Sina, *L'avvento della ragione*, cit., pp. 147-166.

⁸⁴ Su Richard Baxter (1615-1691), cfr. Baxter, *Richard* in Cross (ed.), *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, cit., p. 172.

the english language, a definire l'Università come una scuola nella quale vengono insegnate tutte le arti e tutte le facoltà⁸⁵.

L'aggancio con la teologia avrebbe dovuto infatti essere mantenuto saldo non solo da parte di un'Università cattolica, ma anche da parte di un'Università che si fosse astenuta da professioni religiose, basando i propri insegnamenti sull'indifferentismo, perché, escludendo la teologia, si sarebbero dovute escludere dal sapere universitario discipline come l'etica, la storia, la metafisica e la fisica (tutte in diverso modo basate su una forma non sensibile di conoscenza)⁸⁶. Cos'è, infatti, l'esistenza di Dio se non una verità che, essendo insieme di ordine naturale e soprannaturale, viene raggiunta attraverso i metodi di tutte queste scienze?⁸⁷ Chi mutila il sapere divino, prima o poi finirà col mutilare anche quello umano⁸⁸. L'argomento acquista forza se dal piano della teologia naturale si passa a quello della Rivelazione, in quanto la dottrina dell'Incarnazione è insieme fatto storico e fatto metafisico⁸⁹. Newman, però, nei discorsi universitari del 1852, non approfondiva la questione della teologia rivelata (lo avrebbe fatto in due conferenze del 1855 e del 1858 rivolte rispettivamente agli studenti di Medicina e di Scienze dell'Università cattolica di Dublino e confluite nella seconda parte della *Idea of a University*⁹⁰). L'idea di teologia della quale stava dipingendo i contorni in queste pagine, facendo leva sulla ragione e non sulla Rivelazione ed essendo quindi teologia naturale, era infatti concepita nell'ottica di cercare un terreno comune di confronto con i non cattolici⁹¹ e poteva essere accettata da chiunque non si fosse sottomesso al "dogma" luterano dell'incapacità della ragione a conoscere la realtà e d'altra parte avesse avuto ancora interesse a confrontarsi sul significato di tutto. Ecco allora spiegato il motivo per cui non aveva senso, secondo lui, l'obiezione di chi avrebbe voluto escludere la teologia dalle scuole pubbliche e mantenerla inve-

⁸⁵ Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., pp. 19-20. Su Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), cfr. Johnson, Samuel in Cross (ed.), *The Oxford dictionary of the christian Church*, cit., pp. 898-899.

⁸⁶ Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., pp. 24-25.

⁸⁷ «Is not the being of a God reported to us by testimony, handed down by history, inferred by an inductive process, brought home to us by metaphysical necessity, urged on us by the suggestions of our conscience? It is a truth in the natural order, as well as in the supernatural» (*ibid.*).

⁸⁸ «In word indeed, and in idea, it is easy enough to divide Knowledge into human and divine, secular and religious, and to lay down that we will address ourselves to the one without interfering with the other; but it is impossible in fact. Granting that divine truth differs in kind from human, so do human truths differ in kind one from another. If the knowledge of the Creator is in a different order from knowledge of the creature, so, in like manner, metaphysical science is in a different order from physical, physics from history, history from ethics. You will soon break up into fragments the whole circle of secular knowledge, if you begin the mutilation with divine» (*ibid.*, p. 26).

⁸⁹ «I have been speaking simply of Natural Theology; my argument of course is stronger when I go on to Revelation. Let the doctrine of the Incarnation be true: is it not at once of the nature of an historical fact, and of a metaphysical?» (*ibid.*).

⁹⁰ Cfr. *Christianity and Physical Science* in Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., pp. 428-455; *Christianity and scientific investigation*, *ibid.*, pp. 456-521.

⁹¹ Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., p. 69.

ce solo in quelle private⁹²: se era affare di ragione, non si vedeva perché dovesse poter essere esercitata soltanto in un certo tipo di scuole e non in un altro.

Del resto, se accostata alle tematiche degli anni della conversione e a quelle dei primi anni cinquanta, le riflessioni dell'*Idea di Università* non erano più concepite nell'ottica ecclesiologica di stabilire quale fosse la vera Chiesa o in quella apologetica di sostenere l'unicità della Chiesa cattolica o di vedere nel cristianesimo il principio dell'educazione. Nei primi quattro discorsi del 1852 il cristianesimo, risultando identificato con la teologia naturale, sembrava perdere il suo carattere dogmatico, per assomigliare più a una branca del sapere che ad altro. Come ha rilevato Pietro Zerbi, il progetto newmaniano di Università (a differenza di quello successivo di Gemelli che avrebbe difeso «lo schema medioevale della “summa”, caratterizzato da un'organicità che derivava dalla teologia, fattore dominante e innervante») rispondeva infatti all'idea di «una globale visione del sapere in cui ogni disciplina avesse un posto»⁹³.

7. Il posto delle scienze

Il fatto di non poggiare in modo esplicito né sul cristianesimo, né sul cattolicesimo (perché il fondamento ultimo era la teologia naturale), lungi dal rendere meno cattolica questa proposta, si presentava al contrario come la garanzia della sua cattolicità: “cattolico”, per Newman, era tutto ciò che, trovando piena valorizzazione solo nella Chiesa di Roma, vinceva quell'infedeltà (*infidelity*) che portava ad assolutizzare il mondo o una sua parte, non volendo vederne la dipendenza dal Creatore.

La scelta di non delineare il progetto educativo universitario in termini confessionali, ma facendo leva sul concetto di “liberalità” rispondeva sia (come nota Jacques Servais) all'esigenza di confutare le motivazioni dei difensori delle nuove Università inglesi che, volendo escludere la teologia dal sapere, si dimostravano illiberali⁹⁴; sia anche alla preoccupazione di evitare che, con l'esclusione della teologia dal novero delle scienze, altre scienze (data la naturale e spontanea tendenza dell'uomo a cercare la spiegazione di tutto) avrebbero preso il

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.

⁹³ Cfr. Zerbi, *John Henry Newman e l'idea di università*, cit., p. 94. Per un approfondimento della relazione che Gemelli intrattenne con il pensiero di Newman risultano interessanti i quattro discorsi da lui tenuti per l'inaugurazione degli anni accademici 1928-1929, 1931-1932, 1936-1937 e 1951-1952 dell'Università Cattolica di Milano (cfr. *Storia dell'Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore. Le fonti*, I. *I discorsi di inizio anno da Agostino Gemelli a Adriano Bausola 1921-22; 1997-98*, a cura di A. Cova, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2007, pp. 86-101, 134-154, 183-193, 373-387).

⁹⁴ Cfr. J. Servais, *Conoscere Dio*, in O. Grassi (a cura di), *John Henry Newman. L'idea di ragione*, Milano, Jaca Book, 1992, p. 63; cfr. anche Id., *Valori comuni e “pretesa” cristiana. Attualità di Newman*, «Synthesis», III, 1989, fasc.3, pp. 79 ss.

suo posto, esorbitando dai propri limiti e sostituendo alla trascendenza prospettive ben più misere⁹⁵.

Il rischio di sostituirsi indebitamente alla teologia, presente già in scienze cosiddette “amiche” di essa (come la pittura, la scultura, l’architettura e la musica), a proposito delle quali Newman metteva in guardia dall’idealizzare lo stile gotico (preferito al romanico da parte di anglicani e di *old catholics*), aumentava ancora di più in scienze come l’anatomia comparata, la storia, l’economia politica e l’archeologia. In questi campi, molti uomini elevavano i principi del loro metodo di indagine a misura di tutte le cose e diventavano nemici della religione: Sir William Lawrence, professore di anatomia al collegio chirurgico di Londra, che nel 1816 pubblicò un’introduzione all’anatomia comparata, nella quale sembrava negare la spiritualità dell’anima⁹⁶; alcuni anni prima, in campo linguistico John Horne Tooke propose una sorta di nominalismo grammaticale; in campo giuridico, l’utilitarista Jeremy Bentham riuscì a fare di un trattato sulle prove giudiziarie un attacco contro i miracoli⁹⁷; in campo storico Edward Gibbon (uno dei più famosi storici inglesi), nella sua nota *History of the decline & fall of the roman Empire* (1788), voleva escludere dalla Rivelazione tutto ciò di cui non si poteva addurre prova scritta nei Vangeli o nei Padri e Henry Hart Milman, dignitario della Chiesa anglicana e professore di Poesia a Oxford dal 1821 al 1831, nella sua *Storia degli Ebrei* (1829), interpretò la storia del popolo eletto in termini puramente secolari⁹⁸. Passando infine a William Nassau Senior (professore di economia politica a Oxford dal 1825 al 1830), Newman prendeva in considerazione i pericoli insiti nel non voler riconoscere (come fece l’illustre cattedratico nella conferenza inaugurale del suo corso tenuta nel 1826) di condurre la scienza dell’economia di fronte al tribunale della filosofia e della teologia⁹⁹.

L’errore di fondo cui un sapere universitario autenticamente cattolico avrebbe dovuto porre rimedio e in considerazione del quale Newman aveva immaginato i tratti essenziali dell’Università cattolica in terra d’Irlanda era quindi quella infedeltà che costituiva il tema di uno dei saggi occasionali del 1854

⁹⁵ Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., pp. 73-74.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 78-85. Su William Lawrence (1783-1867), cfr. Newman, *L’idea di Università*, in *Opere*, cit., p. 819.

⁹⁷ Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., pp. 95-96. Su John Horne Tooke (1736-1812), cfr. Ward-Waller (eds.), *The Cambridge history of english literature*, cit., [vol. X], pp. 402, 524, [vol. XI], pp. 401-405, [vol. XII], p. 494; su Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), cfr. quanto viene detto in Clark, *English society*, cit., pp. 92-93, 151-159, 173-175, 148-149; G. Samek Lodovici, *L’utilità del bene. Jeremy Bentham, l’utilitarismo e il consequenzialismo*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2004. Su Henry Hart Milman (1791-1868), cfr. Milman, Henry Hart in Cross (ed.), *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, cit., pp. 1087-1088.

⁹⁸ Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., pp. 85-86. Su Edward Gibbon (1737-1794), cfr. Gibbon, Edward in Cross (ed.), *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, cit., pp. 673-674. Sul rapporto tra Newman e Gibbon, cfr. C. Adler, *John Henry Newman on Edward Gibbon: indebted to the infidel*, «Classical Bulletin», LXIX, 1993, pp. 17-20.

⁹⁹ Cfr. Newman, *The Idea of a University defined and illustrated*, cit., pp. 86-94.

confluiti nella seconda parte della *Idea of a University*: in *A form of infidelity of the day* essa veniva descritta nei termini di un'esclusione del soprannaturale, basata sul fatto di pensare che esso non esiste o nella sua sostituzione con qualcosa di diverso. Contestando l'uso esclusivo e assolutizzato delle scienze riscontrabile ad esempio in una medicina che si rifiutasse di tener conto che l'uomo, oltre al corpo, ha anche l'anima, Newman affermava in un discorso tenuto nel novembre 1858 agli studenti di medicina (uno dei primi insegnamenti del nuovo Ateneo cattolico):

Man has a moral and a religious nature, as well as a physical. He has a mind and a soul; and the mind and soul have a legitimate sovereignty over the body, and the sciences relating to them have in consequence the precedence of those sciences which relate to the body.

Il riconoscimento della dimensione spirituale dell'uomo ha conseguenze ben precise sulla scienza medica, dal momento che essa, se tiene conto di tale dimensione, non può accettare nessuna prospettiva di tipo salutista, secondo la quale non ci sarebbero beni spirituali antepponibili alla salute del corpo. Secondo Newman sbaglia un medico che pretendesse di distogliere una suora dal curare i malati di un'epidemia della quale ella potrebbe morire; e la decisione se ammettere un prete al capezzale di un moribondo (qualora il medico affermi che ciò potrebbe disturbare lo spirito del moribondo mettendone a repentaglio la guarigione) non spetta al medico, ma al prete, perché la religione è una scienza superiore alla medicina¹⁰⁰.

8. *Imperial Intellect*

Proprio in virtù del fatto che la cattolicità del nuovo Ateneo irlandese significava non soltanto collegamento con la Santa Sede, ma anche proposta di un sapere onnicomprensivo e organico alternativo all'assolutizzazione delle scienze, il modello educativo che stava alla base dell'Università cattolica d'Irlanda era rivoluzionario non solo rispetto all'ideale oxoniense, a quello della *mixed education* o dell'indifferenza religiosa imperante nelle Università statali, ma anche rispetto al modello ecclesiastico cattolico: come scrive il Marín, «non si trattava di una scienza profana sottomessa alla religione o tutelata dalla sfera ecclesiastica, ma di un sapere autonomo che, senza perdere la sua natura, accettava liberamente la religione e la fede, ne tiene conto e si nutre di entrambe»¹⁰¹. Non è un caso, infatti, che Newman, dopo aver criticato chi avrebbe voluto escludere la teologia dal novero delle materie universitarie, non aprì una facoltà

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 508-512.

¹⁰¹ Marín, *John Henry Newman. La vita (1801-1890)*, cit., p. 169.

di teologia nell'Ateneo di cui era rettore, ritenendo che la decisione spettasse ai vescovi¹⁰².

Quello che egli proponeva alla cultura del suo tempo era insomma una «philosophy of an imperial intellect» (per usare la famosa espressione che dà il titolo al noto libro di Dwight Culler)¹⁰³, nella quale però il dominio dell'intelletto non consisteva in un tentativo razionalistico di controllo della realtà, ma era

vigile consapevolezza dei limiti propri di ogni particolare scienza e d'ogni particolare verità, e, ancora più profondamente, consapevolezza dei limiti dell'umana conoscenza, della sua inadeguatezza alla realtà e perciò della possibilità sempre aperta sia di nuove manifestazioni dell'essere, che dell'insorgere di apparenti contraddizioni tanto nelle scienze profane che nella teologia, oltre che nei rapporti tra i due ambiti¹⁰⁴.

Al tempo di Newman, la Chiesa cattolica non riuscì ad accettare un modello in cui *catholic* potesse significare non soltanto sottomissione alla Santa Sede e insegnamento conforme alla dottrina cattolica, ma anche *liberal*, cioè totalità e apertura alla teologia. Nemmeno il cattolicesimo irlandese: nel novembre 1858 Newman si sarebbe dimesso da Rettore. Infatti, dopo che, all'inizio del 1852, Cullen gli ebbe commissionato i discorsi sull'educazione universitaria e proprio in concomitanza con la sua nomina ad arcivescovo di Dublino (avvenuta lo stesso anno), i rapporti tra i due degenerarono rapidamente. Volendo che la nuova Università diventasse l'Ateneo cattolico di lingua inglese per il mondo intero e non solo per l'Irlanda, Newman si preoccupava che i professori svolgessero funzioni simili a quelle dei *tutor* di Oxford¹⁰⁵, cercava di scegliere i docenti da un elenco di candidati nel quale prevalessero i laici inglesi convertiti dall'anglicanesimo¹⁰⁶ e chiedeva la collaborazione tra gli altri, di Döllinger (il sacerdote e teologo cattolico tedesco che proprio in quegli anni stava assumendo una posizione critica nei confronti della Chiesa, che lo avrebbe portato di lì a poco a non condividere la proclamazione del dogma dell'Immacolata Concezione, il potere temporale del Papa, il *Sillabo* e l'Infallibilità, dando vita alla setta dei «Vecchi Cattolici», impegnati nella critica delle decisioni della Chiesa)¹⁰⁷, di Orestes Brownson (filosofo americano ex socialista convertito al cattolicesimo)¹⁰⁸ e di Montalembert (filosofo londinese di nascita ma fran-

¹⁰² Cfr. Ker, *John Henry Newman. A biography*, cit., p. 455.

¹⁰³ Cfr. A. Dwight Culler, *The imperial intellect. A study of Cardinal Newman's educational ideal*, London, New Haven, 1955.

¹⁰⁴ A. Bosi, introduzione a Newman, *Opere*, cit., p. 49.

¹⁰⁵ Cfr. a T. Scrutton, 12th May 1852, *LD*, [vol. XV], p. 85.

¹⁰⁶ Cfr. a Cullen, 28th April 1851, *LD*, [vol. XIV], pp. 267-270.

¹⁰⁷ Cfr. a J.J. Ignaz von Döllinger, 15th December 1853, *LD*, [vol. XV], pp. 505-506.

¹⁰⁸ Cfr. a Orestes Brownson, 6th June 1854, *LD*, [vol. XVI], pp. 147-149; a Orestes Brownson, 23rd August 1854, *LD*, [vol. XVI], pp. 234-236; a Orestes Brownson, 27th September 1854, *LD*, [vol. XVI], pp. 257-258. Su Orestes Brownson (1803-1876), cfr. D. Caroniti, *Problema sociale, nazione e cristianesimo: Orestes A. Brownson*, Catanzaro, Rubettino, 1998.

cese di adozione seguace del liberalismo di Lamennais)¹⁰⁹, offrendo ai primi due il posto di professore straordinario. Da parte sua il neo arcivescovo di Dublino fece nominare come segretario o *general manager* dell'Università James Taylor (1805-1875), sacerdote non gradito a Newman. Nel 1871, all'indomani della proclamazione del dogma dell'Infallibilità, il convertito inglese non avrebbe esitato a definire tragico («tragic») lo scisma di Döllinger¹¹⁰ (esprimendo una posizione che probabilmente avrebbe condiviso anche Cullen), ma prima di quella data si dovette assistere alla rottura definitiva della collaborazione tra Cullen e Newman, già fragile fin dall'inizio: sarebbe stato infatti proprio sulla vecchia questione relativa allo status (laico o ecclesiastico) del personale universitario (la proposta da lui rivolta a Cullen nell'estate del 1856 di un elenco di laici ai quali affidare i fondi dell'Università) che Newman, di fronte al netto rifiuto dell'arcivescovo, due anni dopo avrebbe rassegnato definitivamente le dimissioni¹¹¹.

Come nota efficacemente il Marín, l'opposizione tra Cullen e Newman (arrivata fino all'impedimento che l'alto prelato pose alla nomina di Newman a vescovo in Irlanda voluta nel 1854 da Wiseman)¹¹², pur non riguardando i principi della fede e della dottrina cattolica, derivava però «dalla filosofia e dalle diverse concezioni con cui l'uno e l'altro difendevano la creazione di un'Università cattolica ed erano contrari all'insegnamento interconfessionale»: per raggiungere questi due obiettivi da entrambi condivisi, Cullen pensava che il metodo dovesse essere quello di «allontanare dall'ambiente universitario e dai piani educativi tutto quanto del pensiero moderno fosse pericoloso e nocivo per la formazione della gioventù»; Newman (pur condividendo questi obiettivi) «attribuiva anche all'Università il compito positivo e specifico di preparare intellettualmente e moralmente gli alunni per affrontare i pericoli spirituali che inevitabilmente sarebbero sorti nel corso delle loro vite»¹¹³.

Si trattava, in fondo, della differenza tra un atteggiamento centrato sulla difesa del cattolicesimo dagli errori del tempo e di uno centrato sulla proposta di una cultura cattolica in grado di rispondere alle sfide poste dalla società: come tale, il progetto newmaniano si basava sulla consapevolezza dell'impossibilità di vincere l'attacco utilitarista e liberale soltanto richiamando la necessità di conformare il pensiero alla dottrina della Chiesa e senza dire che libertà (ideale della filosofia dell'Inghilterra vittoriana) significava apertura alla trascendenza e liberazione dal ghetto dell'assolutismo del sapere attraverso il collegamento con la teologia. Come nota Nicholas Lash, nell'*Idea di Università*

¹⁰⁹ Cfr. a le Comte De Montalembert, 29th June 1854, LD, [vol. XVI], pp. 181-182. Su Charles-René Montalembert (1810-1870), cfr. E. Passerin, *Montalembert, Charles-René, Forbes de*, in *Enciclopedia cattolica*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1952, [vol. VIII], pp. 1336-1339.

¹¹⁰ Cfr. a Alfred Plummer, 15th Jan 1871, LD, [vol. XXV], p. 269.

¹¹¹ Sulla decisione di dimettersi e sulle effettive dimissioni, cfr. LD, [vol. XVII e XVIII].

¹¹² Su questa vicenda, cfr. LD, [vol. XVI].

¹¹³ Marín, *John Henry Newman. La vita (1801-1890)*, cit., p. 273.

Newman riuscì a far parlare, sintetizzandoli, il meglio della cultura inglese e il meglio del cattolicesimo, scrivendo un'opera sostanzialmente autobiografica:

Newman was a Victorian Tory, an Englishman, and the superior of an Oratory whose ethos, deeply indebted, of course, to Philip Neri, yet also carried echoes of the Oriel Common Room. It was from within a world formed of these elements that he considered the idea of a university¹¹⁴.

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¹¹⁴ N. Lash, *"A Seat of Wisdom, a Light of the World": considering the University*, «Louvain studies», XV, 1990, pp. 188-202. Lo stesso giudizio era già stato espresso da Owen Chadwick nel 1983: «In the first half of his life he wound up the Church of England to its Catholic heritage. In the second half of his life he wound down the Church of Rome – that is, he sought to persuade its leaders not to push their Catholicity into fanaticism, or superstition, or rationality, or rigid hierarchy; and therefore to keep their minds open to the old principle of primitive Catholic faith, and from that broader base to listen to the discoveries of the age – the advance of historical method, before is death the progress of criticism of the Bible; but above all to remember that Catholicism is a mystery of the spirit, too glorious and too profound for the tidiest minds to limit; and that faith in God is always more real and more certain than the language which seeks to describe faith in God» (Chadwick, *Newman*, cit., p. 58).

The myth and reality of Point Puer

John Ramsland

While childhood history is neglected, troubled childhoods and the disenchantment of the child's world have long been themes in Australian literature, ever since the influence of Charles Dickens began. They were glanced at in Marcus Clarke's 1874 novel *For the Term of His Natural Life*¹, in his treatment of boys at Point Puer, Port Arthur, and then brought to fruition in Ethel Turner's 1894 *Seven Little Australians*², and her other novels set in the 1890s through to the 1920s³.

But Clarke took his readers back to Port Arthur, that atypical penal institution of the convict era. Its buildings were designed to impose classification and solitary confinement to evoke the reformist notions of the modern penitentiary. The intention was to re-shape the criminal mind. The Port Arthur ruins are monuments to failed attempts to modernize the system in conformity with influential proponents of the penitentiary⁴, many of whom were opposed to

¹ *For the Term of His Natural Life* was first published as a serial in the «Australian Journal» between March 1871 and June 1872. It was brought out in book form in 1874, and was later published in London, America, Germany and many other countries.

² Published by Ward, Lock & Bowden, London.

³ For example, *The Undergardeners*, London, Ward, Lock, 1925.

⁴ J. Hirst, *The Australian Experience. The Convict Colony* in N. Morris and D.J. Rothman, *The Oxford History of the Prison*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 252-253; I. Brand, *The "Separate" or "Model Prison", Port Arthur*, West Moonah, Tasmania, Jason Publications, 1975, pp. 1-72; I. Brand, *Penal Peninsula. Port Arthur and its Outstations, 1827-1898*, Regal Publications, Launceston, n.d., pp. 1-234.

transportation as it existed. The gloomy place provided «internal, articulated and detailed control» – to produce docile bodies within the surveillance panopticon⁵.

Across Opossum Bay lay Point Puer, where a boys' reformatory for transportees was founded in 1833 as a mirror image to its counterpart – referred to as «Junior Port Arthur». All the facilities of a juvenile penitentiary were built – workshops, jetty, gardens and cultivated land, barracks, chaplain's quarters, superintendent's quarters, a saw pit, an exempt [isolation] room and a military guard house, against the surrounding wall. Behind the wall, ominously, were cells, two gaols and a superintendent of gaols quarters⁶. Point Puer was shaped as a self-contained colony enclosing troubled children many miles from their place of birth. The extreme isolation was palpable.

Gardens were established on Point Puer's tip. The headland rose on its western flank to a sheer drop of 60 feet. At its base crashed the Southern Ocean with «treacherous currents swirling»⁷.

Clarke made memorable use of such landscape. He was imitated widely, creating a lasting myth that overtook reality. The images he created were indelible:

An unlucky accident had occurred at Point Puer that morning [...]. A refractory little thief named Peter Brown, aged twelve years, had jumped off the high rock and drowned himself in full view of the constables. These «jumpings off» had become rather frequent lately, and Burgess [the fictitious superintendent] was enraged at one happening on this particular day. If he could by any possibility have brought the corpse of poor little Peter Brown to life again, he would have soundly whipped it for impertinence [...].

Just so! The magnificent system starved and tortured a child of twelve until he killed himself. That was the way of it⁸.

While the image is melodramatic, it contains a critique of the harsh system.

The Point Puer boys' suffering had appeared first, not as chronicled history, but through the creative endeavours of a novelist who presented them as theatre. Having received an advance from the «Australian Journal» to write his serial, Marcus Clarke travelled from Melbourne to Tasmania to study his subject on the spot in the surroundings of the ruins⁹. This excursion gave his descriptions the ring of truth. He was following the procedures used by Dickens and he drew from documents, especially the 1838 House of Commons

⁵ M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison*, London, Penguin, 1977, p. 172.

⁶ Original plan of Point Puer showing boys' establishment reproduced in P. Buddee, *Fate of the Artful Dodger. Parkhurst Boys transported to Australia and New Zealand 1840-1852*, Perth, St George Books, 1984, pp. 40-41.

⁷ F.C. Hooper, *Prison Boys of Port Arthur*, Melbourne, F.W. Cheshire, 1967, p.v.

⁸ M. Clarke, *For the Term of His Natural Life*, London, Collins, 1953, p. 297. [This version of the book is used throughout].

⁹ «H.R.», *Marcus Clarke*, pp. 5-6, in M. Clarke, *For the Term of His Natural Life*, London, Collins, edition 1953 (first published, 1874), 445 pp.

Report of a Select Committee on Transportation. He then fabricated the punishment book record of Peter Brown:

20th November, disorderly conduct, 12 lashes. 24th November, insolence to hospital attendant, diet reduced. 4th December, stealing cap from another prisoner, 12 lashes. 15th December, absenting himself at roll call, two days' cells. 23rd December, insolence and insubordination, two days' cells. 8th January, insolence and insubordination, 12 lashes. 20th January, insolence and insubordination, 12 lashes. 22nd February, insolence and insubordination, 12 lashes and one week's solitary. 6th March, insolence and insubordination, 20 lashes¹⁰.

As well as a neat method of presenting Peter Brown's punishment history, personality and motives for suicide, Clarke provides a vivid picture of how the Point Puer Juvenile Establishment functioned to produce docile bodies¹¹.

Such were the concerns of Dickens in *The Adventures of Oliver Twist or The Parish Boy's Progress*¹² and *Nicholas Nickleby*¹³. While Clarke condemned the past system of transportation, Dickens was exposing the evils of the pauper system for children and the savage methods of Yorkshire schoolmasters running schools for unwanted boys. Both writers focussed on children confronted by a brutal, unfeeling adult world. Both mounted powerful assaults on the British parliamentary system for the under classes.

A few pages after Peter Brown's suicide, Clarke creates emotionally-laden images that produced a long-standing historical myth, as well as a degree of reality:

There was a long schoolroom, where such men as Meekin [the fictitious chaplain of Point Puer] taught how Christ loved little children; and behind the schoolroom were the cells and the constables and the little yard where they gave their "twenty lashes"¹⁴.

Soon after this inspection, Sylvia, the heroine of the novel married to the commandant, rests alone for a while on a garden bench on «the summit of the cliff». There, she encounters two of Peter Brown's friends, Tommy and Billy. She shows the forlorn little boys «clad in a uniform of grey cloth» motherly affection and kisses them.

After she leaves, Tommy and Billy put into execution their plan to follow Peter Brown:

And so the two babies knelt on the brink of the cliff, and raising the bound hands together, looked up at the sky, and ungrammatically said, "Lord, have pity on we two fatherless children!" and then they kissed each other, and "did it"¹⁵.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 297.

¹¹ Foucault, cit., p. 136.

¹² Published first as a serial between 1857 and 1839.

¹³ Published first in serial form between 1838 and 1839.

¹⁴ Clarke, cit., p. 297.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

Clarke's images were kept alive for readers in the many editions of his famous novel. With the production of a major silent film by the imported American director Norman Dawn, they reached an even wider audience. It was a big budget film of 101 minutes. Location action was shot at Port Arthur. The release is considered by film historians as one of the major events of the Australian motion film industry. The story's potency was such that it had already been filmed twice – in 1908 and 1911.

Dawn's version was a stunning success around Australia, despite the arrival of sound. The scenes depicting Port Arthur were cleverly done. Complex, multiple exposures were created. A series of "glass shots" allowed the director to add roofs and other features to the decaying buildings by painting miniature details on glass and positioning them exactly in front of the camera to match the actual buildings in the distance. Period costumes were borrowed from the Hobart Museum and painstakingly duplicated. Thus, a great historical legend was recreated, reinforcing the audience's popular understanding of the convict era¹⁶.

For the Term of His Natural Life was premièred in Newcastle in the packed Theatre Royal on 20th June 1927, and opened at the Crystal Palace in Sydney five days later. There it ran for an unprecedented eleven weeks. 26,686 people attended in the first week. The impact was similar in other capitals and in suburban and country town cinemas. The viewers had their historical imagination shaped by it.

While the crowd scenes were spectacular, the highlight that brought the huge Australian audiences to tears was the poignant suicide of the two convict boys at Point Puer¹⁷. Years later, it was the scene that everyone recalled. It was woven into the fabric of Australian popular culture.

In a 1986 television mini-series, Clarke's novel was again brought to life for a marathon 289 minutes. A boy, destined for Point Puer and the cliff, was one of the supporting characters. It was not, however, well-received¹⁸.

In his highly successful 1987 convict history, *The Fatal Shore*, Robert Hughes devoted generous space to the «colony of ragged, pale-faced lads of Point Puer»¹⁹. His interpretation follows the legendary lines inspired by Clarke. Nevertheless, he is one of the few historians who has found a place for troubled childhood.

Clarke's novel has become an all-pervading phenomenon. Through other

¹⁶ A. Pike, R. Cooper, *Australian Films, 1900-1977*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1980, pp. 179-182; E. Reade, *The Australian Screen*, Melbourne, Lansdowne Press, 1973, pp. 130-131.

¹⁷ G. Shirley, B. Adams, *Australian Cinema. The First Eighty Years*, Sydney, Angus & Robertson, Currency Press, 1983, pp. 90-94.

¹⁸ Roadshow Home Entertainment, *For the Term of His Natural Life*, directed by Rob Stewart, 1982, approximate running time 289 minutes [two video cassettes].

¹⁹ R. Hughes, *The Fatal Shore*, London, Collins Haivill, 1987, pp. 403, 408-414, 524, 601-602.

fiction, non-fiction, school history texts and feature films, the legend that he created has lasted to the present day. The novel has remained a source to be mined and plundered. The legend of Point Puer and its suicidal boys that Clarke created on a few pages remains a beacon that blinks intermittently, but ever so brightly in popular culture.

Its latest manifestation arrived in Choe Hooper's thriller *A Child's Book of True Crime* set on the modern-day Tasman's Peninsula. Supernatural images of the long-lost convict boys are evoked in the mystical landscape. In a number of images, Hooper creates an iconic atmosphere of landscape memory:

Then the bushfires swept through and the settlement [Port Arthur] was burnt to the ground. When, in *The Scarlet Letter*, Nathaniel Hawthorne describes prisons as "the black flowers of civilisation" he could have been describing the charred remains of the convict boys' cabinet-making, their hand-crafted pews [in the chapel at Port Arthur] turned to cinders²⁰.

Hooper makes insightful historical comments about Point Puer through such passages. She draws with care from primary sources:

This was Sir George's mill [Sir George Arthur, Governor of Tasmania] to grind criminals into God-fearing citizens. His failed Utopia²¹.

Her protagonist visits Point Puer. Every few steps, she came across «another orange-yellow brick» of the buildings that have now disappeared. The remnants of the granite wall and a stone basement, full of leaves and dank water, still exist. The whole area is now over-grown with wild flowers.

The character follows the track to the cliff:

As a child, I'd heard about the convict boys linking hands and throwing themselves to the sharks.²²

And so, back to Clarke's indelible image which «touched the roots of human passion» turning his work into a timeless phenomenon²³.

* * *

Clarke stresses the futility of Point Puer's original plan of repressive and harsh discipline, and rightly so. Yet there was the other side of the coin. After Governor Arthur's departure in 1836, a more re-educational approach was pursued. It was never fully successful, but it did provide a capable form of trade-training in pursuits that could have led to the economic workforce of the developing colonial economy.

²⁰ C. Hooper, *A Child's Book of True Crime*, Sydney, Knopf, Random House, 2002, p. 89.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 236-237.

²³ G.I. Smith, *Introduction*, in Clarke, cit., p. 16.

An active, military-style timetable of actual daily work experience was devised by its first superintendent. The boys rose at sunrise, folded their hammocks and washed for inspection. They attended prayers and were turned outdoors to supervised field labour until breakfast at 8 am. At 9 am they were mustered out to various trades and worked under the direction of instructors until dinner (the main meal of the day) at 1 pm. At 2 pm they were mustered to their trades and employed there till 5 pm when all labour ceased. There was a leisure hour; a light supper followed at 6 pm. Schooling commenced at 6.30 pm until evening prayers at 8 pm. Immediately after, hammocks were slung, the roll was called and a final inspection was made before lights out.

By the time Benjamin Horne took over in 1843, there were seven hundred boys crowded into Point Puer. The establishment was understaffed, overcrowded and underfunded. The school was difficult to run, but the trade training was successful and provided a foundation for future employment²⁴.

Hooper refers to the quality of the pews built by the boys for the chapel on Port Arthur. There are early photographs of this fine furniture. The trade training included blacksmithing, shoemaking, sawing, tailoring, carpentry, stone masonry and brick-making. All such trades were in high demand.

As a stone mason, a convict boy was actually called upon to cut the headstone of Benjamin Horne when he died²⁵. He was buried on the Isle of the Dead.

On release, Point Puer boys quietly disappeared into the colony to avoid the convict taint and became «respectable men»²⁶. The saga of Point Puer boys was indeed a «contradictory discourse»²⁷. The place is a fascinating part of the history of troubled childhood²⁸.

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²⁴ K.J. Gorton, Chapter 5, *Elementary schooling and training*, pp. 178-220 in her PhD thesis, entitled *Carters' Barracks and Point Puer: The Confinement Experience of Convict Boys in Colonial Australia, 1820-1850*, Newcastle University, 2002.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

²⁶ John West, *The History of Tasmania*, Vol. 11, Henry Dowling, Tasmania 1852 (Australiana Facsimile Edition No. 35, South Australia 1966), p. 247.

²⁷ A. Kyle, *Depraved Little Felons*, «Australian Historical Studies», 25, 1992, pp. 19-324.

²⁸ J. May, J. Ramsland, *The Disenchantment of Childhood and Exploring the Cultural and Spatial Boundaries of Childhood in Three Australian Feature Films, 1920s-1970s*, «Pedagogica Historica», Vol. 43, No. 1, 2007, pp. 135-149.

Manuals of conversion: Protestant missionary schoolbooks in Greece during the 19th century

Anthony L. Smyrnaios

1. The protestant bind between school and press

Since the age of Reformation, a fundamental Protestant ideal was undoubtedly a universal literacy. If the Scriptures contain all that is necessary for salvation, it becomes essential for all to be able to read them in private. Thus, it was a prerequisite for a protestant community to be absolutely, and foremost, a reading one, for in such a way it was secured the individualistic character of a sound Christian mode, that is of an inquirer. Church and school, therefore, marched closely hand in hand since the Reformation. Preaching, education, and, above all, the press, were the plain means of accomplishing such a theological need. From their start, therefore, at the end of the 18th century, Protestant missionary societies created a systematically organized net of schools and printing-presses for the use of the missionaries and the new proselytes all over the world. In such a way, these converts were gradually being catechized to the «bookish culture» of the Anglo-Saxon, protestant countries, were being accustomed to the still unknown to them mentality of being «the Bible widely available in the vernacular», and they really entered to the «Gutenberg epoch» of their own territory, as, for instance, was happened to a great extent in the Ottoman Empire (Grabill, p. 22). Moreover, they had for the first time in their lives the valuable opportunity to touch tracts and books, and the missionaries were usually impressive of their yearning to acquire them.

Undoubtedly, the mutual bind between school and press is very strong and

productive in every contemporary missionary enterprise, Protestant, Catholic, or Orthodox. In every case, the press is an ally, a co-worker, the blood donor of the school, and the latter is the chief disposer of the press' products. Since schools are always the best camouflage of any missionary action, encompassing all the plain, and widely acknowledged, elements of usefulness and philanthropy, the press represents in turn the most visible units of such a veiled activity. Therefore, it usually reveals the hidden spirit of any missionary enterprise, and, perhaps unintentionally, brings to light the fact that it pursues education not for its own sake, not to raise the social, or cultural, standards of the converts, but it simply uses it as a well-concealed instrument of conversion to another religious confession. For the missionary press cannot but make use of a religious language, more or less expressively, it is obliged as well to refer to certain, and well-defined, religious symbols, in order to reveal exactly its otherness, its foreignness, from the religion of the proselytes. It needs, and actually encourages, this distinction, and usually it falls into its well-organized trap. If, in such a complex missionary work, «being teachers gave the Americans status, which they could not easily get by being preachers whom no one wanted to hear» (Grabill, p. 20), books and tracts were also used by missionaries to make an powerful entree not only to pupils but also to adults, to the whole families, and, certainly, to the local, or wider, community.

The mutual bind between school and press was strengthened, however, by the culture of the missionaries themselves. It is a remarkable fact that most of them, though derived usually from lower social classes, were well-educated by the standards of the day in Colleges and Missionary Seminaries. They also had a remarkable capacity in languages: all of them had managed to speak fluently and, certainly, to translate, in more than two other languages except their own. In addition, among them were men of an excellent talent and enormous literary activity, such as Elias Riggs and Eli Smith, who contributed to a far great extent to the educational missionary thrust. Riggs, who worked for sixty-eight years in Near East, had a scholar's mastery of eight languages, and wrote, or translated numerous tracts, texts and hymns. These natural gifts, cultivated in the extremely contrary conditions in the missionary fields, and strengthened by the missionaries' commitment to their Lord and His commission, accentuated par excellence, offering to the natives not only a integrated paradigm of culture but also a unparalleled exemplar of a personal character.

2. The modern protestant missionary activity

The most famous protestant missionary movement, set up at the end of the 18th century, made, therefore, an enormous utilization of the printing-press and its products. It was itself a product of a variety of causes, among which

was mainly the great influence of geographical explorations in conjuncture with the anxiety of eminent protestant divines for the future of the world. On the one hand, the exciting travels of James Cook and others called attention to distant, exotic lands and to the uncivilized condition of the heathen dwelling in outer moral darkness, and on the other, the destruction of the Old Regime in France, the spread of Jacobinism and the rise of Napoleon, led the divines and their flocks to a strong conviction that the millennium was at hand. Wars and revolutions along with the enormous development of knowledge and science, resulted to the rapidity of communication, stimulated a holy hope to Christianize the pagan nations, to convert the Jews, Romanists, and as well the «nominal Christians» of the Eastern Churches in order to fulfil the prophecy of Daniel: at the end of time «many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased».

However, such a gigantic enterprise was undertaken in fact without state support. It was almost absolutely «dependent on the initiative of consecrated individuals, and relying for financial support on the voluntary gifts of interested Christians» (Neill, p. 214). This voluntariness was certainly a dominant feature of nineteenth-century British society; it was a response to the disruption of many crucial social relationships issued by the capitalist character of the Industrial Revolution, and it was the basis for the formation of a middle-class identity (Morris, pp. 95-118). Yet, in the missions' case, such voluntary spirit also derived from the burning zeal and the pioneering spirit of protestant missionaries and their home supporters, who shared an Evangelical, postmillennial eschatology that Christ's Second Coming would not precede but follow the thousand years of peace. The latter had the result that, since the millennium had possibly already begun, as at least some jealous Americans concluded, the Kingdom of Heaven might be realized by systematic, missionary efforts for the conversion of the world to Christianity. Indeed, a powerful order was spreading among the missions' supporters: «You are the people, and this is the time!». This postmillennial confidence, therefore, gave them a new sense of urgency and anticipation, a great outward thrust to Christ's Great Commission: «Go ye into the world, and preach the gospel to every creature».

At first, English groups, such as *Baptist Missionary Society* (B.M.S. in 1792), *London Missionary Society* (L.M.S. in 1795) and *Church Missionary Society* (C.M.S. in 1799), undertook the mission to evangelize the world and a little later these initiatives elicited a powerful American response. The *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (A.B.C.F.M. in 1810) and the *Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society* (D.F.M.S. in 1816) were the two leading groups to convey the protestant millennial view of the end of the world in New England. Moreover, a significant role to the work of these missionary societies played other powerful and famous religious groups, as the *British and Foreign Bible Society*, and the British and the American Religious Tract Societies.

The contribution of the *Bible Society*, and its auxiliary societies in many countries, in the spread of the Scriptures was admirable. A throng of translators, printers and colporteurs, was responsible to publish and circulate millions of Bibles, or portions of them, to the most distant areas in the world, and in many cases to produce by such a task the written form of still unwritten languages, especially in Asia and Africa.

At the end of the eighteenth century the Bible had been translated in whole or in part into more than seventy languages; at the end of the nineteenth, complete Bibles numbered more than 100; complete New Testaments another 120, and languages into which at least some part of the Bible had been rendered roughly 300 more – notes Neill, and adds that such a task was – almost wholly a Protestant achievement (Neill, p. 216).

On the other hand, the *Tract Societies* had undertaken the task to print and distribute millions of small books with protestant sermons, religious instructions, or various kinds of protestant literature: these easy-read publications were disposed without payment to the hands of the people in the missionary countries, playing a preliminary or subsidiary role to their protestant training and conversion.

3. *The «sleepless» press of Malta*

The protestant missionary interference to the Mediterranean world commenced in Malta during the second decade of the 19th century. The importance of this island for such a work has been clearly described by the words of the Directors of the A.B.C.F.M.:

The security of the island, its central situation, its proximity to various nations, dissimilar in language, manners, and religion, and the comparative ease with a moral influence may be diffused from it to these nations, make it peculiarly eligible as the seat of a great evangelical printing establishment (Jones, p. 376).

Indeed, the importance of Malta in the missionary enterprise, during, mainly, the first half of the 19th century, proved to be great: its printing-presses, its schools, its residences for the missionaries passing from the island to the other Mediterranean lands, and, lastly, its *Malta Protestant College* (1846-1865), a famous institution, «a centre and rallying-point for evangelical work of all kinds in the Mediterranean» (Stock, p. 141), all played a exceptional role to the strengthening of the protestant, and certainly the Anglo-Saxon presence, in the area. Yet, the most distinguishing missionary activity in Malta was certainly its presses. In that island, according to the English missionary S.S. Wilson, who was present at the very beginning of such a printing activity, «a sleepless press

is required» to pour its production all over the Mediterranean, and it was what exactly happened for almost three decades (Wilson, p. 181).

Paradoxically, it was Dr. Cleardo Naudi, a Maltese and Roman Catholic, who in 1811 made at first an appeal to the *Church Missionary Society* for sending missionaries to the «poor» and «ignorant» Eastern Christians, «living mingled in confusion with the Turkish inhabitants [...] [and] deprived of the true light of the Gospel». The Society responded positively and in 1815 sent William Jowett to «collect information about the state of religion on the shores of the Mediterranean, and to inquire as to the best methods of propagating Christian Knowledge» (Stock, p. 224).

In a well-established Protestant, missionary view, the Eastern Christians, that is Greek Orthodox, Armenians, Nestorians, Chaldeans, Copts and Maronites, were superstitious, corrupted and illiterate, responding by long habit to dead rituals under the spiritual bondage of an, also ignorant and fanatical, priesthood. Certainly, all of them had for centuries proved to be unable to better their wretched spiritual condition, unless Protestant missionaries decided to undertake the great task to revive a spirit of inquiry among them, and, eventually, to bring them to the threshold of their salvation.

Yet, the ulterior purpose of such interference to the Eastern Churches was clearly the conversion of Mohammedans, and this could not be realized but by the preliminary purification of these «nominal» Eastern Christians:

It has not appeared conformable to the direct design of the Society to expend any part of its funds on Christian Countries, otherwise than with the ultimate view of winning, through them, the Heathen to the reception of the Gospel – says a Report of the Society as early as in 1818 (Stock, vol. I, p. 222).

In the origin of such purpose, however, a peculiar bias was found, which widely distributed by missionaries, and missionary theorists too: Moslems insist on their false religion and reject Christianity, for they are mingled into ignorant, immoral and benighted Christians, for they had no opportunity, as yet, to meet pious, humble and well-educated men and women professed a truly Christian character, that is Protestants, and, especially, missionaries. The German missionary Andrew Jetter, writing to the C.M.S., made a widely-accepted remark on this subject:

I repeat, therefore, let those nominal Christians who have daily intercourse with them [the Turks] exhibit the precepts of the Gospel in their lives and actions, and let them be improved [...]; then the Turks will be roused from their lethargy, and throw off those shackles by which their religion has held them for centuries in the grossest ignorance and delusion («The Missionary Register», March 1836, p. 174).

Maybe, Jetter and others should put in mind that the religion of the defeated would be almost impossible, and paradoxical, to be seriously attractive for

their masters, especially when they were so cruel and intolerable, as the missionaries themselves have always described them.

However, the missionaries came very early to acknowledge the dangerousness of the conversion of Moslems to Christianity, since the penalty for apostasy from Islam was, for centuries, simply death. Indeed, a long and chequered course was the missionary process in Turkey. The tone of enthusiasm was seldom raised in the reports of the protestant emissaries in the area. In spite of the ardent efforts of the British Ambassador in Constantinople Sir Stratford Canning to succeed in the establishment of the Protestant millet in 1850, as well as the edict of Hatti-Humayun in 1856 for the religious liberty throughout the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish behaviour against missionaries was always unpredictable. All the decrees were found to be a dead letter, as interpreted by pashas and cadis in the distant parts of the Empire, still even by the Porte itself. At last, the ever-lasting hopes for conversions among the Turks were shattered in the summer of 1864, and for the rest of the century, when a sudden outrage broke out all over the protestant missions of the Empire. Some years later, the German missionary J. Wolters was obliged to report from Smyrna to the C.M.S.:

There is but little success; the door is hardly yet opened; the obstacles in the way of access to the Turks are as great as ever [...]. It is a comfort to me [...] that the Committee is as far as possible removed from the heartless, calculating spirit which one sometimes meets with elsewhere, which expects so many converts to figure in the lists, in return for so much money laid out [...]. Any measure of reform that is passed looks very well on paper, and serves to deceive the public in Europe. As far as regards Turkey, it remains a dead letter [...]. We are bound to wait until Turks come to us; we cannot go to them («The Church Missionary Record», vol. XIII, New Series, June 1868, pp. 170-171, and July 1869, p. 198).

Furthermore, Koelle, a German missionary of the C.M.S., describing the missionary conditions in the Ottoman Empire many years later, writes: «If Turkey is of no use to the world, it certainly is of that one use that it can teach the world patience» (Koelle to C.M.S., Constantinople, 2th January 1879, CMM /18, 1879-1880).

Yet, the well-established religious superiority of such self-confident Protestants could not be altering its peculiar character, at least not in the first half of the 19th century. The attack upon the Moslem world, the greater obstacle in the universal, triumphant course of Protestant Christianity, called therefore for jealous volunteers, and, among others, Greeks seemed to be the most effective instrument for such a purpose. The missionaries usually expected that the Greeks, enlightened and animated by the free and ample circulation among them of the Holy Scriptures, and as well numerous, widely scattered, with a cultivated language, and maintaining a ready intercourse among themselves and with others, will act most powerfully and beneficially on the large masses

among whom they live.

Moreover, some of them focused on the peculiar eschatological mission of Greece:

Its local position between Rome and Turkey, in the very heart of the two Antichrists, gives great facilities for the vigorous operations of the press. A light kindled in such a district is adapted to expose the darkness and errors of the two great enemies of the Saviour's cause, and eventually lead to its final and glorious establishment (Jones, p. 376).

Wilson, also, who proclaimed that he was «a debtor to the Greeks», insisted on the distinguishing character of Greece:

Greece – the very heart and eye of the world. The keys to the mind of Asia must ever be on the Hellespont, and in the hands of the Greeks. The elevation of Greece will illuminate all these regions which Christianity early civilized; but the sun of Asia is darkened, while Greece is in eclipse [...] (Wilson, 86, 243).

Jowett himself, the first emissary of the C.M.S. to the Mediterranean, was confident that Greeks ought to be the evangelists of the Moslem world, but this triumphant project raptly failed with the Greek War of Independence (1821-1828). Yet, on the other hand, this war between the Cross and the Crescent stretched on the Protestants the hope that the fall of Islam was imminent and the eventual triumph of Christendom great.

In the so-called «Mediterranean Mission», therefore, the first printing-press was established in Malta by the A.B.C.F.M. in 1822, and in 1834 was transferred to Smyrna, Beirut and Urmia. This Society printed books in ten languages, including works of a clearly religious nature, hymnals and moralistic tales, but also schoolbooks on grammar, spelling, geography and mathematics, and in the latter 19th century college-level scientific and medical texts. In addition, the Society published periodicals in five languages, dictionaries and volumes on literature and history, amounted to eight million books by 1914, including four million Bibles (Grabill, pp. 20-21). During the Malta period the press of the A.B.C.F.M. published thousands of Bibles, tracts and other religious and schoolbooks in Modern Greek to a total of about 350,000 copies, comprising 21,000,000 pages, while about 30,000,000 pages had been printed from 1822 to 1837. Only in the year ending October 1831, 4,760,000 pages were printed. In such enormous printing activity of the A.B.C.F.M. in Modern Greek should be added, between 1840 and 1869, over than 70,000 copies of Bibles and other religious books in Graeco-Turkish language for the Christians of the provinces of the Asia Minor, whose speech was Turkish and alphabet Hellenic. Furthermore, two missionary magazines were printed in Smyrna: «The Star in the East and the Friend of Youth» (1832-1836), in Greek and English, by the missionary J. Brewer, and «The Magazine of Useful Knowledge» (1836-1844), a monthly periodical published by the Greek convert N.

Petrokokkinos, and supported by the American missionaries, which had almost 1,200 subscribers in 1839.

Among the schoolbooks printed in the American press were: *Lessons for Children*, *Dialogues on Grammar*, *The Alphabetarion*, *The Greek Reader*, *Adams's Arithmetic*, *The Child's Assistant*, *The Child's Arithmetic*, *History of Greece*, *History of Rome*, *History of England*, *Peter Parley's Geography*, with lithographed maps, *Pinnock's Catechism of Greek History*, *Woodbridge's Geography*, etc. (Anderson, pp. 505-506).

The other famous printing-press in Malta was that of the L.M.S. commenced in 1824 by S.S. Wilson, who in the same year had already printed 10,000 tracts at the press of the A.B.C.F.M. Receiving funds not only from the L.M.S., but also from the London Religious Tract Society, Wilson, aided by his colleague Isaac Lowndes, managed to print and distribute nearly 9,000 publications in 1829. Also, in 1831 published five tracts of 9,500 copies in all, and also Scott's *Essays*, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and *Tutor's Guide*, amounted to 29,869 books and tracts in Modern Greek (Lovett, vol. II, 637-639).

Yet, in 1834 it was decided by the L.M.S. to close the Malta station and press, due to the financial problems of the Society, and also to the view that all its missions should only be to the heathen, a common missionary argument for the close of mission stations in the Mediterranean. So, Wilson, who was also the author of the first novel in Modern Greek, *The Rumeliot Chieftain* (*To Παλληκάριον*), finished the work of the press in June, 1835, and returned for ever to England.

Lowndes, who was connected to the L.M.S. since 1817 and worked in the Ionian Islands, was engaged, besides his missionary work, in important literary tasks, such as the *Albanian New Testament* and the *Albanian alphabet*, prepared and printed a *Lexicon of Modern Greek*. In addition, Lowndes in conjunction with H. Leeves, the agent of the B.F.B.S., and two Greek professors, translated the Old Testament from the Hebrew to Modern Greek. This book was published in 1838, but Lowndes also translated Gesenius' *Hebrew Lexicon* into Modern Greek, which was printed in 1842. However, two years later the L.M.S. decided to relinquish the mission in the Ionian Islands, for «the claims of our existing stations in the heathen world have long exceeded the pecuniary resources of the Society», and this ground was not, «strictly speaking, a missionary» one (Lovett, p. 640).

The third protestant printing press in Malta was that of the C.M.S. It commenced in 1825 and supplied the Philhellenic Paedagogion of Syra with numerous copies of religious and school books, as well as other missionary, or public, schools. Some of the books printed there had been translated by the director of the Paedagogion, F.A. Hildner. In a list of 61 Greek publications printed there between 1825 and 1841, included books and tracts from 16 to 827 pages, were also school-books, as *The New Alphabetarion*, *Reading Book in*

Ancient Greek, Instruction in Arithmetic. According to Pestalozzi, Helps to Teach Knitting, Manual for Teaching Sewing with lithogr. plates, English Grammar, Hebrew Grammar, Hymns with Tunes, Greek Atlas, Greek Writing Copies, etc. (Papers Concerning the C.M.S. Establishment and Printing Press at Malta 1822-42, CMO/4, 26). The C.M.S. was obliged to close its press in the middle of the great financial crisis of 1842, though another reason for this end was the prejudice of the Greeks «against foreign works, and especially those printed at Malta», as the German missionary Schlienzy wrote to the C.M.S. (CMM/8 1840-1843).

4. *The missionary printing-presses in Greece*

The missionaries resided and worked in Athens usually supplied with books and tracts from Malta, or Smyrna. Yet, some of them managed to print and publish such books not in missionary presses. It is important to mention that Jonas King alone, the most famous and controversial missionary figure of the A.B.C.F.M., from his arrival in 1831 to 1855 printed in Athens more than 1,000,000 pages, or «the amazing number of 400,000 copies of School-books, Scriptures, and religious works» (Gilpin, p. 25). In addition, Hill, besides other religious books, prepared and published in Athens a *Manual for Infant Schools*, according to the teaching in his School (1859), a reference mark in the education of infants in Greece during the rest of the 19th century.

The printing activity in Greece was also strengthened by the Episcopalian press, which was first established at Tenos Island in 1831. The first tract printed there was described as such:

It consists of two extracts from a little Greek volume of devotions and meditations. One is on the observation of the Lord's day and Festivals; and the other on prayer (*Proceedings of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society*, cit., p. 54).

Soon later, the press was transferred to Athens, when the missionaries John Hill and John Robertson with their wives resided. In this town, the missionaries, «for the better persecution of their missionary work» (*ibid.*, p. 52), decided to divide their labours, and Hill undertook the missionary schools and Robertson the press department.

From a letter of Robertson, we are informed that from the establishment of the mission in 1831 up to the 15th of July, 1834, he had printed 19 religious and schoolbooks in 30,255 copies, containing 2,703,945 pages. The religious books were *Conversation with a Young Traveller, Extracts from a Synopsis on Prayer, etc., Dialogue between two Friends*, and some of the *Robinson's Scripture Characters* (*Adam, Cain, and Abel, Enoch and Noah, Abraham, Lot and*

Melchisedeck, Isaak and Jacob, Joseph). The schoolbooks were Colburn's *Arithmetic*, Jacobs's *Greek Reader*, vol. I, II, *Modern Greek Grammar*, Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, and Plato's *Gorgias and Apology*. Moreover, Robertson printed works of excellent Greek men familiar to his religious views, as the *Address of Prof. Bambas at third examination of Mr. Hildner's school*, the *Address of do. at opening of Mr. Leeves's schools*, *Coray's Synopsis of Sacred History* and the *Translation of "Horne on the Internal Evidences of the Inspiration of the Scriptures"*, by Bambas.

Furthermore, the American missionary, revealed the variety of his printing activities, noticing that

Besides these there have been printed 500 copies of a Greek Hymn for the schools; 600 copies of an address of the Bishop of Athens on the arrival of the first royal decree [...]; 300 copies of another address of his [...]; 12 copies of each of four inscriptions, in large characters, to be hung round the school-room; a series of twelve spelling lessons on sheets, five hundred being printed of the first, and fifty of each of the others; and a considerable quantity of tickets of good behavior, progress in studies, etc., for the Missionary schools (Denison, pp. 266-267).

In 1834 Robertson departed to Syra, where his wife commenced a female school and he continued to print and put in circulation many religious and schoolbooks before their departure for Constantinople in 1839 and one year later for the United States. At the Syra period, the Episcopalian press had been indeed vigorous, printing and publishing more than 8,800,000 pages («*Spirit of Missions*», vol. 1838, p. 254 and vol. 1839, p. 106).

5. *The activity of the B.F.B.S and the B.R.T.S.*

The *British and Foreign Bible Society* (B.F.B.S.) had shown an enormous activity towards the Greeks and the other Eastern Christians since 1810, when the first Greek version of the New Testament published by it. The whole of the missionary operations in that area were in full connection with the B.F.B.S. Since 1817 a series of Auxiliary Societies were established in Malta, Smyrna, Corfu, Cephalonia, Zante, Ithaca, Paxo, Athens, etc. The gross total of the Society generally devoted to the Eastern Mediterranean area from 1818 to the close of 1838 was 57,731 pounds, while from 1846 to 1850 only showed the large aggregate of 31,974 pounds (Canton, pp. 27, 290). From 1810 to 1844 no less than 257,652 volumes of the Greek Scriptures had been issued, including Testaments with the ancient and modern text in parallel columns, the four Gospels, portions of the Old and New Testaments, or the whole editions of them (Canton, p. 272).

In 1834 the Greek government recognized the Holy Scriptures as a book

necessary for the use of all public schools, though this official decision was «only a sanction by authority of what before existed to a very large extent *de facto*», as H. Leeves, the agent of the B.F.B.S in Greece, observed (Canton, p. 19). In 1851, I. Lowndes claimed that

in Greece there was no book so much used in the education of the young as the New Testament published by the Society (the B.F.B.S.), and in 1853 it was ascertained that the schools in which the Word of God had found free course contained 40,257 scholars, so that one at least in every five-and-twenty of the entire population was in almost daily touch with the truths of the Gospel (Canton, 282).

The activity of the British Religious Tract Society (B.R.T.S.) in Greek commenced in 1811, when it printed *The Scripture Extracts*, translated by the Rev. F.F. Usko, of Oxford, and scattered them in several of the Greek islands, and among the crews of Greek vessels in the port of London. These supplies continued in the following years, and the agents of the Society circulated hundred of thousand tracts in connection with the agents of other missionary societies, usually offering grants to them for the printing. Thus, in 1822, the Rev. S.S. Wilson, who had commenced to translate juvenile works in Greek, received various grants from this Society for the printing and circulation of tracts and books, such as *The Scripture Extracts*, *The Divine Songs for Children*, a selection from *Hymns for Infant Minds*, and *The Youthful Lyre*. These works had an enormous circulation among the public, private and, certainly, the missionary schools in Greece, at least, up to the middle of the century (Jones, p. 377). L.C. Korck, an ex-missionary of the Church Missionary Society in Syra, who had appointed by the Bavarian Regent G. Maurer Director of the Seminary for Teachers and Inspector General of the Public schools (1834-1835), supplied with 11,000 copies of these tracts and books from Malta to be used in schools. In addition, the appointment of I. Lowndes as an Inspector of schools for the Ionian Islands (1840), gave increased facilities for their diffusion (*ibid.*, p. 378). The circulation was actually gigantic. As there was fear that, sometimes, these works could probably suffer «the fate of martyrs» and be burnt by the opponents, though such an action happened a very few times during that period, and to an extremely limited extent, Jowett focused on «the necessity of printing ten copies where before we printed only one» (*ibid.*, p. 374). In 1836 only, about forty-five thousand tracts and books were circulated in Greece (*ibid.*, p. 378). Thus, the enthusiasm of the agents was great: «This nation exhibits phenomena peculiar to itself – no people, equally afflicted, equally anxious for instruction, or equally destitute of means. Greece is hungry for books, and I cannot print fast enough», writes Wilson to the Society (*ibid.*, p. 379).

6. The missionary schools in Greece and the use of school-books

As we can see from the various letters of the missionaries in the Mediterranean, books and tracts in Turkey, Palestine, and Egypt, were distributed not only by the missionaries themselves, or by the depots of the missionary schools, but by the protestant book-shops. These were usually kept by native converts, and also used for a meeting-place, a “resort” for all “the inquirers”, as the missionaries usually called the newcomers to Protestant congregations. Conversely, in Greece, though sometimes Hildner, or other missionaries, managed to open such a shop in the bazaars, they were obliged soon to close it, due to financial reasons. Sometimes, as well, the missionaries offered their books to not missionary book-shops to sell them, but usually without much success. Thus schools remained always the main depots of protestant books and tracts, and the colporteurs were the only alternative instrument to distribute them in distant places.

The net of printing-presses and missionary schools, therefore, was indeed dense. The presses of Malta were in operation until 1844, while the presses of Athens, Syra, and Smyrna, had already taken part in the diffusion of religious literature. The missionary schools absorbed the most of that energy, though other public, or private, schools had also received a large amount of it. Furthermore, it was remarkable that, in most cases, a friendly interdenominational intercourse had been established between British and American missionaries, who freely interchanged their Bibles, schoolbooks and tracts, seeking one another of their publications, trying to cover the extended needs of their schools.

The most famous and long-operated educational establishments in Greece were the John and Frances Hill's School in Athens, which exists up to date, though from the last decades of the 19th century no longer with a protestant character, and the Philhellenic Paedagogion of F.A. Hildner in Hermoupolis of Syra in Cyclades (1830-1877). Other missionary schools during that period were the Rigg's School in Argos, the Houston and Leyburn's School in Chios and later in Areopolis of Maina, the J. King's School in Tenos and Athens, the Robertson's School in Hermoupolis, the Leeves's School in the same town, the schools of the American Baptist missionaries Arnold and Buel in Athens and in Piraeus, and some other missionary schools in the Ionian Islands and Crete.

In comparison to the Hill's and to the Hildner's, all these schools were somehow short-lived, from some months to almost ten years; yet the use of protestant literature in them was also enormous. The one school usually equipped the other with books, tracts, and slates, and a friendly correspondence was in operation between them for such a purpose. The offer and the daily utilization of such books, along with the well-conducted character of schools, were the most advantageous and attractive points the people usually acknowledged in missionary schools.

Thus, at the beginning of any missionary enterprise, there were distributed small or larger portions of the Old and the New Testament, and then the whole texts of them. These books were usually offered as gifts to the pupils of the missionary or public schools at the day of the annual Public Examinations, at Christmas celebrations, or at the anniversaries of the establishment of the missionary schools.

The gift most sought for and the most venerated, was a copy of the Sacred Scriptures [...]. This is considered as a gift of the highest value. I do not believe that the most sumptuous Christmas gifts, displayed in the splendid circles of high society in New-York on Christmas day, were more appreciated by the recipients than these precious books – Hill informs his Society («Spirit of Missions», vol. 1859, pp. 190, 192).

These were precisely the texts pupils had learned to read in their school the previous time. In these occasions, a detailed examination of the pupils' knowledge of Scriptures in many forms was taken place in front of the local authorities and the parents or relatives of the children. Usually the missionary or, sometimes, the local bishop, or one of his clergy, minutely examined them in certain passages from Holy Writ, and always the missionaries reported to their Society that they had been wholly satisfied. Hill presents also a theatrical performance of such an examination:

The first class was divided into two sections, and seated opposite each other. They each in turn repeated a prophecy, taken from the Old Testament. The pupils opposite repeated a text from the New Testament, showing the fulfillment of the same. The prophecies and their fulfillment were those respecting the coming of the Messiah («Spirit of Missions», vol. 1859, p. 191).

These books were also distributed to the students of the Normal School for Teachers of Common Schools in Athens, who after taking their diploma were appointed in the provinces, easily conveying the protestant spirit to the small towns and villages of the country. In 1834, the director of it, the German missionary of the Anglican Church Missionary Society, L.C. Kock, had received 11,000 copies of books from the printing-press of Malta for his students. Also, Hill, in 1859, he had given to them 548 copies of the New Testament, and parts of the Old, along with 1,112 Tracts of various kinds («Spirit of Missions», vol. 1859, p. 239). F.A. Hildner as well had equipped many times the Seminary for female teachers in Hermoupolis of Syra, and even the Orthodox Seminary for priests in the same town, with Scriptures and other religious books («The Church Missionary Record», vol. XV, New Series, July 1870, p. 209). According to an American visitor in 1856,

the books introduced and largely used in the public schools of Greece, are those which the American missionaries have selected and translated, the excellent works of pious teaching which have been prepared in America, as best fitted for the youthful mind, are widely

spread there; and above all, the Bible entire, the N. Testament, and extracts selected from both, have been diffused to an extent that is scarcely to be conceived [...] (Gilpin, p. 22).

Certainly, all these sacred books had been translated in Modern Greek. Yet, English Bibles were also distributed, or given as gifts, to the more advanced pupils, who studied English in a special class of the Hellenic school, in order to close even their knowledge of a foreign language into certain religious limits. Moreover, as Hill himself admits, «the English Bible is the only book I use with this class» («Missionary Record of D.F.M.S.», vol. 1833, p. 166).

Among other missionary schools, the Philhellenic Paedagogion of the *Church Missionary Society* in Syra, had an enormous educational and missionary activity and influence not only in the Cyclades but in the whole of Greece and even longer. Its director, the German missionary F.A. Hildner, trained over than 7,000 pupils during the forty-seven years of the school's operation (1830-1877). As he writes in his report of 1868, in his school establishment, from the commencement of its operation till the end of it,

the Bible is a class-book, Scripture, and Scripture history, is read and taught in the higher classes three times a week, and to the lower every day. The Lord's day, when all the children are expected to attend in the morning, is exclusively devoted to Bible instruction and the singing of suitable hymns and Psalms («The Church Missionary Record», vol. XIII, New Series, June 1868, p. 172).

In the report for the year 1846, Hildner also writes:

Among the books used in the different Schools of our Establishment are the New Testament, the Compendium of the Old and New Testaments, The Gospel of St. John, Chrysostom on Reading the Scriptures, the Histories of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, etc. All the children have continued to commit Scripture to memory («The Missionary Register», May 1847, p. 245).

An important part of the work issued by Hildner was the distribution of schoolbooks, Bibles and tracts mostly to the schools at Syra, and partly, on application, sent to the Greek Islands, or other parts of Greece and Turkey, being the «silent messengers», as he calls them («The Missionary Register», March 1848, p. 147). The Demarches, the School Commissions, and the Directors of the schools sent letters and requested books, and also, tables, or slates, from him, while, sometimes, they visited themselves Syra for this purpose. Hildner, dispatching them to those distant places, usually supplied his cases with religious tracts as gifts. In his letters and diaries sent to the C.M.S. he carefully writes down the numbers of books circulated by him, or his colporteurs, and, also, the places where he dispatched them. Thus, he reports to have sent schoolbooks to Athens, Tino, Andros, Milo, Naxos, Scopelo, Skyros, Samos, Kalymnos, Anafi, Negreponte (Euboia), Makedonia, Crete, Peloponnesus, and also in some places of the Ottoman Empire, as in Smyrna and Alexandria.

For instance, in 1845 the number of books disposed by Hildner himself was 4,011, not including a good number of smaller tracts, though the following years the number was for ever diminishing. He often mentions that «many applications for School-books could not be answered» («The Missionary Register», May 1847, p. 246), and «scarcely a day passes wherein I have not opportunity to dispose of some good books or Scriptures, either in the Schools or elsewhere» (*ibid.*, April 1846, p. 198).

Nevertheless, he also notices the difficulty of selling them, for the great poverty of Greeks: «The number of books distributed would be considerably larger if I had not found it necessary to adhere more strictly to the principle of selling» (*ibid.*, April 1845, p. 202). Selling, instead of simply distributing them, he finds, however, necessary, since «the scholars, and also other people, put a greater value on the book, and consequently keep it better, if they have paid some money for it» (*ibid.*, March 1848, p. 148). In other cases, he was obliged to sell them at reduced prices, for, except the poverty of people, the Greeks were reluctant to pay for religious books. This was also the opinion of J. Wolters, who notices that the Greeks were too ready to buy French books, as those of Voltaire, but not so eager to buy and read «books of a serious and religious tendency» (Journal of J. Wolters, April 6th to June 30th, 1840, CMM/7, 1839-1840). From another point of view, however, it was the American missionary J. Brewer who noticed the odd trend of the Greeks only to acquire but not to read the books... (Brewer, p. 153).

7. *The outcomes of the protestant school and printing activity*

The protestant intrusion to the Greek education and youth seemed, therefore, almost complete. The agents of the various Missionary and Bible Societies were almost undisturbed in distributing their books and tracts. Even in an *Education Society* («Philekpaideutiki Etaireia»), established in 1836 by principal literary men in Athens probably in opposition to the missionary operations, the American missionary Benjamin was elected a corresponding member, and, also, the Society adopted several publications of the *American Tract Society*, and placed its print on their title pages (Tracy, p. 415).

The missionary schools had indeed a peculiar task to do in these missionary fields. They tried to integrate their religious influence on the natives and the youth finding the pretext of a regular educational course, which proved to be an irresistible activity, and really a reference mark in a world of extreme fluidity and uncertainty. Hill, trying to persuade the members of his Society for the absolute usefulness of his educational mission, notices that

to all external appearance, or to a mere superficial observer, the schools present nothing more than other well-conducted schools; but a nearer inspection of the working of the machinery, and a better acquaintance with its details, show that there is something beyond the outside appearance – something which has reference to interest of higher value than the cultivation of the intellect alone («Spirit of Missions», 1858, p. 566).

As early as in 1832, Hill also reports the daily program of his school, trying to show to the anxious members of his Society the strict religious character of its course, a character really superior even of the American schools in USA. This program was in fact the same in all the missionary schools in Greece, and elsewhere.

The school is opened at 9 a.m. with prayer, always concluding with the Lord's Prayer, the whole school repeating it aloud. A portion of Scripture is then read [...]. A chapter is then read by the girls in a class (taken from the New Testament) after which, they employ themselves in studying the portion they have to repeat from memory before the close of the day. One hour is appropriated to writing, and even then, 'copies' are sentences from the Gospel. Twice a week they are instructed in Geography, and they begin, to understand the elementary part well. The exercises are suspended for an hour at noon [...]. The afternoon is devoted to spelling and arithmetic, and at the close of the exercises of the day, we all solemnly recite the articles of our common faith, as contained in the Nicene creed [...]. The younger part is taught as in America, upon the Infant-School plan. With Alpha they learn for instance who Adam was; and only this day I was occupied some time in explaining to these infants the nature of sin [...]. Dr. Watts' Hymns for infant minds have been translated into Greek verse and the repeating of them is part of their daily exercises [...]. On Friday afternoon when the exercises of the week close [...], all the Scripture which has been committed to memory during the week is recited, together with the Creed and Ten Commandments, and such other simple religious instruction as we can give; the good are rewarded, and we part to meet again on Sunday morning, when the portion of Scripture which has been selected as the lesson for the week, is amply explained by the brethren alternately, with other religious exercises («Periodical Missionary Paper», September 1832, pp. 11-12).

Almost thirty years later, Hill also declared with much pride:

Our schools are, strictly speaking, scriptural schools. Nowhere else in the Christian world, that I know of, is the Bible made so exclusively the book of instruction as in our missionary schools («Spirit of Missions», 1859, p. 193).

In such an extraordinary religious instruction, probably more suitable for a seminary for priests than for common schools, one can easily notice that not a single portion of time untouched by the religious impulse of the missionaries had almost remained. The latter had the exceptional opportunity to apply their own jealous, religious ideas to a foreign youth hungry for knowledge, literacy, and social mobility. In their triumphant reports to their Societies they were usually astonished by such a chance to catechize their pupils in a religious style even incomparable to that used by their own national educational system.

Almost all the protestant, religious books were used as schoolbooks, all the prayers and hymns recited and singing there were strictly protestant, and none opportunity ought to be lost without a direct or indirect religious interference. Missionaries themselves were always certain for the religious influence exerted by the school-books themselves. *The Alphabetarion*, a book of 120 pages, prepared and published by the American press in Malta, «is pronounced by the Greeks to be unexceptionable, both in respect to matter and style [...]. The book is fitted to exert a pure and excellent religious influence, and promises, as Dr. Korck believes, to become a general school-book in Greece». Korck, therefore, asked for printing as rapidly as possibly 15,000 copies of it («The Missionary Herald», vol. XXVI, 1830, p. 395).

Once, in such school-books, a peculiar problem had to be solved: in their English version some of them had religious pictures, and that could be suspicious for idolatry. Yet, the aesthetic value of them surpassed these suspicions:

Greece is hungering for books, and she will leap for joy to receive them. It has long been my opinion, that provided pictures do not tend to sanction the worship of saints, we do wisely to make our books as attractive as possible – wrote an agent (Jones, p. 377).

Yet, in other instance, Korck decided not to engage the old, famous Greek teacher G. Kleovoulos in the missionary schools of Syra, for he used images in his own school, and even taught his pupils in his printing-lessons to bow before them (CM/O, 43/7, Egina, April 7th, 1828, Korck to Bickersteth).

If a question, however, could be raised, referring to the tolerance of Greeks in such an all-covering religious instruction, a possible answer could be found in a letter of the American missionary J. Robertson at the commencement of his mission in Greece:

The indescribable personal sufferings to which most of the Greeks have been subjected, and the remarkable vicissitudes which they have experienced; the bereavements in their families, and other circumstances, have led many individuals to much serious reflection upon the vanity of the world and the uncertainty of terrestrial enjoyments. I have often noticed a tendency to make frequent references to the hand of Providence. In some cases there is an evident anxiety to escape from the wrath to come, and to work out their salvation [...] (Denison, p. 126).

Yet, another reason for such a tolerance could be the moralistic spirit of the Enlightenment in an odd conjunction with the monastic educational tradition during the Byzantine period and the Turkish domination: the vivid and steady religious education was an important premise for all these jealous spirits, since the youth was regarded by them as always prone to a moral entropy and filth. The staunch protestant training, therefore, derived also from the West, which was the crest of the Greek desire, found eager hearers among the Greeks, and complicated their resistance.

Yet, all this extraordinary activity had insufficient and meager outcomes for

the Protestants. For instance, Paedagogion was indeed the only missionary school in Greece, in which, against the national law, the catechism of the Greek Church had not been entered, due to the complex political and economic conditions prevailing in the island. But the wholly protestant character of the school could not justify for ever the expenditure of the Society's funds contributed for strictly missionary purposes. Thus, as we are informed by the periodicals of the C.M.S.,

The Bible is read by all the scholars, and is the foundation of all the instruction: and the spirit of the school is wholly Protestant. Nevertheless, as the pupils pass from the teaching of the school to the pastoral care of the Greek Church, the Committee does not regard this branch of their operation as sufficiently Missionary. They therefore bear no part of the expenses of the school: and only continue to Mr. Hildner his usual salary as a Missionary of the Society [...] («Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society», Sixty-second Year, 1860-1861, pp. 61-62).

After half a century of an intense missionary enterprise, and a vast circulation of books, Hildner succeeded in converting to Protestantism his second wife only, who was a Greek teacher of his school.

Furthermore, the very expectations of the members of the Societies for certain conversions seemed not to be accomplished by the educational work of the missionaries. In the letter mentioned above, Robertson took pains to persuade some «pious individuals in the United States, who may be inclined to object to the publication of so many books on human science». Some jealous Protestants had felt the printing of secular, educational books useless for the Society's funds, a plain waste of money. So, he tries to focus on six points of justification, but it is the last one that virtually unveils the secret purpose of all missionaries: «That it gives great reputation to our presses; helps to close the mouths of opponents, to win influence for ourselves, and to render more acceptable our publications of a religious character» (Denison, p. 267). Therefore, such books were regarded as the camouflaged means for promoting their certain religious ends, an alibi, which Robertson was too ready to reveal only to his protestant audience in order not to cease the flux of funds for the mission in Greece. He also promises afterwards that

We shall be as much rejoiced as can be any friend of the cause at home, when it shall no longer be necessary for us to publish any book not bearing directly on the subject of religion; indeed, the greater part, by far, of our future publications, will be of a directly religious character (*ibid.*).

Moreover, the same discontent there was for the missionary schools, as being not of a strict missionary character. Hill himself, trying to support his educational work, thirty years after its commencement, from accusations derived from his chief opponent in his Society, Charles Andrews (Andrews, 1866), writes to the Foreign Committee of his Society:

Our schools, indeed, are considered by us as very important instruments to enable us to carry out our great objects. At the beginning of our career they were al important, we could not have taken one step without the aid of this machinery [...]. Still, we regard them as but a small part of our work. We have been erecting a lofty and capacious building: our schools have served as the scaffolding; but until we have reached the head-stone, and crowned it (through the Divine blessing), we shall have need of the scaffolding («Spirit of Missions», vol. 1860, p. 426).

The contradiction between these missionaries and the impatient for conversions members of their Societies made the former to invent somehow unconventional justifications for their mission. The objection of Protestant missionaries themselves to the idea of proselytism is well-known. The paradigm of Catholic missionaries, polemically elaborated by Protestants, had leaded them to abhor even the very word of “proselytism”. Thus, J. Wolters, missionary at Persia, Syra, and later at Smyrna, referring to the some members of the Orthodox Church who became converts to Protestantism at Smyrna, characteristically writes:

It is not we that proselytize, it is the gospel itself: it is the heavenly light of its doctrines which exposes the darkness and errors of these fallen churches, and then it is the tyranny of their rulers, is the hand of persecution, that drives away every sincere inquirer from the bosom of his church («Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society», cit., 1851-1852, p. 71).

In addition, the conciliatory spirit of the Hills’ missionary efforts, which had also brought them to challenge the J. King’s ones, was justified by Frances Hill herself as an astonishing pouring of the Divine Grace on them:

I am convinced that the views we entertain must have been communicated to us by a superior Wisdom than our own. We always maintained a conciliatory course towards this people, but we can hardly say it originated in any preconceived principle [...]. And I have thought that perhaps God has been teaching us in this country how to become missionaries for the extension of our beloved Zion at home (Hills’ Personal Archives, 19/3/ and 1/1/1843).

Educational, that is secular, press and schools, as the preparatory, and necessary, means of a real missionary work, were, therefore, under a slight suspicion during the most part of the 19th century, in most cases not by the missionaries themselves, but by some, at least, members of the Societies, who wished the heathen to «know nothing, except Jesus Christ, and him crucified» (1 Cor. 2:2). Certainly, the problem “evangelization versus civilization” had a comprehensible meaning only in a Western frame of mind, especially after the Enlightenment and its distinction between church and morals or culture. The missionaries, children of their time, had been under such influence, and tried to supersede this chasm either binding the two elements or distinguishing them as much as possible.

Rufus Anderson, the architect of the A.B.C.F.M.'s policy, and a great mission-theorist, was certain that «conversion, not civilization, was the Board's proper concern». To him the key objective of missions was the formation of local churches with native pastors: all the other means, including education, were subordinate and contributory. Otherwise, he was precisely feared of the denationalization of the natives, i.e. by introducing the English language at the missionary schools, for, then, they usually came to regard themselves as elevated above their parents, and the mass of their people, and become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened. He was feared of the foreignness and otherness of these converts from their compatriots, a formidable consequence of the complications issued by the interference of culture in the pure motives of evangelization.

Yet, although his advocacies, the civilizing approach of mission generally prevailed, especially among the religious emissaries to the missionary fields, who were often inclined to transport freely their inevitable cultural baggage to their clientele, observing i.e. that

in Turkey, those who do not read the Bible live on in their gloomy and comfortless abodes, while chairs and tables, books and book-cases, Yankee clocks and glass windows, mark the homes of Bible-readers [...]. The first call of a convert from heathenism is for clean clothes and a better house [...] (Finnie, p. 189).

The missionaries had been persuaded that civilizing succeeded far better than evangelizing did, that without secular means, without an all-embracing adoption of the Western values by the natives, the preaching of a pure Gospel could not be accepted by them. The reason was the often enormous social, economic and cultural chasm between the missionaries and the natives, which made the latter too jealous and too ready to adopt agreeably not the spiritual, but the cultural baggage of those gentle and tender agents both of religious and secular innovation. If, even by the secular means, the propagation of the Gospel had very meager fruits of conversions during the 19th century, one can easily contemplate on the results of a pure, immaculate from civilizing elements, evangelical work. Yet, the missionaries in their fields, being aware or not of such a distinction, offered mixed singles, and attempted to succeed an always ambivalent, uncertain equilibrium between Christianity and civilization, Gospel and school or press, clinging on either side as the historical circumstances as well as their own knowledge and sensibility dictated. The instructive cases of the *Robert College in Constantinople*, the *Syrian Protestant College* in Beirut, and the *Malta Protestant College* in Valletta, were representative for the somewhat secular or civilizing solutions issued by such a anxious tension between culture and Gospel.

However, even these theorists who came to distinguish themselves from the obligation of cultural imposition to other people and countries were proved unable to abandon a feeling of the Western and Protestant superiority in their

exegeses of the missionaries' failure in Greece. Anderson himself was obliged therefore, to pay emphasis on the national inclusiveness of Greeks, their xenophobia, the adoption of «The Great Idea» by them for the recovery of the Byzantine Empire, and, at last, «the tyranny of the Orthodox Church», in order to explain their opposition, or mindlessness, to the efforts of the American Board. In 1870, he disposed the results of the Greek mission of the A.B.C.F.M. depicted in the darkest and most disappointing colours:

The Greeks have retired from us. To the most affecting extent they have become inaccessible to our preaching, our books, and our influence [...]. I do not see where or in what way the Greek mind is [...] approachable [...] to a spiritual influence from Protestant ministers of the gospel.

And taking the account of his Society, notices:

Twenty-seven ordained missionaries of different denominations have labored more or less in this field. A million copies of books and tracts have been printed by different missionary societies, and scattered broadest over the Greek community. Two hundred thousand copies of the New Testament and the parts of the Old, have been put in circulation in the Modern Greek language. Not a small number of Greek young men have been educated in America and England, by benevolent individuals and societies; and more than ten thousand Greek youth have been more or less educated in Greece and Turkey at the schools of the various missions. And yet, not ten persons are known, who are confidently believed to have been truly converted to God by these means! (Anderson, pp. 355, 356).

Finally, G.A. Perdicaris, a Greek Protestant convert, and Consul of the U.S.A. in Greece, also touched in the middle of the century the peculiar character of the missionary efforts, and seemed in fact to anticipate their eventual breaking down:

The schools of the American missionaries, though very excellent in themselves, and very important as auxiliaries, when we consider the state of the country were never regarded as national Institutions; and while there were many of the Greeks who taught them great blessings, the mass of the people with the church at their head, looked upon them with suspicion, and believing them to be nurseries of proselytism, never failed to oppose their influence and their progress. Without any regard to these considerations, it was thought neither proper nor practicable to leave the education of the rising generation to strangers, who, though distinguished for their knowledge and virtues had not the power of imbuing their pupils with the spirit of nationality, which constitutes the life of progress and success in the career of every nation (Perdicaris, vol. II, p. 293).

In any case, the inefficacy of the means of education and press in converting the Greeks to Protestantism during the 19th century, owed mainly to their national aspirations, and, also, to their almost unconscious adherence to the Orthodox Church, offered to them the opportunity to distill the protestant message, and absorb, and use, only the educational content of it. Due to a spirit of usefulness, elaborated in the long, dark ages of Turkish domination, the

Greeks effectively, though inadvertently, resisted to the powerful Protestant interference. The protestant books and tracts, disposed in public and private libraries in Greece up to date, are merely the feeble documents of an enormous and well-organized missionary enterprise, which, however, became fruitless, in spite of the undoubted spiritual influence exerted to the Greek people, which modified their religious temperature to a still unknown degree.

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Western anthropological thoughts and modern children's literature theory in China. The case of Chou Tso-jen

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It is generally agreed that modern Chinese children's literature theory came into its earliest being around the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, and had its progressing paralleled by the social-culture revolution then sweeping the whole country. Scientific description of such a period of history would not be achieved without taking into consideration China's particular reality then, which was characteristic of a historical phenomenon called the *Eastward Transmission of Western Learning*. A heavy tempest was thus caused by the crash between eastern and western cultures. Such a reality became the direct background for the research activities of Chinese children's literature theory forerunners, and to a certain extent, determined the possible historical contents and theoretical features of children's literature study then. It yielded a thread of new academic thoughts in China, by tracing back to which, we can get a significant point for exploring and understanding the early theoretical sources and features of modern Chinese children's literature theory. This is why I choose Chou Tso-jen (1885-1967) both as a personal and collective case to demonstrate the close relationship between western anthropological thoughts and modern children's literature theory in China. For Chinese children's literature researchers, the many essays on children's literature by Chou Tso-jen were surely the first important bunch of fruits in the garden of Chinese children's literature theory. There had been bits of remarks on children's literature by several modern scholars before Chou's essays were published, but all of them were at best a kind of warming-up for the birth of modern Chinese children's literature theory. It was not until Chou's essays

were published that modern Chinese children's literature theory embarked on its formal developing process.

Being a younger brother of Lu Hsün (1881-1936), one of the most important and well-known revolutionist Chinese writers, Chou Tso-jen became a renowned progressionist in his early career as a writer and teacher, and a very important pioneer for the construction of Chinese children's literature theory. He was an ardent introducer and disseminator of overseas academic thoughts, especially that of western anthropology, which provided the direct theoretical sources for his exploration into children's literature theory. It might be said that the relationship between Chou and western anthropological thoughts typically reflected the permeation of western academic thoughts into the early state of Chinese children's literature theory. Without comprehension of such a permeation and influence, one may not thoroughly grasp the reality of Chou's children's literature conceptions; and without such a grasp, it is impossible to talk about the real state and historical features of the beginning of modern Chinese children's literature study and theory.

Like his many contemporaries, Chou was raised up under a strict old-China teaching system that shaped his early mental world and personal idealistic structure, and then thrown into a totally new world and era when he turned into a youth age. Once he stepped out of the isolation of the old-style private school and into the new-pattern schools, his original world suffered heavily from the misery of the country and changed under the totally new thoughts from the west. In September 1901, Chou was enrolled into the Nanjing Naval Officers' School, which put him into preparatory contact with western literature and science. In 1906, he went to Japan for further study, thus getting the chance of a systematic study of modern western thoughts. And it is on this period of time that I would like to concentrate in the following discussion.

The well-known Meiji reform in Japan began in 1868, which brought huge amounts of western thoughts into the country. Chou recalled in his article *My Cluster of Learning* that,

during my first year in Tokyo, I bought Gayley's *The Classic Myths in English Literature and in Art* and Andrew Lang's *Myth, Ritual and Religion*, which brought me into academic contact with myth as a genre¹.

Andrew Lang's mythological theory blazed Chou's interests in anthropology. After that, Chou began to collect Andrew Lang's many other writings involving literary history and criticism, introduction and translation of western classic works, studies on fairy tales and nursery rhymes, and most of all, works on myths². While talking about the great influence of those books on him, Chou said,

¹ Chou Tso-jen, *My Cluster of Learning*, «Past and Present», 1944, 52.

² *Ibid.*

Custom and Myth and *Myth, Ritual and Religion*, those were the two books that impressed me most. For me, they revealed the right way to interpret and hold studies on myths and legends³.

He began trying to translate and disseminate those thoughts to Chinese researchers. In 1907, in the light of Andrew Lang's *Custom and Myth*, *Myth, Ritual and Religion* and Gayley's *The Classic Myths in English Literature and in Art*, Chou conceived an article titled *Myths of Sun, Moon and Stars*, and handed the first finished part of it to his brother Lu Hsün, who was then preparing to print and publish a new magazine named «The New Life». However, the manuscript was finally lost because of the abortive launch of the magazine. In the same year, Chou used a pseudonym to translate H. Rider Haggard and Andrew Lang's *The World's Desire*, which is a novel originally revised from Homer's epic poem *Odyssey*. Chou gave a brief introduction to Andrew Lang's life and theory in the preface of the translated Chinese version⁴. As the very beginning of Chou's reception and dissemination of western anthropological thoughts, those endeavours did not even raise the attention of Chinese scholars.

In 1911, Chou finished his study in Japan and came back to his hometown Shaoxing, a town of a particular traditional culture pattern in South-China, and a place of abundant amounts of old folktales and stories. Chou began to collect the nursery rhymes and fairy tales going around in the town in light of the anthropological methodology he had accepted. During the following three years, he wrote a cluster of essays including *A Study on Fairy Tale*, *Words about Fairy Tale*, *A Study on Nursery Rhyme*, and *Explanation on Classical Fairy Tales* in succession. Discussion in those essays were either restating of anthropological explanations on myths, legends and fairy tales, or direct quotation from its representative scholars (especially Andrew Lang's), all reflected the notable influence of western anthropological thoughts on Chou. Japanese scholar Toru Shinmura (1936-1984) once maintained that,

Chou Tso-jen's viewpoints on fairy tale had their basis in folklore methodology. They were obviously not his original discovery, but the secondary sources he had borrowed from modern European fairy tale theory⁵.

He also found that

Chou Tso-jen was quite overwhelmed by Andrew Lang's theory, and accepted all his propositions about the origin, transformation and classification of fairy tales⁶.

There were abundant facts that would prove Toru Shinmura's asserts.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Ma Chang-yi, *Anthropology and Modern Chinese Mythology*, «Journal of Folklore», 1981, 1.

⁵ Toru Shinmura, *Chou Tso-jen's Children's Literature Conceptions*.

⁶ *Ibid.*

Andrew Lang was not the only western anthropological scholar that influenced Chou's research. During his absorption of anthropological thoughts, Chou had also read other works such as E.S. Hartland's *The Science of Fair Tale*, J.A. MacCulloch's *The Childhood of Fiction*, etc. It was those books that further enlightened his understanding of the meaning of myths, legends and fairy tales, as was acknowledged by himself⁷. Besides, scholars in Japan had commenced their study in mythology and folklore then. Some of its representative scholars also accepted the anthropological thoughts from Andrew Lang and other western anthropologists. During his stay in Japan, Chou attached great importance to those Japanese scholars' theory. All of these nurtured a close relationship between Chou's children's literature theory and western anthropological thoughts.

The problem is, as one of the most important pioneer scholars in the construction of modern Chinese children's literature theory system, why had Chou Tso-jen given his particular favour to western anthropological thoughts? Or, why did western anthropological thoughts bear such a special attraction to Chou's children's literature study? The import and influence of certain outer academic thoughts always reflects the country's own special spiritual state and academic needs in a certain era, and the introducers' own realization of those needs. The act of introduction itself is out of an interaction between many forces and factors. Likewise, for the early construction of modern Chinese children's literature theory, the historical impact caused by western anthropological thoughts was a result from the collision and cooperation between different causations.

In the middle of the last century, China was forced by outer military forces and inner political reform desires to open its long-closed country gate. The once sweet *Centre-of-the-Universe* dream was disillusioned. National dangers compelled its people into serious reflections on the past and future of the country. It was under such a historical background that the question of humanism, emancipation of women and children, and the all-around development of human being were put forward. Long before the May 4th Movement in 1919, Chou had formed his basic humanistic thoughts in Japan. In an article titled *Significance and Function of Writing: On Several Mistaken Points of Recent Chinese Essays*, he argued that human development should include both the satisfaction of living desires and the liberty of spiritual development, the latter even more important for the changing China⁸. Right before the 1919 Movement, Chou published his famous essay *Literature of and for Human*. Like many of his contemporary scholars, he was concerned very much with the all-around cultivation of humanity mainly from the perspective of national survival and development.

The question of human development was partly concretized by the attention

⁷ Chou Tso-jen, *My Cluster of Learning*, cit.

⁸ Cfr. Qian Liqun, *On Lu Hsiün and Chou Tso-jen's Ideaistic Development*, «Modern Chinese Literature Studies», 1982 (4).

paid to the modern fate of women and children. Chou maintained that «in present-day China, the problem of universal humanity had not yet been settled, let alone women and children rights»⁹. Indeed, it was the importance of humanity that led Chou into reflection upon the questions about children; and the recognition of the significance of *literature for human* that put him into contact with literature for children, especially fairy tales and nursery rhymes. Once this particular academic needs of an era attained part of their concrete appearance in Chou's thoughts and writings, it was the time for Chinese children's literature theory to start its early modern trace.

And the anthropological thoughts fitted such a need very much. Chou once said, «I became a bit interested in anthropology not for learning as much as for being a right man»¹⁰. To deal with the problem of humanity, one had to deal with the problem of children, and «to deal with the problem of children, one need to know more about anthropology and folklore»¹¹. Of course, there were different anthropological schools appeared simultaneously or successively in history, and when Chou used the word anthropology, he was mainly indicating the mythological and evolutionary thoughts in anthropology that had been introduced into China then. Representative scholars of Evolutionary School such as Lewis Henry Morgan and Edward Burnett Tylor maintained that development of culture and society was an evolutionary process from low levels to superior ones. Some of them paid their attention to primitive mentality and their art and literature, especially myths. At the beginning of the 20th century, the evolutionary and mythological theory in anthropology began to be introduced into China. During the years 1913-1914, Chou wrote several essays including *A Study on Fairy Tale* and *Words about Fairy Tale* to introduce and explain Andrew Lang's many mythological conceptions. Those were regarded the earliest essays introducing mythological theory to Chinese myth and fairy tale researchers¹².

Beginning with the mythological theory in anthropology, Chou Tso-jen quickly find the theoretical entrance into scientific research and explanation on fairy tales and children's literature as a whole.

Looking back on his early studies on children's literature, Chou said,

Andrew Lang's books enlightened me about the mythological methodology in anthropology. After that, I became interested in *folktales*. I thought that literary genres such as the ancient myths, legends, fairy tales and nursery rhymes were literature before we got to have any letter or character. They were, just as MacCulloch had put it in one of his book's title, *the childhood of fiction*. So, I wrote a number of essays in the early 1910s, including *A Study on Fairy Tale*, *Words about Fairy Tale*, *A Study on Nursery Rhyme*, and *Explanation on Clas-*

⁹ Chou Tso-jen, *Literature of and for Human*, «New Youth», 1918, 5 (6).

¹⁰ Id., *My Cluster of Learning*, cit.

¹¹ Id., *Essays on Children's Literature*, Shanghai, Shanghai Children's Press, 1932.

¹² Ma Chang-yi, *Anthropology and Modern Chinese Mythology*, «Journal of Folklore», 1981, 1.

*sic Fairy Tales*¹³ [...]. Our interests in children's literature could be regarded partly as the result of our interests in anthropology"¹⁴.

Practically, his children's literature conceptions were just cultivated and constructed under the theoretical influence of western anthropological thoughts.

Chou did his children's literature research work mostly in the years between 1912 and 1923. In 1913 and 1914, he published the aforesaid four essays on fairy tales and nursery rhymes. It was his first step toward children's literature theory after his reception of the anthropological thoughts in Japan, and also the most crucial period for him to construct his own children's literature conceptions in the light of those borrowed thoughts. The May 4th Movement didn't arrive until five or six years later. As a forerunner in modern Chinese children's literature research field, Chou seemed to be a bit lonely – the publication of those essays were not thought much of by other scholars. In October 1920, one and a half years after the May 4th Movement, Chou was invited to Beijing Kongde School for a lecture under the topic of *Children's Literature*. During the next few years after the lecture, he began to write and publish essays on children's literature again. At that time, his children's literature conceptions were further enriched and developed, but their theoretical basis remained in anthropology.

Anthropological thoughts had permeated into Chou Tso-jen's understanding of children's literature in many aspects, but mostly concentrated on the next three points. First, anthropological theory helped Chou form a brand-new viewpoint on children corresponding to the needs of a new era and its new thinking mode. Based on modern spirit of science, such a viewpoint offered a logical springboard for the demonstration of Chou's children's literature conceptions. As we all know, construction of a theory system must first find out its starting point, which could not only provide a starting place for the logical self-expansion of the system, but also indicate its overall direction and development. And the logical starting point for children's literature theory is *childhood*. Understanding of the aspects of childhood determines the possible and potential growing points for children's literature study¹⁵. However, children's special physical and psychological characteristics were not recognized in old China, and their unique needs never cared for much. Just as Chou figured out,

People in old China could seldom understand the word *children*, either regarding them as little adults for cramming of Confucian classics, or looking down upon them as incomplete human. Little attention was paid to their mental world¹⁶.

¹³ Chou Tso-jen, *Past Times in My Life*, Changsha, Hunan People's Publishing House, 1982, p. 267.

¹⁴ Id., *My Cluster of Learning*, cit.

¹⁵ Fang Weiping, *Childhood: A Logical Starting Point for Children's Literature Theory*, «Journal of Zhejiang Normal University», 1990 (2).

¹⁶ Chou Tso-jen, *Literature for Children*, «New Youth», 1920, 8 (4).

Then how could we begin to know the true aspects of childhood, and to establish a fresh viewpoint on children? According to Chou, we could achieve this by referring to anthropological thoughts. He pointed out that,

Evolutionary theory assumed that the development of the individual recapitulates that of the whole race. That is, a human embryo repeats men's evolutionary history, and children's mental development repeats the history of the human race. So, some questions in *paidologie* might be interpreted through *anthropologie* theory¹⁷.

His absorption of anthropological theory focused on two aspects. One is part of the anthropological research fruits about primitive mentality. Chou argued that children's mental world was, to a certain extent, analogous to that of the primitive; and children's literature, which includes nursery rhymes and fairy tales, were similar to primitive literature both in contents and forms and in the savage thoughts expressed. «Children are all believers of animism who take it for granted that trees can think and cats can talk»¹⁸.

Another aspect is the evolutionary theory of anthropology. Chou argued that childhood is a changing process of development.

We tell stories of talking cats to children when they believe that's true, not only for delighting them, but also because we know it is a necessary stage for their growth and will finally pass over when they reached a certain age level. As to the biological knowledge about cats, I think there's no urgency to impart it until it is asked for by children themselves¹⁹.

Such a realization of the uniqueness of children's mental world and its evolutionary process made it possible to construct a modern system of children's literature concepts from a new starting point, which is totally different from the old ones.

Second, those borrowed anthropological thoughts inspired many of Chou's theoretical demonstrations that became the fundamental components for his children's literature theory. Chinese children's literature didn't obtain its independent identity until the beginning of the 20th century. Consequently, there was rarely any children's literature theory left from old China. Even if theoretical asserts concerning children's literature were found, they were neither too erroneous or superficial. It almost deprived Chou's children's literature study of any direct theoretical sources. As a result, western anthropological thoughts became the most convenient theoretical instruments for his exploration into the still virgin soil of Chinese children's literature theory. Thus came forth many of his basic conceptions and asserts about fairy tale and nursery rhyme. Actually, Chou's choosing fairy tale and nursery rhyme as the two main genres for his children's literature research was also under the influence of anthropological thoughts. His

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

early writings on fairy tale and nursery rhyme written in classical Chinese were the first monograph in the two fields in China. Chou maintained that explanation on myths didn't find its right way until Andrew Lang advanced his mythological methodology²⁰, and accepted many anthropological viewpoints on the origin, characteristics, types and function of fairy tale and nursery rhyme.

There did exist fragmentary interpretations on myths, legends and nursery rhymes in ancient China. However, many took myths and legends as unbelievable imagination out of certain mental activities that should be denied. And nursery rhymes were regarded as a kind of augury, invented by kids transformed from a particular star called Ying-Huo Star to tell people about their nation's fortune. Chou denied all those old opinions and gave out his new interpretation based on anthropological thoughts:

Märchen, mythos and saga are essentially one thing. People believing in the primitive religion of animism trusted in the universal animation of nature involving earth and sky, gods and ghosts. Stories made out of such a belief were called mythos. Then appeared sagas about demigods or heroes whose existence was believed by its people to be true and who were honored and respected but not feared by them. A märchen was not very different from a saga, only that its many factors, including the time, location and protagonists of the story, were not regarded as real, and were told just for entertainment. In a word, mythos were the record of the religion of the primitive, sagas their history, and märchens their literature²¹.

Two points should be remarked about this explanation on «märchen, mythos and saga». First, before Chou's explanation, there was no strict academic difference in using the above three concepts in China. Chou was the first scholar trying to differentiate them from each other²². Although his explanation on fairy tale was not without deficiency, but it was the first time in Chinese literature history that the literariness of fairy tale was put forward and affirmed. Second, Chou proposed that «märchen, mythos and saga» had their common origination in the primitive animism, i.e. «the universal animation of nature».

We know that animism was the core concept in Tylor's anthropological theory on primitive mentality, which assumes that natural objects and phenomena and the universe itself possess souls. Andrew Lang had also concluded the characteristics of the mental condition of savages in his *Myth, Ritual and Religion*; they were: (1) Confusion of all things in an equality of presumed animation and intelligence; (2) Belief in sorcery; (3) Spiritualism; (4) Curiosity; (5) Easy credulity and mental indolence²³. Both of the two theories had their obvious influence on Chou and his successors in children's literature research.

²⁰ Chou Tso-jen, *Words about Fairy Tale*, «Compilation Department Monthly of the Ministry of Education», 1913, 1(1).

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Ma Chang-yi, *Anthropology and Modern Chinese Mythology*, «Journal of Folklore», 1981, 1.

²³ A. Lang, *Myth, Religion and Ritual*. Vol. I, Chapter 3: *The mental condition of savages, confusion with nature, totemism*, see <<http://classiclitt.about.com/library/bl-etexts/alang/bl-alang-myth-3.htm>>, (last access: February 10th, 2008).

Chou wrote in his *A Study on Fairy Tale*:

Primitive people were inclined to accept animism thoughts which assumed that all things in nature, both animate and inanimate, contain a spirit or soul, and that the existence of spirits was separable from bodies. Thus came forth the genre of myth [...]. Since the customs narrated in those stories were strange in a similar way for modern readers, but could finally be proved true in history, one will find that myths were actually records of real primitive conventions. They are absolutely not nonsense as was generally suggested by modern peoples, but credible record of a period of history in civilization²⁴.

Chou put forward his viewpoints on the fiction features of fairy tale as a genre in children's literature:

Sagas appeared to be records of real happenings in their realistic era, scenes and characters, while fairy tales were totally fiction. That's the most notable difference between the two genres²⁵.

As to the literary technique used in fairy tales, the most notable is

the transformation between human and animals, and the animation of inanimate things, which look a bit like what might happen in miracles²⁶.

Fairy tale was

a literature of Man's childhood, and were favored by both primitive people and children since the two groups are apt to share a similar thinking and feeling mode. So, fairy tales were actually right literature for children²⁷.

Fairy tales would satisfy children's desires for stories, and at the same time, promote their development by keeping to its natural advancing laws, which is one of the most important rules in education²⁸.

By reading those tales,

children can expand their imagination, and learn to understand life and world for future use, and also bear in mind the names of animals, plants and other things that appeared in the tales²⁹.

These interpretations greatly enlightened people's understanding of fairy tale then.

The third aspect of anthropological thoughts' influence on Chou's children's literature research lies in its methodology. Much of the Chinese classical theory

²⁴ Chou Tso-jen, *A Study on Fairy Tale*, «Compilation Department Monthly of Ministry of Education», 1913, 1 (1).

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Chou Tso-jen, *Words about Fairy Tale*, cit.

²⁷ *Id.*, *A Study on Fairy Tale*, cit.

²⁸ *Id.*, *Words about Fairy Tale*, cit.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

was written as personal feelings and experiences instead of empirical research results, much more like a sudden light, and so had left us rarely any scientific research methodology. As to modern children's literature research, the situation was even worse. This is part of why Chou appealed to anthropology for methodological bolster. Generally speaking, anthropological research methods attach great importance to fieldwork for data gathering and the later scientific analysis on the gathered material. In 1911, Chou came from Tokyo back to his hometown and began the collection work of local nursery rhymes. Being not a professional anthropologist, his collection work was far from the strict anthropological fieldwork. In January 1914, he put a notice on a local educational magazine for public collection of local nursery rhymes and fairy tales, but «received only one piece of contribution after a whole year». He had to do the collection all by himself and recorded about 200 pieces of nursery rhymes from the town. About the entire amount of first-hand and secondary sources he had collected, Chou chose to use the taxonomic and comparative methods adopted from anthropological methodology. In *Words about Fairy Tale*, he classified fairy tales into two groups according to their different function. One was labelled *decent fairy tale*, whose stories were derived from sagas and could be further divided into *ideological tales and custom tales*; the other was named *pastime fairy tale*, which was for entertainment only and could also be divided into animal tales, jokes and overlay tales.

He also suggested another classification for fairy tales according to their origins, dividing them into crude and carved ones, the former of collective creation and the latter of individual invention. They were actually the oral and literary tales we are talking about today. In *A Study on Fairy Tale*, he suggested different types of Chinese fairy tales such as *the dead wife, back to life, violation of a ban, the youngest child* and *man-eating* types. In his essay *Nursery Songs*, Chou classified nursery rhymes into *songs on things* (including all the lyrical and narrative nursery rhymes and riddles) and *songs for games* (made up of words and acts as a primitive form of drama). It should be admitted that Chou's classification of nursery rhymes and fairy tales were relatively rough, but he was the first Chinese scholar to apply the science of classification into literary study under the guidance of anthropological methodology.

Chou was also very enthusiastic about the comparative research method of anthropology. In *Explanation on Classical Fairy Tales*, he compared some classical Chinese fairy tales with those from Japan and Europe. He opposed against the saying that *The Cat-less Country*, a tale first appeared in the «Fairy Tale» magazine in 1909, was the first Chinese fairy tale, but pointed out that fairy tales did exist in ancient China, though without being bestowed such a name at that time; many of these tales were recorded among novels of Jin and Tang Dynasty and mythical story collections. To prove it, he compared an ancient Chinese fairy tale titled *Ye-Xian* recorded by Duan Chengshi (803-863) in the Tang Dynasty with Charles Perrault's *Cinderella: Or, the Little Glass Slipper* (1697), and found

the two stories shared amazingly like plots with each other. It was a fresh and exciting discovery for Chinese children's literature researchers then.

On the whole, western anthropological thoughts had remarkable impacts on Chinese mythology and children's literature research in the 1920s and 1930s. During such a reception process, Chou Tso-jen was the first one to introduce and disseminate anthropological thoughts and put them to practice in China, making these thoughts widely known by Chinese researchers. His viewpoints on the origin, interpretation, classification and collection of fairy tales were quoted and adopted by following fairy tale researchers. It was through his endeavour and experiment that modern Chinese children's literature study embraced western anthropological thoughts in its early developing stage. Indeed, the introduction and permeation of anthropological thoughts into children's literature study had historical significance for the initiatory development of modern Chinese children's literature theory. First, the combination of anthropological thoughts with pedagogy paved the way for the forming of a new public concept of children that based on the realization of their independent identity and mental needs, instead of the traditional concept that ignored the entire independent physical and mental world of children and regarded childhood only as a preparation stage for the adult world. This new concept of children promoted directly the advance of modern children's literature writing and study. Second, the mythological theory in anthropology offered valuable theory sources for modern Chinese children's literature study, especially fairy tale study. Their points on the origin and evolution of fairy tales, though always under questioning and fierce controversy, were still of certain truth even today. Third, for a certain period in modern Chinese children's literature history, anthropological research methods became the methodological guidance for the collection and criticism of children's literature. Most of the children's literature works published in China around the 1919 Movement were translated ones or collection and revision of ancient Chinese classics and folktales. Since the features and developing rules of children's literature as an independent genre had never been particularly explained and discussed before, it was no doubt that researchers and writers should feel puzzled by many questions concerning the genre. By adopting anthropological methodology, Chou managed to give out a rough but important description and explanation for the complicated conceptions and topics in children's literature field. His classification and comparison of fairy tales illuminated many of his successors. Quite a number of significant articles on fairy tale appeared through adopting anthropological methodology after Chou's example attempts. Finally, the introduction of anthropological thoughts facilitated the modern transformation of Chinese children's literature study and theory.

A modern system of children's literature theory was established upon the realization of children's subject status and the claiming of modern scientific spirit in children's literature study. Both of the two conditions couldn't be found in old China. Toru Shinmura pointed out that, although Chou Tso-jen used Andrew

Lang's anthropological thoughts to develop many of his own children's literature conceptions,

he did succeed by himself in winning an independent status both for children and for children's literature study as a whole [...]. His criterion of humanism and scientificity for children's literature criticism were widely accepted and fixed then³⁰.

All of these were crucial for the early development of modern Chinese children's literature theory.

It must be admitted that at the very beginning of the construction of modern Chinese children's literature theory, Chinese scholars' reception of western anthropological thoughts had absolutely affected and promoted the development of children's literature and its theory in China. Though, because of the theoretical deficiency of the evolutionary school itself and the inevitable loss of information during the reception process, such a historic act in Chinese children's literature theory development could not avoid itself of historical limitation. Influenced by evolutionary biology, evolutionary anthropologists in the 19th century turned out to be a bit mechanical in dealing with social-cultural evolution. They proposed a linear and hierarchical evolutionary interpretation for the development of human society and culture (from simpler to more complex organizational forms) in a global scale and racial homogeneity of all humankind, but neglected the lively communication and interaction between different districts and cultures. While Chou used their thoughts about individual and collective evolution to illustrate children's physical and mental characteristics, his concept upon children was also isolated far from its concrete social and cultural environment and consequently became an actually vacant concept. Such an isolated world of children and childhood was not existent in reality. It resulted in some correspondent theoretical limitation in Chou's development of his thoughts about children's literature. For example, he insisted that children's literature should accommodate itself to children's psychological needs, but tended to ignore or even deny its educational function. On the other side, although he had figured out the mental similarity between children and primitive people and the analogue between their literatures, the aesthetic uniqueness of children's literature as an independent genre still remained as a question. In a sense, researchers today are inclined to expect more depth from Chou's children's literature theory. And it was also the general and probably inevitable limitation of the whole modern Chinese children's literature study and theory in its early developing stage.

I have mentioned at the start of this article that Chou Tso-jen's was a time of cultural collision between the east and west. Anthropology was not the only western academic school that ever had any impact on Chou and his contemporaries. Actually, it was just one of the most important academic schools that

³⁰ Toru Shinmura, *Chou Tso-jen's Children's Literature Conceptions*, cit.

offered him crucial inspiration and theoretical sources. Chou had said for several times that

for discussion on questions concerning children's literature, one must have a multi-disciplinary knowledge repertoire including anthropology, folklore and pedology, etc³¹.

In an essay titled *On Books for Children*, he called for

the establishment of a children's magazine with an editorial group of multi-disciplinary backgrounds involving natural science, philosophy, literature, arts, anthropology and psychology³².

Chou himself had extensive interests in western humanism, Japanese utopian socialism, Henry Havelock Ellis's psychology of sex, Leo Tolstoy's selfless love theory, Nietzsche's superman theory, John Dewey's child-centred education theory and the child-soul worship in Japanese children's literature. After the May 4th Movement in 1919, he turned his attention gradually to the child-centre theory for revising his conceptions on children and their literature, but the impact of anthropological thoughts as the first and most important theoretical basis for his early children's literature study remained. Modern Chinese children's literature theory gained its primal form through Chou Tso-jen's research practice. However, Chou's enthusiasm in children's literature study and theory gradually faded away when he replaced his interests back to traditional Chinese classics and culture since 1930s. But no back way for Chinese children's theory. Another new stage was prepared under new social conditions and with new theoretical sources for her to step onto.

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³¹ Chou Tso-jen, *Essays on Children's Literature*, Shanghai, Shanghai Children's Press, 1932.

³² Id., *On Books for Children*, in Id., *My Own Garden*, Shanghai, Beixin Press, 1923.

Testing medical students at Harvard, 1870-1930*

Robert L. Hampel

The transformation of American medical schools in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was a remarkably successful development in the history of education. The main contours of that achievement are well known. Stiffer admissions requirements, additional coursework, better laboratory facilities, full time clinical faculty, closer connections with teaching hospitals, stronger links with the parent university, path breaking research, philanthropic grants and advice: there were many reasons for the transformation and they have all been carefully studied by historians¹. What remains to be learned about this topic?

One important aspect of medical school instruction has been neglected: the tests students took. We know very little about that part of the curriculum. His-

* The author is indebted to Professors Kenneth Ludmerer (Washington University, USA) and James Rath (University of Delaware) for comments on an earlier version of this article. He also thanks Jack Eckert and Richard Wolfe for their assistance at the Harvard Medical Library (Harvard University, USA).

¹ Th.N. Bonner, *Becoming A Physician: Medical Education in Britain, France, Germany, and the United States, 1750-1945*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1995; K.M. Ludmerer, *Learning to Heal: The Development of American Medical Education*, New York, Basic Books, 1986; Id., *Time to Heal: American Medical Education from the Turn of the Century to the Era of Managed Care*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1999; R.L. Numbers (ed.), *The Education of American Physicians*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1980; W.G. Rothstein, *American Medical Schools and the Practice of Medicine*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1987; S. Wheatley, *The Politics of Philanthropy: Abraham Flexner and Medical Education*, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1988.

torians have focused instead on the curriculum as the faculty planned and taught it, including the “null curriculum” of the topics left out. They have also described the curriculum as the students grasped it, based on what they wrote at the time and remembered later. We even know about the “hidden curriculum” forged by the dispositions, values, and habits of the faculty – lessons learned by watching great physicians at work and play. What we do not yet understand is the tested curriculum, the knowledge and skills pinpointed by tests as crucial for students to learn.

In the meager literature on medical school tests, the best studies looked at how students were examined before and after, not during, medical school. Charlotte Borst’s prizewinning article on admissions explored the discriminatory thrust of new methods of selection that reflected racial, ethnic, religious, and gender prejudices². Kenneth Ludmerer’s overview of state licensing boards explained how their standards contributed to the demise of proprietary schools and also shaped the curriculum of the survivors³. There is nothing comparable to their scholarship for the tests taken during medical school.

