



**Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference
of the Journal Scuola Democratica**

REINVENTING EDUCATION

2-5 June 2021

VOLUME I

Citizenship, Work and The Global Age

ASSOCIAZIONE "PER SCUOLA DEMOCRATICA"

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**Citizenship, Work and The
Global Age**

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Title **Proceedings of the Second International Conference of the Journal “Scuola Democratica” – Reinventing Education VOLUME I Citizenship, Work and The Global Age**

This volume contains papers presented in the 2nd International Conference of the Journal “Scuola Democratica” which took place online on 2-5 June 2021. The Conference was devoted to the needs and prospects of Reinventing Education.

The challenges posed by the contemporary world have long required a rethinking of educational concepts, policies and practices. The question about education ‘for what’ as well as ‘how’ and ‘for whom’ has become unavoidable and yet it largely remained elusive due to a tenacious attachment to the ideas and routines of the past which are now far off the radical transformations required of educational systems. Scenarios, reflections and practices fostering the possibility of change towards the reinvention of the educational field as a driver of more general and global changes have been centerstage topics at the Conference. Multidisciplinary approach from experts from different disciplinary communities, including sociology, pedagogy, psychology, economics, architecture, political science has brought together researchers, decision makers and educators from all around the world to investigate constraints and opportunities for reinventing education.

The Conference has been an opportunity to present and discuss empirical and theoretical works from a variety of disciplines and fields covering education and thus promoting a trans- and interdisciplinary discussion on urgent topics; to foster debates among experts and professionals; to diffuse research findings all over international scientific networks and practitioners’ mainstreams; to launch further strategies and networking alliances on local, national and international scale; to provide a new space for debate and evidences to educational policies. In this framework, more than 800 participants, including academics, educators, university students, had the opportunity to engage in a productive and fruitful dialogue based on research, analyses and critics, most of which have been published in this volume in their full version.

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Citizenship, Work and The Global Age

A Premise

What is education for? This philosophical question cannot be answered ignoring contributions from social and educational sciences. The growing focus on learning outcomes should have prompted discussion on the values and aims in defining policy objectives and developing accountability systems and evidence-based approaches. Whereas for years public discourse on education has most frequently been confined to a merely sector-based perspective, without addressing the relationship (i.e., interdependency and/or autonomy) with globalised societies or to face the new challenges of contemporary's world. The relationship between education and society and the issue of aims can be observed in a new context which has seen the weakening of the society-nation equation and the strengthening of global dimensions.

The crisis born of the pandemic is more and more global and multidimensional. It inevitably obliges to ask what the post-pandemic socio-economic scenarios could be and what challenges might emerge from the transformations of education and training systems and policies. Many researchers and observers think that the most relevant of these challenges is that of inequalities between and within countries. The medium-long term nature of many of these challenges poses a complex question: does the pandemic tend to widen or narrow the time-space horizons of people perceptions, rationalities, and decisions?

For decades, the field of education and training has witnessed continuous growth in globalization and internationalization: just think of the role of the large-scale assessment surveys and the increasing influence of international organisations. Phenomena and concepts such as policy mobility (lending and borrowing) or – within another field of research – policy learning, as well as global scaling up, global-local hybridization and policy assemblage might find a useful opportunity of debate and in-depth analysis in this stream. This might also be true of the related issue regarding how comparative research must be carried out and of the relationship between some government 'technologies' adopted in the latest cycle of policies – for example, quasi-market, evaluation, and autonomy of schools and universities – and the ever more criticized neo-liberal paradigm. In this framework, without any revival of the political or methodological nationalism, a critical rethinking of the national dimension, perhaps too hurriedly assumed to be 'obsolete', can be useful also for a comparative reflection. As to our continent we are in the presence not only of

globalization of educational policies, but also of their Europeanisation, due to the extent of the European Commission's strategy and its Open Method of Coordination. Beyond the official distinction between formal, non-formal, and unformal learning, it seems European initiatives and programmes shape a new policy world preparing the future of education, particularly through different expert networks, new ways of conceptualizing knowledge, and disseminating standards. On these issues there is no lack of reflections and research, some of which very critical indeed, whose results deserve to be broadly shared and discussed, too.

