



The School and Its Many Pasts

IV: Individual Memories of School

edited by Juri Meda and Roberto Sani



These volumes contain the official proceedings of the International Conference «The School and Its Many Pasts. School Memories between Social Perception and Collective Representation» (Macerata, 12-15 December 2022), organized by the University of Macerata in partnership with the Catholic University of Sacred Heart of Milan, the University of Florence and the University Roma Tre.

These volumes have been published with the contribution of the University of Macerata, the Catholic University of Sacred Heart of Milan, the University of Florence and the University Roma Tre in the framework of the PRIN research project «School Memories between Social Perception and Collective Representation (Italy, 1861-2001)» (n. prot.: 2017STEF2S).

www.memoriascolastica.it

Indexing keywords:

Storia dell'educazione, memoria collettiva, memoria individuale, memoria pubblica, public history, scuola.

History of education, collective memory, individual memory, official memory, public history, school.

Historia de la educación, memoria colectiva, memoria individual, memoria pública, historia pública, escuela.

História da educação, memória coletiva, memória individual, memória pública, história pública, escola.

Histoire de l'éducation, mémoire collective, mémoire individuelle, mémoire publique, histoire publique, école.

4-volumes box set: isbn 978-88-6056-898-4

vol. 4: isbn 978-88-6056-903-5

First edition: March 2024

©2024 eum edizioni università di macerata

Palazzo Ciccolini – via XX settembre, 5

62100 Macerata (Italy)

info.ceum@unimc.it

<http://eum.unimc.it>

School Life and Teachers' Diaries. Echoes of the Gentile Reform in the *Archivio Didattico Lombardo Radice* Diaries: Educational Theories and Educational Practice

Francesca Borruso
Roma Tre University (Italy)

1. *On the sources: a methodology premise*

The primary sources for this enquiry are the teachers' diaries contained in the *Archivio Didattico Lombardo Radice* at MuSEd¹ whose educational history research potential has already been amply documented by a large body of work². Its objective is to enquire into certain aspects of the implementation of the 1923 Gentile Reform in rural primary schools. More specifically I have attempted to make use of teachers' diaries written from 1924 to 1936 in order to identify not only some of the educational practices adopted, but also critical issues and considerations raised by the teachers who were to apply these to the real school setting, in an attempt to examine the meeting points between educational theories, real school practice and those involved in teaching. The intention was thus not to examine a single, however small, source of information on the relationship between pedagogy theories and their application, highlighting the role of educational experience as a space in which these theories were thought out and honed, but also to stress the wealth of information provided by micro-history based, as in this case, on the use of individual diaries capable of offering the previously unseen insights sometimes missed by macro-history. The teachers' diaries are thus sources of the more innovative and revolutionary *School Memories* which, in the wake of the Annales school revolution,

¹ The acronym stands for *Museo della Scuola e dell'Educazione Mauro Laeng*, held at Roma Tre University's Department of Educational Sciences. Set up in 1874 to create a place of support for classroom teaching, it is now a museum which collects and catalogues heterogeneous sources on the history of schooling and the history of education *tout court*, as well as studying and disseminating its research. See F. Borruso, *A Museum of Schools in the Capital Rome (1874-1938)*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. II, n. 1, 2007, pp. 327-349; also, F. Borruso, L. Cantatore, C. Covato, *Il Museo della Scuola e dell'Educazione «Mauro Laeng»: storia, identità e percorsi archivistici*, in A. Ascenzi, C. Covato, J. Meda (edd.), *La pratica educativa. Storia, memoria e patrimonio*, Macerata, eum, 2020, pp. 130-137.

² J. Meda, D. Montino, R. Sani (edd.), *School exercise books. A Complex Source for a History of the Approach to Schooling and Education in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, Macerata, Polistampa, 2010; D. Julia, *Riflessioni sulla recente storiografia dell'educazione in Europa: per una storia comparata delle culture scolastiche*, «Annali di Storia dell'educazione e delle istituzioni scolastiche», n. 3, 1996, pp. 119-147.

sought to reconstruct traces of that ambitious ‘total’ or ‘fully-fledged history’ capable of shining the spotlight on people, themes and issues which had long been neglected and ignored³. Furthermore, whilst these are inaccessible sources, both as teachers’ diaries and as autobiographical documents, it is essential to bear the subjectivity of individual memory in making sense of them⁴, given an institutional context capable of influencing individual accounts and limiting their authenticity – teachers’ diaries were, in fact, often subject to supervision by those above them in the school hierarchy. The diaries are, in any case, an important source for a whole series of reasons: because they were written by people with first-hand experience of the educational relationship, of everyday school life, and because they provide a multiplicity of information on the real educational context, the people involved in the educational relationship (teachers and pupils) and the institutional working mechanisms⁵.

The diaries studied here are part of *Archivio Didattico Lombardo Radice*, made up of 159 primary school exercise book collections also containing illustrations, photographs and childrens’ drawings from schools in Canton Ticino, Portomaggiore (Emilia), Montesca (Umbria) and Acitrezza (Sicily) – some of the few schools left to the Lombardo Radice archive as a result of his opposition to the regime⁶ – dating to 1925 to 1937. The archive also contains 33 diaries written by teachers and head teachers containing school curricula, registers and a number of analytical reports on pupils, mostly in accordance with institutional obligations⁷. It is a veritable treasure trove of information on Italian schooling in these years, as Lombardo Radice himself called it in *Athena fanciulla*, and was initially kept at his Rome home and then at the *Museo Pedagogico* which he himself managed from 1936 to 1938, the year of his death⁸. School exercise books and teachers’ diaries which Lombardo Radice considered to be of great value in documenting the work done by *his* teachers, that is the followers of the *scuola serena* (serene school), which he himself had theorised and pushed for and to assess the outcomes of the Gentile Reform which he had had a hand in, drawing up the new primary school curricula at the invitation of then minister Giovanni Gentile⁹. They were outcomes that he wanted to enquire into

³ See P. Burke *La rivoluzione annalistica. La scuola delle Annales (1929-1989)*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1992; F. Braudel, *Una lezione di storia*, Torino, Einaudi, 1988.

⁴ See P. Lejeune, *Il patto autobiografico*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1986.

⁵ On the importance of narrative pedagogy, see C. Covato (ed.), *Metamorfosi dell'identità. Per una storia delle pedagogie narrate*, Milano, Guerini scientifica, 2006. Once again on the historical importance of atypical sources in the micro-history perspective, see C. Ginzburg, *Rapporti di forza. Storia, retorica, prova*, Macerata, Quodlibet, 2022.

⁶ See G. Cives, *Attivismo e antifascismo in Giuseppe Lombardo Radice*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1983, pp. 97 ff.

⁷ An exception is the diary of Rina Nigrisoli, a teacher who narrates a *scuola serena* experiment in Portomaggiore (Ferrara) from 1920 to 1924, given to the philosopher together with the children’s exercise books. This was a private diary written by Nigrisoli to document her teaching experiment. It was published in 2011. R. Nigrisoli, *La mia scuola*, edited and with an introduction by F. Borruso, Milano, Unicopli, 2011.

⁸ See L. Cantatore, *Il MuSEd di Roma Tre fra passato e presente. Con inediti di Giuseppe Lombardo Radice e Mauro Laeng*, in A. Barausse et alii (edd.), *Prospettive incrociate sul patrimonio storico-educativo*, Lecce, Pensa Multimedia, pp. 247-269.

⁹ A. Gaudio, *Giuseppe Lombardo Radice, il Mezzogiorno e la lotta contro l'analfabetismo*, «Pedagogia e Vita»,

precisely in school practice terms, which he saw as determinant in their ability to give him the non-abstract or ritualised solution-oriented “educational critique” he was looking for, based on concrete educational relationships and a critical rethinking of his educational action¹⁰. From this standpoint, educational action was to be based on individual experience, focusing on the experience of pupils, given the breadth of personalities that teachers came into contact with¹¹, in the context of an educational relationship in which the teacher’s role was, however, pre-eminent all the same: «the human personality is, by definition, always pervasive and it would be strange to expect those who educate to disappear under the pretext of respect for pupil freedom»¹². After *Lezioni di didattica* (1913) Lombardo Radice developed an even more complex conception of educational action which he no longer saw as simply to be passed down by teachers and internalised by pupils – «souls are not to be murdered!» he wrote in an activist pamphlet dating to 1913¹³ – but rather with pupils taking an active and important part in identifying new issues and potential solutions. This notion was a world away from Gentile’s idealistic conception of the educational act as involving pupils’ presumed spiritual identification with their teachers, a stance which moved Lombardo Radice closer to the active learning method¹⁴.

2. Primary school curricula in the 1923 reform

In the context of a school reform as essentially selective and elitist as Gentile’s, in which the central focus was the training of the school’s principal class within a markedly philosophical and historicist classical high school and involving a return to the great classics of humanist culture, Lombardo Radice’s «ultra-liberal»¹⁵ curricula¹⁶ stood out

n. 4, 2004, pp.62-74; M. D’Alessio, *A scuola fra casa e patria. Dialetto e cultura regionale nei libri di testo durante il fascismo*, Lecce, Pensa Multimedia, 2013.

¹⁰ G. Lombardo-Radice, *Lezioni di didattica e ricordi di esperienza magistrale*, edited and with an introduction by L. Cantatore, Roma, Edizioni Conoscenza, 2022, pp. 113-141. See also G. Cives, *Giuseppe Lombardo Radice: didattica e pedagogia della collaborazione*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1970.

¹¹ On the philosopher’s thinking, see G. Chiosso, *L’educazione nazionale da Giolitti al primo dopoguerra*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1983; G.M. Bertin, *Pedagogia italiana del Novecento. Autori e prospettive: Giuseppe Lombardo Radice, Mario Casotti, Lamberto Borghi, Riccardo Bauer*, Milano, Mursia, 1989, pp. 13-46; I. Picco, *Giuseppe Lombardo Radice*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1961; E. Scaglia, *Una pedagogia dell’ascesa. Giuseppe Lombardo Radice e il suo tempo*, Roma, Studium, 2021.

¹² G. Lombardo Radice, *I piccoli “Fabre” di Portomaggiore. L’esperienza didattica di Rina Nigrisoli dal 1919 al 1925*, «L’Educazione Nazionale», n. 13, 1925, p. 70.

¹³ G. Lombardo Radice, *Come si uccidono le anime*, edited by L. Cantatore, Pisa, Edizioni ETS, 2020, p. 53.

¹⁴ Giorgio Bini argues that calling Lombardo Radice an active learning pioneer is an overstatement because he did not share some of the movement’s founding principles, such as the psychological basis of teaching, openness to pedagogical science and democracy as the terrain on which to take on the school-society relationship. See G. Bini, *La pedagogia attivistica in Italia*, Roma, Editori Riuniti, 1971, p. 39.

¹⁵ M. Galfré, *Tutti a scuola! L’istruzione nell’Italia del Novecento*, Roma, Carocci, 2017, p. 82.

¹⁶ Of the many books written about Lombardo Radice’s life and thought, see: L. Borghi, *Maestri e problemi*

for their ambition to imbue primary schooling with the “new” *scuola serena* spirit which he himself had theorised, as well as being one of the most active popularisers of school in public opinion. Lombardo Radice repeatedly criticised the school of his day, accusing it of dogmatism, superficiality, conformism, of being too distant from real life, «Jesuitic» in the sense that it educated pupils to be passive¹⁷, and his idea of *scuola serena* – defined by some as an attempt at an Active Learning idealist rereading¹⁸ – was designed to transform this, from the starting point of a focus on teaching¹⁹, on individualism in educational action, on spontaneity and self-expression in children’s inner worlds as something positive worthy of protection, on the importance of learner experience, on the newly central importance of the school-life relationship.

The importance attached to the arts in the new primary school curriculum – viewed as indispensable in the development of both imagination and reasoning – was an innovative element, although it had already been adopted in a great many «new schools» in Europe and the United States. Singing in choirs, common practice in schools since the early years of primary school, gave way to music theory from nine years onwards. Reciting was still present but no longer as an exercise in rote learning. It was now to be a vehicle for the expression of children’s emotions. Drawing – in which any interference by the teacher was considered ill advised on the grounds that it destroyed children’s artistic and creative instincts «which were born of the needs of the soul»²⁰ – was viewed as an important way of developing their observation skills and spontaneity of expression and fostering an understanding of art. Teachers were advised to pair up drawing with Italian essay writing, turning the latter into an «illustrated handwritten composition» to be undertaken on an at least weekly basis. Existing rhetorical school composition styles were replaced with writing exercises founded on direct observation of the real world and teachers were advised to set pupils free composition tasks to leave room for their creative imaginations. Pre-set essay outlines were always to focus on close observation of a context or literary text analysis. Once again dictation, one of the most frequent exercises in late 19th century primary schools²¹, was to be replaced with «diaries of school life» designed to give children’s experiential lives free rein, without adult interference, and provide space for everyday school life experiences, both linguistic and iconographic. It was with a view to getting past the school textbooks then in use, which Lombardo Radice saw as vehicles for a knowledge «done by others» and thus already dead and buried, conflicting with the need for a living knowledge «in the making»²², that teachers were advised to read

dell’educazione, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1987; T. Tomasi, *Idealismo e fascismo nella scuola italiana*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1969.

¹⁷ Lombardo Radice, *Come si uccidono le anime*, cit., p. 64 ff.

¹⁸ See Bini, *La pedagogia attivistica in Italia*, cit.

¹⁹ See L. Cantatore, *Una «paziente vigilanza sull’umanità in letargo». Giuseppe Lombardo Radice fra pedagogia e didattica*, in A. Ascenzi, R. Sani (edd.), *L’innovazione pedagogica e didattica nel sistema formativo italiano dall’Unità al secondo dopoguerra*, Roma, Studium, 2022, pp. 227-244.

²⁰ Lombardo Radice, *Lezioni di didattica*, cit., p. 263.

²¹ See G. Chiosso, *La vita scolastica in Italia tra l’Unità e la Riforma Gentile*, in Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *L’innovazione pedagogica e didattica nel sistema formativo italiano dall’Unità al secondo dopoguerra*, cit., p. 22-23.

²² Lombardo Radice, *Lezioni di didattica*, cit., p. 130.

the great classics of the past with their pupils, people such as Virgil, Hesiod, Ludovico Ariosto, Torquato Tasso, Giovanni Pascoli, Alessandro Manzoni, Gabriele D'Annunzio, Giosuè Carducci²³.

One of his more innovative ideas was the importance he attached to dialect, which he viewed as children's emotional mother tongue and thus the language of popular traditions, which he called «the spiritual treasure trove of every family»²⁴, to the extent that, in areas speaking other languages the pupils' mother tongue was to be taught alongside Italian, in supplementary hours. This focus on native language was linked to literacy, understood as cutting across both high and low culture which, if severed, risks culminating in an excess of intellectualism in the former and a stifling of the latter with an absence of spiritual tension. Thus, for Lombardo Radice, dialect bridged the gap between the two, as a gateway to high culture and the national language, just as regional culture was a step in the direction of the higher patriotic ideal, with both being expressions of that ancient, stratified wisdom, which was a people's roots, its oldest culture and identity heritage.

Lombardo Radice's history curricula shone the spotlight on recent history, with a particular focus on the Risorgimento and the Great War, stressing the heroism of children's forebears to inculcate feelings of belonging and a desire to emulate them, although, for Ostenc, «this nationalism was unfortunately more a consequence of the use Lombardo Radice's curricula were put to than their real intention»²⁵. The histories of other countries were almost entirely left out of these curricula on the grounds that the priority was to «nurture Italianness», as decreed in official pronouncements. Science subjects were of marginal importance, according to the idealistic tradition that downgraded them in favour of hygiene, law, economics and women's work, which were taught in year five. Physical education focused on team games and recreational activities and occupations that were designed to make school relevant to children's real lives. Lastly, mandatory Catholic religion classes²⁶ – a choice which was opposed by some on the left as well as the liberal right²⁷ – of use to Mussolini to seal his subsequent 1929 Lateran Pacts with the Catholic Church, were justified by Gentile as «morals in action», capable of introducing children lacking in the capacity for philosophical critical thinking to that mythical thought which is the root of human discourse and religious sentiment²⁸.

These were educational ideals which were to be very soon forgotten, after Gentile's resignation from his ministerial post, after Mussolini had set in motion the Fascistisation of schools, distorting the reforms and turning the authoritarian schools envisaged by Gentile into authoritarian Fascist schools. It was a fascistisation process that worked on three levels, according to Charnitzky: regulating the behaviour of teachers and university

²³ See M. Ostenc, *La scuola italiana durante il fascismo*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1981, pp. 76-77.

²⁴ Lombardo Radice, *Lezioni di didattica*, cit.; E. De Fort, *La scuola elementare dall'Unità alla caduta del fascismo*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1996.

²⁵ Ostenc, *La scuola italiana durante il fascismo*, cit., p. 86.

²⁶ G. Canestri, G. Ricuperati, *La scuola in Italia dalla legge Casati a oggi*, Torino, Loescher, 1976, p. 153.

²⁷ G. Ricuperati, *Il problema della scuola da Salvemini a Gramsci*, «Rivista Storica Italiana», n. 4, 1968, pp. 23.

²⁸ The criticism really flooded in; see L. Ambrosoli, *Libertà e religione nella riforma Gentile*, Firenze, Vallecchi, 1980; L. Borghi, *Educazione e autorità nell'Italia moderna*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1951.

professors, integrating pupils into the Fascist youth organisations and giving an ideological slant to school curricula²⁹. The primary school curricula themselves were very soon made difficult to put into practice by the rampant spread of a Fascist rhetoric that Gentile did nothing to stop and which had no disciplinary boundaries. Thus children's inner lives with all their psychological, emotional and sentimental tensions, and Lombardo Radice's enchanted and poetic world rarely came to fruition in school exercise books which were, for the most part, little more than regime propaganda tools. The reform remained, all the same, the face of Italian schooling and managerial class formation for quite some time.

3. *Village teachers*

However, despite the progressive erosion of school freedom under the Fascist regime, small but significant glimpses of educational innovation do come through from a reading of the teachers' diaries of these years. These are reminders of the subversive role individuals can play within even authoritarian institutions and the underground, but in any case influential, generativity of the libertarian ideology expressed in Lombardo Radice's curricula.

In the first place, what emerges from the diaries is the inspections carried out in the classrooms by headteachers, which were sanctioned by the reform both on the grounds of educational autonomy and for state spending limitation purposes. I am speaking above all of the 17 teachers' diaries collected by headteacher Bruno Lunedei from a group of rural schools in Morciano di Romagna, a small town in the Tuscan-Romagna Apennines in the 1924-27 academic years. The headteacher oversaw the implementation of the curricula, carefully reading the teachers' diaries, putting forward education suggestions and also underlining and commenting on errors. The headteacher's role was cultural guidance. This was clearly sanctioned by the law but conflicted with the sensibilities of certain teachers and is also revealing of the emergence of a more authoritarian institutional climate than had existed in the recent past. Teacher Adele Gasparri, in this case, courageously noted down in her diary an argument with her headteacher, judging it intrusive and overly critical of her work. The episode is probably evidence of the social difficulties experienced by teachers – amply confirmed by studies³⁰ – who were not always welcomed by rural communities, who found the presence of an educated woman in their midst unacceptable, or by headteachers who were reluctant to acknowledge women's intellectual independence.

²⁹ J. Charnitzky, *Fascismo e scuola*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1994, pp. 291 ff.

³⁰ On the female teachers' story, see C. Covato, *Un'identità divisa. Diventare maestra in Italia fra Otto e Novecento*, Roma, Archivio Guido Izzi, 1996; A. Ascenzi, *Drammi privati e pubbliche virtù. La maestra italiana dell'Ottocento. Tra Narrazione letteraria e cronaca giornalistica*, Pisa, Edizioni ETS, 2019; S. Soldani, *Nascita della maestra elementare*, in S. Soldani, G. Turi (edd.), *Fare gli italiani*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1993, pp. 67-130. See my own *Maestri e maestre a Roma capitale*, in C. Covato, M.I. Venzo (edd.), *Scuola e itinerari formativi dallo Stato pontificio a Roma Capitale. L'istruzione secondaria*, Milano, Unicopli, 2010, pp. 267-285.

The first section of all the teachers' diaries describes the school context of these years, highlighting the dire state of schooling: a lack of school furniture and educational equipment; makeshift, cold and inhospitable classrooms, not only when they were flooded as a result of rain, as described by Elena Mambelli, but also in winter and autumn when the only heat available was dependent on the wood children managed to hunt down along the walk to school, as Linda Bernardi recounts. Further problems were bumpy roads to schools outside town centres exposing children – almost always without shoes as these were kept for feast days – to dangers. Truancy rates were also high with children being kept back for child labour and, where girls were concerned, as a result of the hostility shown by parents to educating them, a frequent problem, as Anita Brunelli recounted. Teachers' threats to call in parents or report them to the authorities for truancy – mentioned frequently in the diaries – seem to have had little impact on family decisions, not only because this was sometimes dictated by poverty but primarily because parents were aware of the limited propensity of the teachers to do anything to rectify the situation. Of the female teachers, only Giuseppina Tosi, with her strong sense of her own social role as «apostle for good», visited her pupils at home, like the male teachers, to encourage them to attend more regularly. Rosina Arcangeli is the only teacher to have brought in the local authorities at the beginning of the school year, successfully, only to see pupil numbers dwindle once again over the course of the year. However, few teachers succeeded in making meaningful contact with pupils' families, frequently considered neglectful of their children with complaints by teachers of limited pupil hygiene and families' reluctance to buy school books being frequent in a great many rural school diaries. The growing importance of schooling in communities does come across from the diaries, however, with end-of-school-year parties involving the whole village to teachers' sense of themselves as full-blown “village teachers” playing a supporting role in their communities. This support extended beyond the strictly educational sphere and focused primarily on the acquisition of new modern lifestyles and mindsets. In this respect the efforts of some teachers to inform families of the risks to children's health tied to habits such as giving them wine instead of water, the need to learn and follow essential hygiene rules to prevent illness and the importance of sending children of both genders to school are interesting. The diaries contain only one case of a teacher – whose curricula and request that certain local blackshirts supervise children's journeys back home after school to stop them wasting time in street games would suggest she had Fascist sympathies – who pressured parents to sign their children up to the Balilla youth groups. This was not taken up by rural communities and it is clear that financial reasons were not the only explanation for this. Let us look at an example of a story from below which gives us the chance to bring in a perhaps useful element of appraisal regarding the issue of the degree to which schools took Fascist ideology on board and, through this, the attitudes of communities themselves. A number of scholars have argued that schools resisted the appeal of Fascism³¹, while others have argued to the contrary, but these studies reveal the

³¹ Ostenc, *La scuola italiana durante il fascismo*, cit., p. 273.

picture to have been a much more composite one than was previously thought, precisely because «the personalisms and localisms of Italian society left their mark on it»³².

4. *Glimpses into a teaching hovering between tradition and innovation*

There is a range of information regarding the contents of the reform to be found in the diaries held at *Archivio Didattico Lombardo Radice*.

As far as «school life diaries» are concerned we have just one case of a teacher writing one from the rural schools of Morciano di Romagna in the years 1924 to 1927, while these played a pre-eminent role within certain “new school” educational experiments documented in the archive and consisting of a conscious decision to experiment. This difference may be indicative of the innovative nature of the proposed reforms or of the limited nature of state school teachers’ preparedness regarding it.

The central importance accorded children’s linguistic output that emerges both from the attention paid to writing the diaries and to the “school diary project” was short-lived, because the progressive Fascistising of schooling, with its patriotic and propaganda contents, eroded individual freedom of thought³³.

Dialect promotion is similarly not generally present in these diaries. In the rural schools of Morciano di Romagna, only two newly appointed young teachers, Ester Zinaghi and Assunta Raffaelli, out of a total of 17, equipped their pupils with dialect dictionaries, collected small class libraries and set up quiet and comfortable reading corners. These two teachers stand out from the others for the idealistic force of their commitment and they probably also benefited from some recent training. It seems likely that, for older teachers, the new reform curricula meant reworking their existing practices and all the extra work that comes along with it. One teacher, for example, asserts her desire not to scale back dictation from her classroom teaching in favour of free composition, despite the new curricula. It is an understandable reluctance if we remember that 19th century teaching methods were still in use in the 1920s, however patchily, and whilst dictation was criticised by both positivists and idealists, it was still held to be the most effective literacy method and was based on memorising grammar rules and a large number of words which were to be chanted out loud³⁴.

As we know, the promotion of dialect was to last just a few educationally experimental years and was only put into practice in some schools because, from 1929 onwards, with the adoption of the *Testo Unico di Stato* textbooks, linguistic nationalism was to culminate

³² Galfré, *Tutti a scuola*, cit., p. 57.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

³⁴ See M.C. Morandini, *Metodi e pratiche d'insegnamento della lettura e della scrittura in Italia tra Otto e Novecento*, in Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *L'innovazione pedagogica e didattica nel sistema formativo italiano dall'unità al secondo dopoguerra*, cit., pp. 41-57.

in a struggle against everything alien to it, to local and regional variations and dialect with the struggle against illiteracy being seen as a struggle against the use of dialect³⁵.

From Anna Tintori, on the other hand, we learn of the challenges she encountered experimenting with children's artistic dimensions in her classroom. She noted that this was by no means easy to put into practice in rural schools, in the face of overt parental opposition, with the latter seeing drawing, singing and physical education as a waste of time, especially in view of the limited number of hours pupils spent at school. Only Rina Ottaviani succeeded in bringing in drama, staging Virginia Tedeschi Treves's *Piccoli Eroi*, but drawing and singing were rarely mentioned.

Teachers seem to have had more success with free composition, and the diaries contain teacher's thinking on this, as well as on outline-based composition, after initiating certain discussions in the classroom in the days before such work was set. Lino Boschetto, who taught at a primary school on Lido di Venezia and Malamocco (a Lido village) in the 1936-37 school year, told of his success with illustrated composition, in the light of a technique honed over time and based not only on frequent conversations in class for the purposes of what he called «orientation», and which were primarily designed to accord importance to the thoughts of the students themselves, but also of an outline which was to be seen as the most generic and unlimiting possible.

Alongside an increase in writing practice focusing on observing the children's environment and experiences, the practice of reading texts we might call literary classics out loud is also worthy of mention. Almost all teachers mention it, in accordance with the reform. A further practice which comes out of the diaries is walks in the outdoors for educational purposes, observing nature, conducting geography lessons and also recreational activities. Just a few teachers also conducted outdoor drawing lessons and recreational and manual tasks promoting cooperation between pupils, class solidarity and group work. Mutual teaching is also mentioned by many teachers, less in view of large class sizes than of the fact that these contained multiple year groups of different ages. In a context of complete absence of educational instruments in this group of rural schools, one event of interest is the construction of a Montessori-inspired mobile alphabet made together with the students of the young teacher Esther Zinaghi, mentioned above, whose passion for teaching shines through.

Maths teaching, on the other hand, would seem to have focused mostly on mental calculations via speed races practised by almost all teachers and practical measurement tasks such as land measurement and counting numbers of oranges harvested. Clearly, then, maths studies were always bound up with considerations of immediate usefulness to the everyday rural context. It is, above all, from Rina Ottaviani, that we learn of her practice of reading highly patriotic and nationalist texts out loud, together with the discipline problems she encountered and her recourse to exemplary punishments, considerations which give us an insight into the advent of regime propaganda even in the very early 1920s, although the scale of this was still limited.

³⁵ See T. De Mauro, *Storia linguistica dell'Italia unita*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1974, pp. 34-35.

In conclusion, it would seem to be possible to argue that the insights into living communities provided by this specific source have revealed that even in the rural schools, in an admittedly hesitant and tentative way, a certain educational renewal was underway, one hovering between innovation and tradition. Despite being silenced and repressed at length, by the regime's propaganda, ideas inspired by the liberal ideals circulating in these years did emerge. They were innovative ideas and practices, however, which flowed like a karstic underground river ready to come to the surface after World War Two, having been enriched in the meantime by new ideal aspirations designed to bring a new democratic school to fruition.

Albino Bernardini and the Representation of Italian School

Andrea Marrone
University of Cagliari (Italy)

Among the authors who collaborated to build and modify the collective representation of the Italian school in the sixties and seventies, Albino Bernardini was undoubtedly one of the most important and fortunate¹. The Sardinian teacher published successful school memoirs, which influenced the diffusion of a new representation of the education system, its protagonists, its problems, but also the solutions to overcome its injustices. Beyond the mere reconstruction of the author's pedagogical ideas and the inspirations that determined their elaboration, this contribution aims to deepen the main features of the scholastic representation proposed by Bernardini, with particular attention to the works *Un anno a Pietralata* [A Year in Pietralata] (1968), *Le bacchette di Lula* [The Canes of Lula] (1969), *La scuola nemica* [The Enemy School] (1973), *La supplente* [The Substitute Teacher] (1975). The spreading of Bernardini's work will then be explored, highlighting the multiple directions of its diffusion.

1. *The "Red" Teacher*

Research has already studied the life and pedagogical vision of Albino Bernardini². He was born on 18 October 1917 in Siniscola, a village in the province of Nuoro. After completing elementary school, he moved to Chiavari, in Liguria, where he studied at

¹ On the role and use of school autobiographies as sources in historical educational research see: A. Viñao, *Las autobiografías, memorias y diarios como fuente histórico-educativa: tipología y usos*, «Sarmiento», n. 3, 1999, pp. 223-253; J. Meda, A. Viñao, *School Memory: Historiographical Balance and Heuristics Perspectives*, in C. Yanes-Cabrera, J. Meda, A. Viñao (edd.), *School Memories. New Trends in the History of Education*, Cham, Springer, 2017, pp. 1-9.

² On the life and work of Albino Bernardini see: R. Rizzi, *La pedagogia popolare in Italia (1950-1990): Albino Bernardini*, «Educazione e scuola», n. 49, 1991, pp. 100-110; G. Guzzo, *Da Lula a Pietralata: le battaglie di Albino Bernardini per il rinnovamento democratico della scuola elementare*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino, 2007; *Albino Bernardini: i novant'anni di un Maestro. Convegno di studi (Lula, 9-10 novembre 2007)*, Bitti, Comune di Lula, 2010; A. Bernardini, *Un secolo di memorie*, Patti, Kimerik, 2011; E. Zizioli, *Introduzione*, in A. Bernardini, *Un anno a Pietralata*, Roma, Edizioni conoscenza, 2019, pp. 7-34. The "Mauro Laeng" School and Education Museum of the Roma Tre University recently acquired the archival collection of the Sardinian teacher, now being cataloged.

Scuola d'avviamento al lavoro, a lower secondary school. Back in Sardinia, he continued his studies at the *Istituto magistrale* of Nuoro, a school to educate future primary school teachers. He dropped out of school to support his family financially and only obtained his qualification in 1940. A few months later he was drafted into, and participated in the Second World War, serving on the French Front, in Albania, Greece and Yugoslavia. He went to war filled with the belligerent rhetoric of the fascist regime, but he returned profoundly changed, with a revulsion towards the nationalism he had believed in and which had disappointed him. In 1944 he joined the PCI, Italian communist party, becoming secretary of the Siniscola section. He studied Gramscian texts and the Soviet educator Makarenko, his «true pedagogical love»³. In 1949 he attended the PCI's school in Bologna for six months. In these years he engaged in political militancy, also organizing a series of «strikes in reverse», which was the occupation of unused private land, for which he was imprisoned for a few months. In 1953, due to conflicts with the local communist leaders, he was dismissed from the party, leaving his responsibilities in the PCI. He decided to devote himself entirely to elementary school teaching, which he had started working in after the war. In the second half of the 1940s and then in the early 1950s he taught in various villages of Sardinia, mostly in the province of Nuoro.

In 1960 he moved to Rome with his wife and family. Bernardini was assigned to the elementary school of Pietralata, a poor suburb of the capital at that time. He immediately made contact with and joined the *Movimento di Cooperazione Educativa* (Cooperative Education Movement), although he was critical of some decisions of the team's leadership. As soon as he arrived in Rome, he went to the headquarters of the journal «Riforma della Scuola» (School Reform), starting a fruitful collaboration. The magazine was the most important journal of Italian pedagogical Marxism⁴, constituting a lively environment of cultural elaboration and political criticism. Among the editorial staff of the «Riforma della Scuola» he met and established relationships with the main protagonists of that successful pedagogical period, such as Dina Bertoni Jovine, Mario Alighiero Manacorda, Lucio Lombardo Radice, Ada Marchesini Gobetti, Gianni Rodari and many others.

Bernardini's first article in the «Riforma della Scuola» was published in February 1961, four months after his arrival in Rome. In his first article called *La miseria della scuola* (The Misery of School)⁵, he shared his first impressions of the Pietralata school where he worked and also of the initiatives he proposed in the first two months of teaching there. These are brief anticipations of what he would write about in more detail seven years later in *Un anno a Pietralata*. In the following period he intensified his collaboration, publishing dozens of articles. He also became part of the editorial staff of the «Didattica della Riforma» (Didactic for Reform), the magazine's insert for teachers, which he helped to grow. Collaboration on the «Riforma della Scuola» was for Bernardini valuable training in which he practiced writing and structured his political and didactic ideas.

³ A. Bernardini, *Viaggio nella scuola sovietica*, Trapani, Celebes Editore, 1976, p. 7.

⁴ On the Italian Marxist pedagogy of the second half of the Twentieth century see C. Covato, *L'itinerario pedagogico del marxismo italiano*, Roma, Edizioni Coscienza, 2022.

⁵ A. Bernardini, *Miseria della scuola*, «Riforma della scuola», vol. VII, n. 2, 1961, pp. 24-25.

Not surprisingly, Bernardini spoke of his arrival in Rome and his involvement with the Marxist pedagogical group as a second birth. Without them, he wrote, referring to intellectuals close to «Riforma della Scuola», «I don't know if I would ever have become a writer»⁶. The publication of his first school memoirs was due to Dina Bertoni Jovine, who invited him to write a book about his educational experiences, after the publishing house *La Nuova Italia* asked her for new works to be published in the series «Educatori antichi e moderni» (Ancient and Modern Educators). The Sardinian teacher accepted the proposal and, in a few months, finished *Un anno a Pietralata*, which found immediate success. Encouraged by this, the following year he published for the same publishing house *Le bacchette di Lula*, dedicated to his previous school experience in a small Sardinian village in the early fifties.

Four years later, Bernardini published a third book, *La scuola nemica* (1973), in which he did not retrace his school experiences, but reported on children and teenagers from the Nuoro area who, in interviews with him, crudely described the dramas and injustices of compulsory state school. A last educational memoir less well known than the previous ones, was *La supplente* (1975), where he recounted one of his last school experiences in a class in Bagni di Tivoli, a small town near Rome. After a long absence due to illness, he was assigned to a class, which was taught by a substitute teacher who had set the didactic work in a directive, classist, and oppressive way. Initially Bernardini found it very difficult to deconstruct this system, because most of the children and parents seemed to accept it, while also fearing the Sardinian teacher's innovations. Over the months Bernardini managed to change the climate of the group, obtaining excellent results.

After the publication of these four school memoirs, Bernardini continued to write various essays and books. In 1975 he published, with the pedagogists Alberto Granese and Tonino Mameli of the University of Cagliari, a manual entitled *Diventare maestri* (Becoming Elementary Teachers). After a two-week stay in Russia, in 1977, he published *Viaggio nella scuola sovietica* (Journey to Soviet School), in which he described the conditions of Communist education. In these years he also intensified his collaboration with various magazines, mostly devoted to educational issues. From the 1980s he was involved in children's literature, writing numerous stories. His contribution to education was acknowledged by the attribution of an honorary degree conferred by the University of Cagliari in 2005. Bernardini died in 2015.

2. *The Enemy School*

In his four school memoirs published between 1968 and 1975, Bernardini, while working within different contexts (Pietralata, Bagno di Tivoli and various schools in the province of Nuoro), represents common features of a single subject: the Italian school, with its problems and its contradictions.

⁶ Id., *Un secolo di memorie*, cit., p. 117.

A first element to consider in the memoirs of the Sardinian teacher is the “scenography”. In his realistic representations, Bernardini dwells on the poverty, filth and dilapidation of state schools. In Lula there is not a single school building, but the classrooms are distributed in various houses in the village, mostly unsuitable for teaching work. Bernardini defines his classroom as a “stable”: there was no floor, only beaten earth, no window and the little light which filtered through was from the broken glass of the door, often left open, even in winter, to improve the brightness of the classroom. However, the desks at the back were always covered in semi-darkness. The roof, made of reeds and stones, let the water and the winter cold through. Not surprisingly, after a storm, the roof was blown off and the Mayor procured a new classroom for Bernardini’s pupils. His class moved into a room below the apartment of a particularly noisy family, dealing with a disabled child. In addition to the screams, the work of the class was often interrupted by the liquid excrement that dripped from the cracks in the ceiling. The first impression of the Pietralata school is analogous: it is described as «sleazy and dirty like a prison»⁷. The building was insufficient to accommodate the student population, so some pupils were forced to attend school in the afternoon, to the disappointment of their parents. In Lula and Pietralata the Sardinian teacher had to make a collection among already poor families to buy school supplies.

Bernardini describes a school that seems committed to excluding those who most needed to be educated. Teachers do not help pupils in particular need, they punish and discriminate against those who have poor results, they forget the cultural disadvantages of many children who live in an object poverty. The school is pervaded by a widespread classism which, with the excuse of merit, rewards and supports rich children, while penalizing the poor ones. This is a discrimination that, in some cases, could be seen from the very disposition of the class. The substitute teacher of Bagni di Tivoli, for example, had divided the pupils into three groups: that of “criminals”, of “females”, and of «beautiful, clean and tidy children»⁸. In *La scuola nemica*, the various witnesses agreed in denouncing the tendency of teachers to penalize and exclude children from poor families⁹.

In his books, Bernardini writes of a boring school, where the teachers do nothing to arouse the interest of the pupils but base their education on the repetition of rules and formulas. They seem unable to mobilize the intelligence of the students and are hostile to the cultures they belong to. The school is represented as a «prison»¹⁰, isolated from the world, from the real life of the children and from all those experiences that could have interested them. The method used to perpetuate this system was rigorous authoritarianism, where the teachers speak and command, while the children must be

⁷ Id., *Un anno a Pietralata*, cit., p. 29.

⁸ Id., *La supplente*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1975, p. 4.

⁹ A series of examples brought by the pupils interviewed confirms this impression. Among others, a boy from Bitti recounted that once, the Director surprised a student eating a banana during a break, scolded him saying: «You don’t even have to go to study, and now come with the banana: and then they say that there is misery... you have to go feed the pigs» Id., *La scuola nemica*, Nuoro, Ilisso, 2004, p. 201.

¹⁰ Bernardini, *Un anno a Pietralata*, cit., p. 121.

«quiet and good»¹¹. This school model was mostly pursued through intimidation and violence, the greatest common denominator. In his books, the Sardinian teacher describes in detail the punishment and torture perpetuated in schools.

The case of Lula is emblematic. The author talks of a colleague, called “Ballena”, who adopts extreme punishment: in addition to locking up the students in dark classrooms for hours¹², she organizes singular “macabre processions”: the “culprit”, punished perhaps for not having withheld his needs or for having disobeyed, was tied with his hands behind his back to a broomstick and forced to walk the streets of the town with his classmates who had to rail against him¹³. A primitive rite that found a sort of legitimation in its public performance. Such humiliating practices did not find opposition from peers or parents, who seemed to accept and respect such practices and punishment.

The justification of violence was consolidated and internalized in various forms. In Lula, for example, there was a singular tradition: at the beginning of the year the children made canes and gave them to the teachers who were supposed to use them on them in case they misbehaved. When, during the presentation of the canes, Bernardini confesses that he has no intention of using them, pupils were scandalized: «But if he doesn't hit us – said little Pasquale in amazement – what kind of teacher are you then?»¹⁴. In *La scuola nemica* Bernardini collects numerous testimonies of the violence still widespread in the early seventies in the schools of the provinces of Nuoro. Pupils tell of teachers who beat them with whips or with a carpet beater¹⁵, ridiculed the pupils by requiring them to parade through the classes with donkey ears¹⁶, and excluding the mothers of the poorest children from the school plays. However, these punishments generated an equally violent reaction from some pupils, who beat up the teachers, stole from them and threatened them with a knife¹⁷. Also in Bagni di Tivoli, Bernardini collects the testimonies of children who told of various punishments, including the habit of some teachers to kick, punch and «pull ears and hair»¹⁸.

3. *A New Teacher Icon*

Bernardini not only represents the injustices of School, but in his books he promotes a new way of teaching, indicating his experience, his results, his way of teaching and being as a new and revolutionary model. Bernardini is seen as a teacher who fights early school leaving, also taking an interest in «those who don't go to school». He seeks out children

¹¹ Id., *Le bacchette di Lula*, cit., p. 24.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 65.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹⁵ Bernardini, *La scuola nemica*, cit., pp. 223-224, 234-241, 304.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 262, 295, 297.

¹⁸ Bernardini, *La supplente*, cit., p. 6.

who have dropped out of education at home or in the workplace, to persuade them to go back to school. He opposes the suspension of pupils, then a widespread «educational» means, convinced that it was a «senseless» practice, a «contradiction», «a deprivation of the right to know and learn»¹⁹. Furthermore, Bernardini prefers not to fail his students²⁰, convinced that blocking their education would only have negative consequences²¹.

Bernardini does everything to make the school attractive: inspired by the pedagogy of activism, he overturns traditionalist and mnemonic teaching, focuses on the interests of the pupils, organizes activities related to their experiences and current events. He prefers outdoor lessons, manages trips and excursions, has naturalistic research carried out in the field, invites workers, trade unionists, mayors, and the film director Comencini to meet his pupils²². The work is set up with the brainstorming method: the class is divided into «collectives» which regulate themselves and organize the work. The problems are discussed, and the teacher asks the pupils to find solutions. He condemns those who force children to only listen, without ever letting them intervene to express opinions and interests. In short, he fights against the passive and disinterested «school for puppets»²³.

He aimed to make his children «directly responsible»²⁴. In this regard, the use of the «billboard of rules» is very significant, where not only did the pupils write down the main rules of the class that they developed autonomously, but they also had to mark the cases in which they did not respect them²⁵; education through collaboration. Bernardini then proposes a series of group work such as reading the newspapers, drafting a class journal, conducting inquiries on current issues and creating billboards. His action is not limited to just «teaching concepts», but is conducted according to an «ideal content»²⁶, aimed at saving students from ignorance, superstition, social degradation, and distortions due to the cultures they belong to. He is a teacher who believes in his pupils and trusts in their redemption through school: «You are good to me» he said to the pupils of Lulu as he broke their canes. «What is most striking in Bernardini – observed Elena Zizioli – was the innervation of the teaching methods of civil values, managing to give us back a model of a complete teacher: militancy not separated from continuous and constant didactic research»²⁷.

Bernardini was convinced of the need to dialogue with families, especially the poor ones. He organizes assemblies well before the 1974 law, introduces collegial bodies²⁸, visits parents, tries to involve them in and explain the reasons and methods of his didactics. His action is seen as an integral vocation, called to expand beyond the school

¹⁹ Id., *Un anno a Pietralata*, cit., p. 131.

²⁰ Bernardini spoke of failing as a «primordial scholastic taboo»: Id., *La supplente*, cit., p. 144.

²¹ Cf. Id., *Un anno a Pietralata*, cit., p. 160; Id., *Un secolo di memorie*, cit., pp. 185-187.

²² Bernardini, *La supplente*, cit., pp. 94-104.

²³ *Ibid.*, cit., p. 141.

²⁴ Bernardini, *Un anno a Pietralata*, cit., p. 89.

²⁵ Id., *La supplente*, cit., pp. 90-93.

²⁶ Id., *Un anno a Pietralata*, cit., p. 89.

²⁷ Zizioli, *Introduzione*, cit., p. 10.

²⁸ Bernardini, *Un anno a Pietralata*, cit., pp. 56-62; Id., *Le bacchette di Lulu*, cit., pp. 149-161; Id., *La supplente*, cit., pp. 19-23.

walls: in the central square of Lula he is “among the people” and discusses education and school, questions the violent methods of teachers and parents, organizes an assembly on the principles of activism. He portrays himself as a “red Socrates”, a true organic intellectual who defends and spreads his ideas by immersing himself in the social context. Bernardini is also a «troublemaker»²⁹ trade unionist, who goes to complain to those who administer the school and claims adequate spaces and materials. To quote Rodari, «school commitment, social commitment, political commitment are all one for him»³⁰.

Bernardini represents himself as an antagonistic teacher, whose behaviour generates hatred and opposition in the schools and in the realities in which he teaches. If for many colleagues the problem of school is rude pupils or parents who do not take care of their children, Bernardini's opponents are his own colleagues, the «ministerial teachers»³¹, mostly unmotivated, who opt for «positions of convenience or renounce», the moralistic and violent teachers. More generally, the rest of the school staff also seem to oppose Bernardini's changes and battles: janitors, lackeys and spies³², school directors who are bureaucrats with no perception of school problems³³, school inspectors uninterested in teaching or school injustices, but supine to pressure policies.

The Sardinian teacher portrays himself as a «lone hero», one of the few exceptions in a school that does not work. But there is no narcissism or triumphalism or idealistic self-aggrandizement in his character description. Bernardini «doesn't want to embellish anything»³⁴, not even himself. In his books he remembers moments of discouragement, expresses his doubts, does not hide the difficulties and various mistakes. In the early days in Pietralata, for example, he had serious difficulty maintaining order in the class, and while theorizing that he excluded violence, he said that he had sedated the children's conflicts by force, even threatening to throw a pupil «out of the window»³⁵. Also in the other school memoirs, Bernardini describes himself as an impulsive man who sometimes loses his patience, shouts, and threatens. Among other episodes, the clash with the priest of Lula stands out, thrown out of the classroom during the hour of religion because he had started a homily against the communists³⁶. Bernardini reflects and in some cases criticizes his pedagogical errors, with the aim of representing the difficulties and risks of educational work. Among these is the limited effectiveness of his intervention.

In his books, his commitment brings good results, but partial, and in any case always temporary. The feeling is that the «old school» prevails over the attempts of the teacher. When Bernardini left Pietralata after a year, a new teacher arrived in his class. Listless and disinterested in the fate of the pupils, he had put aside Bernardini's method, preferring authoritarian and discriminatory teaching. Some of his pupils who had made

²⁹ G. Rodari, *Prefazione*, in *Le bacchette di Lula*, cit., p. 16.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

³¹ Bernardini, *Un anno a Pietralata*, cit., p. 174.

³² Id., *La supplente*, cit., p. 5.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 120-122; Bernardini, *Un anno a Pietralata*, cit., pp. 104-108.

³⁴ G. Rodari, *Scuola e civiltà*, in Bernardini, *Un anno a Pietralata*, cit., p. 23.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

³⁶ Id., *Le bacchette di Lula*, cit., p. 117.

great progress are rejected, others drop out of school. All of Bernardini's results seemed cancelled. In Lula he was dismissed by the Inspector and the experience of a different school remained only a memory. *La supplente* also has a bitter ending: after the successes built with patience and work, the arrival of his students in secondary school was traumatic. The lessons were boring, traditionalist and strictly authoritarian. Domenico, one of the children he had managed to save, was rejected and decided not to complete his studies.

In short, Bernardini represents his school as an exception in an educational system that is still mostly old, hostile, and unjust. However, he was convinced that his work was not useless. In the final pages of *Un anno a Pietralata*, thinking of his former students, he wrote with optimism that he had the profound «conviction that not everything, despite the difficult life of the village in which time has immersed them, can be forgotten»³⁷.

4. *Spreading of Bernardini's Memoirs*

The ideas and «scholastic images» transmitted in the Sardinian teacher's four books had various levels of dissemination. The first is represented by editorial circulation. The diffusion of Bernardini's works was initially favoured by links with the Marxist pedagogical group which had a certain influence in Italian culture of the time. Except *La scuola nemica*, the books were then introduced and presented by Gianni Rodari, a respected writer and journalist.

However, as written by the Sardinian teacher himself, the real success of his first work and of the subsequent books came above all thanks to television and then cinematographic transposition of *Un anno a Pietralata*, which inspired Vittorio De Seta in the creation of *Diario di un maestro* [Diary of an Elementary School Teacher]³⁸. Thanks to De Seta,

³⁷ Id., *Un anno a Pietralata*, cit., p. 174.

³⁸ On the work of De Seta and on the series inspired by Bernardini's book, see: V. De Seta, *Film per la TV: diario di un maestro. Appunti del servizio stampa n. 52*, Roma, RAI– Radiotelevisione italiana, 1972; G.P. Cresci (ed.), *Diario di un maestro in TV. Una esperienza per chi insegna oggi*, Torino, EDA, 1973; A. Rais (ed.), *Il cinema di Vittorio De Seta*, Catania, Maimone, 1995; S. Toffetti (ed.), *Il maestro impaziente*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 2012; Laura, Luisa e Morando Morandini (edd.), *Il Morandini 2015: dizionario dei film e delle serie televisive*, Bologna, Zanichelli, 2014, p. 414; D. Felini, *Una proposta pedagogica sullo schermo. La scuola in due produzioni televisive di Vittorio De Seta (1970-1979)*, «Orientamenti Pedagogici», n. 2, April-May-June 2015, pp. 273-291; A. Debè, *Constructing Memory: School in Italy in the 1970s as Narrated in the TV Drama "Diario di un Maestro"*, in Yanes-Cabrera, Meda, Viñao (eds.), *School Memories*, cit., pp. 231-244; P. Nappi, *L'avventura del reale: il cinema di Vittorio De Seta, con un ricordo di Raffaele La Capria*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino, 2015; F. Fiumara, *A Light in the Classroom: Vittorio De Seta's "Diario di un maestro" and the Bringing of Experiential Education into Italian Living Rooms*, «MLN», n. 134, 2019, pp. 303-317; A. Debè, *Costruire la memoria: la scuola italiana degli anni Settanta nello sceneggiato televisivo "Diario di un maestro"*, in P. Alfieri (ed.), *Immagini dei nostri maestri. Memorie di scuola nel cinema e nella televisione dell'Italia repubblicana*, Roma, Armando Editore, 2019, pp. 77-98; Ead., *Vittorio De Seta e le sue immagini di scuola: una rappresentazione mediatica della didattica italiana degli anni Settanta*, in *La responsabilità della pedagogia nelle trasformazioni dei rapporti sociali. Storia, linee di ricerca e prospettive*, Lecce, Pensa Multimedia, 2021, pp. 762-769.

the “ant” became an «elephant»³⁹, and Bernardini, until then mostly unknown, was transformed into a national pedagogical icon. The television drama was broadcast in four episodes on RAI 1 (the most important channel of Italian state television) in 1973. It was followed by around 12 million viewers, arousing lively debate. As indicated by Anna Debè this transposition was undoubtedly a «filtered transition»⁴⁰, but above all it was not smooth. This is a significant case, which well represents the difficulties and problems that can arise in the transition from a written source to a cinematographic one.

Vittorio De Seta had intended to make a film about school since the 1950s. Well before shooting the film *Banditi ad Orgosolo* (Bandits in Orgosolo) with which he won a prize at the Venice Film Festival, he read and appreciated *Il diario di una maestra* (Diary of a Teacher) by Maria Giacobbe, to the point of asking her, as revealed by the research by Piera Caocci presented in this same volume, to make a film about her school diary, although nothing came of it. According to De Seta's story, in April 1969 Ugo Pirro advised him to read *Un anno a Pietralata*. The film director was delighted. He proposed a film inspired by the book to RAI and two months later he signed a contract with state television which committed him to writing the screenplay. In the meantime, he contacted Bernardini who enthusiastically accepted the proposal that his book be made into a film, and they wrote the first screenplay together. De Seta then independently continued his research, deepened the pedagogy of activism and, in search of a teacher who could interpret Bernardini, met various avant-garde teachers (Mario Lodi, Francesco Tonucci, Alberto Manzi, Fiorenzo Alfieri and Sandro Lagomarsini), although he later opted for an actor (Bruno Cirino). Gradually De Seta changed his mind and understood that a screenplay which faithfully reflected the plot of the book risked representing an artificial class eventually setting aside Bernardini's memoir⁴¹. That of the Sardinian teacher – he wrote – «was a lived experience. My film must be the same. I feel that the only way to achieve it is to “live” film from life, an authentic pedagogical experience»⁴². Filming began only two years later, in April 1971, and followed a looser script. This too, during filming, was forgotten, indeed «self-sabotaged»⁴³: the plot was mostly constructed and improvised day by day, also conditioned by the pupils – actors who became real «authors»⁴⁴. «The third screenplay was conceived during filming. The fourth, the definitive one, will come out of the editing»⁴⁵ and was concluded in October 1972. *Diario di un maestro* therefore does not present itself as a reduction of *Un anno a Pietralata*, but a «reinvention which, starting from an idea and from a precise starting point, then found its own autonomy and creative originality as it developed»⁴⁶.

³⁹ Rodari, *Un maestro militante*, in A. Bernardini, *La supplente*, cit., p. IX.

⁴⁰ Debè, *Costruire la memoria: la scuola italiana degli anni Settanta nello sceneggiato televisivo “Diario di un maestro”*, cit., p. 86.

⁴¹ Cresci, *Diario di un maestro in TV. Una esperienza per chi insegna oggi*, cit., p. 14.

⁴² V. De Seta, *Quattro anni di lavoro*, in Toffetti (ed.), *Il maestro impaziente*, cit., p. 105.

⁴³ E. Morreale, *Diario di un maestro, quarant'anni dopo*, in Toffetti (ed.), *Il maestro impaziente*, cit., p. 126.

⁴⁴ Cresci, *Diario di un maestro in TV. Una esperienza per chi insegna oggi*, cit., p. 18.

⁴⁵ De Seta, *Quattro anni di lavoro*, cit., p. 110.

⁴⁶ Cresci, *Diario di un maestro in TV. Una esperienza per chi insegna oggi*, cit., p. 25.

The four episodes were broadcast on RAI 1 between February and March 1973. When Bernardini watched the first episode he was furious: «there was not a single word – wrote Bernardini – that mentioned the fact that it had been taken from my book»⁴⁷. It was a «first snub», with which began what Bernardini called a real «underground war» with the Sicilian director. Bernardini, thinking he was the victim of an injustice, wrote to the RAI offices, «threatening them – he said – that if they don't include my name, I'll have the episodes interrupted. Immediately, from the second episode, “Taken from the book of Albino Bernardini” appeared in the credits». At this point the author felt satisfied, but there would be other clashes with De Seta, for whom the Sardinian teacher did not forgive his ingratitude towards his book⁴⁸.

However, De Seta's film played an important role in the promotion of Bernardini's memoirs. This simple credit created huge publicity for the Sardinian teacher, which benefited his entire career as a writer and his representation of the school. The book went through a series of reprints, in March 1980 an educational version was released for middle schools, and again in 2008 Mondadori edited an edition with commentary and exercises for secondary schools.

In addition to editorial circulation and television success, there is a third dimension through which Bernardini's memories spread and influenced the collective imagination. This is a less striking channel, but perhaps more effective, namely the thousands of meetings and conferences which, from the beginning of the seventies, saw Bernardini engaged in speaking tours talking about his works. The effect of De Seta's script can be seen also in this field. After the publication of the first books, Bernardini began to be called in some cultural circles and schools to talk about his experience, but the invitations multiplied exponentially after the second episode of *Diario di un maestro*. As soon as it ended, Bernardini himself said that he had received a call from the assessor for education of the municipality of Cortona who invited him to talk about the book and the film⁴⁹. It was the first of many conferences and presentations, through which Bernardini visited hundreds of schools throughout Italy, meeting pupils and teachers to talk about school and its problems. He then gave an account of it in a book entitled *Un viaggio lungo trent'anni. Tra i bambini e i ragazzi italiani* [A Thirty-Year Journey. Among Italian Children and Young People] (1996)⁵⁰. Furthermore, from the end of the 1970s he began to include his address (Via de Fauni 51 in Bagno di Tivoli) in the introductions of his various books, asking his readers to comment on what they would read and he received more than 15.000 letters from students and readers, now preserved in the archive of the “Mario Laeng” Museum in Rome. Bernardini thus tried to make his books a working tool, capable of arousing questions and reflections, through a real educational relationship that he never gave up.

⁴⁷ A. Bernardini, *Inedito di Albino Bernardini*, in Guzzo, *Da Lula a Pietralata: le battaglie di Albino Bernardini per il rinnovamento democratico della scuola elementare*, cit., pp. 187-188.