To fill that gap in the literature, this article offers a case study of tests at the Harvard Medical School (HMS hereafter) from the 1870s, when the pace of curricular change accelerated rapidly, through the 1920s, the decade when the key components of the modern medical school were firmly in place. Harvard is a particularly interesting school for historians of medical education. Always well-regarded, HMS eclipsed Johns Hopkins after World War I as the premier medical school in the country⁴. As such it influenced the work of other schools and the policies of national associations. Even so, HMS was not an unrepresentative site. In an era when the differences among the good schools steadily narrowed, HMS underwent the major changes that other schools also experienced, especially the quests for better clinical instruction in teaching hospitals, larger endowments for new facilities and faculty, and incentives for conducting first rate research. Furthermore, the primary source materials in the HMS and Harvard University archives are plentiful, and the secondary literature on the school is also substantial. And in regard to testing, HMS modified and altered what it did, allowing historians to trace several important changes over time as well as describe practices that did not shift.

In this article, I sketch two eras in the history of testing at HMS. As I describe the array of tests and the reactions they evoked in students, faculty, and administrators, the comprehensive exams introduced in 1912 and revised in 1920 mark the largest change in what is otherwise a story of continuities.

² C. Borst, *Choosing the Student Body: Masculinity, Culture, and the Crisis of Medical School Admissions, 1920-1950*, «History of Education Quarterly», v. 42, n. 2, Summer 2002, pp. 181-214.

³ Ludmerer, *Learning to Heal*, cit., ch. 13.

⁴ Id., *Time to Heal*, cit., pp. 55-58.

Several administrators lobbied successfully for culminating tests of the students' ability to fuse basic science with clinical decisions. That innovation promoted another important goal of the HMS faculty – encourage medical students to use their minds as analytically as other graduate students attending a superb university. By the end of the 1920s, the faculty had raised the expectations of what aspiring doctors needed to know by focusing on how, not just what, they thought.

Written and Practical Exams, 1870-1910

Before 1871, HMS was a proprietary school with little academic rigor. Earning the degree required only two four month terms of lecture courses, and the tests were perfunctory. The faculty held oral exams at the end of the second term. Nine professors sat at nine tables, quizzing a student each, with a bell ringing every five minutes cueing the students to switch tables. Recollections of the oral exams were not flattering. One graduate from the mid-1850s remembered the superficiality of one of his brief interrogations: «Well, White, what would you do for a wart?»⁵. To a student who did well on his first question, Professor Holmes replied, «If you know *that*, you know everything. Now tell me all about your family and the news at home»⁶. And for a student who had assisted the Professor of Obstetrics in his private practice, the exam question in 1868 was, «Well, doctor, how's business?»⁷. After the 45 minute promenade, each instructor raised a white card if he felt a student should pass; with five whites a student had his degree.

Soon after Charles Eliot became President of Harvard in 1869, he convinced a majority of the HMS faculty to abandon its for-profit structure and adopt several major curricular changes, including a three year course of study, laboratory work in the preclinical science courses Eliot had seen and admired in European medical schools, and written final examinations for all courses, a requirement he also applied to undergraduate courses in Harvard College⁸.

⁵ J.C. White, *Sketches From My Life*, Cambridge, Riverside Press, 1914, p. 152.

⁶ H. James, *Charles W. Eliot, President of Harvard University, 1869-1909*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1930, I, pp. 275-276.

⁷ «Bulletin of the Harvard Medical Alumni Association», July 1908, pp. 86-87.

⁸ On HMS in the 1860s and early 1870s, see E.D. Churchill (ed.), *To Work in the Vineyard of Surgery: The Reminiscences of J. Collins Warren*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1958, ch. 6; T.S. Huddle, *Looking Backward: The 1871 Reforms at Harvard Medical School Reconsidered*, «Bulletin of the History of Medicine», v. 65, n. 3, Fall 1991, pp. 340-365; J.B. Wheeler, *Memories of a Small Town Surgeon*, New York, Frederick B. Stokes, 1935, ch. 4; on Eliot, see H. Hawkins, *Between Harvard and America: The Educational Leadership of Charles W. Eliot*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1972, pp. 58-61.

Because the annual HMS catalog until 1913 published the previous year's exams, it is possible to take a close look at these tests.

The questions retained the oral exams' emphasis on short answers even as writing was unavoidable – at no time were there any true/false, multiple choice, matching, or fill-in-the-blank sections. With eight as the average number of questions to answer in two or three hours (one hour for the fourth year electives), students had the time to write a longer answer than they could have voiced in the orals, but not enough time to write more than a few pages per question. Most questions were terse and did not invite long answers – for instance, of the 181 test items in the 1885 catalog, 84% took one or two lines of print, and some were just sentence fragments – «Diagnosis of scabies»; «Excision of the elbow joint»; «Three rules for prescription writing»; «Symptoms of belladonna poisoning»⁹.

The tests sought definitions and summaries, as the most frequent first words of the questions indicate: «What is... », «Give an account of... », «State... », «Explain... », «Name... », «Describe... », «Enumerate... ». The burden was on the student to recall information – rarely did an instructor include guidelines for a good answer, and only a small fraction of the tests let students omit one or more question. Never were the students asked to challenge what they had read, seen, or done. Even the compare-and-contrast type of question often found today in short essay tests was rare.

The final exams did not try to encompass the full scope of the course. Regardless of the number of items on the test (the longest had 20), the instructors sampled the topics they had covered. Professor William Porter spelled that out after students complained of the severe grading in physiology. For the four exam questions in 1903, he described the nine class sessions when those topics had been discussed. Because his class met daily, many topics studied in the course were thus not on the final¹⁰. Test takers did not encounter unfamiliar material; the surprise came in seeing what the professor chose from the wide array of possible questions.

Rarely did an HMS exam question span more than a few pages from a hefty textbook. For instance, only three of 31 examination questions in four courses in 1885 covered more than ten pages in the texts, which averaged 731 pages in length¹¹. The publication of the previous year's exam questions encouraged

⁹ *One Hundred and Third Annual Catalogue of the Medical School (Boston) of Harvard University, 1885-86*, Cambridge, Harvard University, 1885, pp. 3-12.

¹⁰ William Townsend Porter to Charles W. Eliot, December 19, 1904 (Box 111, «William T. Porter» folder, Records of the President of Harvard University, Charles W. Eliot, 1869-1930, Harvard University Archives, UAI 5.150). For the wide range of topics taught by Porter and his colleagues, see W.T. Porter, *Introduction to Physiology*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1901.

¹¹ Throughout the 1870s and 1880s, the HMS catalogs listed the textbooks for most courses. For 1885, I read the texts for *Chemistry*, *Obstetrics*, *Theory and Practice*, and *Gynecology*, the

but did not require the specificity of the questions. Instructors made sure their questions varied from year to year (Porter's questions recurred in similar but not identical forms every fourth year, and most other courses had even less frequent recycling). Creating a large file of narrow questions, then selecting a different batch each year, guaranteed some novelty and at the same time gave an edge to the student who conscientiously read a stack of HMS catalogs. But an instructor could have written a set of broader gauged questions and rotated among them. Alternatively, the faculty could have stopped publishing the exam questions if it felt that custom prevented them from crafting broader questions. In other words, the narrowness of questions reflected the faculty's notion of how to learn – students should memorize a vast amount of information and be able to recall bits and pieces of it.

The only exception to this pattern emerged in the final exams in the third and fourth year clinical courses. Over time, more and more items on those exams presented patients' case histories, usually several paragraphs in length. Diagnosis? Prognosis? Treatment? Those were the questions most frequently asked after each case. A thorough answer would include a "differential diagnosis" to compare the ailment to others in order to establish a credible diagnosis. The case questions were therefore not as narrow as the non-case questions, but the two thirds of the answer devoted to prognosis and treatment did not require similar comparisons.

As Table 1 indicates, the absolute number of case questions rose from eight to 31 between 1885 and 1905, and the percentage of exams that included at least one case rose from 20% to 31%. Some course exams only had cases (Clinical Medicine¹² and Clinical Surgery), some offered both cases and short answer items (Obstetrics), but a majority of the third and fourth year courses continued to test without any cases, especially the month-long fourth year electives, relying instead on the short answer recall questions found throughout the preclinical and clinical courses.

four courses where only one book was listed (many other courses had multiple books but no indication as to which ones were supplemental rather than required). E.H. Bartley, *A Text-book of Medical Chemistry*, Philadelphia, P. Blakiston, Sons, & Co., 1885; A. Flint, *A Treatise on the Principles and Practice of Medicine*, Philadelphia, Lea Brothers & Co., 1881; W.T. Lusk, *The Science and Art of Midwifery*, New York, D. Appleton Company, 1884; T.G. Thomas, *A Practical Treatise on the Diseases of Women*, Philadelphia, Henry C. Lea, 1882.

¹² On this course, see R.C. Cabot, E.A. Locke, *The Organization of a Department of Clinical Medicine*, «Boston Medical and Surgical Journal», October 19, 1905; for recollections of Cabot's uses of cases, see F.M. Rackemann, *The Inquisitive Physician: The Life and Times of George Richards Minot*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1956, p. 47.

TABLE ONE . *Final exams, Harvard medical school, 1885-1905*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Course exams with cases, all years</i>	<i>Course exams with cases, 3rd and 4th year</i>	<i>% cases, 3rd and 4th year exam questions</i>
1885	20% (5/25)	27.8% (5/18)	8.7% (8/92)
1890	13.8% (4/29)	19.0% (4/21)	9.8% (13/133)
1895	21.2% (7/33)	26.1% (6/23)	11.9% (19/159)
1900	25% (10/40)	32.3% (10/31)	13.2% (22/167)
1905	31% (13/42)	38.2% (13/34)	19.0% (31/163)

SOURCE: *Annual catalogs*, Harvard Medical School (Harvard Medical Library in the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine – Harvard Medical Library hereafter)

NOTE: The catalogs before 1883 and after 1905 did not include the fourth year course exams (the fourth year was optional from 1880 through 1892).

A student's grade did not derive solely from the written final exam. In nearly all courses, instructors evaluated the "practical work," the commonly used term for the laboratory and clinical assignments. These tests (either written or oral) gauged the part of the curriculum that grew most rapidly from the 1870s on. Before then, medical students spent little time in laboratories or hospitals – a lecturer would occasionally demonstrate procedures for the class to watch, but few instructors had their pupils carry out the tasks themselves. «Students heard much, saw little, and did nothing» was how one physician recalled a pedagogy in which the instructor was a «fountain», as Abraham Flexner despaired in his famous report on medical education¹³. When students voluntarily acquired first hand experience – in apprenticeships, hospital service, summer sessions, or European study – they did so outside rather than within the school year.

In the late 19th and early 20th century, teaching and learning changed significantly. There was less observation and more participation. Time in laboratories, outpatient clinics, and hospital wards increased; classroom lectures and amphitheater demonstrations decreased. Students spent hundreds of hours dissecting, doing experiments, mastering diagnostic procedures, and caring for patients. At HMS, the practical work developed more slowly in the clinical than in the preclinical courses, as Kenneth Ludmerer has shown¹⁴. Without a full partnership with a teaching hospital until 1912, the HMS faculty struggled to secure enough satisfactory opportunities for students to take part in

¹³ Will Mayo, quoted in J.B. Herrick, *Memories of Eighty Years*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1949, p. 50; A. Flexner, *Medical Education in the United States and Canada*, New York, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1910, p. 93.

¹⁴ K.M. Ludmerer, *Reform at Harvard Medical School, 1869-1909*, «Bulletin of the History of Medicine», v. 55, 1981, pp. 343-370.

the diagnosis and treatment of patients¹⁵. Outpatient work and obstetrical cases (carried out in the homes of the poor) helped fill the gap, but the faculty relied more than they liked on clinical lectures and demonstrations, hospital ward rounds in groups of six or eight men, and clinical conferences (the equivalent of a seminar devoted to reading and writing papers)¹⁶.

Even so, practical exams pervaded the curriculum by the 1890s, and usually counted for approximately one-third of the course grade¹⁷. Students would examine and answer questions on tissue sections, analyze urine, sputum, and pus samples, scrutinize stains of a piece of cloth, repeat experiments performed earlier in the term, demonstrate muscular contractions and reflexes in a frog, show the proper use of instruments, describe the structures and their relations seen in a dissection, deliver six babies, and so on. Except for the home deliveries and the diagnosis of several outpatient and hospital cases, the practical exams asked student to reproduce what they had done before. In that sense they too were tests of memory (and very possibly easier tests than the written exams, if higher grades indicate ease)¹⁸.

There were several other ways to test students, but none of them rivaled the frequency and importance of the written and practical exams. A popular pedagogy in college and pre-college classes, the recitation, accounted for approximately five percent of the instructional time at HMS in the 1890s¹⁹. Also known as quizzes or quiz sections, the students' answers were occasionally graded, but usually they were an ungraded form of review of the readings and lectures. Often voluntary, they were conducted in the spirit of homework to keep students from falling behind and to prepare them for the written exams. Papers were occasionally assigned; for instance, students in third year clinical medicine described and investigated in more depth a case they had seen, and in some fourth year electives students could substitute a paper for a written exam. Assignments done throughout the term could be graded, as the chemistry and

¹⁵ M.J. Vogel, *The Invention of the Modern Hospital: Boston, 1870-1930*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1980, ch. 4.

¹⁶ «We were taken around as if on a Cook's tour by an instructor who showed us interesting patients and quizzed us on them a bit, but we were actually observers, not participants». J.H. Means, *Experiences and Opinions of a Full-Time Medical Teacher*, «Perspectives in Biology and Medicine», v. 2, n. 2, Winter 1959, p. 134 (Means was an HMS student from 1907 to 1911).

¹⁷ From 1890 to 1920, the faculty approved departmental policies on the percentage of the final grade allocated to the practical work. The ten requests (all granted) ranged from 25% to 40% (there was no indication if those percentages were increases, decreases, or reaffirmations of previous weightings). Harvard Medical School. *Minutes and Records of the Faculty of Medicine*, v. 5-7 (Harvard Medical Library, AA 1.55).

¹⁸ Porter to Eliot, December 19, 1904; Student Board of Criticism to Dean E.H. Bradford, February 27, 1915 in «Students – Comments on Curriculum, 1909-1915» file, Box 24, Folder 1603, Deans' Subject Files, Harvard Medical Library; Francis W. Palfrey to Harvey Cushing, November 13, 1916 (Folder 366, *Harvey Williams Cushing Papers*, Sterling Library, Yale University).

¹⁹ «Bulletin of the Harvard Medical School Association», no. 3, p. 76 (Boston, 1892).

histology instructors did in the late 1890s. The departments were free to adopt whatever assessments they preferred, subject to the approval of the Course of Study Committee, but the variations were small, outweighed by the similarity of relying on written finals and practical tests, the two major forms of evaluation at HMS from the 1870s on.

Alongside the formal assessments created and graded by the HMS faculty were informal judgments of what the students could do. For an excellent student, a professor could make available educative opportunities within the school (an appointment as a “prosector” in anatomy, for instance), in a hospital (Harvey Cushing administered ether at dozens of operations as a second year student, thanks to Professor Richardson), and in private practice (in the old custom of serving as an assistant or apprentice)²⁰. The support of several professors could be crucial in securing an internship, even when the hospital also required a record of course grades and held its own written and/or practical examinations. Furthermore, students could on their own seek opportunities to demonstrate their skills. Cushing substituted for an intern, worked in hospital one summer, spent Christmas vacation in an outpatient department, and joined and gave papers at an honorary society; Lawrence Henderson, a future chemistry professor, cut classes to do research, as did physiologist Walter Cannon, who began publishing as a second year student²¹.

From 1871 to 1910, the array of formal and informal tests I have described was not overhauled. The occasional shifts were modest, following rather than leading curricular and instructional changes. Rather than abandoning a particular type of exam, the specific questions were fine-tuned. For instance, the case questions included more and more quantitative data derived from blood work and other diagnostic procedures such as X-rays, a reflection of the increasingly sophisticated tools in use. The exams did not leap ahead of the curriculum by asking questions that would have coaxed students and faculty to develop new or different competencies. After 1910, however, that ambitious goal became the objective of a new test required of all students.

The origins of comprehensive examinations, 1910-1920

The major change in HMS tests began with the keen commitment of A. Lawrence Lowell, Eliot’s successor in 1909, to comprehensive examinations

²⁰ J.F. Fulton, *Harvey Cushing: A Biography*, Springfield, IL, Charles C. Thomas, 1946, pp. 55-76. Here and elsewhere, Fulton reprints many of Cushing’s diary entries and letters.

²¹ “Memories”, pp. 46-47 (Box 1, *Lawrence J. Henderson Papers*, Harvard University Archives, HUG 4450.10); S. Benison, A. Clifford Barger, E.L. Wolfe, *Walter Cannon: The Life and Times of a Young Scientist*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1987, ch. 3.

that would supplement, and if possible replace, the tests within courses. Lowell's advocacy of a culminating or capstone test derived from his belief that the worst flaw in American higher education was tying graduation to the accumulation of course credits. After passing a course, few students had any incentives to remember the material. The credits would endure even if the knowledge faded. Students could thus act like a «tourist who visits a European picture gallery, looks at the pictures starred in Baedeker, checks them off and straightway forgets them»²². Lowell wanted students to know and be able to use the major ideas and methods of a discipline in order to graduate. Grasp, mastery, scope, power, command, and comprehension: those were the words Lowell chose to express his notion of the intellectual abilities a student should acquire to deserve the diploma.

Individual course exams were too brief and too narrow to show whether or not a student had developed a coherent overview of his field of study. He believed that culminating examinations were the best way to accomplish that. If students knew from the start that they had to take and pass tests for which last minute cramming was impossible, then their education would be purposeful and enduring. Otherwise it would be as aimless as «a football game without goal posts» and as transient as «fruit in a cold storage plant without the means of refrigeration»²³.

Lowell thought the medical school curriculum suffered from the intellectual fragmentation he saw elsewhere in higher education. Neither the faculty nor the students paid enough attention to the connections among the courses, especially the value of the basic sciences for clinical practice. As he reminded Professor John Warren, many students in Warren's anatomy class «proceed to forget it – sometimes, I gather, with considerable thoroughness»²⁴.

The students offered a different way to improve HMS tests. They wanted the faculty to assess a broader range of the work they already did. In the first and longest of the nine extant student critiques of the HMS curriculum before 1930 – a 90 page report in 1899 – the men called for grades on many types of work, including labs, dissections, quizzes, and case write-ups after clinics. Assignments done throughout the term should count in the final marks, the students believed. In no course should the finals count for more than half of the course grade. Grading more broadly would mean more emphasis on practical work²⁵:

²² A.L. Lowell, *The Danger to the Maintenance of High Standards from Excessive Formalism*, «The Journal of the American Medical Association», March 14, 1914, p. 826.

²³ A.L. Lowell, *At War with Academic Traditions in America*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1934, pp. 165, 140.

²⁴ A.L. Lowell to John Warren, February 25, 1911 (Series 1909-1914, Folder 1163, *Records of the President of Harvard University*, Abbott Lawrence Lowell, 1909-1933, Harvard University Archives, UAI 5.160).

²⁵ «A Report from the Committee of Graduates and Undergraduates upon the Course of Study at the Harvard Medical School, 1899» (Harvard Medical Library, AA 222.5). The student version

There are today many men who graduate with high standing, who do so largely through their ability to cram and write a good Blue book examination, and whose actual, working knowledge of the practice of medicine is far less than it should be. The present system tends to reward those men who systematically cut their lectures and clinics during the last part of the year and spend their time in learning what they believe will be on their examination paper, regardless of its value in their future practice [...]. We would suggest that the examinations be made of a more practical kind in order to test what a man can do, rather than what he can write.

To the students, the emphasis on written exams reflected a larger problem in the curriculum – too much time listening. By 1910, over 30 hours each week was spent in required classes. State licensing boards stipulated more and more hours in the major courses, and the emergence of new specialties further engorged the curriculum. Particularly irksome was the five hours of lectures in the afternoons of the third year, after a full morning of individual and group work in hospital wards and outpatient departments²⁶. In the students' opinion, many lectures could have been shortened, especially when they repeated either the texts or the information given in clinical demonstrations. «Responsible hospital work with parallel reading and discussion» could fill some of the hours freed, and the rest of the time could be devoted to study²⁷. Those changes would make the curriculum truly comprehensive, eliminating repetitive lectures and augmenting clinical experiences.

To some extent, Lowell shared the students' views. He clearly disliked the curricular congestion. In one article, he said that medical schools «are too fond

of comprehensiveness was also expressed in a petition to the Dean to protest Professor Porter's harsh grading of the final exam in Physiology. After questioning Porter's reasons for failing three men on the final, the petitioners stressed that the men had been diligent throughout the course. For instance, one student «attended every lecture, wrote every daily and weekly paper [quiz] (on which he received good marks), read his thesis [paper] on time, took part in the three required discussions [of other students' papers], and handed in his bibliography». Two of the three final exam answers were «passable», but flawed premises and unscientific language doomed the third answer. Failing the entire course because of one wrong answer struck the petitioners as unduly harsh for a student who had performed well throughout the term (in Porter's department, the previous work only counted if the final exam was «near fifty percent», the passing mark at that time in HMS). «To the Dean of the Faculty» (Box 111, «William T. Porter» folder, *Eliot Papers*).

²⁶ Walter Cannon recalled the afternoons as «dreary and benumbing», James Means considered them «dreadful», and Paul White felt «saturated» (W.B. Cannon, *The Way of an Investigator*, New York, W.W. Norton, 1945, p. 85; J. Means, *Experiences and Opinions*, cit., p. 133; P. White, *My Life and Medicine*, Boston, Gambit, 1971, p. 12). The third year ended with eleven examinations, resulting in «panic-stricken cramming», according to C.T. Ryder, *The Medical School*, «Harvard Bulletin», January 5, 1910.

²⁷ Resolutions from 4th year students, 1910 [untitled page] (Series 1909-1914, Folder 1163, *Lowell Papers*). The students' recommendations belie Professor Councilman's pessimistic opinion that «our students are little children, without intellectual freedom. They desire no choice in the quantity or quality of the food put before them, the methods of feeding have been acquired by long tradition, they have good table manners, they eat, like good little boys, all they can – why does there not come from the student a demand for freedom?» (William Councilman to Abraham Flexner, March 16, 1910, Harvard University folder, *Flexner Papers*, Library of Congress).

of treating the student as if he were a goose to be stuffed»²⁸. In several speeches and articles, he stressed that «real education is self-education»²⁹. Requiring endless hours of mandatory coursework discouraged that independence. Although he had no quarrel with the value of practical work and suitable assessment of it, he parted company from the students in regard to frequent testing and grading. That was part of the problem rather than the solution. Constant marking would focus attention on the bits and pieces of the curriculum rather than lead to a grasp of the entire field. Furthermore, a barrage of quizzes, tests, and grades might prod the less able and conscientious students to keep up with their classmates, but it would deprive the better students of the leeway they could use to develop their talents. Already underappreciated in American society, the best students did not need the sort of regimentation they had already endured in elementary and secondary schools. In short, Lowell admired the students' objective – evaluate a wide range of work – but he rejected their strategy for achieving it.

In contrast to the American reliance on course credits, the medical schools in England and Germany required satisfactory performance on two general exams – one on the medical sciences, the other on the clinical work – as the basis for graduation. What Lowell and several HMS faculty allies proposed followed the European precedent closely (in fact, Lawrence Henderson, one of Lowell's HMS allies, visited European schools in 1910 to learn more about their practices). The first general exam covered the first two years of coursework; the second spanned the last two years. Both exams included an oral, weighted half as much as the written work (40%), with an additional 40% derived from practical exams taken in the courses. But the faculty did not share Lowell's readiness to abandon written tests in the courses. In the March, 1911 meeting where the generals were adopted, the faculty rejected a proposal that final exams serve only «to certify in doubtful cases that the student has done the work of the course»³⁰.

Another sign of faculty caution was the defeat of a clause that the general exams would evaluate «comprehension, judgment, and skill». Throughout the decade, the exams featured the same type of describe-and-define items found on final examinations since the 1870s. Each department sent a list of questions to the committee overseeing the generals, but the committee rarely broadened or combined the submissions. For instance, the first two questions on the six hour 1916 first general were «Position and relations of the prostate gland»

²⁸ «Boston Medical and Surgical Journal», June 13, 1912, p. 896.

²⁹ Lowell, *At War with Academic Traditions*, cit., p. 145; Id., *What a University President Has Learned*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1938, p. 60.

³⁰ *Minutes and Records of the Faculty of Medicine*, v. 7 (Harvard Medical Library, AA 1.55); A. Lawrence Lowell to Algernon Coolidge, March 1, 1915 (Series 1914-1917, Folder 535, *Lowell Papers*). Another far reaching proposal – course exams would only test the practical work – was not adopted.

and «Describe the intracranial blood sinuses – how are they connected with the superficial veins of the head and face?»³¹. Of the ten additional questions, only two items, both cast as a series of questions on the spleen and intestinal amoebae, encompassed anatomical, pathological, physiological, and therapeutic issues. The second general exam in the same year was even longer – 20 questions in six hours – and it concentrated on clinical issues, featuring the traditional diagnosis/prognosis/treatment questions about an array of illnesses and diseases. Only two items invited wide-ranging answers: «Discuss preventable blindness» and «An unknown middle aged man is found unconscious. What steps should be taken to determine the cause of his condition?»³². It is thus not surprising that Lowell later observed that the general exams before 1920 had reviewed the course work rather than correlated the various subjects³³. The HMS exams resembled the written tests of recall given by state licensing boards more than they matched Lowell's notion of comprehensiveness. Nor is it surprising that there was no overhaul of the HMS curriculum in that decade. Although the Dean in 1912 proposed devoting April and May to lectures, demonstrations, and recitations to «round out the students' education and to prepare him for the final general exam without requiring of him any special cramming», his idea never took hold³⁴. Not until a new Dean made truly comprehensive exams one of his priorities would significant changes in the assessment of student work occur.

Independent and scholarly habits of mind: Tests and grades in the 1920s

The HMS faculty dropped the first general in 1917 and revamped the second general in 1920, redesigning it to cover the entire curriculum by asking questions on clinical practice for which the student had to use whatever knowledge was relevant.

The exam questions themselves were not comprehensive – they usually targeted a specific illness, injury, or organ, and only two or three questions were posed. But in other ways the exam was comprehensive. Because students did

³¹ «First General Examination – 1916» in «Examinations» file (Harvard Medical Library, CE 4).

³² Copies of the 1916, 1917, and 1919 second general examinations are in the «Examinations» file (Harvard Medical Library, CE 4).

³³ Lowell, *What a University President Has Learned*, cit., pp. 37-38. There is no evidence in the Archives on the oral component of the comprehensives before 1920. On the practical exams, the students claimed they were too easy. «Men who do poor and careless work from day to day are not weeded out by the new system any better than by the old». Student Board of Criticism to Dean E.H. Bradford, February 27, 1915, p. 2 («Students – Comments on Curriculum, 1915-1925» folder, Deans' subject files, Box 24, folder 1604, Harvard Medical Library).

³⁴ Henry A. Christian to E.H. Bradford, April 20, 1912 in «Miscellaneous Letters to Henry A. Christian, 1896-1917» (Harvard Medical Library, HMS b68.1, p. 76).

not know the questions in advance, and without the option of choosing among the questions, their preparation had to be thorough. That had been true of course exams – what changed with the comprehensives was the length and interdisciplinary scope of the answers. For example, the May 1920 general exam had students write for eight hours on the following³⁵:

A man of 55 develops an attack of convulsions. What explanation might there be and how would you reach a diagnosis?

Discuss epigastric pain; its physiological, anatomical, and clinical significance.

A patient receives an injury to the spine in an accident. Discuss what pathological, anatomical, and physiological lesions may result – with consequent symptoms and treatment.

In future years, similar questions concentrated on hemorrhoids, indigestion, typhoid fever, infected wounds, vomiting, diphtheria, the gall bladder, jaundice, syphilis, and so on, with several dozen short answer questions included from 1921 to 1923 and then dropped as contrary to the exam's central purpose, correlation.

The shorter oral component of the comprehensives also began with clinical matters – an examination of a patient in an HMS teaching hospital – followed by thirty minutes of questions on the case or on any issues the examiners wished to raise. The faculty only gave the orals to the top and bottom of the class – the men who, on the basis of their annual grades and their mark on the written comp, might graduate with honors and the men who might fail. The comps were part of an ambitious vision of the ideal habits of mind acquired by a medical student. The exam questions required all students to do what some faculty could not or would not do – yoke the preclinical sciences with clinical judgment. Many of the older, part time clinical faculty knew less basic science than most of their students, and they downplayed its importance for much of the work of a general practitioner.

For them the mantra of “science at the bedside” was not as urgent as it was for David Edsall, Dean of HMS from 1918 to 1934 and one of the pioneers in relating physiology to disease³⁶. The direction of change throughout American medical research was toward laboratory discoveries with clinical significance as well as clinical investigation carried out in the hospitals' own labora-

³⁵ Committee on Examinations. *A Critical Review of the Methods of Promotion, Examination, and Grading in the Harvard Medical School* (Committee on Examinations, September 1920), p. 13 (Harvard Medical Library, AB 12.25.2).

³⁶ The faculty letters to Lowell reveal support for Edsall from clinical and preclinical instructors alike, unlike the only other candidate, Reid Hunt (Series 1917-1919, Folder 1888, *Lowell Papers*). At Edsall's retirement dinner, Lowell praised him for overcoming a split between clinical and preclinical faculty that Lowell considered as deep as the gulf between antebellum northern and southern positions on the extension of slavery. J.C. Aub, R.K. Hapgood, *Pioneer in Modern Medicine: David Linn Edsall of Harvard*, Cambridge, Harvard Medical Alumni Association, 1970, p. 338.

tories³⁷. Harvard was no exception to that trend, and the former wariness between clinical and preclinical faculty diminished in the 1920s. The comp questions signaled the belief that every doctor, not just future researchers, needed those correlative skills. But not all faculties had them, so the Dean chose as the readers of the comprehensives eleven «keen and eager» junior faculty, «younger men with fresher experience» in connecting science and practice³⁸. He selected readers who in their own teaching and research modeled the style of thinking called for in the test.

What Edsall sought was more than correlation of clinical and preclinical work. Another important skill was the ability and disposition to study on one's own instead of the unimaginative "penny-in-the-slot" passivity bred by course exams on facts and procedures asserted by books and lectures³⁹. Dean Edsall shared President Lowell's enthusiasm for self-education. He was wary of restructuring the schedule for the sake of closer preclinical and clinical ties, a goal he earnestly sought. Several other medical schools had required hospital work from the first year on, assigned the preclinical faculty to do some teaching during the third and fourth years, and created new courses devoted solely to particular diseases and organs⁴⁰. Edsall feared that those changes would foster «spoon-fed correlation» where the teachers «do for the student what he should be trained to do for himself»⁴¹. The changes Edsall accepted in the HMS schedule were modest – slating concurrently courses like second year anatomy and physical diagnosis – and some shifts the faculty established on its own – physiologists, pathologists, and pharmacologists spoke at various clinics, and the head of the surgery department held demonstrations for first year anatomy students. He was more enthusiastic about changes that gave the students greater freedom – clearing three afternoons of all required classes, offering summer school courses, keeping the library open longer, and encouraging state licensing boards to scale back the onerous number of required hours of study of various subjects. What he rejected was any hint that instruc-

³⁷ A. McGehee Harvey, *Science at the Bedside: Clinical Research in American Medicine, 1905-1945*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981, ch. 12; Ludmerer, *Learning to Heal*, cit., ch. 11; C. Rosenberg, *The Care of Strangers: The Rise of America's Hospital System*, New York, Basic Books, 1987, pp. 184-189.

³⁸ David Edsall to Joseph Erlanger, November 11, 1924 ("Examination Committee – Correspondence, 1916-1926" Box 6, folder 315, Deans' subject files, Harvard Medical Library).

³⁹ David Edsall to Edwin A. Locke, May 25, 1934 (Box 4, folder 157, *David Edsall Papers*, Harvard Medical Library, GA 23).

⁴⁰ See *Final Report of the Commission on Medical Education*, New York, Office of the Director of Study, 1932, pp. 183-196. Edsall and Lowell were members of the commission, and Edsall's prose pervades this thorough overview of medical education in the 1920s.

⁴¹ D. Edsall, *An Adequate Examination at the End of the Clinical Courses*, «The Journal of the American Medical Association», May 2, 1925, p. 1322. Neither Edsall nor the faculty adopted what would later be called «competency based education» – they did not spell out the specific skills needed to connect preclinical and clinical science.

tors should hand students a set of rules for correlation. When Abraham Flexner referred to the new approach as a “system,” Edsall reminded him that it was actually the opposite:

It is the way I think and the way any one trained at all in sound diagnosis and therapeutics thinks. The whole thing is really less a system than an attempt to get away from any formal system as far as possible and from the multiplication of things to be acquired *through memory*, and rather to develop the student's powers of thinking of facts that he has already acquired instead of simply adding further dogmatic “facts” and rules⁴².

Students could not rely on course exams to show them how to correlate. The extant exams from three large departments indicate the persistence of traditional testing practices throughout the 1920s. «Gangrene of the toe», «Discuss treatment of an infected knee joint», «The surgical bearings of choked disc»: third year surgery exams had the same type of items the department created forty years earlier⁴³. Physiology finals asked four to six questions that ranged from very specific («What reflex arcs are affected by cutting the vagus nerves of the cat?») to moderately specific («Discuss the role of the sympathetic system in heat regulation»)⁴⁴. Only once from 1918 to 1929 was a question truly open-ended: «Describe in some detail, some particular aspect of Physiology in which you are especially interested». Anatomy and Histology exams increased rather than decreased in length, posing up to 40 questions (in 1924) and introducing fill-in-the-blank items (in 1925)⁴⁵. At least in these departments, there was no reorientation of assessment in the direction of correlative thinking. As one instructor observed, «many members of the faculty are skeptical about turning men out of the old established routine» of frequent quizzes and tests⁴⁶.

Independent work by itself was valued, but it was also a means to an end, and that end was broader than linking the various courses on the comprehensive examination.

When the faculty discussed the strengths and weaknesses of students' performances on the written and oral comps, they did not limit their remarks to the substantive ways in which students had or had not connected one field to another. They also paid close attention to *how* the students used their minds. Could they think clearly when asked questions in the oral? Did the student exercise «evaluation, interpretation, and perspective» when he included laboratory tests results in the essay, or did he «relinquish his powers of judgment

⁴² David Edsall to Abraham Flexner, November 4, 1921 (Box 5, folder 164, *Edsall Papers*, GA 23). For Flexner's endorsement of Edsall's views, see *Medical Education: A Comparative Study*, New York, Macmillan, 1925.

⁴³ The surgery questions are in Folders 410-412 (*Harvey Cushing Papers*).

⁴⁴ «Examinations in Physiology, 1915- » file (CE 69 File, Harvard Medical Library).

⁴⁵ «Anatomy, Embryology, Histology Exams – 1921-1948» file (CE 4 File, Harvard Medical Library).

⁴⁶ Arlie V. Bock to David L. Edsall, October 29, 1924 (Box 4, folder 125, *Edsall Papers*, GA 23).

and discrimination» by piling up data only loosely related to the case?⁴⁷ Were students curious enough to learn on their own biographical information about the major figures in the history of medicine? Few were, yet «any educated physician» should know that⁴⁸. The same claim applied to coherent speech, logical prose, and persuasive reasoning. A good practitioner needed them all.

Edsall and the faculty considered mental nimbleness part of the «true university spirit», as Professor Ernst put it⁴⁹. HMS students were not merely «applicants for a license through examinations», Edsall said⁵⁰. Medicine should be studied as a scholarly discipline that shared the academic standards of other departments within a research university. That point of view was certainly not new in the 1920s – it had been set forth for decades, especially in the assault against for-profit schools not affiliated with a university. Many of the gains achieved in the late 19th and early 20th centuries stemmed from *faculty* accomplishments as full time staff developed successful programs of research and committed themselves to training future researchers. What Edsall sought was the extension of that spirit of inquiry throughout medical school rather than assigning it to those few who later held post-graduate fellowships or secured hospital residencies. The requirement of a bachelor's degree for admission to HMS took hold in 1902, but the perception of medical study as graduate work still needed to be strengthened⁵¹. The comps were one way to do that – they modeled the type of critical thinking that let Edsall himself and other clinical researchers pursue medicine as an experimental science.

As Edsall raised academic standards, he decreased the importance of course grades. In other Harvard programs, the best students were rewarded rather than penalized for devoting extra time and effort to one field of special interest. Edsall felt that the HMS system of testing, promoting, and rewarding students discouraged what should be encouraged. Talented students who earned lower grades in some courses because they focused their energy on one course would benefit from the «Promoting Boards» created in 1918. These faculty committees reviewed the work of each student before recommending promotion, dismissal, or remedial work⁵².

⁴⁷ Committee on Examinations, *Second Annual Report of the Committee on Examinations* (September, 1921), pp. 29-30 (Harvard Medical Library, AB 12.25.2).

⁴⁸ Committee on Examinations, *Third Annual Report of the Committee on Examinations* (October, 1922), p. 11 (Harvard Medical Library, AB 12.25.2).

⁴⁹ «The Journal of the American Medical Association», March 17, 1914, p. 803.

⁵⁰ David Edsall to Edwin A. Locke, May 25, 1934 (Box 4, folder 157, *Edsall Papers*, GA 23).

⁵¹ The graduate division of HMS was not where Edsall hoped to achieve his goals. It offered brief «continuing education» courses for local physicians. In several other ways it differed from HMS – full time study was rare, instructors received a percentage of the tuition, summer coursework was extensive, and women could enroll. See the 1910/11, 1915/16, and 1919/20 annual reports of the HMS Dean, printed in each year's annual report from the President and Treasurer of Harvard.

⁵² Harvard Medical School, *Records of the Administrative Board*, v. 3, May 1, 1918 (Harvard Medical Library, AA 1.55.3). Each class had its own Board except for the fourth year students.

The charge to the Boards to go beyond course grades to formulate an overall grade for the work of the year would «promote real scholarship and a degree of specialization worthy of graduate school work». The student who excelled in one area exemplified «the best type of graduate school work»⁵³. In that spirit, the faculty voted to award Special Honors at graduation for distinguished research in one field.

In most Ph.D. programs, grades are not as important as other markers of student progress. What counts is the caliber of the work. The crucial assessments are the letters of recommendation and other testimonials from faculty. In like fashion, grades became less important badges of merit at HMS in the 1920s. For several years, no course grades were released to the students (who protested strenuously and successfully)⁵⁴. But if the students still knew their grades, they counted for less in the search for an internship, which by the 1920s was sought by all (and secured by all, although the most desirable ones were highly competitive). In 1925, the faculty voted to withhold grades from hospitals and to downplay class rank by only pegging students in the top, middle, and bottom third of their class⁵⁵. In place of that information, the heads of service at the HMS teaching hospitals had access to the comments on each student that the HMS instructors (after 1925) were asked to send to the Dean's office. As Edsall told the third year men in 1928, «Grades have very little influence in the hospitals around here. They have less to do with it than the general impression you have made on your instructors»⁵⁶.

Were the efforts on behalf of independent scholarship successful? Only fourteen of nearly 1,300 students failed the HMS comprehensive exams in the 1920s, and over the course of that decade the Committee on Examinations reported fewer and fewer shortcomings in the answers of students who passed. But what about the faculty's performance? How did they carry out their work as assessors? Did they couple science and judgment as tightly as they expected their students to do?

⁵³ *Second Annual Report of the Committee on Examinations*, p. 7 (Harvard Medical Library, AA 12.25.2).

⁵⁴ [Second Year Class, 1921] "To Dean David L. Edsall" ("Students – Comments on Curriculum, 1915-1925", Deans' subject files, Box 24, folder 1604, Harvard Medical Library). Grades were abolished at the Yale Medical School, which also adopted comprehensive examinations. G.N. Burrow, *A History of Yale's School of Medicine: Passing Torches to Others*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2002, pp. 110-111.

⁵⁵ *Records of the Administrative Board*, v. 4, January 17, February 7, February 21, 1924; June 11, 1925 (AA 1.55.3). The shift also meant that third year students no longer applied for and received their fourth year clerkships on the basis of their class rank (Elliott Cutler to Dean Burwell, April 30, 1942, in "Curriculum: Fourth Year-Policies and Clerkships, 1915-1950", Box 9, folder 461, Deans' subject files, Harvard Medical Library).

⁵⁶ "Notes on Dr. Edsall's Speech to Third Year Students – February 23, 1928", in "Curriculum: Fourth Year-Policies and Clerkships, 1915-1950" (Box 9, folder 461, Deans' subject files, Harvard Medical Library).

The Science of Subjective Impressions

After the students turned in their comprehensive exam essays, three instructors read each student's work, marked it on a hundred point scale, and discussed their appraisals with each other. The nine graders had no rubrics or guidelines to follow. On the basis of the comp scores and the annual grades, the committee awarded a final letter grade for the four years, with «no fixed rule» used for that decision⁵⁷. Each fall, the committee then wrote a long report to the entire faculty, sharing what it called «impressions» of the strengths and weaknesses of what they had read and heard. Obviously the faculty undertook its assessment of student work without the painstaking quantitative precision used in the laboratory sciences. They relied on and trusted their subjective judgment of student competence. Testing for them was more art than science. The HMS approach to testing and grading in the 1920s had little use for the rapidly growing field of “psychometrics,” the branch of psychology dedicated to testing. The faith in holistic appraisals based on subjective impressions was at odds with the psychologists' enthusiasm for objective tests, which they often likened to the diagnostic tools used by physicians⁵⁸. It is not hard to imagine how a psychometrician would have cringed at this section of a transcript of the June 7, 1928 meeting of the Committee on Examinations:

He [a fourth year student] got a consistent B [in his courses] but we did not feel like recommending him for Honors. We gave him a mark of B- on the oral. Dr. Blackfan was then given authorization to change the mark to a C+ if he so desired, and, after conference with other members of his team, he did so⁵⁹.

Even so, the approach to testing and grading respected several important features of scientific work. Thoroughness was one such attribute. The members of the Promoting Boards shared their personal opinions of how the students had performed in all settings, whether lab, hospital, recitation, or seminar. As the head of the Surgery department told his son, «We know pretty well who ought to get through and who ought not to get through without subjecting the men to a written test» although they continued to give one⁶⁰. Enhancing the thoroughness was the consideration of extenuating circumstances, especially sickness; trends like improvement over time; and temperament, such as a «right attitude»⁶¹.

⁵⁷ *Third Annual Report of the Committee on Examinations* (October, 1922), p. 9 (Harvard Medical Library, AB 12.25.2).

⁵⁸ J. Brown, *The Definition of a Profession: The Authority of Metaphor in the History of Intelligence Testing, 1890-1930*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1992, ch. 6.

⁵⁹ “Committee on Examinations: Grades and Correspondence, 1927-29” (Box 6, folder 316, Deans' subject files, Harvard Medical Library).

⁶⁰ Harvey Cushing to William H. Cushing, February 12, 1924 (Folder 132, *Cushing Papers*).

⁶¹ *Second Annual Report of the Committee on Examinations*, p. 27 (Harvard Medical Library, AB 12.25.2). Cases of moral misconduct, such as the sexual harassment of nurses, were referred to the Administrative Board.

Experimentation was another scientific habit of mind demonstrated as the faculty constantly modified the oral part of the comprehensives, with changes introduced nearly every year in the 1920s. The purpose of the oral remained the same – gather additional information on the men under consideration for honors and for failure. How to reach that goal changed. The examiners tried to make the oral more valid by increasing the length of time; otherwise it would have been a test of speed more than anything else. They developed questions that each team of examiners had to pose rather than let the teams ask whatever they pleased. In 1927, the examiners had ten volunteers take five different types of orals in order to understand what skills and information each one tapped (they differed considerably). In 1928, the oral included parts of three of the five orals from 1927, spanning bedside diagnosis, factual recall, and analytical reasoning.

Peer review was a third scientific disposition manifested by the examiners. A major point of the HMS assessment innovations was the shift from private to collective judgment. The Promoting Boards and the Committee on Examinations represented unprecedented organizational support for the frequent discussion among faculty of student work. Before the 1920s, that occurred informally, especially when problems arose, but now there were organizational structures in place to make sure it happened regularly. The conversations continued after the committee meetings by virtue of long and detailed annual reports, tracing disappointing student performance to curricular and instructional weaknesses. The 1920 report, for instance, revealed that four departments used different terminology for the physiology of the nervous system⁶². In another department, one professor opposed prescribing sodium bicarbonate for gastric hyperacidity but his students saw, during hospital rounds, another professor take it every day for his ulcer⁶³.

In short, the HMS faculty used particular traits of scientific thinking as they exercised their judgment in assessing student work. What they did lacked the statistical precision favored by the psychologists, but the instructors were, in their own ways, just as meticulous – and they faced none of the criticism directed against some psychometricians as too zealous and overconfident in their quest to sort and slot people on the basis of their innate intelligence and acquired ability. As assessors, the HMS faculty did what they told their students to do: break free of what Edsall often called the “mechanical” methods of absorbing information rather than thinking for one’s self. By creating new ways of testing and grading, the faculty was asking more of itself at the same time as it raised its expectations of the students. Both were obliged to go

⁶² Committee on Examinations. *A Critical Review...* (September, 1920), cit., pp. 16-17 (Harvard Medical Library, AB 12.25.2).

⁶³ *Second Annual Report of the Committee on Examinations*, p. 27 (Harvard Medical Library, AB 12.25.2).

beyond the more modest exertion called for in taking and grading the written coursework tests of recall.

The struggle with an overloaded and fragmented curriculum would be fought again and again later in the century⁶⁴, but at the nation's premier medical school the principle had been established that students should be thoughtful scholars, and as such they deserved to be assessed by more than grades on examinations in their courses. Even if some professors changed more slowly than the Dean and President liked, the school was light years beyond where it had been in the 1850s when Mr. White was asked what he would do for a wart.

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⁶⁴ M. Konner, *Becoming a Doctor*, New York, Viking, 1987, p. 14, on an «endless series of lectures» from HMS professors, «every one of whom tries to cram as much as is humanly possible into an hour». Former Harvard President Derek Bok made the same point, less hyperbolically, in *Higher Learning*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1986, pp. 90, 104.

The policies for a nationalistic education in Japan in the Meiji Period

Ken Yasuoka

Prefaces

The Meiji period (1868-1912) is a period of extreme importance in Japanese history: at the beginning of this period Japan suddenly denied the feudal system which had continued for more than 700 years and abolished *Sakoku*, the policy of *national isolation*¹, and began to plan a modernization and westernization with a “Top-down” styled political system. Although Japan had had trade-relationship and contact with western countries since the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries – a relationship which was basically located in the Far East – she had raised her own culture under the influence of neighbouring countries such as China and Korea. However, Japan intensely inclined to absorb western civilization by changing its policies with the occasion of the Meiji Restoration² in 1867 and at the same time also harmonizing her own traditions.

¹ The national isolation *Sakoku* (鎖国) literally means «country in chains»: a policy which prohibited exchange and trade with foreign countries. It was adopted in 1639 and continued until 1858. The aim of the policy was to keep Christianity from being imported to Japan, and to protect the feudal system.

² From 1192 to 1867, *Bushi Kaikyū* (武士階級), the *Samurai* class, that is the upper class of the feudal hierarchy assumed control of the Japanese domestic and foreign policy.

Through westernization Japan, in a 20-30 year period after 1867, achieved rapid modernization in various fields such as education, military, the tax system, the constitution, the parliamentary system, the railway system, etc. and was approved as a modern state by the great western powers and finally succeeded in becoming one of them by 1912 when the Meiji period closed: this, in fact, had been one of the most important aims of the state at the beginning.

In the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century when the concept of imperialism – the idea that the stronger preyed upon the weaker – prevailed in the world as a common idea, only Japan maintained her independence³ and achieved what is known as modernization among Asian countries in the wave of the invasion of the great western powers. Various measures were taken to achieve self-government and modernization. One of these measures was to equip and develop the educational system.

If modern Japanese history is generally divided into two periods, it could be a wide held belief that the surrender of Japan in the last War in 1945 is the dividing point. What makes the division could be seen as the period in which the spirit and the concept of two constitutions, that is, the Meiji Constitution (explained later) and the Constitution of Japan⁴ became a common idea among the Japanese people. In this paper I am going to refer to the former period: the Meiji period during the time when the Meiji Constitution was enacted and promulgated (1889), and measures regarding education were taken. In the occasion of writing this paper, I intend to try to discover what the state of Japan aimed to achieve in the process, and at the same time, try to discover what fixed the direction which led to the surrender and ruin of the state in 1945 and the mistakes which the state made. Bearing them in mind and in order to make them a lesson for our future, I am going to write the text below with the historical background of that time in perspective.

³ Although Ching (清, 1616-1912) and Thailand can be said to have been independent countries, the condition was different for Japan in terms of the failure of modernization and having been tossed back and forth by the great western powers. Furthermore, it is difficult to define if the Ottoman Empire (1299-1922) belonged to Asia or to Europe because of its location. In any case, Japan, located in the Far East, cannot be compared with the Ching and Thailand.

⁴ The constitution of Japan, *Nihon koku Kenpō* (日本国憲法) has been in existence since 1947. It declares sovereign power and the renunciation of war – from such points of view, it is in clear contrast with the Meiji Constitution which declared the sovereign power of the emperor and the duty of military service.

1. *Meiji Restoration and Fukoku Kyōhei, Shokusan Kōgyō*⁵

Before referring to the educational measures taken, I need to mention the reason why Japan needed to deny its own feudal social system, and plan to create a modern state by absorbing western culture. It is impossible to mention these measures without understanding the historical background at that time and the circumstances in Japan and overseas. In fact the reason “why” was to avoid colonization by the great western powers and to obtain equality with them.

Contact between Japan and the western countries was started by a Portuguese vessel which drifted ashore a Japanese island in 1543. After this the country came to have a trade-relationship with Spain, England and Holland. But the Tokugawa family⁶ which established a Samurai-political power in Edo (now known as Tokyo) in 1603 hated missionaries and the spread of Christianity which was introduced by trade and exchanges. Iemitsu Tokugawa (徳川家光, 1604-1651, who reigned 1623-1651: the 3rd *Shōgun*) enforced *Sakoku*, the policy of national isolation, in 1639. He abolished all kinds of trade with other countries except Holland (because Holland had no intention of converting Japan to Christianity) and Ching, and these measures continued up until 1854: an incredibly long time – spanning more than 200 years⁷.

While Japan was left behind as the world centred on the West, from the middle of 17th century onwards western vessels due to the progress of navigational technology and of capitalism started to appear in Japanese waters, seeking to trade with Asian countries and markets. Although the Tokugawa shogunate severely tried to maintain the policy of *national isolation*, in 1842, when the news of the surrender of Ching in the Opium War spread like a shock wave throughout the country, the Tokugawa shogunate abolished

⁵ *Fukoku Kyōhei* (富国強兵) literally means «enrich the country, strengthen the military». It was a principle slogan of the age of modernization. While *Shokusan Kōgyō*, (殖産興業) is made up of two terms, *Shokusan* which means «to produce products», and *Kōgyō* which means «to build up industries» by learning and absorbing the great western powers modern systems (by adapting principles of capitalism into Japanese industries). Japan aimed to enrich economical, military power through *Shokusan Kōgyō*.

⁶ One of the Samurai family. After them, the Tokugawa family was delegated the domestic and foreign policy of Japan for generations until the Meiji Restoration in 1867. This power is called Tokugawa shogunate; it is also called the Edo period, and it is defined as “Japanese modern” in history.

⁷ Korea (1392-1910), not for trading purposes, dispatched a mission twelve times from 1607 to 1811. The principle of *the national isolation* was to keep Christianity from being imported and expanding in Japan. Only Holland was allowed to trade because she did not intend to export her religion.

Ikokusen Uchiharai Rei, the «Edict to Repel Foreign Vessels»⁸ which was being enforced at that time due to the fear of becoming a second Ching, that is, of being colonized. During this period four American vessels, navigated by General M. Perry suddenly appeared in Uraga Bay Kanagawa⁹ and forced Japan to open trade in 1853, 11 years after the end of the Opium War.

Domestic Japan was confused by this force which suddenly appeared on the seas. In the following year, in 1854, the Kanagawa treaty (between the United States and Japan) was concluded, and the policy of *national isolation* which had continued for more than 200 years was abolished. In 1858, the Tokugawa shogunate concluded a treaty of amity and commerce; what is known as the “unequal treaty” with America, Russia, Holland, England and France¹⁰. Political opinions in the countryside were exasperated by a series of actions taken by the Tokugawa shogunate, and what is known as the movement of *Sonnō Jōi*, «Revere the Emperor, Expel the Barbarians»¹¹ was brought about in many places. As a result the Tokugawa shogunate suddenly collapsed.

Although at the beginning the movement of *Sonnō Jōi* had stressed the expulsion of foreigners for fear of Japan becoming a colony, gradually the stress started to move to subvert the Tokugawa shogunate who behaved like a traitor favouring the great western powers and also to revere the Emperor as sovereign of the state. Originally this school of thought did not have modern ideas or a concept of the state any different from the Independence of America and the French Revolution. However, the simple and clear ideology of the Tokugawa shogunate collapsed in 1867, and the feudal age in

⁸ «Edict to Repel Foreign Vessels», *Ikokusen Uchiharai Rei* (異国船打払令) was enforced from by the Tokugawa shogunate in 1825 in order to drive foreign vessels away from Japan waters and was effective until 1842.

⁹ Matthew Calbraith Perry (1794-1858), a sailor of the U.S. Marine. He had a sign manual of the President of the U.S. One of the main reasons why the state forced Japan to open the country was to provide drinking water and wood to vessels and their sailors arriving in Japanese waters for whaling. Also, *Kanagawa* (神奈川) is a prefecture location south of Tokyo.

¹⁰ It was one which forced foreigners' stay and freedom in assigned places and ports. In foreigners' colonies, extraterritorial was effective and Japan was not allowed to have tariff autonomy.

¹¹ «Revere the Emperor, Expel the Barbarians», *Sonnō Jōi* (尊皇攘夷) was an ideological and political movement at that time. It insisted on revering the Emperor instead of the Tokugawa shogunate and on expelling foreigners. This concept was born in the 12th century in Sung (宋, 960-1279) a Chinese dynasty which had been invaded by barbarians and was advocated by Chu His (朱子, 1130-1200), a Confucian who lived in the country. The concept defines China itself (the Chinese race) as the centre, while others (other races) are defined as barbarians and with this definition, it tried to distinguish the centre (the centre of the universe) from barbarians and establish its own orthodoxy and superiority. In this sense, it can be said to be an ideology based on a kind of nationalism or racism.

which the *Samurai* who had been at the top of the hierarchy for 700 years ended (*Meiji Ishin*, 明治維新, «Meiji Restoration», 1867).

The ruling system of Japan in the Edo period had been the feudal system (homage) based on an alliance between the Tokugawa family (the greatest *Daimyō*, Japanese feudal, *Samurai* lord) and about 300 large or small *Daimyō* in each *han*¹². But with the flourish of the movement of *Sonnō Jōi*, some of them betrayed the feudal system and played central roles in subverting the Tokugawa shogunate, and a new government was established with a fundamental measure of «Revere the Emperor, Open the country» in December 1867, after having noticed the impossibility and insignificance of *Jōi*, the expulsion of barbarians in face of the great forces of the great western powers. In the following year, in 1868, the name of the era changed into *Meiji* (明治), and Tokyo was settled as the capital of the state. Upon taking the power, however, the new government became aware of the unreasonableness of the unequal treaties concluded between the Tokugawa shogunate and the great western powers.

From the view of the great western powers' "standards", based on international law, Japan was an "uncivilized country", thus it was impossible for them to build up an equal diplomatic relationship with the country. Japan was in urgent need of modernizing (westernizing) various systems such as law, parliament, education, railroads, the postal system etc., in order to be approved as a "modern state". This is the reason why Japan, an Asian country, advocated *Datsua Nyūō* (脱亜入欧, «Escape from Asia and Entrance to the West»), and why, fortunately or unfortunately, Japan had to absorb modern western systems at all costs and plan to westernize herself. Accordingly the state underwent many difficulties, trials and errors in order to achieve modernization in the Meiji period. Furthermore, it was in urgent need of building up and enforcing her armaments and other modern systems to defend the land against invasion from other countries in the 19th century, the age of imperialism: where the stronger preyed upon the weaker.

It also needs to be considered that as a fundamental condition for approval as a "modern state", Japan needed to build up and enforce a modern educational system (the rate of school attendance especially was regarded as a measure of modernization). Naturally the new government made efforts to

¹² *Daimyō* (大名), Japanese feudal, *Samurai* lords, were regarded as those who possessed more than 10,000 of *koku* (石). *Koku* is a unit of measure for rice, and one *koku* is equivalent to 180 litres of rice. The possession of *koku*, was directly connected to the financial power of each *Daimyō*. Incidentally, the amount of the *koku* of the Tokugawa family was about 8 million. While the term *han* (藩), included the place (territory), the organization, and the members and people, etc. The *Daimyō* was the ruler in each *han*, and then there was the *Samurai* class, then farmers, craftsmen, and merchants; in that order.

build up the system, also emphasizing education for the achievement of *Fukoku Kyōhei*. How and what were the educational policies and measures that the government emphasized? I intend to refer to these successively.

2. The development of the early educational policies

Before starting to give an overview of educational history in the Meiji period, we need to know that educational policies were always operated and developed based on an “education for the state” which was a key concept of the policies. Furthermore, in the new state of Japan, the concept was strengthened by the policies which had established a public educational system in almost the same period or earlier than that of western great powers, and on enforcing *Gakusei* (学制, «The fundamental code of education») in September 1872¹³. It can be said that the history in the Meiji period was a process of trials and errors in the field of school education in order to produce loyal subjects “for the state” and to achieve modernization as soon as possible using education for the development of an “industrial revolution” and “international competition” based on imperialism and capitalism.

As to domestic affairs, in 1868 when the new government started, there were still *Daimyō* under the *han system* in every local area of Japan and the feudal system had continued as before during the Edo period. It was quite impossible for the new government’s policies to travel effectively throughout the country or to expect them to help cultivate a “consciousness of the state”¹⁴. The *Samurai* still worked and behaved as they had in the past, and therefore the defence of the country under the principle of “levee en masse” would continue to be uncertain for as long as such a feudal and hierarchical social system existed. Until such circumstances were not reformed or resolved it was impossible for the government to confront the great western powers in diplomatic fields. Therefore a series of policies were made such as *Shimin Byōdō* (1869)¹⁵, *Haihan Chiken* (1871)¹⁶, *Chiso*

¹³ For instance, Great Britain in 1870, Prussian Germany in 1872, and France in 1881, enforced a law system which organized public modern education in each country. They all did this after their industrial revolutions, while Japan did the contrary and imposed it beforehand.

¹⁴ There were about 300 *Daimyō* under the feudal system in the Edo period in Japan: it was quite decentralized. Although the people had a consciousness for their own local areas, they had little consciousness of being “Japanese” who lived in the state of Japan.

¹⁵ *Shimin Byōdō* (四民平等) literally means «equality amongst four classes», the *Samurai*, the farmers, the craftsmen, and the merchants in the Edo period. It abolished the feudal hierarchy and made the Japanese people subjects. Also, a competitive society which depended on the individual independent of family and birth, appeared.

¹⁶ *Haihan Chiken* (廃藩置県, «abolition of *han-system*») broke up *han* – there were about 270 in the Edo period. Instead, it settled a governor in each prefecture. The aim

Kaisei, *Chōhei Rei* (1873)¹⁷, and the enforcement of *Gakusei*, etc.: they were complete reforms with the aim of overturning the conventional feudal system, and they were carried out without bloodshed or arms. Consequently, a series of modernizations in educational field with a “Top-down” style were carried out with relative ease.

The distribution of Gakusei and the spirit. In 1871, the Ministry of Education was established and the following year, in September 1872, *Gakusei*, the fundamental code of education which was composed of 109 chapters, was distributed to all the Japanese people and it also planned the establishment of a public educational system: this was the first modern law in Japan. The new government’s idea of education and its aims were clearly expressed in the preface: they can generally be divided into four parts: 1. Formation of people based on individualism and personal success; 2. Education for all the people; 3. Emphasis on the pragmatism of knowledge; 4. Educational expenses to be borne by the people (not by the state or municipalities)¹⁸. The following expresses the idea:

Knowledge is the basis for success in life. Therefore how can people live well without learning? If they are bad, stray, suffer from hunger, and are disobedient to the family and lose their life, the error can eventually be traced to the lack of learning.

This overturns a conventional concept in the feudal period, where knowledge was limited to the *Samurai* or just a part of the wealthy families in other classes under Confucian’s concept that «Although it could be possible to guide people to life under the law, it could be quite difficult to make them understand the law». It stresses that success or failure in life is not due to social rank, but to the effort of each individual in a modern, civic society.

[...] Although there were few people from the *non-Samurai* class, they would insist that they dedicated themselves to the country and acted without knowing the basis for success, or they had a tendency to rote learning and reading in a monotonous

was to change conventional decentralization into centralization for the smooth promotion of modernization by the new government with a “Top-down” political system.

¹⁷ *Chiso Kaisei* and *Chōhei Rei* (地租改正・徴兵令). *Chiso Kaisei* was a complete reform of the land and tax system. It fixed a payment of 3% of the land price by cash, and planned to stabilize the financial foundation. *Chōhei Rei*, as known already, considered that conscription was a duty for all men on the principle of *levee en masse*.

¹⁸ 寄田啓夫・山中芳和編著『日本の教育の歴史と思想』ミネルヴァ書房 Michio Yorita, Yoshikazu Yamanaka, *Nihon no Kyōiku to Shisō* [The Education of Japan and thoughts], Minerva Shobō, 2002, p. 68.

voice and their theories were lofty. Rare were those who could acquire and practice knowledge in the real sense [...]

This is a criticism of the knowledge based on Confucianism in the feudal age which had inclined to be just theoretical, not practical and recommended that it be practical.

We hope that you, our people in each village and in town, do not produce an unlearned individual in your family.

It represents the principle of education to all people.

From a systematic point of view *Gakusei* adopted a school district system following the example of that of France. According to this system, the country was divided into 8 university districts and there were 32 secondary school districts in each of the 8 districts. There were also 210 elementary school districts in each of the 32 districts which intended to establish a university, a secondary school (inferior one for 3 years, superior one for 3 years) and an elementary school (inferior one for 4 years, superior one for 4 years) in each district. If the plan had gone ahead, 256 secondary and 53,700 elementary schools would have been established: the idea was calculated to establish an elementary school for every 600 people – for every 100 children. It was an impracticable theory: the actual number of elementary schools in 1873 a year after the distribution of *Gakusei* was 12,558, and in 1878¹⁹ it was 266,584. After that it moved sideways. It has to be said that the school district system proclaimed by the state was a hopeful, idealistic and impractical one. *Gakusei* was not compulsory education either. It was not until 1900 that such an educational system was established in Japan. Its circumstance derived from the research on the educational systems of the great western powers and the arrangement of the number according to the circumstances of Japan at that time by the Ministry of Education.

Here, we must pay attention to one thing: *Gakusei*, based on the concept of “success” and “individualism” asked for a charge from people living in critical circumstances with regards to the national budget, and although individualism was emphasized, a policy based on the concept of “Education for the state” strictly existed. Superficially, as it preached the significance of education for each individual, it used logic to insist on the education for the state. It was obviously to avoid expenses to the Meiji government, and forced the expense of education onto the individual by telling them of the significance of education: it was contrary to the principle of free tuition by the state which was a fundamental principle of modern universal educa-

¹⁹ The same as above, p. 70.

tion²⁰. Children were an important labour force and to lose them meant to lose bread. Also, the industrial and economical structure had remained unchanged ever since the feudal period and their life had never been easy. Riots, arson, refusal to enter schools and pay a tuition fee for *Gakusei* were present in many regions.

Furthermore, the pragmatism which was affirmed in *Gakusei* valued intelligence and technique, and a tendency to neglect the moral education was clearly noticeable. For instance, according to *Shōgaku Kyōsoku*²¹, at the inferior elementary school²², moral education was obligatory as “lectures” only in the first and the second year, but it was not obligatory for the years above this or at the superior elementary school²³. The example tells us that rapid import and adoption of western modern science and technique was the base of educational policy²⁴. A series of tendencies to value intelligence and neglect moral education, and the ideas of *Gakusei* which were out of touch with reality were seen through protests and became a reason to criticize the government as well. Instead of *Gakusei*, a new policy adapted to the actual circumstances was requested. I will refer to its policy in the next chapter.

Absorption of western culture and O-yatoi gaikokujin. When we consider the absorption of western cultures into Japan, the existence of *O-yatoi gaikokujin*, «hired foreigners»²⁵, cannot be neglected. It is impossible to say how many of them were in the country in total, but it must have been hundreds, even up to about two thousand (there are several theories regarding this figure). The number is even higher if we count them at every prefecture and private school level. In any case, it is a fact that many *O-yatoi gaikokujin* were in Japan and were hired to introduce western liberal arts and technology.

²⁰ 川瀬八洲夫『近代教育思想史』垣内出版 Yasuo Kawase, *Kindai Kyōiku Shisō shi* [The history of modern educational thoughts], Kakiuchi Shuppan, 1982, p. 58.

²¹ *Shōgaku Kyōsoku* (小学教則) was a regulation on elementary schools, which was promulgated in 1875. It prescribed the number of hours to be dedicated to each subject every week and so on.

²² Each school year was divided into 2 classes and the term for the class in each year was 6 months. The total period of education was 4 years from the age of 6 to 9, and it started with the 8th class and continued to the 1st class and graduation.

²³ There the period of study was 4 years from the age of 10 to the age of 13 and there were 8 classes just like in the elementary school.

²⁴ 平野智美・菅野和俊編著『教育学講座2』学習研究社, Tomomi Hirano, Kazutoshi Kanno, *Kyōiku gaku Kōza* [The lecture of pedagogy], Gakushū Kennkyū Sha, 1979, p. 137.

²⁵ *O-yatoi gaikokujin* (お雇い外国人) literally means «hired foreigners». They were hired by the new government in order to teach the liberal arts, technology, and the legal system of the great western powers. The basis of Japan's *Fukoku Kyōhei* and *Shokusan Gōgyō* were created by them.

Why did so many of them choose to visit Japan, an Asian, uncivilized country? The reason was the high salary which was offered. The middle classes of them were paid 200 yen a month, and the higher classes were paid 600 yen or more. For example Fenollosa was paid 370 yen, De Reijke was paid 400 yen, Bältz was paid 500 yen, and Clark was paid 600 yen²⁶. According to *Gakusei*, the monthly tuition fee for school education was 5 *sen*²⁷, the salary of a junior high school principal was 10 yen at that time. Every one of them was a scholar and a professor of world standing. Many of them were intellectuals known in their own countries. Instead of huge investment, the new government invited the “world’s talents” to come, and they brought their intelligence, knowledge and technology to Japan. It can be said that through *Shokusan Kōgyō*, modern industries were created in Japan. Although it was very expensive to the new state, the new government foresaw that the term of their role would be about 10 years and intended to change them all into roles for Japanese intellectuals in the future.

Students from various fields were actually sent overseas to Germany, France, and Great Britain, and sometimes to America from 1870 onwards and this was a turning point. From the 1880s, almost all *O-yatoi gaikokujin* retired from their positions and were replaced by students who had returned to Japan from overseas. An example is Kimitake Furuichi (古市公威, 1854-1934), who was the first Japanese professor in the field of civil engineering. He studied in France from 1875 to 1880 and graduated in engineering. From 1880, when he returned to Japan, he was engaged in the design of public works in the Home Office (内務省, *Naimushō*) while he was also a professor at *Kōka Daigaku* (工科大学, forerunner of the department of engineering of Tokyo University) from 1880 and taught students. It can be said that he distributed “an electric current” which he had gained in France to students.

Under the Slogan of *Fukoku Kyōhei* the new government thought that the training of leaders who could enlighten and train people was urgently

²⁶Arnest Francesco Fenollosa (1853-1908) an American philosopher, taught philosophy at Tokyo Imperial University. He valued Japanese art so much, that he made the effort to introduce Johannis de Reijke (1842-1913) a Dutch engineer for river works. He was engaged in river works and the forestation in Japan for more than 30 years. Ervin von Bälz (1849-1913), a German doctor was engaged in the development of Japanese medical science for 27 years from when he was invited to be professor at *Tokyo Igakkō* (東京医学校), the predecessor of the Medical Faculty of Tokyo University). William Smith Clark (1826-1886), an American botanist, was the first vice principal of *Sapporo Nogakkō* (札幌農学校), the School of Agriculture established in 1876, forerunner of Hokkaido University. He taught students botany and science in English. Although his stay in Japan was only 8 months in 1876, his attitude for education based on the Christian spirit affected them so much, that many talents were born. They were paid in silver, not Japanese yen. Although the silver reserves were in abundant in Japan, it is said that almost all them went overseas in that period.

²⁷*Sen* (銭) is a unit of Japanese money, one hundred of *yen*.

needed. It made the effort to create professional education in various fields through *O-yatoi gaikokujin* as well as establishing the Tokyo Imperial University (established in 1877, and forerunner of Tokyo University), and other professional schools under the government's offices: the Sapporo school of Agriculture (札幌農学校, *Sapporo Nogakkō* established in 1876, forerunner of Hokkaido University) of the Development Commission, *Heigaku-ryō* (兵学寮, established in 1869), the Academy of the Ministry of Military²⁸, *Shihan Gakkō* (師範学校, a normal School to foster teachers of the elementary school, established in 1872) by the Ministry of Education, etc. Furthermore, Japan actively learned and absorbed the system and knowledge in each field from every country: for example, engineering was from Great Britain, tactical methods were from France (then from Germany after the Franco-Prussian War), education and teaching methods were from America and medical science was from Germany. Especially after 1871, Japan stressed an inclination towards Germany, and the state itself came to change into a "German type of state" (see par. 4).

3. Reaction and nationalization of the educational policies

The promulgation of *Kyōiku Rei* (教育令, «Education Order») and *To-kuiku Ronsō* (德育論争, «Controversy on moral education»). In the educational field, the modern public educational system was started by the promulgation of *Gakusei* in 1875 under the slogan of *Fukoku Kyōhei* and westernization. But because of the inclination towards westernization and a direct importation of thoughts and educational systems from the great western powers, the introduction of these systems ignored the domestic circumstances of Japan and emphasis on intellectual education came to be criticized. In the summer of 1879, Emperor Meiji (明治天皇, 1852-1912, reign 1867-1912) unofficially announced *Kyōgaku Seishi* (教学聖旨, «imperial will on the great principles of education») and gave it priority under the new government. He made *Nagazane Motoda* (元田永孚, 1818-1891) his aide write down his thoughts on education and these writings are composed of *Kōyōgaku Taishi* («General Observations on Education») and *Shōgaku*

²⁸ The Ministry of Military, *Hyōbu Shō* (兵部省) was abolished in February 1872, in its place the Department of the Army and the Department of the Navy were established. Then *Heigaku-Ryō* of the Army were renamed and reorganized into *Rikugun Shikan Gakkō* (陸軍士官学校) in 1874, and also the Navy was turned into *Kaigun Shikan Gakkō* (海軍士官学校).

Jyōmoku Niken («Two headlines for primary education»)²⁹. Emperor Meiji preached of *Kyōgaku Taishi* that «They are not few who value only knowledge and intelligence, and who turn their thoughts towards *Bunmei-Kaika* (文明開化, «Civilization and Enlightenment»), and who ignore morals and manners», and so showed his dissatisfaction towards westernization and intellectual education. He also preached the necessity to clarify loyalty and filial piety, and a moral education based on Confucianism: «If morality, knowledge and intelligence are totally filled within our own people and a right and true education is spread to all the state, we will never need to be ashamed overseas when compared to the spirits of independence of other states».

Here we must pay attention to one thing. Even though *Kyōiku Rei* was promulgated at almost the same time as that of *Kyōgaku Seishi*, it did not reflect the Emperor's will regarding moral education based on Confucianism. In the 3rd chapter of *Kyōiku Rei* we read that the «elementary school is a place in which general education is to be given, therefore reading, *Shūji* (Japanese Penmanship), mathematics, geography, history, moral education etc. are fundamental subjects». Finally moral education was indicated and The Emperor's and his aides' will to value that which had been ignored³⁰ was finally being considered. Furthermore, *Kyōiku Rei* was diffused in a manner which tried to correspond and be flexible to the circumstances of each local place, though after the promulgation there was a decline in the rate of school frequency and many schools were abolished, the quality of teachers fell etc. The decline of primary education was noticeable throughout the country and complaints concerning liberalization soon began. Therefore, once again the government had to take measures to resolve the problems.

The promulgation of *Kyōgaku Seishi* brought about controversy in the government regarding the educational policy for the formation of subjects: what is known as *Tokuiku Ronsō*. One concern of the Conservatives (the Emperor's aides) was *Nagazane Motoda*, and they planned policies following the Emperor's hand and tried to reach an accord between policies and religion (National Shintoism³¹): the promotion of moral education based on

²⁹ *Shōgaku Jyōmoku Niken* (小学条目二件), two headlines for primary education show criticisms of the educational method based on *Gakusei* and how it could be reformed. They refer to primary education in particular, that it should instruct subjects to be loyal through the introduction of the loyal protagonists in Japanese history, and how practical knowledge should be given to students who were not following an intellectual education.

³⁰ 平野智美・菅野和俊編著『教育学講座2』学習研究社, Tomoni Hirano, Kazutoshi Kanno, *Kyōiku gaku Kōza* [The lecture of pedagogy], Gakush Kennky Sha, 1979, p. 140.

³¹ The national religion of Japan organized by the state after the Meiji restoration was promoted with nationalism, and it defined the Emperor as a living God. In this sense it can be said that it was a spiritual backbone for the Japanese and guided them to the militarism of the 1930s and 40s.

Confucian ethics. Another group were the “enlightened Bureaucrats” who focused on *Hirobumi Itō* (伊藤博文, 1841-1909, who later became the first Prime Minister of Japan) and aimed at the establishment of a political system by the enforcement of the strong power of the state, not by the policies of the Emperor’s hand but by utilizing the Emperor’s name as a sign of authority. To begin with, *Itō* and other Bureaucrats, who were promoters of *Kyōiku Rei* were against the context of *Kyōgaku Taishi*, *Nagata* and the educational theory of other Conservatives was removed. But it is here, that the rise of the *Freedom and People’s Rights Movement*³² cannot be ignored. The movement started in 1874 and by 1880 had expanded to every corner of Japan to such a point that it could no longer be ignored. *Gakusei* and *Kyōiku Rei* which formed “people” who advocated “lofty” ideas and theories and who insulted the government by showing off their knowledge and disturbed local officers were criticized by *Shōgaku Jyōmoku Niken* and this criticism helps to explain why the movement flourished. The Bureaucrats, in an attempt to oppress the movement which had expanded to every corner of Japan, tried to move closer to the Conservatives by introducing Confucianism ethics to school education.

The so-called *Kaisei Kyōiku Rei* (改正教育令, «revised educational order») was passed on December 28th 1880 as a way of resolving some of the problems of the *Kyōiku Rei* already mentioned above, especially the development of the Freedom and People’s Rights Movement. In content, the liberal and decentralized educational system of *Kyōiku Rei* was changed into that of a centralized one and the authority of each governor was strengthened. Moreover, the Emperor Meiji was unhappy with the way *Kyōiku Rei* neglected moral education and that the spirit of *Kyōgaku Seishi* was not reflected at all. Therefore, he ordered the Minister of Education to prescribe the subjects in the following order: 1. moral education, 2. reading, 3. *Shūji*, 4. mathematics, 5. Geography, 6. history. According to this order, moral education became the first subject on the list of *Kaisei Kyōiku Rei*, the direction to respect which was laid afterwards. Furthermore, from March 1880 the government started to check and control the quality of textbooks for students, as well as trying to control the contents which were based on liberalism and to promote an educational training which stressed loyalty and patriotism. In April of the same year in a meeting ordinance (集会条例 *Shūkai*

³² The «Freedom and People’s Rights Movement» (自由民権運動, *Jiyū Minken Undō*) was a large movement at that time against the government which strongly promoted modernization based on “Top-down” style of modernization of national power. It requested that the government open parliament and diffuse normal elections based on the thoughts of sovereignty in the populace and the right to self-govern which had been imported to Japan during the process of the promulgation of *Gakusei* and the absorption of western cultures.

Jyōrei) was enforced, whereby all teacher and student political activities and meetings were prohibited, and the interference and control by the state in the education field were emphasised. The government dodged the attack and criticism which came from the Freedom and People's Rights Movement with the Emperor's declaration to open the parliament in 1890 (declared in October 1881), and at the same time, oppressed the movement with a series of measures. The government's measures succeeded and the movement came under control, and a "Top-down" styled modernization came to be promoted as the government expected.

Kaisei Kyōiku Rei is also called *Kanshō Kyōikurei* (interfering-educational order). It was a reaction to the government's principles on educational measures which can be seen if we compare the name to the Education order, the so-called *Kyōiku Rei* (free education order). But after that it became a direction of educational measures in Japan.

Arinori Mori's educational measures based on nationalism. The first Minister of Education that the cabinet elected in 1885 was *Arinori Mori* (森有礼, 1847-1889), a man greatly trusted by *Hirobumi Itō*, the first Prime Minister. He was sent from *Satsuma-han*, where he was born, to Great Britain in 1885 with the order to learn "naval skills". Indeed its *han* had taken very opened, liberal policies³³. He started to work in the new government after returning to Japan and was then sent to America, China and Great Britain and enjoyed success as a diplomat. During his work he saw that China, a great power in Asia was being devastated by the great western powers, and he recognised that also in America and Great Britain, the relationship and diplomacy amongst nations were defined by "national power" and through the difficulty and failure of negotiation to reform unequal treaties. Furthermore, he strongly felt the importance of *Fukoku Kyōhei* in order to achieve equality in diplomatic relations. As a result, he understood that the development of the educational system was of extreme importance and that there was an urgent need to achieve modernization of the state *Fukoku Kyōhei* and *Shokusan Kōgyō* (in fact *Itō* had the same way of thinking, and this was why *Itō* recommended him for the position).

In March 1886, a year after assuming the position, he circulated the *Tei-koku Daigaku Rei* (帝国大学令, «Imperial University Order»). In April he successively circulated the *Shihan Gakkō Rei* (師範学校令, «Normal School Order»), *Chugakkō Rei* (中学校令, «Junior High School Order»), *Shōgakkō*

³³ *Satsuma* was located in the *Kagoshima* prefecture (a prefecture in south west Japan). In the late part of the Edo period *Satsuma-han*, one of the greatest *han* in Japan, approached Great Britain by itself. In the same period there were some *han* who sent their youth to western countries against *Sakoku*, Tokugawa shogunate's policy as well as *Satsuma-han*.

Rei (小学校令, «Elemental School Order»). They established the rule and school system in each school compared to *Gakusei* and *Kyōiku Rei* which had been promulgated beforehand and set all schools together with the same rule and spirit. It can be said that they were primarily established for the purpose of strengthening and enriching the State of Japan: for example *Tei-koku Daigaku Rei*, declares that «The imperial university has a purpose of teaching knowledge and technique, which correspond to the demands of the state, and of researching the heart of them». Furthermore, the autonomy of the university was limited because the appointing of all managerial posts such as the role of president, the deans of faculties, the members of trustee etc. were carried out by the Minister of Education. Furthermore the faculty of law was too important in the formation of government officials, and therefore the president held the post of dean as well³⁴. Such a series of measures can be said to be of opposite character and direction to those which were being adopted by the universities in Europe, which aimed at the independence and freedom of scholars from the states and the oppressive power of the church.

In every school order, the principle was the same:

[...] the principle of education is wholly to train and make people. What are the people? It can be said they are the subjects who are necessary, and loyal to our imperial. What are the subjects? It can be said those who wholly dedicate themselves to duties as imperial subjects. To dedicate themselves to the duties means to work well, with enough strength for the state in each of their positions. Therefore, indeed the purpose of education is to train and make people for practical use³⁵.

Arinori Mori thought that this was an ideal feature of the Japanese trained by a nationalistic education. He also thought that the success or failure of a nationalistic education would totally depend on the quality of teachers and for this reason he stressed the need to educate, starting with them. At *Shihan Gakkō* their training followed a military system and tools for torture were used. They had to do soldiers' gymnastics and lived in dormitories to make them acquire three characteristics: obedience, affection and authority. Their training was to train talents, so-called "priests in the educational field", who would teach the students in the future. Although it was a very hard and difficult process, it was carefully and methodically planned. Many uncritical and loyal teachers to the state were produced and they devoted themselves to the education of loyal and uncritical "subjects" at

³⁴ 井上勝也著『国家と教育』 晃洋書房, Katsuya Inoue, *Kokka to Kyōiku* [State and Education], Kōyō Shobō, 2000, p. 50.

³⁵ 大久保利謙『森有礼全集』第一巻 宣文堂, Toshiaki Ōkubo, *Mori Arinori Zenshū* [The collected works of Arinori Mori], vol. 1, Sembun Dō, 1972, p. 581.

school. As a result, the state would collapse and surrender in World War II half century later.

With the above consideration, it can be said that *Mori* is the founder of the nationalistic educational ideology and its system in the Meiji period. He saw the Enlightenment at work in western countries when he was young, and he was against *Motozane Nagata* and his group's conservative, Confucian educational point of view. Therefore he must naturally have been liberal and enlightened. But he atrophied modern Japan and was a cause of the state's collapse half a century later due to the base of the nationalistic educational system which he himself had established. Although the modernization of the educational system and its establishment was developed in a short period under his guide, it brought about reactions as well; he was assassinated at the age of 43, knifed to death by an opponent in February 1889 because of his successive radical policies. But the nationalistic education established by him was introduced in schools with the promulgation of *Kyōiku Chokugo* and other education measures which followed.

4. *The way to Kyōiku Chokugo (The Imperial Re-script on Education) and the establishment of a system of a nationalistic education*

The Promulgation of the Meiji Constitution and Kyōiku Chokugo. In 1889 and in 1890, the Meiji Constitution and *Kyōiku Chokugo* (教育勅語, «The Imperial Rescript on Education») were successively promulgated. One was the first modern constitution in East Asia, and the other was a clear provision of ethic standards as imperial subjects to be studied. It is important to pay attention to the fact that both Constitution and Rescript were directly invested by the Emperor with the authority on subjects (seen as “imperial”, i.e. “loyal” and “obedient” people to the State): as a result, the hierarchical relationship between him and the people, as ruler and subjects, was defined and clarified, and after that in a certain, nationalistic way the laws and precepts passed from him to them.

There were controversies in the government as to how the styled constitution should be adopted: should it follow the style of Great Britain or France or of Prussia with a diffusion and development of the Freedom and People's Rights Movement. *Hirobumi Itō* and his sympathizers insisted that the style which Japan should adopt was that of the Prussian style which strongly promoted a “Top-down” styled modernization with a strong sovereignty. When and after they gained the initiative of the administration of the state in 1881, they planned to establish an absolute, nationalistic system following the example of Prussia in order to create a new state.

As to their inclination, *Ryōtarō Shiba* says:

It is because of the victory of the Franco-Prussian War in 1871, just 4 years after the Meiji Restoration. The Japanese officers who stayed in Europe directly saw and questioned the ability between these two states with regards to the War [...]. Furthermore, Prussia created the German Empire cancelling the North German Confederation with the victory. Not to mention, the Japanese (new government) who had had their restoration in 1867 could not but help but be attracted to the state [...] such a situation was the same in terms of the constitution. As to the state, they had a feeling of relief rather than that of favour: they were surprised to know the existence of such a country in Europe where there were still unenlightened people, and they sympathized with that³⁶.

Itō and his sympathizers felt that there was something similar when comparing the circumstances between these two states: the period of the unity, and “Top-down” styled modernization which was used to overcome the “backwardness”.

On 11th February 1889, the Meiji constitution was promulgated and disclosed to the public as the Imperial Constitution with the form being passed to the Prime Minister *Kiyotaka Kuroda* (黒田清隆, 1840-1900) by the Emperor Meiji. In the preface it is written:

Whereas We make it the joy and glory of Our heart to behold the prosperity of Our country, and the welfare of Our subjects, We do hereby, in virtue of the Supreme power We inherit from Our Imperial Ancestors, promulgate the present immutable fundamental law, for the sake of Our present subjects and their descendants [...]. Considering that Our subjects are the descendants of the loyal and good subjects of Our Imperial Ancestors, We doubt not but that Our subjects will be guided by Our views, and will sympathize with all Our endeavours, and that, harmoniously cooperating together, they will share with Us Our hope of making manifest the glory of Our country, both at home and abroad, and of securing forever the stability of the work bequeathed to Us by Our Imperial Ancestors.

Although the Meiji constitution was divided into three powers, the supreme power of the Emperor was as strong as that of the German Empire's. It can even be said that it was stronger than that of the German Empire's, as can be seen from the article below:

Article 1. The Empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages eternal.

[...]

Article 3. The Emperor is sacred and inviolable.

[...]

Article 11. The Emperor has the supreme command of the Army and Navy.

³⁶ 司馬遼太郎『この国のかたち3』文春文庫, Ryōtarō Shiba, *Kono Kuni no Katachi 3* [The form of Japan 3], Bunshun, Bunko, 1995, pp. 26-27.

Article 12. The Emperor determines the organization and peace standing of the Army and Navy.

Article 13. The Emperor declares war, makes peace, and concludes treaties.

[...]

Article 14.1. The Emperor declares a state of siege.

[...]

Article 31. The provisions contained in the present Chapter (remark by writer: *Rights and Duties of Subjects*) shall not affect the exercise of the powers appertaining to the Emperor, in times of war or in cases of a national emergency.

However, with a difference to Germany, the Emperor did not administer the state by himself. This meant that his existence seemed to be what was called philosophically “nothing”. Instead, the ministers assisted him and took on responsibilities (Art. 55). It can be said that the concept of how the Emperor should be perceived in Japanese history is described well in the Constitution.

Article 55

1. The respective Ministers of State shall give their advice to the Emperor, and be responsible for it.

2. All Laws, Imperial Ordinances, and Imperial Rescripts of whatever kind, that relate to the affairs of the state, require the countersignature of a Minister of State.

The most serious miscalculation of this “German styled” constitution is “the supreme command” (art. 11 corresponds to art. 16 of the Constitution of the German Empire) and the articles connected to the concept (art. 12, 13, 14, 31): although nobody would imagine the miscalculations at that time. Half century later after it was promulgated, in the 1930s, the supreme command would wrongly be interpreted to be a part of the military (a staff military)³⁷ that was superior to the three powers. Furthermore, certain members ill-used the name of the Emperor (the great general and admiral of the supreme command), and the Army and the Navy (in particular the Army) had their own way, and brought about the ruin of the country by conquering the country with extreme nationalism and militarism, guiding the country and people to war against America and Great Britain.

³⁷ That is the central institution for the supreme command of the old Japanese Army. It was referred to that one of Prussia, following the victory of the Franco-Prussian war. The institution could take campaigns under the name of the supreme command though not through the parliament or the government. It guided the two Empires in Japan and Germany to the ruin of the state because the military was out of touch with policy and diplomacy. For example: the invasion of Belgium, a neutral country by the German Army when the World War I broke out in 1914; and the invasion of Manchuria by the Kwantung Army (a group of the Imperial Japanese army, in Kwantung Peninsula) in 1931. Both of them were planned by the staff military of these two states by themselves. Both governments knew of the fact only after the actions had been carried out.

The people were excited by the promulgation and a celebration (lantern parade) was held in many places. But we must ask ourselves just how many Japanese could understand the real meaning of the "Imperial Constitution" and foresee the future of the state at that time? The modernization of Japan was just one way of controlling from the top downwards without attempting to awaken and improve the civic consciousness: in fact, the celebration describes this fact well.

Kyōiku Chokugo. Promulgated on 20th October 1890, it can be said that *Kyōiku Chokugo* was the end of the controversies associated with *Tokuiku Ronsō* and which was derived from *Kyōgaku Seishi* in 1879 and developed after it. Long and severe controversies occurred between Bureaucrats, centred on *Hirobumi Itō*, and the Conservatives (the Emperor's aides), centred on *Nagazane Motoda*. As a result, it led them to unity due to the question of moral education: which was in fact *Kyōiku Chokugo*. Under the guide of the Prime Minister *Aritomo Yamagata* (山県有朋, 1838-1922), *Kowashi Inoue* (井上毅, 1843-1895) and the Minister of Education *Akimasa Yoshikawa* (芳川顕正, 1841-1920), *Nagazane Motoda*, etc. it was drafted and promulgated in the form of the Emperor's bestowing it upon his subjects.

The content describes the ethic rules to be acquired as imperial subjects and it centred on loyalty and filial piety. In fact:

Know ye, Our subjects

Our Imperial Ancestors have founded Our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue. Our subjects ever united in loyalty and filial piety have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the glory of the fundamental character of Our Empire, and herein also lies the source of Our education. Ye, Our subjects, be filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters: as husbands and wives be harmonious, as friends true; bear yourselves in modesty and moderation; extend your benevolence to all; pursue learning and cultivate arts, and thereby develop intellectual faculties and perfect moral powers; furthermore advance public good and promote common interests; always respect the Constitution and observe the laws; should emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the State; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth. So shall ye not only be Our good and faithful subjects, but render illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers. The Way here set forth is indeed the teaching bequeathed by Our Imperial Ancestors, to be observed alike by Their Descendants and the subjects, infallible for all ages and true in all places. It is Our wish to lay it to heart in all reverence, in common with you, Our subjects, that we may all thus attain to the same virtue.

It can be said that *Kyōiku Chokugo* established a fixed form of an imperialistic and nationalistic education system, through which *Gakusei*, and *Tokuiku Ronsō* arose in 1875 and from which the nationalistic policy of *Arinori Mori* was successively influenced. Also, from the aspect of being bestowed on

the subjects as “Re-script” by the Emperor, it defined how moral education and its spirit must have been part of the context. After 1891, it was read in the occasion of events and national holidays at schools. Furthermore it was necessary to place the *Goshinei* (御真影, «Emperor’s picture») in all the schools. It was thought that through the conformity of the thought and training, loyal and obedient subjects to the imperial state would be developed.

Here, the two wars, the Sino-Japanese War in 1894 and the Russo-Japanese in 1904 occurred over the question of neutrality and supremacy in the Korean Peninsula, and the victory of Japan over the two countries cannot be ignored: the peninsula was like a blade in front of Japan and had to be kept there for the defence of the country. Because of the victory, Japan was able to abolish extraterritoriality in 1895 and recovered tariff autonomy in 1911. Furthermore, the inequality of the treaties was dealt with and this had been a long-standing wish of the country. It was actually an approval of Japan’s modernization, of *Fukoku Kyōhei* from the great western powers. Especially the victory against Russia, a great western power, re-enforced the subjects’ trust and loyalty of the Emperor. Afterwards the spirit of *Kyōiku Chokugo*, as an eternal one in the imperial state, came to penetrate the spirit of the imperial subjects in school education from generation to generation under the absolute relationship between Him (the Emperor) and them. (Incidentally, the military authorities in the 1930s and ‘40s ill-used the relationship and controlled the subjects by using the words, «supreme command» and «Emperor». They also planned the militarism of the state and trained young militarists during school education).

However, at the same time, the state became a state of imperialism and started to take on a colonial policy with respect to other Asian countries; it annexed Korea in 1910 and its subjects blindly followed and this fact cannot be ignored. Due to the imperialistic and military direction chosen by the state and the subjects, the country went into conflict with America and Great Britain, which had colonies in Asia, just half century later. It was beaten and as its result the state collapsed and the subjects had to undergo terrible torture.

Conclusion

Let me introduce a text to demonstrate the end of the imperialistic and nationalistic education, which was established by the state in the Meiji Period. It is a chapter by Hitoshi Oka (岡仁詩, 1929-2007) who was once also the manager of the Japanese national rugby team.

The day of the end of the War came to me on August 15th 1945. I was completely educated that Japan was a sacred country, while America and Great Britain were cruel. But those people who had always said this to me after August 15th started to say that in fact Japan was an invader under the imperialism, while those two countries were those of democracy and liberalism. I was 16 years old and very sensible. I was so shocked by this that I thought of suicide... Midget submarine strikes against the enemy's warship on the day of the Attack on Pearl Harbor... Kamikaze, combat plane struck against them, and the people who did this and died by attacking were worshiped as divinities of war...

I think I did not know the world when I reflect about that time. It seemed to be a condition of *Sakoku* of thoughts and ideologies: when I was commanded «turn right!» I had to turn right immediately under such a controlled condition. Also I had to «throw away my life» for the country and the Emperor. They were not only the words during War, but also before that... «to devote oneself»: to throw away one's personal desire and feelings and devote oneself to the Emperor, the state and the society without considering one's personal interest – that was a word taught to us junior high school students at that time, and I thought that the concept was a right way to live. Individuality was buried into an organization called “state”.

But I was told all of a sudden on August 15th «They all are lies, not true in fact»³⁸.

It was the result of the extremely severe War carried out desperately by all subjects under the words of «loyalty and patriotism». It is evident that the spirit of *Kyōiku Chokugo*, which affirmed imperial «loyalty and patriotism» was based on a kind of nationalism. It is a self-evident fact that because of the spirit, severe resistance was provoked against Japan in many Asian countries and amongst their people, and Japan itself and its own people were seriously wounded as well as them in the War: so many scars were left throughout Asia. Without the spirit and the thoughts which are sympathetic to and praised by all humankind, many conflicts and frictions are provoked and the welfare of mankind cannot be improved. It also can be applied to the fate of the German Empire, the example for the Japanese Imperial, and of Hitler's Germany based on state socialism. It is also evident by the fact that many ideologies and racism rose but eventually they disappeared in many places during the long history of humankind until today.

The achievement of Japan's modernization and energy in the 40 years from 1867 through a strong policy of “modernization from Top-down” which was derived from its backwardness in the Far East is surprising. However, as a result of the educational training and of the creation of obedient and loyal subjects to the imperial state, the consciousness of each Japanese individual did not improve and they did not move from being “subject” to

³⁸ 同志社大学キリスト教文化センター『偶像不羈なる書生を圧束せず, Center for Christian culture of Doshisha University, *Tekitō Fuki naru Shōsei wo assoku sezu* (Do not squash talented, independent students!), 2006, pp. 131-132.

“citizen” after all. Therefore the people did not resist the inclination of the State for imperialism, which emerged following the victory in the Russo-Japanese War, and the subsequent militarism in the 1930s and 40s. It can be said that the Japanese were blind and could not see things objectively, correctly and independently. The “modern times” in the country began to be a period of poverty and decline as time passed and as a result the state collapsed due to the War.

Education for the “public” or for “private”: which one is the ideal? It could be an eternal assignment in the field of educational. “Private” cannot be buried under the “public”, at the same time, however, the development of public welfare cannot be realised only with the insistence of the “individual” without taking “public interest” into account. “Public” and “private”, “wholeness” and “individual”, “other countries” and “own country”, etc.: both sides can be seen in all aspects. However, it is important to advance a “middle way” of retaining balance between both sides without inclining and holding to just one side. In order to train “world citizens”, it is important to promote education in order to cultivate the sense of “balance” within us all at every level; national and public, private, and also individual especially in these days when globalisation is rapidly advancing all over the world. This point can be the conclusion to guide us for the future with objective research, and the fact and history provoked by Japan.

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L'Italie et les Italiens vus par la littérature enfantine entre Second Empire et Troisième République

Mariella Colin

Clé des échanges entre les civilisations, le discours de l'Autre investit la pensée et l'écriture à l'aide de stéréotypes, qui servent à la fois de points d'ancrage et de repoussoir¹. Signes d'une communication univoque, ces figures de référence figent l'imaginaire collectif de la culture regardante; facteurs de consensus et d'acceptation du monde, ils fixent les grands traits des représentations identitaires; ils sont véhiculés par les voies qui façonnent les opinions et croisent les chemins de la création artistique et littéraire. Il est bien connu que l'affirmation des nationalités, particulièrement forte au XIX^e siècle, a également engendré en Europe les stéréotypes nationaux de l'identité et de l'altérité. Mais tout en s'inscrivant dans l'histoire longue des mentalités, de tels stéréotypes de l'Autre ont connu des cycles d'existence propre: ces formes, qui éclosent souvent au moment des heurts entre nations, parfois persistent au-delà des changements dans leurs relations.

Tel est le cas des stéréotypes de l'Italie et des Italiens en France. La longue série des représentations de l'altérité italienne dans l'hexagone est ponctuée par les événements majeurs qui ont marqué l'histoire des relations entre la France et l'Italie, tout comme entre les Français et les Italiens. Même si les permanences alternent avec les ruptures, il n'en est pas moins vrai qu'en France, plu-

¹ Sur le stéréotype, cf. R. Amossy, *Les idées reçues. Sémiologie du stéréotype*, Paris, Nathan, 1991; B. Marillaud, *Le stéréotype: usages, formes et stratégies, actes du XXI colloque d'Albi «Langage et significations»*, Toulouse-le-Miral, 2001.

sieurs stéréotypes de l'Italie et des Italiens se formèrent, comme nous allons le voir, pendant le Second Empire et la Troisième République; une période qui, dans la péninsule, correspond aux années (comprises entre l'Unité et la Première Guerre mondiale) pendant lesquelles s'est constitué, puis consolidé, le royaume d'Italie. Pour ce qui est des regards croisés entre la France et l'Italie, leur cristallisation s'est faite au moment où les relations entre les deux pays étaient presque toujours mauvaises, marquées par la défiance réciproque et ponctuées de crises aiguës, entrecoupées de brefs moments de détente. Le résultat, pour ce qui est des représentations des Italiens dans l'imaginaire français, fut celui d'une vision essentiellement dépréciative de la part de la culture regardante.

Pour en rendre compte, nous avons choisi d'examiner les livres pour les enfants, en raison du potentiel heuristique qu'ils offrent à l'histoire de l'imaginaire collectif. À mi-chemin entre la littérature, la pédagogie et l'idéologie, fonctionnant comme des miroirs grossissant, ils mettent en relief les représentations et les *topoi* d'une époque et d'une société donnée, et sont parmi les meilleurs révélateurs des images mentales. Ces clichés français de l'Italie et des Italiens, qui eurent une prégnance et une résonance à la mesure des conflits et des tensions qui opposaient alors les deux pays, furent par la suite accueillis et pérennisés auprès des nouvelles générations, grâce à la continuité des lectures enfantines. Ceci parce que le temps où se formèrent ces stéréotypes tenaces fut aussi celui de l'«âge d'or» de la littérature enfantine française, illustrée par des auteurs tels que la comtesse de Ségur, Hector Malot ou Jules Verne, dont les œuvres étaient promises à une longue postérité.

Parmi les livres de cette époque féconde que nous allons examiner, on trouve plusieurs grands classiques (comme *Sans Famille* ou *Mathias Sandorf*) tout comme des textes mineurs peu connus. Ce qui les rassemble, dans notre approche, ce n'est pas tant leur qualité artistique que les représentations de l'Italie et des Italiens que les uns et les autres ont contribué à véhiculer, tant par les personnages que par les situations ou les épisodes mis en scène dans leurs intrigues.

L'Italie et les Italiens vus par la comtesse de Ségur

Le premier des grands écrivains français pour l'enfance qui choisit l'Italie contemporaine comme décor de ses récits, et des Italiens comme personnages de ses livres, est la comtesse Sophie de Ségur². Son œuvre s'inscrit tout entière

² Sur la comtesse de Ségur, voir: L. Kreyder, *L'enfance des saints et des autres. Essai sur la comtesse de Ségur*, Fasano, Schena-Nizet, 1987 et F. Marcoin, *La comtesse de Ségur ou le bonheur immobile*, Artois Presse Université, 1999.

dans l'horizon idéologique et politique de la France de Napoléon III, qui, après avoir contribué au succès de la seconde guerre de l'indépendance italienne dans le but de faire de l'Italie un état satellite, voit ses plans mis en échec par l'irréversibilité du processus unitaire dans la péninsule; d'où un ressentiment qui s'enracinera de manière durable dans l'opinion publique française. Mais ce n'est pas tant à l'Italie nation traîtresse et ingrate envers les Français, qui, selon la formule en vogue à l'époque, s'est faite «avec le sang des autres», que la comtesse va s'en prendre; son Italie à elle, c'est le royaume usurpateur qui a spolié le souverain pontife de ses territoires, et qui ne cesse de le menacer. Le ressentiment anti-italien dont Sophie se fait le porte-parole auprès des jeunes lecteurs est celui de la Droite catholique française³, qui à partir de 1849 voit dans le nouvel empereur le défenseur du pouvoir temporel des papes. Ajoutons à cela que deux des fils de Sophie sont des catholiques militants: tout d'abord l'abbé Gaston de Ségur, devenu un ultramontain zélé après avoir été ordonné prêtre en 1847⁴, puis Anatole, écrivain polygraphe qui met sa plume au service du livre religieux⁵. Parmi les fréquentations de la famille de Ségur, on trouve Louis Veuillot, le directeur du journal ultramontain et légitimiste «L'Univers»⁶; il est devenu un familier et il fait partager à Sophie ses vues politiques conservatrices et son aversion pour tout ce qui pouvait menacer les droits de l'Église de Rome. Lors de l'unité italienne, la comtesse rallie immédiatement le camp des catholiques intransigeants; pour elle, Rome ne peut être que la ville vaticane et catholique, où elle a rejoint en 1852 son fils, prélat diplomate de la France auprès du Saint-Siège.

Le rejet viscéral que la comtesse éprouve pour l'Italie libérale va s'inscrire également dans ses fictions romanesques. Le premier signe de son antipathie pour les patriotes italiens se manifeste au détour d'une page de *Les Bons Enfants* (1862). Cet ouvrage n'a pas de véritable intrigue; il s'agit d'une série de petits épisodes dont sont protagonistes plusieurs «bons enfants» (des personnages derrière lesquels se cachent les véritables petits-enfants de la comtesse⁷). L'épisode du poisson d'avril (deux petits garçons déjouent un vilain tour)

³ Sur la droite catholique française pendant le Second Empire, voir: A. Dansette, *Histoire religieuse de la France contemporaine*, vol. II: *Deuxième République et Second Empire*, Paris, Fayard, 1942; J. Le Goff, R. Rémond, *Histoire de la France religieuse*, vol. II: *Du roi très catholique à la laïcité républicaine, XVII^e-XIX^e siècle*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 2001.

⁴ Nommé auditeur de Rote pour la France, Louis-Gaston de Ségur, prélat domestique du pape Pie IX, servit d'agent officieux du gouvernement français à Rome, où il consacra toute son influence à favoriser les ultramontains. Frappé de cécité, il fut contraint de rentrer en France où il fut nommé chanoine de Saint-Denis, doté de tous les privilèges attachés au caractère épiscopal mais sans être évêque. Il se consacra alors à la rédaction d'ouvrages édifiants et apologétiques comme son frère Anatole.

⁵ Sur le livre religieux français au XIX^e siècle, cf. Cl. Savart, *Le Catholicisme en France au XIX^e siècle: le témoignage du livre religieux*, Paris, Beauchesne, 1985.

⁶ Sur Louis Veuillot et «L'Univers», cf. P. Thureau-Dangin, *L'Église et l'État sous la Monarchie de Juillet*, Paris, Plon, 1880.

⁷ Ce qu'elle explique elle-même dans la dédicace de l'ouvrage.

est suivi par l'épisode du mouton noir (Léonce, Arthur et leur sœur Sophie teignent en noir leur mouton jouet), puis par un autre où Léonce, voulant faire la toilette du chien d'Arthur, manque de lui brûler le poil. À la fin de ce dernier épisode, Léonce devient le protecteur d'Arthur, et tous les deux se battent contre un groupe rival de garçons commandés par le méchant Justin. Dans la description de ces petites bagarres dans les jardins des Tuileries, s'insère inopinément une note italophobe :

Justin, furieux, alla se proposer à un autre cercle, composé de tous les querelleurs, batailleurs, vauriens, chassés des autres jeux. Celui dans lequel se trouvaient Léonce et Arthur prit le nom de cercle des *Vrais Français*, et celui de Justin fut connu sous celui de *Bersaglieri*. Jamais ils ne se mêlaient dans leurs jeux. Il arriva quelquefois que les *Bersaglieri* cherchèrent à provoquer les *Vrais Français* par des injures et des mottes de terre lancées dans les deux groupes. Mais les *Vrais Français* dédaignaient ces insultes, faisaient les cornes à leurs ennemis et continuaient leurs jeux, protégés par les gardiens des Tuileries, qui les reconnaissaient à leur docilité et à leur politesse⁸.

L'année de parution des *Bons Enfants* coïncide avec celle de la première tentative de Garibaldi de se rendre à Rome avec ses volontaires (1862); cependant le rapport direct avec l'épisode d'Aspromonte n'est pas assuré, et la parution de l'ouvrage a très bien pu le précéder (l'expédition eut lieu au mois d'août). De toute évidence, les *Bersaglieri* ne peuvent pas être confondus avec des Garibaldiens, car ce sont des troupes de l'armée régulière; c'est sans doute aux soldats piémontais qui occupèrent les provinces papales en 1859 que la comtesse fait allusion ici. Cette hypothèse est rendue encore plus plausible par le fait que, dans son cercle le plus proche, Anatole de Ségur avait prononcé en 1860 un discours solennel (intitulé *Les martyrs de Castelfidardo*) en l'honneur des troupes pontificales commandées par le général Lamoricière, mises en déroute par l'armée piémontaise de Cialdini⁹. On ignore si les petits lecteurs de la «Bibliothèque rose illustrée» de Hachette pouvaient comprendre ce terme, en identifiant dans les *Bersaglieri* les soldats de l'armée qui avaient occupé les provinces du souverain pontife; mais cela devait sans doute être le cas pour les petits-enfants de la famille Ségur. Mais passons; quoi qu'il en soit de la compréhension exacte de ce mot italien, les individus «querelleurs, batailleurs, vauriens» désignés par ce terme, seront immédiatement associés par le jugement du lecteur à une représentation fortement négative.

Le lien avec l'action de Garibaldi est en revanche bien établi dans un autre livre, où la passion italophobe de la comtesse se révèle dans toute son ampleur, en investissant l'intrigue et les personnages principaux: *Après la pluie, le beau temps*. L'ouvrage, publié par Hachette en 1871, a été écrit avant cette date; la narration est contemporaine de la deuxième tentative garibaldienne d'occuper

⁸ Nous citons d'après l'édition suivante: *Les Bons Enfants*, Paris, Gallimard «Folio Junior», 1981, p. 56.

⁹ Le texte de *Les Martyrs de Castelfidardo* fut publié à Lille chez Lefort en 1869.

Rome, car l'action romanesque est censée se passer pendant l'année 1866-1867. L'intrigue est construite autour d'une héroïne: Geneviève Dormère, jeune fille orpheline, victime de son cousin Georges et de son père, qui ne cherchent qu'à capter son héritage. Mais Geneviève, qui est amoureuse de son cousin Jacques depuis son enfance, résiste à leurs manœuvres avec l'aide de la cousine Primerose, et finit par trouver le bonheur dans les bras de Jacques. Le récit s'achemine vers le *happy end* – l'union heureuse entre les deux jeunes gens qui triomphent sur les méchants – lorsque Jacques, apprenant que le Saint-Siège est plus que jamais menacé par «les hordes révolutionnaires italiennes»¹⁰, décide de s'enrôler parmi les soldats du pape¹¹. Il déclare donc à sa fiancée:

Le Saint-Père Pie IX appelle les chrétiens catholiques pour défendre le siège de la foi; je me suis engagé dans les zouaves pontificaux, et je dois partir dans quinze jours ou un mois¹².

Le mariage est quand même célébré, puis le jeune couple part pour Rome pour que Jacques puisse tenir ses engagements. Il reçoit la bénédiction du Saint-Père avant de s'engager parmi les zouaves et d'affronter le conflit décisif qui s'annonce, «entre les hordes révolutionnaires italiennes et les troupes du pape, peu nombreuses, mais animées d'une foi ardente et d'un amour profond»¹³. L'auteur ne cache pas un certain enthousiasme belliqueux pour cette campagne qui s'annonce «magnifique et meurtrière», ni sa satisfaction pour «la déroute complète des ennemis de Dieu»¹⁴ qui en marquera l'issue. Les zouaves triomphent et se couvrent de gloire face aux forces ennemies qui, au dire de la comtesse, auraient été cinq fois supérieures:

Chacun sait la glorieuse histoire de cette courte campagne, qui se termina par les deux magnifiques et meurtriers combats de Mentana et Monterotondo. Pendant trois jours, quatre mille hommes, qui composaient l'armée pontificale, luttèrent sans repos *contre quinze à vingt mille révolutionnaires bien armés, bien repus et commandés par des officiers italiens*.

La victoire des pontificaux fut complète, grâce à la courageuse intervention de nos braves soldats français, heureusement arrivés et débarqués à temps pour compléter *la déroute honteuse des misérables bandits*¹⁵.

¹⁰ Mme la comtesse de Ségur, *Après la pluie, le beau temps*, (1871), Paris, Hachette, «Bibliothèque rose illustrée», p. 360.

¹¹ L'idée lui a été probablement donnée par un article de Louis Veuillot dans *L'Univers*, célébrant le courage d'un jeune français, Arthur Guillemon, volontaire pontifical en 1859 (cf. F. Marcoin, cit., p. 280).

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 300. C'est nous qui soulignons.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 360.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 367.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 362 (c'est nous qui soulignons). De fait, la victoire sur les garibaldiens fut remportée par le corps d'expédition français fraîchement débarqué à Civitavecchia pour venir en aide au souverain pontife et armé des fusils Chassepot.

Le discours de l'auteur-narrateur, manifestement emporté par un enthousiasme partisan, falsifie avec emphase la vérité historique. Dans cette version partisane des combats de 1867, tant Monterotondo que Mentana auraient été des victoires pontificales et françaises, alors que Monterotondo fut une victoire garibaldienne; dans le camp des adversaires des forces pontificales, les officiers de l'armée italienne et les volontaires garibaldiens se seraient battus côte à côte. Manifestement la comtesse ne s'embarrasse pas de distinctions, car son intention est avant tout d'exalter les défenseurs français de la papauté face aux Italiens – toutes tendances confondues – dans lesquels elle voit les ennemis de l'Église catholique. Une telle violence verbale de la part d'un auteur appartenant à la fraction la plus conservatrice de la société française n'a pas de quoi surprendre; on peut même supposer que Mme de Ségur aurait sans doute manifesté en 1870 encore plus fortement son hostilité contre l'Italie (lorsque fut saisie l'occasion de la défaite française à Sedan pour s'emparer de Rome) et contre les Italiens (qui s'installèrent dans la ville vaticane en obligeant le pape à se déclarer leur «prisonnier») si l'attaque cérébrale qui la frappa en 1869 n'avait pas mis fin à son activité littéraire¹⁶.

Mais la contribution de la comtesse à la création des stéréotypes italiens ne s'arrête pas là: après avoir fait œuvre de pionnière, en donnant les premières formes romanesques au cliché de l'«Italien ennemi de la France catholique», elle sera également la première à représenter une autre figure de l'Italien-type vu par les Français: celle de l'Italien immigré, individu de nationalité étrangère marqué par son infériorité sociale et culturelle. Même si l'émigration italienne en France n'est pas encore un phénomène de masse, la population migrante en provenance de la péninsule correspond au flux traditionnel de domestiques, nourrices, ouvriers agricoles, auxquels viennent s'ajouter les manœuvres employés dans les chantiers de travaux publics de Napoléon III, mais aussi les marginaux qui hantent les grandes villes, comme les saltimbanques, les mendiants et les voleurs.

C'est dans *François le bossu* (1864) qu'elle le met en scène sous les traits de Paolo Perroni, domestique de Monsieur de Nancé et maître d'italien et de musique de ses enfants. Par ce personnage, le stéréotype de l'Italien immigré recouvre dans les pages du roman ségurien bon nombre de poncifs, qui seront ensuite repris dans maintes fictions romanesques. Paolo Perroni est un jeune homme qui se dit médecin, et qui s'est réfugié en France après avoir échappé aux soldats de Radetski en 1848. Son paradigme physique et social fait de cet Italien exilé, venu chercher en France un asile et un travail, un immigré dont il porte les stigmates: ses moeurs rustres et violentes l'obligent à recevoir des leçons de civilité de la part de ses maîtres français¹⁷, tandis que son langage,

¹⁶ Elle décéda en 1874.

¹⁷ Paolo est en effet enclin à la vengeance. Lorsqu'il déclare au petit François qu'il faut administrer des leçons à ses ennemis parce que «c'est bon, vengeance», ce dernier lui répond que Jésus

rebelle aux tournures et aux sons de la langue de Racine, le désigne immédiatement comme culturellement inférieur et en fait un personnage ridicule. Les illustrations du volume dans l'édition Hachette contribuent à accentuer ces traits: il est représenté comme un individu perpétuellement surexcité, les yeux écarquillés, les cheveux ébouriffés et la moustache frémissante. Mme de Cémiane le décrit à ses amis comme «un demi-médecin italien, fort original, qui va vous amuser»¹⁸. Quand il se présente pour demander à être engagé, son discours, marqué par un fort accent italien (que la comtesse orthographie phonétiquement pour amuser les lecteurs), le rend irrésistiblement comique:

Signorina, bella, bellissima, moi, Paolo, désire vous voir tous les zours avec vos beaux ceveux noir de corbeau, votre peau blanc de lait, vos bras superbe et votre esprit magnifique; et zé demande, Signora, que zé vienne tous les zours; zé donnerai des leçons à la petite Signorina; zé serai votre serviteur dévoué, zé déjeunerai, pouis zé recommencerai les leçons, pouis les promenades avec vous, pouis vos commissions, et tout¹⁹.