The equipping of the new generations with the tools – knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values – to live in a plural and interconnected world is delicate matter indeed in Europe. It is the issue at stake for the encounters – and at times clashes – between old and new visions and forms of pluralism and secularism. Around this theme are developed educational policies and strongly heterogeneous curricula. Such topic is linked also to the variability in young people's competences and attitudes towards 'cultural otherness'.

Life-long learning is another question of notable importance at international level as it implies both a diverse temporal horizon for education and its link to the dimensions of work. And a different approach to the relationship between school and extra-scholastic (life-wide) learning is also implied. From this stems the necessity of greater investment for example in both the early years (ECEC) and the adult education. We might ask, however, how much has been done to achieve this goal, and whether it risks remaining a fascinating but largely unfinished project for a long time.

Within a general rethinking of the aims and the means at the disposal of education systems, many papers ask whether until now enough has been done to educate towards citizenship and democracy and whether various national educational systems have adopted this issue as their core mission.

A second group of questions derives from some crucial challenges – such as the dramatic deterioration of the biosphere, the climate, and the health – which impose both the necessity of rethinking this mission in a planetary context and redefining the 'citizenship' as a concept not merely national, but multi-level, that is ranging from global to local; and in our continent European, too. How deeply are our nations presently involved in the task of educating their citizens in terms of knowledge of global and trans-national issues? And are they striving to build a collective common consciousness in Europe? What help is being given in this sense by proposals elaborated and experiences promoted by international organizations or the EU?

Finally, starting from infant and primary schools, what weight does citizenship education have in schools, what approaches are adopted and what have shown to be the most effective? What didactics are applied and what seem to be the most promising experiences? To what extent are teachers prepared and motivated and students interested in it? Universities and adult education should also play a role in citizenship education. What proposals and significant experiences can be described and examined?

The Volume also includes contributions on the relationship between education and economic systems which is a classic subject of social science. During the twentieth century, the functionalist perspective established a close link between 'school for the masses' and the construction of individuals personalities conforming to values and social objectives. Professions have then become more and more specialized and therefore requiring ever more targeted skills. Hence, the insistence on the need to train future workers in technical and technological skills, as well as more recently in the 'soft skills' climate, increasingly necessary in certain sectors of the economy (Industry 4.0). The alliance between the functionalist perspective and the neoliberal visions finds its conceptual and practical pivot in the employability conceptual frame. On the other hand, since the 1970s, critical research has highlighted that formal education system contributes to the reproduction of inequalities, confirming and strengthening hierarchies and power relations between different actors of the economic system. These lines of investigation have underlined the weight of cultural and social capital in determining school performance, but also the inflation of educational credentials as a combined effect of mass schooling and changes in the economic system. In more recent times, the fragmentation of the educational and training systems, because of the multiplication of public and private agencies in charge of training citizens, in addition to the explosion of the non-formal and informal as learning places (e.g., on the Internet), challenges the school to maintain its primacy as a place responsible for training workers. Moreover, it questions its ability to continue to represent a social elevator and / or a place of social justice.

The issue of the reproduction of inequalities and differential returns of educational qualifications fuels lively and stimulating interdisciplinary debates: economic stagnation, mass unemployment and job instability affect the inclusion of young generations in the labour market. Recently, in the context of lifelong learning policies, the relationship between training and work has become increasingly central, but the definition of the goals of these policies is not neutral: in the neoliberal mantra it is a question of guaranteeing the adaptability, employability and autonomy of each individual, so that one can occupy a place in society according to the dominant values. There is no shortage of critical voices about this individualistic and functionalist interpretation

of the Lifelong Learning vision. On the other hand, even the supporters of neoliberal-inspired policies want an inclusive training offer (from a meritocratic perspective), as it is essential for recruiting resources and supporting flexible production systems focused on knowledge.