⁴⁸ Id., *Un secolo di memorie*, cit., pp. 182-184.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

⁵⁰ A. Bernardini, *Un viaggio lungo trent'anni. Tra i bambini e ragazzi italiani*, Cagliari, Edizioni Castello, 1996.

Conclusions

From what emerged, Bernardini's contribution played a leading role in the broader phenomenon of deconstruction and reconstruction of the collective imagination of school on which a group of militant teachers and pedagogists worked since the 1960s, determined to profoundly renew the face of Italian state education. Bernardini spoke of his first book as an «instrument of struggle», with a «revolutionary character». His memoirs are not limited to pure reporting but are addressed to a clear political intent: revealing the misery of school, denouncing its social injustices, testifying to the possibility of a pedagogical revolution in institutions, promoting an idea of active education, free from the mechanisms of power that limited its potential and vitality. The forms of this commitment have had various phases: starting from real individual experience, Bernardini's memoirs have become "public memory" with his books, until they find an extraordinary diffusion with the film adaptation of De Seta. In a final phase, Bernardini dedicated himself to spreading his ideas through hundreds of meetings in Italian schools, aware that school changes and renews itself piece by piece.

Teaching in Post World War Two Italy: Anachronism and Change in Autobiographical and Literary Narratives

Chiara Meta
Roma Tre University (Italy)

1. *World War Two: from hopes for social inclusion to resistance to change*

As is well known, the end of World War Two marked a watershed in the history of the Italian school system, involving its democratic reconfiguration after over twenty years of Fascism. In actual fact, several more years were to pass before the schooling and education principles set down in the new constitution that came into force in 1948, including compulsory schooling up to 14 years of age, were truly to come to pass¹. With the unitary resistance phase which had brought democratic forces together for the constitutional project having rapidly faded, Italy slipped gradually into the 'leaden' 1950s which were, in schooling terms, too, a decade of «blocked schooling»² coinciding on the political plane with the Christian Democrat season³.

These were the years of reconstruction and initial economic consolidation in a nation which was still «primarily rural»⁴. A further survival was the «dual system whose purpose was reproducing the existing social class system and conserving the hegemony of the dominant social groups»⁵: one channel for the managerial classes (middle school and access to the high school) and one for the lower classes (professional training).

¹ R. Sani, *La scuola e l'università nell'Italia unita: da luoghi di formazione delle classi dirigenti a spazi e strumenti di democratizzazione e di promozione sociale delle classi subalterne*, in A. Ascenzi, R. Sani (edd.), *Inclusione e promozione sociale nel sistema formativo italiano dall'Unità ad oggi*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2020, pp. 42-43. On this topic see also C.G. Lacaita, *La Costituente e i problemi della scuola*, in N. Raponi (ed.), *Scuola e Resistenza*, Parma, La Pilotta, 1978, pp. 303-315.

² See M. Baldacci, *La scuola al bivio. Mercato o democrazia?*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2019, pp. 163-167.

³ Alcide De Gasperi remained prime minister of an essentially single-party DC government until his death in 1953. In fact, the alliance between the DC and the left-wing parties had already turned into "forced cohabitation" in 1946 and in 1947 this led to the expulsion of the Communists and Socialists from the nation's government at the time Italy joined NATO (See C. Spagnolo, *La stabilizzazione incompiuta. Il Piano Marshall in Italia, 1947-1952*, Roma, Carocci, 2001).

⁴ Baldacci, *La scuola al bivio*, cit., p. 166. On this subject see also M. Galfré, *Tutti a scuola! L'istruzione nell'Italia del Novecento*, Roma, Carocci, 2017.

⁵ Baldacci, *La scuola al bivio*, cit., p. 167.

Some further time had yet to pass, as we will see, before the advent of a new economic and political phase implementing the constitutional principle of schooling open to all, despite some limitations⁶.

As has rightly been noted,

in 1951 universal education had only reached 85% of 6-14 year olds with school attendance by 11 to 14 year olds (middle school with Latin and preparation for work) of around 30%. In some areas of the country even primary school attendance was still irregular with over 70% of children dropping out of school between year one and year five in some southern regions⁷.

In this respect, it is precisely some of the most lucid pages of post Second World War literature, for example those of writer Leonardo Sciascia, a primary school teacher in Sicily from 1949 to 1958, that can offer us some of the most vivid images of a southern Italy still marked by centuries-long backwardness, widespread illiteracy and generalised distrust of school⁸. A flesh and blood teacher, Mr. Laurana, appears in the novel *A ciascuno il suo* and Sciascia entrusts him with a very clear image:

He was very gentle, to the point of shyness, to the point of stammering: [...] An honest, meticulous, sad man, not very intelligent [but] not without a certain self-awareness, a covert presumption and vanity which derived from the environment of the school in which he felt, and was, so different from his colleagues and from the isolation which what we might call his erudition caused him [...] at the age of nearly forty he was still engaging in his mind in love stories and affairs with students and colleagues who either failed to notice or only just⁹.

It is partly this “social invisibility” of his that enables him to investigate the mysterious death of the pharmacist in the town the novel is set in and which costs him his life, as excessive curiosity in a world in which silence and connivance with the mafia are the only

⁶ It would be very difficult in just a few lines to condense the experiences of the secular, Communist and democratic Catholic intellectuals who worked for democratic schooling principles right from the immediate post Second World War years. As far as the intellectuals revolving around the PCI are concerned, it is important to remember the relevant part played by the «Riforma della Scuola», journal founded in 1955 and to which thinkers and educationalists of the calibre of Mario Alighiero Manacorda, Dina Bertoni Jovine, Lucio Lombardo-Radice and Francesco Zappa – to cite just the most famous – contributed; on this journal, see P. Cardoni, «Riforma della Scuola»: appunti per un difficile *bilancio*, in A. Semeraro (ed.), *L'educazione dell'uomo completo. Scritti in onore di Mario Alighiero Manacorda*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 2001, pp. 227-229. Once again as regards the post-war period the development of secular educational thinking via a group of intellectuals, Ernesto Codignola, Lamberto Borghi, Aldo Visalberghi, Raffaele Laporta and others revolving around a journal – «Scuola e Città» – and a publishing house – La Nuova Italia in Florence – should also be remembered; on this topic see F. Cambi, *La scuola di Firenze. Da Codignola a Laporta 1950-1975*, Napoli, Liguori, 1982; C. Betti, *Itinerari e proposte di rinnovamento pedagogico e culturale nel sistema formativo italiano del secondo dopoguerra: l'area laica*, in A. Ascenzi, R. Sani (edd.), *L'innovazione pedagogica e didattica nel sistema formativo italiano dall'Unità al secondo dopoguerra*, Roma, Edizioni Studium, 2022, pp. 335-354.

⁷ G. Chiosso, *Sviluppo e declino della scuola italiana*, in G. Acone, G. Bertagna, G. Chiosso (edd.), *Paideia e qualità della scuola*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1992, p. 13.

⁸ On this aspect see L. Cantatore, *La "poesia della scuola". Miseria e nobiltà di maestre e maestri nella letteratura italiana fra Otto e Novecento*, in G. Marrone (ed.), *Maestre e maestri d'Italia in 150 di storia della scuola*, Roma, Edizioni Conoscenza, 2018, pp. 45-92.

⁹ L. Sciascia, *A ciascuno il suo*, Milano, Edizioni Corriere della Sera, 2016, p. 48.

survival strategy can be fatal. It is an occasion to escape from the greyness of his life and, above all, a way of proving those calling him «idiot»¹⁰.

Sciaccia thus paints a picture of a teacher with a «scholastic» but dignified culture, lacking in special qualities or originality but «not stupid, frustrated but not too much by his inability to take part in “high” culture and thus tending to shut himself up in his school studies. Practically and academically underappreciated, if not useless, these studies protect him from a difficult, frequently hostile world unwilling to acknowledge the importance of a dignified and uneasy, however secondary, role such as his»¹¹.

A further visual angle of use in depicting these years of middle-of-the-road DC rule, including in the field of school policy, is representations of the lives of teachers¹². From this point of view it can be said that while, in the early 20th century teaching had been a way for women to «find a space for themselves in history»¹³, to play a «twofold social role, reflecting both class and gender, to the extent that this was considered fit for the lower and middle bourgeoisie»¹⁴. In the post Second World War era, and to some extent fostered by it, many women acquired the right to teach in secondary schools, partly on the grounds of an increase in school numbers due to a progressive growth in school attendance numbers.

As has, in fact, been stressed, after 1945 and right through the 1950s there was a great demand for education «including at a secondary level and recourse to selected access now felt like an anti-social utopia. The problem was thus no longer reducing but rather multiplying and qualifying teachers»¹⁵.

It is precisely in this context that the lower middle class situation gave us the work of Lalla Romano, *Un caso di coscienza*. Set in the 1950s, the novel tells of events that really happened in a girls' middle school in Milan, where Romano herself taught. The

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ P. Cardoni, *Insegnanti di carta. Professori e scuola nella letteratura*, Roma, Edizioni Conoscenza, 2008, p. 25.

¹² In a way this seems little changed from the lives of women teachers in the late 19th century depicted by Matilde Serao and also acutely described by Edmondo De Amicis (on this theme the following is a must: C. Covato, *Un'identità divisa. Diventare maestra in Italia fra Otto e Novecento*, Roma, Archivio Guido IZZI, 1996. I. Porciani, *Sparsa di tanti triboli: la carriera della maestra*, in Ead., *Le donne a scuola. L'educazione femminile nell'Italia dell'Ottocento*, Firenze, Il Sedicesimo, 1987, pp. 170-190; S. Soldani, *Nascita della maestra elementare*, in S. Soldati, G. Turi (edd.), *Fare gli italiani. I. La nascita dello Stato nazionale*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1993, 67-130. Ascenzi, *Drammi privati e pubbliche virtù. La maestra italiana dell'Ottocento tra narrazione letteraria e cronaca giornalistica*, Pisa, Edizioni ETS, 2019).

¹³ M. Morandi, *Scuola è un nome femminile. Riflessioni intorno alle scelte denominative delle scuole normali in età liberale*, in C. Ghizoni, S. Polenghi (edd.), *L'altra metà della scuola. Educazione e lavoro delle donne tra Otto e Novecento*, Torino, SEI, 2008, p. 131.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ A. Santoni Rugiu, S. Santamaita, *Il professore nella scuola italiana. Dall'Ottocento ad oggi*, Roma, Laterza, 2011, p. 103. As Marcello Dei stressed: «In the four decades from 1950 to 1990 the upper secondary school population increased exponentially. It doubled in the first decade, from 416.000 to 840.000 and then doubled again in the next decade. The pace then began to slow down in the 1970s and peaked in 1991-92 at over 2.8 million students. The following year the trend inverted and a slight reduction in numbers was recorded which is still under way» (M. Dei, *La scuola in Italia*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1998, p. 93).

«conscience» is that of the writer herself, involved in a «case»¹⁶ that obliged her to take a stand, against her nature – she who always suspended judgement¹⁷ – on events unfolding around her, partly on the strength of a certain social conformism foisted on her in a hidebound and social-prejudice-packed environment. After an existential crisis causing her much suffering and rethinking and forcing her out of her shell, she decided to defend a school colleague of hers, considered heretical and criminal in the law courts because, as a Jehovah's Witness, she had rejected a blood transfusion prescribed for her son whose life was at risk. The school headmistress asked the writer to convince the teacher in question to hand in her resignation after she had been ostracised and judged by all her colleagues for her religious beliefs. Not only did Romano oppose this public lynching, however, but she also gave testimony to the law courts in her colleague's favour, enabling her to regain custody of her daughter who had, in the meantime, been taken away from her on precautionary grounds.

Beyond the story itself, the writer's intention is to portray a school context cut through with immobilism and social class prejudice, mirroring a society struggling to «defascistise» its governmental apparatus and dominant teaching mindset. In fact, the years of post-war reconstruction saw the first economic consolidation of a country which was still «predominantly rural»¹⁸, marked by a selective and discriminatory schooling process in which, as we have seen, school opportunities and access were not equal to all.

2. *A single middle school and a difficult school democratisation process*

At the end of the 1950s, Italy's economic and political framework changed profoundly, leading to a consequent transformation in the school-related political orientation. It was precisely the «economic boom» years of 1958 to 1962 that triggered the rapid social transformations which led to a rethinking of the role played by school in a mature capitalist nation.

A more advanced political equilibrium of this sort made the need to finally set in motion the constitutional provision raising the school leaving age to 14 possible for the first time.

The law that came into effect on 31 December 1962 (Law no. 1859) and set up the single middle school was the outcome of a difficult governmental compromise between the DC and PSI political parties, but was also the expression of a «bottom-up, reformist drive set in motion by the political-trade unionist battles fought by progressive forces

¹⁶ L. Romano, *Un caso di coscienza*, Torino, Bollati Boringhieri, 1992, p. 8. See also C. Meta, *Un caso di coscienza*, «Banca dati delle opere letterarie e dei diari editi sulla scuola», DOI: 10.53167/1386, published on: 28.02.2022 <https://www.memoriascolastica.it/memoria-collettiva/opere-letterarie/un-caso-di-coscienza> (last access: 27.09.2022).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁸ Baldacci, *La scuola al bivio*, cit., p. 166.

(parties, trade unions, associations, movements) not without the support of a progressive faction within the Catholic world»¹⁹.

Without doubt the setting up of the single middle school was an unprecedented innovation whose intention, at least, was to break down the powerfully class-based framework that the Italian school system had inherited from Fascism. It should equally be highlighted that it was only partly a victory for the secular, democratic Catholic and Communist forces which had joined forces around the “Latin issue”, for example, for the creation of a finally democratic school system. The law required Latin to be taught in the second year as a “supplement” to Italian, before making it non-compulsory again in the third year. It remained a fundamental requirement for access to classical high schools until 1979, however.

It was precisely in the wake of the law coming into force that a phenomenon that has been the subject of a great deal of sociological enquiry occurred, in which part of the teaching body, especially teachers of lower middle-class origin, opposed the democratisation of access, ostensibly in the name of defending quality schooling, but actually out of fear of a potential loss of social prestige tied up with teachers’ social identity. Many social prejudices imbued with a myriad of forms of biological determinism and classist stereotypes still cut through the lion’s share of Italian school culture, and the pedagogical theories many teachers’ mindsets were still replete with testifying to «their inability to take on board the social changes under way»²⁰. From this point of view, it is once again literature that is most capable of giving us a quasi “molecular” depiction²¹ of the social and cultural climate of the day in a country now modernising in the wake of its recent industrialisation triggering a profound «anthropological shift», so majestically described by Pier Paolo Pasolini and generating a progressive secularisation in Italian mores functional to a new consumer society²².

A novel by writer Maria Corti *Il ballo dei sapienti* which came out precisely in the mid-1960s beautifully renders a picture of Milan undergoing full neo-capitalist expansion by means of events at *Ginnasio-Liceo Bonvesin della Riva*. The lives of its characters, described

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 169. The process by means of which the single middle school law came to pass was a very long, drawn out and fraught one, interwoven with the birth of the first centre-left government which saw the Socialist party join the government. For an especially careful and detailed account of events see F. Borruso, *La riforma della scuola media unica (1962). Tra didattica e politica*, in Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *L'innovazione pedagogica e didattica nel sistema formativo italiano*, cit., pp. 461-478.

²⁰ C. Covato, *Itinerari e proposte di rinnovamento pedagogico e culturale nel sistema formativo italiano del secondo dopoguerra: l'area marxista*, in Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *L'innovazione pedagogica e didattica nel sistema formativo italiano*, cit., p. 355.

²¹ Here the reference is to the “molecular metaphor” used by Antonio Gramsci in *Quaderni del carcere* to allude to the constant shift from individual to collective considered intrinsically reciprocal. As regards the notion of «transformation» or «molecular change» used by Gramsci both in his *Quaderni* and his *Lettere*, see E. Forenza, *Molecolare*, in G. Liguori, P. Voza (edd.), *Dizionario gramsciano 1926-1937*, Roma, Carocci, 2009, pp. 551-555.

²² See P. Pasolini, *Scritti corsari*, Milano, Garzanti, 1975.

with great realism by a literature teacher at the school for many years, are imbued with a sense of boredom and alienation from a rapidly changing context within which the teaching body in particular reveals feelings verging on frustration linked to a progressive loss of social and professional prestige, as in the case of Mr Lanfranchi unable to give «a mark of 5 out of 10 to a boy who writes subjects without verbs»²³ and feels all the futility of what was once seen as a mission, namely teaching the Italians how to use their language correctly.

Returning to the historical context once again, it is also important to remember that, when the centre left was at its apex and it was evident that a “minimalist” programme had won where the nation’s structural modernisation was concerned²⁴, we can identify the first great watershed moment since the end of World War Two, one which was decisive also as regards the profound changes taking place in schooling, namely the 1968 student movement²⁵. In Italy specifically, when top-down reformism had died out and, in the strictly school context, as we have seen, was not followed by a truly democratic widening out process as provided for by the law on the single middle school or equality of access to education, it was followed by reformism from below. In the wake of the shock wave generated by the school protest movement, which soon joined forces with the demands of the working class «hot autumn»²⁶, this led in the early 1970s also on the schooling front, to the apex of what has been called the reform season. Just a few years witnessed the introduction of state nursery schooling in 1968, full time in 1971, the launching of the right to 150 hours training for workers in 1973 and then the *Decreti Delegati* in 1974 and Law 517/77 on planning and assessment, which abolished marking and set up a bulwark against primary school selection.

²³ M. Corti, *Il ballo dei sapienti*, Milano, Mondadori, 1966, p. 16. See also S. Di Biasio, *Il ballo dei sapienti*, «Banca dati delle opere letterarie e dei diari editi sulla scuola», DOI: 10.53167/561, published on: 19.10.2021 <https://www.memoriascolastica.it/memoria-collettiva/opere-letterarie/il-ballo-dei-sapienti> (last access: 27.09.2022).

²⁴ On the subject of judgements of the centre-left season: Y. Voulgaris, *L'Italia del centro-sinistra. 1960-1968*, Roma, Carocci, 1998 and G. Vacca, *L'Italia contesa. Comunisti e democristiani nel lungo dopoguerra. 1943-1978*, Venezia, Marsilio, 2018.

²⁵ More generally it should be noted that the 1968 protest movements with their well-known trans-national cultural dimension «the West’s traditional geo-cultural politics (which fused with the Catholic tradition in Italy) of an essentially hierarchical sort, suffered a crisis of power» (M. Baldacci, *L’antitesi pedagogica del Sessantotto*, in *1968 e niente fu come prima*, Roma, Edizione Conoscenza, 2018, p. 67).

²⁶ A must on this subject is B. Trentin, *Autunno caldo. Il secondo biennio rosso (1968-1969)*, Roma, Editori Riuniti, 1999; see also S. Turone, *Storia del sindacato in Italia dal 1943 al crollo del comunismo*, Bari-Roma, Laterza, 1976.

3. *The ebb years: from democratic schooling to the corporate school model*

By the end of the 1970s, the great forward movement of the previous period had come to an end. Open access schooling went from being the exception to the rule.

From then on, in fact, new problems came to the fore caused both by school's failures (which continued to record especially high levels of selection and expulsion from the school system) and by the gradual and constant decrease in the youth population²⁷.

Above all, what emerged forcefully was the fact that the reform process of the 1960s and 70s had not truly succeeded in breaking up the class-based framework of Italian schooling, despite the adoption from 1975 onwards of «development plans» by which Italy began moving in the direction of the state school funding systems adopted in the most avant-garde nations²⁸.

The age-old problem remained the north-south gap and consequent unequal redistribution of public spending in infrastructure and school building investments, as the condemnations that came in from borderline experiences such as Don Milani's *Scuola di Barbiana* and the radical practices deployed by Albino Bernardini, Mario Lodi and Don Roberto Sardelli, to use just a few of the most famous examples²⁹.

Furthermore, whilst it was true that the demand for education had increased, even when this was not cancelled out by Italy's still very high school drop-out rates, it was still forced into the blind alley of training schools designed less as true bridge between education and work than to block social mobility.

The culmination of this was equally a change underway through the West. From the perspective of the overall framework in the early 1970s, moreover, the first signs of a significant economic crisis triggered by the oil price shock of 1973 were beginning to make themselves felt³⁰. Dropping profits were followed by the advent of a radical restructuring of the accumulation process which ultimately, on the global scale, as Giovanni Arrighi has noted, brought an end to American capitalism's expansion phase based essentially on a growth in manufacturing³¹. This change in socio-political frameworks had serious

²⁷ Chiosso, *Paideia e qualità della scuola*, cit., p. 13.

²⁸ On this subject: F. Harbison, C.A. Myers (edd.), *Education, Manpower, and Economic Growth: Strategies of Human Resource Development*, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964.

²⁹ As is well known, the dominant feature of Don Milani's educational work was its return to evangelical equality values and a reimplementation of the social democracy demands set out in the Constitution (see Scuola di Barbiana, *Lettera a una professoressa*, Firenze, Libreria Editrice Fiorentina, 1967). On Albino Bernardini's experience as a primary teacher in a Rome suburb, see Id., *Un anno a Pietralata*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1968; as far as Don Sardelli and his work with the children of the slumdweller of Acquadotto Felice in Rome is concerned, see, lastly, R. Sardelli, M. Fiorucci, *Dalla parte degli ultimi*, Roma, Donzelli, 2020; Scuola 725, *Non tacere*, Firenze, Libreria Editrice Fiorentina, 1971.

³⁰ See Baldacci, *La scuola al bivio*, cit., p. 171.

³¹ See G. Arrighi, *Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power and the Origins of Our Time*, London, Verso Books, 2010.

school reform repercussions and left its mark on a schooling model functional on «market domination»³².

A careful examination of the “anthropological transformation” generated by these changes on teachers and students in the 1980s and 90s is once again to be garnered from a more recent literature. From their perspective as secondary school teachers, writers such as Paola Mastrocola and Margherita Oggero show a committed participation to the stories told, whilst also demonstrating an emotional gap from this world that is difficult to narrow. It is less a matter of taking the distance required for a literary rendering than of a decoupling of the aspects most internal to school debates to the extent of a total rejection of it «without, however, translating into a systematic criticism and even less a different perspective. It is as if the authors felt the need for a safety barrier, an alter ego»³³.

In the case of Oggero’s *La collega tatuata*, for example, her character nicknamed Profia attempts to find out who murdered a teacher in her school, almost as a way of escaping a school life seen as an ungratifying, even alienating place³⁴. Mastrocola’s *La gallina volante* also features a profoundly dissatisfied teacher whose sarcasm with his students conceals a total disillusionment regarding the school’s educational potential and a desire to nurture interests outside the purely financial security reasons for his school work, completely free of the motivation and interest he finds in «succeeding in getting a hen to fly»³⁵.

What comes across from the most recent literature set at school is, in general terms, the pursuit of an alternative, almost secret identity experienced by the author-teachers as a refuge from an absent sense of self-acceptance, of a specific professional dimension almost always felt to be stifling and constricting and, on the other, bound up with this what comes through is all the real frustration suffered for the loss of any remaining residue of professional social prestige, as has emerged from many recent enquiries.

The 2017 CNR report on internal migration focused entirely on analysing teachers and highlighted the link between lack of employment security, which is often discontinuous, and the frequent territorial mobility, primarily of female teachers employed in the various levels of the state school system (nursery, primary, lower secondary and upper secondary)³⁶.

³² It was a paradigmatic shift which had significant repercussions in Europe from the starting point of the Delors Report on Education for the 21st Century sponsored by UNESCO, which put forward an abstract compromise between social democratic and neoliberal ideals, human development and human capital production which fit perfectly into a neo-liberal framework. These same EU educational policies were in line with the new political-cultural climate: on one hand the White Paper written by Cresson (1995) shone a spotlight on the problem of bringing education up to date with the dynamics of a global economy based on knowledge and, on the other, the Lisbon Strategy (2000) indicated a series of EU educational milestones played out on the new paradigm of market efficiency and the importance of competition which was to be achieved within a decade, to make the European Union one of the world’s most avant-garde economies (see Baldacci, *La scuola al bivio*, cit., pp. 174-176).

³³ Cardoni, *insegnanti di carta*, cit., p. 33.

³⁴ See M. Oggero, *La collega tatuata*, Milano, Mondadori, 2002.

³⁵ P. Mastrocola, *La gallina volante*, Milano, Guanda, 2000, p. 148.

³⁶ See M. Colucci, S. Gallo (edd.), *Rapporto sulle migrazioni interne in Italia. In cattedra con la valigia. Gli insegnanti tra stabilizzazione e mobilità*, Roma, Donzelli, 2017. The latest conference of the *Società Italiana di Pedagogia* (SIPED), focusing specifically on school and teachers, also shone a spotlight on the close nexus in the

All this, above all as regards the current state of affairs in Italian schools, brings out all the situation's contradictions in terms of the failure to achieve equality of access for all, especially during the Covid 19 pandemic period³⁷. Solutions may potentially be found from those proposed by research networks and institutions more sensitive to the issue of educational poverty, such as the *Patti educativi di comunità*, for example, bottom-up community educational agreements capable, in areas of greatest risk of social exclusion, of getting a multitude of stakeholders such as schools, local bodies and associations and cultural operators involved in combating school dropout rates³⁸.

This, however, means reviving the truly democratic inspiration behind the Italian Constitution and, as we have seen, the episodes of greater school reforming spirit in the 1960s and 1970s, including the example of Antonio Gramsci who, in his *Quaderni del carcere*, spoke of the need for a «single intellectual and manual school [providing] initial, general humanistic and educational culture, which rightly combines training for manual skills (technical, industrial) and of the capacity for intellectual work»³⁹, something which has never taken shape in Italy.

Italian education system between teachers' fragile professional and social identity and educational poverty and high drop-out rates with a severity concentrated in specific parts of the country and especially the south (M. Fiorucci, E. Zizioli (edd.), *La formazione degli insegnanti: problemi, prospettive e proposte per una scuola di qualità e aperta a tutti*, Lecce, Pensa Multimedia, 2022).

³⁷ Save the Children has highlighted that official data now shows what many teachers have experienced in the first person over the last two years. The pandemic has generated a collapse in student learning, especially in lower and upper secondary school, in a learning context which was geographically patchy and incapable of offering equal opportunity to education even prior to the pandemic (see <https://www.savethechildren.it/impossibile2022-il-report.pdf>, last access: 02.12.2022).

³⁸ An enquiry carried out by the *Disuguaglianze e diversità* forum on the potential efficacy of the territorial educational agreements is also interesting in this regard. This promotes the idea, previously also argued by Don Milani as we have seen, that “those with fewer opportunities” should be offered more schooling and greater educational resources in an attempt to compensate for their initial disadvantage (see <https://www.forumdisuguaglianzediversita.org/patti-educativi-territoriali-e-percorsi-abilitanti-unindagine-esplorativa/>, Rapporto di ricerca dicembre, last access: 04.12.2022).

³⁹ A. Gramsci, *Quaderni del carcere*, edited by V. Gerratana, Torino, Einaudi, 1975, p. 1531.

Chronicles about School Life between Intimate Diaries and Educational Documentation

Lucia Paciaroni
University of Macerata (Italy)

Introduction

Starting from the first half of the 1990s, in the wake of the reflection on school culture proposed by Dominique Julia, there has been an important renewal in the field of historical-educational research, as it is known. According to the French historian, school culture, that is, «the set of rules defining the knowledge to be taught and the behaviours to be inculcated and the educational practices, which are allowed by the recipients of the educational action for their correct transmission and assimilation»¹, had to be considered as a historical object to be investigated and he assigned to the «history of school disciplines» a prominent role in the field of research areas as it was able to describe the dynamics taking place within a classroom.

This reflection decisively contributed to the paradigm shift in historical-educational research and marked the beginning of an ever-increasing commitment – by educational historians – towards the study of the historical evolution for school disciplines and educational practices related to them. In particular, we remember the studies by the historian André Chervel in France, who precisely specialized in the field of history of school disciplines² and the studies by Marc Depaepe and Frank Simon in Belgium, who highlighted the heuristic potential of historical research on school daily life, its space, time and actors³; in addition to this research, we can also mention the innovative lines of investigation proposed by the Iberian scientific community, in particular the ones by Agustín Escolano Benito and Antonio Viñao Frago⁴, which were devoted to material

¹ D. Julia, *La culture scolaire comme objet historique*, in A. Nóvoa, M. Depaepe, E. W. Johanningmeier (edd.), *The Colonial Experience in Education: Historical Issues and Perspectives*, Ghent, Universiteit Gent, 1995, pp. 353-382.

² A. Chervel, *Des disciplines scolaires à la culture scolaire*, in *Educational and Cultural Transmission: Historical Studies of Continuity and Change in Families, Schooling and Youth Cultures*, Ghent, Universiteit Gent, 1996, pp. 181-195; Id., *La culture scolaire. Une approche historique*, Paris, Belin, 1998.

³ M. Depaepe, F. Simon, *Is There any Place for the History of 'Education' in the 'History of Education'? A Plea for the History of Everyday Educational Reality in- and outside Schools*, «Paedagogica Historica», vol. XXXI, 1, 1995, pp. 9-16. We can also consider the research carried out by I. Grosvenor, M. Lawn, K. Rousmaniere (edd.), *Silences and Images: The Social History of the Classroom*, New York, Peter Lang, 1999.

⁴ The Iberian community has distinguished itself for the attention paid to new trend lines of educational historiography by proposing pioneering research on the history of school material culture. Please, see A. Viñao Frago, *Educación y Cultura. Por una historia de la cultura escolar: enfoques, cuestiones, fuentes*, in C.J. Almuíña

school culture. Viñao Frago introduced to the scientific community of educational historians the heuristic potential of what he defined as *memoria escolar*, «a part of the most general enculturation process, based on interpreting the state educational system as a tool for transmitting social memory in order to consolidate culture and identity»⁵. On the basis of these indications in recent years, educational historians have also begun to start up studies and research on “school memory”, interpreted as a real historiographical phenomenon⁶.

In particular, scholars firstly turned their attention towards individual school memory, made up by the self-representation of oneself, which was provided by former teachers and pupils and other protagonists in the school world within oral testimonies, diaries, autobiographies and memoirs in general. The so-called *egodocuments*⁷ were widely used as sources in historical-educational research, as they were considered they were able to reconstruct school history starting from its protagonists’ real experiences rather than from legislative and institutional sources in an attempt to open up what was called the «black box of schooling»⁸.

Teachers and other protagonists in the school world have often felt the need to tell their stories⁹, to leave traces of their school life, the experiences with pupils and the personal educational experiments. This need to tell their stories has come down to us in different forms and ways, which do not only fall within individual school memory, but also within

Fernández (ed.), *Culturas y civilizaciones: III Congreso de la Asociación de Historia Contemporánea*, Valladolid, Universidad de Valladolid, 1998, pp. 165-184; A. Escolano Benito (ed.), *La cultura material de la escuela: en el centenario de la Junta para la Ampliación de Estudios, 1907-2007*, Berlanga de Duero, CEINCE, 2007.

⁵ J. Meda, *Memoria Magistra. La memoria della scuola tra rappresentazione collettiva e uso pubblico del passato*, in G. Zago, S. Polenghi, L. Agostinetto (edd.), *Memorie ed Educazione. Identità, Narrazione, Diversità*, Lecce, Pensa Multimedia, 2020, pp. 25-35. We can also see: A. Viñao, *La memoria escolar: restos y huellas, recuerdos y olvidos*, «Annali di Storia dell’Educazione e delle Istituzioni Scolastiche», n. 12, 2005, pp. 19-33.

⁶ Please, see: C. Yanes-Cabrera, J. Meda, A. Viñao (edd.), *School Memories. New Trends in the History of Education*, Cham, Springer, 2017; J. Meda, M. Brunelli, L. Pomante (edd.), *Memories and Public Celebrations of Education in Contemporary Times*, «History of Education & Children’s Literature», vol. XIV, n. 1, 2019, pp. 9-394; P. Alfieri (ed.), *Immagini dei nostri maestri: memorie di scuola nel cinema e nella televisione dell’Italia repubblicana*, Roma, Armando, 2019; J. Meda, *I «luoghi della memoria scolastica» in Italia tra memoria e oblio: un primo approccio*, in A. Ascenzi, C. Covato, J. Meda (edd.), *La pratica educativa: storia, memoria e patrimonio. Atti del I Congresso nazionale della Società Italiana per lo studio del Patrimonio Storico-Educativo (Palma de Mallorca, 20- 23 novembre 2018)*, Macerata, eum, 2020, pp. 301-322.

⁷ About the topic of egodocuments, please see: A. Viñao Frago, *Teachers’ egodocuments as a source of classroom history. The case of autobiographies, memoirs and diaries*, in S. Braster, I. Grosvenor, M. del Mar Del Pozo Andrés (edd.), *The Black Box of Schooling: a Cultural History of the Classroom*, Brussels, Peter Lang, 2011, pp. 141-157, but also Id., *La memoria escolar: restos y huellas, recuerdos y olvidos*, «Annali di Storia dell’Educazione e delle Istituzioni Scolastiche», n. 12, 2005, pp. 19-33.

⁸ About this concept, please see: Braster, Grosvenor, Del Pozo Andrés (edd.), *The Black Box of Schooling*, cit., 2011. This expression was coined by Marc Depaepe and Frank Simon (1995), taking up the one already used by the sociologist Colin Lacey (1970) to direct the educational historians’ attention to classrooms as places of «evaporated educational relationships», real black boxes of school culture, from which every single trace of – orthodox and revolutionary, licit and illicit – educational practices, which had been carried out there, was essential to try to recover. See Meda, *Memoria magistra*, in Polenghi, Zago, Agostinetto, *Memoria ed educazione*, cit., pp. 25-35 (in partic. p. 28).

Please see: D. Demetrio, *L’autobiografia come cura di sé*, Milano, Cortina, 2006.

the collective one, i.e. that type of memory consisting of multiple representations of school, teachers and school groups, which have been offered by the cultural industry and the world of information over time. Just to cite a few examples among the authors who decided to autobiographically tell the school world, we can mention Leonardo Sciascia, Maria Giacobbe, Lucio Mastronardi, Rosario Naccarato, but we can also think about Don Milani and the school of Barbiana¹⁰, Mario Lodi and his experiences narrated through the pages in *C'è speranza se questo accade al Vho* and *Il paese sbagliato*¹¹, but also Albino Bernardini¹².

Egodocuments are often able to tell us stories, which are not only linked to big names in education, but also to those figures who have been considered less important for a long time, such as so many apparently anonymous teachers, who would rather deserve a particular attention for the fundamental impact, which the practice of their profession had on the life of people and communities where they acted.

Among the projects, which have also tried to give the right space to lesser-known names, we remember the *Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione*, who was edited by Roberto Sani and Giorgio Chiosso¹³ and was precisely born with the desire to add a further element to let us know and understand Italian school, educational and pedagogical history and preserve the memory of its protagonists, adults and especially «children»¹⁴, «whose activity and commitment, while being almost exclusively carried out in the local context at times, prove to be fundamental to understand the concrete training and cultural dynamics, which have marked the growth and the evolution of Italian society in the last two centuries»¹⁵.

¹⁰ Please see L. Sciascia, *Le parrocchie di Regalpetra*, Bari, Laterza, 1963; M. Giacobbe, *Diario di una maestra*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1966; L. Mastronardi, *Il maestro di Vigevano*, Torino, Einaudi, 1962; Scuola di Barbiana, *Lettera a una professoressa. Scuola di Barbiana*, Firenze, Libreria Editrice Fiorentina, 1967; F. Marinelli, *Diario di una maestra*, Milano, R. Archinto, 1988; R. Naccarato, *Le scuole rurali agli inizi del Novecento: S. Caterina di Aiello Calabro*, Cosenza, Klipper, 2008. About this topic, please see: R. Certini, *Bambini e scolari nelle memorie e nei diari di maestri e maestre: tra biografia e racconto*, in C. Covato, S. Ulivieri (edd.), *Itinerari nella storia dell'infanzia. Bambine e bambini, modelli pedagogici e stili educativi*, Milano, Unicopli, 2001, pp. 197-229.

¹¹ M. Lodi, *C'è speranza se questo accade al Vho*, Milano, Edizioni Avanti, 1963; M. Lodi, *Il paese sbagliato*, Torino, Einaudi, 1970.

¹² A. Bernardini, *Le bacchette di Lula*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1963.

¹³ G. Chiosso, R. Sani, *Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione 1800-2000*, 2 voll., Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, 2013.

¹⁴ See G. Chiosso, R. Sani, *Presentazione*, in Idd. (edd.), *DBE: Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione*, 2 vols., Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, 2013, Vol. I, pp. VII-X.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

1. *Giovanni Lucaroni: chronicles about school life between intimate diary and administrative documentation*

Among the “little protagonists” in the educational world, it is also possible to include Giovanni Lucaroni¹⁶, a teacher coming from Marche region whose professional life was reconstructed thanks to the homonymous collection, which is preserved in the Centre for Documentation and Research in History of Textbooks & Children’s Literature of the University of Macerata¹⁷ and was given by his granddaughter Maria Agostina Marzioli in 2012. This collection allowed us to dig into the life of the teacher who has been teaching in Mogliano, in the Macerata hinterland, for over forty years. So, it was possible to discover that his personal and professional events were intertwined with the national scenarios and that «active school» promoted by Giuseppe Lombardo Radice¹⁸, so much that numerous publications by Lucaroni about the adoption of new programs for primary school and also the importance of the dialect attracted the attention of the scholar from Catania¹⁹. In fact, the teacher Lucaroni had shown great enthusiasm towards the 1923

¹⁶ J. Meda, *Giovanni Lucaroni*, in G. Chiosso, R. Sani (edd.), *DBE: Dizionario Biografico dell’Educazione*, 2 vols., Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, 2013, Vol. 2, pp. 58-59.

¹⁷ About the Centre for the Documentation and Research on the history of textbooks and children’s literature at the University of Macerata and its documentary and bibliographic heritage, please see: M. Brunelli, *The «Centre for the documentation and research on the history of textbooks and children’s literature» in University of Macerata (Italy)*, «History of Education and Children’s Literature», vol. IV, n. 2, 2009, pp. 441-452; A. Ascenzi, E. Patrizi, *Inside School Lives: Historiographical Perspectives and Case Studies. Teachers’ Memories Preserved at the Centre for Documentation and Research on the History of Schoolbooks and Children’s Literature*, «Espacio, Tiempo y Educación», vol. 3, n. 1, 2016, pp. 343-362.

¹⁸ About Giuseppe Lombardo Radice, please see: I. Picco, *Giuseppe Lombardo-Radice*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1967; G. Cives, *Giuseppe Lombardo Radice: didattica e pedagogia della collaborazione*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1970. There are also some recent studies: L. Cantatore, *Vita mortis meditatio. Il breviario pedagogico di Giuseppe Lombardo Radice*, «I problemi della pedagogia», vol. LXVI, n. 1, 2020, pp. 107-124; Id. (ed.), *Giuseppe Lombardo Radice. Lezioni di didattica e ricordi di esperienza magistrale*, Roma, Edizioni Conoscenza, 2022; E. Scaglia (ed.), *Una pedagogia dell’ascesa. Giuseppe Lombardo Radice e il suo tempo*, Roma, Studium, 2021; G. D’Aprile, *Memorie di una inedita corrispondenza. Lettere di Giuseppe Lombardo Radice ad Adolphe Ferrière*, Pisa, ETS, 2019.

¹⁹ Although personal archives are extremely important for historical-educational research, they are not always easy to be found, often because families do not keep those “old” documentary deposits and, if lucky, one has to rely on the sensitivity of those who decide to preserve and to give entire archives belonged to the protagonists of the past school to the institutions in charge. This is a fundamental documentary heritage for this research and, for this reason, it is advisable to launch specific awareness campaigns on the topic so as not to lose precious sources for historical-educational research forever. Among the researches which stand out because of their systematicity and completeness, we remember Mirella D’Ascenzo about Alberto Calderara (M. D’Ascenzo, *Alberto Calderara. Microstoria di una professione docente*, Bologna, CLUEB, 2011); Michela D’Alessio who carried out research on the Lucan educator Arturo Arcomano, using his private archive, but also school registers and chronicles about school life in order to reconstruct the history of the new school created in Basilicata in the 1950s (M. D’Alessio, *I diari e i quaderni scolastici quali fonti per lo studio delle pratiche educative del passato. L’esperimento didattico del maestro Arcomano nella «scuola nuova» di Basilicata a metà del Novecento*, in S. González, J. Meda, X. Motilla Salas, L. Pomante (edd.), *La Práctica Educativa. Historia, Memoria y Patrimonio*, Salamanca, FahrenHouse, 2018, pp. 1022-1033). We can also think about the rich material belonged to Maria Maltoni, whose collection – after a donation – is now preserved in the municipal library of Impruneta and, even, the reconstruction of Elvira Bono’s activity carried out by Maria Cristina Morandini, using handwritten

school programs and had been the author of numerous publications where he tried to make Lombardo Radice's "new school" known and understood.

The research on the teacher Lucaroni's biography was also carried out within the school archive at the "Giovanni XXIII" Institute of Mogliano where it was possible to consult all the class newspapers starting from his first teaching year in 1910 until 1956, when he was retired, and his personal file. This contribution intends to draw attention on the columns of the registers devoted to the chronicle about school life and the observation on pupils, which become a sort of space between intimate diary and administrative documentation – based on the use the teacher makes of them –, even if they do not fall within those sources, which we consider individual school memory. Therefore, it is believed that they can decisively contribute to reconstruct what really happened inside a classroom and which were the educational practices adopted and the teachers' opinions on different school aspects.

As it is known, under art. 27 of the ordinance of January 10th, 1924 – containing regulatory standards for the application of the Royal Decree no. 2185 of October 1st, 1923 –, the teacher was required to fill in the class diary, the prospectus of pupils who were classified into groups according to their ability, the educational program, the final report and the school chronicle among the documents²⁰.

Art. 27 indicated that news and data on the pupils' attendance, the teacher's absences and any "didactic handing-over" to the supply teacher, the state of teaching aids, the supplementary works, the visits, the trips, the school parties, the visits by superiors and the notable episodes of city life in relation to school had to be included in the school chronicle. Furthermore, the Ministry had published clarifications concerning the regulatory provisions in circular no. 7 of 1924²¹. About Art. 27, it was specified that the chronicle did not have to be a collection of compositions about the main events of school life during the year, but it had to be really a chronicle about school life «because it was lively, but sober and such that it could be re-read with utility and satisfaction even after years»²².

Moreover, in the circular, Minister Gentile hoped that collection of annual chronicles could have given valuable elements for reconstructing the events of educational activity in every Italian Municipality in the future; for this reason, he had foreseen that the chronicle files were kept in the school library²³.

Regarding the meaning to be attributed to the "teacher's chronicle", Giuseppe Lombardo Radice had intervened in an exasperated tone – in an article published

and printed material concerning the procedures for employing and pursuing the career of the teaching staff, which is preserved in the Historical Archive at the Municipality of Turin (M.C. Morandini, *La maestra in Italia tra Otto e Novecento: il caso torinese di Elvira Bono*, «Rivista di storia dell'educazione», n. 1, 2018, pp. 173-190).

²⁰ *Ordinanza contenente le norme regolamentari per l'applicazione del Regio Decreto 1° ottobre 1923, n. 2185*, «Bollettino Ufficiale del Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione», n. 3, 15 January 1924, pp. 53-64.

²¹ *Circolare n. 7, Chiarimenti circa le norme regolamentari per l'applicazione del Regio Decreto 1° ottobre 1923, n. 2185*, «Bollettino Ufficiale del Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione», n. 6, 5 February 1924, pp. 359-366.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 365.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 365.

in «L'Educazione Nazionale»²⁴ in March 1926 –: according to him, educators and headmasters went from obsession to obsession making the simplest things complicated. Among these obsessions, he also counted the chronicle. According to Lombardo Radice, there were even those who had become the inventors of modules for chronicles, diaries, skill groups, which he considered «a real offense to teachers and a great shame for the good name of the school»²⁵. Lombardo Radice commented like this:

What is this teacher's chronicle? It is such a concise note about didactically interesting events of the school year in school or classroom. The teacher judges about the interest of things. A teaching staff reunion; an educational exhibition; a school party; the events of school attendance in relation to health conditions; the library purchases in relation to the program; the visits to museums; the workshops; the exploration trips into the countryside in relation to the program; the characteristic results of a new teaching experience; some memorable episodes of the internal school life and the relationships with families and so on.

According to Lombardo Radice, what counted was the fact of not making it an external obligation of daily teaching confessions, as the old diary was instead²⁶, «a real mortification of the teacher»²⁷, but it had to become a private teacher document.

Giovanni Lucaroni punctually filled in those columns in his school registers and the reading and the analysis of those pages are able to bring us back to his classroom and to help us to decipher the activity of that teacher who always questioned himself on poor class results or too undisciplined pupils and demonstrated a deep resilience in the face of difficulties. From his chronicle, it is possible to reconstruct so many aspects related to everyday school life and the material school life, but also the personal reflections on his pupils, the changed teacher-pupil relationship compared to the past and his role as a teacher. Those columns of the register represent a very important space from which personal confessions and ideas on topics such as the mixed classes, the obligation of a uniform and the Single State Textbook emerge. Furthermore, it is also possible through them to reconstruct many other aspects of school life in that period, when work came first for families and then class attendance.

For example, the teacher wrote on September 1st, 1927:

²⁴ G. Lombardo Radice, *La cronaca della scuola*, «L'Educazione Nazionale», March 1926, pp. 26-27. With this letter, Lombardo Radice replies to Mr. A. Perfetti who had intervened in the Piacenza newspaper «La Libertà» on 15 January 1926.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

²⁶ The regulation – approved by the Royal Decree of 6 April 1913 – concerning the juridical status of the teachers from primary schools, which were administered by School Boards, provided in art. 86 that the teacher had to keep a register in order, where he wrote down the pupils' absences and points of merit both for study and for conduct and in art. 87 the teacher's task of filling in the school diary in accordance with the instructions given to him by the competent authorities. Furthermore, art. 92 indicated that the teacher was required to hand out to the deputy inspector the registers, but also a detailed report about the teaching given, the pupils' attendance, their diligence and the profit obtained. The regulation concerning the juridical status of the teachers from primary schools, which were administered by Municipalities, provided for the same provisions in artt. 84-85-90 («Gazzetta Ufficiale del Regno d'Italia», n. 137, 13 June 1913, pp. 3563-3679, in partic. pp. 3660-3661, 3673-3674).

²⁷ Lombardo Radice, *La cronaca della scuola*, cit., p. 27.

September, which has been consecrating to holidays, trips in the country, journeys and hunting for a long tradition, is not too propitious for a serene restart, especially for rural centres devoted to the grape harvest, which no pupil wants to sacrifice to school²⁸.

In fact, pupils were often busy in farm work at the expense of their studies. We also find a reference to it in the register of the 1924/25 school year: in the school diary, Lucaroni judged the student Giuseppa Piccinini to be intelligent, but she did not probably study «for lack of time, because she needs to work at home. She could do much more; but she is assiduous and this is so»²⁹.

Every year, the teacher was aware that it was necessary to wait for the end of the grape harvest to have all the students back in the classroom and, in his chronicle of September 1927, he commented how school was the last thought for parents, but also for municipal administration, despite the fact that times had changed, and he wrote:

I set to work with the good intention of still giving all that care I will be able to school in general and my class in particular³⁰.

We read in the chronicle that September «uselessly runs away»³¹ but, finally, on October 1st, Lucaroni took up the teaching of the fourth male class, made up of some third-class pupils to whom he had taught the previous year, some pupils coming from rural schools and remedial students. A few days later, he already defined them as «good guys, even if many of them are not adequately prepared for the fourth class and have only very little intelligence», but the teacher did not lose heart and, in fact, he commented: «We will see to love each other and to help us as much as possible»³².

In the chronicle, Lucaroni respected the provisions of the government regulation and, therefore, he reported news and information on his absences, visits, trips, school parties, but also visits by superiors and notable episodes of city life in relation to school. The teacher was punctual in describing the headmaster's visits, also indicating the topics dealt with and some «good and fatherly advice»³³ received.

However, Lucaroni also used those columns to open his heart about the aspects he did not like about school. For example, at the beginning of the 1928/29 school year, he had been in charge with a mixed fifth class, made up of 11 boys and 11 girls. He immediately compared them, highlighting the girls' superiority in language and reading against the boys' superiority in arithmetic. According to the teacher, this difference could be generalized for almost all the school groups. In fact, according to Lucaroni, the class

²⁸ *Cronaca ed osservazioni dell'insegnante sulla vita della scuola*, in Archive of the *Istituto comprensivo "Giovanni XXIII"* in Mogliano (hereinafter: ASICM), series «Registri di classe», folder «Registri di classe 1927/28», Register of Giovanni Lucaroni for 1927/28 school year.

²⁹ *Cronaca ed osservazioni dell'insegnante sulla vita della scuola*, in ASICM, series «Registri di classe», folder «Registri di classe 1924/27», Register of Giovanni Lucaroni for 1924/25 school year.

³⁰ *Cronaca ed osservazioni dell'insegnante sulla vita della scuola*, in ASICM, series «Registri di classe», folder «Registri di classe 1927/28», Register of Giovanni Lucaroni for 1927/28 school year.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

was quite homogeneous and with excellent attendance, despite it was the harvest season, even if he was convinced that he would have found it difficult to carry out scientific subjects for which «girls always have a certain revulsion, not being too suitable by their very nature»³⁴, but he was ready to adapt the program according to their needs.

However, a few years later, Lucaroni expressed his opposition to mixed classes right within the chronicle of the 1932/33 school year. In fact, Lucaroni explained that he appreciated the advantages «which theoretically justify it from the point of view of a more male and less unilateral social education; but in practice I have not found it very useful, while I have always found enormous difficulties in adapting the program»³⁵.

In the chronicle and the observation of school life during the 1933/34 school year, he reiterated his hostility towards mixed classes, especially the upper classes,

The much-praised advantages of promiscuous education have never convinced me, and in practice I have only found... obstacles, inconveniences and... damages. Not to mention that the program must undergo multiple adaptations, which are not so easy to be realized³⁶.

In the chronicle, the teacher always devoted a lot of space to the observation of his class, which was described as slack and undisciplined most of the time, but he always proved to be determined and ready for new challenges. For example, in the school register of the 1933/34 school year³⁷, Lucaroni, who was in charge with a third class, immediately defined it as «very undisciplined». The teacher's reaction was not to immediately consider the class «bad», because children of 8-9 years old could not be like this, but they were undisciplined as they were used to «chattering without purpose, leaving their seats without permission»³⁸ and being inattentive, as he wrote. In the face of this problem of discipline, Lucaroni was ready for a month of deep work in order to «seize their heads, wills, intelligences and – slowly, slowly – bend to... a lot of work, which the class requires for its demanding program»³⁹.

Some of his positions on aspects of the internal school life, such as the obligation to wear a school apron, are also evident from the columns of the teacher Lucaroni's chronicle. He wrote in the chronicle of October 1932:

There are no funeral school aprons yet and school is joyful like a carpet of flowers! The eye sails there with pleasure. I try to read impressions and expressions in their eyes. I have reason to be satisfied with some smart faces⁴⁰.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Cronaca ed osservazioni dell'insegnante sulla vita della scuola del 15 settembre 1932*, in ASICM, series «Registri di classe», folder «Registri di classe 1932/33», Register of Giovanni Lucaroni for 1932/33 school year.

³⁶ *Cronaca ed osservazioni dell'insegnante sulla vita della scuola del 12 settembre 1933*, in ASICM, series «Registri di classe», folder «Registri di classe 1933/34», Register of Giovanni Lucaroni for 1933/34 school year.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Cronaca ed osservazioni dell'insegnante sulla vita della scuola del 22 settembre 1933*, in Register of Giovanni Lucaroni for 1933/34 school year, cit.

⁴⁰ *Cronaca ed osservazioni dell'insegnante sulla vita della scuola del 16 settembre 1932*, in Register of Giovanni Lucaroni for 1932/33 school year, cit.

But, on September 19th, the school image as a “carpet of flowers” disappeared for Lucaroni in order to be replaced by «the gloom of black sackclothes», which «has almost completely invaded the classroom»⁴¹. In 1931, Lucaroni’s aversion to school aprons is also evident in a publication of his where he commented: «Why those black sackclothes of penance? Whom do the young sparrows who are putting their wings and the skylarks who learn to weave their nests for hiding their happiness there mourn for?». In fact, according to him, «uniform is a law according to which you are no more than...*the one who has the duty to be*: a soldier who accepts with a smile on his lips and performs with devotion of sacrifice all the duties, which it symbolizes and combines»⁴².

Starting from the late 1920s, references to Duce and Fascism began to appear in the chronicle. In fact, school time was marked by Fascist anniversaries and the chronicle about school life is full of descriptions of these events.

As regards the anniversary of the March on Rome, Lucaroni indicated in the school register of the 1928/29 school year that pupils had written about it in the diary, after speaking about it together with the teacher, and this had been carried out on State order. Almost annoyed, Lucaroni commented: «We would have talked about it anyway, there is no doubt about it!»⁴³.

Lucaroni also referred to State orders in the chronicle of September 1928, expressing a certain malaise for extra-curricular occupations, which could refer to the position he held as the president of the local organization Opera Nazionale Balilla in those years:

In my opinion, however, I have to confess that excessive extra-curricular occupations steal precious time from me both in terms of preparation and necessary rest – and this seriously worries me. It is bad that political authorities overemploy teachers in positions and jobs, which can dissuade or distract them from their work! Discipline imposes it on me and I obey: but I would be much happier if I could be entirely and only in charge with school. I want to hope that I will be soon freed from this excessive weight⁴⁴.

The political chronicle has intensified starting from the mid-1930s. The image of a school at the service of the regime’s ideological propaganda emerges among the columns of Lucaroni’s registers; for example, on October 1936, on the occasion of the Anniversary for the great Fascist gathering, he described pupils, who quivered with enthusiasm, as

⁴¹ *Cronaca ed osservazioni dell’insegnante sulla vita della scuola del 19 settembre 1932*, in Register of Giovanni Lucaroni for 1932/33 school year, cit.

⁴² G. Lucaroni, *A fior di labbro. Fantasie*, Montegiorgio, Tipografia Editrice Carlo Zizzini, 1931, pp. 145-146. For a deep examination on the topic of school uniforms, please see: I. Dussel, *Historicising Girls’ Material Cultures in Schools: Revisiting Photographs of Girls in Uniforms*, «Women’s History Review», vol. 29, n. 3, special issue, 2020, pp. 429-443; Ead., *School Uniforms and the Disciplining of Appearances: Towards a History of the Regulation of Bodies in Modern Educational Systems*, in T.S. Popkewitz, B.M. Franklin, M.A. Pereyra (edd.), *Cultural History and Education. Critical Essays on Knowledge and Schooling*, New York – London, RoutledgeFalmer, 2001, pp. 207-241; K. Stephenson, *A Cultural History of School Uniform*, Exeter, University of Exeter Press, 2021.

⁴³ *Cronaca ed osservazioni dell’insegnante sulla vita della scuola del 5 novembre 1928*, in ASICM, series «Registri di classe», folder «Registri di classe 1928/29», Register of Giovanni Lucaroni for 1928/29 school year.

⁴⁴ *Cronaca ed osservazioni dell’insegnante sulla vita della scuola del mese di settembre 1928*, in Register of Giovanni Lucaroni for 1928/29 school year, cit.

The Duce, the omnipotent, the omnipresent, is for children and adults. Love for Him is able to perform any miracle. Well. Italian people have really merged into a single block, including these children, who move with their excitement for things so far from their evaluation!⁴⁵

Lucaroni spoke about a «school which was never absent», when it dealt with the Duce⁴⁶ and, on October 28th, 1936, he wrote that school lived on these dates to celebrate Fascism⁴⁷.

However, there are some attacks and critical issues on choices, such as the adoption of the Single State Textbook. For example, he wrote in the school register of the 1932/33 school year:

Those State books will – unfortunately – come in a few days and I think about them with a weight... as if they fell on my stomach. What will I do with them, what will the guys do with 600 or more pages of treatises, which make up their primary school book? When will they decide to cut $\frac{3}{4}$ of them?⁴⁸

On other occasions, the teacher Lucaroni will return to attack the Single State Textbook – not only through the chronicle in the register, but also in some publications –, defining these books «stuffed, crammed, inadequate, voluminous and expensive, condemned for their disproportion since they first appeared and now officially decreed for rewriting them *ab imis*»⁴⁹ and demonstrating how he has not always hidden his own disagreement towards the choices of the Fascist government, despite a formal adherence to Fascism.