Entré au service de Monsieur de Nancé, Paolo, «dévoué, affectionné comme un chien fidèle»²⁰, devient l'homme à tout faire de la maison: domestique, précepteur, ouvrier, menuisier, compagnon de jeu des enfants. Cependant son statut d'immigré ne s'arrête pas à son infériorité culturelle et à son incompétence linguistique, car il sait se montrer généreux et bon envers les enfants. Lorsque Mme des Ormes humilie le pauvre François – qui est bossu à cause d'une chute dans sa petite enfance – en le traitant de «petit Esope», Paolo ne craint pas d'annoncer qu'un jour, grâce à son art, François «sera aussi grand, aussi belle que son respectable signor padre»²¹. Il tiendra parole. Mi-médecin et mi-sorcier, Paolo Perroni délivre François de sa bosse grâce à un système mécanique de son invention, qui redresse miraculeusement le garçon. Puis, lorsque la guérison est avérée, Paolo, comme tous les émigrés, déclare sa nostalgie de sa patrie italienne, vers laquelle il est attiré irrésistiblement:

Zé m'ennuie de la patrie! Il faut que je revoie la patrie! O patria bella! O Italia! Signor mio, laissez-moi aller jeter un coup d'oeil sur la patrie, seulement oune petite quinzaine!²²

Pour que la fin de l'histoire soit tout à fait heureuse, Paolo reviendra néanmoins en France avec Elena, sa jeune épouse, s'installera dans la maison des de

nous a appris à pardonner; et lorsque la méchante Mina le traite de «grand Italien, pique-assiette», il se rend chez M. des Ormes pour demander: – Monsieur le comte [...], si vous permettez, zé pounirai la dona Furiosa à ma façon; zé la foustizerai comme un cien. Ce à quoi M. des Ormes répond: – Merci, Monsieur Paolo; cette punition ne convient pas en France» (Nous citons d'après l'édition suivante: *François le bossu*, Paris, Hachette, «Bibliothèque rose illustrée», 1893, p. 86 puis p. 100).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 364.

Nancé et fondera une nouvelle famille prolifique. Comme toute bonne *mamma* italienne, Elena mettra au monde sept enfants, trois filles et quatre garçons!

Les représentations des Italiens ennemis esquissées par Sophie Rostopchine – l'Italie vue comme l'ennemie politique de la France catholique, l'Italien vu comme un immigré au naturel attachant, mais inférieur et marginal – seront ensuite reprise et développées, en étroite correspondance avec l'évolution des relations entre les deux pays. C'est que nous allons constater chez les écrivains pour les enfants de la Troisième République.

Entre Second Empire et Troisième République: Hector Malot

C'est le stéréotype de l'Italie immigré qui est adopté par Hector Malot dans *Sans famille*. La rédaction de son célèbre roman, dont la diffusion sera mondiale, se situe chronologiquement entre la fin du Second Empire et les débuts de la Troisième République. Malot écrit dans ses mémoires qu'immédiatement après le succès de *Romain Kalbris* (1869), l'éditeur Pierre-Jules Hetzel²³ lui demanda un autre roman du même genre pour son «Magasin d'éducation»; ce qu'il fit, en le rédigeant rapidement. Mais lorsqu'il lit son manuscrit à Hetzel, celui-ci, qui était hostile à tout ce qui pouvait évoquer la «question sociale», refusa de le publier parce qu'il jugea excessif le réalisme des scènes «des enfants fouettés chez le padrone de la rue de Lourcine»²⁴. Le roman fut enfin publié en 1878 chez Dentu, avant d'être repris par Hetzel²⁵.

Dans cet épisode, Vitalis, après avoir annoncé à Rémi qu'il va être loué pendant l'hiver à un *padrone* qui l'enrôlera pour jouer de la harpe, l'emmène chez le *signor* Garofoli. Les scènes incriminées se trouvent dans le chapitre XVII, justement intitulé «Un *padrone* de la rue de Lourcine», où sont décrites sans fard les misérables conditions des enfants immigrés, exploités par un négrier italien; ces garçons venus d'Italie arrivent en groupe, et, après un premier tri, on sépare les plus robustes, destinés à être engagés par des fumistes ou des maîtres ramoneurs, des plus jeunes et chétifs. Le lecteur entre avec Rémi dans un quartier des bas-fonds parisiens, où des eaux puantes croupissent au bas de maisons lépreuses, jusqu'à une cour sombre et étroite. C'est là que Garofoli règne en maître absolu sur vingt enfants affamés, qu'il oblige à mendier et à voler; ceux-ci doivent rapporter tous les jours une somme fixée par le patron, sous peine de recevoir en punition des coups de fouet. De fait, l'arrivée de

²³ Sur P.-J. Hetzel, voir: A. Parménie, C. Bonnier de la Chapelle, *Histoire d'un éditeur et de ses auteurs*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1985 et J.-P. Gourevitch, *Hetzel: le bon génie des livres*, Monaco, Le Serpent à plumes, 2005.

²⁴ H. Malot, *Le Roman de mes romans*, Paris, Flammarion, 1896, p. 128.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

Garofoli et des enfants est suivie du rituel journalier de la remise des sous au *padrone*, tandis que le fouet tombe sur ceux qui n'ont pas réuni l'argent requis.

Si Malot s'est vraisemblablement inspiré pour cet épisode des situations analogues qu'on trouve dans *Oliver Twist* (1839) de Charles Dickens, il n'en reste pas moins qu'il met en scène un phénomène social bien connu des Français du Second Empire, et notamment des Parisiens: la mendicité des petits Italiens, musiciens ambulants et vagabonds, qui affluaient en groupe dans la capitale à la solde d'un marchand d'enfants. Plusieurs arrêtés préfectoraux ordonnaient des mesures sévères contre ce marché sordide, par lequel un négrier italien prenait à bail, dans le pays d'origine, des enfants que leurs parents lui louaient à l'année; la presse française dénonçait ce fléau, en décrivant l'exploitation inhumaine dont ils étaient victimes, et demandait qu'on mette fin au scandale²⁶.

Le tableau des conditions misérables des enfants italiens de la rue Lourcine offert par ce chapitre de *Sans famille* est dramatique. Ce *padrone* italien tranche vivement avec la figure toute romantique de Vitalis, dont le statut de saltimbanque correspond également aux métiers vagabonds de l'immigration traditionnelle italienne, celle des métiers de la rue, que les Français de l'époque d'Hector Malot connaissaient bien. Vitalis, qui a acheté pour quarante francs les services de Rémi à son père adoptif Barberin, est aussi un loueur italien d'enfants; cependant sa véritable identité restera longtemps un secret. C'est seulement lorsqu'il sortira de scène que le lecteur apprendra, en même temps que Rémi, que sous le nom d'emprunt de *Vitalis* – ô combien significatif pour l'éducation à la vie de Rémi – se cachait le chanteur d'opéra Carlo Balzani. Ce sera Garofoli en personne qui, rendu maître du secret de Vitalis par un hasard, dira alors à Rémi que Carlo Balzani avait été «le chanteur le plus fameux de toute l'Italie»²⁷. Après avoir vu sa voix s'affaiblir, celui-ci avait préféré choisir l'anonymat de l'émigré musicien nomade plutôt que de voir sa gloire ternie dans son pays. Avant sa mort, même si les preuves de ses origines nationales, semées au fil des pages, sont nombreuses – Vitalis est entouré de chiens savants aux noms italiens (Capi, ou autrement dit Capitano, Zerbino et Dolce), habille Rémi en petit Italien, lui apprend des chansons napolitaines – la nationalité de Vitalis n'est jamais mentionnée de façon explicite, ni lors de son apparition dans la narration, ni dans la suite des épisodes où il figure en tant que personnage.

Le paradigme de ce personnage est éminemment positif: même s'il est bizarrement accoutré, il apparaît entouré d'un halo de majesté au narrateur, qui

²⁶ C'est notamment un article de Maxime Du Camp, *La mendicité à Paris-Saint-Denis et Villers-Cotterets*, paru dans la «Revue des Deux Mondes» du 1^{er} mai 1870, qui relatait avec beaucoup de détails la condition des enfants italiens mendiants dans les rues de Paris. Pour plus d'information, cf. M. Colin, *L'émigration des enfants italiens en France aux XIXe et XXe siècles, entre la littérature et l'histoire*, in *Gli italiani all'estero* n° 3 bis, *Autres passages*, Publications de Paris III-La Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1990, p. 17-33.

²⁷ Nous citons d'après l'édition suivante: H. Malot, *Sans famille*, Paris, 1979, Editions G.P., p. 211.

déclare dans ses mémoires: «Jamais je n'avais vu une personne vivante dans une attitude si calme; il ressemblait à l'un des saints en bois de notre église»²⁸. Vitalis, que Rémi admire et qui lui semble «magnifique de noblesse»²⁹, contraste fort avec la cruauté des véritables patrons d'enfants *girovaghi*, tel Garofoli. Pour qu'il n'y ait pas de malentendu possible, le narrateur avertit dès le début les lecteurs, en soulignant que Vitalis «par une exception chez les acheteurs d'enfants, ce n'était pas un méchant homme»³⁰: une exception à la règle dont les raisons seront connues lorsqu'on apprendra que son émigration est due à des circonstances personnelles, liées à un destin peu commun. Tout comme Paolo pour François le bossu, Vitalis servira à Rémi de maître d'expériences et de maître d'études; mais à la différence du premier, il ne sera pas associé dès le début à une représentation de l'Italien immigré, d'autant plus qu'il s'exprime dans une langue française irréprochable, et qu'il apprend à Rémi à lire et à écrire le français, puis les langues étrangères (l'anglais et l'italien). Aussi la charge d'éduquer le protagoniste est-elle dévolue à un personnage vu comme un individu d'exception plutôt que comme un Italien, sous le guide duquel Rémi parcourra les routes de France et sera initié à la vraie vie.

L'Italie et les Italiens vus par les écrivains pour la jeunesse de la Troisième République

Nous avons vu comment la prise de Rome suscita l'antipathie déclarée des catholiques conservateurs français, qui, à l'instar de la comtesse de Ségur, ne cessèrent de plaindre le malheureux Pontife et de fulminer l'anathème contre l'Italie sacrilège. Cependant les nouvelles forces politiques laïques qui dirigeaient la Troisième République ne se prirent pas davantage de sympathie pour le nouvel État libéral. Les rapports entre Rome et Paris allèrent même jusqu'à l'hostilité déclarée lorsque l'Italie, après l'occupation de Tunis par la France en 1881, stipula la Triple alliance avec l'Allemagne et l'Autriche-Hongrie. Les heurts et la polémique qui s'ensuivirent devaient durer quelque quinze ans³¹, et donner lieu dans les débats et dans la presse française à des critiques violentes contre les Italiens. De plus, cela se produisit au moment où les Français voyaient arriver sur leur sol la première vague d'immigration de masse des ressortissants les plus pauvres d'une nation qu'ils haïssaient.

Le roman d'Hector Malot associe, comme nous venons de le voir, deux

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

³¹ Cf. à ce propos A. Billot, *La France et l'Italie. Histoire des années troubles (1881-1899)*, Paris, Plon, 1905; P. Milza, *Français et Italiens à la fin du XIX^e siècle*, Paris-Rome, École Française de Rome, 1981.

représentations opposées, l'une réaliste et négative, l'autre romantique et positive, du même stéréotype: l'Italien immigré, figure de l'altérité ennemie que les Français peuvent côtoyer chez eux, sans se rendre dans le pays voisin. Dans les années successives, les représentations littéraires de l'Italie et des Italiens qui seront données par les autres écrivains de jeunesse de la Troisième République, resteront fidèles au stéréotype de l'Italien ennemi, mais lui donneront une nouvelle forme: cet Italien ennemi des Français est le plus souvent d'origine sicilienne. Ce nouveau cliché peut être interprété comme le reflet des relations tendues, sinon franchement hostiles, que la France républicaine de Jules Ferry entretient avec l'Italie, où le leader de la Gauche historique au gouvernement est le sicilien Francesco Crispi.

On est d'abord frappé par le fait qu'après 1880, les fictions romanesques proposées à la jeunesse française délaissent Florence, Rome ou Venise, pour faire de la Sicile leur lieu d'élection; mais loin d'être une terre de charme et de délices, l'île est désignée comme un repaire de brigands et de criminels. C'est Jules Verne qui inaugure ce stéréotype, lorsqu'il publie en 1885 *Mathias Sandorf*. Dans cet ouvrage le patriotisme n'est pas français mais hongrois, et la scène des aventures se déplace en Méditerranée, de Trieste en Dalmatie, puis à Malte et en Corse; le héros, Mathias Sandorf, prépare une insurrection en Hongrie qui est découverte par ses ennemis. Le périple du patriote hongrois finit par le conduire en Sicile, où il doit affronter les bandits de Zirone; bandit et homme de main, c'est «l'un de ces hommes sans foi ni loi, aventurier à toutes mains, à la disposition du premier qui le paiera bien ou du second qui le paiera mieux pour n'importe quelle besogne»³². Cela donne à Jules Verne l'opportunité de faire quelques commentaires très négatifs, tant sur la région, «un pays singulièrement favorable aux exploits du brigandage, même à l'époque actuelle, que cette Sicile!»³³, que sur la mafia, à laquelle est affilié Zirone, dont par ailleurs Jules Verne n'a qu'une idée très vague. Verne y affirme que le brigandage est une conséquence du déclin de la mafia, ce qui aurait conduit la plupart de ses membres «à aller demander au brigandage un plus lucratif moyen d'existence»³⁴; raison pour laquelle il rappelle aux lecteurs français qu'«il est bon que les voyageurs ne s'aventurent pas sans précautions dans ce pays»³⁵. Toutefois l'auteur, qui avait déjà censuré d'autres jugements critiques contre les Siciliens à la demande de son éditeur Hetzel³⁶, nuance par la suite son propos, en affir-

³² Nous citons d'après l'édition suivante: J. Verne, *Mathias Sandorf*, Paris, Hachette, 1967, p. 6.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

³⁶ Sur le désir de son éditeur, Jules Verne avait retouché *Mathias Sandorf*; certains détails auraient pu froisser des lecteurs italiens. Le romancier obéit: «Soyez sans inquiétude. Je refais un Sandorf voulant la justice, non la vengeance» (cf. A. Parménie et C. Bonnier de La Chapelle, *Histoire d'un éditeur et de ses auteurs*, P.J. Hetzel (*Stahel*), Paris, Albin Michel, 1953, p. 645). Sur la vision politique internationale de Jules Verne, cf. J. Chesnaux, *Jules Verne, un regard sur le monde: nouvelles lectures politiques*, Paris, Bayard, 2001.

mant que la nouvelle administration italienne, en donnant des lois nouvelles au pays, a amoindri la puissance mafieuse, et que la gendarmerie a détruit la majorité de ses bandes.

On retrouve une situation et un ton analogues dans un roman d'aventures de Paul d'Ivoi, *Les Cinq Sous de Lavarède* (1895). Paul d'Ivoi est le nom de plume de Paul Charles Éric Deleutre, feuilletoniste et grand reporter au «*Matin*» et au «*Journal des Voyages*». Son expérience de globe-trotter lui inspire ce premier livre, qui le rendra célèbre³⁷. Dans ce roman plaisant est raconté le tour du monde qu'un journaliste impécunieux, Armand Lavarède, doit accomplir avec seulement cinq sous en poche pour pouvoir toucher l'héritage que lui a légué son cousin. Non seulement il réussira cet exploit, mais il trouvera le temps de lutter, chemin faisant, contre les oppresseurs du monde entier: Boxers, Tibétains et Maffiosi siciliens. En compagnie d'un groupe d'Anglais, il arrive en Sicile et débarque à Messine, là où les habitants sont toujours prêts à monter de mauvais coups contre les voyageurs étrangers. Le chapitre XXVIII (intitulé *La maffia*) commence par différencier les «deux associations de brigandage de l'Italie» que sont *la Camorra* et *la Maffia*, pour mettre ensuite l'accent sur les dangers que présente la Sicile pour tous les nouveaux arrivants dans le pays:

– *La Maffia*, reprit [le signor Giovanni], ce n'est pas une association, c'est un peuple, c'est la Sicile tout entière et rien que la Sicile. Tous en ce pays nous sommes, non affiliés, mais complices de la *Maffia*³⁸.

Lavarède et ses amis ne tardent pas à en faire l'expérience: la jolie Aurret est kidnappée par une bande mafieuse qui exige une forte rançon pour sa liberté. Le groupe des voyageurs demande l'aide de la population pour retrouver les criminels, mais en vain; on leur explique que «la lâcheté et le mauvais vouloir des Siciliens» empêchent de retrouver les coupables, car lors de l'enquête, il s'avère que «le témoin est Maffioso, celui qui ne sait rien est encore Maffioso, et la victime, elle-même, par crainte des vengeances futures, devient muette»³⁹. La loi de l'*omertà* unissant tous les Siciliens dans le même silence, seuls les *cara-binieri* venus de Nord de l'Italie peuvent faire la guerre aux bandits. Les gendarmes italiens cherchent à découvrir leur repaire, mais c'est le groupe des Français qui y parviendra: grâce au courage des amis de Lavarède, qui n'hésitent pas à aller les affronter, «boxant en Anglais et cognant en Bretons», tout se termine bien pour la jeune Anglaise, qui sera libérée de ses ravisseurs et rendue à son père.

³⁷ Il en écrira par la suite encore dix-huit, dans la série des «Voyages excentriques» de l'éditeur Combet, par référence aux «Voyages extraordinaires» d'Hetzl. Son style le rapproche davantage de Louis Bousсенard que de Jules Verne.

³⁸ P. d'Ivoi (*alias* Paul Deleutre), *Les Cinq Sous de Lavarède*, Paris, Combet, 1895, p. 396.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 409.

Les jugements critiques de Paul d'Ivoi, ainsi que cette mise en intrigue de la mafia, sont des représentations certes négatives de l'italianité, mais elles sont loin d'atteindre la violence des attaques contre la Sicile et les Siciliens qu'on trouve dans un autre livre pour la jeunesse de la même époque: *Excursions en Sicile* de Pierre Frede, publié en 1888 chez Delagrave. On y décrit la Sicile, que découvre une famille française qui s'y rend en visite. Si les monuments et les paysages de l'île font l'objet de l'admiration du narrateur, la population sicilienne en revanche, accablée de défauts, est la cible de tous ses sarcasmes. À Palerme, où les voyageurs débarquent, l'aristocratie et le peuple sont des gens «vivant dans une indolence de créoles»⁴⁰; la noblesse ne se soucie que de ses titres, tandis la populace, au lieu de travailler, se tourne vers sainte Rosalie et sainte Agathe, pour leur demander le bonheur à peu de frais. Leurs croyances religieuses les mènent à une attitude fataliste, qui les prive de toute initiative: «tous sont insouciant du lendemain [...] ils se laissent aller comme il plaît au ciel et à la madone»⁴¹. Cette indolence et ce fatalisme néanmoins contrastent fortement avec le portrait charge du Sicilien-type, brossé par l'auteur, d'après lequel «le Sicilien est violent et brutal comme un volcan»⁴²:

Ils sont tous ainsi, les Siciliens. Ils passent bêtement leur colère sur une chose inanimée qui ne peut rien pour calmer leur fureur, et comme si ce quelque chose était sensible à leur rage et pouvait leur répondre⁴³.

Ces défauts ne sont pas que siciliens, car d'après Pierre Frede, ils sont communs à tous les Italiens: d'une part, parce que «les peuples de l'Italie sont généralement d'une étonnante fainéantise»⁴⁴, de l'autre, parce que «les Italiens et les Siciliens, apparentés avec les Grecs, ont le même défaut national: la hâblerie de l'orgueil»⁴⁵. Le sommet de l'italophobie est atteint lorsqu'il s'agit de confrontation directe entre les Siciliens et les Français; Frede trouve ses accents les plus violents lorsqu'il évoque l'épisode des Vêpres siciliennes, «épouvantable massacre», «affreuse boucherie de gens inoffensifs», qui, d'après lui, fut provoquée «par l'exaspération brutale d'un peuple fanatique fatalement porté à tous les excès»⁴⁶. L'épisode ancien des Vêpres est ensuite associé à un épisode plus récent, celui d'une autre «scène cannibalesque», démontrant la cruauté du même peuple: le naufrage en 1800 entre Messine et Syracuse d'un navire français, chargé de blessés et de malades, qui au lieu d'être secourus «sont massacrés lâchement par les Siciliens»⁴⁷.

⁴⁰ P. Frede, *Excursions en Sicile*, Paris, Delagrave, 1888, p. 12.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

Pour quelles raisons les représentations négatives de la Sicile et des Siciliens se sont-elles figées en stéréotype dans les années 1880? À notre avis, l'explication politique reste déterminante dans cette période; n'oublions pas que la tension entre les deux pays atteint son point culminant en 1887, lorsque le *misogallo* Francesco Crispi renouvella la Triple Alliance et provoqua la guerre douanière avec la France. Avoir oublié tous les bienfaits reçus de la France pour s'allier à l'oppresseur de l'Alsace-Lorraine, voilà ce que les dirigeants radicaux de la Troisième République ne peuvent pardonner à leur sœur latine, qu'ils accusent à leur tour de félonie. Que Crispi fût sicilien, aucun intellectuel français ne pouvait l'ignorer, à une époque où la population française elle-même, nourrissant une haine profonde envers le président du conseil italien, appelait les travailleurs immigrés originaires de la péninsule «les Crispi». La haine de la France pour l'Italie ingrate, alliée du pire ennemi de la Nation après avoir profité de la défaite de Sedan pour achever son unité territoriale, se déchaîne dans le stéréotype du Sicilien criminel et féroce, derrière lequel se cache le chef sicilien de son gouvernement.

Un autre livre pour la jeunesse, publié en 1887, achève de nous en convaincre. Il s'agit du volume consacré à l'Italie dans la série des *Scènes de la vie de collège dans tous les pays* qu'éditait alors Hetzel. Sous le titre de *Tito le Florentin*, André Laurie (nom de plume de Pascal Grousset) brosse une description de la vie scolaire dans la péninsule qui sert de prétexte à un véritable pamphlet dirigé contre la politique internationale de Rome. Après quelques généralités sur l'école secondaire en Italie, l'intrigue commence à se construire; toutefois elle n'est pas centrée autour du héros éponyme, le jeune Tito, mais bien au contraire autour de son professeur de français, M. Randal. Celui-ci est haï par deux de ses collègues, l'un Italien et l'autre Allemand, très hostiles à la France: Pompei et Bollman. Le *signor* Pompei, tout épris des mythes de la romanité, explique à ses élèves que les Vêpres Siciliennes furent «le jour le plus glorieux de l'histoire nationale»⁴⁸, tandis que le professeur Bollman – un agent secret allemand qui fait de la propagande pour son pays – veut les convaincre que le Français est pour eux «l'ennemi, l'être qui fut à toute époque le plus odieux aux cœurs italiens»⁴⁹. Avec la complicité de Furbone, le directeur d'un journal italien germanophile, Pompei et Bollman orchestrent une campagne de diffamation contre M. Randal, qui finit par se trouver accusé du vol d'un précieux manuscrit et écroué. Mais Ercole Salviati, le père de Tito, n'a pas oublié que «la France est la nation qui a versé son sang à Magenta, à Solférino et dans cent combats pour rendre possible à l'Italie de faire son unité»⁵⁰, et il est prêt à s'engager personnellement pour innocenter Randal. Le jour du procès s'ouvre

⁴⁸ A. Laurie (alias Pascal Grousset), *Scènes de la vie de collège dans tous les pays: Tito le Florentin*, Paris, Hetzel, 1887, p. 81.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

par un coup de théâtre: devant les magistrats, le petit Tito et sa famille apportent les preuves qui innocentent Randal et chargent Bollmann. Ce n'est pas tout, car le père de Tito le Florentin prend la parole pour faire une étonnante révélation au public du tribunal:

Savez-vous qui est M. Randal?... C'est un ancien soldat de nos guerres d'indépendance, un volontaire et un officier de Garibaldi, un brave, un héros... Pour tout vous dire en un mot, c'est ce fameux capitaine Georges qui, avec tant d'autres Français, était venu librement, spontanément, mettre son épée au service de l'Italie et verser son sang pour elle... ⁵¹

Le personnage de Randal créé par Laurie n'est rien d'autre qu'une personification de l'aide militaire que les Français ont apportée aux Italiens, lorsqu'ils n'ont pas hésité à risquer leur vie pour la liberté de la nation voisine. Le père de Tito prononce enfin un ardent plaidoyer en faveur du rapprochement des deux nations latines, et rappelle à nouveau que l'Italie doit sa liberté aux sacrifices généreux des Français⁵², alors que les Allemands ont toujours été ses ennemis naturels.

Au début du ^{xx}^e siècle, les relations entre Paris et Rome, qui s'éloigna progressivement des Empires centraux, s'améliorent. Les stéréotypes négatifs nés au siècle précédent toutefois ne disparaissent pas immédiatement, mais continuent d'apparaître dans quelques livres, de plus en plus rares et médiocres, des premières décennies du siècle suivant. C'est ainsi que le stéréotype faisant de l'Italie du sud un repaire de mafieux et de brigands, prêts à attaquer d'innocents touristes étrangers, se manifeste encore dans toute sa virulence, même s'il n'est plus fait référence à la Sicile, mais à d'autres régions méridionales, comme les Abruzzes ou la Campanie. *Les Brigands des Abruzzes*, publiés en 1912 dans la «Bibliothèque d'éducation récréative» d'Alcide Picard aux frais du ministère de l'éducation nationale, sont l'œuvre d'A. Hannedouche, un inspecteur de l'enseignement primaire. Sous ce titre, ont été regroupées par notre inspecteur de nombreuses histoires de bandits et autres voleurs de grand chemin des Abruzzes, comme si les faits racontés étaient toujours d'actualité et non d'un passé révolu (l'époque du brigandage qui suivit l'unité italienne). Tout a déplu et répugne à l'inspecteur Hannedouche dans cette région du Mezzogiorno italien; il ne manque pas une occasion d'exhaler son italophobie, en blâmant tantôt les plats qu'on lui a servis dans les auberges («un de ces mélanges italiens qu'on ne saurait comment qualifier»⁵³), et tantôt les habitants («qui ne valent guère mieux que les bandits des montagnes avoisinantes»⁵⁴). Il commence par

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 294.

⁵² Ercole Salviati va jusqu'à soutenir que les Français constituaient «un bon tiers» des volontaires de l'expédition des Mille.

⁵³ A. Hannedouche, *Les Brigands des Abruzzes*, Paris, Alcide Picard, «Bibliothèque d'éducation récréative», 1912, p. 19. L'auteur affirme, entre autre, qu'à la place des anguilles on y sert des vipères fricassées.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

décrire une population passive et nonchalante, des gens «aussi paresseux, aussi insoucians que peuvent l'être des peuples des climats doux et ensoleillés»⁵⁵; mais derrière cette paresse apparente couve le tempérament sauvage des brigands de la région. Connus pour leur férocité, ils aiment se vanter de leurs exploits meurtriers, comme le font les chasseurs du gibier capturé; si en on croit notre inspecteur, «tirer sur un voyageur leur semblait avoir à peine plus de conséquence que de tirer sur un lièvre»⁵⁶. Leurs proies de prédilection sont bien évidemment les voyageurs étrangers, français et anglais, qui passent par ces contrées. Les gendarmes envoyés par l'État italien interviennent de temps à autre, pour les chasser à leur tour avec la même férocité:

Il est vrai qu'ils sont de temps en temps chassés comme des bêtes fauves par les gendarmes, que leurs têtes mises dans des cages de fer sont attachées aux postes sur les côtés de la route, ou que leurs membres pendus pourrissent aux arbres près des endroits où ils ont commis leurs atrocités⁵⁷.

Mais malgré l'action impitoyable des gendarmes, ces bandes de brigands se reconstituent et se multiplient à chaque fois; elles forment une société à part et bénéficient de la protection des gens de la région, «race pauvre et demi-barbare»⁵⁸, qui se place sous leur protection. Bandits et brigands de l'Italie méridionale forment également le sujet d'un autre petit roman pour la jeunesse publié par Hachette, qui répond au titre de *La Sorcière du Vésuve* (1927). Ce livre évoque les bandes de Fra Diavolo et de ses épigones sous le règne de Joachim Murat; l'action est censée se passer en 1808, sous la domination napoléonienne. Les personnages napolitains sont des brigands, «qui se cachent non pour combattre, mais pour assassiner»⁵⁹ les soldats français. Ils sont fanatisés par une étrange sorcière appelée *la Maga*, à laquelle ils vouent une obéissance sans faille: «pour nous la Maga est la mère toute-puissante et nous ne demandons qu'à mourir sur son ordre!»⁶⁰, déclarent-ils. L'histoire suit ensuite une intrigue très embrouillée et de plus en plus invraisemblable. Après bien des embuscades et des évasions de part et d'autre, il s'avère que le commandant des soldats français avait sauvé autrefois la vie du mari de *la Maga*; celle-ci préfère alors renoncer à son combat et se donne la mort en se jetant dans le cratère du Vésuve.

⁵⁵ L'ouvrage porte la mention: «Ministère de l'éducation nationale».

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ G.G. Toudouze, *La Sorcière du Vésuve*, Paris, Hachette, «Nouvelle bibliothèque d'éducation et de récréation», 1927, p. 65.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

Conclusion

Après les années 1920, ces stéréotypes de l'Italie et des Italiens finissent par s'éclipser. Ce déclin met fin à un cycle de clichés fonctionnant comme des organisateurs textuels, qui a débuté au moment de l'Unité et s'est développé dans les années suivantes, notamment dans les dernières décennies du XIX^e siècle. Toutefois ils n'ont pas disparu entièrement, car s'il est vrai que certains des textes qui les véhiculent sont tombés dans l'oubli et qu'ils ne doivent d'être mentionnés ici qu'à notre curiosité de chercheur, d'autres en revanche ont continué d'être lus, comme les livres de la comtesse de Ségur, d'Hector Malot et de Jules Verne.

Dans ce patrimoine non seulement littéraire mais aussi culturel, se trouvent inscrites ces représentations de l'Italie et des Italiens que les tensions politiques internationales entre la France et l'Italie ont largement contribué, comme nous l'avons déjà montré, à former. Les écrivains de l'hexagone placent constamment personnages et lieux italiens sous le regard français; ce qui confirme que, dans les exemples choisis, c'est bien à partir de la structure regardante que sont codifiés les représentations de l'Autre. Les héros et les protagonistes de ces récits sont toujours des Français; les villes et les régions italiennes sont toujours vues par des voyageurs venant de l'hexagone, qui portent sur ces lieux, jugés inhospitaliers et dangereux, un jugement hostile sinon méprisant. En revanche les Italiens, même lorsqu'ils atteignent le statut de véritables personnages romanesques (à l'instar de Paolo Perroni ou de Vitalis), vivent non pas en Italie mais en France, où leur condition d'immigrés fait d'eux des étrangers, individus socialement et culturellement inférieurs aux citoyens à part entière.

Tel qu'il ressort de ces stéréotypes, ce regard français pourrait être rapproché du regard des colonisateurs que ces mêmes Français étaient alors. Certes, ces *topoi* révèlent beaucoup d'hostilité envers l'État italien, qui s'opposait au plan international à la politique française, mais aussi du mépris, ou bien de la condescendance, pour le peuple italien, que certains Français avaient tendance à placer au niveau des populations du grand empire colonial qu'ils étaient alors en train de constituer. Telle pourrait être l'explication ultime du complexe de supériorité qui apparaît en filigrane dans les représentations de l'Italie et des Italiens transmises par la littérature enfantine française, sous le Second Empire et la Troisième République.

The Pigna Paper Mill and the exercise books of the «new Italy» (1870-1960) *

Anna Ascenzi

1. A company at the service of the school: the Paolo Pigna Paper Mill in Italy between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries

It is quite likely that in unified Italy, no other business apart from the Paolo Pigna Paper Mill in Alzano Lombardo (Bergamo), has been able to link its own image so strongly to the sector of the market where it operated, that is the Italian school – almost to the point of stabilising a sort of “total identification” with it.

In the same way, one could say that – much earlier than the coming of modern systems of advertising and communication – the Pigna exercise books, with their wide range of typologies and their richly illustrated covers, took root in the social imagery of many generations of students, and they became in fact, something more than a simple aid for the educational activity, more than a minor element of the school equipment: they actually ended up with representing an almost fixed, ever present object – despite their variety of formats and typologies – both in the image and the, though sometimes faded, memories of one's own school life, and in the collective portrayal of the daily life of Italian students.

* This paper was first presented at the International Symposium *School Exercise Books. A Complex Source for a History of the Approach to Schooling and Education in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Macerata 26th-29th September 2007), whose proceedings are now in print. This version has been enlarged and adapted for the journal «History of Education & Children's Literature».



Fig. 1. *Selection of rags*, ca. 2nd half of 19th century (Pigna Paper Mill Historical Archive).

After all, if one retraces the origins and the significant steps of this company's history, we can well understand how this identification with the school reality is neither an accident, nor the result of a series of fortuitous circumstances, but the outcome of a policy which had been tenaciously planned by the company ever since its beginning¹.

As known, in 1856 the entrepreneur Paolo Pigna (1802-1888) took over a pre-existing paper mill in Alzano Maggiore, near Bergamo, and after having restored its buildings, began the production of hand-made paper, which was exclusively made of rags². About fifteen years later, in 1870, the company – which had been formally set up with the business name of *Cartiere Paolo Pigna*, with its registered office in Milano³ – made a first step towards mechanization, by introducing into the production cycle continuous machine which was able to produce up to 6-7 quintals per day of different kinds of paper, especially fine quality paper⁴. In 1872 the same entrepreneur in front of the *Committee of inquiry into industry* showed in detail the specific features of the company's production compared with the other paper mills in the province:

¹ See *Cartiere e fabbriche di pasta di legno nella Provincia di Bergamo*, «Bollettino dell'Associazione dei fabbricatori di carta e arti affini del Regno d'Italia», IV, ottobre 1893, 5, pp. 9-40.

² A. Mandelli, *Alzano nei secoli. Storia della antica comunità alesana*, 2nd edition revised and augmented, Bergamo, Bons, 1988, p. 323.

³ See *Registro Generale delle Notificazioni dei Commercianti e Negozianti Arti e Commercio della R. Città e Provincia di Bergamo*, in Archivio di Stato di Bergamo, vol. II; *Registro Ditte*, in Archivio della Camera di Commercio, Industria, Artigianato e Agricoltura di Bergamo. See also: L. Fiorentini, *Monografia della Provincia di Bergamo*, Bergamo, 1889, pp. 101-103.

⁴ In 1870 at the Exposition in Bergamo the company obtained the silver medal for «the fine and good quality of the machine-made paper, as coloured or not» (A. Mandelli, *Alzano nei secoli. Storia della antica comunità alesana*, cit., p. 323).



Fig. 2. *The mechanisation of the paper making, early 20th century* (Pigna Paper Mill Historical Archive).

There are other paper mills, but they only produce ordinary paper, while I make fine papers, paper for registers, for ordinary letters and very thin paper, paper telegraph rolls, paper made from coloured pulp and coloured coated paper, and marbled paper⁵.

Three years later, in 1875, whilst carrying on his forced march towards mechanization, the entrepreneur made a continuous paper-making machine – which was able to produce up to 25 quintals per day – and which was to be installed in the plant of Alzano Maggiore⁶. The investment and technological innovations of this period soon achieved results: in the mid-1870s the paper mill employed about forty workers and boasted a highly differentiated production, with a special attention to the production of high-quality paper. Almost the entire production was sold on the Milan market, where the company had its own storeroom⁷.

The small business founded by Paolo Pigna found itself in the beginning to be in a particularly complex economic and political scenario, which at a local level was characterized by several small workshops. Their presence on the market was already difficult because of their small dimension and poor mechanization, but it was further limited by strong foreign competition and the sub-

⁵ «Ve ne sono altre, ma fabbricano solamente carta ordinaria, mentre io fabbrico anche carte fini, da registri, da lettere usuali e sottilissime, rotolini per telegrafo, colorate in pasta e colorate con patine, marmorizzate» (*Deposizione di Paolo Pigna*, in *Atti del Comitato dell'inchiesta industriale (1870-1874). Deposizioni orali*, Firenze, 1874, vol. IV, t. I).

⁶ See *Annuario delle cartiere italiane 1875. Compilato da A. Gola. Anno I*, Milano, Tip. Giuliani e C., 1875, p. 11. See also G. Cima, *L'industria della carta*, in N. Zucchelli (ed.), *Ingegneria e industria in terra bergamasca*, Bergamo, Sindacato Provinciale Fascista Ingegneri di Bergamo, 1941, pp. 133-134.

⁷ A. Mandelli, *Alzano nei secoli. Storia della antica comunità alesana*, cit., p. 332-335.

stantial lack of an industrial policy which was able to offer the new national paper industry a serious prospective of development. In 1873 the *Committee of inquiry into industry* gave this judgement regarding the situation and the future prospective of the sector:

Papermaking is widespread enough in Italy, especially due to the goodness and amount of rags which are gathered across the peninsula, and to the propitious hydrographical features of many Italian provinces. In the past years production was exclusively hand-made, but progressively mechanical techniques have been introduced, which produce in a quicker, and cheaper, way⁸.

In reality, statistics from the late 1870s give the image of a production field which was still strongly fragmented into a multitude of small artisan workshops (very few had average dimensions) and which were especially concentrated – because of the need for hydraulic energy – along the rivers at the entrance of the alpine and pre-alpine valleys. Statistics indicate the existence of 521 firms, for a total of 17,312 workers, an engine force of 13,980 hp – almost entirely hydraulic – and a wealth of equipment which included 813 vats, 73 cylinder machines and 95 continuous paper making machines, for a yearly production which is estimated to have been about 600 thousand quintals⁹.

After being rendered a limited partnership in 1883, from the 1880s the Pigna paper mills expanded their dimensions, and therefore «in a few years got to a first vertical integration»¹⁰. Together with the modernization of technical equipment, i.e. through the acquisition of machines for the production of finished paper, in nearby Alzano di Sopra a laboratory was established for the production of wood-pulp, with three *fiberizers* and a 20 hp hydraulic engine. This laboratory represented a turning point in the traditional production strategies of the company: the almost exclusive use of rags as a raw material began to be – though only partially – substituted by pulp, a material, however, which was destined to prevail in the following years. At the end of the nineteenth century the paper mill of Alzano Maggiore employed about 150 workers and had machinery which was powered by a hydraulic force of 70 hp.

⁸ «È piuttosto estesa in Italia la fabbricazione della carta e lo si deve in gran parte alla bontà e quantità degli stracci che si raccolgono nella penisola e alle condizioni idrografiche assai propizie di molte province italiane. La fabbricazione si esercitava esclusivamente, negli anni andati, con metodi a mano, ma in progresso vennero adoperati sistemi meccanici, i quali producono molto più prontamente e con maggiore risparmio» (*Atti del Comitato dell'inchiesta industriale, 1870-1874. Riassunti delle deposizioni orali e scritte*, Firenze, 1874, p. 1).

⁹ V. Ellena, *La statistica di alcune industrie italiane*, Roma, 1879, pp. 117-126; Ministero di Agricoltura, Industria e Commercio, *Notizie statistiche sopra alcune industrie*, Roma, 1878.

¹⁰ «giungendo in pochi anni a costruire un abbozzo di integrazione verticale» (G. Subbrero, *L'industria cartaria e poligrafica (1861-1951)*, in V. Zamagni, S. Zaninelli (eds.), *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).

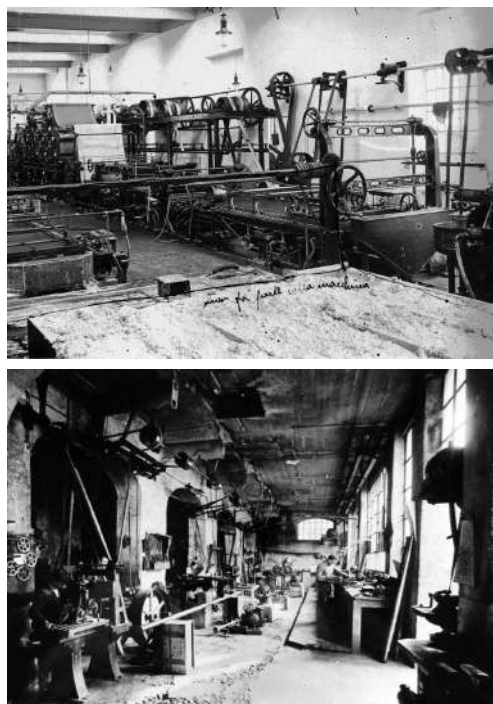


Figs. 3a-b. *Interiors of the establishment and storehouse, late 19th century* (Pigna Paper Mill Historical Archive).

This factory produces – as read in the *Industrial Statistics* for the year 1900 with regard to the factories in Lombardy – stationery paper, writing paper, paper for registers, drawing paper, many sorts of cardboard, gift items in luxury boxes, visiting cards, invitation cards, condolence cards, glossy and non-glossy, imitation wood paper, marbled paper, imitation shagreen paper and so on¹¹.

The starting-up of the Pigna paper mill in the new century occurred in a national and local framework of the paper industry, which was characterised by ups and downs. It is true that, with respect to the mid-1870s, production at the beginning of the twentieth century had increased almost twice as much: from 600 thousand to a little under 1,200,000 quintals of paper. It is also true that for the same period the *Industry Statistic* noted for the year 1903 that for the 405 active factories, occupational levels were modest with about 19,088 workers employed in the sector. Vice versa, the progress registered with regard to the level of mechanization in the companies was noticeable, with an engine force which had practically doubled – even though still hydraulic in great part

¹¹ «Da questa fabbrica escono carte da cancelleria, carte da lettera, da registro, da disegno, da stampa, cartoni d'ogni genere, articoli novità in scatole di lusso, biglietti da visita, per partecipazioni, per lutto, carte lucidate e non lucidate, con imitazioni di legno, di marmo, zigrinata uso pelle ecc.» (Ministero di Agricoltura, Industria e Commercio, *Statistica industriale. Lombardia*, Roma, 1900, pp. 55-56; N. Zucchelli (ed.), *Ingegneria e industria in terra bergamasca*, Bergamo, 1941, p. 133).



Figs. 4a-b. *The paper machines' room and the forge*, late 19-early 20th centuries (Pigna Paper Mill Historical Archive)

– and with a slight increase in technical equipment both with respect to the use of cylinder machines and in continuous paper-making machines¹². It should be added that:

a partial diversification had occurred in the prime materials used: even though the percentage of rags used remained high i.e. vegetable and mixed fibres, straw, canvas and esparto – the importance of mechanical wood-pulp, two thirds of which was nationally produced, and of cellulose, which was almost totally imported¹³, were becoming increasingly important.

In the Bergamo area, the development of the paper industry in the second half of the nineteenth century was fairly limited. The firms – with the exception of the Pigna mills – essentially maintained their artisan features and dimen-

¹² Ministero di Agricoltura, Industria e Commercio – Direzione della Statistica, *Statistica industriale. Industria della carta*, «Annali di Statistica», serie IV, 1898, 91; Id., *Statistica industriale. Riassunto delle notizie sulle condizioni industriali del Regno*, parte I, Roma, 1906, pp. 202-209.

¹³ «una parziale diversificazione si era prodotta nelle materie prime utilizzate: se ancora alta risultava la percentuale di stracci vegetali e misti, paglia, steli di canapa e sparto, acquistava sempre maggiore importanza la pasta di legno meccanica, per due terzi di produzione nazionale, e la cellulosa, quasi totalmente importata dall'estero» (G. Subbrero, *L'industria cartaria e poligrafica, 1861-1951*, cit., pp. 320-321).

sions, even though a slight technical development can be noted. In the early years of the 1900s there were 8 paper mills, compared with the 9 registered in 1861; there were 247 workers with respect to the 318 noted forty years before; the total engine force amounted to 456 hp, of which 380 were hydraulic – in comparison with the 198 hp registered for the year 1861. From the point of view of technical equipment, the statistics for the late nineteenth century, noted 6 continuous and cylinder machines and 8 *fiberizers*, which confirms the increasing use of wood-fibre as a prime material, along with the use of traditional rags. At a local level, along with the Pigna paper mills, a noticeable role was played by the company of the Pesenti brothers in Nembro, and of Clivati & C. in Alzano Maggiore¹⁴.

After the death of Paolo Pigna (1888), the company was directed for a short-time by his son Carillo. Control was then taken by Giuseppina Pigna and her husband Daniele Pesenti (1861-1911)¹⁵, who assumed direction¹⁶. The Pesenti family, one of the most prestigious families of local entrepreneurship¹⁷, had for decades belonged to «generations of “master paper-makers”, but although their paper mill in Nembro was still working, despite its ups and downs, from the end of the 1870s they had devoted themselves to the production of hydraulic lime and cement, a sector which at that time was booming in the Bergamo area. But they did not neglect other initiatives and enterprises, and one of these was in fact the Pigna paper mill»¹⁸.

When Daniele Pesenti assumed the direction of the company, it was in a critical situation:

The Pigna paper mill – we can read in the *Family's Memories*, which were written in 1931 by Cesare Pesenti – [...] was in dire straits. [It was] Messy, with respect to the old equipment; irrational, with respect to the arrangement of the buildings; the hydraulic power was wrongly used; the transmissions, badly arranged; transport, badly organized; full of wrong manoeuvres, which made the work difficult and uneconomical, the paper mill was indebted, not very productive and lacking in modern technical devices, which were insufficient for the needs»¹⁹.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 322-323. See also *Industria della carta ed arti grafiche*, Milano, Hoepli, 1883

¹⁵ See *Atto costitutivo del 23 febbraio 1895*, in Archivio della Camera di Commercio di Bergamo, Serie della Cancelleria commerciale del Tribunale di Bergamo, vol. 321, società n. 590.

¹⁶ See *Nota di trascrizione della Ditta Paolo Pigna di Alzano Maggiore al R. Tribunale Civile e Penale di Bergamo del 23 settembre 1897*, *ibid.*

¹⁷ A. Mandelli, *Alzano nei secoli. Storia della antica comunità alesana*, cit., p. 54.

¹⁸ «una generazione di “maestri cartieri” ormai da decenni, ma nonostante la cartiera da loro posseduta a Nembro funzionasse ancora, sia pure tra alterne vicende, a partire dalla fine degli anni Settanta dell'Ottocento si erano dedicati con crescenti fortune alla produzione della calce idraulica e del cemento, settore all'epoca in fortissima espansione nel bergamasco. Non per questo i Pesenti trascurarono altre iniziative e attività, e una di queste fu proprio la Cartiera Pigna» (G. Subbrero, *L'industria cartaria e poligrafica (1861-1951)*, cit., p. 333).

¹⁹ «La cartiera Pigna [...] era in assai grame condizioni. In disordine nel troppo vecchio macchinario; irrazionale nella disposizione dei fabbricati; male sfruttata la forza idraulica; mal disposte

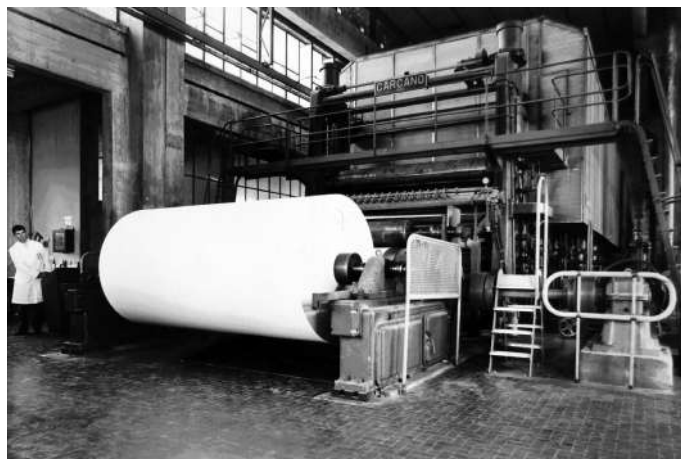


Fig. 5. Paper machine, 1st half of 20th century (Pigna Paper Mill Historical Archives)

In a few months Daniele Pesenti was able to re-organise the company on new premises, and later, to enlarge them through the building of new and functional departments, which made them much more efficient and profit making. His restructuring was global and implied a «total technical reorganization, through the rationalization of the flows of production, and new investment with respect to the equipment; finally, the financial situation was resolved»²⁰. At the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the Pigna paper mill was once more competitive on the market²¹.

It was also merit of the intuition of the Bergamo entrepreneur who immediately realised – already in the late nineteenth century – that it was necessary to increasingly specialise the company, and to steer production towards the key-field of school-notebooks and of the material which supported paper writing, which exactly at that moment was beginning to develop across the peninsula. Between the beginning of the twentieth century and the Second World War in fact, the «Italian paper industry went through a strong development. The entire paper and cardboard production rose, from 1,150,000 quintals, to more than 5,310,000 in 1939, and the number of workers employed in the

le trasmissioni; mal regolativi i trasporti; piena di false manovre che rendevano difficile e antieconomico il lavoro, la cartiera aveva debiti, produceva troppo poco e non disponeva di mezzi tecnici moderni sufficienti al bisogno» (C. Pesenti, *Memorie di famiglia. Lotte, travagli e fortune*, Bergamo, Istituto Italiano d'Arti Grafiche, 1931, p. 51).

²⁰ «una completa riorganizzazione tecnica, con la razionalizzazione dei flussi produttivi e nuovi investimenti in macchinario; infine, venne risanata la situazione finanziaria» (G. Subbrero, *L'industria cartaria e poligrafica (1861-1951)*, cit., p. 334).

²¹ C. Pesenti, *Memorie di famiglia. Lotte, travagli e fortune*, cit., pp. 55-61.

sector from 23,257 in 1911 to 56,127, and marked concentrations occurred in the sector»²². At the basis of such a development, the very increase in domestic demand must be considered with relation to the ever falling rate of illiteracy and the continuous increase in schooling; as well as the growth in the publishing industry and the increasing spread of periodicals and newspapers²³.

In continuity with the firm's traditional production of ordinary paper together with fine paper, papers for registers and writing paper, various coloured and elaborated paper²⁴, Pesenti chose to aim production especially at writing materials, above all, notebooks and writing materials for schools and education. It is no accident that the advertisements for the company, which at that time were published by a specialised press, and spread through commercial channels, showed this kind of material for the very first time. Therefore, in addition to the «writing paper, in envelopes and boxes, paper for registers, in double or triple-glossed paper, paper for printing, paper made from coloured pulp, wrapping paper, various cardboard, envelopes and paper bags, registers and letter books of various format, size and ruling», in the company catalogue, one can clearly read «paper and stationary for offices, paper for schools, notebooks»²⁵.

Production for schools had by then its own stable market and, therefore, it needed exact rules, which aimed not only at guaranteeing the quality and marketability of the products, but also at protecting the role of the enterprises involved in the sector; we can see this from the significant battles which were carried out in the early years of the twentieth century by Daniele Pesenti and other Milanese paper manufacturers through their *Association of paper producers and related arts*, which had arisen in 1888 and counted the Pigna paper

²² «l'industria cartaria in Italia registrò una fase di forte espansione. La produzione totale di carta e cartoni passò da 1.150.000 quintali a più di 5.310.000 nel 1939, gli addetti salirono da 23.257 nel 1911 a 56.127 e nel settore si verificarono accentuati fenomeni di concentrazione» (G. Subbrero, *L'industria cartaria e poligrafica (1861-1951)*, cit., pp. 328-329).

²³ 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, 1926, pp. 182-188; Ministero per la Costituente, *Rapporto della Commissione economica presentato all'assemblea costituente, II. Industria, I. Relazione*, Roma, 1947, I, pp. 137-148.

²⁴ See F. Barbieri, R. Ravanelli (eds.), *Storia dell'industria bergamasca*, Bergamo, Grafica & Arte, 2003 (reprint), p. 178.

²⁵ «carte da lettera, in buste e scatole, carte da registro, in doppia e tripla colla, carte da stampa, carte colorate in pasta, carte da impacco, cartoni vari, buste e sacchetti, registri e copialelettere di ogni formato, dimensione e rigatura [...] carte da ufficio e da cancelleria, carte da scuola, quaderni» (see for example: *Le cartiere italiane all'Esposizione di Torino*, «L'industria della carta. Giornale pratico per la fabbricazione e applicazione della carta, cartoni, succedanei e articoli affini, per le industrie grafiche in genere, cartonaggi, carte da giuoco, ecc.», I, 1898-1899, n. 2-3, p. 20; *Annuario della Città e Provincia di Bergamo*, Bergamo, Tip. Gatti, 1899, p. 265; *Le fabbriche di carta in Lombardia*, «L'Industria della Carta e delle arti grafiche», VII, 1° ottobre 1904, 19, p. 220).

mill among its founding members²⁶. In spring 1905, for example, Daniele Pesenti presented at a meeting of the *Association* two matters of topical interest for the approval of the members:

The meeting – as we can read in the minutes of the 14th May 1905 – therefore examines two items on the agenda, which have been presented by the Paolo Pigna enterprise: the former one, in order to lodge a petition to the Ministry of Public Education, to promulgate rules regarding the notebooks' ruling according to precise models; the latter, so that the producers may eliminate, from the cover of exercise books, the printing of the buyers: after a short discussion in which the engineer Ostrogowich, the gentleman Pesenti, Mr. Sesana, the commendatore Siccardi, the engineer Nodali and Dr. Molina participated, both items were approved²⁷.

The first point wished to resolve a far from banal problem, which had been faced by the producers of exercise book many times in the previous years: that is the lack of exact rules set out by the Ministry of Public Education regarding the size and features of the exercise books to be used in the various classes of the primary and popular schools. The lack of such guidelines in fact, had led in the past to stationers and sellers refusing entire lots of merchandise. The second point was, under many aspects, even more important: the firms (which until then had produced on behalf of a third party, and had been forced to put the stationers' or retailers' mark on their products) decided to assume the production of their own exercise books, with the specific intention of linking their own name with this kind of product.

The position assumed by the *Association of paper producers*, thanks to the leadership of the Pigna company, marked a turning point in the field of production and sale of school exercise books, since in actual fact it facilitated the official entry onto the school-market of new and inured companies: which, like the Pigna paper mill, in the following years aimed increasingly at establishing new and more useful agreements with retailers (stationers, shops etc.), in order to set up an ever increasing network for the distribution of materials across the national market²⁸.

²⁶ See *Atti dell'Associazione dei fabbricatori di carta ed arti affini del Regno d'Italia. Adunanza dell'11 marzo 1888*, in «Bollettino dell'Associazione dei fabbricatori di carta e arti affini del Regno d'Italia», I, agosto 1888, 1, pp. 13-14.

²⁷ «L'Assemblea prende quindi in esame due ordini del giorno presentati dalla Ditta Paolo Pigna: l'uno perché venga fatta istanza al Ministero della P.I. per l'emanazione di norme che regolino la rigatura dei quaderni con modelli ben definiti; l'altro perché i fabbricanti aboliscano dalle copertine dei quaderni la stampa della ditta committente: dopo breve discussione, cui partecipano l'ing. Ostrogowich, il cav. Pesenti, il sig. Sesana, il comm. Siccardi, l'ing. Nodali e il dott. Molina, i due ordini del giorno sono approvati» (*Associazione dei fabbricanti di carta ed arti affini. Assemblea dei Soci 14 maggio 1905*, «L'Industria della Carta e delle arti grafiche», VIII, 16 maggio 1905, 10, p. 1).

²⁸ In this connection, see the references made by Juri Meda in his paper: «*Contro il tanto deprecato mercantilismo scolastico*»... *I controversi rapporti tra editori, insegnanti e cartolai e l'intervento del regime*, which has been presented in the aforementioned International Symposium *School Exercise Books* in Macerata.

After the tragic death of Daniele in 1911, the leadership of the company was taken over by his son Carillo Pesenti Pigna, who had to confront the difficult situation created by the First World War and the economic and production crisis which soon followed in the post-war period²⁹. Under Carillo Pesenti the enterprise reached its definitive affirmation on the national market, as can be argued from the birth of a proper commercial sector and the creation of a stable network for distribution which linked stores all across the peninsula. In 1919 a first restructuring of the society occurred, with the Pigna paper mill becoming a joint-stock company³⁰ with a corporate capital of 4 million lira, which increased to 8 million lira in 1920, with two consecutive moments of growth³¹. In the following year the productive structures were enlarged, through the acquisition of the Ghisalberti paper mill (ex Clivati) in Alzano Maggiore³².

Despite the difficult context of the economic crisis due to the revaluation of the Lira and the crisis in the market and in production which exploded in 1929³³, as well as, in the following period, restrictions caused by the autarchic

²⁹ *Le industrie e la guerra. Valida cooperazione delle Cartiere alla produzione di proiettili*, «L'Industria della Carta e delle arti grafiche», XIX, 1° settembre 1916, 9, pp. 166-172. But see also V. Porri, *l'evoluzione economica italiana nell'ultimo cinquantennio*, cit., pp. 185-187.

³⁰ See *Copia autentica del verbale 8 settembre 1919 del Consiglio di Amministrazione della Società Cartiere Paolo Pigna alla Cancelleria del Regio Tribunale Civile e Penale di Bergamo del 3 ottobre 1919*, in Archivio della Camera di Commercio di Bergamo, Serie della Cancelleria commerciale del Tribunale di Bergamo, vol. 321, società n. 590.

³¹ In connection to this, see *Copia autentica dell'atto di trasformazione di società e aumento di capitale sociale*, 1° luglio 1919, rogata dal notaio Francesco Finardi, n. 11425, del 29 luglio 1919, Archivio della Camera di Commercio di Bergamo, Serie della Cancelleria commerciale del Tribunale di Bergamo, vol. 321, società n. 590. After transforming the Pigna paper mill into a joint stock company in Alzano Maggiore, 25th June 1919, the Board was composed of: the engineer *commendatore* Giacomo Tedeschi (president), the honorable attorney Paolo Bonomi (vice-president), the gentleman Angelo Manzoni, the gentleman Luigi Gervasoni (advisors), the gentleman Mario Franzi (managing director and general director of the new society); one year later, in October 1920, an extraordinary assembly of the stockholders, in addition to increasing the capital up to 8 million, added two new board counsellors: the *commendatore* Cesare Pesenti and the *commendatore* Carillo Pesenti. See *Bilanci, dividendi, aumenti di capitale, costituzioni e scioglimenti di società*, «L'Industria della Carta e delle arti grafiche», XXII, 1° agosto 1919, 8, p. 109; *Bilanci, dividendi, aumenti di capitale, costituzioni e scioglimenti di società*, *ibid.*, XXII, 1° settembre 1919, 9, p. 123; *Bilanci, dividendi, aumenti di capitale, costituzioni e scioglimenti di società*, *ibid.*, XXII, 1° ottobre 1919, 10, p. 137; *Bilanci, dividendi, aumenti di capitale, costituzioni e scioglimenti di società*, XXIII, 31 ottobre 1920, 10, p. 167.

³² See G. Subbrero, *L'industria cartaria e poligrafica (1861-1951)*, cit., p. 333.

³³ «The revaluation of the lira, the 1929 crisis and the autarchy created many problems for the company. Especially severe were the effects of the market restriction, the collapse of prices, and the foreign markets – which nevertheless accounted for about 10-15% of the total turnover – together with, from 1935, the imposition of a quota on the raw material, especially cellulose. The company had to noticeably decrease its working rhythms and hours, and to dismiss workers. In order to restrain the falling prices, in 1932 the same Pesenti Pigna promoted a national consortium for the producers of exercise books: this consortium assigned a quota to the associated firms which was proportional to their related production potentialities, leaving freedom with regard to

policy³⁴, constant elements of the Bergamo enterprise in the 1920s and 1930s can be seen. These were, on the one hand, the specialisation of production and on the other, the continuous updating of technology.

In 1926 – as has been highlighted – Carillo Pesenti established a new department of materials pertaining to the paper-transformation industry, and the enterprise begun increasingly to specialise in producing school materials, especially exercise books³⁵: in 1931 – with about 850 workers – the production capability touched 5,000 quintals of paper per month, against the 700 at the beginning of the century, and some years later the production of exercise books was mechanised³⁶.

Furthermore, the commercial organization was improved through the opening, in 1929, of new stores in Milan and Trieste³⁷. With regard to production, a significant improvement occurred when «the firm succeeded in accessing the state job orders, becoming the sole supplier of ribbon paper both for the Telegraph and the Railway administration»³⁸.

On the eve of the Second World War, with a production which was especially centred on paper for office and stationery, and particularly on exercise books, the Pigna paper mill reached noticeable occupational levels, employing about 850 workers. The daily productive potential of about 250 quintals of papers made it one of the most important enterprises in this field at a national level³⁹. In spite of the losses and difficulties which followed the world conflict, in the post Second World War period the business, always firmly in the hands of the Pesenti and Pigna family heirs,

the sales conditions. After two difficult years, the Consortium was dissolved. From 1935 the sector, and the company, had to suffer the effects of the autarchy, or more precisely, a strong increase in the prices of raw materials, together with the difficulty in importing the more modern machines, especially with regards to the machines for the paper making industry» (G. Subbrero, *L'industria cartaria e poligrafica (1861-1951)*, cit., pp. 334-335).

³⁴ See C. Pesenti, *Memorie di famiglia. Lotte, travagli e fortune*, cit., pp. 51-61. But see also the yearbooks: *L'Industria nella Provincia di Bergamo*, Bergamo, G. Gaffuri, 1927-1932; Consiglio provinciale dell'Economia [after: Consiglio provinciale dell'Economia corporativa] di Bergamo, *Relazione statistica*, Bergamo, 1927-1935.

³⁵ *Annuario delle cartiere italiane e delle industrie operatrici della carta e del cartone, commercianti in carta, industrie grafiche ed editoriali. Informazioni statistiche*, Milano, Edizioni de «L'industria della carta e delle arti grafiche», 1933-1934, p. 152.

³⁶ «Nel 1926 Carillo Pesenti impiantò un nuovo reparto di articoli cartotecnici e l'azienda si dedicò sempre più alla produzione di articoli scolastici, in particolare quaderni: nel 1931 – con circa 850 addetti – la potenzialità produttiva sfiorava i 5.000 quintali di carta al mese contro i 700 d'inizio secolo, e qualche anno dopo la produzione di quaderni venne automatizzata» (G. Subbrero, *L'industria cartaria e poligrafica (1861-1951)*, cit., pp. 333-334).

³⁷ See *L'industria cartaria nella provincia di Bergamo e le Cartiere Paolo Pigna*, «La Rivista di Bergamo», X, 1931, II, pp. 78-80.

³⁸ G. Subbrero, *L'industria cartaria e poligrafica (1861-1951)*, cit., p. 334.

³⁹ *Società italiane per azioni. Notizie statistiche 1940*, Roma, Associazione fra le Società italiane per azioni, 1940, p. 1403.

stressed even further its production specialisation, so that in 1960, against a global paper and cardboard production of 167,000 quintals (which rendered it the nineteenth business in the national field), 163,000 quintals were constituted by paper for writing (the eighth position in the field)⁴⁰.

2. *The production of exercise books by the Pigna paper mill between political plans and market demands*

The Pigna exercise books accompanied the literacy and mass-schooling process of Italians, especially when – from the second half of the 1870s onwards – the school measures, which were promulgated by the Historical Left (the Coppino Law), rendered the process more intense and systematic⁴¹. The Alzano Lombardo business, which developed between the two centuries, especially at a local and regional level (Bergamo, Milano and the Lombardy area), from the eve of the First World War could count on a network of commercial delivery, which covered great part of the national territory.

The archival documentation witnesses how the Pigna paper mill – long before any other company in the sector – understood the importance of connecting the production for schools with the national project for the education of Italians, which was carried out by the Liberal ruling class, despite varying phases and according to different modalities and forms, from the era of Crispi⁴². The Alzano Lombardo company strove to adapt its products to the mass-schooling and nationalization of Italians, increasingly going along with the process which aimed at embedding in the people the feeling of the crucial role played by the school, in order to improve the social-cultural development of the Nation, and to establish a specific communitarian identity. It was a process which, launched with increasing conviction during the era of Giolitti,

⁴⁰ «accentuò ulteriormente la sua specializzazione produttiva, tanto che nel 1960, di fronte a una produzione complessiva di carta e cartoni di poco superiore ai 167.000 quintali (che la collocavano al diciannovesimo posto nel settore nazionale) ben 163.000 erano rappresentati da carta da scrivere (all'ottavo posto nel settore)» (G. Subbrero, *L'industria cartaria e poligrafica (1861-1951)*, cit., p. 336).

⁴¹ See M. Bendiscioli, *La Sinistra storica e la scuola*, «Studium», 1977, n. 4, 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.

⁴² 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», 1987, 4, 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. Soldati, G. Turi (eds.), *Fare gli italiani. Scuola e cultura nell'Italia contemporanea. I. La nascita dello Stato nazionale*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1993.

was to undergo significant and unexpected developments in the years of the Great War and those following it and which would reach its acme during the Fascist period.

An in-depth analysis of the features of the exercise books which were produced in Alzano Lombardo, and especially of the pioneering importance which was promptly attributed to the pictures and to the introductory texts of these same pictures for the covers, seems to be fundamental from this point of view, in order to appreciate the development and the characteristics of the production and commercial strategy of the Pigna paper mill; but also in order to assess the leading role which the firm played in building a specific school culture, and in the development of the mass-educational process between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The production of the Pigna exercise books appears to be marked in fact – especially from the last decade of the nineteenth century – by a clear and conscious ideological-political project which accompanied and overlapped its production and commercial projects to the point of becoming the driving force of this latter one: its principal and most direct tool of development and entrepreneurial success, an expression of a kind of “surplus value”, which qualified the same product, rendering it more recognisable and attractive – and therefore more commercially competitive – on the market.

The production of school-notebooks was destined to a great development in Italy during the eras of Crispi and Giolitti, when literacy and schooling were, by then, a large and established process: the precocious specialization of Pigna in this sector, together with the choice – much more so than other companies in those years⁴³ – of markedly characterising its own products through a systematic valorisation of their features, and the functionality and efficacy of the message conveyed by the exercise books (such as by means of illustrations and printed texts), reveals a precise and modern marketing strategies. These strategies, on the one hand adopted the general direction and the concern of the ministerial and more generally political “national pedagogy”, which was repeatedly expressed by the diverse ruling classes of the country – from Crispi to Giolitti to Mussolini, passing through the difficult period of the Great War and the early post-war period⁴⁴; on the other hand, they also tried to adjust the general indications of such a “national pedagogy” to the

⁴³ For a first census of the enterprises which worked in this field, see: J. Meda, *Quaderni di scuola. Nuove fonti per la storia dell'editoria scolastica minore*, «Annali di storia dell'educazione e delle istituzioni scolastiche», 2006, 13, pp. 73-98.

⁴⁴ In this connection see: A. Ascenzi, *Tra educazione etico-civile e costruzione dell'identità nazionale. L'insegnamento della storia nelle scuole italiane dell'Ottocento*, Milano, Vita & Pensiero, 2004; M. Ostenc, *L'éducation en Italie pendant le fascisme*, Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne, 1980; e J. Charnitzky, *Fascismo e scuola. La politica scolastica del regime (1922-1943)*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1994.

characteristics and communication potentials of the *medium*, that is the school exercise books⁴⁵.

In fact, the exercise books, without losing their original material function, i.e. keeping their modest nature of secondary and subordinate tools within the students' didactical equipment, ended up by playing a "new" and diverse role, in comparison with their original one. One could say rather, that this different and parallel function of the transmission of educational content and messages – and later, of ideological and political propaganda, especially during the Fascist period⁴⁶ – manifested itself even beforehand, in an autonomous manner, with respect to the actual material usage, in the classroom or elsewhere, of the exercise book. In some particular cases, such as for the exercises books which were destined to receive explanations and texts concerning the history of the country or, in the Fascist period, destined to spread the principles and directives of the Mussolini regime, one can find a peculiar complementarity between the "editorial message" of the schoolbook (i.e. the illustrations and the printed text of the cover) and the "school writings" produced by the student, according to a perspective where the first one (the editorial message) aimed at becoming a further "reinforcement" and confirming/legitimising the second one (the "students' writings").

At the base of the production and commercial strategies of Pigna, a series of reasons and general beliefs can be traced. First of all the vivid awareness that the exercise book, where it had been immediately capable of transmitting a reassuring iconic-verbal message which was easy to understand at all levels, could play a crucial role – even though only an auxiliary and complimentary role – in the scholastic and extra-scholastic formation of the new generations, and indirectly of the same Italian families, especially from the working classes and rural areas. Secondly, was the firm conviction that, much more than the schoolbook, the exercise book was destined to circulate in household spaces – that is amongst the students' family members – and was destined to stimulate the interest and the attention of the adults, who would not have disdained the illustrations and related explanatory texts, which characterized the "editorial message" of the exercise book. Conveniently adjusted to the demands and capabilities of a mass public, which was only in part made up of young students, the exercise books' illustrations and texts could have contributed – in this sense – to complete and enlarge the patrimony of knowledge of the readers, who – as the producers soon realised – were not limited only to the actual owner of the exercise books.

⁴⁵ See A. Viñao Frago, *Los cuadernos escolares como fuente histórica: aspectos metodológicos e historiográficos*, «Annali di storia dell'educazione e delle istituzioni scolastiche», 2006, 13, pp. 17-35.

⁴⁶ See also the excellent work of L. Marrella, *I quaderni del Duce. Tra immagine e parola*, Taranto, Barbieri, 1995.

Last, but surely not least, it must be pointed out how the Pigna paper mill soon matured the belief that the cover illustrations, i.e. the iconic message which the exercise books transmitted, needed special care and attention. The images had to be adapted to a widespread childish public (in the original meaning of the phrase «childish people», coined by Silvio Antoniano, or the more recent and contemporaneous «pupil people», *popolo pupillo* in Italian, as formulated by the real expert of national-popular education that was Francesco Crispi⁴⁷). In other words they should be attractive and captivating, even absorbing; they should reflect, over the years, the development of the childish and popular *social imagery*, and the changes in tastes and customs so that they would be always up-to-date and abreast of the times. From here, the choice of the Alzano Lombardo company to concentrate, in an ever more noticeable and systematic manner, and with real moments of excellence during the Fascist period, on skilled and/or already famous illustrators, who at times boasted a specific production of plates destined to illustrating manuals and school books, periodicals and books for children and youth; or who, on a different level, had already coped with the growing and complex world of designing advertising posters⁴⁸.

It is worth mentioning here the presence in the first two decades of the nineteenth century of known artists such as Carlo Tallone and Gino Boccasile, who also worked with Pigna during the 1930s. Richer is the number of illustrators, already famous and/or beginners, during the twenty year Fascist period: Sergio Bonelli, Giovanni Bonfanti, Galileo Chini (*Chin*), G. Divala, Marcello Dudovich, Libero Maraja (*Lima*), Carmelo Marotta, Nino Pagatto, Mario Puppo, Guglielmo Sansoni (*Tato*), Roberto Sgrilli, Bruno Stefani, Boris Zueff. Finally, amongst the illustrators who worked for Pigna during the post Second World War period, we must recall E. Gusmaroli, Lico, G. Mattoni, Manno Previtali, Giorgio Scudellari and Guido Zamperoni (*Zam&Roni*). A similar attention was naturally devoted to the choice of the authors of the texts which accompanied and supported the illustrations on the covers, but with regards to these characters the research into the Pigna Company's historical archives has not yet given back precise information and data.

The success enjoyed by the Pigna Company – already in the late 1920s it had control of a large part of the flourishing market of the school exercise books, in part thanks to the state job orders – was also due to the contribution of other factors which we should remember, albeit only briefly. First of all, the

⁴⁷ See U. Levra, *Fare gli italiani. Memoria e celebrazione del Risorgimento*, pp. 65-66.

⁴⁸ About Italian illustrators for children, see A. Faeti, *Guardare le figure. Gli illustratori italiani dei libri per l'infanzia*, Torino, Einaudi, 2001; and P. Vagliani, *I grandi per i piccoli: autori e illustratori per l'infanzia a Torino dal 1900 al 1950, tra letteratura, pittura e arti decorative*, in *Bibliofilia subalpina*, Torino, Centro Studi Piemontesi, 2000, pp. 121-136. A first census of illustrators of Italian notebooks of the twentieth century is contained in J. Meda, *Quaderni di scuola. Nuove fonti per la storia dell'editoria scolastica minore*, cit., p. 90.

nature of the exercise book's iconic-verbal message, was able – much more so than a schoolbook, a dictation, classroom readings or the actual lessons held by teachers – to pour into the daily life of the pupils (and their families) and, like a sort of modern advertising message, for a determined period (the period of use of the didactical aid) reiterate its content, rendering it familiar and creating a background, almost a *continuum* in the perceptual universe of the individual pupil's experience.

Secondly, the equally revealing aspect was the fact that, no matter what its specific didactical use (for composition and/or exercises, for rough or final copy, etc.), the exercise book established a daily relationship of familiarity with the pupil and, also thanks to the essentiality and repetitiveness of the message transmitted, it aimed at facilitating the acquisition/fixing of specific contents and images – much more so and better than textbooks which, because of their complexity, needed the mediation of teacher. Because of the impersonal features of textbooks and the fact that they were common to many students, as well as their nature as finished products, defined in their formal and content features, textbooks made less likely the possibility of the process of a pupil's identification/appropriation – compared to exercise books – especially if we consider that it is a process which notably weighs on building a determined imagery.

It must be added that, inside the Alzano Lombardo company, the conviction was soon clear that it was necessary to introduce systems and solutions in order to make pupils faithful to the Pigna products: that is, to obtain a sort of “loyalty” from the client. As in the case of collecting the Liebig picture cards – which were matched with specific popular goods – it was a question of building a relationship of continuity with the buyers. Hence, the launch of an actual “series” (a sort of monothematic collection) of exercise books, which were destined to build many thematic routes to be completed through acquiring a certain number of items, and whose iconic-verbal message was autonomous in each single exercise book and, at the same time, embedded into a more global itinerary of information/education, which developed and ended up in the “series”. After being launched in a fairly anonymous manner and already limited form in the years of the war with Libya, this strategy of creating loyalty in the pupils reached its acme and maturity during the twenty year Fascist period, when – as shown by the same company's advertising – it triggered off a mechanism of purchase similar to that of the collecting of picture cards, with the aim of completing the entire collection of exercise books of one or more “series”, as well as the search for possible missing copies.

A review, albeit brief, of the main subjects and themes which were developed on the covers of the exercise books in more than fifty years of activity of the Pigna company⁴⁹, from the end of the nineteenth century to the post Sec-

⁴⁹ The documentary materials which are reproduced here (sketches, illustrations, samples of covers, etc.) and related to the chronological period from the last decade of the nineteenth centu-

ond World War period, allows us to globally evaluate the developmental trends and the aforementioned aspects, as well as to see the various facets which the Alzano Lombardo company had, in the framework of the mass-schooling and nationalization processes which occurred after the unification of Italy. In connection with the historical phases, the large collection of materials (sketches, samples of covers, single copies, etc.) which are preserved in the Historical Archives of the Pigna paper mill, permits us to outline four different periods, each one presenting homogeneous characteristics from the point of view of the style, of the typographic-editorial format and, what is more significant for our analysis, of the contents and messages that were transmitted.

As regards the first phase, that is between the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, from the analysis of the covers a strong attention principally emerges – according to typical nineteenth-century models – towards themes of moral and civic education (one recalls in particular the series: “Good children” and “Bad children”)⁵⁰; in the meantime it is also clear that there was an intention of offering, through exercise books, an occasion for enriching the grounds of school knowledge, thanks to a sort of “additional curriculum” supplementing the primary school course. Hence, the first and still disorganized “series” were launched dedicated to the alphabet and writing, as well as disciplines such as geography, the history of the country, drawing and painting, arithmetic and geometry, natural sciences etc.⁵¹. In addition to the aforementioned typologies, we must add the ones destined to illustrate fairy-tales⁵², moral stories⁵³ and episodes from the great works of Italian and European literature⁵⁴.

ry up to the second post-war period (1950s and 1960s), are stored at the Historical Archives of the Pigna paper mill (from now on cited as: ASCP) in Alzano Lombardo (Bergamo). I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to the Direction of the firm *Cartiere Paolo Pigna* for allowing me to access the Historical Archive and to consult the rich documentation that is kept there, as well as for allowing me to reproduce – in this paper – a significant part of the Pigna exercise books’ covers between the nineteenth and twentieth century. I would like to sincerely thank Giulia Bassi and Valerio Volpi for giving me their precious collaboration in order to find the documentation and reproduce it. It must be clarified that the Pigna Historical Archive has not yet been fully arranged, therefore a first and tentative arrangement of the documentation, together with a first organization into series, and the archival references, have been given by the Author, in collaboration with Giulia Bassi.

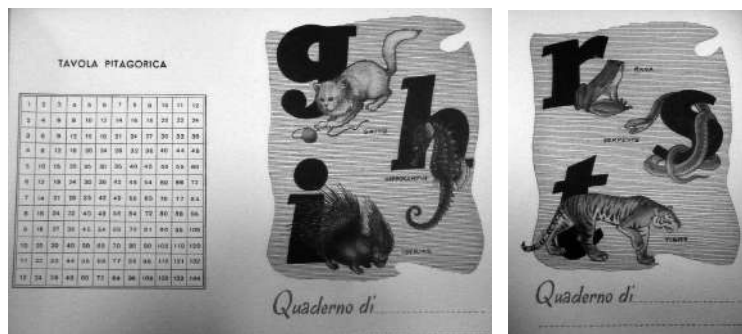
⁵⁰ See the illustrations kept inside the series: without title, *senza titolo* (from now on: s.t.), 1908, in ASCP, *Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni*, n. 2.

⁵¹ See the illustrations kept inside the series: *Alfabeto*, without date (*senza data*, from now on: s.d.), in ASCP, *Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni*, nn. 1-2.

⁵² See the illustrations kept inside the series: *Favole*, s.d., in ASCP, *ibid.*

⁵³ See the illustrations kept inside the series: *Favole*, s.d., in ASCP, *Scatola bianca grande*.

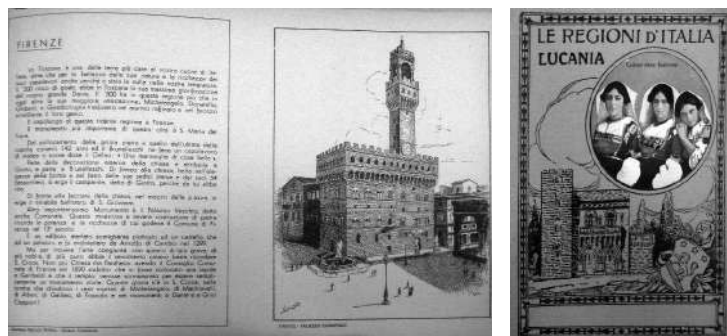
⁵⁴ See the illustrations kept inside the series: *Don Chisciotte della Mancia*, s.d., in ASCP, *ibid.*



Series *Alfabeto* («Alphabet»).

The second phase is noted starting above all with the *Libyan feat* and the First World War. Here subjects and themes linked to the national identity and patriotism prevail, as do the cult of the nation and the knowledge of its beauty. Significant, as well as illustrative of a totally new approach even from the point of view of the language and the iconographic communication styles, are the “series” of covers, which were devoted to:

– the great cities of Italy⁵⁵ and the Italian regions with their customs and traditions⁵⁶;



Series *Le regioni d'Italia* («The regions of Italy»).

⁵⁵ See the illustrations kept inside the series: *Città d'Italia*, s.d., in ASCP, Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni, nn. 1-2 and Scatola bianca grande.

⁵⁶ See the illustrations kept inside the series: *Le Regioni d'Italia*, 1921-1927, in ASCP, Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni, n. 2.

– the Italian colonies⁵⁷;



Series *Le Colonie d'Italia* («The Italian colonies»).

– great Italians in history (an idealistic representation of the “people of saints, poets and explorers”)⁵⁸;

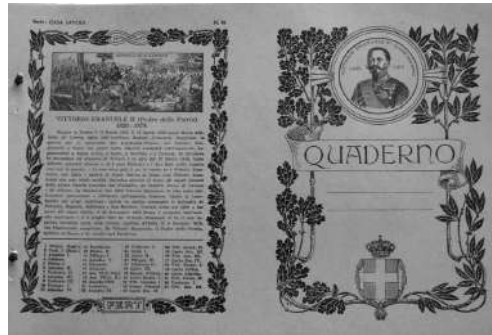
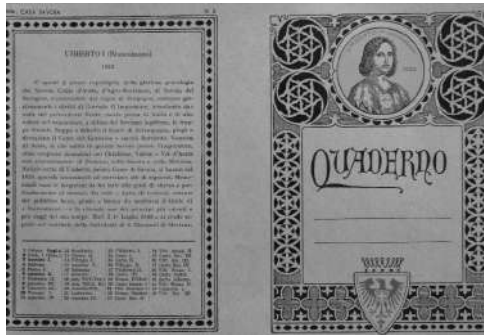


Series *I grandi navigatori* («Great Italian explorers»).

⁵⁷ See the illustrations kept inside the series: *Le Colonie d'Italia*, 1910-1912 e 1921-1927, in ASCP, *ibid*.

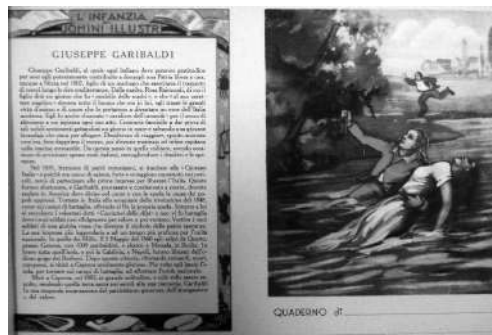
⁵⁸ See the illustrations kept inside the series: *I grandi navigatori*, s.d., in ASCP, Scatola bianca grande.

– the glorification of Italian roots and the historical role of the Savoy Dynasty⁵⁹;



Series *Casa Savoia* («The Savoy Dynasty»).

– the *pantheon* of the “Fathers of the Nation”⁶⁰;

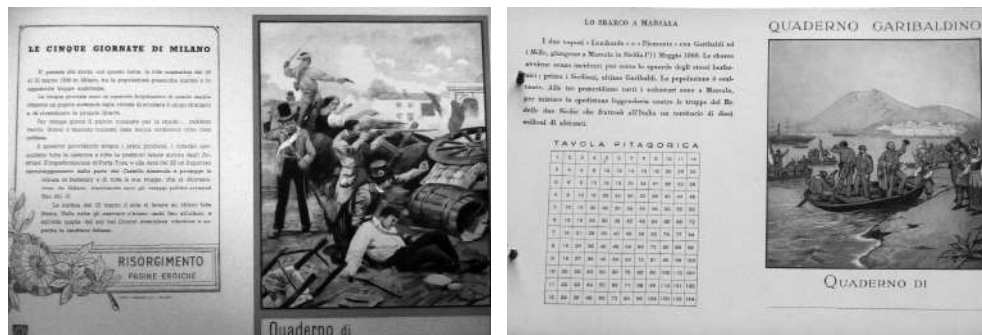


Series *L'infanzia di uomini* («Childhood of Great Men»).

⁵⁹ See the illustrations kept inside the series: *Casa Savoia*, 1909-1910 and 1925-1926, in ASCP, *ibid.*

⁶⁰ See the illustrations kept inside the series: *L'infanzia di uomini illustri*, 1922-1924 and 1936-1937, in ASCP, *Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni*, nn. 1-2.

– the leading figures of the *Risorgimento*, considered from a popular national point of view⁶¹;



Series *Risorgimento. Pagine eroiche* («Risorgimento: heroic pages») and *Quaderno garibaldino* («Garibaldi exercise book»).

– colonial feats⁶²;



Series *Le grandi imprese coloniali* («Great colonial feats») and *Le nostre colonie* («Our colonies»).

⁶¹ See the illustrations kept inside the series: *Risorgimento. Pagine eroiche* and *Quaderno garibaldino*, s.d., in ASCP, Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni, n. 2 and Scatola bianca grande.

⁶² See the illustrations kept inside the series: *Le grandi imprese coloniali* and *Le nostre colonie*, 1910-1913, in ASCP, Scatola bianca grande.

– the heroic evidence of the Great War⁶³.



Series *Episodi del valore italiano nella Grande Guerra* («Events of Italian bravery in the Great War 1915-1918») and *Gli invitti di Redipuglia* («The unbeaten patriots of Redipuglia»).

The third and more prolific period of the production of the Pigna exercise books coincides with the twenty year Fascist period. From the second half of the 1920s, a notable increase in sales and the organization of a commercial distribution network capable of supplying stationery stores all over the national territory was accompanied by a business policy aimed at achieving the objectives of the Mussolini regime in the field of school and, in general, of the mass education of the youth. All this was to be clearly reflected in the choice of subjects and themes to be developed on the covers. In fact we can notice the realisation of a complete strategy, aimed at supporting and giving impulse to the

⁶³ See the illustrations kept inside the series: *Il valore italiano nella Grande Guerra*, *Episodi del valore italiano nella Grande Guerra 1915-1918*, *I Condottieri* and *Gli Invitti a Redipuglia*, 1921-1923 and 1927-1931, in ASCP, *Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni*, n. 1 and *Scatola bianca grande*.

process of fascistization of schools and the youth⁶⁴, according to the modalities and features which were similar to those developed in the reading books for the primary school, especially in the *Single State Textbooks*⁶⁵.

The analysis of the “series” of covers which circulated in this phase, not only discloses the systematic and pervasive nature of the intention of transforming school exercise books into a formidable tool for the transmission and spread of fascist ideology and propaganda; but it also reveals the extraordinary modernity of techniques and graphic-verbal languages used, which marked a real turning point in comparison with the previous phases. A rapid review of the series of exercise books of the 1920s and 1930s, up to the Second World War – a period where production came to a drastic standstill⁶⁶ – shows an increasingly prevalence of themes and subjects with a strong ideological and political mark, which became almost exclusive during the 1930s, for example:

– the exaltation of the “fascist revolution” and the appeal to the fundamental principles and the *slogans* of the regime⁶⁷;



Series *Nuove legioni* («New legions»).

⁶⁴ See A. Gibelli, *Il regime illustrato e il popolo bambino*, in V. De Grazia, S. Luzzatto, *Dizionario del fascismo*, Vol. I, Torino, Einaudi, 2002, pp. 262-263; Id., *Il popolo bambino. Infanzia e nazione dalla Grande Guerra a Salò*, Torino, Einaudi, 2005. Regard to the specific topic of the school exercise books, see also D. Montino, *Le parole educate. Libri e quaderni tra fascismo e Repubblica*, Milano, Selene, 2005.

⁶⁵ See 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, R. Sani (eds.), *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 & Pensiero, 2005; D. Montino, *Le parole educate. Libri e quaderni tra fascismo e Repubblica*, pp. 121-144; R. Sani, *La «bonifica fascista» dei libri di testo dalla riforma Gentile alla Carta della Scuola di Bottai*, paper presented at the conference promoted by the Faculty of Education of the University of L'Aquila (L'Aquila, 30-31 March 2007), whose proceedings are in the press.

⁶⁶ See an outline in G. Bertacchi (ed.), *La Resistenza ad Alzano Lombardo. Itinerari di ricerca attraverso testi e documenti cinquant'anni dopo*, Bergamo, Istituto bergamasco per la storia della Resistenza e dell'età contemporanea, 1995, pp. 23-28 and *passim*.

⁶⁷ See the illustrations kept inside the series: *Nuove Legioni*, s.d., in ASCP, Scatola bianca grande.

– the subtle propaganda against communism, or rather the “Nation’s enemy” explained to children⁶⁸;



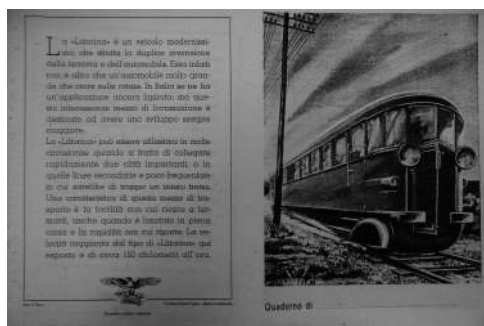
Series *Infanzia felice* («Happy Childhood»).

– the “new fascist Italy” represented in the great works of the regime (monuments, town planning, technical conquests, etc.)⁶⁹;



Series *Ali d'Italia* («Italian Wings») and *Visioni d'Italia* («Italian visions»).

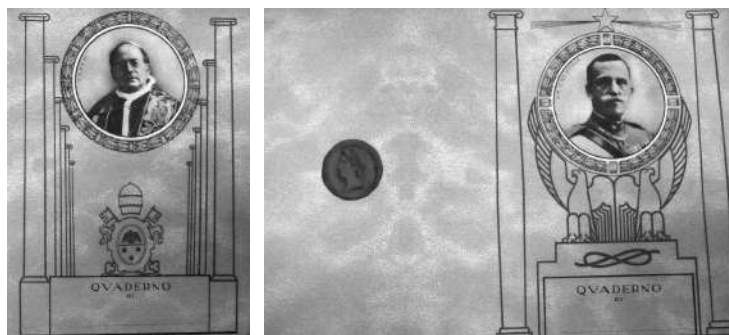
Series *I nostri transatlantici* («Our transatlantics») and *Grandi Record* («Great records»).



⁶⁸ See the illustrations kept inside the series: *Infanzia felice*, 1935, in ASCP, Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni, n. 1.

⁶⁹ See the illustrations in the series: *Visioni d'Italia*, *Opere del Regime*, *Grandi Record*, *Ali d'Italia* and *I nostri Transatlantici*, 1930-1936, in ASCP, Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni, nn. 1-2, Campionario copertine 1932-1950 and Scatola bianca grande.

– the celebration of the Conciliation and the new relationship between the State and Church after the Lateran Pact of 1929⁷⁰;



Series *Pergamena* («Parchement»).

– the transformation of the country into a great military power and the building of an “Armed Nation”⁷¹;



Series *Nuove armi* («New weapons»).

⁷⁰ See the illustrations in the series: *Pergamena*, s.d., in ASCP, Scatola bianca grande.

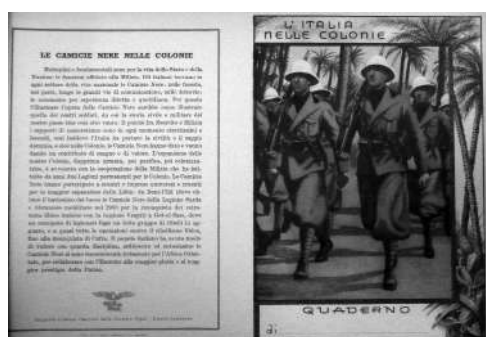
⁷¹ See the illustrations kept in the series: *Nuove Armi, Navi da Guerra, Civiltà-Vittorie-Armi*, 1931-1938 and 1940-1943, in ASCP, Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni, n. 1, Campionario copertine 1932-1950 and Scatola bianca grande.

– the effort of integrating people in the colonies and the founding of the Empire⁷²;

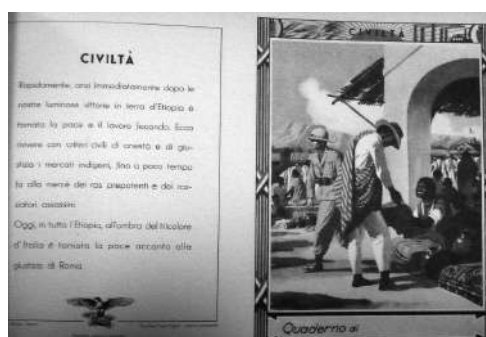


Series *Colonie d'Italia* («Italian colonies»).

Series *L'Italia nelle colonie* («Colonial Italy») and *Vittorie* («Victories»).



– the dimensions and characters of the “Fascist culture”, and its expansion into the Empire’s territories⁷³;



Series *Civiltà* («Civilisation») and *Infanzia felice* («Happy Childhood»).

⁷² See the illustrations in the series: *Colonie d'Italia*, *Africa Orientale* and *Civiltà-Vittorie-Armi*, 1930-1943, in ASCP, *ibid*.

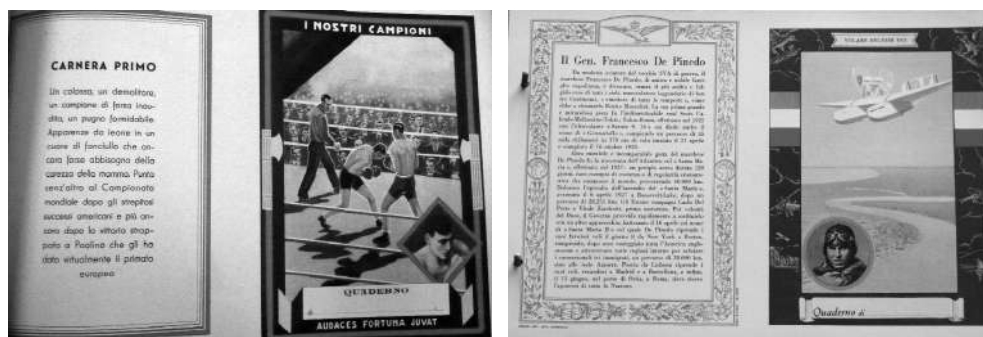
⁷³ See the series: *Infanzia felice* and *Civiltà-Vittorie-Armi*, 1935 and 1940-1943, in ASCP, *ibid*.

– Autarchy, the “grain battle” and the new “work culture”⁷⁴;



Series *Autarchia* («Autarchy») and *Agricoltura* («Agriculture»).

– daily life in the twenty year Fascist period, told through the actions of “Great Italians” in the field of sport and in aeronautical feats⁷⁵;



Series *I nostri campioni* («Our champions») and *Ali d'Italia* («Ali d'Italia»).

⁷⁴ Series: *Autarchia* and *Agricoltura*, 1936-1938 and 1932, in ASCP, *Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni*, n. 2, *Campionario copertine 1932-1950* and *Scatola bianca grande*.

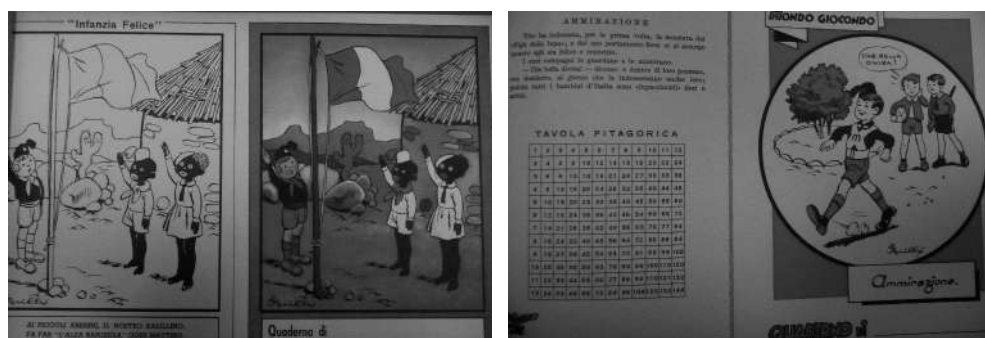
⁷⁵ Series: *I nostri campioni*, *Sport* and *Ali d'Italia*, 1929-1936, in ASCP, *ibid*.

– the exaltation of physical and military education for youth⁷⁶;



Series *Giovinchezza sportiva* («Sporting youth») and *Giovinchezza in marcia* («Marching youth»).

– the building of the fascist *New Man*, exemplified through three diverse genres of illustrations and texts: focusing on the image of the healthy and care-free childhood (the “happy childhood”)⁷⁷;

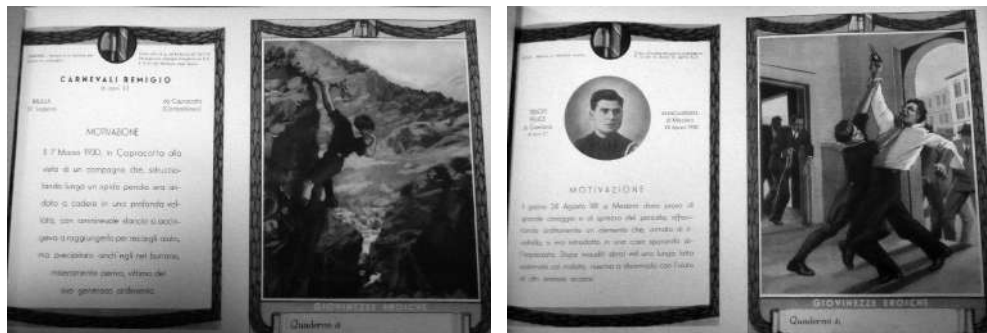


Series *Infanzia felice* («Happy childhood») and *Mondo Giocondo* («Plauful world»).

⁷⁶ Series: *Giovinchezza sportiva* and *Giovinchezza in marcia*, s.d. and 1936-1940, in ASCP, *ibid*.

⁷⁷ Series: *Infanzia felice* and *Mondo giocondo*, 1935 and s.d., in ASCP, *Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni*, n. 1-2.

– the example of the “heroic youth”⁷⁸;



Series *Giovinezze eroiche* («Heroic youth»).

– the militarisation of the new generation, which was inspired by the famous motto: “Each boy a soldier!”⁷⁹;

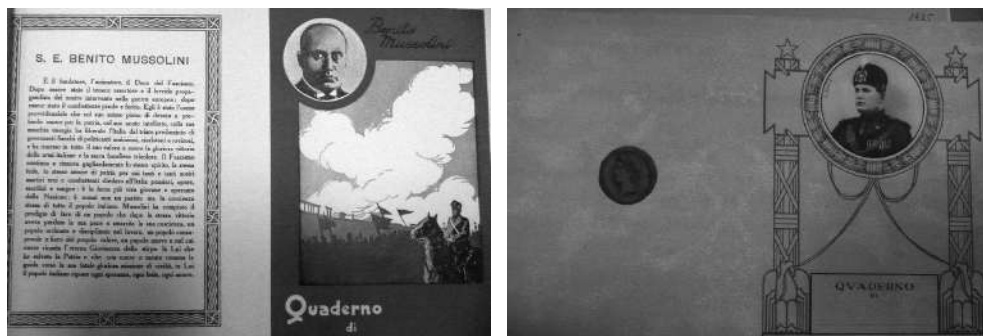


Series *Piccolo soldato* («Little soldier»).

⁷⁸ Series: *Giovinezze eroiche*, 1937, in ASCP, Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni, n. 2.

⁷⁹ Series: *Piccolo soldato*, s.d., in ASCP, Scatola bianca grande.

– and finally, one can not forget the real “cult of the *Duce*” (i.e. Mussolini), who was often retracted on the exercise books’ covers⁸⁰ in various styles and situations.



Series *Benito Mussolini and Pergamena* («Parchement»).

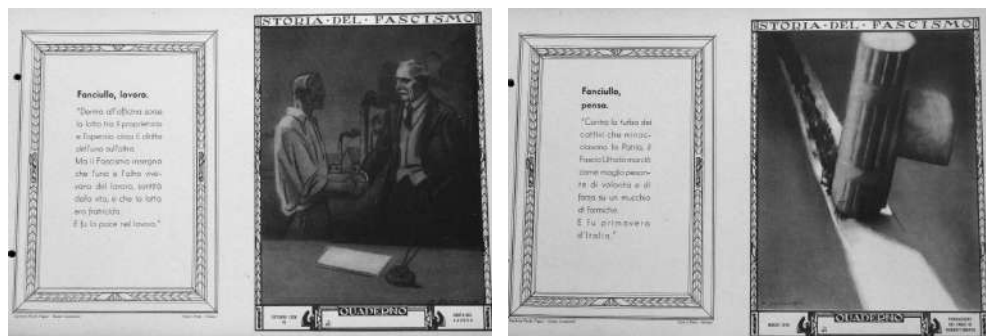
The choice of matching images (drawings, photographs, etc.) with brief explanatory texts, which clarified or completed the picture’s message, was subject to a particular impulse in this phase. As in previous periods, the texts were written in a clear and essential language, and easy to comprehend at all levels; however, as if in confirmation of the Pigna company’s capability to adapt its communicative approach to diverse contexts and in tune with the “new times”, during the twenty year Fascist period, they acquired the argumentative style and the rhetorical ways of the political mass-communication adopted by the fascist regime. In contrast, they consequently lost their directness and intentional simplicity which had in the past guaranteed the exercise books’ efficacy and success with the particular public of children, boys and their families. As proof of this we must recall the cycle of covers from the series *Storia del Fascismo* («History of Fascism»), illustrated by Marcello Dudovich in the 1930s⁸¹.



Series *Storia del Fascismo* («History of Fascism»).

⁸⁰ Series: *I condottieri*, 1931, in ASCP, Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni, n. 1.

⁸¹ Series: *Storia del Fascismo*, s.d., in ASCP, Scatola bianca grande.



Series *Storia del Fascismo* («History of Fascism»).

These covers, because of the particular style of their images and texts, constitute something more than a reconstruction or a telling of facts and events (the “history” of Fascism, as suggested by the title). Rather, they take the shape of a real “fascist catechesis”, typically set according to the rhetorical forms and the communicative style of religious works.



Series *Storia del Fascismo* («History of Fascism»).

From this point of view, it is undeniable that we find ourselves in front of one of the most significant and emblematic examples of the union between word and image, text and picture. A union which reintroduced into school exercise books the concept of Fascism as a “political religion” – which was already largely witnessed in manuals and textbooks (e.g. in some history manuals⁸²) – in which determined symbolic and cultural tools and the verbal-iconic language revisited, from a secular point of view, the expressive forms typical of religious speech⁸³.



Series *Storia del Fascismo* («History of Fascism»).

⁸² See S. Guarracino, *I manuali del consenso*, «I viaggi di Erodoto» 1989, 8, pp. 170-183; A. Ascenzi, *L'immagine di Giuseppe Mazzini nei manuali di storia dall'Unità al fascismo*, in *Giuseppe Mazzini. Verifiche e incontri*, Genova, Gammarò Editori, 2006, pp. 17-37; and Ead., *L'insegnamento della storia e la manualistica storica da Gentile a Bottai*, in *Educazione e scuola in Italia da Gentile a Bottai (1922-1943)*, paper presented at the conference promoted by the Faculty of Education of the University of L'Aquila (L'Aquila, 30th-31st March 2007), whose proceedings are currently being printed.

⁸³ See E. Gentile, *Il culto del Littorio. La sacralizzazione della politica nell'Italia fascista*, Laterza, Roma-Bari, 1993

With fall of Fascism after the Second World War and the coming of a democratic government, the Pigna paper mill had to face the need to reorganize production activity, and to cope with the damaged material and the general crisis in the sector caused by the lack of raw materials and by the delays in restoring the commercial network of distribution. In addition to this, the firm had to radically rethink all its editorial strategies, and to redefine, from the point of view of its cover themes and subjects, its own business image.

It was a necessarily long and complex process, which was characterised by highs and lows and many difficulties, but which allowed the firm not only to keep its production in the sector, but also to develop and to enlarge its own field of action, through acquiring a further share of the market⁸⁴. Obviously it is not possible in these circumstances to explain the development of the Alzano Lombardo company in the last fifty years, but in conclusion it is worthy mentioning two substantial aspects of the “new strategy” which was undertaken by Pigna in the post Second World War period. The first aspect regards the definitive overcoming of that particular *pedagogical intentionality* – in the sense of projects aimed at national mass-education, which were time after time assumed and followed by the post-unification ruling classes – which, from the Liberal age to the Fascist period, had represented a constant in the production and editorial strategies of the paper mill, and contributed to define its identity and undoubtedly to achieve its success.

The second aspect, strictly linked to the first one, deals with the fact that during the post Second World War period the definitive decline of the traditional perspective of supporting the process of mass-nationalization of the Italian youth, did not coincide with undertaking an analogous perspective of engagement in embedding the new values and ethical-civic demands of the rising Italian democracy in the new generations⁸⁵.

As regards the cover themes, the choice focused – at least initially – on rigorously neutral subjects, as testified by the widespread series of exercise books whose covers were dedicated to “My country: monuments and landscapes of the peninsula”⁸⁶.

⁸⁴ See M. De Meis, A. Pellegrini, *Il settore della cellulosa e della carta*, in Camera dei Deputati, *Atti della Commissione parlamentare d'inchiesta sui limiti posti alla concorrenza nel campo economico*, vol. VII: *Studi e monografie*, Roma, 1965, pp. 129-145.

⁸⁵ See R. Sani, *La scuola e l'educazione alla democrazia negli anni del secondo dopoguerra*, in M. Corsi, R. Sani (ed.), *L'educazione alla democrazia tra passato e presente*, Filano, Vita & Pensiero, 2004, pp. 43-62.

⁸⁶ See illustrations kept in the series: *La mia Patria e Italia artistica*, 1953-1954 and 1955, in ASCP, Campionario vecchi quaderni, nn. 1-2 and Scatola bianca grande.



Series *La mia patria* («My homeland»).

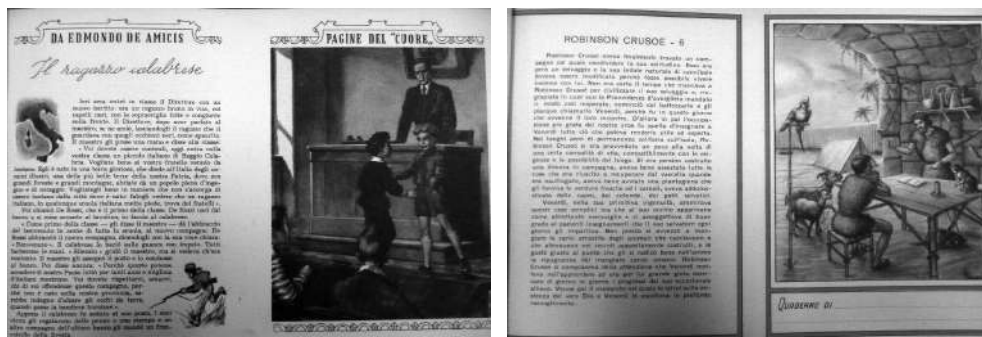
From the 1950s, apart from welcoming the ever spreading “American dream” with its stories about the Far West⁸⁷,



Series *Eroi del Far West* («Heroes of the Far West») and *Avventure indiane* («Indian Adventures»).

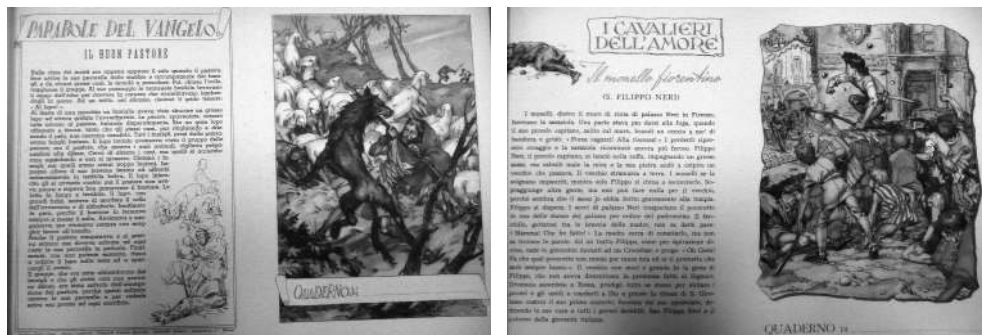
⁸⁷ See illustrations kept in the series: *Eroi del Far West e Avventure indiane*, 1948, in ASCP, *ibid.*

and recovering reassuring pages from the classics of children's and youth literature (*Cuore* by De Amicis, several tales by Emilio Salgari, *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe and *Peter Pan* by James Matthew Barrie)⁸⁸,



Series *Pagine del "Cuore"* («Pages of "Cuore"») and *Robinson Crusoe*.

the Pigna exercise books gave generous room to the use of religious themes⁸⁹;



Series *Parabole del Vangelo* («Parables of the New Testament») and *I cavalieri dell'amore* («The knights of love»).

⁸⁸ See illustrations in the series: *Pagine del «Cuore»*, *Sandokan*, *Robinson Crusoe* and *Peter Pan*, 1950-1954, in ASCP, *ibid.*, n. 1.

⁸⁹ See illustrations kept in the series: *Parabole del Vangelo* e *I Cavalieri dell'Amore*, 1948-1949, in ASCP, *Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni*, nn. 1-2.

and to entertainment and amusement purposes, which were for the very first time consciously and purposely organized into age brackets, focusing especially on fairy-tales for the youngest and on comics for pupils in intermediate classes⁹⁰;



Series *La rosa di Bagdad* («Baghdad Rose») and *Giornalino*.

and on the presentation of new sport “idols”, for the somewhat more grown up pupils⁹¹.



Series *I grandi campioni del ciclismo* («The champions of cycling»).

⁹⁰ See illustrations kept in 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 and Scatola bianca grande.

⁹¹ See illustrations kept in the series: *I grandi campioni del ciclismo*, 1948-1949, in ASCP, Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni, nn. 1-2.

A certain success was obtained by the covers dedicated to “nature and its marvels”⁹², taken from popular American scientific documentaries, aimed at stimulating the imagination of the adolescent and enlarging their knowledge.



Series *La natura e le sue meraviglie* («Wonders of the nature»).

Substantially, in a framework which was marked by a gradual prevailing of market logic and of the dynamics connected with the development of the consumer society⁹³, the new editorial strategy adopted by the Pigna paper mill emerged – in the same way as would happen to other important enterprises in this sector – becoming one which had to comply with the new tastes of the young and public opinion, which were then being shaped by the cinema and other mass media, and increasingly inspired by American models (Walt Disney) and by the *American Way of Life*⁹⁴.

After the definitive fading of any pretension to contribute to the building of the “new Italy” and to the nationalization of the young generations, the Pigna exercise books have given back to us, in these last fifty years, the image

⁹² See illustrations kept in the series: *La natura e le sue meraviglie*-Walt Disney, 1950-1960, in ASCP, Campionario copertine 1932-1950.

⁹³ See C. D'Apice, *L'arcipelago dei consumi. Consumi e redditi delle famiglie italiane dal dopoguerra a oggi*, Bari, De Donato, 1981; and G. Ragone, *Consumi e stile di vita in Italia*, Napoli, Guida, 1985. About the transformations in Italians' daily life during the first fifteen years after the war, see also, G. Venè, *Vola colomba. Vita quotidiana degli italiani negli anni del dopoguerra: 1945-1960*, Milano, Mondadori, 1990.

⁹⁴ In this connection see 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 (eds.), «Quaderni Storici», 1985, pp. 95-134; S. Gundle, *L'americanizzazione del quotidiano. Televisione e consumismo nell'Italia degli anni Cinquanta*, «Quaderni Storici», 1986, 62, pp. 563-580; G. Finck, F. Minganti, *La vita privata italiana sul modello americano*, in Ph. Ariès, G. Duby (eds.), *La vita privata. V: Il Novecento*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1988, pp. 351-380.

of a childhood and youth which are no longer regimented or object of an ideological and political plan, but which exist in a rather individual and private dimension, product of a process which has passed through various and deep transformations, from the immediate post-war period up to present day.

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La stampa scolastica e l'avvento del Fascismo

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1. La stampa per gli insegnanti agli inizi degli anni Venti

Nei primi venti anni del Novecento la stampa per la scuola raggiunse il suo massimo sviluppo in termini di testate stampate e di copie diffuse. Si trattava di un'esperienza ormai consolidata fin dagli ultimi decenni del secolo precedente. Come era accaduto e accadeva in altre parti d'Europa, ad esempio in Francia, Inghilterra, Germania, anche da noi i periodici professionali erano ben presto entrati tra le abitudini correnti degli insegnanti, soprattutto di quelli della scuola elementare¹.

I giornali scolastici si erano moltiplicati dall'Unità in poi per varie ragioni: per la necessità di aiutare in specie i maestri nella quotidiana attività didattica; allo scopo di partecipare ai dibattiti scolastici, fenomeno connesso alla graduale acquisizione dell'identità professionale da parte degli insegnanti e della consapevolezza del loro ruolo sociale; per il bisogno di difendere quelli che erano allora definiti "gli interessi di classe" (oggi si direbbero le rivendicazioni sindacali), soprattutto attraverso i bollettini associativi.

Non c'era maestro o maestra che non fosse abbonato a qualche foglio magistrale che lo raggiungeva periodicamente anche nelle località più sperdute. Nel *Romanzo di un maestro* il De Amicis ci presenta il protagonista, il maestro

¹ G. Chiosso (a cura di), *I periodici scolastici nell'Italia del secondo Ottocento*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1993, pp. 7-44.

Emilio Ratti, intento a sfogliare «al lume di una minuscola fiammella di petrolio» nelle lunghe serate in casa, raccolte di giornali scolastici per trovare esercizi adatti ai suoi allievi e tenersi aggiornato sulla vita scolastica.

Nonostante le difficoltà provocate dalla Grande guerra che aveva richiamato molti maestri e professori in servizio militare, il contingentamento della carta e altre priorità più urgenti cui far fronte, alla fine del conflitto i giornali magistrali erano fiorenti. Non era inconsueto il caso di città anche di dimensioni medio-piccole nelle quali uscivano due o addirittura tre fogli scolastici. Spesso essi erano espressione di gruppi di insegnanti che appartenevano a diverse organizzazioni magistrali, in particolare alle due più significative e capillarmente distribuite sul territorio nazionale: l'Unione Magistrale Nazionale e l'Associazione Magistrale Italiana "N. Tommaseo", tra loro in forte concorrenza ideologica e politica.

Parimenti significativa, pur se meno rilevante sul piano quantitativo, era anche la pubblicistica per i docenti delle scuole secondarie, solitamente legata ai gruppi associativi locali che animavano la vita dei professori medi, talora in aperto contrasto o semplicemente *a latere* dell'associazione di maggior peso e cioè la Federazione Nazionale Insegnanti Scuole Medie. Apprezzabile era inoltre la presenza dei fogli dei sodalizi che raccoglievano i docenti dell'istruzione tecnica, di disegno, di geografia, di scienze, di matematica, di materie classiche che congiungevano gli interessi specifici disciplinari con i problemi di categoria.

Per avere l'idea dell'imponente mole di pubblicazioni scolastiche che uscirono nella forma del bollettino associativo tra il 1900 e il 1925 basta citare questi dati: 126 testate riconducibili all'Unione Magistrale Nazionale, 60 legate all'Associazione Magistrale Italiana "N. Tommaseo" e 48 voci di altre associazioni di maestri (gruppi non ricompresi nei sodalizi maggiori, testate socialiste e di categorie specifiche come i direttori didattici e gli ispettori) per un totale, nel solo comparto della scuola elementare, di ben 234 periodici. A questa cospicua cifra vanno inoltre aggiunti 44 titoli di iniziative avviate tra i professori della scuola media fino a raggiungere la rispettabile cifra di 278 giornali distribuiti in maniera abbastanza omogenea sull'intero territorio nazionale².