The attention of scholars focuses on the effects of the 'knowledge society' in the educational system of European countries. In this perspective, several studies have focused attention on the orientation processes that contribute to the reproduction of inequalities as the students from the lower classes tend to orient themselves, and are oriented by their teachers, towards the vocational paths, stigmatized within the educational systems.

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Building inclusion in the school

Raffaele Tumino

Università di Macerata, raffaelino.tumino@unimc.it

ABSTRACT: *Migration flows bring to the fore the constitutive dilemma that lies at the heart of liberal democracies: «the one between the claims of the sovereign right to self-determination and adherence to the universal principles of human rights» (Benhabib, 2006, p. 38). The solution lies in recognizing that: a) «no human being is illegal»; b) the crossing of borders and the demand for access to a different political community is not a criminal act, but is the expression of human freedom and the desire for better living conditions in a shareable world (ibid, p. 40). But to what extent are we willing to renegotiate our point of view on rights, citizenship, democracy? Is it possible today to offer a solution to the question of intercultural conflicts with valid and adequate tools for the multiple treatment needs advanced in the name of cultural diversity? How can the school favor processes of effective inclusion? More than a century ago J. Dewey (1916) placed at the center of education the study of the environment through history and geography, the space for work and play, the role of secular and democratic social values, collaboration between subjects who live together in the school to operate and train. These didactic-educational indications are still valid today and, indeed, should be resumed. More, they have to be further enhanced to counter any discrimination, intolerance, weakening of democracy in a historical moment in which multiculturalism at school, in neighborhoods, in cities, seems to bring out inequalities in the equality of opportunities in learning and socialization (Malusà, 2020). The inclusive educational perspective that the contribution intends to illustrate has as its objective the enhancement of the transcultural dimension that characterizes our times (Hannerz, 1996; Welsch, 1999) by encouraging the encounter and contamination of knowledge, of the practices, of the experiences. Transcultural pedagogy is inclusive because it works for social justice, for the recognition of rights not based on an abstract cosmopolitanism, for the development of individual capacities, for the enhancement of individuals. The didactic-educational indications present in this contribution urge teachers and educators to build a located and rooted know-how to act, which helps to form future citizens of the world with local and global cultural and identity references (Hannerz, 1996), rooted in local geo-history, projected in an anthropological dimension that concerns the world. It suggests moving through the disciplines, taking ideas from various fields of study, being interested in the existences of the subjects, the places of existence, non-formal learning opportunities, cultures in its various narrative forms.*

KEYWORDS: *Democracy, Inclusion, Pedagogical Anthropology, Transculturality.*

Introduction

This contribution offers an analysis of the nature and characteristics of widespread and participatory learning in secondary school which has as its reference the transcultural paradigm developed by W. Welsch (1999): it indicates a condition of permanent interconnection and fluidity of 'cultures', due to two main factors: an external one, consisting in the dense network of communications, relations and exchanges that connects all the countries of the world, but also the communities in a given territory; an internal one, deriving from an interior disposition of contemporary man, much more accentuated than in the past, to go beyond one's own geographical and psychological boundaries, to explore the territories of otherness (Hannerz, 1997; Berg, Ni Éigeartaigh, 2018).

The transcultural dimension assigns otherness a crucial role in the construction of identity, capable of promoting authentic relations between cultures. Individuals today are inherently transcultural. This is not only true for migrants, but increasingly for everyone. This multiplicity of voices that inhabits the self feeds that constant internal dialogue, or reflexivity, which is one of the characteristics of contemporary man (Giddens, 1991).