Conclusions

Therefore, the chronicle about school life has proved to be an important source, which is able to give us valuable information for historical-educational research on what happened inside the classroom and the way the teacher Giovanni Lucaroni thought and acted. It is not a real intimate diary, but it is possible to define it as «a semi-public autobiographical space»⁵⁰, re-using Quinto Antonelli's definition.

Despite an apparent political alienation – also due to numerous positions he held within Fascist organizations⁵¹ –, it is believed that the deep analysis on the life of the

⁴⁵ *Cronaca ed osservazioni dell'insegnante sulla vita della scuola del 2 ottobre 1936*, in ASICM, series «Registri di classe», folder «Registri di classe 1936/37», Register of Giovanni Lucaroni for 1936/37 school year.

⁴⁶ *Cronaca ed osservazioni dell'insegnante sulla vita della scuola del 24 ottobre 1936*, in Register of Giovanni Lucaroni for 1936/37 school year, cit.

⁴⁷ *Cronaca ed osservazioni dell'insegnante sulla vita della scuola del 28 ottobre 1936*, in Register of Giovanni Lucaroni for 1936/37 school year, cit.

⁴⁸ *Cronaca ed osservazioni dell'insegnante sulla vita della scuola del 24 settembre 1932*, in Register of Giovanni Lucaroni for 1932/33 school year, cit.

⁴⁹ G. Lucaroni, *Premessa*, «Toga Praetexta», 1934, pp. 367-368.

⁵⁰ M.T. Sega, *Introduzione*, in Ead. (ed.), *La scuola fa la storia. Gli archivi scolastici per la ricerca e la didattica*, Portogruaro, Nuova dimensione, 2002, p. 19.

⁵¹ In fact, besides being a member of the Directory of the Fascio in Mogliano in 1924 and 1929 and

teacher Lucaroni – which was investigated through the lines of his school chronicles, but also using other sources, such as his personal archive – leads us to place him in that circle of teachers, who tried to demonstrate «a silent resistance against the regime»⁵².

Chronicles about school life represent an area to be still largely explored and it would be certainly interesting to start a large campaign of “excavations” within school archives by proceeding with a collection of the chronicles contained in the registers. There are still many school stories, which are preserved in school archives and can help us to add numerous details to educational historians’ research. Undoubtedly, these are sources, which are difficult to be found – also considering the difficulty of accessing school archives – but they are also not easy to be interpreted: it is obvious that we can wonder about how much chronicles are the result of a free reflection or a constraint imposed by the State. We can answer to this question through a close examination of the source considered and an intertwining of different types of sources, which allow us to reconstruct the teachers’ stories, such as the one by Giovanni Lucaroni, who was not only a teacher of a small village in the Macerata hinterland, but also «a clear writer about school matters and a technician inured to the school of experience»⁵³, as Alfredo Saraz defined him.

an Extraordinary Commissar of the Fascio in Mogliano in June, July and August 1929, Giovanni Lucaroni founded the autonomous Balilla Group (1924-1928), he was the first president of the National Balilla Organization (from 1928 to 1930 and, then, in 1934 again) and a G.I.L. deputy commander from 28 October 1937. Lucaroni was also the Eighth Cohort B Commander and the Centuria Av. Commander, but he was also the first president of the National Afterwork Club (1927/28). Giovanni Lucaroni is also the author of the text *Sulle orme. “Ai Balilla”*, Montegiorgio, Tip. Editrice Carlo Zizzini, 1929, where there are examples of goodness, love, abnegation, constancy, heroism, sacrifice of adults and children. In fact, the names of those who have distinguished themselves in history are reported, such as Giotto and Donatello or Carlo Goldoni and Vittorio Alfieri, but also Massimo D’Azeglio, Giuseppe Garibaldi, Vittorio Emanuele III and Benito Mussolini and many others. There are also examples of young Balilla people who have distinguished themselves for exemplary feats, some of whom were even decorated with medals.

⁵² About this topic, please see G. Chiosso, *Il fascismo e i maestri*, Milano, Mondadori, 2023. The relationship between the teacher Lucaroni and Fascism was deeply examined in: L. Paciaroni, *Il maestro di Mogliano. Vita e opera di Giovanni Lucaroni (1891-1980)*, Venezia, Marcianum Press, 2023.

⁵³ Letter from Alfredo Saraz to Giovanni Lucaroni dated 25 March 1924, in Archive of the Centre for Documentation and Research in History of Textbooks & Children’s Literature of the the University of Macerata, fond «Giovanni Lucaroni», series «Recensioni e giudizi», document n. 48.

The “Brilliant” School of Elena Ferrante

Monica Galfré
University of Florence (Italy)

Introduction

In the intense picture painted of Italian society in *L'amica geniale* (henceforth: *My Brilliant Friend*), a literary landmark of recent times¹, Elena Ferrante attributes a crucial role to education and culture. The story's two heroines, born and raised in a deprived quarter of Naples in the aftermath of World War II, find a place of commonality but also of division.

Both are outstandingly bright primary school students from deprived backgrounds and immediately forge a magnetic friendship which, despite their diverging destinies, will compel them forever to see themselves in each other. Lenù is given permission to try for the secondary school entrance exam, later attending the classical high school and eventually reaching the *Scuola Normale* in Pisa², where she becomes part of the cultural elite while maintaining a contradictory bond with her city of origin. Lila, on the other hand, remains tenaciously bound to the streets of her childhood, personifying the obscure side of a childhood partly shared with her friend.

My Brilliant Friend has been translated into over 50 languages and is now one of the most popular texts in world literature, as it speaks a universal language³. Despite this, the book's poetics are still deeply rooted in postwar Italy, a period that from today's perspective appears to encapsulate the great hopes and disappointments of the 20th century.

By combining the verticality of historical events with the horizontality of ordinary lives, novels like that of Ferrante seem to give us a more direct, authentic insight into the past than books written by historians. This would indicate almost a mistrust of history, as if it were a subject dealing only with big events and important names, while at the same time favouring abstract categories and concepts⁴. Times have changed a great deal since the publication of Elsa Morante's *La storia* (The Story)⁵, a work that triggered heated

¹ See the bibliography in T. De Rogatis, *Elena Ferrante. Parole chiave*, Roma, Edizioni E/O, 2018, pp. 289-295.

² The *Scuola Normale Superiore* in Pisa is a leading institution in the Italian research system and a prestigious public university for higher education advanced studies.

³ See V. Scarinci, *Chi sono i contemporanei di Elena Ferrante?*, «Doppiozero», 28 May 2017, <https://www.doppiozero.com/chi-sono-i-contemporanei-di-elena-ferrante> (last access: 04.03.2023); De Rogatis, *Parole chiave*, cit., p. 24.

⁴ See S. Loriga, *La piccola x. Dalla biografia alla storia*, Palermo, Sellerio, 2012.

⁵ E. Morante, *La storia: romanzo*, Torino, Einaudi, 1974.

debate on precisely this issue⁶. Almost half a century later, in a historiographic context that has also changed a great deal, the popular appeal of Ferrante's work has aroused far less diffidence. Nobody seems to have any doubts that an ordinary individual – whoever they may be – can be a reliable historical witness. Enzo Traverso recently spoke of *La tirannide dell'Io* (The Tyranny of the Ego)⁷, alluding precisely to the importance of the individual dimension, both in the object and in the subject of historiographical work.

Then how can literature, which is so much more enjoyable to read, replace history? Although many people now believe that these subjects have permeable boundaries, their approaches are in fact very different. In this respect it may be useful to compare the two, given the role that narratives destined for a broad public can play in building a shared sense of history, albeit with the knowledge that nothing is so ambiguous as the relationship between history and literature. Furthermore, in recent years the great debate on “public history” has led us to question ourselves about narratives aimed at the general public, and the now ineluctable role they play in the building of a shared sense of history⁸. In the case of *My Brilliant Friend*, this urgency was renewed in the wake of the record audiences attracted by the televised drama broadcast on RAI 1 in November 2018, a screenplay that also remained absolutely faithful to the original story.

My Brilliant Friend is not an historical novel. Its aim is not to dramatise major events in history, nor is it questioning history, as Morante does at the start of each chapter. On the contrary, Ferrante's main intent is to tell the lives of two women, through the mirror of the (highly conflicted) friendship that has bound them since infancy. All she is interested in is Lila and Lenù. Yet, the story of the two women inevitably evokes the context in which they grew up, even if it is relegated to a «sketchily-defined background»⁹.

The story reads as a journey fraught with difficulty and hardship, fluctuating between success and defeat, the old and new generations, and thus remains eternally suspended between two periods: past and present. *My Brilliant Friend* refers to history indirectly, but the narrative device on which the novel is based is expressly tied into the work of the historian. It is Lenù, by now an established author, who decides to reconstruct the story of her own life, of Lila and of their friendship, by using as a source that unreliable, subjective method: memory. The decision not to address the question of History directly translates into a clever game of transparencies, in the knowledge that the setting for the rewriting of “History” and of “stories” is always the balcony of the present day¹⁰. Telling the story of the two women, just as «writing the history of the twentieth century»,

⁶ A. Borghesi, *L'anno della Storia 1974-1975. Il dibattito politico e culturale sul romanzo di Elsa Morante. Cronaca e Antologia della critica*, Macerata, Quodlibet, 2018, p. 18; see also G. Turi, *Libri e lettori nell'Italia repubblicana*, Roma, Carocci, 2018, p. 107.

⁷ E. Traverso, *La tirannide dell'Io. Scrivere il passato in prima persona*, Bari-Roma, Laterza, 2022.

⁸ See the multi-author discussion edited by T. Bertilotti, *Pratica storiografica e altre narrazioni del passato*, «Contemporanea», n. 4, 2018, pp. 603-32.

⁹ E. Ferrante, *La frantumaglia*, Roma, Edizioni E/O, 2016, p. 274; includes interviews and letters with and by the writer between 1991-2016.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 366-67; on the complexity of historical time, see R. Koselleck, *Futuro passato. Per una semantica dei tempi storici*, Genova, Marietti, 1986; F. Hartog, *Regimi di storicità. Presentismo ed esperienze del tempo*, Palermo, Sellerio, 2007.

becomes in the words of Enzo Traverso «an exercise in walking the tightrope» between history and memory¹¹.

So the story begins at the end, in 2010, when the fate of our two heroines, now well into their sixties, reaches a definitive crossroads. Lenù's decision is a kind of revenge against her friend, whose surprising talents of intelligence, inventiveness and indeed genius she so admires – to the extent that Lenù suspects it was actually her friend who had the real gift for writing. The division of roles is very clear: Lenù writes the novels and is the one who escapes the neighbourhood, while Lila is too busy living to write and stays where she is, facing her demons head-on. Their destinies are divergent, but complementary. Each thinks the other is her brilliant friend.

My Brilliant Friend has been inspiringly described as «the confessions of an Italian woman»¹², – a story that describes – one hundred and fifty years after Nievo¹³ – sixty years of the history of Italian womanhood. After all, women are owned by time – starting with the biological clock. In some way they also own time, having a special relationship with writing as a tool of self-analysis, which is why women are reliable witnesses of a history that goes beyond themselves.

The timeline of seventy years traced by the four volumes of *My Brilliant Friend* does not appear to be dictated directly by the twists and turns of the Republic's history – although there is a striking parallel between the existential plot and the evolution of the general context, the retreat and sense of defeat typical of old age and the emergence from the postwar period.

School and culture, to which language and writing are closely linked, are at the heart of these complex dialectics, which recall long-standing problems of Italy, themes on which historians have long reflected: the country's tormented national unity and the difficult dialectic between centre and periphery. From childhood, Lenù and Lila are fully aware that a lack of education and speaking in dialect are the immovable boundary markers of their neighbourhood's inferiority. They know that the game of their salvation will play out behind the desks at school. During their infancy and into adolescence, both girls associate the sought-after world of culture and education (Lenù defines it as her «true wealth»¹⁴) with riches and wellbeing, to the extent that in their minds, people gain wealth by writing. Part of our heroines' journey is thus reflected in the dynamics of school education, which in turn reflect Italy's path through the twentieth century, with all its light and shadows.

Culture and education enjoy widespread respect. Men and women, the decent and the dishonest and even the Solara family of the Camorra – who play a not insignificant role in the novel – hold Lenù in high regard: she goes to school, then publishes books and writes for newspapers (even if it is to denounce people like them). In the same way,

¹¹ E. Traverso, *Il secolo armato. Interpretare le violenze del Novecento*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 2012 (French edition: 2011), p. 170.

¹² B. Manetti, *Confessioni di un'italiana*, «L'indice dei libri del mese», n. 12, 2014, p. 18.

¹³ Ippolito Nievo was an Italian writer and patriot; his *Confessioni d'un italiano* (1867) is widely considered one of the most important novel about the Italian *Risorgimento*.

¹⁴ E. Ferrante, *L'amica geniale*, Roma, Edizioni E/O, 2011, Volume 1, p. 255.

they also respect Lila, who is unable to continue her studies but possesses extraordinary talents.

Historiography has also shown that with the acceleration in social mobility during the Fifties and Sixties, even in the deprived South, school and study played an irreplaceable role, upholding the traditional social hierarchies while also reshaping them, offering an extraordinary tool for redemption within contexts fraught with difficulties and hardship – something that the definition of “golden age”, used for the first thirty years postwar, tends to gloss over¹⁵.

School and culture are an instrument of redemption all the more precious to women, given the unprecedented, rapid and thus traumatic process of emancipation during the Sixties and Seventies, the decade when Italy’s polemical modernisation was at its peak. For both Lila and Lenù, women in a hostile world that intends to give them nothing, knowledge and language are the keys to building their identities, and to freeing themselves – even merely loosening the grip – of the vice of the past. Both belong to the first generation of women who overcame a thousand problems in order to challenge male dominance and build their own lives. The neighbourhood in which our two heroines were born is emblematic of the obstacles they will encounter along their way. A microcosm of violence and barbarity, it is an abyss that could swallow them up at any time, because before being outside, it is inside.

It is significant that for both children, school – where girls traditionally excel, and this is also confirmed for other periods, by the few studies existing on this topic – is the first place in which they find an equality, a recognition and even an affection that they cannot find in the family. The teacher Oliviero goes out of her way for both girls and is what their real mothers cannot be for their daughters; in the same way, the female teachers at the grammar school look very different from the maternal model, a figure of which Lenù in particular is deeply ashamed.

What kind of school does Ferrante portray? The primary school is a traditional, selective and meritocratic institution, tempered by the protective figure of the teacher, Oliviero, even though her affection is proportionate to her pupils’ achievements. For the young Lenù, her first teacher is a goddess, in competition and synergy with her mother. Her teacher finds books for her, takes her on holiday to Ischia and will always see Lenù as her greatest professional achievement. But for those who cannot keep to the pace, the teacher is unhesitatingly ruthless, even with bright children like Enzo, or even the talented Lila, who betrays her gifts to abandon her studies, albeit reluctantly. The book is in fact dealing with a deeply classist institution that may facilitate those who have the means (like the pharmacist’s son, of unremarkable ability) but is not an easy journey even for the capable, deserving students cited in the Italian Constitution.

Ferrante devotes little space to the *scuola media* (middle school or lower secondary school), which before the 1962 reforms continued to stand as a barrier and which appears overall to be rather colourless. The *liceo* (grammar school) is more open, at least

¹⁵ See M. Barbagli, D.I. Kertzer (edd.), *Storia della famiglia in Europa*, Vol. 3: *Il Novecento*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2005; M. Galfré, *Tutti a scuola! L’istruzione nell’Italia del Novecento*, Roma, Carocci, 2017.

superficially, but it is full of contradictions, which Ferrante illustrates in the figure of Miss Galiani. Although this teacher has an innovative, even unconventional approach to the curriculum, to the extent that she discusses current affairs and actively engages her students, she proves to be more middle-class and straight-laced than she might at first seem. The sentiment she ultimately shows towards Lenù, after having encouraged and praised her for years, is a mix of hostility and envy. The *Scuola Normale*, by contrast, is portrayed as the temple of conservation, classist and chauvinist even when it opens up to debate, to be exploited only as a social springboard.

The conflictual relationship between the Italian language and dialect – central to Ferrante's poetics – is redolent of the fatigue of a tough battle with an uncertain outcome. In *My Brilliant Friend*, dialect is neither consolatory nor protective. It is simply an uncomfortably tight garment that one would prefer to rip off. Italy's national language, and the increasingly sophisticated use that our heroines make of it as they progress out of infancy, are initiatory tools that testify how language can bring equality, and division. Not even the Italian spoken by the educated Neapolitans – such as Lenù's teachers, – is any more authentic¹⁶. It is also an expression, albeit from another viewpoint, of a process of construction of a language (and identity) that is anything but flat, beyond all stereotypes¹⁷.

Ferrante revives the question of language and adds originality by reading it from a gender perspective. In doing so, she reveals the male obsession with verbal supremacy, strikingly evident even among the non-parliamentary left-wing circles of the mid-1970s, and then the inevitable attempt to appropriate masculine models by entering into competition, but also the need to experiment with life by following other avenues.

Lenù places all her hopes for a better future on culture and education – but this is perhaps precisely the reason why she never fully shakes off the profound – «constitutional and ineradicable» sense of being an outsider¹⁸, – feeling ultimately rejected, as if she was something borrowed and never owned. In addition to her commitment to study, this is another reason why the young Lenù imposes on herself a strict discipline of reading, about all kinds of subjects but especially current affairs, both national and international, and politics.

However, it is the writing and its progressive refinement that allow Lenù to settle the score. Context is by no means secondary to this. The stage is set for a qualitative leap during the political and cultural breakdown of the 1970s, of which feminism would prove to be the overriding element. In Carla Lonzi's *Sputiamo su Hegel* (Let's Spit on Hegel)¹⁹, Lenù finds powerful answers, which change her view of the world and broaden her horizons in a sort of epistemological revolution that the historians of her generation, with the category of gender, have applied to the reinterpretation of the past. For Lenù, feminism is first and foremost a confirmation of the crucial importance and ambivalence of the body, which appears to be the main route to salvation, yet also the place of defeat.

¹⁶ See De Rogatis, *Parole chiave*, cit., p. 190.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

¹⁸ E. Ferrante, *Storia del nuovo cognome*, Roma, Edizioni E/O, 2012, vol. 2, pp. 316-317.

¹⁹ C. Lonzi, *Sputiamo su Hegel*, Roma, Editoriale grafica, 1970.

My Brilliant Friend is thus a representation of the past with a strong generational and gender imprint which, like all ex-post reinterpretations including historiography, is constructed in, and reflects, the present day. But unlike history, a novel is free to use pretence, which makes it not only more compelling but also, paradoxically, more authentic than reality itself.

In conclusion, the deep sense of failure with which the elderly Lila and Lenù look back on their childhood at the end of the novel, is linked to the end of the “short century”, which in Italy also swept away the first republic, taking with it all the women’s points of reference – starting with education and culture, which they both used at great cost to shape their identities, albeit in different ways. Moreover, in Italy the issue of schooling played an undeniably important political and social role until the 1980s, partly because of the public function attributed to culture.

On this point too, *My Brilliant Friend* does not stand alone. The decline of the model of education born from the Unity of Italy – the centralised state system seen as a favoured route towards nationalisation – has aroused no less apprehension and disorientation among the teaching profession. The past, whether demonised or looked at with regret, still weighs heavily on the public debate on the crisis in education. It is as if, by failing to recognise the world we are looking at, we are unable to imagine the future either²⁰.

What about the historians in all this? Historians play a decisive role, which can only be that of rereading the past secularly, documents in hand, while fending off flawed perspectives, whether they be generational or political.

²⁰ On this point I refer to Galfré, *Tutti a scuola!*, cit., pp. 21 ss.

Restless and Longlasting *Cuore*. Readings of a Classic between Text and Images

Susanna Barsotti, Chiara Lepri*
Roma Tre University (Italy)

1. *Libro Cuore*

Libro Cuore – as has been known for entire generations of Italians – is one of the most successful and widely read Italian children's classics¹. Destined for immediate success right from its first publication on 15 October 1886, by Treves of Milan², De Amicis's *Cuore* is still today reprinted in large copies in the children's book series of the most important Italian publishing houses. There is thus nothing strange about returning to look at De Amicis's best known work in an attempt to understand its continued popularity from the perspective of school memories passed down for over a century.

At the time *Cuore* was written, in Piedmont, like much of the rest of Italy in the late 1880s, the lower middle classes were facing the spectre of social degradation, the lower classes unemployment and overall impoverishment and the old landowning and moneyed aristocratic families had come out badly of the era's agriculture and banking upheavals. All this was a backdrop which led to a general fading of hopes for gradual and non-violent change in the establishment, economic life and social relations. The headlines of the main Turin newspapers show the climate generated in this transitional phase clearly, a process which was to end only in the early 20th century in Piedmont, with the first industrialisation processes. And it was, once again, the press which considered the direction being taken by the working class movement, which was beginning to organise politically and in trade unions, in many of its editorials and debates, especially the «going to the people» by certain intellectuals, with De Amicis in the lead, and the condemnation and awareness-raising in the name of the humanitarian principles of brotherhood and social justice being trumpeted in newspapers and journals as well as novels and treatises. They are the same principles that this Oneglia-born writer inserts into Enrico Bottini's school diary, making *Cuore* «one of the most powerful *national cultural unification* tools (understood in the anthropological and psycho-sociological sense) in the name of the intellectual hegemony

* Susanna Barsotti wrote sections 1, 2 and 3; Chiara Lepri sections 4, 5 and 6.

¹ See A. Ascenzi, R. Sani (edd.), *Fra infanzia e scuola: Cuore (1886) di Edmondo De Amicis*, in *Storia e antologia della letteratura per l'infanzia nell'Italia dell'Ottocento*, Vol. II, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2018.

² As Alberto Asor Rosa has noted, *Cuore* was published a grand total of forty times in its first year of publication and a million copies of it had been sold by 1923. See A. Asor Rosa, *La cultura*, in *Storia d'Italia*, Vol. IV, tomo 2, *Dall'Unità a oggi*, Torino, Einaudi, 1975.

of the northern bourgeoisie, or at least the part of it which adhered to enlightenment and cautious progress ideals»³. This is one of the cornerstones of De Amicis's work as it intersects with general plans to *civilise* the lower classes on the basis of the world vision and values inherent to the progressive bourgeoisie and its productive classes, who played such a centre-stage, driving force, role in the national political unification process. *Libro Cuore* thus succeeded in what was a fundamentally important enterprise for recently unified Italy: national unification via a literary work whose language and values made it accessible to all. The entirely original subject of the book was school. In his book De Amicis tackles the pedagogical issue facing the unification state and does so by letting his characters speak. In this sense the school framework and monthly accounts are two ways of recounting Italy's unification dream, putting together rich and poor, good and bad, bottom and top of the class.

2. *The "heart" school*

Enrico's school diary revolves around this paradigm and, in this way, De Amicis seeks to «demonstrate that, while the class differences remain, the children of this famous third year of primary school, as human beings and Italians, could in any case develop friendships, love and mutual respect»⁴, the very same relationships around which the future Italy could take shape. Education is thus the linchpin of De Amicis's message, together with schooling, teachers, state authority, citizenship education entrusted to the literacy process and civil coexistence within the context of social cohesion in difference. School acts as an ideological filter and ethical and civil integration driving force. It is the fulcrum of universal emancipation, cut through by events in children's and adults' lives. In *Cuore*, De Amicis focuses on school because in his vision it is this which is the driving force behind the nation's social and political emancipation and, at the same time, the tool best suited to moral and economic emancipation. Through Enrico Bottini's voice the writer recounts his own utopia in the school world, a world away from school as it really was, which De Amicis was all too familiar with and had described in *Romanzo di un maestro*⁵. His intention, however, was to outline a school model, however ideal and unlikely to come to fruition, as a guide in its pursuit. The narrative voice (only the monthly accounts are not his), as we have seen, is Enrico, an idealised late 19th century Turin boy:

[...] with his Frenchified Italian, his hyperbole, his over played instrumental tools, his taste for 'homemade' rhetoric and so on.

Cuore's school is to be everyman's school, which could be anywhere in Italy. It is true that it is in Turin, for no other reason than that a utopia such as this could only be the expression of a northern

³ *Ibid.*, p. 928. The italics are original.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 930-931.

⁵ See E. De Amicis, *Il Romanzo d'un Maestro*, edited by A. Ascenzi, R. Sani, Pisa, Edizioni ETS, 2021.

Enlightenment mindset. De Amicis's is a city school and could not be elsewhere because the city acts and must act as a constant educational stimulus: its monuments, its topography, its troop processions, the king, the Carnival, All Soul's Day, the market, its various artisan workshops, its shops, building firms and means of transport. The city is one of the cornerstones of De Amicis's school⁶.

De Amicis's school has a further two pillars: teacher and the family. His teacher, Perboni⁷, is a serious man who never laughs, never jokes. Without him school would be impossible. He is the author of the monthly reports in which he demonstrates all his knowledge. If the classroom can be seen as a container, the expression of a geographical confine, symbolically Italy itself, the teacher is its content, the substance of the educational experience. Via school, in the sharing of classroom life, a sort of embryonic nation, what pupils learn is that a civilised nation must have spaces and contexts in which all disparities can be cancelled out. Within the classroom space it is teachers who level out the differences, who eliminate all disparities in the name of a shared goal.

The family has a similarly fundamental role in *Cuore*, which – as Giovanni Genovesi has noted – «risks overshadowing the teacher's role, with the latter seeming to be the person who puts the family's, and above all the father's, will into practice»⁸. Alberto Bottini, Enrico's father, is the «father prototype supporter of the school [...]. He is always there, together with his son who tells him the salient events happening at school: meetings with Enrico's companions on the street, at school or at home, comments on class activities, conversations with the headmaster, visits to places in the city, visits to the former teacher»⁹.

The scaffolding around De Amicis's school is, however, rocked by an errant individual, Franti, one of Enrico's classmates, the rebel, the bully, as we would call him today. He leaves the scene too early for us to truly understand what his role in the novel might be. However, as Umberto Eco notes in his well-known *Elogio di Franti*, with his laugh, his sadistic poking fun, it is Franti who points an accusing finger at the paternalism of the post-unification classroom. Franti is to dystopia what Garrone is to utopia, school is a negative vision for the former and a place of dreams for the latter.

This is the basis of the idea of Franti as a metaphysical motif within *Cuore's* make-believe sociology. Franti's laugh is destructive and is considered evil solely because Enrico identified Good with the existing order, which he himself profits from. But if Good is simply that which a society identifies as favourable, Evil will be solely that which conflicts with a society identified with Good, and Laughter, the tool the innovator uses to cast doubt on what a society considers to be Good, will take the shape of Evil, whilst in actual fact the person laughing – or scoffing – is none other than an exponent of a different but possible society¹⁰.

⁶ P. Boero, G. Genovesi, «*Cuore*». *De Amicis tra critica e utopia*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 2009, p. 16.

⁷ On teachers and certain considerations on the subject of the portrayal of the teachers in *Cuore* see, amongst others, E. Catarsi, *I maestri e il "Cuore"*. *La figura del maestro elementare nella letteratura per l'infanzia tra Otto e Novecento*, Pisa, Del Cerro, 1996.

⁸ Boero, Genovesi, «*Cuore*». *De Amicis tra critica e utopia*, cit., p. 16.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ U. Eco, *Elogio di Franti*, in E. De Amicis, *Cuore. Libro per i ragazzi*, Torino, Einaudi, 2001, p. 362. The article was published for the first time in «Il Caffè», in 1962, and entitled *Franti o il Cuore*, and later with the

Franti, a despicable person in Enrico's eyes, is emblematic not simply of explicit diversity but also proof, as Franco Cambi has pointed out¹¹, of a limit to De Amicis's vision, casting light on real tensions in Umberto-era society, a crack within «the simplified image of society and childhood which De Amicis constructs and puts forward as a mass society code of ethics»¹². What De Amicis proposes, in fact, and what Franti risks jeopardising, is the idea of a school by, and for, everyone as a necessary element in emancipation for its secular nature and its attention to the school classroom, its relations with the family, its ability to impact on the social status quo. It is a school whose basis is relationships and feelings without neglecting education, a *heart* method which relates to the moral dimension of the educational process.

To channel his school *utopia*, De Amicis makes use of a narrative structure that is one of the most significant elements in *Cuore*, constructed around a harmonious rendering of three methods: Enrico's school diary, letters from his father, mother and sister, and the monthly stories of his teacher, Perboni. These are three intersecting parts whose convergence and coherence in content are the foundation stones of the book. Giuseppe Zaccaria¹³ cites the scene of Enrico's mother's visit, with her son, to Crossi's mother, an episode commented by Enrico's mother, and echoed by his father in the letter entitled *La scuola* and whose ending is taken up by Enrico himself in his introduction to the first of his monthly tales, *Il piccolo patriota padovano*. It is a process which embodies a structural constant in the work in which the three registers cross reference each other.

The three cross-referencing texts are mutually intersecting and consolidate into a shifting, mutually reinforcing and nurturing whole. The structure of the text is thus dynamic, intensely dynamic, and this facilitates its reading and fills those «langours» which are deliberately placed centre stage in the operation¹⁴.

The characters in this universe are less full-blown characters than types, both good and bad, crucial to the development of the novel and its achievement of its objectives. Each of Enrico's classmates, and Enrico himself, are engaged in a self-improvement battle and this is possible only if they work together. De Amicis's school is a place in which individual wills are called on to converge on a single aim, in a constant process of reciprocal emulation under the wise guidance of their teacher. However, as Cambi has argued, *Cuore's* ideal type revolves around three key figures¹⁵. We have already spoken of Franti and the other two are Enrico and Garrone. There is a tangible resemblance between

title it is now known as, *Elogio di Franti*, in U. Eco, *Diario minimo*, Milano, Mondadori, 1963.

¹¹ See F. Cambi, *Collodi, De Amicis, Rodari. Tre immagini d'infanzia*, Bari, Dedalo, 1985. Certain important considerations on Franti are also to be found in D. Starnone, *Introduzione* a E. De Amicis, *Cuore*, Feltrinelli, Milano, 1993, especially p. XVIII ff.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 102.

¹³ See G. Zaccaria, *Cuore di Edmondo De Amicis*, in A. Asor Rosa (ed.), *Letteratura italiana. L'età contemporanea. Le opere 1870-1900*, Vol. 13, Torino, Einaudi, 2007, pp. 560-562.

¹⁴ F. Cambi, *Rileggendo «Cuore»: pedagogia civile e società postunitaria*, in F. Cambi, G. Cives, *Il bambino e la lettura. Testi scolastici e libri per l'infanzia*, Pisa, Edizioni ETS, 1996, p. 325. On the importance of *Cuore's* tripartite structure, see also F. Trequadrini, *Letteratura come rimpianto e come desiderio*, L'Aquila, Tracce, 1988.

¹⁵ Cambi, *Collodi, De Amicis, Rodari*, cit.

them, an integration. The two classmates are emblematic of the conduct required of the sons of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie itself, bound up with solidarity, brotherly understanding and communication. They are direct embodiments of *heart*. Affectionate and generous, their behaviour is marked by a sense of equality and fraternity, with Enrico embodying an interclass and humanitarian dimension constantly reinforced in his letters to his parents, and Garrone embodying natural, steadfast justice as the criteria regulating their action. This latter, always described as good and with an adult sense of justice, can be considered emblematic of the ideal lower classes De Amicis has in mind: quiet, never seditious, responsible and aware of what is right, predisposed to working with others but with a firm sense of his own identity. Enrico, on the other hand, is paradigmatic of a progressive bourgeois consciousness which seeks to understand and take on board some of the values and virtues of the lower classes. He is also, and first and foremost, an ethical symbol. «The embodiment of a moral disposition which can only be built on ad hoc education of which family, school and friendships form part [...] and which look, on one hand, to justice and equality and, on the other, to compassion and emotional solidarity. In it, in fact, it is emotions [...] which are the roots and ‘proof’ of universality and the potential for a justice ethic»¹⁶.

Types not characters, then, because what De Amicis is interested in is laying the foundations for school, understanding the pillars it is built on, the norms and values interwoven into it and on which its purpose is built, embodied in the monthly stories. The sentimental and adventurous tone of the book is designed to appeal to both adult and young readers with the latter being who De Amicis relies on to get the book into the hands of parents and involve them in the titanic task of founding a true school.

3. *Italian heart*

A significant 2021 essay by Marcello Fois entitled *L'invenzione degli italiani*¹⁷ attests to the restlessness and enduring quality referred to in the title of this work, underlining that De Amicis's book should perhaps be revived and reread today as an Italian literary classic whose primary aims were not literary, in Fois's view, but rather revolved around a specific ethical engagement, whose extension has come down to us. The fundamental importance of De Amicis's pedagogical tale, Fois argues, lies in its ability to formulate an essential structure by which we can portray and recount our national unification on the basis of solidarity. It is a structure based on education, empathy and love which, in these times of hatred, it is more important than ever to relearn. In *Cuore* De Amicis put forward a model of schooling based on real education for all and formulated an essential basis on which to portray and recount ourselves as Italians, whatever our differences. «De

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

¹⁷ M. Fois, *L'invenzione degli italiani. Dove ci porta "Cuore"*, Torino, Einaudi, 2021.

Amicis's impact on the national and folk imagination is [...], whether we are aware of it or not, still immense»¹⁸.

If, paraphrasing Italo Calvino, «a classic is a book which never stops saying what it has to say»¹⁹, then it may be important to reread *Cuore* and ensure it is read by children, but below the surface of its sometimes rhetorical tone, «as an outline of “how we were” and, to an even greater extent, “where we come from”»²⁰, both historically and psychologically. Studies around De Amicis's work and his idea of schooling carried out since the 1980s have demonstrated the work's interpretative richness and also, at the same time, shone a spotlight on a new way of rethinking his work, from a political and no longer rhetorical perspective. The rhetoric is certainly there but it revolves around a desire for persuasion regarding the creation of an educational project in which it was school that was centre stage.

4. *Illustration and visual memory in Cuore*

Cuore has thus contributed to the formation of a school memory which coincides, of course, with the vision of its author, but as an «ultra-successful and ultra-controversial» book²¹ which is now almost a hundred and forty years old and has survived the various political and cultural climates that school has lived through and won itself a nucleus of interest in the critical debate.

For the purposes of rethinking this path, we have chosen to enquire into the role played by the novel's illustrations in consolidating the notion of schooling²² as espoused by De Amicis. It is also the work's iconographical apparatus – to all intents and purposes a meta-text, in fact – that enables us to observe diachronically not solely changes in Italy's educational demands but also the novel's impact on the image of school held by generations of Italians for more than a century.

In the 19th century children's literature featured a close bond between words and images: books for children and young people are characterised by a polyphonic dimension capable of communicating an ideological continuity between words and images, breathing life into a shared and unified project. *Cuore* fits fully into this paradigm: whilst the three illustrators Treves used aligned to De Amicis's message, what they did first and foremost was to set in motion a dialogue designed to interpret the work in accordance with their own stylistic and expressive contributions. These survived for over fifty years. It was only from the mid-1940s onwards that *Cuore* illustrations multiplied in the new editions, which have continued to come out right up to our own times, in a fascinating journey

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

¹⁹ I. Calvino, *Perché leggere i classici*, Milano, Mondadori, 1991.

²⁰ Cambi, *Rileggendo «Cuore»*, cit., p. 338.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

²² For an in-depth study into the relationship between educational memory and image, see E. Collelledmont, *La memoria visual de la escuela*, «Educatio Siglo XXI», vol. 28, n. 2, 2010, pp. 133-156.

in which the novel's illustrators initially fell into line with the author's intentions before evolving into criticism, even satire, on the novel.

5. *A path through Cuore's iconography*

The first edition of *Cuore* was not illustrated. Paola Pallottino has noted that its figurative story is «one of the most significant in Italian illustration history»²³. Treves published the 126th edition with 200 engravings, 194 of which were signed. Just five years later, in 1891, he announced a publication with illustrations by three “art masters” in «L'Illustrazione Italiana» which «followed the text word for word and illustrated every page», making for «the most attractive, most real, most interesting book and most widely patriotic book ever put in young people's hands»²⁴.

These three illustrators certainly contributed to the book's great success «making the principal readings tangible but adding their own, and thus extending its values to those most congenial to the individual reader»²⁵: Arnaldo Ferraguti, linked to the social protest movement, Enrico Nardi, with his light, ironic vein, and Giulio Aristide Sartorio, a Roman painter known for his friezes in the lower house at Montecitorio, all paid close attention to the publisher's instructions showing, for Faeti, «a perhaps sincere intention of rendering the reality of the lower classes clearly and honestly» without, however, freeing themselves of «their unconscious fear and hostility» which ultimately took precedence over all else²⁶. But it was Ferraguti, whose childhood had been similar to Franti's (having been expelled from Bourbon-era school for drawing Garibaldi), who left the most pervasive mark on the image of De Amicis's school which has survived to our own day. His were the famous classroom illustrations in which we can make out a geographical map of unified Italy, the children and their desks. His was the iconic kiss on the mouth between Enrico's mother and a nursery school child. His is the image of Franti's expulsion from the school when he is thrown out by the headmaster²⁷. The painter's illustrations enquire into the marginalised classes, the work of the lower classes, emigration and the schooling process and highlight class conflict²⁸, thus throwing light on the social ferment of the years in which *Cuore* was written but also underlining the languors inherent to the work itself, from the starting point of its title.

²³ P. Pallottino, *Lacrime e veleni. Un secolo di illustrazioni per "Cuore"*, in M. Ricciardi, L. Tamburini (edd.), *Cent'anni di "Cuore". Contributi per la rilettura del libro*, Torino, Umberto Allemandi & C., 1986, p. 171.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

²⁶ A. Faeti, *Guardare le figure. Gli illustratori italiani dei libri per l'infanzia*, Roma, Donzelli, 2011, p. 114.

²⁷ On the subject of the Franti drawn by Ferraguti, Antonio Faeti notes that «with a quasi-clinical lucidity he used his artist's pencil to show a strange smile replete with all the physical otherness which, in the illustrations of the day, were characteristic of the inmates of Salpêtrière or delinquents in Lombroso's work» (Faeti, *Guardare le figure*, cit., p. 112).

²⁸ Pallottino, *Lacrime e veleni*, cit., p. 176.

The interpretations of this artistic trio remained unchallenged until 1946, with the exception of 12 colour illustrations by Ticino painter Luigi Rossi in the 1920s when Treves's publishing monopoly ended and the Garzanti edition came out with cartoon drawings by Bruno Angoletta. In 1947, once again for Garzanti, an edition illustrated by Giorgio Tabet came out, with the latter's talent stifled by the hagiographic aura given the work by its previous illustrators. This was the advent of a trend destined to continue: the incessant republications of *Cuore* which followed surged, after a new Garzanti illustrated by Frigerio and Rizzato to mark the fiftieth anniversary of De Amicis's death (1958) led to a varied sequence of editions and illustrators taking their own style and poetics to a strong adherence to by then consolidated *clichés*. «The categorical De Amicis labels»²⁹ still predominate regardless of a school that was becoming universal in precisely those years, but which remained a place in which «present, past and future clashed head on, where the demands of modernisation and planning logics, together with the dissemination of new mindsets, encountered the resistance of rooted traditions»³⁰. This emerges clearly from later editions of *Cuore* whose semantics were triggered by a methodologically dialectic use of the verbal and iconographical codes taken together, precisely where images favour and stimulate the decodification processes not only of the novel's meanings but also of the subliminal messages of an educational character that it expresses³¹.

6. Two comparison frameworks and two exceptions

Monica Galfré observed that «in the 1950s and 60s there was Mastronardi's view of the situation, the teacher humiliated by a hardworking and vicious society which pushes him to the margins, that of Mario Lodi, the Po plains countryside teacher who manages to carve out space for experimentation [...], and there is Don Milani, who [...] taught the power of the alphabet to the poor, laying bare the class-based scales suffocating Italian schools and souls prior to the protest movements»³².

The equal middle school was set up in 1962; Einaudi published Gianni Rodari's *Favole al telefono* with illustrations by Bruno Munari; an article came out in «Il Caffè» destined to establish a *before* and *after* in the critical history of *Cuore*, namely Eco's *Franti o il Cuore*, now better known as *Elogio di Franti* referred to above, which laid bare the

²⁹ Faeti, *Guardare le figure*, cit., p. 110.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

³¹ In addition to those mentioned in the text, the following are some of the best known editions: 1963, Fabbri: ill. G. Bartoli; 1964, Garzanti: ill. A. Bioletto; 1965, Mondadori: ill. E. Bertello; 1965, IEI: ill. V. Accornero; 1965, Capitol: ill. R. Sgrilli; 1966, Paoline: ill. C. Ruffinelli; 1968, Malipiero: ill. G. Castellani; 1969, La Scuola: ill. C. Solarino; 1973, Salani: ill. G. Montelli; 1978, Rizzoli reuses Ferraguti, Nardi, Sartorio; 1981, Mondadori: ill. G.L. Coppola; 1985, Mondadori: G. Bertello; 1988, Piccoli: G. Festino; 1990, Paoline: ill. A. Cesselon; 1992, SEI: ill. S. Lobalzo; 1994, Mondadori: S. Alcorn; 1998, Mursia: S. Bernasetti and T. Ornitto; 2001, Mondadori: ill. D. Toffolo; 2001, Giunti: G. Gallizia; 2005, Fabbri: D. Fabbri; 2011, Raffaello: ill. A. Rossi; 2011, DeAgostini: ill. M. Longo; 2020, Mondadori: ill. E. Stoirich.

³² M. Galfré, *Tutti a scuola! L'istruzione nell'Italia del Novecento*, Roma, Carocci, 2017, p. 192.

novel's rhetorical and lower middle class contents, its cruelty, class-based and conformist vision and paternalist overtones. Despite this «peak of rejection»³³ that the ideological and cultural renewal the work had already been subject to even prior to 1968, with its new educational models and the birth of a freer civil and social consciousness, despite the stylistic fresh air being breathed into the sector (think of the influence of US comics) its illustrators ultimately continued with their «calligraphic reconstructions» or «supine enlargements»³⁴ of now anachronistic situations and sentiments.

There are two comparison frameworks capable of confirming this trend in particular: depictions of Franti, specifically, and of the classroom. The former because Franti is a linchpin figure around whom the most heated debate around those praising and those deprecating the work revolve and which is thus crucial to the reception of the work. The latter because it is the representation of the classroom which visual pedagogy draws on most, together with the images it fosters: the itself theatrical class setting generates an extraordinarily evocative and incisive drama³⁵ and *Cuore's* illustrations over time, at the end of the Ferraguti-Nardi-Sartorio season, made a world which is generally closed to the outside world visible externally, too, one which is also replete with the evocations and expectations of the collective imagination of yesterday and today. Lastly, these two comparison frameworks act as a *litmus test* because they cut through all the various editions one-dimensionally with a first exception, the edition illustrated by Costantini.

In 1977, not long after the *Decreti Delegati* Law, the mass schooling system was restructured around law no. 517. The year special needs classes were abolished, Flavio Costantini, a painter with a long-standing interest in social history, illustrated the Strenna Olivetti edition of the novel by turning the dominant system on its head and giving readers what Pallottino calls the «iconographical equivalent» of *Elogio di Franti*. What emerges in his work, in fact, is an evident criticism of a school institution in which «everyday invisible violence is played out»³⁶ while gnarled human figures, many buildings and few children, in the name of the denial of childhood, alternate in full-page plate geometries. The dead teacher has Matilde Serao's face, anatomical hearts are visible on the walls and stationers sell Attilio Mussino's *Pinocchio* and Heinrich Hoffmann's *Struwwelpeter*. And what is Franti's place? He is shoeless, with his arms outstretched and an embittered expression on his face. It is not clear where he is going, but he is moving robot-like along the facade of a building whose windows are barred. Could this be the prison he is destined for after his argument with Stardi? This disquieting image echoes Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1975), a fundamentally important work which was making waves at the time, laying bare the repressive devices inherent in educational practice and its institutions.

Costantini's vision remained a one-off for some time. In the 1980s, in the wake of Comencini's 1984 TV broadcast, *Cuore's* iconography underwent a further involution: the illustrators of the day still preferred the "heart line", with Franti continuing to be

³³ Cambi, *Collodi, De Amicis, Rodari*, cit. 82.

³⁴ P. Pallottino, *Lacrime e veleni. Flavio Costantini e l'illustrazione di Cuore*, in *Viaggio intorno a Cuore*, Genova, Tormena, 2004, p. 19.

³⁵ R. Farné, *Pedagogia visuale*, Milano, Raffaello Cortina, 2021, p. 11.

³⁶ Pallottino, *Lacrime e veleni*, cit., p. 178.

marked out by his scornful expressions and clothing, while the Baretto classmates, much more realistically drawn in colour, were timidly transgressive, staring out of the classroom window in boredom, like the pupils of *Cipi* and teacher Mario Lodi.

It was not until 2001 that *Cuore* was turned on its head with the dazzling and irreverent illustrations of Alberto Rebori and Federico Maggioni published by Corraini, a Mantua publishing house with a long-standing interest in art. What is striking about this version? In contrast with the fixity of the original text, it stands out like a distorting mirror with an irreverent depiction of the book's characters and events. Thus, if «every era has found what it “needed” in *Cuore* and cut loose what it considered jetsam»³⁷, this demonstrates the usefulness of continuing to read a novel which our studies show to have been an undeniable historical source and, at the same time, must inevitably come across as anachronistic to 21st century readers.

By choosing parody did the two artists deliberately adopt «the laughter, irony, scorn, devil may care, mimicry and ridicule»³⁸ typical of Franti himself? A provocative, systematic visual deconstruction in which Rebori placed feral hallucinatory figures at the desks and Maggioni shows a confused Franti, almost a sketch of a prison lifer, and then a collection of organs sticking out of a thorax (*Franti il disordine interiore*, we read: in English, *Franti, the inner disorder*), is indicative of a changed cultural climate and idea of school – of autonomy – which, its difficulties notwithstanding, takes new educational criticisms on board and demands that the “Frantis” we have always had be accepted. *W la diversità* (*Long live diversity*, in English) is a heartfelt exclamation visible in an eloquent illustration of Maggioni's.

In the context of the indirect memory of school generated by *Cuore*'s iconography characterised by a hypnotic compulsion for repetition, Rebori and Maggioni revisited a myth by acting on the visual image it continues to feed into. It is this illustration turned into a tool for criticism, revisionism and analysis of the most famous and long-lived literary work on schooling in Italy, one which takes back its historical quality but which continues to prompt wide-ranging thinking on the image of school both past and present and on themes and problems in today's school. This majestic dialogue between the two artists thus opens up not only to the subtle interplay of the new children's editions³⁹, which give them the necessary contact with one of the classics of Italian literature, but also to the various iconographic reinterpretations that make this classic (like all other classics) a restless object of undoubted value, but also accessible to rereadings revolving around the symbolic linchpin which school represents.

³⁷ Genovesi, Boero, “*Cuore*”, cit., p. 79.

³⁸ Eco, *Elogio di Franti*, cit., p. 363.

³⁹ See M. Boscherini, *Vi racconto Cuore*, ill. di G. Orecchia, Milano, Mondadori, 2007; M. Attanasio, *Dall'Atlante agli Appennini*, ill. by F. Chiacchio, Roma, Orecchio Acerbo, 2011; R. Piumini, *Cuore*, ill. by F. Mancini, Trieste, Edizioni EL, 2017; S. Bordiglioni, *Cuore*, ill. by A. Ruta, Trieste, Edizioni EL, 2018. For a more indepth study see L. Cantatore, *Le riscritture dei classici nella letteratura per l'infanzia*, in S. Barsotti, L. Cantatore (edd.), *Letteratura per l'infanzia. Forme, temi e simboli del contemporaneo*, Roma, Carocci, 2019.

Here Starts “Penelope’s Web”. Education and Social Prejudices as Seen in Women-Teachers’ Diaries in Greece (1800-1920)

Polly Thanailaki
International Hellenic University (Greece)

1. *Women and Education as seen in Diaries of female-Schoolteachers*

Diaries reflected the female writers’ true feelings, ambitions, desires, and problems. Moreover, the study of the above personal journals of the past enable historians explore the female model of the time when the diary was kept. Additionally, diaries help researchers explore the existing social nuances of the period and they answer the question why girls’ schooling was not set as first priority in many countries in southern Europe, including Greece. Moreover, the personal journals constitute an invaluable source of information for female education as well as for women schoolteachers’ vocational studies.

In Greece, at the turn of 19th century, Eleni Boukouvala was one of the first women-inspectors of girls’ elementary schools along with another teacher named Elpiniki Karakousi¹. Boukouvala and Karakousi inspected female elementary schools for only one year, 1898-1899². Their term was not completed as their post depended on state funding that was eventually cut because of money shortage³. The two female inspectors worked with zeal and commitment in order to carry out their task⁴. Their assignment was difficult due to many reasons as inequality dominated in women-inspectors positions contrasted to male inspectors who were more privileged. For example, the women-inspectors earned less money than their male peers while another case of disparity lay on the fact that they often had to work under the direction of men deputy-inspectors who were often under-

¹ Elpiniki Karakousi pursued studies of a higher level in Germany. See more in: P. Thanailaki, *Breaking Social Barriers: Florentia Fountoukli (1869-1915)*, «BSHM Bulletin: Journal of the British Society for the History of Mathematics», vol. 25, n. 1, 2010, pp. 32-38.

² P. Paschalidis, *San paramythi. 12+1. Histories gyro apo ti Demotiki mas Ekpaideusi. Ektheseis ton epitheoriton tou 1883 kai ekpaideutikes metarrythmiseis sto teleftaio tetarto tou 19ou aiona*, Post Graduate Thesis, Department of Philosophy and Pedagogy (Supervisor: S. Ziogou-Karastergiou), Thessaloniki, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2012, pp. 101-102.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Karakousi taught the subject of Pedagogy in the *Arsakeion*’ Normal School. She was also director of *Vamvakaris Parthenagogeion* in Piraeus. Later, she relocated to Mytilini where she offered her services to the local girls’ school. See: K. Parren, *He despoinis Elpiniki Karakousi en Mytilini*, «Ephemeris ton Kyrion», n. 589, 3 October 1899.

qualified compared to their female peers because many of them did not possess even the necessary experience of having served in a schoolmaster's position before⁵. However, the fully qualified female inspectors were often passed over for promotion in favour of men. Due to the fact that there were not enough men-inspectors to inspect girls' schools, the state hired women-inspectors with casual employment contracts for the purpose. The above women-educators had to obtain proof of academic knowledge from a European Higher Institution, or University, documenting that they had pursued studies in pedagogy and literature. Despite their high qualifications, the female-inspectors were evaluated as «second class» inspectors in their ranking as they did not possess a permanent position while their salaries depended on state funding⁶.

Boukouvala's account of facts bore the characteristics of a personal journal. She wrote about her personal experience and feelings when touring Greece as an inspector. On the first lines of her account of facts, she praised her home country for its beautiful landscapes that she saw when visiting many regions in order to perform her inspection task. She also referred to her firm belief that female schooling in Greece had made much progress at the turn of 19th century because many girls' schools had been set up all over the country. Additionally, the Greek people – particularly in the urban areas – were more open to new challenges in terms of their daughters' education. However, she noted that there still existed a lot of social prejudices for women-teachers especially in the rural areas of the country as in the countryside the peasants considered girls' schooling a taboo, labelling the literate women as «too independent» and «loose», a notion that dominated throughout 19th century⁷. Thus, illiteracy and ignorance still prevailed in the villages that were closed communities. Another reason was the financial inability of the local people to afford school expenses⁸. The women-teachers, particularly those appointed to small distant villages, encountered the above-mentioned dominating biased notions and entanglements while most of the times they were thought of being accountable for all blames and scandals occurring in the small place where they taught. Moreover, the peasants were unwilling to place themselves in the teachers' shoes and see their embarrassing situation. Boukouvala wrote about the bitter tears that the young teachers shed being entangled in social prejudices and having to live in harsh living conditions. She metaphorically expressed it in the phrase: «their bread was saturated with their tears» in order to denote that the women-teachers were poor and they had to work under adverse circumstances as the ones mentioned above. However, the young teachers had to survive and eke out a living because most of the times they had to fend not only for themselves but also to financially support their families as they were the sole bread

⁵ E. Georgiadou, *Gynaikeia Erga (E): Kathigitriai pedagogikis, mathimatikon kai philologias*, «Ephemeris ton Kyrion», n. 699, 17 March 1902.

⁶ [Greek Government Law], *Nomos VTMT: Peri tis stichiodous I dimotikis ekpedeuseos*, «Ephemeris tis Kyverniseos», n. 37, 5 October 1895.

⁷ E. Boukouvala, *Anamniseis ek tis Epitheoriseos sxoleion thileon-He thesis tis didaskalissis*, «Epetiris tis Dimotikis Ekpaideuseos», Athens, Anestis Konstantinidis, 1902, p. 81.

⁸ P. Thanailaki, *Gender Inequalities in Rural European Communities during 19th and Early 20th century: A Historical Perspective*, Cham, Springer, 2018, p. 23

winners. The situation was similar to men-teachers financially-speaking but not in equal social terms as in the Greek rural areas their male peers were greatly respected while in the urban regions things were much easier for both men and women-schoolteachers, Boukouvala remarked⁹.

In the 19th-century Greek society, the unmarried schoolteachers were socially marginalized while they did not feel free to enjoy privacy. That was the case especially applied to those of young women-teachers appointed to teach in a village school in the countryside. Boukouvala referred to this ailing situation as the young female schoolteachers, upon their appointment, realized that their behaviour, their acquaintances, their hair style, the cloths they wore as well as everything on them or about them, was much gossiped and heavily criticized by local people. The social rules preached a strict code of conduct according to which it was not accepted for a woman-teacher to take a walk – for instance – out in the street in order to breathe fresh air after a tiring day in her stuffy classroom. So much worse was the fact of being seen talking to a man. It is true that life in the rural areas for all women was harsh. Thus, the prejudiced illiterate peasants imposed a certain mode of behaviour and female schoolteachers were not the exception to the rule¹⁰. In this context, they were always under the vigilant eye of their fellow-villagers while the rumour about them spread very quickly being a «whispering one» at the beginning while later it turned out to be a public outcry in case she was considered by the locals that she was «loose», and not taking into consideration the social rules¹¹. But above all, the most embarrassing situation was the sexual harassment or assaults they often received by the «womanisers», or the «Don Juans» of the village as such incidents were often referred in her accounts of facts, too¹².

Boukouvala also noted that the teacher's first days at school were easy because the local people viewed her as the woman who would carry to them the torch of culture and literacy. But later things became difficult. She observed: «Here comes the young woman's frustration over the insufficient training that she had received». So, the first pleasant and comfortable days in her new professional life seemed to belong to the past as the poor teacher soon realized that her professional training was too theoretical and lacking in practical training, also not reflecting the real conditions of the classroom¹³. The problem was not only the schoolteacher's frustration over her inadequate professional training but also the element that she was hindered in her teaching task by other social abnormalities and constraints. One of them was the pupils' irregularity of school attendance. The girls did not attend classes on a regular basis being held back by their mothers who asked them either to babysit at home, or to replace them in the house chores when they were off to labour in the fields with their husbands. Often the young pupils had to herd the domestic animals of the family. Boukouvala wrote: «Here starts "Penelope's web"»¹⁴

⁹ Boukouvala, *Anamniseis ek tis Epitheoriseos sxoleion thileon*, cit., p. 74.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 83.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

implying that what the teacher had taught during the pupils' regular attendance was lost later afterwards because of their constant absences, and upon the girls' return to school, the poor teacher had to start it over again. But it was not only this obstacle that teachers faced as they had also to show to the inspector that they had a neat and tidy classroom, full of pupils. However, apart from the above difficulties, the teachers were assessed for their teaching performance and they were evaluated according to their pupils' low or high level of academic knowledge, and to their overall school achievement as well. The fact that the pupils skipped classes counted negative as literally there were no students in the class! Very often teachers used to go from door to door pleading the parents of the absent girls to let them get back to school because their absence counted against their teaching ability, and the skipping of classes slowed down the girls' school performance because they appeared having gaps in their knowledge¹⁵.