Queste espressioni della vita e della vivacità del corpo docente erano affiancate da importanti riviste a diffusione nazionale sorte tra la fine dell'Ottocento e i primi anni del nuovo secolo con scopi principalmente didattici, ma arricchite da articoli letterari, riflessioni pedagogiche, scritti di varia umanità e, ovviamente, completate da una ricca sezione di notizie politico-scolastiche.

Agli inizi degli anni Venti tre erano le riviste magistrali più importanti a livello nazionale. La prima per prestigio e diffusione era certamente «I Diritti della scuola», diretta da Annibale Tona, sorta alla fine del 1899 per iniziativa di un grande divulgatore pedagogico e scrittore per l'infanzia, Guido Antonio

² I dati sono ricavati dall'introduzione al repertorio a cura di G. Chiosso, *La stampa pedagogica e scolastica in Italia. 1820-1943*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1997, p. 9.

Marcati. «I Diritti» avevano rilevato l'eredità del «Risveglio educativo» di Milano, che aveva rappresentato una delle voci di maggior spicco dell'ultimo scorcio dell'Ottocento. Dopo una breve stagione milanese, nel 1903 la redazione si era trasferita nella capitale. Già nel 1902 «I Diritti della scuola» potevano vantare una tiratura di 18 mila copie, tiratura che andò ulteriormente aumentando negli anni successivi in relazione anche con il sostegno che la rivista diede al sorgere e allo sviluppo della prima grande associazione magistrale nazionale, la già ricordata Unione Magistrale Nazionale³.

Il periodico del Tona era espressione di quella cultura laica e democratica d'intonazione tardo positivista (e non infrequentemente anche filo massone) che percorreva larga parte del mondo degli insegnanti italiani del primo Novecento. Politicamente a lungo vicina al ministro Credaro, al momento della guerra la rivista si era definita «pacifista per convinzione, ma interventista per necessità» e continuò a difendere in modo così battagliero i diritti dei maestri e la necessità di miglioramenti retributivi al punto che diversi numeri negli anni di guerra subirono i tagli della censura.

Su posizioni più caute e misurate e d'intonazione più patriottica, si collocava anche il «Corriere delle maestre» diretto da Guido Fabiani, giornalista e scrittore di talento, uno degli autori più longevi e di maggior spicco della casa editrice milanese Vallardi. Mentre infatti «I Diritti della scuola» erano di proprietà di una piccola casa editrice sorta appositamente per la pubblicazione del periodico e di cui il Tona era *magna pars*, il «Corriere delle maestre» costituiva uno delle iniziative editoriali più importanti dell'editore milanese intorno alla quale il Fabiani creò un'ampia offerta di libri di testo e di opere di narrativa per l'infanzia⁴.

Rivolgendosi direttamente alle maestre (che all'inizio del Novecento ormai rappresentavano i 2/3 circa degli insegnanti elementari italiani) il periodico vallardiano aveva compiuto una scelta coraggiosa, ritagliandosi una quota di mercato molto interessante e promettente che assicurò a lungo (fino agli anni Quaranta) una prospera vita alla testata.

La terza rivista a diffusione nazionale era «Scuola Italiana Moderna», avvia-

³ Manca purtroppo uno studio che ricostruisca le vicende dei «Diritti della scuola» e l'unica traccia complessiva è la nota di G. Tognon in *La stampa pedagogica e scolastica in Italia*, cit., scheda n. 367. Sul piano memorialistico si rinvia alla monografia *I quarant'anni dei "Diritti della scuola"*, in «I diritti della scuola», 1939, suppl. al n. 13. Molte riferimenti alla vita del periodico e al ruolo svolto dal suo direttore Annibale Tona, limitatamente al periodo 1900-1925, si trovano nel saggio di A. Barausse, *L'Unione Magistrale Nazionale. Dalle origini al fascismo. 1901-1925*, Brescia, La Scuola, 2002.

⁴ Per una visione d'insieme dell'esperienza del «Corriere delle maestre» cfr. *La stampa pedagogica e scolastica in Italia*, cit., scheda n. 322 e *Bibliografia dei periodici femminili lombardi. 1786-1945*, Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, 1993, scheda n. 88. Cfr. inoltre lo spoglio bibliografico curato da E. Catarsi, A. Peretti, *Il "Corriere delle maestre" (1897-1943). Aspetti e problemi di una rivista magistrale*, «Bollettino Cirse», 1982, n. 3, pp. 33-42. Sull'attività editoriale del Fabiani cfr. P. Decima, *I manuali di storia per le elementari tra '800 e '900. L'esempio di Guido Fabiani*, «La fabbrica del libro», 2005, n. 2, pp. 8-13.

ta nel 1893 a Brescia per iniziativa degli ambienti magistrali cattolici locali. Dopo una precaria esistenza durata per circa un decennio (meno di un migliaio di copie a numero), il periodico bresciano cominciò ad affermarsi a partire dal 1904 quando ne assunsero la direzione Angelo Zammarchi e Ettore Arduino. Due concomitanti ragioni assicurarono al foglio bresciano una fortuna crescente (alla vigilia della guerra poteva contare su 7.500 copie in abbonamento). In primo luogo vanno ricordate le sinergie con l'Associazione Magistrale "N. Tommaseo" sorta nel 1907 in alternativa all'Unione Magistrale Nazionale, operazione che la rivista caldeggiò e sostenne energicamente, diventando la "bandiera" della scuola ispirata ai principi cristiani. Ma non meno decisivi ai fini dell'affermazione del foglio bresciano furono anche la scomparsa o il ridimensionamento di altri fogli cattolici (specie nel primo dopoguerra), fenomeno che spostò una cospicua quota di lettori verso «Scuola Italiana Moderna»⁵.

Sul versante della scuola secondaria nessun periodico riuscì ad affermarsi come un grande organo nazionale per diffusione e durata comparabile a quelli destinati ai maestri. Tra i due secoli furono compiuti due tentativi in tal senso, ma senza raggiungere risultati apprezzabili.

Il primo, «La biblioteca delle scuole italiane»⁶, pur vantando una discreta durata (dal gennaio del 1889 al dicembre 1905), un buona schiera di collaboratori e il sostegno di numerose case editrici (che se ne avvalevano come canale pubblicitario per le loro edizioni scolastiche), fu travagliato da continue interruzioni delle pubblicazioni con svariati cambi di editori e direttori. Il secondo, «La scuola secondaria italiana», fu un'iniziativa propiziata dapprima dalla casa editrice del Risveglio educativo e, quindi, rilevata dall'editore Agnelli⁷. Ma neppure questa impresa riuscì a decollare, chiudendo le pubblicazioni dopo pochi anni (marzo 1897-ottobre 1904).

Agli inizi del nuovo secolo non mancarono invero alcune esperienze pubblicistiche autorevoli anche sul versante dell'istruzione secondaria, a partire dalle note riviste di Giuseppe Lombardo Radice, «Nuovi Doveri»⁸ e «Rassegna di

⁵ M. Cattaneo, L. Pazzaglia (a cura di), *Maestri, educazione popolare e società in "Scuola Italiana Moderna"*, 1893-1993, Brescia, La Scuola, 1997. Sulle ragioni del rilancio della rivista bresciana rinvio a quanto detto in G. Chiosso, *La stampa scolastica tra Otto e Novecento e "Scuola Italiana Moderna"*, «Civiltà bresciana», 1993, n. 2, pp. 9-13.

⁶ *La stampa pedagogica e scolastica in Italia*, cit., scheda n. 111.

⁷ *Ibid.*, scheda n. 1103.

⁸ *Ibid.*, scheda n. 755. Sulla rivista lombardiana è ormai disponibile un'ampia documentazione di cui sono riferimenti principali M. Raicich, *Gli anni dei "Nuovi Doveri" (1907-1913)*, «Riforma della scuola», 1968, nn. 8-9, pp. 3-10; M. Rossi, *L'antefatto dei "Nuovi Doveri"*, *ibid.*, 1968, n. 12, pp. 605-612; N. Sistoli Paoli, *L'educazione popolare nel "socialista" Giuseppe Lombardo Radice*, in G. Genovesi, C.G. Lacaita (a cura di), *Istruzione popolare nell'Italia liberale. Le alternative delle correnti di opposizione*, Milano, Angeli, 1983, pp. 269-282; R. Fornaca, *Pedagogia italiana del Novecento. Dall'inizio del secolo al primo dopoguerra*, Roma, Armando, 1978, pp. 125-133; A.M. Colaci, *Gli anni della riforma. Giuseppe Lombardo Radice e "L'Educazione nazionale"*, Lecce, Pensa, 2000, pp. 32-51; R.A. Rossi, *Idealismo pedagogico e riforma della scuola nella rivista "Nuovi Doveri"*, Cosenza, Edizioni Periferia, 2002.

pedagogia e politica scolastica»⁹ affiancate da altre meno conosciute, ma non meno interessanti come, ad esempio, «La cultura dello spirito»¹⁰ di Francesco Paolo Japichino, «Il vomere»¹¹ uscito a Napoli per iniziativa di Giovanni Sanna e Nicola Terzaghi e soprattutto «La nostra scuola» avviata nel 1913 da un gruppo di insegnanti milanesi vicini a Prezzolini, Gentile e Lombardo Radice¹².

Si trattò tuttavia di periodici di breve durata e a circolazione abbastanza circoscritta, anche se di notevole significato per la qualità culturale e l'ampiezza dell'analisi delle politiche scolastiche del tempo. Basta ricordare alcuni dei collaboratori per averne conferma: Gaetano Salvemini, Giovanni Gentile, Ernesto Codignola, Mariano Maresca, Giuseppina Pizzigoni, Giuseppe Saitta, Giovanni Modugno, Bernardino Varisco.

Il tentativo più riuscito di dar vita a un significativo periodico di respiro nazionale destinato ai professori della scuola secondaria fu compiuto a Milano con «La corrente», apparso nel gennaio 1904, dapprima espressione dell'Associazione milanese fra gli Insegnanti delle Scuole Medie e poi, dal 1907, trasformato in un libero giornale¹³. Vicino alle posizioni della Federazione Nazionale Insegnanti Scuole Medie, negli anni della guerra fu animato da forti idealità nazionali e fu molto sensibile ai temi dell'irredentismo e del pieno coinvolgimento degli intellettuali nell'opera di «educazione nazionale». Nell'immediato dopoguerra s'impegnò per una forte difesa della scuola statale contro le aperture dei gentiliani, antefatto delle critiche che avrebbe destinato alla riforma del 1923. Tra i collaboratori anche questo periodico annoverò nomi importanti nella vita culturale di quegli anni come lo storico Corrado Barbagallo, il letterato Alfredo Galletti, il filosofo Rodolfo Mondolfo, oltre a Gaetano Salvemini, Giuseppe Lombardo Radice e molti altri, tra cui alcuni giovani di promettente futuro come il latinista Concetto Marchesi.

⁹ *La stampa pedagogica e scolastica in Italia*, cit., scheda n. 877.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, scheda n. 347.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, scheda n. 1273.

¹² *Ibid.*, scheda n. 725. Ved. inoltre A. Santoni Rugiu, *Dai primi del '900 alla Riforma Gentile*, «Scuola e città», 1967, n. 4-5 (numero monografico dedicato a Ernesto Codignola), pp. 39-43; G. Tognon, *Benedetto Croce alla Minerva*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1990, pp. 294-296; G. Chiosso, *La formazione del maestro in alcune riviste scolastiche e pedagogiche del primo Novecento*, in G. Genovesi, P. Russo (a cura di), *La formazione del maestro in Italia*, Ferrara, Corso, 1996, pp. 83-85.

¹³ *La stampa pedagogica e scolastica in Italia*, cit., scheda n. 320. Sul periodico milanese numerosi riferimenti in L. Ambrosoli, *La Federazione Nazionale Insegnanti Scuola Media dalle origini al 1925*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1967.

2. I giornali per la scuola di fronte alla riforma scolastica del 1923

Questa rigogliosa e varia presenza pubblicistica era destinata a sbriciolarsi nel breve spazio compreso tra il 1924 e il 1926. Decisive furono, d'un lato, le restrizioni in materia di stampa introdotte nel momento della transizione del fascismo verso la dittatura, già anticipate da alcune iniziative del luglio 1923¹⁴ e, dall'altro, le disposizioni contro il libero associazionismo successive al 1925. Può valere anche per la stampa per gli insegnanti quanto è stato scritto per i giornali in generale: «È difficile indicare con precisione quanto tempo ci volle per fascistizzare la stampa italiana, ma alla fine del 1926 il processo era ormai completato»¹⁵.

La conquista dei giornali costituì infatti uno dei primi obiettivi del fascismo. Alla stampa dell'Italia liberale strumento di gruppi privati che l'avevano orientata a vantaggio di propri interessi economici e politici i fascisti opponevano una concezione della stampa al servizio della nazione, «veicolo dell'avanzamento sociale e politico di tutti i cittadini»¹⁶. La libertà di stampa andava conseguentemente intesa non soltanto come «un diritto, ma anche come un dovere [...]». Se si vuole, come si vuole, che il giornalismo sia una missione, ebbene ogni missione è accompagnata da un senso altissimo di responsabilità»¹⁷.

Al giornalismo non poteva, perciò, «essere riconosciuta libertà di movimento se non nella misura in cui assolveva le sue proprie funzioni nel progresso del fascismo». Notizie e informazioni andavano perciò usate «con scopi pedagogici» e cioè come «strumenti per sviluppare e modellare la coscienza nazionale»¹⁸. Da queste premesse scaturirono con il tempo e il rafforzarsi del regime le limitazioni e le violazioni della libertà di stampa secondo un copione proprio di ogni dittatura.

Non mancano analogie tra la strategia perseguita nel campo della stampa e i rapporti tra il fascismo, il mondo scolastico e, in specie, l'associazionismo dei docenti (e la pubblicistica che vi era collegata). Anche in questo caso i fascisti muovevano agli insegnanti e ai sodalizi che li rappresentavano l'accusa, non

¹⁴ Il primo intervento volto al controllo della stampa fu il R.D. n. 3288, *Norme sulla gerenza e vigilanza dei giornali e delle pubblicazioni periodiche*, del 13 luglio 1923. Il provvedimento dava al governo ampi poteri discrezionali in materia di soppressione o di sequestro dei giornali. Mussolini non diede tuttavia immediata validità al decreto (che restò comunque come una spada di Damocle sulla libertà di stampa) che entrò poi in vigore all'indomani del delitto Matteotti, il 10 luglio 1924.

¹⁵ Ph.V. Cannistraro, *La fabbrica del consenso. Fascismo e mass media*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1975, p. 177.

¹⁶ Così si poteva leggere, per esempio, sull'*Annuario della stampa 1929-1930*, a cura del Sindacato nazionale fascista dei giornalisti, Milano, Libreria d'Italia, 1930, pp. V-VII.

¹⁷ Dall'intervento di Mussolini al Primo Congresso del Sindacato nazionale fascista dei giornalisti nel gennaio 1924, cit. in V. Castronovo, N. Tranfaglia (a cura di), *La stampa italiana nell'età fascista*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1980, pp. 38-39.

¹⁸ Ph.V. Cannistraro, *La fabbrica del consenso. Fascismo e mass media*, cit., p. 174.

del tutto infondata, di essere prigionieri di interessi particolaristici e dunque condizionati dai ristretti orizzonti dei problemi di categoria (in specie di tipo rivendicativo) senza riuscire a innalzarsi a una visione “nazionale”, come si diceva allora, della questione scolastica.

La conseguenza era che gli insegnanti non riuscivano a percepirsi come i principali protagonisti (e, di conseguenza, incapaci di pensare alla scuola come a uno dei luoghi strategici per il futuro della Nazione) per la formazione di un “nuovo italiano” e dunque incapaci di servire un “supremo interesse” a cui andavano, quando necessario, anche sacrificati gli interessi particolaristici. Contro questo fondamentale limite fin dall'immediato dopoguerra alcuni gruppi di intellettuali e docenti secondari avevano moltiplicato le critiche, come vedremo tra breve, verso l'associazionismo scolastico.

La stampa italiana accolse in genere il primo governo Mussolini con un misto di attesa, di curiosità e anche di sollievo nella speranza del superamento della paralisi e degli scontri che avevano segnato gli ultimi governi liberali. Queste analisi riflettevano i sentimenti e le preoccupazioni degli strati sociali borghesi e piccolo-borghesi impauriti dalle rivendicazioni della sinistra rivoluzionaria. La tendenza prevalente nei grandi giornali di opinione si orientò verso l'aspettativa della “normalizzazione” della vita nazionale auspice il fascismo come dimostrano i ricorrenti appelli in questo senso che lungo tutto il 1923 apparvero sui maggiori organi di informazione. Soltanto la stampa di opposizione (socialista, comunista, repubblicana) manifestò subito profonde e irriducibili riserve sulla natura “liberale” del fascismo¹⁹.

Il fatto che i quotidiani più importanti avessero aperto verso il fascismo una linea di credito, aiutò notevolmente Mussolini a consolidare il suo potere. In questa situazione aumentarono per Mussolini «le possibilità di manovra e di effettiva gestione del potere», trasformando e radicando a suo vantaggio lo stato d'animo prevalente nel paese «sino a dare ad esso il carattere di una vera e propria adesione al suo governo»²⁰.

Non molto diverse rispetto alla tendenza prevalente nella stampa d'opinione furono le valutazioni apparse, ad esempio, rispettivamente sui «Diritti della scuola» e sul «Corriere delle maestre» al momento dell'incarico di capo del governo a Mussolini. Il fatto che egli fosse un maestro sembrava di buon augurio per la comprensione e soluzione dei problemi che agitavano la scuola italiana e la categoria magistrale. Nel salutarne l'ascesa al potere Annibale Tona auspicava che il Paese fosse «uscito finalmente dall'incubo della lotta civile» e si avviasse «con risoluto animo alla sua ricostruzione, morale ed economica» dopo la lentezza snervante e inconcludente dell'azione parlamentare e governativa più recente. Dal «Corriere delle maestre» giungeva l'invito per una pron-

¹⁹ V. Castronovo, N. Tranfaglia (a cura di), *La stampa italiana nell'età fascista*, cit., pp. 3-18.

²⁰ R. De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere. 1921-1925*, Torino, Einaudi, 1995 (1° ediz. 1966), p. 395.

ta ripresa del processo riformatore della scuola all'insegna dell'educazione nazionale e di una generale pacificazione.

Nello scorrere le raccolte dei giornali scolastici, compresi quelli associativi, non si coglie però (salvo che nei fogli magistrali di tendenza socialista) un'esplicita e preminente attenzione verso le vicende politiche di quegli anni.

Non mancano – è vero – qualche dibattito sulla natura del fascismo e qualche preoccupazione per le intemperanze dei primi gruppi magistrali in camicia nera, al momento ancora largamente minoritari. Appare tuttavia nettamente prevalente l'attenzione alle questioni che toccavano più da vicino la vita dei maestri: lo stato giuridico, la richiesta di statizzazione di tutte le scuole, l'equiparazione degli stipendi a quelli degli impiegati dello Stato, la riforma del Monte pensione, la sistemazione in ruolo di alcune categorie di maestri, per ricordare soltanto le tematiche più vive. Questa visione alquanto settoriale dei problemi rifletteva la curvatura sindacal-corporativa che, come abbiamo già accennato, aveva connotato l'azione dell'associazionismo professionale fin dagli anni precedenti lo scoppio della guerra e, con maggior forza, in quelli dell'immediato dopoguerra.

Gentile e gli idealisti suoi sodali avevano fatto della critica di questo atteggiamento, come è noto, uno degli obiettivi centrali del loro impegno politico, intraprendendo vigorose battaglie polemiche attraverso fogli come «La nostra scuola» acquisita da Vallecchi²¹ e animata dopo il 1920 dal Codignola e «L'Educazione nazionale» fondata nel 1919 da Lombardo Radice d'intesa con Prezzolini. Questi periodici manifestarono ben presto un'esplicita intenzione militante. Intorno ad essi si aggregarono gruppi di docenti e intellettuali con l'evidente intenzione di creare un contraltare alle storiche associazioni dei docenti.

Il Codignola promosse a tal fine il Gruppo d'Azione per la scuola nazionale mentre Lombardo Radice, a sua volta, diede vita alla Lega democratica per il rinnovamento della vita nazionale con un occhio di riguardo al tema della riforma scolastica. Di lì a poco, nell'autunno del 1919, il Codignola e il Lombardo Radice unificarono gli sforzi nell'iniziativa del Fascio di Educazione nazionale cui diedero, almeno in una prima fase, la loro adesione personalità di varia estrazione e formazione culturale (tra gli altri Anile, Gentile, Gobetti, Momigliano, Monti, Prezzolini, Varisco). Le successive vicende del Fascio por-

²¹ A partire dal 1920 l'editore fiorentino Attilio Vallecchi (da poco sulla scena editoriale dietro la decisiva spinta di Papini e Soffici che si erano staccati dal gruppo della prezzoliniana «Voce») divenne il canale privilegiato, specie per iniziativa di Ernesto Codignola, per la diffusione del neo idealismo gentiliano e del movimento per la riforma della scuola. Tra il 1920 e il 1925 Gentile pubblicò presso Vallecchi ben dieci volumi oltre a due ristampe e ai testi di Spaventa e Gioberti da lui curati. Il Codignola assunse la direzione di svariate collane, animò la rivista di pedagogia «Levana» e alla chiusura delle pubblicazioni de «La nostra scuola» diede vita al periodico magistrale «La nuova scuola italiana». Cfr. G. Turi, *Giovanni Gentile. Una biografia*, Firenze, Giunti, 1995, pp. 448-449; C. Betti, *L'editoria scolastica e pedagogica fiorentina e le sue novità*, in C. Betti (a cura di), *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, pp. 288-291.

tarono nel 1922 Codignola e Lombardo Radice a collaborare con Gentile alla riforma scolastica e a creare, per iniziativa specialmente di Codignola, un gruppo di pressione all'interno del fascismo²².

Nel frattempo alcuni fascisti della prim'ora fuoriusciti dall'Unione Magistrale (Ciarlantini, Dini, Sacconi) già alla fine del 1922 si mossero per dare vita ad un'associazione alternativa ai sodalizi storici, la Corporazione della Scuola, con il preciso scopo di smantellare l'associazionismo magistrale e secondario (in particolare il gruppo più forte e organizzato e cioè l'Unione Magistrale Nazionale). Ben presto la Corporazione divenne il braccio operativo del fascismo nel mondo degli insegnanti.

Furono queste le premesse su cui si sviluppò, in specie a partire dal 1924, il graduale svuotamento delle associazioni dei maestri e dei docenti secondari e il progressivo allineamento delle maggiori testate al nuovo clima politico.

Fino a quel momento l'attenzione dei giornali scolastici era stata assorbita dalle vicende della riforma scolastica avviata da Gentile alla fine del 1922 e proseguita con gran lena (e anche in grande silenzio) per tutta la prima parte del 1923. Il giudizio sul fascismo passò in secondo piano rispetto alla realtà di una riforma gestita in modo autoritario e senza nessuna forma di consultazione con i rappresentanti degli insegnanti. Enorme fu, a questo riguardo, lo sconcerto tra le *élites* associative del tempo. Provocò grande impressione, fin quasi – si direbbe – a intimorire gli ambienti dei maestri e dei professori, il decisionismo di Gentile che, appena salito al Ministero, inviò una severa circolare che richiamava i docenti i loro doveri con un linguaggio che rasentava la disciplina militare²³.

Come è risaputo la riforma scolastica si abbatté sulla scuola italiana come un vero e proprio uragano, scompigliando le carte in tavola. Non è questa la sede per approfondire i rapporti tra Gentile e le tesi scolastiche del fascismo, tematica del resto già ampiamente indagata da numerosi studiosi. Basta qui ricordare che Gentile elaborò con un piccolo gruppo di fidati collaboratori, la "sua" riforma senza mediazioni, godendo dell'incondizionato appoggio di Mussolini, anche quando si levarono alte le proteste dell'opinione pubblica.

Secondo il filosofo siciliano si trattava di ridare serietà, rigore, coscienza nazionale alla scuola perché la rinascita dell'Italia partiva dall'educazione degli Italiani. E questo nel linguaggio gentiliano si traduceva nel primato della cultura classica, l'unica a suo vedere idonea a formare lo "spirito" dell'allievo, nella rigida gerarchizzazione degli ordini scolastici associata ad una concezio-

²² Per una dettagliata e documentata ricostruzione di queste vicende cfr. A. Santoni Rugiu, *Dai primi del '900 alla Riforma Gentile*, cit. pp. 39-42. Sul Fascio di Educazione nazionale cfr. inoltre U. Margiotta, *Giuseppe Lombardo Radice. Tra attualità pedagogica e irrisoluzione storica*, Reggio Calabria, Edizioni Parallelo 38, 1975, pp. 241-249; G. Chiosso, *L'educazione nazionale da Giolitti al primo dopoguerra*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1983, pp. 167-173.

²³ C.M. del 25 novembre 1922, n. 64 dal significativo titolo *La disciplina nella scuola e il dovere degli insegnanti*.

ne aristocraticamente selettiva – nella logica, per dirla in altro modo, del minimo d'istruzione a tutti e nel massimo ai pochi destinati a diventare il ceto dirigente di domani – e infine in una concezione della libertà scolastica subordinata al principio del valore preminente dello Stato.

E se non aveva del tutto torto Gentile a sostenere, a posteriori, che la riforma del 1923 altro non era che la sistemazione organica delle proposte che negli anni d'anteguerra erano state ampiamente e vivacemente dibattute tra i professori, è pur anche vero l'azione riformatrice si era compiuta, inquadrandola entro un preciso sistema filosofico e interpretando con un approccio fortemente ideologico solo alcune proposte formulate negli anni prima della guerra negli ambienti della Federazione Nazionale Insegnanti Scuole Medie.

Le aperture di Gentile e Lombardo Radice circa l'insegnamento religioso nella scuola elementare e verso le scuole confessionali erano poi vissute in maniera molto contrastata all'interno del mondo scolastico italiano, in genere segnato da una laicità areligiosa quando non attraversato da un vero e proprio anticlericalismo militante.

Di fronte alla mole dei cambiamenti e alla loro repentina attuazione la reazione della pubblicistica scolastica non si fece attendere. Attraverso le pagine dei «Diritti della scuola» e del «Corriere delle maestre» si assiste al manifestarsi di diversi stati d'animi, dall'attesa iniziale alla preoccupazione fino al dissenso, ora espresso con toni cauti (il «Corriere») ora manifestato con toni più forti (i «Diritti»). Ma il punto in un certo senso accomunante più che ideologico-politico appare quello della corporazione che guarda a se stessa. La riforma viene insomma giudicata soprattutto dal punto di vista degli insegnanti, del loro status lavorativo e delle loro aspettative economiche e, salvo la dibattuta questione dell'insegnamento religioso e la riforma della scuola normale, molto meno dal punto di vista dell'assetto complessivo.

Nulla che lasci intravedere un atteggiamento di più ampio respiro, nulla insomma di comparabile con gli articoli che apparvero in quello stesso periodo, per esempio, sulla «Rivista pedagogica» del Credaro dove si coglieva lo sforzo di indagare la riforma nei suoi risvolti culturali e pedagogici e, in certa misura, anche nelle sue valenze sociali e politiche²⁴. E nulla di politicamente così impegnativo come accadeva nel caso dei periodici socialisti che attaccavano frontalmente la riforma per la sua impostazione di classe e per le concessioni ai cattolici in materia di libertà scolastica²⁵.

²⁴ G. Chiosso, *L'opposizione democratica alla riforma Gentile: il caso della "Rivista pedagogica"*, in *Opposizioni alla riforma Gentile*, Torino, Quaderni del Centro Studi "C. Trabucco", n. 7, pp. 115-152; M.A. D'Arcangeli, *Luigi Credaro e la "Rivista pedagogica" (1908-1939)*, Roma, Tipolitografia Pioda, 2000, pp. 141-148.

²⁵ L. Ambrosoli, *Libertà e religione nella riforma Gentile*, Firenze, Vallecchi, 1980, pp. 102-127 e 174-190; R.S. Di Pol, *La politica scolastica del fascismo nelle riviste del socialismo riformista italiano (1923-1926)*, in *Opposizioni alla riforma Gentile*, cit., pp. 153-187. Cfr. anche R. Mondolfo, *Educazione e socialismo*, a cura di T. Pironi, Manduria, Lacaita, 2005, pp. 209-283.

C'è da chiedersi se la lettura sostanzialmente tattica della riforma fosse del tutto riconducibile entro gli orizzonti limitati e circoscritti agli interessi immediati degli insegnanti secondo una consuetudine che si ritrova anche per altre questioni e in altri contesti storici oppure se certi silenzi fossero dovuti alle preoccupazioni legate al decreto sulla stampa del luglio 1923 sopra ricordato e che gli storici giudicano l'antefatto delle leggi liberticide che sarebbero venute più tardi.

Il decreto, ufficialmente presentato come risposta "inevitabile" agli abusi dell'opposizione, dava facoltà ai prefetti di diffidare e, sentita una commissione composta da un magistrato e da un giornalista, di dichiarare decaduto il responsabile del giornale (il direttore o uno dei principali redattori) che pubblicasse notizie false o tendenziose volte a danneggiare il credito nazionale, turbare l'ordine pubblico o disobbedire alle leggi in vigore. Con un simile strumento tra le mani per i prefetti non sarebbe stato difficile segnare la morte di qualunque foglio che si avventurasse a criticare l'opera del governo. Gentile, dal canto suo, non aveva esitato a procedere per vie disciplinari contro alcuni maestri che sull'organo ufficiale dell'Unione Magistrale e su giornali locali avevano attaccato sia la Corporazione della Scuola sia il fascismo stesso²⁶.

Anche se Mussolini non aveva subito dato corso al decreto sulla stampa, sospendendone la pubblicazione sulla «Gazzetta Ufficiale» fino a che le circostanze lo avessero richiesto (ciò che sarebbe accaduto soltanto al tempo del delitto Matteotti)²⁷, l'eventualità che il decreto diventasse da un momento all'altro esecutivo introdusse nel mondo dei giornali un clima intimidatorio. La conseguenza fu che i giornalisti scelsero la comoda strada dell'autocensura.

Sono indicative, a questo riguardo, le aperture che sul «Corriere delle maestre», dopo le iniziali critiche a diversi aspetti della riforma, cominciarono ad apparire verso il fascismo con l'ospitalità a scritti di esponenti della Corporazione della Scuola (Bascone, Giovanazzi e altri). I «Diritti della scuola», dal canto loro, perseguirono l'obiettivo di "normalizzare" la Corporazione della Scuola. Preoccupato dell'aggressività del nuovo sodalizio (rivolta specie contro l'Unione Magistrale Nazionale) il Tona lavorò per l'unione strategica di tutte le forze associative magistrali²⁸.

Con questa proposta il direttore del periodico romano cercava di evitare, per un verso, l'emarginazione dell'Unione Magistrale (che stava subendo l'emorragia dei soci filo fascisti) e, per un altro verso, sperava di circoscrivere l'area di influenza della Corporazione della Scuola, scongiurando che diventasse l'unico interlocutore a livello ministeriale. La Corporazione della Scuola, forte degli appoggi governativi e sostenuta dai gruppi fascisti locali, perseguiva tuttavia un ben altro progetto e cioè quello dell'annessione dei maestri già unio-

²⁶ Per la ricostruzione di queste vicende cfr. A. Barausse, *L'Unione Magistrale Nazionale*, cit., pp. 555-559.

²⁷ R. De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere. 1921-1925*, cit., p. 658.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 560-561.

nisti e tommaseisti. Per questo motivo rifiutò qualsiasi forma di intesa e di alleanza con altre associazioni.

Quanto ai fogli cattolici e, in primo luogo, a «Scuola Italiana Moderna» su di essi non furono influenti i consensi che a Gentile giungevano, per esempio, dal padre Gemelli e dalla «Civiltà Cattolica» per il riconoscimento della libertà di insegnamento e l'istituzione dell'esame di stato, obiettivi perseguiti da decenni dal movimento cattolico. Ma c'erano anche due altre buone ragioni di condivisione della riforma gentiliana. Una riguardava il ripristino dell'insegnamento religioso nella scuola elementare e l'altra concerneva i nuovi programmi elaborati per la scuola elementare da Lombardo Radice. Animati da una concezione idealistico-spiritualistica, essi erano molto più vicini alla sensibilità cattolica del metodismo tardopositivistico reinterpretato nelle forme herbartiane d'inizio secolo che avevano segnato la vita scolastica dei primi due decenni del secolo.

Di questi sentimenti si fecero interpreti i due principali animatori della rivista bresciana, il direttore Ettore Arduino e la responsabile della sezione didattica, Maria Magnocavallo. Nell'aprire l'annata 1923-1924 l'Arduino sottolineava con soddisfazione che, dopo anni di asservimento della scuola agli interessi politici con la riforma dei mesi precedenti si era finalmente manifestata

la difesa aperta e dignitosa degli interessi della Scuola e di coloro che della Scuola sono l'anima, gli artefici modesti, ma operosi di ogni giorno, e gli uni e gli altri considerati in funzione con le superiori esigenze della Nazione²⁹.

La Magnocavallo, a sua volta, annotava che i nuovi programmi per l'istruzione primaria erano destinati a segnare

l'inizio di una nuova era, nella quale l'ossequio alla religione e l'amore all'Italia, congiunti al rispetto per la personalità dell'allunno, saranno la salda base su cui poggerà il lavoro di preparazione delle future generazioni³⁰.

Attraverso il ripristino dell'insegnamento religioso la scuola non si sarebbe più limitata «a istruire», ma avrebbe finalmente potuto perseguire la formazione integrale del fanciullo.

Naturalmente «Scuola Italiana Moderna» manifestava anche alcune riserve, in parte legate alle aspettative retributive e normative degli insegnanti e in parte connesse ai rischi di accentramento burocratico conseguenti all'organizzazione regionale voluta da Gentile. Ma ciò che più li distanziava dal ministro era ovviamente l'*humus* filosofico e culturale sul quale si reggeva la riforma. I cat-

²⁹ [e.a.], *Riprendendo*, «Scuola Italiana Moderna», 1923-1924, n. 1, p. 1.

³⁰ M. Magnocavallo, *Una lieta ripresa di lavoro*, «Scuola Italiana Moderna», 1924-1925, n. 1, p. 1. Sulla figura della Magnocavallo cfr. C. Ghizzoni, *Cultura magistrale nella Lombardia del primo Novecento. Il contributo di Maria Magnocavallo (1869-1956)*, Brescia, La Scuola, 2005.

tolici non potevano dimenticare, ovviamente, che anche per Gentile la scuola per antonomasia era quello dello Stato e che la presenza della religione nella scuola era vista non in quanto valore in se stesso, bensì come una *philosophia minor* in funzione dei limitati orizzonti ideali entro cui si doveva collocare la formazione dei ceti popolari³¹.

Ma, come la Magnocavallo aveva occasione di affermare con fermezza in un convegno dell'associazione "Tommaseo" nel gennaio 1924, «non toccava ai maestri cattolici "sindacare l'intenzione del ministro": a loro toccava semmai il compito di "valorizzare" ciò che era stato concesso»³².

Un netto e incondizionato sostegno alla riforma giungeva invece dai fogli vicini agli idealisti come «L'Educazione nazionale», rivista fondata da Giuseppe Lombardo Radice nel 1919, «Levana» e «La nuova scuola italiana», erede de «La nostra scuola», entrambe dirette da Ernesto Codignola. Proprio intorno all'esperienza di quest'ultima rivista si compì l'intesa tra il gruppo degli idealisti vicino a Codignola stesso e Mussolini in affannosa ricerca di sostenitori di prestigio³³.

Il gruppo gentiliano affrontava la questione scolastica con un respiro culturale e un'ampiezza strategica non comparabile con altre posizioni politico-scolastiche, tanto meno con il filo-sindacalismo dei gruppi associativi dei docenti. La scuola era vista dai gentiliani come l'architrave della rinascita nazionale pagata a così caro prezzo con l'esperienza della guerra. L'educazione "nazionale" – che doveva trovare proprio nella scuola il suo naturale ambiente di promozione – era concepita come partecipazione ad un progetto ideale nel quale solo si poteva ritrovare il senso della propria umanità.

Attraverso la riforma della scuola, in altre parole, si trattava di «rifare l'uomo»: non l'uomo del Rinascimento, incarnazione sì dello spirito, dell'arte e della scienza, ma anche dell'individualismo che aveva portato alla decadenza politica, bensì l'uomo del Risorgimento che esprimeva i valori che avevano reso possibile la formazione dello Stato nazionale e che Gentile individuava in qualità etiche come «sacrificio, devozione di sé all'ideale che lo trascende, riconoscimento di una legge che gli è superiore. E perciò religione»³⁴.

³¹ Per una complessiva lettura dei rapporti tra la rivista bresciana e il fascismo cfr. R.S. Di Pol, *Il cammino di "Scuola Italiana Moderna" tra cultura idealista e condizionamenti politici*, in M. Cattaneo, L. Pazzaglia (a cura di), *Maestri, educazione popolare e società in "Scuola Italiana Moderna"*, cit., pp. 181-213.

³² C. Ghizzoni, *Cultura magistrale nella Lombardia del primo Novecento*, cit., p. 383. Sulla posizione dell'Associazione Magistrale Italiana "N. Tommaseo" verso la politica scolastica del fascismo cfr. L. Pazzaglia, *L'associazionismo magistrale cattolico: la vicenda della Nicolò Tommaseo*, in L. Pazzaglia (a cura di), *Cattolici, educazione e trasformazioni socio-culturali in Italia tra Otto e Novecento*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1999, pp. 564-577.

³³ M. Ostenc, *Il fascismo e la riforma Gentile: opposizioni e convergenze (1922-1923)*, in *Opposizioni alla riforma Gentile*, cit., pp. 9-34.

³⁴ J. Charnitzky, *Fascismo e scuola. La politica scolastica del regime (1922-1943)*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1996, p. 100.

Su questa base – che Gentile aveva elaborato fin dai primi anni del secolo³⁵, che era stata rilanciata con nuovi scritti alla fine della guerra e che, sul piano politico, aveva assunto una prima fisionomia con il Fascio di Educazione nazionale – con l'avvento del fascismo al potere nel gruppo idealista si andarono ben presto delineando due distinte posizioni. Una è riconducibile a «L'Educazione nazionale» di Giuseppe Lombardo Radice³⁶ e l'altra alle riviste animate da Ernesto Codignola, «Levana»³⁷ e «La nuova scuola italiana»³⁸.

Secondo Lombardo Radice la riforma scolastica e, più ampiamente, il movimento di rinnovamento ispirato ai valori nazionali che discendeva dall'esperienza della guerra si doveva svolgere secondo un approccio più etico che politico. Se l'uomo di scuola non poteva ovviamente estraniarsi dalla battaglia politica vera e propria (basta sfogliare «L'Educazione nazionale» per trovarvi un puntuale impegno, talvolta anche aspro, contro ministri, funzionari, partiti e associazioni degli insegnanti) la sua militanza era tuttavia funzionale non all'agone politico ma a quella «trasformazione del quotidiano» a cui è sempre affidato il cambiamento duraturo.

È questo il senso della scelta che Lombardo Radice compie quando lascia l'incarico ministeriale: restare «accanto ai maestri», apprezzare il bene ovunque esso si manifesta, mantenersi al di sopra delle fazioni e pensare alla scuola come a una esperienza «metapartitica». Le idealità nazionali non possono diventare patrimonio esclusivo di sola parte politica, ma fecondare tutte le fedi. Il programma del Fascio di Educazione nazionale

«non è fascista né antifascista, ma italiano; non nazionalista, ma nazionale; un Fascio insomma di italiani... senza "camicia". Noi collaboreremo perché il Governo faccia *arci-bene* il bene che promette con parole nuove; noi non possiamo però rilasciare senz'altro certificati di assoluta fiducia». E poco più avanti: «Vogliamo un'Italia che abbia *tutte le sue voci* e sappia ancora gridare *Evviva* oltre che *Eia!*»³⁹.

Alla visione «metapartitica» del problema scolastico in nome del pluralismo «delle fedi» di Lombardo Radice, risponde la scelta «politica» di Ernesto

³⁵ Sull'evoluzione lineare dal giovane Gentile al filosofo della maturità cfr. E. Giammancheri, *I primi scritti pedagogici di Giovanni Gentile*, «Pedagogia e vita», 1971-1972, n. 6, pp. 619-647.

³⁶ *La stampa pedagogica e scolastica in Italia*, cit., scheda n. 445. La rivista è stata oggetto di accurata attenzione in M. Ostenc, *La scuola italiana durante il fascismo*, cit.; in G. Tognon, *Benedetto Croce alla Minerva*, cit. e in G. Turi, *Giovanni Gentile. Una biografia*, cit. Cfr. inoltre R. Fornaca, *Pedagogia italiana del Novecento. Dall'inizio del secolo al primo dopoguerra*, cit., pp. 133-142; N. Sistoli Paoli, *La figura del maestro in "L'Educazione nazionale"*, in G. Genovesi, P. Russo, *La formazione del maestro in Italia*, cit., pp. 273-287; A.M. Colaci, *Gli anni della riforma. Giuseppe Lombardo Radice e "L'Educazione nazionale"*, cit.

³⁷ *La stampa pedagogica e scolastica in Italia*, cit., scheda n. 637.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, scheda n. 751. Sulle prime annate della rivista cfr. il saggio di C. Betti, «*La nuova scuola italiana*» tra riforma e controriforma dell'istruzione popolare», in G. Spadafora (a cura di), *Giovanni Gentile. La pedagogia, la scuola*, Roma, Armando, 1997, pp. 391-424.

³⁹ G. Lombardo Radice, *Accanto ai maestri. Nuovi saggi di propaganda pedagogica*, Torino, Paravia, 1925, pp. 448-449.

Codignola. «La nuova scuola italiana» e «Levana» si configurano sotto molti aspetti come voci antitetiche a «L'Educazione nazionale»: divergono l'analisi del ruolo svolto dagli idealisti (metapartitico per Lombardo Radice, prefascista per Codignola), la valutazione dei rapporti con il fascismo (mero incontro occasionale secondo Lombardo Radice, naturale sviluppo di un processo storico per Codignola), il concetto stesso di educazione nazionale (equivalente al processo di autoformazione del popolo in Lombardo Radice, fatta coincidere da Codignola con l'educazione fascista).

Differenti furono le reazioni di fronte alla crisi del 1924. Lombardo Radice, nel condividere i sentimenti di sdegno della maggioranza degli italiani, come è noto prese le distanze dal fascismo, lamentando che una serie di errori politici avesse rigettato nella incertezza più grave il paese così da far rischiare alla scuola «di essere assalita anch'essa dalla tragica passione del parteggiare»⁴⁰. Codignola giudicò invece il delitto Matteotti un semplice, per quanto drammatico, incidente di percorso, distinguendo tra la natura «buona» del fascismo e gli eccessi intemperanti e riprovevoli di alcune frange minoritarie che rischiavano di comprometterne l'opera in favore della rinascita dell'Italia⁴¹.

E animati da intenti diversi, pur nel comune richiamo a Gentile e nella convinta difesa della riforma, risultano anche i due volumi che Lombardo Radice e Codignola pubblicano nel 1925: rispettivamente *Accanto ai maestri* e *Il problema dell'educazione nazionale*⁴².

Le intenzioni di Codignola erano state chiaramente espresse già nell'ottobre del 1922 quando, nel salutare l'avvento al ministero di Giovanni Gentile, parlava di una

«ricerca scientifica filosofica o pedagogica» che non poteva estraniarsi dalla vita e giudicava «vane chiacchiere le idee che non si concretizzano nel particolare delle situazioni

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 456 (G. Lombardo Radice, *Accanto ai maestri*, «L'Educazione nazionale», 1924, n. 1).

⁴¹ E. Codignola, *La nostra crisi politica*, «La nuova scuola italiana», 1923-1924, n. 40, pp. 529-530. Alla vigilia del discorso di Mussolini del 3 gennaio 1925 la rivista ammoniva che «una crisi provocata dalla "questione morale" getterebbe il paese nella guerra civile; questo almeno dovrebbero intendere gli oppositori più accaniti. La battaglia contro Mussolini deve essere impegnata sul terreno parlamentare [...]. Il tentativo di sottrarsi a questa logica inesorabile impegnerebbe l'opposizione ad un gesto rivoluzionario, cui naturalmente il fascismo risponderebbe con la violenza» (*ibid.*, 1924-1925, n. 13, p. 191). Sul fascicolo successivo il discorso di Mussolini era presentato come un intervento che mentre «rigalvanizzava la massa fascista aspettante il segno della riscossa contro la sempre più fastidiosa pressione avversaria, gettava lo sgomento fra le opposizioni che stanziano nell'aula e sull'Aventino» e i provvedimenti volti a stroncare i partiti democratici (sequestro di giornali, chiusura di circoli politici, perquisizioni) erano giustificati come salutari provvedimenti «tendenti a sventare la manovra sediziosa delle opposizioni» (*ibid.*, 1924-1925, n. 14, p. II di cop.).

⁴² E. Codignola, *Il problema dell'educazione nazionale in Italia*, Firenze, Vallecchi, 1925. Per un'analisi più approfondita sulle posizioni di Lombardo Radice e Codignola rinvio al mio saggio *Educazione nazionale, politica e scuola in alcuni "Gentiliani" (1919-1925)*, «Pedagogia e vita», 1981-1982, n. 5, pp. 495-523.

storiche in cui bisogna agire inserendosi» perché «gli avvenimenti politici non possono non avere, sempre, un'importanza di prim'ordine»⁴³.

Su precisa questa linea avrebbe orientato «La nuova scuola italiana», impresa editoriale voluta insieme a Vallecchi al duplice scopo di sostenere l'attuazione pratica della riforma scolastica nelle scuole elementari e di rappresentare un fondamentale polo di riferimento per il fascismo scolastico.

«La nuova scuola italiana» si presenta come una rivista militante destinata ai maestri con lo scopo dichiarato di sottrarli alle altre testate magistrali e, in primo luogo, a «I Diritti della scuola». Il linguaggio dei principali collaboratori (tra gli altri il giovane Casotti, ancora molto vicino a Codignola, Sacconi, Bascone, Padellaro) si presenta traboccante di passione politica, talvolta irriverente (e non solo critico) verso gli avversari, spregiudicato nei giudizi fino a rappresentare in modo quasi caricaturale la scuola prima di Gentile. La linea politica è di scoperto fiancheggiamento dell'operato ministeriale e governativo e il sostegno al fascismo e alla Corporazione della Scuola risulta incondizionato.

3. *La crisi della libera stampa democratica e la fine dell'associazionismo professionale*

Nell'ottobre 1924 la riforma scolastica entrava in vigore in un clima di generale insofferenza e, in molti casi, di esplicita protesta. Insegnanti, genitori e studenti (in specie quelli universitari) espressero in vari modi la loro insoddisfazione. Si moltiplicarono non solo le memorie e gli scritti di protesta inoltrati al Ministero, ma sorsero anche svariati comitati per contrastare la chiusura di scuole o sollecitare disposizioni transitorie.

Protestavano, in particolare, le famiglie per il maggior rigore degli studi, protestavano gli studenti delle scuole secondarie e quelli universitari, protestavano gli editori per la «bonifica libraria» che mandava al macero migliaia di libri, protestavano i docenti per gli accorpamenti disciplinari e i licenziamenti dovuti alla soppressione di alcune materie. Gentile si era frattanto dimesso dall'incarico di ministro, giudicando ormai esaurito il proprio compito, e anche Lombardo Radice aveva lasciato la Direzione generale delle scuole elementari.

La protesta contro la riforma costituiva una seria sfida per il governo e Mussolini invitò i prefetti a riferirgli «con massima precisione ed obiettività ripercussioni riforma Gentile nonché stato animo popolazione e studenti»⁴⁴.

⁴³ Per Giovanni Gentile, «Levana», 1922, n. 4, p. 369.

⁴⁴ J. Charnitzky, *Fascismo e scuola. La politica scolastica del regime (1922-1943)*, cit., p. 167. Sulle proteste connesse con l'avvio della riforma scolastica cfr. l'ampia ricostruzione alle pp. 166-173 e 206-208.

Il malessere della scuola s'incrociò con uno degli episodi più drammatici della storia di quegli anni: l'assassinio del deputato socialista Matteotti con tutte le conseguenze che ne scaturirono. Le vicende che seguirono tra l'estate e l'autunno posero le premesse per la svolta autoritaria del fascismo che Mussolini avrebbe sancito senza reticenze con il discorso del 3 gennaio 1925.

Della crisi di quei mesi ben poco filtrò sui fogli scolastici e i pochi cenni che se ne trovano si presentano sempre con un certo distacco rispetto all'agone politico. Così, ad esempio, il Fabiani mentre denunciava coraggiosamente la violenza fascista all'indomani del delitto Matteotti, non giungeva tuttavia a una precisa presa di posizione politica. Fedele al motto che campeggiava nella testata: «La scuola al di sopra dei partiti, l'Italia al di sopra di tutto!», il «Corriere» si rifugiava *super partes*, come si poteva cogliere nella chiusa dell'articolo:

È superfluo dire che con le nostre parole noi non ci riferiamo a politica di parte. Saliamo più alto, nel campo cioè della educazione del popolo nostro di tutti i gradi, così borghese come operaio. Poiché non basta segnare nelle riforme della scuola un nuovo indirizzo morale, che certo varrà meglio a meglio educare le generazioni venture; occorre altresì che, con l'opera assidua dei governi, dei giornali, dei discorsi, dei libri, e ogni altro mezzo di propaganda e di esempio, si infonda in tutti i ceti della popolazione nostra la profonda persuasione e la pratica dell'amore e del rispetto del prossimo⁴⁵.

Lo stato d'animo prevalente, anche di fronte alla controversa riforma e alla grave incertezza politica, si direbbe in sostanza quello oscillante tra la presa d'atto di un fatto ormai compiuto (l'affermazione del fascismo) e il desiderio di restare al di fuori delle contese politiche.

Soltanto «I Diritti della scuola» osarono attaccare in quei mesi la riforma scolastica con una serie di articoli di Mariano Maresca, che fornì l'occasione per un vivace scambio di opinioni con Lombardo Radice e altri collaboratori della rivista diretta dal Codignola. Ma le drammatiche giornate vissute dall'Italia nella seconda metà del 1924 – con le forze politiche dell'antifascismo sull'Aventino parlamentare in segno di protesta – trovarono anche sulla rivista del Tona un modesto spazio, confinato nella rubrica miscelanea dedicata alle informazioni politiche⁴⁶.

Tra la fine del 1924 e i primi mesi dell'anno seguente apparvero sempre più evidenti due fenomeni: il sostanziale accostamento delle maggiori testate al fascismo e l'irreversibile crisi dell'associazionismo professionale che portò con sé la fine di gran parte di quella pubblicistica locale che, come si è sopra ricordato, era stata espressione della vitalità del mondo scolastico italiano.

Il primo fenomeno fu dunque quello del ripiegamento e, in seguito, dell'affiancamento filo fascista sempre più esplicito delle testate maggiori. Anche in

⁴⁵ G. Fabiani, *Dopo il delitto di Roma*, «Il corriere delle maestre», 1923-1924, n. 35, p. 273.

⁴⁶ Cfr. la rubrica *Piccolo Notiziario Politico* in «I Diritti della scuola», 1924-1925, n. 3, p. 40; n. 8, p. 127; n. 12, p. 188; n. 34, pp. 576.

questo caso sembra prevalere un'ottica circoscritta alla realtà della scuola. Si discute ancora di riforma (mentre la realtà del fascismo viene ormai data come un fatto compiuto) e l'unica prospettiva per contrastarla appare ai «Diritti della scuola» e al «Corriere delle maestre» quella di un cambio ministeriale in grado di rettificarne l'impianto. Era questa l'illusione coltivata, del resto, anche da Credaro sia nel momento di maggior debolezza di Mussolini (e cioè tra l'estate e l'autunno del 1924, durante la crisi seguente al delitto Matteotti) e sia anche quando, agli inizi del 1925, l'avvento di un fascista non gentiliano alla Minerva, Pietro Fedele, sembrò porre le condizioni per reorientare i provvedimenti del 1923.

Ma sfuggiva a Credaro, come al Tona, al Fabiani⁴⁷ e agli altri responsabili dei fogli scolastici che ancora uscivano, che la nomina di Fedele non significava affatto un cambio di rotta, ma un semplice riassetto degli equilibri all'interno del fascismo, con il ridimensionamento della componente idealista. E infatti modesti, nella sostanza, sarebbero stati i ritocchi apportati dal nuovo ministro verso cui gli avversari di Gentile deposero ingiustificatamente le loro speranze. Nonostante l'allarmismo di Gentile e dei suoi, timorosi di un'eventuale "controriforma", l'azione di Fedele si concentrò soprattutto sull'introduzione nella scuola dei primi elementi di esplicita fascistizzazione, sul miglioramento dei rapporti con la Chiesa e sulla razionalizzazione di alcuni aspetti dei provvedimenti del 1923. Fu questo il caso dell'avocazione al Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione delle scuole professionali e tecniche fino al 1928 dipendenti dal Ministero dell'Economia e sdegnosamente sottovalutate da Gentile.

La vera stagione post gentiliana, sia detto incidentalmente, sarebbe cominciata con la nomina del ministro Belluzzo, un ingegnere dal profilo culturale in netta controtendenza con la cultura tipica della classe politica del tempo.

Le storie editoriali che accompagnarono «I Diritti della scuola» e il «Corriere delle maestre» stavano, del resto, dimostrando che le due testate erano ormai assorbite (o stavano per esserlo) senza colpo ferire entro la cosiddetta "normalità" del fascismo, secondo una prassi adottata per molte altre testate giornalistiche, con una strategia fatta di intimidazione preventiva e di trasformazione delle proprietà. Nel luglio del 1924 Mussolini rese operativo il decreto già predispo-

⁴⁷ Mentre il Tona salutava la fine del ministero di Gentile con il liberatorio titolo *Fine di un ciclone* («I Diritti della scuola», 1923-1924, n. 35, p. 586-587), il direttore del «Corriere delle maestre» riconosceva non ritualmente i meriti del ministro Gentile: «Di Giovanni Gentile e dell'opera sua come Ministro, rimarrà certamente lunga traccia in tutto il campo, così ideale come amministrativo, delle scuole italiane. Né questo è il momento di pronunziare un giudizio definitivo sull'Uomo insigne e sui suoi provvedimenti innovativi, troppo essendo vicino il rivolgimento da lui compiuto, e troppo vasto, per poterne apprezzare con sicura coscienza gli effetti [...]. Gli insegnanti elementari non dimenticheranno certamente Giovanni Gentile. Non dimenticheranno i miglioramenti da lui apportati alle loro condizioni economiche, alla dignità del loro ufficio (le maestre ricorderanno sempre la difesa da lui fatta con alata parola delle loro benemeritenze quando una indecorosa lotta di sesso s'era delineata) i provvedimenti di varia natura presi in favor della scuola» (*Da un Ministro all'altro*, «Il Corriere delle maestre», 1923-1924, n. 36, p. 281).

sto l'anno precedente e fino a quel momento mai pubblicato. Questa decisione gli consentì non solo di colpire i giornali dei partiti dell'opposizione, ma pose in gravi difficoltà anche quelle voci non partiticamente schierate (come, ad esempio, il «Corriere della sera» di Milano e «La Stampa» di Torino), ma impegnate a contrastare la deriva illiberale del nascente regime.

Le vicende che portarono allo strangolamento della stampa liberale e alla contestuale fascistizzazione delle maggiori testate di opinione costituiscono un significativo antefatto – se si possono comparare le vicende della grande stampa con quelle più circoscritte delle quali ci occupiamo – anche per ciò che accadde tra il 1925 e il 1926 ai «Diritti della scuola» e al «Corriere delle maestre». Più che agire attraverso provvedimenti repressivi contro i giornali di opinione (che avrebbero avuto effetti molto negativi nell'opinione pubblica straniera, ciò che Mussolini non voleva) il Duce, avvalendosi soprattutto dell'intervento del fratello Arnaldo e di Augusto Turati, agì per vie interne e più caute. Intervenne sulle proprietà, procedendo a modifiche degli assetti societari e includendo persone di propria fiducia nei consigli di amministrazione.

È esattamente quanto accadde anche alle due maggiori riviste magistrali. Nel caso del «Corriere delle maestre» l'allineamento fu contestuale all'avvicinamento dell'editore Vallardi al fascismo. Nel 1925 l'editore milanese fu tra i primi a sottoscrivere con Cappelli, Vallecchi e Zanichelli un ordine del giorno in favore del fascismo nell'ambito del convegno svoltosi nel marzo 1925 a Bologna da cui scaturì il ben noto *Manifesto degli intellettuali fascisti*⁴⁸. L'iniziativa non portò a nessun risultato concreto, ma testimoniò l'adesione al nuovo assetto politico di alcuni tra i maggiori editori italiani. Fu inevitabile che anche il periodico magistrale si allineasse alle logiche editoriali vallardiane.

Del resto il Fabiani fin dall'ottobre 1924 aveva richiamato i maestri al loro dovere professionale: «Nella scuola dobbiamo ricordare di essere funzionari scolastici, cui incombono degli obblighi di disciplina che devono essere lealmente accettati e lealmente osservati»⁴⁹ e due anni più tardi il percorso di allineamento era definitivamente concluso con un atto di incondizionato omaggio al fascismo. Ad esso era riconosciuto il merito di essere riuscito

nel volger di soli quattro anni a dare alla scuola primaria un più ampio respiro, ai maestri una maggior dignità di vita, di cultura e il gran bene della serenità nella vecchiaia [...] con la radicale riforma del Monte pensione. Ultimo atto di provvidenziale realizzazione del regime fascista che in pochi mesi effettuò ciò che in ventinove anni noi avevamo invano auspicato, chiesto, invocato.

Per quanto riguarda la rivista «I Diritti della scuola», fino a quel momento di proprietà un piccolo gruppo di azionisti, nel giugno 1926 essa fu rilevata da una nuova società per azioni controllata dall'editore fiorentino Bemporad.

⁴⁸ N. Tranfaglia, A. Vittoria, *Storia degli editori italiani*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2000, p. 249.

⁴⁹ Così nell'articolo di apertura del «Corriere delle maestre» dell'annata 1924-1925, n. 1, p. 1.

Contemporaneamente lo storico direttore della rivista, Annibale Tona, fu posto sotto tutela da un consiglio di amministrazione composto da un gruppo di intellettuali fascisti: Franco Ciarlantini (maestro elementare ex socialista e poi fascista della prim'ora, molto attivo nel campo editoriale), Giovanni Marchi (già coprotagonista con il Codignola nell'impresa della «Nostra scuola»), Roberto Forges Davanzati (proveniente dalle file del nazionalismo) e Ermene-gildo Pistelli (il padre scolio fiorentino noto filologo e apprezzato scrittore per l'infanzia).

Il profilo de «I Diritti» – che restava il periodico più diffuso tra i maestri⁵⁰ – si adeguò alla nuova situazione come lo stesso Tona precisava nel momento in cui presentava ai lettori il nuovo assetto della proprietà:

Il passato (dei «Diritti») di aspre battaglie per il buon diritto della scuola contro l'incomprensione e l'incuria dei vecchi partiti e dei vecchi governi, la fede che nutrì e propugnò sempre nel risorgimento della Patria attraverso l'elevazione spirituale de' suoi figli, valgono oggi l'orgoglio di sentire e comprendere in tutta la sua grandezza il nuovo destino conquistato all'Italia dal Fascismo, dando la sicura coscienza di potere a quel destino mirare, dal modesto suo posto, e quel destino servire, con schietto fervore e indefettibile disciplina⁵¹.

Bemporad, dal canto suo, cercò di trarre il massimo vantaggio dall'investimento: le pagine della rivista divennero il veicolo di un catalogo incentrato prioritariamente sui libri per la scuola elementare e per l'infanzia. Il ritorno economico fu subito evidente, con il risparmio di oltre 25 mila lire l'anno grazie allo spazio pubblicitario gratuito su ogni fascicolo a cui l'editore fiorentino aveva diritto per contratto⁵². Agli interessi economici si sommarono inoltre quelli politici e il carteggio tra Tona e Bemporad offre un eloquente spaccato degli interessi in campo e dei complessi rapporti con gli ambienti fascisti⁵³.

Quanto a «Scuola Italiana Moderna», l'allineamento si svolse secondo le modalità ricorrenti nella pubblicistica, nell'editoria e più ampiamente negli ambienti educativi cattolici di quegli anni⁵⁴. Senza rinunciare a puntuali e anche decise prese di posizione specie in materia religiosa, essi scelsero in

⁵⁰ J. Charnitzky, *Fascismo e scuola. La politica scolastica del regime (1922-1943)*, cit., p. 307.

⁵¹ A. Tona, *Nel nuovo anno scolastico*, «I Diritti della scuola», 1925-1926, n. 34, p. 510.

⁵² Per la documentata ricostruzione di questo importante passaggio della vita della rivista magistrale romana cfr. S. Oliviero, *Le riviste per la scuola. Periodici Bemporad dal 1890 al fascismo*, in C.I. Salviati, *Paggi e Bemporad editori per la scuola. Libri per leggere, scrivere e far di conto*, Firenze, Giunti, 2007, pp. 220-221; Id., «I Diritti della scuola» a Firenze: spigolature d'archivio, «Nuovo Bollettino Cirse», 2007, n. 1-2, pp. 99-103.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 223-224.

⁵⁴ R.S. Di Pol, *Il cammino di "Scuola Italiana Moderna" tra cultura idealista e condizionamenti politici*, cit.; R. Sani, *L'editoria educativo-popolare cattolica tra le due guerre. Itinerari e proposte*, in L. Pazzaglia (a cura di), *Chiesa, cultura e educazione in Italia tra le due guerre*, Brescia, La Scuola, 2003, pp. 329-357; L. Caimi, *La formazione dell'"uomo nuovo" nel cattolicesimo italiano del Novecento*, «Annali di storia dell'educazione e delle istituzioni scolastiche», 2002, n. 9, in specie pp. 127-140.

sostanza la strada dell'autocensura e del consenso esteriore. Anche la rivista bresciana abbandonò ben presto le tematiche politiche per concentrare la propria attenzione sull'attuazione della riforma della scuola elementare, sostenuta con grande vigore, sull'insegnamento religioso e sulla formazione cristiana dei maestri.

Non furono dunque necessarie le drastiche misure contro la stampa adottate con la successiva legge del 31 dicembre 1925 per rendere docili e addomesticare le voci più significative del mondo magistrale italiano.

Occorre peraltro avvertire, giunti a questo punto, che sarebbe necessario procedere ad un'analisi più circostanziata e interna alle varie esperienze per verificare in che modo si manifestarono l'infeudamento al fascismo e i rapporti con le varie anime del regime. Le diverse testate non cantarono infatti all'unisono. Differenze di impostazione pedagogica e culturale si possono facilmente cogliere tra «I Diritti della scuola», che continuò a restare espressione di una pedagogia dai toni sostanzialmente laici, e «Scuola Italiana Moderna» ben diversamente orientata. Ma ancor più evidenti furono le differenze tra queste due testate e la codignoliana «La nuova scuola italiana» che si propose non soltanto come una voce allineata, ma rappresentò un'espressione organica, per quanto anche talvolta critica, del fascismo scolastico.

Queste vicende s'intrecciarono, a loro volta, con la crisi e lo scioglimento del libero associazionismo professionale che ebbe il suo epilogo con la legge dell'aprile 1926 quando furono poste le basi del corporativismo fascista. Ma il declino e l'agonia delle associazioni democratiche degli insegnanti erano iniziate ben prima e cioè fin da quando gli insegnanti fascisti avevano dato vita alla Corporazione della Scuola, poi destinata a diventare l'Associazione Nazionale Insegnanti Fascisti e, nel 1931, a trasformarsi nell'Associazione Fascista della Scuola.

Nel novembre 1925 la Federazione Nazionale degli Insegnanti Scuole Medie si autosciolse, ponendo così fine a una storia più che ventennale. La fine della Federazione coincise anche con la chiusura della rivista milanese «La corrente». L'anno successivo toccò all'Unione Nazionale Magistrale dopo un inglorioso tentativo di fusione con il sodalizio fascista. Più complessa fu la vicenda dell'associazione cattolica «N. Tommaseo» che sopravvisse fino al 1930, al prezzo tuttavia di una trasformazione da sodalizio sindacal-professionale in associazione a scopi principalmente religiosi.

Il tracollo dell'associazionismo professionale provocò la fine della maggior parte dei periodici locali che non furono rimpiazzati, se non occasionalmente, da analoghe iniziative fasciste. Si esauriva in tal modo la straordinaria stagione di vitalità del giornalismo scolastico d'anteguerra.

4. *La fascistizzazione della stampa scolastica*

Anche prima del loro formale accodarsi al fascismo, «I Diritti della scuola» interpretavano il nuovo clima che si respirava nell'Italia del 1925 ormai reversibilmente avviata verso la dittatura, invitando i maestri a tornare alla scuola. Se questo invito rientrava nella logica di quella vocazione piccolo corporativa che, come sappiamo, riempiva le pagine delle riviste magistrali del tempo, esso rappresentava anche la consapevole testimonianza – da parte di quel giornalista dalle antenne sensibili che era il Tona – della fine di una stagione e dell'inquietta apertura di una nuova fase della storia italiana.

Null'altro restava da fare ai maestri che occuparsi di

quel fanciullo di oggi che cresce in mezzo a cose troppo grandi di lui: è nato in un mondo ancora agitato e schiumante per l'immane tempesta della guerra, respira un'aria arroventata di passioni, quali nobili e feconde, quali abbiette e venefiche; assiste all'infuriare di lotte rudi, spietate, senza esclusioni di colpi, alla distruzione violenta di quel che avevano edificato e veneravano i suoi maggiori [...].

Quanto più gravi diventano le difficoltà del proprio compito, tanto più il maestro sente in sé fortificarsi la volontà di superarle, tendersi e affinarsi le proprie energie, crescere la fede nella efficacia di una perseverante opera educativa. Egli sente che in questa ora il suo dovere verso il Paese, verso l'avvenire, verso coloro che non glielo riconosceranno, è quello di costruire nel fanciullo la salda struttura interiore che fa l'uomo e il cittadino⁵⁵.

La fine della libera stampa scolastica può essere riassunta in pochi ma eloquenti dati statistici. Mentre l'incidenza periodici scolastici pubblicati nel primo

⁵⁵ A. Tona, *Preludio*, «I Diritti della scuola», 1925-1926, n. 1, p. 1. La consapevolezza dell'irreversibilità della situazione che si stava ormai chiaramente delineando era già stata anticipata fin dal giugno precedente in un articolo dal titolo *Per la tranquillità della scuola* nel quale il Tona esprimeva alcune preoccupazioni a riguardo dell'oltranzismo della Corporazione della Scuola (1924-1925, n. 34, pp. 529-530). Nella parte finale dello scritto trapelava il proposito di lasciare alle spalle le polemiche degli anni precedenti là dove, in particolare, si leggeva che «è in nome della scuola, di cui sentiamo di interpretare lo spirito al di sopra di ogni influsso passionale, che noi invochiamo in questo grave momento, da chi può e deve, una parola rassicurante, che le ridia la serenità e la fede, senza le quali la sua opera diventerebbe sterile e bugiarda. La scuola nostra non ha nulla da rimproverarsi: è scuola di vitalità, di disciplina, di dovere: è la scuola che ha dato i combattenti del Piave e di Vittorio Veneto, i vincitori ed i morti; e i suoi maestri lavorano in silenzio a renderla sempre migliore, con una abnegazione e un favore che nessun torto di Governi ha mai potuto affievolire. Fate voi, on. Fedele, che essa almeno non sia turbata nel suo raccoglimento profondo... che essa almeno rimanga, per la serenità dei nostri fanciulli e per il conforto nostro, una pura oasi di eguaglianza e di amore fra tutti gli italiani!» (p. 530). Un articolo dai toni ormai molto lontani dalle riflessioni svolte poco meno di un anno prima, nel luglio 1924, quando in un editoriale dai toni forti di commento sul delitto Matteotti si poteva leggere: «Basta col tentativo di sopprimere ogni forma di controllo e di onesta critica. Non potrebbe essere più eloquente e più chiara la necessità dei civili e liberi dibattiti, che rendono feconde le opere stesse di coloro che sono al potere; e che, ove manchino, finiscono con l'essere invocati, come ora accade, da quelli stessi che più violentemente li ripudiarono. L'antidemocrazia, che ha avuto tanta e tanta immeritata voga, si sente minacciata di sterilità e di impotenza, ora che i suoi eccessi hanno raggiunto l'apice» (1923-1924, n. 35, p. 585).

ventennio del Novecento risulta del 36,3% rispetto al totale delle testate apparse in Italia tra il 1820 e il 1943, nel ventennio successivo e cioè tra il 1920 e il 1940 essa scende drasticamente al 20,8% e sarebbe ancor più bassa se si escludessero dal conteggio le testate associative locali che in numerosi casi continuarono a uscire almeno fino al 1925. Basta scorrere l'indice cronologico del repertorio della stampa pedagogica e scolastica in Italia per verificare la brusca caduta delle antiche testate non rimpiazzate da nuove iniziative dopo il 1925⁵⁶.

La normalizzazione, per così dire, fascista non si esaurì perciò nell'allineamento silente delle testate maggiori, ma anche nella dispersione di un patrimonio di voci plurali che avevano reso quanto mai vivace l'Italia scolastica tra secondo Ottocento e primo Novecento. Coerente con la propria vocazione totalitaria il fascismo scolastico si concepì come un centro di propulsione verticistica (rafforzando in tal modo la tradizione centralistica dell'organizzazione scolastica italiana) che non abbisognava di una rete di discussione, ma soprattutto di fedeli esecutori. Questa impostazione non esclude che all'interno del fascismo, come accenneremo tra breve, convivessero varie anime pedagogiche tra loro in permanente concorrenza.

Nel maggio 1925 apparve il quindicinale «La Corporazione della scuola» diretto da Acuzio Sacconi, battagliera espressione della Confederazione fascista della scuola o, più semplicemente, Corporazione della Scuola di cui si è detto già in più occasioni. Ai violenti attacchi contro le associazioni democratiche dei docenti giudicate espressione della vecchia mentalità positivista, utilitaristica, massonica il periodico di breve durata, ma di forte impatto politico, congiunse una visione della scuola intimamente intrecciata con la rivoluzione fascista. La scuola di qui in poi non avrebbe più potuto agire in forme «metapartitiche», ma con un contenuto «religiosamente politico».

A tal fine bisognava liberarla da tutti quanti – per dissenso, tiepidezza o viltà – non erano in grado o non volevano perseguire il disegno di un «italiano nuovo». Era in questo senso che Giuseppe Saitta, per esempio, auspicava la fascistizzazione della scuola e un'epurazione scolastica «condotta condotta con accuratezza e con fermezza»⁵⁷. La Corporazione della Scuola si concepiva infatti non solo «a fianco della scuola» come era accaduto per le organizzazioni professionali d'anteguerra, ma intendeva farsi «strumento collaboratore e cooperatore accanto e dentro alla scuola di Stato»⁵⁸.

Di qui la richiesta avanzata al ministro dell'Istruzione di non riconoscere «altra organizzazione scolastica al di fuori della Corporazione», sollecitata con un duro corsivo polemicamente indirizzato al «Ministro fascista della Pubblica Istruzione» apparso nel settembre 1925:

⁵⁶ *La stampa pedagogica e scolastica in Italia*, cit., pp. 791-824.

⁵⁷ G. Saitta, *Politica scolastica*, «La Corporazione della scuola», 1925, n. 6, p. 1.

⁵⁸ A. Sacconi, *Parole chiare*, *ibid.*, p. 1.

Prima di tutto, perché la politica intransigente adottata dal Partito mal si concilia con qualunque segno che valga a dimostrare l'efficienza o comunque l'esistenza di forza notoriamente avverse al regime e alla riforma della scuola. In secondo luogo, perché gli avversari hanno dimostrata la più insigne malafede nello sfruttare, con un'indegna vendita di fumo, ogni più innocente telegramma di saluto mandato dal Ministro alle loro sparute adunanze. In terzo luogo, perché deve finalmente accelerarsi, anche nel campo della scuola, la necessaria chiarificazione e tutti devono prendere netta posizione dentro la Corporazione o fuori di essa⁵⁹.

La richiesta sarebbe stata accolta di lì a poco nell'ambito dell'avvio del processo corporativo sancito con la già menzionata legge del 1926.

Alla rivista del Sacconi fecero seguito «La scuola fascista»⁶⁰ destinata ai maestri, e «La cultura fascista»⁶¹ (dal 1928 reintitolata «La nuova scuola media»⁶² e, poi, «Scuola media fascista»)⁶³ rivolta ai docenti della scuola secondaria, entrambe emanazione dell'Associazione nazionale insegnanti fascisti (ANIF) che, a partire dagli inizi del 1926, rilevò l'esperienza del sodalizio del Sacconi, con l'obiettivo dell'inquadramento unitario degli insegnanti italiani entro la cornice del fascismo scolastico.

Le tirature iniziali delle due pubblicazioni (25 mila per la prima e 10 mila copie per la seconda)⁶⁴ documentano che il transito dei docenti italiani verso il fascismo avvenne molto gradualmente. I maestri e i professori in servizio in quegli anni superavano le 170 mila unità, cinque volte tanto le copie diffuse. Mentre i maestri, per lo appartenenti al ceto medio-basso e gratificati di alcune norme previdenziali attese da anni, si allinearono piuttosto rapidamente alla nuova situazione, ben diversa si configurò la realtà dei docenti secondari. E se alla vigilia della guerra quasi tutti gli insegnanti elementari ormai aderivano all'Associazione Fascista della Scuola (AFS, costituita nel 1931 in sostituzione della precedente Associazione Nazionale Insegnanti Fascisti), la quota dei professori associati superava di poco il 50%⁶⁵.

Nel frattempo il fascismo rafforzò le riviste ministeriali volute da Lombardo Radice e Gentile per promuovere e sostenere la riforma scolastica. Gli «Annali della Pubblica Istruzione» usciti tra il 1924 e il 1925 in due distinte edizioni rispettivamente destinate alla scuola elementare e a quella secondaria⁶⁶, dal 1926 assunsero una nuova intitolazione come «Annali della Istruzione».

⁵⁹ *Improrogabile chiarificazione*, *ibid.*, p. 1.

⁶⁰ *La stampa pedagogica e scolastica in Italia*, cit., scheda n. 1020.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, scheda n. 343.

⁶² *Ibid.*, scheda n. 753.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, scheda n. 1050.

⁶⁴ Secondo i dati riportati in J. Charnitzky, *Fascismo e scuola. La politica scolastica del regime (1922-1943)*, cit., p. 306, i due periodici tiravano rispettivamente 25 mila copie («La scuola fascista») e 10 mila copie («La cultura fascista»).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 302-306.

⁶⁶ *La stampa pedagogica e scolastica in Italia*, cit., schede nn. 30 e 31.

ne elementare»⁶⁷ e «Annali dell'Istruzione media»⁶⁸, segnati da una sempre più esplicita militanza.

Queste due iniziative tra loro diverse – la prima con espliciti scopi di inquadramento politico, l'altra cautamente filtrata attraverso la pedagogia ministeriale e dall'esperienza di uomini di scuola di notevole valore come Camillo Quercia e Ciro Trabalza – possono comunque essere associate come casi esemplari del riorientamento della stampa scolastica dopo il 1924-1925. Alla pluralità di voci della pubblicistica associativa e pedagogica, il fascismo rispose affidandosi a grandi organi di stampa forniti di notevoli mezzi in grado di penetrare capillarmente tra gli insegnanti e creare le condizioni per la loro fascistizzazione di massa.

Un processo, si potrebbe dire, di razionalizzazione e di modernizzazione della comunicazione, predisposta centralmente e pianificata nella circolazione periferica attraverso le campagne di abbonamenti. Una soluzione non dissimile da quanto stava accadendo nel mondo della stampa quotidiana ove si ridussero le testate non solo a causa della soppressione dei fogli dell'opposizione politica, ma anche molti giornali di provincia fascisti o filofascisti⁶⁹ difficili da controllare. Qualcosa di analogo stava capitando anche nell'editoria. La battaglia contro la cosiddetta "crisi del libro" era, nel medesimo tempo, l'occasione per sostenere la modernizzazione del settore sul piano imprenditoriale e tecnologico, aggiornare le tecniche di comunicazione e lanciare una grande offensiva per ampliare gli spazi di consenso al regime⁷⁰.

Non c'è spazio in questa sede per indagare e approfondire i diversi aspetti della stampa scolastica e pedagogica del fascismo attraverso cui si possono cogliere differenti interpretazioni del modello educativo e pedagogico del regime. Le riviste di Codignola e di Gentile (in particolare «Educazione politica», poi dal 1927 «Educazione fascista»), per esempio, ebbero caratteristiche alquanto distanti da quelle promosse da Nazareno Padellaro e Luigi Volpicelli e anche da quelle dirette dal Sacconi, per non parlare delle posizioni espresse da personalità di primo piano non riconducibili all'*entourage* gentiliano (come Bodrero, Belluzzo e lo stesso Bottai) su varie riviste del tempo, in primo luogo «Critica fascista».

La deferenza formalmente esibita nei confronti del filosofo di Castelvetro non impedì lo scatenarsi e lo scontrarsi di tesi diverse.

Sulle distinzioni e le lotte interne che percorsero il fascismo anche sul terreno pedagogico – e non solo in ambito scolastico – sarebbe necessario uno studio

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, scheda n. 28.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, scheda n. 29.

⁶⁹ Ph.V. Cannistraro, *La fabbrica del consenso. Fascismo e mass media*, cit., pp. 189-192.

⁷⁰ G. Pedullà, *Gli anni del fascismo: imprenditoria privata e intervento statale*, in G. Turi, *Storia dell'editoria nell'Italia contemporanea*, Firenze, Giunti, 1997, pp. 341-382; G. Ragone, *Un secolo di libri. Storia dell'editoria in Italia dall'Unità al post-moderno*, Torino, Einaudi, 1999, pp. 111-160.

approfondito. Al momento disponiamo soltanto di qualche assaggio in alcune ricerche di carattere generale⁷¹. I periodici sono a tal riguardo ricchi di spunti. Basta pensare, per esempio, alle differenti posizioni assunte nei confronti del movimento pedagogico dell'attivismo ormai in pieno sviluppo a livello internazionale, alle diverse valutazioni sulla funzione educativa della cultura tecnica e professionale, alla complessa e a lungo discussa questione dei rapporti tra politica e pedagogia per finire alle tematiche riguardanti non soltanto la presenza della Chiesa e delle scuole confessionali nella vita scolastica italiana, ma anche la natura e il valore della dimensione religiosa nel processo educativo.

Il fascismo tollerò anche la persistenza di qualche voce dissonante che comunque non assunse mai caratteristiche antagoniste. Nessuno si azzardò a chiudere la «Rivista pedagogica» del Credaro che continuò le pubblicazioni fino al 1939 e cioè fino alla morte del suo fondatore e una certa tolleranza fu anche manifestata per la rivistina di Giovanni Calò, «La vita scolastica»⁷², che con cautela e prudenza non lesinava qualche puntura di spillo. Meno fortunato fu Giuseppe Lombardo Radice. «L'Educazione nazionale» – senza alcun dubbio la più significativa rivista pedagogica del primo Novecento – incorse negli inciampi delle rivincite e delle ritorsioni politiche e fu chiusa d'autorità nel 1933 con l'accusa di «agnosticismo» verso le realizzazioni scolastiche del regime⁷³.

La chiusura dell'«Educazione nazionale» rappresentò una delle pagine più oscure e inquietanti della nostra storia pedagogica, intrecciandosi ormai con la riduzione della pedagogia a politica militante come negli anni Trenta si cominciò apertamente a teorizzare e a perseguire. La dittatura era definitivamente e irreversibilmente sconfinata nel totalitarismo.

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⁷¹ Oltre ai due lavori più noti perché direttamente riguardanti il fascismo scolastico (Ostenc e Charnitzky) utili spunti introduttivi in M. Bellucci, M. Ciliberto, *La scuola e la pedagogia del fascismo*, Torino, Loescher, 1978; M. Isnenghi, *L'educazione dell'italiano. Il fascismo e l'organizzazione della cultura*, Bologna, Cappelli, 1979; P.G. Zunino, *L'ideologia del fascismo. Miti, credenze e valori nella stabilizzazione del regime*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1985; E. De Fort, *La scuola elementare dall'Unità alla caduta del fascismo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1996.

⁷² *La stampa pedagogica e scolastica in Italia*, cit., scheda n. 1233.

⁷³ G. Cives, *L'Educazione nazionale (seconda serie: 1924-1933)*, «Riforma della scuola», 1968, n. 8-9, pp. 35-50.

Russian and Soviet schooling: educational legacies, institutional reforms and national identities*

Dorena Caroli

The history of schooling has always represented an important area of research for specialists in Russian and Soviet history. Western scholars have gradually shifted their interest from pedagogical theories to the analysis of school systems understood as complex systems of educational norms, institutional aspects and national identity¹. This was exactly what had happened after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when the Russian experts in education revealed a marked inclination to renew their research topics and methodologies².

This critical review has no pretensions to be exhaustive; nonetheless, it is an attempt to present the main studies of the Russian and Soviet school systems in a *longue durée* perspective. It will therefore aim at analysing all the different features of the Tsarist and Soviet schooling. On the one hand, in the Tsarist Autocracy, schooling had to carry out the political and national project of educating the nobility, building a new class of liberal Intelligentsia and “russifying”

* I wish to express my gratitude to Gerlind Schmidt (Deutsches Institut für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung, Frankfurt am Main) and to Theodore R. Weeks (Southern Illinois University, Carbondale) for their helpful suggestions. I also thank Elena Poggi and Angela Ruth Logue for the linguistic revision of the text.

¹ For a comparison with the European school system, see D. Julia, *Riflessioni sulla recente storia dell'educazione in Europa: per una storia comparata delle culture educative*, «Annali di storia dell'educazione e delle istituzioni scolastiche», 3, 1996, pp. 119-147.

² D. Caroli, *Nuove tendenze nella storia dell'infanzia, dell'educazione e delle istituzioni scolastiche nella Russia post-comunista (1986-2006)*, «History of Education & Children Literature», II (1), 2007, pp. 377-392.

the ethnic minorities. On the other hand, the Soviet government and the Communist Party unified and centralised the school system to shape the Communist classless society – dominated by the proletariat – in order to facilitate the social mobility necessary for the planned development of the country³. In spite of their very different aims, these school systems had something in common, that is to stem illiteracy and to assimilate the non-Russian population. Although Tsarist and Soviet reforms had failed in their attempt, they led to an effective increase in the literate population. According to the Soviet scholar E.N. Medynsky, the population censuses conducted in 1897, 1926 and 1939 showed a very important change: respectively 24.0 per cent, 51.1 per cent and 81.2 per cent of the population aged 9-50 were literate⁴.

This review – divided into three parts – will analyse the historiography of the Russian and Soviet school systems. In the first part, the evolution of the schooling system from the Reign of Peter the Great (1682-1725) until the October Revolution (1917) will be presented; in the second part there will be an analysis of the “United Labour School” reform – introduced during the October Revolution – and the following reorganisation of the school until the decree on compulsory primary education (25th July 1931). It will also evaluate the changes caused by the planned economy from the end of the 1920s until the pre Second World War period. Finally, in the third part, this review presents the reforms undertaken during World War II until the “Khrushchev School Reform” (1958), which led to the introduction of compulsory secondary education (1973). This review will also present the different reforms of literacy and schooling in relation to the changes in educational politics, the main debates among pedagogues and the organisation and didactical aspects of the school practices.

1. *Literacy and Schooling in Tsarist Russia from Catherine II until the October Revolution (1762-1917)*

While the history of literacy in Modern Russia and in particular the role of the Church and the Army have not yet been analysed, J. Mc Clelland, M. J.

³ N. Nar, *The Campaign against illiteracy and semiliteracy in the Ukraine, Transcaucasus, and Northern Caucasus, 1922-1941*, in G.L. Kline (ed.), *Soviet Education*. Foreword by G.S. Counts, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul LTD., 1957, pp. 139-159; A. Kappeler, *Russland als Vielvölkerreich: Entstehung, Geschichte, Zerfall*, München, Beck, 1992; Y. Slezkine, *The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism*, «Slavic Review», 53 (2), 1994, pp. 414-452; T.R. Weeks, *Nation and State in Late Imperial Russia. Nationalism and Russification on the Western Frontier, 1863-1914*, Dekalb, Northern Illinois University Press, 1996; T. Martin, *The affirmative Action Empire. Nation and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 2001.

⁴ E.N. Medynskij, *Narodnoe obrazovanie v SSSR*, Moskva, Akademija Pedagogičeskich Nauk RSFSR, 1952, pp. 24-25.

Okenfuss and F. Nethercott have approached some more general aspects of the history of culture: the role of the Academy, the diffusion of humanism and the reception of the platonic philosophy in Russian academies from the middle of the XVII century until the middle of the XIX century⁵.

Okenfuss is the author of a very important monograph on the history of childhood in Russia⁶. He was among the first to completely devote his studies to the Russian school system. To be precise, he has studied the influence of Jesuit schools on Orthodox Schools during the last decades of the XVII century and at the beginning of the XVIII century. He argues that «the statutes of the Kiev brotherhood college were modelled on those of the Jesuit schools, and in places word-for-word borrowing was involved». The *curricula* of the subjects taught at the Orthodox Kiev School were identical to those of Jesuit schools in Poland, where the struggle against Lutherans had led to the introduction of such a *curriculum* by the Catholics and the Orthodox of the European classical grammar schools. The Jesuit notion of education is visible in the subjects taught and textbooks used (*De institutione Grammatica Libri Tres*, by Emmanuel Alvarez, 1572). Indeed, Latin remained the major subject in the Kiev school and the principal language of instruction. On the basis of this school, Peter the Great restructured the Moscow school and all the diocesan schools – about 26 in 1750 – which were not necessarily religious or theological academies⁷.

Isabel de Madariaga has analysed the reform undertaken during the Reign of Catherine II (1762-1796), which was at the basis of the development of the Russian school system. Inspired by the culture of the Enlightenment – aimed at the *fabrication de l'homme idéal et du citoyen parfait* – Catherine's school policy can be divided into two phases. The first phase was characterised by the nomination of Counsellor I.I. Betskoy, the founding of a special Commission and the publication of the *General Plan for the Education of Young People of both Sexes* (12th March 1764). This reform, which provided for the opening of the Institute for Noble Girls – the first female school – and of the first Russian orphanage, led to the control on foreign tutors and, most of all, strengthened the secondary military education and technical-vocational schools. However, the reform did not affect the primary schools managed by Orthodox priests or by officers of lower ranks, and the literacy centres founded by landowners. In

⁵ J. Mc Clelland, *Autocrats and Academics: Education, Culture and Society in Tsarist Russia*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1979; Max J. Okenfuss, *The Rise and Fall of Latin Humanism in Early-Modern Russia: Pagan Authors, Ukrainians, and the Resiliency of Muscovy*, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1995; F. Nethercott, *Russia's Plato: Plato and the Platonic Tradition in Russian Education, Science and Ideology (1840-1930)*, Burlington, Ashgate, 2000.

⁶ M.J. Okenfuss, *The Discovery of Childhood in Russia. The Evidence of the Slavic Primer*, Newtonville, Oriental Research Partners, 1980.

⁷ M.J. Okenfuss, *The Jesuit Origins of Petrine Education*, in J.G. Garrard (ed.), *The Eighteenth Century in Russia*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1973, pp. 106-130 (110, 112).

1755 and 1764, some gymnasia were founded in Moscow and in Saint Petersburg in order to prepare the youth for universities (Moscow and Saint Petersburg) and the Academy of Sciences (Saint Petersburg). These gymnasia were attended both by the sons of the nobles and those of other social classes, who were called *raznochintsy*⁸, which means not belonging to the noble rank – i.e. military, clergy and serfs.

During the second phase, Catherine II turned her attention to the question of education in the context of the *Statute on Local Administration* (1775), according to which local authorities were to establish schools – managed by the Boards of Social Welfare – at both a district (*uezd*) and province (*gubernia*) level. Interested in Johann Basedow's conception, Catherine invited one of her disciples to open a Philanthropinum in Saint Petersburg. On Diderot's advice and thanks to the visit of Joseph II to Russia, Catherine adopted the Prussian system, which had been reorganised after the abolition of the Society of Jesus (1773). Joseph II adopted the school methods applied in Prussian Silesia by an Augustinian abbot, Johann Ignaz von Felbiger, who had participated in the school reform in 1774. Felbiger's teaching method involved the choice of the same textbook for all the pupils, who should read simultaneously to better memorise the content. This method also guaranteed a uniform teaching system, which matched the schools of a multi-language and multi-culture Empire⁹.

In September 1782, Catherine founded the Commission for the Establishment of Schools, leading to the standardisation of the school system in the Russian provincial capitals, as well as teacher training and the publication of text books. One of the most important members of the Commission – directed by P.V. Zavadovsky – was the mathematician F.U.T. Aepinus. He had suggested to Catherine that she ask Joseph II for an Orthodox adviser to help her introduce to the Russian provincial capitals, cities and villages the Austrian system of the *Trivial-, Real- and Normalschule*. Joseph II had sent her the Austro-Serbian reformer F.I. Jankovich de Mirjevo – also recommended by Felbiger – who had carried out the reform in the Habsburg territories, where people spoke Serb-Croatian and were of Orthodox faith. Jankovich's intervention was particularly important for text books, because he translated several text books (written or approved by Felbiger) about different subjects (history, geography, reading, writing, arithmetic, Latin, Greek, grammar) from German and Serb-Croatian. Jankovich himself prepared a catechism, which was approved by Aepinus and Catherine. In 1782, the Commission introduced these new teaching methods in the schools of the capitals and started to control whether or not private schools were using the authorized textbooks¹⁰.

⁸ I. de Madariaga, *Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great*, London, Phoenix Press, 1981, pp. 488-502 (491-493).

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 495.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 495-496.

On the model of Felbiger's Serb-Croatian works, the Commission also published texts concerning the moral task of the teachers – the *Guide to Teachers* (1783) – and for pupils – *The Duties of a Man and Citizen* (1783) – in order to raise citizen awareness towards the State, God and the family. *The Duties of a Man and Citizen* was a treaty enriched by passages from the New Testament; nevertheless it had the hallmarks of the Enlightenment, since the teaching of religion was foreseen on the basis of texts published by the Commission itself – and not by the Church. Before 1819, this text was reprinted eleven times, and then it was outlawed by the Metropolit Filaret because it was founded on a secular moral and not on religion, which had instead acquired a predominant role in the Russian school system of the XIX century.

The reform activity was completed by the publication of the *Russian Statute on Education* (5th August 1786) establishing a wide net of primary and secondary schools in the province capitals and elementary schools in the districts, all of which were free and open to all social classes (nobles and liberal Intelligentsia, i.e. the *raznochintsy*). According to this Statute, primary schools had two classes lasting one year each and aimed at teaching literacy and calculating, integrating basic lessons with religion and moral education. Secondary schools had four classes, the last of which lasted two years. These schools integrated the teaching of technical subjects – physics, drawing and architecture – with the classic ones such as history, geography, classical or modern languages – Tatar, Arabic and Chinese. This Statute – which neglected rural schools – significantly boosted the opening of schools in Russian and Baltic provinces for a total of 165 schools, 394 teachers, 10,230 male pupils and 858 female pupils. These figures doubled in the following four years, then lessened after Catherine's death. This Statute also introduced substantial changes in other educational institutions – such as the Cadets Corps of the Army and the Navy – in order to enhance military education and most likely the education of the *raznochintsy* too¹¹.

Under the tsars Aleksander I (1801-1825) and Nicholas I (1825-1855), the school system became quite conservative in the sense that

boy serfs were soon banned from public gymnasia; these schools were disconnected from the district schools, and girls were debarred from both. Parish schools were meant to be chiefly for peasants, district schools primarily for merchants' children, and gymnasia for nobility. Nevertheless elementary education expanded, under the auspices of several different ministries and the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church, whose clergy had run rather primitive literacy schools (*shkoly gramoty*) for hundreds of years¹².

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 498-499.

¹² J. Dunstan, *Girls and Schooling in Imperial Russia. An Outline mainly from Western Research*, «Education in Russia, the Independent States and Eastern Europe», 14 (1), 1996, pp. 8-21 (13).

Indeed, schooling became a part of the reactionary autocracy thanks to the creation of a Central Educational Apparatus and the establishment of the Ministry of National Enlightenment (1800-1825). This issue has been analysed by P.L. Alston, who has outlined the reorganisation of the school system (24th January 1803), aimed at improving elementary school in every provincial district and projecting a secondary school in every provincial capital. For this reason, the provinces were grouped into six educational districts, and six members of the central school administration had to represent the interests of their area in Saint Petersburg. In order to provide continuous progression, the most important change concerned the transformation of Catherine's major schools into 4-year provincial schools and Catherine's minor schools into 2-year improved elementary district schools¹³.

From 1810 to 1821, Sergei N. Uvarov (1786-1855) was at the head of these educational districts. According to Catherine Wittaker, Uvarov was «the foremost autodidact of his time», whose personality was emblematic of the «aristocracy of Knowledge [which] began to replace an aristocracy of birth in Russia». From 1818 to 1855 he was president of the Academy of Science. From 1833 to 1849, as Minister of Education, Uvarov conceived education as a mirror of the Empire ideology of "Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality". Whitaker also argues that

Uvarov was born in a generation nurtured on the rational ideals of the Enlightenment and on the polite society of the old regime, but there then followed more than a half a century of searching, a Romantic chaos that alternated between revolution and reaction, both of which Uvarov loathed. [...] Part of the Uvaronian "system" – promoting monopoly and centralization, assuring political loyalty, muting dissidence, and maintaining educational standards at the highest contemporary levels – endured to the extent that it remained part of the present-day Soviet system¹⁴.

The centralisation of national education represented the starting point for the school system development: the number of literacy schools and rural schools increased from 1,500 in 1838 to 21,400 in 1865, with 413,500 pupils (10 per cent female), but then decreased in the 1880s¹⁵.

In his brilliant research – *When Russia Learned to Read. Literacy and Popular Literature, 1861-1917* – Jeffrey Brooks analyses the increase of common literacy between the serf emancipation and the Bolshevik Revolution, emphasizing the development of Tsarist schooling: the Peasant School of Literacy (*shkoly gramoty*), which responded to the literacy needs, the *zemstvo* schools,

¹³ P.L. Alston, *Education and the State in Tsarist Russia*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1969, pp. 20-30.

¹⁴ C.H. Whittaker, *The Origins of modern Russian Education: an intellectual biography of Count Sergei Uvarov, 1786-1855*, De Kalb Illinois, Northern Illinois University Press, 1984, pp. XII-XIII.

the Church Parish schools and the State schools, financed by the Ministry of Education. J. Brooks offers a detailed description of school attendance – which corresponded to half of the school-age population aged 8-11 – as well as the school *curriculum*, text books and the teachers' status¹⁶. Elliott Mossman argues that, from 1861, Lev N. Tolstoi (1828-1910) founded several schools in Jasnaia Poliana (province of Tula), which represented the expression of his conception of an antiauthoritarian and free education¹⁷.

The school reform started in 1864 – in the period of the Great Reforms – and has been thoroughly presented by Jean Saussay. He has analysed the political debates about popular education between liberals (K.D. Uschinsky) and democrats (N.G. Chernyshevsky), which anticipated the law on primary education (14th July 1864), the expansion of which was due to the liberation of the serfs (1861)¹⁸. This law did not provide for the State's intervention on literacy but represented the victory of a conservative clerical trend: the predominant role was indeed not played by the Ministry of Education, but rather by the Church and the Clergy. According to Saussay, «l'instruction religieuse était d'ailleurs imposée et figurait en tête des matières au programme». The clergy would play an important role not only in the management of popular schools, but also in the teaching activity itself. The Ministry of Education played instead a limited role in primary education and had to abandon the idea of centralising the six types of existing paying primary schools – Parish schools, popular schools and the schools pertaining to the different Ministries. In 1874, during the Reign of Aleksander II, D.A. Tolstoi – the new Minister of Education – introduced a new control system: 34 inspectors had to control what happened in the schools of the different provinces, through provincial and district councils. However, the clergy failed definitively in this mission in popular schools and Tolstoi had to organise five pedagogical courses to train teachers¹⁹. Allen Sinel has examined the policies and reforms of the Russian Ministry of Education under the direction of the Count Dmitry Tolstoi. He has presented the reforms which shaped Russian secondary and primary education, and pointed

¹⁵ J. Dunstan, *Girls and Schooling in Imperial Russia. An Outline mainly from Western Research*, cit., p. 13.

¹⁶ J. Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read. Literacy and Popular Literature, 1861-1917*, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1985, pp. 35-58 (36-37).

¹⁷ E. Mossman, *Tolstoi and Peasant Learning in the Era of the Great Reforms*, in B. Eklof (ed.), *School and Society in Tsarist and Soviet Russia*. (Selected Papers from the Fourth World Congress for Soviet and East European Studies, Harrogate, 1990), Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, The Macmillan Press LTD., 1993, pp. 37-69. As for Tolstoi, see L. Froese, *Ideengeschichtliche Triebkräfte der russischen und sowjetischen Pädagogik*, cit., pp. 87-143.

¹⁸ J. Saussay, *Le débat public sur l'enseignement primaire au début des années 1960*, «Revue des Études Slaves», 58/2, 1986, pp. 123-158.

¹⁹ J. Saussay, *La loi du 14 juillet 1864 sur l'enseignement primaire et la reprise en main sous le Ministère de D.A. Tolstoï*, *ibid.*, pp. 159-173 (p. 159).

out that secondary schools had to convert the Tsarist educational system in a tool to be used by the Autocracy²⁰.

The debate about popular education became very intense in Russia, since it represented an important aspect of the Imperial policy-making and the emancipation of the peasant population (1861), which underwent many social changes until the Revolution of 1905²¹. In this regard, Ben Eklof – one of the most important experts on Russian education – argues that

the expansion of schooling in the Russian countryside after 1864 brought basic education within the reach of the majority of peasants in the European heartland by the time of World War I, but that this expansion was initiated by the purposeful self activity of the anonymous peasant million. The elite contribution – whether by the local *zemstvos* of officialdom – began on a large scale only after the great famine of 1891-1892 [...]; before that date it was peasants who supplied the energy, money and effort to launch and maintain the school expansion campaign²².

According to Eklof, the expansion of rural education in Imperial Russia represents a myth, since «a large proportion of the expansion of the school system was in reality a process of formalization, of registration and incorporation of previously functioning peasant schools into the official network»²³. In the following decades, there were important changes in the educational policy: by the 1880s, the *zemstvos* had begun to maintain local teachers and to support literacy schools, which generally offered two years of instruction rather than the minimum of three, even though the peasants would pay 43 per cent of the costs of schooling. In the years 1900-1908, the Ministry of Education increased the control on peasant schools by doubling the number of inspectors in the countryside and by assuming the financing of school construction and maintenance²⁴.

These trends are also confirmed by the data presented by John Dunstan:

the 1870s were a period of marked growth in secular primary education, from over 9,000 schools and 283,000 pupils in European Russia in 1865 to nearly 23,000 schools with 1.2 million children by 1881. The reaction then to the assassination of Aleksander II was characterised by a slowdown in the development of secular (*zemstvo*, commune, Ministry) primary schooling and a countervailing spurt in the growth of church primary edu-

²⁰ A. Sinel, *The Classroom and the Chancellery: State Educational Reform in Russia under Count Dmitry Tolstoi*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1973.

²¹ A. Sinel, *The Campaign for Universal Primary Education in Russia 1890-1904*, «Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas», 30, 1982, pp. 481-507.

²² B. Eklof, *The Myth of the Zemstvo School: The Sources of the Expansion of Rural Education in Imperial Russia: 1864-1914*, «History of Education Quarterly», 24 (4), 1984, pp. 561-584 (561-562).

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 576.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 571, 576. See the monograph by E. Eklof, *Russian Peasant Schools. Officialdom, Village culture, and popular pedagogy, 1861-1914*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 1986.

cation, from over 4,000 schools with nearly 105,000 pupils in 1881 to almost 32,000 schools with 981,000 youngsters in 1894. In the 1890s the *zemstvos* began to campaign energetically to develop primary education and enthuse rural teachers. Church and secular primary schooling both approximately doubled their enrolments between the accession of Nicholas II and the 1905 revolution, reflecting the new and growing convergence of attitudes to that level of education as essential for progress²⁵.

During the Reign of Aleksander II, the percentage of girls in the school population increased from 8.2 per cent in 1856 to 17.7 in 1878 and 32.2 in 1911. The national education law of May 3rd, 1908 opened the way to universal compulsory primary education. As for secondary education, there was a slow-down during the Reign of Alexander III but after that, gymnasias for boys and girls significantly spread with the advent of Nicholas II: 364 gymnasias for boys with 136,800 pupils and 499 gymnasias for girls with over 157,000 pupils in 1904²⁶.

The thorny issue of imperial school politics among the ethnic minority – included the school system introduced for Jews in 1844²⁷ – has been tackled by Robert P. Geraci in his fascinating book *Window on the East. National and Imperial Identities in Late Tsarist Russia*. In this well documented monograph, Geraci analyses the attempt Russians made to render nationality a stable category of identity, and how schools could be used in the cultural assimilation, in particular that of Muslims in the region of Kazan (Tatarstan)²⁸. Geraci also examines

whether and how Russians transferred their conceptions of self onto the peoples of their “Eastern” or non-European domains [...] by examining three institutional-cultural spheres in Kazan that were concerned with the integration of Eastern peoples: the church (religion), the schools (pedagogy), and the University (science)²⁹.

Indeed, Geraci focuses on nationality – “Russianness” – in order to examine the «variety of criteria – political, psychological, racial, linguistic, historical and so on – that [Russians] have employed to define the category of “Russian”»³⁰. The fourth chapter of the book is entirely devoted to two very different pedagogical systems for non-Russians launched in the 1860s and 1870s and developed in the Kazan region among the so-called *inorodtsy* (alien population):

²⁵ J. Dunstan, *Girls and Schooling in Imperial Russia. An Outline mainly from Western Research*, cit. pp. 15, 17-18.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 16. See also C. Johanson, *Women's struggle for higher education in Russia, 1855-1900*, Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987.

²⁷ Of particular interest are Z. Halevy, *Jewish schools under czarism and communism: a struggle for cultural identity*, New York, Springer Pub. Co., 1976; J.E.O. Screen, *The Helsinki Yunker School, 1846-1879: a case study of officer training on the Russian Army*, Helsinki, SHS, 1986.

²⁸ R. P. Geraci, *Window on the East. National and Imperial Identities in Late Tsarist Russia*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 2001.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

«Il'minskii's religious schools for Orthodox Christians and a network of schools for Muslims that concentrated on teaching the Russian language as a foundation for Russification»³¹. The difference between the two systems was that

Il'minskii used the Orthodox religion as the primary tool of cultural assimilation of Christian and animist of non-Russian while relying on native non-Russian languages as media of instruction. The other school system, called the Russia-Tatar schools [*mektebs and medresses*], accepted Islam as the religion of its subjects and sought to Russify by means of the Russian Language. It was designed and administered by the Ministry of Education with particular attention to the Kazan region. The two systems reflected fundamentally different visions of Russia national identity and its relations to the Empire³².

The attack of Il'minskii's system – «as a means to spread Christian Enlightenment not only to children but to the whole of the rural Kriashen community» – was caused not only by the voluntary principle of his missionary work among Tatar-Muslims, but probably by the failure of the Russification project among minorities.

The failure of cultural Russification in the Baltic provinces has been described by E.C. Thaden, M.H. Halzel and T.U. Raun³³. Although the study of Russian had been established in the Baltic schools since 1875, school systems and teachers' seminaries were still controlled by the Baltic German nobility and by the Lutheran Church³⁴. For this reason, an imperial *ukaz* ordered «the compulsory instruction of the Russian language in all primary and secondary schools of the Dorpat Educational Region» (1885) and the government «transferred the Lutheran rural elementary school and teachers' seminaries from the sphere of the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Education in order to lessen the control of the nobility and the Church»³⁵. Traditionally, resistance to Russification was stronger among the Estonians, especially the Intelligentsia. Even though the Educational Statute for Estonia (1875) called for the teaching of Russian in all Lutheran rural elementary schools within five years, in 1880, Russian was a school subject only in 42 per cent of the township schools in Estonia and in 48 per cent of those in Northern Livonia. The loss of elementary education in the native language was considered as «the bitterest blow of

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 116-157 (116).

³³ E.C. Thaden, *The Russian Government*, in Id. (ed.), *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855-1914*, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1981, pp. 54-75; M.H. Halzel, *The Baltic Germans*, *ibid.*, pp. 168-178; T.U. Raun, *The Estonians*, *ibid.*, pp. 314-326. See also J. Miąso, *Educational Policy and Educational Development in the Polish Territories under Austrian, Russian and German Rule, 1850-1918*, in J. Tomiak et al. (eds.), *Schooling, Educational Policy and Ethnic Identity. Comparatives studies on governments and non-dominant ethnic groups in and non-dominant ethnic groups in Europe, 1850-1940*, Darmouth, New York University Press (European Science Foundation), 1991, pp. 163-184.

³⁴ E.C. Thaden, *The Russian Government*, cit., pp. 58-59.

³⁵ M.H. Halzel, *The Baltic Germans*, cit., pp. 168-178 (168).

Russification by both the Estonian Intelligentsia and the masses of the rural population. [...] The educational reform shattered the myth of the benevolence of the Tsarist regime and produced a profound pessimism about the Estonian future»³⁶.

Wladimir Süß's most recent book is also very interesting for the study of schooling among non-Russian minorities. Süß has focused his work on schooling and the German minorities, in particular those of the regions of the Volga and the Black Sea, from the beginning of the XVIII century until the October Revolution³⁷.

Whereas the imperial politics ascertained the limits of Russification and interethnic politics, the pedagogical movement of the late Imperial Russia was characterised by different trends such as the anthropocentric approach and the principle of labour (V.F. Odoevsky, V.G. Belinsky, A.I. Herzen and N.I. Pirogov), the pedagogical ethnic-national conception (K.D. Uschinsky), the idea of social education (N.G. Chernishevsky and N.A. Dobroliubov) and free education (I.I. Gorbunov-Posadov and K.N. Wentzel). Leohnard Froese has analysed how popular education influenced socialist and revolutionary pedagogues. He has noticed that they were interested in active pedagogy (J. Dewey) and in the co-educational system³⁸.

Many scholars have also investigated the question of the "professionalization" of teachers – a very slow process, as it was in Italy for instance. Christine Ruane has focused her attention on the everyday life of teachers, the development of the professional ethos, the role of gender in the development of this job, and women's entry into the teaching activity after 1871. Ruane has also analysed the slow conquest of a professional status devoid of prejudices after 1890, as well as the emergence of the Social aid societies for teachers in Saint Petersburg and Moscow and the development of the Congresses for the Education of teachers, organised by the Ministry for Finances³⁹. This last aspect has also been developed by S.J. Seregny and by J.D. Morison, whose purpose was to investigate the creation of a teacher class in the Russian countryside, its participation in the Revolution of 1905 but also the repression of the teach-

³⁶ T.U. Raun, *The Estonians*, cit., pp. 314-326 (315-316).

³⁷ W. Süß, *Das Schulwesen der deutschen Minderheit Russland. Von der ersten Ansiedlungen bis zur Revolution 1917*, Köln Weimar Wien, Böhlau Verlag, 2004.

³⁸ L. Froese, *Ideengeschichtliche Triebkräfte der russischen und sowjetischen Pädagogik*, Heidelberg, Quelle and Meyer, 1963, pp. 45-86. See also J. Dunstan, K.D. Ushinsky: *Trail-Blazer of Educational Thought in Russia*, «Journal of Russian Studies», 30, 1975, pp. 25-27. See also M. Mervaud, *Herzen, Ogarev et l'éducation du peuple*, «Revue des Études Slaves», 58/2, 1986, pp. 175-195; B. Eklof, *Worlds in Conflict: Patriarchal Authority, Discipline and Russian School, 1861-1914*, in Id. (ed.), *School and Society in Tsarist and Soviet Russia*, cit., pp. 95-120.

³⁹ C. Ruane, *Gender, Class, and Professionalization of Russia City Teachers 1860-1914*, Pittsburgh and London, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994. For the courses and institutions in 1912-1916, see also W.H.E. Johnson, *Russia's Educational Heritage*, Pittsburg, Carnegie Press (Carnegie Institute of Technology), 1950, pp. 206-225.

ers by the Tsarist government, which used to consider them in a very ambiguous way until World War I⁴⁰.

Finally, higher education has been studied in detail by Trude Maurer, who has analysed three important aspects of the history of university in Tsarist Russia: 1) the implementation of university legislation in Russia from the Napoleonic age to the Russian revolution; 2) the university's involvement in the Revolution of 1905, aiming at the creation of the "academic Union"; 3) a collective biography of Russian Professors. Maurer has conducted the most exhaustive study on this topic and has presented in detail both the political context and the institutional changes in Russian Universities⁴¹.

2. *The Revolution of the School System (1917-1939)*

The history of the Soviet school system – created during the October Revolution and which developed until the reforms of 1931 – has been analysed from different points of view, such as the history of the pedagogy or the institutional changes. Some experts have considered the Soviet school system of the 1920s as a transposition of the Marxist pedagogy based on labour and aimed at educating the "New Man"⁴². For instance, L. Froese, J. Bowen. G. Hillig and K. Kobelt have studied in detail the different conceptions of the revolutionary pedagogues and schools officers (N.K. Krupskaya, A.S. Makarenko, S.T. Shatsky and V.N. Shulgín)⁴³.

⁴⁰ J.D. Morison, *Les instituteurs de village dans la Révolution de 1905 en Russie*, «Revue des Etudes Slaves», 58 (2), 1986, pp. 205-219; S.J. Seregny, *Russian Teachers and Peasant Revolution. The Politics of Education in 1905*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1989; Id., *Teachers, Politics and the Peasant Community in Russia, 1895-1918*, in B. Eklof (ed.), *School and Society in Tsarist and Soviet Russia*, cit., pp. 121-148.

⁴¹ T. Maurer, *Hochschullehrer im Zarenreich: ein Beitrag zur russischen Sozial- und Bildungsgeschichte*, Köln/Weimar, Wien, Böhlau, 1998. See also B.A. Ruble, *Second Metropolis. Pragmatic Pluralism in Gilded Age Chicago, Silver Age Moscow, and Meiji Osaka*, Washington D.C., Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2001, pp. 174-206.

⁴² See for example L. Froese, *Ideengeschichtliche Triebkräfte der russischen und sowjetischen Pädagogik*, Heidelberg, Quelle und Meyer, 1963; M.A. Manacorda, *Il marxismo e l'educazione, Marx, Engels, Lenin*, Roma, A. Armando Editore, 1964 (2nd ed., 1976). Recent essays about the well-known pedagogue S.T. Shatskij, see L.E. Holmes, *Shatskij: Reformer and Realist (Introductory Remarks to F.A. Fradkin's "S.T. Shatsky's Last Years")*, in B. Eklof (ed.), *School and Society in Tsarist and Soviet Russia*, cit., pp. 149-153; F.A. Fradkin, *Soviet Experimentalism Routed: S.T. Shatsky's Last Years*, *ibid.*, pp. 154-175.

⁴³ I. Lézine, *A.S. Makarenko, pédagogue soviétique (1888-1939)*. Préf. de H. Wallon, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1954; J. Bowen, *Soviet Education. Anton Makarenko and the Years of Experiment*, Madison, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1962; L. Froese, *Ideengeschichtliche Triebkräfte der russischen und sowjetischen Pädagogik*, cit., pp. 188-193, 217-227; J. Dunstan, *V.N. Soroka-Rosinskij (1882-1960), Soviet Teacher, in Fact and Fiction: the Double exposure of Viniksor*, Lewinston, Edwin Mellen Press, 1991; G. Hillig, S.C. Weitz (eds.), *Stand*

O. Anweiler, S. Fitzpatrick, W. Berelowitch and L. Holmes have examined the features of several Soviet reforms, the Sovietisation process and the experimental education. They started with the Soviet school system organisation and didactics, which had the important task of creating the new Soviet society on the basis of the new Communist values and the new social relations⁴⁴. There have been many debates about elementary and secondary schools, which were focused not only on the length of schooling and organisation but also on the role of labour education, which was to mould the young generation for the country's industrial development.

The German scholar Oscar Anweiler has retraced the history of the Russian and Soviet school system from the end of the XIX Century to 1931. Anweiler has conducted a detailed analysis of the "culture of pedagogy" as well as of the reforms of the United Labour School, from its foundation (30th September 1918) until the decree of September 5th, 1931, when Stalin's school reform restored the traditional subjects and the authoritarian role of the teachers inside the schools. Anweiler has also analysed the pre-Revolutionary heritage, the pedagogical trends of the beginning of the century, the Bolshevik school politics, Lenin's program of 1919, the different debates among the Revolutionary pedagogues about the Marxist doctrine, the development of the *New Economic Politics* (1921-1927) and the *First Five-Year Plan* (1928-1932). Anweiler has examined the programmes and methodology of the teaching – in particular the *Dalton Plan* (elaborated by H. Parkhurst) and the *Complex Method* (inspired by W.H. Kilpatrick) – and the debate about the theory of the "gathering away of the school" (V.N. Shulgin) abandoned after the decree of September 5th, 1931. This decree was of fundamental significance, because it awarded the direction of the school policy-making to the Communist Party⁴⁵.