From these first introductory bars, the liberation of the transcultural perspective from intercultural education is evident. The latter insists it recognizes the 'differences' but tends to incorporate them in a 'universalist' perspective (Palaiologou, Dietz, 2012), resulting, in the end, assimilationist (Demetrio, 2003). The empirical researches, conducted at national and European level, attest that we are far from 'inclusion' and highlight phenomena of hardship and exclusion that increasingly affect immigrants and the children of second generation immigrants with the consequent growth of school mortality in the last twenty years (Moro, 2004; Gorski, 2009; Ventura, 2012; OCDE, 2016; Lerin, 2018; Tarozzi-Malusà, 2018; Malusà, 2020).

For a different conception of 'culture' and 'relations between cultures' it may be useful to critically re-read John Dewey's didactic-educational action, using the concept of 'democratic iterations' as the basis of the 'deliberative democracy' advocated by Seyla Benhabib. The two thinkers, in fact, are animated by a similar ethical-political vocation. Suffice it to recall: the defense by Benhabib to the position expressed by Dewey (Benhabib, 1996, 70-71) towards those who discredit «deliberative democracy» due to the «poor preparation and aptitude of American citizens» as argued by Walter Lippmann (Dewey, 1927, 117-118); the genesis of the concept of «deliberative democracy» (Dewey, 1916, 1927; Benhabib, 1999, 2004, 2006); their contribution in the historical evolution of this model (Benhabib, 1996; Passerin d'Entrèves, 2006; Bernstein, 2010). Furthermore, Luisa Santelli Beccegato insisted

on the affinity between the two thinkers (Santelli Beccegato, 2005, p. 176). Finally, the transcultural dimension of Deweyan activism highlighted Alain Gossout (2012) also present in Benhabibian political philosophy (Benhabib, 2003).

The proposal to read Dewey and Benhabib integrally leads to enhancing the 'cultural experiences' of the school's protagonists through disciplines and practices: the informal learning opportunities that are given within the relational dynamics between teachers, students and families. The world of the school thus becomes the place of the fundamental «democratic iterations» for the «right belonging» to the «political community» (Behanbib, 2008).

1. The didactic-educational action. The example of history.

We distinguish between didactic action and educational action: the first implies a focus on contents whose cultural value generally refers to the disciplines (considered in their training potential of a mainly instructive / cognitive nature); an explicit effort on the part of the educator in the choice and organization of the same (Chevallier, 1991; Calvani, 2007; Cohen-Aria, 2018, 221-228) and the identification of the most suitable presentation and communication methods. The educational action, on the other hand, tends to be referred to the broader sphere of personal training, considered according to an integrality of growth dimensions that go beyond those strictly cognitive or, in any case, connected to the acquisition of knowledge.

The distinction between didactic action and educational action is supported by Bertagna (2018) while for other authors it is instead suspect (Massa, 1987; Mantegazza, 2006; Peticari, 2007; 2012). Privileging the perspective of the latter, it must be observed that the acquisition of scientific-disciplinary knowledge by the pupil, a moment in which it is customary to focus on the didactic action, obeys criteria of a general formative order, of enhancement valences not only of a cognitive / instructive nature, but also ethical-value, social, emotional and affective, perceptive, in general for the promotion of the personal growth of students. Therefore, the disjunction between the didactic and educational dimensions, between 'education' and 'education', is very suspect from the point of view of educational-pedagogical epistemology because it tends (fictitiously) to separate the scientific-disciplinary content from the 'values'. Indeed, considering the didactic-educational action deeply integrated by the didactic and educational dimensions favors (and guarantees) scientific education, the ethical and political, psychological and cultural dimensions of the pupil (and the teacher). The prevalence of teaching risks losing sight of the integral education of the pupil. A trend denounced in the lashing notes of Mantegazza (2006, 11):

Presenting history as a useless weight on the shoulders of men or as an accumulation of deaths and rubble, politics as the administration of the existing or as a utopian project doomed to failure, theory as an idle pastime for educated people or as a complication of life so simple and clear : these are the faults of so much pedagogy, these are the undignified and somewhat vile tricks to escape the duty of fixing one's gaze into the horizon of the blackest black. Of course, history has also been a mass of deaths, politics has also been reduced to shrewd and dishonest administration, theory has also been an empty game of false dialectics: precisely for this reason, and without ignoring all this, to resume talking about history as balance always poised between emancipation and barbarism, of politics as an attempt to implement the human dream of a just society, of theory as a true and deeper form of intellectual and pedagogical practice, is an unavoidable duty for a pedagogy that still wants to think of itself as a science of emancipation and liberation of man, woman, animal and plant (Mantegazza, 2006, 11; author's translation).