Indicative of the social biases, ignorance, and the intellectual darkness prevailing in the Greek countryside especially in girls' schooling, is the following example that further illustrates the above ailing situation. From Boukouvala's first-hand account of facts we learn that in a village school on an island of the Ionian Sea, there were enrolled more than one hundred male pupils. Recently it had been set up another separate school for girls. To her surprise, the establishment of the above school was considered by the villagers as a «deadly insult» for their ethics. Because the peasants were not allowed to obstruct its setting-up, they decided not to send their daughters to school in order to cause the suspension of its operation. In fact, when Boukouvala visited it, she saw-to her surprise-that there were only seven female pupils attending the class. The above pupils were the daughters of the village doctor, the priest, and the daughters of a small number of families of similar social status¹⁶. But what shocked her most was the element that the above parents sent their daughters to school covertly following different routes each time and avoiding the main street as they feared lest they would incite their fellow-villagers' wrath, or that they would trigger their contempt, or that they would cause suspicions over their daughters' morality¹⁷. The school operation alarmed and incited the hostility of the vulgar illiterate peasants to such an extent that one day they lay in waiting and when the poor teacher went off to Corfu city, they broke into the door of her class destroying all her official records and tearing off her cloths. This unlucky incident took place in 1898. In this point Boukouvala expressed her frustration contending that since people behaved in such a way, no law regulating school attendance could be implemented no matter if it was mandatory, or not¹⁸.

In Boukouvala's personal accounts of facts it is also observed the complete ignorance of even the basic rules of personal hygiene in the rural areas. She wrote that not only did the girls ignore the basics of hygiene but that the teachers had also to face mothers' aggressiveness who blatantly asked her how she dared insult their daughters on the matter. In addition she noted that mothers appeared completely unwilling even to hear about

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

it¹⁹. And it was not only mothers' reluctance as – apart from it – they were also opposed to the idea of having their daughters practice feminine arts such as sewing. The reason lay in the fact that they much preferred the embroidering of luxurious and fine pieces of craft that were «totally useless to rural households» according to the woman-inspector. Boukouvala added that the poor teachers also faced the parents' unwillingness to buy even the essential materials for the above crafts on the pretext that the girls practiced them at home. They argued that at school they had better learn practicing fine embroidering, alone. So, the schoolteachers had to cope with a lot of social biases and obstacles at large that hindered their teaching duties in many ways²⁰. However, the above narrow-minded views did not apply to all cases, as in other areas of the country, the women-schoolteachers were successful in persuading their students to practice useful feminine crafts²¹. The inspector wondered to what degree it was feasible for an embarrassed schoolteacher to be diplomatic and to adjust her behaviour accordingly as she had to deal with so many different characters and so many multiple forms of petty-pride on the part of parents. At the same time, the village schoolteachers had to wisely manage the gendered biases that they personally faced. Boukouvala reached the conclusion that this uncomfortable situation stemmed from the element that the peasants had mistakenly perceived the teacher's behaviour, or because of the fact that they were rude as they were illiterate and ignorant²². No matter what the peasantry thought about the young innocent woman-schoolteacher of their village, and how much they valued her or not – as there were few cases that they did value her –, or by contrast, how bitterly they criticised her behaviour and her social conduct, the backwardness of the local people was always there to set the social boundaries and to hinder girls' progress. It is a fact that gendered prejudices and illiteracy made people narrow-minded and the above characteristics were the reasons for making them vindictive in case they judged that the schoolteacher exceeded the moral boundaries that their provincial society had set to them. In this case, the local authorities were ruthless in persecuting her²³.

In order to defend the female schoolteachers' dignity and chastity, Boukouvala held the opinion that people had really to admit that there were very rare examples that «a true cause for discrediting the body has ever existed». Boukouvala also emphasised on the point that the female schoolteachers led an exemplary life in terms of virtuousness, and that was an asset which should be worth of parents' praise²⁴. She also added that the young women-schoolteachers were exposed to many temptations and dangers at a very young age and that they received no moral support on the part of the state and on behalf of the local authorities. An example of honesty of a teacher is the following case. In Epirus, a school suspended its operation in the region of the Vlachs. The schoolteacher of the above school submitted her resignation despite the fact that the Greek Ministry of

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

²¹ Paschalidis, *San paramythi. 12+1*, cit., p. 366.

²² Boukouvala, *Anamniseis ek tis Epitheoriseos sxoleion thileon*, cit., p. 81.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

Education intended to continue to pay her salaries. However, the young woman refused to receive them saying that it was a matter of pride for her. In order to earn her living, she tutored the girls of wealthy families of the area delivering them French lessons²⁵. In a nutshell, Boukouvala in her personal chronicle, proposed two solutions for improving female schoolteachers' training and position: First, the young female teachers had to be provided with more Practicum classes so as their training be more applied. Second, they should be supplied with the essential administrative knowledge, as – for example – to learn how to write a report, and how to generally run a school²⁶.

In the following paragraphs I will study the subjects and teaching hours pertaining to female education of the secondary tier as well as of the Normal school at the turn of 19th century. In 1893, the number of the teaching periods per week in the *Arsakeion* nine-grade school of secondary tier of female education indicated the following: The subject of the Greek language took up most of the teaching hours as it was supplied to female students for twelve teaching periods per week in grades A and B. In the other grades, it was taught for nine teaching periods – and more precisely – in grades C, D, E, F, G, H and I. By contrast, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Science had a poor representation in the school curriculum. More particularly, Arithmetic was taught for three teaching-periods per week in the first four grades that were A, B, C, D while in grades E, F, they dropped to two. In grades G and H, only one teaching-period was allotted in the school curriculum while in grade I it was not supplied at all. Chemistry was taught for two teaching-periods in grades H and I. In grades D, E, and F, Geometry was supplied to the girls for two teaching-periods, and for one teaching-hour in grades G and H. In the graduating grade I, the subject was not taught. The classes of Handicrafts were taught on an average of 3.6 teaching-hours per week, depending on the academic year, denoting the gendered aspect of the subject and the orientation of female education²⁷. As for the two-grade Normal School curriculum of the *Philekpedeutiki Etairieia* of the same year, it indicated the following. The school also focused on the subject of the Greek language. The Arithmetic classes were taught for only one teaching-period in grade A, and also did Geometry. The training courses included classes of Didactic Exercises that were supplied to the students for two teaching-periods in grade A, and for twelve hours in grade B. Likewise, the subject of Pedagogy was taught for four teaching-periods in each grade²⁸.

From the above data it is deduced that the higher level of female schooling encompassed an eleven-year cycle of studies. Moreover, women's education seemed to focus more on the Greek language and less on Arithmetic. In fact, only one teaching-period per week was devoted to the teaching of Arithmetic in the two-year cycle of studies of the Normal school. By contrast, the subject of Handicrafts took up a very significant space in both

²⁵[Uncredited author], *To en Ioanninois Romoynikon sxoleion*, «Foni tis Hpeirou», vol. 12, n. 22, 1893, <https://www.vlachoi.net> (last access: 09.09.2022).

²⁶ Boukouvala, *Anamniseis ek tis Epitheoiseos sxoleion thileon*, cit., p. 76.

²⁷ [Greek Government Law: "Kanonistikon"], *Peri Orologion ke Analytikou Programmatos ton mathimatou ton pliron parthenageion ke ton didaskaleion ton thileon*, «Ephemeris tis Kyverniseos», n. 163, 21 August 1893.

²⁸ The *Philekpedeutiki Etairieia* operated the only accredited Normal School for female teachers in Greece during 19th century.

school curricula. In the secondary tier of girls' education alone, the number of the classes in the above subject amounted to thirty-six, in total. This data reinforce the view that much emphasis was given on feminine crafts-practicing in order to denote, once more, the gendered aspect of this subject. In the curriculum of the Normal School, the number of classes devoted to professional training should not be ignored as there were fourteen teaching-periods per week designed for the instruction of Didactic Exercises, and four classes for the subject of Pedagogy. What is noteworthy though is the absence of the teaching of the principles of Hygiene in the Normal School as only in the secondary tier of education it was instructed, and that was supplied for one teaching-period, alone. It is also unclear whether the future teachers received Practicum classes as an independent module, or the above subject was part of the course of the Didactic Exercises²⁹. Also, little attention was paid to the subjects of Home Economy and Home Pedagogy. According to the curriculum of the above vocational school, the students did not receive any classes of Home Economy while in the secondary tier the female students were supplied with the above subject for one teaching-period per week. Moreover, two classes were supplied for Home Pedagogy – thus – making three the instruction of the teaching-periods in the above field altogether. In her concluding remarks Boukouvala pointed out that the female teachers' training was inadequate, and she blamed the Greek state³⁰. Hence, Boukouvala was right – to some extent – in remarking the absence of an efficient number of Practicum classes as emphasis was given more on their theoretical education and less to applied knowledge.

2. *The Diary of the American missionary schoolteacher Frances Hill*

In Athens, upon the creation of the Greek state in 1831, the establishment of two missionary schools, one for boys and one for girls, was observed. They were set up by the American protestant missionary couple John and Frances Hill. The Hills' educational endeavour became the first organised attempt to operate private schools in Athens. The presence of missionary schools in Greece and the educational activities of the missionary wives rocked the waters and became the stimulus for female progress. Globally, the establishment of schools, the publishing of pamphlets and tracts as well as the delivering of sermons, became the most powerful weapons in the hands of the protestant missionaries for disseminating their Christian teaching³¹. Frances Hill ran her school in such a way so as her students would become virtuous and pious future mothers and spouses. However,

²⁹ In the five-grade curriculum of the Normal School of *Arsakeion* of the *Philekpedeutiki Etaireia*, in 1877, there is a reference to a subject entitled "Didactic Exercises with application to teaching". See S. Ziogou-Karastergiou, *He Mesi ekpaideusi ton koritsion stin Hellada (1830-1893)*, Athens, Historiko Archeio Hellinikis Neolaias, 1986, p. 154.

³⁰ The Normal School of the *Philekpedeutiki Etaireia* submitted the syllabus of its schools to the Greek Ministry of Education every academic year in order to approve it (*ibid.*, p. 150).

³¹ Thanailaki, *Gender Inequalities*, cit., p. 88.

the missionaries were often accused of attempting conversion as their schools had gained a foothold in Greek education.

In this point we should consider the fact that the Hills had endured a very difficult time in Athens in 1842 because they were persecuted for religious conversion by the Greek authorities and by the Greek Orthodox Church. Due to the above persecution, they had to suspend the operation of their schools for a certain period of time and to travel abroad³². John and Frances Hill walked a very thin line in this case as they had to face their enemies in Athens again upon their return, and resume their educational attempt. At the same time, they had to write reports to their protestant society at home in order to enumerate funds. Therefore, they had to show that their educational endeavours were successful, and to also demonstrate their students' accomplishments because they needed the on-going financial support from the USA. This was the method followed by all missionaries around the world³³. The above strategic method is further illustrated in an entry in Frances's diary, dated March 19th 1843. She wrote that the Hills' educational work met with no opposition on behalf of the Greek political and religious authorities and that day by day they seemed «to be gaining in respect» after their adventure and persecution that they had suffered³⁴. In her effort to re-establish their schools Frances wrote that they had to show a low profile. «We must be wise as serpents and harmless as doves», she added³⁵. Additionally, Frances and her husband organized a Sunday school that had two hundred children. They employed teachers for their new educational attempt. She held the opinion that the above effort would require much faith and patience in «sowing the seed», and for bearing fruitful results³⁶. In the end of the school term, Frances mentioned that their pupils had learnt how to read while the Bible was the main textbook used in the class³⁷. Years later, Frances sounded very happy with their new educational endeavours after their persecution. She remarked: «I cannot but feel that the effort to place a high standard of religious education before this people has been blessed»³⁸. The Hills were the first educators that established a vocational school in the field of home crafts, «the school of industry». In this way the young women felt useful earning their living as – otherwise – they would feel humiliated because they would have to beg³⁹. In her diary, Frances Hill sounded happy with her educational endeavour because she thought that she properly directed a big number of young and «tender minds» who in other respects

³²Their persecution was given the name *Ta Hilleia* [The Hills' Issue] by the Greek press. See more in P. Thanailaki, *Ameriki kai Protestantismos. He Evaggeliki Aftokratoria kai oi oramatismoi ton Amerikanon missionarion gia tin Hellada to 19o aiona*, Athens, Kastaniotis, 2005, pp. 153-155.

³³R. Wollons, *Writing Home to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions: Missionary Women Abroad Narrate Their Precarious Worlds, 1869-1915*, in C. Mayer, A. Arredondo (edd.), *Women, Power Relations, and Education in a Transnational World*, Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2020, p. 101.

³⁴Archeio Scholis Hill, *Diary of Frances Hill*, Athens, dated 19 March 1843.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 11 December 1842.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 5 February 1843.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 6 July 1843.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 7 July 1852.

³⁹Thanailaki, *Ameriki kai Protestantismos*, cit., pp. 158-59

they would have remained altogether without «spiritual culture»⁴⁰. Frances sounded very happy and felt proud of the high level of the studies supplied in their school. To reinforce her argument she wrote that Mr. Kontogonis – one of the members of the school board of *Arsakeion* that rivalled their school – acknowledged the superiority of the Hill school⁴¹. Five years later her enthusiasm on the progress of the supplied education is expressed in her diary. She noted that their school was flourishing, «and may continue so as long as we like» with the «will of God»⁴². Frances had to show both to the missionary society in Athens and to their missionary society in the USA that they performed very well as the competition was strong not only with the *Arsakeion* school but also with the other missionary schools operating in Athens and in the Greek islands that were also managed by American missionaries of other protestant denominations. In 1857, Frances was fifty-eight years old⁴³. She was a mature woman that had been living in Athens along with her husband for a long time. They focused their missionary educational attempts on the Kindergarten education and on the training of Kindergarten teachers. In May 1st 1858, she felt very happy with the progress of the infants of their schools that contained more than one hundred and fifty little children. They prepared all different lessons by themselves, and also the hymns and moral songs. She wrote: «I could not but think what an answer all this was to the assaults of our enemies»⁴⁴. Since 1853, the Hills focused more on the education of the destitute children. In the same year, the *Philekpedeutiki Etaireia* owned its own school-building. It was then when Frances Hill established again her own *Parthenagogeion* after her friends' prompting and advice. The *Parthenagogeion* stepped up and re-gained its good old fame. The Kindergarten was also pioneering in its teaching methods. It encompassed education for both boys and girls being very successful as it is noted in her diary. The *Parthenagogeion* catered for the needs of those of girls who wished to pursue a higher level in academic knowledge. The supplied courses were the Greek, English and French languages, as well as arithmetic, geography, history (including religious history), and catechism, the latter being taught by an Orthodox priest. The female students also received classes of handicrafts, music, and painting. Frances directed the school of the destitute children in which they employed Greek teachers to teach the classes⁴⁵. In her diary Frances Hill sounded very happy and she felt proud of the high level of studies that they supplied in their schools. In conclusion, what is seen in Frances' diary is her enthusiasm for their female school in Athens as they held a firm belief that Greek women should become educated so that they would break free from illiteracy and social prejudices. She also contended that the schooling that the girls received in the Hill school, would render them good spouses and mothers in line to the female mode shaped in the western world of the time, and in accord with the couple's religious beliefs.

⁴⁰ Archeio Scholis Hill, cit., 6 January 1856.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 18 September 1852.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 9 May 1857.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 10 July 1857.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 1 May 1858.

⁴⁵ Thanailaki, *Ameriki kai Protestantismos*, cit., pp. 149-150.

The present study is essentially a map of a yet uncharted territory regarding diaries and written reports of professional women in Greece such as teachers in girls' schools during 19th century. An attempt was made to explore their diaries and logs and to study them from a social as well as an educational perspective. In the above written accounts of facts the reader can see that there existed ignorance, illiteracy, social prejudices, gendered biases, and there were gaps in female teachers' training. In Boukouvala's personal journal, the reader can see the existing social misconceptions and prejudices that the Greek female schoolteachers faced especially those appointed to teach in small village schools. Their life and everyday routine were heavily criticised while they often met insurmountable difficulties in their teaching task. It can also be traced the teachers' embarrassment who amid all the above frustrations – they had to cope with the inefficient training they had received in the vocational school. In the case of Frances Hill diary, an effort was made to show how the protestant American missionary schools operated in Greece. Educating the elite girls and instructing the underprivileged students a domestic craft, were the two axes on which the American missionary couple provided their Greek students with. Frances Hill often felt embarrassed as she and her husband faced persecutions by the Greek Orthodox Church and by the Greek state while they had to start their educational enterprises over again.

Using School Memory to Get to Know “Frontier Realities”. Angelina Lo Dico: Teacher in the Land of Basilicata

Vittoria Bosna
«Aldo Moro» University of Bari (Italy)

Introduction

Sources of unquestionable value for a careful reconstruction of everyday school life are the life stories and memoirs of schoolteachers, the subjects of which have been edited by various scholars such as Michela D’Alessio and Alberto Barausse. These studies not only give due recognition to some little-known life stories, but also provide an opportunity to talk about the stories of teachers and schoolmistresses who helped to shape generations of pupils¹.

It started with an analysis of the state of literacy in this mysterious land, full of history and traditions, a land that has suffered the scourge of illiteracy due to backward mentalities, a lack of space to create schools and, finally, a disregard for education itself, considered by many to be essentially “useless”. An insightful element was Giuseppe Zanardelli’s trip to the Land of Basilicata, during which he found that 80% of the Lucanian population was still illiterate.

In 1947, to combat the scourge of the lack of education, which was particularly high in the rural centers of southern Italy, the National Union for the Fight against Illiteracy (UNLA) was founded².

Just before the unification of the country, this topic was also the subject of the demethno-anthropological investigations of Ernesto De Martino³, which identified two classes of the “ignorant” as: the truly illiterate and the illiterate, individuals who possessed the means of reading but were unable to use written language to formulate messages.

¹ A. Barausse, T. de Freitas Ermel, V. Viola (edd.), *Prospettive incrociate sul patrimonio storico-educativo*, Lecce, Pensa Multimedia, 2020.

² The National Union for the Fight against Illiteracy, founded in 1947, had Francesco Saverio Nitti as its first president; the national board include: Riccardo Bauer, Antonio Banfi, Adriano Olivetti, Vincenzo Arangio Ruiz, Corrado Alvaro, Guido Calogero.

³ Ernesto De Martino was an Italian theorist of religions and southern ethnologist (Naples, 1908 – Rome, 1965). He is credited with a historicist interpretation of religious manifestations and some innovative research in the South based on participant observation and interdisciplinary teamwork.

It can be said that a real excursus on the Lucanian school plot was proposed by Governor Julius De Rolland who, after realizing the low school attendance, imposed school attendance, as he announced in his circular of 26 October 1861, which states:

From the age of six, no boy or girl may be absent from school for any length of time except in special circumstances. Parents will be invited by the School Committees to fulfil this obligation; if they fail to do so, they will be reprimanded the first time, and after a month they will have their names posted in the Church and in the Municipal House, and their names will be read to the people by the Parish Priest on the first Sunday of every month; fathers of families who neglect this duty will not be able to obtain help from the Public Benefit and will not be employed in public works or in any public office⁴.

Unfortunately, warnings were of little use, including the legislative measures of Ministers Michele Casati and Luigi Coppino in 1877, who tried to back up this deficiency. Non-compliance continued to be substantial, despite the application of severe sanctions.

In the meantime, our afflicted Mezzogiorno saw the state as the only one that could resolve the condition of civil backwardness in southern Italy. Saverio Nitti played an important role in this regard, he was a convinced, thoughtful and pragmatic reformism, respectful of the values of bourgeois society in which he fully recognized himself, albeit with a critical spirit⁵.

One must recognize in his thinking a clear progressive attitude, given the need for a change in mentality and cultural preparation that he made a clear reference to and that would have been successful for a society such as the southern one. In fact, to regenerate Southern Italy, it was also necessary to have a cultural growth that would “lead to class consciousness and political life”, in this way the peasant classes would grow politically through “a work of true pedagogical enlightenment”⁶.

The Zanardelli-Giolitti ministry also resumed this political strategy in 1902, marking a real changing process, called the “nationalization of childhood”⁷. Particularly through the teaching programs, a necessary patriotic spirit spread among many teachers, which lasted until the Great War (1915-1918).

Elements of patriotic impetus from the Risorgimento period were introduced into school curricula, there were traces of Moral and Civil Education, elements of the History of Ancient Rome. In short, the school became an instrument for transmitting love of country and behavioral ethics, all in line with the tendency to fascistise Italian schools⁸.

Childhood was involved in concrete activities, girls, for example in schools, prepared clothes for soldiers, many children “played at war” with home-made wooden or tin weapons and often sailed to school. In Southern Italy, however, there were still many problems that beset the people, so that Mussolini’s seizure of power in 1922 went almost unnoticed. In addition to an expansionist policy, the Duce extolled the unity of the

⁴ ASP, fond “Prefettura” (1860-72), dossier 144.

⁵ A. Acquarone, *L'Italia giolittiana*, Milano, il Mulino, 1988, p. 351.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 354.

⁷ Cf. G. Gabrielli, *Educati alla guerra: nazionalizzazione e militarizzazione dell'infanzia nella prima metà del Novecento*, Milano, Ombre Corte, 2016.

⁸ D. Miolla, *Voci dal Sud. Storia e storie (mai) dimenticate*, Pisticci, s.n., 2018, p. 115.

family, the proliferation of births and the undisputed value of rurality. Thus, numerous schools sprang up in the countryside and on farms, lessons were held in rooms offered by the farmers in which accommodation for the teachers was also included. Reading Centers also sprang up, small libraries travelling to help all those who, while working, wanted to continue studying and learning.

In particular, initiatives were taken in favor of working adults by the Central Committee for Popular Education at the Ministry of Public Education, the Committee against Illiteracy was born and coordinated its activities, which in a few years went from being experimental to being an obligatory step to oversee the obligation of education.

At that time in Lucania, and particularly in its hinterland, everything was lacking, including schools, she managed to teach her young and adult pupils the ABC. It must be added that the educational processes also encountered the drama of social upheavals such as transoceanic emigration⁹. The educational themes in Basilicata were strongly supported by the parliamentary groups. Basically, a lay, compulsory school and a vocational school were thought of, as Ascanio Branca proposed between 1882 and 1886, suggesting the formation of «normal female schools funded by the State» because of the important function of preparing future female teachers.

It was not until 1902 that the *Unione Magistrale* – a teachers' association – was formed and in 1912 the first congress dedicated to illiteracy in Basilicata was held, socialists took part, there was a real «battle against ignorance, in favor of literacy, secular schools and cultural emancipation in general»¹⁰.

In this work I will address the path that led to literacy in Italy, and in Basilicata in particular, through the various historical moments and the laws that made education possible starting from the first half of the 19th century, the decisive contribution of the rural schools and the figure of Angelina Lo Dico, a Sicilian teacher originally from Marianopoli (Caltanissetta) who came to Tinchi di Pisticci in 1921 to teach and help needy local families.

1. *The greatest obstacles in the Land of Basilicata: illiteracy, schools and recruitment of teachers*

In the opinion of some scholars in the southern provinces, among the greatest obstacles to illiteracy was the shortage of teachers, even underpaid ones, the shortage of schools, because of the poverty of many municipalities it was difficult to build school buildings, or to pay rent for suitable premises where a school could be established. Finally, a shortcoming not to be underestimated was the poor attendance of the few schools, this was due to the fact that children were often sent out to work, paying no heed to

⁹ T. Russo, *Culture e scuole in Basilicata nell'Ottocento*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 1995, p. 111.

¹⁰ D. Sacco, *Cattolici e socialisti nel Mezzogiorno. Il caso lucano 1885-1915*, Manduria, Lacaita, 1990, p. 112.

the disciplinary sanctions provided for in the Coppino Law of 1877, which not only upheld the obligation to attend, but also established a specific time of year for pupils who still had to work with their parents in the fields. In fact, considering that compulsory attendance, already established by the Casati Law in 1859, had not in fact been observed by many families who, out of necessity and custom, destined their offspring to work in the fields, the 1877 provisions placed greater constraints on local authorities to fulfil the obligation of the first three years, both for boys and for girls.

At this point, we come to the problems concerning the appointment of lay teachers and schoolmistresses, employed both by mountain communities and in rural schools, who were often not even paid, given the scarce resources. In this regard, reference is made to some testimonies of such teachers, the first is dated 4 September 1862, the teacher states that he was called «to exercise the grave office of teacher without being provided for it either with premises, furniture or even a salary»¹¹.

Whereas, teacher Michele Belladonna from S. Chirico Raparo wrote on 24 November 1862 that the municipality in which he had been called to work as a teacher was perhaps «the most miserable one, I beg you for the second time to please include him in the number of the fifty poor municipalities, to whom the 20.000 lire allocated for public education are owed [...] it is also very painful to have borne for about eight months the arduous task of primary school teacher without even a penny»¹².

In this situation, the municipalities tried to justify their lack of commitment by pointing out that the public school was poorly attended, even the mayor of Potenza wrote to the Prefect in a letter dated 18 January 1862 referring to this very problem, namely that

the school, which was opened with seventy pupils, has now been abandoned by the pupils themselves due to a lack of desire to learn or family demands. In the meantime, the teacher, despite being out of service, proclaims against the municipality to still have the monthly payment, declaring that he is not at all at fault¹³.

2. *The charisma of a young teacher*

Between 1920 and 1921, after a brief experience in a school in the province of Caltanissetta, as a primary school teacher, Angelina Lo Dico was appointed and appointed as a teacher in Basilicata in Tinchi-Caporotondo, a small hamlet of Pisticci in the single mixed school, as multi-grade schools were called at that time¹⁴.

¹¹ See A. Ascenzi, R. Sani (edd.), «Un'altra scuola... per un altro paese». Ottavio Gigli e l'Associazione nazionale per la fondazione di Asili rurali per l'infanzia tra lotta all'analfabetismo e Nation-building (1866-1873), Macerata, eum, 2014.

¹² ASP, fond "Prefettura" (1860-72), dossier 146.

¹³ ASP, fond "Prefettura" (1860-72), dossier 144.

¹⁴ The students, according to the Casati Law of 1859 and the subsequent Instructions for primary school teachers on how to carry out the programs, approved by Royal Decree of 15 September 1860, drafted by

The decision to leave Sicily and her loved ones was very painful. She arrived in Basilicata accompanied by her father and sister Rosina, and the first impact was so traumatic that her father was determined to bring her home, but the young teacher had made up her mind. Her arrival was a novelty for the locals, happy and probably a little incredulous to have a teacher to whom they could entrust the education of their children, they begged her to stay, promising to take care of them, and indeed they did. During the first months of her stay, the young woman was hosted at Teresa Panetta's home in Pisticci, and from here Angelina would set out every morning to reach her place of work, using makeshift means of transport as the connections between the town center and the surrounding areas were either non-existent or precarious. Even from the point of view of health care, there was little or no doctor in the village to provide basic care, the only hope was the hospital in the city of Matera, which was far away and difficult to reach, and this difficult situation led to frequent and dangerous epidemics.

The poor reality of the new location deeply affected the young woman, who saw only misery and illiteracy all around her, an area marked by malaria and tuberculosis, a particularly varied climate characterized by long periods of drought alternating with frequent rains that flooded the land and destroyed the crops, the only source of sustenance for the families. Certainly, it was not an ideal situation, but the woman wanted to carry out her task as a teacher to the end.

Again, in rural areas there were not many educational institutions and children grew up among the fields and roads.

The school building existed only on paper, but, it was all to be built, the woman did not give up even in the face of this and placed the multi-grade class assigned to it in a small farmhouse belonging to the family Laviola. In that small space, he worked and lived, a house-school where he gave lessons every morning, while in the long afternoons he spent his time helping adults and illiterate elderly people whom he taught to read and write.

Hers was very hard work, but she was helped and sustained by a strong faith in God and the conviction that she wanted to help the weakest. For these reasons, when she realized that many children lived in hamlets rather far from the school, she worked to start more multi-grade classes and from time to time gave lessons in the open countryside to the many children of seasonal labourers from Lecce engaged in tobacco cultivation.

These events clearly demonstrate her charity-filled spirit, remember when she offered her home and care to a young Lecce reaper suffering from a very high fever. To a colleague who pointed out her imprudence, she replied: «But wasn't there Jesus in that sick young

Angelo Fava, were placed in uniform classes in terms of cultural knowledge, not rigidly constituted based on age. The only constraint in this regard was the attainment of 6 years to be enrolled in the first grade. In the same classroom there could thus be children of different ages with the risk of disparities in psychological and physical development. This also had repercussions on the furnishings of the classroom and the spatial arrangement of the pupils. Class I therefore did not indicate, as is the case today, the classroom attended by 6-year-olds, but the place where the schoolchildren arrived, lacking all knowledge. In the same classroom, however, several classes could coexist, for example the lower and upper I, children at their first teaching experience, together with peers already minimally literate, or repeaters.

man?»), similarly, she wanted to take in an abandoned girl suffering from consumption in her home, she did not think much of it, she cured her by also contracting the disease. Because of this, she was forced to return to Sicily. Angelina Lo Dico always acted with great goodness, the same goodness that led her to also help women with housework, using her free time, visiting needy families was an obligation from which she never shirked. This commitment of hers knew no bounds, she entertained in homes, played with children, and often offered to be their godmother, practically became everyone's godmother.

Essentially, Angelina's little house had become a point of reference and aggregation for school, social and religious gatherings.

The tireless activity of helping the needy after eleven years in the Pisticci's area was fatal for Angelina. She fell ill with tuberculosis after taking in a young woman suffering from consumption and was forced to leave Tinchi and return to Marianopoli where she died, in a reputation for holiness, on the night between 4 and 5 November 1932, as she had predicted while clutching the Crucifix in her hands.

At her death, many lay and religious people spoke words of thanks and compassion for Angelina Lo Dico, in which regard we recall those of Father Luciano Vullo, on the day of her funeral. The priest wished to dedicate words of affection to her, emphasizing her goodness of spirit and her closeness to the poor: «The most ardent desire of her heart and the ideal of her good soul was to leave the world and become a nun. She could not fulfil her fervent wish. A thousand obstacles prevented, and she was never of the world. Body and soul, she consecrated to God»¹⁵.

3.1 *The Search: records speak*

After Lo Dico's sudden death, the Tinchi community was orphaned of a dear person, a woman who had dedicated much of her life to her neighbours, to those in need. Defined as a «teacher who was inculpable in every respect. She enjoyed the esteem of families and maintained excellent relations with school and political authorities as well as with colleagues. She displayed a praiseworthy religious fervor and used this to instill good feelings in the rural population, which she proclaimed in the little church, which she had built near the school, with the collaboration of these good villagers»¹⁶.

A reading of the registers found in the Tinchi school where Angelina taught has revealed some interesting facts about her teaching, centred on the experimental method fueled by the «lesson of things», in line with the programs of the well-known pedagogue Aristide Gabelli¹⁷.

¹⁵ D. Calabrese, A. Vullo (edd.), *Raccolta di testimonianze circa la vita e le virtù di Angela Maria Lucia Lo Dico da Marianopoli (1900-1932)*, Marianopoli, s.n., 2005.

¹⁶ Archive of the *Istituto Comprensivo "P. Pio da Pietrelcina"* in Pisticci.

¹⁷ T. Tomasi, *Società e scuola in Aristide Gabelli*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1965; D. De Salvo, *Il positivismo pedagogico di Aristide Gabelli*, Messina, Samperi, 2012.

Looking at the outside of the registers, they were very bare, brown in color with black binding. There were substantial differences between masters in relation to the order, some took perfect care of the calligraphy, others less so. The first pages were dedicated to the generalities of the pupils, in the arrangement of: Surname and First Name; Paternity; Maternity; Birth Place; Birth Date; Age; Family Conditions; Vaccination; Date and Presentation of Report Card. After the preliminary information, we moved on to the Educational Program per group of lessons to be carried out during the year, the extremely diverse subjects counted on very rich programs.

In the register, in addition to the subjects, there were various headings such as: "Miscellaneous Notions", which in turn was divided into sub-headings. The first entry was marked with the phrase "In Life", referring to that part of the syllabus that involved teaching the children about moral rules, i.e. how to communicate one's "Generalities", how to always do one's duty with love, how to behave respectfully towards everyone, and finally the importance of greetings.

The second entry in the register concerned "Manual Work", with precise distinctions between boys and girls. For the boys there were manual activities such as: fretwork on wood and the first notions of a trade, while for the girls it referred to domestic work such as: the use of the needle, thimble, scissors, threads. In addition, the first rudiments of embroidery were also taught: stitches, threads, napkin appliqués. Then, gardening was continued. The program was not completed when there was no garden for the exercises and families could not contribute to the purchase of the necessary.

With regard to the reference to religion, it was taught in all classes, while singing, drawing, fine writing, expressive reading and recitation were subjects that were taught from class III onwards. Turning to spelling lessons, there was only involvement in classes II and III; while Reading and written language exercises were to be taught in all classes, the same was true for Arithmetic and Accounting.

A further point was reserved for Miscellaneous Notions and Fascist Culture, from class I up to class III, and for History and Fascist Culture from class IV onwards.

For Geography there was involvement from class III onwards, for Notions of Law and Economics only class V, for Physical Education from class III onwards. Finally, only for women in all classes were there lessons called Housework and Manuals, alongside Hygiene and Personal Care.

In addition to each month's syllabus, the registers contained the director's notes mainly concerning the teacher's observation of the progress of the syllabus. A small space on the left was used by the teacher to note the general progress of the pupil¹⁸.

Finally, in the last part of the register there was a space for final evaluations, personal notes, such as recommendations to parents about cleanliness and the obligation to make all boys and girls wear the uniform-apron. Referring precisely to the case of poor boys and girls, the teacher noted the pain of many destitute mothers who could not provide a uniform for their sons and daughters.

¹⁸ Archive of the Parish of St. Anthony of Padua in Pisticci, Registers of attendance of the T.O.F. of Pisticci, year 1927.

3.2 *The religious commitment of Angelina Lo Dico*

Despite the difficult and precarious situation in the area, what aroused the greatest bitterness in Angelina, apart from the lack of a proper school building where she could put her charisms and work to good use, was the lack of a place of worship.

Over time, she matured the decision to donate a small church to Tinchì and its inhabitants, and so she managed to set up a temporary chapel at a stable on an old abandoned farm until she was given a small piece of land by two local families where she built the chapel of Christ the King, completed in 1929.

For the building of the chapel, all the inhabitants of the small village offered a considerable contribution and all kinds of help, with the proceeds from the collections and the sale of fruit, eggs, vegetables, and wheat that Angelina herself went to glean during the summer. The little schoolchildren carried bricks and sand in the mornings, so in a short time the little church of Christ the King became a reality. Angelina's happiness was so great that in the school register on the morning of 25 April she wrote:

This day will be memorable for the children of this school. At last, the long-awaited chapel is no longer a dream but sweet reality. Everyone is happy. You can see the joy that beats in their hearts as they see the crowning of their works, now carrying a large stone on their shoulders every morning, now coming to class with their sweaty, red, happy faces and holding a bunch of ears of corn from the school sale¹⁹.

The church dedicated to Christ the King was opened for worship on Palm Sunday 1929 with a solemn and long procession through the nearby countryside amidst singing and prayers. The feast ended with the offering of lunch to the poor. Its activity was frenetic and tireless, it knew no pauses or rests.

Every eve of a religious feast day, she would walk to Serricchio, Canala and other local hamlets to announce the arrival of the feast to the peasants. This untiring and continuous activity as a teacher, nurse and missionary never made Angelina forget her religious commitment, as she belonged to a third religious order, committing herself to follow a rule drawn up and approved by the Holy See.

Conclusions

The merits of teacher Angelina Lo Dico and her teaching can be traced back precisely to a determining factor such as her ability to know how to create bonds built with patience, without delegation, so that everyone remains themselves, doing their part, seeking and offering greater strength through the relationships they establish.

We can state how far-sighted and innovative the figure of Angelina Lo Dico was in the early decades of the 20th century, when poverty (understood in the broadest sense of the

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

term) was rampant in homes, schools, and in the thoughts of ordinary people. Within this framework she was the promoter of the educating community, a community where the concept of solidarity is flanked, to the point of integrating it, with that of participation. In fact, there is no true solidarity if there is no knowledge and gratitude, and a relationship of reciprocity is not created. Solidarity is not to be given or offered to someone who is or feels excluded, limited, but is rather a recognizing oneself in someone, giving him or her dignity. A fundamental aspect of which teacher Lo Dico was a forerunner is the teaching method that is now called: outdoor education. Being in the open air, together with their peers, enhances the social skills of boys and girls who, placed in a context other than the classroom, are encouraged to relate to themselves and others in a different way. In addition, some activities raise awareness of the issues of respect for the environment, self-perception in the world and the health of body and mind.

In 1992, the New Horizons Association of Marconia instituted a literary competition named after her and launched a popular petition, obtaining the naming of the hospital. Research carried out by a Lucanian professor has made this extraordinary figure known in the hope of making him known to future generations, to keep his memory alive, but especially to convey the educational passion that animated her, the same passion that every teacher should feel within himself because "a teacher is the one who can change the face of the world".

Teachers in Transit: Memories of Doings and Knowledge from a Transnational Viewpoint (1882-1914)

Terciane Ângela Luchese
University of Caxias do Sul (Brazil)
Claudia Panizzolo
Federal University of São Paulo (Brazil)

Introduction

Between the end of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century, a considerable number of immigrants of all ages, migrated to Brazil from the Italian peninsula; most of the families, which were many, occupied colonies, becoming small landowners, especially in Rio Grande do Sul. In the case of São Paulo, where they settled in a larger proportion, they inhabited urban areas as workers, business owners and other different professions, and/or rural areas through a partnership system or even with the acquisition of small properties.

The migratory flow in Brazil brought about several changes, among which is the establishment of schools characterized as ethnic due to the language used and the ways in which they operated routinely. The purpose of this text is to understand this movement, as well as the knowledge and memories involving practices constructed by teachers who e/immigrated from Italy and worked in schools, many of which had ethnic marks. Some of these teachers also took on the role of consular agents. In their luggage, a diversity of cultural practices was transported and confronted with the various ways of living in the places where they settled.

By means of contributions from the History of Education and Cultural History, we conduct a historical document analysis based on an empirical corpus composed of laws, photographs, newspapers, notebooks, books, in addition to interviews, letters and reports, herein understood as documentary sources of public writing with relevant personal marks, as they bring a set of requests, demands, desires and aspirations of the teachers, as well as reports on the relationships established by inspectors and consuls with the places and with the protagonists of the school world that they represented.

Analyzing migratory processes and the history of education, the perspective of thinking about a transnational history allows for a reflection on life journeys involving contexts of the Italian peninsula and Brazil, with our attention always turned to what produces

and constitutes spaces, institutions and national traditions that have been modified over time¹. As stated by Weinstein

transnational studies generally recognize the persistence of the nation as a main sphere of politics, economy and culture. On the one hand, this allows greater attention to processes, to networks and to phenomena of all kinds that cross the nation's borders without entailing homogenization; on the other hand, the transnational character allows us to go beyond the identification of particularities or specificities in a national context².

With regard to the matter of the analytical game of scales, we consider with Werner and Zimmermann that the «notion of scale, in this case, does not refer to the micro or the macro, but to the different spaces in which the constitutive interactions of the analyzed process are inscribed»³. We consider that the emigrant constitutes the first experiences in the territory of the “Motherland”, a space in which they learn values, habits, customs, religious and cultural traditions that produce a way of being in the world. When one crosses borders, new ways of living and coexisting are confronted in the “Destination Homeland”. Through difference, they establish negotiations, conflicts, tensions and the reinvention of traditions in cultural dynamics that are reconfigured in time and space.

Thus, we connect historical contexts beyond national borders, so we analyze the flow from Italy to Brazil, and in two locations – Rio Grande do Sul and São Paulo. The practices and ways in which they left marks in the school process can be understood by crossing documents between the Italian and Brazilian contexts, allowing an in-depth analysis of the ways of doing school, by investigating the factors, mechanisms and dynamics through which ministerial dispositions were appropriated and converted into pedagogical practices. Therefore, an analysis that looks at the history of education, transnationally, between Brazil and Italy, from the presence of subjects who acted as teachers. In this sense, the «idea of transnationality would thus reflect the postcolonial perception that identities are not fixed, that is, centered, for instance, on a nationality»⁴.

It is about taking migratory processes as flows that interconnect national borders, reflecting on the movement of ideas, knowledge, technologies and ways of living that intersect, connect, relate and change, about understanding the complexity of local and national histories, without ignoring them, but taking them as context. Such relationships comprehended in the educational field are important, as they allow a close look at that which is singular, but also at common and similar configurations. Both male and female

¹ I. Tyrrell, *What is transnational history?*, 2007, available at: <https://iantyrrell.wordpress.com/what-is-transnational-history/>, (last access: 10.12.2022).

² B. Weinstein, *Pensando a história fora da nação: a historiografia da América Latina e o viés transnacional*, «Revista eletrônica da ANPHILAC», n. 14, January-June 2013, pp. 9-36 (in particular, p. 23). ANPHILAC is the *Associação Nacional de Pesquisadores e Professores de História das Américas* (National Association of Researchers and Teachers of American History).

³ M. Werner, B. Zimmermann, *Pensar a história cruzada: entre empiria e reflexividade*, «Textos de história», v. 11, n. 1/2, 2003, p. 103.

⁴ W. F. F. Lowande, *A história transnacional e a superação da metanarrativa da modernização*, «Revista de Teoria da História», vol. 20, n. 2, 2018, pp. 219-245, available at: <https://revistas.ufg.br/teoria/article/view/56515><https://revistas.ufg.br/teoria/article/view/56515> (last access: Dec 10, 2022), pp. 225 and 226.

teachers inserted in the places they inhabited, in the sociability networks they formed, and in the educational processes that constituted said networks through the dynamics of cultural practices.

Studies such as those by Luchese⁵, Rech⁶ and Castro⁷ focus on the school process among immigrants in different regions of Rio Grande do Sul and show the ways in which different subjects, individually or collectively, as a private or associative initiative, promoted the opening and maintenance of schools. On the other hand, the studies by Panizzolo⁸, Mimesse⁹, Franchini¹⁰ and Correa¹¹, for instance, deal with the context of the Italian school in São Paulo and its multiple forms of organization.

From previous studies¹², we know that initiatives for the organization of schools among immigrants and their descendants occurred due to the absence of a public school system in Brazil, especially in Rio Grande do Sul and São Paulo. They were alternatives created by the need that families of immigrants and descendants had when settling in colonies, or even, at times, in urban areas. Some initiatives, however, were supported by other agents, such as priests or consuls, with the latter being a result of Italian policies that, in a way, sought to assist the emigrants.

⁵ T.Â. Luchese, *Processo escolar entre imigrantes no Rio Grande do Sul (1875-1930)*, Caxias do Sul, Educus, 2015.

⁶ G.L. Rech, *Escolas étnicas italianas em Porto Alegre/RS (1877-1938). A formação de uma rede escolar e o fascismo*, Caxias do Sul, Educus, 2021.

⁷ R.B. Castro, “*Una Società senza scuola è come un corpo senz’anima*”: *As escolas italianas vinculadas às sociedades de mútuo socorro em Pelotas/RS (1872-1938)*, Thesis on Education, Graduate Education Program, Universidade Federal de Pelotas, 2021.

⁸ C. Panizzolo, *O processo escolar entre italianos e seus descendentes: a escola italiana em São Paulo (fins do século XIX e início do século XX)*, Report submitted to FAPESP, *Bolsa de Pesquisa no Exterior* (Research Abroad Scholarship) – BPE, 2018. Also, C. Panizzolo, *O processo escolar entre italianos e seus descendentes: a escola italiana em São Paulo, no século XIX e início do século XX*, in T.Â. Luchese (ed.), *Escolarização, culturas e instituições; escolas étnicas italianas em terras brasileiras*, Caxias do Sul, Educus, 2018.

⁹ E. Mimesse, *A educação e os imigrantes italianos: da escola de primeiras letras ao grupo escolar*, São Paulo, Iglu, 2010.

¹⁰ F. Franchini, *Entre Vargas e Mussolini: a nacionalização do Instituto Médio Ítalo-Brasileiro Dante Alighieri*, Master’s in Education, Universidade de São Paulo, 2015.

¹¹ R.L.T. Corrêa, *Conviver e sobreviver: estratégias educativas de imigrantes italianos (1880 a 1920)*, Thesis on Economic History, Universidade de São Paulo, 2000.

¹² See, for instance, T.Â. Luchese (ed.), *História da escola dos imigrantes italianos em terras brasileiras*, Caxias do Sul, RS, Educus, 2014; T.Â. Luchese, L. Kreutz (edd.), *Imigração e Educação no Brasil: histórias, práticas e processos escolares*, Santa Maria, Editora da UFSM, 2011; Eadd., *Educação e etnia: as efêmeras escolas étnico-comunitárias italianas pelo olhar dos consules e agentes consulares*, «História da Educação», vol. 14, n. 30, 2010, p. 227-258; T.Â. Luchese, *Em busca da Escola pública, tensionamentos, iniciativas e processo de escolarização na região colonial italiana Rio Grande do Sul Brasil*, «Cadernos de História de Educação», vol. 11, n. 2, 2012, p. 667-679; Ead., *Escolarização, culturas e instituições: escolas étnicas italianas em terras brasileiras*, Caxias do Sul, Educus, 2018; Ead., A. Barausse, R. Sani, A. Ascenzi (edd.), *Migrações e História da Educação. Saberes, práticas e instituições, um olhar transnacional*, Caxias do Sul, Educus, 2021; A. Barausse, T. Â. Luchese, *Education, ethnic identity, and memory in the Italian ethnic schools of South Rio Grande (1875-1902)*, «Paedagogica Historica», vol. 54, n. 6, 2018, pp. 720-735; Idd., *Nationalism and Schooling: Between Italianity and Brazility. Dispute in Education of Italian Gaucho People (RS, 1930-1945)*, «History of Education and Childrens’ Literature», vol. XII, n. 2, 2017, pp. 443-475; G. L. Rech, T. Â. Luchese, *Escolas Italianas no Rio Grande do Sul: Pesquisa e Documentos*, Caxias do Sul, Educus, 2018.

The alternatives mobilized for the organization and the derived school typologies, widely called Italian ethnic schools or Italian schools, certainly bring together a diversity of ways and forms of organizing this school/class. Community Italian schools, because they result from the action of several families in favor of the initiative; private Italian school, Italian parochial school, in the case of those linked to the action of a local parish priest; Italian schools linked to Mutual Aid Associations; subsidized Italian schools, when the teacher received regular support from the Italian Government; these are some of the examples mapped in the cross-documentation between what was preserved in Brazil and Italy. The complexity of school processes and their cultures is a fruitful path for research. Analyzing the theme at different scales also allows us to understand nuances and hues that intertwine official prescriptions and local tactics in favor of schooling.

1. *The male/female teacher, between representations and connected stories*

The migration of teachers from Italy to Brazil, especially to Rio Grande do Sul and São Paulo, did happen, but with a relatively small number of trained teachers. Most of those who came to work in the Rio Grande do Sul and São Paulo contexts, whether in Italian or public schools, or in other educational instances, became teachers due to opportunities and/or choices to stay in the profession. A transnational attention is drawn to the object – teachers who immigrated, or immigrants who took on the role of teaching in the host land, lived in hybrid conditions, produced cultural transfers¹³, that is, a dynamic of resemantization of the culture lived in Italy to the new experiences in the Brazilian context.

In the case of Rio Grande do Sul, it is worth noting the initiative of mutual aid associations in the creation and maintenance of schools, as well as the Italian schools created in rural areas that had a local, more educated settler as their teacher¹⁴. The most recurrent way of maintaining learning as to reading, writing, doing math and, of course, in many cases, also praying, was the choice, from a group of families, of the one who was willing to teach. Becoming a teacher for the opportunity that arose, making oneself a teacher while living the experience of teaching. Ribeiro reinforces the need that rewarded the efforts of families to create schools:

The lack of a public school system capable of promoting the rural areas that were being colonized forced settlers to take other initiatives in the creation of schools. In many places in the RCI [Italian Colonial Region], schooling begins with isolated private schools, ruled by a more educated settler or one who had had some school experience in Italy¹⁵.

¹³ M. Espagne, *A noção de transferência cultural*, «Jangada», n. 9, January-June 2017, pp. 136-147.

¹⁴ T.Â. Luchese, *Processo escolar entre imigrantes no Rio Grande do Sul (1875-1930)*, cit.

¹⁵ L.B.M. Ribeiro, *Escolas italianas em zona rural do Rio Grande do Sul*, in C.P. Ribeiro, J.C. Pozenatto (ed.), *Cultura, imigração e memória: recursos e horizontes*, Caxias do Sul, Educs, 2004, p. 149.

In this sense, as Luchese¹⁶ mentions, many of these initiatives were ephemeral. On the other hand, in the case of mutual aid associations, the maintenance of schools lasted a little longer. This is the case of the *Scuola "Vittorio Emanuele II"*¹⁷, to which Rech refers as an institution that maintained a school for a significant period (1877-1938).

In the case of São Paulo, Panizzolo¹⁸ states that the first Italian school in the city of São Paulo was founded by teacher Francesco Pedatella in 1887. Until 1893, year when the «Fanfulla» magazine was created, there were 7 schools in the capital alone, and this figure rose to 26 by 1900¹⁹. According to Trento²⁰, in the city of São Paulo, in 1908, there were 80 Italian schools, which represents a significant increase.

The education offered in São Paulo's Italian schools (as well as in Rio Grande do Sul) was called an elementary course and organized into two sections, with the lower one consisting of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades, and the upper one consisting of the 4th and 5th grades, as prescribed by Italian law. It is possible that the schools offered only the lower elementary course because most children studied up to the third grade and then entered the world of the adults, or rather, the world of work. This hypothesis finds support in the description provided by the three teachers appointed to compose the Commission responsible for writing the *Programmi per le scuole elementari italiane dello stato di S. Paulo* (Programs for the Italian elementary schools in the state of São Paulo), in 1904, since, according to them: «Families in general send their children to school until the third grade and, therefore, it is an end in itself. When a young person completes this grade, they must be, as much as possible, prepared to continue their education on their own»²¹.

Collegio "Sempre Avanti Savoia!", founded by teacher Francesco Pedatella, operated in a building, or rather, in a two-story house specifically built for this purpose. It is, according to the image below, a large school, with big and tall windows, which probably ensured good ventilation and lighting, unlike many other schools that had a single room in a rented or leased space. Teacher Pedatella maintained the boarding school "*Sempre Avanti Savoia!*", as shown in Figure 1.

Pedatella's school was located on R. Da Consolação, 350, and was one of the oldest schools in the city of São Paulo. Teacher Francesco Pedatella directed the school in 1905 and was assisted by his daughters Assunta and Rafaella Pedatella. The school offered complete primary education and followed the school programs of the Italian government, in addition to having an evening course for adults, in which Portuguese was taught. According to Parlagreco²², the school had a rich academic heritage and was attended by

¹⁶ T.Á. Luchese, *Processo escolar entre imigrantes no Rio Grande do Sul (1875-1930)*, cit.

¹⁷ G.L. Rech, *Escolas étnicas italianas em Porto Alegre/RS (1877-1938)*, cit.

¹⁸ C. Panizzolo, *O processo escolar entre italianos e seus descendentes*, cit.

¹⁹ «Fanfulla», 1906.

²⁰ A. Trento, *Do outro lado do Atlântico. Um século de imigração italiana no Brasil*, São Paulo, Edunesp, 2022.

²¹ Originally: «Le famiglie in generale mandano i loro figli alla scuola fino al compimento della terza classe e che perciò questa è fine a se stessa. Per cui il giovanetto, uscendo da questa classe, deve essere, per quanto è possibile, preparato a continuare da si la propria educazione». F. Pedatella, *Relazione Scolastica, 1894-1895*, in *Archivio Storico Diplomatico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Archivio Scuole, 1889-1910, folder 341, p. 2).*

²² C. Parlagreco, *Il Brasile e gli italiani*, Firenze, R. Bemporad & Figlio, 1906, pp. 796-810.

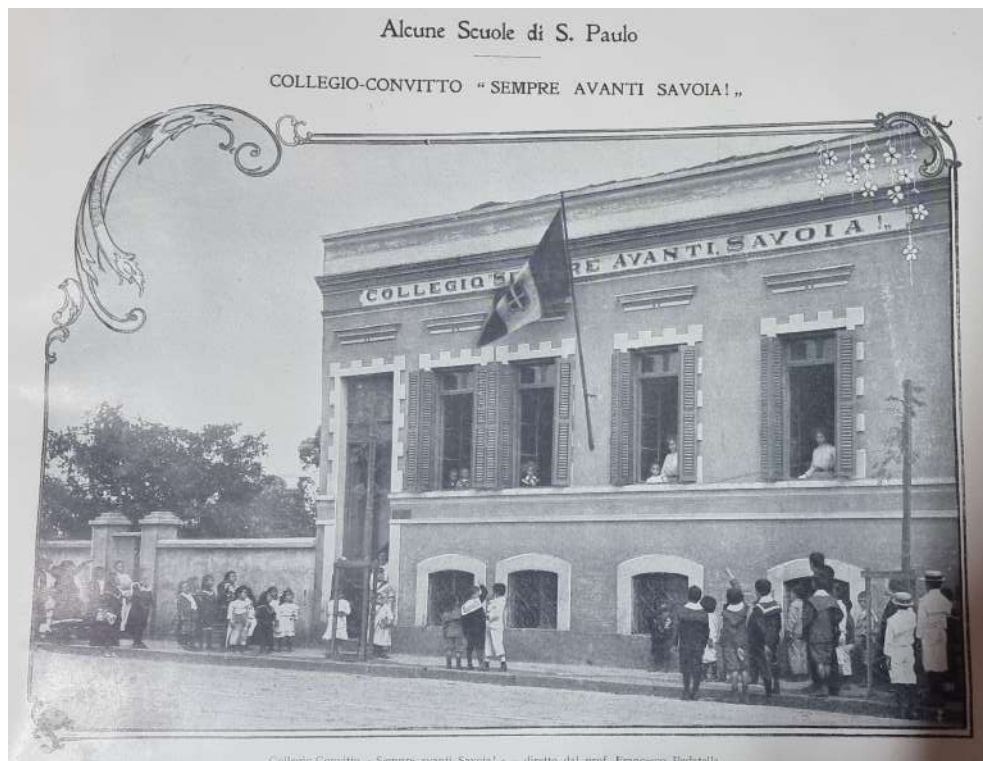


Fig. 1. *Collegio "Sempre Avanti Savoia!"*, directed by teacher Pedatella, São Paulo, 1906 (Parlagreco, cit., 1906, p. 803)

80 students of both sexes, divided into three classes. The library had about 300 books. Pedatella was recognized as the founder of 14 other schools, in addition to being invited to conferences, promoting commemorative parties, marches, gymnastics competitions, awards... For his intense activity, he had been proclaimed "benefactor of instruction". It is also worth highlighting the action of this teacher in promoting teacher associations. São Paulo had two associations: *Società Protettrice delle Scuole Italiane* and *Federazione delle Scuole Italiane*, the latter being chaired by teacher Francesco Pedatella, with 35 associated schools. Pedatella's schools were made known in different ways, especially through the press. Besides advertisement in newspapers, it is important to mention that the school relied on publicity and promotion also through the distribution of leaflets. Teacher Pedatella opened other branches in Vila Mariana, Bom Retiro, Santa Rosa, Cambucy and Barra Funda. He was a leader who played an important role in the context of Italian schools. With regard to teaching, the school's²³ weekly schedule consisted of a distribution of activities for each of the classes, as transcribed below:

²³ F. Pedatella, *Relazione Scolastica*, 1890, in Archivio Storico Diplomatico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Archivio Scuole, 1889-1910, folder 341.