In a more recent article, Anweiler analyses the organisational structure of the Soviet school system and the importance of decentralisation. Indeed, the *Rules for the Organisation of Public Schools in the Russian Republic* (1918) established that the People's Commissariat for Enlightenment was to progressively take the direction of the school system. The Constitution of 1923 confirmed the leading role of the Commissariat, but established that Governmental institutions had the important task of determining the principles of nation-

und Perspektiven der Makarenko-Forschung. Materialien des 6. internationalen Symposions (28 April-2 Mai 1989), München, Minerva Publikation, 1994; K. Kobelt, *Anton Makarenko – Ein stalinistischer Pädagoge. Interpretationen auf dem Hintergrund der russisch-sowjetischen Bildungspolitik*, Frankfurt/M., Peter Lang, 1996.

⁴⁴ For the common education and co-educative system, see E.T. Ewing, *Gender Equity as a Revolutionary Strategy: Coeducation in Russia and Soviet Schools*, in Id. (ed.), *Revolution and Pedagogy. Interdisciplinary and Transnational Perspectives on Educational Foundations*, New York, Palgrave Publication, 2005, pp. 39-59.

⁴⁵ O. Anweiler, *Geschichte der Schule und Pädagogik in Russland vom Ende des Zarenreiches bis zum Beginn der Stalin-Ära*, Berlin, Quelle & Meyer Verlag, 1964.

al education. Thereby, the reforms of the 1920s were characterised by a moderate federalism in teaching, with some cases of centralisation in the Federal or autonomous republics. Although the Communist Party's task was to steer the educational policy at the Republican level, there were considerable differences in the organisation of the primary, secondary and vocational school system, in the elaboration of the programmes and in teachers' education. In particular, such differences emerged from the very beginning of the 1920s in Ukraine, where the People's Commissariat for Enlightenment expressed a different conception of education compared with the Russian People's Commissariat for Enlightenment. This explains why the Russian republic's school system represented a model of teaching for the other republics.

From 1928 to 1934, the main decisions regarding education were taken by the Communist Party and by the Council of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union. The introduction of the planned economy led to the end of the General Direction for vocational teaching (*Glavprofobr*) in 1930 – subsequently managed by economic institutions (*Vesencha*) – which represented the first step towards a separate management of the Soviet school system. In 1932, a Committee for High Technical Education was founded by the Russian Central Executive Committee. In 1946, the Committee for High Technical Education became the Ministry for High Education and only in 1959 the Federal and Republican Ministries for Education were established⁴⁶.

Sheila Fitzpatrick was among the first to deal with the educational and cultural politics of the post-revolutionary period (1917-1921). In her study about the foundation of the People's Commissariat for Enlightenment (that is the People's Commissariat for Education), Fitzpatrick analyses the process of elaboration of the Commissariat's politics, its structure, the relations with the other government institutions and in particular with the Communist Party. She has also focused on the role of V.I. Uljanov/Lenin (1870-1924) and of the main characters of the Commissariat's educational policy – A.V. Lunacharsky (1875-1933), M.N. Pokrovsky (1868-1932), N.K. Krupskaya (1869-1939) and E.A. Litkens (1888-1922). Fitzpatrick has analysed the main area of action of the People's Commissariat for Enlightenment: the school system management (primary, secondary and vocational), and culture and scientific research. As for the school system, the Commissariat was steered towards the American and European movement of active schools and progressive education: school programmes related to the social environment, different relationships between teachers and pupils, labour education and gymnastics. After a description of the revolutionary personality of Lunacharsky – the People's Commissar for Enlightenment which had the mission to "enlighten people" – Fitzpatrick describes the foundation of the Commissariat, the Department responsible for vocational education,

⁴⁶ O. Anweiler, *Centralisme et fédéralisme dans le système d'enseignement soviétique*, «Revue des Études Slaves», 58/2, 1986, pp. 229-243.

culture and scientific research and finally its reorganisation of 1921. The reform of the school and educational institutions – colonies and children's gardens – was strictly connected with the evolution of the cultural policy of the People's Commissar for Enlightenment and its reorganisation⁴⁷.

The history of the "United Labour School" during the 1920s has been analysed by W. Berelowitch and L.E. Holmes, who have studied the reforms from many points of view. In his study on the Sovietisation of Soviet schools, Berelowitch has pointed out the function of ideology in the whole system of Communist education: the ideological education of teachers, the connection between schools and Youth Communist organisations, the propaganda of atheism, the ritualism of school life and the leader cult after 1924. The school was to become a *gigantesque école* and fight against illiteracy – 50 per cent of the population was illiterate. Berelowitch has also analysed the psycho-pedagogical movement (P.P. Blonsky), which tried to organise the school reform on the basis of child psychology (in Russian *pedologija*)⁴⁸.

Holmes's analysis presents the debates about primary and secondary school reforms, the dichotomy between reforms and reality in the revolutionary period, the compromise between the People's Commissariat for Enlightenment and the teachers during the New Economic Policy, and the Cultural Revolution (1928-1931), which introduced a general compulsory education (25th July 1931). According to Holmes, the fact that Lunacharsky's supported a 9-year "polytechnical" education has stirred harsh debates between the People's Commissariat for Enlightenment, the Height Council of Economy's (*Vesencha*) members and the Communist League of Youth (*Komsomol*). In fact, Lunacharsky's position did not match with the economical needs nor fight against juvenile unemployment. However, during the 1920s, the People's Commissariat for Enlightenment managed to prevent the transformation of secondary schools into vocational schools – Factory apprenticeship schools (*Fzu*) and *technikumy* – in an attempt to preserve "polytechnical education" – understood as non-specialized education. Holmes has also analysed the evolution of *curricula*, the didactical experimentations of progressive education, teachers' behaviour, text books and school programmes. Nonetheless, Factory apprenticeship schools failed in their purpose – exactly as primary schools had done – and their management was transferred to economic institutions with the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. In August 1930, the First Polytechnical Congress brought a deep change: secondary schools introduced a specialized training from the V to the VII class and were now directly managed by the factories.

In this perspective, James C. Mc Clelland's essay is very interesting. Mc Clel-

⁴⁷ S. Fitzpatrick, *The Commissariat of Enlightenment. Soviet Organisation of Education and the Arts under Lunacharsky. October 1917-1921*, Cambridge-London, Cambridge University Press, 1970, pp. 26-36, 43-58, 227-236.

⁴⁸ W. Berelowitch, *La soviétisation de l'école russe, 1917-1931*, Lausanne, L'Age d'Homme, 1990.

land has focused on the dilemma of whether to support the general polytechnical education or rather the specialized education. This debate has characterised the reform of the “United Labour School” and divided experts such as Lunacharsky and Krupskaya, who considered the polytechnical principle to be a fusion of Kerschensteiner and Dewey’s conceptions with the Marxist ideology. The 9-year school based on labour – for children from 8 to 17 – provoked several debates within the Commissariat itself and also within the Ukrainian People’s Commissariat for Enlightenment, which supported a 7-year school system based on common education. In practice, between 1921 and 1925, the school attendance rate fell below that of 1914, when only half of the school-aged children in the countryside entered the school. In 1925, less than 50 per cent of the children attended the 3-year schools. Only 16.2 per cent of the children attended a complete cycle in the cities against 1.9 per cent in the countryside⁴⁹.

The question of polytechnical education – the most thorny but important issue of the history of Soviet education – has been analysed by Anna Gock, who has very exhaustively presented the debates on this topic in which N.K. Krupskaya, P.P. Blonsky, A.G. Kalashnikov, M.M. Pistrak and V.N. Shulgin were engaged. These Soviet pedagogues had very divergent ideas about the polytechnical principle and the role of both general education – in particular in the second degree school – and vocational education. Gock stresses the position of A.S. Bubnov – the People’s Commissar for Enlightenment from September 1929, the Soviet propaganda on polytechnical education during the First Five-Year Plan and the progressive liquidation of the polytechnical education from 1931 to 1937. Gock also points out that the concept of polytechnical education reflects the awareness of economic backwardness and the need to modernize society and economy⁵⁰.

Fitzpatrick’s book on the educational and cultural politics between 1921 and 1934 is particularly crucial to the understanding of the role of schools in social mobility. Fitzpatrick has given us a clearer picture of policy making, by focusing not only on the education system, the educational methods and the attendance of school, but also on the attack on illiteracy, the treatment of the «bourgeois and professors», mass education in the countryside, the impact of the Cultural Revolution on schools, and finally on the new education policies (1931-1934). Fitzpatrick has dedicated an entire chapter to «the making of a proletarian Intelligentsia», which means to the process of access to higher edu-

⁴⁹ J.C. McClelland, *The Utopian and the Heroic: Divergent Paths to the Communist Educational Ideal*, in A. Gleason, P. Kenz, R. Stites (eds.), *Experiment and Order in the Russian Revolution. Bolshevik Culture*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1985, pp. 114-130.

⁵⁰ A. Gock, *Polytechnische Bildung und Erziehung in der Sowjetunion bis 1937. Bildungspolitische und Pädagogische Diskussionen und Lösungsversuche*, Berlin, In Kommission bei Otto Harrassowitz Weisbaden, 1985. See also L.H. Holmes, *Magic into Hocus-pocus: The Decline of the Labour Education in Soviet Russia’s Schools, 1931-1937*, «Russian Review», 51 (4), 1992, pp. 545-565.

cation, which developed considerably and was reorganised at the beginning of the 1930s⁵¹. Marianne Krüger-Potratz has outlined the history of the pedagogical thought during the Cultural Revolution and the famous theory of the “withering away of schools” elaborated by Shulgin⁵².

The picture of the educational institutions of this decade has been completed by M. David-Fox’s research, which describes the pre-revolutionary Party schools and the three main institutions devoted to the Party Height Education – the famous Sverdlov University, the Institute for Red Professors, and the Socialist Academy (Communist)⁵³. In a very original research, based on archival material, Thomas Ewing deals with

the elementary and secondary school teachers who filled the rapidly expanding system of Soviet education in the 1930s. The study begins with the difficult position of teachers on the so-called “school front”, and ends with the severe impact of mass repression at decade’s end⁵⁴.

Ewing discusses the role of the teachers in the campaign for universal education and argues that

mass schooling thus stands at the point of convergence between policies and institutions of the state, on the one hand, and interests and aspirations of the people, on the other. Occupying a strategic location in the universal education campaign, teachers enacted and embodied this common ground between regime policies and community expectations. The expansion of education should also be recognised; however, as a process of state formation. [...] The teachers were involved in both dimensions of this process, as substantial quantitative increases were accompanied by fundamental changes in the lives of individuals⁵⁵.

Ewing affirms that there was an increase of 19 million pupils in ten years – 11 million in the primary schools and 8 million in the secondary⁵⁶ – even though these data hid the repression of teachers. With the real repression of pedology (4th July 1936), «the Central Committee decree and subsequent policy decisions were aimed directly at teachers’ efforts to avoid so-called “difficult” or “backward” pupils»⁵⁷. More than half million teachers were examined by special control commissions, which dismissed those who did not cor-

⁵¹ S. Fitzpatrick, *Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union (1921-1934)*, Cambridge-London-New York-Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 1979.

⁵² M. Krüger-Potratz, *Absterben der Schule oder Verschulung der Gesellschaft?: die sowjetische Pädagogik in der zweiten Kulturrevolution 1928-1931*, München, Wewel, 1987.

⁵³ M. David-Fox, *Revolution of the Mind: Higher Learning among the Bolsheviks, 1918-1929*, Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press, 1997.

⁵⁴ E.T. Ewing, *The Teachers of Stalinism: Policy, Practice, and Power in Soviet Schools of the 1930s*, New York, Peter Lang, 2002, p. 3.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁵⁷ E.T. Ewing, *Restoring Teachers to Their Right: Soviet Education and the 1936 Denunciation of Pedology*, «History of Education Quarterly», vol. 41 (4), 2001, pp. 471-493 (p. 487).

respond to the social origins and the political Faith requested by the Party: about 22,000 teachers were dismissed after the arrest of some of their relatives in the summers of 1936 to 1940⁵⁸. Andrej S. Bubnov himself (1883-1940), a People's Commissar for Enlightenment, was expelled by the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1937.

The year 1937 represented a crucial year for the history of schools, because the so-called "model schools" were closed, including the famous "School No. 25" (1931-1937) attended by Stalin's son and daughter and by the children of the Party leaders and of the Muscovite elite. According to Holmes, the «School No. 25 story illustrates the awesome power of the Communist Party and Soviet state, both of which exercised a daily presence in the lives of the school's administrators, teachers, and pupils». The history of this school is representative of the transformation of "totalitarian schools" based on Communist education and the ideological control of pupils through the use of a unique text book and rigorous discipline. Holmes describes the everyday school life, the didactics, leisure activities and financing strategies of the school maintenance⁵⁹. The school then abandoned the methods of the Revolutionary progressive education and restored the traditional lesson system with school subjects – literature, history, geography – based on the Marxist history and literature text books. The school had to close following a major financial crisis. According to Holmes, the budget of education was progressively curtailed between 1937 and 1953⁶⁰. After that, there was a period of recovery for schooling and the literacy rate remained constant with 31-33 million pupils until the 1960s⁶¹.

These studies are based on a huge collection of archival material, which has also enabled us to analyse school exercise books and "children's writing" – one of the new trends of the history of education. During the International Conference of 2007 – *School exercise books. A complex source for a history of the approach to schooling and education in the 19th and 20th centuries* – A. Salnikova and V. Bezrogov examined children's autobiographies and the assimilation of the "Sovietness" during the 1920s and 1930s⁶². During this confer-

⁵⁸ E.T. Ewing, *The Teachers of Stalinism: Policy, Practice, and Power in Soviet Schools of the 1930s*, cit., pp. 227-258 (cfr. 233, 242); L.E. Holmes, *School and Schooling under Stalin, 1931-1953*, in B. Eklof, L.E. Holmes, V. Kaplan (eds.), *Educational Reform in Post-Soviet Russia. Legacies and prospects*, London-New York, Frank Cass, 2005, pp. 56-101 (cfr. p. 64).

⁵⁹ L.E. Holmes, *Stalin's School Moscow's Model No. 25, 1931-1937*, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999, p. 17.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁶¹ R.B. Dobson, *Higher education in the Soviet Union: Problems of access, equity, and public policy*, in G.W. Lapidus, G.E. Swanson (eds.), *State and Welfare USA/USSR. Contemporary Policy and Practice*, Berkeley, University of California (Institute of International Studies), 1988, pp. 17-59.

⁶² See the papers by V. Bezrogov, *Old crow quills draw the new world? An Elementary School-children's Written Exercises in the 1920s – the beginning of the 1930s's Russia: Draft Reconstruction of the Writing World of the First Soviet Generation* and by A. Salnikova, *Transformations in*

ence, I have myself analysed the evolution of the didactics of literature and natural science on the basis of school exercise books of pupils of the Tolstoi's school in Jasnaia Poliana, of the two famous Soviet heroes Zoia and Aleksandr Kosmodemianskie – who attended the “Okt'iabr” school in Moscow – and of some pupils of the Biological Station for young naturalists “K.A. Timiri-azev” (Moscow). These exercise books mirror the teaching activity and the educational praxis of that time, which aimed at educating the patriotic feelings and the devotion for the Fatherland based on the Russian tradition⁶³. These new sources shed a new light on Soviet and Stalinism schools and have enabled scholars to delve into new unexplored fields of the history of “totalitarian education”.

3. *The Soviet School from World War II to the “Khrushchev School Reform” (1940-1958)*

The history of the Soviet school during World War II has been analysed in detail by Dunstan, who argues that the crisis in Soviet schools was not caused by the War itself, even though it definitely led to shortages of buildings, teachers and textbooks. Dunstan's book is divided into three parts: the school in the 1930s, the school during the War and the school after the War. In the first part, Dunstan analyses the Stalinist school system and schooling in the territories into which the Soviets had moved after the German invasion (i.e. Finland, the Baltic States and Bessarabia). The bulk of the research is constituted by wartime schooling and upbringing, teachers' turnover, the dismantling of co-education and the dropping out of children. In the third and last part, Dunstan describes the reforms of 1943 – which fixed single-sex schools and lowered the school starting age. He also examines several organisational aspects such as the restoration of school buildings, the lack of teachers – 14 per cent below the pre-war rate – and children's recovery at the three stages of schooling⁶⁴. Also vocational education was reorganised during the War: a National Reserve System of Labour was created and charged by the Factory apprentice-

Russian Children's Texts during the First Years of the Bolshevik Rule: Internalizing 'Sovietness'?, to be published in J. Meda, D. Montino, R. Sani (eds.), *Quaderni di scuola. Una fonte complessa per la storia delle culture scolastiche e dei costumi educativi tra Ottocento e Novecento. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi* (Macerata, 26-29 Settembre 2007), forthcoming)

⁶³ D. Caroli, *I quaderni di scuola e la didattica della lingua, della letteratura e delle scienze naturali in Russia e in Unione Sovietica (1860-1940) / School exercise books and the didactics of language, literature and natural sciences in Russia and in the Soviet Union (1860-1940)*, *ibid.*

⁶⁴ J. Dunstan, *Soviet Schooling in the Second World War*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, Macmillan Press Ltd., 1997. See also W. Moskoff, *Soviet Higher education policy during World War II*, «Soviet Studies», 38 (3), 1986, pp. 406-415.

ship schools, which had been separated from the People's Commissariat for Enlightenment in 1929. In 1959, the Chief Administration of Labour Reserve became the All-Union Ministry of Labour Reserve, which expanded the network of vocational-technical schools⁶⁵.

As J.J. Tomjak underlines, the XIX Congress of the Communist Party (1952) announced an important decision to reintroduce polytechnical training in schools. The Ministries of Education and the Russian Academy of Science then began to elaborate the content of polytechnical education. The outcome of the debates was the *Khrushchev Memorandum* (21st September 1958), followed by the publication of the law «on strengthening the relationship of the school with the life and the further development of the system of public education in the country» (24th December 1958)⁶⁶.

The "Khrushchev School reform" concerned the reintroduction of polytechnical education, which was possible thanks to the introduction of the 8-year school – instead of the 7 – and of a general compulsory education⁶⁷. Secondary education – for pupils aged 15-16 – should be based on the connection between education and productive labour. After 7 years of school, pupils had three options to complete their education: a) schools for the rural worker youth; b) secondary schools for general and polytechnical education; c) technical institutes and centres for specialised education⁶⁸.

On the basis of new archival material, the French historian Laurent Coumel has declared that the reform of 1958 would not only provide a remedy for industry and agriculture labour force shortages but also modify the mechanisms allowing access to secondary professional education, which had led to the exclusion of the less privileged from classes VIII, IX and X⁶⁹. Indeed, before this reform, 284,000 pupils attended school in 1950, while after the introduction of compulsory secondary education in 1973, this number increased to 4 million in 1980⁷⁰.

The "Khrushchev School reform" – in spite of the "opposition" to Khrushchev described by Coumel himself – was elaborated in the continuity of the historical tradition of the decree of September 5th 1931, on the basis of

⁶⁵ O. Anweiler, *Centralisme et fédéralisme dans le système d'enseignement soviétique*, cit., pp. 229-243.

⁶⁶ J.J. Tomiak, *The Soviet Union*, Newton Abbot, David & Charles, 1972, pp. 11-38.

⁶⁷ G.S. Counts, *Khrushchev and the Central Committee Speak on Education*, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1959.

⁶⁸ L. Volpicelli (ed.), *La scuola nell'U.R.S.S. e la legge Kruscev*, Roma, A. Armando, 1959, pp. 227-244. See also M. Pagella, *Viaggio in U.R.S.S. Cose mai viste nel mondo sovietico della scuola e del lavoro*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1958.

⁶⁹ L. Coumel, *L'appareil du parti et la réforme scolaire de 1958: un cas d'opposition à Hruščev*, «Cahiers du monde russe», 47/1-2, 2006, pp. 173-194.

⁷⁰ R.B. Dobson, *Higher education in the Soviet Union: Problems of access, equity, and public policy*, cit., pp. 17-59.

which the Communist Party had assumed the direction of the school policy-making. The Federal Ministry for the whole school system was created only later, in 1966. Until this date, the People's Commissariat for Enlightenment represented the only model for orientating school reforms in Soviet republics. Furthermore, after 1979, three different Ministries for Schools – secondary vocational and higher education – and a State Committee for the Education of Vocational and Technical Education were established⁷¹.

However, as shown by Dunstan, «the basically academic and cognitive-oriented reaction to Khrushchev's "polytechnical" programme was quite short-lived» but the anti-vocational lobby was still active in 1983. The reform of January 4th 1984 concerned both primary schools and the vocational training system, and aimed at achieving universal secondary education. This reform also aimed at lowering school starting age to 6 instead of 7. The 3-year primary school would be reorganised as a 4-year school, and the 8-year incomplete school as a 9-year school. Secondary general schools were increased from 10 to 11 years – or 12 with completion of vocational-technical education⁷².

The school system developed in Russia and in the former Soviet republics is characterised by a transformation process – still ongoing – which has been weakened by the centralised education system and by the slow process of democratisation⁷³. Eklof, Holmes and Kaplan have made an important contribution to our understanding of the institutional transformation of the Russian school system and its financing – which has been reduced from 4.5 per cent in 1994 of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to 3.2 per cent in 1999 – and in particular of its "inside history": the *curricula* reform with an increase in humanities; the re-writing of text-books; the adoption of the mother tongue

⁷¹ O. Anweiler, *Centralisme et fédéralisme dans le système d'enseignement soviétique*, cit., pp. 237-238.

⁷² J. Dunstan, *Soviet Education Beyond 1984: a commentary on the reform Guidelines*, «Compare», 15(2), 1985, pp. 161-167 (162). See also I.F. Protchenko, *School reform in the USSR*, «Soviet Education Study Bulletin (Bulletin of the U.K. Study Group on the Soviet Education)», 3 (1), 1985, pp. 1-17 (2).

⁷³ J. Sutherland, *Problems in the Russian school after Gorbachev 1992-1994*, «Education in Russia, the Independent States and the Eastern Europe», 13 (1), 1995, pp. 3-14; Y. Gautier, *Pour une école de l'ouverture. Entretien avec Vladimir Kinelev ministre de l'éducation de Russie*, «Le monde de l'éducation», novembre 1996, pp. 49-53; G. Schmidt, *Das Bildungswesen Russlands ein Jahrzehnt nach dem Umbruch – Die ethnisch-nationale Bildung und Erziehung und die "BildungsTransformation"*, in H. Döbert, H.-W. Fuchs, H. Weishaupt (eds.), *Transformation in der ostdeutschen Bildungslandschaft. Eine Forschungsbilanz*, Opladen, Leske und Budrich, 2002, pp. 131-151; J. Muckle, *Russian Concepts of Patriotism and their Reflection in the Education System Today*, «Tertium Comparationis. Journal für International und Interkulturell Vergleichende Erziehungswissenschaft», 9 (1), 2003, pp. 7-14; G. Hillig, *Erziehung im Kibbutz – ein Überblick für Pädagogen in der postsowjetischen Ukraine*, *ibid.*, 9 (2), 2003, pp. 188-222; R. Motika, S. Reichmuth, M. Kemper (eds.), *Islamic Education in the Soviet Union and Its Successor States*, London, Routledge, 2005; G. Schmidt, *Russische Föderation*, in H. Döbert, W. Hörner, B. von Kopp, W. Mitter (eds.), *Die Schulsysteme Europas*, Heidelberg, Springer Verlag, 2006, pp. 437-457.

language in all the schools of the former republics of the Soviet Union – such as Estonia – and the changes caused by the Bologna Process (18th-19th June 1999) on the higher education system of Russia and of the former Soviet republics⁷⁴.

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⁷⁴ See B. Eklof's introduction to B. Eklof, L.E. Holmes, V. Kaplan (eds.), *Educational reform in Post-Soviet Russia. Legacies and prospects*, cit., pp. 1-20 (11).

Educación y ciudadanía en España hasta 1975: una construcción histórica forjada de equilibrios y dependencias*

Manuel Ferraz Lorenzo

El cumplimiento de los deberes de ciudadanía por gobernantes y gobernados, es la única solución posible para todos los problemas: en la esfera social, política y económica, no hay dificultades insolubles cuando cada cual cumple con su obligación.

Augusto González Besada, *Deberes de ciudadanía olvidados o mal cumplidos por las generaciones actuales*, 1913.

En los últimos años parece haberse convertido en práctica habitual – hasta cierto punto imparable – el conocimiento de las sociedades a través de una mayor expansión temática de determinados objetos de estudio, para dar respuesta a nuevas formas de agrupamientos, relaciones y comportamientos de los individuos que las integran. De igual modo, también han variado las técnicas, los métodos y los enfoques dirigidos a redefinir con mayor precisión la naturaleza de los fenómenos investigados. Los procesos estructurales de larga

* Esta publicación está circunscrita al Proyecto de Investigación financiado por el Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia con la referencia HUM2004-04562. Quiero agradecer, asimismo, la lectura que del primer borrador realizaron Víctor Alonso, Miguel Ángel Cabrera, Mariano González y Victorio Heredero. Sus comentarios, notas, advertencias y sugerencias han contribuido a enriquecer el trabajo final.

duración, la universalización de los grandes relatos, el inmovilismo determinista que daba cuenta de lo acontecido y las manifestaciones narrativas que lo describían han cedido terreno a los estudios particulares o micros relativos a la identidad, género, territorialidad, etnicidad... y, con mayor o menor fortuna, también a los centrados en la ciudadanía como sujeto/objeto histórico y categoría social de análisis. Una construcción genealógica propia de Estados desarrollados (esto es, de Estados en los que las minorías son excluidas para que la mayoría disponga de un óptimo nivel de vida, de recursos y de prestaciones) en los que los derechos y deberes han sido asumidos como corolario de garantía, orden y cohesión sociales. Y es que, como bien ha precisado algún destacado historiador en una aseveración que se presta igualmente a la matización,

La ciudadanía es la candidata más cualificada para constituir un amplio sujeto histórico que permite agrupar a sectores más amplios que la clase obrera tradicional, en un mundo en el que escasea tanto el trabajo fijo como la identidad profesional o laboral¹.

Nuestro propósito en este trabajo se basa, fundamentalmente, en poner de manifiesto la estrecha relación existente entre educación y ciudadanía – como proceso histórico la primera y condición social la segunda – para desvelar la naturaleza secular y evolutiva de ambas, y su adaptación a los discursos sociales emergentes y dominantes tras los cambios económicos, políticos y sociales de la etapa contemporánea. En la primera parte realizaremos un somero análisis de la versátil concepción de ciudadanía existente desde la antigüedad; para ello haremos una selección de fuentes literarias – obviamente incompleta, como no puede ser de otro modo en un ensayo de estas características – siguiendo los pasos de determinados autores; después, ya en la segunda parte del texto, intentaremos analizar los contenidos de la legislación educativa española destinados a la formación del niño para su futura conversión en ciudadano, aunque, como veremos, carentes de todo tipo de significación para elevarlo a la condición de actor social.

1. *Antecedentes histórico-pedagógicos generales*

1.1. *Etapa antigua de racionalidad jurídico-política.* Si nos remontamos a la antigüedad y rastreamos la estela dejada por los pensadores más representativos y prolíficos de la época y, al mismo tiempo, menos silenciados por el mantenimiento de determinadas tradiciones de pensamiento, podemos percatarnos de la preocupación que en ellos suscitó la dignificación de la sociedad, *poleis* o Esta-

¹ C. Forcadell Álvarez, La historia social, de la “clase” a la “identidad”, en E. Hernández Sandoica, A. Langa (eds.), *Sobre la historia actual. Entre política y cultura*, Madrid, Abada Editores, 2005, p. 28.

do (entendidos como comunidad política no reducible a simple aglomeración urbana) y el papel ejercido por los ciudadanos como grupo social dominante y la ciudadanía como modelo ideal de convivencia. Platón fue uno de los que más tinta derramó para plantear, con la claridad expositiva que le caracterizó, los márgenes políticos y sociales en los que debían moverse estos individuos al considerarlos únicos y legítimos herederos de los tradicionales grupos étnicos de “mejores”. Su vocación política y sus propuestas educativas dirigidas a engrandecer el Estado y la ética aristocrática ateniense en momentos de manifiesto declive por mor de la democracia imperante, le llevaron a expresar que

cada ciudadano sólo debe aplicarse a una cosa, aquella para la que ha nacido, a fin de que cada particular, ajustándose a la profesión que le conviene, sea uno; para que el Estado sea también uno, y no haya ni muchos ciudadanos en un solo ciudadano, ni muchos Estados en un solo Estado².

A pesar de reconocer en éstos al sector social más determinante por su capacidad de gestión y por ser el único depositario de la virtud o excelencia (*areté*), la perfección y la razón, tampoco expresó dudas o reparos si era puntualmente engañado (sic) por parte de los magistrados – grupo de poder formado a su vez por ciudadanos – «para bien de la república» (p. 97). Por tanto, el interés común se situaba por encima del individual (*oikos*) aunque articulado por quienes poseían la virtud innata de carácter etno-histórico y la preparación cultural adecuada en el marco de una sociedad jerárquicamente clasista. Los conceptos que aludían a la misma ley para todos (*isonomía*), a la misma participación en los negocios públicos (*isegoría*) y a la misma cuota de participación en el poder (*isocracia*) que caracterizaron el modelo democrático esclavista ateniense, no fueron tenidos en consideración – es más, fueron severamente criticados – en el prototipo de sociedad ideal diseñada por Platón. Por todo ello, *La República*, pese a ser un importante eslabón en la formación y el diseño de los gobiernos y de los sectores que los conforman (ciudadanos instruidos), no inicia históricamente la cadena de la teoría política del Estado – y por tanto de la deliberación acerca de la existencia del ciudadano “perfecto” – sino que es una reacción conservadora a teorías precedentes como, por ejemplo, la establecida por los sofistas.

Su discípulo Aristóteles, siguiendo los mismos pasos, expresaba la alta consideración que debían ostentar estos individuos puesto que de su buen hacer dependía el óptimo funcionamiento del Estado deseado. Valorados globalmente como miembros de una asociación superior, los ciudadanos eran definidos sencillamente como «hombres que tienen derecho a llegar a las magistraturas», esto es, como potenciales gobernantes. De lo cual se deduce que, «aunque el Estado necesite de todos los individuos que lo componen, no se sigue de aquí

² Platón, *La República o el Estado*, Decimocuarta edición, Madrid, Espasa-Calpe, 1980, Libro Cuarto, p. 127.

que todos deban ser ciudadanos necesariamente». De igual modo, tampoco los sectores más jóvenes podían formar parte de este selecto grupo: «Así los niños no son ciudadanos como los hombres. Éstos gozan de tal derecho en toda su plenitud; aquellos, de una manera imperfecta»³. La ciudadanía, como vemos, más que un estatus era un devenir para los que tenían virtualidades innatas o bien rango económico suficiente para llegar a adquirirlas de no poseerlas por nacimiento.

Pese a los matices diferenciadores en sus respectivas doctrinas sociales, filosóficas y pedagógicas, el común denominador que caracterizaba a ambos autores en esta particular temática podría concretarse en los siguientes enunciados: a) los ciudadanos como sectores hegemónicos de la sociedad; b) los ciudadanos como grupo reducido y la ciudadanía como privilegio de nacimiento o de clase; y c) los ciudadanos como garantes de la distribución desigual de derechos y deberes para evitar los enfrentamientos y la movilidad social y, por tanto, para facilitar la convivencia y la cohesión política. Como parte del cuerpo cívico cuyo origen se basaba en el orden natural, ser ciudadano era en sí mismo una función social que tenía por objeto defender el régimen contra intereses particulares o camarillas, jerarquizando, diferenciando y, al mismo tiempo, unificando. Según este planteamiento, podríamos convenir en la idea de que «la política, la ciudadanía, no eran, pues, ni el medio de la definición y realización de derechos (políticos, económicos, etc.) ni el mecanismo compulsivo de la cooperación obligada, sino a la vez causa y efecto de la auto-obligación colectiva»⁴.

En este contexto, la educación debía reproducir los valores y derechos históricos reservados exclusivamente a los candidatos a gobernantes. Debía dedicarse, por tanto, a formar una elite preparada para la acción política (meritocracia), basada en los principios sociales y morales del pasado más glorioso resultante de los regímenes aristocráticos para – a través de una incuestionable división social en la que el fin común justificaba los medios personales – poder distinguir entre actividades nobles (propias de los ciudadanos libres destinadas a contemplar el bien) e innobles (propias de los no ciudadanos y de los ciudadanos no libres o metecos que embrutecían y destruían la naturaleza humana, destinadas a mantener el sistema de producción). Parece lógico constatar que una sociedad basada en la esclavitud, y que a todas luces despreciaba al *demos* (entendiendo por tal la población perteneciente a las aldeas campesinas o a las entidades urbanas con participación política autónoma), no podía – ni debía – garantizar la cultura a todos sus miembros. No ocurría lo mismo entre los ciudadanos que, como hemos expuesto, se debían al Estado más que a sí

³ Aristóteles, *La Política*, Ediciones Alba, Madrid, 1987, Libro III, Capítulo III, p. 91 y 92. Antes había advertido de lo siguiente: «Siendo el niño un ser incompleto, su virtud no consiste en apoyarse únicamente sobre sí mismo, sino más bien sobre una virtud más perfecta que dirigirle debe», p. 47.

⁴ P. Sánchez León, *La ciudadanía que hemos perdido: El zóon politikón en perspectiva histórica*, en M. Pérez Ledesma (Comp.), *Ciudadanía y democracia*, Madrid, Editorial Pablo Iglesias, 2000, p. 49.

mismos y, por tanto, «cada individuo es un miembro del cuerpo social y la educación de la parte debe ser adecuada a la del todo» (Aristóteles, p. 157).

Una concepción que comienza a erosionarse y que paulatinamente tocará su fin durante el período helenístico, donde el surgimiento de distintas monarquías como consecuencia de la fragmentación del imperio de Alejandro Magno y el estadio de universalización al que se llega – especialmente ilustrativo en lo relativo a la lengua griega común o *Koiné* –, alentarán un nuevo discurso y una nueva práctica política en la que la ciudad sólo permanecerá como entidad local abandonando su tradicional rango estatal como fórmula política y social por antonomasia. Desde entonces, se considerará ciudadano a quien forme parte del selecto y útil círculo de poderosos que habitan los vastos dominios imperiales, independientemente de su origen geográfico o de su ocupación territorial más local.

Por su parte, la cultura romana, de carácter más práctica y utilitaria, basada en la propiedad de la tierra y en su legitimación a través del derecho (*ius*), no admite la reflexión literaria ni filosófica como expresión de avance social. Sin remontarnos a la Ley de las XII Tablas (s. V a.d.e.) y dentro de los derechos prescritos y ampliamente respetados, el de ciudadanía era uno más; un título político, si se prefiere, imposible de hacer universal a toda la población y que facultaba a tener plenas competencias, primero, en la República y, tras las sucesivas guerras civiles y con recortes importantes en sus determinaciones, en el Imperio. El ciudadano – con todos sus atributos sociales y jurídicos – lo era por acuerdo en derecho y no por compartir creencias religiosas, origen étnico, tradiciones o lengua. Tengamos presente que los ciudadanos romanos podían tener procedencia itálica, hispana, lusitana, gala, germánica, etcétera, con lo cual la heterogeneidad de origen – y por tanto, su falta de pureza patriótico-territorial – estaba garantizada; eso sí, debían convertirse en modelo de comportamiento y en protectores de la comunidad de intereses para el resto de la población. Así por lo menos lo expresaba Marco Tulio Cicerón en uno de sus Discursos:

Si, pues, el papel de un buen cónsul, cuando alguien trata de minar y destruir los resortes del Estado, es el de acudir en socorro de la Patria, el de defender los intereses y la seguridad de todos, el de hacer un llamamiento al patriotismo de los ciudadanos y el de subordinar el cuidado de su propio bienestar al bien común, es también el papel de los buenos y valerosos ciudadanos⁵.

Como máximo pilar de la República, Cicerón deseaba que todo ciudadano honesto (*vir bonus*) participara en los asuntos públicos y abordara temas de interés para la colectividad (*populus*), convirtiéndose incluso en gestor de los mismos, pues la *res publica* no era simplemente un régimen de participación comunitario sino, sobre todo, «el conjunto de bienes que son propiedad de los

⁵ Cicerón, *Discursos políticos y forenses*. Obras Maestras, traducción, prólogo y notas de Agustín Blánquez, Barcelona, 1981, pp. 91-92.

ciudadanos»⁶. Todo ello, durante una etapa histórica en la que el esplendor político y territorial romano no daría paso a una o varias *polis* sino a grandes y medianas urbes donde se daban cita gentes de distintos lugares y posiciones sociales. Ciudadanía, dominio y moralidad se convertirían en los pilares básicos de la sociedad y la educación propuesta en su obra *De Magistro* sería la mejor forja para concebirlos.

Siguiendo a Platón, e imitando modos de hacer y pensar griegos lo que le supuso no pocos enfrentamientos con los sectores más tradicionales y más caros al filohelenismo, Cicerón deseó fundar una especie de idealismo político basado en el estudio de las leyes, la filosofía y la oratoria; una propuesta que llegó tarde y que rápidamente se convertiría en anacrónica dada la persecución a la que estaba abocado el régimen republicano. Aquella *auctoritas* que planteaba con tanta energía para cohesionar a los ciudadanos y al resto de habitantes de las provincias romanas, adoptó la fórmula de imperio y se sometió a un mayor grado de burocracia, centralización, control y represión. Desde ese mismo momento, el ciudadano abandonó su papel de activista político y de propietario comprometido y solidario (con los suyos) y se convirtió en dócil técnico al servicio del Estado o, peor aún, en mero súbdito del mismo, hasta que el emperador Marco Aurelio Caracalla, después de asesinar a su hermano y a más de 20.000 personas por considerarlas desafectas a sus ideas, promulgó el año 212 el Edicto que llevaba su nombre y por el que confería la ciudadanía a la población libre de todas las provincias del Imperio.

1.2. *Etapas antigua y medieval de espiritualidad teológica-social*. Con el cristianismo y el neoplatonismo se inicia una nueva fase en la que lo político, entendido a la vieja usanza como elemento racional e intelectual, desaparece por completo – no así lo social que se impregna de espiritualidad – y el aspecto teológico se convierte en la única apoyatura para alcanzar la anhelada morada celestial. Sin entrar en disquisiciones sobre las distintas fases por las que atraviesa este pensamiento que pone los cimientos de la Edad Media, podemos afirmar que la ciudadanía como compromiso con y por la *polis* desaparece de raíz a tenor de que, por una parte, tanto la ciudadanía como lo que ella representa se considera insustancial y perecedero y, por otra, serán nuevos individuos y nuevas instituciones salidos de la alianza entre el poder civil y religioso los que se alcen con su hege-

⁶ P. López Baraja De Quiroga, *La polis aristotélica y la res publica ciceroniana: estudio comparativo*, en D. Plácido, M. Valdés, F. Echeverría, M.Y. Montes, *La construcción ideológica de la ciudadanía. Identidades y sociedad en el mundo griego antiguo*, Madrid, Editorial Complutense S.A., UCM, 2006, p. 323; G. Pereira Menaut, *Ciudadanía romana clásica vs. ciudadanía europea. Innovaciones y vigencia del concepto romano de ciudadanía*, «Historia Actual Online» (HOAL), 2005, núm. 7, pp. 143-150. Para obtener una visión más global del concepto de ciudad y de ciudadano a lo largo del mundo antiguo y medieval, ver la obra clásica de M. Weber, *La ciudad*, Madrid, La Piqueta, 1987 (versión original, *Die Stadt*, 1921).

monía y lo controlen de manera absoluta. Los privilegios, ventajas o prerrogativas políticas, económicas y jurídicas adscritas a esta categoría social en la antigüedad, son sustituidas por prebendas espirituales mucho más determinantes para la vida eterna del ser humano. Así lo expone uno de los más destacados Padres de la Iglesia, Agustín de Hipona, en su monumental obra *La Ciudad de Dios*. Construidas sobre principios contrarios, la ciudad celestial prevalece sobre la ciudad terrenal o, lo que es lo mismo, los fundamentos divinos basados en la fe se anteponen a los fundamentos de la comunidad civil basados en la razón intelectual; «dos amores, pues, han hecho dos ciudades» o «cree para que entiendas» son las bases del pensamiento agustiniano. De esta manera, Dios está llamado a legitimar el poder en toda su extensión, en su propio nombre y para sí mismo.

Esta versión profundamente teocéntrica de la sociedad, como es obvio, demandaba un nuevo modelo educativo que desarrollara sus principios y actuara en consecuencia sobre lo que Agustín dio en llamar la «verdad interior». El conocimiento había sido puesto por Dios en el hombre (era innato, por tanto) y sólo habría que recurrir a la «evocación» (*sic*) para hacerlo presente en el individuo. Siguiendo esta exposición, el auténtico maestro era Dios y el hombre se quedaría como simple instrumento de extracción con la finalidad de sancionar y perpetuar la ley natural:

Mas en otro tiempo discutiremos [...], de toda la utilidad de las palabras, que, bien considerada, no es pequeña. Pues hoy te he advertido de no darles más importancia de la que conviene, para que no sólo no creamos, sino que comencemos a entender cuan verdaderamente está escrito por la autoridad divina que no llamemos maestro nuestro a nadie en la tierra, puesto que el solo Maestro de todos está en los cielos⁷.

Esta versión educativa que presentaba la teología como máxima aspiración y preocupación pedagógica y el hierocratismo como máximo horizonte de racionalidad práctica, perduró durante toda la etapa medieval con los arreglos y puestas al día pertinentes realizadas por autores tan emblemáticos como Isidoro de Sevilla.

En una sociedad dominada por la nobleza analfabeta (como fue el elocuente caso de Carlomagno) y por la clerecía dogmática (encarnada por el papado y las órdenes mendicantes), el ciudadano concebido como individuo autónomo y con derechos sociales comunitarios en versión greco-latina desapareció por completo durante el largo período medieval, como hemos advertido ya, y en su lugar la dominación se ejerció a través del siervo y más tarde el vasallo. Peor aún; bajo el férreo control social de la Iglesia pontificia ejercido después de varios siglos de alianza para difuminar las diferencias entre el *ordo spiritualis* y el *ordo temporalis*, la servidumbre social se convirtió en servidumbre divina y los habitantes devendrían fieles sojuzgados por el “dogma” y la “gracia”, con

⁷ San Agustín, *Del Maestro*, Cap. XIV, en *Obras de San Agustín*, Madrid, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1971, t. 3, p. 636; Id., *La Ciudad de Dios* (2004), Mexico, Editorial Porrúa, S.A., 2004.

lo cual el adversario a batir lejos de personalizarse se había esencializado, volatilizado. El ciudadano, entendido como sujeto que por gracia divina poseía potencial capacidad para profesar el libre albedrío, lo era más por lo que recibía – sobre todo obligaciones y protección – que por lo que hacía o proponía – participación en los asuntos colectivos.

La dominación y la sacralización resultantes de la supremacía eclesiástica servirían para mitigar los conflictos ocasionados por las desigualdades naturales, hasta el punto de que durante la Baja Edad Media, cuando aparecen las primeras ciudades, éstas no se convierten en asociaciones de individuos sino en entes colectivos que dominan o apaciguan todas las manifestaciones individuales o particulares para alcanzar la virtud, que pasa a ser término intercambiable del de beatitud. Así lo expresa durante la Escolástica, en pleno siglo XIII, Tomás de Aquino:

necesariamente la ley debe ante todo encaminarse al orden consistente en la beatitud. Además, puesto que toda la parte se ordena al todo, como lo imperfecto a lo perfecto, y un hombre es parte de la comunidad perfecta, es necesario que la ley atienda propiamente y se ordene a la felicidad común⁸.

Siguiendo con esta lógica, el hombre sólo podía transmitir una parte insignificante de los conocimientos porque, *stricto sensu*, seguían siendo innatos y responsabilidad exclusiva de Dios; una buena manera de sellar su compromiso cristiano al fortalecer el poder de la Iglesia tras la controversia intelectual del siglo XIII, y de limitar el poder *político* terrenal surgido del incipiente auge comercial. Lejos de suscitar una ruptura con la tradición, la naciente burguesía arraiga sus compromisos con la corona para consolidar una posición diferenciada.

1.3. *Etapas modernas de racionalidad individual y estatal*. Pero a partir del siglo XIV – siglo de crisis económica, de peste y epidemias, de división de la Iglesia, de conflictos y violencia sociales – la paulatina consolidación de la burguesía, la acumulación de capital, la aparición de las monarquías y de los príncipes como responsables de sus dominios, la experimentación de la secularización como norma de vida moral, las nuevas formas de expresión culturales y artísticas junto a la negación del determinismo naturalista... , la vida comienza a transformarse y del ecumenismo anterior que se resquebraja comienza a aflorar el nuevo humanismo occidental de carácter y naturaleza antropocéntrica; o lo que es sinónimo, comienza la desvinculación del pensamiento científico-técnico de la competencia doctrinal teológica. El mismo Erasmo de Rotterdam – monje agustino, repararemos en ello – lo expresaba con notable claridad: «Es hora ya de dejar a los dio-

⁸ Tomás Aquino, *Suma Teológica* (selección). Introducción y notas por el P. Ismael Quiles, S.I., S.A. Madrid, Espasa-Calpe, 1979, p. 121.

ses en el cielo para regresar a la tierra»⁹. Como se puede apreciar, la *civitas dei* del medievo comienza a erosionarse, si bien es cierto que con dificultades y notables altibajos, y se encamina hacia la *civitas terrena* del período moderno.

Un contemporáneo suyo, Nicolás de Maquiavelo, dedica una de sus obras cumbre – *El Príncipe*, escrita en 1513 – al «magnífico Lorenzo de Médicis» encarnación ideal de príncipe renacentista; en ella revela las estrategias, cualidades y destrezas que debe de llevar a la práctica un auténtico hombre de Estado para mantener a toda costa la virtud política y el poder, hasta el punto de sostener que el «fin justifica los medios». Al marcar una nítida línea divisoria con el pasado medieval más proclive a mantener las leyes naturales que las convencionales, Maquiavelo llegó a proponer la creación de un «principado civil» con el apoyo del pueblo:

Trataremos ahora del segundo caso: aquel en que un ciudadano, no por crímenes ni violencias, sino gracias al favor de sus compatriotas, se convierte en príncipe. El Estado así constituido puede llamarse *principado civil*. El llegar a él no depende de los méritos o de la suerte; depende más bien de una cierta habilidad propiciada por la fortuna y que necesita, o bien del apoyo del pueblo, o bien del de los nobles. Porque en toda ciudad se encuentran estas dos fuerzas contrarias una de las cuales lucha por mandar y oprimir a la otra que no quiere ser mandada ni oprimida. Y del choque de las dos corrientes surge uno de estos tres efectos: o principado, o libertad, o licencia¹⁰.

El príncipe, visto de este modo, se convierte en ser soberano en la toma de decisiones y, por lo tanto, no se debe a ningún otro poder temporal o espiritual. La transformación del ejército, la creación de la hacienda pública, el establecimiento de una burocracia permanente, el sometimiento a una única autoridad, la secularización del pensamiento etc., serán las bases de la nueva organización política.

En este escenario social, la educación no fue considerada prioridad del estado en ebullición y, de hecho, las propuestas educativas continuaron estando en manos de la Iglesia hasta el punto de poder afirmar que «durante la Edad Moderna, el modelo educativo sigue siendo prácticamente un monopolio eclesiástico de carácter supraestatal fuese en su vertiente jesuítica o calvinista»¹¹. De la educación cortesana dedicada a la formación de príncipes a la educación

⁹ Erasmo De Rotterdam, *Elogio de la locura*, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 1986, p. 51 (la primera edición data de 1511).

¹⁰ Maquiavelo, *El príncipe*, capítulo IX. *Del principado civil*, Ediciones elaleph.com, 1999, pp. 48-49 (<<http://www.elaleph.com>>). Versión impresa en Madrid, Alianza Editorial, pp. 71-72.

¹¹ M. de Puelles Benítez, Manuel de, *Estado y Educación: una relación histórica*, en A. Ruiz (coord.), *La escuela pública. El papel del Estado en la educación*, Madrid, Biblioteca Nueva, 2002, p. 18. Véanse igualmente H. Barreiro, A. Terrón, *La institución escolar: una creación del estado moderno*, Madrid, Octaedro-FIES, 2005; el libro clásico de E. Garin, *La educación en Europa 1400-1600*, Barcelona, Crítica, 1987, especialmente los capítulos 6 y 7, pp. 171-221 (título original, *L'educazione in Europa 1400-1600. Problemi e programmi*); A. Viñao Frago, *Leer y escribir. Historia de dos prácticas culturales*, I.A.P., México, Fundación Educación, Voces y Vuelos, 1999 (sobre todo los capítulos 3 y 4, pp. 91-116).

de los súbditos más pobres y alejados de los centros de poder y de las influencias palatinas, todas las formas de transmisión del saber estaban en manos del clero. Veamos dos ejemplos: Felipe II encargó la educación de su hijo Carlos a la religiosa carmelita Catalina de Cardona, quien, a pesar de su predisposición y paciencia, no pudo con la indisciplina de su pupilo; por otra parte, en Canarias no se conoció escuela pública – esto es, creada, gestionada y financiada por instituciones oficiales – en su más importante núcleo poblacional hasta el siglo XVIII, aunque ello tampoco restó protagonismo a franciscanos y dominicos principales valedores de la educación elemental en las Islas hasta mediados del siglo siguiente.

Se fortalece la figura del súbdito y del soldado y comienza el ocaso de los vasallos y caballeros en una fase de capitalismo mercantilista preindustrial, donde el individuo alfabetizado – no ocurriría lo mismo con la enseñanza superior en la que se intentaba (y a veces se conseguía) el intervencionismo estatal – todavía no urgía para la vertebración y desarrollo de la administración. La educación escolar durante los siglos XVI y XVII se sustentaba sobre las propuestas eclesiásticas, las prácticas privadas y, a lo sumo, las actuaciones municipales, pasando a ser controlada de forma centralizada por el Estado a principios del siglo XIX como tendremos oportunidad de comprobar más adelante. El panorama instructivo o educativo lejos de ser homogéneo se presentaba con notables desigualdades dependiendo de factores como el estamento social, el origen racial, el sexo, la ubicación geográfica, el ser o no primogénito (para el mantenimiento de los mayorazgos), el tener ascendientes familiares puros, etc. En este entramado de relaciones sociales lo “público” no formaba parte del imaginario colectivo y la participación en los asuntos generales no suponía ningún valor añadido a lo adquirido familiarmente. La doctrina absolutista, sin límites y sin control para los monarcas, sólo reconoce el deber del sometimiento y de la obediencia para los súbditos. No hay pacto social ni puede haberlo hasta que el desarrollo de las condiciones económicas y mercantiles inglesas y la agudización de las contradicciones que dan paso a la revolución de 1688, apuestan abiertamente por la propiedad, el orden y la seguridad provenientes de los derechos naturales y de la libertad de elección (sólo para quienes puedan ejercerla y a sabiendas de que el individuo es anterior al grupo y por tanto crea la sociedad). Se sientan así las bases del iusnaturalismo y del liberalismo como discursos político y económico que catapultan a la burguesía como clase social en ascenso. Hasta tal punto se encumbró su proyección económica que no dudó en considerar su pretensión como causa universal y su pensamiento utilitario como doctrina general.

Pero es durante el siglo XVIII, época que transcurre con la revolución industrial en Inglaterra y con la revolución política en Francia, cuando se producen las mayores reivindicaciones de carácter individual y las más importantes luchas por el control del Estado de la época moderna, cuestionando las seculares nociones de poder y autoridad. Como correctamente ha expresado George Rudé, «sea cual sea la imagen que el siglo XVIII haya proyectado hacia el futuro, no ha sido

la de una época del hombre común»¹². *El contrato social* y el *Emilio* de Rousseau, por citar sólo a un autor, dejaban claramente expuestos cómo debía organizarse el nuevo orden social desde lo individual a lo colectivo y, para conseguirlo, cómo debía articularse el modelo educativo del niño (burgués) llamado a dirigirlo: «Ciudadano de un Estado libre y miembro del poder soberano, por débil que sea la influencia que mi voz pueda ejercer en los negocios públicos, el derecho que tengo a votar me impone el deber de instruirme»¹³. El contrato propuesto estaba destinado a la formación de los ciudadanos y a la consolidación del cuerpo social; sin embargo, la opción pedagógica elegida para ello seguía siendo elitista y hasta cierto punto antisocial pues la cualidad de ciudadano (como individuo) no debía estar reservada – y no podía ser transferida – a todos por igual. El modelo político de democracia propugnado – en su sentido más simple, como mera electoralización –, por tanto, no era neutral ni universal como tampoco lo había sido el concepto en sí mismo.

En efecto, Sebastián de Covarrubias había definido el término “democracia” en 1611 siguiendo los criterios de Platón como «el imperio popular, quando no se gobierna por los nobles, ni sabios, reducidos a cierto número, sino por república formada». Desde una posición más ideológica, el francés Antoine Furetière afirmaba en 1690 que democracia designaba «la forma de gobierno en que toda la autoridad reside en el pueblo»¹⁴. Por entonces, era más fácil identificar el significado del concepto por lo que excluía, contra lo que luchaba o lo que despreciaba (absolutismo político, feudalismo económico, derecho divino...), que por lo que postulaba o defendía. En este sentido, el liberalismo aristocrático, de raíces tradicionales y morales propuesto por Montesquieu o Vico, y el utilitarismo político que defendía la subordinación de la política a la economía (en versión de los enciclopedistas), que unía el liberalismo económico y la autoridad política (según los fisiócratas), o que presentaba lo útil como lo que conducía a la felicidad y colmaba las necesidades humanas (en la línea expuesta por el pensamiento de Bentham), poseían mejor coartada con carácter de inmediatez.

Sin embargo, la propuesta democratizadora emergente en Rousseau que simplemente mostraba los rasgos de una poliarquía electiva, tuvo una mayor cobertura para la burguesía a medio y largo plazo pues le facilitaba los mecanismos para hacer su propia revolución y, en consecuencia, para acceder, tomar

¹² G. Rudé, *Europa en el siglo XVIII. La aristocracia y el desafío burgués*, Madrid, Alianza Universidad, 1978, p. 95 (título original: *Europe in the Eighteenth Century. Aristocracy and the Bourgeois Challenge*, 1972).

¹³ J.-J. Rousseau, *El contrato social*, Madrid, Sarpe, 1984, libro primero, p. 1 (en la versión citada p. 25); y Id., *Emilio o la educación*, Madrid, S.A. de Promoción y Ediciones, 1985, II vols.

¹⁴ S. Covarrubias, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*, Barcelona, Editorial Alta Fulla, 1998 (edición facsímil), p. 450, y A. Furetière, *Dictionnaire Universel, Contenant Generalement Tous les Mots Francais...*, Geneva, 1970, edición facsímil citada por J. Markoff, *La problemática historia de la ciudadanía democrática*, «Electronic Journal of Constitutional History», 2005, Number 6, september, <http://hc.rediris.es/06/articulos/html/04.html>.

y conformar el poder político. Reparemos en la idea de que durante la contemporaneidad la ciudadanía será la expresión del vínculo legal entre cada uno de los individuos y la autoridad soberana que los gobierna; un vínculo que no es ni recíproco ni simétrico ni equiparable a todos en sí mismos. Estados Unidos declaró su independencia en 1776 y optó por el modelo político democrático; pese a todo, en él sólo votaban los blancos adinerados con exclusión de los esclavos, indígenas, negros y mujeres que se consideraban indignos de poseer un derecho tan preeminente. Lo mismo ocurriría en las demás sociedades occidentales hasta bien entrado el siglo XX, con el agravante de que muchos de estos Estados imponían también sus decisiones políticas a los habitantes de las colonias sin ningún tipo de consulta previa sobre su porvenir. El modelo político democrático cumplía su cometido que, como vemos, no coincidiría con el desarrollado en etapas posteriores cuando las condiciones económicas, políticas y sociales y los discursos dominantes que las legitimaban – amparados en los llamados derechos civiles, políticos y sociales de sus habitantes – variaron considerablemente¹⁵. Y mientras tanto, ¿dónde ha quedado y cómo ha quedado la categoría social de ciudadano?, o formulado de otro modo: ¿cómo se fraguó la ciudadanía moderna entendida como forma de agrupamiento de seres humanos, versada no sólo ni fundamentalmente en el orden tributario, penal y procesal del antiguo régimen, sino en el orden de los derechos individuales y de la protección ante una comunidad más amplia y con posibilidad real de reivindicar ‘su’ cuota de justicia ante los gobernantes?

Si seguimos en este apartado a Jean Touchard¹⁶, los principios en los que se inspira la “Revolución del Occidente” de 1789 (denominación más general y chovinista que la de “Revolución francesa”) podrían sintetizarse en dos: a) la soberanía de la nación, donde se incluiría el racionalismo, utilitarismo, individualismo y juridicismo propio de la época, y b) los derechos del individuo a través de la Declaración de los Derechos del Hombre y del Ciudadano donde, no lo olvidemos, se amparaba como «inviolable y sagrado» el derecho a la propiedad. Es este segundo aspecto el que nos interesa resaltar porque es donde se recogen por primera vez y de manera contractual los derechos burgueses de libertad, propiedad, seguridad y resistencia a la opresión, que de manera racional y deísta se propagaron por el resto de Europa. Y decimos derechos burgueses porque cuando Babeuf escribe su *Manifiesto de los iguales* y expresa sus ideas igualitaristas destinadas a dar cuerpo a la revolución social de inspiración comunista (no sólo política de inspiración burguesa), es desoído por los que debían aplaudir su discurso; es más, su ejecución apenas inmutó a los cam-

¹⁵ Seguimos en este punto la concepción de ciudadano y ciudadanía expuesta por T. Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class and Other Essays*, Cambridge University Press, 1950. En castellano y en la última edición, T.H. Marshall, y T. Bottomore, *Ciudadanía y clase social*, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 1998.

¹⁶ J. Touchard, *Historia de las ideas políticas*, Madrid, Tecnos, 1985, pp. 356-361 (edición en francés *Histoire des idées politiques*, 1961).

pesinos y al naciente proletariado, sectores a los que dirigía su proyecto de transformación social.

En este contexto, el estatus individual de “ciudadano” y la categoría social y política de “ciudadanía” surgen como necesidad de la burguesía para enfrentarse a la nobleza estamental poseedora de seculares privilegios y, por tanto, para frenar el absolutismo despótico proveniente del poder ejercido por la Iglesia y por la aristocracia, exigiendo la puesta en práctica de derechos fundamentales como el de la vida, la libertad de conciencia, la propiedad, la educación...¹⁷. Es así como se produce una lucha contra el poder del Estado y no contra el Estado mismo, al que se trata de reforzar con la unidad de gobierno encarnada en la concepción de “nación”, para dar paso durante el siglo XIX – y más específicamente entre 1830 y 1880, al decir de Hobsbawm – al Estado nacional con sus particulares demarcaciones territoriales (*ius domicili*, que andando el tiempo y por determinadas razones basadas en una excluyente y malentendida búsqueda de identidad devendría en *ius sanguinis*)¹⁸. Los regímenes políticos liberales (garantes de los derechos del hombre y del ciudadano) en la etapa de desarrollo de la sociedad industrial y capitalista, promoverán también el derecho a la educación – haciéndola obligatoria aunque no gratuita – con el objeto de que se convierta en elemento indispensable de formación cívica, orden y estructuración social. Libertad individual y respeto a la ley colectiva, supuestamente universal, condensarán la esencia del contrato social sobre el que se apoya la ciudadanía como categoría histórica y como base de legitimación ideológica del régimen imperante.

Un contrato o “*pactum* ciudadano” no sólo no compartido sino incluso ferozmente combatido por las ideologías que representaban a los sectores más desfavorecidos y explotados de la sociedad capitalista durante el siglo XIX. Tal y como se expresaba en mítines, pasquines y manifiestos¹⁹, los contratos sociales debían hacerse entre iguales y no entre sectores con intereses claramente opuestos; las proclamas revolucionarias no se hacían para proteger los derechos de los ciudadanos, simple entelequia o ficción, sino para defender la causa de los trabajadores y derrocar así el orden que había establecido unas condiciones históricas arbitrarias y sectarias de ciudadanía, donde la propiedad privada y las relaciones de producción dadas se situaban en el centro estraté-

¹⁷ J.M. Vallès lo ha expresado con meridiana claridad: «en el estado liberal, la relación política principal no se establece ya entre un soberano omnipotente y un súbdito sumiso. Ante el poder estatal aparece ahora la figura del ciudadano, como sujeto protegido, vigilante y dispuesto a intervenir en la vida política». *Ciencia Política. Una introducción*, Barcelona, Ariel, 2002, p. 91.

¹⁸ E. Hobsbawm, *Naciones y nacionalismo desde 1780*, Barcelona, Crítica, 2004 (versión original, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780. Programme, myth, reality*, 1990).

¹⁹ No olvidemos el contenido del emblemático *Manifiesto del Partido Comunista* de 1848, en el cual se afirmaba taxativamente que «los obreros no tienen patria. No se les puede arrebatar lo que no tienen». Su propuesta, pues, se enfrentaba a la idea liberal de pertenencia a un determinado Estado nacional. C. Marx, F. Engels, *Manifiesto del Partido Comunista*, Moscú, Progreso, 1981, p. 50 (edición original en alemán de 1848).

gico de la lucha de clases. «De ahí que – como ha llegado a expresar Gómez Llorente – la identidad colectiva del proletariado no pudiera consistir en sentirse “ciudadanos” de una polis que les hurta no sólo la participación en el gobierno del Estado, sino las condiciones vitales mismas. Su identidad colectiva se remite a la conciencia de clase y como praxis a la acción revolucionaria»²⁰. Las virtudes cívicas, como creaciones humanas, debían de ser otras muy distintas de las presentadas por el liberalismo en ascenso, y su consecución no dependía de pactos formalmente establecidos sino de reivindicaciones y luchas sociales permanentes. La ciudadanía como construcción histórica y, por ello, como noción fundamentalmente política de suyo delimitativa y segmentadora cuando no abiertamente marginadora, debía extenderse no más allá de lo necesario para fortalecer un determinado modelo de Estado sin levantar recelos en los sectores más sensibles o francamente opuestos a esta idea identitaria de comunidad. La escuela como institución generadora de confianza y la educación como proceso forjador de discursos universalizadores, se convertirían en las piezas niveladoras de la expansión ciudadana bajo el modelo liberal. Veamos cómo se articuló esta concepción en la España contemporánea.

2. Evolución legislativa de la enseñanza y creación ideológica-pedagógica de la ciudadanía

No haría falta retrotraerse a la Ilustración para darnos cuenta de la enorme vocación educativa que algunos de sus representantes expresaron para buscar en ella el “fomento” de la racionalidad, utilidad y felicidad de los pueblos, con vistas a su modernización y prosperidad social. Jovellanos, Feijóo, Sarmiento, Viera y Clavijo y un largo etcétera de pensadores de la época defendieron a su manera un modelo de educación pública, universal, humanista, cívica, ética y estética a imitación de lo ocurrido en otros pueblos allende los Pirineos y hacia estos derroteros se encaminaron políticas y estrategias educativas como las diseñadas por gestores como Campomanes, Olavide o Cabarrús²¹. Aunque es

²⁰ L. Gómez Llorente, *Educación y ciudadanía*, en J. Torreblanca, *Los fines de la educación. Una reflexión desde la izquierda*, Madrid, Biblioteca Nueva, 2002, p. 104. En los mismos términos se expresa M. Pérez Ledesma, *El lenguaje de la ciudadanía en la España contemporánea* (inédito). Agradezco al autor que haya tenido la deferencia de dejarnos el manuscrito para su consulta.

²¹ Veamos dos ejemplos a este respecto: «¿Es la instrucción pública el primer origen de la prosperidad social? Sin duda. Esta es una verdad no bien reconocida todavía, ó por lo menos no bien apreciada; pero es una verdad. La razón y la experiencia hablan de su apoyo. Las fuentes de la prosperidad social son muchas; pero todas nacen de un mismo origen, y este origen es la instrucción pública...». M.G. de Jovellanos, *Memoria sobre Educación Pública. Tratado Teórico-práctico de enseñanza con aplicación a las escuelas y colegios de niños*, Clásicos Castellanos, 1985, BAE, Vol. 46, en *Historia de la Educación en España. Del Despotismo Ilustrado a las Cortes de Cádiz*, Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, estudio preliminar por Enrique Guerrero, p. 224. Por su parte, Viera y Clavijo lo expresó de este otro modo al reclamar más y mejor educación al Síndico Personero General (personaje característico de la organización política de Canarias, en quien se confiaba la justicia, la defen-

cierto que la ciudadanía como categoría social y los ciudadanos como sujetos colectivos provistos de derechos no habían aparecido, el Estado debía fortalecer las propuestas de estabilidad y quietud a través de la educación (mejor llamada instrucción) evitando conflictos internos entre facciones, estamentos sociales y sectores políticos opuestos. Esta misma ausencia conceptual también se haría notar en la Constitución de Bayona de 1808 puesto que en ninguno de sus 146 artículos aparecía referencia alguna al “ciudadano”. Su atención se centraba en los asuntos relacionados con la religión, la corona, el Consejo de Estado, la administración de hacienda, estamentos sociales, etc.

Nada que ver, por tanto, con la Constitución de 1812, heredera legítima del movimiento revolucionario liberal francés, que dedicaba todo el capítulo IV del título II (arts. 18-26) a exponer las razones que hacían preciso el mantenimiento de las cualidades ciudadanas de todo español y, por tanto, la incardinación del sujeto individual en la forma del sujeto colectivo llamado pueblo, nación o patria. Parecía iniciarse la primera creación histórica del concepto aunque en su inicial formulación de requisitos doctrinarios apenas distaba de los expuestos por los gobernantes atenienses del siglo V a.n.e., para los cuales la base de la ciudadanía radicaba en ser hijo de madre y padre ateniense: «Son ciudadanos aquellos españoles que por ambas líneas traen su origen de los dominios españoles de ambos hemisferios, y están avecindados en cualquier pueblo de los mismos dominios». Si bien en artículos posteriores se ampliaban los criterios que daban lugar a la inclusión en la categoría de ciudadano amén de esta simple pertenencia territorial, no es menos cierto que también se daba cuenta de los factores que hacían perder dicha condición, o que la suspendían temporalmente, con lo cual se percibía con mucha nitidez la dicotomía existente entre inclusión y exclusión depurativa de la misma. Entre estas últimas se encontraban: a) el estado de sirviente doméstico (por tanto, la pertenencia a un determinado estamento social); y, b) lo que resulta más revelador desde nuestro específico ámbito de estudio, ya que «desde el año de mil ochocientos treinta deberán saber leer y escribir los que de nuevo entren en el ejercicio de los derechos de ciudadano» (art. 25)²². Este título constitucional, y los términos de este articulado de manera más específica, habría que relacionarlos con el título IX (art. 366-371) que se dedicaba en exclusiva a la instrucción pública y que amparaba la creación de escuelas de primeras letras en todos los pueblos de la monarquía donde debía enseñarse lectura, con-

sa de los vecinos, la vigilancia de los intereses comunes, etc.): «La educación de la juventud es lastimosa; y no sería tiempo perdido el que V.S. emplease en ver cómo se le puede dar una forma más regular y más decente. La República pide ciudadanos que sean su adorno y sus delicias y la infeliz educación se los niega. A V.S. pertenece remediar del modo posible esta desgracia, que es la ponzoñosa raíz de todas las desgracias de un pueblo». J. Viera Y Clavijo, *El Síndico Personero General. Obra patriótica, escrita periódicamente en la ciudad de La Laguna*, Edición 1993, estudio introductorio y notas a cargo de Olegario Negrín Fajardo, Cabildo Insular de Gran Canaria, Memorial Primero, p. 75 (los Memoriales originales fueron escritos en 1764).

²² *Constitución política de la monarquía española* (1812), en *Constituciones de España 1808-1978*, Madrid, Editorial Segura, 1988, p. 44.

tabilidad y catecismo católico, para constituir un plan de enseñanza ampliamente uniforme en todo el reino. Por tanto, ser varón y español (o al menos pertenecer a sus dominios), no ser pobre y conocer los rudimentos de la lectura y escritura parecían, de entrada, elementos suficientes para formar parte de la ciudadanía a principios del siglo XIX a propuesta de los liberales reunidos en territorio gaditano. Esta acentuación en la instrucción se convertiría en auténtica piedra de toque de toda la política escolar, de todos los debates pedagógicos y de las mayores disputas ideológicas de la etapa contemporánea. Lo que estaba en liza era algo muy importante: saber cuántos españoles estaban habilitados para el ejercicio de los derechos políticos como ciudadanos activos y, por tanto, para reformar o transformar – si se daban las condiciones necesarias, que no sólo dependían de la alfabetización de la población – las estructuras del país. La nacionalidad como sujeción y la ciudadanía como participación se reforzaban mutuamente cada vez más, aunque en la práctica tomaron derroteros distintos hasta bien entrado el siglo XX; ni la una ni la otra serían factores suficientes para facilitar la toma de decisiones e intervenir con efectividad sobre asuntos de poder que afectaban al individuo y, por derivación, a la colectividad.

El *Informe de la Junta creada por las Regencia para proponer los medios de proceder al arreglo de los diversos ramos de la Instrucción Pública* o, más coloquialmente, el *Informe Quintana* de 1813 que se convertiría en Dictamen el año siguiente, mantenía la idea de que la instrucción debía ser universal, esto es, «extenderse a todos los ciudadanos». Y añadía acto seguido con mayor abundamiento y precisión: «Debe distribuirse con toda la igualdad que permitan los límites necesarios de su costo, la repartición de los pobres sobre el territorio, y el tiempo mas o menos largo que los discípulos pueden dedicar á ella». Lejos de representar la voluntad de los sectores más desfavorecidos y populares de la época, ofrecía una visión de conjunto de los intereses demandados por la burguesía cuya consigna se centraba en el progreso y la prosperidad de la sociedad, esto es, de una parte muy específica y significativa de ella²³. Se evidenciaba, de esta manera, el credo educativo del primer liberalismo español con su peculiar formulación y articulación política, a través de la cual quedaba recogida ya – y para siempre – la dualidad del sistema (entre público y privado) y las dificultades añadidas para amplias capas sociales de adquirir la condición igualadora de ciudadanía por esta vía.

La Guerra de la Independencia, la escisión de la mayor parte del antiguo imperio colonial en América, la quiebra de la monarquía absoluta, la depresión y hundimiento de precios, el colapso de la hacienda, la crisis del campesinado, el despegue de la economía de mercado, la dificultad de estructurar una nueva organización política y social, el malestar de la Iglesia ocasionado por la presión de las

²³ Op. cit., p. 381. Véase también a este respecto, G. Ossensbach Sauter, M. de Puellas Benítez (Comps.), *La Revolución francesa y su influencia en la educación en España*, Madrid, UNED y Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 1990.

deudas acumuladas y su negativa para pagar los impuestos estatales, las continuas crisis económicas, etc.²⁴, favorecerían el levantamiento de Riego y la participación política de los doceañistas en el denominado Trienio Liberal. En junio de 1821 y en el ámbito estrictamente educativo, las Cortes aprobaron el *Reglamento general de instrucción pública* que podría ser considerado de manera referencial como la primera ley general de educación sancionada en España y con la cual se inaugura la etapa contemporánea en asuntos de enseñanza. La denominación de “enseñanza”, pues, se hacía realidad con este reglamento que la dividía en tres etapas (las actualmente vigentes: primaria, secundaria y universitaria) y que pretendía llevar a la práctica los contenidos constitucionales de 1812 y los preceptos del Informe Quintana de 1813. En él, también se proponía la extensión en la creación de escuelas públicas (al menos una en cada pueblo de 100 vecinos) para posibilitar el contenido de los artículos 25 y 366 de la Constitución, por los que se extendía la enseñanza y se daba forma a la idea interesadamente reverdecida de «entrar de nuevo desde el año 1830 en el ejercicio de los derechos de ciudadano»²⁵. Educación y ciudadanía se situaban en el diseño liberal como las dos caras de la misma moneda, destinadas no tanto a facilitar la participación real y efectiva en política y la implicación directa en el desarrollo acumulativo del capitalismo emergente, como a alcanzar la meta burguesa plenamente ilustrada de consolidar ciertos niveles de progreso individual y limitadas y segregadoras cuotas de bienestar común. Se seguía sin considerar a la educación como un derecho que podría facilitar la promoción personal de toda la población – eje vertebrador de teorías y prácticas educativas ampliamente difundidas con posterioridad –, para permanecer como una más de las obligaciones o prestaciones contraídas por el Estado en calidad de suprema agencia niveladora²⁶. De todos modos, el enga-

²⁴ Sólo citaremos tres obras clásicas que abordan estas temáticas: M. Artola, *La burguesía revolucionaria (1808-1874)*, Madrid, Alianza Universidad, 1973, Colección Historia de España, Alfaguara, Tomo V; J. Vicens Vives, *Coyuntura económica y reformismo burgués*, Barcelona, Ariel, 1974, especialmente las páginas 143-156; y J. Fontana, *La quiebra de la monarquía absoluta 1814-1820*, Barcelona, Ariel, 1978.

²⁵ *Historia de la Educación en España. De las Cortes de Cádiz a la Revolución de 1868*. Introducción por Manuel de Puellas Benítez, Madrid, Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 1985, pp. 50-51. Previo a este Reglamento se publicó el Real Decreto de 24 de abril de 1820. En uno de sus artículos se exigía a los prelados diocesanos que velaran por que los curas párrocos de la monarquía explicaran la Constitución política de la nación a sus feligreses como parte de sus obligaciones. Dicho decreto supuso – en palabras de la profesora Carreño – «[...] el primer intento de envergadura de educar formalmente al nuevo hombre, al hombre ciudadano, asunto primordial para que pudiera ponerse en marcha el orden político que propiciaba el liberalismo» (p. 762). M. Carreño Rivero, *Datos para una historia de la educación cívica española: el Real Decreto de 24 de abril de 1820*, «Bordón. Revista de Orientación Pedagógica», 1989, vol. 41, núm. 4, pp. 757-763. Para conocer parte de lo ocurrido durante el período anterior de invasión napoleónica, véase de esta misma autora: *El despertar de la conciencia cívico-política popular en los inicios de la España contemporánea: la politización de los sermones en la Guerra de la Independencia (1808-1814)*, «Revista de Educación», 2006, núm. 339, Madrid, Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, pp. 317-338.

²⁶ R. Prieto, *Instrucción: derecho a saber y derecho a enseñar*, «Ayer», 1999, núm. 34, Marcial Pons, Madrid, p. 135.

ño era manifiesto a tenor de que quienes necesitaban educación, una vez alcanzado el requisito económico, se la proporcionaban privadamente a sus vástagos – sin demora, en estancias particulares y con maestros de calidad – sin esperar nada de la caridad escolarizadora estatal caracterizada por las constantes desatenciones de las administraciones correspondientes.

2.1. *Moderados y progresista: entre avenencias y desavenencias pero con objetivos comunes.* No obstante, la vuelta del absolutismo, la extirpación del pensamiento liberal y la represión subsiguiente (según afirmaba Fernando VII, «El voto general clamó por todas partes contra la tiránica constitución», «el sostenimiento de la Santa Religión de sus mayores» y «la conservación de mis legítimos derechos que heredé de mis antepasados»)²⁷, trajeron consigo la derogación del Reglamento de 1821 y el regreso del escolasticismo de la mano del *Plan Literario de estudios y arreglo general de las Universidades del Reino*, más conocido como Plan Calomarde de 1824. La enseñanza primaria se mantenía y confiaba cada vez más a los religiosos y el único interés mostrado por las autoridades se centraba en el control de las universidades y academias, buscando la uniformidad en los estudios a través de la disciplina moral y religiosa (arts. 266-302). Hasta tal punto se llevaron a efecto las «leyes de policía escolástica» (sic) enunciadas en su articulado, que no se admitía la matrícula de ningún alumno si éste no disponía de «un certificado de buena conducta política y religiosa dado por el párroco y autoridad civil de donde proceda» (art. 268)²⁸.

El ciudadano no contaba y la domesticación del súbdito volvía a convertirse en el objetivo prioritario para mantener estable el orden social ante la despreocupación de las autoridades por las actividades más estrictamente relacionadas con la educación intelectual del pueblo. Además, el niño seguía siendo – como en tiempos de Aristóteles – sólo un ciudadano en potencia y, por tanto, el centro de interés se había fijado una vez más en los adultos. Como ha expresado Ruiz Berrio a este respecto,

no es el niño sujeto de derecho en las leyes [...]. Cuando se abren las escuelas de primeras letras se hace pensando en solucionar el problema social – problema de mayores – de que desaparezcan los golfillos que infectan las calles molestando a los transeúntes, o bien se hace con el sentido político de atraerse, mediante ciertos conocimientos que se les va a proporcionar, a ellos y a sus padres para una causa determinada²⁹.

²⁷ Manifiesto de S.M. declarando que por haber carecido de entera libertad desde el día 7 de marzo de 1820 hasta el 1 de octubre de 1823, son nulos y de ningún valor todos los actos del gobierno llamado constitucional: y en cuanto a lo decretado y ordenado por la junta provisional y la regencia, aquella creada en Oyarzun, y esta en Madrid, lo aprueba S.M. entendiéndose interinamente, en D. Sevilla Andrés, *Constituciones y otras leyes y proyectos políticos de España*, Madrid, Editora Nacional, 1969, Tomo I, pp. 241-243.

²⁸ *Historia de la Educación en España. De las Cortes de Cádiz a la Revolución de 1868...*, cit., pp. 68-122 (ver especialmente el título XXX, p. 111 y ss.).

²⁹ J. Ruiz Berrio, *Política escolar de España en el siglo XIX (1808-1833)*, Madrid, Consejo

Pero aquellas normas dirigidas a los niños para resolver los problemas de los mayores, como todo parche social, tampoco surtieron los efectos deseados como la reducción de la delincuencia y la separación definitiva de los niños de los vagos y maleantes, cuya forma de vida no era precisamente la más ejemplar; una vez más, la educación no podía contener los excesos de las formas capitalistas de producción ni las injusticias que le eran inherentes. El “protopaidocentrismo” ilustrado se evaporó y el anclaje a las formas más herméticas del antiguo Régimen se hicieron evidentes en el ámbito de la creación y transmisión de los conocimientos; gremialismo y artes tradicionales fueron su concreción más destacada.

Pese a todo, el balanceo político propio de la época evidenció las disputas constantes por el control ideológico de la educación; conviene tener presente en este sentido que, ante la inexistencia de un Ministerio del ramo, los bandazos se daban del Ministerio de Gobernación (o «de lo Interior») cuando los liberales llegaban al poder, al de Gracia y Justicia bajo los auspicios de los conservadores y de férrea sujeción eclesiástica, de «ideas absolutistas y retrógradas» en palabras del político y literato Antonio Gil de Zárate. Sólo a partir de 1832 las competencias pasan al Ministerio de Fomento que será el encargado de ejercer, entre otras, las funciones de inculcación doctrinaria oportunas y de regular la sociedad civil a través de la propia gestión educativa. La percepción existente sobre la instrucción poco había evolucionado pues, como podemos observar a continuación, los argumentos se seguían adentrando en la idea de preparar a los alumnos para convertirlos en fieles servidores del Estado. Por lo menos esta era la idea que se transmitía a mediados de siglo por parte de algunos sectores sociales cuando hablaban de los beneficios que reportaba la extensión y difusión de la educación: contribuía a disminuir los delitos; coadyuvaba a formar a los ciudadanos, esto es, a los individuos que participaban en la vida político-pública; posibilitaba orientar a la población hacia aquellas profesiones que el bienestar social exigía; facilitaba las transformaciones (suponemos que políticas y sociales) por vía evolutiva y no revolucionaria; ayudaba a descentralizar la acción de los gobiernos; etc³⁰.

La educación, en este formato centralizador, reglamentista y reproductor seguía siendo una necesidad de Estado más incluso que una necesidad individual, y la generalización de la misma en las primeras etapas de la vida parecía no ser cuestionada por ningún sector social, aunque los avances más dignos de tener en consideración provinieran de las filas liberales moderadas acos-

Superior de Investigaciones Científicas e Instituto de Pedagogía San José de Calasanz, 1970, p. 287.

³⁰ A. de Oliván, *De la administración pública en España*, Madrid, IEP, 1954. Hacía referencia a la voz “Administración” de la *Enciclopedia española del siglo XIX* que se publicó en 1842. Cita por A. Viñao, *Política y educación en los orígenes de la España contemporánea. Examen especial de sus relaciones en la enseñanza secundaria*, Madrid, Siglo XXI, 1982, pp. 6-7, cita 3.

tumbradas y acomodadas ya al ejercicio del poder³¹. El Duque de Rivas, cuyo Plan educativo fue aprobado en 1836, no dudaba en proponer la extensión de los estudios pero, al mismo tiempo, restringir el principio de la enseñanza gratuita. En la exposición de motivos que serviría para defender dicho texto señalaba que «esta obligación del gobierno es como una pirámide, que, empezando en una ancha base, formada por los menesterosos, disminuye á proporcion que va aumentando su altura y creciendo la riqueza de los particulares»; o, dicho de otro modo, que «lo que procura al Estado ciudadanos útiles y honrados, capaces de labrar su prosperidad y gloria, no es el dar á los pobres una educación manca y ella misma pobre». Estos enunciados cicateros de los liberales a favor de la gratuidad, sumados a las nulas propuestas de intervención educativa por parte de los absolutistas y amén del lastre acumulado con el paso de los siglos de absentismo, rutinismo memorístico y de contenidos escolásticos, arrojaba datos estremecedores: en 1841 tan solo el 24,2% de la población española estaba alfabetizada (obviamente más en las zonas urbanas que rurales y más entre los varones que entre las mujeres a las que se les dispensaba una educación estrictamente ética y estética, es decir, profundamente moral y doméstica), y en 1850 a pesar de existir 17.434 escuelas en todo el reino, 8.935 pueblos de menos de 100 habitantes continuaban sin saber lo que era un aula escolar. Contrastaba esta realidad con la de Estados como Dinamarca, Alemania, Holanda o Suecia que padecían menos de un 30% de analfabetismo, y se situaba junto a otros como Rumania, Serbia, Grecia o Portugal con cifras que superaban con creces el 50%³².

Una muestra de moderantismo que tendría su concreción más destacada durante el bienio progresista (1854-1856) de la mano del director general de Instrucción Pública, Antonio Gil de Zárate. Según sus propias palabras,

La revolución tenía, pues, que alcanzar también á la Instrucción pública; y ¿cómo era posible que este ramo permaneciera por más tiempo sujeto a sus antiguas práctica, cuando todo variaba, todo le daba el ejemplo, todo exigía que se asociase al progreso universal, acusándolo de tardío, y reclamando su cooperación, como que sin él, base del edificio social, nada puede llegar á tener estabilidad y vida?³³

³¹ De liberalismo doctrinario y ambivalente ha calificado Puelles sus propuestas. Vid. M. de Puelles Benítez, *Estado y educación en la España liberal (1809-1857). Un sistema educativo nacional frustrado*, Barcelona, Ediciones Pomares, 2004.

³² A. Viñao, *Escolarización y alfabetización en la primera mitad del siglo XIX*, en B. Delgado Criado, *Historia de la educación en España y América*, Madrid, Ediciones SM y Morata, 1994, Vol. III, pp. 127-130; C. Cipolla, *Educación y desarrollo en occidente*, Barcelona, Ariel, 1970, pp. 143-144 (edición original, *Literacy and development in the West*, 1969); C.E. Núñez, *La fuente de la riqueza. Educación y desarrollo económico en la España contemporánea*, Madrid, Alianza Universidad, 1992, especialmente pp. 89-199.

³³ A. Gil de Zárate, *De la instrucción pública en España*, 1885, Pentalfa, 1995 (edición facsímil), Tomo I, pp. 115-116. La cita del Duque de Rivas se recoge en esta misma obra, concretamente en las páginas 164-168. Fue este autor, Gil de Zárate, quien certificaría de manera taxativa y definitiva el sentido de la educación: «Porque digámoslo de una vez, la cuestión de enseñanza es cuestión

Con los vaivenes económicos y políticos que se siguieron prodigando, con las rivalidades cada vez más enconadas entre distintas facciones y con numerosos planes de estudio que se superponían y completaban cuando no se derogaban y se reemplazaban, esa pretendida estabilidad voceada por Gil de Zárate llegaría con la *Ley de Instrucción Pública* de 9 de septiembre de 1857, más conocida por Ley Moyano. Con ella se legalizaba la práctica educativa vigente sin aportar innovaciones significativas; de hecho, fue considerada por su propio promotor como una ley de instrucción «inofensiva [y] modesta». Aunque pretendía adaptarse a las necesidades del país, la realidad estadística hablaba por sí sola: 15 millones de habitantes, 2,5 millones de jornaleros, 260 mil pobres de solemnidad, tres cuartas partes de la población analfabeta, 150 mil electores (número inferior al de funcionarios que dependían directamente de los ministerios), disminución del 11% en las remuneraciones de los obreros textiles (de 1849 a 1862), jornales diarios de 9 reales para los obreros y de 1'5 para las obreras, retribuciones de 2.500 reales anuales para los maestros de pueblo frente a los más de 60.000 para cada gobernador civil, etcétera, eran hechos constatables día a día.

Consensuada por los distintos grupos políticos, mantenía la división de las tres etapas educativas de principios de siglo, obligaba la asistencia a clase a todos los niños comprendidos entre los 6 y 9 años, centralizaba todas las competencias en torno al ministerio de Fomento, mantenía la uniformidad de los libros de texto donde los contenidos más destacados eran doctrina cristiana y nociones de historia sagrada acomodadas a los menores (con lo cual el respeto a los acuerdos firmados con la Santa Sede en 1851 fue absoluto), defendía la gratuidad sólo para quienes no pudieran pagarla y previa certificación «del cura párroco y visada por el alcalde del pueblo» (art. 9), planteaba que las escuelas estuvieran a cargo de los pueblos y dependieran financieramente de los municipios (lo que supuso un desastre en la práctica), destacaba la creación de centros para niñas en los municipios de 500 habitantes (con contenidos obviamente diferentes a los de los niños), defendía que la inspección y vigilancia de las escuelas fuera ejercida por los obispos y prelados diocesanos y, además, permitía abrir centros de primera y segunda enseñanza a los institutos religiosos «dispensando a sus jefes y profesores del título y fianza que exige el

de poder: el que enseña, domina; puesto que enseñar es formar hombres, y hombres amoldados á las miras del que los adoctrina. Entregar la enseñanza al clero, es querer que se formen hombres para el clero y no para el Estado; es trastornar los fines de la sociedad humana; es trasladar el poder de donde debe estar á quien por su misión misma tiene que ser ageno á todo poder, á todo dominio; es en suma, hacer soberano al que no debe serlo» (pp. 117-118). Es por estos años del siglo XIX en los que Raimundo Cuesta sitúa una interesante reflexión: «La escuela ya entonces deja de ser una esperanza concebida por clérigos atormentados por la idea de pecado y por ideólogos henchidos de mística fe patriótica (defectos perfectamente intercambiables) y se convierte, cada vez más, en una sistemática empresa del Estado benefactor del ciudadano». R. Cuesta Fernández, *Felices y escolarizados. Crítica de la escuela en la era del capitalismo*, Barcelona, Octaedro-EUB, 2005, p. 45.

artículo 150» (art. 153)³⁴. Coincidía, aunque solo en lo temporal, con «el momento de cambio» – según expresión de Brian Simon – por el que pasaba la educación en gran parte de los países de Europa, para adaptar sus sistemas educativos a la realidad industrial imperante con la implicación directa del Estado y la anuencia de la Iglesia en toda su reestructuración. Aunque la Ley Moyano estuvo en vigor hasta 1970, salvo leves interrupciones, los resultados educativos obtenidos después de su aplicación no sorprendieron a nadie por su alcance; en 1860 seguía sufriendo el país uno de los mayores atrasos culturales y científicos de toda Europa, con índices de analfabetismo que rondaban el 80% y que situaban a España cada vez más lejos de los Estados de su entorno. Como parecía constatarse, las «fuerzas del mercado» no actuaron en todas las zonas de la misma manera ni con la misma intensidad³⁵.

2.2. *Liberalismo e intento de democracia política, social y educativa.* El sexenio democrático supuso el triunfo de los postulados de la burguesía progresista y la afirmación de los planteamientos liberales en educación. Si nos atenemos tanto al decreto de 21 de octubre de 1868 como al manifiesto del gobierno provisional de 25 del mismo mes y año, podemos apreciar que uno de los temas estelares de la nueva política se centraba en los cambios que debían producirse en la enseñanza, tanto en el ámbito legislativo, como en el de las ideas pedagógicas y en el práctico-escolar: al destronamiento y expulsión de la reina «en abierta oposición con el espíritu del siglo», siguió la defensa de la secularización del Estado, la libertad religiosa y la libertad de enseñanza (valorada como «reforma cardinal») a tenor del «estado de descomposición á que había llegado la instrucción pública en España, merced á planes monstruosos, impuestos, no por las necesidades de la ciencia, sino por las estrechas miras de

³⁴ *Historia de la educación en España. De las Cortes de Cádiz a la Revolución de 1868...*, cit., pp. 245-300. Para obtener un más detallado análisis de la misma, véase M. de Puelles Benítez, *Educación e ideología en la España contemporánea*, Barcelona, Labor, 1980, pp. 142-157 y A. Viñao Frago, *Política y educación en los orígenes de la España contemporánea. Examen especial de sus relaciones en la enseñanza secundaria...*, cit., pp. 378-396.

³⁵ D. Müller, F. Ringer, B. Simon (comps.), *El desarrollo del sistema educativo moderno. Cambio estructural y reproducción social 1870-1920*, Madrid, Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social, 1992 (las expresiones entrecomilladas han sido extraídas de las páginas 131 y 135 respectivamente). Para el porcentaje de analfabetismo, ver M. Vilanova Ribas, X. Moreno Julia, *Atlas de la evolución del analfabetismo en España de 1887 a 1991*, Madrid, CIDE, 1992, p. 62. Aunque la etapa cronológica que acota no se remonta tanto en el pasado, a través del estudio introductorio que se aborda en la primera parte de la obra se pueden extraer datos reveladores de 1860 (fecha en la que, por cierto, se publicó el primer censo español con información estadística sobre analfabetismo). Para Lorenzo Luzuriaga, sin embargo, la cifra rondaba el 75,5% en dicho año, guarismo que mantiene Antonio Viñao. Vid. L. Luzuriaga, *El analfabetismo en España*, Museo Pedagógico Nacional, Madrid, 1919, p. 44 y A. Viñao, *Escolarización y alfabetización en la segunda mitad del siglo XIX*, en B. Delgado Criado (coord.): *Historia de la educación en España y América*, Madrid, Ediciones SM y Morata, 1994, Vol. III, p. 392.

partido y de secta»³⁶. Unos planteamientos que serían recogidos en la Constitución de 1869 a través de los cuales se permitía la fundación de establecimientos de instrucción o educación por cualquier español sin previa licencia (art. 24). El Estado, lejos de asumir el monopolio educativo, mantenía una función meramente subsidiaria; la reposición de la Ley Moyano (derogada por la efímera ley sobre enseñanza primaria de 2 de junio de 1868), la libertad de cátedra y la libre elección de métodos y libros de texto, componían las reformas más radicales de los liberales españoles en pleno ejercicio de poder y con amplio apoyo social. En este sentido, como ha destacado Fernández Soria, «ciertamente, entre el liberalismo se tiene conciencia de la necesidad de la moralización de la ciudadanía, pero no se dibuja el perfil de la educación moral idónea al respecto»³⁷. Ni siquiera el republicanismo gubernamental, de existencia extremadamente efímera y más preocupado por la guerra carlista, el brote emancipatorio de Cuba y el orden social interno, fue capaz de ir más allá y sólo se detuvo en aspectos muy concretos de la segunda enseñanza y en la reorganización de algunas Facultades universitarias.

Quizás lo más llamativo en su quehacer, por la clara apuesta social que asumía sin precedentes en el país, fue la *Ley Benot* de 24 de julio de 1873 que ordenaba el trabajo infantil prohibiéndolo a menores de 10 años y limitando la jornada a los comprendidos entre 10 y 16 en fábricas, talleres, fundiciones o minas (se excluían así otros sectores económicos como la agricultura o el comercio). Estatúa, además, la obligación de que las fábricas situadas a más de cuatro kilómetros de lugar poblado sostuvieran un establecimiento de instrucción primaria, cuyos gastos – contradictoriamente – debían ser indemnizados por el Estado. Con esta ley sancionada durante la etapa republicana de Salmerón pero cuya aplicación real fue nula por los acontecimientos que estaban a punto de sobrevenir, se armonizaba y regulaba por primera vez en España la edad de obligatoriedad escolar con la de entrada en el mercado de trabajo, como ya habían hecho

³⁶ Manifiesto del Gobierno provisional exponiendo los principios fundamentales proclamados por la revolución, 25 de octubre de 1868, en *Historia de la Educación en España. De las Cortes de Cádiz a la Revolución de 1868...*, cit., pp. 510-517 (la cita aparece en la página 513). En este mismo marco de las reformas concebidas, «puede decirse que, junto a la soberanía nacional, el segundo gran principio de la Revolución de Septiembre fueron los derechos individuales y, en concreto, los directamente relacionados con la vida política, es decir, los derechos de asociación y reunión. La revolución del 48 francés se hacía presente, en este aspecto, veinte años más tarde en España». G. Rojas Sánchez, *Los derechos políticos de asociación y reunión en la España contemporánea (1811-1936)*, Navarra, EUNSA, 1981, p. 464.

³⁷ J.M. Fernández Soria, *Educación en valores. Formar ciudadanos. Vieja y nueva educación*, Madrid, Biblioteca Nueva, 2007, p. 133. En palabras de Fontana, «resulta evidente que no nos hallamos ante una revolución “social”, sino ante un golpe de estado que presenta algunos matices revolucionarios, aportados por sectores que han actuado secundariamente, a remolque de los núcleos dirigentes, y que no han logrado imponer sus propios objetivos (que, en muchos casos, ni siquiera percibían claramente)». J. Fontana, *Cambio económico y actitudes políticas en la España del siglo XIX*, Barcelona, Ariel, 1975, p. 105.

Inglaterra (1833) y Francia (1847)³⁸. Una especie de puesta al día en la ordenación del trabajo infantil para limar las aristas de la explotación servil e inhumana producida por la vorágine imparable del capitalismo industrial.

2.3. *Educación y ciudadanía: de la ambigua quietud estatal al regeneracionismo social*. La política educativa seguida durante el largo período de la Restauración, lejos de continuar la senda de las innovaciones pedagógicas de los demoliberales – defensa de la escuela nacional, universal, secular y racional – comenzó con la actuación de Orovio como ministro de Fomento. Persiguió nuevamente – ya lo había hecho durante el reinado de Isabel II como ministro del mismo ramo – las ideas krausistas y los profesores que las abanderaban tuvieron que abandonar sus cargos. La política educativa se mantuvo fiel a la moderada Ley Moyano de 1857 (decimos moderada por sus legisladores, aunque plenamente conservadora por sus contenidos) y a la católica Constitución de 1876 (en la cual se establecía que «cada cual es libre de elegir su profesión y de aprenderla como mejor le parezca», Art. 12). Como no podía ser menos, se incumplió la Ley Benot y se permitió la entrada a las minas a los niños con 6 años de edad dispuestos a percibir salarios miserables y de consolación³⁹; los patronos y no los maestros debían marcar nuevamente el camino por el que debía transitar la infancia.

La ley de 26 de julio de 1878 también prohibía el trabajo de menores pero su alcance fue mucho más limitado; sancionaba penalmente a los adultos que utilizaran a los niños en tareas peligrosas de equilibrio, fuerza, dislocación o a los que los emplearan en las profesiones de buzo, torero, domador de fieras, etc. Una ley excepcional, particular y simbólica que no iba al fondo de la cuestión laboral y que mantenía las condiciones de explotación a través de la mendicidad y la agricultura, además de otras prácticas y ocupaciones habituales, y que se alejaba de la normativa reformista inglesa, alemana o francesa. Sólo la Ley de Minas de 15 de julio de 1897 prohibió el trabajo en el interior de estas

³⁸ Eduardo Benot, uno de los varios Ministros de Fomento con que contó la República, era consciente de la trascendencia individual y social que entrañaba la labor educativa; no en vano, llegó a afirmar en su obra *Errores en materia de educación y de instrucción pública* que «El que sea dueño de la educación cambiará el mundo [...]. La fuerza, en la época moderna, tiene por símbolo una pluma, no una espada». R. Cuesta Fernández, *Felices y escolarizados...*, cit., pp. 62-63; C. Ruiz Rodrigo, I. Palacio Lis, *Pauperismo y educación. Siglos XVIII y XIX. Apuntes para una Historia de la Educación Social en España*, Universidad de Valencia, 1995; y A. Tiana Ferrer, *Educación obligatoria, asistencia escolar y trabajo infantil*, «Historia de la Educación. Revista Interuniversitaria», 1987, Salamanca, núm. 6, pp. 43-59. Desde un punto de vista más estrictamente jurídico: M.R. Alarcón Caracuel, *El derecho de asociación obrera en España (1839-1900)*, Madrid, Ediciones de la Revista de Trabajo, 1975, pp. 379-381 y E. Borrajo Dacruz, *Introducción al derecho del trabajo*, Madrid, Tecnos, 1996, p. 95.

³⁹ M. Tuñón De Lara, *El movimiento obrero en la historia de España*, Madrid, Taurus, 1972, p. 263; también, A. Tiana Ferrer, *Maestros, misioneros y militantes. La educación de la clase obrera madrileña, 1898-1917*, Madrid, Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, CIDE, 1992, pp. 76-112.

galerías a las mujeres de cualquier edad y a los muchachos menores de doce años⁴⁰ y, posteriormente, la Ley de 13 de marzo de 1900 o Ley Dato condenó el trabajo de niños menores de 10 años y extendió la negativa a las mujeres en los lugares insalubres y peligrosos; por primera vez dicha normativa desarrollaba los derechos de la mujer antes, después del parto y durante el período de lactancia. Esta legislación cerraría su ciclo con las disposiciones publicadas por el gobierno de la II República, aunque antes habría que citar la Ley de 23 de julio de 1903 (publicada en la Gaceta de Madrid el 2 de agosto), por la que se evitaba la vagancia y mendicidad de los menores de dieciséis años, y el expediente del Magisterio de Marina que reglamentaba el trabajo de los niños en los buques y que permitía faenar a los menores de 10 años acompañados de sus padres y a menos de 3 millas de la costa⁴¹. En efecto, los niños que estaban obligados a apartarse de las escuelas públicas – entre otros motivos, porque no las había⁴² – colaboraban con las familias en su sostenimiento económico, cumplían funciones de adultos, poseían mayor cobertura en la precaria legislación laboral... , pero seguían sin conquistar el derecho social de ciudadanía y las garantías que lo avalaban como menores corresponsables del progreso del país, además de en la fuerza de trabajo, en la toma de decisiones.

En este contexto arreció el debate entre clericales y anticlericales, entre

⁴⁰ Colección legislativa Española, vol. 162, 1897, p. 34; y *Mujer y sociedad en España (1700-1975)*, Madrid, Ministerio de Cultura, 1982, ver especialmente las pp. 47-107 y 241-263 (coordinó la obra Rosa María Capel Martínez).

⁴¹ M.J. Espuny Tomás, *Mendicidad infantil: Ley sobre mendicidad y vagancia de los menores de diez y seis años de 23 de julio de 1903*, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, 2005, <<http://www.upf.edu/iuslabor/042005/historia1.htm>>. El expediente del Magisterio de Marina añadía que para navegar en iguales condiciones que los niños mencionados, aquellos que tuvieran entre 10 y 14 años debían adquirir el compromiso del patrón de que les facilitaría instrucción primaria. Asimismo quedaba terminantemente prohibido navegar a más de tres millas de las costa a los menores de 14 años. Información recogida en el semanario «La Laguna», núm. 333, 23 de enero de 1909.

⁴² La paupérrima situación de la Instrucción Pública, traducida en la inexistencia de escuelas y de maestros, en la carencia de material pedagógico, en las malas condiciones de salubridad de los locales, así como en las deficientes condiciones sociales del alumnado, queda manifiesta en las habituales referencias por parte de la prensa de la época. Asimismo, resulta de gran utilidad la consulta de los diferentes informes emitidos a las autoridades municipales tanto por maestros como por inspectores de primera enseñanza. En concreto, pueden ser consultados los diferentes documentos que se encuentran en los Archivos Municipales de Santa Cruz de Tenerife (Leg. Instrucción Pública (1841-1895), *Informe sobre la instrucción pública*; o *informe sobre el estado de las escuelas municipales*, ambos de 1887; L. 55-12, sobre mueblaje y material de las escuelas (1910); o L. 45-54 sobre *deficiencias en las escuelas* (1924), La Laguna, así como en el Archivo de la Parroquia Matriz de N.S. de la Concepción (Santa Cruz de Tenerife) localizable en C. 100-45, *Expediente que contiene todo lo relativo a instrucción Pública*. Para tener una visión más general de lo ocurrido en el Estado en distintos momentos históricos, véase: L. Mallada, *Los males de la patria y la futura revolución española*, 1890. Selección, prólogo y notas de Francisco J. Flores Arroyuelo, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 1969; R. Macías Picavea, *El problema nacional*, 1899. Introducción por Andrés de Blas, Madrid, Biblioteca Nueva, 1996; y L. Bello, *Viaje por las escuelas de Madrid (1925-1931)*. Edición y estudio introductorio de Agustín Escolano. Comunidad de Madrid, 1998.

defensores del regeneracionismo y de la más estricta tradición, entre liberales y conservadores... , aunque les unía un amplio denominador común: el mismo modelo de producción económica, la preservación del orden social y la legitimidad del marco constitucional existente. Una etapa de auge imparable de la enseñanza privada – sobre todo en las grandes ciudades – donde se convertía en negocio extremadamente rentable y donde, según certera expresión de Yvonne Turín, «el llevar hábito eclesiástico sirve de certificado de aptitud»⁴³. Mientras la enseñanza pública agonizaba por sus carencias y abandonos, Salmerón – republicano por convicción, influido por Sanz del Río y la corriente de pensamiento krausista – recordaba en su Manifiesto de 1891:

El máspreciado de todos los servicios públicos es el establecimiento de un sistema completo de educación secular, comprensivo de todas las enseñanzas necesarias para formar al hombre y al ciudadano, enalteciendo la función del Magisterio, al que se ha de encomendar una verdadera cura de almas para que forme la conciencia nacional⁴⁴.

Salvo la paulatina incorporación de la escuela graduada pública, la creación del Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes en 1900 por el conservador García Álix – a partir del cual el Estado ya no era mero subsidiario en la formación de los ciudadanos sino que se constituía en máxima referencia, que no responsable, de la misma – y los decretos posteriores (especialmente el de 26 de octubre de 1901, firmado por el ministro liberal Romanones) que lograron que el Estado se hiciera cargo de los haberes de los maestros después de tantos años de demanda, al igual que el incremento en la edad escolar que pasaba de los 6 a los 12 años (en lugar de los 6 a los 9 que contemplaba la Ley Moyano), poco cambió el panorama educativo durante la Restauración sobre todo en los períodos de alternancia encabezados por los gobiernos conservadores⁴⁵; de hecho, en

⁴³ Y. Turín, *La educación y la escuela en España de 1874 a 1902. Liberalismo y tradición*, Madrid, Aguilar, 1967, p. 97 (versión original en francés, *L'Education et L'École en Espagne de 1874 à 1902. Libéralisme et tradition*).

⁴⁴ Citado por M. Domingo, *La escuela en la República (la obra de ocho meses)*, Madrid, M. Aguilar, 1932, p. 20.

⁴⁵ Es durante esta época cuando comienza a darse la batida de las autoridades a favor de la educación cívica, acometida que ya no tendría tregua y que coincide en el tiempo con la celebración del Congreso Internacional de educación moral de Londres (1908). El mencionado decreto añadió a las materias cursadas hasta entonces en la primera enseñanza pública las de Higiene y Fisiología Humana, Dibujo, Trabajos manuales... y, sobre todo, Rudimentos de Derecho. Cinco años más tarde, a través del decreto de 4 de octubre de 1906, dicha materia también se impartiría en las clases de adultos y pasaría a llamarse de manera más específica “Rudimentos de Derecho y de Educación Cívica”. Por último, la R.O. de 28 de mayo de 1911, hablaba de la trascendencia de la Educación Cívica y Moral ya que «de ella formaría parte lo referente a los deberes del ciudadano para con su patria, materia importantísima que no cabe omitir en ningún plan adecuado de enseñanza primaria». Vid. Real decreto de 26 de Octubre de 1901 dando nueva organización al pago de las atenciones de personal y material de las Escuelas públicas de primera enseñanza. *Historia de la Educación en España*. Vol. III, *De la Restauración a la II República*, Madrid, Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 1989, estudio preliminar por Manuel de Puelles Benítez, pp. 157-169;

1900 el índice de analfabetismo rondaba el 63% con un descenso que no llegaba al 10% con respecto a 1874⁴⁶. En años posteriores, sólo la constitución de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigación Científica (JAE) en 1907, la creación de la Residencia de Estudiantes en 1910 o la Residencia de Señoritas en 1915, supuso un impulso renovador en la enseñanza al facilitar el contacto de los docentes entre sí y de éstos con las experiencias pedagógicas desarrolladas en el extranjero⁴⁷. En la misma línea aperturista, de formación integral y reivindicativa, habría que citar la creación de los primeros sindicatos de la enseñanza y las propuestas educativas alternativas provenientes de los republicanos y anarquistas de principios de siglo, obviamente distintas y distantes de las defendidas por la administración estatal, dirigidas a conseguir el trabajador-ciudadano libre y racional: «Aprendan los niños a ser hombres, y cuando lo sean declárense en buena hora en rebeldía», afirmaba el pedagogo Francisco Ferrer y Guardia que sería fusilado por orden gubernamental en 1909⁴⁸.

Sin embargo, con un analfabetismo que superaba el 52% en 1920 y con algunos intentos para proponer manuales destinados a la educación del ciudadano⁴⁹, el presidente del Consejo de Ministros del directorio militar se encar-

J.-L. Guereña, *Los manuales de urbanidad*, en A. Escolano (Dir.), *Historia ilustrada del libro escolar en España. Del Antiguo Régimen a la Segunda República*, Madrid, Fundación Germán Sánchez Ruipérez, pp. 467-499 (las citas han sido extraídas de las páginas 470 y 495); y A. Terrón Bañuelos, *Lo que la escuela transmitió: el currículo y su acreditación*, en A. Escolano Benito (Dir.), *Historia ilustrada de la escuela en España. Dos siglos de perspectiva histórica*, Madrid, Fundación Germán Sánchez Ruipérez, pp. 145-169.

⁴⁶ Y. Turín, *La educación y la escuela en España...*, cit., p. 355.

⁴⁷ Vid. P. Álvarez Lázaro (director), *Cien años de educación en España. En torno a la creación del Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes*, Madrid, Fundación BBVA y Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deportes, 2001.

⁴⁸ F. Ferrer y Guardia, *La Escuela Moderna*, Madrid, Júcar, 1976, p. 56. En una línea más regeneracionista, propia de la época, se expresaba Augusto González Besada en el discurso pronunciado con motivo de su entrada en la Real Academia de Ciencias Morales y Políticas: «El secreto del mal consiste, digámoslo sin eufemismos, que ya es hora de echar a un lado halagos y lisonjas, en que no se educa al pueblo: y la responsabilidad de su ignorancia, esa sí que es absoluta y totalmente de sus gobernantes, bastante ciegos para no advertir que la educación es el primero y el más urgente de los problemas sociales». A. González Besada, *Deberes de ciudadanía olvidados ó mal cumplidos por las generaciones actuales*, Madrid, Imprenta Clásica Española, 1913, p. 13. Coincidía en el tiempo, no en la exposición de motivos, con otro importante ensayo de casi 500 páginas sobre la misma temática: Condesa Zamoyska, *La educación moral y cívica*, Barcelona, Gustavo Gili Editor, 1913, y, poco después, con R. Ruiz Amado, *Educación cívica*, Barcelona, Librería religiosa, 1918. Pocos años antes, la Gaceta de Madrid había publicado una R.O. en la que se declaraba de utilidad para la enseñanza, el opúsculo denominado «Nociones de Ciudadanía» del que era autor Rafael Bagde Mangino. En el mismo aparecían elementales ideas del Estado, la patria, las formas de gobierno, la organización de los poderes, etc. Vid. «Gaceta de Madrid», 19 de noviembre de 1911, núm. 323, p. 373.

⁴⁹ Como el elaborado por Juan Palau, cuyo objetivo se centraba en «ilustrar al joven acerca de lo que es la sociedad, de lo que debe a la comunidad y del modo práctico cómo puede y debe cada ciudadano contribuir a la vida social; tiende, en una palabra, a darle la impresión de que todo lo que es lo debe a la sociedad y le enseña que su deber primordial consiste en vivir para la comunidad de que forma parte». J. Palau Vera, *La educación del ciudadano*, Barcelona, Seix Barral, 1921, palabras

gó de recordar la política a seguir: «No parece llegado el momento [...] de entregar el poder a los hombres civiles. El Directorio se cerró contra los partidos organizados, porque éstos nada representan a no ser el desprestigio del poder público»⁵⁰. El polémico colofón de esta etapa llegaría con el Real-Decreto Ley de reforma universitaria de 19 de mayo de 1928, firmado por el ministro Eduardo Callejo, que privilegiaba las enseñanzas superiores privadas-confeccionales. A través del mismo, los alumnos que habían cursado sus estudios en los centros universitarios privados – jesuitas y agustinos – podían realizar los exámenes de fin de curso (lo que equivalía en la práctica a la convalidación de sus conocimientos) ante un tribunal formado por dos profesores de sus respectivos centros y un catedrático de universidad de la facultad correspondiente. Como ha señalado Antonio Viñao,

el contraste entre los propósitos y lo legislado y entre lo legislado y la realidad sería una constante en los años posteriores. Mostraba además, como señalarían Francisco Giner de los Ríos y Manuel B. Cossío, la ineficacia de las reformas «desde arriba» sin medios y sometidas a los vaivenes políticos. La inestabilidad política sería, en efecto, un rasgo característico de este período, como lo atestiguan los 26 ministros de Instrucción Pública que hubo entre 1900 y 1915 y los 27 que habría desde 1915 a 1931, con una media de 1,7 ministros por año»⁵¹.

2.4. *De la educación moral como una obligación a la educación ciudadana como un derecho.* La llegada de la II República representó una eclosión en las

recogidas en el prefacio, p. 5; ocho años más tarde, también se publicaría el libro del jesuita B. De La Concha, *Deberes éticos y cívicos y Rudimentos de Derecho*, Libro de texto para los Institutos de Segunda Enseñanza, Edición oficial, Barcelona, Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, 1929.

⁵⁰ G. Rojas Sánchez, *Los derechos políticos de asociación y reunión en la España contemporánea (1811-1936)*, Ediciones de la Universidad de Navarra (EUNSA), 1981, p. 399. Si bien la participación del ejército en la educación sobre valores cívicos y ciudadanos, en consonancia con el Directorio *primorriverista* y sus premisas, encuentra su fiel reflejo en la ROC de 11 de febrero de 1926 (DO, 39) sobre *Escuelas de preparación fuera de filas*, hay que buscar en la década anterior la constitución de Escuelas militares de este tipo, tanto de carácter oficial como particular (ver ROC de 27 de septiembre de 1912). Para un seguimiento más exhaustivo, consultar, por ejemplo, los fondos del Archivo Intermedio Regional Militar, sito en Santa Cruz de Tenerife, y los diferentes expedientes (Sección Instrucción, C.934, 935, 937) referidos a estas experiencias poco conocidas y menos estudiadas.

⁵¹ A. Viñao, *Escuela para todos. Educación y modernidad en la España del siglo XX*, Madrid, Marcial Pons, 2004, p. 22; véase igualmente: A. Escolano Benito, *La educación en la España contemporánea. Políticas educativas, escolarización y culturas pedagógicas*, Madrid, Biblioteca Nueva, 2002; A. Tiana Ferrer, G. Ossenbach Sauter, F. Sanz Fernández (coords.), *Historia de la Educación (Edad Contemporánea)*, Madrid, UNED, 2002. Para conocer el Real-Decreto Ley apuntado, y sobre todo el artículo 53, véase *Historia de la Educación en España. De la Restauración a la II República*, Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 1989, pp. 227-247. Estudio preliminar por Manuel de Puellas Benítez. Antes de este polémico Real-Decreto Ley, la segregación social y educativa se había visto fortalecida con el Decreto de 6 de noviembre de 1916 (derogado en abril de 1931) por el que se exigía una previa inscripción en el Registro de ciudadanía y vecindad civil para que comenzara a contar el plazo de residencia con el que obtener la vecindad real y, por tanto, algo parecido a la ciudadanía formal.

expectativas creadas a favor de la libertad, la justicia y la cultura – esto es, del reconocimiento de determinados derechos y valores aceptados desde la Revolución francesa como inalienables y universales – durante tanto tiempo ausentes para gran parte de la población española que sólo había conocido (y padecido) arbitrariedades y obligaciones. En este modelo de desarrollo democrático el prototipo de ciudadano se corresponde con el trabajador y así sería enunciado de manera apodíctica y original en el artículo 1 de la Constitución: «España es una República de trabajadores de toda clase que se organiza en régimen de Libertad y Justicia. Los poderes de todos sus órganos emanan del pueblo»⁵². Por ello, más que de libertades ciudadanas en abstracto, durante la República se habló de reivindicaciones y derechos del individuo para el ejercicio de la práctica social.