In the direction of carrying out a further process of clarification, we limit ourselves to a few justifications regarding the option taken by referring once again to Dewey and in particular on the teaching of history and geography in *Democracy and education*. The most explicit part of the Deweyan vision of history is in the pages in which he speaks, so to speak, of the didactics of history. Dewey inserts these notations into the broader concept of an idea of 'school-laboratory': the link between history and geography to facilitate the understanding of the reasons for urban settlements; the active involvement of the pupil so that he gets used to exercising the habit of research and the autonomy of judgment against memorization and imitation; the suggestion of starting from local history to arrive at universal history, according to the didactic criterion of the passage from the known to the unknown, considered valid since ancient times; the advice to use biographies and anecdotes. But these are not the aspects for which the reflections on Dewey's history are worth mentioning, especially in the light of contemporary studies of didactics of history (starting from the *Annales*), led to emphasize the 'activist' aspects, losing sight of the priority aspect: why should one study history and what should one learn by studying this discipline? This is the point from which we must start: the search for the particular usefulness of a discipline which, in itself, is a knowledge aimed only at expanding knowledge and judgment skills.

There are two points of reference for understanding the role and meaning of this knowledge: on the one hand, the fact that it presents itself as a 'sociology in direct', that is, a tool not to review the past, but to understand the development of social changes and, therefore, the present and the lines of its development towards the future (Dewey, 1916, 43-106); on the other hand, the fact that every activity and every human experience cannot be understood, described and exploited outside the awareness of their intrinsic dynamism, which depends not

only on the category of becoming, but also and perhaps above all on the element of interaction, thanks to which everything is in constant transformation, based on the principle of the reciprocity of the elements.

As emerges in *Democracy and Education* and in *A Faith in Common*, education is the ability to control becoming, preparing the future, through the exercise of the imagination (Dewey, 1916, 56-88; Id., 1934, 21) and forming the mental habit of problem solving, which is first of all the ability to read the present in the light of the cultural heritage and, then, to resolve its imbalances thanks to a constructive tension towards the unprecedented. Secondly, education is structurally a relationship or, better still, an intertwining of relationships that ceaselessly and necessarily leads to the continuous reconstruction of the world and of oneself.

In fact, education cannot take place regardless of the relationships that constitute it, but, at the same time, the more education is established, the more these relationships are guaranteed and protected. It can therefore be inferred that the educated boy is the one who knows, consciously and responsibly, to give meaning to history because he builds it and, at the same time, by interpreting it, he invents the path day after day. The educated subject is not at the mercy of time, but, on the intellectual level and with the mediation of the imagination, is able to control it, organize it and prevent its development, planning it and directing it towards richer meaningful and more profitable ways to the good of oneself and of what surrounds it in a network of reciprocal connections.

It is a theme that reaffirms the close connection between science, society, culture, politics and education: where subjects and groups no longer receive, through school and other extracurricular educational opportunities, solicitations for growth, the exercise of thought and imagination, education and history are destined to be irreparably separated. And not because the becoming of existence is blocked, but because the understanding and interpretation of this course are hindered. On the one hand, education sinks into didactics, while history is no longer perceived as a sort of common home to the construction of which education contributes.