Table 1. Weekly schedule of the *Collegio "Sempre Avanti Savoia!"* (Pedatella, *Relazione scolastica*, cit., 1890)

SCHOOL PROGRAM			
1 st Grade	2 nd Grade	3 rd Grade	4 th Grade
MONDAY	MONDAY	MONDAY	MONDAY
Simultaneous reading and writing exercises. Objective teaching. The parts of the human body and poems from memory.	Reading exercises focused on the terms and words read. Writing by imitation, the parts of the human body. Grammar.	Proper reading and explanation, that is, with correct accentuation of prepositions and periods.	Reading and explanation of things read. Grammar and essay writing. Arithmetic. Decimal metric system.
TUESDAY	TUESDAY	TUESDAY	TUESDAY
Simultaneous reading and writing. Stories addressed in Greek, Hebrew, and Roman History.	Stories from Greek, Roman and Hebrew History. Writing by imitation. Poems from memory. Analyses.	Writing. Reading. Geography and History of Italy.	Geography and history of Italy. Calligraphy and sensory reading.
WEDNESDAY	WEDNESDAY	WEDNESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Writing numbers up to 100. Mental addition and subtraction. Reading. Recitation of poems from memory.	The first four operations with mental calculation exercises from 1 to 9, and, in writing, up to 1000. Intuitive concept and writing of ordinary fractions.	Grammar and arithmetic. Exercises on the four operations with decimal numbers taught in practice. Conversion of ordinary fractions into decimals. Grammar analysis.	Problems. Morality. Etiquette. Memory exercises. Freehand drawing of geometric figures and definition of the most important square and rectangle measurement rules.
FRIDAY	FRIDAY	FRIDAY	FRIDAY
Simultaneous reading and writing exercises. Objective teaching. Names and qualities of objects found at school and the main ones found at home.	Exercises. Poems from memory. Writing by imitation. Natural phenomena.	Roman History. Reading Objective teaching; measuring temperature checked with a thermometer.	Physics and Natural History with practical demonstrations. History of Rome.
SATURDAY	SATURDAY	SATURDAY	SATURDAY
Writing numbers. Objective teaching, the parts of the human body, domestic animals. Division of time: hours, days, weeks, months and year.	Reading. Mental calculation exercise. Poems from memory. Etiquette. Problem.	Grammar. Poems from memory. Moral problem and Etiquette.	Grammar and analysis. Arithmetic. Metric measurements of length, surface, volume, capacity and weight, with relative exercises. Gymnastics and military exercises.
Time Daytime – 09:00 to 15:00 Evening – 19:00 to 21:00 São Paulo, 7 February 1890 The principal, Francesco Pedatella			

The table is organized for the four grades of elementary school, with the contents divided throughout the week. There were no classes on Thursdays, as per the document. The proposed teaching content was: Grammar (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th grade), Reading (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th grade), Literature (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th grade), Arithmetic (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th grade), Geometry (4th grade), History (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th grade), Geography (3rd, 4th grade), Various notions (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th grade), Calligraphy (4th grade) and Gymnastics (4th grade). The Program share some similarities with the one approved in 1901 by the São Paulo Association of Italian Teachers, as addressed above.

It is worth mentioning the use of the simultaneous method by teacher Pedatella, which shows up-to-dateness for the pedagogical debate at the time. The method was introduced in Italy and Brazil during the 19th century, and children, by means of it, while identifying the alphabetic code, also learned to read and write, as long as they had a book in common. A facilitator for the execution of the method was serial teaching and the availability of books, which, in addition to guiding the teaching of reading, also helped the learning of writing.

Besides teaching reading and writing using the simultaneous method, Pedatella adopted the intuitive method, for the following reasons: «I remain faithful to the use of the intuitive method that I spread and applied not only in language teaching, but in all other disciplines, considering it as the only one (so far) to make the subjects taught retain in the intelligence of children»²⁴. Once again, the teacher proved that he followed *pari passu* the methodological discussions of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The intuitive method, supported by the concrete, rational and active teaching tripod, aimed to enhance children and prepare them for the construction of knowledge, through observation and work. The explanations about the method given by Valdemarin (2004) in this regard are quite enlightening:

Observing means progressing from perception to idea, from the concrete to the abstract, from the senses to intelligence, from data to judgment. Working implies adopting a brilliant discovery credited to Fröebel, which consists of making teaching and education in childhood an opportunity to carry out concrete activities, similar to those of adult life. By combining observation and work in the same activity, the intuitive method aims to guide children's discovery so that observation generates reasoning, and work prepares future producers, making thinking and building inseparable things²⁵.

In the intuitive method, it would be up to the teacher to propose school activities that would prepare the students' senses towards observing their work, their activity and the construction of meanings. The school constitutes, then, a privileged place for the stimulation and fixation of learning, through «systematized experiences that enable, continuously and gradually, the acquisition of words, expressions and symbols of complex ideas»²⁶.

²⁴ «È mantenuto fedele all'uso del metodo intuitivo che ho diffuso ed applicato non solo nell'insegnamento della lingua, quando su tutte le altre discipline, ritenendolo come l'unico mezzo (fin ora) a far ritenere nella intelligenza dei fanciuli le materie insegnate» (F. Pedatella, *Relazione scolastica, 1891-1893*, in Archivio Storico Diplomatico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Archivio Scuole, 1889-1910, folder 341).

²⁵ V.T. Valdemarin, *A centralidade do método de ensino na educação moderna*, in J.S. de Almeida (ed.), *Profissão Docente e Cultura Escolar*, São Paulo, Intersubjetiva, 2004, pp. 149-170.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

Concerning *Collegio “Sempre Avanti Savoia!”*, we have knowledge of materials intended for schools to use, such as flags, shields, paintings of Natural History, Roman History, Modern History, images of the sovereigns of Italy, geographical charts of Italy, Europe and Africa, terrestrial globe, Pythagorean chart, among many others. These materials were fundamental for the implementation of the intuitive method, whose stages included one called “lesson of things”, in which children learned by studying the objects themselves, as well as engravings or drawings of them²⁷.

Considering the operation of the school maintained by teacher Pedatella in São Paulo, we can have a glimpse of knowledge, practices and ways of organizing schooling. Pedatella’s leadership in São Paulo was evident. In the case of Rio Grande do Sul, through the compilation of references found in the memory collection of the *Arquivo Histórico Municipal João Spadari Adami* (AHMJSA) and the *Elementos Culturais da Imigração no Rio Grande do Sul* project, of the *Instituto de Memória Histórica e Cultural da Universidade de Caxias do Sul* (ECIRS/IMHC/UCS), we present a set of evidence that points to the constitution and representations about teaching in the so-called Italian schools in the Rio Grande do Sul context:

Table 2. Memories of the Italian school and the teachers’ work (extracts from interviews found in the memory database of AHMJSA and ECIRS/IMHC/UCS)

Name	Parents, date and place of birth	Profession	Narrated memory
Elvira Tonietto Mosele ²⁸	Daughter of immigrants Belvim Tonietto and Stella Maria Tonietto, June 20, 1920, Caxias do Sul	Housewife	Memory of her grandfather, in Linha Feijó [now Farroupilha] «He was a teacher there, he taught and did everything, because there was no priest back then, he did this and that, anything but saying mass, but he buried the dead, officiated weddings, baptized, the Passion Week [...] my father taught».
Graciema Patternoster Pieruccini ²⁹	Daughter of immigrants João Patternoster and Maria Sartori, 08/08/1892, Caxias do Sul	Housewife	«My father came from Europe, from Trento, Giacomo Patternoster was my grandfather, Caxias’s first teacher [...]. For reading, writing, doing math. Then, that teacher, Maria Translati too, who was a great teacher in Caxias do Sul, but she was Italian. [...] She was Italian. [...] Oh, the stone... we were told to draw numbers, write, we had dictations. There was this girl that used to stay really close to the teacher’s desk, whom she helped, so she dictated, and we wrote».

²⁷ On this matter, see C. Panizzolo, *João Köpke e a escola republicana: criador de leituras, escritor da modernidade*, Thesis on Education, Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, 2006.

²⁸ Elvira Tonietto Mosele. Interview from the Memory Database of the *Arquivo Histórico Municipal João Spadari Adami* (AHMJSA), conducted by Sonia Storchi Fries and Susana Storchi Grigoletto on 01.12.2005, FG646.

²⁹ Graciema Patternoster Pieruccini. Interview from the Memory Database of the AHMJSA, conducted by Edma Ribeiro Pacheco and Zenith Salvador on 02.04.1985, FG052.

Aparício Postali ³⁰	Son of Abel Postali and Maria Prezzi Postali, no date of birth informed, Caxias do Sul	Dentist and photographer	«I studied at my mother's school. She was a teacher [...]. So, we went to school, 30, 40 students or whatever. My mother was energetic, she was a tall lady, hair pulled back, in a bun, the conductor. Look, if you messed up, a quince stick would be striking your back! We left the rural school with my father, I was 11, 12 years old».
Verônica Candiago Bortolon ³¹	Daughter of Francisco Candiago and Giovana Ruzzarin Candiago, 1915, Caxias do Sul	Teacher	«My maternal grandfather was an educated person, you know? He was a teacher. Back in Italy and when he came to Brazil, he was one of the first teachers in the neighborhood, in Sexta Lé-gua, São Valentim. That church in São Valentim, Sexta Lé-gua. Antônio Ruzzarin. [...] They had a school there and he taught. He was very fond of reading and writing. He was held in high esteem by the neighbors it seemed. There were few people who could read and write at that time. My mother always told me. Then, at night, the neighbors would come and say: – Antônio, write me a letter to send to Italy, to my parents, my siblings-in-law or whoever. He'd get all happy, poor guy. He really enjoyed writing. When there was a wedding, at that time, they used to write a short speech for the bride and groom. So, they would go there and ask: Antônio, write me a little speech [...]. It was a school run by the Italian government itself, he received all the material from Italy. He taught Italian».

Through the excerpts, we perceive important nuances to think about teaching and its representations. The use of school materials, such as books in Italian, are remembered. Learning in dialect and teaching practices, with many of them being repetitive and based on memorization. The memory of the teacher who taught reading, writing and counting. The number of students in classes, the various levels of students in the same classroom. Differently from that of Pedatella, individual teaching prevailed. The teacher as a reference for the community, supporting social and religious activities. The constitution of teaching with specific training in Italy was an exception. Most of those who acted as teachers did so from the opportunity that arose, from the need for someone to take on the role in a given community.

³⁰ Aparício Postali. Interview from the Memory Database of the AHMJSA, conducted by Maria Beatris Gil and Sonia Strochi Fries on 09.09.1998, FG291 and FG292.

³¹ Verônica Candiago Bortolon. Interview from the Memory Database of the *Elementos Culturais da Imigração* (ECIRS), given to Liane Beatriz Moretto Ribeiro on 03.10.1985, transcribed by Tranquila Brambina Moresco Brando, Instituto de Memória Histórica e Cultural (IMHC), Universidade de Caxias do Sul (UCS).



Fig. 2. Teacher Lodovico Maestri's school, built in a joint effort by the community³²

It is noticeable that the documentary records indicate that the first teachers in Italian schools were, for the most part, male teachers; however, in the first years of the 20th century, female teachers took over, many of them very young, who become teachers. It is also possible to observe that the teachers who worked in the first years in private or community ethnic schools sought further training and went after the roles of public teachers or teachers subsidized by the state government. In this case, an example of a teacher who remained in the role, but who went from being an Italian school teacher to a public teacher, was Lodovico Maestri. He started as a teacher in São Pedro, Linha Palmeiro in Bento Gonçalves, and then, in 1911, he transferred to Alfredo Chaves, in Linha Silva Jardim, which he mentioned belonging to the then district of Nova Bassano. There, he took over the direction of a public school. In the figure below, the image of the school where Teacher Lodovico worked, in a way which is very representative of what happened in so many other cases among teachers in the Gaucho Highlands.

The small school located next to the church, to the cemetery and to the community hall, in a rural area, is a common representation of communities in southern Brazil. The teacher taking on different roles in the community, as a catechist or supporting the vestrymen, would become a local leader. In 1925, during the celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of Italian immigration to Rio Grande do Sul, Maestri appears as a teacher in a school in Paraf³³.

³² A.I. Battistel, *Retratos da Colônia*, Porto Alegre, Palotti, 2008, vol. 2, p. 575.

³³ B. Crocetta, *Un cinquantennio di vita coloniale. Cinquantenario della Colonizzazione nel Rio Grande del Sud: 1875-1925*, Porto Alegre, Posenato Arte & Cultura, 2000 (fac-simile 1925), pp. 357-462.

It is interesting to notice that teacher Lodovico Maestri was very active in matters involving the communities in which he lived, participating in different moments of the local sociocultural life. He was also a correspondent for newspapers such as Garibaldi's «Il Colono Italiano», and the publishing of articles produced by him was frequent. We draw attention to a piece of evidence that we selected and in which Maestri publishes that he received school material – books – from the Italian consulate, but did not sell them, since they were distributed free of charge, as one can read below:

For the pure truth. I hereby declare and attest, Lodovico Maestri, that, ever since I became a teacher, I have never sold books as school material provided by the Government of Italy. This statement of mine is intended to shut the mouth of any detractor who has the courage to utter such falsehood to Consular Officer, Mr. Dr. Gino C. Battocchio in Bento Gonçalves. Lodovico Maestri. Teacher³⁴.

In another article signed by teacher Lodovico Maestri, he defended the school and, through a practical example, a conversation he had had with a settler, he explained, argued and showed the importance of school for girls, even if it was for them to be ‘good mothers’. From the content, there is an evident indication of cultural practices and moral values belonging to a collective body, recorded by teacher Maestri's quill. The school was represented as a space for enlightenment, for dissemination of knowledge and for preparing children – boys and girls – to play their social roles. It is interesting to observe that teacher Maestri mentioned the religious aspect, beyond a certain “refinement” in the ways of being and acting, the social “etiquette”. The school would contribute to that and support future mothers and fathers to be better equipped to teach their own children.

Another teacher, Camila Roncoroni, graduated in Italy, immigrated to Brazil, circulated through Rio Grande do Sul, between the Capital and the Gaucho Highlands when working at the school maintained by *Sociedade Princesa de Montenegro* in Porto Alegre, and found different material conditions to teach. Below is an image produced inside the classroom, which, in itself, is relatively unusual, but the intention seems to have been to show the organization and set of materials that were available. Wooden desks and the teacher's table, typical of the time, cabinets with teaching materials, walls with paintings of the king and queen³⁵, the Italian flag, blackboard, abacus, murals, dish towels and napkins with embroidery displayed in the back, on the left side. Therefore, the preparation of the environment for the production of the image is evident, as one can see in Figure 3.

On the desks, one can see some books and/or sheets. On the table, at the center of the image, a typewriter. On the blackboard, the record of the year 1903. The same page of the «Almanacco dell Fanfulla»³⁶ mentions that the school inspectors were Adelchi Colnaghi and Rev. Don Giovanni Riolo. And the following pages, presenting the other Italian

³⁴ «Il Colono Italiano. Organo degli interessi coloniali», vol. III, n. 27, 9 September 1911, p. 2.

³⁵ From the image, the portraits depict Humberto I and Margherita, first king and queen of the unified Italy.

³⁶ «Almanacco del Fanfulla», 1905.



Fig. 3. Inside the *Società di Beneficenza ed Istruzione Principessa Elena di Montenegro's* classroom («Almanacco del Fanfulla», 1905, p. 54)

societies in the capital of Rio Grande do Sul, such as Umberto I, indicate the operation of other schools.

It is interesting to note that, in the case of teacher Camila Roncoroni, she stayed in Brazil for more than three decades and taught in several municipalities, such as Pelotas, Silveira Martins, Gramado, Taquara, and in the vicinity of Barra do Ribeiro. From the Fiftieth Anniversary work, it is known that she returned in 1923 to her hometown, Milan³⁷. Few of the teachers who worked in Italian schools took a journey such as that of teacher Camila Roncoroni, returning to Italy.

Working in the Gaucho Highlands, another example is teacher Pietro Ceconello. He taught in Caxias at an Italian school, and later, with a certain effort to master Portuguese, he passed a state examination and started to work as a teacher bound to the government of Rio Grande do Sul. Teachers from Italian schools, or immigrants who become teachers and take courses, prepare themselves, many even self-taught, dedicating time to their occupation, later as public teachers in Rio Grande do Sul – there are several cases that

³⁷ B. Crocetta, *Un cinquantennio di vita coloniale*, cit., p. 399.

we identified. In Bento Gonçalves, the case of the Italian teacher Angelo Roman Ross is known; he came to be the principal of the public Elementary School.

Conclusions

In order for the understanding of the history of schooling among Italian immigrants in Brazil to gain greater complexity and be deepened, analyzing the role, the functions and who the teachers were is part of the process. The instability, temporariness, ephemerality of institutions marks most schools among Italian immigrants and descendants. It is important to realize that, of those who took on the role of teachers, most were schoolmasters. The teacher was central to the existence of the school, because where the teacher was, the school was. But it is certain that teaching actions were beyond the school:

the most educated in the community, and this condition, added to being “masters”, generated prestige, respect and community leadership. Many were the teachers who played, within the social environment in which they lived, a central role in religious, claiming and organizational matters, becoming representatives of that group, if not local leaders. These were the representations produced about being a teacher³⁸.

In addition to being a schoolmaster, the teacher took on different social roles in the community, participating in religious celebrations, being the spokesperson for the families before local authorities, contributing to the catechism, to the local band or choir, contributing to local newspapers, that is, many male and female teachers had other work functions concurrently with teaching. In most cases, it is possible to identify that becoming a teacher was an artisanal, and sometimes improvised, function. One became a teacher through practice, through self-teaching.

Aside from the example presented herein – that of teacher Pedatella, who adopted simultaneous teaching –, individual teaching prevailed, which was based on memorization, emphasizing what was believed to be essential: reading, the main mathematical notions, and writing. Notions of history and geography, notions of civic life and the catechism were also worked on. These teachers played «[...] one of the traditional roles of a teacher, that which made them a spiritual agent, in the figure of a teacher, and a social guide, in the figure of a model personality within the community»³⁹.

Many of the teachers had different parallel functions, such as those who were both teachers and farmers, or, as Libera Bigarella Cavagnolli recalled, when mentioning that her father, Benedito Bigarella, who «were a very good man, very educated, he was a teacher and later worked as a postmaster and a scribe». This is also the case of Giulio

³⁸ T.Â. Luchese, *Processo escolar entre imigrantes no Rio Grande do Sul (1875-1930)*, cit., p. 416.

³⁹ R. Fernandes, *Ofício de professor: o fim e o começo dos paradigmas*, in C.P. de Sousa, D.B. Catani (edd.), *Práticas educativas, culturas escolares e profissão docente*, São Paulo, Escrituras Editora, 1998, p. 1-20 (in particular, p. 03).

Lorenzoni, who went from being a teacher to holding other positions, including that of a post office assistant, and later a post office agent. Teachers transitioning to other jobs, most of which were better paid.

Another situation was that of those who worked as private teachers in their own homes, or those who became teachers subsidized by the Italian government or by the municipality or state itself. In some situations, it was possible to identify teachers who were subsidized and, by taking enhancement courses, adapted and were appointed public teachers, such as Pietro Ceconello and Lodovico Maestri, for instance.

In this movement between migrating and being a teacher, it is possible to perceive the cultural exchanges and the necessary adaptations, pedagogical creations produced inside the classrooms. There is, and within the limits of this text it was not possible to explore further, a growing presence of women working in teaching⁴⁰. Many teachers, in their work, mobilized resources and were inventive, creating tactics to implement schooling and appropriation of knowledge, especially the learning of Portuguese, which the majority did not master. The male and female teachers who migrated gradually constituted themselves in the teaching profession. Most of them were lay people and became teachers out of necessity, with many having completed a few years of schooling, but they were bound to the community and recognized for the work done. Over the years, especially in the second decade of the 20th century, municipalities began to offer enhancement courses and organize selection processes, though simplified. In any case, it is relevant to recognize that a teacher, either male or female, made the schooling of immigrants and descendants possible and, in most cases, passed on knowledge and made it hybrid, between what was learned in Italy and what was experienced in Brazil.

⁴⁰ It is worth remembering what Louro writes on the subject: «Women had, “by nature”, an inclination towards dealing with children, that they were the first and “natural educators”, so nothing more appropriate than entrusting them with the school education of the little ones. If a woman’s primary destiny was motherhood, it would suffice to think that teaching represented, in a way, “an extension of motherhood”, with each male or female student seen as a “spiritual” son or daughter. [...] To this end, it would be important for teaching to be also represented as an activity of love, devotion and donation» (G.L. Louro, *Mulheres na sala de aula*, in M. Del Priore (ed.). *Histórias das mulheres no Brasil*, São Paulo, Contexto, 2004, pp. 443-481, in particular p. 450).

School Memories from Croatia: Autobiographies of Mijat Stojanović and Imbro Ignjatijević Tkalac

Vlasta Švoger, Zrinko Novosel
Croatian Institute of History in Zagreb
(Croatia)

*Introduction*¹

Autobiographies by Mijat Stojanović *Adventures and Misadventures of my Life (Sgode i nesgode moga života)*, published in 2015) and Imbro Ignjatijević Tkalac *Youth Memories from Croatia (Jugenderinnerungen aus Kroatien)*, published for the first time in Leipzig in 1894) are exceptionally valuable historical sources since only few autobiographic records, diaries and memoirs from 19th century Croatia have been preserved. Research conducted thus far suggests that Stojanović was the only 19th century Croatian teacher who wrote an autobiography, while his contemporary, writer and teacher Dragojla Jarnević (1812-1875) kept a diary for four decades². Similar research has not yet been conducted on archival legacies of 20th century Croatian teachers³. The reason for this small number of preserved autobiographic records and diary entries of Croatian teachers dating from the 19th century should be sought in their modest education, widespread illiteracy and a narrow circle of potential readers. Namely, in the late 1860s, approximately 85% of the Croatian population was illiterate (over half of the urban population was illiterate)⁴. Stojanović's and Tkalac's⁵ individual school memories, as presented in their autobiographies, are an

¹ This paper has been fully supported by the Croatian Science Foundation under the project "European Origins of Modern Croatia: Transfer of Ideas in Political and Cultural Fields in the 18th and 19th Centuries", IP-2018-01-2539.

² Her diary was published in its integral version for the first time in 2000. D. Jarnević, *Dnevnik*, edited by I. Lukšić, Karlovac, Matica hrvatska, 2000.

³ In Italy, approximately 30 memoirs of elementary school teachers have been preserved dating from the period from 1861 to the 1970s. Cf. M.C. Morandini, *Telling a Story, Telling One's Own Story: Teacher's Diaries and Autobiographical Memories as Sources for a Collective History*, in C. Yanes-Cabrera, J. Meda, A. Viñao (edd.), *School Memories. New Trends in the History of Education*, Cham, Springer, 2017, pp. 115-127.

⁴ D. Župan, *Kulturni i intelektualni razvoj u Hrvatskoj u "dugom" 19. stoljeću*, in V. Švoger, J. Turkalj (edd.), *Temelji moderne Hrvatske. Hrvatske zemlje u "dugom" 19. stoljeću*, Zagreb, Matica hrvatska, 2016, pp. 273-308, especially p. 273.

⁵ As forms of individual school memory, J. Meda and A. Viñao mention diaries, autobiographies, memoirs and personal recollections formulated in oral testimonies. Cf. J. Meda, A. Viñao, *School Memory: Historiographical Balance and Heuristic Perspectives*, in Yanes-Cabrera, Meda, Viñao (edd.), *School Memories*, cit., pp. 1-9.

extremely important source on 19th century Croatian school history since both authors pay great attention to describing their own formal and informal education while presenting their personal life paths and intellectual development⁶.

Our research into the aforementioned autobiographies departs from Philippe Lejeune's definition of autobiography as a «retrospective prose narrative written by a real person concerning his own existence, where the focus is his individual life, in particular the story of his personality». In the author's view, the main features of an autobiography are: a prose narrative; the theme is individual life and the story of one's own personality; the author, the narrator and the main character are one and the same; a retrospective point of view in narration⁷. Both Stojanović's and Tkalac's autobiographies have these characteristics. The authors reconstruct the past based on their memories and selected personal experiences that are a product of social relations. These are creative processes characteristic of autobiographic discourse. As is often the case with autobiographies, both authors critically and emotionally comment on various events in their private and public spheres⁸. In the selected autobiographies, narratives are based on facts. These texts could be classified as a subtype of autobiographies that Louis A. Renza calls the memoir mode of autobiographical writing⁹.

School Memories of Tkalac and Stojanović in their Autobiographies

Politician and publicist Imbro Ignjatijević Tkalac (1824-1912)¹⁰ begins the reconstruction of his life with his earliest memories. The book describes the first twenty years of his life until he left Croatia to study abroad. His narration is strongly marked by (self-)irony, and the text could be read as a personal history of emotions¹¹.

Tkalac was born into a wealthy family of lower nobility. He received his first education at home. His governess taught him Italian and French based on folk songs, opera arias and everyday conversation, but did not teach him to read, write or grammar. The boy's

⁶ On informal education in Croatia see V. Švoger, *On the Role of Informal Education in 19th Century Croatia*, «Review of Croatian History», vol. 13, n. 1, 2017, pp. 79-102.

⁷ Ph. Lejeune, *The Autobiographical Pact*, in Id., *On Autobiography*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1989, pp. 4-5, 12, quotation p. 4.

⁸ M. Cuesta, *How to Interpret Autobiographies*, last updated 13.06.2011, www.razonypalabra.org.mx (last access: 31.01.2016); A. Cagnolati, J.L. Hernández Huerta, *School Memories in Women's Autobiographies (Italy, 1850-1915)*, in Yanes-Cabrera, Meda, Viñao (edd.), *School Memories*, cit., pp. 99-113.

⁹ L.A. Renza, *The Veto of the Imagination: A Theory of Autobiography*, «New Literary History», vol. 9, n. 1, 1977, pp. 2-26. The author also differentiates the «confessional» and narcissistic modes of autobiographical writing (*Ibid.*, pp. 9-19).

¹⁰ On his life and work, cf. A. Feldman, *Imbro Ignjatijević Tkalac. Europsko iskustvo hrvatskog liberala 1824-1912*, Zagreb, Izdanja Antibarbarus d.o.o., 2012.; M. Kolar, *Život i rad Imbre Ignjatijevića Tkalca*, in I.I. Tkalac, *Hrvatsko gospodarstvo polovicom XIX. stoljeća. Izvještaji carsko-kraljevskom ministarstvu u Beču*, edited by V. Stipetić, Zagreb, Dom i svijet; Ekonomski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 2004, pp. 9-22.

¹¹ This paper uses the following edition of the book: *Uspomene iz Hrvatske (1749-1823. 1824-1843.)*, Zagreb, Matica hrvatska, 1945.

memory was extraordinary and he learnt with ease, so that at the age of five he was fluent in Italian and French. He taught himself individual letters by writing them with a chalk on a wooden floor, and consequently held his pen as a piece of chalk throughout his life. Afterwards, a private teacher taught him to read, write and arithmetic¹². Private teachers gave piano and singing lessons to Tkalac and his two younger sisters. The boy would eventually sing at public concerts in his hometown of Karlovac and write music for poems by J. W. Goethe and H. Heine. Another tutor taught him various painting techniques and encouraged the development of his taste for visual arts¹³. Count Đuro Drašković's library, which was almost exclusively stocked with books in German, delighted young Tkalac who decided to learn the language at an early age in order to be able to read these books. Unable to find a qualified teacher, his father first hired a German officer and then a German-speaking gardener. The boy perfected the language by reading the books from the Count's library¹⁴. Several years later Tkalac was equally enthusiastic about the Hirschfeld bookstore in Zagreb, well stocked with Croatian, German, and Italian titles. Since his first visit to the bookstore, Tkalac became a regular buyer of foreign books and journals, some of which were on the Austrian list of forbidden works, but were nevertheless smuggled by booksellers into the Habsburg Monarchy. Throughout his life, Tkalac remained fascinated with books and spent much time seeking and buying the best books wherever he travelled¹⁵.

By the time he began attending regular school at the age of eleven, Tkalac critically remarked that he was «spiritually left to himself and without any guidance whatsoever». By that time, he had already read many books in German, Italian and French – novels, poetry, history and geography books, travelogues and studies in natural sciences. Despite the boy's vast knowledge, the principal of the elementary school in Karlovac¹⁶ would not allow him to immediately attend the second grade, due to his very bad handwriting. His Franciscan teachers were poorly educated, had no pedagogical training, and taught in German which students could not understand, so it could not be expected that they would learn much. The teachers' knowledge was very modest, consisting mainly of what was written in the textbooks. In class, they would read individual textbook paragraphs, paraphrase only the more difficult parts, and the students would mechanically memorise what the teacher read. In tests, the students had to reproduce the texts from the textbooks, possibly literally, while their understanding of the material was not checked. Elementary school pupils were taught catechism, Bible history, German grammar and

¹² Tkalac, *Uspomene iz Hrvatske*, cit., pp. 61-66.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 90, 174-184, 302-303.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 86-90.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 152-158.

¹⁶ The town of Karlovac was part of the Croatian-Slavonian Military Frontier, where German was the official language in military matters as well as in schools. The Military Frontier (German: *Militärgrenze*) was a border area of the Habsburg Monarchy formed as a defensive territory against the Ottomans during the 16th century. In the subsequent period, it was organised as a large Habsburg military province extending from the Adriatic Sea to the Carpathian Mountains. The Croatian-Slavonian Military Frontier was its westernmost part stretching along the present-day land border between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. This part of the Military Frontier was reincorporated into Croatia in 1881.

composition were introduced, reading, calligraphy and the basics of arithmetic. Their mother tongue was not then taught in Croatian schools but was gradually introduced starting in the revolutionary year 1848, after the Croatian Parliament in October 1847 replaced Latin with Croatian as the official language in education, the judiciary and public administration. Therefore, Tkalac critically recalls that the only thing he learnt in elementary school was to have beautiful handwriting¹⁷.

Tkalac's earliest memories of his classmates were not positive. Namely, he started attending classes during the midterm and was older than the other boys, who teased him because of it. Tkalac won their respect only after he defended himself in a fistfight and told them that they would not even have a place to go to school, were it not for his mother's uncle, who had donated money for the foundation of both the elementary school and the secondary school in Karlovac¹⁸.

The situation in the secondary school, which he attended from October 1837 onwards, was no better. During the school holidays, he read all the secondary school textbooks his parents had bought for his elder brother. He asked permission to take exams for the first two grades of the secondary school in order to enrol directly into the third grade, but was not allowed since school rules did not permit it. This was the reason that he, in his own words, «lost six invaluable years of life». However, he did not blame his teachers, because: «The little they knew was not their fault, but that of the government that based its power on the animalisation of the people and the ignorance of the so-called “educated classes”». Tkalac was very critical of the educational policies implemented by the governing circles in Vienna. He concisely summarised the main motto of such policies in an alleged statement that Emperor Francis I addressed to a delegation of teachers from the Ljubljana Lyceum during the 1821 Congress of the Holy Alliance held in Ljubljana: «I do not need learned, but loyal subjects». Tkalac's assessment of educational policies in the Habsburg Monarchy in the period prior to the March Revolution was satirical and critical: «According to this ‘gracious’ recipe, they trained the “limited subservient minds” and salvaged the honest subjects from even the least “learnedness”»¹⁹.

In secondary school, Tkalac studied Latin, Greek and Hungarian, and in addition he studied Czech, Polish and Russian on his own. Since he needed little time for homework and studying, he spent time walking, painting, playing, but mostly reading. He wanted to accomplish a «harmonious development of mind and heart» through reading and self-education. He read all the masterpieces of world literature, most of them in the original languages, some of them multiple times. He read Greek and Roman classics, important works in philology, history, archaeology and Bible history, geography, philosophy, politics and art history²⁰. His extraordinary memory enabled him to remember what he had read almost word for word, although he remained critical of his own knowledge, evaluating it as unconnected and unusable for school. His vast knowledge surpassed that of his teachers. However, Tkalac self-critically observed that this had had a negative impact on

¹⁷ Tkalac, *Uspomene iz Hrvatske*, cit., pp. 137-141, 145-148, 158.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 139-141.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 158-160, quotation pp. 159-160.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 166-170, 184-192, quotation p. 184.

the development of his personality, since he became (overly) self-conscious, conceited and sometimes insolent, he despised every authority and rebelled against the authority of teachers. He described the negative sides of self-education and the lack of incentives from school and teachers as follows: «School [...] did not contribute to the development of my spiritual and moral qualities at all. Without it, I would have been free from many moral faults I have possessed my entire life. Later, I could never get rid of the harmful sides of autodidacticism»²¹.

In elementary and secondary school, he was the best student in his class and knew much more than his peers and his teachers. He was therefore unpopular among his classmates and his teachers were afraid that his questions might put them in an embarrassing situation. In his autobiography, he wrote self-critically:

I was therefore far ahead of my schoolmates, but even more sadly, far ahead of my teachers. The pupil who would buy and read books which his teachers did not even know existed, had to – whether you like it or not – be both a nuisance and unpleasant; the teacher would always be afraid of being caught in his ignorance by the pupil, while the whole school would then maliciously laugh. Besides, a pupil like that would very quickly become aware of his superiority and would not develop any form of respect for his teacher, which is the basis for every discipline²².

In his autobiography, Tkalac comments on political, social, economic and cultural circumstances in Croatia in the first half of the 19th century, as well as objectives and results of the Croatian national revival²³. Although he sympathised with the work of the Croatian revivalists, he did not actively partake in the revival movement (the Illyrian movement) because he was repulsed by the harsh disputes (occasionally turning into armed conflicts) between members of the Illyrian movement – Illyrians – and their political rivals, the so-called Magyarons (Hungarophiles). He acknowledged the zealous patriotism that imbued Illyrian artistic creativity, especially in literature, which he indirectly evaluated in the following lines: «That what was said in praise of Hungarians could also be said of the Croatian educated classes: they took every book in Croatian as if it had been a literary masterpiece and encouraged young writers to work praising them benevolently and uncritically, pampering them and spoiling them in this way»²⁴.

Mijat Stojanović (1818-1881)²⁵, one of the most prominent Croatian educators and folk writers of the 19th century, was born into a peasant family in the Slavonian Military Frontier. His parents were illiterate like the overwhelming majority of the Croatian peasantry in the first half of the 19th century. Mijat Stojanović's autobiography entitled

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 158-161, quotation p. 161.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 160.

²³ V. Švoger, *Under the Crescent and the Star: The Illyrian Movement*, in N. Barić, Z. Radelić, G. Ravančić (edd.), *A History of the Croats. The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Zagreb, Croatian Institute of History, 2022, pp. 67-89.

²⁴ Tkalac, *Uspomene iz Hrvatske*, cit., pp. 192-212, quotation, pp. 207-208.

²⁵ On his life and public activity, cf. M. Ogrizović, *Likovi istaknutih pedagoga II. Ljudevit Modec, Mijat Stojanović, Stjepan Basariček*, Zagreb, Školske novine, 1980, pp. 85-141; V. Švoger, *Schule als Zeitungsthema in 19. Jahrhundert in Kroatien: am Beispiel des Lehrers Mijat Stojanović (1818-1881)*, «Review of Croatian History», vol. 18, n. 1, 2022, pp. 135-154, especially pp. 139-150.

*Adventures and Misadventures of my Life*²⁶ is a combination of memoir writing and diary entries in some of its parts. Like Tkalac, the author begins with his family's history providing many interesting data on Croatia's social, political and everyday life. The author reconstructs his life, focusing on his own intellectual, emotional and professional development.

Stojanović describes his first school experiences using picturesque words and in an emotionally charged manner. At the age of ten, he persuaded his father to enrol him in school. He attended a German village school. Fearing his strict teacher who responded to every wrong answer with the usual punishment of the time – beating pupils – the boy could not show the little knowledge he possessed: «This wrong opinion, I will say prejudice (that the pupil is not capable of learning, author's note) of my first teacher, and his even worse treatment of me, were the reason that even in my third grade I could not read, even less count and my handwriting was horrible». Consequently he sat in the so-called *eselbank* as the worst student in the class. In his autobiography, he does not blame the teacher, who worked «according to the inadequate, awkward and poor way of teaching at the time», but ascribed his poor results in school to his underdeveloped cognitive and emotional skills. After two years, his first teacher passed away. His new teacher managed to dispel the boy's excessive fear of authority and encourage him to study more and show his knowledge without fear. Consequently, young Stojanović became one of the best students in his class. His father would not allow him to pursue his education since he needed his help on the farm. However, the number of pupils in his local village school grew significantly and Stojanović soon found work as an assistant to his former teacher²⁷.

Stojanović was very critical of the knowledge he acquired through self-education throughout his life. At the beginning of his career, «I was happy to teach and educate children, but I did not know much, save a bit of reading, writing and arithmetic»²⁸. He reflected on the role of elementary schools in upbringing and education as well as cooperation between teachers and parents as a precondition for quality education. He expressed these thoughts in his autobiography as well as in the articles he published in various political newspapers and professional journals. In his autobiography, he writes about the role of elementary school in society and his endeavours to materialise it as follows:

I had to work hard both with teachers and students until everything again [...] went the proper way; along this way, the school accomplished its great task and its sublime purpose. To raise children, to make people out of them who use their reason properly, who think, speak and create in a morally sound way and who are good in the occupation they have in civil society. I faced many obstacles from parents too, who give little or no support to school in the domestic upbringing of their children, mostly out of ignorance and negligence; and from teachers as well, who are not committed and do not invest all the

²⁶ M. Stojanović, *Sgode i nesgode moga života*, in D. Župan, S. Andrić, D. Matanović (edd.), *Slavonski Brod, Hrvatski institut za povijest – Podružnica za povijest Slavonije, Srijema i Baranje*, Zagreb, Hrvatski školski Muzej, 2015.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 49-51, quotations p. 49.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

powers of their mind and body in performing their sublime tasks, but rather teach as hired workers; and, finally, from learning youth neglected in such circumstances²⁹.

His twelve articles entitled “Letters of an Old Teacher to His Young Companion”, written in epistolary form in which an experienced teacher answers the questions of his young colleague, analyse the role of all the factors having an effect on the upbringing of children: parents, teacher/school, church, and nature. He believed that teachers have to work in concert with others, but also as a corrective, since they enter this process later than other mentioned factors. He analysed and presented the teacher’s role in great detail and gave useful and practical advice to his younger colleagues. This advice was not only based on his twenty-five year teaching experience, but Stojanović quoted or paraphrased ideas of prominent European philosophers from antiquity to the modern age (Aristotle, Plato, Sophocles, Cato the Elder, G. W. Leibnitz, J. G. Herder, E. von Feuchtersleben, an Austrian physician, poet and philosopher engaged in the 1848 reforms of the educational system in the Habsburg Monarchy, and theologian and aestheticist J. G. M. Dursch)³⁰.

In a series of articles entitled “Thoughts on Elementary Education and Elementary Schools”, Stojanović analyses in detail the educational role of elementary schools, the highly responsible role of teachers in the education and upbringing of new generations, how to play this role and what obstacles teachers have to overcome in the process. In his view, «to be a teacher is the greatest honour a man can enjoy in this world». Furthermore, he analyses issues faced by the Croatian elementary school system at the level of organisation and implementation. He highlighted the need to found quality schools for teachers, increase teachers’ wages, write quality textbooks in the national spirit and ensure decent pensions for teachers as prerequisites for improving the quality of education. In his view, all able children should regularly attend school from the age of six to twelve, and then continue repeating the material in Sunday schools for the next three or four years³¹. He believed that quality primary education could be ensured only through cooperation and synergy of all the factors influencing the functioning of elementary schools.

When Stojanović began to work as an assistant teacher, he was fully aware of his modest knowledge. For this reason, he invested great efforts in self-education, working at school during the day, studying and preparing classes at night. In his words: «Not a day passed without me reading, writing and studying. I studied natural sciences, geography, general and Croatian history and German grammar. I would often ponder over a book or a map deep into the night. It is hard work to be one’s own teacher». He prepared for the prescribed professional exams on his own, which he managed to pass with success and gradually advance in his career from assistant teacher to district school inspector in 1871³².

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

³⁰ *Pisma starog učitelja svomu mladomu drugu. Od M. St., učitelja*, «Narodne novine», vol. 24, from n. 95 (27 April 1858) to n. 110 (15 May 1858).

³¹ M. Stojanović, *Misli o pučkoj prosvjeti i o pučkih učionah*, «Napredak», vol. 3, from n. 11 (1 March 1862) to n. 21 (1 August 1862). Quotation, n. 11, p. 168.

³² Stojanović, *Sgode i nesgode moga života*, cit., pp. 54-65, 79-118, quotation p. 65. Stojanović’s professional path is shortly presented in: D. Župan, *Stojanovićeve ‘Zgode i nezgode’*, in Stojanović, *Sgode i nesgode moga života*, cit., pp. XVIII-XXII.

In parallel with his professional development, he read Croatian and international literary works, professional literature and newspapers, wrote articles for domestic newspapers and journals on education science and politics, several school textbooks on various subjects, mostly based on Austrian and German templates, collected folk proverbs, poems and other material for his books intended for the broadest social classes. He was also very active in the struggle to improve Croatian teachers' professional training and status. He was one of the founders of the Croatian Educational and Literary Society in 1871, the most important professional society of Croatian teachers still operating today³³.

Situation in the Croatian School System According to Other Sources

The school system established during the reign of Maria Theresa underwent minor changes³⁴ and remained in force until the mid-19th century failing to give a significant contribution to the rise of literacy in Croatia. During the 1830s, there were approximately 230 schools including those in the Military Frontier. In addition to a small number of schools, a major problem were poorly educated teachers and poor school attendance. Consequently, even those who attended elementary school, especially in rural areas, remained illiterate³⁵. In an 1844 brochure dealing with the situation in elementary schools, prominent Croatian politician, writer and natural scientist Ljudevit Vukotinović (1813-1893) writes: «youngsters forget what they have learnt in a year or two. Once they leave school, they never think of a book again. They do not even have prayer books, because they are ashamed [...] to carry them to church»³⁶.

During the mid-19th century, especially in the revolutionary years of 1848-1849, various authors addressed the poor state of Croatian elementary schools in newspapers. A general assessment was that the main reasons for such a state of affairs were the small number of schools, too small and poorly equipped school buildings, poorly educated and poorly paid teachers who were therefore unmotivated, overcrowded classes, low-quality textbooks, lack of teaching aids, inadequate teaching methods and poor cooperation with parents who were reluctant to send their children to school, especially in rural areas, since they needed their help in farm work. The authors generally agreed on how the

³³ Cf. D. Župan, *Bibliografija radova Mijata Stojanovića*, in Stojanović, *Sgode i nesgode moga života*, cit., pp. 285-299. A list of newspapers and journals where Stojanović published his numerous articles, discussions, travelogues and poems between 1845 and 1881 is provided in: V. Brešić, *Čitanje časopisa. Uvod u studij hrvatske književne periodike 19. stoljeća*, Zagreb, Matica hrvatska, 2005, pp. 46-47.

³⁴ For changes in Croatia's elementary school system and in secondary school education, the latter one lasting six years as of the early 19th century, cf. I. Horbec, M. Matasović, V. Švoger (edd.), *Od protomodernizacije do modernizacije hrvatskog školstva*, knj. I., *Zakonodavni okvir*, Zagreb, Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2017. Last updated: 20.03.2017, <http://histedu.isp.hr/grada-za-povijest-skolstva/> (last access: 10.07.2022), pp. 23-26.

³⁵ I. Ograjšek Gorenjak, *Reforma obrazovnog sustava kao jedno od ključnih društvenih pitanja 19. stoljeća*, «Radovi – Zavod za hrvatsku povijest», vol. 39, 2007, pp. 57-95, especially pp. 60-61.

³⁶ Lj. Vukotinović, *Něšto u školah pučkih. Rěč u svoje vrěme*, Zagreb, Franjo Supan, c. kr. p. knjigotiskar i knjigotaržac, 1844, p. 29.

quality of elementary education in Croatia could be improved: teachers should be given better education and higher salaries for their work, new textbooks should be written in Croatian, new school buildings should be built and adequately equipped with teaching aids, and parents should be encouraged to send their children to school regularly. It was expected that the quality of the Croatian elementary school system would be improved through these measures³⁷.

The second half of the 19th century saw a gradual increase in the number of elementary schools and students in Croatia. According to official data from 1851 provided by the Land Government, there were 229 elementary schools in Croatia excluding the Military Frontier, which increased to 716 in 1878 and 1,185 in 1888 (with the incorporation of the Military Frontier). Gradually, the percentage of children who regularly attended school increased as well. In 1851, only 29.67% of the school-aged children attended school regularly, which rose to 67.82% in 1878, and in 1890, 68.5% of boys and 55.6% of girls attended classes regularly³⁸.

Although these official data suggest there was significant improvement in the development of elementary education in Croatia in the second half of the 19th century, it seems that the situation on the ground was somewhat different. In a text published in the education magazine «Napredak» (Progress) in the mid-1870s, county school inspector Ivan Filipović (1823-1895) confirms the evaluation of Croatia's education system made by Stojanović and Tkalac in their autobiographical notes. Filipović enumerates reasons for the poor state of the Croatian education system:

Deficient and irregular school attendance, insufficient supply of prescribed teaching material for the children, inadequate and incomplete teaching aids, large number of inadequate school buildings and furniture totally unsuitable. In Zagreb County, barely 30 percent of children eligible for school attend classes; and of these 30 percent barely one third attends school on a regular basis. In a number of schools with 80-100 children or more, I found 15-16; and was told that attendance is good if there are 30 present. In general, school attendance is so poor that it is a real horror; and all reports by teachers and more conscientious local school boards are completely in vain. Furthermore, children are very irregularly supplied with prescribed books, copybooks and notebooks³⁹.

After the modernisation of *Gymnasien* and *Realschulen* in the Habsburg Monarchy as a whole, which took place in 1848-1849 and was a prerequisite for the reform of higher education that began simultaneously⁴⁰, the quality of Croatian secondary school education improved significantly in the second half of the 19th century. Four-year lower *Gymnasien* were transformed into eight-year higher *Gymnasien*, new *Gymnasien*,

³⁷ V. Švoger, *Zeitungen. Plattform für Debatten über die Modernisierung des kroatischen Schulwesens im 19. Jahrhundert*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 12, n. 1, 2017, pp. 321-336.

³⁸ *Izješće o stanju školstva u Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji svršetkom školske godine 1877/8*. Zagreb, Kr. hrv.-slav.-dalm. zem. vlada, 1879, pp. 15, 45; *Izješće o stanju školstva u Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji svršetkom školske godine 1889-90*. Zagreb, Kr. hrv.-slav.-dalm. zem. vlada, 1891, pp. 13, 56.

³⁹ I. Filipović, *Na obranu pučkog učiteljstva*, «Napredak», n. 12, 20 April 1876, p. 178.

⁴⁰ Ch. Aichner, *Die Universität Innsbruck in der Ära der Thun-Hohenstein'schen Reformen 1848-1860. Aufbruch in eine neue Zeit*, Wien-Köln-Weimar, Böhlau Verlag, 2018, pp. 74-110.

Realschulen, Realgymnasien and vocational schools were opened⁴¹. Apparently, the private experience of students did not correspond to the actual progress in the quality of teaching in Croatian secondary schools. In a 1907 article, prominent Croatian poet Antun Gustav Matoš (1873-1914) critically described secondary school education in 19th century Croatia based on his own experience:

I speak from my own experience, because I have, sadly, attended the best Croatian *Gymnasium* and am a graduate *in spe*, and am still considered to be immature by so many professors. Oh, when I just remember! Cramming, repeating by heart [...], sitting six hours a day in grey and stuffy holes [...], switching from dogmatics to geometry, from logarithms to history, from Hannibal to natural sciences, [...]. The Jesuit catechist almost killed my belief in deity, the cramming grammar teachers not only made classic languages repulsive to me, but also inculcating them upon us, prohibiting us from becoming imbued with classic ideas of patriotism and free Socratic discussions⁴².

Conclusions

As first-rate “ego-documents”, the analysed autobiographies contain individual reflections on personal school experiences of two men who belonged to different social classes in 19th century Croatia. Their recollections contain very critical evaluations of the Croatian school system, which they consider unsatisfactory, while humorous (self)-criticism permeates their description of their participation in the educational process. The paper shows that other sources mainly confirm Stojanović’s and Tkalac’s assessment of the Croatian 19th century school system. Therefore, their individual memories can be interpreted as part of the collective memory of the Croatian 19th century school system.

⁴¹ V. Švoger, Z. Novosel, *The Age of Neo-Absolutism*, in *A History of the Croats*, pp. 111-130, especially pp. 116-119.

⁴² A.G. Matoš, *Gimnazijski naš sistem*, «Novosti», vol. 1, n. 45, 6 September 1907.

A Common Narrative? Civics Teachers of the German Democratic Republic between Memory and Identity

Jascha Hook
University of Kaiserslautern-Landau
(Germany)

Introduction

While the GDR has long since been consigned to history since its collapse over thirty years ago, the controversial debate about its past continues¹. The subject *Staatsbürgerkunde* (civics and politics), which was intended to influence the political education of youth, represents such a section of controversial memories of the GDR. Especially in the initial years following the fall of communism, civics was often seen as an example of the authoritarian character of the GDR². Even though various waves of remembrance have since led to a more complex assessment of the subject, its fundamentally negative public perception has remained. For civics teachers, this means that their life's work is still barely recognised. Against this background, it is assumed that civics teachers create counter-memories to influence collective memories of their controversial school past from within³.

While civics was initially regarded as a monolithic block in which teachers implemented the political guidelines in full, recent research has drawn attention to the different teaching patterns that have existed even in this strictly standardised subject⁴. Therefore, and because memories are always related to their speakers' present needs and past experiences, their memories are also expected to show differences as well as similarities⁵. The reciprocal relationships between memory and identity will be elaborated

¹ M. Sabrow (ed.), *Erinnerungsorte der DDR*, München, C.H. Beck Verlag, 2022.

² T. Grammes *et alii* (edd.), *Staatsbürgerkunde in der DDR. Ein Dokumentenband*, Wiesbaden, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2006, p. 29.

³ J. Meda, A. Viñao, *School Memory: Historiographical Balance and Heuristics Perspectives*, in C. Yanes-Cabrera *et alii* (edd.), *School Memories. New Trends in the History of Education*, Cham, Springer, 2017, pp. 1-9.

⁴ T. Grammes, *Staatsbürgerkunde zwischen Katechetik und Dialektik*, in Ministerium für Bildung, Jugend und Sport des Landes Brandenburg (ed.), *Freundschaft! Die Volksbildung der DDR in ausgewählten Kapiteln*, Berlin, BasisDruck, 1996, pp. 19-169.

⁵ The memories of civics teachers were also studied once before in the 1990s, but the focus was more on their teaching-related memories and less on their previous biographical experiences, which are questioned here regarding their influence on their specific memories and teaching identities (*Ibid.*, pp. 56-169).

by analysing autobiographical life narratives. This paper analyses how their self-images as civics teachers are linked to their biographical experiences. These analyses also show how they model their relationship to the GDR, how they legitimise their former allegiance, and generally, how they narrate their school past.

The research corpus consists of five narrative interviews⁶ conducted in 2019 with former civics teachers, who have in common that they have all voluntarily taught civics from the early days onwards and spent almost their entire professional lives in the GDR. These teachers had the greatest influence on the development of the subject in practice. Three of them taught at secondary, and two at upper secondary schools. Birth years between 1928 and 1938 are evenly distributed between the idealistic founding generation and the pragmatic generation⁷. Following these findings of GDR generational research, Neumann distinguishes between the idealistic teachers oriented to anti-fascist values who would have entered the teaching profession in the 1950s and the younger, much more pragmatic teachers born before 1950⁸.

The narrative interviews were opened with a slightly focused question: «Would you please tell me your story as a civics teacher?». In addition to the narrative interview method⁹, in which immanent follow-up questions only follow the impromptu narrative, questions were also asked about their teaching experiences in a second phase. This paper presents two cases that differ mostly in terms of their state relationship, professional self-image, and memories of the GDR school.

1. Theoretical background

Research on memory has promoted the insight that memories are based on the present position of their speakers. Therefore, the reconstruction of memories must begin with determining the discursive space from which the rules and patterns, possibilities and limits of their constitution emerge. In this context, previous research has drawn attention to the significant influence of contemporary delegitimising discourses on the memory of the GDR¹⁰.

⁶ F. Schütze, *Biographieforschung und narratives Interview*, «Neue Praxis», vol. 13, n. 3, 1983, pp. 283-293.

⁷ T. Ahbe, R. Gries, *Gesellschaftsgeschichte als Generationengeschichte. Theoretische und methodologische Überlegungen am Beispiel DDR*, in A. Schüle et alii (edd.), *Die DDR aus generationengeschichtlicher Perspektive. Eine Inventur*, Leipzig, Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2006, pp. 475-573.

⁸ T. Neumann, *Die Lehrer sind natürlich insgesamt als Berufsstand in der DDR sehr stark angegriffen worden. Was Lehrerinnen und Lehrer heute mit der DDR-Schule verbindet*, in H.-E. Tenorth (ed.), *Kindheit, Jugend und Bildungsarbeit im Wandel. Ergebnisse der Transformationsforschung*, Weinheim/Basel, Beltz, 1997, pp. 397-410.

⁹ F. Schütze, *Biography Analysis on the Empirical Base of Autobiographical Narratives: How to Analyse Autobiographical Narrative Interviews*, in F. Schütze et alii (edd.), *Sozialwissenschaftliche Prozessanalyse. Grundlagen der qualitativen Sozialforschung*, Opladen – Berlin – Toronto, Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2016, pp. 75-117.

¹⁰ H. Haag et alii (edd.), *Volkseigenes Erinnern. Die DDR im sozialen Gedächtnis*, Wiesbaden, Springer VS, 2017.

Particularly affected by them were also the members of the GDR education system, who, especially in the initial period after the fall of communism, were not infrequently accused of uneducational motives or even indoctrinating practices. Even if the social memory of the GDR is now more differentiated, the former civics teachers responsible for the ideological core subject are certainly still under such pressure to justify themselves.

Reh has drawn attention to the discourse dependency, performativity, and reflexivity of the biographical constructions of East German teachers¹¹. The discursive influence on their biographical drafts was said to go so far that they could only talk to a West German pedagogue about their past pedagogical practices in the form of «confessions» to counter the interactively generated pressure to justify themselves¹².

In contrast, the narrative texts are examined concerning the present needs of their speakers *and* the patterns and themes of their lived experiences to ask about integrating biographical knowledge in the construction of their biographical self-images. Even though discourses shape their memories, we must consider that the discursive spaces that influence our self-narratives are neither uniform nor randomly distributed and relate to both our position in the social space and our former life experiences¹³. To trace the genesis of memories, the past experiences of their bearers must also be reconstructed¹⁴. Because biographical research can make these diverse connections between past, present, and future visible, it is particularly suitable for researching memories.

The reconstruction of the experienced past can provide information about why and how some people connect to those discourse fragments in the context of their self-presentation. Thus, the genesis of memories can be opened up both from present and past. According to the basic assumptions of biographical research, the life narratives are interpreted neither one-sidedly as direct representations of the past nor one-sidedly as representations of the present, but rather as socially constructed yet individual life realities in the form of communicatively generated biographies depicting connections between past, present and future.

¹¹ S. Reh, *Berufsbiographische Texte ostdeutscher Lehrer und Lehrerinnen als Bekenntnisse: Interpretationen und Überlegungen zur erziehungswissenschaftlichen Biographieforschung*, Bad Heilbrunn – Obb., Klinkhardt, 2003.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹³ B. Dausien, G. Kluchert, *Mein Bildungsgang. Biographische Muster der Selbstkonstruktion im historischen Vergleich. Beispiele und Argumente für eine historisch-empirische Forschungsperspektive*, «BIOS», vol. 29, n. 2, 2016, p. 224.

¹⁴ G. Rosenthal, A. Worm, *Geschichtswissenschaft/Oral History und Biographieforschung*, in H. Lutz et alii (ed.), *Handbuch Biographieforschung*, Wiesbaden, Springer VS, 2018, p. 155.

2. Case Study

2.1 Case reconstruction of Anna (1928): «I can't teach things today and live quite differently in reality»

The communication with Anna, born in Silesia in 1928, is characterised by the fact that she feels under particular pressure to justify herself. She counters this perceived pressure by depicting a life story in which war experiences in particular led to morality and loyalty to the GDR.

She narrates the story of a life after the Second World War that turned into an odyssey of expulsion. The turmoil of war hit her twice, as it meant losing her homeland and abandoning the studies she had just started. It was not possible to resume her studies because of her family's financial situation caused by the war. Because her father could not work after his return from captivity, she had to work as a secretary as a matter of necessity. After 1949 she returned to *Schwerin*, where she initially lived for a short time after her escape from Silesia and where most of her relatives lived. Since her parents stayed in *Schleswig-Holstein*, the family was divided into East and West from that point onwards.

Her first encounter with socialism is told as a scene of biographical importance, in which she experienced a change in her identity. Given her war experiences, she would have been open to the revolutionary idea of an alternative model of society in which the pursuit of power and money as the cause of war would have no meaning. As she was unsatisfied with her office job, she took an evening class to make her dream come true. Her desire to become a teacher goes back to her own female teacher, who became her role model as someone who could teach with authority without being authoritarian. She represents the myth of the natural teacher who is gifted in forming a good relationship with her students.