En semejante contexto social, de reconocimiento de derechos y de «encantamiento cultural»⁵³, se hacía necesario la formación de la población para mejorar las condiciones laborales, crear conciencia sobre la propia realidad y favorecer la igualdad de oportunidades que sistemáticamente había sido negada por autoridades y grupos de presión afines. Sin embargo, aquella república que respetó decididamente el juego parlamentario y despertó la conciencia del país, lejos de mantener propuestas unitarias se fragmentó en varias “repúblicas” por los bandazos ideológicos, manejos políticos, intereses económicos y financieros, presión de la oligarquía y fracturas de todo tipo que se sucedieron en su seno en el corto período de un lustro. Sin incidir demasiado en las diferencias para no salirnos de nuestro inicial marco de referencias, indiquemos las características generales de este período histórico de concepción universal de la educación y de la ciudadanía.

Para comenzar, la cultura no se entenderá como actividad propia de minorías intelectuales o artísticas sino que se transformará en seña de identidad, corriente de pensamiento y acción sociopolítica general, hasta el punto de pretender convertirse en poderosa palanca de influencia social regeneracionista que, a veces – todo sea dicho –, rayaba lo utópico e idealista e incluso hasta lo populista. En este mismo sentido se situaba la función educadora del Estado que integró la civilidad como objetivo básico de vertebración y progreso nacional, tal y como había teorizado y practicado medio siglo antes el institucionismo gineriano. Desde este particular punto de vista se entiende que la República no buscara una educación popular como tantas veces se le recriminó – y tanto le reprochó la clase obrera –, sino nacional y universal para construir la ciudadanía que las clases medias demandaban y que teñía el país de un cierto halo de progreso, equiparable al del resto de Estados europeos más avanzados. No serían estériles, pues, las pugnas ideológicas por el control político en

⁵² Constitución de la República española, en *Constituciones de España...*, cit., p. 199.

⁵³ M. Tuñón De Lara, *La política cultural del primer bienio republicano: 1931-1933*, en *La II República española: El primer bienio. III Coloquio de Segovia sobre Historia Contemporánea de España*, dirigido por M. Tuñón de Lara, Madrid, Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1987, p. 266.

materia educativa, por la libertad de prensa y de cátedra, por el laicismo, por la extensión alfabetizadora, por los cambios de contenidos y de métodos, etc⁵⁴.

Conocida la herencia del pasado más reciente⁵⁵, los objetivos a cumplir eran difíciles y exigían grandes sacrificios, si bien la simbiosis entre institucionismo (de tendencia liberal) y socialismo (de tendencia marxista) haría más llevadero el camino y la inspiración de los cambios que estaban por venir; Lorenzo Luzuriaga – artífice del programa educativo del Partido Socialista español desde 1918 y conocedor como pocos de las ideas pedagógicas y de la realidad de la enseñanza en España – había expresado sintéticamente la complejidad de los nuevos proyectos:

Nosotros hemos de hacer aquí lo que en tantos otros aspectos de la vida pública: ir del candil a la luz eléctrica, pasando por alto el petróleo y el gas. Tenemos que crear 30.000 escuelas primarias y un centenar de Institutos de segunda enseñanza, de suerte que puedan llegar a ella, en todos sus grados y manifestaciones, por lo menos los más capaces, ya que de momento no puede hacerse con todos⁵⁶.

Marcelino Domingo, Ministro de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes durante el gobierno provisional y principal inductor de la llamada «república de maestros», mantendría esta misma línea de pensamiento y de prioridades durante su mandato: incremento de puestos escolares, reconocimiento social y salarial de los maestros, renovadas competencias del cuerpo de inspectores, escuela pública obligatoria y gratuita, escuela única, laica, mixta y racional, cambios metodológicos para facilitar el aprendizaje, participación social en la escuela y sustitución de las juntas por consejos escolares y, en paralelo, extensión de la cultura popular de la mano de las Misiones Pedagógicas⁵⁷. A partir de diciembre de 1931 y siguiendo los preceptos constitucionales, sobre todo el

⁵⁴ Así lo expresaba Rodolfo Llopis, director general de primera enseñanza entre 1931 y 1933: «El instrumento más eficaz de esa transformación nacional ha de ser la escuela. La escuela ha sido siempre el arma ideológica de todas las revoluciones. La escuela tiene que convertir a los súbditos de la Monarquía borbónica en ciudadanos de la República española». *La revolución en la escuela. Dos años en la Dirección General de Primera Enseñanza*, edición de Antonio Molero, Madrid, Biblioteca Nueva, 2006, p. 22 (facsimil del original publicado por M. Aguilar, Madrid, 1933, 277 pp.). Por su parte, Rafael de Pina – destacado columnista – constataba en un artículo de opinión la dialéctica existente entre educación, ciudadanía y política: «La educación de la ciudadanía es la condición imprescindible para el normal desenvolvimiento de un régimen de democracia. Sería inútil desentenderse de este problema. La realidad nos lo pone a diario delante, y hay que abordarlo con decisión [...]. La grandeza de la patria futura ha de ser obra de la aportación de todos y en ella la discrepancia puede ser una fórmula de colaboración – acaso más fecunda que un cómodo conformismo absoluto –, digna del más profundo respeto», *Ciudadanía y educación*, «La Prensa», Santa Cruz de Tenerife, 31 de marzo de 1932.

⁵⁵ Como botón de muestra basta decir que en 1930 sólo entraba en las escuelas primarias el 40% de la población escolar, y a los institutos llegaba el 2% de éstos. Las universidades eran instituciones inalcanzables social y económicamente hablando para los que no pertenecían a las elites del país.

⁵⁶ Citado por A. Molero Pintado, *La reforma educativa de las Segunda República Española. Primer bienio*, Madrid, Aula XXI-Santillana, 1977, p. 149. Ver igualmente, M. Samaniego Boneu, *La política educativa de la Segunda República durante el bienio azañista*, Madrid, CSIC, 1977.

⁵⁷ M. Domingo, *La escuela en la República...*, cit., 334 pp.

artículo 26 que en uno de sus apartados prohibía a las órdenes religiosas ejercer la industria, el comercio o la enseñanza y, de manera más específica, el 48, que expresaba que la cultura era atribución del Estado, que la enseñanza primaria era gratuita y obligatoria, que se establecía la libertad de cátedra y que la enseñanza era laica, se afianzaron los pilares del edificio escolar y educativo en lo que restaba de primer bienio o bienio reformista.

Sin embargo, aquel empuje inicial, aquella concentración de fuerzas, no resistiría la presión de distinto signo contenida en los momentos posteriores y la contrarreforma educativa se haría palpable durante el bienio radical-cedista de marcado carácter reaccionario y pragmático: recorte del presupuesto, parálisis en la creación de escuelas, prohibición de la coeducación, confesionalidad, freno en la labor de la inspección para la renovación educativa, etc., obligaban a mantener un mayor interés por los dogmas de la Iglesia que por los derechos civiles conquistados hasta entonces. Las aguas sólo volverían a su cauce tras el triunfo del Frente Popular en las elecciones de febrero de 1936. Durante este breve período se adoptaron las disposiciones que originaron el reformismo republicano de la mano, nuevamente, de Marcelino Domingo en la cartera de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes⁵⁸.

Por primera vez en la historia de España se intentó desarrollar un modelo de enseñanza pública donde todos sus miembros se vincularan al proyecto común de creación de la ciudadanía civil, política y social, poseedora, por definición, de derechos y deberes generales. En este escenario, la educación no sólo fue un recurso para satisfacer las necesidades administrativas del Estado, como venía siendo lo habitual, sino para movilizar y satisfacer los intereses de los ciudadanos y ciudadanas (la mujer obtiene por primera vez el derecho político de decidir votando) como colectividad social, e impedir el rebrote – más que posible como se pudo observar poco después – de las arbitrariedades y privilegios a la usanza del antiguo régimen que anulaban los derechos individuales y las libertades personales recién conquistadas. En definitiva, la educación pública-nacional diseñada, defendida y practicada por los representantes republicanos, herederos del reformismo institucionista y por ello en clara oposición a otras posturas ideológicas más radicales defendidas por comunistas y anarquistas, se configuró sobre la base de subordinar las identidades históricas, sociales y culturales de naturaleza colectiva, al proyecto más específico de creación de una ciudadanía para la comunidad política de pertenencia que emergía asentada en el concepto general de individuo y de trabajo⁵⁹. Una propuesta de la clase media

⁵⁸ Como clásicos de esta temática, vid. C. Lozano Seijas, *La educación republicana*, Universidad de Barcelona, 1980, y M. Pérez Galán, *La enseñanza en la segunda República*, Madrid, Edicusa, 1977.

⁵⁹ Conviene tener muy presente lo que se decía a este respecto en 1936: «Educación cívica no quiere decir una educación que recibe el ciudadano por el Estado y sus organizaciones, sino, al contrario, la educación para la comprensión del Estado, de su esencia y de sus tareas, y, sobre todo, para la voluntad de colaborar como miembro activo en la realización de estas tareas [...]. Durante mucho tiempo se

apoyada por la intelectualidad que, obviamente, no convenció a los sectores más desfavorecidos de la población y que además sería ampliamente combatida por la oligarquía más rancia con fuerte arraigo militar y eclesiástico.

2.5. Integrismo educativo y restricción ciudadana. En efecto, en 1935 tuvo lugar en Tenerife una de tantas jornadas auspiciadas por la Iglesia – y legalmente autorizada por los representantes más conservadores del republicanismo – en la que quedaba expuesto lo más selecto y granado del pensamiento reaccionario de la época. Acción Católica echó mano sus propagandistas más influyentes de dentro y fuera de las Islas para establecer las bases sobre las que reeditar sus campañas ideológicas y morales posteriores. En el Libro de Actas, documento de extraordinario valor para conocer las posiciones originalmente defendidas y que serían ampliamente difundidas en las décadas posteriores, podemos leer cosas tan interesantes como, por ejemplo, que «la salvación de España no la hemos de esperar de los políticos, ni de los hombres de ciencia, ni de los militares, ni de ningún elemento humano. Se salvará cuando se recristianice», o que «la formación espiritual del hombre exige que posea una cultura religiosa intensa que constituya los cimientos en que ha de edificarse la personalidad espiritual del futuro ciudadano». El estatuto del ciudadano, pues, pasaba a ser esencialmente religioso y su observancia no dependía de los poderes públicos sino de la institución eclesiástica, salvo que Estado e Iglesia fusionaran sus intereses cívicos y espirituales como a la postre ocurrió⁶⁰.

ha creído que la esencia de la educación cívica consistía en la transmisión de ciertos conocimientos. Se ha llegado incluso a exigir para ello una asignatura especial: el *estudio de la ciudadanía*. Con el curso del tiempo, y en razón de la transformación total de nuestra Pedagogía, se ha puesto cada vez más de relieve la opinión de que la instrucción cívica se debe realizar, en la medida más amplia, dentro de los cuadros de las otras asignaturas, en primer lugar de la *Historia* y de la *Geografía*». L. Sánchez Sarto (Dir.), *Diccionario de Pedagogía*, Madrid, Labor, 1936, Tomo I, pp. 1000, 1002-1003. De este mismo autor – y en esta misma editorial – debemos señalar la traducción y prólogo realizados de la obra del pedagogo alemán G. Kerschensteiner, *La educación cívica*, Barcelona, Labor, 1934. Tampoco podemos dejar de mencionar desde una perspectiva más específica de doctrina política, la obra de V.F. Ascarza (recopilador), *Lecturas ciudadanas (educación cívica)*, Madrid, Editorial El Magisterio Español, 1933, y la de J. Carreras Y Artau, *Los deberes del hombre*, Barcelona, Librería Bosch, 1935 (especialmente el capítulo XIV, pp. 92-99). O desde una visión más didáctica, si cabe, la de R. Torroja Valls, *La educación moral y cívica en la escuela actual*, Gerona, Dalmau Carles, 1933; y D. Naveran, *Una lección práctica de educación cívica en una escuela rural*, Madrid, Instituto Pedagógico, 1935.

⁶⁰ *Semana «pro Ecclesia et Patria»*, 15-22 de septiembre de 1935, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, La Laguna (Tenerife), Librería y Tipografía Católica, 1936, pp. 57 y 61. Ver a este respecto, también, J. Casanova, *La Iglesia de Franco*, Madrid, Temas de Hoy, 2001. El movimiento de la Acción Católica español, que cobra fuerza y se organiza a partir de la década de 1920, se nutre de diferentes referencias europeas, fundamentalmente belgas, alemanas y, sobre todo, italianas y francesas. Favorecido por el empeño de Pío XI, vive la estructuración progresiva de un movimiento asociativo de corte conservador, vertical y fuertemente jerarquizado. La profusión de manuales, bien de producción española (por ejemplo, E. de Beitia, *Apostolado de los seglares. Lecciones de Acción Católica*, 1935), o extranjera (por ejemplo, G.C. de Rutten, *Manual de Estudios de Acción Social y Católica*, 1933) fue pareja a su desarrollo. En palabras del propio Pío XI, en su Encíclica sobre La edu-

A partir de entonces, lo ideológico se confundió con lo propagandístico, lo técnico con lo servil, las manifestaciones culturales con lo más vetusto del pensamiento... y lo peor de todo, la posición de los adversarios se transformó de manera expeditiva y *per se* en discurso situado en terreno enemigo que era preciso combatir ferozmente para difundir las ideas de obediencia, sacrificio, adhesión y militancia debidas. El resultado de esta conjunción no podía ser otro que el de la total depuración, represión y aniquilación de todos los que no pensaran conforme a los patrones preestablecidos, o simplemente se hubieran alineado a favor del reformismo republicano por leves y acomodaticios que fuesen sus contenidos. Como en su día expresó J. Fontana, «la represión cumplía en el campo franquista una función política fundamental, ligada a las necesidades de una guerra de clases de los menos contra los más: la de paralizar al enemigo por el terror»⁶¹. Se rompían así las diversas tradiciones intelectuales herederas del liberalismo, institucionismo, socialismo y republicanismo finiseculares y se adoptaba el modelo oligárquico-eclesiástico en su versión más integrista y puritana: patriotismo exacerbado, unipartidismo, exaltación carismática del líder, alianza con los poderes fácticos del Estado, nacional-catolicismo, ortodoxia de principios, uniformidad ideológica, manipulación y falsificación del pasado, entre otros, fueron sus rasgos configuradores que demandaron un modelo de cultura oficial alejado del promovido en el resto de Europa de raíces democráticas y liberales (con las excepciones más destacadas y obvias de Italia y Alemania).

En el ámbito educativo se puede constatar que la naturaleza y las consecuencias de esta función depuradora, ideológica, metodológica y curricular no habían tenido precedentes en la dilatada historia de España. Aunque en la práctica el desmantelamiento de la escuela republicana se realiza desde los inicios mismos del golpe de Estado, fue la Ley de Educación Primaria de 17 de julio de 1945 la que sancionaría la poda de manera jurídica; una ley que ataba los cabos sueltos de la educación y que se adaptaba a los nuevos tiempos otorgando un perfil más católico que falangista, dada la derrota de las potencias del eje tras la II Guerra Mundial a las que Franco había concedido toda su confianza y apoyo. El artículo 15 lo expresaba con claridad: «La Escuela es la comunidad activa de Maestros y escolares, instituida por la Familia, la Iglesia o el Estado, como órgano de la educación primaria, para la formación cristiana, patriótica e intelectual de la niñez española». El carácter confesional de la educación, la creación de escuelas primarias y de Magisterio por parte de la Iglesia (católica),

cación de la juventud: «[La escuela católica] no pretende separar a sus hijos del espíritu nacional, sino antes bien educarlos en el modo más perfecto y más conducente a la prosperidad de la nación, puesto que el buen católico, precisamente en virtud de la doctrina católica, es por lo mismo el *mejor ciudadano*, amante de su Patria, sometido a la autoridad civil constituida en cualquier forma legítima de Gobierno», en «Ecclesia. Órgano de la Dirección Central de la Acción católica española», (3), 1 de febrero de 1941, p. 12 (la cursiva contenida en la cita es nuestra).

⁶¹ J. Fontana (ed.), *España bajo el franquismo*, Barcelona, Crítica, 1986, p. 18. Véase igualmente, E. Díaz García, *Pensamiento español en la era de Franco (1939-1975)*, Madrid, Tecnos, 1983.

los libros de texto elaborados y aprobados por la jerarquía eclesiástica, los sacerdotes como miembros natos de los tribunales para el ingreso en el magisterio, además de la separación de sexos «por razones de orden moral y de eficacia pedagógica», fueron algunos de los preceptos contenidos en la Ley que reponía a la Iglesia en sus tradicionales funciones pedagógicas⁶².

Aquella normativa y otras, junto a la ratificación de los acuerdos con la Santa Sede y la multitud de consignas posteriores provenientes de ámbitos tan dispares como los militares, eclesiásticos, intelectuales, políticos, SEU, etcétera, que seguían apelando a la educación como cruzada a favor del sentir hispano, de raíces étnicas, patrióticas y tradicionales, empobrecieron hasta lo indecible los aspectos cualitativos de la enseñanza e impidieron que mejoraran los cuantitativos. En 1950, y excluyendo a los menores de 10 años y a los mayores que no sabían escribir pero sí a duras penas leer o poner su nombre, seguía existiendo en España un analfabetismo oficial del 17,3% que ahondaba en las diferencias existentes entre clases sociales, provincias, zonas (rurales o urbanas) y sexos. Las posteriores campañas alfabetizadoras poco mejoraron la realidad educativa aunque contribuyeron a intensificar el carácter propagandístico a favor del régimen y de la inserción laboral de los trabajadores (dicha campaña estaba dirigida a las varones entre 15 y 60 años y a las mujeres entre 15 y 50), dado al abandono masivo que se estaba produciendo del campo a favor de la industrialización urbana y la posterior terciarización de la economía. Una tesis que es avalada, además, por la negligente actuación de las autoridades ante las deficientes condiciones en las que se escolarizaba a los menores, cuando esto ocurría, y por las enormes carencias personales y materiales padecidas habida cuenta de que en 1956 todavía faltaban por crear más de un millón de puestos escolares. En la clausura del I Congreso Internacional de Pedagogía celebrado en Barcelona el año 1955, Joaquín Ruiz Giménez – Ministro de Educación Nacional – seguía hablando del «aún elevado tanto por ciento de analfabetismo que existe en España» y de la preocupación mostrada por el Caudillo «para encargar una eficaz campaña con el fin de combatirlo en

⁶² *Historia de la Educación en España. Nacional-Catolicismo y Educación en la España de posguerra I y II*. Estudio preliminar y selección de textos por Alejandro Mayordomo, Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 1990, p. 678. Además, E. Gervilla Castillo, *La escuela del Nacional-Catolicismo. Ideología y educación religiosa*, Granada, Impredisur, 1990; A. Mayordomo, J.M. Fernández Soria, *Vencer y convencer. Educación y política. España 1936-1945*, Universitat de València, 1993; R. Navarro Sandalinas, *La enseñanza primaria durante el franquismo (1936-1975)*, Barcelona, PPU, 1990; Monográfico dedicado a la educación en España bajo el franquismo (1936-1975) de la revista «Historia de la Educación. Revista Interuniversitaria», Salamanca, Ediciones de la Universidad de Salamanca, 1982. Desde los primeros momentos del estallido del golpe militar, la Jefatura del Servicio Nacional de Primera Enseñanza exponía «la necesidad de mantener en la Escuela de la Nueva España el espíritu religioso y patriótico, que constituye la esencia de nuestro Movimiento Nacional». Para ello se exigía a los maestros e inspectores «el más exacto cumplimiento de las normas que sobre educación religiosa, patriótica, cívica y física contenía la Circular del 5 de marzo de 1938». A modo de ejemplo de la mucha literatura vertida a este respecto y convertida en normativa, consúltense los BOE de 8 de marzo y 7 de septiembre de 1938.

dos años y prácticamente reducirlo a cero»⁶³. Pura intoxicación ideológica y simple campaña política, pues al finalizar esta década todavía existía un 24% de analfabetismo real y se insistía, a través de los medios de comunicación, en la pertinencia de fomentar contenidos de «educación ciudadana» desde las aulas de los institutos, círculos de instrucción y sociedades de recreo⁶⁴.

En un ambiente de estancamiento económico sólo superado en parte por los créditos norteamericanos, de agitación y protesta social cada vez más intensas, de ruptura entre las familias católica y falangista, de procacidad intelectual y triunfalismos hidráulicos, la ciudadanía se había disipado como sujeto histórico socialmente activo – ya que ni siquiera en el Fuero de los Trabajadores casi dos décadas antes había aparecido como mero horizonte de atracción de identidad e intereses – y en su lugar figuraban las expresiones «españoles» y «productores», por oposición a la de extranjeros y obreros y, juntos o separados, todos ellos traidores a la Patria⁶⁵. De esta forma, los únicos ciudadanos en estado puro pasan a ser Franco y sus legisladores, quienes se arrojan el derecho, convertido en privilegio y don por la gracia de Dios, de tomar todas las decisiones políticas, minimizando hasta el ridículo la capacidad participativa de la población y adquiriendo el estatus público de ciudadanos de pro. El propio Juan Manuel Eguiagaray – Ministro de Administraciones Públicas en 1992 – durante la presentación de la Ley de Régimen jurídico de las Administraciones Públicas y del Procedimiento Administrativo Común, al hacer referencia a la legislación de 1957, señalaba sin ambages que «nada de extraño tiene que en ese marco los ciudadanos fueran calificados como administrados y no como titulares auténticos de derechos cuyo ejercicio tiene que garantizar la Ley»⁶⁶.

La etapa tecnocrática con miembros del Opus Dei en el gobierno, como fue el caso de Lora Tamayo en la cartera de Educación y Ciencia (hasta entonces y desde la guerra civil Ministerio de Educación Nacional), elevó la escolaridad

⁶³ Palabras textuales recogidas por la prensa de la época. Vid. *Un plan de dos años para liquidar el analfabetismo en España*, «El Día», Santa Cruz de Tenerife, 7 de mayo de 1955.

⁶⁴ Eso sí, educación ciudadana entendida al más puro estilo eclesiástico-militar de sometimiento moral y de observancia escrupulosa a la autoridad. Véase el periódico «Diario de Avisos», en sus respectivas ediciones del 3 y 6 de febrero de 1956. Desde los momentos iniciales de la guerra civil se confeccionaron manuales destinados a padres y alumnos para que conocieran su nuevo papel en el marco militar-eclesiástico recién instaurado. A modo de ejemplo, M. Rodríguez Miguel, *Las lecciones del padre. Educación moral y cívica*, Burgos, Hijos de Santiago Rodríguez, 1937. Con el tiempo, el enfoque y tratamiento de estos problemas fue evolucionando. Vid. *Semanas Sociales de España, La educación social y cívica en una sociedad de masas*, Madrid, Junta Nacional de Semanas Sociales, 1964.

⁶⁵ De hecho, como ha expuesto Mayordomo Pérez, en el Título II, artículo 33 de dicho Fuero, se disponía que el ejercicio de los derechos ciudadanos allí reconocidos, no podía atentar a la unidad espiritual, nacional y social de España. *Historia de la Educación en España. Nacional-Catolicismo y Educación en la España de posguerra (I)*. Estudio preliminar y selección de textos por Alejandro Mayordomo, Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 1990, p. 59.

⁶⁶ Citado en J.I. Moltó García, *La Administración General del Estado*, Madrid, Tecnos, 1998, p. 63.

obligatoria hasta los 14 años para hacerla coincidir también con una mejor preparación de la mano de obra demandada por el primer plan de desarrollo y el fuerte crecimiento industrial de los años 60. Dicha Ley de educación de 29 de abril de 1964 sería seguida por otras de reforma de la enseñanza primaria y de la enseñanza media para adecuar la educación a las estructuras económicas del país, si bien el colofón a esta etapa vendría rubricado por la *Ley General de Educación y Financiamiento de la Reforma Educativa* de 4 de agosto de 1970 – precedida a su vez del *Libro Blanco* o del estudio titulado *La educación en España. Bases para una política educativa* – que, al decir de Agustín Escolano, crearía las condiciones para «situar a la institución educativa en una clara dinámica de modernidad estructural»⁶⁷. Con esta «macroreforma estructural», como también ha sido denominada por otros autores⁶⁸, se terminaba el largo período de dominio educativo contenido en la Ley Moyano de 1857 y se planteaban, como temas estrella, la educación preescolar, la escolarización obligatoria entre los 6 y 14 años (a través de la denominada educación general básica), la reforma de la formación profesional, la creación del bachillerato unificado y polivalente, y, además, irrumpe la labor psicopedagógica en los centros escolares. Estas reformas siguen – según la propia exposición de motivos contenida en la parte preliminar del texto – la intención de ofrecer a todos «igualdad de oportunidades educativas», amén de «contribuir a la edificación de una sociedad más justa», «huir de todo tipo de uniformismo» y, al mismo tiempo y de manera contradictoria con ello – al negar la pluralidad ideológica inexcusable para avanzar en esta dirección –, de «hacer partícipe de la educación a toda la población española, basando su orientación en las más genuinas y tradicionales virtudes patrias»⁶⁹. Una propuesta esperanzadora y cargada de buenas intenciones, pese a todo, que abocaba nuevamente en un callejón sin salida: la falta de libertades necesarias y las enormes desigualdades económicas padecidas, para abordar sin sometimientos y con garantías de cambio un esfuerzo colectivo de tanta envergadura, cuya fundamentación no era precisamente pedagógica sino política y social.

⁶⁷ A. Escolano Benito, *La organización de la escuela. Del arcaísmo a la modernidad*, en Id. (Dir.), *Historia ilustrada de la escuela en España. Dos siglos de perspectiva histórica*, Madrid, Fundación Germán Sánchez Ruipérez, 2006, p. 471.

⁶⁸ A. Viñao, *Escuela para todos...*, cit., p. 83.

⁶⁹ Ley general de educación y financiamiento de la reforma educativa de 4 de agosto de 1970, BOE, 6 de agosto de 1970 y Editorial Escuela Española S.A., Madrid, 1977, pp. 5 y 7. La orientación de la reforma insiste claramente en una nueva perspectiva del “escolarizable”, que pasa de ser sujeto meramente reproductor del conocimiento, a otro responsable directo de la adquisición del mismo a través de aptitudes y actitudes propias, siguiendo el lenguaje psicopedagógico y subrepticio al uso.

3. Conclusiones

En los folios precedentes hemos resaltado una concepción de la educación que vinculara los procesos de aprendizaje y, por tanto, de creación, validación y transmisión de saberes y conocimientos, a las necesidades más perentorias de los grupos políticos instalados en los centros de poder o en sus alledaños, y que demandaban la fundación de la ciudadanía como categoría social diferenciada para desarrollar su particular modelo de Estado. Dicha concepción se ha basado, insistamos una vez más, en generar obediencia hacia sus gobernantes como concesión desde y para el fortalecimiento de la autoridad, en el mismo sentido en que la educación se había concebido como forjadora de la observancia individual dirigida a dicho fin colectivo⁷⁰.

Una etapa larga y discontinua pero con un común denominador que no se corresponde, ni mucho menos, con un período de intensos y profundos cambios comportamentales, culturales y sociales, sino de mera adaptación estructural al capitalismo emergente. Un período de acoplamientos, confabulaciones y controles políticos cuya concreción más patente fue el intento de universalizar las ideas educativas y las prácticas escolares a través del llamado «modelo de educación pública nacional», al decir de Lorenzo Luzuriaga, «formas de escolarización patronal», según expresión de Aída Terrón o «modo tradicional-elitista», como conceptualización propuesta por Raimundo Cuesta⁷¹.

Sin embargo, intentando realizar en la medida de lo posible un ensayo de sistematización, hemos podido comprobar cómo la educación oficial y las prácticas pedagógicas anexas – que han servido para desarrollar una determinada concepción del tiempo, del espacio, del orden, de ciertos cánones de conducta y de una única modalidad reglada de saberes convertida a priori en principio supremo de todo conocimiento humano – legitimaron una concepción de ciudadanía acomodada a la lógica depurativa de las distintas formas de poder dominante⁷². Por ello, la cualidad de ciudadano fue algo que se aprendió y que

⁷⁰ En una de las acepciones de la *Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada Europeo-Americana* de 1912, la voz “ciudadano” significaba – y no era por casualidad – “hombre bueno” (Madrid, Espasa-Calpe, Vol. 13, p. 570). Ello nos retrotrae, de nuevo, a la idea expresada por Cicerón acerca del *vir bonus* romano, como referenciábamos en las páginas iniciales del presente trabajo.

⁷¹ L. Luzuriaga, *Historia de la Educación pública*, Losada, Buenos Aires, 1946, pp. 93-158; H. Barreiro, A. Terrón, *La institución escolar...*, cit., pp. 85-90 y R. Cuesta Fernández, *Felices y escolarizados...*, cit., pp. 123 y ss.

⁷² Mayoral lo ha precisado de manera un tanto turiferaria a favor del actual modelo de democracia liberal: «Así como el protagonista de la sociedad confesional era el *creyente*, el referente humano de la sociedad laica y secularizada ha sido el *ciudadano*, siendo misión fundamental de la educación laica su formación integral. El *ciudadano* no es sólo una denominación convencional de carácter administrativo, el equivalente a usuario en el argot de la teoría de los servicios públicos. Se trata de una categoría cultural, política y jurídica, una construcción social intencionada que dota a la persona de un *status* de derechos y deberes solamente existente en el marco del Estado de Derecho que comporta la democracia. Fuera de la democracia y sus valores no existe el ciu-

dependió de las variables existentes en cada momento histórico; de ahí que podamos inferir que su naturaleza, características, definición y determinación más específicas no fueron acumulativas ni progresivas o extensivas, ni caminaron siempre al mismo ritmo y en la misma dirección.

Así pues, sin ánimo de aniquilar la propensión natural al optimismo, en estas páginas hemos querido dejar constancia del nacimiento de la educación pública y de la configuración de la escuela como institución destinada a la formación de la identidad ciudadana – expresión genérica y polisémica donde las haya –, con el cometido de adquirir para una parte de la población estatus y derechos (nada desdeñables, por cierto) que permitieran a la población una mejora individual y un mayor grado de cohesión grupal como contribuyentes y administrados, obviando la idea de que la ciudadanía la otorga la simple condición humana con identidad de intereses y proyectos comunes. Ciudadanos, al fin y al cabo, que han devenido meros electores en el presente, más dados a invocar y adueñarse de lo que consideran sus derechos (hasta convertirse en depredadores bulímicos de los mismos) que a participar activamente de lo son sus deberes y obligaciones con relación a los aspectos universales y cotidianos que los unen a los demás. Una evolución histórica significativa y un tanto laberíntica que ha emergido como consecuencia de excluir de dicha construcción categorial a otros seres humanos por motivos tan dispares como el lugar de nacimiento, el nivel educativo alcanzado, la condición social, la posición económica, el espacio territorial ocupado o, más grave aún, las diferencias ideológicas blandidas. Pero adentrarse en estas cuestiones tan complejas como actuales requiere de un análisis detallado y ampliamente documentado en formato de otro nuevo capítulo de la historia que, si les parece – dado el espacio ocupado y el tiempo agotado –, dejamos para otra ocasión.

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dadano sino el súbdito, el creyente, el fiel o el gobernado». V. Mayoral, *Sobre la escuela laica*, en *Por la escuela pública. Homenaje a Mariano Pérez Galán*, Madrid, Fundación Cives, 1998, pp. 178-179.

Un autore per adulti o per ragazzi? Ipotesi sulla lingua di Italo Calvino

Laura Detti

1. Scrittore dell'infanzia

Italo Calvino non è uno scrittore per ragazzi, né la sua letteratura è per l'infanzia. Così egli non si è mai definito, né la critica letteraria lo ha mai presentato in questa veste. È però sicuramente – lo dicono i suoi testi – uno “scrittore dell'infanzia”, un autore che, come sostiene Pier Vincenzo Mengaldo¹ in un attento e accurato studio, «ha fortemente tematizzato l'infanzia». In molte delle sue opere, Calvino considera lo sguardo dell'infanzia uno sguardo privilegiato sul mondo. La questione non è sicuramente nuova in letteratura, ma in questo autore assume una rilevanza e un tono tali da rappresentare un importante contributo al problema della definizione dell'ambito letterario che si rivolge all'infanzia e all'adolescenza.

¹ Cfr. P.V. Mengaldo, *La tradizione del Novecento. Terza serie*, Torino, Einaudi, 1991. Si avverte che nel corso dell'articolo verranno utilizzate le seguenti abbreviazioni bibliografiche, relative alle opere di Italo Calvino più frequentemente citate: BR = I. Calvino, *Il barone rampante*, Torino, Einaudi, 1957 (I Coralli, 79). Faremo riferimento all'ed. Milano, Mondadori, 2002; CI = I. Calvino, *Il cavaliere inesistente*, Torino, Einaudi, 1959 (I Coralli, 108). Faremo riferimento all'ed. Milano, Mondadori, 2002; LA = I. Calvino, *Lezioni americane. Sei proposte per il prossimo millennio*, Milano, Garzanti, 1988; MS = I. Calvino, *Mondo scritto mondo non scritto*, Milano, Mondadori, 2002; VD = I. Calvino, *Il visconte dimezzato*, Torino, Einaudi, 1952 (Gettoni 9). Faremo riferimento all'edizione per ragazzi, accompagnata dalle tavole di Emanuele Luzzati, ripubblicata (la prima edizione per ragazzi risale al 1975) da Mondadori nel 2004.

Esaminiamo rapidamente la sua produzione dall'immediato dopoguerra agli anni Sessanta. Il suo primo libro, *Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno*, risalente al 1946, ha come protagonista Pin, un ragazzo praticamente senza famiglia (ha una sorella prostituta), e la Resistenza, periodo storico in cui è ambientato il racconto, è proposta al lettore attraverso gli occhi di un ragazzo. Nel *Visconte dimezzato* (1952), la voce narrante è quella di un bambino, il nipote del Visconte di Terralba; nel *Barone rampante* (1957) una parte consistente del racconto è dedicata all'infanzia di Cosimo Piovasco di Rondò; nel *Cavaliere inesistente* (1959), l'alter ego, diciamo così, del Cavaliere è Rambaldo, adolescente alle prese con la ricerca della strada da intraprendere nell'"esistente". Fino ad arrivare alle novelle di *Marcovaldo* (in volume nel 1963), in cui il protagonista non è un bambino, ma i bambini figli di Marcovaldo sono personaggi fondamentali e la loro presenza è costante nei racconti.

Passando dalle pagine di narrativa a quelle saggistiche – questi due ambiti nella produzione letteraria di Calvino sono così intrecciati tra loro da rivelarsi necessaria una lettura parallela – si evince che lo scrittore tratta dell'infanzia con insistenza, vi torna più volte, sempre a lungo. E mostra un interesse particolare per il modo con cui un ragazzo guarda e vede le cose del mondo. Non solo. Utilizza il ricordo del piacere provato nel corso delle sue letture infantili per riprodurre quel gusto nei suoi racconti di scrittore-lettore adulto. Quel piacere diventa, insomma, una chiave per accedere ad una ricerca accurata sullo stile².

Accanto al ricordo delle letture giovanili si è poi aggiunto un reale interesse – come studioso, professionista dell'editoria e giornalista – nei confronti di

² Calvino parla delle sue letture d'infanzia in molti scritti critici, saggi, interventi a convegni. Ne parla non solo per rintracciare l'influenza che esse hanno avuto sulla sua scrittura, ma anche per comprendere il peso che esse hanno avuto sulla sua idea di lettura. Scrive ad esempio in un manoscritto inedito: «Il primo vero piacere della lettura d'un vero libro lo provai abbastanza tardi: avevo già dodici o tredici anni, e fu con Kipling, il primo e (soprattutto) il secondo libro della Giungla. Non ricordo se ci arrivai attraverso una biblioteca scolastica o perché lo ebbi in regalo. Da allora in poi avevo qualcosa da cercare nei libri: vedere se si ripeteva quel piacere della lettura provato con Kipling». La testimonianza – inserita in *Romanzi e racconti*, Vol. I, p. LXV, Milano, Mondadori, 1991 (I Meridiani) – è tratta da un manoscritto inedito, e viene fatta risalire dai curatori del volume, M. Barengi e B. Falcetto, al triennio che va dal 1935 al 1938). Del piacere legato alle letture giovanili Calvino si soffermerà anche nell'intervento tenuto alla Fiera del libro di Buenos Aires nel 1984: «La crisi durò fino a quando non decisi che avrei scritto non il romanzo che credevo di dover scrivere, che gli altri s'aspettavano che scrivessi, ma il romanzo che mi sarebbe piaciuto leggere: un libro come arrivato da un altro tempo e da un altro paese, da un autore sconosciuto, un vecchio volume trovato in soffitta, mezzo mangiato dai topi, a cui abbandonarmi col fascino delle letture infantili. Fu allora che trovai la vena fantastica che poi pubblico e critica giudicarono la più rispondente al mio temperamento».

La memoria personale fa da sottofondo a tutto il *Barone rampante*. A rivelarlo è lo stesso autore nella prefazione all'edizione scolastica del racconto che risale al 1965. Sotto le vesti del professor Tonio Cavilla, docente pignolo e scrupoloso, Calvino presenta ai giovani lettori un'analisi attenta ed elaborata dell'opera. «Che dietro il divertimento letterario del *Barone Rampante* – scrive nella Prefazione – si senta il ricordo, anzi la nostalgia delle letture della fanciullezza, brulicanti di personaggi e casi paradossali, appare chiaro».

quei capolavori letterari che sono divenuti nel tempo classici della letteratura per ragazzi: il riferimento è ad autori come Stevenson, Defoe, Collodi, Twain e ad un genere vasto e articolato come quello della fiaba. L'interesse verso quegli autori è rivolto soprattutto alle scelte stilistiche che essi compiono nelle loro opere. Uguale curiosità è quella che lo porta ad immergersi nell'universo immenso della fiaba popolare, dando vita alla straordinaria raccolta rappresentata dalle *Fiabe italiane*³. Difatti sia rispetto ai classici citati sia rispetto al genere della fiaba, l'interesse di Calvino è rivolto principalmente alle tecniche del narrare, all'aspetto tecnico della scrittura. Aspetto che, come vedremo, è uno dei punti che più ha appassionato l'autore nel suo percorso letterario.

1.1. *Lo stile del fantastico*. L'infanzia incontrata in modo trasversale, dal contatto con alcuni classici della letteratura al viaggio nella memoria personale, è uno dei temi caratterizzanti l'opera di Calvino, ed è forse uno di quegli aspetti che, almeno in una certa fase, ha contribuito in modo determinante alla creazione di una "lingua", di un codice, di uno stile originali e inconfondibili. La *rapidità*, la *visibilità*, la *leggerezza*, l'*esattezza*, la *molteplicità*: i valori letterari lasciati da Calvino nelle sue *Lezioni americane. Sei proposte per il prossimo millennio*⁴ sono quelli che lo scrittore ha ricercato e da cui è stato guidato sin dall'inizio del suo incontro con il mondo letterario. Un insieme di qualità stilistiche che finiscono con il confluire in un valore più generale, più ampio e probabilmente anche più ambiguo: la *concretezza*. Ciò che lo scrittore ricerca è una lingua concreta, una lingua cioè che abbia la possibilità di fornire al lettore una «realtà fantastica», ovvero un fantastico credibile. Insomma, il compito dello scrittore è per Calvino quello di trasportare il lettore nell'ambito del "fantastico", fornendo a questo territorio una concretezza e quindi una credibilità pari ad un altro "livello" di realtà, per usare un'espressione dell'autore.

Dall'analisi che proponiamo nelle pagine che seguono, emerge infatti che egli avesse ben chiara l'esistenza di un "territorio del fantastico" (o meglio di un territorio della lettura fantastica) ben delimitato, con dei confini precisi, con delle regole interne esatte. La sua attività di scrittore – Calvino parla spesso nei suoi saggi degli studi sul fantastico nell'ambito della critica letteraria (un nome per tutti Todorov) e della sua passione per il fantastico noir di autori come Poe e Hoffmann⁵ – lo vide impegnato nella definizione di questo territorio, dei confini o meglio dei contorni che caratterizzano il profilo della let-

³ *Fiabe italiane raccolte dalla tradizione popolare durante gli ultimi cento anni e trascritte in lingua dai vari dialetti da Italo Calvino*, Torino, Einaudi, 1956.

⁴ LA.

⁵ Si veda in particolare *Introduzione a Racconti fantastici dell'Ottocento*, Vol. I, Milano, Mondadori, 1983.

teratura fantastica. Ricerca che lo interessò sia come studioso e come curatore di opere classiche (si ricorda che una delle attività che tenne occupato Calvino, sin da giovane, nella casa editrice Einaudi fu quella di ripensare, per riproporli al pubblico, alcuni classici della letteratura)⁶ sia come narratore.

1.2. *Calvino e l'editoria per ragazzi*. È proprio in virtù di questo complesso percorso letterario che Italo Calvino, da scrittore geniale e raffinato quale era, è riuscito a diffondersi tra il pubblico di giovani e giovanissimi. Insomma, Calvino è divenuto “suo malgrado” uno scrittore per l'infanzia e l'adolescenza. D'altra parte, sia dalle sue opere saggistiche che da quelle narrative, emerge la tesi secondo la quale è il pubblico a scegliere i libri, non è l'autore a costruirsi il suo pubblico. Infatti, per Calvino il pubblico è indeterminato⁷.

A facilitare l'accesso di alcune opere dello scrittore presso il giovane pub-

⁶ Calvino arrivò ad Einaudi nel 1947 come responsabile dell'ufficio stampa e pubblicità. In seguito divenne dirigente e successivamente consulente editoriale. Uno dei suoi compiti era proprio quello di scegliere e selezionare opere edite ed inedite da ripubblicare o pubblicare. Rispetto al ruolo ricoperto dallo scrittore all'interno della società editoriale torinese, si veda la *Cronologia*, a cura di M. Barengghi e B. Falcetto, presente in I. Calvino, *Romanzi e racconti*, Vol. I, Milano, Mondadori, 1991 (I Meridiani), e E. Ferrero, *I migliori anni della nostra vita*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 2005.

⁷ La questione della “indeterminatezza del pubblico” rappresenta un nodo importante all'interno della produzione di Calvino. Nel saggio *Per chi si scrive? (Lo scaffale ipotetico)* – pubblicato per la prima volta su «Rinascita» (n. 46, 24 novembre 1967) – lo scrittore ci dice: «Che fa il libraio che sa vendere? Dice: Lei ha letto questo libro? Bene, allora deve prendere anche questo. Non dissimile è il gesto – immaginario e inconscio – dello scrittore verso il lettore invisibile. Con la differenza che lo scrittore non può proporsi soltanto per la soddisfazione del lettore [...]; ma deve presupporre un lettore che ancora non esiste, o un cambiamento nel lettore qual è oggi. [...] A noi però interessa un'altra possibilità della letteratura: quella di mettere in discussione la scala dei valori e il codice dei significati stabiliti». Qualche riga più avanti ribadisce: «L'operazione di uno scrittore è tanto più importante quanto più lo scaffale ideale in cui vorrebbe situarsi è uno scaffale ancora improbabile». La questione del pubblico in questo scrittore non è solo legata alla fruizione, alla recettività delle opere da parte dei lettori. La concezione di pubblico per Calvino è strettamente legata alla ricerca attorno agli strumenti della narrazione. Per l'autore il pubblico, a cui ogni scrittore pensa quando scrive, non solo è “indeterminato” nel senso in cui abbiamo detto, ma è anche un “pubblico ideale”. Il lettore diventa cioè un soggetto importante nella narrazione, al punto da trasformarsi esso stesso in un ingrediente del racconto. Viene immaginato, costruito quasi come un personaggio del racconto, un occhio esterno che condiziona tutta la narrazione. Non è un caso che Calvino usi molto spesso nelle sue opere l'espedito della metanarrazione. Ovvero fa comparire nel corso delle sue storie la mano dell'autore che mostra al lettore l'artificio della scrittura, i trucchi del mestiere insomma. Significativo è *Se una notte d'inverno un viaggiatore*, racconto esemplare rispetto al tema scrittore-lettore. Ma l'autore porta la questione del rapporto scrittore-lettore anche all'interno dei suoi scritti di narrativa. Nel *Cavaliere inesistente*, ad esempio, abbiamo una narratrice-scrittrice della storia che stiamo leggendo, che è Suor Teodora-Bradamante. Bradamante, si scoprirà alla fine del racconto, è personaggio della storia e allo stesso tempo narratrice. Nel *Barone rampante* è il fratello del protagonista, Cosimo Piovasco di Rondò, a consegnare la storia ad un quaderno.

blico fu un evento preciso: l'inserimento delle sue opere in collane di libri per ragazzi e in edizioni scolastiche. Le scelte dell'editore furono sicuramente, come avviene quasi sempre in questi casi, dettate dal mercato librario. Ma di certo furono suggerite dal riconoscimento all'interno dei racconti di un elemento "fiabesco". Elemento che riguardava non solo la struttura e i contenuti dei suoi romanzi, ma anche e soprattutto la ricerca stilistica. Sono note le parole di Cesare Pavese all'uscita del *Sentiero dei nidi di ragno*. Lo scrittore, amico e "guida" (fu il primo a cui Calvino sottopose i suoi manoscritti), parlò del racconto sulla Resistenza in termini che, rivisti alla luce del presente, risultano sorprendenti e significativi: «Forma fiabesca e avventurosa, di quell'avventuroso che si dà come esperienza fantastica di tutti i ragazzi».

A confermare il successo di Calvino tra bambini e adolescenti è anche l'interessante corrispondenza che lo scrittore tenne con le classi di scuole elementari e medie tra gli anni Sessanta e gli anni Ottanta. Si tratta sia di lettere, elaborati, analisi sul testo, commenti, varianti poetiche sulle opere dello scrittore realizzate dai ragazzi, sia delle risposte attente dell'autore. Il tutto, per la gran parte inedito, è conservato presso l'Archivio storico della casa editrice Einaudi a Torino, creato da Roberto Cerati, attuale presidente della casa editrice. Calvino, ci ha rivelato lo stesso Cerati, conservava con gran cura il materiale, era un "basso" della sua scrivania, e sembra avesse in mente, anche se il progetto non si realizzò mai, di ordinare gli scritti dei ragazzi e di ricavarne un libro. Le lettere e i lavori degli alunni, alcuni realizzati con grande cura, rappresentano uno spaccato interessante per comprendere la fruizione, seppur mediata dall'istituzione scolastica, delle opere di Calvino da parte di bambini e ragazzi. Le risposte dello scrittore d'altra parte – lettere in cui il tono è più serio e rigoroso del solito – ci mostrano l'attenzione e la consapevolezza con cui egli guardava al mondo dell'infanzia; un mondo interiore, ideale, ma anche un mondo concreto delle bambine e dei bambini che leggevano i suoi libri. Attenzione e consapevolezza che si ritrovano nei suoi racconti e che si tradussero in un elemento stilistico concreto: quello della ricerca di una lingua scattante, ritmica, limpida e precisa. La "lingua del fantastico".

2. Un originale codice letterario: lo stile calvino

Italo Calvino ha parlato molto di sé, della sua ricerca sullo stile, delle elaborazioni e delle riflessioni sulle tecniche del narrare, della sua idea di letteratura. Tutto questo, racchiuso in saggi, articoli, commenti, ha accompagnato passo passo la sua attività. Emblematiche, oltre che note, sono le *Lezioni americane*, che rappresentano una sorta di confessione dello scrittore dei propri "trucchi letterari". Come accade per molti personaggi del mondo letterario, in Calvino saggistica e narrativa si intrecciano in un modo tale che per compren-

dere la realtà complessiva della sua opera le due parti non possono non essere lette parallelamente.

Non possiamo insomma leggere il Calvino narratore senza leggere il Calvino saggista. La lettura parallela di questi due piani ci offre la possibilità di comprendere la complessità del narratore e del suo complesso approccio al mondo della letteratura. Se seguiamo questo percorso emerge non solo il profilo del narratore, ma anche la figura di un intellettuale di largo respiro, come sono stati alcuni protagonisti della storia culturale del nostro paese nell'immediato dopoguerra. Calvino, come alcuni suoi contemporanei, possedeva la capacità di oscillare con "agilità", di muoversi con "leggerezza", usando termini a lui cari, tra un piano e un altro del variegato mondo letterario e critico, senza soffermarsi e chiudersi pienamente in uno. Ovvero, la capacità di farsi leggero come il Mercuzio shakespeariano, la figura ideale a cui aveva dichiarato di voler somigliare⁸.

Della sua indole a muoversi tra un piano e un altro parla in un articolo Giulio Bollati: «Calvino non amava essere definito in modo preciso, con etichette che fissano un uomo a un ruolo. Era un marginale, un eccentrico per natura e per partito preso. Calvino era dappertutto, ma non era mai dove credevi di trovarlo»⁹. E nello stesso articolo, un po' più avanti, aggiunge e precisa: «Doveva spostarsi, cambiare aria, fuggiasco imprendibile»¹⁰.

È per questo che leggere Calvino significa leggere la sua intera opera letteraria, quella che comprende non solo la narrativa ma anche quella che testimonia la sua attività di editore, giornalista, commentatore, pensatore. Per leggere Calvino occorre, cioè, saltare un po' qua un po' là tra saggio e racconto.

Faremo quindi un'analisi delle caratteristiche stilistiche che l'autore ha preso in considerazione e definito nei suoi saggi per comprendere come esse sono state trasferite nei racconti. Insomma, leggeremo Calvino attraverso Calvino.

Prenderemo in esame in particolare alcune delle opere più diffuse tra il pubblico di bambini e ragazzi, opere appartenenti al decennio che va dagli anni Cinquanta agli anni Sessanta: *Il visconte dimezzato* (1952), *Il barone rampante* (1957), *Il cavaliere inesistente* (1959). Sono i racconti che, com'è noto, furono poi raccolti nella famosa trilogia *I Nostri Antenati*¹¹.

Non abbiamo preso in esame *Marcovaldo ovvero le stagioni in città*¹² principalmente per due ragioni. Innanzitutto per la genesi di quest'opera. *Marcovaldo* rappresenta in Calvino forse il caso esemplare di racconto nato per adul-

⁸ I. Calvino, in «The New York Times Book Review», LXXXIX, 49, December 2, 1984, p. 42. Risposta alla domanda: «What character in fiction or nonfiction would you most like to do?» (Quale personaggio, inventato o no, vi piacerebbe essere?); ora in I. Calvino, *Saggi 1945-1985*, Vol. II, a cura di M. Barenghi, Milano, Mondadori, 1995, p. 2911 (I Meridiani).

⁹ G. Bollati, *Calvino editore, in Calvino & l'editoria*, a cura di L. Clerici e B. Falcetto, Milano, Marcos Y Marcos, 1993, p. 1.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4

¹¹ I. Calvino, *I nostri antenati*, Torino, Einaudi, 1960.

¹² I. Calvino, *Marcovaldo ovvero le stagioni in città*, Torino, Einaudi, 1963 (Libri per ragazzi, 14).

ti ma proposto nella sua prima uscita in volume come un'opera per ragazzi. Le novelle di *Marcovaldo* nacquero infatti come racconti per l'«Unità», quindi il loro interlocutore non era sicuramente il pubblico di bambini. Però alcune di esse fecero la loro prima uscita su un giornale per bambini, «Il Corriere dei piccoli». In seguito la casa editrice Einaudi decise di raccogliere i racconti in volume realizzando un'edizione per ragazzi,

Insomma, *Marcovaldo* fece un percorso inverso rispetto ai racconti della trilogia: venne pubblicato per la prima volta come opera per ragazzi e solo successivamente come opera per adulti, ovvero per tutti. Per il discorso che intendiamo portare avanti è invece più interessante scoprire dal di dentro dei testi destinati a un pubblico non definito quali sono le ragioni per cui opere rivolte ad un pubblico adulto finiscono nelle mani dei ragazzi.

In secondo luogo, le novelle di *Marcovaldo* nascono in periodi diversi tra loro, ed è quindi difficile e complicato riconoscere la genesi ideale e letteraria di quest'opera. Probabilmente i racconti, prima di essere raccolti insieme, ebbero un'origine differente l'uno dall'altro, vennero pensati come novelle autonome, ed è quindi anche probabile che ognuna di esse avesse un diverso destinatario.

2.1. “*Dipinti di parole*”: *scrivere per immagini. La visibilità.* La visibilità è una delle caratteristiche letterarie su cui Calvino si sofferma maggiormente nei suoi saggi. Uno di questi è la nota *Introduzione* che egli realizzò per la raccolta *Racconti fantastici dell'Ottocento*. Ragionando del fantastico in letteratura e parlando degli scrittori più rappresentativi di questo filone letterario (da Hoffmann a Shelley, a Dickens, a Le Fanu), Calvino ci dice:

Il dato comune di tutti questi autori così diversi che ho nominato fin qui è di mettere in primo piano una suggestione visiva. E non è un caso; come dicevo all'inizio, il vero tema del racconto fantastico ottocentesco è la realtà di ciò che si vede; credere o non credere ad apparizioni fantasmagoriche, scorgere dietro l'apparenza quotidiana un altro mondo incantato o infernale. È come se più di ogni altro genere narrativo il racconto fantastico fosse tenuto a “dar da vedere”, a concretarsi in un seguito di immagini, ad affidare la sua forza di comunicazione al potere di suscitare “figure”. Non è tanto la maestria nella manipolazione della parola o nell'inseguire i lampeggiamenti di un pensiero astratto che conta, quanto l'evidenza di una scena complessa e insolita¹³.

Qui Calvino ci dice due cose fondamentali: il racconto fantastico è tale perché ha una sua realtà interna, una realtà credibile per il lettore; questa realtà è credibile perché è visibile, perché è rappresentata da una serie di immagini che danno vita ad una scena evidente, ad una «evidenza».

Il termine «evidenza» è particolarmente significativo per comprendere l'idea

¹³ I. Calvino, *Racconti fantastici dell'Ottocento* (1983), in MS, p. 204.

letteraria e lo stile letterario di Calvino. Lo ritroviamo nella relazione ad un convegno del 1978, pubblicata nella raccolta *Una pietra sopra* con il titolo *I livelli della realtà in letteratura*. Qui lo scrittore sostiene:

Col personaggio protagonista entra in gioco una soggettività interna al mondo scritto, una figura dotata di una sua evidenza – e spesso si tratta d'una evidenza visiva, iconica – che s'impone all'immaginazione del lettore e che funziona come dispositivo per collegare livelli diversi della realtà o addirittura per farli esistere, per permettere loro di prendere forma nella scrittura¹⁴.

Qui viene usato di nuovo il termine «evidenza», ma in questo contesto l'espressione assume un significato più articolato. L'autore ci dice che in letteratura, e in particolar modo nella letteratura fantastica, i personaggi hanno una vita a sé, autonoma, anzi l'esercizio letterario riesce proprio nel momento in cui lo scrittore sa far muovere con vita autonoma i personaggi del suo romanzo o del racconto, nel momento in cui scompare la sua mano, la sua presenza. Cioè, nel momento in cui si crea una «soggettività interna al mondo scritto», capace di emergere in rilievo, di divenire «evidenza». Ma che caratteristiche ha questa evidenza? È un'evidenza «iconica, visiva», sostiene di nuovo Calvino, nella quale lo scrittore è come il disegnatore che dà fisionomia e vita ai personaggi non facendo affatto sentire la sua presenza. Lo scrittore si nasconde dietro le quinte e semmai tira i fili invisibili dei suoi personaggi, in modo che essi appaiano sulla scena come abbandonati a se stessi, mossi da vita autonoma. Non a caso vengono portate come esempi alcune famose figure del mondo letterario, da Gulliver a Don Chisciotte. Di quest'ultimo dirà: «Don Chisciotte è un personaggio dotato d'una iconicità inconfondibile»¹⁵.

L'idea di scrittura per immagini è un tratto che si rintraccia in vari saggi dell'autore ed è uno dei temi spesso sottolineati dagli studiosi dell'opera di Calvino. Si ritrovano passi significativi nei saggi raccolti in *Mondo scritto e mondo non scritto*¹⁶ e nelle suggestive pagine delle *Lezioni americane sei proposte per il prossimo millennio*. Seguendo l'itinerario dell'autore, si comprende che egli arriva a parlare della scrittura per immagini attraverso la trattazione di una precisa e nota tecnica narrativa: la descrizione, ma una descrizione che crei quell'allucinazione caratteristica delle opere di Kafka.

«La vera sfida per uno scrittore – scrive infatti ad un certo punto Calvino nella conferenza *Mondo scritto mondo non scritto* tenuta alla New York Uni-

¹⁴ I. Calvino, *I livelli della realtà in letteratura*, in I. Calvino, *Una pietra sopra*, Milano, Mondadori, 1995, pp. 384-385.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 385.

¹⁶ I. Calvino, *Mondo scritto mondo non scritto*, in MS. Si tratta di un conferenza che Calvino tenne alla New York University come "James Lecture" all'Institute for the Humanities il 30 marzo 1983. Pubblicata per la prima volta con il titolo *The Written and the Unwritten World* su «The New York Review of Books», May 12, 1983, pp. 38-39, quindi in «Letteratura internazionale», II, 4-5, primavera-estate 1985, pp. 16-18.

versity nel 1983 – è parlare dell'intricato groviglio della nostra situazione usando un linguaggio che sembri tanto trasparente da creare un senso d'allucinazione, come è riuscito a fare Kafka»¹⁷. Ma cosa intende Calvino per linguaggio trasparente? Nella conferenza l'autore comincia una trattazione sulla descrizione, una sorta di «descrizione della descrizione», rifacendosi ad alcune esperienze della poesia del Novecento. Parla di una descrizione minuziosa, in cui poniamo «tutto il nostro amore per il dettaglio»¹⁸, una descrizione capace di rendere il linguaggio così trasparente, quasi allucinatorio da mostrare cose, oggetti presi dal mondo reale ma lontanissimi «da ogni immagine umana»¹⁹. L'oggetto descritto diviene cioè qualcosa di assolutamente *lontano* dalla realtà del mondo non scritto, ma entra a far parte del mondo assolutamente *vicino* del mondo del «fantastico».

Calvino dichiara esplicitamente di non essere un buon osservatore, di non ricordare ciò che del mondo osserva. La soluzione, scrive, è osservare e descrivere allo stesso tempo. A proposito di *Palomar* dichiara: «Cerco di fare in modo che la descrizione diventi racconto, pur restando descrizione»²⁰. Insomma, Calvino sembra dirci: sto raccontando il mondo, ma vi sto dicendo qualcosa che è molto lontano dal mondo, qualcosa che è poi non altro che il «fantastico». E scrivere descrivendo non è altro che scrivere per immagini. Ma non immagini che siano fotografie, istantanee del mondo reale. La descrizione di Calvino sembra somigliare ad un dipinto di parole. Le immagini sono qualcosa che già si allontanano dal mondo, sono dipinte e descritte così minuziosamente da risultare assolutamente irreali, ovvero fantastiche. Somigliano a delle immagini interne, mentali. È per questo che la descrizione non è descrizione dell'oggetto reale, nasce nel momento stesso in cui scriviamo e diventa racconto. Si parte dal mondo non scritto, dal quotidiano, dall'esistente – perché è da lì che nasce l'urgenza dello scrittore – ma si approda al «fantastico», a quel fantastico che poi è l'idea di letteratura che propone Calvino.

È emblematico in questo senso ciò che lo scrittore dice di Giacomo Leopardi nelle *Lezioni americane*. Nella lezione dedicata alla qualità letteraria dell'esattezza ci dice che Leopardi riesce a raggiungere la vaghezza e l'indeterminatezza attraverso una precisione estrema delle sue immagini. Quella di Leopardi, scrive, è «una attenzione estremamente precisa e meticolosa che egli esige nella composizione di ogni immagine, nella definizione minuziosa dei dettagli, nella scelta degli oggetti, dell'illuminazione, dell'atmosfera, per raggiungere la vaghezza desiderata»²¹.

La questione dell'evidenza, dell'iconicità della scrittura, della soggettività

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

²¹ LA, pp. 60-61.

interna al racconto fantastico ritorna anche nell'intervento dedicato a *I livelli della realtà in letteratura*. L'evidenza di una scena letteraria, ci dice lo scrittore in questo intervento, riesce a mostrarsi perché prevede l'assenza della mano dello scrittore. La «soggettività interna al mondo scritto» è proprio questo, è un'assenza dell'autore che scrive, oppure una presenza così forte (si pensi alla tecnica della descrizione di cui parla Calvino) da risultare annullata. La forza, la vita di un testo letterario non è data né dal suo riferimento alla realtà esterna, né dalla sua credibilità come fatto storico. È data da una credibilità «interna alla lettura», da quella che Coleridge, spiega l'autore, chiamava «suspension of disbelief», sospensione dell'incredulità. «Questa *suspension of disbelief* – scrive Calvino – è la condizione di riuscita d'ogni invenzione letteraria, anche se essa si situa dichiaratamente nel regno del meraviglioso e dell'incredibile»²². Una sospensione dell'incredulità che nasce dalla fuoriuscita del lettore dal mondo non scritto per approdare al mondo del fantastico in cui l'incredibile ha una sua realtà interna. È un incredibile, insomma, che non è tale perché ha un rapporto di referenza, di rimando al mondo non scritto. È un incredibile che può essere creduto proprio perché nasce in un'altra dimensione, nella dimensione del raccontare.

A) *Il gusto per il dettaglio*. Per rendere più chiaro il nostro discorso è utile qualche esemplificazione basata sulle opere narrative. Personaggi, figure “evidenti”, che si possono vedere. Sospensione della credulità, ovvero creazione, attraverso una “descrizione” minuziosa, di situazioni che possono essere considerate credibili, ovvero possono avere senso, solo all'interno del mondo fantastico in cui ci si immerge nel corso della lettura. Sono questi i due aspetti fondamentali di ciò che Calvino intende per visibilità, sono questi due degli elementi centrali della sua scrittura per immagini.

Partiamo dal *Visconte dimezzato*, cronologicamente il primo dei racconti della trilogia. Nella prima parte del racconto, per mostrare l'atmosfera di sera, dopo una battaglia negli accampamenti dei cristiani, in cui il Visconte di Teralba si aggira in attesa della battaglia del giorno dopo, Calvino racconta:

Era il tramonto, e davanti a ogni tenda i soldati erano seduti coi piedi scalzi immersi in acqua tiepida. Soliti com'erano a improvvisi allarmi notti e giorno, anche nell'ora del pediluvio tenevano l'elmo in testa e la picca stretta in pugno²³.

Al di là dell'ironia, qui l'autore mette in atto la sua passione per il dettaglio in modo da darci tutti gli elementi per immaginare, vedere questi soldati. L'acqua in cui hanno messo i piedi, precisa, è acqua tiepida, proprio come si fa un pediluvio vero. I piedi sono scalzi, sottolinea, non tanto per essere ridondante

²² I. Calvino, *I livelli di realtà in letteratura*, in I. Calvino, *Una pietra sopra*, p. 378.

²³ VD, p. 9.

ma quasi per farci vedere tra la trasparenza dell'acqua i piedi di questi personaggi. Seduti davanti alle tende, piedi in acqua, elmo in testa e picca stretta in pugno: sembra vederli questi soldati. Sembra di vederli in tutta la loro tragica comicità. Una comicità data dall'elemento del contrasto che Calvino inserisce spesso nella descrizione delle sue figure: soldati con i piedi scalzi ma con l'elmo in testa e la picca in mano. Si riescono a vedere non solo perché vengono presentati come delle icone, ma anche perché riusciamo addirittura a sentire la temperatura dell'acqua, acqua tiepida. Prendiamo quindi contatto con queste figure non solo attraverso la vista, non è una questione legata ad un unico senso, ma attraverso una possibile percezione sensoriale ad ampio raggio.

Un altro chiaro esempio della cura per il dettaglio, lo ritroviamo nel punto in cui lo scrittore ci descrive il "panorama" alla fine di una battaglia tra turchi e cristiani.

Galoppando avanti, – scrive – videro che i caduti dell'ultima battaglia erano stati quasi tutti rimossi e seppelliti. Solo se ne scopriva qualche sparso membro, specialmente dita, posato sulle stoppie²⁴.

Con poche parole l'autore tiene a dirci tutto, a dirci che quelle membra sono soprattutto dita, che giacciono non su una superficie qualunque, ma sulle stoppie. Le stoppie esistono davvero, distese di stoppie ci tornano facilmente alla mente, appartengono ad un paesaggio familiare che fa parte del nostro immaginario. Queste dita su un campo deserto, fatto di stoppie, che giacciono insieme a qualche altro membro sembra di vederle, pur sapendo che la situazione ha dell'incredibile, che dopo una battaglia non ci capiterà mai di incontrare delle dita così ben definite sul terreno. Lo stesso vale per la polvere da sparo, che ovviamente è impossibile recuperare se mescolata con la terra.

Le situazioni, i personaggi che Calvino presenta sono eccessivi, impossibili, e per questo ironici, ma l'autore riesce a renderli concreti, visibili, grazie alla sua capacità di descriverli nel dettaglio. Per farci vedere il padiglione dell'imperatore alle prese con strategie, lo scrittore ci dice:

I tavoli erano ingombri di carte srotolate e l'imperatore vi piantava degli spilli, traendoli da un cuscinetto puntaspilli che uno dei marescialli gli porgeva. Le carte erano ormai tanto cariche di spilli che non ci si capiva più niente²⁵.

La situazione è descritta nei dettagli: le carte «srotolate» (e usando questo termine ci vengono mostrati i papiri con i lembi all'insù che giacciono sul tavolo come se volessero arrotolarsi da un momento all'altro), gli spilli, il cuscinetto puntaspilli che il maresciallo porge all'imperatore e le carte cariche di spilli.

Prendendo in considerazione questi passi capiamo cosa Calvino intendeva

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

per scrittura precisa e concreta. Precisa, perché nulla è lasciato alla nostra immaginazione, ogni aspetto è descritto minuziosamente. Concreta perché è una scrittura che dà origine a situazioni incredibili pur partendo da elementi semplici, realissimi, ovvero concreti: dalle stoppie all'acqua tiepida per i pediluvii, agli spilli, alle carte sparse, al puntaspilli, alla polvere da sparo... Ciò che rende la situazione fantastica, ciò che mette in moto l'immaginazione è il modo con cui questi elementi si fondono. Elementi reali si fondono in una situazione paradossale, in-credibile.

Sempre nel *Visconte dimezzato*, Calvino presenta i turchi in questo modo: «Coi cavalli intabarrati, il piccolo scudo tondo, di cuoio, la veste a righe nere e zafferano». E il turbante, la faccia color ocra e i baffi, come uno che a Terralba era chiamato «Miché il turco. [...] Le facce erano cotte e cocciute come contadini»²⁶. Nel pieno della battaglia, lo scrittore ci tiene a dire che i turchi avevano una veste a righe nere e zafferano – non gialla, o giallo scura, ma zafferano – e un piccolo scudo, di cuoio nello specifico. Anche qui i turchi diventano delle icone.

O ancora quando ci descrive l'immagine dell'ospedale di campo:

In terra c'era una lunga fila delle barelle con dentro quegli sventurati, e tutt'intorno imperversavano i dottori, strappandosi di mano pinze, seghe, aghi, arti amputati e gomiti di spago. Morto per morto a ogni cadavere facevan di tutto per farlo tornar vivo. Segna qui, cucila, tampona falle, rovesciavano le vene come guanti, e le rimettevano al suo posto, con dentro più spago che sangue, ma rattoppate e chiuse. Quando un paziente moriva, tutto quello che aveva di buono serviva a racconciare le membra di un altro, e così via. La cosa che imbrogliava di più erano gli intestini: una volta srotolati non si sapeva più come rimetterli²⁷.

L'immagine è abbastanza raccapricciante. Ma ciò che colpisce è anche qui la cura del dettaglio, che ovviamente in un contesto del genere diventa paradossale e quindi comica. L'immagine degli intestini che, srotolati, non si sa come infilarli è esilarante.

È importante citare un altro esempio di scrittura precisa e descrittiva. Facendo parlare in prima persona il narratore del racconto, che anche qui, come abbiamo già detto, è un bambino (ovvero il nipote del Visconte), dice: «Quelli per me erano tempi felici, sempre per i boschi col dottor Trelawney cercando gusci d'animali marini diventati pietre»²⁸. A parte l'omaggio a Stevenson (Trelawney è il nome di un personaggio dell'*Isola del tesoro*), il nostro avrebbe potuto benissimo utilizzare il termine "fossile", invece, quasi per una repulsione per l'astrazione, scompone il termine in modo analitico: «gusci d'animali marini diventati pietre». Una repulsione che lo porta a descrivere nel dettaglio ciò di cui sta parlando al lettore. E così facendo usa un'espressione che si potrebbe utilizzare quando si parla

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

ad un bambino, per spiegare ad un bambino cos'è un fossile. Ma è anche l'espressione che userebbe un bambino se si trovasse davanti ad un fossile. Vediamo come l'amore per la descrizione, per la concretezza avvicina Calvino al mondo dell'infanzia. Non perché Calvino si fosse posto il problema di rendersi più leggibile per un pubblico di bambini e ragazzi; *Il visconte dimezzato* non nasce per un pubblico di quell'età. Al contrario sembra che Calvino abbracci la passione per la concretezza dell'età dell'infanzia, dell'immaginazione, del modo di guardare le cose dell'infanzia, e li riporti nel suo modo di raccontare, nel suo modo di usare la lingua. È in questo senso che all'inizio del lavoro abbiamo parlato di Calvino come uno "scrittore dell'infanzia". L'autore ha tematizzato l'infanzia in quanto ha riportato lo sguardo del bambino nel suo raccontare e in quanto ha riprodotto quel «piacere delle letture infantili» che lo accompagna sin dalla sua fanciullezza. Riproduce cioè quella "concretezza" che lo scrittore rintraccia in *Pinocchio*, in quell'immagine dell'«Omino di burro che guida nella notte il carro silenzioso, dalle ruote fasciate di stoppa e di cenci, tirato da dodici pariglie di ciuchini calzati di stivaletti... »²⁹. Una concretezza che dà alle «apparizioni» di Collodi una forza visiva «tale da non poter essere più dimenticata»³⁰.

Il visconte dimezzato è forse l'opera in cui maggiormente Calvino ha sperimentato la tecnica narrativa della descrizione e della precisione così come l'abbiamo delineata. Non è un caso che di lì a poco venga definito il progetto delle *Fiabe italiane* in cui egli ha ampiamente dato spazio alla visibilità e alla concretezza della scrittura. E *Il visconte dimezzato* è probabilmente, proprio per queste caratteristiche, il racconto più vicino al genere della fiaba tra le opere di narrativa dello scrittore. Nel *Barone rampante* e nel *Cavaliere inesistente* lo stile si fa più dilatato e meno omogeneamente asciutto di quanto non lo sia nel *Visconte*.

Ma andiamo con ordine. Nel *Barone rampante*, che vede la luce nel 1957, continua a emergere l'attenzione per il dettaglio e comincia a prendere piede quella scrittura trasparente, quasi allucinatoria, di cui Calvino parla nelle *Lezioni americane*. Seguiamo questo passo del racconto:

Venne l'inverno. Cosimo si fece un giubbotto di pelliccia. Lo cucì da sé con pezzi di pelli di varie bestie da lui cacciate: lepri, volpi, martore e furetti. In testa portava sempre quel berretto di gatto selvatico. Si fece anche delle brache, di pelo di capra col fondo e le ginocchia di cuoio. In quanto a scarpe, capì finalmente che per gli alberi la cosa migliore erano le pantofole, e se ne fece un paio non so con che pelle, forse tasso. [...] Per la notte Cosimo aveva trovato il sistema dell'otre di pelo; non più tende o capanne: un otre col pelo dalla parte di dentro, appeso a un ramo. Ci si calava dentro, ci spariva tutto e s'addormentava rannicchiato come un bambino³¹.

Assistiamo a due modi diversi di usare la descrizione. Nella prima parte del passo la descrizione del giubbotto di Cosimo sembra più vicino ad una tas-

²⁹ I. Calvino, *Il fantastico nella letteratura italiana*, in MS, p. 230.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ BR, p. 86.

sonomia che ad una descrizione di un oggetto concreto³². Nella seconda parte del primo passo citato, invece, quando lo scrittore descrive il «giaciglio» notturno di Cosimo ricompare la cura per il dettaglio. Il motivo probabilmente sta nel fatto che in questa parte Calvino ci descrive in modo preciso qualcosa di “incredibile”, impossibile nella realtà. Ritorna cioè il binomio incredibile-concreto che porta alla già menzionata *suspension of disbelief*. Un otre appeso ad un ramo in cui Cosimo di notte ci sparisce dentro ha dell’incredibile. Mentre viene descritto ci par di vedere il sorriso scettico e sornione dello scrittore che, con faccia tosta o ormai lanciato nella sua idea, ce lo descrive precisamente: è un otre di pelo dalla parte di dentro, in cui Cosimo si rannicchia come un bambino. Grazie al binomio incredibile-concreto l’immagine diventa «iconicamente inconfondibile», la possiamo vedere, tanto da portare la mente ad un nido di uccelli penzolante o al ventre materno. E questo impatto visivo ci fa comprendere la forte poeticità dell’immagine.

È visivamente inconfondibile anche l’immagine di Cosimo che sale sull’albero per restarci per sempre, in rivolta contro le regole dei genitori:

Cosimo salì fino alla forcella d’un grosso ramo dove poteva stare comodo, e si sedette lì, a gambe penzoloni, a braccia incrociate con le mani sotto le ascelle, la testa insaccata nelle spalle, il tricorno calato sulla fronte³³.

Così come lo scrittore ci parla della visione del mondo che si apre agli occhi di Cosimo che decide di vivere tra le piante:

Cosimo guardava il mondo dall’albero: ogni cosa vista di lassù, era diversa, e questo era già un divertimento. Il viale aveva tutt’un’altra prospettiva, e le aie, le ortensie, le camelie, il tavolino di ferro per prendere il caffè in giardino. Più in là le chiome degli alberi si sfittivano e l’ortaglia digradava in piccoli campi a scala, sostenuti da muri di pietre; il dosso era scuro di oliveti, e, dietro, l’abitato di Ombrosa sporgeva i suoi tetti di mattone sbiadito e ardesia, e ne spuntavano pennoni di bastimenti, là dove sotto c’era il porto. In fondo si stendeva il mare, alto d’orizzonte, ed un lento veliero vi passava³⁴.

Quest’ultima immagine sembra effettivamente la descrizione di un dipinto: l’orizzonte del mare era alto, precisa l’autore, e un veliero vi passava lento, come a comunicare la sensazione di calma del panorama. Non poteva esser descritta meglio la prospettiva di Cosimo dall’alto.

Della stessa precisione è la descrizione dell’«animo tristo» della sorella di

³² Come la presentazione qualche pagina prima delle varie specie di alberi che Cosimo incontra nella sua vita tra le piante: «Cosimo stava volentieri tra le ondulate foglie dei lecci [...] e ne amava la screpolata corteccia, di cui quand’era soprapensiero sollevava i quadrelli con le dita, non per istinto di far male, ma come d’aiutare l’albero nella sua fatica a rifarsi. O anche desquamava la bianca corteccia dei platani, scoprendo strati di vecchi oro muffito. Amava anche i tronchi bugnati come ha l’olmo».

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

Cosimo, Battista. Anche qui Calvino dà vita ad un'immagine raccapricciante pari a quella delle operazioni per mettere in sesto i soldati nel *Visconte dimezzato*.

Era bravissima nel cucinare, perché non le mancava né la diligenza né la fantasia, doti prime d'ogni cuoca, ma dove metteva le mani lei non si sapeva che sorprese mai potessero arrivarci in tavola: certi crostini di paté, aveva preparato una volta, finissimi a dire il vero, di fegato di topo [...]; per non dire delle zampe di cavalletta, quelle di dietro, dure e seghettate, messe a mosaico su una torta³⁵.

Anche qui come nella descrizione, quasi tassonomica, degli alberi su cui Cosimo vive si dà libero sfogo alla sua passione per l'elenco scientifico. Ciò che caratterizza questi elenchi è forse proprio il loro essere immobili. Pur essendo delle descrizioni, non contengono l'elemento del movimento che invece rende più vive, visibili e concrete, le altre descrizioni che abbiamo citato. Qui si sconfinava, cioè, nel terreno dell'astrazione.

Quando giungiamo al *Cavaliere inesistente* l'esattezza, la precisione sembra esser diventata protagonista, oggetto del racconto. Siamo infatti quasi al racconto filosofico, anche se Calvino sembra rifiutare questa definizione per i suoi racconti³⁶. Siamo però sicuramente di fronte ad un racconto altamente simbolico. Partiamo, per rintracciare l'uso della descrizione, proprio dalla presentazione del cavaliere:

Il re era giunto di fronte a un cavaliere dall'armatura tutta bianca; solo una righina nera correva torno torno ai bordi; per il resto era candida, ben tenuta, senza un graffio, ben rifinita in ogni giunto, sormontata sull'elmo da un pennacchio di chissà che razza orientale di gallo, cangiante d'ogni colore dell'iride. Sullo scudo c'era disegnato uno stemma tra due lembi d'un ampio manto drappeggiato, e dentro lo stemma s'aprivano altri due lembi di manto con in mezzo uno stemma più piccolo, che conteneva un altro stemma ammantato più piccolo ancora³⁷.

La luminosità, la lucentezza splendente dell'armatura del cavaliere spicca fortemente in quel paesaggio di guerra polveroso, sporco. Sembra davvero di poterla vedere, vera e concreta, pur essendo mossa dal niente.

Un'altra immagine del cavaliere carica di visibilità è quella creata nel momento in cui egli, dopo aver dato prova della sua precisione nel tiro con l'arco a Bradamante, a Rambaldo e agli altri paladini, si allontana.

Stringeva nelle mani di ferro l'arco ancora tremante; – ci racconta Calvino – poi lo lasciava cadere; si raccoglieva dentro il mantello, tenendolo chiuso con i pugni sul pettorale della corazza; e così si allontanava. [...] Agilulfo era già lontano e non si voltava; il cimie-

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³⁶ Cfr. I. Calvino, *Il barone rampante*, Prefazione, Letture per la scuola media, Torino, Einaudi, 1965.

³⁷ *CI*, p. 5.

ro iridescente era piegato avanti come camminasse chino, a pugni stretti sul pettorale, trascinando il nero mantello³⁸.

La cura del dettaglio si esprime nella descrizione di ogni movimento del cavaliere. Ma la descrizione precisa dell'autore si unisce ai gesti precisi e netti del personaggio (i pugni chiusi e stretti sul pettorale e altri gesti sembrano davvero quelli di una macchina). Si comprende così cosa intendesse Calvino quando nei suoi scritti saggistici parlava del rapporto tra "io scrivo" e personaggi creati. Si tratta di un rapporto dialettico, circolare, in cui l'una parte mostra l'altra al lettore. L'iconicità del personaggio esiste perché c'è un narratore che lo descrive, come fosse uno spettatore davanti a un personaggio che si muove. Dall'altra parte i movimenti – nel caso del *Cavaliere inesistente* movimenti precisi e netti – esistono perché c'è un io scrivo che li ha generati. L'uso della descrizione e la "visibilità" contenuta in questi racconti mostrano al lettore questa circolarità, è come se lo facessero partecipe dei trucchi dello scrittore, dei trucchi del mestiere del saper scrivere.

Ecco infine la descrizione precisa dell'"abbigliamento" dei paladini: «Molti dei guerrieri erano chiusi nell'elmo e nella corazza fino alla cintola e sotto i fiancali e il guardareni spuntavano le gambe in brache e calze, perché cosciali e gamberuoli e ginocchiere si aspettavano a metterli quando si era in sella»³⁹.

B) La similitudine. Un aspetto fondamentale dello stile e della lingua di Italo Calvino è l'uso della similitudine. Lo scrittore fa un uso frequente nelle opere che stiamo analizzando di questa figura retorica, che fornisce, insieme alla descrizione, concretezza alle immagini create.

Occorre però specificare che l'uso della similitudine diventa più frequente e significativo nelle opere che appartengono alla fine degli anni Cinquanta. Sembra che la scrittura di Calvino in questi ultimi anni cominci a subire un'evoluzione che andrà avanti fino alle opere tarde. Sembra cioè che la ricerca della concretezza della lingua, come l'autore l'aveva sin da allora tematizzata, cominci a lasciar posto a una nuova poetica. La semplicità del raccontare, la rapidità degli accadimenti, che hanno caratterizzato *Il visconte dimezzato*, cominciano ad assumere un'altra natura o addirittura ad essere in parte abbandonati nel *Cavaliere inesistente*. La similitudine è infatti in parte una tecnica che complica la narrazione, inserisce delle difficoltà nella lingua. Ciò non vuol dire che Calvino non cerchi più la concretezza della lingua, l'obiettivo principale è ancora quello di dar vita a una lingua viva, capace di mostrare nei dettagli al lettore ciò che sta leggendo.

Prendiamo ad esempio questo passo del *Cavaliere inesistente*:

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

Attorno all'imperatore facevano gruppo i paladini, frenando per il morso gli impetuosi cavalli; e in quel caracollare e dar di gomito i loro argentei scudi s'alzavano e s'abbassavano *come branchie d'un pesce*. A un lungo pesce tutte scaglie somigliava l'esercito: a un'anguilla⁴⁰.

Dire che gli scudi in fila e in movimento dei soldati di Carlo Magno sembrano le branchie di un pesce, significa dare concretezza, verrebbe da chiedersi? Gli scudi come branchie dovrebbero far allontanare dalla credibilità l'immagine creata, verrebbe da rispondere. In realtà, proprio quel contrasto tra incredibile e concreto (incredibile che gli scudi siano branchie, ma concrete e visibili sono le branchie d'un pesce), dà luogo alla credibilità, ovvero alla visibilità di ciò che si sta raccontando. Ciò mostra come la similitudine, pur interrompendo le descrizioni meccaniche degli accadimenti, contribuisca a render visibili le immagini create dallo scrittore. Rappresenta cioè un elemento stilistico strettamente legato alla descrizione stessa.

Qualche pagina prima Calvino utilizza un'altra similitudine per rendere l'esercito visibile alla mente del lettore. Questa volta la vicinanza è con un campo di grano mosso dal vento: «La tromba suona il segnale del "rompete le righe". Ci fu il solito sbandarsi di cavalli, e il gran bosco delle lance si piegò, si mosse a onde *come un campo di grano quando passa il vento*»⁴¹. Usa la similitudine anche quando descrive l'aspetto dei paladini sotto l'armatura:

Le gambe, sotto a quel torace d'acciaio, parevano più sottili, *come zampe di grillo*; e il modo che essi avevano di muovere, parlando, le teste rotonde e senz'occhi, e anche di tener ripiegate le braccia ingombre di cubitiere e paramani era da grillo o da formica; e così tutto il loro affaccendarsi pareva un indistinto zampettio d'insetti⁴².

Guerrieri come insetti.

Indimenticabile è poi l'immagine di Gurdulù che dorme, satollo di zuppa: «Steso nell'erba, russava a bocca aperta, e petto stomaco e ventre s'alzavano e abbassavano *come il mantice d'un fabbro*»⁴³. Oppure per descrivere la forza e la rigidità dei nemici di Carlo Magno scriverà: «saracino duro *come un baccalà*».

Nel *Visconte dimezzato* l'uso della similitudine ha la funzione di conferire forza alle immagini.

Dall'alto della sella, il luogotenente Medardo – scrive Calvino – contemplava l'ampiezza dello schieramento cristiano, pronto per l'attacco, e protendeva il viso al vento di Boemia, che *sollevava l'odor di pula come da un'aia polverosa*⁴⁴.

O ancora:

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 22, corsivo nostro.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7, corsivo nostro.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 18, corsivo nostro.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 29, corsivo nostro.

⁴⁴ VD, p. 13, corsivo nostro.

Il mantello di mio zio ondeggiò, e il vento lo gonfiava come una vela e si sarebbe detto che gli attraversasse il corpo, anzi, che questo corpo non ci fosse affatto, e il mantello fosse vuoto come quello d'un fantasma⁴⁵.

Emblematica è anche la descrizione relativa alla visione del padre Aiolfo del Visconte che muore in compagnia dei suoi uccelli:

La mattina dopo, la balia, affacciandosi all'uccelliera, vide che il visconte Aiolfo era morto. Gli uccelli erano posati sul suo letto, come su un tronco galleggiante in mezzo al mare⁴⁶.

O ancora il dottor Trelawney che «aveva un viso rugoso come una castagna secca» e le sue gambe «che le uose inguainavano fino a mezza coscia, sembravano più lunghe, sproporzionate come quelle d'un grillo, anche per via dei lunghi passi che faceva»⁴⁷.

Per “far vedere” l'agilità del cavallo del Visconte cattivo Calvinò ci dice «che saltava per le rocce come fosse un figlio di capra»⁴⁸. E per descrivere il volto del lebbroso scrive: «Aveva il viso tutto scaglioso come una scorza secca»⁴⁹. Infine, la similitudine forse più bella inserita dallo scrittore in questo racconto. Quando descrive l'attesa del duello tra le due metà del Visconte, quella buona e quella cattiva, e ci dice che la natura si rivolge tutta contro se stessa, così come l'uomo s'avventa contro di sé, usa un'espressione che ci mostra tutta la tensione del momento: «Il lebbroso soffiò il corno: era il segnale; il cielo vibrò come una membrana tesa»⁵⁰.

L'uso della similitudine è presente anche nel *Barone rampante*, sebbene questo sia essenzialmente il romanzo del “movimento”, dell'immagine in movimento. La dinamicità delle immagini, come vedremo nei paragrafi successivi, è infatti forse la caratteristica stilistica centrale di questo romanzo di Calvinò. La similitudine ha nel *Barone rampante* più la funzione di rafforzare l'aspetto ironico e grottesco delle situazioni che si vanno delineando più che amplificare la visibilità delle immagini. Ad esempio parlando dell'Abate Fauchelafleur, l'abate a cui è stato consegnato il compito di curare la formazione e l'educazione di Cosimo, lo scrittore per mostrare l'inadeguatezza e la rigidità di questo personaggio scrive: «Se n'andava a zonzo col breviario aperto davanti, ma con lo sguardo fisso nel vuoto come una gallina»⁵¹.

Ecco altri esempi. Parlando del gruppo di bambini, ladruncoli di frutta, a cui Cosimo bambino avrebbe voluto somigliare: «Gli uomini con le forche, che credevano ormai d'avere in mano i ladri di frutta, se li videro scappare per l'a-

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 22, corsivo nostro.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 25, corsivo nostro.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 36, corsivo nostro.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 37, corsivo nostro.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 68, corsivo nostro.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 107, corsivo nostro.

⁵¹ BR, p. 9, corsivo nostro.

ria come uccelli»⁵². E ancora per descrivere il modo di far stizza di Cosimo agli stessi ladri di frutta Calvino dice: «Mio fratello ora prendeva a una a una le ciliegie del tricorno e le portava alla bocca come fossero candidi»⁵³.

Parlando invece di Viola, la bambina di cui Cosimo si innamorerà, che capitanava la banda maldestra di Ombrosa, lo scrittore scrive: «Correva sul suo cavallino bianco le strade e i sentieri, e quando vedeva frutta matura in frutteni incustoditi, li avvertiva, e *accompagnava i loro assalti da cavallo come un ufficiale*»⁵⁴. Come si evince da questi esempi, la similitudine viene usata per rafforzare l'elemento ironico delle scene descritte. L'ironia, come il movimento, percorre tutto *Il barone rampante*.

In altri casi la similitudine diventa veicolo per introdurre nel romanzo espressioni del linguaggio parlato, modi di dire. Ad esempio: «Fortuna che Cosimo si teneva ben saldo alle corde! Altrimenti sarebbe *piombato a terra come un salame!*»⁵⁵. Oppure: «un velo di malinconia passava sul suo viso, *come le nuvole passano sul sole*»⁵⁶. E ancora: «Solo Cosimo restò lì, *il viso rosso come una fiamma*»⁵⁷.

Queste introduzioni di espressioni di linguaggio parlato non sono usuali in Calvino e sembrerebbero addirittura una caduta di stile. Ma si tratta invece di uno stile intenzionalmente ricercato. Esse sono presenti nel *Barone rampante*, perché il romanzo nasce da contrasti familiari ed è pieno, appunto per questo, di colori e di immagini che hanno la funzione di far sentire, diciamo così, il calore di episodi di vita casalinga. In fondo la famiglia, il rapporto tra genitori e figli, è uno dei temi centrali del romanzo e Calvino fa di tutto, anche nelle scelte linguistiche, per far sentire al lettore il tepore di situazioni e atmosfere familiari. Stile e oggetto del raccontare si fondono insieme.

C) *Il contrasto: l'ironia*. Per dare maggiore forza visiva alle immagini, per renderle «iconicamente inconfondibili», come diceva nei suoi saggi, Calvino utilizza anche un'altra tecnica: inserisce nelle descrizioni dei suoi personaggi l'elemento del contrasto. Quando nelle prime pagine del *Visconte dimezzato* descrive il visconte, ancora tutto intero, che cammina insieme al suo scudiero sul campo dove si è svolta la battaglia dice: «Era pallido, ma i suoi occhi scintillavano»⁵⁸. Mettere insieme due immagini, due pennellate di colori, potremmo dire, differenti, fa sì che personaggi e situazioni risaltino, vengano messi in «evidenza», come diceva lo scrittore nelle sue riflessioni sul genere fantastico. Insomma, una tecnica di chia-

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 39, corsivo nostro.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 40, corsivo nostro.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 44, corsivo nostro.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 26, corsivo nostro.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 45, corsivo nostro.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 49, corsivo nostro.

⁵⁸ VD, p. 6.

ro-scuro, di scultura in rilievo. Oppure quando il Visconte malvagio, ormai metà, giunge a Terralba trasportato su una lettiga da loschi figuri: «Ed ecco che la lettiga veniva posata a terra, e in mezzo all'ombra nera si vide il brillio di una pupilla»⁵⁹. L'immagine contiene quasi elementi di genere *horror*; e questo conferma come Calvino fosse un grande estimatore del fantastico "nero" in letteratura.

Più avanti sempre nel *Visconte dimezzato* si legge: «Le pere che pendevano contro il cielo albeggiante»⁶⁰. Se avessimo letto che le pere semplicemente pendevano dall'albero non ci saremmo soffermati ad immaginare, non avremmo avuto elementi sufficienti per "vedere" la situazione, l'immagine avrebbe contenuto poca carica visiva. Ma il vedere queste pere pendenti sullo sfondo del cielo con i colori della luce dell'alba (nelle righe più avanti scopriremo che le pere sono tagliate a metà a testimonianza del passaggio del visconte) dà all'immagine contorni netti e ce la rende molto più evidente e suggestiva. Così come le metà dei funghi velenosi che il visconte getta nello stagno: «Erano le metà dei funghi che egli aveva portato via, ed erano sparse su quella superficie trasparente»⁶¹. Anche in questo caso, se non fosse stato aggiunto l'ingrediente della "trasparenza", probabilmente non ci saremmo soffermati a "guardare" questi funghi galleggianti. Così come le figure del Visconte Buono e del Visconte cattivo che si sfidano a duello. Anche qui diventano figure ritagliate o intagliate con molta nettezza: «C'era l'alba verdastra; sul prato i due sottili duellanti neri fermi con le spade sull'attenti»⁶². Sono i colori a conferire forza iconica all'immagine: i due mantelli e gli abiti neri si stagliano sul verde dei prati di Terralba e sul colore verdastrò del cielo albeggiante.

In altri passi del *Visconte dimezzato*, il contrasto non è solo di colori. L'evidenza dei personaggi è creata anche dall'uso di paradossi, di immagini assurde, bislacche, grottesche, nate dall'unione di ingredienti contrastanti: alto e basso insieme, bello e brutto, triste e allegro. Così come il «ponticello di tronchi» che «attraversava un abisso profondissimo»⁶³, o «e ghirlande di gelsomino intorno ai visi sfigurati dei lebbrosi di Pratofungo»⁶⁴. Oppure Pamela, la giovane contadina di cui si innamorano entrambe le parti del Visconte, che gira per i boschi con il vestito da sposa la sera prima del matrimonio, finché «lo strascico non raccolse tutti gli aghi di pino e i ricci di castagne che seccavano per i sentieri»⁶⁵. E le case di Pratofungo, il villaggio dei lebbrosi, ove i tetti di paglia erano «adorni di festoni d'aquilone»⁶⁶, o l'immagine della «lebbrosa senza naso che si stava pettinando tra le fronde d'un lauro»⁶⁷.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

Come abbiamo visto, succede spesso, anzi quasi regolarmente, che in Calvino lo stile e l'oggetto del raccontare si fondano o si sovrappongano, emergendo una volta uno una volta l'altro. Come nel *Cavaliere inesistente*, la precisione, l'esattezza è sia elemento stilistico sia oggetto del racconto (la precisione rappresentata dalla figura di Agilulfo, cavaliere inesistente), così nel *Barone rampante* il contrasto delle immagini diviene uno degli oggetti del romanzo: il contrasto di Cosimo con la famiglia, con il mondo, che lo porta a salire sugli alberi e a non scendere più. Cosicché tutto il romanzo è percorso da situazioni, eventi, personaggi paradossali. Quando ad esempio si descrive il contrasto ottico del sole tra le foglie scure: «Il sole era tra le foglie, e noi per vedere Cosimo dovevamo farci schermo con la mano»⁶⁸. Oppure quando l'autore ci mostra l'immagine di Cosimo che sbuccia con la punta delle scarpe il legno della magnolia «aprendo bianche ferite nel nero della scorza»⁶⁹. O ancora quando descrive il senso di nostalgia che doveva prender a Cosimo bambino (da poco deciso a vivere sugli alberi) quando la sera scendeva e la casa paterna vista dagli alberi mostrava i tepori di una vita familiare lontana: «Ognuno salì nei suoi quartieri e sulla facciata della casa le candele accese aprivano occhi d'oro nel riquadro delle impanate»⁷⁰. L'immagine è visivamente molto forte. Le candele accese sullo sfondo del nero delle finestre rendono bene l'idea che la giornata sta finendo per lasciar spazio alla notte, come quando nella campagna si vedono da lontano le luci di casolari nella notte.

Tranne questi sporadici momenti, il contrasto è oggetto del raccontare, è tematizzato. I paradossi guidano tutta la storia. Ad esempio la sorella Battista conduce una vita monacale, perché costretta, ma nel frattempo è di una perfidia eccessiva. La bambina, con tanto di cuffia e vestita per la notte, va in giro con il candelieri da una parte e il fucile dall'altra. Così come la prima immagine di Viola, anche questa altamente rappresentativa del personaggio, che vola in alto con l'altalena, in un gioco che dà gran piacere a molti bambini, in un abbigliamento e in un atteggiamento che ha tutt'altro della bambina:

Era una bambina bionda, con un'alta pettinatura un po' buffa per una bimba, un vestito azzurro anche quello troppo da grande, la gonna che ora, sollevata sull'altalena, traboccava di trine. La bambina guardava a occhi socchiusi e naso in su, come per uno suo vezzo di far la dama⁷¹.

Qui Calvino oltre a fornirci una veloce descrizione di come era considerata l'infanzia nel Settecento ci mostra la personalità, anche questa fortemente conflittuale, di Viola. Oppure, ci descrive il contrasto di un baronetto che tutto d'un tratto decide di abbandonare lo stile di vita che appartiene al suo rango

⁶⁸ BR, p. 16.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

andando a vivere sugli alberi: «Con la cravatta di pizzo s'asciugò il sudore dal viso»⁷².

Ancora, per far emergere la figura della madre di Cosimo – donna, madre e figlia di un generale, così rigida da avere l'appellativo di Generalessa – Calvino usa un contrasto: ci dice che era una donna dedita al ricamo, tipico passatempo femminile, ma che i soggetti dei suoi ricami erano cannoni «con le varie traiettorie che partivano dalla bocca da fuoco, e le forcelle di tiro, e gli angoli di proiezione»⁷³.

Nel *Cavaliere inesistente* il piacere per i chiaro-scuri, per i contrasti di luce e colori, torna ad essere presente. Più di una volta Calvino si diletta nel far risaltare il candore dell'armatura del cavaliere: «Era l'imbrunire; sul cimiero le piume iridate ora parevano tutte d'un unico indistinto colore; ma l'armatura bianca spiccava isolata lì sul prato»⁷⁴; oppure «La banca armatura di Agilulfo alta sul costone della valle incrociò le braccia sul petto»⁷⁵; o quando all'alba, la luce ancora incerta, Rambaldo scorge l'armatura bianca del cavaliere «sotto un pino, seduto per terra»⁷⁶. E ancora Agilulfo che «al margine del campo passava lento» e «sull'armatura bianca pendeva un lungo mantello nero»⁷⁷. Sicuramente anche per *Il cavaliere inesistente* il contrasto, non solo cromatico, diventa una delle caratteristiche del protagonista: Agilulfo ha una corazza forte e precisamente costruita, ma poiché è vuota è attraversata «a ogni fessura dagli sbuffi del vento, dal volo delle zanzare e dai raggi della luna»⁷⁸. Il nostro protagonista è un cavaliere armato di tutti punto, ma, essendo disumano, è leggero come una piuma, tanto che il giovane Rambaldo piangente «sentì qualcosa posarglisi sui capelli, una mano, una mano di ferro ma leggera»⁷⁹.

Ma i contrasti luce si ritrovano anche oltre la figura del cavaliere inesistente. «Nell'ora incerta che precede l'alba», quando nell'accampamento i soldati di Carlo Magno si svegliano per prepararsi alla battaglia, lo scrittore racconta: «Alle tende dei comandi e delle furerie s'accendevano le torce, a contrastare con la mezzaluce che filtrava dal cielo»⁸⁰. Oppure il color pervinca che spicca sopra la corazza di Bradamante:

Sopra la corazza vestiva una guarnacca color pervinca⁸¹

[...] la sua giornata cominciava quando indossava l'armatura e montava in sella; difat-

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁷⁴ *CI*, p. 7.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

ti appena aveva le sue armi indosso era un'altra, tutta lucente dal coppo dell'elmo ai gamberuoli, facendo sfoggio dei pezzi d'armatura più perfetti e nuovi, e con l'usbergo infiocchettato di nastri color pervinca, che guai se ce n'era uno fuori posto⁸².

E la «picchiettatura di efelidi rosse» che spiccano sulla «pelle olivastra» di Gurdulù⁸³; o i «mantelli bianchi» dei Cavalieri del Santo Graal che scendono sulle loro «corazze d'oro»⁸⁴.

2.2. *“L'economia espressiva”. La rapidità, ovvero il ritmo della scrittura.* Abbiamo parlato della visibilità come una delle caratteristiche centrali della scrittura di Calvino: la costruzione di immagini in movimento. Un altro aspetto fondamentale del suo stile, che si lega all'aspetto della dinamicità, è quello del ritmo della scrittura. Oltre a mostrare il movimento delle sue immagini, personaggi e situazioni, e a intraprendere una ricerca furiosa del termine più adatto o dell'espressione più giusta a rendere la dinamicità, Calvino punta anche ad una scrittura essa stessa scattante, ritmica, veloce. Sono le stesse parole che, per intenderci, devono sgattaiolare, saltare come il Barone Cosimo tra i rami degli alberi d'Ombrosa. Lo scrittore riassunse questa tecnica letteraria col termine «Rapidità», e dedicò ad essa uno degli interventi delle sue *Lezioni americane*.

Leggendo quelle pagine si comprende quanto il ritmo della narrazione sia stata una delle premure più forti dello scrittore. Una premura che ci fa comprendere ulteriormente le scelte letterarie e culturali di Italo Calvino.

Se in un'epoca della mia attività letteraria – scrive nelle *Lezioni americane*⁸⁵ – sono stato attratto dai folktales, dai fairytales, non è stato per fedeltà a una tradizione etnica (dato che le mie radici sono in un'Italia del tutto moderna e cosmopolita) né per nostalgia delle letture infantili (nella mia famiglia un bambino doveva leggere solo libri istruttivi e con qualche fondamento scientifico), ma per interesse stilistico e strutturale, per l'economia, il ritmo, la logica essenziale con cui sono raccontate.

Qualche riga più avanti dirà che il testo originale delle fiabe su cui lavorò e di cui rispettò le caratteristiche stilistiche, tra cui il ritmo, «era molto laconico»⁸⁶. Citiamo questa espressione non solo per comprendere, come dicevamo, quali furono gli interessi che spinsero l'autore ad avvicinarsi a questa o a quella letteratura, a questo o a quel genere letterario, ma soprattutto per individuare il significato che egli dava al ritmo nella narrazione.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁸⁵ LA, p. 37.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

La laconicità, l'essenzialità, l'efficacia narrativa, la capacità di far accadere mille avvenimenti in poche righe, sono tutti elementi tipici della fiaba. Nello stesso capitolo delle *Lezioni americane* Calvino dirà: «La prima caratteristica del folktale è l'economia espressiva; le peripezie più straordinarie sono raccontate tenendo conto solo dell'essenziale»⁸⁷. Il ritmo e la velocità sono quindi legati all'essenzialità della lingua, alla sua capacità di essere netta, precisa, concisa. Tant'è che lo scrittore paragona il lavoro del romanziere, di chi scrive in prosa, al lavoro del poeta. La ricerca del poeta sulla rima, sulla cadenza, sul ritmo deve essere la stessa di quella che compie lo scrittore di racconti nel dare ritmo agli eventi. «Come nelle poesie e nelle canzoni – ci dice⁸⁸ – le rime scandiscono il ritmo, così nelle narrazioni in prosa ci sono avvenimenti che rimangono tra loro». L'espressione è felicissima e ci mostra quanto in Calvino contasse più la “musica” che emanavano le sue storie di qualsiasi altro ingrediente, e per usare un termine forse riassuntivo della sua poetica, ciò che contava era la leggerezza dei racconti.

La velocità di cui parla lo scrittore, rifacendosi ad illustri predecessori, Leopardi e Galilei, è ancora la velocità mentale quella che permette di collegare fatti e persone lontane nello spazio e nel tempo. È la velocità del lettore che legge e quella della mente dello scrittore che cerca la parola giusta per mostrare il movimento delle immagini da lui create. Il rapporto tra scrittore e lettore sul tema della rapidità Calvino lo pone nei suoi racconti. Nel *Cavaliere inesistente* questa operazione è esplicita ed esemplificatrice. Ad un certo momento Suor Teodora-Bradamante, la voce narrante del romanzo, comincia a raccontare al lettore come sta costruendo la sua storia. Agilulfo e Gurdulù stanno per partire per il Marocco e una riga più avanti sono già in mare su una nave.

Tutto questo che ora contrassegno con righine ondulate – si legge – è il mare, anzi l'Oceano. Ora disegno la nave su cui Agilulfo compie il suo viaggio, e più in qua disegno un'enorme balena, con il cartiglio e la scritta «Mare Oceano». Questa freccia indica il percorso della nave. Posso fare pure un'altra freccia che indichi il percorso della balena; to': s'incontrano. In questo punto dell'Oceano dunque avverrà lo scontro della balena con la nave⁸⁹.

E più avanti vediamo Agilulfo “davvero” combattere con la balena, per quell'incredibile meccanismo della *suspension of disbelief* di cui parlava Coleridge. Oltre al paragone della scrittura con il disegno, paragone significativo per la letteratura di Calvino, qui l'autore mostra al lettore la possibilità che ha qualsiasi scrittore di far accadere in poche righe mille avvenimenti: gli basta una freccia, un ghirigoro e nella sua mente la storia ha fatto già mille miglia.

È per questo che nelle *Lezioni americane* Calvino ad un certo punto dirà: «La novella è un cavallo: un mezzo di trasporto con una sua andatura, trotto

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁸⁹ *CI*, p. 197.

o galoppo, secondo il percorso che deve compiere, ma la velocità di cui si parla è una velocità mentale»⁹⁰. Anzi, preciserà meglio più avanti, ciò che interessa è «il rapporto tra velocità fisica e velocità mentale»⁹¹. È la possibilità cioè dello scrittore di scegliere l'andatura, tirando o meno le redini del suo cavallo, rispettando però il ritmo dei percorsi mentali suoi e dei suoi lettori.

Per mantenere il giusto ritmo, ci confessa ancora nelle *Lezioni americane*, è anche necessario non prolungarsi nelle storie, «perché è difficile mantenere questo tipo di tensione in opere molto lunghe»⁹². Così la scelta del racconto breve, delle *short stories*, e la citazione di autori come Paul Valéry, Francis Ponge, Jorge Louis Borges. La rapidità non è quindi nello svolgersi del singolo avvenimento della storia, ma nella storia tutta.

Nelle opere. L'uso della paratassi. La ricerca di una scrittura ritmata e la via del racconto breve si traducono nelle opere che stiamo prendendo in analisi in vari modi.

Partiamo dal primo aspetto, il ritmo nella scrittura. Occorre innanzitutto rilevare che la ricerca di una lingua precisa, esatta, concisa porta inevitabilmente lo scrittore ad operare una semplificazione della struttura della frase, tant'è che il procedimento sintattico più utilizzato da Calvino per rispettare questa scelta stilistica è la paratassi. Periodi brevi, in cui le digressioni in frasi subordinate sono quasi abolite. Non solo. La semplificazione del periodo, al fine di dare ritmo e velocità alla storia, è anche frutto di una puntuale e articolata ricerca sui termini, per rintracciare, come dice lo stesso Calvino, la parola giusta, il termine più rispondente, più concreto appunto. Insomma, poche (di qui l'economia linguistica) ma giuste parole, ovvero parole capaci di rendere vivo ciò che si sta raccontando. Nella costruzione di periodi rapidi, veloci e laconici, infatti, egli non rinuncia mai alla ricerca di termini che diano concretezza e visibilità alle immagini. In questo lo aiuta sicuramente l'uso di verbi che indicano il movimento. I periodi in cui di più Calvino sperimenta la rapidità, in cui sembra insomma cambiare marcia per accelerare, sono infatti caratterizzati da verbi che indicano moto ma che sono anche sempre figurati.

Seguendo questo procedimento, paratassi e ed economia linguistica, Calvino riesce in alcuni punti a raggiungere i livelli dello stile della fiaba a cui idealmente si rifaceva. Partiamo dal *Visconte dimezzato*, che è tra l'altro l'opera forse più rappresentativa dello "stile rapido". Non è un caso che sia vicina, come anni di composizione, alla messa a punto del progetto di riscrittura delle *Fiabe italiane*. Alla fine del secondo capitolo, nel momento in cui viene data vita alla prima metà del Visconte, quella cattiva, si legge:

⁹⁰ LA, p. 40.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 48.

Cucirono, applicarono, impastarono: chi lo sa cosa fecero. Fatto sta che l'indomani mio zio aperse l'unico occhio, la mezza bocca, dilatò la narice e respirò. La forte fibra dei Terzalba aveva resistito. Adesso era vivo e dimezzato⁹³.

A parte la struttura sintattica, grazie alla quale Calvino fa accadere in poche righe molti eventi, rintracciamo l'uso di verbi di movimento (aperse, dilatò), che oltre a dare ritmo agli avvenimenti ci mostra visivamente ciò che sta accadendo. «Dilatò la narice e respirò», con un occhio solo e la mezza bocca: si riesce a vedere davvero la mezza faccia del Visconte che torna in vita.

Oppure prendiamo un'immagine come questa: «E poi uno scalpitio sui ciottoli e Medardo galoppava per la riva. Si fermò, si sfiabbiò, scese di sella»⁹⁴. In due righe il Visconte compie mille azioni diverse tra loro e nessuna di esse si mostra al lettore poco precisa o poco concreta, nonostante la rapidità con cui avvengono. Ancora, quando Pamela è legata in casa dai suoi genitori che la vogliono dare in sposa al Visconte cattivo, si legge:

E l'indomani legarono Pamela e la chiusero in casa con le bestie; e andarono al castello a dire al visconte che se voleva la loro figlia la mandasse pure a prendere, ché loro erano disposti a consegnargliela⁹⁵.

Più avanti Calvino è ancora più efficace, la velocità aumenta.

A beccate le anatre la liberarono dai lacci, e a cornate le capre sfondarono la porta. Pamela corse via, prese con sé la capra e l'anatra preferite, e andò a vivere nel bosco. Stava in una grotta nota solo a lei e a un bambino che le portava i cibi e le notizie⁹⁶.

In questo secondo passo, l'efficacia linguistica è sicuramente raggiunta. Tant'è che ci porta la mente ad alcuni passi delle *Fiabe italiane*, come questo: «Si racconta che c'era una marito e una moglie, e avevano due figli, maschio e femmina. Morì la moglie, e il marito passò a seconde nozze; e la nuova moglie aveva una figlia orba da un occhio»⁹⁷.

Nel *Visconte dimezzato* Calvino sperimenta il ritmo scattante del racconto, la creazione di eventi che fanno davvero rima tra loro. Come in questo passo:

Misi la lenza in un laghetto del torrente e aspettando m'addormentai. Non so quanto durò il mio sonno; un rumore mi svegliò. Apersi gli occhi e vidi una mano alzata sulla mia testa, e su quella mano un peloso ragno rosso. Mi girai ed era mio zio nel suo nero mantello. Balzai pieno di spavento, ma in quel momento il ragno morse la mano di mio zio e rapidissimo scomparve⁹⁸.

⁹³ VD, p.18.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Fiabe italiane raccolte dalla tradizione popolare durante gli ultimi cento anni e trascritte in lingua dai vari dialetti* da Italo Calvino. Si fa riferimento all'ed. uscita nel 1971, Torino, Einaudi, p. 739.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

O in questo:

Io obbedii e cacciai la mano nel cavo. Era un nido di vespe. Mi volarono tutte contro. Presi a correre, inseguito dallo sciame, e mi buttai nel torrente. Nuotai sott'acqua e riuscii a disperdere le vespe. Levando il capo, udii la buia risata del visconte che s'allontanava⁹⁹.

Sembra davvero di leggere una fiaba quando il dottor Trelawney medica la parte buona del Visconte appena giunta a Terralba:

E lo porta alla sua casetta da beccchino, dove acconcia la mano con farmaci e con bende. Intanto il visconte discorre con lui pieno d'umanità e di cortesia. Si lasciano con la promessa di rivedersi presto e rafforzare l'amicizia¹⁰⁰.

Poche parole per spiegare sentimenti, fatti, atmosfere, proprio come accade nella fiaba. Efficacissimo è anche questo brano:

Gli sbirri andarono al visconte con l'ampolla e il visconte li condannò al patibolo. Per salvare gli sbirri, gli altri congiurati decisero di insorgere. Maldestri, scoprirono le fila della rivolta che fu soffocata nel sangue. Il Buono portò fiori sulle tombe e consolò vedove e orfani¹⁰¹.

Qui, in poche righe, l'autore fa accadere una miriade di eventi, poche parole per descrivere avvenimenti di giorni e giorni. Sembra che lo scrittore sia guidato quasi da un'ansia, da una furia per far accadere eventi assurdi, cioè incredibili, inspiegabili (come l'eccessiva crudeltà). La spiegazione non è data perché non deve essere data, siamo nel territorio dell'incredibile, e la rapidità della narrazione permette all'autore di dispensarsi da questo compito.

Anche nel *Barone rampante* Calvino non perde lo stile asciutto e veloce, pur prendendo qui la prosa una carattere più dilatato. Sono gli eventi stessi ad essere meno netti, lineari, ma più arzigogolati, come la fuga di Cosimo tra gli alberi. Infatti *Il barone rampante* è il romanzo più lungo dei tre, il personaggio è più umanizzato, e tutto il racconto prende la forma di qualcosa di più aggrovigliato, di più impastato – come a strati – e quindi di più dilatato. Non è rapido come *Il visconte dimezzato* né preciso e geometrico come *Il cavaliere inesistente*. Ma nonostante la forma del romanzo, nonostante la struttura della cornice, lo scrittore mantiene nel *Barone rampante* la predilezione per lo stile scattante. Scrive ad un certo punto, parlando del protagonista che ha già abbandonato il suolo per vivere in cima agli alberi:

Poi volle una lenza con un uncino. Se ne servì per ripescare, dall'alto d'un ulivo che sporgeva sul letamaio dei d'Ondariva, il gatto morto. Lo scuoiò, concio alla meglio il pelo e se ne fece un berretto. Fu il primo dei berretti di pelo che gli vedemmo portare per tutta la vita¹⁰².

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

¹⁰² BR, p. 64.

Oppure, poniamo l'attenzione su questa immagine:

Veloce come sempre, il Cavalier Avvocato uscì di casa, prese le scalette del giardino e si perse tra i filari della vigna; Cosimo, per vedere dove andava, s'arrampicò su un altro ramo. Lì, di tra il fogliame, s'udì un frullo, e s'alzò a volo un merlo¹⁰³.

In questi due passi si avverte la predilezione per la rapidità di Calvino, anche se le la paratassi non è l'unico procedimento sintattico utilizzato e la frase comincia a subire qualche stratificazione.

Come dicevamo, nel *Barone rampante* il movimento è oggetto della narrazione. Al centro del raccontare ci sono i movimenti di Cosimo tra un ramo e l'altro, tra una fronda e l'altra. Movimenti che spesso sono rapidi e scattanti. Sembra di nuovo che qui si compia quella sovrapposizione, quella fusione tra stile e oggetto del narrare, per cui la velocità dello stile è obbligata dalla velocità dei movimenti del protagonista. Il brano che segue è esemplificativo a riguardo:

Con un guizzo dei suoi s'attaccò al ramo e si riportò a cavalcioni. Viola, ricondotto il cavallino alla calma, ora pareva non aver badato a nulla di ciò che era successo. Cosimo dimenticò all'istante il suo smarrimento¹⁰⁴.

Il passo segue il racconto di una delle scaramucce tra Cosimo e Viola, e come accade in quasi tutto il romanzo, mostra come il rapporto tra i due sia fatto di cambiamenti repentini di sentimenti, modificazioni di umore improvvisi. Le reazioni repentine e improvvise dei due personaggi sembrano influenzare la prosa dell'autore, che in questi casi diviene veloce e ritmata, come l'ideale stilistico ricercato. Così come quando lo scrittore racconta i momenti di furia di Cosimo tra gli alberi: «Saltava, muoveva passi rapidissimi su di un ramo obliquo, s'appendeva e sollevava di scatto a un ramo superiore, e in quattro o cinque precari zig-zag era sparito»¹⁰⁵. Anche qui il ritmo della frase risente dei passi rapidi del protagonista tra gli alberi. Oltre alla rapidità e all'essenzialità (l'uso di pochi termini e del procedimento della paratassi), ciò che caratterizza il passo è la presenza di verbi di movimento che contribuiscono a dare ritmicità alla frase. Non solo, la ritmicità è data dalla concatenazione di eventi che, come ci dice lo scrittore nelle sue *Lezioni americane*, fanno rima tra loro: saltava, s'appendeva, si sollevava, ecc.