The link between education and history is not accidental and contingent, but necessary and intrinsic, to the point that, if we separate the two elements, we can never reach a true education. Subjects and groups capable of interpreting the contexts in which they live, of grasping their weaknesses and/or opportunities, of directing their experience in logically well-founded ways: this is the result to which the open and continuous process of education must lead. Not surprisingly, Dewey himself, underlining the intrinsic dynamism and problematic nature of the experience for which nothing can be given for sure forever, writes: «[Democracy] must be realized anew in every generation, every year and every day, in the relationships there from

person to person in all forms and social institutions» (Dewey, 1940. 454).

The equation between history and education, therefore, is not the result of a democratic society, but, rather, guarantees, on a practical and contingent level, outcomes of democratic quality. In fact, everyone, not one less (as the title of a film by Chinese director Zhang Yimou, 1999, which would find the approval of Dewey), are called to build individual and social experience and question their experience without prejudice or ideological hesitations or mortgages.

2. The democratic iterations

Recalling the Deweyan reflection was useful for understanding the subsequent developments of education for democracy. In particular, following Dewey's discourse, education for democracy proceeds from the 'relationship', which is the very heart of the educational process, to the 'word', which gives voice to the interpretation and narration of my experience and that of others; from 'imagination', which allows you to prepare new paths and plan new goals, to 'processuality', which is allied with 'relationship', from 'continuity' to 'complexity'.

In line with the Deweyan perspective, Benhabib's 'dialogic-relational' conception reformulates the knowledge and organization of the world and the entities that inhabit it, including man, combining 'narrative of the self' and 'knowledge of others'. These allow us to weave together identity, difference, recognition and belonging, fueling the life of the polis, recognizing that man's identity is fragile and conditioned and therefore needs to be narrated. For Benhabib there is a close link between 'networks of interlocution' (Tylor, 1989, 33-45), narrativity (Benhabib, 1999, 335-361) and the narrativity-Self relationship (Benhabib, 1992; 2002); 2004; Fazio-Nicolini, 2006). Already in the very idea of culture (Rorty, 2002, p. 155) there is the discursive and dynamic aspect that opposes the vision of cultures «as clearly describable totalities» (Benhabib, 2002, p. 23). What matters at Benhabib is not the point of view of the social observer (narrator or chronicler) who aims to find a coherence of culture – which inevitably makes culture an 'object' of observation to be subjected to control –, but the point of view and the narrative descriptions of those who participate and are protagonists of that culture. In fact, Behnabib writes: «those who participate in culture experience their traditions and stories, their rituals and symbols, their tools and their material conditions of life by means of shared, albeit controversial, narrative description» (ibid.).

Therefore, culture is given by an intertwining of human actions and interactions that are linked with the narratives in an evaluative relationship, what Benhabib defines as «evaluative attitudes of the actors towards their own acts» (ibid., p. 25).

Culture, for Benhabib, is nothing more than this process; narration by means of evaluative processes, binary oppositions and complex dialogues between the parties creates culture understood as 'interactive universalism'. On the one hand, interactive universalism allows all moral beings to enter the conversation, without excluding anyone and without privileged recognition of rational abilities; on the other hand, it highlights the importance of cultural narratives thanks to which one becomes aware of the identity of the other. The awareness of the otherness of the other and, in particular, of certain aspects of his identity (which in the eyes of the subject make the other concrete) is achieved thanks and only to his narratives (Benhabib, 1999b, p. 344). Thus, the individual's action is dictated by his ability and need to weave relationships and build his own personal story starting from narratives (ibid.).

The narrative activity thus becomes a tool for collaboratively reflecting on specific situations on the experience of the person and the community. In these exchanges the narratives become an interactive production and the interlocutors themselves become co-authors (Benhabib, 1999, p. 345).

In the story, in fact, the discursive relationality allows each moral subject, that subject who, by the mere fact of being able to narrate himself and be able to account for himself and his own gestures, must be respected in his own irreducible humanity, to understand himself as another, and at the same time to evaluate the 'wisdom' of one's life project (Tumino, 2020, 416).