Shortly after completing her distance learning course, she was struck by another twist of fate. Her husband's serious illness forced her to leave her beloved *Schwerin* for *Thuringia* to be closer to his relatives. The situation in the young GDR at that time brought about a positive change. A dramatic teacher shortage gave her the opportunity to work as an entry-level teacher. While she was at least happy with establishing a secure existence, the separation from her parents living in West Germany remained a burden. The Berlin Wall was built just as she was visiting them with her daughters in 1961. The fact that she returned despite having the opportunity to stay in the West caused those around her to question her sanity. However, her material and spiritual ties enabled her to feel integrated.

The early death of her husband in 1966, leaving her alone with three daughters, made it necessary for her to qualify to teach higher classes. In this situation, the newly introduced subject of civics offered advancement opportunities. As well as the difficulties of maintaining contact with her parents across the borders, she experienced a crisis when the authorities refused her exit permit to attend her father's funeral. This episode of biographical importance provides an insight into her transformation of identity:

The year 1967 was very hard for me, but I accepted it, and I would never have wanted permission if it could only be obtained by devious means. In 1967 my father died, and I was unable to go to the funeral because as a civics teacher I could not get permission. I had to accept it, and I would have resisted trying to get permission by networking or by giving any specific reasons. I would have been reluctant to do so because then I would not have known how to face the students. So, you had to make sacrifices.

In this situation of an identity struggle in which her professional identity conflicts with her family identity, she decides to maintain her moral integrity by privately practising what she preaches as a teacher: to follow the decisions of the socialist party, even if that means giving up part of her identity. She rejects the alternative of «cheating for personal gain», arguing that civics cannot be taught without authenticity. The biographical action pattern of adapting to expectations ultimately comes down to the anticipated problems of maintaining different identities. In this situation, meeting one's own expectations as well as those of others will be difficult. Living with this pressure to fulfil both can make a person vulnerable («I would not have known how to face the students»). This pressure must therefore be met with a transformation of identity. Anna's change is ultimately that of someone who only works as a civics teacher to someone who *is* a civics teacher («When I taught civics, the students had to be able to determine that the teacher stood behind what he was telling me»).

This is a reminder that civics was also taught by authentic teachers who willingly accepted personal renunciations as their duty. Civics thus appears as a moral burden because lifestyle and politics always had to be reconciled. The forgotten dignity of the civics teachers can be emphasised here. Anna explains her ability to carry the burden again with her life story as a «war-torn-woman» whose life has become more and more an exercise in frugality, modesty and willingness to make sacrifices. She constructs herself as a «moral saint»¹⁵, who is capable of overcoming egoistic temptations, albeit feeling the sacrifice as such.

The global stylistic shape of the narration contains elements of Aristotle's tragedy, such as the effort to elicit pity by listing her deprivations as well as her self-construction as an ethically good character who has experienced a swing from fortune to misfortune through no fault of her own. Accordingly, she explains how teaching civics ultimately failed during the increasing instability of the GDR. Following her principles as a true socialist, she retired even before reunification, feeling that otherwise she would have been «kicked out» soon anyway. After reunification, she felt stigmatised because of her former position, although she still feels nothing to apologise for in terms of her self-perception as always being sincere. Ultimately the narrative pattern of the «war-torn-woman» serves as justification for her former work. After again summarising her difficult life situation in which she decided to remain loyal to the GDR, she formulated a long coda that can be sharpened into a question: Can one blame someone who was so affected by fate for accepting compromised happiness in the GDR, especially when one has given up so much for it?

¹⁵ S. Wolf, *Moral Saints*, «The Journal of Philosophy», vol. 79, n. 8, 1982, pp. 419-439.

2.2 Case reconstruction of Werner (1938): «Under today's conditions of migration, German didactics have become obsolete»

Werner, also born in Silesia, was a highly honored teacher who considers himself to have taught successfully. After mentioning that today's Germany could not protect the cultural heritage embodied in the GDR school system, he proudly reports on his career path: After his graduation in 1959 he completed a postgraduate civics course in 1964 and thus became involved in teacher training. After mentioning his last achievement of becoming headmaster of an advanced polytechnical school in 1977 he announces a substantial change in his life, commenting that it will surprise me. In 1983 he was barred from his profession and sentenced to menial work as an unskilled production worker. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, he was officially rehabilitated as one of the few former civics teachers allowed to teach democratic political education in West Germany. How does he explain his downfall?

The answer takes us right back to his family history as relatives of an ethnic German minority living in Silesia up to their expulsion after the Second World War. The sense of *Deutschtum* he developed in this context is represented as the critical point in his relation to the socialist state. His reading of history starts with the referendum in Upper Silesia in 1921 concerning whether Silesia should continue to belong to Germany or join the newly founded Poland. The referendum caused several riots directly affecting his family. In this situation, his mother experienced how paramilitary groups in her father's hotel fought against the Polish insurgents with her ancestors. He tells the story as if he was there: «We had to defend our *Deutschtum* with weapons in hand». It shows how deeply the concepts of homeland ties and Germanness were embedded in their family tradition.

The socialisation conditions he experienced were determined by their self-positioning as Germans who were preserving their German culture even under the most demanding conditions. The influence of the idea of being German on his mother's thinking was such that he felt challenged to prove that she was not a convinced National Socialist. His mother, characterised as a resolute woman, appears as his role model. Because of the First World War she could not continue school and become a teacher as she wished. As a result, she transferred her preferences to her son, taking care of his intellectual development. His admiration of his mother and the German Empire (1871-1918) continues to this day:

Today I still have a few letters from her. In terms of spelling, she could compete with any German teacher today. She has hardly made a mistake, but they actually really learned something in the imperial school, especially to speak German properly, to talk German properly and write German properly even if you only went to school for seven years.

Because of his family history, he developed a special interest in history. By quoting his history teacher, he demonstrates how his words shaped his self-view of performance excellence: «Werner does an outstanding job in history class». After that, he moved towards an orientation of «being the best at what I do», which is expressed later in his decision to refuse the offer to study art, thinking he is not worthy of becoming an art

teacher. That only his «mummy» was able to convince him to accept the offer illustrates her influence on him.

In the 1950s, his relation to the socialist state would have been good. His nationalistic attitude made him believe in early reunification. Under the impression of GDR's golden age, in which the state offered opportunities for social advancement, integration would have been easy for him. His application for a postgraduate course in civics was primarily chosen as an opportunity for social advancement, even though he would have been intrinsically motivated as well.

In the story that follows, Werner portrays himself as a pedagogical hero who has always struggled to improve the standard of education as an important contribution to the building of the socialist state. Emphasising his special qualifications as one of the first subject teachers with additional studies in pedagogy, he recounts his path to becoming a pedagogical authority among practitioners. By claiming the design of civics as a scientific subject, in which students would have learned methods of scientific reasoning, he claims an understanding of the subject that would have been marginalised in practice. In contrast to his ideologically blinded colleagues, he portrays himself as a passionate didactician who, mainly for pragmatic reasons, would have devoted himself entirely to transmitting knowledge as his biographically developed passion.

Although he claims to have already incurred the displeasure of his ideologically blinded party colleagues with this scientific self-image, the problems of fitting in with the GDR state would not have fully arisen until the GDR's attitude towards the "German question" became an individual problem because of his mother's move to the West. He resisted the request to break off contact with her, which was demanded of him as a headmaster. By insisting on visiting his mother, he acted in this decision-making situation according to his socialisation-acquired understanding of home and nation, which outweighs his socialist ties. His disbarment shows how the confrontation between his traditional understanding of patriotism as related to the nation as a whole and the socialist understanding of patriotism, which had been subordinate to the socialist cause, led to a break with the state. So, he was barred from his profession after speaking during an informal discussion with delegates from another socialist country about his family history of expulsion from his traditional homeland, thereby addressing a taboo subject in the GDR, which was perceived as evidence of his reactionary attitude.

After his professional disbarment, he directly worked his way up the social hierarchy. The direct acceptance of his disbarment and the effortlessness in adapting to the new situation show that his actions were primarily guided towards a purpose. Just when he was considering applying for another postgraduate course to reclaim his lost status, the *Wende* unexpectedly began, after which he immediately demanded his rehabilitation as a teacher. He had no reservations about now teaching political education «on the other side of the divide». This shows that his actions were not swayed by ideological ties but rather by a strong sense of self-commitment, success orientation and, above all, a sense of duty to his home country.

Against this background of confrontation between nationalism and socialism, his loyalty to the GDR needs to be justified. He confronts this problem with an argumentation

that seems committed to preserving his biographical identity insofar as the connections between socialism and personally significant nationalism are elaborated here:

So, the civics classes were of quite a different level. I have to say that there were still people who acted as propagandists. I tried to be moderate. Of course, the goal of educating good socialists applied to everyone. By the way, to educate good patriots and internationalists in one. That demonstrates that the idea of being German was very strong. Nowadays, you would say, man, that is not possible. But that is something *Erich Honecker* also said in many of his speeches: the goal is to educate young citizens, who are good patriots, socialist patriots, and proletarian internationalists. That was the top priority, and to a certain extent you could identify with it quite closely. For me, that clearly meant that we are and will remain Germans and as Germans we want to make a good contribution. As a German state, maybe we can be a model for our beloved compatriots, and perhaps one day the whole of Germany will become socialist; that would be nice, such dreams we had.

He presents himself as a German who would have maintained his German identity even under the conditions of a socialist state. This self-image would have been in line with the official state doctrine of the GDR, as evidenced in the words of *Erich Honecker*. The way he saw it, the preservation of a German identity was not only legitimised by the state but also desirable. Accordingly, in contrast to today's misunderstandings, the pedagogical mission would have been not only to educate socialists but to educate patriots as well¹⁶. In the form of a generally accepted pedagogical motivation, this goal would have been broadly acceptable to him. In this respect, he presents himself as someone who primarily agreed with the GDR because of its compatibility with German Nationalism. That creates the impression that GDR education was not only about the education of a socialist personality. The message is that the German identity would not have to be given up in the GDR.

It should be noted here that this is precisely the reception the GDR state leadership had sought. This reception was to be evoked by the Nation's concept representing one of the legitimisation strategies of the GDR, which can be characterised as an appeal to national sentiment in an effort to combine national traditions and the socialist state¹⁷. This link between patriotism and internationalism was created for propaganda purposes and made it possible to maintain the self-image of acting German even in a socialist state. Within this framework, Werner presents an image of the GDR school as being in line with the German school tradition. For example, to emphasise the continuity of the GDR school with German traditions, he always refers to the «Advanced Polytechnical School» as «Gymnasium», even though this term was not used in the GDR.

That the ambiguities of his state relationship are not much discussed is due not only to the biographical requirement of identity continuity and the preservation of life

¹⁶ The argumentation corresponds to the narrative pattern of the «confession», in which common negative ideas about GDR pedagogy are first (partially) admitted to successfully distance oneself from them on the basis of the authenticity thus gained (Reh, *Berufsbiographische Texte ostdeutscher Lehrer und Lehrerinnen als Bekenntnisse: Interpretationen und Überlegungen zur erziehungswissenschaftlichen Biographieforschung*, cit., p. 164).

¹⁷ M. Lemke, *Nationalismus und Patriotismus in den frühen Jahren der DDR*, «Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte», vol. 50, 2000, pp. 11-19.

achievements. This also has to do with his present narrative standpoint on which basis the memories are organised: they are constructed against a perceived loss of German culture through migration. The topic of migration determines the communication before and after the official interview situation. In connection with the fundamental assumption that the East has better preserved the German Identity, nationalism and patriotism were projected onto the GDR, leading to a more positive memory, and reducing the socialist component. Against the fear of identity loss through migration, he interprets East Germany and the GDR as its predecessor state as «*Deutscher als Deutsch*»¹⁸. In this respect, he takes part in an identity discourse among politically right-wing East Germans: «It still works here [in East Germany], but *Frankfurt* is no longer a German city».

Thus, his memories are dominated by experiences that prove that the GDR preserved the German culture better than West Germany. Numerous stories from everyday school life are told based on the GDR's values, such as discipline, diligence, and a sense of duty. Parallels are drawn with the German Empire as the state that describes his ideal of a functioning society. His socialisation in a family committed to imperial traditions, in which a sense of duty was seen as a prerequisite to flourish socially, may have made it easy for him to support an authoritarian state like the GDR. But it is precisely by looking back at the impression of a perceived loss of culture that the assertion of a similarity between the German Empire and the GDR makes it possible to maintain his identity as a German who always thought and acted German.

2.3 Teachers' self-designs: Teaching as struggle for authenticity

When asked about their teaching experiences in civics, all teachers shared a story of change from a normal subject to a special problem subject that would have become more difficult to teach as the GDR descended into crisis. All teachers have attributed this turning point at the end of the 1970s to the fact that the students would have been more and more attracted by the material superiority of the class enemy they learned about from the West German media, or through encounters with their western relatives as more travel became possible. Since then, the students would have abandoned their reserved approach to asking critical questions. The episodes about how they dealt with these critical questions of students are particularly suitable for the analysis of their biographical structures of meaning, as is shown in this extract from Anna's interview:

I: Do you have an example of such a problem?

Yes, they came and said, oh what we saw in the department stores and what we experienced and what we got as presents and so [...] and then came the question, why not in our case (a little quieter) and this occurred even less in the upper classes at that time: it was more the 7th and 8th classes that asked this question. And now you had to answer so that what you said was true and the students believed it.

¹⁸ K. Heft, *Kinismord in den Medien. Eine Diskursanalyse ost-westdeutscher Dominanzverhältnisse*, Opladen – Berlin – Toronto, Budrich Academic Press GmbH, 2020, p. 272.

I: What did you answer?

That was followed by the question: what do you prefer, to have this opportunity to buy everything but possibly not have the money and having to see it pass by? That is how it was at first, I guess. I can only guess, or we do not have it for now, but (knocks on the table), we have an apartment (knocks), we have jobs (knocks), we can pay the rent, we can buy bread (knocks), and in exchange for that we now have occasional banana shortages, so those were the first problems that arose.

In dealing with critical questions, Anna relied on the power of persuasion of an ever sincere socialist, who speaks authentically from her own perspective about the advantages of the GDR. Her belief in authenticity as a basic requirement for successfully teaching civics is demonstrated by the fact that she only gave an argument for the GDR that she truly believed in. Since only authentic testimonies are recognised as convincing, only those arguments that were once important for building up her loyalty to the GDR are given. The arguments mentioned are all related to the need for material security, which became biographically significant against the background of her life as a war-torn woman. The scenic language used draws attention to the fact that this seems to be the routine answer she also gave in class. And, quite interestingly, she does not regard her answer as indoctrination, although the suggestive question masked as a decision question is highly manipulative. Werner also grapples with the question of credibility, although his answer and self-image are somewhat different:

I: You said that you wanted to solve problems, which sometimes required criticism. You have already mentioned it, but could you tell me again in more detail how you assessed your room for manoeuvre?

Let me start with an example to show how I did it. There was once a song and a question from a student that I still remember: the party is always right, so then the question came up in class, you have to imagine it in the days of the GDR: is the party always right? And I gave this answer: the party is the party of the most progressive class in society, and its programme is based on scientificity. Party and scientificity are therefore connected, and science tells the truth. Can science be wrong? Yes, science can sometimes be wrong, but then it continues researching, and then it's right again, so in the end it comes to the truth. That's how it is. That's how the situation was handled, but of course not in the way a comrade in the district leadership would have welcomed it, but that was how you helped yourself. What else could I have said? Because history has shown clearly that the party made a mistake here and there. If I had said that, it would have gotten around immediately: Werner at the high school says the party makes mistakes. I would have been better off not going to school the next day. So you could combine it with science, which was, for example, a way to get out of an affair and avoid offending anyone so much that you put your existence at risk.

When asked about his room for manoeuvre, Werner mentions a professional crisis triggered by a student's question about whether the socialist party is always right as propagated. That is notable because the question directly casts doubt on the claim to the unrestricted validity of Marxism-Leninism. He responded to the provocative question instead of reprimanding the student for it. Instead of simply answering the question in the affirmative and conflicting with the reality in which the party naturally made mistakes, he argued that the socialist party, because of its scientific ideology, always arrives at the truth despite occasional mistakes. This was to somehow overcome the situation. Thus, he constructs himself as a successful teacher who has managed to skillfully extricate

himself from an unpleasant situation without completely abandoning the core of his actual identity. Even in such a problematic situation with limited options to take action, he would not have appeared as a propagandist engaging in cheap agitation but as a scientifically oriented teacher who had allowed even the most provocative student questions and insisted as much as possible on the scientific design of the subject. For all its distancing from ideological argumentation, the statement also contains the admission that an open expression of opinion would not have been possible under the conditions of the politicised subject. At least from a retrospective point of view, Werner does register having argued ideologically; but compared to Anna, the manipulation through the pseudo-logical connection of party and truth is much more subtle.

Conclusions

The analysis shows that the status of a civics teacher cannot be taken as a label from which their commitment to the state and their integration mode can be adequately inferred. Even civics was not only taught by fully convinced socialists. The interviews suggest that the early teaching staff of the ideological core subject was also divided into genuine socialists and more pragmatic-patriotic teachers.

Anna represents the teachers who believed the anti-fascist founding myth primarily because of their wartime experiences and whose socialist convictions remain unbroken today, making their memories of the GDR exclusively positive. Werner's life narrative reflects the structural pattern of diminishing integration the more his socially acquired German Identity conflicted with the socialist state. However, since his memories are against the backdrop of a perceived loss of German culture, which would not have existed if the GDR had continued to exist, his memories today are also more positive than they might have been at an earlier point in time.

Their self-designs as teachers in the context of an interactively generated pressure to justify themselves reflect the basic patterns of their subject-related counter-memories between authenticity and scientificity. The secondary school teachers see themselves predominantly as authentic teachers, the upper secondary teachers as scientific teachers, emphasising that socialist personalities could only be formed through genuine conviction and not ideological argumentation. Thus, Anna's answer to the provocative student question corresponds to catechetical speech, and Werner's answer more to dialectical speech, described as basic communication patterns in civics¹⁹. These identities are justified in each case by life histories. That once again confirms previous research findings on the importance of authenticity for the actions of civics teachers²⁰.

While Anna develops a counter-memory against the accusation of indoctrination by emphasising her authenticity, which she backs up with her willingness to give up part

¹⁹ Grammes *et alii* (edd.), *Staatsbürgerkunde in der DDR. Ein Dokumentenband*, cit., p. 103.

²⁰ Grammes, *Staatsbürgerkunde zwischen Katechetik und Dialektik*, cit., pp. 60-61.

of her identity, Werner creates a special counter-memory by justifying the GDR school system for its patriotic, educational mission, which would still be considered legitimate today. The emphasis on patriotic education simultaneously negates the intention of an exclusively socialist education in the GDR at the time. Under the impression that the GDR would not have been all about socialism, he does not emphasise the peculiarities of the socialist school but its similarities with the German school tradition. These memories are an expression of biographical work insofar as the patriotisation of the GDR is necessary to preserve his identity as someone who has always acted German-style. In this sense, the discourse on East Germany as being more German than German represents the starting point of his GDR memories. This illustrates that the present positions of narrators cannot be understood without reconstructing their pasts. Only against the background of his experienced past as an expellee, for whom German traditions have a special significance, does it become understandable why this strand of discourse about East Germany so strongly influences Werner's memoirs. In this respect, the analysis shows how closely the memories are linked to the identities of their speakers.

Ultimately, the teachers remember civics as a subject that virtually *demand*ed biographical work because it would have been associated with particular expectations that had to be reconciled with one's own identity. For Werner, this meant constantly working to reconcile the socialist educational mandate with his German identity, while Anna was ultimately left only with the sacrifice of her family identity to be able to teach civics in harmony with herself.

Memories of Teachers and School Inspectors in Post-War Greece. Visions of the Past and Interpretations in the Present

Despina Karakatsani, Pavlina Nikolopoulou
University of Peloponnese (Greece)

Introduction

In our contribution we attempt to look into and reconstruct some aspects of the educational reality during the first postwar decade in Greece, drawing on the oral testimonies of members of the educational community.

This contribution presents and analyses the oral testimonies of five teachers that took their first steps as young teachers in the 1950s to rise in the educational hierarchy and serve as school officers a few years later¹. All our informants were former male school officers for women did not have the right to claim such a position. Since the inception of the institution in the mid-nineteenth century, school officers were members of the educational staff assigned various administrative, instructional, educational and inspection duties².

In the aftermath of World War II, Greece became the theatre of the first armed conflict of the Cold War which impacted seriously international affairs for the next decades³. The civil war that broke out between the Democratic Army of Greece (ΔΣΕ) and the National Army (ΕΣ) and lasted for more than three years (March 1946-October 1949) resulted in a social and political scene by far different to its prewar counterpart⁴. A large number of the members of the National Liberation Front (ΕΑΜ), which was the major resistance movement in Greece during the country's Occupation, served in the ranks of the Democratic Army of Greece. The Greek Communist Party which had the support of the socialist countries played the leading part in the National Liberation Front. The National Army, that is the governmental army, had the support of the King. It was also initially supported by the British and from 1947 on had the support of the USA. The

¹ Emergency Law 1112/46, *Regarding the Appointment of School Officers in Elementary Education*, Issue Α¹, Government Gazette 105, 19.03.1946.

² D. Karakatsani, *Educational Theory and Teaching Practice in Post-War Greece*, Athens, Epikentro, 2012, p. 284.

³ M. Meletopoulos, *Ideology of the Right-Wing State 1949-1967*, Athens, Papazisis, 1993, p. 63.

⁴ D. Charalambis, *Army and the Political Power: The Structure of Power in Post-War Greece*, Athens, Exantas, 1985, p. 65.

Greek Civil War was fought in Northern Greece and as such it was primarily a war that took place in the countryside⁵.

1. *The historical context*

In the first postwar decade, the harsh socio-economic conditions meant that the country struggled to get reconstructed after a decade of warfare. The great intensity of the social relationships and the violence of social clash characterized this period⁶. An authoritarian and suppressive regime was put in place in Greece, which – contrary to what happened in other countries that had experienced similar conflicts in the twentieth century – developed and functioned in the context of a parliamentary democratic system. Yet, it was a democracy with limited personal rights⁷. The political and social conditions of the time left their indelible mark on the acute educational problem which manifested itself during this period. The educational system functioned in anomalous conditions and in certain areas its operation was suspended. At the same time, in conditions of political polarization, prosecutions of teachers, of primary school teachers, started (Ninth Resolution/1946)⁸.

As the Civil War cast its shadow on the postwar political life and amid fears of a coup which challenged the prewar social structures and the dominance of the middle-class, education as an internal reproduction mechanism of the social order took on strong nationalist directions. It projected the classic heritage and the nation's historical continuity as integral parts of the national unity and survival, stressed national integrity and identified it with the maintenance of the social order⁹. It further suggested a militant Christianity as a deterrent against the ideology of social emancipation, forging an ideological edifice which highlighted the idealized national superiority¹⁰.

⁵ M. Mazower (ed.), *After the War*, Athens, AlexandriaAthens, 2000, p. 16.

⁶ V. Kremidas, *Greece Between 1945 and 1967: The Historical Background: The Greek Society in the Early Post-War Period*, Athens, Sakis Karagiorgas Foundation, 1994, p. 15.

⁷ K. Tsoukalas, *State, Society and Labour in Post-War Greece*, Athens, Themelio, 1986, pp. 17-18.

⁸ A. Dimaras, *War, Occupation, Civil War, 1940-1949*, in *History of the Greek Nation*, Athens Publishing, Athens, vol. 16, 2000, p. 548.

⁹ P. Nikolopoulou, *Formation and Development of the Science of Pedagogy in Greece (19th-20th centuries): Athens University*, Thessaloniki, Kyriakidis, 2023, pp. 391-394.

¹⁰ *Declaration of the Christian Association of Scientists*, Athens, s.n., 1946, pp. 203-204; C. Maczewski, *The Movement of Zoi in Greece: Contribution to the Problem of Tradition in the Eastern Church*, Athens, Armos, 2002, pp. 56, 135.

2. *School, education and teachers in the post-war period*

It was in the 1950s that the school of national-mindedness came to be at a time marked by the interplay of three factors; first, state violence which was inflicted consecutively, though in different forms, by the two traditional political parties at the time, the Liberals and the Populist Party, and aimed at the military, political and ideological defeat of the Left, aligned with the National Liberation Front; second, the projection and imposition of pro-bourgeois obsolete ideas about the nation and society together with an ever-increasing anti-communism and an increasingly selective educational system¹¹.

In the political and educational environment of post-civil war Greece, school officers were an integral part of the educational hierarchy as they intervened between the teachers and the administration, and undertook the task of inspecting the former and securing their compliance to the objectives, content, forms and methods of instruction the state wished to offer its citizens. The school officer was responsible for evaluating and classifying teachers, taking into consideration not only their knowledge and their teaching methodology but also their commitment to the values of nation-mindedness, their obedience to hierarchy, their integrity and character, as well as their social relationships. In short, he monitored every aspect of their life, and this is why his role was crucial in controlling and disciplining them¹². Since the school officers' role in the successful implementation of educational policy was indispensable, their selection was based on their acceptance of the dominant ideology and their ability to communicate it to the teachers' body. It was common knowledge among the teaching circles that candidates who did not meet the criterion of nation-mindedness did not qualify for a teaching post¹³.

3. *Research-memories and school teachers in postwar Greece*

We attempt to investigate how teachers selected to serve this very role in the post-civil war state form, maintain, employ and communicate the memory of the 1950s school; what they choose to recall and what they consign to oblivion. We further seek to explore how their memories interact with later representations of school life, impacting their interpretation of the events and re-signifying their past experiences according to the dictates of their present individual, social and national identity. Apart from the oral testimonies, our contribution draws on contemporary pedagogical journals, in an attempt to study how the image of the post-civil war school these journals suggest is at odds with the image constructed and reconstructed in the memories of our informants.

¹¹ C. Noutsos, *The Route of the Camel and the School. Educational Policy in Greece: 1944-1946*, Athens, Vivliorama, 2003, pp. 32-33, 82-83.

¹² D. Mariolis, *The School of Nation-Mindedness (1949-1974)*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Athens, Panteion University, 2022, p. 123.

¹³ Karakatsani, *Educational Theory and Teaching Practice in Post-War Greece*, cit., p. 289.

What these interviews primarily reveal is that the memory of the civil war era leaves out their personal feelings as well as the tensions and the conflicts that characterized this period. Although the majority of our informants comes from rural areas and despite the fact that the civil war in the countryside fed into the most harsh and bloody pages of Greek history, memories of atrocities are surprisingly absent from their descriptions. They are even hesitant to describe the civil war as such. They resort to generalisations that imply what they had been through, but they never articulate explicitly their experience. For example, the civil war is «the great misfortune, a difficult period even tragic», a period where «everyday affairs took a difficult turn. Things got worse and worse». They avoid mentioning the names of the civil war rivals as well as direct references to contemporary events and persons linked with the polarization of the Greek society.

All of them mention the chances and the opportunities they were deprived of due to the civil conflict. They stress their humble origins as they were the offspring of poor families. Their choice to pursue a teaching career was out of necessity as they lacked the financial means to pursue long university studies. However, they did not describe at length the survival problems, the depravities and the precariousness present at the time in the life of the majority of the population. Memories of their feelings towards the events are also missing. Nowhere in their discourse do they express fear for their life or for the lives of their beloved ones, disappointment or anger for not fulfilling their dreams. Never do they assign responsibility to either of the civil war rivals for the predicament they found themselves in. They attempt to present themselves as neutral and only implicitly, through the use of certain words, through some fractions of speech in their well-structured narrative, their alignment with the government is revealed.

Although the interviews were conducted in the early twenty-first century at a time when no longer did these school officers serve as professionals it is evident from their silences and from what they forget that they are well-aware that the civil war constitutes a traumatic memory since it changed the terms in which the Greek society came to understand itself. They know that there is not such a thing as a uniform narrative about the civil war widely accepted in Greek society; this is why they are very careful during the interview to express their feelings, especially when it comes to anything that could trigger off past passions. They are fully aware of the requirements they had to meet to be selected for the post of school officer as well as of the role they played in the post-civil war school. They are also aware of the opposition and the objections raised against the institution of the school officer by a large part of the educational community.

During their interviews they consign into oblivion parts of their lives and action linked with aspects of the post-civil war state which to date feed into disagreement and contention. They consciously choose to foreground parts of their life which they think contribute to the construction of a consensual collective memory in the context of which their choices and action could possibly be acceptable. They highlight the fact that they succeeded in the school officer contest, and they were selected among dozens of other candidates neither because of having any connections in the Ministry of Education nor because of favoritism. References to the objective and impartial way of their professional development, common to all the informants, show primarily their attempt to justify

their personal value. At the same time, whether consciously or not, through their silences and omissions, they depict a more democratic picture of the post-civil war state than the one the study of the archives allows us to draw. They avoid references to the certificate of political convictions which according to contemporary law was absolutely necessary for any appointment in the public sector.

The certificate stands as the most characteristic example of the constitutional dualism that characterized the regime of constitutional monarchy. The liberal constitution of 1952 regulated the relationships between the state and the nationally-minded citizens while a paraconstitution comprising urgent measures was at work for the non-nationally-minded. «Both the constitution and the paraconstitution were applied simultaneously and therefore the civil war survived at the institutional level for the next two and a half decades since the end of the armed conflict...»¹⁴. The memory of the defeated of the civil war, the persecutions, the redundancies, the suffering, the transfers across the country, the threats against the lives of hundreds of teachers¹⁵ are tellingly absent from their descriptions of the period.

Notwithstanding the fact that protests against the unfair persecutions of teachers often featured in the early post-civil-war pedagogical journals¹⁶ and the Greek Teachers' Union frequently made appeals to the government through the columns of its journal to compensate for the injustices some teachers had suffered¹⁷, this bleak reality is far from present in the discourse of the school officers interviewed.

In the rare instances that our informants make references to the social reality of persecution and exclusion experienced by a large part of the population, they do so presenting these cases as a rare example of deviating from the democratic function of the institutions or to present themselves as an exception to a rule which in any case is mentioned only fragmentarily, hastily and allusively. Their attitude towards the policy of persecution is not common in all instances and this is why their references range from complete silence to selective mention. One of the school officers supports that «when the colleague of any political leanings – not of a worldview – was careful, no distinction was made». This positive judgement of the democratic function of the institution is based on a carefully vague description of the terms which protected the teachers from persecution. Getting involved in public affairs and expressing in public their political views could result in discrimination against them and therefore had to be done “carefully” even when it concerned the legitimate political forces. Not only the public but also their private life was judged, not only their action but also their ideas. It was expected that their worldview should be aligned with the regime's ideology. At a time when the communist party was

¹⁴ N. Alivizatos, *Emergencies and Political Freedom, 1946-1949*, in J.O. Iatrides (ed.), *Greece between 1940 and 1950. A Nation in Crisis*, Athens, Themelio, 1984, p. 393.

¹⁵ C. Noutsos, *The School of Nation-Mindedness, (1945-1952)*, in C. Chatziiosif (ed.), *Twentieth-Century Greek History*, Athens, Vivliorama, 2009, pp. 113-117.

¹⁶ «Free Greece», 08.09.1945: «Neo-Hellenic Education», n. 1, October 1945, p. 2; *The Social Issue*, «Neo-Hellenic Education», n. 10-11, July-August 1946, p. 8; *Whose Fault?*, «Neo-Hellenic Education», n. 12, September 1946, p. 8.

¹⁷ «The Teachers' Forum/Podium», n. 77, 30 May 1948, p. 1.

illegal, the support of ideas judged by school officers as communist could have serious repercussions for teachers which ranged from an unfavorable transfer to redundancy.

Another school officer mentions that in the region where he served «there were eleven teachers who had been laid off because of their political convictions» before he himself took office. This information is relayed without any details or even a comment. On the contrary, he lingered on analysing the steps he took to compensate a teacher, who had been made redundant, for the money the service withheld from him. He also related in detail how he was assigned the task – with a double-sealed envelope – to draw a report for a kindergarten teacher after a complaint had been filed against her on the grounds that a close relative was aligned with the left in the past. He visited her without notice so as to inspect her work. During inspection he was ensured that she did not engage in any political activity whatsoever; on the contrary, she was respectful of the formal regulations and applied them in her everyday teaching practice. He went on to write a report which allowed her to retain her post. His stance is presented as fair and friendly towards the teachers; yet even at the dawn of the twenty-first century, this school officer is far from condemning a practice that could lead to a teacher being thrown to the margins of social and economic life on the grounds of an anonymous complaint.

In certain cases, the school officers attempt to offset the suffering so as to downplay the fact that a large part of the educational body holds them responsible for the way the educational institution operated at the time, a fact they are well aware of. Whoever blames them as perpetrators, so goes their argument, they forget that when the political landscape changed, it was the school officers that were in turn victimized. They attempt to present the abolition of the institution of the school officer yet another form of persecution they suffered from. As one of them put it: «In other words, situations (politics) are as such; what can be done?». However, in their discourse, they omit to mention that the abolition of the school officer institution had been the repeated request of the General Assemblies of Teachers for almost five years (1976-1981)¹⁸.

Employing not only selective oblivion but also selective memory, school officers implicitly adopt an ideological stance towards what they experienced. It is a political stance presented as rather neutral. In the post-civil war school, «we did not dwell on politics and even so on party conflicts», they stress. School was a pocket of neutrality in a country torn apart from the civil war passions, a school like a beehive. «We focused only on the teaching methodology...Our students' parents had no idea what our political convictions were». Teachers offered the knowledge the state considered important for future citizens, instilling in their students the dominant ideology. They were civil servants and as such they did not gauge the directions the educational policy took and, in any case, they did not cast them into doubt. They condemn any different stance on the teachers' part. «It is unacceptable...».

All the school officers interviewed stress that they encountered difficulties, especially at the beginning of their career. As young teachers, they served in rural schools, mostly in

¹⁸ P. Samios, *The School Officers in Primary Education (1834-1982)*, «Anti-notebooks of Education», n. 107, 2014, pp. 69-86.

schools at the frontier zone of Greece. They delineate the living conditions in the country's borders as extremely difficult and unsafe. Massive population transports either by the guerillas or the national army left schools without teaching staff and the countryside deserted. They were sent to work at schools which were still in operation. They describe crowded classrooms with no less than eighty students. They had difficulty in securing accommodation which meant that often the school premises served as their lodging as well, putting a campaign bed in the teacher's office. Food was secured from soups kitchens set up by the state, the municipalities or various charities. As they were assigned many duties, they had to work mornings and afternoons to the point of exhaustion. However, all of them state that they faced these dire conditions not only with patience but also with pleasure. This attitude, they argue, was linked with their firm belief that the teacher in the post-civil war Greece had a crucial mission to accomplish for the country's reconstruction. To them, the teaching profession is a social mission. They all stress that they were forced to abandon their dreams of pursuing a career in other fields which would secure them better remuneration and higher social prestige than the teaching profession seen as a mission on their part.

4. *Educational objectives and teachers' mission*

Their mission as they perceived it was linked with the country's reconstruction. They were called to instill in the young generation the ideals of national-mindedness which comprised devotion to homeland, Orthodox Christianity and family. In other words, devotion to the triptych of the Greek nationalism inscribed in the context of severe anti-communism. Education, as they argue, had to be first and foremost national education, to mold good citizens able to defend their country. One of them notes that immediately after his graduation from the Pedagogical Academy, he went on to work as a teacher in one of the fifty-two childtowns set up across Greece in the early 1950s¹⁹. The childtowns were institutions where the government transported and accommodated children from areas where the civil war was raging. He reproduces the formal discourse that the children's displacement from their home villages, which most often was against their and their parents' will, was meant for the protection of the children as «they ran the risk of being abducted from the other side (the guerillas)».

In a highly allusive discourse, he responds to the allegations of the Left that the purpose of the children's transport to the childtowns was mainly their indoctrination²⁰. The operation of the childtowns served the instruction of inmates in the national ideals, so his argument runs. It was «an attempt to cultivate patriotism». He admits that at times the children's education, which he sees as «a duty towards the homeland», led to extremities which he does not dwell on. He goes on to argue that these instances do not reflect the

¹⁹ The Royal Fund, *The First Congress of the Childtown Leaders*, March 1956, p. 8.

²⁰ Educational Centre Library "Ch. Florakis", AM 361704, AM 350495, AM 361214.

reality of the children's lives, they were "exceptions". Anti-communism underlies their interviews, yet it is not directly stated. Given that dozens of teachers' public speeches in the archives are imbued with extreme and blatant anticommunism, we contend that the careful formulations they resort to are related to the ways their memories are mediated by their contemporary reality. In their discourse, communists are designated as «the others, the foreigners' puppets, the Iron Curtain, a different world apart». As part of their national mission, they thought that they ought to contribute to the assimilation of the populations which, according to them, did not meet the criteria of national identity, that is the Slav-speaking and Muslim populations in Western Macedonia and Thrace respectively. The fact that they do not even make a passing reference to a case that made the headlines not only in Greece but also abroad aptly illustrates their attitude towards these populations – as a matter of fact two of our interviewees come from these areas and they also served there. Indeed, it was the first time ever that a woman was executed by the Greek national army.

It was a female teacher, Irine Gkini, a Slav-Macedonian and member of the Greek Communist Party who asserted the equal integration of Slav-Macedonians to the Greek state²¹. Yet, one of our interviewees praises the work of the female teachers who served in the Slav-speaking villages as a patriotic contribution which, given the ideology of nation-mindedness, sought to assimilate these populations into the dominant ideology and wipe out their special characteristics. The same applies to the teachers who served in Muslim villages.

Their action, as young teachers, went beyond the narrow limits of the classroom. In the post-civil war state intellectuals were called to undertake the task of instructing citizens into the ideals of nation-mindedness. Governments recognized the crucial ideological impact the teachers' body could have on the isolated agrarian populations, especially on those who were stricken by the battles of the civil war and lived in appalling conditions²².

School officers refer to the obligation they had at the beginning of their career to organize as young teachers a series of public speeches, according to the regulations and circulars sent to them, which aimed at raising the national-social awareness of the population in the areas they served. They saw it as an important duty and they accepted it delightedly. In a certain case one of them states that «... I did something bolder which I thought it was an accomplishment. Whenever I could, I would climb to the church pulpit». The connection of the school with the Church was really strong and instruction in practicing Christianity was one of the central principles that governed educational policy in post-civil war Greece²³. According to the school officers, this connection should have been even stronger. Morning prayer, as they stress, was the order of the day. Students and teachers had to go to mass on Sundays and each Saturday the last session in the school timetable was reserved for the interpretation of the Bible. School officers

²¹ <http://costaslapavitsas.blogspot.com/2014/05/blog-post.html?spref=tw> (last access: 18.02.2023).

²² K.D.T., *The Teacher's Home*, «The Teacher's Forum/Podium», n. 51, 3 September 1947, p. 3.

²³ A. Dimarias, V. Vassilou-Papageorgiou, *From Slate Pencils to Computers*, Athens, Metaichmio, 2008, p. 147; *Declaration of the Christian Association of Scientists*, cit., pp. 203-204.

considered religion to be strongly linked with their identity as teachers. In this respect, they identified with most of the teachers at the time.

The strong psychological and emotional identification with the Church and the development of strong spiritual bonds with it was the result of regularly repeated religious ceremonies which were the order of the day in the 1950s school²⁴. School officers state that the Christian and patriotic principles weighed most in them when they compiled the teachers' assessment reports. The criteria of the assessment fall into five categories; their scientific integrity; classroom management skills; carrying out their duties conscientiously; their integrity and character; their social action. Therefore, assessment was not only about their teaching skills; it was also about controlling their behaviour and their overall social presence. Their promotion, increase in remuneration, transfer to a school they preferred were contingent on the school officers' reports. As teachers were obliged to live in their workplace and move only on permission granted by the school officer, it becomes clear that the power the school officer exerted on them was even greater. In this regard, one of our interviewees stated: «There is no division nor that it should be a division among public life, the life of a civil servant and private life. What a teacher is in his/her private life is of great importance».

5. *Female teachers and memories*

It was the female teachers that mostly experienced pressure as they were very young and had to live far from their families in an environment that kept a vigilant eye on them, ready to condemn every deviation from the dominant morals²⁵. Female teachers occupied a lowly position at the time as they were not entitled to undertake administrative roles because of their gender. In this respect, our interviewees do not seem especially sensitive to the issues female teachers had to deal with. On the contrary, they attribute most of their problems to lack of zest and professional integrity. When asked about the problems female teachers faced due to their family obligations, one of our interviewees responds as follows: «Female teachers took advantage of their rights with regard to their school duties».

The school officer's visit to the school was often unwelcome and triggered feelings of anxiety and fear in the teachers; at times school officers were accused of being partial and unfair. Our interviewees referred at length to the reports they had to submit and the evaluation of the teachers under their jurisdiction. Unlike other issues, they were ready to refute the allegations levelled at them. They implicitly admit that there might have been instances of unjust and partial assessment but in line with their long-held

²⁴ A. Karakasidou, *Protocol and Spectacles: National Anniversaries in Northern Greece*, in M. Mazower (ed.), *After the War*, Alexandria, Athens, 2000, p. 251.

²⁵ V. Papageorgiou, *The One-Class Primary School*, «Neo-Hellenic Education», n. 14-15, February-March 1947, p. 68.

view they maintain that these were the exception. Similarly, they support that school officers who urged teachers to report their colleagues were also the exception. They deny having employed these practices. They further support that if teachers were educated and conscientious, there was no need to be apprehensive of the school officer's reports and that they themselves never had any concerns about the school officer's visit when they served as teachers. They advocate that the assessment is necessary for the smooth operation of the educational institution and the maintenance of high-quality studies. They stress that assessment is indispensable not to punish the indifferent teacher but to reward his/her conscientious counterpart. Lack of assessment, they argue, leads to downgrading all the teachers to the lowest level. They contend that the school in the 1950s was better as compared to contemporary school. «It is unfair to argue that the school in the 1950s was authoritarian. Nor that it was strict. The school needs a prestigious teacher, in the positive sense of authority. Authority is necessary for school. Prestige, morality, dignity».

Conclusions

According to their statements, it is interesting to note that during their career they applied the principles of the New Education movement. As school officers, they argue, they urged the teachers to employ visual aids while teaching, to foster children's self-motivation and discovery-learning. They think that it was far from difficult to apply methods which placed the child at the centre of the learning process despite the fact that at the time the teacher's authority was unquestionable. They do not detect the contradiction and they continue to argue that the structure and the operation of the school in the 1950s should stand as a model to contemporary schools.

The study of the historical evidence does not allow agreement with this opinion. The collective memory of the school of the first post-civil war decade is different. The case of the school officers points out that memory is selective and at times resorts to oblivion. It is often the case that people do not wish to remember every part of their past. They choose to recall images and events on which their present identity is anchored. The past is revisited to be reconstructed drawing on present concerns. From this perspective, memory is a social construct linked with the identity of the social subjects and with the effects it has on identity formation. Regarding the discrepancy observed in the representations of the school in the early post-civil war era teachers and officers maintain, we contend that «the different approach to the past or the different perceptions of history secures the identity of its carriers while remembrance of a past event reflects the position an individual or a group occupies in a society»²⁶.

²⁶ M. Halbwachs, *Collective Memory*, edited by A. Mantoglou, Athens, Papazisis, 2013, pp. 27-28.

Daily Notes in Diaries: Traces of Teaching in Personal Archives (Porto Alegre/BR, 1995-2014)

Dóris Bittencourt Almeida
Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul
(Brazil)

1. *A rare documentary type*

Every day she does everything always the same way...¹

This text analyzes records in personal diaries written by Beatriz Daudt Fischer, a Brazilian professor, retired from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul and from the University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos. We analyzed nineteen diaries produced between 1995 and 2014. It is a rare documentary set, carefully kept and generously donated to the Archive of the School of Education/UFRGS, through which it is possible to recognize, by reading between the lines, different places occupied by Beatriz, throughout all these years. As the pages of these writing supports are perused, regularities are perceived, identified with the quotidian experience, hence a quick examination makes me think, as the composer Chico Buarque says, that «every day she does everything always the same way»; however, by investing in more refined examinations, I could perceive in these notes, which seem trivial, pieces of evidence, sometimes subtle, sometimes explicit., of the changes in her life paths, in different dimensions.

Beatriz was born in 1948 in Novo Hamburgo, a municipality in the metropolitan area of Porto Alegre, colonized by German immigrants. She studied Pedagogy at Unisinos, was a professor at the state education network, obtained a Master's Degree in Social Foundations of Education (Stanford University/USA), in 1980, and a PhD from PPGEDU/UFRGS, having defended her Thesis in 1999. With regard to teaching work in universities, she applied for UFRGS and was a professor associated with the School of Education between 1985 and 1995. Afterwards, she joined Unisinos and there she continued to teach in the Pedagogy Program and work in the Graduate Program in Education.

Some time ago, I encouraged her to donate her archives to the Archive of the School of Education. In 2019, she released her diaries, objects of this study. And it was in 2020, during difficult months of the Covid-19 pandemic, that Beatriz separated for donation other personal archives, representative of her teaching and research paths. In view of so

¹ Quote from the song *Cotidiano* by Chico Buarque, first recorded on his album *Construção* (1971).

many possibilities of research, I chose here to address the diaries, relying on the power and monumentality of this kind of memory notebooks, here understood according to the concept of educational heritage.

Beatriz is a keen keeper. And, thus, she did not discard her diaries, she did not erase her traces in time, on the contrary, she cared for them and for so many other papers, even when they had no more use value and handed them over to an institutional place that will continue the work of preservation. The diaries, at the time of donation, were in perfect condition, which indicates that they were taken care of.

In this study, I strove to focus on “what the diaries had to say to me”, at various times I was tempted to call Beatriz and ask questions about matters that meseemed enigmatic. I did not contact her. In a way, I faced the same dilemmas as she did when she investigated the personal archives of another professor: Nilce Lea². In her words: «Should I immediately seek information through testimonies from her friends and family members? Or should I wait first for the results of my incursion looking into each page or scrap kept in this box?»³. However, she also provides an answer key, as a kind of orientation, which I follow in this study of her diaries:

From question to question, I find reasons to persist in this adventure, trying to structure a path that enables me to collect details, seek traces, perhaps mere secondary traces of a life, entangled in other lives⁴.

Aware of these sensitive implications involving immersion in the papers of people with whom we maintain bonds of affection, I decided to take the risks, and face them. In this field of conflicts, my personal interest in the opportunity of dealing with these personal writings – often difficult to access – ran deep.

2. *Diaries, what for?*

Before we get to the diaries themselves, we should reflect on their uses. After all, why do we make these records? Who currently uses them? What do we do with them when the year comes to an end? Commonly identified with the demands of work and study, in them we take note of appointments. Accordingly, they serve as facilitators of memory, because they enable us to remember, through the exercise of writing, what we should do. Hence, their use increased as society became more complex, with the development of cities and services, where the acceleration of time and the accumulation of professional, educational and personal tasks, associated with daily life, required that we take note of such tasks lest we risk forgetting them.

² B.D. Fischer, *As caixas de papel de Nilce Lea: memórias e escritas de uma simples professora?*, «História da Educação», vol. 9, n. 17, January-June 2005, pp. 69-80.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

However, if we observe through the layers of time, we will see, according to Castillo Gomez⁵, that there is a genealogy that permeates the diaries, since the final centuries of the Middle Ages, when books of accounts and diaries began to be written. These writings, as well as the contemporary diaries in their different supports, make it possible to register experiences with open writings, fraught with varied notes, referring to the experiences lived.

Thus, it can be said that, as the twentieth century advanced, the use of diaries becomes increasingly common among women, as they occupied other professional and educational spaces, outside the household setting. Agendas also invaded the education of students, constituting artifacts of contemporary school culture, with their use being often encouraged so as to record important dates of the school calendar.

Such artifacts are understood as ego-documents, that is, even quick notes, usually of a professional nature, present autobiographical dimensions of the person who started to take notes so as not to forget. Cunha explains that, just as diaries, agendas are also written with a certain intimacy, both are “intimate archives”, textual devices, which acquire a certain confessional tone when organizing daily life through writing, despite the singularities of each writing support⁶. In this regard, Castillo Gomez explains that these personal writings are like attestations of the itineraries of certain subjects, saying that: «it is a matter of sources that historians cannot disregard in their work, unless they want to be accomplices of certain silences and omissions»⁷.

Understanding them beyond personal records, the exercise of scrutinizing agendas and diaries enables the recognition of generational representations, distinguishing characteristics of their owners, their ways of living, circulating discourses, among many other observable aspects. According to Cunha, «Exposing doubts, a *thousand nothings*, fragments of personal and family memory, working with this material makes it possible to give visibility to what was destined for silence and oblivion»⁸.

Therefore, agendas of times of yore constitute a very attractive documentary type. This fascination also relates to the matter of their fleetingness. They retain use value, in theory, during the year for which they were edited. Evidently, as writing supports, they are often used for purposes other than that of everyday records. However, this is not the case with Beatriz, who was faithful to the protocols of the agendas, as there are few transgressions observed.

These reflections are relevant so, from now on, we focus on the diaries of a university professor, here taken as objects of study. From 1995 to 2014, Beatriz was concerned with producing several notes, most related to her professional teaching and research activities. These records will be analyzed below in the text.

⁵ A. Castillo Gómez, *Cultura escrita y clases subalternas: una mirada española*, Oartzun, Sendoa, 2001.

⁶ M.T. Santos Cunha, *Diários íntimos de professoras: letras que duram*, in A.C. Venancio Mignot, M.H. Camara Bastos, M.T. Santos Cunha (edd.), *Refúgios do Eu: educação, história, escrita autobiográfica*, Florianópolis, Editora Mulheres, 2000, pp. 59-80.

⁷ Castillo Gómez, *Cultura escrita y clases subalternas*, cit., p. 16.

⁸ Santos Cunha, *Diários íntimos de professoras: letras que duram*, cit., p. 160.

3. *The diaries, by themselves*

Analysis of the set of documents shows that their dimensions are always the same, 17 cm wide and 23 cm high, in brochure format, comfortable to carry and handle. By examining these materials, it can be said that, in general, Beatriz followed the established protocols, but not totally. She often used the pages of birthdays, investments and schedule to record what she liked about the academic events she attended. However, she took note of appointments on the right fields of days, although she used the same spaces for other notes on subjects she considered important to remember. It is noted her concern to carefully fill in the addresses and phone numbers of her affection networks.

Regarding the customization of the covers of the diaries, those of 1995, 1996 and 1997 have a small golden rectangle, but only that of 1995 has the engraved name “Beatriz T.D. Fischer – Tita”. In those from 2000 to 2003, personal details are prominent. In 2000, she attached a kind of adhesive tape, with small drawings of fruits — something sweet. In 2001, she affixed a seal of the World Education Forum⁹, which took place in October of that year. In 2002 and 2003, Beatriz Fischer’s political affinities were shown on the covers of the diaries, because, in 2002, she pasted a political propaganda seal of the election of Tarso Genro as Governor of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, as a member of the Workers’ Party¹⁰, along with another seal of the Internacional soccer team, alluding to the International Women’s Day with the words “For the colored woman, every day is Interna(c)tional”. Also in 2003, I was moved as I remembered the World Social Forum¹¹ that took place in Porto Alegre, since a seal of this great event adorns the cover of the diary.

4. *Traces of herself in the notes: the professor, the researcher*

Perhaps the aspects that appear most strongly in Beatriz’s notes are teaching and research, as they permeate all diaries, considering the greater objective of this writing

⁹ In 2001, between October 24 and 27, Porto Alegre hosted the first World Education Forum (WEF), as one of the actions promoted by the World Social Forum (WSF). It convened more than 15.000 educators, students, researchers, activists from various social and popular forces and representatives of more than a hundred countries from all continents. This event was held again in Porto Alegre in 2003 and 2004 (<http://latinoamericana.wiki.br/verbetes/ff/forum-mundial-de-educacao>; last access: 20.02.2023).

¹⁰ Tarso Genro ran for governor of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, as a member of the Workers’ Party, in the 2002 elections. However, Germano Rigotto (PMDB) had the majority of votes in the election.

¹¹ The World Social Forum (WSF) is an event that was constituted as an alternative space to the World Economic Forum, held annually in Davos (Switzerland). Therefore, it is a place of reflection and exchange of experiences about the social problems that affect humanity. It proposes the development of a solidarity-based globalization, which considers the major social issues amid sustainability agendas. Porto Alegre hosted the World Social Forum in 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2005 (<http://forumsocialportoalegre.org.br/forum-social-mundial/>; last access: 20.02.2023).

support, which is the annotation of daily professional appointments. However, there are differences in the records, considering the professional places she attended.

In the first diaries, between 1995 and 1997, we find the professor immersed in the preparation of her doctoral thesis, defended in 1999¹², as she remembered at times to “study at home” (1995, 1996) and there are notes of her searches for documents for research, indications of readings, lectures she attended, and classes in the Graduate Program in Education at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS).

In addition, there are other pieces of evidence of the development of her research. She continued investing in visits to archives, writing the days of interviews with the teachers. In these first diaries, we see her intention to write down the days of defenses of doctoral theses of her fellow students at UFRGS, in some cases she took notes of the oral exam of the examination board. We are talking about a time when few university professors held PhD degrees; therefore, most of Beatriz’s contemporaries invested in their academic training concomitantly with the professional practice of teaching — just as she did.

In 1996, Beatriz entered a new professional phase; she started working as a professor at Unisinos, in the Graduate Program in Education. Thus, from 1997 onwards, she is increasingly more involved with Unisinos, starting to record the dates of meetings, report deliveries, jot down ideas from the institutional seminars in which she participated, in addition to vacation days and days in which she worked more and could, at another time, take some time off.

There is also the building of academic networks of which Beatriz would be part for many years. Thus, there are several references to the National Association of Graduate Studies and Research (ANPED), with indications of the dates of the annual assemblies and deadlines for submitting papers. There are references to the first meetings of the Rio Grande do Sul Association for the History of Education (ASPHE), an institution that gathers education historians and in whose creation Beatriz participated. In 1997, she made a record of the IV National Meeting of Oral History, in a period of affirmation of the methodology among historians. Participation in these events indicates the research movements of Beatriz Fischer, a pedagogue who was also interested in the thematic field of history of education, in dialogue with oral history.

Thus, year after year, the diaries show that her work responsibilities are accentuated. Regularly, she writes down her schedule containing: classes, trips to participate in scientific events; corrections of student papers; preparation of scientific articles; participation in examination boards; readings of theses and dissertations; advisory sessions for master’s dissertations and doctoral thesis, papers required for program completion, and undergraduate research; faculty meetings; research line meetings; selections for Master’s and Doctorate programs; submissions of projects to research support agencies; production of reports. On some holidays, she wrote that she should produce texts for certain events or correct student works. Below, I present some notes from 2000:

¹² The thesis entitled *Professors: stories and discourses of a present past*, defended at PPGEDU/UFRGS, in 1999, under advisory of Balduino Andreola.

Mar 5, 2000 – last deadline for ASPHE presentation

Apr 9 – Faculty meeting to debate questions: How to properly assess a class with 54 students?

Apr 11 – Faculty meeting on methodology: What material is needed for Social Studies methodology?

May 7 – Discussion on the pedagogical project of the Pedagogy Program¹³.

Her consolidated career as a researcher led to participation in other scientific societies, in addition to those already mentioned. Thus, she approaches the Brazilian Society of History of Education (SBHE) and starts to attend the Brazilian Congresses of History of Education (CBHE). It is also worth mentioning her involvement with the Brazilian Society for (Auto)Biographic Research (Biograph), whose meetings — International Congresses on (Auto)Biographic Research (CIPA) — Beatriz also attended.

Work-related demands seem to increase every year. Accordingly, in May 2003 she recorded a list of “tasks” she needed to tackle:

- rite and submit poster for international congress
- write full paper for ISCHE¹⁴ May 15
- ASPHE – write paper May 5
- request CNPq scholar April 28
- write presentation Line: my contribution
- select text for ppg “Tuesdays”
- revise my lattes¹⁵.

Therefore, in 2005, Beatriz wrote «examine journals to publish, what texts do I have? what texts do I need to write?». In 2006, I found the names of her PhD and Master’s advisees, along with the deadlines of their defenses.