Arriviamo al *Cavaliere inesistente*, e qui la prosa torna a somigliare di più a quella utilizzata nel *Visconte dimezzato*. Il *cavaliere inesistente* ha infatti per diversi aspetti una struttura che somiglia a quella della fiaba. Vediamo come Calvino racconta con "rapidità" e quindi con essenzialità un momento della battaglia in cui Rambaldo tenta di vendicare la morte del padre:

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

La zuffa si è fatta più serrata. Ecco che il guerriero pervinca balza di sella il suo saracino; quello, appiedato, scappa nella macchia. L'altro s'avventa su Rambaldo ma nello scontro spezza la spada; per timore d'esser preso prigioniero volta il cavallo e fugge pure lui¹⁰⁶.

Gli eventi accadono con velocità, ovvero vengono narrati senza “fare spreco” di termini, sono concatenati tra loro come necessari e hanno una loro visibilità. A proposito della possibilità di vedere le immagini create risalta il passo «l'altro s'avventa su Rambaldo» e «il guerriero pervinca sbalza di sella il suo saracino».

Ugualmente rapido è un passo come quello che ci mostra la partenza di Agilulfo, con il suo scudiero Gurdulù, alla ricerca delle prove che dimostrino la validità del suo titolo di cavaliere:

Agilulfo preparò meticolosamente il suo equipaggio e il suo cavallo, e lo scudiero Gurdulù arraffò a casaccio coperte, striglie, pentole, ne fece un mucchio che gli impediva di vedere dove andava, prese dalla parte opposta del suo padrone, e galoppò via perdendo per strada ogni cosa¹⁰⁷.

Calvino sperimenta la sua passione per l'economia linguistica anche nell'ultima parte del racconto. Leggiamo ad un certo punto, quando la storia è alle ultime battute:

Agilulfo si ferma a chiedere la strada. Gli risponde cortese la mugnaia e gli offre vino e pane, ma egli rifiuta. Accetta solo biada per il cavallo. La strada è polverosa e assolata; i buoni mugnai si meravigliano che il cavaliere non abbia sete¹⁰⁸.

È un brano tratto, dicevamo, dall'ultima parte del racconto, in cui Suor Teodora, la narratrice, mostra al lettore le sue “tecniche di scrittura”, tanto che qui i personaggi sembrano davvero somigliare a delle marionette. Il gioco dello scrittore, il gioco della finzione viene insomma svelato all'occhio del lettore. E il racconto subisce un'accelerazione. Così come in questo passo:

Questa che disegno adesso è una città cinta da mura [dice la narratrice al lettore, *ndr*]. Agilulfo deve attraversarla. Le guardie alla porta vogliono che scopra il viso; hanno l'ordine di non lasciar passare nessuno col volto nascosto, perché potrebb'essere il feroce brigante che imperversa nei dintorni. Agilulfo si rifiuta, viene alle armi con le guardie, forza il passaggio e scappa¹⁰⁹.

Nonostante il narratore mostri in un momento la sua mano che muove i fili della narrazione, il racconto subito dopo rientra nella dimensione di oggetto autonomo; ovvero la magia della sospensione dell'incredulità e il piacere nel

¹⁰⁶ CI, p. 41.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

seguire le avventure della storia non vengono intaccati. Ci si dimentica immediatamente che l'avventura che stiamo leggendo è frutto dei movimenti di un burattinaio che gioca con la nostra fantasia. Il gusto dell'immergersi nella storia non viene intaccato nemmeno dalla forte essenzialità del racconto.

3. *Lettura e letteratura*

L'analisi che abbiamo compiuto, parziale e sicuramente non esauriente rispetto a tutti gli aspetti che caratterizzano lo stile Calvino in queste opere, ci porta ad azzardare una sintesi rispetto a questi tre racconti. I tre romanzi, che furono poi raccolti nella trilogia dei *Nostri antenati*, potrebbero essere sottotitolati in questo modo: *Il cavaliere inesistente* o dell'esattezza, *Il barone rampante* o del movimento, *Il visconte dimezzato* o della rapidità. Ognuna di queste tre caratteristiche della lingua sembra infatti appartenere in modo particolare ad uno dei romanzi.

La visibilità e la rapidità. Queste due caratteristiche letterarie che abbiamo analizzato confluiscono in Calvino in una caratteristica più generale, a cui l'autore fa spesso riferimento nei suoi scritti, ovvero la concretezza. Ciò che lo scrittore ricerca è una lingua concreta, una lingua cioè che abbia la possibilità di fornire al lettore una «realtà fantastica», ovvero un fantastico credibile. Insomma, il compito dello scrittore è per Calvino quello di trasportare il lettore in un livello di realtà, per usare una sua espressione, che funzioni esattamente al suo interno come un'altra esperienza di realtà¹¹⁰. Dall'analisi compiuta emerge che Calvino aveva ben chiara l'esistenza di un territorio del fantastico – o meglio di un territorio della lettura fantastica – ben delimitato, con dei confini precisi, con delle regole interne esatte e funzionali ad una struttura precisa. Tutta la sua attività di scrittore si è svolta attorno alla ricerca delle delimitazioni di questo territorio, dei confini o meglio dei contorni che caratterizzano il profilo della dimensione della lettura-letteratura. Dal percorso svolto in questa analisi si evince infatti che il rapporto letteratura-lettura è per Calvino strettissimo: non può esistere un'idea della letteratura senza un'idea della lettura, allo stesso modo non può esistere una dimensione letteraria senza una dimensione della lettura.

Del binomio lettura-letteratura ne parla in modo esauriente Gian Carlo Ferretti in due saggi dedicati a Calvino, *Le avventure del lettore*¹¹¹ e *Le capre di*

¹¹⁰ Rispetto alla concretezza nella lingua di Calvino, G. Vidal, in una testimonianza contenuta *L'isola di Calvino*, il film-documentario di P. Andriani e R. Giannarelli, ricorda che lo scrittore sosteneva che la fantasia da sola, ovvero l'incredibile, «è stucchevole», un po' come la marmellata quando viene assaporata da sola; se invece la marmellata viene messa sul pane il tutto assume un sapore più gradevole.

¹¹¹ G.C. Ferretti, *Le avventure del lettore. Calvino, Ludmilla e gli altri*, Lecce, Piero Manni, 1997.

*Bikini. Calvino giornalista e saggista*¹¹². Ferretti sostiene che Calvino portò nella sua attività alla casa editrice Einaudi, in particolare nella direzione della Collana Centopagine, «una precisa consapevolezza del committente e del destinatario»¹¹³. Ciò dimostra quanto lo scrittore fosse cosciente del fatto che nell'attività di scrittura il lettore, ovvero la dimensione da offrire al lettore, fosse una prospettiva da cui non poter prescindere.

Questo aspetto e i risultati ottenuti da Calvino nel corso della sua ricerca sullo stile ci forniscono forse la spiegazione più plausibile della diffusione delle sue opere tra il pubblico giovanile. L'attenzione al lettore ha portato Calvino ad effettuare delle scelte stilistiche che si sono rivelate efficaci per qualsiasi tipo di pubblico, che si sono prestate alla fruizione di diversi lettori, grandi e piccoli. «Diverse fruizioni» con un denominatore comune, quello di veder soddisfatti i meccanismi mentali della rapidità, del ritmo, della visibilità (ovvero dell'immaginazione), del movimento. Il lettore per Calvino è l'individuo, un individuo che sin dai primi anni della sua esistenza prova gusto nel soddisfacimento di questi meccanismi della mente, soprattutto quando è impegnato in un'attività come quella del seguire una storia attraverso pagine scritte. Qui ritorna il gusto delle letture infantili, il gusto che Calvino dichiara di voler ritrovare e trasportare nelle letture-scritture adulte. Quel piacere che un bambino può provare leggendo un'opera a lui esplicitamente diretta o un'opera senza un destinatario preciso, di cui ci si appropria autonomamente. Per il Calvino-bambino queste opere erano quelle di Kipling, di Poe, per un bambino di altre epoche sono stati e saranno altri autori. Ciò che interessa allo scrittore è sostenere che i lettori bambini e i lettori adulti vogliono veder soddisfatto il medesimo piacere: quello di immergersi in una lettura che li porti a dimenticare tutto ciò che è intorno, a non tener conto delle passare del tempo, a rimanere imprigionati a pagine da cui ci si allontana con sofferenza e fatica. Come accade a Gian de Brugh, il brigante del *Barone rampante*, che, preso dalle sue letture, finì col divenire innocuo, finì col dimenticarsi della sua passione da brigante e finì impiccato.

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Fonti
e Documenti

Libri di testo ticinesi. Il fondo del Centro didattico di Massagno

Diego Erba

Il Cantone Ticino è uno dei 26 cantoni che compongono la Confederazione Elvetica. Con alcune vallate del confinante Cantone dei Grigioni è il solo territorio nazionale in cui si parla italiano. Nelle scuole ticinesi si impara dapprima, quale lingua madre, l'italiano, seguita poi via via dalle altre lingue nazionali (tedesco e francese) e dall'inglese.

L'ordinamento scolastico ticinese attuale è simile a quello italiano, almeno per quanto concerne le scuole dell'obbligo. Dopo i primi tre anni facoltativi di scuola dell'infanzia (3-6 anni d'età), abbiamo una scuola elementare di cinque anni (6-11 anni) e in seguito una scuola media di quattro anni (11-15 anni). Le scuole successive (licei, scuole professionali, commerciali, ecc.) fanno parte del settore post-obbligatorio. Nel 1996 è stata creata l'Università della Svizzera italiana che conta attualmente quattro facoltà (scienze economiche, scienze della comunicazione, architettura, scienze informatiche). Il Cantone dispone pure di un istituto per la formazione dei docenti (Alta scuola pedagogica di Locarno) e di una Scuola universitaria professionale della Svizzera italiana.

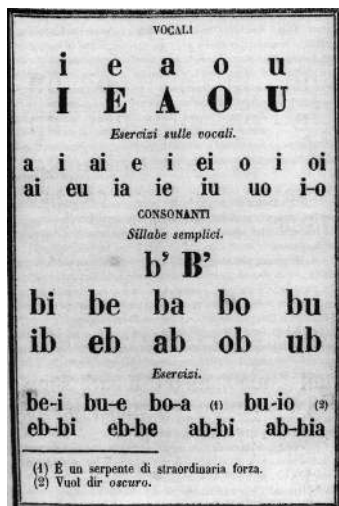
Il Cantone Ticino costituisce a tutti gli effetti una minoranza linguistica e culturale all'interno di una realtà nazionale composta da popolazione di lingue e culture diverse. Per questi motivi, sin dall'introduzione della scuola pubblica nei primi decenni del XIX secolo, il Ticino ha dovuto e voluto far capo alle sole proprie forze per la produzione di materiali e di testi scolastici, destinati agli allievi delle scuole dell'obbligo in particolare. Per contro, nel caso delle scuole superiori, si fa capo sovente all'editoria della vicina Italia che offre evidentemente un mercato più ricco e variegato.

Attualmente la situazione è assai diversificata, in quanto ai testi “ticinesi” presenti soprattutto nelle scuole elementari si affiancano edizioni pubblicate in Italia. Va comunque rammentato che i docenti delle scuole fruiscono di un’ampia autonomia didattica per cui l’impiego del libro di testo è lasciato alla scelta e alla valutazione del singolo docente.

L’uomo politico del passato, ricordato tra le altre cose per essere stato “il padre dell’educazione popolare ticinese”, fu Stefano Franscini (1796-1857). Fu lui ad istituire nel 1826 la prima scuola di “mutuo insegnamento” a Lugano. In quegli anni in Ticino mancavano ancora sia le scuole che i maestri. Una prima legge, approvata nel 1804 dal Gran Consiglio (il legislativo), aveva stabilito l’obbligo dell’istruzione fra la gioventù, ma mancavano però i fondi per poter realizzare le scuole adatte a tale nobile scopo. Nei villaggi delle vallate ticinesi era solitamente il prete che si occupava di insegnare i primi rudimenti del leggere e dello scrivere. Siccome però nemmeno i sacerdoti risultavano essere particolarmente preparati, sia sul piano delle competenze che sul piano pedagogico-didattico, e siccome molte famiglie davano la priorità all’aiuto da parte dei loro figli nei lavori dei campi e nell’allevamento del bestiame, gli analfabeti erano ancora moltissimi. I pochi ragazzi che frequentavano le lezioni non erano assidui e sovente si assentavano per ragioni familiari o per altre difficoltà dovute per esempio alla lontananza del luogo di domicilio. Fu ancora il Franscini ad allestire nel 1828 l’antologia *Prime letture de’ fanciulli e delle fanciulle ad uso delle scuole elementari ticinesi*, alla quale fecero seguito altre pubblicazioni, come ad esempio l’*Aritmetica elementare* pubblicata nel 1836.



Frontespizio della prima pubblicazione di Franscini sul tema della pubblica istruzione, 1828.



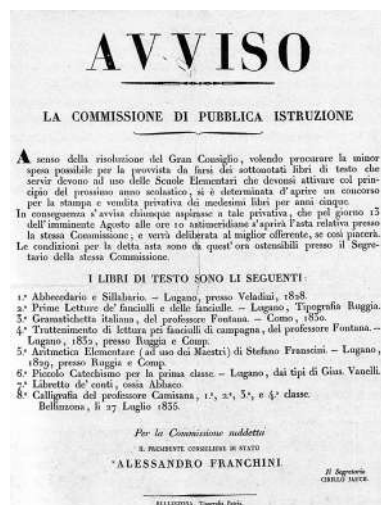
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Ernesto Pelloni – direttore dell'«Educatore della Svizzera Italiana», il più autorevole periodico pedagogico-culturale ticinese degli inizi del '900 – scriveva nel 1917:

La propaganda scolastica fatta per mezzo del libro di lettura [e degli altri testi scolastici] è simile [...] alla piovgerella lenta, insistente, sottile che cade per giorni e giorni e tutto bagna e penetra profondo e tutto rianima e vivifica, dal filo d'erba all'albero gigantesco. [...] Occhio ai libri di testo [...], se veramente vogliamo influire sulle nuove generazioni, se veramente ci preme il bene del paese¹.

Il libro di scuola è visto come un mezzo privilegiato per influire sulla gioventù ticinese, in vista della promozione degli interessi civici e sociali del Cantone. Dall'affermazione di Pelloni possiamo trarre due osservazioni: il testo scolastico non è soltanto un mezzo didattico, ma potenzialmente anche un mezzo politico, poiché consente alle autorità e agli ambienti pedagogici di perseguire determinati obiettivi attraverso l'educazione della gioventù; inoltre – affinché quest'operazione sia realizzabile – il testo scolastico deve essere “ticinese”, ossia deve tener conto delle esigenze particolari del Cantone Ticino.

È quanto scrive Grazia Cairoli nella Memoria di licenza presentata alla Facoltà di Lettere dell'Università di Friburgo nel 1986, intitolata: *Libri di scuola ticinesi 1880-1930: aspetti e problemi di una regione in un genere letterario particolare*.



La Commissione di pubblica istruzione appalta la stampa e la vendita dei libri di testo per le scuole elementari e pubblica l'elenco dei testi approvati, tra i quali anche il manuale di aritmetica scritto da Stefano Francini, 1835.

¹ Cfr. «Educatore della Svizzera Italiana», n. 23, 1917, p. 596.

Ad oltre un secolo di distanza è possibile reperire i materiali didattici che hanno contraddistinto i primi anni e l'evoluzione della scuola ticinese? A questo interrogativo ha voluto dare risposta una ricerca condotta dal Centro didattico cantonale (CDC) di Massagno.

Infatti, il CDC di Massagno – dipendente dal Dipartimento dell'educazione, della cultura e dello sport del Cantone Ticino – aveva pubblicato nel 1991 un primo *Catalogo dei libri di testo ticinesi*, in occasione della riorganizzazione della propria biblioteca.

Considerato il consistente aumento del fondo si è poi proceduto – nel 2001 – a pubblicare una seconda edizione del catalogo, che si presenta ora in una nuova veste tipografica e con un numero di titoli quasi raddoppiato. Sono infatti ben 287 i titoli finora recuperati e regolarmente catalogati. Anche questa seconda edizione comprende – come la prima – l'elenco dei libri scolastici utilizzati nelle scuole del Cantone Ticino e ufficialmente approvati dall'Autorità scolastica cantonale. La maggior parte dei testi presenti nel catalogo è stata pubblicata nella prima metà del Novecento; una cinquantina soltanto nell'Ottocento. Il più antico testo conservato è una *Grammatica ragionata della lingua italiana* dell'abate Francesco Soave, pubblicata da Veladini a Lugano nel 1831.

Nella prefazione dell'opera di legge:

L'edizione di questa Grammatica è fatta rigorosamente su quella degli autori dei Classici Italiani in Milano, divenuta ormai rara; essa è la più pregevole per essere stata l'ultima a cui abbia assistito l'Autore medesimo².

I libri di testo scolastici sono tuttora da considerare un'eccezionale documentazione per lo studio della storia della scuola ticinese. L'analisi dei loro testi e contenuti, infatti, consente di studiare e capire i mutamenti politici e i cambiamenti intervenuti nella società ticinese (passata – tra la metà dell'Ottocento e la metà del Novecento – da una civiltà contadina e rurale a una industriale) e l'evoluzione degli indirizzi pedagogici della scuola ticinese.

Un elenco di questi libri non era mai stato allestito in precedenza e non esiste tuttora una raccolta completa di queste opere, che in una certa misura hanno contribuito a fare la storia del Cantone e in particolare quella della scuola ticinese.

Le notizie bibliografiche sono completate da due tipi di note: la prima riporta l'esatta dicitura dell'approvazione dell'Autorità scolastica cantonale, le notizie sulle varie edizioni dell'opera, le indicazioni riguardanti l'aspetto grafico e illustrativo e altri particolari; la seconda segnala altre edizioni dell'opera di proprietà del CDC (in totale una sessantina). È importante rilevare come il catalogo contenga la notizia bibliografica di un solo esemplare: la prima edi-

² F. Soave, *Grammatica ragionata della lingua italiana*, Lugano, Veladini, 1831, p. 3.

zione oppure quella più vecchia conservata all'interno del fondo. Il catalogo è illustrato con le copertine o i frontespizi di quasi tutti i volumi elencati.

Nel catalogo pubblicato dal CDC di Massagno i libri, elencati in ordine cronologico, sono suddivisi in quattro capitoli: *scuola elementare*, *scuola elementare e media*, *scuola media*, *diversi ordini di scuola*, all'interno dei quali è stata fatta un'ulteriore suddivisione per materie d'insegnamento.

L'attribuzione dei singoli testi agli ordini di scuola di competenza non corrisponde necessariamente a quella odierna, in quanto l'ordinamento scolastico ha subito – nel corso degli anni – parecchie riforme, alcune delle quali di rilievo fondamentale, come ad esempio la soppressione negli anni '70 della scuola maggiore e del ginnasio, che accoglievano gli allievi d'età compresa tra gli 11 e i 15 anni, sostituite dalla scuola media unica quadriennale. Le denominazioni indicate nel catalogo del Centro didattico cantonale sono invece quelle attualmente in vigore.

I settori scolastici maggiormente interessati sono quelli elementare e medio. In pratica si tratta della scolarità obbligatoria assicurata agli allievi del Cantone Ticino: da qui l'esigenza di mettere a disposizione dei docenti che vi insegnavano appositi strumenti didattici, in un momento in cui l'offerta di mezzi e materiali didattici era assai inferiore – come abbiamo già rilevato – di quella attuale.

Le materie privilegiate sono la lingua italiana (grammatica e lettura), la matematica, la geografia e la storia, comprensiva dell'educazione civica. Da questa sommaria indicazione emerge la volontà degli autori di assicurare agli allievi una buona padronanza del «leggere, scrivere e far di conto», nonché di promuovere la conoscenza del proprio territorio.

Degne di menzione sono alcune opere che qui vorremmo citare.

Il *Trattato elementare dei doveri dell'uomo con un'appendice delle regole della civiltà ad uso delle scuole* di Francesco Soave, edito nel 1838, ad esempio, rammenta che fra i compiti della scuola vi era pure quello di insegnare la buona educazione e il galateo, un aspetto quest'ultimo ribadito nel 1932 all'interno del volume di Vittore Frigerio *Buona creanza: piccolo galateo per la gioventù ticinese*.

Per contro, può far sorridere oggi il titolo di un altro libro di testo rivolto ai diversi ordini scolastici con il quale l'autore Alderige Fantuzzi nel 1925 pubblica presso Veladini il suo *Manuale di agraria: ad uso delle scuole e degli agricoltori della Svizzera italiana*. Questo argomento sarà successivamente ripreso dall'Autore nel 1931 con un'altra pubblicazione dal titolo *I campicelli scolastici nel cantone Ticino: prontuario per le concimazioni e per le semine*.

Da rilevare infine che la maggior parte degli autori dei testi scolastici censiti nella pubblicazione del CDC di Massagno erano noti docenti delle scuole ticinesi.

La ricerca e l'acquisizione di questi preziosi libri da parte del Centro didattico cantonale di Massagno continua tuttora, nell'intento di riuscire a costrui-

re un fondo il più completo possibile. Questo nonostante il reperimento di certi manuali non sia sempre agevole, in quanto essi sono oramai reperibili unicamente per mezzo del mercato antiquario, dove i volumi disponibili sono quasi sempre i medesimi e non necessariamente i più rari ed antichi.

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*Critical Reviews
and Bibliography*



Rassegne critiche
e Bibliografia

Critical Reviews / Rassegne critiche

A brief historical survey of critical studies and recent research on children's literature in Great Britain (1990-2005)*

Gloria Alpini

... a Children's story is the best art form for something you have to say.

C.S. Lewis

... while adult Literature is deteriorating, Literature for children is gaining quality and stature.

Isaac Bashevis Singer

Since the end of the 1600s in England, criticism of Children's Literature has followed a "natural" cycle of birth, growth, and development that is almost parallel to the birth and development of Children's Literature which, from oral storytelling, became written and spread through seventeenth century Europe thanks to the works of Gianbattista Basile and Charles Perrault.

The field is vast, and thus this article can not be exhaustive but rather will attempt to retrace a brief history of criticism in the English language by examining several books and articles on the subject, published since 1990 but that offer refer as far back as 1700, and available at the University of Cambridge Library¹.

* The author is indebted to Professor Emeritus Peter Hunt (University of Wales, Cardiff, UK) for his precious advice and bibliographic material.

¹ For an introductory study, see: *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature*, Carpenter and Prichard, Oxford University Press, 1984; *Understanding Children's Literature*, Key essays from the second edition of *The International Companion Encyclopedia [sic] of Children's Literature*,

Six principle ideas emerge as the basis of this material:

- I. rather than undergoing a crisis, traditional criticism of Children's Literature in the last decade has distilled and produced important concepts;
- II. criticism of Children's Literature has reassessed the genre so that it is no longer considered either non-Literature or an inferior genre but an apparently simple art form which is in reality quite complex;
- III. Children's Literature is an integral part of Literature², not a stand-alone category, and its inclusion as an independent discipline for study will cause a revolution in the academic curriculum³;
- IV. criticism of Children's Literature has identified an important *difference* or characteristic of Children's books by highlighting the presence of both visual images (illustrations) and the existence of a *double audience* (books read both by adults and by children);
- V. to carry out *different* research, an aesthetics for Children's Literature is yet to be defined based on new analytical criteria;
- VI. more research is required for some sectors, like Children's poetry.

These concepts have led to recent studies of the image of the child as he or she is perceived by the adult reader; of the illustrations; of the roles of both the child and the adult reader while reading, and above all of the relationship between the adult and the child (which must be re-evaluated, just as the relationship between men and women has been re-evaluated to avoid the child being considered no more than a territory to be colonized through indoctrination).

Here, we shall take into consideration scholars like Peter Hunt (Professor Emeritus in Children's Literature, University of Wales, Cardiff) who have contributed most significantly to changing attitudes or, if you will, to a true "Copernican revolution"⁴ – to reviving traditional criticism and inspiring new approaches to reading, but above all to a re-evaluation of the intellectual and aesthetic capabilities of the child and the child's role as "critical reader" in educational and social environments.

ed. by P. Hunt, 2nd edition, London-New York, Routledge, 2005 (1999); and *The International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* ed. by P. Hunt, London-New York, Routledge, 1996.

² For an integrated study, see *Introducing Children's Literature. From Romanticism to Post-modernism*, D.C. Thacker and J. Webb, London-New York, Routledge, 2005 (2002).

³ J. Zipes: «It is our firm belief that including Children's Literature within introduction to Literature courses or within courses that deal with the teaching of critical reading methods and literary theory will transform the survey and revolutionize the undergraduate curriculum» (p. xxxii), Preface, *The Norton Anthology of Children's Literature*, London, W.W. Norton & Company Ltd., 2005.

⁴ P. Hunt, one-day *Conference on Children's Literature*, Università degli Studi di Milano, 23 March 2007.

A Brief Historical Chart (1690-1950)

In 1996, John Goldthwaite identified the historical periods of development of European and English Children's Literature.

Children's Literature was largely a Puritan monopoly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries [...] From the 1690s to the 1840s [we have] the first age of Children's Literature with gathering of oral traditions [...] [F]rom the 1840s to the 1950s [we have] the second age [characterised by] transformations of folk forms into a new narrative [...] experimentation [...] [I]n the 1880s we have the golden age [with authors such as] Lewis Carroll [...] and Carlo Collodi. [In the same period, we have] illustrated books [by Walter Crane, Kate Greenaway and Randolph Caldecott, which developed in] the 1920s into modern picture books⁵.

Thus, we have the Puritan period (between 1600 and 1700); between 1690 and 1840 we have an interesting epoch thanks to collections of folk stories; between 1840 and 1950 we have a period of transformation of folk tales. Between 1880 and 1890, the golden age of Children's Literature develops, with authors like Lewis Carroll and Carlo Collodi and extraordinary English illustrators like Walter Crane, Kate Greenaway and Randolph Caldecott. The modern illustrated book arrives in 1920 thanks to these artists – and, I would add, to the invaluable work of Beatrix Potter, whose contributions were chronicled in the 2006 film *Miss Potter*, directed by Chris Noonan, in which Potter was played by Renée Zellweger. The film highlighted Potter's genius as illustrator of her own unforgettable characters like *Peter Rabbit* or *Mrs Tiggy-Winkle*, as well as Potter's struggle as a woman writer for an independent life within the Victorian world.

"Enlightened" Criticism and the Role of the Critic as Educator Thanks to Periodicals (1700-1800)

Children's Literature in England developed on a track parallel to that of the novel of 1700, and therefore, by the second half of the century, scholars were writing criticism of Children's Literature that had been authored for the most part by women.

From 1800 to the present, criticism of Children's Literature has grown remarkably, but for our purposes we will concentrate on several publications that have appeared since 1990 because it would seem that that year marks the beginning of a golden age of criticism thanks to several revolutionary developments:

⁵ J. Goldthwaite, *The Natural History of Make-Believe. A Guide to the Principal Works of Britain, Europe, and America*, Introduction, Oxford-New York, Oxford University Press, 1996.

1. thanks to the growing body of literary criticism, Children's Literature is no longer considered a secondary, or inferior, genre;
2. the literary criticism is produced at an academic level and considers several points of view;
3. criticism of Children's Literature provides new stimuli for traditional criticism, which finds itself in crisis.

In his essay, Terry Eagleton, focusing on the recent crisis in literary criticism and the role of the critic⁶, explains how, in England of the 1700s, the figure of the critic was quite important because through his or her writing in periodicals, the critic acted as cultural mediator.

The first periodicals created a sort of forum⁷ for popular opinion in which differing opinions could be aired for the public, including new radical ideas, and in which writers could also survive financially because they were paid for their writing⁸. Eagleton states that this particular "educator" breathed life into modern European criticism which, based on individual, reasoned judgment, became an "enlightened" criticism that gave rise to the fight against the absolutist state and monarchical government.

According to Eagleton, the fight was successful thanks to the spread of radical ideas which, from 1730 on, were published in books and periodicals allowing for widespread diffusion of personal and humanistic education. In periodicals, what Eagleton terms «a discursive space» was created for the exchange of ideas. Anyone who could read and write could participate on paper in discussion/criticism – even women, who traditionally were not admitted to the *clubs* or coffee houses where between 1600 and 1700 the most conservative issues of the day were debated, including the exclusion of women from public education. Thanks to radical editors like Joseph Johnson, women like Mary Wollstonecraft were able to publish. Periodicals offered wide participation, autonomy, and freedom of speech because it made writing possible without patronage. Awareness of the relationship between knowledge and power put the *status quo* at issue.

It is interesting to note that Children's Literature and women's writing developed side-by-side. For example, in 1787, Wollstonecraft wrote a treatise on the *Education of Daughters* and a year later wrote a Children's book: *Original Stories from Real Life, with Conversations calculated to regulate the Affections and form the Mind to Truth and Goodness* with illustrations by William Blake (reprinted in 1791). Later her husband, the philosopher William Godwin, opened a Children's bookshop (1805-1825), and published an abridged

⁶ T. Eagleton, *The Function of Criticism*, London, Verso, 2005.

⁷ See periodicals like «Tatler and» «Spectator».

⁸ G. Alpinì, *Modernità, femminismo e postmodernità nell'educazione: la pedagogia umanistica e personalistica, il curriculum dell'inclusione e la scuola dialogica*, forthcoming.

version of Shakespeare's works for children (Charles and Mary Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*). In the wake of these accomplishments, many Children's magazines flourished in the 1800s.

An excellent source for research in this sector is the work of John Rowe Townsend, the renowned historian of English Children's Literature. Townsend notes with regret that today there are fewer specialized magazines and periodicals in Children's Literature, and those that do exist are of inferior quality to those of the 1800s. Today the Children's Literature market is rich in literary and mass market products, but worthy literary criticism is reserved for experts in the field, not for the public. Terry Eagleton believes that the democratic function of the literary criticism that flourished between 1700 and 1800 has been lost. If so, there is the risk that criticism will become self-referential, sterile, and limited to the few who dwell in the ivory tower of academe⁹; the risk that new talent will find no voice; the risk that it will prove impossible to open a debate on the need to encourage new talent; and last but not least, the risk of no debate on the need to encourage the critical and democratic spirit the governed the *open* magazine of Joseph Johnson, where an unknown and self-educated woman like Mary Wollstonecraft could voice her revolutionary and innovative thoughts and open the school doors to poorer children and to little girls.

Historical-Biographical Criticism

To understand the importance of the "Copernican revolution" taking place today in the field of criticism of Children's Literature, a step backward to the period before 1990 is required.

The general tendency has been to produce historical-biographical criticism which today is considered rather limited, although it does provide a rich information resource for researchers. For example, in 1965 John Rowe Townsend published *Written for Children. An Outline of English-language Children's Literature*¹⁰ which listed many Children's magazines published from 1860 on, like

⁹ In Italy high quality Children's magazines like the famous «Corriere dei Piccoli» have disappeared from circulation. «Corriere dei Piccoli» was an important influence on aspiring writers like Elsa Morante who began writing at a disadvantage in the twentieth century, much like British women writers at the end of the 1700s, because like them she had little opportunity to pursue her studies. Yet, she could give voice to her creativity and ideas thanks to the «Corrierino»¹⁰ which began publishing modern stories in 1933 (later collected in *Le bellissime avventure di Cateri dalla trecciolina*, 1942), giving this quite young, aspiring female writer the idea that she might be able to earn a living from her own writing. Today the only access to the magazine is «Corriere dei piccoli online» (an editorial decision that excludes children who do not have computers).

¹⁰ J.R. Townsend, *Written for Children. An Outline of English-language Children's Literature*, 6th ed., London, The Bodley Head, 1995 (first published in 1965). Townsend attempted to embrace a wide field, from the Greeks to the present day, to determine how the concept of childhood has

«Aunt Judy's Magazine», «Riverside Magazine», «Our Young Folks», «Young People», Marianne Carus's «Cricket» or «St Nicholas», a magazine published in 1873 (edited by Mary Mapes Dodge).

Written for Children (which has long been an important reference point) has come under criticism recently because the historical-biographical approach is considered *non* critical. The fact remains, however, that the book was reprinted in 1995 and in 2005¹¹. In fact, Townsend appreciated the historical-social context from which Children's Literature emerges, and considered Children's Literature an integral part of Literature worthy of introduction into the academic world and not a sub-genre.

Townsend cites an important moment when in the 1400s the first English printer, William Caxton, evinces interest in Aesop's fables, although he prints these for all readers, not specifically for children. Then like Goldthwaite, Townsend too speaks of attacks by the Puritans on fantasy works for their «corruptive imagination», repeating the old Platonic notion found in the *Book of Nurture* (1554) by Hugh Rhodes, according to which children should be kept away from «feigned fables, vain fantasies and wanton stories» (p. 5, Townsend). According to Townsend, the Puritans considered children and youngsters as souls to be saved (which is how we get to 1671 with James Janeway's celebration of the «joyful» death of holy children).

Yet, in 1707 Dr. Watts, in a significant development, silences the Puritans with his *Divine Songs*, which place children in a different light: in a state of innocence. The new concept arises thanks to the philosophy of John Locke who, in his treatise on education (*Thoughts on Education*, 1693), presents a new perspective on the child's mind, seeing it as a *tabula rasa*, or, *blank page*. The child should learn through play, not through the rod.

Townsend emphasizes that after the revolution of 1688, the English middle class grew stronger and more educated, opening new opportunities for Children's book publishing. At the time, however, there were few books that were both enjoyable and useful for children. Therefore, three adult books found their way into the Children's book market: *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) by John Bunyan, *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) by Daniel Defoe, and *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) by Jonathan Swift. But these were difficult for children to understand, and therefore they were abridged and simplified for children. In 1740, Samuel Richardson translated Aesop and in 1744 John Newbery opened a Children's bookshop in London. Books became the new toys and sold for approximately six pence each.

At this point, Townsend tells us that Children's Literature was divided into

changed through the ages, noting the scarce attention paid to childhood in the past. Surviving manuscripts indicate that these have been used only for teaching purposes and not to entertain children (he cites as an example *The Babees' Book*: «Symon's Lesson of Wisdom for All Manner Children»).

¹¹ Latest edition, Greenwood Press USA, 2005.

teaching products and commercial products and became a source of income for gentlewomen. Some women writers both taught and entertained – women like Anna Letitia Barbauld, Lady Fenn, Priscilla Wakefield, Dorothy and Mary Jane Kilner, and Mary Elliot. Others were Puritan writers like Mrs. Trimmer and Mrs. Sherwood. He gives particular mention to another, the Anglo-Irish writer and teacher Maria Edgeworth, at first influenced by Jean Jacques Rousseau but later author (with her cultured father, her intelligent stepmother, and her brother) of her own treatise (*Practical Education*) which became quite influential in England, although it was a clear departure from French philosophy and pedagogy which, among other things, denied the importance of women's education.

Townsend concludes that Children's Literature will undergo a true revolution with the advent of multimedia, which allow for greater interaction by the child. He states that perhaps the future rests with the *open book*, that is, the unfinished book or story that the child completes, opening the possibility of a collaboration between author and reader.

The usefulness of Townsend's approach lies in the fact that his book furnishes a long list of authors of Children's books from 1700 to the present (Charles Perrault, Mme D'Aulnoy, William Blake, Ann and Jane Taylor and many others). His work was the first book that attempted a wide survey¹².

Finally, the historical-biographical approach offers a rich source for the discovery of authors of the past like Maria Edgeworth, the above mentioned Anglo-Irish author, famous in her day, and for other works of Children's Literature written between 1780 and 1848 and worthy of study and evaluation.

Women's Contributions (1700-1800)

In 1990, Mitzi Myers had *Early Lessons* by Maria Edgeworth (1801) reissued in the United States, underlining the influence that these stories have exerted on important Children's authors like Louis May Alcott (*Little Women*), Frances Hodgson Burnett (*Little Lord Fauntleroy*) and Beatrix Potter.

¹² Many English language authors are cited, like Mary Howitt, translator of the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen, Robert Browning, author of *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, John Ruskin, author of *The King of the Golden River* (1841), and Christina Rossetti; and in the golden years of English and American Children's Literature from 1870 on, Townsend cites Robert Louis Stevenson, Louisa Alcott, Mark Twain, Anna Sewell (author of *Black Beauty*), Lizzie W. Champney who represents women scholars, travellers, and free spirits (*Three Vassar Girls Abroad*), James Barrie, author of *Peter Pan*, Rudyard Kipling, Frank Baum, author of *The Wizard of Oz*, Beatrix Potter, Kenneth Grahame, author of *The Wind in the Willows*, A.A. Milne, author of *Winnie the-Pooh*, P.L.Travers, J.R.R. Tolkien, Walter de la Mare, T.S.Eliot, author of *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* (1939) which inspired the hit musical *Cats*, Dodie Smith, Ted Hughes, author of *The Iron Man* (1968), recently brought to the screen, and *The Iron Woman* (1993), C.S. Lewis, Robert Frost, and many others.

Myers admires Edgeworth for her ability to combine narrative ability with new ideas on education and a rare ability to penetrate the minds of children presented as individuals with lives of their own and not simply as receptacles for adult wisdom (Myers, p. iii-iv). Her characters demonstrate a «power» of their own, «the power of children» able to solve their problems on their own (a very modern theme in the story *The Cherry Orchard*)¹³.

Myers notes that in *The Cherry Orchard* Edgeworth, starting as a scholar interested in French, English and Irish politics and economics, takes on other important themes, giving life to a “feminine utopia” where the individualism and alienation of rural and industrial life at the end of the 1700s are placed in opposition to the ideal spirit of community. Her ideal of childhood is quite unlike the romantic ideal of the solitary child (Rousseau) or the irresponsible child as represented in a story by Owen, the cousin of the main character, Marianne. Owen is described as a boy who always tries to impose his will on his friends («he would never, either when he was at play or at work, do what they wished; but he always tried to force them to yield to his will and his humour», Edgeworth, pp. 52-53). Rather, he is seen through the eyes of a mature little girl, Marianne, who can combine reason and emotion and suggests an ethic for well-being that is common to one and all and rises above her self-affirmation.

Marianne, the 8-year-old main character, represents the ideal of modern leadership. While playing in the cherry orchard with the others, she asks herself what qualities are necessary to interact with the community and realizes that she must be both «peacekeeper and harmonizer» (Myers, p. viii). As such, she is chosen as the leader of the group of children she plays with, because she is always ready to include, rather than exclude, other members of the group. Thus Edgeworth shows that society is founded on solidarity, and not on individual hegemony, and that to become a leader, one must begin learning in childhood. The story serves as an object lesson in what must be cultivated early on in order to live well. It is not morality that counts, but a democratic education and the renunciation of the myth of ego through the practical experience of living. Myers notes that in the Children’s story, Edgeworth *never* preaches but synthesizes the intellectual and aesthetic elements of her day and pushes them toward new horizons. According to Myers, with this story Maria Edgeworth tries to answer the question raised by Adam Smith of how to reconcile the interests of the individual with those of the community to guarantee social welfare.

Maria Edgeworth’s stories are based on the principles that appear in the

¹³ *The Little Dog Trusty; The Orange Man; and The Cherry Orchard: Being the Tenth Part of Early Lessons* (1801) by Maria Edgeworth, with an introduction by Mitzi Myers, The Augustan Reprint Society, Publication Numbers 263-264, William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, Los Angeles, University of California, 1990.

treatise on education which she wrote and according to which education must be practical – based, that is, on everyday experience and not “rote learning” or abstract study. Above all, children must be helped to stimulate their thinking and to reach their own conclusions based upon their own experiences. An expert in French language and Literature, Edgeworth edited Mme de Genlis’ *Contes Moraux* and the French philosophical story of the 1700s, transforming the conventions (didactic content, the interaction through dialogue of two poles and ethical values) into an Anglo-Saxon model that was realistic and unsentimental and which drew inspiration from the everyday.

Marilyn Butler too credits Edgeworth with exploring new areas like child psychology, sociological realism, and the novel of “place”, pioneering a style that influenced, among others, Jane Austen and Walter Scott. Nonetheless, Children’s Literature was considered a minor genre and not part of the accepted canon, and literary gems like this remained hidden or unknown.

It was Maria Edgeworth herself who challenged Dr. Johnson’s idea that writing for children was easy, a descent from the light of science to the depths of indoctrination:

«For children,» says Dr. Johnson, «[Dr Isaac Watts] condescended to lay aside the philosopher, the scholar, and the wit, to write little poems of devotion, and systems of instruction adapted to their wants and capacities, from the dawn of reason to its gradation of advance in the morning of life. Every man acquainted with the common principles of human action, will look with veneration on the writer, who is at one time combating Locke, and at another time making a catechism for CHILDREN IN THEIR FOURTH YEAR. A voluntary descent from the dignity of science is perhaps the hardest lesson which humility can teach».

It seems, however, no very easy task to write for children [...] But in real life [children] MUST see vice, and it is best that they should be early shocked with the representation of what they are to avoid. There is a great deal of difference between innocence and ignorance.

(Preface addressed to parents, in Maria Edgeworth, *The Parent’s Assistant or Stories for Children*)¹⁴

We find ourselves at a watershed, because Edgeworth is aware of the fact that criticism, here represented by Dr. Johnson, underestimates Children’s Literature. In fact, writing for children is *no very easy task*. The writer also recognizes the intellectual capabilities of children who, according to her, should not be kept in the dark but should be made to “see” evil so that they may learn to protect themselves and to avoid it because «there is a great deal of difference between innocence and ignorance».

¹⁴ Source: e-text, <<http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext03/prtas10.txt>>.

Modern Criticism: 1749-1989. Different Approaches

Two books mark an important turning point in criticism during the 1990s: *Children's Literature. The Development of Criticism*¹⁵ and *Literature for Children. Contemporary Criticism*¹⁶. They were published, respectively, in 1990 and 1992, both volumes are anthologies of critical essays edited by Peter Hunt. Both books were published by Routledge (London and New York).

Children's Literature. The Development of Criticism is an anthology of a series of important essays on Children's Literature chosen by Hunt. The approach is historic because Hunt presents his choices in chronological order, starting with an essay of 1749, and because he has streamlined the previous encyclopedic chaos, he presents instead, a rigorous selection of essays that mark the most significant moments.

Hunt notes that although the body of criticism of Children's Literature underwent major development in 1945, criticism of Children's Literature already existed as far back as the second half of the 1700s when the concept of childhood changed radically.

According to Hunt and many other scholars like Margaret Meek (who wrote the introduction to the *Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*), a basic text in this area of scholarship is *Children's Books in England. Five Centuries of Social Life* by F.J. Harvey Darton (CUP, 1932, 1982 by Brian Alderson). Darton understands the need for serious research in this rapidly expanding field, and deplores the dearth of evaluations of the aesthetic merits of Children's books («Little is said about the aesthetic merits of Children's books», Darton, p. vii).

To this day, this remains the most tangled knot. If criticism has not yet solved the problem, Hunt explains, it is because it is difficult to define the child reader for whom the Literature is intended, and it is equally difficult to define the textual characteristics such as content and style.

The concept of childhood varies and determines the conditions of the type of literature produced. Children's Literature is defined in relation to the child reader and not in relation to the intentions of the author or the text. One aspect fundamental to research, therefore, is the idea that Children's Literature has two different audiences: children and adults.

The second half of the 1700s in England saw a great increase in the publication of Children's books, which had long been considered part of popular culture and thus an inferior genre. But the phenomenon is important if we consider that in England in 1990, more than 2,500 Children's books were pub-

¹⁵ P. Hunt (ed.), *Children's Literature. The Development of Criticism*, London-New York, Routledge, 1990.

¹⁶ P. Hunt (ed.), *Literature for Children. Contemporary Criticism*, London-New York, Routledge, 1992.

lished annually, books of great cultural, behavioral, intellectual, and cultural relevance.

A parallel development is the criticism that developed starting in 1700 and which Hunt divides into three periods:

1. criticism of 1700, which deserves consideration;
2. Victorian criticism of the 1800s, anthologized by Lance Salway (*A Peculiar Gift*, Kestrel, 1976). Hunt recommends several of these texts, defining them as hieratical criticism devoid of philosophical and methodological issues and based mainly on the romantic idea of the child who was considered "inferior" with respect to adults. Victorian criticism is remarkable for the most part for its pragmatism. Books likely to have most impact are considered, but no definition of Children's Literature is offered. Nor is it asked what a book is good for or who the reader is or how the reader reads. The approach is for the most part bibliographic, useful mostly for collectors.
3. Post-1945 criticism (see Darton) takes a more academic approach composed of a mixture of bibliography and liberal-humanistic evaluation, deeming the books accessible or appropriate. According to Hunt, with few exceptions, criticism is characterized by abstract presumption and by universal and impersonal opinion mostly aimed at creating a canon.

Beginning in 1990, says Hunt, a change takes place, determined by the fact that today's readers tend to shy away from both criticism and a canon. Thus criticism has become aware of the need for a more democratic and interdisciplinary discourse and gives rise to different approaches: cognitive development (which analyzes politics and censorship); educational strategies (which analyze statistics and readability); analysis of the illustrations and media; and the theory of receptivity.

In actual fact, the revolution in the field of criticism of Children's Literature had already begun in 1980 when British universities began evaluating it, choosing to analyze new themes like the meaning of "value", the role of the reader, and the multidisciplinary approach, worthy themes that also succeeded in revitalizing *mainstream criticism*, that is, traditional literary criticism that was also in crisis. In 1980 at the first meeting of the *British Research Seminar on Children's Literature*, the need to define what distinguishes Children's Literature historically, psychologically (Nicholas Tucker and Arthur Applebee used Piaget's model of progress by stages) and from the point of view of receptivity (based on Freud, Singer, Winnicott and Bettelheim) was recognized.

But the problem of developing a "poetics" in Children's Literature – how to structure such an issue and how to clarify it from an academic standpoint – remained unsolved.

In addition to briefly outlining the development of criticism, Hunt has col-

lected past essays that may prove useful in framing the work still to be done.

As far as the crisis in criticism, Hunt, in his introduction, explains, with a quote from *Reading and Righting*, that the academic approach in criticism is necessary:

What future for the critic? [...] I see an ever-expanding future for the librarian, the teacher, the parent, above all, the child as critic. These I expect to become more active, informed, confident and demanding [...] I hope DIY criticism will become the universal practice [...]. Criticism, taking its cue from the adult literary establishment, has failed to grapple with several basic contradictions in the historical development of fiction for the young.

(Robert Leeson, London, Collins, 1985, p. 42)

Hunt explains that the academic approach is necessary not because it is more important than other approaches, but because it can contribute by offering intellectual clarification and casting light on the past, an exercise that is not purely historical but does avoid “re-inventing the wheel” or continuing to sustain useless defensive positions. Therefore, a clarification of the theoretical positions developed in the past is useful.

Hunt divides his book into five parts.

The first deals with criticism before 1945 with a new publication of the first essays that identify the difficulties within the field, pinpoint the arrogance that views the child in a subordinate role, and recognize that the material and the audience in question require a *different* approach. Authors included in the first part are: Sarah Fielding, Mrs Sarah Trimmer, Elizabeth Rigby, Charles Dickens, G.K. Chesterton and Arthur Ransome.

In 1749, in the *Preface* to the novel for girls entitled *The Governess or Little Female Academy*, Sarah Fielding invites her young readers not to use laziness as an excuse for not wanting to read when in reality they are incapable of understanding. Rather, reading and writing are necessary to understand that evil is madness for both the individual and for society. On the other hand, in 1803 the conservative Mrs. Sarah Trimmer argued that it was a mistake to allow children to choose their reading material.

The most interesting contribution came in 1844 when Elizabeth Rigby stated that children should not be judged on the basis of the «difference in their talents» but according to how their abilities are stimulated. She stated that knowledge should come to children in small daily doses, that the act of learning is voluntary, and that the child should be stimulated beyond his or her immediate comprehension by increasingly difficult learning tasks to whet his or her curiosity (just as Walter Scott urged in the *Preface* to *Tales of a Grandfather*). The modernity of Rigby's statement lies in her definition of children as different from adults not because of their inferiority but because of their different abilities («The truth is, though seldom apprehended by juvenile book-writers, that children are distinguished from ourselves less by an inferiority than by a

difference in capacity»). According to her, adults should not give themselves too much credit when judging – or give too little credit to children. The “evil” of the age, caused by undifferentiated reading, was for Rigby a necessary evil. Of course, Rigby stated, it is important to draw a distinction between Children’s books and books for childhood: the former are easy to write, while the latter require an unusual mind that can conceive of a beau-idéal, i.e. the union of the highest art and the simplest form. Therefore, a Children’s book is no less difficult but far more interesting.

Toward the mid-1800s, a debate was born concerning the appropriation of old fairytales by writers who rewrote these to conform to Victorian morality. At the time, Coleridge, Lamb, Dickens and Ruskin sided with the preservation of fairytales and opposed changes made by the moralists (see *Frauds on the Fairies* by Charles Dickens, 1853).

Hunt includes in his anthology G.K. Chesterton, who stated in 1908 that in childhood one learns philosophy, democracy, and tradition, and the child is nourished by fairytales that must contain forbidden and incomprehensible elements. The opposing view was taken by Arthur Ransome in 1937. He maintained that the author has absolute power and writes only for himself, not for children (the concept adopted by C.S. Lewis).

After 1945, the forerunners of the criticism industry appeared, men like Roger Lancelyn Green (1946, 1965), a bibliophile who took the issue to the academic world but only with biographies and summaries of books, ignoring the social and political implications. Geoffrey Trease (1949, 1964), a politically motivated pragmatist, took issue with conventional thinking, while scholars like Brian Alderson denied the importance of the child as reader (1969). John Rowe Townsend, an academic, analyzed the literary experience and its aesthetic aspects, although as a scholar he refused to be dogmatic about drawing up standards because he felt, as did T.S. Eliot, that one’s own sensibilities should be examined, discussed and trusted. Felicity Hughes, an Australian scholar, emphasized a theoretical approach since taste is not, as many believed, an immediate instinct.

Hughes had a fascinating theory. According to her, the history of Children’s Literature coincides with the history of the novel, which was intended for an adult male reading public. Thus the novel was born “parallel” to another Literature – Children’s Literature – intended for the excluded, i.e. boy, girls, and women, who were held to be readers incapable of critical thinking. Hughes warns that to develop a theory of a Children’s Literature aesthetics, one must first free oneself of the prejudice that children have no aesthetic needs and no aesthetic discerning qualities like wisdom, intelligence, and imagination.

Hunt includes other forerunners like Aidan Chambers, who marks an important development by introducing literary criticism into the discipline of Children’s Literature and analyzing the figure of the reader (*The Reader in the Book*, 1985). For Chambers, criticism must avail itself of a method and thus he

chooses to analyze the means of communication, the idea of the reader, the creation of the reader as the author's *alter ego*, the participation of the reader in the text, the reader who fills in the blanks of the text, and the point of view of the child.

Books by Michael Benton and Hugh Crago (who observes and notes the reactions of his five year old daughter through her various reading experiences) that analyze the figure of the reader followed. According to Crago, a child's taste is formed quite early from what the child knows, by the child's first powerful aesthetic experiences, and by the drive to learn, appreciate and value the new and the different. Therefore, the richer and more ambiguous the text, the more interesting and stimulating the response it will evoke. Children's obsessive requests for repetition of a particular story are determined by the need to learn through repetition, by the intense relationship between the child and the story and between the child and the parent who reads the story to the child. For Crago, as for Hunt, criticism should not determine which books are good or bad, suitable or unsuitable, but should indicate the possibilities for interaction and for meaning. Furthermore, criticism should not concentrate only on traditional categories (plot, characters, theme), but on the interaction of two characters who are holding the dialogue.

In the third part, we have the approach of William Moebius, which focuses on an analysis of the illustrated book. Illustration in Children's books is not often taken into consideration because there is no adequate theory for its analysis. Its history begins in the 1800s (a pioneer in this research is the American Barbara Bader, 1976). Others scholars in the discipline are Patricia Ciancialo (1970), William Feaver (1977), Jane Doonan (1986), Elaine Moss (1985), Paul G. Arakelian (1985) and William Moebius (1986), who, according to Hunt, offers the best theoretical exposition, tracing the influence of the illustrator Beatrix Potter and her successors and classifying the illustration as an integral part of the reading experience. Moebius refers to Barbara Bader (American Picturebooks; *From Noah's Ark to the Beast Within*, New York, MacMillan, 1976) for a definition of an illustration aesthetics and distinguishes the illustration as part of the communication, which focuses attention on drawing, and on illustration as art, which focuses attention on the beauty of the illustrated object.

On the basis of the thinking of Roland Barthes and Barbara Bader, Moebius maintains that it is necessary to analyze the social codes present in the illustration to show the invisible; modern drawing does *not* imitate but does invite a vision from new perspectives. Moebius explains that the child, as Piaget affirms, lives his own development as a passage from the pre-operative to the formal functioning during which he or she learns to recognize the power of symbols in the story; the graphic "codes" strengthen the ability to comprehend events and feelings. Moebius distinguishes these "codes" according to various criteria: location in the text (the drawing above, below, or at the side of the

page); size (large or small); perspective (two- or three-dimensional to determine the open-mindedness of the character); frames (circular); lines (fine, smooth, discontinuous), and colours (traditional associations with colour).

In the fourth part of his book, Hunt discusses two feminist articles by Lissa Paul and Margaret Meek on education through empirical reading. Lissa Paul (1987) states that while reading *Foreign Affairs* by Alison Lurie, she noted that Children's Literature has much in common with women's writing. Both treat the same themes (identity as Other), use the same language of otherness, experience the same problem of being considered an inferior genre, employ the same images of entrapment, and have developed during the same historical period. Paul states that stories for men and women are different. When boys become men, they receive a reward (wealth and the princess); girls, on the other hand, explore the unconscious in an attempt to integrate into society. Paul uses the neologism «unvention» created by Annis Pratt (1982) to describe a woman who wants to learn to spin on her own, without following the instructions given by men:

a woman who wanted to learn to spin her own wool, but found herself unable to follow the step-by-step male-order instructions. It was not until she actually began to work with the spindle that she found that her fingers already seemed to know how to perform motions arcane to her conscious mind [...]

(Paul in Hunt, p. 163)

Thus *unventing* means regaining through intuition a lost talent, a latent awareness. Women's writing and Children's Literature are, for Paul, forms of *unvention* to regain a world and a latent identity. To understand the mystery, one must know how to read the signs of a feminist poetics that is as valid as the poetic of Children's Literature – both of which must be recognized as traditional Literature is.

Margaret Meek goes on to emphasize the need for a more systematic poetic, in the Aristotelian sense, to define Children's Literature. Meek bases her theory on Benton's theory of language acquisition and states that «children exercise word-calling as power against the dark» (p. 171, in Hunt); they leave room for forbidden impulses, and see language exceed its limits to explain reality. Reading is a stimulating interactive process that is necessary to determine a poetics of Children's Literature which takes this into account.

The fifth part outlines various areas of research to be developed and the specialized periodicals within the discipline. In England, the most important is «Signal, Approaches to Children's Books» (in print since 1970-2002), which did not print reviews but which discussed different themes. Another, whose range was broader, was «Children's Literature in Education», which came into existence following the conference in Exeter. There were periodicals that printed reviews, such as «Growing point», «Books for Your Children» and «British Book News-Children's Books» and «The Times Literary Supplement Special

Issue». However, all of these have ceased publication. Periodicals from other countries like the U.S.A. are also referred to, such as «The Horn Book» (the oldest containing reviews), «The Lion and the Unicorn», and the «Quarterly» published by the *Children's Literature Division* of the *Modern Languages Association*. Periodicals from Australia, New Zealand, and Europe are also listed. Finally, Hunt mentions the *International Board for Books for the Young* (IBBY), which has offices throughout the world, and the *International Research Society for Children's Literature*.

Contemporary Critical Literature: 1990-2005

In *Literature for Children. Contemporary Criticism*, Peter Hunt pinpoints the major issues and knots still to be untangled and indicates the most efficient research approaches, noting that there is still much to be studied within the discipline. His introduction briefly summarizes the situation of contemporary criticism.

Hunt states that Children's Literature presents its own unique problems because it raises issues of classification and evaluation criteria which are in and of themselves incentives for the further development of criticism.

Another problem to overcome is the prejudice that exists regarding the material. Children's Literature, women's writing, and post-colonial writing are all three marginalized, but the fight against such marginalization has borne its own fruit so that traditional criticism, now in crisis, has found stimulus in criticism developed for so-called "secondary" literary genres. Still to be resolved is the fact that traditional criticism offers models for interpretation which are too conventional and misleading and do not allow for identification of the characteristics unique to Children's Literature. One basic issue still to be clarified and resolved is the definition of the *differences* between adult and Children's Literature.

Hunt appreciates the rich criticism of Children's Literature which has arisen from the interaction of the different disciplines and varied approaches, but would prefer that the work proceed with greater rigour. It is also essential to resolve the tension between traditional Literature, the study of which has been institutionalized for some time, and Children's Literature, which for so long belonged to no canon at all. In its non-canonic aspect, Children's Literature poses a difficult challenge to traditional criticism.

Scholars state that it is necessary to begin seeking answers to basic questions such as: What are the themes that characterize Children's Literature and distinguish it from other genres? Are there common themes that repeat? If we cannot discover what distinguishes Children's Literature, must we, as Susan Sontag suggests, change our approach and interpretive criteria to find one?

Hunt notes that Western “truths” are at issue, and that this offers another reason for revising the value system for Literature and for criticism. The basic themes to be examined, according to him, are the relationship between Children's Literature and its two audiences (the child and the adult); the relationship between Children's Literature and the existing canon; the relationship between the reader and the text, between narrator and listener; and the many different studies within the sector.

Another basic problem to be solved is how to determine whether Children's Literature constitutes art – a status that tradition has long denied it *a priori* for its didactic nature. If Jacqueline Rose complained about the fact that Children's Literature, with few exceptions, is a form of indoctrination used by adults to control children, Hunt notes that, in reality, in its traditional oral forms, Children's Literature developed as a subversive and interactive genre. Does indoctrination therefore actually betray the origins themselves of Children's Literature?

In England and elsewhere, Children's Literature is still often studied in relation to cataloguing and reading ability levels, catalogued but not evaluated, studied only in relation to educational theories and not literary theories. Harvey Darton contributed a historical study and bibliography, but did not consider literary values. Children's Literature includes famous authors like Hardy, Joyce, Woolf and Thackeray, but their works in the genre are either unknown or given little consideration.

In this second anthology, Hunt initially cites Samuel Pickering's essay on the role of criticism in Children's Literature (1982), and agrees that criticism in the sector cannot be abstract and therefore cannot follow the current post-structuralism school that often risks (becoming self-referential) falling back upon itself or remains obscure. He deems it necessary to break the literary canon, stimulate new approaches like that of *reader-response*, argue the power structures, encouraging new readings of history and Literature. Even traditional criticism has recognized the wealth of reader-response and multicultural theories, all tainted, respectively, by the criticism on Children's Literature and post-colonial Literature. Hunt also refers to scholars like Reynolds and Myers, the former offering a feminist revision of Children's Literature from 1880 to 1910 (*Girls Only*), the latter underlining the need for analysis of aesthetic forms that go beyond historical and social matrices.

Later a series of articles are chosen which elaborate different themes using different approaches which are, however, necessary given that in this field interdisciplinary studies are most useful.

Peter Hollindale's essay puts Children's Literature into a political context and concentrates on ideology. In his opinion, Children's Literature contains dominant and/or alternative issues which the author deals with according to his or her own personal ideology, given that writing is a political act which raises the question of the relationship of power between writer and reader. The world

of Children's literary criticism has given rise to a schism between *book people* (those on the side of the book) and *child people* (those who take the child's part). The former believe in adult judgments, in the literary value of the text, in adult supremacy, and assume a largely conservative stance. The latter believe in the child's judgment, in the social and political influence of the text on the reader, in the differences between readers (English, Asiatic, Irish children), in the importance of the child reader, and assume a progressive stance. These extremes, according to Hollindale, are reductive and simplify the issue. Too much attention is paid to what children read and not enough to *how* children read. Too much pressure is put on writers to conform. Children are not empty receptacles; they have their own backgrounds, their own dialects, and their own subcultures. Therefore, each reader, like each writer, has his or her own ideology. The critic's job, therefore, is not to promote but to discover, to understand, and to make understood the ideology, latent or otherwise, in the text by raising «questions [...] to lift ideology "off the page"» (Hunt, p. 40).

We then find three essays by Geoff Moss, Lissa Paul (1988) and Sarah Gilead written for *The Modern Language Association of America*.

Geoff Moss maintains that Children's Literature deserves a post-modern academic approach and explores meta-fiction. He explains that within Children's Literature, we must distinguish between a "dominant" form in which the poetics are based upon a system of conventions and the relationship between *signifier* and *signified* (closed system) is accepted, and the post-modern form in which the meta-narrative (the narrative presented as artifact) highlights the difficult relationship between fiction and reality, between image and word (a tension perceptible in Children's illustrations as well), in which language is considered an arbitrary system of signs (open system). Open texts are defined by Roland Barthes as «textes de jouissance»¹⁷, where the *manner* in which the story is told is as important as the story itself. This entails juggling conventions. The intention is not to satisfy but to provoke, to disturb, and to challenge the reader, and make him or her reflect by using visual nonsense, irony, discontinuity, blanks, and distance. The ego is represented as an object to be constructed but nonetheless subject to change. According to Moss, there are few meta-narrative texts for children, perhaps because, as Jacqueline Rose tells us, adults write for «a child they have constructed in their own minds». Thus the tendency to promote closed texts rather than open texts «to cut the child off from the experiment lest it should be dangerous and to deny metafiction because it turns the reader into a self-conscious collaborator rather than an easily manipulated consumer» (Moss in Hunt, p. 47).

This second essay, by Lissa Paul (1990) adopts an experimental approach (harking back to fractal geometry). Feminist Paul bases her theory on the dis-

¹⁷ «Barthes calls text of bliss the text that imposes a state of loss, the text that discomforts [...], unsettles the reader's historical, cultural, psychological assumptions [...]» (Barthes in Hunt, p. 65).

inction made by Ted Hughes between an abstract, to-tell-the-truth discourse and mimetic discourse; post-structuralism has made *mimesis* out-moded, but the issue of mimesis should be reevaluated through a fractal geometry that evaluates repetition in nature. Mimesis belongs to the feminist oral culture in which the individual learns through imitation and repetition (to remember). The child finds enjoyment in imitation/mimesis and recognizes and remembers through repetition. Aristotle also saw mimesis as a natural process, and Paul identifies in mimesis the poetic characteristic of Children's Literature.

In her essay, Sarah Gilead (Israel) subjects Children's Literature to the same standards as adult Literature and analyzes closure in Children's fantasy novels. Her aim is to dissolve two prejudices: first, the child's inability to provide aesthetic answers (this attitude is produced by the idea/prejudice that the adult holds of the child; Gilead maintains that in reality, the child does have the ability to resist the imposition of standards set by adults). Second, the idea that fantasy and realism are two rival literary genres, one serious and the other not. In reality, the use of fantasy is more complex than we think. Fantastic texts create tension between difference perspectives. It is possible to analyze the function of fantasy by concentrating on the end, which is generally a return-to-reality. The narrative cycle of reality-fantasy-reality can have a moral function and a social function in that it forms the ego (i.e. a journey into fantasy for didactic purposes), or it can have a subversive function that casts social values into doubt. Gilead identifies three types of closure: 1) closure for restoration (based upon didacticism to obtain social control, see *The Wizard of Oz*); 2) closure as loss, wherein magic is abjured (see *Alice in Wonderland*); 3) ambiguous closure where the tension between a flight from reality or an invitation to a subversive critique of society remains unresolved (*Peter Pan*).

Another scholar, Michael Benton, has published a series of articles (see *Poetry for Children: a Neglected Art*, 1978) on the relationship between poetry and children and learning (*The Importance of Poetry in Children's Learning*, 1989). Benton complains about the lack of critical attention given to Children's poetry and the absence of pleasure in teaching poetry, pleasure that is killed when teaching emphasis is placed upon form and meaning and formal criticism is imposed before an initial reading for pleasure can elicit an individual response. Benton bases his remarks on Louise Rosenblatt's *Transactional Theory* according to which a first reading and an individual reaction precede an understanding of meaning and criticism. Poetry is important in teaching from the very start because it teaches *intelligence of thinking* and *intelligence of feeling* (*aesthetic pleasure*). Furthermore, it teaches that freedom of expression can exist alongside language governed by rules. The teaching method should be changed. Rather than asking children "why" they like a poem, they should be stimulated to think by using phrases like "tell me about" or "tell me" what you think. James Britton, an important British pedagogue, states that the critic's voice is not the voice of authority that requires the student to renounce his or her own

ideas and repeat the opinions of authoritative critics. Rather, the teacher should stimulate students to trust their own judgment.

The Australian Jack Thompson states that to create young, intelligent readers, questions about the text should be asked to stimulate thoughtful readings that teach the child how to obtain control over what is read.

So, as Geoffrey Williams states, Children's texts are far more complex than we imagine. In the wake of these ideas, Hunt points out the need for criticism that interprets Children's Literature bearing in mind that pedagogy today no longer has the traditional goal of looking for meaning but rather of exploring the multiple meanings within the text. The job of criticism today is expressed in the famous words of the British critic Kermode: «the power to make interpretations». The use of the plural is meant to indicate the fact that to interpret a text is to appreciate the plurality of meanings that constitute it (Barthes in Hunt, p. 138).

Hunt also includes an essay by Ronda Bunbury and Reinbert Tabbert that analyzes the international aspect of Children's Literature by considering certain Australian texts read by German children. (This school of criticism relies on multiculturalism and requires comparative studies). The essay highlights the contradictory relationship, produced by colonial power, between respect and rejection vis-à-vis imported texts, and caused by the proliferation of books in English (a subject also studied by Sheila Ray, 1982). In several cases, it underlines the ability of young German readers to recognize Australian use of irony and parody.

In the last chapter, Hunt further notes how even today women are under-represented in criticism, in the academic world, and *even* in his book. But he does recognize that the contribution of feminism is one of the most important because it underlines the relationship that exists between Children's Literature and the socialization process that is offered to or imposed upon young readers male and female.

Other observations by Sullivan underline the importance of folklore (oral Literature) in relation to science fiction, while Nicholas Tucker presents a picture of the development of child psychology as it relates to Children's Literature. Although child psychologists and authors of Children's Literature are rivals, in actual fact their differing points of view often influence one another. Tucker notes that Charles Dickens was influenced by Jean Jacques Rousseau for whom the child learns more from nature than from books, therefore the young protagonists are often found in a country setting. In Dickens, however, there are also traces of John Locke, who stated that books were as necessary as play for the child's development. Thus a book becomes an important instructional tool that changes the life of Oliver Twist.

In Germany, thanks to the scholar Friedrich Froebel, games and folk stories are both appreciated, but, in Austria, the work of Sigmund Freud places the influence of romantic ideas on children on the table for discussion. Accord-

ing to Freud, children have their own intimate life characterized by violent desires and fantasies (the Oedipus complex). Melanie Klein enlarges upon this idea, explaining that the little boy who is jealous of his mother may desire to kill her when he cannot have her all for himself.

The works of Jean Piaget, Susan Isaacs and Maria Montessori place emphasis upon the child's learning experience and life experience, making it more desirable to stimulate the child using illustrations rather than verbal explanations. The child is seen as capable of complex reasoning and desirous of developing his or her own logical thought.

In 1960, Vygotsky again changed the focus, calling attention to the child's emotional makeup which should be stimulated using games (play) and language. Language helps children understand symbolic models. Therefore, verbal stimulation is useful. Jerome Bruner (1979) goes farther, stating that the child is capable of understanding multiple identities through myth found in books. The challenge today is to stimulate *personal* responses in children.

Finally, Hunt indicates the importance of *Cultural Studies* and cites the article by Tony Watkins in which he explains that today the Truth is considered out of reach. According to a basic Marxist idea, *meaning* means a truth imposed by the class that holds power, a truth dictated by self-interest. Subjectivity is taken as a socio-cultural construction made by the dominant ideology but always subject to change. In that sense, reading is conceived of as a negotiation between *meaning for power* and criticism. The role of the critic is to:

1. study the production of meaning in an historical context;
2. analyze the internal structure of a text to understand how meaning is constructed;
3. interpret the symbolic form.

Therefore, an active, critical, and committed reading is required. These points can be useful in an analysis of Children's Literature.

In addition, the influence of the New Historicism should be considered. This school holds that there is a reciprocity between Literature and history. Mitzi Myers underlines the importance of integrating a text and its socio-cultural context because cultural formations exist beyond the extra-literary, and literary practices can lead to actions that occur in a social context.

Hunt concludes that in the critical field in spite of these various approaches there are still gaps to be filled. For example, there are no important essays on Children's poetry or on the links between Children's Literature and teaching/education or Children's theatre¹⁸.

¹⁸ An essential text for study in this area is *The Norton Anthology of Children's Literature* (2,200 pages) published in 2005 and edited by Jack Zipes (General Editor, University of Minneso-

Monographs

There are many books of criticism, but we shall cite only four of these monographs here: 1. *The Case of Peter Pan or The Impossibility of Children's Fiction* by Jacqueline Rose, The Macmillan Press, London, 1984 (re-issued in 1994)¹⁹. This work is important because it refers to a case brought before Parliament in 1987 regarding author's royalties bequeathed to London's *Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children* by the author of Peter Pan, James Barrie. Rose interviewed hospital personnel who were able to keep the royalties but not those royalties on the interpretation/exploitation of Peter Pan. Taking the case as a starting point, the author demonstrates how Children's Literature is linked to financial, political, and ideological issues.

Rose accuses conservatives of seeing childhood sentimentally and either ignoring or underestimating its real problems, like the sexual exploitation of minors. She bitterly condemns Stephen Spielberg's film *Hook* because it is devoid of any real criticism or radical challenge to the problems of a capitalistic society. Rose sees Peter Pan as a child who does not grow up not because he does not want to, but because someone stops him (Barrie even explains that Captain Hook is the personification of a school like Eton). Thus the story can be read as radical social criticism, a vehicle for a hidden story that fulfils the same function as myth.

Rose explains that it is necessary to identify the fantasy that lies at the base of the concept of fiction for children which, she says, is based on impossibility: the impossible relationship between adult and child. She poses a fundamental question: does Children's fiction build an image of the child in order to draw closer to the child that exists outside the book, or to an imaginary child far from reality? Analyzing the origins of Peter Pan, extrapolated from *The Little White Bird*, initially written by Barrie for adults, Rose notes that in the Children's version, sexual references are avoided so as to avoid the difficulties of these. Rose then criticizes writers who construct an image of the child based on the philosophic ideas of Lock and Rousseau, who imagine the 'innocent' child removed from sexuality and social inequality. At the basis of writings for children lies the conviction that the child and the world can be understood solely through reason, a conviction that endured through the Victorian era when to "explore" new territory meant to "control" the colonies. Rose notes that Peter Pan was written during the time of Sigmund Freud that the psycho-

ta), Lissa Paul (Associate General Editor, Brock University), Lynne Vallone (Associate General Editor, Texas A&M University), Gillian Avery, and Peter Hunt (University of Cardiff). The anthology includes 170 writers and illustrators spanning 350 years of Children's Literature.

¹⁹ An extremely interesting volume: Macmillan is an important publisher of, among many other texts, the famous essay by Laura Mulvey (basic to film scholars) in the same series (*Language, Discourse, Society*) edited by Stephen Heath, Colin McCabe and Denise Riley. The Editor in Chief was the famous Frank Kermode.

analytical approach can be useful in understanding not what Children's Literature is, but why we try to construct an image of the child based on our relationship with language and sexuality. Rose's study highlights the perverse and dishonest goals behind the image built of the child. She demonstrates the continual sexual and political mystification of the child.

Rose cites Freud to help us acknowledge that childhood coexists in the adult thanks to the memory that the adult recreates to build his or her own self-image. A process of transformation takes place that provokes distortions of the actual event and parts of it that we would prefer to forget. From this point of view, the story of Peter Pan can be read as a case of censorship and distortion. *The Little White Bird* is the story of a bachelor who tells the story of a couple to their son. This is a story about storytelling and the vital role of the child in the process. The author, James Barrie, also deals with the themes of sexuality and death. Peter Pan was transformed into a theatrical piece initially rich in plays on words, another important element lost in the later prose and film versions. Rose reveals that the author had originally represented Hook as a metaphor for Eton, but references to the school were eventually cut. Rose concludes that today the hospital has lost not only control, but the income once guaranteed it by Peter Pan as well.

The second of the four we cite here is *Children's Literature. Criticism and the Fictional Child*, by Karín Lesnik-Oberstein (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1994)²⁰, which elaborates on Jacqueline Rose's theory which states that criticism ignores the construction of the child and of meaning, thus confusing the child with the invention of the child. If women have been able to define themselves, children still have not had the chance to fight for equality and self-definition. In *The feminine Subject in Children's Literature* (London, Routledge, 2002), the author Christine Wilkie-Stibbs²¹ reveals that criticism has yet to

²⁰ According to Karin Lesnik-Oberstein, the aesthetic of receptivity sees the reader as responsible for meaning, and places at issue the hierarchical relationship between adult and child. Lesnik-Oberstein does not believe in the distinction made by Townsend between books that instruct and books that entertain, and uses deconstructivism to take issue with the didactic impulse in Children's Literature often used to dominate and control the child. Criticism does not confront the problem of the child's freedom, restrictions, or limitations. Critics are divided into pluralists (book people) who emphasize individual learning and educationalists (child people) who emphasize the education of the masses and morality, but in fact both serve the same ends: control of the child. A needed study would focus on how a text influences the reader. According to Lesnik-Oberstein, there are three truly important critics: Peter Hunt, Jacqueline Rose and Barbara Wall, whose book *The Narrator's Voice* (1991, Macmillan, London), is based on the narratological theory that analyzes the relationship between narrator, text, and listener.

²¹ Christine Wilkie-Stibbs maintains that criticism has yet to articulate a framework for analysis of the feminine in Children's texts. Starting with the definition of feminine as a «conscious use of body language», a definition elaborated by the French feminist critics Luce Irigaray (*le parler femme*), Hélène Cixous (*l'écriture féminine*) and Julia Kristeva (the Semiotic and the Thetic, or, the mother tongue or maternal body language that emphasizes connection and fluidity) and through study of the psychoanalytic theories of Jacques Lacan on the formation of the subject,

articulate for analysis the issue of *the feminine* in Children's texts. Finally, the fourth book, *Ways of Being Male. Representing Masculinities in Children's Literature and Film* edited by John Stephens (New York-London, Routledge, 2002) acknowledges the fact that in reality the representation of male bodies and male behavior have been determined by a patriarchal ideology. Here, Stephens begins with a quote that contrasts the results obtained from feminism with the gap that still remains in the analysis of male roles («the Feminist thinking – that girls deserve the same opportunities as boys – has become recognised as common sense. But we are still confused about directions for boys»). The book maintains that the traditional representations of masculinity, such as macho, aggressive, tough, violent, misogynist, and homophobic, are no longer valid thanks to the challenge that feminism has imposed on the patriarchal society.

Conclusion. Thinking for Growth

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.

Hosea 4:6

In England and in Italy as well, Children's Literature has never been considered important or an art form in itself because for too long the importance of the child in society has been ignored or considered only as a mind to be indoctrinated either idealistically or romantically.

C.S. Lewis is among those who have tried to overturn this tendency, affirming that Children's stories are the the best and most expressive art form. Today, however, as Peter Hunt reminds us, it is not enough to appreciate Children's

Wilkie-Stibbs analyzes the feminine in order to propose an alternative aesthetics for Children's Literature, that is, an aesthetics of the body expressed through writing and reading. The texts examined are by Margaret Mahy and Gillian Ross because these follow post-structuralist feminist thought, emphasizing circularity, fluidity, mutability, inter-textuality, meta-narrative, and the continuous process of becoming as opposed to binary logic, hierarchical structures, fixed identity, and linear temporality. The approach is based on the contributions of Roberta Seelinger Trites, Lynne Vallone, Lissa Paul, Kimberley Reynolds, Shirley Foster and Judy Simons. It is unusual in its attempt to define a feminine poetics with a literary identity through acts of reading (Wilkie-Stibbs, p. xii) that encourage returns to pre-Oedipal relationships with the mother in a fictional narrative dimension that projects onto the Imaginary the primordial values, like water, to reconnect feminine relationships with their origins. *Feminine* reading through literary transference is conceived as an interpretation or a dynamic, literary exchange that paves the way for the unsaid, the repressed, an opening of the self through the other, to make room for the literary subjectivity of *Newly Born Woman* (Wilkie-Stibbs, p. 177) which redefines logic, retrieving the feminine Imaginary and the relationships between mother and daughter. *Feminine* reading allows for the conscience to move, transfer, or integrate its contents and allows the subject (no longer determined by sex or social codes) to experience inner growth which is so stimulating and liberating.

Literature without appreciating the figure of the child as a thinking being, eager and able to learn. Children's Literature should be appreciated as an instrument of knowledge for the child. This is particularly relevant because a nation's most important resource are its Children's minds, which deserve to be stimulated from the very start to reach full individual autonomy, aesthetic taste, and social development.

Today the role of the critic is primarily to recognize the worth of the child and his or her capabilities. In fact, if Children's Literature has been underestimated, it is because children have been denied aesthetic abilities (as for Benedetto Croce did in Italy). Consequently, a relationship of subjection/dependence/inferiority has developed in which the adult tends to consider Children's Literature from a purely instructional point of view.

The critic's job is also to appreciate the history of Children's Literature by placing children at its centre and analyzing how children have been depicted in characters like Alice, who is intellectually vivacious. The heroine must *reason* and argue hard and quickly for her own survival. Or characters like Pinocchio who develop not because of some abstract ideal of love but for the real love he feels for his friend Arlecchino and for his father Geppetto. In these examples, aesthetic values marry ethical values without neglecting the doubts and evils that are present in human existence from the first years of life.

The critic must never allow *ignorance* to be confused with *innocence*.

With our modern world in deep crisis, it must be said that the cultural process regenerates when issue is taken with values. How? Not by simply deciding upon a poetics, but by first opening a forum for democratic discussion through the creation of periodicals and magazines whose audience is not only experts, but also and above all children who deserve respect, consideration, and credit.

Children must not be merely represented or relegated to subordinate positions. This would mean denying the child the ability to reach his or her own awareness (criticism) which is internal and comes from within. Thus, as the oracle at Delphi reminded Socrates, Know thyself. Those who follow the Benedetto Croce model, refusing to consider Children's Literature Art and denying the child his or her own intellectual abilities and aesthetic taste should remember that knowledge should never be dogmatic; nor does it come to man from without, but is rather part and parcel of the human intellect. Truth comes to light after personal experience, and the Teacher must only favour and elicit awareness through *questioning*, irony, and an absolute absence of prejudice (including prejudice against children and their "assumed" limits). Moments for reflection must be created for children as well – above all for children.

Anyone who has had the experience of telling children stories understands that they are quite capable of playing with meaning, guessing the value of narrative conventions, and understanding even the most subtle irony. Children know that stories are metaphors for states of feeling and understand the most

complex concepts. They know that listening or reading means understanding. They need storytelling because stories stimulate their intellectual and emotional development. They love stories because they share them not only with their parents, but also with their teachers in an attempt to make sense of life, joy, pain, and therefore the world in which they live.

The role of the critic is to make understood the importance of teaching Children's Literature, starting from nursery and primary school, and that requires the creation of a careful and engaging curriculum. Margaret Meek reminds us, in fact, that in England one law (*Orders for literacy teaching*) begins with the words, «Pupils should be given an extensive experience of Children's Literature» (Meek, *Encyclopedia*, Introduction, p. 4). Meek firmly believes that Children's abilities improve according to the difficulty of the text. What is important, she states, is that the child *wants* to read.

Storytelling is the primary mental activity that includes a dialogue between adult and child, as may be noted from the common etymology of the Latin word *fabula*, a term derived from the verb *fari* (to speak) and harks back to the importance of oral and social communication. It is essential to teach how to have a dialogue, because without dialogue there can be no knowledge.

And if there is no knowledge? John Goldthwaite reminds us that according to the Bible, lack of knowledge destroyed a people («My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge», Hosea 4:6). Ignorance is evil. Knowledge is good, it is a continuous search that starts with a human exchange, with a fertile collaboration between adult and child, and its worth goes far beyond the *logical* sphere to include the *practical* and the *emotional*. It is therefore criticism's duty to teach not what, but *how* to read and discuss.

Jacqueline Rose is a skeptic because she doubts that a relationship between adult and child is possible, given that Children's Literature is based upon an *image* of the child rather than upon the real child. But Hunt sees hope in what he calls a «Copernican revolution» that arises from a concept of reading. Michael Benton holds that the child's responses must be considered (*readers' responses*) in constructing meaning. Wilkie-Stubbs insists that we must consider the little girl reader as a builder of «feminine subjects». John Stephen states that the child reader must learn to discern a writer's style to discover how the text has been constructed and to understand the power of the writer and become a «critical reader». Peter Hollindale, having condemned the drastic division between two types of scholars (*child people* and *book people*), insists that teaching children to read must also mean teaching them to recognize the author's hidden intentions/ideologies.

In England, the *Children's Rights Workshop* asked publishing houses how many Children's books had girls as main characters. The answer was, very few. In addition, post-colonial Children's Literature in England includes few main characters who are not white and male. To remedy the situation, some time ago a group of writers from the Caribbean were invited to read *different* sto-

ries in British schools. The experience was a revelation. From that moment on, local publishing houses were born to publish stories set in other parts of the world, and today stories are published paying careful attention to the image of the foreigner (a friendly image) and to multicultural life, stories more sensitive to those who are discriminated against and marginalized in society.

The role of the critic is to increase awareness of books that contribute to changing attitudes, not simply to mirroring them (Meek, p. 8). But there is still much work and research to be done to promote positive images of bilingualism and multicultural encounters. Since the 1980s, the plurality and availability of reading material outside the school system has allowed children to learn to question a text, to read "against", recognizing the inter-textuality, the meta-narrative games, and the experiments that belong to the new millennium.

Yet, we still have a long way to go to promote positive images of bilingualism and of multicultural interaction.

That is why today it is even more necessary to create quality periodicals and magazines for children who otherwise become the first to be excluded from the criticism of Children's Literature where it should really be they who are the protagonists and not merely the consumers of books, gadgets, or objects of study²².

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²² See Peter Hunt's essay, *Poetics and Practicality: Children's Literature and Theory in Britain*, «The Lion and the Unicorn»

Forum / Discussioni

Carità educatrice e istruzione nel Piemonte dell'Ottocento. A proposito di un recente volume

Roberto Sani, Michel Ostenc,
Ester De Fort

Roberto Sani

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Le ricerche e gli studi sulla politica scolastica e sulle più generali vicende dell'istruzione e dell'educazione nel Piemonte dell'Ottocento preunitario hanno conosciuto, particolarmente negli ultimi due decenni, un notevole sviluppo. Basterebbe qui accennare alle accurate indagini condotte da René Boudard, Roberto Berardi e Marina Roggero sul periodo della dominazione francese e napoleonica¹, nonché ai lavori altrettanto puntuali e documentati di studiosi quali Giuseppe Griseri, il già ricordato Roberto Berardi, Bernardino Ferrari, Simonetta Polenghi, Giorgio Chiosso, Redi Sante Di Pol, Ester De Fort e Maria Cristina Morandini sui dibattiti pedagogici ed educativi, sulle istituzioni ed ini-

¹ Cfr. R. Boudard, *Jourdan et l'instruction publique en Piémont*, «Revue de l'Institut Napoléon», LVI (1981), 1, pp. 45-78; Id., *L'organisation de l'Université Impériale en Piémont et les systèmes d'instruction publique qui la précédèrent entre 1800 et 1806*, in Id., *Expériences françaises de l'Italie napoléonienne. Rome dans le système universitaire napoléonien et l'organisation des académies et universités de Pise, Parme et Turin (1806-1814)*, Roma, Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1988, pp. 361-477; M. Roggero, *L'alfabeto e le orazioni. L'istruzione di base in Piemonte nel primo Ottocento*, «Rivista storica italiana», CIII (1991), 3, pp. 739-787; R. Berardi, *L'istruzione della donna in Piemonte. Dall'assolutismo dinastico al cesarismo napoleonico*, Deputazione subalpina di storia patria, Torino, 1991; Id., *La vita quotidiana nelle scuole primarie piemontesi dell'età napoleonica*, «Bollettino storico-bibliografico subalpino», XC (1992), 2, pp. 581-611.

ziative scolastiche e sugli interventi nel campo dell'istruzione primaria e secondaria e dell'insegnamento universitario avviati nell'età della Restaurazione e nella successiva fase che, dalle riforme carlo-albertine del 1848, giunge fino alla legge Casati e al compimento del processo di unificazione nazionale².

Il recente e importante volume di Giorgio Chiosso *Carità educatrice e istruzione in Piemonte. Aristocratici, filantropi e preti di fronte all'educazione del popolo nel primo '800*³ si colloca nell'alveo di questo significativo filone di studi, del quale fa propria l'esigenza di un approccio alle vicende scolastiche ed educative che non si esaurisca nell'approfondimento del quadro legislativo e istituzionale, ma miri a fornire una lettura assai più ricca e articolata delle dinamiche sociali, degli orientamenti culturali e ideologici, delle aspirazioni e dei progetti politici che alimentarono i processi di modernizzazione scolastica e di sviluppo dell'alfabetizzazione e dell'istruzione ai diversi livelli nel Piemonte preunitario.

Articolato in sette densi capitoli, il lavoro di Chiosso presenta i risultati di una lunga e impegnativa stagione di ricerche condotte su una pregevole documentazione inedita conservata presso archivi pubblici e privati, nonché su una ricca messe di fonti a stampa – riviste scolastiche e magistrali, libri di testo e pubblicazioni educative, regolamenti e circolari ministeriali, programmi didattici ecc. – in larga misura ignorate o scarsamente utilizzate in precedenza dagli studiosi, delle quali l'Autore ha rivelato l'indubbia importanza ai fini di una ricostruzione storica capace di dare conto dei molteplici fattori in campo e delle complesse dinamiche e strategie che alimentarono l'operato non solamente del

² Cfr. G. Griseri, *L'istruzione primaria in Piemonte (1831-1856)*, Torino, Deputazione subalpina di storia patria, 1973; R. Berardi, *Scuola e politica nel Risorgimento. L'istruzione del popolo dalle riforme carloalbertine alla legge Casati (1848-1859)*, Torino, Paravia, 1982; B. Ferrari, *La politica scolastica di Cavour. Dalle esperienze prequarantottesche alle responsabilità di governo*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 1982; S. Polenghi, *La politica universitaria italiana nell'età della Destra storica 1848-1876*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1993, pp. 15-90; G. Chiosso, *Rosmini e i rosmينiani nel dibattito pedagogico e scolastico in Piemonte (1832-1855)*, in F. Esposito, U. Muratore (a cura di), *Rosmini e il Piemonte. Studi e testimonianze*, Stresa, Ed. Rosminiane, 1994, pp. 79-128; Id., *Rosmini, i preti liberali e la scuola nel Piemonte di metà Ottocento*, «Archivio teologico torinese», IV (1998), 1, pp. 58-83; Id., *Educare e istruire il popolo a Torino nel primo Ottocento*, in L. Pazzaglia (a cura di), *Chiesa e prospettive educative in Italia tra Restaurazione e Unificazione*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1994, pp. 201-251; R.S. Di Pol, *Chiesa, educazione e scuola in Piemonte, ibid.*, pp. 253-285; E. De Fort, *L'istruzione*, in U. Levra (a cura di), *Il Piemonte prima del 1848*, Torino, Comitato torinese dell'Istituto del Risorgimento Italiano, 1999, pp. 241-279; Id., *L'istruzione primaria e secondaria e le scuole tecnico-professionali*, in U. Levra (a cura di), *Storia di Torino. La città nel Risorgimento (1798-1864)*, Torino, Einaudi, 2000; M.C. Morandini, *Educazione, scuola e politica nelle «Memorie autobiografiche» di Carlo Boncompagni*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 1999; Id., *Da Boncompagni a Casati: la costruzione del sistema scolastico nazionale (1848-1861)*, in L. Pazzaglia, R. Sani (a cura di), *Scuola e società nell'Italia unita. Dalla legge Casati al Centro-Sinistra*, Brescia, La Scuola, 2001, pp. 9-46; Id., *Scuola e nazione. Maestri e istruzione popolare nella costruzione dello Stato unitario (1848-1861)*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2003.

³ G. Chiosso, *Carità educatrice e istruzione in Piemonte. Aristocratici, filantropi e preti di fronte all'educazione del popolo nel primo '800*, Torino, Società Editrice Internazionale, 2007.

governo sabauda, ma anche delle *élites* intellettuali e degli ambienti culturali e pedagogici, delle amministrazioni locali, nonché della gerarchia ecclesiastica e dell'articolata e multiforme realtà della Chiesa e del cattolicesimo piemontesi: dalle parrocchie agli istituti religiosi di antica e recente fondazione, dai seminari per il clero alle istituzioni deputate all'assistenza e alla cura spirituale dei poveri e delle classi popolari, fino alle varieguate espressioni del laicato cattolico, nel cui ambito un ruolo estremamente significativo erano destinati ad esercitare taluni esponenti dell'aristocrazia, quali ad esempio – per citare solo i più noti – Roberto e Costanza d'Azeglio, Tancredi e Giulia di Barolo, Cesare Alfieri di Sostegno.

Sulla scorta di tale imponente documentazione archivistica e a stampa, l'Autore ricostruisce i dibattiti sull'educazione e sulla scuola nel Piemonte dei primi decenni del secolo XIX, centrando l'attenzione sui mutamenti della vita economica e sociale prodotti dalle grandi trasformazioni dell'età rivoluzionaria e napoleonica e sul conseguente affermarsi di una diversa concezione del rapporto tra individuo e società civile e di una nuova idea di cittadinanza e di partecipazione alla vita comunitaria, nel cui ambito l'alfabetizzazione e l'acquisizione attraverso la scuola di un complesso di virtù civiche e sociali erano destinate a divenire un costume via via sempre più diffuso.

L'approdo alla società alfabetizzata e secolarizzata propria della modernità tardo ottocentesca – scrive al riguardo Chiosso – fu l'esito di un processo duraturo e complesso [...]. Nei primi decenni dell'Ottocento il processo di alfabetizzazione fece registrare una forte e, sotto certi aspetti, definitiva accelerazione dovuta a varie ragioni. In particolare si verificò il passaggio dal principio dell'istruzione "opportuna e utile", lasciata alla discrezionalità dei singoli, all'istruzione "necessaria", presupposto, a sua volta, del successivo passaggio al principio dell'istruzione sanzionata come "obbligatoria". Mentre nei primi decenni del secolo si poteva ancora vivere abbastanza normalmente senza padroneggiare la lettura e la scrittura [...], pochi decenni più tardi l'individuo analfabeta o anche parzialmente alfabetizzato è visto come un grave intralcio sul piano dell'evoluzione sociale ed economica e della stessa convivenza civile.

Il volume approfondisce le molteplici tappe e i complessi scenari di tale processo, prendendo le mosse dall'eredità francese e napoleonica, con i suoi fermenti innovatori e le sue istanze di modernizzazione dello Stato e della società destinate a lasciare «una traccia indelebile sulla funzione civile e sociale della scuola», e dalle vicende che contrassegnarono la restaurazione, all'indomani del 1815, della monarchia sabauda dopo la caduta di Napoleone.

Molto opportunamente, l'Autore illustra l'ampio dibattito che coinvolse uomini politici e intellettuali di diverso orientamento ideologico e culturale – da Gian Francesco Galeani Napione a Cesare Taparelli d'Azeglio, da Prospero Balbo agli esponenti della cosiddetta «Amicizia Cattolica», il sodalizio di laici cattolici fondato nel 1817 a Torino dall'abate Pio Brunone Lanteri con il fine di contrastare «i fermenti superstiti della rivoluzione e del libero pensiero»,

fino ai padri della Compagnia di Gesù – in ordine al ruolo e alle prerogative da assegnare all'istruzione e alla scuola nel quadro della riorganizzazione dello Stato sabaudo: un dibattito che era destinato, come nota Chiosso, a porre le premesse «per il passaggio delle scuole primarie ancora a base latina d'Antico Regime alla scuola elementare ottocentesca», ma anche, più in generale, a riproporre nel nuovo scenario della Restaurazione i temi del rapporto tra diffusione dell'istruzione e sviluppo socio-economico e civile del Paese.

L'introduzione nel 1822 del nuovo regolamento degli studi, redatto dal gesuita padre Luigi Taparelli d'Azeglio e destinato a rimanere in vigore fino al 1848, così come, su un diverso piano, la chiamata nel 1824 dei Fratelli delle Scuole Cristiane a Torino, ad opera di Carlo Felice, con il proposito di affidare loro l'incarico di gestire le scuole elementari della capitale, attestano il maturare, già al principio degli anni Venti, in un contesto politico e culturale ancora dominato dal conservatorismo e dalla sostanziale chiusura alle nuove istanze liberali, di quello che già Angiolo Gambaro aveva indicato come «un sentore alquanto più moderno nel valutare l'importanza dell'educazione del popolo»⁴, e che Chiosso segnala come l'espressione del definitivo superamento degli antichi e radicati pregiudizi – particolarmente acuitisi dopo l'esperienza rivoluzionaria e napoleonica – nei riguardi dell'istruzione popolare. «Pur nel suo sostanziale conservatorismo», nota l'Autore, il criterio di un'istruzione estesa anche ai ceti popolari e funzionale alla loro positiva integrazione nella vita sociale e nella realtà produttiva si «distanziava tuttavia di gran lunga dalle tesi dei reazionari che in quegli stessi anni negavano *tout court* il valore dell'istruzione» e additavano il pericolo insito nella propagazione dell'alfabeto in seno alle classi subalterne e agli strati più poveri e negletti della popolazione.

Accanto alle caute aperture e alle modeste realizzazioni che ebbero come protagonista, prima del 1848, il governo sabaudo, Giorgio Chiosso, come si è accennato, ricostruisce con ampiezza di riferimenti l'ampio ventaglio di iniziative ed esperienze promosse da «esponenti dell'aristocrazia, ricchi borghesi, vescovi e semplici sacerdoti» per diffondere, a Torino come nel resto del Piemonte, l'istruzione e l'educazione del popolo, nella convinzione che proprio attraverso la diffusione delle scuole e l'intensificazione delle opere educative destinate all'infanzia e alla gioventù di ambo i sessi (asili infantili, scuole serali per gli artigiani, laboratori professionali, oratori, convitti, conservatori femminili, educandati ecc.) fosse possibile porre in essere una strategia preventiva per combattere la miseria, la mendicizia, il disordine sociale e, nel contempo, assicurare l'ordinato progresso della vita civile.

Questa linea di tendenza generale – scrive l'Autore – si manifestò in forme particolarmente significative a Torino fin quasi ad identificarla, attraverso le esperienze dei cosiddetti “santi sociali” (Cottolengo, Cafasso, don Bosco, Murialdo e dei loro fiancheggiatori

⁴ Cfr. A. Gambaro, *La pedagogia italiana nell'età del Risorgimento*, in *Nuove questioni di storia della pedagogia*, 2, *Da Comenio al Risorgimento italiano*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1977, p. 589.

come Cocchi, Borel, Maccarelli, più tardi Faà di Bruno e Allamano), con un modello esemplare di carità coerente con le esigenze della società ottocentesca.

Alla costruzione di un simile modello diedero un significativo apporto ambienti e personalità del cattolicesimo piemontese di diversa formazione religiosa e culturale, come quelli legati direttamente o indirettamente all'esperienza dell'Amicizia Cattolica di Torino e alla spiritualità di matrice gesuitica e alfonisiana (si pensi a Pio Brunone Lanteri, a Cesare Taparelli d'Azeglio, ai marchesi di Barolo, al teologo Cesare Guala e a don Bosco), o quelli animati da altre forme di spiritualità (da Roberto e Costanza d'Azeglio all'abate Peyron, a don Cocchi e al Murialdo); così come fornirono il loro rilevante contributo taluni istituti religiosi maschili e femminili di antica e recente fondazione (dai già ricordati Fratelli delle Scuole Cristiane alle Suore di S. Giuseppe, dai Barnabiti alle Suore del Buon Pastore ecc.), chiamati a fondare e a dirigere scuole e altre istituzioni assistenziali ed educative a Torino e in altri centri del Piemonte.

Soprattutto a partire dagli anni Trenta e Quaranta, sottolinea l'Autore, matura in Piemonte una nuova generazione di studiosi di questioni pedagogiche ed educative e di uomini di scuola «che fanno dell'istruzione una battaglia civile e politica, concependola come un tassello essenziale per la costruzione di una società civile più dinamica e aperta, in una parola più moderna». È il caso, ad esempio, di personalità del calibro di Carlo Bon Compagni, Domenico Berti, Casimiro Danna, Antonio Rosmini, Giovanni Antonio Rayneri e Lorenzo Valerio, i quali forniranno un notevole contributo alla diffusione nel regno di Sardegna delle moderne teorie pedagogiche e delle nuove istanze educative e scolastiche elaborate in Francia, in Svizzera, in Belgio e nel resto d'Europa (si pensi alla ricezione delle opere di Pestalozzi, di Cochin, di Naville, di padre Girard e della Necker de Saussure; ai rapporti instaurati con i toscani Lambruschini, Capponi e Mayer, e con Ferrante Aporti, all'avvio delle prime esperienze di fondazione degli asili aportiiani).

Il volume di Giorgio Chiosso approfondisce i notevoli mutamenti che la nuova sensibilità e cultura educativa e scolastica maturata in Piemonte negli anni Trenta e Quaranta era destinata a produrre sulle tradizionali istituzioni assistenziali per la gioventù povera e abbandonata (si pensi, ad esempio all'Opera della Mendicità Istruita, sorta a Torino nel 1818) e, nel contempo, si sofferma su talune iniziative ed esperienze destinate a segnare profondamente e in modo duraturo la riflessione pedagogica e la progettualità educativa e scolastica sviluppatesi nel regno di Sardegna all'indomani della concessione dello Statuto albertino e dell'avvio della stagione risorgimentale. È il caso, in particolare, dell'attività di Antonio Rosmini e dei significativi sviluppi della tradizione pedagogica ed educativa rosminiana, così come, su un diverso piano, delle iniziative avviate a Torino e in altri centri del Piemonte da don Giovanni Bosco e dai Salesiani nell'ambito dell'istruzione artigiana, dell'animazione religiosa e civile della gioventù attraverso gli oratori e dell'editoria popolare e scolastica.

È anche il caso delle molteplici iniziative finalizzate alla formazione culturale e professionale degli insegnanti, nel cui ambito l'Autore approfondisce con dovizia di particolari le origini e i significativi sviluppi delle prime scuole di metodo e, nel contempo, l'avvio delle prime riviste specializzate per la scuola e per i maestri (si pensi, ad esempio, a «L'Educatore Primario», edito per i tipi di Paravia a partire dal 1844 e redatto da studiosi e insegnanti del calibro di Agostino Fecia, Giovan Battista Scagliotti, Vincenzo Troya, Vincenzo Garelli, Giovanni Scavia, Domenico Berti ecc.) e la produzione dei primi manuali e libri di lettura per le classi elementari improntati a moderni criteri didattici e pedagogici.

Al di là dei molteplici e inediti aspetti della vicenda scolastica ed educativa del Piemonte preunitario dell'Ottocento che il volume di Giorgio Chiosso ricostruisce in modo esemplare, il lavoro si segnala per la sua capacità di fornire un paradigma interpretativo generale capace di andare oltre gli schematismi e le ipoteche ideologiche che hanno contrassegnato per lunga pezza la storiografia educativa sulla stagione risorgimentale (e più in generale sulla prima metà del secolo XIX), e di restituirci una lettura a tutto tondo di una stagione politica e sociale, ma anche scolastica e pedagogica, ricca di fermenti innovatori, nella quale orientamenti ideologici e progetti culturali talora anche molto distanti, se non addirittura contrapposti, trovarono un punto d'incontro e una più alta sintesi nella prospettiva di dare corpo

a un'idea di educazione non solo disciplinatrice, ma concepita soprattutto in chiave "preventiva" e cioè volta a creare le condizioni perché l'inserimento di quote sempre più alte di persone di estrazione popolare nel consorzio borghese si svolgesse in modo lineare e "promozionale".

Michel Ostenc

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Les mouvements insurrectionnels piémontais de 1821 provoquèrent l'abdication de Victor-Emmanuel I^{er} et l'avènement de son frère Charles-Félix. Le nouveau souverain réprima durement le sursaut libéral des «Fédérés» et mena dans un premier temps une politique résolument conservatrice. Le système scolaire du royaume fut confié au père jésuite Luigi Taparelli D'Azeglio et les *Regie Patenti* du 23 juillet 1822, conçues à l'image de l'ordonnance royale française du 22 février 1816, allaient servir de fondement à l'enseignement piémontais jusqu'en 1848. L'instruction publique des couches populaires avait une forte connotation éthico-religieuse et les curés étaient autorisés à enseigner dans leur paroisse alors que les instituteurs laïques devaient solliciter une autorisation de l'Etat. Cette orientation cléricale et conservatrice resta pourtant sans lendemain. L'ascension de la bourgeoisie piémontaise diffusa les idées d'alphabétisa-

tion du peuple, le maître d'école remplaçant progressivement le prêtre et le carabinier dans les esprits. L'ouvrage de Giorgio Chiosso⁵ jette un éclairage tout à fait neuf sur ce changement qu'il attribue non seulement à la classe dirigeante libérale mais aussi à une nouvelle attitude du clergé.

Les initiatives en faveur des asiles pour enfants s'inspirèrent largement au Piémont de celles du prêtre Ferrante Aporti qui avait ouvert un premier établissement de ce type à Crémone en 1828. Il s'agissait de suppléer aux carences de la famille en matière d'éducation en apprenant leurs prières aux enfants âgés de deux à six ans, et en leur enseignant les rudiments de la lecture et de l'arithmétique. Aporti restait silencieux sur ses relations avec les milieux qui soutenaient le mouvement des écoles enfantines en France, pour ne pas s'exposer aux critiques. L'Eglise n'était pas la seule à s'y opposer et l'écrivain Giacomo Leopardi dénonçait vivement ces «tromperies maçonniques»; mais l'aristocratie piémontaise n'était pas tenue aux mêmes réserves et ses initiatives en la matière ressemblaient au modèle français. Le prince Carlo Bon Compagni, dont le rôle politique commencera avec le mouvement national de 1848, n'était pas seulement en contact avec Ferrante Aporti. Il connaissait les salles d'asile de Jean-Marie Denis Cochin, *L'Education progressive* de madame Necker de Saussure et le manuel d'enseignement primaire d'Ambroise Rendu. Ces influences avaient contribué à susciter dans les élites piémontaises une attention particulière pour les problèmes de l'enfance, même si les plus libéraux abordaient la question de l'éducation avec beaucoup de prudence comme en témoignent les écrits de Cavour.

Le *Regie Patenti* de 1822 avaient confié l'essentiel de l'enseignement primaire piémontais aux Frères des Ecoles chrétiennes qui jouirent d'une grande notoriété pendant la Restauration. Les écoles en langue vulgaire de ces frères «Ignorantelli» étaient organisées en trois niveaux qui séparaient l'étude de la lecture de celle de l'écriture et de l'arithmétique. Un seul maître suffisait à un grand nombre d'élèves: il s'occupait d'un seul écolier à la fois, pendant que les autres consolidaient leurs acquis par des exercices répétitifs. Il est certain que les Frères des Ecoles Chrétiennes contribuèrent à la diffusion de l'enseignement primaire et favorisèrent le renouveau des textes scolaires dans leurs manuels édités chez Pomba. Ils introduisirent la pratique des écoles du soir et celle de l'enseignement simultané; mais ils se trouvèrent au centre des polémiques des années 1840, lorsque les libéraux posèrent la question de l'éducation du peuple en se référant à l'enseignement mutuel d'origines lancastériennes. On leur reprocha des méthodes pédagogiques surannées et la place excessive des pratiques religieuses dans leurs écoles. L'opinion anti-libérale prit leur défense et leur enseignement fit figure de modèle pour les milieux conservateurs. Il n'est donc pas surprenant que le jugement de l'Histoire reste aujourd'hui très mitigé à leur égard.

⁵ G. Chiosso, *Carità educatrice e istruzione in Piemonte. Aristocratici, filantropi e preti di fronte all'educazione del popolo nel primo '800*, Torino, Società Editrice Internazionale, 2007.

Les critiques libérales s'inspiraient de méthodes nouvelles souvent empruntées à l'œuvre pédagogique du père Grégoire Girard. Elles donnaient une dimension particulière à l'enseignement de Pestalozzi en faisant de la mère un modèle et en considérant l'intuition comme le fondement de la pratique éducative. Cette pédagogie fortement imprégnée de culture romantique présentait une sensibilité spiritualiste. Alors que Pestalozzi privilégiait l'observation empirique, le père Girard soulignait la valeur éducative de la langue. La parole était une manifestation de la spécificité humaine, débitrice du principe théologique de l'incarnation. Le père Girard insistait aussi sur les méthodes d'enseignement mutuel et sur la dimension sociale de l'éducation dans son *Cours éducatif de langue maternelle*, un ouvrage qui connut une très large diffusion. Giorgio Chiosso cite deux institutions qui illustrent parfaitement l'engouement philanthropique des élites piémontaises pour l'éducation du peuple. L'Opera della Mendicizia Istruita a recueilli de 1816 à 1861 des enfants issus de familles modestes des banlieues turinoises. Cette jeunesse pauvre et abandonnée recevait une formation professionnelle adaptée aux activités économiques de la ville. Le travail du bois, du cuir et du fer conduisait aux métiers de menuisier, d'ébéniste ou de cordonnier. Une discipline stricte régnait dans les ateliers et les apprentis étaient soumis au port d'un uniforme. L'œuvre disposait d'écoles dominicales où enseignaient les Frères des Ecoles Chrétiennes. On y accédait après un examen d'admission et les cours, dispensés entre 7 heures 30 et 15 heures 30, comportaient l'enseignement du catéchisme. La création d'une salle d'asile au palais Barolo était toute aussi révélatrice. Le salon de la marquise Falletti di Barolo était fréquenté par des conservateurs, mais aussi par Silvio Pellico après sa libération de la prison autrichienne du Spielberg et même par Cavour. Le marquis avait noué des contacts avec l'abbé Dupanloup et il voulut imiter les Pastoret qui avaient ouvert une salle pour enfants dans leur palais parisien. Les motivations religieuses de Barolo n'étaient pas exemptes d'arrière-pensées politiques, l'éducation étant pour lui un moyen de prévenir les crises sociales. Les tenants du «Vieux monde» qui l'entouraient soutenaient qu'elle permettait à chacun de trouver le bonheur en restant dans sa condition. Ils appréciaient dans l'œuvre de Barolo la capacité du christianisme à lutter contre les maux qui affligeaient le peuple et dénonçaient l'immoralité des applications du progrès au système éducatif. La centaine d'enfants de la salle d'asile provenait de familles indigentes. L'assiduité en classe devait être respectée et des règles de comportement étaient inculquées aux élèves, dans l'espoir qu'elles s'étendraient aux parents; mais les châtiments corporels étaient sévèrement proscrits. Deux institutrices devaient suffire pour apprendre à lire et à compter. Le programme scolaire prévoyait aussi l'enseignement du catéchisme, de l'histoire sainte et de quelques mouvements de gymnastique. Dans son ouvrage *Sull'educazione della prima infanzia*, le marquis de Barolo considérait la santé morale comme étroitement liée à la santé physique. Cette théorie de l'endurcissement héritée des *Pensées sur l'éducation* de John Locke avait été repri-

se par les pédagogues sensualistes; mais Barolo était un organisateur plus qu'un pédagogue. Il remplaça les institutrices par des Sœurs de la Providence, tout en souhaitant un noviciat d'un niveau culturel modeste qui lui paraissait plus adapté à la formation des maîtresses de salle d'asile. Le marquis défendit l'œuvre des Frères des Ecoles Chrétiennes lorsqu'elle fut contestée; mais il s'efforça de trouver un compromis entre la stricte application de leurs méthodes et les exigences de la tradition. Il fallait conserver la gratuité de l'école du peuple, mais suppléer aux carences d'un enseignement en langue vulgaire incapable de servir de propédeutique au latin. A partir de 1835, les élèves appelés à poursuivre des études classiques furent accueillis dans des écoles communales qui les préparaient à cet enseignement. Quant aux salles d'asile, elles reçurent un agrément officiel en 1839, lorsqu'à l'initiative d'un groupe de libéraux où figuraient Cavour et Bon Compagni, le souverain autorisa la fondation de la Società promotrice di Asili e Scuole infantili.

Le renouveau éducatif piémontais ne s'arrêtait pourtant pas à la philanthropie des élites laïques. Giorgio Chiosso l'insère dans une renaissance religieuse liée à une nouvelle génération de prêtres. Certes, le clergé piémontais paraissait opposé à tout changement; mais ce misonéisme s'accompagnait d'un zèle d'une grande élévation morale qui lui avait permis de nouer des liens étroits avec le peuple. A partir des années 1840, les séminaires privilégièrent les exigences pastorales sur l'enseignement universitaire de la théologie. Ils eurent recours à la morale d'Alphonse de Liguori dans une spiritualité plus encline à la compréhension et au pardon qu'au rigorisme janséniste. Le prêtre devenait l'éducateur de ses ouailles en interprétant le message évangélique comme un soutien à la dignité humaine et au bon citoyen. Giorgio Chiosso nous éclaire sur le rôle des idées pédagogiques de Rosmini dans le mouvement piémontais en faveur de l'éducation du peuple. Le «prêtre de Rovereto» entendait d'abord restaurer une conception de la connaissance comme illumination de l'esprit, ruinée par l'empirisme du XVIII^e siècle. Elle unissait l'être réel à l'être idéal, et cette synthèse se nouait dans l'être moral. Cette philosophie qui fait de l'être une règle de vérité et un principe d'éthique était bien connue des milieux catholiques cultivés de Turin. Rosmini estimait que les peuples avaient le droit de disposer d'eux-mêmes, mais que les droits de l'homme étaient bien antérieurs à ceux de l'Etat. Sa conception des relations de l'Eglise et de l'Etat se tenait à égale distance du protectionnisme josphiste autrichien et du laïcisme des «Carbonari». La diffusion de ses œuvres pédagogiques commença au milieu des années 1830; mais il était déjà connu pour deux livres parus en 1823 et 1826 *Della educazione cristiana* et *Sull'unità dell'educazione*. Dans ces ouvrages, Rosmini considérait la religion chrétienne comme un principe fondamental d'éducation puisque sa morale servait de couronnement à tout enseignement. La pensée de François de Sales et de Philippe Neri imprégnait la conception rosminienne d'une éducation du cœur sollicitant à la fois le sentiment et la volonté, qui était étroitement associée à la formation de l'intelligence, les deux notions s'influençant réciproquement. L'intuition intellectuelle et la sensation

fournissaient à l'individu l'idée de l'être et du sentiment de soi; mais seule la philosophie permettait cette connaissance de la nature humaine indispensable à toute action éducative. Giorgio Chiosso décèle une importante nouveauté dans la pédagogie de Rosmini, la vérité n'étant plus un fait acquis mais une découverte. Une étude minutieuse de la correspondance du «prêtre de Rovereto» avec le directeur de l'Ecole normale de Côme permet de brosser le tableau du maître idéal, modèle plus proche de l'image du père que de celle de l'instituteur. L'influence de Rosmini sur les catholiques piémontais était pourtant essentiellement politique. Il prônait après 1830 un accord entre l'Eglise et l'Etat qui séduisait les libéraux turinois tentés par un rapprochement avec les catholiques anti-rigoristes.

La presse pédagogique piémontaise était fortement influencée par le modèle français. Giorgio Chiosso en fait le tour en citant le «Journal d'Education», bulletin d'une Société pour l'instruction élémentaire destinée à encourager la fondation de nouvelles écoles, «L'Echo des Ecoles primaires» du baron Joseph Marie de Gerando qui entendait promouvoir les effets de la loi Guizot dans l'enseignement, «L'Ami de l'enfance» qui nouait des liens entre les philanthropes s'intéressant aux salles d'asile, le *Manuel général de l'instruction primaire* et le «Journal général de l'Instruction publique». La presse d'éducation et d'enseignement a joué un grand rôle dans la diffusion des conceptions pédagogiques de Rosmini. Il appartenait à un spécialiste comme Giorgio Chiosso d'en faire la démonstration à l'aide de «L'Educatore primario», un journal fondé en 1845 et fortement influencé par l'exigence d'une conciliation entre libéralisme et foi chrétienne. Au premier rang des collaborateurs figurait Giovanni Rayneri, un prêtre qui se consacrait à l'enseignement tout en continuant à s'adonner à des études philosophiques. La promotion de l'éducation devenant pour lui un acte de foi, il multiplia les cénacles et utilisa ses cours à l'université de Turin pour diffuser les idées de Rosmini: critique de l'empirisme éducatif hérité de l'illuminisme et universalité du principe chrétien garantissant l'unité de l'éducation. Les disciples de Rosmini étaient persuadés qu'on ne portait pas atteinte au renouveau de l'inspiration chrétienne dans l'éducation en supprimant le contrôle de l'Eglise sur l'école. Ils vont collaborer à l'élaboration de la loi Bon Compagni de 1848 qui procédera à la laïcisation du système scolaire piémontais. Cependant, la théologie de la Croix de Rosmini s'exprimait dans *Les cinq plaies de l'Eglise* sous forme d'exaltation et de sacrifice. Ce christocentrisme restait dénué des molleses mystiques et des complaisances intimistes du romantisme; mais associé aux *Constitutions sur la justice sociale*, il provoqua la mise à l'Index des œuvres du «La Menais italien» au moment où le synode des évêques piémontais dénonçait la nouvelle législation scolaire du royaume.