The exercise of democracy is therefore attested to in this ethical-political and pedagogical perspective that we have traced, following our thinkers, as the fundamental relational grammar of all individuals who, considered equal on the moral and political level, but different on the cultural level, can give rise to deliberative acts of discourse, where power, knowledge and decisions on well-being are structured as a public and collective exercise of arguments. The communicative-relational action can, therefore, restore, in the encounter with the stranger, individuality and subjectivity to all the actors of a conversation and with them give voice to desires and needs, these fundamental elements for reconfiguring belonging and redesigning the political practice in the name of 'participatory deliberation' (Benhabib, 2004). Here, again, it is possible to recover the productive and not only reproductive role of the imagination in individual and collective action, a role which, albeit starting from a reproductive synthesis, must always be based on experience, and yet, manages to go beyond the already given, the already said, the already thought, recovering the dynamics of a planning open to the future.

3. Conclusions

The process of 'transnationalization' of the present age has repercussions on history, on culture, bringing negotiation and co-construction in cultural experience (individual and collective) at the center of lives and societies and redefining, along this process, the identity, therefore, as the crossing of several texts. A polysemy that captures in the alterity of uses, customs and languages, a horizon of different senses, given to the world, which provocatively urge us to regain confidence with our way of speaking and inhabiting the world.

If we understand culture as a *constellation of social and narrative practices*, where the accent is to be placed on processuality, we could take a significant step forward and understand cultural identity as an intersection of different paths, a mapping of the self in continuous becoming and subject to contamination and hybridism. The migrant's experience indisputably highlights the permeability of cultures, the result of complex trans and infra-territorial dialogues. The presence of the 'foreigner' manifests a challenge to thought, which forces us to include in the identity, as its constitutive trait, the relationship with otherness.

Then it would be useful for the didactic-educational action to take place through these points: facilitate suitable conditions for 'foreigners' to find the most suitable hosting habitat; propose arguments that recall the prestige of 'other' cultures; enhance the language and literature of the countries of origin; present guiding themes found in the most diverse cultures such as travel, pilgrimage, nostalgia, roots, the stranger.

If understood and managed in this way, the presence in the classroom of pupils with ethnic or cultural differences could represent an opportunity for enrichment not only for all pupils, but also for the teacher: to improve training curricula, communication styles, structure and the very aims of the teaching courses. As a reward for the greater commitment, the teacher would increase their professional and human competence. Even uncertainty would become a resource, stimulating starting not from pre-established solutions, but from a question, from a need to seek innovative paths.

Ultimately, perhaps a transcultural re-reading of the knowledge taught in secondary school would be desirable, which passes through a 'revision' of school curricula and teaching programs (Brunelli, Cipollari, Pratisoli, 2007; Fiorucci, 2008; Luatti, 2009).

To give some examples:

1) in the teaching of history there would be to revisit the theme of the discovery / conquest of America (Todorov, Baudot, 1997) and of the encounters between peoples in the age of Columbus (Abulafia, 2008) with particular reference to;

a) the point of view of Arab historians on the Crusades (Gabrieli, 1957; Maalouf, 1989);

- b) the history of the 'Mediterranean' (Braudel, 1977; Riccardi, 1997) as a space for dialogue and encounter between civilizations;
- c) the close relationship between Europe and Asia (Goody, 2010)
- d) the review of the Italian colonial experience (Di Sapio, Medi, 2009; Tomasello, 2004);

2) for the teaching of geography, think of the role that knowledge of other cartographic representations of the world could play, such as, for example, the one proposed by Arno Peters (Peters, 1988; Grillotti Di Giacomo, 2008);

3) for music, think of the hybrid dimension of jazz, blues and world music;

4) for the economy, think of the strong correlations between migration and economic globalization.

In light of this, we can finally say that: the teacher / educator / cross-cultural operator is a border operator; transculture represents a modality, a versus, a direction, a thought, a process to be built and invented 'new cognitive niches'; the third millennium can become a possibility / occasion so that borders and customs do not become obstacles to cognitive processes.

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