And her memory notebooks contain the research projects she conducted at the University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos. In 2004, there were two: “Pedagogical practice at the university: researching teaching trajectories” and “With the past ahead: school trajectories of yesterday’s students, today’s citizens”. In 2009, she wrote the name of another: “Stories of teachers in Novo Hamburgo and São Leopoldo (1930-2000): memories and archives”. In view of the subjects addressed, they all relate to the field of Education History and the professor is interested in researching teacher and student itineraries. From 2009 onwards, the introduction of the subject of school archives indicates another focus of attention, considering the discussions about school culture and educational heritage that gained traction in Education History.

It should be noted that, between 2010 and 2011, she took notes referring to the collection she organized: *Tempos de escola: memórias* (School times: memories)¹⁶. It is a set of three books with autobiographical texts, produced by teachers, mostly university professors, with a long career, many of whom recognized for their work in Education History. Thus, in 2010, she wrote the «list of authors in the collection, I sent an invitation

¹³ Diary, 2000.

¹⁴ International Standing Conference for the History of Education (ISCHE), is an annual Congress that convenes researchers from different countries, being considered an event of high scientific relevance.

¹⁵ Diary, 2003.

¹⁶ B.D. Fischer (ed.), *Tempos de escola: memórias*, São Leopoldo, Oikos, 2012.

on 4 November, I sent a deadline extension on 23 December». In 2011, in some moments, she noted «remember the deadline of the School Times texts».

Moreover, I would like to say that Beatriz used to record in all semesters the date of the Pedagogy Program's graduation ceremony, which brings to mind her esteem for the students in these emblematic moments of graduation.

And, although her involvement with Unisinos occupies much space in her diaries, everything indicates that she did not abandon Faced/UFRGS, as she systematically wrote down several events that took place there and that she wanted to attend. In 2000, on May 30, she highlighted «Faced children's literature room 703». She registered the examination boards she participated in at PPGEDU/UFRGS and, in 2013, she wrote «on a Saturday – Gurias Faced!».

The professional dimensions, which translate into these numerous notes related to teaching and research, indicate the extent to which Beatriz was involved with her work. And these same notes, sometimes overlapping with others, make us think about the challenges of teaching in higher education, the accumulation of tasks, clearly perceivable in many pages, especially in recent years. These myriad demands exemplify the excess of work, as she needed to divide her time between teaching, advisory, research and other activities that required her participation in different contexts of the University.

5. *Other traces of Beatriz, amid the diaries*

As I explored the diaries, I found other ways Beatriz expressed herself, in addition to teaching and research. Along with her professional appointments, these writing supports served to remind her, for example, of health care and home care. Beatriz is attentive to matters pertaining to her health; she systematically did not forget the dates of routine examinations and visits to doctors, dentist and nutritionist. She also worries about going to the hairdresser. These constitute self-care practices that increase over the years. In 1996, amid a list of tasks, she wrote «take diet more seriously, gymnastics as well». As time passed, she seemed to have found space in her life for walking and practicing pilates, as she wrote down these physical activities every day.

The faces of Beatriz, as the mother of Gustavo and Janaína and daughter of Bila, now a centenarian lady, also appear on the diaries. Among older records, references to her children are more constant, for example, she took note of a trip of Gustavo to Europe in 1995, and then we learn that he passed through several countries, because she wrote in the diary, daily, the places where he would be, as well as the flight schedules, on August 6, «departure Gu, SP, 10 p.m.», on August 22, «Rome», on August 24, «Venice» and on September 5, «depart from Paris at 11:30 am, arrive in London». That same year, she wrote on April 21, «holiday – go out with my dear daughter». Two years later, Janaína who would travel to Recife; Beatriz wrote down the name of the lodging hotel, and also the numbers of the room and the contact phone. In these diaries of the 1990s, her

children were adolescents, they needed more attention; perhaps, that is why they appear more in the notes of the mother.

Taking care of the household organization is also an indication of her concerns, as she wrote reminders for herself. Beatriz used to make to-do lists so as not to forget:

Tasks for 1995 – at home

- paint living room wall
- buy carpet
- old photo frames
- decide where to put crystal closet
- buy two ornamental chairs
- living room lights out of order – buy
- TV living room lamp
- organize drawers!¹⁷

Other diaries show that her concern with the organization of the household persists, and the dates of condominium meetings also appear, although all these are always in a much lower proportion than the professional notes.

As time goes by, the children become adults and, little by little, they are no longer as present in the memory notebooks; however, increasingly more care is required for her mother, “grandma Bila”, as Beatriz refers to her in several passages. Thus, on March 2, 2009, she notes «her mother’s 90th birthday» and, from then on, year after year, she notes the date of her birthday, as in the 2013 diary: «grandma Bila, 94 years!». There are many notes involving her mother: starting in 2005, she often writes «Pick up mother in NH, take mother to NH» (Novo Hamburgo), in the same way she noted every time she took her mother to doctors. In the last diary, of 2014, another character appears in the life of Beatriz: puppy Picuxo — there are reminders to have the dog groomed and apply vermifuge.

However, the diaries contain more than just schedule for work, home care, family care, and health appointments. They also contain Beatriz’s expression of socialization, as she cultivates friendships wherever she goes; thus, she organizes social events with girlfriends from the city where she was born — the meetings with the “girls from Noia”¹⁸. There are also notes for parties, dinners with colleagues from Faced and Unisinos. Beatriz is attentive to her dear ones, as she carefully notes the dates of birthdays, so as not to forget.

I still want to examine what Beatriz chose to preface her diaries, that is, the reflections she chose as preamble, revealing her interests and her positions in relation to life. First, it should be said that these impact phrases were found in fourteen diaries; they are not found only in 1995, 1997, 2000, and 2001. As Beatriz is a scholar of the subject of memory, it is not surprising the number of musings on the subject, which are found in the diaries of 1996, 2004, 2005, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2014.

Through literature and psychoanalysis, Beatriz exposes her understandings of the memory phenomenon, comprehended in its multiple temporal dimensions. She quotes

¹⁷ Diary, 1995.

¹⁸ Beatriz’s reference to the city where she was born, Novo Hamburgo.

poet Mario Quintana: «The past is an invention of the present. That is why it is always so beautiful, even when it was a pity. Memory has a beautiful box of colored pencils»¹⁹. In this vein, she copied passages from Monteiro Lobato's *Memórias de Emília*, highlighting the character's line «my memories, Emília explained, are different from all others. I tell what happened and what shall happen»²⁰. Following the paths of literature, she highlighted reflections of the writer Moacyr Scliar: «to some, even those that are not very old, the river of memory is a muddy watercourse that flows, slow and ominous, bringing debris, detritus, corpses, remains of this or that; to me, no: it is a vigorous stream of clear and fresh water»²¹. And words of Ferreira Gullar, taken from the «Folha de São Paulo» newspaper in 2011:

And I wonder what we are made of, whether of matter or of memory. But, you see, memory is not past? I tend to think, outside of apparent logic, that everything is present, everything lived, only that, in general, we are too busy with the now to realize it²².

From the field of Psychoanalysis, she reproduced Diana Corso's thought, saying that «when we arrive in the world, already awaiting for us are the stories of our parents and ancestors, their secrets and longings: we are open works, influenced by what is said about us, to us, and with us», taken from the «Zero Hora» newspaper²³. And even in the last diary, of 2014, the topic appears in remarks by Eduardo Galeano²⁴ and Marta Medeiros, who says in a chronicle that «We have a splendid past ahead. For sailors with a desire for the wind, memory is a starting point»²⁵ and complements: «We have to narrate ourselves to others and to ourselves, in order to be understood. We are all writers, but some write and others do not, said José Saramago. Everything that seems invented flirts with the truth».

Therefore, when comparing all these thoughts, we realize, first, that the choices were not random, that she copied statements with which she identified. In common, the idea of thinking about memory in its inventive capacities, pervaded with subjectivities, as a kind of fabulation of the past, which materializes in the narrative. Also the principle that memory is a production in the present time, it indicating which memories we build about the past, but which also contemplates the perspective of the future.

However, these initial writings on the diaries are not just about memory. We found excerpts from Gaston Bachelard, Georges Duby, Patricia O'Brien, Edgar Morin, Michel Mafessoli, and Eric Hobsbawm, among others. From Bachelard, Beatriz highlights: «It always occurs like this: in the order of philosophy one can only persuade by suggesting fundamental dreams, one gives thought its avenues in dreams»²⁶. From Duby, she quotes:

¹⁹ Diary, 2004.

²⁰ Diary, 2005.

²¹ Diary, 2009.

²² F. Gullar, *Preconceito cultural*, «Folha de São Paulo», 04.12.2011.

²³ Diary, 2008.

²⁴ E. Galeano, *Palavras andantes*, Porto Alegre, L&PM, 1994, p. 96.

²⁵ M. Medeiros, *Somos todos escritores*, «Zero Hora», 23 February 2014.

²⁶ Diary, 2005.

«Vestige of a dream is no less “real” than a step. I believe that the imagination has as much reality as the material»²⁷. From O’Brien, there is a reflection on Foucault, when saying that the philosopher «Did not have a fixed theory or an immutable position with respect to which all things could be measured»²⁸. In 2008, she quoted Morin²⁹: «Life should not be prose made out of obligation. Life is living poetically in passion, in enthusiasm». And, in 2009, Mafessoli: «This is the rhythm of life. Seeing far, behind to see far ahead [and] telling and retelling to presentify the past. Every memory has something epic about it». I also highlight what she copied from Hobsbawm³⁰: «Almost all young people grow up in a continuous present without any organic relationship with the public past of the time in which they live»³¹. In the last ones, once again there is reference to memory in dialogue with time.

The woman who writes this text is moved by the 2003 diary, which is opened with a phrase by Luis Inácio Lula da Silva, «Think with your head, walk with your own legs, listen to what your heart says» (1st January 2003), probably taken from his inaugural speech, in his first term as President of Brazil. Such passage written in the agenda indicates the professor’s political convictions and her hopes for a better country, with prospects for social justice. In this line of thought, we observe, in 2007, this phrase without indication of author: «Fighting for difference when equality standardizes. Fighting for equality when difference makes inferior (good)».

Finally, it is worth noting some phrases with a strong presence of the greater meanings of existence, as she says in 2006, «Honoring life!». Thus, referencing Rubem Alves, she writes: «The order of power is the order of love. Without love, power is stupid. Without power, love is weak, but when the two converge, joy ensues»³². From Guimarães Rosa comes the opening reflection of the 2004 diary: «The course of life wraps everything up. Life is like this: it warms and cools, it tightens and then it loosens, it pacifies and upsets, what it wants from us is courage». Proceeding, Oscar Wilde is featured in 2005, with the following words: «When a person looks at life from an artistic point of view, the brain becomes a heart». In 2011, there is an idea without author: «Happiness is like a butterfly, when you want to catch it, it flies away, but if you sit down without worry it can land on you». A very difficult task — perhaps impossible for me — is attempting any inference about the reasons for these choices for opening the diaries, without thinking about the person Beatriz. In any case, if we examine exclusively what she chose as introduction, as windows open for the new year, we see a woman who cultivates loves and joys, endowed with good humor, who recognizes life as “a gift”.

²⁷ Diary, 2004.

²⁸ Diary, 2005.

²⁹ She writes that the phrase was taken from E. Morin, *Os sete saberes necessários à educação do futuro*, São Paulo, Cortez Editora, 2011.

³⁰ Beatriz notes that the phrase appears in E.J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: the Short Twentieth Century: 1914-1991*, London, Abacus, 1995.

³¹ Diary, 2012.

³² Diary, 2003.

And, finally, I dedicate a few words to reflect on what Beatriz kept within the diaries. There is not a considerable amount of papers; perhaps, they have been taken away. Nevertheless, some have remained, and meseems they should not be ignored in this text. In the first diary of 1995, she kept a note with a reflection written for her, wishing a “happy 1995”, along with a poem about women, by Adelia Prado. Later that year, she kept a message entitled “Letter to God”, a reminder of the mass on the occasion of the graduation of Pedagogy students. Through this keepsake, we learn of the existence of these religious ceremonies in a public institution. In 1997, a picture of Father Reus³³, with a prayer and a post-it note with a “prayer to St. Michael”. In the 2001 diary, there are several papers, one of which announces the VII ASPHE meeting, which we learn would hold discussions on the history of school institutions, literacy, memories and archives. She also printed and kept a long email from her son, of an intimate nature. In addition, there is another paper publicizing “20th century under discussion”, referring to a course given by Donaldo Schuller. She kept a paper with the schedules of a bus that made trips between Porto Alegre and Unisinos. The 2008 diary contained a Unisinos memo, a book return note from the University library, an announcement of the book *Histórias de vida e formação de professores* [Stories of life and teacher training]³⁴, her University card, a sheet with names of candidates for the master’s degree and doctorate, and an annotation of a book called *A impostura do mestre* [The imposture of the schoolmaster], by Marcelo Ricardo Pereira. In 2010, there is a napkin decorated with images of France, a Unisinos advertisement and a sheet with the handwriting of Beatriz, reading «profile: production, publications, capacity for advisory, undergraduate and graduate teaching, expectation as to management», next to each category, a column for marking. Are these the requirements that were expected of a Unisinos professor? Also, there is a well-known chronicle by journalist Paulo Santana called *To Sirs, with Love*, published in the newspaper «Zero Hora». In 2012, there is a text entitled *Interdisciplinary Education*, by Renato Janine Ribeiro, taken from the «Folha de São Paulo» newspaper and a part of a schedule of History Teaching classes, probably for the Pedagogy program. And, emblematically, the last diary features a cartoon criticizing the low salary of teachers.

Examination of these memory notebooks enables us to get closer to their owner. Indications show that, in addition to professional duties, there was room in the diaries for other traces of their owner, expressed in her care for her health, household, and family. There was also room to express her convictions and sensitivities about various topics that mobilized her.

³³ João Batista Reus was a Teuto-Brazilian Jesuit priest who built his missionary trajectory in the city of São Leopoldo, near the Valley of River dos Sinos.

³⁴ I. Ferreira de Souza Bragança, *História de Vida e Formação de Professores: diálogos entre Brasil e Portugal*, Rio de Janeiro, EDUERJ, 2012.

6. *End of diaries?*

In concluding this text, I am struck by a feeling of gratitude towards the woman who allowed its realization. It is necessary to cultivate reverence for those who allow us to enter into their intimate writings in order to produce new knowledge through them.

When I decided to explore Beatriz's diaries, I took the risk of being allured by them³⁵, of perhaps being unable to keep enough detachment to research them with some objectiveness. I made an attempt, in a markedly shifting terrain, due to the affective implications of the woman that writes here.

«Every day she does everything always the same way» seems to be a maxim that accompanies the production of our diaries, after all, in them the becoming of quotidian life materializes in words that systematically indicate our responsibilities, often associated with the demands of work. Thinking about Beatriz, how could she be a good professor and researcher without making use of diaries that worked as supports to memory? However, it can also be inferred that every day she did not do everything always the same way, because we are mutant beings, we transform and reinvent ourselves as time goes by. Peering into the pages of each diary enabled an exercise of perceiving the subtleties of the existence of this woman, professor, researcher, mother and daughter.

³⁵ Â. de Castro Gomes, *Nas malhas do feitiço: o historiador e o encanto dos arquivos privados*, «Estudos Históricos», vol. 11, n. 21, 1998, pp. 121-127.

“With Faith and Knowledge, All Can Be Overcome”: Memories of an Orphanage and of Vocational Education for Abandoned Children (Porto Alegre/RS – 1947 to 1955)

Luciane Sgarbi S. Grazziotin
University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos (Brazil)

Introduction

Sue Mckemmish, in 1996, published a paper titled *Proofs of me...*; the author states that, «at the time it was published, the paper opened new ways, as it explored the nature of personal archives and the social injunctions connected to the role they play in our ways of witnessing and memorializing not only individual lives but also the collective life [...]»¹. These archives may produce other possibilities of analysis of a history in society.

In that way, the study I present allowed for the examination, through Mister José Clério Barbosa de Moraes's oral recollections and personal archives, of the practices instituted in an educational institution founded in the end of the 19th century, the *Pão dos Pobres* (Bread of the Poor) Orphanage. This documentation enabled us to understand the distinct dimensions that compose the school culture produced in this environment, which constitutes a corollary to understanding the schooling processes in other times.

The developed research is part of a broader project named “Instituições escolares na região metropolitana de Porto Alegre e Vale dos Sinos: acervos, memórias e cultura escolar – sec. XIX e XX” (Schooling institutions in the metropolitan region of Porto Alegre and Vale dos Sinos: collections, memories and school culture – 19th and 20th centuries). This historiographic project aims to investigate different educational institutions, including spaces dedicated to fostering, namely orphanages, patronage institutions and schools. They are spaces dedicated to charity, usually funded by religious orders, which maintain a shelter space for “destitute” people, along with a professional educational institute.

The opportunity to access certain school archives, seldom seen and non-divulged in the academic context, led to a chain of reflections, which I have been producing since 2016, in regard to the studying of teaching institutions as research object in the History of Education area.

¹ S. Mckemmish, *Provas de mim...*, in L. Heymann, L. Nedel (edd.). *Pensar os arquivos: uma antologia*, Rio de Janeiro, FGV Editora, 2018, p. 18.

The interest for the *Pão dos Pobres de Santo Antônio* is based on the personal archive of an alumnus, as aforementioned, whose documents and individual memories are used to establish a relation between the institutional and social contexts in the middle of the 20th century.

The contact with Mister Barbosa's path, during the period he stayed in the institution analyzed in this study, enabled the historicization of his life in the Orphanage, nomenclature used at the time, whose lenses to look at the past were the experiences narrated in that space. The time frame, between 1947 and 1955, was chosen based on the time that Mister Barbosa stayed in the institution.

The study aims to analyze, within this eight-year time frame, the representations produced on an institution that has been working as children's shelter and school for orphans in the city of Porto Alegre since 1916; discuss the discursive constructions, pertaining to orphaned children's shelter spaces, conceived by the memories of a person who lived there during the 1940s; and understand the "daily practices"² of a religious institution that adds discipline and techniques with strictly defined times and spaces to a dynamic that combines education and work.

1. Contextualization

According to Desaulniers³, *Pão dos Pobres* was founded on the 15 August 1895 by Canon Marcelino de Souza Bittencourt, in the aim of giving alms and distributing Saint Anthony's bread for the people in need⁴. The orphanage, founded to shelter orphaned boys, was built only in 1916, two decades later. The following decades were characterized, in Brazil, by a very significant industrialization process; such changes brought along as consequence new social demands, mainly in the educational field.

Within an increasingly competitive society, it was essential for people to have a trade to face the difficulties of living in an industrial society that was already showing signs of growing social exclusion⁵. Within the religious field, the institutions, in the aim of keeping up with the times, undertook initiatives to qualify the people in society for

² M. Certeau, *A invenção do cotidiano: artes do fazer*, Petrópolis, Vozes, 2012, p. 109.

³ J. Desaulniers, *Formar cidadãos: uma proposta da escola católica*, «Veritas», vol. 42, n. 2, 1997, pp. 313-331.

⁴ The essential stone was placed in 1904, and the Work was called *Abrigo das Famílias Pobres do Pão dos Pobres de Santo Antônio* (Shelter for Poor Families of Saint Anthony's Bread of the Poor). The institutionalization of schooling takes place in 1910 with the foundation of two schools, *Dom Sebastião*, for girls, and *Dom Feliciano*, for boys, in the aim of educating abandoned children. In 1911, the founder of the Work passed away, while it was in a full expansion process. At the time, no one willing to continue the Work was found. In 1915, by request of the Metropolitan Archbishop Dom João Becker, the Religious Congregation of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, or De La Salle Brothers, takes over; and the institution is opened on the 2 April 1916 (G. Staub, *Projetos de vida e emancipação: constituindo o ser-sujeito cidadão no Pão dos Pobres*, Master's Thesis, Graduate Program in Education, Porto Alegre, University of Vale Do Rio Dos Sinos, 2013, p. 59).

⁵ Desaulniers, *Formar cidadãos*, cit., pp. 313-331.

this developmental context. Thus, catholic trade schools began to emerge, in the aim of preparing students to live in society, providing them with professional training and, more than that, training for life⁶. Such institutions started, then, to train new citizens according to precepts of the Catholic Church. I consider *Pão dos Pobres de Santo Antônio* to be a school that innovated within the educational field at the time, as it associated basic education to the learning of a trade. With this conception, a "new citizen" began to be shaped for a society undergoing organization.

2. Paths taken

Inspired by the studies of Gomes⁷, Heymann and Nedel⁸ and Cunha⁹, I present the basis for documental analysis of personal archives used in this study. Grazziotin¹⁰, Alberti¹¹ and Thompson¹² are part of the theoretical framework regarding oral history.

The personal documents, "treasures" that were kept away for years, enable the construction of a path to understand the representations produced by Mister Barbosa about a shelter institution for abandoned minors. They are relics of an 83-year-old man, from a time described by him as "my jackpot".

⁶ The history of social and assistance commitment of *Pão dos Pobres* as an institution began as counterpart to a bloody civil war, political in its nature, between the years of 1893 and 1895. Until shortly before, Brazil was governed by the imperialist regime, which had ruled the country since its discovery in 1500. In 1889, specifically, the republican regime was established. In the state of Rio Grande do Sul, this passage was not pacific; under the argument that the new republic was exploiting the people of the state with heavy taxes over production goods made there, two expressive groups emerged, ideologically separated by distinct stances: the ones in favor of the government, and the revolutionary ones who defended the separation of the South of Brazil in wishes of creating an independent country. The battle, which occurred in 1893, was called Federalist Revolution, also known as War of Decapitation, and decimated over 10.000 people, leaving widows and their orphaned children abandoned to their own luck. Within this context, some initiatives were created in the aim of supporting the widows and protecting, educating and professionalizing the orphans. One of the few institutions to succeed in this undertaking, surviving to this day (2023), was *Pão dos Pobres de Santo Antônio*. *It is essential, narrate situations the new republic was explicit, at long y the request of the Archbishop essential, narrate situations* (A.D. Corpassi, *A preparação para captação de recursos à luz do novo mrosoc: um estudo de caso da Fundação Pão dos Pobres*, Capstone Project, Graduation Course, Porto Alegre, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, 2018).

⁷ Â. de Castro Gomes, *Nas malhas do feitiço: o historiador e o encanto dos arquivos privados*, «Estudos Históricos», vol. 11, n. 21, 1998, pp. 121-127.

⁸ L. Heymann, L. Nedel, *Apresentação*, in L. Heymann, L. Nedel (edd.). *Pensar os arquivos: uma antologia*, Rio de Janeiro, FGV Editora, 2018.

⁹ M.T. Cunha, *O historiador e suas fontes*, São Paulo, Autêntica, 2009.

¹⁰ L.S. Grazziotin, *Memórias orais arquivadas: a escolarização de migrantes no meio rural da região nordeste do Rio Grande do Sul (1910 a 1940)*, in A. Ruggiero, L.O. Conedera (edd.), *Entre a Itália e o Brasil Meridional: história oral e narrativas de imigrantes*, Porto Alegre, Editora Fi, 2020; Ead., *Bom Jesus, tempo e memória: educação e gênero no contexto urbano (1913-1950)*, in *12º Encontro Sul-Rio-Grandense de Pesquisadores em História da Educação: História, Infância e Educação*, Santa Maria: UNIFRA, 2006, pp. 1-17.

¹¹ V. Alberti, *História oral: a experiência do CPDOC*, Rio de Janeiro, Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 1990.

¹² P. Thompson, *A voz do passado: história oral*, Rio de Janeiro, Paz e Terra, 1992.

According to Ângela de Castro Gomes, «the documentation of private archives would allow, finally and in a very particular way, for breathing life into history, filling it with men and not names [...] Men who have their life stories, their virtues and flaws and that reveal them precisely in this type of material»¹³. And she continues: «For the historian, it is a great opportunity. And I believe that, in order for it to be taken full advantage in terms of what it can provide, historians must equip themselves with the not-so-new procedures of criticism»¹⁴.

Oral memories breathed life into history and another possibility of looking at this “boys’ territory”, *Pão dos Pobres*. They were produced via interview, carried out by me and at Mister Barbosa’s house, along with his wife and daughter. It was these documents, up until recently regarded as ephemeral, trivial, not very trustworthy, that became the masterpiece of this study.

Examining these oral memories and personal artifacts, we are able to notice some “networks”, some affections that emerge from pictures that immediately bring back nostalgic memories. They are “structures of sociability”; they are the “age effects/sympathy”, present in life narratives¹⁵.

A report card, very shabby due to its age, brings on its pages the daily life of who lived in an orphanage and the achievements after leaving it. The report card, held on to by Mister Barbosa, is a space where time stopped; this is a print from 1953, the year he left the institution.

Printed on each yellowed page are diverse prayers, indulgences, fables and curiosities. In a section titled “notes and facts”, there are anecdotes in a jocular tone, as well as customs of the time, pictures of families doing charity and classes of graduates of that year, pictures of students from the institution in a sort of summer camp; pictures of former residents’ weddings and, on the last page, a list of names in a section titled “alms and donations”. The print at hand was trimestral; it is a sort of testimony of belonging for the boys who lived there, who left as adults, and that, “at the moment”, were part of a social space that once excluded them. It is also the “portrait” of the daily life of a society that was just taking its first steps towards a capitalism that would encompass, in the near future, every last bit of its life. This set of perceptions is enabled by the materiality of the Report Card analyzed.

Within his archive, hung on the wall of his house is a diploma of conclusion of professional training. In it, there is the slogan that inspires the title of this paper (*With Faith and Knowledge, All Can Be Overcome*) and the list of 22 children who lived there and who, according to Mister Barbosa’s narrative, left the institution when they turned 18 years old, with professional training: «I was trained to become a machinist [...] This is how I earned my money [...] It was my jackpot, that school» (Interview, 21.11.2021)¹⁶.

¹³ De Castro Gomes, *Nas malhas do feitiço*, cit., p. 125.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ J.-F. Sirinelli, *Os intelectuais*, in R. Rémond (edd.), *Por uma história política*, Rio de Janeiro, Editora FGV, 1996, pp. 231-270.

¹⁶ Our translation. In the original: «Aprendi a profissão de Torneiro mecânico [...] Foi onde eu ganhei um dinheirinho [...] Foi minha Mega Sena, foi aquele colégio [...]».

«Many of these paper sheets, which at first would preserve other uses, when archived, acquire a new status, fulfilling immediate demands, in a sort of musealization»¹⁷. Nora¹⁸ states that

the places of memory are the remains [...] the memory keeps through artifice and will a collectivity. Museums, archives, cemeteries and collections, parties, anniversaries, verbal processes, monuments, sanctuaries, associations are the aims, the testimonies of another time, of the illusions of eternity. [...] They are the rituals of a society with no rituals; ephemeral sacrednesses in a society that desacralizes.

Mister Barbosa builds, with the remains of other times, the testimony of certain collective practices, in a production of senses that allows us a small but clear glimpse onto the experiences, the paths taken individually: and, thus, an overview of Rio Grande do Sul society of the mid-20th century.

In addition to this study, it is important to highlight other studies carried out on the institution known as *Pão dos Pobres de Santo Antônio*, whose focus is related, above all, to themes in the areas of Social Sciences and Psychology.



Fig. 1. Cover of the Report Card of *Pão dos Pobres*, 1953 (Mister Barbosa’s personal archive, 2021)



Fig. 2. Diploma of Conclusion of Professional Training (Mister Barbosa’s personal archive, 2021)

Table 1. Academic production about *Pão dos Pobres de Santo Antônio*

AUTHOR	TITLE	JOURNAL/ INSTITUTION	DATE
Julieta Beatriz Ramos Desaulniers	A dinâmica estrutural do campo Religioso: alguns dados empíricos (The structural dynamic of the Religious field: some empirical data)	«Veritas», vol. 41, n. 2	1996
Leandro R. Pinheiro	O Pão Dos Pobres e o Terceiro Setor (<i>Pão dos Pobres</i> and the Third Sector)	«Veritas», vol. 43, special issue	1998
Ana Paula Brasil Vaz Madruga	Cidadania em construção: A proposta do Pão dos Pobres (Citizenship under construction: the proposal of <i>Pão dos Pobres</i>)	«Veritas», vol. 43, special issue	1998

¹⁷ D.B. Almeida, *Percursos de um Arq-Vivo: entre arquivos e experiências em História da Educação*, Porto Alegre, Letra1, 2021.

¹⁸ P. Nora, *Lês lieux de mémoire – I La republique*, Paris, Gallimard, 1984, p. VI.

Juliana Pedroso	Pão dos Pobres: um estudo para identificação de imagem (<i>Pão dos Pobres</i> : a study for image identification)	Monography: specialization in Business/UFRGS	2009
Edna Das Graças Martins Pereira	Na Casa do Pão e do livro: a Contribuição da Psicanálise para compreender os meninos do Pão dos Pobres a caminho de uma educação cidadã (At the House of the Bread and the book: the Contribution of Psychoanalysis to understand the boys from <i>Pão dos Pobres</i> on the way to a citizen education)	Master's in Education PPGEdu/UNILASALE	2009
Giovana Mazzarolo Foppa	Adolescente egresso da FASE: Estudo de caso sobre o Programa RS socioeducativo (Teenager who exited the Social-Educational Service Foundation: A case study about the Social-Educational Program of Rio Grande do Sul)	Master's degree at the Graduate Program of Criminal Sciences/ PUCRS	2011
Gilmar Staub	Projetos de vida e emancipação: constituindo o ser-sujeito cidadão no Pão dos Pobres (Life projects and emancipation: constituting the being-subject citizen at <i>Pão dos Pobres</i>)	Master's in Education/ UNISINOS	2013
Eduardo Marinho	As fragilidades na gestão de organizações da sociedade civil: um estudo de caso comparativo entre a Fundação o Pão dos Pobres e a Associação São Francisco do bairro Ipiranga (The weaknesses in management of organizations in civil society: a comparative case study between <i>Pão dos Pobres</i> Foundation and <i>São Francisco</i> Association at Ipiranga neighborhood)	Capstone Project: major in Business/UFRGS	2014
Amanda Dom Cortopassi	A preparação para captação de recursos à luz do novo MROSC: um estudo de caso da Fundação Pão dos Pobres (The preparation to collect resources in face of the new Regulatory Framework of Civil Society Organizations: a case study about <i>Pão dos Pobres</i>)	Capstone Project: major in Business /UFRGS	2018

Out of the eight studies about *Pão dos Pobres*, the first ones, from the 1990s mostly, are within the areas of Business and Social Sciences; only two of them focus on Education. The studies identified make us think about the way the Institution was constituted and its management structure, besides there being a case study about some students – this study was developed within the Psychology area.

3. *Path, training, arrivals and departures*

Mister Barbosa says that he had no father or mother; he left the countryside when he was nine and illiterate. «I left, you must have noticed, the seventh of February of

1947, it is a sacred date for my life» (Interview 21.11.2021)¹⁹. He used to live with his grandmother in the rural area; he was taken to Porto Alegre by Mister Sebastião Velho, a family friend. He narrates his arrival and his first impressions in a calm way, making hand gestures and with much nostalgia, as expected.

I got there... cars, I only knew two, what is all this movement, I kept it for myself, right? Then, he [referring to the family friend that took him] took a cab and took me there, and then there is a gate, like, a big, green one, and there was a chapel here, and here is where the workshops started, and here there was the hall office, there, there was a brother sitting down, and there is where they received people. I had never been given a candy in my life. First thing he did was give me a candy (Interview 21.11.2021)²⁰.

He recalls the first moment: «and that is when, ok, then he, Mister Sebastião, said, "here's the boy, here he is". He took me by the arm, left through that church» (Interview 21.11.2021)²¹. It seems like things would happen and, just like that, being there, "goodbye", they stayed there.

Regarding the order, the routine and the discipline to which the boys were submitted, Mister Barbosa recalls that the priests did not punish the children; they called their attention, but did not mistreat them. He talks about how he got a candy from a priest and that, when he was left at the orphanage, on his first day, he played soccer with the young boys.

Memories arise, as we all know, in a disordered manner; memory narratives, as we know, have this characteristic. Even though a word within a memory may seem paradoxical, the interlocutor is able to establish the intended relation. This is how it was, he continues:

leaving through the back of the church, [...] there is, was, a fig tree, like this, that covered a great part of the garden. And a hubbub of people that, my goodness! But what is that? Only with me, they did not speak, my head was in the clouds. I had never travelled by car... never had travelled... none of those things²².

At Mister Barbosa's living room, through my questions, there is, slowly, the return to the past, and the four listeners dive into another time. One cannot do without the past by

¹⁹ Our translation. In the original: «Eu saí daqui, tu deve ter observado aí, o dia sete de fevereiro de 1947, é uma data sagrada pra minha vida».

²⁰ Our translation. In the original: «Cheguei lá...carros eu só conhecia dois, que é que o movimento, fiquei na minha, né? Aí, ele [se refere ao conhecido da família que o levou], pegou o táxi e me levou lá e dali tem um portão, assim, portão grande, verde e tinha uma capela aqui, e aqui começava as oficinas e aqui no começo tinha o escritório de entrada, ali, tinha um irmão sentado, ali que recebia as pessoas. Eu nunca tinha ganhado uma bala na vida. Primeira coisa que ele fez, me deu uma bala».

²¹ Our translation. In the original: «e foi quando, tá, daí ele disse, seu Sebastião, disse, tá entregue o moço, tá entregue. Ele me pegou pelo braço, sai por aquela igreja».

²² Our translation. In the original: «tu sai de trás da igreja, [...] tem, tinha uma figueira, assim, que cobria uma área grande do jardim. E uma algazarra de gente que nossa senhora! Mas o que que é isso? Só comigo, não falavam, eu tava em outro mundo. Nunca tinha andado de carro... nunca tinha andado... nada daquelas coisas».

exercising decision or intelligence; nor is it summoned by a simple act of will. The return to the past is not always a moment of freeing a memory, but an advent, a capture based on the present²³. Maurice Halbwachs, with a similar perspective, states «memory is largely a reconstruction of the past with the help of data borrowed from the present, where the image of then is manifested, already very altered»²⁴.

The reconstruction of the environment, the ways of schooling, the practices experienced in the daily life of the institution begin to take shape; the narrative brings to life, in a nostalgic, but firm, wistful and curiously thankful tone, curious elements, when we take “today” as reference.

First, everybody dressed the same, there was no distinction, there was time for everything. We would go to bed, get up at six, do our hygiene, go to the bathroom, wash ourselves, this and that, six thirty there was the mass, seven o'clock breakfast, and from seven to eight there was the cleaning. Some would clean the bathroom, others would clean the corridor, others would swipe the yard, others would clean the windows and doors, there was something for everybody to do. And it went on [...] after cleaning, we had class (Interview 21.11.2021)²⁵.

In order to understand the daily life in this “orphanage”, I base it on the concept of “daily practices”, developed by Michel de Certeau²⁶; he states: «practices are an art or ways of doing [...] they are a way of thinking combined with a way of acting, an art of combining, inextricable from an art of using».

Within the daily life of the school, distinct practices are part of the day-to-day; Mister Barbosa recalls: «our leisure activity was soccer, and on Sundays there was button soccer, but this one was hard to play because everybody wanted it. And there was chess, but very few played it»²⁷ (Interview 21.11.2021).

Information on the schooling process appears among the daily narratives. The classes were divided into two phases, the younger ones, until 13 years old; and the older ones, between 14 and 18, which were training to learn a trade. We contacted the institution and did not have access to documents concerning the curricular structure proposed at the time.

According to Madruga²⁸, it is possible to infer, taking into consideration the time, that the principles of the *Rerum Novarum* Encyclical, implemented by Pope Leo XII, were reinterpreted in a more radical way and verticalized by the pedagogy applied by the

²³ B. Sarlo, *Tempo passado: cultura da memória e guinada subjetiva*, São Paulo, Cia. das Letras, 2007.

²⁴ M. Halbwachs, *A memória coletiva*, São Paulo, Centauro, 2004, p. 76.

²⁵ Our translation. In the original: «Primeiro lugar, todo mundo vestido igual, não tinha distinção de nada, horário pra tudo. Deitava, levantava seis horas, fazia a higienização, ali banheiro, se lava, isso e aquilo, seis e meia missa, sete horas o café, das sete e até como oito limpeza. Uns limpavam o banheiro, outros limpavam o corredor, outros varriam o pátio, outros limpavam vidro, tinha serviço para todo mundo. E foi indo [...] terminava a limpeza a aula».

²⁶ Certeau, *A invenção do cotidiano*, cit., p. 43.

²⁷ Our translation. In the original: «a recreação era futebol e nos domingos [...] tinha futebol de mesa, botão, mas era, esse era disputado. E tinha xadrez era muito pouquinhos que jogavam».

²⁸ A.P.B.V. Madruga, *Cidadania em construção: a proposta do Pão dos Pobres*, «Veritas», vol. 43, n. 5, 1998, pp. 15-19.

De La Salle Brothers, who took over *Pão dos Pobres*. The institutional foundations were adequate for the full development of a training that took place in a closed boarding school regime, aimed at poor orphans, using disciplinary religious modalities with practices and techniques regulated by previous and strictly-defined times and demarcated spaces.

With a strict routine, according to Mister Barbosa's recollections, there were numerous activities the boys did throughout the day – a set of devices guaranteed by the brothers' strict supervision.

Conclusions

In the course of the investigation, evidence appears on the purposes for the creation of the Institution, which was founded, initially, due to a social problem in Porto Alegre. This situation was due to the exaggerate number of orphans because of the revolutions that exacerbated the abandonment situation, leaving an increasing number of children helpless on the streets. The *Pão dos Pobres de Santo Antônio* Institution, as well as many other orphanages at the time, was founded, thus, to minimize and try to solve this matter, taking these boys in. Based on the memories and documents analyzed, it is possible to identify rituals, times, spaces and daily practices that were part of the Institution.

Mister Barbosa's recollections are filled with nostalgia – «painted with colored pencils», as Mário Quintana²⁹ once said –, which is a common aspect of an interview event. From those, memories of sharing, trust, discipline and a "touch" of loneliness emerge. Matters related to learning a trade, work and training for life are the things that prevail throughout all the narrative that was produced. In the listened memories, there are representations of welcome, affection, with a gratitude tone for the learned trade. There are no complaints, bitterness or a narrative of abandonment, at least none that was verbalized.

Through the sources used in this paper, especially the oral memory, and equipped with my theoretical and methodological choices, I was able to filter, organize, compose and decompose a fragment, among so many that could have been chosen, regarding Mister Barbosa's life. Thompson³⁰ states that «oral history is a history built around people. It brings life into history itself and that expands its field of action». And she continues, «It accepts heroes who are not just among leaders, but among the unknown majority of people [...] oral history proposes a challenge to consecrated history myths [...] it offers the means for a radical transformation to the social meaning of history»³¹.

Memory is connected to an ambition, a pretention to be faithful to the past; and, in spite of the traps that the imaginary sets to memory, it is possible to state that it is a specific search for the "truth"; it is an exercise of looking at the past "thing"; and, in

²⁹ Poet born in Rio Grande do Sul; he lived between 1906 and 1994.

³⁰ Thompson, *A voz do passado*, cit., p. 44.

³¹ *Ibid.*



Fig. 3. Picture with the family friends couple that came to visit him in 1949 (Mister Barbosa's personal archive, 2021)

the end, there is nothing better than the memory as testimony that something happened³².

For my part, as an interviewer and researcher, whose task is to problematize, what impacted me was the interviewee's constant tone of gratitude for the opportunity he had in life and the reverence for the institutional environment. I did not think to find such a condescending and nostalgic narrative, which minimized deeper difficulties, challenges and sadness. To some extent, I was prepared for what I understand, now, to be a stereotype of the memories about a total institution – in this case, the orphanage –, that is, a place of suffering, loneliness and abandonment. Nevertheless, the dimension of abandonment is there, in some way present when he comments on the visits he got over the nine years he was in the Institution. When he was showing me a picture, he pointed out to a couple and said, «They were the only ones, they went there two or three times. After that, Ilton Fernandes went there once, and, then, no one else. Not my sister, nor my

grandmother, uncles, aunts... no one»³³ (Interview 21.11.2021); the tone is, basically, one of observation.

I found, especially, a narrative about the recognition of the role of the orphanage in his life; about thankfulness for the future provided, and without which he would not have achieved the things he did; about admiration for the work and the way the priests conducted the routine of the children who lived there; and about pride, for the trust put in him when he was chosen to collect the donations for the congregation. Lastly, the ills that these institutions usually install in the memories of those who lived there were not identified at any moment.

³² P. Ricœur, *A memória, a história, o esquecimento*, Campinas, Unicamp, 2007.

³³ Our translation. In the original: «Eram os únicos, foram umas duas, duas ou três vezes e depois o Ilton Fernandes foi uma vez só e mais ninguém. Nem minha irmã, nem minha avó, nem meus tios, nem nada».

Narrating the School of the Past and the Future. A Preliminary Analysis of the “Educational Memories on Video” (MEV) Database

Stefano Oliviero
University of Florence (Italy)

1. *Memories, stereotypes and school*

In everyday language, history and memory are often used interchangeably, whereas it is well known that these two forms of processing the past possess fundamental underlying differences. In essence, history constructs narratives based on information drawn from a number of sources, which are duly criticised, interwoven and contextualised. Memory, on the other hand, relies on an inherently subjective point of view and on collective representations – elements that are not necessarily substantiated or supported by sources. Memory thus sometimes tends to generalise or simplify a subject of study – the past – which is, in reality, highly complex. An accurate reconstruction of the past, beyond the nuances of the relationship between history and memory, which we will discuss later in this paper, must instead adopt a rigorous historical method.

Nevertheless, the confusion between history and memory is strongly reinforced in public discourse. Indeed, in public discourse, the task of interpreting and recounting the past is frequently entrusted mainly to memory, which is considered more empathetic and comprehensible than history, which is instead perceived as dry and impassive. Such an approach is, of course, scientifically inadequate, but nonetheless ends up being privileged over the historical method.

Judgements formulated in the public debate on phenomena that occurred in the past are thus often constructed on the basis of memory rather than historical analysis.

Memory is, however, conditioned by a number of factors of an individual and collective nature, including culture, the choice to remember or to forget, power, politics, religion, and even historiographical production itself.

«Official memory», recalls Giovanni De Luna, «is essentially “cultural” memory. Devoid of any “biological” points of reference, it can therefore only be created artificially, according to the principle that ‘the past does not establish itself naturally but is a cultural creation’, whereby those who construct memory deliberately choose which aspects of the past need to be brought to life in the present. The state, in particular, does so by using

a multitude of tools: history books, school textbooks, monuments, toponymy, public holidays and political rituals»¹.

However, the influence of the imagination on conventional wisdom also plays an important role in the construction of individual and collective memory. In other words, a personal memory is conditioned as much by the imagination as by direct lived experience. For example, Italians' individual and collective memories of the "Swinging Sixties" of the 20th century are undoubtedly influenced by the complex collective imagination of the "economic miracle", mediated as is well known by cinema, fashion, memories, new means of transport, electrical appliances, etc.².

In short, stereotypical readings of past phenomena, which populate the imagination in abundance, can therefore condition individual memories.

School memories are certainly no exception. Indeed, school, as a widely shared experience in the lives of so many people, is perhaps particularly susceptible to these influences, to the extent that it could even be read as a category of imagination in itself³. School memory understood as an evocation of a shared school of the past⁴. We shall discuss this in more detail later, however.

This contribution thus seeks to promote a reflection on stereotypical views of the school of the past and their interrelationship with memory. In particular, we will focus on certain features of the school of the past, including educational rigour and the selective nature of education, which are sometimes cast in conventional wisdom as indices of quality. Such indices of quality are, however, often supported more by memories alone than by scientific evidence.

In the following pages, I will therefore examine some recurring themes and opinions in the public debate on schooling and then try to match them, or at least compare them, with the memories and imagination that emerge from the testimonies of ordinary people collected in the "Educational Memories on Video" (MEV) database, hosted on the portal www.memoriascolstica.it.

The paper will thus also be an opportunity to describe, albeit briefly, the MEV database, to the creation of which this author has contributed together with the University of Florence research unit (coordinated by Gianfranco Bandini) for the project "School Memories between Social Perception and Collective Representation (Italy, 1861-2001)", coordinated at national level by Roberto Sani of the University of Macerata⁵.

¹ G. De Luna, *La Repubblica del dolore. Le memorie di un'Italia divisa*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 2015.

² P. Gabrielli, *Anni di novità e di grandi cose. il boom economico fra tradizione e cambiamento*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2011.

³ J. Meda, *La memoria della scuola tra rappresentazione collettiva e uso pubblico del passato*, in S. Polenghi, G. Zago, L. Agostinetto (edd.), *Memoria ed educazione*, Lecce, PensaMultimedia, 2021, p. 30; A. B. Escolano, *Más allá del espasmo del presente: la escuela como memoria*, «História da Educação», vol. XV, n. 33, 2011, pp. 10-30.

⁴ J. Meda, A. Viñao, *School Memory: Historiographical Balance and Heuristics Perspectives*, in C. Yanes-Cabrera, J. Meda, A. Viñao (edd.), *School Memories. New Trends in the History of Education*, Cham, Springer, 2017, p. 2.

⁵ R. Sani, J. Meda, *School Memories between Social Perception and Collective Representation: an Innovative Research Project with a Strong International Focus*, «History of Education and Children's Literature», vol. 17, n. 1, 2022, pp. 9-26.

Lastly, I will attempt to offer some brief observations on the extent to which individual and collective memories of schooling may condition or have conditioned the choices of policy-makers on the future of education.

2. *The obsession with memory*

Memory has only recently become a topic of study in a historical-educational context, owing to the pioneering research conducted at the beginning of the millennium in Spain and Latin America, culminating in the key turning point of the Seville conference in 2015⁶, which also provided a solid foundation for the Italian line of research, now firmly established. There is no need here, however, to reiterate the stages of this historiographical development, on which timely and in-depth contributions can be found in this volume.

Among the various historiographical perspectives that memory has opened up in the field of education, I would like to recall here at least its contribution to the study of collective representations and the imagination (through, for example, research on film and literary production) and to the study of collective civic education processes (through research on public monuments, works of art, philately, honours, etc.). The study of memory, then, allows us to shed light on everyday school life and to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics within classrooms through the analysis of the school's "black box". These perspectives were investigated in detail and as a whole by the research groups involved in the project "School Memories between Social Perception and Collective Representation (Italy, 1861-2001)", in the context of which the publishing initiative that includes this paper was also initiated⁷.

In short, venturing into school memories means entering a field of research that is full of opportunities, but also pitfalls and challenges.

Memory is, in fact, a highly complex subject of study, which requires an endless bibliography spanning various disciplines: from history to philosophy, from neuroscience to linguistics, from psychology to ethology, from anthropology to sociology, and so on. These are, however, just a few examples of disciplines that reflect upon the vast, and by no means circumscribed, universe that is memory. Indeed, on the contrary, memory studies are currently being further expanded.

To use Patrizia Violi's incisive summary, our epoch is «obsessed and permeated by the thought of memory». Beyond the aspects investigated by cultural studies on memory and its relationship with history, in recent years, again in Violi's words, «the discourse on memory [has progressively grown], with an explosion of memory-related phenomena, which multiply in every field – from the proliferation of commemorations and remembrance days, to the incessant opening of new memorial museums, from

⁶ Yanes-Cabrera, Meda, Viñao (edd.), *School Memories*, cit.

⁷ Please refer to the page on the portal, where you will find the updated list of publications originating from the project <https://www.memoriascolastica.it/le-nostre-pubblicazioni> (last access: 10.03.2023).

the frequency with which artists work on the subject, down to the more frivolous [...] phenomenon of the nostalgia for the past that runs through much of our culture, from design objects to television series, – and leads us to think of an authentic cultural consumption of the past»⁸.

In short, the field of *memory studies* is currently being spurred on by stimuli that were, until recently, unheard of, and is undergoing continuous qualitative and quantitative evolution.

In this context, the relationship between history and memory – a relationship that, moreover, is already in constant evolution and the subject of much historiographical discussion in itself – has also become more dynamic. It would be impossible to recall these discussions in their entirety in these pages, but in essence, they have moved from an initial phase in which the dividing line between the two forms of processing the past was clear-cut, to a reading in which the boundaries between history and memory could be drawn less sharply⁹. As Marcello Flores has recently so lucidly pointed out, «today, the relationship with the past – of memory and history, often without the possibility of making a distinction between them – is an increasingly central element of public life, but in an intertwined, contradictory and confusing way»¹⁰.

In short, the growing need for a past expressed by our society – that obsession that we have already mentioned – has encouraged an osmosis between history and memory. However, this osmosis, to stay with the metaphor of liquids, has resulted in a solution that is completely unbalanced towards memory, which ostensibly, but only superficially, seems to be able to respond more effectively to the processing of the past.

Thus, with the complicity of the culture industry and the mainstream media, memory has provided a firm foothold for those interpretations of the past that have favoured a moral or political approach, without having to risk confronting the sources and reconstructing the causes of various phenomena. This use of memory serves the needs expressed by the dominant power of the day, but is far removed from seeking to understanding the phenomena and problems of the present and risks rendering the field of history entirely barren.

In reality, however, this prominence of memory also offers an opportunity to rise to a challenge and rethink ways of approaching history, i.e. the role of the historian. A history that does not renounce methodological rigour, but is able to confront the evolution of society. A history that is more sensitive to popular aspects, open to new technologies and, above all, attentive to the participatory processes of research and to public engagement – the real strength of memory¹¹.

⁸ P. Violi, *I paesaggi della memoria. Il trauma, lo spazio, la storia*, Milano, Bompiani, 2014, p. 15.

⁹ B. Bonomo, *Voci della memoria. L'uso delle fonti orali nella ricerca storica*, Roma, Carocci, 2013, pp. 32-38; C. Pavone, *Prima lezione di storia contemporanea*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2007; M. Halbwachs, *La memoria collettiva*, Milano, Unicopli, 2001, pp. 123-66.

¹⁰ M. Flores, *Cattiva memoria. Perché è difficile fare i conti con la storia*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2021, p. 107.

¹¹ G. Bandini, *Tempi duri per la storia. Il contributo della Public History of Education alla consapevolezza delle nostre complesse identità*, in G. Bandini, S. Oliviero, M. Brunelli, P. Bianchini, F. Borruso, *La Public History tra scuola, università e territorio. Una introduzione operativa*, Firenze, Firenze University Press, 2022, pp. 95-110.

The increasing focus on memory, however, as we have mentioned, also implies the growth of *memory studies*, and thus the emergence of new historiographical perspectives.

The “Educational Memories on Video” (MEV) database, as we shall see in shortly, was created precisely in an attempt to respond to the need to develop new approaches to making educational history and, at the same time, to offer a glimpse into those aspects of everyday school life that are difficult to detect with traditional sources.

3. *The “Educational Memories on Video” database*

The MEV database, an integral part of the *memoriascolastica.it* portal, currently contains almost 300 video interviews, including school and childhood memories of ordinary people, as well as workplace memories of teachers, educators, headteachers and educational directors¹².

The video testimonies were produced by students, volunteers and researchers from the University of Florence and then uploaded to YouTube by the interviewers. The University’s research team then incorporated the testimonies into the *memoriascolastica.it* portal and catalogued and indexed them according to pre-established parameters, with the help of a software programme, *Mnemosine*, specially created (and patented) by the national research group coordinated by the University of Macerata¹³. Finally, each memory is accompanied by a descriptive sheet, also drafted by one of the team members. All the material is open source.

The interviews vary in length from 30 minutes to over two hours and average 50 to 60 minutes. The topics covered focus on everyday school life, material conditions and relationships between pupils, parents and teachers.

With regard to the quantitative distribution among the various types of video testimonies, out of all the resources, school and childhood memories currently represent the overwhelming majority compared to other categories. School testimonies covering the period from the 1960s to the 1980s are the most prevalent overall.

As for the geographical location of the eyewitnesses, i.e. their birthplace or place of residence, this is mainly concentrated in Tuscany (of which Florence is, indeed, the capital), with a few cases in other parts of Italy.

Among the many issues addressed by the eyewitnesses, it is worth mentioning at least three: the processes of modernisation in Italy that form the backdrop to school memories and the very perception of school; the considerable social recognition of the role of teachers that seems to populate the memories of many of the eyewitnesses; and the

¹² G. Bandini, S. Oliviero. *Memorie educative in video*, Vol. I, Firenze, Edizioni Forlilpsi, 2021; G. Bandini, S. Oliviero, *Memorie Educative in Video*, Vol. II, Firenze, Edizioni Forlilpsi, 2022.

¹³ P. Alfieri, G. Bandini, A. Barausse, C. Covato, A. Debé, C. Ghizzoni, C. Lepri, L. Levantesi, J. Meda, C. Meta; M.C. Morandini, S. Oliviero, R. Sani, F. Targhetta, G. Zago, *Mnemosine. Historical Open Data Management Software*, 2021; Patent Number: D0000150490.

theme of punishment, often recalled as a natural and integral element of the curriculum, especially between the 1950s and 1970s. We shall return to this in a moment.

Of particular interest is the use of photographs taken from the interviewee's family album, or other objects kept by the eyewitness, as memory triggers; photos and objects filmed by the cameras and captured in the video testimony thus become further sources on which research paths could be built.

In terms of methodological aspects, it is worth highlighting the intergenerational relationship between interviewer and interviewee sparked in each video interview – a relationship that, beyond the content collected, has thus also taken on an educational value¹⁴.

Ultimately, the MEV database, as mentioned above, has therefore taken up the challenge of renewing approaches to, and languages of, history. Moreover, it has opened up new historiographical horizons by presenting previously unpublished school memories¹⁵.

Indeed, MEV stems from a research project that emphasises, first and foremost, the aspect of engagement, which we have seen to be a highly sought-after and emerging social need. This active participation involves both the researcher and the non-academic public, who are free to access sources thanks to open-access digital technology. Moreover, the participatory approach is also evident from the active role attributed to the interviewers (and the eyewitnesses), who retain the intellectual property of their videos, which are uploaded to YouTube through their accounts. While this method of collecting and storing video interviews certainly does not fulfil all the requirements that the professional archiving of sources would entail, it is undoubtedly useful from a technical and manageability point of view, as well as being beneficial in terms of the interviewer's active participation in the research.

As mentioned above, the MEV project is undoubtedly helping to open the school's "black box", allowing us to take a closer look at some of the practices of everyday life that only memories can restore. In other words, the "Educational Memories on Video" database not only provides a consistent and continuously updated archive of individual memories, but also offers the opportunity to gain an overview of certain phenomena that defined many people's school experience.

Analysis of the sources stored in the MEV suggests various avenues of research that may contribute to supplementing the history of schooling, which is event-based or predominantly reconstructed from legislative sources.

In the following pages, however, we will focus on some reflections on the relationship between stereotypes and memories collected in the MEV and in particular, as Juri Meda has incisively observed, «to define how the present looks at the past and interprets or reinterprets it». «School memory», Meda continues, «does not interest us merely as a

¹⁴ P. Clemente, *La postura del ricordante. Memorie, generazioni, storie della vita e un antropologo che si racconta*, «L'ospite ingrato», II, 1999, pp. 65-96, <https://www.ospiteingrato.unisi.it/la-postura-del-ricordantememorie-generazioni-storie-della-vita-e-un-antropologo-che-si-raccontapietro-clemente/> (last access: 10.03.2023); D. Demetrio, *Pedagogia della memoria. Per se stessi con gli altri*, Roma, Meltemi, 1998.

¹⁵ G. Bandini, *Educational Memories and Public History: A Necessary Meeting*, in Yanes-Cabrera, Meda, Viñao (edd.), *School Memories. New Trends in the History of Education*, cit., pp. 143-156.

channel to access the schools of the past, but as a key to understanding what we know today or believe we know about schools of the past and how far what we know corresponds to reality, or whether our understanding is merely the result of prejudices and stereotypes that have become ingrained in the common sentiment, and difficult to uproot»¹⁶.

Let us try, then, to trace and examine some of these judgements and stereotypes in the individual memories collected in the MEV. In particular, we will refer to school and childhood memories.

4. *School memories and conventional wisdom*

Among the topics covered by the video interviews collected in the MEV, there are of course certain topics that lend themselves best to this discussion on prejudices and conventional wisdom.

Take, for example, punishment, a practice mentioned in many of the testimonies and to describe which memories are essential¹⁷. Beyond the singularities and variety of the punishments recounted in the various interviews, which could therefore even be indexed according to their specificities, what interests us most is the way in which these practices – the punishments – are remembered by the eyewitnesses. In short, we are interested in better understanding the perceptions that the eyewitnesses have of school punishments.