Les débats d'inspiration rosminienne menés par Giovanni Rayneri à la Società d'Istruzione e d'Educazione de Turin sont d'une importance fondamentale pour comprendre le passage de la loi Bon Compagni aux dispositions scolaires suivantes. Ils s'exprimaient dans «L'Istituto» en polémiquant ouvertement avec les tenants du catholicisme intransigeant. Pendant que le libéralisme catholique

de Domenico Berti s'orientait vers une séparation définitive de l'Eglise et de l'Ecole, les critiques de Giovanni Bertini à la hiérarchie ecclésiastique débouchaient sur des positions anti-confessionnelles où l'Etat s'occupait seul de la formation morale et religieuse des enfants. Rayneri concluait enfin à la nécessité d'une refonte des manuels scolaires. Les considérations philosophiques qui sous-tendaient le débat piémontais des années 1850 étaient éloignées des préoccupations de l'Eglise de France. La loi Guizot réservant la première place à l'instruction morale et religieuse à l'école primaire, le cœur du débat se situait dans l'enseignement secondaire. La situation était différente au Piémont où le philosophe hégélien Bertrando Spaventa préconisait une plus grande intervention de l'Etat en matière scolaire pour limiter les prétentions de l'Eglise à jouir d'une liberté illimitée; mais Domenico Berti rejetait tout monopole d'Etat, tout en lui reconnaissant le droit et même le devoir de fixer les grandes orientations de la politique scolaire. La Società d'Istruzione e d'Educazione n'acceptait par contre la liberté de l'enseignement qu'au niveau universitaire et Cavour reportait à plus tard son extension à l'ensemble du système scolaire. Sous l'effet des révolutions de 1848 ou de la mise à l'Index de son œuvre, la pensée de Rosmini évoluait vers une défense des droits de l'Eglise à éduquer. Certes, les pouvoirs publics pouvaient conserver un droit de regard sur l'école dans le cadre d'une libre concurrence; mais l'Eglise devait conserver un rôle central en matière d'éducation et l'Etat se voyait nier toute capacité éducative propre. Cette position se rapprochait de celle des catholiques intransigeants, bien que Rosmini restât fidèle aux principes d'autonomie et de concurrence. L'Eglise et l'Etat devenaient deux entités complémentaires collaborant au perfectionnement moral de la personne. Ainsi, après avoir considéré l'individu comme la fin principale de toute initiative éducative, Rosmini critiquait toute tentation jacobine de ramener la dynamique de l'éducation à des projets polémiques.

Pour des raisons historiques et géographiques, le Piémont était imprégné d'un esprit salésien fait d'optimisme, d'équilibre et de discrétion. Ce filon se mêlait à celui de Philippe Neri, resté vif lui aussi. Cette fusion n'était pas surprenante, la spiritualité philippine étant fondée sur une foi dans la nature humaine pleine de simplicité et de mansuétude. Elle se manifesta chez Jean Bosco qui érigea François de Sales en modèle de son action éducative. Prêtre à Turin en 1841, il était préoccupé par le sort des enfants pauvres du faubourg de Valdocco et les avait réunis dans un Oratoire. Giorgio Chiosso en avait déjà fait une étude remarquable dans un travail qui illustrait le renouveau éducatif du Piémont de Charles-Albert⁶. L'auteur suit l'évolution de la pensée de Jean Bosco depuis ses positions rigoristes du séminaire de Chieri jusqu'au style pastoral de sa démarche éducative. Le prêtre était convaincu de la nécessité d'un recours aux traditions pour transmettre le message évangélique au peuple,

⁶ G. Chiosso, *L'oratorio di Don Bosco e il rinnovamento educativo nel Piemonte carlo albertino*, in P. Braido (a cura di), *Don Bosco nella Chiesa e al servizio dell'umanità*, Roma, LAS, 1987.

et il dénonçait dans ses premiers écrits la dérive d'une culture classique conduisant à l'idéologie néfaste des précurseurs de la Révolution française; mais sa pédagogie s'inséra dans le débat sur l'éducation qui secouait le Piémont de son temps. Les radicaux aspiraient à une société moderne, avec une active participation des masses populaires, et les modérés ne concevaient l'éducation du peuple qu'avec une dimension morale et religieuse. Le choix de Jean Bosco s'en réclama, tout en se référant à des options humanitaires plus larges encore.

Il avait trouvé chez les prêtres qui sillonnaient les montagnes de son enfance des figures paternelles de substitution; mais ce sacerdoce lui paraissait trop enclin à la transcendance. Il avait connu au séminaire la pédagogie de la crainte, et il aurait préféré une théologie morale à celle dont le dogmatisme formait les prêtres aux controverses. La pédagogie de Jean Bosco réagissait contre ces excès par la prévention et la participation; mais ces principes s'actualisaient dans une atmosphère où la tendresse devenait la plus grande vertu de l'éducateur. Jean Bosco n'a d'ailleurs pas créé de spiritualité originale; il a finalisé très librement son action éducative à partir d'idées ignaciennes ou salésiennes, et d'emprunts à Alphonse de Liguori ou Philippe Neri. Le choix qu'il a fait entre le rigorisme de sa formation cléricale et le salésianisme de sa vocation personnelle le conduisit à un mariage heureux entre ecclésiologie théorique et ecclésiologie vécue. Le fameux thème de la prévention, qui faisait partie de la modernité de sa pédagogie, avait été adopté dès le début du siècle par des congrégations enseignantes comme les frères maristes de Marcellin Champagnat. Il avait été repris par Ferrante Aporti, l'un des premiers à prendre en compte le caractère préventif d'une action caritative organisée. L'école primaire devenait ainsi une institution de prévention de l'immoralité de l'enfance et la religion un moyen de l'exercer. La gymnastique figurait parmi les enseignements modernes de l'Oratoire. Elle y fut introduite par le prêtre Giovanni Cocchi, avec l'appui d'amis du progrès comme Cavour ou Bon Compagni. Le travail était une discipline plus innovante encore, Jean Bosco remplaçant l'optique traditionnelle d'une «pratique à la vie vertueuse» par une conception sociale acquise au contact des enfants de la rue. L'initiation salésienne au travail ne relevait pas d'une éthique productiviste et elle n'était pas seulement une mortification conduisant à la religion. Sans doute, les libéraux proches de Cavour concevaient-ils l'éducation du peuple en fonction d'une modernisation économique du pays, et sa formation professionnelle comme un moyen d'insertion sociale; mais Jean Bosco ignorait ces considérations utilitaires et il leur préférerait celles des pédagogues rosminiens selon lesquelles l'instruction donnait accès au royaume de Dieu.

Il apparaît clairement que Jean Bosco était un éducateur plus qu'un théoricien de l'éducation. Il s'inspira de pédagogues de la Restauration catholique qui voyaient dans la religion une garantie morale, et resta étranger au devoir d'éducation de l'Etat conduisant à la laïcisation de l'instruction; mais Giorgio Chiosso montre que l'insertion de sa pédagogie dans un système religieux n'en altère pas les effets progressistes grâce à l'influence du courant anti-rigoriste

qui a trouvé un terrain d'élection en terre piémontaise. L'ouverture du pensionnat, la construction de l'église de saint François de Sales, le renouveau des bâtiments de l'oratoire de Valdocco, la propagande anti-protestante contre les Vaudois et les «Letture Cattoliche» sont un premier pas vers la société salésienne qui illustre le dessein de Jean Bosco d'aller bien au-delà de Turin et du Piémont. L'ouvrage de Giorgio Chiosso s'achève sur une intéressante étude de la formation des maîtres. Il représente l'aboutissement d'importantes recherches dont plusieurs publications nous avaient permis de suivre le cheminement⁷. Ces travaux se nourrissent d'archives peu connues et d'une analyse des textes qui allient la sûreté de la documentation à la rigueur de la méthode. Ils apportent une contribution essentielle à l'histoire du Piémont qui a toujours suscité des débats passionnés entre les spécialistes. Le rôle de l'école dans l'éveil national et la prise de conscience du sentiment unitaire ont récemment fait l'objet du livre de Maria Cristina Morandini, *Scuola e nazione. Maestri e istruzione popolare nella costituzione dello Stato unitario (1848-1861)*⁸. Giorgio Chiosso en décèle les prémices dans le mouvement d'éducation du peuple que connaît le Piémont pré-unitaire. Le rapprochement d'un libéralisme modérément laïque et d'un anti-rigorisme religieux conduit à la loi scolaire Bon Compagni et appelle à des «connubi» ultérieurs. La thèse néo-guelfe de Francesco Traniello d'un catholicisme conciliateur d'inspiration rosminienne et salésienne s'en trouve confortée⁹. Elle ne manquera pas de susciter les critiques des tenants du jacobinisme et de l'illuminisme piémontais; mais le livre de Giorgio Chiosso est d'une grande solidité, et ses démonstrations étayées par des connaissances pédagogiques et philosophiques étendues paraissent difficilement contestables.

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Molto opportunamente Giorgio Chiosso raccoglie in questo volume vari saggi sparsi, uniti da un filo comune, inquadrandoli con una riflessione complessiva e storiograficamente aggiornata relativa al dibattito sui temi educativi nel Piemonte della Restaurazione¹⁰. Proprio in questa fase si posero infatti

⁷ Cfr. G. Chiosso, *L'educazione del popolo nei giornali piemontesi per la scuola*, in Id. (a cura di), *Scuola e stampa nel Risorgimento. Giornali e riviste per l'educazione prima dell'Unità*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 1989, pp. 25-61; G. Chiosso, *Educare e istruire il popolo a Torino nel primo Ottocento*, in L. Pazzaglia (a cura di), *Chiesa e prospettive educative in Italia tra Restaurazione e Unificazione*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1994, pp. 201-251.

⁸ M.C. Morandini, *Scuola e nazione. Maestri e istruzione popolare nella costituzione dello Stato unitario (1848-1861)*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2003.

⁹ Cfr. F. Traniello, *Cattolicesimo conciliatorista. Religione e cultura nella tradizione rosminiana lombardo-piemontese 1825-1870*, Milano, Marzorati, 1970.

le basi di quello che si può a ragione definire un vero e proprio laboratorio pedagogico, alimentato dall'incrociarsi di fermenti diversi ma fecondi, animato da preoccupazioni in gran parte convergenti. Il contesto è quello di una società e di ceti dirigenti profondamente scossi dall'esperienza rivoluzionaria e determinati a evitarne la ripetizione, soprattutto di fronte alle incipienti trasformazioni che investivano, in particolare, la capitale del Regno. Torino infatti, se pur ancora profondamente segnata dalle caratteristiche delle città d'antico regime, gravitante intorno ai consumi di lusso dei ceti nobiliari e della corte e al mondo della burocrazia e in genere dei servizi, era oggetto in quegli anni di un processo di continua immigrazione.

Questa folta, fluttuante popolazione, non più tenuta a freno dai tradizionali vincoli comunitari, e, per la sua povertà e per il suo modo di vita, ai margini delle regole dominanti, ispirava paura o per lo meno preoccupazione: per questo assunse una nuova centralità il tema della carità educatrice, riabilitante, che non si limitasse a somministrare al povero soccorsi materiali, destinati a lasciare il tempo che trovavano, abituandolo anzi all'ozio, ma avviasse un percorso di rigenerazione. Si tratta di un tema su cui in tutta Europa si svolsero discussioni e iniziative, del resto ben conosciute nel Regno Sardo, come dimostra la trama di rapporti ricostruita dall'Autore, che legavano i marchesi Giulia e Tancredi Falletti di Barolo, tra le più importanti figure di benefattori piemontesi, a esponenti della beneficenza d'Olttralpe.

Tra i protagonisti del rinnovato slancio assistenziale che percorreva il mondo subalpino si trovavano appunto nobili per i quali la carità costituiva un dovere sociale (e, aggiungeremmo, una fonte di prestigio), cui si affiancarono sacerdoti e laici animati dall'esigenza di ricristianizzare la società post-rivoluzionaria, borghesi in cerca di responsabilità pubbliche, congregazioni desiderose di compiere opere di carità e ampliare il pubblico delle proprie scuole. Le motivazioni che animavano la beneficenza erano quindi variegate, e vanno lette non solo e non tanto come frutto della volontà di addomesticare i ceti popolari, ma anche, come sottolinea Giorgio Chiosso, alla luce di clima culturale segnato da una più intensa spiritualità. Soprattutto tra quanti, come i Barolo, erano animati da vivi sentimenti religiosi, per non parlare ovviamente di preti come don Bosco e don Cocchi, si avverte una volontà di bene e un interesse sincero per i poveri, certo superiore – notiamo – a quello dimostrato da non pochi filantropi su posizioni liberistiche e neo-malthusiane. Per questi ultimi il problema della povertà andava affrontato preventivamente, offrendo ai ceti popolari un'istruzione cautamente dosata, che inculcasse i valori borghesi del risparmio e della morigeratezza e consentisse loro di meglio muoversi nell'ambito di un mercato dominato dalle leggi della più sfrenata concorrenza, mentre doveva essere scoraggiato a tutti i costi il ricorso alle istituzioni assisten-

¹⁰ G. Chiosso, *Carità educatrice e istruzione in Piemonte. Aristocratici, filantropi e preti di fronte all'educazione del popolo nel primo '800*, Torino, Società Editrice Internazionale, 2007.

ziali. Il rifiuto della carità legale, cioè di una carità organizzata dalle strutture pubbliche, *leit-motiv* del dibattito del primo Ottocento, era del resto comune anche ai cattolici più conseguenti, muovendo però dalla rivendicazione del primato della Chiesa in questo campo e da una concezione di carità cristiana quale mezzo di salvezza individuale e derivazione di un principio essenzialmente divino.

Chiosso nota come proprio i modelli di spiritualità cattolica che si affermarono in Piemonte in questi anni, all'insegna di una pietà calda e affettuosa, di una concezione della perfezione cristiana come obiettivo da perseguire attraverso l'amore di Dio e del prossimo, fossero alla base del rinnovato attivismo nel campo caritativo. Osserviamo peraltro che uno dei maggiori esponenti delle rinnovate attività assistenziali e del movimento degli asili in Francia, il Cochin, era di formazione giansenista, e che pure i protestanti furono particolarmente attivi in questi anni nel campo della beneficenza, a sottolineare la pluralità delle strategie e degli impulsi che confluirono verso l'intensificarsi delle iniziative assistenziali.

Anche i cattolici che muovevano da un'impostazione caritativa più tradizionale mostrarono tuttavia, secondo Chiosso, capacità di innovazione, non solo grazie al nuovo rilievo dato all'istruzione, ma altresì attraverso le capacità organizzative e amministrative messe in campo. A questo proposito ci si può chiedere se non si possa forse cogliere una qualche forma di adesione o perlomeno di riconoscimento delle leggi dell'economia liberale, e persino delle istanze illuministiche che suggerivano interventi razionali e organizzati, non affidati alla casualità e alla discrezionalità, gestiti con competenza da personale esperto. L'Autore illustra l'articolata struttura assistenziale creata dai Barolo, sulla cui efficienza e modernità è lecito esprimere qualche dubbio, per lo meno in relazione alle qualità delle competenze richieste alle maestre, che per Tancredi svolgevano un compito addirittura «volgare» e «abietto»: non a caso, su questo aspetto vi fu un aspro scontro col Rosmini (che tacciò lo stesso marchese di incompetenza), secondo il quale le suore della Provvidenza, cui furono affidati per un breve periodo gli asili fondati dai Barolo, avrebbero dovuto avere una cultura meno superficiale. Inoltre, la volontà di promozione individuale e sociale delle giovani tenacemente perseguita dalla volitiva Giulietta vedeva il suo momento culminante, in particolare nel caso delle «pericolate», nella segregazione in monastero e in un duro regime penitenziale dalle conseguenze anche pesanti sulla loro salute, talora imposto più che liberamente accettato. Se paiono eccessivamente riduttive le chiavi di lettura di simili realtà e in genere dell'universo assistenziale offerte da Goffman e Foucault con i loro concetti di «istituzione totale» e di «società disciplinare», sarebbe però proficuo a nostro giudizio non interpretarla solo alla luce di un intenso amore del prossimo, ma interrogarsi anche sui condizionamenti subiti dai poveri e da quanti erano oggetto dell'intervento rieducativo, oltre che sulla natura di scambio propria del rapporto tra benefattore e beneficiario.

Giorgio Chiosso, d'altro canto, ci invita a superare i pregiudizi di una storiografia influenzata dalle critiche che i liberali rivolsero alla realtà educativa della Restaurazione, non tanto all'opera dei marchesi, unanimemente apprezzata, quanto alla politica scolastica sabauda, di cui indubbiamente si enfatizzarono le chiusure e gli insoddisfacenti risultati, e ai Fratelli delle Scuole Cristiane, chiamati nel regno sabauda da Carlo Felice. Di questi ultimi l'Autore rivaluta sostanzialmente l'operato, notando il carattere innovativo dell'approccio educativo, all'insegna della competenza degli insegnanti e del metodo simultaneo, e le molteplici direzioni del loro impegno (dalle scuole inferiori a quelle professionali ai libri di testo).

Indubbiamente, certi giudizi un po' *tranchant* sui Fratelli, cui la storiografia lasalliana ha contrapposto una ricostruzione un po' troppo agiografica, risentono del clima creatosi in seguito all'accentuarsi dello scontro tra Stato e Chiesa. Ma se la *Conduite* costituisce un raffinato strumento pedagogico e soprattutto, come ha dimostrato Foucault, si può porre all'origine di molti dispositivi disciplinari ancora funzionanti nella scuola moderna, va detto che non tutte le valutazioni critiche dei contemporanei si possono tacciare di anticlericalismo, cogliendo anzi un certo inaridirsi dello spirito originario e una progressiva inadeguatezza rispetto alle nuove esigenze, per il basso livello dell'insegnamento, frammentato in una molteplicità disparata di nozioni, affidato a maestri talora giovanissimi e ignoranti, per le pratiche religiose insistenti e ripetute che rischiavano di «far pigliare a noia la preghiera, in vece – come osservava Pietro di Santa Rosa – di farla amare e rispettare».

Fatto sta che all'interno del mondo cattolico, come riconosce anche Giorgio Chiosso, e tra gli stessi ecclesiastici non vi era unanimità di vedute. Di particolare interesse sono ad esempio le pagine che l'Autore dedica al Rosmini, agli ambienti gravitanti intorno all'Università e alla Facoltà di Teologia, di cui mette in luce l' incisiva azione sulla politica scolastica del Piemonte ormai divenuto liberale. Per alcuni anni costoro controllarono la scuola e il mondo accademico e si fecero promotori del rinnovamento educativo, attraverso la Società d'Istruzione e di Educazione e vari giornali pedagogici e libri per il popolo e per l'infanzia, come è stato ricostruito da Maria Cristina Morandini e dallo stesso Chiosso anche attraverso le sue importanti ricerche sulla stampa e sul mondo dell'editoria.

La rete di relazioni che strinse i vari protagonisti agì a vari livelli e abbracciò personaggi di grande levatura tra i quali spicca Niccolò Tommaseo, esule a Torino dal 1854 e collaboratore prima de «L'Educatore» e quindi de «L'Istituto», riviste modeste ma la cui capacità di influenza e la cui penetrazione capillare sono giustamente sottolineate dall'Autore.

La collaborazione di questo gruppo col governo costituzionale, che condusse alla legge Boncompagni, non dovette essere certo apprezzata dai cattolici intransigenti, gravitanti intorno all'arcivescovo Frasoni, a «L'Armonia», e ad altri gioinaletti di minore spessore: contrapposizione che tende a essere posta

un po' in ombra dall'Autore. Ma è anche vero che le divergenze furono spesso (non sempre però) superate nel nome di un approccio pragmatico ai problemi e di un comune fervore nell'operare in campo assistenziale ed educativo. Non è un caso che il Tommaseo, pur così critico verso il Piemonte, affermasse che uno dei suoi punti di forza era proprio il clero, colto e non servile, partecipe della vita civile.

Il volume di Giorgio Chiosso ha quindi il merito di offrire alla riflessione una molteplicità di spunti preziosi per la ricostruzione delle vicende del Piemonte preunitario, che tanto influirono sui successivi sviluppi della storia nazionale, e ricorda alla storiografia risorgimentista la necessità di dedicare maggiore attenzione alle battaglie cruciali sul tema educativo, e alle iniziative attraverso le quali si operò concretamente per l'«incivilimento» del popolo e il superamento dell'Antico Regime.

Notices Recensioni

Giorgio Chiosso (a cura di), *TESEO '900. Editori scolastico-educativi del Novecento*, Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, 2008, 713 pp. + Cd-Rom.

Après le premier *TESEO* – un titre qui est l'acronyme formé par les initiales de *Tipografi e editori scolastico-educativi dell'Ottocento* – paru en 2003, on attendait avec impatience le deuxième tome, qui devait poursuivre ce recensement pour les éditeurs-typographes dont l'activité a débuté au XX^e siècle. Voilà qui est chose faite: ce deuxième volume vient de paraître chez la même maison d'édition (Editrice Bibliografica) sous le titre de *TESEO '900. Editori scolastico-educativi del primo Novecento*. Comme pour le premier tome, nous sommes en présence d'un monument de 713 pages in *quarto*, qui est un

modèle de recherche historique. Tout comme le précédent, il est le résultat d'un important programme scientifique collectif: sous la direction de Giorgio Chiosso, pendant quatre ans (de 2003 à 2007), cinquante-huit chercheurs appartenant à six Universités (Turin, Bologne, Florence, Padoue, Macerata et Udine) ont exploré le secteur de l'édition scolaire et éducative pendant la première moitié du XX^e siècle; parmi ceux-ci, trois (Luisa Lombardi, Raffaele Tumino et Fabio Targhetta) se sont distingués par un véritable travail de bénédictins, en confectionnant respectivement quatre-vingt-quatre, quatre-vingt-huit et quarante-trois notices d'autant de maison d'édition. L'opération est un succès remarquable, par l'ampleur de l'opération déployée et par la minutie avec laquelle la tâche a

été affrontée, si on tient compte de l'étendue du domaine et de l'état fragmentaire des sources, dispersées dans toute la péninsule – même si les régions où l'activité des éditeurs-typographes a été la plus importante se comptent sur les doigts d'une seule main (Lombardie, Toscane, Piémont, Sicile).

Par rapport au premier volume, le second prend en considération tous les éditeurs-typographes du secteur du livre scolaire et éducatif, mais privilégie les fonctions éditoriales: ce choix est dicté par l'évolution que le domaine a connue au XX^e siècle, lorsque l'éditeur s'est imposé comme la figure majeure, en se différenciant du libraire et du typographe. La production s'est modernisée, le marché s'est élargi et les entreprises les plus fragiles ont disparu du tissu industriel et économique. Entre 1900 et 1943, sont en activité quelque 800 maisons d'édition grandes et petites, mais une moitié d'entre elles a commencé son activité au siècle précédent et n'est donc plus recensée dans *TESEO '900*. C'est pourquoi on passe des 601 *schede* (fiches descriptives) du *TESEO Ottocento* aux 453 *schede* du *TESEO Novecento*, réunissant toutes les maisons d'édition nées dans la première moitié du XX^e siècle, qui ont été à l'origine de la production à caractère didactique et pédagogique en Italie. Les 453 entreprises éditoriales recensées ont été identifiées à partir de toutes les sources bibliographiques et archivistiques existantes, comme les catalogues libraires collectifs et les brochures et prospectus publiés individuellement par les édi-

teurs-typographes de la péninsule, puis les répertoires bibliographiques. Les archives municipales ont aussi permis aux chercheurs de reconstituer les vicissitudes des petites maisons d'édition dans toutes les provinces de la péninsule.

Comme dans le premier volume, ces 453 éditeurs-typographes font l'objet de notices descriptives (*schede*) qui sont autant de petites monographies reconstituant leur histoire. Elles sont composées, pour chacune d'entre elles, de deux parties. La première partie constitue la carte d'identité de la maison: son nom, son lieu d'implantation, sa durée de vie (indiquée par les dates de début et fin d'activité) sont suivis de la liste de tous les auteurs et collaborateurs, avec leurs fonctions et compétences propres. La deuxième partie, plus descriptive, détaille les vicissitudes économiques et technologiques de l'entreprise et de ses propriétaires, et présente une analyse de ses publications et de leur évolution. Une bibliographie critique accompagne et complète chaque fiche.

Par la richesse et la précision de leurs contenus, la portée des études regroupées dans *TESEO '900* s'étend à plusieurs domaines de la vie économique et culturelle de la péninsule dans la première moitié du XX^e siècle.

Le premier domaine est celui de l'histoire de l'enseignement, qui est traitée non seulement dans les fiches analytiques, mais également dans une série d'essais préliminaires. Sept synthèses, rédigées par des spécialistes italiens d'histoire de l'éducation, sont

consacrées à l'évolution des livres et manuels scolaires, ou bien de leurs contenus disciplinaires, pendant la période allant du début du XX^e siècle à la fin de la seconde guerre mondiale. Les deux premières portent sur les changements que la réforme Gentile de 1923 et les programmes idéalistes (élaborés par le pédagogue Giuseppe Lombardo-Radice) ont apporté dans les années Vingt à l'école primaire. Elles portent respectivement sur: les livres de lecture de l'école primaire et la réforme Gentile (Sabrina Fava); les livres en dialecte et les almanachs régionaux pour les écoles primaires introduits par Lombardo-Radice (Alberto Barausse et Michele D'Alessio). Lors de la mise au pas de l'école dans les années Trente, les «sussidiari» sont introduits comme «livres d'État uniques pour toutes les écoles», que le régime imposa, comme les autres manuels, dans tout le premier degré (Maria Cristina Morandini). Viennent ensuite, selon un ordre chronologique inversé, des synthèses portant sur l'enseignement de disciplines particulières, comme l'éducation physique et le sport (Nicola Barbieri), les langues étrangères (Nadia Minerva) et les atlas de géographie (Eleonora Cima).

Le deuxième domaine est celui de l'histoire de l'édition, pour laquelle l'objet marchand «livre d'école et d'éducation» – certainement le plus important du marché éditorial – continua d'être le moteur d'une dynamique économique puissante pendant la première moitié du XX^e siècle. La reconstitution dans le détail de l'évolution du monde de l'entreprise édito-

riale et typographique permet de comprendre les stratégies économiques et technologiques utilisées par ses leaders à tous les niveaux. *TESEO* permet de vérifier le déclin, voire la disparition du secteur scolaire de certaines maisons d'édition, puissantes au siècle précédent, tandis que d'autres connaissent un accroissement important de leur production et montent en puissance, notamment grâce au fascisme. De fait, la politique scolaire et éducative du régime est à l'origine des grands bouleversements que connaîtra le secteur dans l'entre-deux-guerres. En 1923, la réforme Gentile et les nouveaux programmes d'enseignement, tout comme la sélection rigoureuse des livres pour l'école primaire mise en place par la «Commissione Centrale per l'esame dei libri di testo», feront disparaître des ouvrages qui étaient réimprimés sans grand changement depuis les années 1880. Dans les années 1930, l'imposition du «livre d'État» acculera à la faillite les plus petites entreprises, tandis qu'elle contribuera à développer celles qui, par leur stratégie de production industrielle et leurs bonnes relations avec les hiérarques du régime, tireront leur épingle du jeu. Vallecchi à Florence, la SEI à Turin, La Scuola à Brescia et, surtout, Mondadori à Milan, seront les grandes gagnantes de la politique scolaire mussolinienne. Au-delà de la vie économique et culturelle de la première moitié du XX^e siècle, l'activité des éditeurs croise sans cesse l'histoire politique de ce temps: celle du fascisme avant tout, qui marqua l'école de ses réformes et

la production scolaire et scientifique de son idéologie, auquel tous les éditeurs du secteur scolaire et éducatif de la péninsule furent confrontés.

Par la richesse et la précision de leurs contenus, ces notices, véritables «tessons d'histoire culturelle italienne» – comme les définit Giorgio Chiosso, en s'inspirant de la pensée d'Eugenio Garin – aident à recomposer la totalité de l'ensemble. Les notices mettent en évidence l'envergure du projet de plusieurs éditeurs, qui furent non seulement des entrepreneurs industriels mais aussi des protagonistes de la scène culturelle de leur temps. Si certains ne virent dans le livre d'école qu'une opportunité offerte par un marché en expansion, d'autres mirent en œuvre des stratégies personnelles, tant dans le choix des auteurs et collaborateurs (parmi lesquels on remarque l'apparition de plusieurs universitaires, hommes de science et grands écrivains).

Le volume est complété par une série d'annexes. Un bel encart de trente pages en couleur reproduit plusieurs manuels et ouvrages divers du corpus étudié. Il s'agit d'un échantillon assemblé avec soin, qui offre de bons exemples de la variété de cette production éditoriale destinée au premier et au deuxième degré de l'enseignement, dans toutes les disciplines. Ce fascicule iconographique, réunissant les images des couvertures de 120 volumes, a été préparé grâce à Pompeo Vagliani et à la mise à disposition du fonds de la Fondazione Tancredi Falletti di Barolo. Quatre index analytiques – établis par les soins de Maria Cristina Morandini – offrent

une vision globale de toutes les données fondamentales et permettent au lecteur de s'orienter dans l'ouvrage: l'index général de toutes les maisons d'édition et typographies; l'index chronologique, comportant l'année de naissance et de cessation d'activité des maisons, ainsi que le lieu d'édition; l'index des auteurs et collaborateurs éditoriaux, et l'index des secteurs disciplinaires de production libraire. Enfin, le Cd-Rom qui est joint au volume le reproduit intégralement en version numérique, et permet des recherches rapides sur l'ensemble de l'ouvrage par différentes entrées (nom d'éditeurs, d'auteurs, etc.).

Offrant à la fois un instrument bibliographique irremplaçable et une étude scientifique de tout premier ordre, *TESEO '900*, tout comme *TESEO '800*, constitue, pour tous les chercheurs en histoire de l'éducation et de l'édition scolaire, un instrument de recherche des plus utiles, ainsi qu'une œuvre de référence qui ne devra manquer dans aucune bibliothèque universitaire.

Mariella Colin

Alla Sal'nikova, *Rossijskoe detstvo v XX veke: Istorija, teorija i praktika issledovanija* [Russian Childhood in the Twentieth Century: History, Theory and Research Practice], Kazan', Kazanskij Gosudarstvennyj Universitet, 2007, 255 pp., ill.

Alla Sal'nikova's research is the first research on the history of childhood

in the twentieth century to be published in Russia. It represents neither an analysis of childcare and schooling reforms, nor a history of the family, but rather the history of the verbal culture of different generations of Russian, Soviet and Post-Soviet children. On the basis of a complex interpretation scheme (sociological, anthropological and semiotic), the author analyses a rich variety of "children's texts" in order to track down in the words used by children the "signs" of the time and of the great changes which affected children's life from War World I to the Collapse of the Soviet Union. The book is composed of 4 parts, each divided into chapters.

In the methodological preamble, Sal'nikova points out that Russia has lagged behind other countries in the field of "children studies". However, during the last decade – thanks to psychohistory and anthropology – new interesting trends have emerged (I.S. Kon, J. Druzhnikov, S.V. Zhuravlev-A.K. Sokolov), among which an innovative research on the history of children's literature (A. Mamedova, M. Majofis, I. Kukulin, O.S. Paranicheva), on schooling and on school books (E.M. Balashov, A.I. Scherbinin) stand out. According to the author, the different historiographical trends have produced many childhood myths which have failed to place children in the Soviet political context (p. 35). Furthermore, following R. Coe's theory of the so-called «national myth of childhood» (p. 47) – formulated in *Reminiscences of Childhood: An Approach to a Com-*

parative Mythology (1984) – Sal'nikova attempts to reconstruct the shaping of the Soviet myth of childhood, which has replaced the Russian myth. On the basis of the research on Russian and Soviet childhood by A. Wachtel, L. Kirshenbaum and C. Clark, Sal'nikova focuses on the Soviet myth of the rapid adaptation of children to the new social order and to the different educational practices of this process. In order to support her thesis, Sal'nikova appeals to the children's literature studies by J. Mc Cannon and C. Kelly, which have shown the increasing politicisation of children's imagination (through the cult of the leaders and the socialist order) and the considerable hiatus between symbols and reality.

In the second part, Sal'nikova devotes her analysis to children's texts and memories – mainly collected during the 1920s – of Russian and Soviet catastrophes. Gathering interviews of an autobiographical nature was very important for the culture of that time. Sal'nikova highlights the 1,500 autobiographical memories collected by the famous psychologist N.A. Rybnikov, from 1926 to 1928 (p. 91). Nevertheless, the so-called «children's verbal creativity» was even reflected in manuscript reviews, school chronicles, secret diaries, as well as in letters to the front and other correspondence. Sal'nikova notes that one of the most important children's texts features is «their fully expressed semantic-semiotic political context» (p. 105), which influences the functioning of children's memories – no matter what the gender of

the child. «Children's memory – as a main result of children's socio-cultural praxis – aims at fixing what is important and meaningful for the child, from the point of view of the world's understanding and perception» (p. 114): the family, serious illness, fires and the death of someone close. At the end of this part, the author takes into account the language of the Revolution in children's texts, which has undergone some changes after World War I – not only in the vocabulary but also in the linguistic and metaphorical symbolism. In the children's texts, which have been preserved by well-known linguists, philosophers and philologists (V.V. Zenkovskij, A.A. Potebnja and A.M. Selischev), one can find a strong politicisation, that has been defined as «the poison of the time» (according to the words of P.P. Blonskij's).

In the third part, which constitutes the bulk of the book, Sal'nikova presents gender features of children's writings from 1914 to the end of the 1920s and identifies World War I with the discovery of youth and with a deep change in youth mentality. Indeed, following the Russian Japanese War (1905), the militarization of children had increasingly spread, thus leading to the development of military groups (*Poteshnnye voinskie chasty*) in schools, which often became scout organisations. The pedagogue P.N. Nesterov has studied certain aspects of the children's gradual process of their understanding of the war (patriotic demonstrations, correspondence with soldiers, dispatch of objects to the front) – in particular it was the girls',

who were the first to express solidarity with soldiers. The author retraces the presence of the war in letters, drawings and songs written at school, thus emphasizing that one of the most important topics of children's patriotic literature was exactly the «voluntary child soldier», which reflected the influence of war on children's psychology (children's war games, the definition of the German enemy and the children's flight to the front). Sal'nikova also tackles the problem of the assimilation of the *sovietness* (in Russian *sovetskost'*) – the revolutionary transformation of childhood in Russia which occurred thanks to educational reforms and revolutionary experience. These children had grown up during the revolutionary years; still, however, the adaptation to Communist rules was rather superficial, particularly in the choice of children's readings. The great variety of children's texts is due to the social condition of the child – abandoned or not – and to the gender difference, which come out inspite of the «co-educative system» of soviet schools. Particular attention is paid to the problem of the formation of new Soviet girls with new values and ideals in the first decade of the Soviet Era.

The fourth part presents the generation of children born between 1980 and 1990 – which Sal'nikova calls «childhood on breakage» (*detstvo na izlome*). The life of «The nephews of the Soviet Empire» – who lived during post-communist transformations – has been the subject of 100 school compositions – the title of which was «Me, the family, my country in 1990» (p. 211) – written in the

year 2000 by children aged between 11 and 14 and attending the schools in Kazan (Republic of Tatarstan, Russia). In these free compositions, the children expressed – as children did during the 1920s – many subjective aspects as well as the history of changes. The events are told with gender differences: while the girls remember the most sorrowful family events, the boys prefer to report the events of the external world. An interesting range of different attitudes towards “consumer goods”, school uniforms, school homework, political events and the Tatar language also emerges in these texts. With this last part, Sal’nikova gives the complete picture of Russian generations – the generation of World War I, the first Soviet generation and the latest generation – all of which have experienced traumatic events as well as the adaptation to a new political system and new values in everyday life. This well-written book represents an innovative research based on children’s writings and would definitely deserve to be translated into English, making it more accessible to a wider public.

Dorena Caroli

Francis Marcoin, *Librairie de jeunesse et littérature industrielle au XIX^e siècle*, Paris, Honoré Champion, 2006, 893 pp.

Il contributo di Francis Marcoin alla storia della produzione giovanile ottocentesca in Francia è il risultato

di un’attenta esplorazione di un settore al crocevia fra l’industria, la società e la letteratura. Trattasi di uno studio di ampio respiro, in cui viene percorso ed organizzato uno spazio di ricerca vastissimo, mentre l’analisi si sviluppa su molteplici livelli, colleganti il discorso critico all’attenta ricostruzione contestuale politica ed economica. La «librairie» infatti è il termine che indicava il commercio dei libri, spesso inglobante la funzione editoriale, e la «littérature industrielle» (non utilizzata qui in senso peggiorativo), sta a indicare che lo studio dei testi va associato all’indagine sui circuiti di produzione e di vendita, e che gli editori, attori importanti della vita intellettuale, non devono essere dissociati dagli autori.

Il piano dell’opera segue l’ordine cronologico. Il periodo dell’Ottocento (inteso in senso lato, dalla fine del Settecento al primo Novecento) è diviso in cinque sezioni, nelle quali ai periodi storici vengono abbinate sezioni tematiche; sono così passate in rivista le correnti e tendenze seguite dalla «librairie de jeunesse», che concilia in vario modo le finalità del «plaire et instruire» a cui rimane sottoposta. Si susseguono così «l’enfant des philosophes» (dall’epoca dei Lumi alla fine della Restaurazione), «l’enfant de Juillet» et «l’enfant du journal» (durante la monarchia degli Orléans: 1830-1848), seguiti da «l’enfant de la modernité» (Secondo impero: 1848-1870) e «l’enfant patriote» (Terza repubblica; 1870-1914). Ogni epoca viene presa in considerazione secondo un’angolatura specifica, che unisce al periodo stori-

co il periodico o l'editore che meglio la contraddistingue.

La prima sezione («l'enfant des philosophes») presenta le origini della letteratura giovanile. Il paradigma è Berquin, l'autore francese che servirà da modello a quanti si proponevano di scrivere per i fanciulli, per diventare in seguito oggetto di critiche e di ironia; ma Marcoin riabilita lo scrittore e sottolinea la vivacità delle sue scenette, fra le prime forme letterarie in cui è ritratta la spontaneità infantile. Accanto allo scrittore francese si pongono gli scrittori europei, i cui testi si diffondono nei paesi di lingua inglese, francese e tedesca. Nella successiva Restaurazione, i testi scelti come punti di riferimento sono due: *Simon de Nantua*, di Laurent-Pierre de Jussieu – uno dei primi «romanzi» popolari educativi adibito poi a libro di lettura nelle scuole, e una «robinsonnade»: *Le Robinson de douze ans, histoire intéressante d'un jeune mousse français abandonné dans une île déserte*, de Madame Mallès de Beau-lieu. Le «robinsonnades», adattamenti ed imitazioni dell'opera di Daniel Defoe per l'infanzia, sono un genere che circola ovunque, proponendo numerosissime varianti (la lista stabilita da Marcoin ne enumera 150) dell'archetipo del naufrago sull'isola disabitata, eroe solitario che si salva grazie alle sue sole risorse personali.

«L'enfant de Juillet» fa un largo posto alla «novità»: il termine rinvia al nuovo interesse per l'infanzia, ma ancor più allo sviluppo del commercio librario nelle vie parigine, accanto ai ritrovi, i negozi ed i teatri per i fanciulli, in cui si sistemano librai ed edi-

tori, i quali stampano e vendono i «magasin» (titolo o sottotitolo dei periodici e collane editoriali). Vengono fondate le case editrici come la Librairie Hachette e le altre «maisons», piccole ditte che all'inizio provvedono a tutto ciò che riguarda il processo di fabbricazione e commercio dei libri; ma più che nella capitale, è in provincia che prosperano allora gli editori per l'infanzia, che rimangono per lo più nell'orbita cattolica: Mame a Tours, Lefort a Lille, Ardant e Barbu a Limoges. La produzione dell'epoca è quella dei volumi che concorrono per il premio Montyon, il premio di «virtù e utilità» che meglio risponde ai gusti e alla sensibilità dominante. Fra gli autori e gli intellettuali legati al settore, primeggiano Louis Veuillot, scrittore reazionario e ultramontano, e il canonico Schmidt, autore bavarese le cui novelline sono tradotte e pubblicate in Francia a partire dal 1816. Sempre nel periodo della monarchia degli Orléans, «l'enfant du journal», lettore di periodici, sottolinea lo straordinario sviluppo della stampa per la gioventù. Si tratta di materiale complesso da recensire: molti periodici hanno avuto un'esistenza brevissima o discontinua, e molto resta ancora da fare per una catalogazione completa. «Magasin», «journal», «musée», i titoli spesso si assomigliano, nel passare dall'uno all'altro gli articoli vengono copiati o imitati, e l'intenzione degli autori rimane invariabilmente educativa. Il titolo che trattiene l'attenzione di Marcoin è il «Journal des enfans», fondato nel 1832 da Lautour-Mézeray, che avrà

vita lunghissima (sarà pubblicato sino al 1896). La figura di spicco è quella di Louis Desnoyers, giornalista e scrittore che da un lato afferma che i fanciulli non sono bisognosi di una letteratura specialmente concepita per loro, e dall'altro confeziona un giornale per il solo pubblico infantile, dove vengono pubblicati racconti allegri in cui la nota comica non manca mai. Desnoyers è noto come l'autore di *Jean-Paul Choppart*, destinato a diventare un classico della letteratura giovanile; prima di uscire in volume, il romanzo sarà pubblicato in appendice nel «Journal des enfants» – anticipando quella che sarà la vicenda delle *Avventure di Pinocchio*, apparse nel 1881-1883 nelle pagine del «Giornale per i bambini».

La produzione del Secondo Impero è presentata sotto il titolo «l'enfant de la modernité». La «modernité» è un concetto che per Marcoin deve essere compreso in contrasto con la letteratura «honnête», monotona e ripetitiva, dei racconti e romanzi moraleggianti, numerosissimi in un periodo dominato da un'ideologia conservatrice e clericale. Comincia allora l'irresistibile ascesa commerciale di Louis Hachette, che coglie immediatamente le nuove opportunità offerte dallo sviluppo industriale e fonda la «Bibliothèque des chemins de fer», nella quale una collana sarà destinata unicamente ai fanciulli. Nasce così la celebre «Bibliothèque rose illustrée», nella quale saranno pubblicate tutte le opere della Contessa di Ségur, affiancata dal gruppo di scrittrici del «romanzo cattolico»

(Zénaïde Fleuriot, Julie Gouraud, Madame de Stolz), allora altrettanto lette ed amate. L'altro editore che inizia la propria parabola ascendente è Pierre-Jules Hetzel, che insieme a Jean Macé lancia il prestigioso «Magasin d'éducation et de récréation», in cui verrà pubblicata l'opera di Jules Verne. Altri autori di letteratura giovanile vengono qui passati in rassegna da F. Marcoin, come Hector Malot et Erckmann-Chatrian, a cui si aggiunge la presenza meno scontata di Mallarmé, critico di libri e spettacoli per l'infanzia.

Molti cambiamenti importanti sono quelli della Terza Repubblica. Nel periodo dell'«enfant patriote et anarchiste» si sviluppa la scuola laica e vengono stampati e letti da generazioni intere libri ispirati alla nuova pedagogia repubblicana, di cui il più noto è *Le Tour de la France par deux enfants*. F. Marcoin fa un'analisi approfondita di questi «romanzi scolastici» nel contesto politico del paese, traumatizzato dalla disfatta di Sedan. Patriottismo ed ideologia politica lasciano però spazio all'immaginario, che in questi anni del «trionfo del romanzo» prende la forma del libro d'avventure con i suoi eroi, senza però escludere altri generi e personaggi. Nell'ultimo capitolo («Fin de siècle, début de siècle») un nuovo rilievo è dato alla stampa periodica («le Saint Nicolas», «Le Noël», «La Semaine de Suzette») ed agli artisti-disegnatori come Benjamin Rabier. Si moltiplicano i giornali illustrati, come quelli stampati dai fratelli Offenstadt (letteratura industriale sì, ma non indegna).

Grazie alla sua immensa ricchezza d'informazioni ed analisi, il libro si presta tanto ad una lettura completa quanto alla consultazione per capitoli o per voci singole. Tre indici segnalano rispettivamente i nomi degli autori, illustratori, editori ed intellettuali, i titoli dei periodici e i nomi dei critici citati nel testo. Completato da un'esauriente bibliografia ragionata, il contributo di F. Marcoin può esser considerato come un'opera di riferimento ed un testo fondamentale per tutti i ricercatori e cultori della materia.

Mariella Colin

Historia de la educación. Revista de la Sociedad Argentina de la Historia de la educación. Anuario n. 7/2006, Buenos Aires, Prometeo libros, 2007, 337 pp.

Cultura Escrita & Sociedad. Revista internacional de Historia social de la cultura escrita. N. 4/2007, Gijón, Ediciones Trea, 2007, 270 pp.

Nel presentare gli ultimi numeri di queste due riviste – l'una argentina e l'altra spagnola – occorre una breve premessa. Di solito, le recensioni e le rassegne si occupano di volumi, monografie o raccolte di saggi, dove prendono forma definitiva articolati percorsi di ricerca, che si presentano dunque nella loro interezza. Sulle riviste, invece, spesso accanto ad interventi corposi e conclusi, si raccolgono gli sviluppi dei percorsi di ricerca, incursioni indiziarie su temi

innovativi ma ancora da poco conosciuti, sondaggi di tipo esplorativo in campi nuovi: insomma, la ricerca nel suo farsi e nel divenire oggetto compiuto. In questo senso, mi pare importante dare conto anche della produzione che emerge dalle riviste del settore, in modo da fornire un utile strumento per orientarsi nel campo degli studi sulla storia della scuola, dell'educazione e dell'infanzia nelle loro articolazioni più vaste e complesse. Il primo volume, dunque, è *Historia de la educación*, l'Annuario della Società Argentina di Storia dell'Educazione, presieduta attualmente da Pablo Pineau, rivista diretta da Silvina Gvirtz a cui partecipano molti dei più importanti studiosi del settore (tra cui Rubén Cucuzza, Alain Choppin, Gregorio Weinberg). La prima parte dell'Annuario presenta una riflessione sulla genesi stessa del sapere storico-educativo e aspetti di natura teoretica, includendo tre saggi – di Claudio Suasnábar e Mariano Palamidessi, di Sandra Carli, di Leandro J. Stagno – sul tema della formazione e della produzione di conoscenza nel campo dell'educazione in Argentina. Vengono così individuate le radici stesse di questo sapere, diviso tra pedagogia, educazione e storia, nella burocrazia dello Stato moderno e nelle Università. Particolarmente interessante è il saggio di Sandra Carli, che espone una serie di riflessioni teoriche sui processi intergenerazionali di trasmissione della cultura nella seconda metà del Novecento, intrecciando le ricostruzioni del passato con le pratiche narrative del tempo presente. Una seconda sezione,

di natura prettamente storiografica, affronta lo sviluppo e le trasformazioni dei sistemi educativi latino americani, dando vita ad un vocazione comparativa che pare essere una delle caratteristiche della rivista. Un primo contributo, di Diana G. Vidal, indaga i motivi del fallimento delle riforme dell'educazione e della scuola attivate in Rio de Janeiro nel 1922, nel 1927 e nel 1931. Un secondo articolo, di Virginia Ginocchio, tratta le forme prescritte dallo Stato per il comportamento dei bambini in scuola tra '800 e '900, ed un terzo – di Alberto L. Gómez e Jesús R. Morante – verte sull'insegnamento della geografia durante il franchismo tra la fine della Seconda guerra mondiale e la metà degli anni Cinquanta. Un saggio particolarmente degno di nota, dedicato ad un ambito cronologico molto vasto, è quello di Jorge N. Cornejo sulla storia dell'insegnamento della scienza e della tecnologia in Argentina tra il 1880 e il 2000. Attraverso l'analisi dei libri di testo di chimica, fisica, cosmografia, tecnologia e biologia l'autore indaga i mutamenti didattici dei testi, i loro fondamenti epistemologici e il modo con cui le materie vengono insegnate nella scuola secondaria. I libri di testo sono al centro anche del lavoro di Maria A. Nicoletti sull'immagine e la rappresentazione degli indigeni della Patagonia nei libri della Congregazione Salesiana tra il 1900 e il 1930. L'A. mette in luce, con efficacia, il vero e proprio processo di costruzione di un "altro interno" che mette in gioco la difficile ed intricata questione delle identità, soprattutto in un paese nato

dai flussi migratori che hanno caratterizzato i decenni tra XIX e XX secolo. Infine, la Congregazione dei Salesiani, presente dalla fine dell'800 in Argentina, è al centro dello studio di Maria de los Milagros Pierini, che ne ha indagato l'attività – che prevalentemente si è svolta non tanto nell'evangelizzazione degli indigeni quanto in un ruolo educativo vasto e articolato – in Santa Cruz durante il primo peronismo. Una terza sezione ha carattere monografico, essendo dedicata all'educazione durante l'ultima dittatura militare argentina. I tre saggi, di Delfina Doval, Alejandro Vassiliades e Laura Rovelli trattano, rispettivamente, dei processi di restaurazione a carattere fortemente conservatore e repressivo dell'educazione durante il potere militare, la funzione e i modi dell'insegnamento nella provincia di Buenos Aires, e il dibattito sulla creazione delle nuove università, pensate per dare impulso e sostenere lo sviluppo del paese, degli anni Settanta. Nel complesso, la rivista presenta differenti punti di vista e modalità metodologiche: dalle fonti più consuete, di natura burocratica e legislativa, a documenti come i libri di testo, dai temi legati all'identità a quelli relativi ad una sorta di storia della storiografia educativa argentina, passando per una certa vocazione comparativa, il volume rende bene il quadro di un ambiente culturale vivace, che prende molto sul serio l'educazione e la scuola, sapendo intrecciare sapientemente la profondità storica con le questioni più prettamente didattiche e pedagogiche.

La seconda rivista è spagnola. Diretta da Antonio Castillo Gómez e con un importante comitato scientifico (tra cui Roger Charter e Guglielmo Cavallo, Daniel Fabre ed Armando Petrucci) esprime quanto di meglio è stato fatto, negli ultimi anni, nell'ambito degli studi sulla cultura scritta, le pratiche di scrittura e di lettura, la loro funzione sociale, la loro diffusione ed utilizzo tra i ceti subalterni. Per quanto abbia una decisa connotazione contemporanea, la rivista ospita studi che si interessano anche al medioevo e all'età moderna, fino agli ultimi due secoli, confermando la volontà di affrontare la storia della scrittura e dell'alfabetizzazione in un'ottica di lungo periodo. In quest'ultimo numero, coordinato da Veronica Sierra Blas, l'attenzione è rivolta ad un tema specifico: l'alfabetizzazione e la cultura scritta durante la Guerra Civile spagnola. L'argomento è sviluppato da più punti di vista, e tocca la storia della scuola (i contributi di Maria del Mar del Pozo Andrés e Sara Ramos sulla quotidianità scolastica registrata dai quaderni, e di Manuel F. Soría sulla scuola, le biblioteche e l'alfabetizzazione dei soldati); quella della scrittura (il bel saggio di Veronica S. Blas sulle scritture dei soldati al fronte); quella dell'editoria (il puntuale contributo di Ana Martínez Rus sulle iniziative editoriali che si sono sviluppate in quegli anni); quella letteraria (il saggio di Didier Corderot sulla "narrativa breve", novelle e racconti), passando attraverso la memoria, la rielaborazione e la rappresentazione, anche individuale, del conflitto (i saggi di Antonio Viñao Frago sulle

autobiografie, le memorie e i diari dei maestri, e di Mirta Núñez Díaz-Balart sulla ricostruzione dell'esperienza della repressione carceraria nelle testimonianze del dopoguerra). I temi dei singoli argomenti, anche se brevemente esposti, danno modo di comprendere la complessità dell'approccio utilizzato. La scrittura, sia come pratica faticosa di incerti scriventi, che come testo a stampa; sia nei suoi modi di acquisizione che in quelli di effettivo utilizzo: leggere e scrivere *davvero*, si sa, è diverso dal *saper leggere* e scrivere, dunque è affrontata nel suo insieme, permettendo al lettore – specialista e non – di avere un saggio raffinato di cosa si debba intendere come cultura della parola scritta, seppur per un ambito cronologico ben delimitato come quello della Guerra Civile. La parola scritta, infatti, solo ad un approccio superficiale si limita a quella della letteratura e della burocrazia. In realtà, soprattutto in età contemporanea ma anche prima, la scrittura si intreccia con la storia sociale, segna limiti e poteri, inclusioni ed esclusioni, ideologie educative e spazi di autonomia espressione, voglia e necessità di comunicare, strategie di resistenza nei confronti della modernità e, a volte, di vera e propria sopravvivenza nei confronti, per esempio, delle guerre e dei processi migratori. Di questi percorsi di ricerca, nei suoi primi quattro numeri, ha dato ampio conto *Cultura Escrita & Sociedad*, arrivando a tessere anche una serie di relazioni internazionali su questi argomenti e dando spazio al lavoro di giovani studiosi, spagnoli e non, tanto da agire anche come impulso per nuovi percorsi ed

indagini. Sempre attenta alle novità metodologiche, all'intreccio delle fonti, il carattere più immediato della rivista è proprio questa apertura nei contenuti e la freschezza degli approcci che vi si possono incontrare.

Davide Montino

Hector Ruben Cucuzza, *Yo argentino. La construcción de la Nación en los libros escolares (1873-1930)*, Buenos Aires-Madrid, Miño y Dávila editores, 2007, 127 pp.

Hector Ruben Cucuzza insegna Storia sociale dell'educazione presso l'Università di Luján in Argentina, e da tempo si occupa della storia dei processi di alfabetizzazione, delle pratiche di insegnamento della lettura e della scrittura, della scuola durante il peronismo. Negli ultimi anni ha spostato la sua attenzione verso il tema della formazione dell'identità nazionale argentina, partendo da una constatazione molto semplice, come spiega lo stesso A. nella prefazione: interrogati sui loro nonni, ben pochi alunni del corso del professor Cucuzza asseriscono di averli tutti argentini; piuttosto le loro radici sono in Italia, in Spagna, o in altri paesi europei. Ma se interrogati sulla loro nazionalità, tutti rispondono «io sono argentino». Da qui la domanda che muove il libro: come è possibile che in così breve tempo si sia formata un'identità nazionale? E quali contorni ha assunto, su quali basi e contenuti si è depositata nell'immaginario del paese?

Cocuzza cerca di rispondere a questi quesiti individuando nella scuola, e in particolare nei libri e nelle letture scolastiche, il luogo dove si sperimenta in modo forte e profondo la costruzione dell'identità nazionale argentina. Proprio i libri sono l'oggetto di questo studio, ma inquadrati in un contesto ben più ampio. E qui sta uno dei meriti della ricerca proposta. Il libro, infatti, dedica tutta una prima parte al tema della nazione come problema teorico e storiografico, analizzando come il concetto venga declinato dal nazionalismo romantico, dalle oligarchie liberali, dal nazionalismo patriottico e conservatore e, infine, da quelli che l'A. definisce i «nazionalismi eterogenei» che emergono dalla crisi degli anni Trenta, di matrice filofascista o populista. A partire dalle riflessioni che autori come Eric J. Hobsbawm e Benedict Anderson hanno svolto nei loro studi, il nesso che lega l'idea di nazione ai processi di formazione dello Stato e di una identità politica, culturale e civile emerge con chiarezza in merito all'Argentina, e più in generale in tutto il Sud America, come il problema centrale della costruzione di una comunità che si definisce per allontanamento rispetto al dominio coloniale della madre patria pur mantenendo un legame essenziale con i luoghi di provenienza dei milioni di migranti che soprattutto tra XIX e XX secolo sono approdati in quel continente. In altri termini, le fasi di costruzione di un'identità nazionale si mostrano nella complessità e contraddittorietà di un fenomeno essenzialmente sovrastrutturale proprio laddove devono

fare i conti con una moltitudine di persone che hanno radici identitarie e linguistiche che non si possono ridurre ad una unità di fondo. In Argentina, tedeschi, italiani, spagnoli, francesi sono diventati argentini in tempi relativamente brevi, hanno dovuto apprendere un'appartenenza fatta di valori, speranze, miti, sogni, date storiche, eroi nazionali che gli desse il senso di far parte di una comunità. E in questo percorso una parte importante è stata svolta dalla scuola. Ed è così che entriamo nella seconda sezione del volume, quella che analizza le letture scolastiche come veicolo di questa nazionalizzazione. Dai libri studiati viene fuori innanzi tutto un'idea ben precisa di patria, a partire dalla definizione geografica, attraverso il nome stesso che evoca ricchezza (dal latino *argentum*), passando attraverso l'orgoglio di appartenere ad un paese ricco di risorse, fino ad un modello di esaltazione militare che identifica popolo ed esercito. In questo contesto, la patria è una comunanza di famiglie, di persone nate su una terra, su un territorio, appunto su quella che è la patria argentina. Questa idea di patria si costruisce, operativamente, a partire dalle date di fondazione dello Stato (il 25 di maggio del 1810, giorno della manifestazione popolare che chiese l'indipendenza; il 9 luglio 1816, data della dichiarazione formale di indipendenza), si identifica nei simboli della nazione (la bandiera, lo scudo nazionale con le due mani unite che sorreggono una picca su cui è posto un berretto frigio, simbolo di libertà, attorniate da alloro e ulivo, simboli a loro

volta di gloria e pace), prende ad esempio gli eroi che hanno costruito e difeso l'Argentina nel tempo (Manuel Belgrano, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, Josè de San Martín, Juan Bautista Cabral). Se tutto ciò attiene all'immagine che di sé vuole darsi il paese, troviamo anche tracce significative di come vengono definiti gli altri: gli indios, i meticci e gli immigrati. Se per esempio i gauchos vengono descritti in termini essenzialmente a-storici, agli indios viene negata del tutto ed espressamente la possibilità di avere una storia: se mai sono stati oggetto – e non vittime – di un processo di civilizzazione, che assume in alcuni testi toni anche apertamente razzisti. Infine, la figura del migrante: accolto in un paese dove spera di trovare fortuna, egli sembra inserirsi senza conflitti o tensioni sociali, in modo naturale, quasi a voler esorcizzare il pericolo di un cosmopolitismo che andrebbe ad incrinare quel faticoso percorso di formazione di una identità nazionale che è l'obiettivo primario delle letture analizzate: si possono avere origini lontane, ma si deve essere argentini.

Il volume, in conclusione, si presenta come un ottimo esempio di contestualizzazione di una fonte complessa come il libro scolastico: avvalendosi dell'esperienza di ricerca maturata all'interno del Progetto MANES (Manuales escolares), volto a creare una rete di studiosi con interessi rivolti alla storia dei libri di scuola latinoamericani e che ha puntato molto sulla necessità di legare i contenuti dei singoli libri a tematiche generali più ampie, Cucuzza mostra, per l'area

argentina, come la lettura scolastica sia uno degli strumenti più potenti attraverso il quale si esplica la volontà pedagogica dello Stato e della nazione, apportando un contributo significativo soprattutto in chiave comparativa, sia in merito all'area sudamericana che più in generale con quanto è successo nei paesi europei tra XIX e XX secolo. Tornando agli studenti evocati all'inizio, una volta letto il libro del loro professore non potranno più non interrogarsi in maniera profonda sulle loro identità, e sul modo con cui dovranno relazionarsi col mondo. Se Cucuzza conclude domandandosi se il Bicentenario dell'indipendenza sarà l'occasione per costruire una nazionalità sudamericana, noi possiamo alzare la posta ed auspicare che cominci un processo di formazione di identità plurime che tengano insieme il paese, la nazione, lo Stato e il mondo. Un cammino forse lungo e difficile, ma possibile. Magari a partire dal confronto su come i vari Stati hanno educato la gioventù all'idea di nazione nel corso degli ultimi due secoli, di cui *Yo argentino* è un tassello possibile da cui partire.

Davide Montino

Ana Chrystina Venancio Mignot, Maria Teresa Santos Cunha (organizzadoras), *Práticas de memória docente*, São Paulo, Cortez editora, 2002, 183 pp.

La dimensione della scrittura, negli ultimi anni, ha assunto un ruolo sem-

pre più importante anche all'interno degli studi dedicati alla storia della scuola, della pedagogia e dell'educazione. In particolare, fonti come i registri di classe con le loro cronache dettagliate, i quaderni di scuola con gli esercizi e le pagine di diario, le relazioni dei docenti e degli ispettori, si sono rivelati documenti importanti al fine di indagare le reali ed ordinarie pratiche pedagogiche messe in atto, così come le abitudini e i costumi educativi propri degli insegnanti e dei loro discenti. Ma la scrittura può rivelare anche molto di più, ed un efficace esempio in questa direzione è rappresentato dal volume curato da Ana Chrystina Venancio Mignot e da Maria Teresa Santos Cunha, ricercatrici e docenti rispettivamente dell'Università statale di Rio de Janeiro e di Santa Catarina, in Brasile. Il libro, infatti, raccoglie una serie di interventi che testimoniano proprio della complessità della pratica scrittoria di insegnanti ed educatori, un atto quotidiano che non si limita a dare conto del semplice insegnamento, ma veicola qualcosa di ben più profondo: «a quantitate e a diversidade de documentos evidenciam que os profissionais da educação não se limitam a ensinar a ler e a escrever. São produtores de textos que projetam sonhos, expressam dificuldades, eternizam práticas, inscrevem o banal, o singular, o repetitivo, o espetacular da sala de aula» (p. 9). In questa affermazione c'è tutto il programma di una ricerca – per l'Italia ancora in gran parte, se non tutta, da realizzare – che si presenta assai complessa ma ricca di suggestioni e contenuti. Di fatto,

questi documenti sono scritture che potremmo definire ibride, tra il pubblico e il privato, in cui speranze, sogni, delusioni, adesioni ideologiche si mescolano ai rendiconti burocratici, alle relazioni didattiche, alle annotazioni strettamente lavorative. Lungo questa strada, dunque, diventa quasi obbligatorio considerare la scrittura anche come un esercizio di memoria, una sorta di testimonianza autobiografica che investe proprio chi con la scrittura ha in primo luogo un rapporto didattico: professori ed educatori, uomini di scuola e pedagogisti hanno lasciato abbondante traccia del loro vissuto professionale e dell'immaginario collettivo che hanno condiviso, filtrato attraverso la loro soggettività e il loro personale angolo visuale. Di tutto questo, attraverso dieci contributi molto mirati, parla *Prácticas de memória docente*. Scorre sotto gli occhi la varietà dei documenti interpellati: dalle lettere dei professori ai registri di classe, dalle relazioni ispettive alle autobiografie, dalle memorie di vita alle varie carte depositate negli archivi privati, tutti disposti lungo un sottile crinale che non solo distingue il pubblico dal privato, ma pure l'immagine ufficiale della scuola da quella che emerge da fonti che si iscrivono per lo più in pratiche di scrittura personale e quotidiana. Diventa pertanto necessario assumere una prospettiva microstorica, la quale in questo contesto si rivela con una serie di esempi paradigmatici: in particolare, Héctor R. Cucuzza presenta l'attività di un'educatrice argentina, Anunciada Mastelli, attraverso il suo archivio privato, metten-

do in luce proprio la complessità di letture dei documenti conservati: la figura dell'educatrice, in questa prospettiva, diventa come le immagini mutanti dei caleidoscopi, e assume differenti forme (p. 109), ma tutto ciò altro non è che lo specchio di una vita trascorsa attraverso eventi e processi importanti – tra gli anni Venti e gli anni Sessanta del Novecento –, che hanno influito sulle idee e le convinzioni di Anunciada così come su quelle di tante persone più o meno impegnate nella vita pubblica. Se da un Archivio viene fuori – e non potrebbe essere diversamente – un'immagine poliedrica di chi ha contribuito a formare quella raccolta di carte, dalle autobiografie e dalle memorie ricaviamo, invece, l'immagine che l'autore ha voluto dare di sé. Non meno interessanti, però, sono queste forme di scrittura, come mostrano i saggi di Ana Chrystina V. Mignot e di Denice B. Catani e Paula P. Vicentini. Sia testi manoscritti che testi a stampa si rivelano un potente strumento per sondare l'immagine che di sé costruisce la categoria professionale degli insegnanti, così come le contraddizioni che si manifestano tra quello che dovrebbe essere l'attività docente e il modo con cui viene interpretata dagli stessi educatori e professori.

Il volume, in conclusione, contiene una serie di spunti notevoli, anche se corre il rischio – in alcuni passaggi – di mantenere troppo le distanze dal contesto generale. In una prospettiva storica, infatti, è necessario tessere in modo robusto i legami con quadri generali più ampi, con processi sociali ed economici di vasta portata, di

cui la scrittura reca tracce spesso abbondanti. Bisogna fare uno sforzo per tematizzare e definire griglie più precise in cui inserire i documenti, altrimenti il risultato diventa quello di una carrellata di esempi, slegati tra loro, che non riescono a dare il senso di una sintesi. Non è il caso del presente lavoro, che pure mostra casi disposti su una linea cronologica e tematica vasta, perché qui a tenere insieme i pezzi è il collante della storia della cultura scritta, delle pratiche di scrittura e non solo di acquisizione alfabetica, che resta lo sfondo principale in cui collocare i documenti e le singole storie di vita che quei documenti racchiudono.

Davide Montino

Aldo Carera, *Allievi sindacalisti. Formazione e organizzazione al centro studi Cisl di Firenze (1951-52)*, Milano, Bibliolavoro, 2007, 383 pp.

Aldo Carera, docente di Storia economica e del lavoro presso l'Università Cattolica di Milano, studioso del sindacato e del movimento operaio, nello specifico cattolico, ha dato alle stampe un contributo particolarmente originale: si tratta di questo *Allievi sindacalisti*, che ricostruisce nel dettaglio il primo Corso annuale della scuola di preparazione sindacale della Cisl. Tempo e spazio della ricerca sono ben delineati: Firenze, tra l'ottobre 1951 e il maggio 1952. I protagonisti sono altrettanto definiti: ventitre allievi, ammessi al corso, e destinatari di un

processo formativo compiuto, di cui sono testimonianza le altrettante «Monografie economico-sindacali» che quegli allievi hanno prodotto come attività di ricerca (oggi, come sottolinea l'A., diremmo attività di tirocinio o di stage). Il volume si divide in due parti. La prima ricostruisce quel Corso del 1951-52, le attività didattiche, i criteri organizzativi, nonché i contenuti di un sapere che si snodava tra scienze umane ed economiche, esperienze di lavoro, orizzonti politici ed obiettivi sindacali; la seconda parte, antologica, riporta una vasta serie di documenti e tutte le Monografie realizzate dagli studenti. Al di là dell'indubbio merito di aver ricostruito un luogo formativo extrascolastico come una scuola sindacale, che allarga notevolmente l'orizzonte di una storia delle istituzioni educative troppo spesso legata solo alla scuola, è da sottolineare l'importanza attribuita ad una fonte particolare come le relazioni prodotte dai corsisti. Una «scrittura scolastica», in quanto prodotta in un contesto educativo, che l'A. definisce un buon testimone «dell'incontro tra i diversi piani della formazione avvenuto nei locali di via Gustavo Modena, 15. Il piano base delle conoscenze disciplinari nel campo delle scienze umane, apprese dai docenti di estrazione accademica, il piano professionalizzante recepito dall'apporto di dirigenti e di tecnici della confederazione, il piano della "dottrina Cisl" che fluiva al Centro studi e che filtrava nelle conversazioni e nei lavori di gruppo, il piano dell'esperienza individuale e pregressa e di quanto si era addensato nelle settimane dei tirocini»

(p. 17). Ed è proprio questa capacità di sondare in profondità le Monografie a designare il tratto più originale, sul versante metodologico, del libro. È la dimostrazione di quanto profonde possano essere le implicazioni di carattere generale che scaturiscono da un'analisi circoscritta e particolareggiata. Il libro, dunque, muovendo da un momento preciso e limitato, apre la riflessione a temi più ampi, quali la funzione delle scuole di sindacato, e più in generale della formazione politica, in senso lato, che tanto ha contribuito nel plasmare la classe dirigente del nostro paese. D'altra parte, l'interesse verso il centro studi della Cisl pone all'ordine del giorno un'altra esigenza: quella di considerare, tra i percorsi educativi e culturali, una realtà ben più ampia di quella strettamente scolastica. Soprattutto in merito alla formazione delle *élite* economiche e finanziarie, ma anche in relazione alle dinamiche della politica di massa: basti pensare alla centralità non solo delle scuole di partito, ma anche delle sezioni, dei circoli, delle parrocchie, delle Società di mutuo soccorso, delle Acli, dove si sono attivati complessi dispositivi di socializzazione innervati da una identità e da una presa di coscienza che discendeva da una pedagogia politica strutturata intorno alle idee guida del Novecento. Su questa strada, poi, è facile incontrare la fabbrica come luogo pedagogico (e con essa, ovviamente, la militanza sindacale di base), e tutto ciò che le ruota intorno: il quartiere operaio, il dopolavoro, finanche il circolo ricreativo.

Nella prima parte del libro, dunque, si profila l'organizzazione dei

corsi, tenuti da personale qualificato, in genere accademici, e tesi a sviluppare competenze e consapevolezze non tanto tecniche, quanto inserite in un quadro culturale generale. Moderna, poi, era l'idea di spingere i corsisti verso un'autonoma e personale gestione dei fenomeni economico-sindacali, ossia di fornire strumenti atti a valutare e a decidere piuttosto che una visione d'insieme ideologica e, per così dire, preconfezionata. La finalità del corso, dunque, non era solo quella di formare dei dirigenti sindacali, ma quella più ambiziosa di formare degli esperti del mondo del lavoro che sapessero coniugare esigenze pratiche e tecniche con quadri teorici e scientifici solidi. Insomma, mettere insieme il cervello con le mani, l'esperienza con la speculazione, la realtà con i modelli ideali. Questo connubio tra teoria e prassi si vede bene nelle Monografie: risultato di esperienze concrete di lavoro sul campo, tra la relazione di tirocinio e una vera e propria tesi di laurea, sono il prodotto di quanto imparato a lezione, letto sui libri e sperimentato sul luogo di lavoro. Rappresentano, quindi, la sintesi di un percorso che trovava la sua completezza sul terreno, all'interno delle dinamiche industriali, al crocevia tra produzione, diritti e lavoro.

Il libro di Carera, dunque, si profila come un riuscito esempio di analisi microstorica, condotta in modo esemplare, che sa coniugare il dato singolo, anche frammentario, dentro un quadro più ampio. Le vicende dei primi ventitre corsisti fiorentini diventa il caso emblematico, nell'Italia del dopoguerra, di un progetto che non

solo era sindacale, si muoveva cioè sul terreno delle rivendicazioni economiche, ma voleva essere culturale nel senso più largo del termine. Anche questo un elemento del processo di ricostruzione avviatosi dopo la Seconda guerra mondiale, ricostruzione che fu, giova ricordarlo, tanto materiale quanto morale e alla quale contribuì anche il sindacato libero, di matrice comunista e cattolica.

Davide Montino

Gianfranco Tortorelli (a cura di), *Bologna e l'editoria nazionale dopo l'Unità: temi e confronti*, a cura di G. Tortorelli, Bollettino del Museo del Risorgimento, 2006-2007 (anno LI-LII), 299 pp., ill.

La storia dell'editoria ha compiuto diversi ed importanti passi in avanti, tanto da raggiungere ormai una sua crescente e specifica autonomia. Molto però resta ancora da fare e ogni passo in avanti, ed è il merito anche di questa pubblicazione monografica curata da Gianfranco Tortorelli, consente di precisare ed allargare le possibilità ancora inesplorate di questo distinto ambito di ricerca. Soprattutto nel caso dell'Ottocento l'approfondimento fornito da questo genere di studi consente di conoscere meglio, con la circolazione e la diffusione dei testi, la cultura del secolo, tema quanto mai dibattuto, soprattutto oggi, quando sembra ormai essersi fatta largo più che in passato la convinzione della natura prevalentemen-

te letteraria del secolo XIX, secolo nel quale le passioni letterarie rappresentarono quasi una forma di sublimazione della politica. A fronte di un tale ripensamento delle "vecchie" categorie euristiche e del lessico creato dalla passata storiografia sul Risorgimento, sin troppo legate agli angusti limiti della pura politica, si è imposta una prospettiva di lettura allargata ad una dimensione culturale più ampia. In questa logica sembra dunque sempre più importante sapere ciò che leggevano i lettori dell'Ottocento tanto nella città quanto in quella provincia che resta a tutt'oggi un luogo meno conosciuto. Proprio a specifiche e circoscritte realtà, con speciale e prevalente riferimento all'area bolognese e fiorentina, guardano i saggi contenuti in questa pubblicazione. Uno sguardo in periferia che appare ad esempio alquanto utile per comprendere al meglio la questione della "ricezione", tema controverso per tutti gli studiosi di storia della cultura e spesso rimasto in sospeso e insufficientemente approfondito anche in recenti e note pubblicazioni come quella, per molti altri versi meritevole, di Alberto Mario Banti su *La nazione del Risorgimento*, o quella dedicata da ultimo da Antonio Chiavistelli alla formazione di un'opinione pubblica nazionale all'interno dello Stato regionale toscano (*Dallo Stato alla nazione Costituzione e sfera pubblica in Toscana dal 1814 al 1849*, Carocci, 2006).

A quest'ultimo proposito si può sottolineare ad esempio che sappiamo pochissimo dei lettori, chi erano, quale tipo di testi ordinavano agli editori o comunque a quali pubblicazio-

ni si appassionavano, in quali modi vi si avvicinavano, per non dire della loro interpretazione di questi stessi testi, per riassumere sappiamo ancora troppo poco di quella che era la ricezione in provincia della produzione editoriale ottocentesca. In tal senso importanti risposte potrebbero venirci ad esempio dalla moltiplicazione di saggi come quello di Sara Mori (*I libretti devozionali nella prima metà dell'Ottocento. Alcune riflessioni sull'editoria di larga circolazione*), che, trattando della circolazione e della fruizione di generi minori, ma di "larga circolazione", possono aiutarci ad approfondire la conoscenza di qualcosa di cui si sa ancora poco, ma che appare in grado a sua volta di dirci molto sui gusti di parte dei lettori ottocenteschi, contribuendo al contempo a restituirci un'immagine più sfaccettata del secolo decisivo per la formazione dell'identità nazionale. Il caso toscano, approfondito nella seconda parte del suo contributo dall'autrice, è ad esempio la dimostrazione del ruolo non irrilevante, per certi versi anzi sorprendente, giocato allora da un certo tipo di pubblicazioni (libretti di preghiera, piccoli catechismi, istruzioni cristiane, raccolte di canti e di vite dei santi) nei consumi culturali di alcune aree della penisola; dai dati raccolti si può persino ipotizzare che «il genere devozionale, pur subendo negli anni dei naturali alti e bassi, sia uno dei prodotti più resistenti ed affidabili per gli stampatori» (p. 237), imponendosi come «una tipologia di sicuro smercio». E del resto se, come ricorda la stessa Mori, poco conosciamo dell'editoria religio-

sa nel periodo post-napoleonico e dell'esistenza di sue eventuali logiche di mercato, ancora meno sappiamo del peso di generi e di testi che rispondevano più in generale ad una cultura tradizionale. Del peso pertanto e dell'influenza di persistenze passate, presumibilmente ancora forti, e del contributo da esse fornito al clima culturale in cui avvenne il processo di costruzione dell'identità nazionale.

Altra rilevante questione è costituita, sul versante del commercio dei libri, dal grande tema, in parte non affrontato, del mercato editoriale, soprattutto con riferimento all'Italia preunitaria. Non è ancora ben chiaro cosa fosse e se esistesse un mercato realmente nazionale. Risposte in tal senso potrebbero venirci ad esempio da studi modulati sull'esempio di quello qui proposto da Alessandro Volpi (*I rapporti dell'impresa di Giovan Pietro Vieusseux con l'editoria bolognese. I primi anni, 1822-1835*), che esamina e mette in luce gli stretti rapporti, nonché il carattere della loro natura, fra il grande editore di origini ginevrine Giovan Pietro Vieusseux e figure di importanti tipografi, librai e dotti intellettuali dell'ambiente felsineo, fra cui spiccavano personaggi quali Annesio Nobili o Pietro Brighenti. Un saggio da cui emerge con chiarezza quanto l'azione di meccanismi e di reti informali al pari del ruolo e delle relazioni private e personali supplissero in maniera determinante, ma non senza frequenti difficoltà, agli elementi di arretratezza e di disomogeneità del mercato editoriale italiano, conferendo alle imprese librerie, comprese quelle più ambiziose come nel

caso di Vieusseux, forti tratti di inevitabile occasionalità. Una vicenda quella raccontata e ricostruita da Volpi, grazie ad un sapiente uso delle carte Vieusseux, in un certo senso emblematica dei limiti e delle fragilità di un sistema di diffusione e di circolazione della cultura in gran parte dipendente dalle lune dei rapporti di amicizia e dei contatti individuali. Proprio l'immenso materiale archivistico lasciato ai posteri dal Vieusseux, che come si è appena rilevato è in grado di dirci veramente molto sullo stato del mercato librario, potrebbe peraltro, per tornare al tema discusso in precedenza – e penso soprattutto ai volumi del copialettere –, se studiato con certissima pazienza, offrirci altresì uno spaccato non da poco sul pubblico e sul profilo dei lettori della penisola, sui loro gusti e sui loro interessi; lo mostra ad esempio nella seconda parte del suo saggio lo stesso Volpi approfondendo la rete dei lettori bolognesi ed emiliani del Vieusseux, non di rado in veste di acquirenti diretti, composta in larga parte da un limitato ma coeso manipolo di clienti interessati alle pubblicazioni della sua Biblioteca Circolante, espressione di quell'idea di graduale "incivilimento" tanto cara al Vieusseux, e non di rado reperite all'estero.

Utili informazioni del resto, per rispondere ai quesiti proposti, possono venirci almeno in parte oggi, come sottolinea anche il curatore del volume nella sua introduzione a questo numero monografico, dalle possibilità offerte da sempre più accurati repertori (l'ormai noto *CLIO*, il più recente *Editori italiani dell'Ottocento*, e quelli più

specifici come ad esempio il *TESEO*, ossia *Tipografi ed editori scolastico-educativi dell'Ottocento*), a cui aggiungerei il crescente vantaggio derivante oggi agli studiosi di storia dell'editoria e della lettura dalla continua e progressiva digitalizzazione dei cataloghi storici, che consentono nuove verifiche, utili collazioni e possibili integrazioni. Strumenti di cui sembra essersi avvalsa con profitto Mirella D'Ascenzo nel suo contributo su *Editoria, scuola e società a Bologna nel primo Novecento*, incentrato sulla vitalità e la fioritura di questo specifico settore editoriale nel capoluogo emiliano. Un settore che ricevette notevole ed ulteriore impulso dalle riforme scolastiche e dall'introduzione dei nuovi programmi promosse in epoca giolittiana e fascista, nonché dagli investimenti sul piano dell'istruzione popolare di quel "socialismo municipale" di inizio secolo che trovò in tale area la sua principale patria di adozione.

Utili e supplementari informazioni sull'editoria e sugli aspetti legati alla sua produzione e alla sua circolazione possono venirci, come dimostra lo studio di Maurizio Brotini sul granducato di Toscana (*La censura delle stampe tra mercato e politica: i Registri della Censura libraria di Firenze per l'anno 1842*), anche dalla copiosa documentazione degli uffici preposti alla censura. Rispetto ad un uso storiografico di questi materiali d'archivio spesso piegato in passato, ma non di rado ancora oggi, alla ricostruzione politica e delle idee, Brotini ne dimostra l'utilità nella ricostruzione delle dinamiche di mercato. La sottovalutazione di pubblicazioni sottopo-

ste alla revisione dei censori e la contestuale sovrarappresentazione di altre opere, per scopi di pedagogia nazionale o per pura passione aneddotica o letteraria, hanno prodotto infatti una conoscenza distorta e squilibrata, quando non espressamente viziata, della produzione editoriale del passato. Considerazione quest'ultima che, sulla scia dei più aggiornati studi di storia del libro, torna peraltro con forza anche negli esiti e nei risultati del menzionato saggio della Mori, che si è avvalsa proprio dei registri della censura per colmare le numerose lacune riscontrate sui repertori editi, a cominciare dal *CLIO*, rivelatosi particolarmente carente riguardo a quella letteratura "grigia" rappresentata dalla pubblicistica minore (p. 234).

Molti di questi problemi risulteranno in parte, ma non del tutto, superati con l'Italia unita. La fine di forme di rigida censura, la formazione di una normativa più omogenea sul diritto d'autore e il definitivo superamento delle divisioni doganali sono certamente elementi di potenziale riduzione della frammentazione. Fattori di divisione e radicate fratture restavano però ancora nella sostanza delle cose, come mostra ad esempio il saggio di Vincenzo Trombetta sulla realtà di Napoli (*"Nello intendimento di far prosperare in queste contrade l'arte tipografica". L'Editoria nella Napoli postunitaria*). Anche in materia di editoria lo storico dualismo italiano continuava a farsi sentire con forza, e il contesto napoletano ancor più che arretrato, non mancando anzi di alcuni specifici motivi di intrinseca vitalità, risulta fortemente autonomo e separa-

to dal restante territorio del neostato unitario, rispetto al quale non si realizzò al tempo nessun rilevante interscambio di libri. Lacerata dal confronto traumatico con la nuova situazione politica, a testimoniare anche in questo campo la percezione di una distanza da uno Stato che sembra allontanare piuttosto che accogliere, la tradizionale produzione editoriale napoletana ebbe considerevolmente ad accusare la fine del protezionismo doganale borbonico. A fronte di tale crisi, nella nuova città postunitaria gli aspetti di fermento furono dovuti soprattutto alla comparsa di iniziative editoriali legate all'impegno di una locale borghesia umanistica tipica dell'Italia meridionale tardo ottocentesca, che finirono per dar vita ad «un *differente* e, per certi versi atipico, modello di sviluppo», meritevole di ulteriori approfondimenti (p. 226). Specchio immediato di tale processo fu l'impor-si di generi librari espressione di professionalità giuridiche, mediche, amministrative, accademiche.

Della borghesia italiana, della sua crescente importanza socio-culturale nell'Italia di De Pretis e di Crispi, delle sue articolazioni interne e dei suoi gradimenti estetici, ben riassunti da alcune passioni letterarie – si pensi al De Amicis e al suo *Cuore*, quasi incarnazione di una società e di un'epoca –, in fondo molto ci parla anche il bel lavoro di Giorgio Bacci (*Illustrazioni di largo consumo: dinamiche visive e culturali nei romanzi di Carolina Invernizio*), dedicato agli oltre trenta romanzi, allora assai popolari, di Carolina Invernizio, e soprattutto alle copiose e accurate illustrazioni che ne

accompagnavano iconograficamente la lettura. Quelle pagine e quelle insistenti immagini, in cui il povero e l'alto borghese spesso convivevano o trovavano una loro precisa collocazione edificante, rappresentarono un canale di acculturazione e di iniziazione ad una pedagogia patriottica che, attraverso il linguaggio unificante e paternalistico dei buoni sentimenti, finiva per mettere d'accordo un pubblico trasversale composto da alto borghesi e da lettori di un'aristocrazia operaia di artigiani e lavoratori urbani, nonché da uomini e specialmente da donne piccolo-borghesi.

La borghesia e il suo montante protagonismo culturale postunitario attraversano anche il saggio di Pier Paola Penzo (*Infrastrutture, edilizia e urbanistica nei periodici professionali: Bologna 1860-1890*), riguardante lo studio di un genere di pubblicazione particolare ma emblematica di una tale affermazione. Si tratta dei periodici professionali, che l'autrice ha studiato relativamente al caso bolognese. Attraverso le pagine di questi fogli, rivolti ad un pubblico specialistico di ingegneri, architetti, imprenditori agricoli ed industriali, medici ed accademici umanisti, per quanto in un contesto limitato ad una sola città, abbiamo la possibilità di osservare da vicino i contenuti e gli orientamenti culturali di una nuova Italia emergente. La diffusione sempre più marcata ed articolata di un'editoria tecnico-scientifica è infatti il sintomo dei mutamenti sociali in atto e del perfezionamento dei confini e dello statuto di nuove identità professionali. In particolare, l'autrice approfondisce attraverso l'analisi

dei periodici la crescente partecipazione al dibattito sulla modernizzazione urbanistica della città, che diviene una sorta di caleidoscopio in cui si riflette e si riverbera la visione politica più ampia di questi nuovi soggetti sociali su questioni decisive come quelle economiche e sociali. Anche Bologna, come altri capoluoghi italiani, diviene allora sede di un grande ed ottimistico mito borghese tardottocentesco, vale a dire l'Utopia igienista. Un orizzonte quello dell'igienismo che investe naturalmente e soprattutto i medici ma che, nelle sue possibili implicazioni, arriva a coinvolgere anche gli agronomi, gli ingegneri ecc...

Nel campo dell'editoria si vanno poi affermando con il consolidamento dell'unità più mature logiche di mercato e di impresa di cui è esempio a Bologna l'esperienza della nota casa editrice Zanichelli, capace di imporsi con le sue collane su scala nazionale. Un'esperienza importante e duratura che riecheggia nel saggio di Gianfranco Tortorelli («*È meglio guarire che restare sempre infermicci*»: *geremiadi di Nicola Zanichelli sul commercio librario e sulle contraffazioni*) e, soprattutto, nei suoi risvolti imprenditoriali, nel contributo di Loretta De Franceschi (*La Società anonima per azioni "Nicola Zanichelli": dalla costituzione alla fine della prima guerra mondiale, 1906-1918*), già artefice di un'accurata monografia sugli esordi ottocenteschi del libraio e tipografo Nicola Zanichelli. Se Tortorelli mette a fuoco proprio la figura del fondatore, con speciale attenzione alle sue posizioni di ordine culturale e commerciale colte attraverso la partecipazione in prima

persona ai dibattiti che coinvolsero nel delicato momento seguente all'Unità la sua categoria, come quelli sul commercio librario e sulla contraffazione, la De Franceschi ricostruisce invece le diverse strategie ed attività della casa editrice di fronte alle sfide del nuovo secolo. Letture che, pur da due angoli visuali diversi, convergono nel mostrare la lungimiranza di un'avventura imprenditoriale che, nella sua capacità di adeguarsi alle molteplici trasformazioni e alle mutate condizioni delle diverse epoche, denota pur fra difficoltà e traversie i suoi tratti indubbiamente dinamici e moderni.

In conclusione, il maggior merito di molti di questi saggi risiede sia nell'indicazione, attraverso studi di vicende e di realtà circoscritte, di piste di indagine estendibili ad altri contesti nazionali ed utili a far scaturire, se messi insieme, un più preciso ed esauriente quadro d'insieme, sia nel collocarsi fuori da schemi spesso stereotipati, riuscendo invece a far dialogare più in generale la storia del libro con categorie in parte nuove e diverse, rispetto a molti studi nostrani di storia dell'editoria, come ad esempio quelle di mercato e di cultura.

Marco Manfredi

***Amici di carta. Viaggio nella letteratura per i ragazzi*, L. Braidà et al. (a cura di), Milano, Università degli Studi di Milano-Skira, 2007, 197 pp.**

È un titolo molto evocativo *Amici di carta*, è un titolo (il cui conio si deve a

Vittorio Spinazzola che apre il volume con una carrellata affettivo-autobiografica sulla letteratura per i ragazzi) che dispone alla conoscenza di un mondo antico, ora rimosso ora ricordato, il mondo della cultura dell'infanzia, della formazione attraverso le prime immagini e le prime letture che scorrono sotto i nostri occhi di bambini. È vero. Infatti, in questo libro una forte componente emozionale si unisce alla competenza scientifica degli studiosi che lo hanno impaginato, così ricco di immagini e di spunti critici, frutto degli entusiasmi radunati attorno ad APICE, il centro *Archivi della Parola, dell'Immagine e della Comunicazione Editoriale* sorto da poco presso l'Università degli Studi di Milano e dal quale provengono le preziose illustrazioni (fondo Reggi, fondo Wick, fondo Bompiani).

Diciamo subito che l'arco cronologico di cui si occupa questo libro-catalogo è molto ampio. Si tratta infatti di documentazione che va dalla fine del Settecento alla metà inoltrata del Novecento.

Una prima ricognizione, di impianto generale, della raccolta Reggi è affidata a Lodovica Braidà che fa leva sugli aspetti materiali del libro per l'infanzia, delineando un profilo evolutivo dello stile e dei contenuti della cosiddetta "grande esclusa" attraverso le tappe canoniche che guidarono il criterio selettivo del collezionista Sergio Reggi: *Pinocchio*, *Salgari*, *Yambo*. All'interno di questo corpus, un discorso a parte è riservato da Irene Piazzoni ai libri "sonori", volumi illustrati con dischi in vinile allegati, veri e propri oggetti di lusso, tutti

risalenti agli anni del secondo conflitto mondiale.

Se è vero, come è vero, che una delle peculiarità del prodotto editoriale per ragazzi è l'illustrazione, qui non poteva mancare un discorso ben articolato come quello di Antonello Negri. Prendendo le mosse da quel caposaldo della pubblicistica per l'infanzia che fu il «Giornale per i bambini», lo studioso individua un duplice filone che caratterizza questo ambito del linguaggio grafico sullo scorcio dell'Ottocento: da una parte il naturalismo più tradizionale di stampo borghese (il «buon senso figurativo»), dall'altra la semplificazione e stilizzazione che, nel Novecento, si mescolerà ai più innovativi esperimenti d'avanguardia («ingenuità e sfrontatezza»). Così Yambo, Rubino, Cambellotti, Toddi, Pinochi, Angoletta scorrono fra le pagine ricordandoci, in particolare a proposito di Sergio Tofano, che «primitivismo e infantilismo sono da tempo diventati un carattere stilistico variamente usato dalle avanguardie artistiche francesi e tedesche, ma in Italia è proprio allora che un'inclinazione del genere si manifesta in artisti come Carrà, Rosai, Soffici e, naturalmente, Maccari» (p. 37).

Del resto, si sa, «per il bambino l'illustrazione è *fatale*: perché imponendosi come vera ed esatta – cioè come l'unica possibile, senza che la sua convenzionalità e casualità siano sospettabili – ne orienta una volta per tutte la lettura: il Corsaro Nero avrà quel volto e non altro, le fauci spalancate di quel drago avranno quel diametro e non altro... » (p. 51). Ce lo ricorda Michele Mari, insistendo su

orrori, angosce, fobie, sadismo e fascismo presenti nei lavori di scrittori che sono stati illustratori delle loro stesse storie, come Hoffmann-Donner, Thienemann e Busch; come *Pel di carota* di Jules Renard dove ci si rammarica di non essere orfani, come *Il piccolo principe* (che si suicida!) di Saint-Exupéry, come *La famosa invasione degli orsi in Sicilia* del nostro visionario Dino Buzzati. Un discorso nel quale ben si inserisce la riflessione di Nicoletta Vallerani sulla metamorfosi del corpo nella letteratura per l'infanzia, scorrendo velocemente «un catalogo di corpi strani campionati da testi di lingua inglese, in prevalenza di Lewis Carroll e di Edward Lear, cronologicamente collocati nella seconda metà dell'Ottocento e affiancati a un immaginario che si è riproposto – anche nella sua versione “illustrata” e visiva – fino a tempi molto recenti, invadendo la terra cognita di Harry Potter e quella meno familiare di Coraline, con puntigliose citazioni che non hanno mai smesso di divertire i bambini» (p. 67).

A questi interventi panoramici seguono una serie di saggi di taglio monografico, che presentano affondi su singoli autori od opere. È il caso del pezzo di Alberto Cadioli su Salgari e la rappresentazione del mare in tempesta, nelle cui descrizioni «non c'è alcuna differenza tra l'Oceano indiano, il Mar dei Caraibi, le Bermuda o lo stretto di Behring: sono tutti luoghi dell'immaginario, più che della realtà geografica, perché l'uragano è, in primo luogo, una funzione narrativa: deve coinvolgere il lettore in una situazione di paura, ma, nello stesso

tempo, deve aprire nuovi scenari, al centro dei quali, sia che segua la catastrofe del naufragio o la braca regga alle onde, l'eroe deve mostrare sicurezza e coraggio, portando avanti insieme alla barca anche la narrazione, conducendola a nuovi orizzonti» (p. 86); è il caso delle osservazioni di Silvia Morgana su *Pinocchio* e sul suo apparato/apporto linguistico nella tradizione letteraria italiana, nonostante la prospettiva regressiva-tradizionalista rappresentata dall'«eterogeneo materiale pinocchiesco apocrifo» che abbonda nel fondo Reggi, dove il personaggio collodiano «diventa ciclista, partecipa al Giro d'Italia, si cimenta in gare automobilistiche, va in aeroplano, debutta in società e prende parte ai divertimenti e agli svaghi della *belle époque*. Ma vive anche gli eventi della storia, che lo vedono protagonista e anche strumento di propaganda politica: il burattino compirà «eroiche imprese» nella guerra di Libia, diventerà un fascista convinto e attivo, distinguendosi prima come balilla e poi nella Campagna d'Etiopia» (p. 109).

Ancora di taglio monografico sono la bella analisi del *Ciondolino* di Vamba procuratoci da Luca Clerici e la rilettura che de *La scacchiera davanti allo specchio* di Massimo Bontempelli fa qui Giovanna Rosa, evidenziandone i parallelismi con il capolavoro di Carroll e illustrando il significato della scelta di un illustratore come Tofano, per un'avventura che non vuole evocare adulte e «perturbanti» inquietudini dechirichiane, perché «agli imperativi severi del volontarismo etico, che nei libri educativi

guidava la *Bildung* del giovane protagonista, *La scacchiera* oppone le risorse energetiche dell'immaginazione divertente, quasi a suggerire ai cuccioli d'uomo che «per cavarcela nelle difficoltà della vita» occorre preservare il gusto dell'avventura imprevedibile, il solo capace di fronteggiare la vischiosità sclerotica dei luoghi comuni che immobilizzano e distorcono la realtà. In questo racconto rivolto ai giovanissimi, l'obiettivo polemico è la miopia cocciuta con cui gli adulti vantano le loro verità superbe, fino a credersi «padroni del mondo»» (p. 134).

Se il tema, affrontato da Emanuela Scarpellini, della diffusione mondadoriana di «Topolino» nell'Italia fascista e degli accorgimenti adottati dall'editore per evitare la censura di regime, continua a mantenerci in Italia, finalmente Francesca Orestano, Maria Giulia Longhi e Gian Piero Piretto ci introducono alle collezioni di libri stranieri conservati presso il centro APICE. La prima si sofferma sul fondo messo insieme dal bibliofilo Peter Arms Wick (1920-2004), fondamentale se si vuole ripercorrere la formazione del canone della letteratura per l'infanzia, a cominciare dall'Inghilterra del Settecento. Dal classico di John Newbery, passando per alcune preziose prime edizioni di Carroll, Kipling e Barrie, per arrivare alla piena *golden age* della *children's literature*, guardando raffinate illustrazioni e maneggiando ricche legature. Longhi si dedica alla sezione di libri in lingua francese, fra gli esercizi per l'educazione morale e religiosa (1800-1830), i *livres de prix* (1840-1870) e gli album per l'infanzia illustrati da

Boutet de Monvel (1880-1900) per l'editore Plon. Infine Piretto conclude richiamando alla nostra attenzione il discorso educativo post-rivoluzionario in Unione Sovietica, quando l'editoria per l'infanzia diventa fonte di sopravvivenza per molti artisti e luogo d'espressione per l'arte d'avanguardia, invisibile al regime. Una parabola involutiva che dalla grammatica costruttivista porta alla retorica del realismo socialista.

Lorenzo Cantatore

*Scientific News
and Activities
of Research Centres*



Cronache scientifiche
e Attività
degli istituti di ricerca

The Department of Childhood Studies at Rutgers University, Camden (Usa)

Lynne Vallone

The Department of Childhood Studies at Rutgers University in Camden, New Jersey puts the issues, concepts and debates that surround the study of children and childhoods at the center of its research and teaching missions. Through a multidisciplinary approach, the Department of Childhood Studies aims both to theorize and historicize the figure of the Child and to situate the study of children and childhoods within contemporary cultural and global contexts. The Department opened its doors in September 2007, offering interdisciplinary degrees at the B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. levels (<<http://childhood.camden.rutgers.edu>>).

Currently, the Rutgers University Department of Childhood Studies is the first Ph.D. program in Childhood Studies in the United States. Full-time faculty members in the Department of Childhood Studies include Dr. Daniel Hart, Distinguished Professor (Psychology) and Chair; Dr. Daniel T. Cook, Associate Professor (Sociology); and Dr. Lynne Vallone, Professor (English). Rutgers-Camden is a small and attractive urban campus expanding to accommodate the growth of Southern New Jersey and is located just across the Delaware River from Philadelphia.

The diverse and vibrant urban location offers a productive setting for the study of children and childhoods today. The Department of Childhood Studies is enhanced by the proximity and mutual projects it undertakes with the *Center for Children and Childhood Studies*, also housed at Rutgers-Camden (<<http://children.camden.rutgers.edu>>).

The Center promotes the understanding, enrichment, and recognition of the significance of the experiences of children through outreach programs that assist children in New Jersey in areas such as health, literacy, and social development and through sponsoring symposia, lecture series, and workshops. The expertise of the Childhood Studies faculty is complemented by the Associates in the *Center for Children and Childhood Studies* who have appointments in a wide range of departments and schools around the University, including, among others, Anthropology, Psychology, Sociology, Criminology, English, Public Policy, Religion, Philosophy, History, and Law. Students in the Department of Childhood Studies are encouraged to engage in research projects offered through the Center. Active teacher/scholars, the full-time faculty in the Department of Childhood Studies represents a wide range of interdisciplinary interests. Daniel Hart's research focuses on personality and development in children and adolescents. He also serves as the Director of the *Center for Children and Childhood Studies*. Daniel T. Cook works primarily on 20th-century and contemporary children's consumer culture and Lynne Vallone's research centers on socio-historical studies of children's literature and the literature and cultural histories of girlhood. More detailed information about each faculty member can be found on the Department of Childhood Studies website.

Certainly, graduate students form the core of any post-baccalaureate program and the intellectual atmosphere of the Department of Childhood Studies has been enriched by its inaugural class of fourteen doctoral students (part-time study is available). The students bring a wealth of accomplishments from a variety of backgrounds including law, early childhood education, literature, educational administration, library science, and psychology, among other disciplines and fields. The students bring their diverse preparation and training to bear on the common enterprise of the study of children and childhoods in historical and contemporary cultural and global contexts.

The curriculum in the Department is multidisciplinary in scope and purpose and provides students with a strong background in both humanistic and social science perspectives on children and their representations. This approach will prepare students for careers in many areas including academics, public policy, social services, youth programming, and education. Courses available to graduate students extend from the two-semester Proseminar in Childhood Studies to a variety of methods courses (statistical, interpretative, literary), to in-depth study of specific areas such as Children and Childhood in Cross-Cultural Perspectives, Child Growth and Development, The Visual and Material Cultures of Childhood, Issues in Social Policy, The History of Childhood, Growing Up in Africa, Children's Literature, and Children and the Justice System, among many others. The intellectual life of the Department's faculty and graduate students is enhanced by the on-going Research Seminar in Childhood Studies which meets three or four times each semester to discuss topics of interest in the study of children and childhoods from a variety of perspectives.

Recent talks have considered the development of spatial awareness in the infant brain, the effects of transnational migration on the emotional lives of Ghanaian families, and the responses of teen readers in dialogue with Mark Twain's character Jim from *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

The Department of Childhood Studies at Rutgers, Camden is developing many plans for the future growth and continued success of Childhood Studies. In spring 2009 semester, for example, the Department will host a major conference on children and war. In addition, we are interested in developing possible research collaborations and potential exchanges between our Department and other programs in Childhood Studies. To that end, we will welcome two visiting European scholars at different stages in their careers in the spring 2008 semester. Most importantly, the Department expects to continue to expand over the next several years through the recruitment of additional faculty with full-time appointments in Childhood Studies.

Students interested in graduate study in Childhood Studies at Rutgers University are encouraged to visit our website and to contact members of the Department (Daniel Hart, email: hart@rutgers.edu; Daniel T. Cook, email: dtcook@camden.rutgers.edu; and Lynne Vallone, email: vallone@rutgers.edu); for specific questions about guidance through the application process, please direct inquiries to Daniel Hart, Chair (who can also be reached by telephone at 856-225-6741 or 856-225-6438).

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The state of the art of the Japonic-Chinese and Sino-Canadian children's literature. Two international Symposiums in Osaka and Zhejiang

Xia Zhao

1. Japonic-Chinese Children's Literature Symposium held in Osaka

The 3rd Japonic-Chinese Children's Literature Symposium was held in Japan's city Osaka from November 23 to November 28. Actually, it was 14 years ago when the 2nd Symposium was held in Shanghai, and 17 years ago when the first one took place in Osaka. The long interval between made this Symposium an even more precious one.

The central topic for the Symposium is *Japonic-Chinese Children's Literature in A Globalization Epoch: What Has "Harry Potter", "Lord of the Ring" and "The Chronicles of Narnia" Brought Us?* More than 70 children's literature researchers and writers from China and Japan attended the Symposium. Five well-known Chinese children's literature scholars and writers, that is, Cao Wenxuan from Beijing University, Fang Weiping from Zhejiang Normal University, Zhu Ziqiang from China's Ocean University, Ma Li from Shenyang Normal University, and Qing Wenjun from Shanghai, were invited as keynote speakers on the Symposium. President of Tokyo Centre for Japonic-Chinese Children's Literature and art communication Mr. Akira Nakao did as chairman of the organization committee. Among the Japanese attendees, there were Japanese pioneer children's literature researcher and winner of the International Brothers Grimm Award Prof. Shin Torigoe, renowned children's literature researcher Masako Shimizu, Hiroshi Sunada, Hisako Kimishima, Takashi Kawano, Tomoko Narumi, Noriko Asano, and children's books writer Jyun

Nasuda, Kumiko Kun, Shizuko Wakayama. Some Chinese student researchers in Japan also participated in the Symposium.

Prof. Fang Weiping and Mr. Takayuki Kono compered the whole Symposium. Cao Wenxuan and Masako Shimizu respectively made memorial speeches titled *Literary Choice in a Chaotic Era and the Possibility of Fantasy* for the Symposium. The following speeches and debate were focused on the great influence western fantasy works such as the Harry Potter Series had on children and children's literature in the two countries, the features, significance and values of fantasy, and the current and future development of Chinese and Japanese children's literature in a globalization era. The Symposium did not purpose to solve the problems, however, but to clarify them, and, in its clarification, help to find a good way of reaction. Prof. Shin Torigoe, who had contributed a lot to the Symposium, said in the closing address that this was the most successful bi-lateral conference he had ever attended between Japanese and Chinese children's literature colleagues. Prof. Fang Weiping concluded in the end that the Symposium was most successful in its topic setting, viewpoint interpretation and academic communication, which brought on high expectation for the next time of get-together. As representative of participators from China, he also expressed their acknowledgment for all the work Prof. Shin Torigoe and other Japanese friends had done for the Symposium.

During the Symposium, a visit to the International Institute for Children's Literature in Osaka was arranged. This is the first institute devoted to the study of children's literature in Japan. It began with the donation of the enormous collection of children's literature by Mr. Shin Torigoe, a professor at Waseda University, Tokyo at that time, to the Governor of Osaka Prefecture in 1979, and was formally opened in 1984. It has now collected more than 690,000 children's books from different countries, and is trying to integrate the functions of being both a research and a service institute.

2. Sino-Canadian Children's Literature Seminar Held on Campus

November 20th, 2007, a rare sunny day after a whole rainy week, giving the on-coming Sino-Canadian Children's Literature Seminar a perfect start.

The Seminar was placed in a particularly Chinese flavored building named Honglou (the Red Mansion) in Zhejiang Normal University whose children's literature research and teaching is quite renowned in China. Many important contemporary children's literature writers and scholars had been cultivated here since about nearly 30 years ago, when the university established its children's literature institute, the first one among all Chinese universities since the end of the Cultural Revolution (1976). Honglou is now the location of Children's Culture Institute, the first academic institute responsible for com-

prehensive children's culture study among colleges and universities around China.

Researchers and writers of children's literature from China and Canada participated in the seminar. Among them, there were Jiang Feng, the only Chinese member of the international Brothers Grimm Award Judgment Committee; Fang Weiping, Vice Dean of Children's Culture Institute and Director of Children's Literature Institute in ZNU; Linda Leith, Founder and President of the Blue Metropolis Montreal International Literary Festival; Marie-Louise Gay, well-known children's literature writer and illustrator in and out of Canada, also nominee for the Hans Christian Andersen Award and the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award; Peng Yi, a researcher in CCI, who's well known for his children's literature writing, translation and research works; and Zhang Hong, a renowned children's literature writer and Deputy Editor-in-Chief of *Shanghai Daily*, the sole English magazine in East China. Teachers and college students interested in children's literature were also given admittance to the seminar.

Prof. Fang Weiping presided over the whole seminar. After a welcome address and a brief introduction to children's literature research progress in CLI, he made it clear that the seminar would focus on a communication and comparison between contemporary children's literature development in the two countries. In one of the opening speeches, Zhao Xia, a research in CCI, gave a concrete description of contemporary children's literature development in China through five keywords: Picture books, Classics, Childhood, Cartoons and Youth Writing. Dr. Linda Leith in her speech analyzed the unique context within which Canadian writers write, including Canada's history and population, climate, geography, geopolitics, regional identity and language, which together had an impact on Canadian literature as a whole, including children's literature. She also talked about her own literary writing and its relationship with Chinese culture. As founder of the Blue Metropolis Montreal International Literary Festival, Linda Leith also introduced to the audience the Festival's multi-cultural and -lingual features and special activities, and what it had done for culture bridging.

As a flourishing children's literature genre both in contemporary China and Canada, picture book became one of the most important topic during the seminar. Dr. Peng Yi, whose new book *Picture Book: Reading with Classics* had just won the highest official publication award the *Governmental Award for Publication* in China, gave a speech titled *Publication of Picture Books in Modern China*, in which he talked about the unprecedented trend of both national and translated picture books publication in Chinese Mainland. It was revealed in his speech that, some of the best sold picture books in contemporary China are introduced from Canada and other countries. Marie-Louise Gay talked about Canadian children's picture books history, their artistic features, especially the difference in style, perspective, design, fantasy and humor between English and French Canadian illustrators: the former conservative and

realistic, while the latter of surrealism and romanticism, but both of them fascinating enough to earn their readers favor. Ms. Gay also shared her own experience as picture books writer and illustrator with the audience. Dr. Qian Shuying from CLI gave a presentation of Canadian children's literature translated and published in China from a comparative perspective. Researches on Canadian children's literature done by Chinese scholars were also summarized.

In the latter part of the seminar, a free discussion focusing on how to create excellent picture books and to improve communication between children's literature writers, researchers, and promoters of the two countries were arranged. Some Canadian children's books were gifted by their authors to the International Children's Literature Library in CCI. Fang Weiping concludes at the end of the seminar that, it is very important for children's literature from different countries to enhance mutual understanding and communication. This seminar could be a good start. We are hoping that children's literature from more countries may be engaged into this kind of discussion and communication to promote its writing and research on a much broader level.

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The European Project «History On Line» (Lifelong Learning Programme – Erasmus EVC sub-programme, 2007-2009)

Marta Brunelli

1. The birth of an idea: the Internet and current trends of historical research

The huge impact of the new information technologies on the modalities of communicating, searching and selecting information, as well as producing and sharing new knowledge, has radically transformed the way in which also historical research is carried out in the Internet era.

As current national and international projects of digitisation have shown nowadays, entire documentary collections of historical interest can be described, indexed, reproduced and published in an electronic and multi-medial form, and then finally made available for remote access through any Internet connection. Libraries or archival collections are increasingly finding a “digital” form: in this way the expression *digital library* just means a library institution which has not only automated all services (first of all catalogues and retrieval systems), but which has also transformed its sources (bibliographic information as well as documents themselves, i.e. texts, pictures, etc.) into digital contents.

Consequently, the numerous transformations under way in the field – such as the birth of bibliographical databases (Opacs and Meta-opacs), Web portals and gateways which are specialised in historical fields, as well as networks devoted to the various communities of historians, as well as interactive tools (such as the well-known *Wikipedia*), and virtual environments where to meet, communicate, even teach and learn – end up intensely affecting the work of historians.

The ways of communicating among historians, of history teaching/learning (in on-line, or “blended” modalities), of producing knowledge within these new virtual environments (according to the purest “constructivist” paradigms of learning) are undoubtedly changing, to a degree that scholars are nowadays talking about digital historiography – that is, a historiographical genre which could not exist without the Internet, and without one of its most spread applications, i.e. the Web.

Clearly, the Net presents risks and “critical” aspects which have been analysed by scholars, and which are well known to anyone who is familiar with this reality: we mean the aspects related to difficulties in searching, finding and selecting useful information in an overwhelming quantity of data (*information overload*); the problem of the reliability of sources and confidence in websites; the unsteadiness of information; the problems of the transformation and re-contextualisation of a document after its “migration” into a digital format. But it is undeniable that the Net, with its multi-medial tools, the power of the hyperlink navigation, the synchronous/asynchronous modes of communication, and the progressive establishing paradigm of the Web 2.0 (with its forthcoming evolution, the Web 3.0) is going to offer new and enthusiastic opportunities to everyone interested in historical research: academics, researchers, teachers and students, as well as the “ordinary” surfers of the Net.

2. The European Project History On Line

The project History-On-Line (HOL), which started in October 2007 with the funding of the European Commission (Life Long Learning programme – Erasmus EVC sub-programme) is based on this awareness. The Project was proposed by the Italian universities of Macerata (Prof. Roberto Sani) and Turin (Prof. Giorgio Chiosso), and is aimed at promoting quality and innovation in history education through the use of new ITC, and through the scientific inter-university cooperation in historical research.

Partners in this project are: the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research (Germany); the Carl Von Ossietzky Universität (Germany); the Fatih University (Turkey); the UNED-Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (Spain), Académie de Strasbourg – GIP FCIP Alsace (France); the National School of Political Studies and Public Administration (Romania); TEI of Mesolongi, Department of Applied Informatics in Management and Economy, Ebusiness Lab (Greece); University of Debrecen, Department of Cultural Studies and Adult Education (Hungary). Technical-administrative and technological support is given by the partners: Pixel (Italy) and Easy Technologies S.r.l. (Italy).

The aim of the project is to match the new needs which have been created by the application of ITC to the study of history, i.e.: a direct online access to:

sources (virtual repertories, digital libraries); didactic materials (manuals, on-line training courses, online reference materials); research tools (historical essays, journals, etc.); software and databases for the analysis of history sources. The result of the collective efforts of the European partners (universities, scholars, professors and students) will lead to the implementation of a specialised Internet Portal: here, documents and other tools will be made available, and organised according to scientific and didactical criteria. In order to achieve the objective of rendering the Portal a familiar point of reference for innovation in history, it has been decided to focus on the historical-educational sector: this will allow to carry on a rigorous analysis of modalities of integration and cooperation among European partners, to explore a historical comparative approach as well as to test the interaction through students-users' viewpoints, and finally to deeply test the Internet potentials for historical methodologies.

3. Objectives and actions of the HOL project

The main objective of the project is to promote integration between history professors, researchers and students of different European countries; in this way, the idea of a European history as a sum and result of the different national histories can be developed in a historical-comparative approach, together with the promotion of a new Web 2.0 historiography, where the Net-user is the protagonist, and the online learner is the producer of new knowledge.

In this way, the Portal will become a collector of material and databases for the analysis of history sources, such as the already existing databases for school manuals (Edisco in Italy, Emmanuelle in France, Manes in Spain, Red Patre Manes, Latin America, Belgium, Portugal and the Georg Eckert Institut in Germany), which will be gathered in a *supra-national* database; but also new databases can be arranged, such as *national* databases (into which material of common may be poured, in order to share similar documentation with other countries and to allow a comparative approach among national works). In *building* the online resources, partners will elaborate standards for selecting, cataloguing and codifying documentation related to three separate sections of the Portal, i.e.: «Modern and contemporary history»; «Material and databases of history sources»; «Essays and monographs».

Another important contribution of the project will be the creation of the Guide to Historic Research Methods, which aims at offering a tool which will accompany users (expert and non) in an autonomous and conscious re-construction of history through an effective use of all the material contained in the project Portal. In this way the users can further their knowledge in the history subject area but can also learn how to apply their critical skills. The guide will

include examples which will illustrate the methodology of historical research “step by step”, also through the use of the available online resources.

After gathering materials and arranging tools in the Portal, the following step is the testing-phase. Five pilot groups, made of experts and students, will follow one of the historical re-construction initiatives through the sources, and will use the portal by applying the Guide to Historic Research Methods and experimenting cooperative online historical writing. In this way, the use of the portal for history training will be checked and validated, together with the functionality of all the tools.

4. Towards the union of accessibility with scientific rigour

Reproducing and making historical sources accessible in a *trans-national* Portal, implies the choice of criteria and the definition of standards and protocols (e.g., in selecting and using sources within a cooperative historical-writing perspective, etc.), in order to guarantee the uniformity of the final product and to offer new qualitative and quantitative analysis tools for different historical sources. This objective of “standardisation” aims at validating – on a rigorously scientific base – models and procedures which are the expression of the scientific research which is carried out by different European universities and historians, offering moreover a chance for a comparative approach to the historical methodology on the Web.

Matching accessibility with scientific rigorousness as well as with correctness of information is a possible objective to reach also in the historical research field. The added value of these hyper-medial and interactive features of the Net lays in the fact that its extraordinary communicative power can be easily joined with the methodology of research, and adapted to suit didactical aims in order to provide a lifelong- and intergenerational learning platform, and an open educational online base of resources at a European level, through the use of innovative e-learning theories and tools.

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