It is, above all, immediately clear that the individual's recollection is conditioned by the social perception of the punishments, based, however, on the era in which they occurred. Conversely, detached observations are rare. Indeed, the eyewitnesses recount the punishments they experienced themselves, or were subjected to by other pupils, as a routine part of everyday school life. They do so without stigmatising the negative aspects, but rather, on the contrary, recognising (or in some cases even extolling) their pedagogical value.

Although punishment was banned, it seems to have been an integral part of curricular activities until well into the 1970s and does not, therefore, always appear to be distinguishable in the eyes of the eyewitness. One eyewitness, for example, recounts an incident during the late 1960s when, after a spelling mistake, his teacher forced him to rewrite the word correctly a thousand times. However, the witness, who was eight years old at the time, merely filled several pages of his notebook with the word "convicted", without counting the total. The teacher did do the maths, however, and upon ascertaining that the child had only partially completed the task, increased the number of lines from one thousand to two thousand. It can hardly be said that the teacher was sympathetic... Nonetheless, the eyewitness recalls this episode without ever describing it as a punishment,

¹⁶ J. Meda, *Memoria magistra*, cit., p. 31.

¹⁷ G. Bandini, V. Francis, *Corporal Punishment at School and in the Family: a Long Process for its Complete Elimination*, «Rivista italiana di educazione familiare», vol. 16, 2020, pp. 1-9.

but, on the contrary, recounts it only to exalt the great life lessons delivered by his beloved teacher, at the mention of whom he is moved to floods of tears¹⁸.

In cases where the most explicit punishments, i.e. corporal punishments, are recalled, we often hear episodes recounted with the same emotional participation with which the witnesses describe other school routines, without implying any judgement. Indeed, there are video testimonies in which the punishment incidents are even recounted with a certain glee. For example, one of the eyewitnesses describes with hilarity how, also in the late 1960s, the school caretaker tied him to his chair with a rope due to his misbehaviour...

All in all, what emerges from the video testimonies is that a certain strictness in teaching and educational methods was undoubtedly more than tolerated and judged by the eyewitnesses to be normal practice – or even appropriate, as a sign of the school's high standards¹⁹.

In the eyewitnesses' accounts, the dialectical relationship between the authoritarian methods of teachers and academic quality (and thus also the quality of the teachers themselves) seems almost to have become a category of their imagination. The teacher is the absolute protagonist of the educational and didactic processes, while the pupil is always a subordinate.

The undisputed authority of the teacher, gained through their authoritarianism, was also confirmed by the families. Indeed, recurrent reference is made in the interviews to an absolute trust in teachers and, above all, a widespread recognition of their authority. «As far as my parents were concerned, I was always wrong», says one eyewitness, yet the account does not appear at all resentful; rather, the judgement is largely positive, due to the unconditional respect their parents showed for the teachers. In short, there is hardly any critical assessment of the cultural, intellectual and social subordination that many people suffered at school up until the late 1970s. There are, moreover, no concerns about the behaviour of the parents.

Instead, a representation of school as ontologically strict, austere and selective dominates the interviews – a stereotype that is decidedly entrenched and difficult to uproot.

More generally, the video interviews reveal the conviction that schools of the past were better than schools of the present, precisely because they were stricter. So, they were better, because the teachers were firm and the pupils were also more studious.

This prejudice is so difficult to uproot that, to some degree, we can even find traces of it in a video testimony, also collected in the MEV, by Agostino Burberi, a pupil of Don Lorenzo Milani, who famously made the fight against class-based schooling his life's

¹⁸ S. Oliviero, *1000 volte già. Memorie d'infanzia di Massimo Avanzati*, «Memorie Educative in Video», DOI: 10.53221/2073, Last updated: 31.12.2022, <https://www.memoriascolastica.it/memoria-individuale/video-testimonianze/1000-volte-gia-memoria-di-infanzia-di-massimo-avanzati> (last access: 11.03.2023).

¹⁹ L. Paciaroni, *Memorie di scuola. Contributo a una storia delle pratiche didattiche ed educative nelle scuole marchigiane attraverso le testimonianze di maestri e maestre (1945-1985)*, Macerata, eum, 2020; Chiara Martinelli, «Le querce non fanno limoni». *Mutamenti scolastici e sociali nelle testimonianze orali relative agli anni Cinquanta, Sessanta e Settanta*, «History of Education and Children's Literature», vol. 17, n. 1, 2022, pp. 517-536.

calling²⁰. The memories of this eyewitness, which are worth examining in more detail, are consistent with those of others regarding the judgement of corporal punishment. The methods used by the Prior of Barbiana are, however, well known and widely discussed in the historiography²¹. There is, on the other hand, an interesting passage in which Burberi describes the studiousness of the pupils at the School of Barbiana in conducting their research in the classroom, comparing them, however, with pupils of today rather than the pupils of the time, as would perhaps have been more straightforward: «you young people of today», says Agostino, «believe everything they tell you on the internet and no longer understand what is the truth and what isn't the truth». In other words, young people of today are superficial. It is evident, however, that this is not an opinion that is actually reflected by Burberi and the other eyewitnesses interviewed, i.e. arising exclusively from the reflections of the eyewitnesses interviewed for the MEV database, but rather appear to be collective representations that have become crystallised.

5. *School memories and prejudices in the public debate*

On the other hand, this prejudice about the alleged superficiality of the pupils or young people of today compared to young people of the past, often finds its way into the public debate, due in part to the support of authoritative figures. In Italy, the statements of prominent intellectuals, such as Umberto Galimberti or Ernesto Galli della Loggia, on the limited knowledge of the youth of today and the relative responsibilities of schools are fairly well known²². Such statements are, however, based mainly on the collective imagination and personal memories rather than on specific studies.

Indeed, the public debate on schools in Italy in recent years has been fuelled by stereotyped judgements not infrequently built on individual and collective memories. These memories are themselves conditioned by pedagogical models that were prevalent in the past, most notably the Gentile model.

In 2021, for example, *Il danno scolastico. La scuola progressista come macchina della disuguaglianza* (Educational Damage. Progressive Schooling as a Machine of Inequality), a pamphlet co-written by two authors, received considerable media attention. The title already states beyond a shadow of a doubt the position of the authors, who are indeed quite well known for their stringent criticism of Italian state schooling²³. The book makes

²⁰ Interview with Agostino Burberi, last updated: 24.11.2022, <https://youtu.be/Y3PeO2K1kGo> (last access: 10.03.2023).

²¹ A. Santoni Rugiu, *Don Milani. Una lezione di utopia*, Pisa, Ets, 2007.

²² P. Fasce, *Sul vanverismo pedagogico*, last updated: 03.12.2020, <https://www.educazioneaperta.it/sul-vanverismo-pedagogico.html> (last access: 11.02.2023); C. Raimo, *L'aula vuota di Ernesto Galli della Loggia è un libro pessimo sotto ogni punto di vista*, «Minima et Moralia», 12 June 2019, last updated: 12.06.2019, <https://www.minimaetmoralia.it/wp/altro/aula-vuota-ernesto-galli-della-loggia-un-libro-pessimo-punto-vista> (last access: 11.03.2023).

²³ L. Ricolfi, P. Mastrocola, *Il danno scolastico*, Milano, La Nave di Teseo, 2021.

abundant use of the authors' individual recollections, on which detractors' arguments about mass democratic schooling often rest, to argue for the irreplaceable excellence of the selective school: a serious, austere and therefore high-quality model. The method adopted in the book, in other words, places memory above history, and almost inevitably ends up making generalisations or judgements that are poorly supported by rigorous historical or scientific investigation. Ultimately, the incontrovertible thesis that arises from the memories of the two authors is that the schools of yesterday were better than the schools of today.

This idea of schools of the past has thus been re-emphasised by the media and seems to have conditioned the school memories of many ordinary eyewitnesses, or rather seems to have conditioned their reading of those school memories.

It is, however, an intertwining between a certain idea of schooling and the construction of collective memory, which is by no means confined to the work of Mastrocola and Ricolfi, but can be found, as we have seen, in numerous stances in the public debate and even in educational reform projects.

A case in point, which we would regard as emblematic, is the so-called *Buona Scuola* (Good School) reform project promoted by the Renzi government (during the 17th Legislature) between 2014 and 2015. Needless to say, we cannot dwell here on the political line of the Renzi government and its idea of schooling. Suffice it to say that the Good School reform project, and to some extent even the approved law (Law no. 107 of 2015), essentially insisted on a neoliberal school model²⁴.

The Italian Prime Minister invested heavily in school reform, a reform that on several occasions – in line with his well-known communication style – he presented and publicly defended in person, bypassing the Minister of Education (Stefania Giannini), who almost always remained in the background.

Among the numerous occasions on which the Prime Minister presented the reform project, a famous video from 2015 is particularly relevant to the reflections we propose in this paper, in which we find various school stereotypes reflected in the collective memory and supported precisely by the individual memory of the Prime Minister himself²⁵. In this video, Matteo Renzi explains his reform using a slate blackboard – an object that is in itself evocative, as it is imprinted in the school memories of Italians of all generations. Then, to describe the support that, in his view, the Good School reform would give to every teacher, the Prime Minister recalls his teacher and the prestige she enjoyed.

Today, teachers have lost some of the social authority they had in previous years. My teacher, Eda, in the small town where I grew up, used to enter the bar, enter the club, and was respected by everyone, just like the pharmacist, the marshal or the parish priest, because hers was a figure that had social prestige. Today, that social prestige has been lost. We, as new parents, are partly to blame, because when my father was called by a teacher to say that I had misbehaved, he blamed me; my generation of parents,

²⁴ S. Oliviero, *La scuola nella società delle gomitate (2010-2020)*, in S. Santamaita, *Storia della scuola. Dalla scuola al sistema formativo*, Milano-Torino, Pearson, 2021, pp. 228-270.

²⁵ *La Buona Scuola*, last updated: 13.05.2015, <https://youtu.be/yEM1Xnx4Uvs?t=352> (last access: 10.03.2023).

on the other hand, often blames the teachers. So the primary responsibility lies with us, the parents of the new generation. But let's be clear, there's also a share of responsibility that stems from the fact that when you ask pupils to boycott the INVALSI [Italian National Institute for Educational Evaluation] tests, or threaten to block the exams, you're not doing the school a service and you're not doing those pupils a service. That's why it's important to be able to intervene by giving teachers more money, not because social authority derives from this, but because it's a matter of justice.

Matteo Renzi's arguments, as previously mentioned, are thus clearly emblematic for the purposes of our discourse. Indeed, social recognition of teachers passes through the filter of individual memory. This recognition is in itself strongly intertwined with the collective social representation of schools, past and present, and their actors (teachers, pupils and parents), imprinted in the common sentiment. The individual and collective school memory, with its mechanisms, therefore also becomes a basis on which to plan reforms.

In conclusion, research on school memories opens up horizons to be explored and can provide support in understanding the conditioning of conventional wisdom on our memories and thus on our identities. It also provides support for a deeper understanding of the processes by which ideas on schooling take shape, sometimes determining choices that influence the future. Indeed, the collective school memory continuously reconstructs itself by proposing in the present a selection of memories of the past made by social groups and individuals to determine a precise cultural identity. School, as the undisputed protagonist in the life experience of many people in advanced societies, is undoubtedly an essential cog in this mechanism.

Educational Policy in Greece and Educational Discourse throughout 1963-1965: Male and Female Student Memories

Evangelia Kalerante, Georgios Tzartzas
University of Western Macedonia (Greece)

Introduction

In our research we examine social references and political considerations, as they are interpreted by social subjects, who in the specific period between 1963-1965 were students at Greek universities. We attempt to explore specific cultural issues and how this youth culture integrates the interpretation of the political intentions of the Union Centre government, but also more broadly of right-wing (EPE) and left-wing (EDA) political plans. The specific content of the policy includes the successive electoral victories of the Union Centre, initially with 42% (November 1963) and 53% later on (February 1964)¹.

During this period (1963-1965), unique political student movements are evolving, who join with other population groups in claiming rights by challenging conservative right-wing politicians². Perceived as a development of political events, the youth movement represents a political reflection, focusing on the promotion of undemocratic conditions in the coordination of political actions for democracy, political ethics, and the mitigation of social inequalities, according to Donatella Dela Porta and Mario Tiani³. The important point is that these unique movement actions contain a corresponding scientific chapter, prefiguring alternatives for the democratic organisation of the State, rights to education, elimination of social inequalities, structures of opportunity in education, in a system of economic and political modernisation⁴. The youth expresses a

¹ G. Anastasiades, P. Petridis (edd.), *G. Papandreou. The Crisis of Institutions, Party Formations and Political Discourse*, Thessaloniki, University Studio Press, 1990; J. Meynaud, *Les Forces politiques en Grèce*, Paris, Lausanne, 1965; I. Nikolakopoulos, *Searching for the Centre: the Electoral Wanderings of a 15-Year Period (1946-1961)*, in G. Anastasiades, P. Petridis (edd.), *G. Papandreou. The Crisis of Institutions, Party Formations and Political Discourse*, cit., pp. 431-458.

² M. Cheze, *La France en Grèce. Etude de la politique culturelle française en territoire hellène du début des années 1930 à 1981*, Paris, Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, 2013; E. Giotopoulou-Sissilianou, *Education Matters*, Athens, Kedros, 2007.

³ Ch. Lazos, *Greek Student Movement 1821-1973*, Athens, Gnosi, 1987.

⁴ G. Becker, *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1964; D. Bell, *The Reforming of General Education*, New York, Doubleday Anchor, 1966.

new socio-political discourse rationalising expectations for individual goals, reinforcing the progressive narrative⁵, perhaps by writing all these political expectations to the government of the Union Centre and personally to Papandreou⁶.

The issue of education, which is promoted as a political demand of the Union Centre and the EDA⁷, is also synchronised with the research work of the Institutes and bodies⁸ who consider that modernisation in economics and politics is directly linked to the strengthening of the right to education and the reduction of illiteracy⁹. Students reinforce the political argument for structures of opportunity for young men and women in privileged professional positions, by implicitly expressing a political reason for the presence of young people on the social and political scene and, simultaneously, the high educational capital, which seeks to be transformed into a high social status. Progress is interpreted in political terms as an option to overturn outdated political conservative correlations¹⁰. In essence, the different versions of political discourse that are emerging during this period (1963-1965) express broader views, selectively adapting the demands of the 1960s¹¹, which are evolving at an international level, broadening prospects for the reduction of social exclusion, social inequalities, and authoritarian policies of governance¹².

1. *Methodology*

The present study is based on a qualitative research (2021-2022) and intends to show up perceptions of Greek student in the tertiary education during the period 1963-1965 in Greece. Refers to interviews with three students from the natural sciences and two from the humanistic. The interviews were semi-structured and repeated several times, in several topics in order to approach issues on politic, education, culture, personal ambitions as well as identity issues.

We considered as important to address this particular group of students between 1963-1965, because this population was already limited during this period. Additionally,

⁵ I. Papathanasiou (ed.), *The Lambrakis Youth in the 1960s: Archival Documentation and Autobiographical Testimonies*, Athens, IAEN-GGNG & EIE, 2008.

⁶ R. Imvrioti, *The Youth's Accusations*, Athens, Diogenes, 1972; N. Demertzis, G. Stavrakakis (edd.), *Youth: The Imponderable Factor*, Athens, Polytropon, 2008.

⁷ EDA (United Democratic Left), *Science and Scientists in Greece*, United Democratic Left, 1966.

⁸ P. Bourdieu, L. Boltanski, *Le titre et le poste: rapports entre le système de production et le système de reproduction*, «Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales», vol. 1-2, 1975, pp. 95-107; R.B. Braithwaite, *Scientific Explanation*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1964.

⁹ H. Grau, *Greece: Urban Adult Education, 20 September 1964-19 May 1965*, Paris, UNESCO, 1965.

¹⁰ J.S. Coleman, *Equality of Educational Opportunity*, Washington, US Government Printing Office, 1966.

¹¹ T.H. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties*, Oxford, Oxford University, 1995.

¹² D. Lockwood, *Social Integration and System Integration*, in G. K. Zollschan, W. Hirsch (edd.), *Explorations in Social Change*, London, Routledge, 1964; A. Maddison, A. Stavrianopoulos, B. Higgins, *Foreign Skills and Technical Assistance in Greek Development*, Paris, OECD, 1966.

the population had either decreased due to age or some individuals suffered from various diseases. Of course, this category also includes people who do not wish to address issues related to memories¹³.

From a group of 30 interested persons, 5 students (3 males and 2 females), were chosen for the interviews. The approach is that of a micro-history, following the narrations of a period which is not determined by a written history, but by the oral narration, focusing on the style of the discourse, the action of approving or disapproving, the emotions. It is important to know that the historical paradigm of that period is focusing on the memories¹⁴.

At the end, the interviews have transformed into narrations. The interviews are applied to depict the setting and provide interpretations of male and female university students' memories of that period.

Therefore, out of an expanded total of thirty individuals, the five repeated interviews, which resulted in narrative interviews, were deemed sufficient for our research, where elements of interpretation and conceptualisation of the social self were constantly added, which collectively ran an extended period beyond the defined 1963-1965. These individual interviews satisfy the demand for scientific framing and documentation, because in scientific terms they are the potential effective suitable material for the researcher to approach particular elements that evolve in a historical period. It is the micro-history that evolves through the narratives of social subjects who act as mediators of condensed meanings of an era that is not defined by written texts but by the spoken word with the immediacy of the narrative where, as researchers, we intervene only to clarify elements or to revert the discussion to the thematic units, which we consider original or in need of review. Regarding the characteristics of speech, we evaluated the style, the expressions of approval or disapproval as well as the emotions. It is important that during this time in Greece, the historical example focuses on memories. Thus, we ascertain that oral memory repositories are formed by different research groups, for researchers to have the speech of social subjects at their disposal, as they are the protagonists in historical events.

The present study refers to democratic perceptions and opinions of people, acting in a period, which allowed them to express their opinions and to value social processes. For the preparation of the interviews, the elaboration of the bibliography was helpful, both in methodological as well as theoretical issues, in history, sociology, politics in the specific period between 1963-1965. Moreover, the press and students' magazines were analysed to explain the hermeneutical context.

It is the democratic view of approaching the opinions of individuals who act in a period when they are indirectly given the right to express opinions and to conceptualise evolving situations. During the preparation of the interviews, the corresponding literature was studied, both in terms of the organisation of the combination of different methodological tools in research, as well as the theory of history, sociology, and politics

¹³ T. Mulvihill, R. Swaminathan, *Critical Approaches to Life Writing Methods in Qualitative Research*, London, Routledge, 2017.

¹⁴ P. Leavy, *Oral History*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011.

for this period. In addition, archival data were studied to identify specific operational issues of the universities in the period 1963-1965. The press of the time was also used, as were student magazines. This process was deemed necessary to organise the interviews for the categorisation of the main themes, which were gradually framed by questions.

The main categories are:

1. the values of the period 1963-1965
2. the youth culture
3. students
4. issues of social inequalities
5. the final evaluation of the facts.

Following the repeated individual sessions, where data had been recorded, we proceeded to *de novo* categorisation. This was extremely difficult, because all five individuals had strong narrative speech and constantly added data, thus, opening up new fields. Characteristically, the social subjects themselves studied letters and photographs in the time between the interviews, and all this personal material reinforced their memories. In some cases, while it seemed facilitative, it complicated the process of categorisation, because the patterns of speech, events, and situations became more and more complex.

2. Discussion

As we have already mentioned, the repeated interviews provided us with the opportunity to observe evolving conditions in historical time, while simultaneously social subjects drew from their memory events that constantly connected with others, enriching the historical narrative and the thematic analysis. Here lies the advantage of the method we used, which is a combination of different research tools for qualitative research. At the same time, social subjects retrieved memory elements, while we also augmented the material of the period, not only with their thematic discourse, but also with the accompanying material the subjects provided us, such as letters, photographs, newspaper clippings, etc. Different interviews could be considered to have worked in a research-action field¹⁵, because the protagonists of the interview were modifying elements, as were the researchers. This is a research interaction, which we believe that at a time when issues for oral memory management are opening up, combined with research, will contribute to new readings of historical periods. Something similar is currently developing in Greek literature, where the literary work incorporates archival data and oral memories of the events it deals with as a macro-level, the micro-level of the novel or essay.

¹⁵ L. Gogou, E. Kalerante, *Research-Action in Sociological Refocusing on Symbolic Structures and Social Networks: From Conflicting Discourse on Knowledge to Social Change*, in L. Gogou, E. Kalerante, Th. Eleftherakis, G. Koustourakis, P. Giavrimis, S. Nikolaou (edd.), *Qualitative Methods in Education: Theoretical Considerations and Practical Applications*, Athens, Grigoris, 2020, pp. 321-347.

The interviewers gave particular interest to an individual evaluation of historical events, in particular to the Prime Minister, which was Papandreou. His characteristics, as a popular and democratic leader, stands in opposite to the “black past” of the conservative governments. To highlight are also the references to the lack of progress in Greece after the civil war of 1946-1949, between conservatives and leftists. His high electoral rate and the increased expectations that had been created had attributed special political characteristics, making Papandreou a charismatic leader in Max Weber’s terms. As we have already mentioned, during this period particular demands are being made, which seem to incorporate combined elements, such as democratisation of the political system, social political rights, including the reduction of social inequalities, social equality as regards gender, labour rights and the strengthening of the right to education¹⁶. In this context, right-wing politics and the demonisation of communists are questioned. Besides, the leftist trend of the EDA party also expresses this shift towards a different political direction¹⁷.

Papandreou was like a Lord. He inspired you to be the first contact. People demonstrated in the streets, because of him. He represented alone the entire Union Center (party).

Papandreou was in the car, a convertible. He was fearless. The people (demonstrated) in the street, young, old man, all they called his name and they believed on it. We, the students were first of all.

We were tired to hear the word Communist. Every time the conservatives wanted to get elected something, to be deliberated from the communists. By Papandreou we forget that word.

I was member of the Left Organisation (the following organisation of the partisans during the WWII), but I demonstrated every time with the Union Center. We wanted him, even if he was not leftist or to say it better, he was against the Left. It was enough (for us) that he hated the conservatives.

Greece was always a poor country. When I went to Germany for a while, I realised how we were behind (of every progress). A country in the darkness. Meanwhile, leftists were still in exile. How could you speak about progress?

The comments by the interviewers focus on the status of young people. It seems, that they “discover” that they are young in that period between 1963-1965, because they fell to be protagonists. The university became center of producing ideas. G. Papandreou address to the students for the rebuilding of Greece. In Greece, too, the concept of youth culture is shaped with its particular imperatives on the role of young people in the development of democratic policies¹⁸. Indirectly, previous generations that are thought to have fostered intense political confrontations between nationalists and leftists are questioned. At the

¹⁶ A. Kazamias, *Educational Reforms 1957-1977. Myths and Realities*, in A. Kazamias, M. Kassotakis (edd.), *Educational Reforms in Greece: Efforts, Deadlocks, Perspectives*, Rethymno, Faculty of Philosophy – University of Crete, 1986; E. Kalerante, *The Pedagogical Institute, The Novel Proposal of G. Papandreou’s Government. The Demands of “Closed” Groupings in an “Open” Education System*, in A. Rigos, S.I. Seferiadis, E. Hatzivasileiou (edd.), *The Brief Decade of ’60*, Athens, Kastaniotis, 2008, pp. 389-404.

¹⁷ T. Trikkas, *ECN: 1951-1967. The New Face of the Left*, Athens, Themelio, 2009.

¹⁸ C. Geertz, *Ideology as a Cultural System*, in D. Apter (ed.), *Ideology and Discontent*, New York, Free Press, 1964.

same time, the “regime” of the right-wing government with the exclusion of communists, imprisonments, exiles, dissidents is projected, as well as the paper of social convictions regarding the assumption of professional positions in the public sector, but also for the attribution of rights in wider areas.

The whole day of protests, we were in our Departments. From there, we started everything. We wrote, we removed posters. More and more, came people. The Departments opened up.

I never felt young. Always, I learned something for home. My mother was excited, because I was a student. My father said to me, to get not crazy. I said I go to protests, without any excuse. I heard every time in the speeches of Papandreou, the phrase young. The same sentence, that I heard by the Left Organisation.

I jumped and said that I am young and can change the world. Since then, I said I study to get a profession. Not in the public sector, because (as communist) was not allowed.

I was a vital person. I believed that by Papandreou, I will not marry son after my study. We invested a lot by him. Later, all this ended by the junta, the dictatorship.

The interviewers emphasize the attribute of been student, as well as the correlation between the scientists/science and to the organisation of the state, or even more to the cultural changes. The structural scientific discourse emerges within this dynamic discourse produced by the university youth. Their positions are expressed by the dynamic youth of the “elite” who have high educational capital and who claim a position in a political system that “moves” in traditional terms¹⁹. The theme of modernisation is associated with political rationalism, political liberalism, and political ethics, which reject existing right-wing politics in humanist terms as well. This is an important finding in our research, because their political discourse and their ritualistic action in the terms of E. Durkheim create a social field, which political deregulation is considered the result of the lack of a scientific perspective. At this level, political exclusions, as well as the wider issues of social inequalities are understood and interpreted also at the level of scientific political discourse.

For us, women, it was important to be in the university, of course in departments frequented by women. Some female students studied in the department of mathematics. I always wondered about the relationships with the male students. Later, she emigrated to Switzerland.

I worked in many jobs. I was not a bourgeois student. It's not accidentally that they call me worker. Always my hands were a little dirty. When I heard from Papandreou that science will be everywhere, I began to believe, that the black period of the conservatives was finished, as well as their privileges. I couldn't see any more priests and political layers. My best friend was in the Pedagogical Institute. He told me about the educational projects. The vision of the popular language, the *Demotike*, the kids in the school desks, the end of poverty. In the University, I was one of them, with shoes full of holes. Nobody gave any attention to that. In this situation was me and some others.

When I heard the speech of Papandreou in the University, I saw myself as a scientist in the public sector, without been necessary to belong in a conservative family.

¹⁹ K. Panteloglou, *The Restless Youth of the '60s, the Type of Social Vanguard*, Athens, private edition, 2002.

Their discourse shows up issues of social classes, but even of social sex. It is not accidentally, that in that period in the discourse of social sex are involved women left organizations but also bourgeois with the scope of acquire high hierarchy positions. The scientific political analysis examines issues of social research, which are framed by political discourse, in order to highlight and strengthen the need for policy change, but also the consequences of political “fixations” and obsessions on the right-wing “political correctness”. Even people belonging to the upper classes, mainly women, express this intentionality with their high educational capital to join professional roles of increased social prestige²⁰. The clientelist system is also directly disapproved – that is, the citizens’ desire to be recruited in the public sector through the political interventions of government officials. The demand for meritocracy is embodied in the expanded demand for political liberalism, modernisation²¹ of economic rational development by strengthening the primary and secondary sectors of production within an expanding confidence in the Union Centre Party to “eliminate” the “lawless” policy that prevailed²².

Poverty, everywhere poverty. We, the children from the country, suffered a lot. In Athens the situation was better for some people in particular for those working in the public sector. The goal was a post in the public sector. The flower shops near the parliament worked very well.

Many flower bucket, addressed to the parliamentary members with the intention to earn a post in public sector. I believed that Papandreou would put an end to that. In Christmas, when I returned to my village, realised the poverty and the analphabetism. Everybody, who want to write a letter, I wrote it for him, or had a request, or to order something, I did it for him. The wind of change arrived even in the village. Everybody had expectations.

A lot of brochures were available by the women of the Department. I was in the chemical department, and I am luffing now because of the bullying. I heard a lot of comments. In 64 I was almost ready to abandon the study. Papandreou saved me. I don't know, I get angry and thought, I could make it.

We considered, by the interviewers, as necessary to focus on the education discourse, in order to correlate them with the other themes. Here lies the methodological advantage, because we can follow previous observations and to increase the reflections and to show up how education determines other issues. The issue of civic literacy is highlighted as a dominant element in the reform of society. Literacy is associated with the modernisation of economic and political structures towards rational choices of development and the involvement of social subjects as citizens in the system. Indirectly, the abolition of the privileges of the upper social classes is highlighted in terms of the structures of opportunity they had in the system and especially in their involvement in the right-wing political system with their participation in strategic positions in institutions, the public sector, political institutions and institutions for the exercise of «legitimate violence»²³. In this

²⁰ I. Lambiri, *Social Change in a Greek Country Town*, Athens, Centre of Economic Research, 1965.

²¹ G. Langrod, *Réorganisation de la fonction publique en Grèce*, Paris, OECD, 1965; L. Lindberg, *Political Dynamics of European Economic Integration*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1963.

²² M. Dobb, *Economic Growth and Underdeveloped Countries*, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1963.

²³ T.B. Bottomore, *Classes in Modern Society*, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1965; T.H. Marshall, *Class, Citizenship and Social Development*, New York, Doubleday & Company, 1964; A. Marwick, *The Sixties*:

context, the argument for the loss of rights of illiterates in understanding socio-political conditions and in creating opportunities within the system is strengthened. In social and political terms, it emerges that with illiteracy, the manipulation of a large number of citizens, mainly citizens of the province, is strengthened²⁴.

University professors, in particular those conservatives, they started to get gray hair. In the exams they were the most tolerant. The scope was not the failure. The Secretary of the ministry came to the chemistry labor to discuss with us. Among the representative of the students were even member of the Parliament of PASOK and the Leftists. I remember the way how the present our demands. It was this enthusiasm to speak intensive and very much in order to influence.

My sister visited the youngest class of the Gymnasium, when we heard about the popular language (*demotike*), we screamed loud in the balcony, *Demotike*. Moreover, as they said in Gymnasium to use the written form in *demotike*. By the student elections, some of us we said, no more illiterate.

Like a joke the conservatives were mocking us and said philosophy will be spoken in the language of the Shepard's.

In the Philosophical department book changes or the use of *demotike* in conferences were forbidden. I remembered, we follow some conferences, organized by philologist. I Was in the Philosophical department of Athens, nothing like that of Thessaloniki.

In the final meeting, after the five settings, the emphasis was a holistic evaluation, so that the period of 1963-1965 could be connected with the previous period, the following dictatorship and the present day. It was crucial, because the goal was a new approchement of several issues and to close a period with those, which through their memories, opened us new perceptions and new interpretations. In this final phase of the interviews, following the completion of a long period of contacts, we felt that we had to address this interconnection of past, present, and future, while being aware of the project's difficulty, because we wanted to avoid unambiguous political references to parties of choice. Accordingly, the discussion focused on socio-political considerations with an emphasis on the fields that had already been considered in previous interviews. The first comparative view, with the dictatorship that followed, yielded evidence for the undoing of expectations, the end of an act, the weakening of an undertaking towards change. As it seems, the "concept of change" was strongly promoted as a policy of the period 1963-1965 and less as a policy of the later period 1981-1985, when PASOK came to power, expressing the applied socialist perspective²⁵. The important elements that emerge show that the progress over these years does not express the demands of the period and, in fact, consider that social inequalities remain, political modernisation has not been achieved despite the promotion of democratic principles, and what they are

Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy and the United States, c.1958-c.1974, London, Bloomsbury Reader, 2011.

²⁴ A. Vrychea, K. Gavroglou, *Attempts to Reform Higher Education 1911-1981*, Thessaloniki, Contemporary Issues, 1982.

²⁵ A. Meloni, *1961-1981. The Facts and the Faces*, Athens, Livani, 2002.

particularly concerned about is the “young category” – in fact, the youth –, referring to a “lost generation”.

If you asked me to say only one word, I would say hope, that something will change in our lives. The conservatives after 1961 were unbearable. Education was for a few, girls out of questions.

1967. Comes the end, the dictatorship. Everything went back. Fear again and again!

I have memories. Many times, I think, that we lived a short two-year period, others lived in 1968. Unfortunately, came the dictatorship.

As an educator, I see that many demands from today, we put them also in that time. Poor boys, out of school, as a kind of school student outflow. Life has still the same goals.

Issues of social inequality are still demands. Some headway was made, but [...] I don't know, perhaps the crisis period has further reinforced inequalities. I am not optimistic.

My generation was building a future – we had hope. I remember some demonstrations where people applauded us. They saw something to us... we were injustice with the young. There is no future for me, but I doubt there is for them either.

Conclusions

It seems that the period 1963-1965 created high expectations to the transition to a new aera of democratic and political and economic progress²⁶. In these expectations the main medium of transformation was the education and the social subjects, i.e. the students, maximise an expectation for social mobility. They consider that the scientific discourse could reverse conservative policies and could end the civil war ambience, and the still existing confrontation between right and left political parties. The new generation of students, appreciate the distinction to take a leading position in the production of a political discourse about equality and humanism. The emotional projections increase the connection with the political paradigm and the role of young people in the society.

Their memories of the past highlight all these elements, which they would like to forget, to eliminate.

They emphasize not only to the political antagonism, but also analphabetism, which they consider as a necessary process to progress, political and democratic ideas, but even individual ambitions, opportunities, and professional skills. For the students, the notions of the end of an epoch, build the begin of a new one. For the left and central political movements these notions express the progressive ideas, in particular from Europe and the USA. The memories of the interviewers rebuild, reconstruct a period, which they lived as students, and the expressed ideas, desires, but even more the satisfaction, that they were protagonists, parts of an elite social movement, been students of high tertiary universities,

²⁶ E. Kalerante, *Educational Culture and Socio-Political Discourse: “The Short History of Educational Policy 1963-1965 in the Great History of the 1960’s”*, Athens, 24 Grammata, 2021.

and with this role could create, shape a biography, which involved an ethic and values of a *conditio humana*²⁷.

Greek students in that period are not isolated, but are in contact with the international culture and the circulation of ideas. The relationship of youth with social movements is strongly highlighted²⁸, which are manifested internationally, but also more widely the political concern, which is also developing within Greece in Universities, Institutes and educational institutions²⁹. This is a fertile stage, where the concept of progress of economic and political modernisation is linked to education³⁰. Therefore, inequality in educational opportunities is conceptualised as regression in multiple political and social fields. The “short” two years were comprehensive in dense political and social messages, which formed wider convergences with the legalisation of rationalism as a result of scientific investigation of dysfunctional sectors, politics, economy and education in Greece³¹.

This progress is interrupted by conservative political forces latest by the dictatorship between 1967-1974, which mirrors the disappointment, the return to previous conservative models and the deregulation. As shown by our interviews, for the social subjects dictatorship was perceived as a return to more intense far-right politics than the 1950-1962 period. Especially for the youth, the triptych of fatherland, religion, and family formed a conservative coherent framework, where all political intentions for democracy and political humanism were negated. The seven-year dictatorship is interpreted as a period of “conservative regression”, which, especially regarding this generation, cancelled out structures of opportunity, mainly for the underprivileged social classes, who once again, and perhaps more intensely, saw themselves being evaluated with obsolete political criteria through the ranking of right or left. This classification model incorporated corresponding interpretations for the stereotypical roles of men and women, for the stereotypical approach to education. It is no coincidence that research was disconnected from theory and political application, so that the political content of nationalism enriched with religious dogmatic discourse negated political democratic principles and the progressive youth culture.

Later, after the end of dictatorship in 1974, will follow a new period of expectations and hope, which according to the interviewees is different from the period of 1963-1965, and is partly recognizable in the first governance of PASOK, the socialist party of A. Papandreou, between 1981-1985. The period after the dictatorship, as presented by the interviewees, was technically divided into two sub-periods, one until 1981 and the other from 1981 to 1985. The end of the dictatorship found the social subjects of our research in professional positions, which did not correspond to their educational capital.

²⁷ Ch. Wulf, *Einfuehrung in die Anthropologie der Erziehung*, Weinheim und Basel, Beltz, 2001; Greek transl. by G. Tzartzas, *Anthropology of Education, Homo Humanus Novus*, Athens, IWN, 2021.

²⁸ C. Tilly, *Social Movements 1768-2004*, Athens, Savala, 2007.

²⁹ National Centre for Social Research, *Twenty-five Years of Operation*, Athens, EKKE, 1986.

³⁰ C. Moustaka, *Attitude, Sociometric Status and Ability in Greek Schools*, Athens, Social Sciences Centre, 1967.

³¹ Ch. Iordanoglou, *The Greek Economy after 1950*, Athens, Bank of Greece, 2020; P. Kazakos, *Between State and Market: Economy and Economic Policy in Post-War Greece 1944-2000*, Athens, Patakis, 2001.

Some were forced to quit their studies. The outcome of dictatorship on a personal level, as is already recorded, had negated any form of opportunity structure for integration into the system in more democratic terms³². They certainly had a positive attitude towards the new condition that emerged following the dictatorship. However, expectations were limited because they saw similar policies evolving and the only functional opening was the intervention of International Organisations with the promotion of a general mobility towards the democratisation of political issues³³. On the contrary, the period 1981-1985 rekindled expectations and desires for the new generation. The reference to socialism and the new social projects strengthened references to social equality, the dynamics of the middle class, the undoing of clientelist policies, etc. The broader issues raised are the strengthening of education and the confidence that this increased perspective for education will contribute to social mobility by reducing social inequalities, at a time when social-mindedness is also being abolished. The periods from 1985 until today are not further analysed. What is highlighted is the more difficult environment of the “crises” by emphasizing the social exclusion and marginalisation of young people. In comparison to the period 1963-1965 it is referred to as regression – the progress of technology is not evaluated, nor is emphasis placed on elements of political democracy, because the condensed incomplete content of opportunities for young people is prioritised. Summarising our approach, which is essentially the subjects’ biographical analysis, we focus on the increased expectations of the 1963-1965 generation and the exclusions of today’s young people, where the interviewees believe that, in a period of increased wealth of multiple privileges, young people live with limited rights, without a welfare state, without structures, «manipulated by those who control them, even by their own parents».

³² R.K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*, New York, Free Press, 1963.

³³ J.E. Miller, *The United States and the Making of Modern Greece: History and Power, 1950-1974*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, 2009; UNESCO, *Alphabétisation, 1965-1967*, Paris, UNESCO, 1968; G. Papadopoulos, *Education 1960-1990 the OECD perspective*, Paris, OECD, 1994.

ABSTRACTS

Abstracts of the contributions
to the 1st volume

*The School and Its Many Pasts:
The Different Types of School Memory*

edited by Lucia Paciaroni

The Future of Memory: Initial Steps in a Research Career and Emerging Historiographical Perspectives

Cristina Yanes-Cabrera
University of Sevilla (Spain)

The study of school memory requires two elements: first, knowing the types of conditioning factors that influence the approach to any research; and second, knowing how to orient yourself in the study of school memory, and review what has been studied and worked on the subject. To this end, it is inevitable to ask questions and try to find answers.

This article primarily targets newcomers to school memory research, aiming to analyze key aspects that should be considered when undertaking this type of study. It explores the importance of differentiating and connecting memory and history, discusses the reasons for studying school memory, highlights the precautions involved in such research, and presents notable collective works in the field. Finally, and as a conclusion, it offers new historiographical perspectives that will allow us to continue shaping the study of school memory.

Keywords: school memory; historical-educational research; historiographical perspectives.

Images of the Changing School in Luigi Comencini's Television Documentary "I bambini e noi" (1970)

Davide Allegra
University of Bari "Aldo Moro" (Italy)

On the background of the industrial Turin of the early 1970s as it emerges from a selection of representations offered by movies and songs, the essay aims at reconstructing some features of the school renewal taking place at the time in the city, through the television documentary *I bambini e noi* directed by Luigi Comencini in 1970. The last episode of the documentary, entitled *Qualcosa di nuovo*, registers the encounter between the emerging proposal of the *animazione teatrale* and the pedagogical innovation of the *Movimento di Cooperazione Educativa* and it shows the first full-time primary school experiments carried out in some of the working-class districts of Turin, thus anticipating and creating the conditions for the approval of Law no. 820 of 1971.

Keywords: *Movimento di Cooperazione Educativa*; full-time primary school; theatre; television; Turin.

The Infant School on Set. The Film "Chiedo asilo" by Marco Ferreri and the Educational Imaginary in 1970s Italy

Elisa Mazzella

Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan (Italy)

This study will examine the film *Chiedo asilo* (Seeking Asylum) directed by Marco Ferreri in 1979, and its contribution to the representation and construction of the collective mindset in 1970s Italy. This analysis will cover teaching methods, and the representation of the figure of the teacher and of the class. The film seems to challenge the inessential trappings of school, family, and other traditional institutions of the day. The eccentric approach of the young male teacher thus becomes an expression of, and vehicle for, innovative and unconventional educational methods in sharp contrast with traditional educational approaches, inspired by ideals of freedom, the importance of cultivating children's imagination, and the need to ground teaching in the encounter with the real world.

Keywords: collective school memory; history of schooling; infant school; teacher; 1970s.

Pupils and Teachers at School: Memories and Social Imagination through Cinema

Dalila Forni

Link University (Italy)

The present contribution aims to offer an analysis of school representations in the second half of the twentieth century cinema. Cinema is one of the main tools that work in the construction of our socially shared imaginary as it transmits perceptions and canons related to school dynamics, habits, pedagogical values. Through the selection and analysis of some international cinematographic works, the contribution intends to develop a preliminary investigation on the construction of the characters of pupils and teachers in films produced in the second half of the twentieth century, tracing recurrent lines and relevant traits. The study will also favour a gender perspective, so as to highlight differences and common features between the socially shared image of male and female students or educative figures.

Keywords: cinema; students; childhood; school; gender.

Between School Memory and Visual Culture: the Photo Albums of the Porta Romana Art Institute in Florence (1939-1962)

Chiara Naldi

University of Florence (Italy)

The School of Photography at the Porta Romana Art Institute in Florence was opened in 1937, for educational purposes but also with the aim of providing advertising and propaganda material for the Fascist regime. The Institute now holds a valuable photographic collection, most notably a series of 17 albums containing photographs of *laboratory artefacts, pupils at work, and national exhibitions in which the Institute played a leading role in the 1930s*. Although the photographic production preserved in the albums was produced mainly for educational and documentary purposes, the development of a visual culture pertaining to the photographic culture of the time is evident. This photographic heritage of the Florentine Art Institute is one in which school memory, documentation and visual culture intertwine, yielding unexpected results.

Keywords: school memory; photography school; photographic archive; art institute; Florence.

School Life Representation in the Photographic Images of the Dossier Series Biblioteca di Lavoro by Mario Lodi

Silvia Pacelli, Valentina Valecchi

Roma Tre University (Italy)

The purpose of this essay is to offer an historiographical analysis of the photographic documentation in the dossier series *Biblioteca di Lavoro* and examine the way school is depicted in it. *Biblioteca di Lavoro* was an innovative editorial project directed by Mario Lodi between 1971 and 1979. The experiences recorded in its 130 dossiers reflect the pedagogical vision developing in Italy in the late 1960s, inspired by Célestin Freinet's ideas, and the teaching methods of the Movimento di Cooperazione Educativa. The photographs are valuable testimony to an anti-authoritarian school movement and reveal the democratic and renewed idea of school of those years.

Keywords: *Biblioteca di Lavoro*; school memory; visual memory; photography; Mario Lodi.

Representing the Institutions between 1968 and Coming-of-Age Novels: the “Educational Video Memories” Database

Chiara Martinelli

University of Florence (Italy)

This paper aims to investigate the reception of literature for children, and specifically of the coming-of-age novel, through the use of oral sources. For this purpose, the “Educational memories in video” database will be used, established by the University of Florence as part of the PRIN project. Through their analysis, the period of sixty-eight emerges, compared to the other decades, in terms of a different use and memory of reading; moreover, within that period, a clear gender demarcation is evident. Unlike men, who cite childhood and adolescent reading as a tool for escape into other worlds, for women coming-of-age novels assumed a transformative importance and questioned the traditional female paradigms.

Keywords: oral history; coming-of-age novel; gender history; memory; Italy.

The Construction of an “Archive of Memory”. School Memory through the Voice of Its Protagonists in 20th Century in Molise

Rossella Andreassi, Valeria Viola

University of Molise (Italy)

This contribution intends to present the project for the construction of an “Archive of Memory”, conducted by the work group of the Ce.S.I.S. and MuSEP of the University of Molise. The editorial project that analyse the development of schooling processes carried out in some areas of southern Italy in the period between the 1930 and the 80s of the twentieth century, has increasingly represented a fertile ground to deepen the issues raised by the use of oral sources; these require a particular procedure of construction in order to add elements as impartial as possible in the process of defining the school memory. The research stems from the heuristic contribution offered by studies aimed at enhancing the forms of memory that, in addition to the collective and public dimension, includes the subjective one, expressed through the ego-documents.

Keywords: school memory; oral sources; history of education.

The School of “Fascism in Crisis” through the Memories of Pupils of the Time

Francesco Bellacci

University of Florence (Italy)

In the historical-educational field, the study of school memories is now a consolidated trend thanks to which it is possible to shed light on a series of dynamics that have remained in the shadows in

the political-legislative reconstructions of the school of the past and partly also in the reconstructions that are more attentive to social history. The study of video testimonies on school and childhood memories between the 30s and 40s, collected between 2019 and 2022 for the PRIN project “School Memories between Social Perception and Collective Representation (Italy, 1861-2001)”, no doubt making a valuable contribution by providing unedited insights. We are interested in investigating the school memories surrounding some of the years of the Fascist dictatorship, to better understand the totalitarian dynamics in schools.

Keywords: fascism; memory; education; school; students.

Learning Memory. The Impact of the Racial Laws on Three Roman High Schools: between Oblivion and Remembrance

Tommaso Petrucciani

University of Macerata (Italy)

Following the establishment of Holocaust Remembrance Day in Italy, memory has become a teaching subject in Italian schools. As the impact of the racial laws on education was commemorated, the school itself became an object of remembrance, in the context of a policy that allegedly sought to “not forget” the past as the generation of witnesses gave way to younger ones. This contribution discusses the case of three high schools in Rome (“Visconti”, “Tasso” and “Giulio Cesare”) that were strongly affected by the racial laws, and where the memory of the expulsion of Jewish students and teachers has become part of the schools’ identity. I will also describe the processes that – before the emergence of this *duty of remembrance* – led to a state of oblivion of those events on an individual, collective and public level.

Keywords: Holocaust remembrance day; politics of remembrance; racial laws; school oblivion; Italy.

Rebuilding and Enhance Memory. The Activity of the Lower School “G. Perotti” of Turin

Rocco Labriola

Lucanian Deputation of Homeland History (Italy)

The lower school “G. Perotti” in Turin has for some years been embarking on a process aimed at reconstructing and enhancing its nearly century-old history with a series of activities still in progress. This plan includes the publication of two volumes on the historical and pedagogical events of the school, the inauguration and reorganization of the archive, the establishment of a museum.

Keywords: school; school naming; museum; Turin.

The Collodi School. School Atmospheres in the Work of Carlo Lorenzini

Simone di Biasio, Teresa Gargano

Roma Tre University (Italy)

This work presents a reading of the work of Carlo Collodi from the perspective of his depiction of the era’s schools and the theories then governing education. The author of Pinocchio, a writer of a great many readers for young students, is thus revealed to have also been a sophisticated educationalist as he ventured into the heart of the Umberto era’s schooling policies. Via an analysis of his main works, especially the various Giannettinis, my aim is to provide insights into the school classrooms of an Italy which was, in the late 1800s, struggling to free itself of illiteracy and also of a children’s literature whose educational orientation was moralising. What emerges is the pre-eminence of attempts to modernise alluding to the advent of new media as educational aids.

Keywords: Carlo Collodi; Pinocchio; Giannettino; school; education; children’s literature.

The Palidoro Children's House diaries of Irene Bernasconi (1915-1916)

Martine Gilsoul

Roma Tre University (Italy)

After attending the Montessori course organised by the Società Umanitaria (1914-1915), Irene Bernasconi (1886-1970) began to work in one of the first Montessori Children's Houses in the Agro Romano, opened at the behest of Alessandro Marcucci, director of the Ente Scuole per i contadini (Schools for Farmers). This contribution presents the characteristics of two of her diaries: the Diary of the Children's House of Palidoro and a private diary. They provide insight into the daily life of the teacher and the many challenges she faced, along with the transformation of her pupils. Her teaching activity was innovative: she added activities not foreseen by Montessori. Through an approach inspired by micro-history, an unpublished chapter of the reception of the Montessori method in Italy unfolds.

Keywords: Irene Bernasconi; diary; pre-school; Montessori method; Agro Romano.

"She Told Me to Read, Always Read". Itineraries of Reading Education through the Oral Testimonies of Teachers and Students of Yesterday

Monica Dati

University of Florence (Italy)

The paper aims to trace, thanks to the video-testimonies contained in the "Memoria scolastica" web portal (www.memoriascolastica.it), a specific path dedicated to reading education: through the point of view of teachers and students this work wants to explore some important aspects such as instrumental learning, its teaching and its promotion, also making a quick reference to the debate on the textbook, and more generally to the history of the school and some of the problems that have affected the whole of our country, such as illiteracy. A first step to highlight the importance of oral sources in creating a reflection on reading, its multiple educational values with reference to one of the main contexts in which it is practiced, that of school.

Keywords: reading; reading history; digital history; oral history; school memories.

The "Diario di una maestra" of Maria Giacobbe and the Sardinian School

Piera Caocci

University of "Gabriele d'Annunzio" Chieti-Pescara (Italy)

This essay aims to report on the contribution of the *Diary of a teacher*, an ego-document about the initial phase of teaching in poor, rural territories in North Sardinia, by the Sardinian writer Maria Giacobbe, whose well-known diary has helped us to better understand her social commitment and underline crucial aspects of her pedagogical method. Giacobbe taught during the postwar period, and she saw the situation of extreme poverty and illiteracy first-hand. Furthermore, in many Sardinian counties educational instruction had little value. Giacobbe created a harmonious, dynamic dialogue with her pupils, considering them worthy of care and attention, something which was unheard of in an educational culture based on rote learning and strict and often humiliating punishment.

Keywords: history of education; ego-document; teaching memory; Italy; 20th century.

Formation and Transformation. Memories Around Early Childhood Educational Services in an "Educationally Poor" Context

Maura Tripi

University of Catania (Italy)

The paper presents some findings from a research focused on public 0-3 educational services in Palermo and Catania (Italy). These services are characterised by low provision, lacks and limits compared to the law standards. Nevertheless, in this Southern Italian context, the pedagogical perspective may outline an alternative narrative to the dominant collective imaginary of a Southern “educationally poor” context, documenting a still relatively unknown historical process related to 0-3 services. Emerging from an interpretative perspective, two significant counter-narratives exemplify how nidi can be considered democratic levers, involved into transformative processes and emancipatory paths. Finally, a critical dimension suggests pedagogical research as a tool to actively enhance the recognition and legitimation of knowledge grounded in practice, activism and experience.

Keywords: ECE services; counter-narratives; professional development; critical poverty knowledge; community.

School Architecture and Furniture in Italy, 1950-1970. Forms and Spaces of a Collective Memory

Giulia Cappelletti

Roma Tre University (Italy)

The aim of this paper is to investigate the contribution of artists, architects, designers and entrepreneurs to the definition and diffusion of the “physical” representation of school and its features, through a selection of case studies. The purpose to circumscribe this research to a historical period comprising the end of World War Two and the 1970s takes into account the lively circulation of artistic and design objects for school, frequently designed and produced in conjunction with the building of schools themselves and in line with the tastes and aesthetics of these years, and their links with historical-political events. The research also aims to frame the active contribution of these authors to the evolution of the socio-cultural and socio-pedagogical discourse over on the school at large.

Keywords: school furniture; visual arts; school buildings; collective memory; visual memory.

Plaques and Statues as School Memories. The Case of the Monumental Tributes to Giovanni Cena

Valentino Minuto

University of Macerata (Italy)

This contribution is aimed at highlighting the historiographic significance of the monumental memorialization of school personalities. Epigraphic and sculptural works dedicated to characters of the school past are not only commemorative media; plaques and statues also fulfil an educational function, celebrating the values that school must pass on to the new generations. Therefore, monumental sources can be used to reconstruct the ideal representation of the role assigned to school by the ruling classes. But the reasons behind the choice of installing plaques and statues do not only regard the promotion of a civil pedagogy. Monuments are also the expression of a self-celebratory strategy implemented by the constituted authorities to legitimate themselves as the guardians of a dignified school past. The fruitfulness of monumental sources for the history of school memory is supported by illustrating a case study: the monumental tributes to the educational philanthropist Giovanni Cena from 1918 to 1927.

Keywords: school memory; monumental sources; official school imaginary; political use of memory; Giovanni Cena.

Child-care institutions. Memories between Public Celebrations and Collective Representations

Sofia Montecchiani

University "G. d'Annunzio" of Chieti-Pescara (Italy)

Between the 19th and 21st centuries many Italian structures dedicated to the assistance of abandoned and orphaned children were closed or converted, but their work was not promptly replaced with adequate compensatory measures. In the collective memory, they are often remembered as gloomy places, a perception that does not do justice to their complex social and pedagogical role taken on over time. This meaning is often taken into account instead in public and official celebrations, or in the museums' exhibitions. Therefore, a deep hiatus emerges between public and collective memory in reference to this type of childcare institutions that it is worth investigating with a necessary extension of the sources, in order to understand and light up their real charitable and educational value.

Keywords: child-care institutions; abandoned children; public memory; Italy; 19th century; 21st century.

The "Raggio di Sole" Open-Air School and Its Directors in Collective and Public Memory

Giulia Fasan

University of Padua (Italy)

This paper aims to reconstruct how the "Raggio di Sole" school and after-school centre – established in Padua (north-eastern Italy) in 1905 and 1907 – and its directors were represented in public and collective memory, with particular reference to the figure of Alessandro Randi (1858-1944), president of the association that established it. Randi's commitment to education and public health led to the "Raggio di Sole" and, by extension, Padua's local authority, becoming an important model, an example of best practice that was followed and studied not only in Italy but also abroad.

The aim here is to retrace the historical, pedagogical and cultural dimensions of memory and legacy regarding the "Raggio di Sole" school in Padua and its directors.

Keywords: open-air school; collective school memory; public school memory; Alessandro Randi; pedagogical positivism.

Villa Emma in Nonantola, between History and Public Memory

Silvia Panzetta

University of Bologna (Italy)

Nonantola is a town located between Modena and Bologna which has a rich medieval history thanks to the Benedictine Abbey founded by Lombard duke Anselmo. During the twentieth century Nonantola was the scene of very important educational experiences and among these it is of fundamental interest the rescue of seventy-three Jewish youths and their teachers that arrived at Villa Emma in July 1942 and in April 1943. This group, that was in severe danger after the Armistice of September 8th 1943, was saved thanks to the actions of some teachers of the local seminary, the rector of the seminary, a local doctor, many families and an organization from Modena that had already expatriated in Switzerland British officers that had escaped from the prison camps in Modena and Carpi. On the basis of the existing bibliography and recent new research we will investigate further this event, known mainly at a local level, to place it into the larger history and memory of the educators and teachers that contributed to saving the Jews from extermination. The experience was characterized by forms of active pedagogy linked with other educators that, at the time, were very advanced, like don Zeno Saltini, which were realized in the area of Nonantola after WWII. Don Zeno Saltini also offered hospitality to children from Southern Italy and the affair was noted as "Trains of happiness". On the basis of new archival and printed sources, already found and reworked in terms of historical narration, it is proposed to examine

the forms of public memory with epigraphs, tombstones and other, present in the area of Nonantola, to honor the history and collective memory in these complex political, historical and educative events that characterized Nonantola during and after the Second World War, thanks to the bright personalities of don Arrigo Beccari, monsignor Ottaviano Pelati and Ida Nascimbeni.

Keywords: Villa Emma; Nonantola; Jews; epigraphs; collective memory; public memory.

Public School Memory between Centralist Policies and Local Instances. Giulitta Ferraris Well-Deserving of Education and the Termoli «Gesù e Maria» Boarding School in the Early 20th Century

Annarita Pilla

University of Molise (Italy)

This contribution intends to examine the field of merit awarded to teachers by the Ministry of Education in the first decade of the Twentieth century. The contribution is part of the broader framework of the research conducted by the Molise-Basilicata research unit for the creation of the Honours Database. The honours to school staff can be considered as forms of the school's public memory policies introduced by the liberal elite. Specifically, the paper wants to focus on the merit conferred in 1910 on Sister Giulitta Ferraris, teacher and headmistress of the «Jesus and Mary» Orphanage-Education Centre in Termoli. To this end, the case study analyses the specificity and relevance that the «Gesù e Maria» Institute had in the Molise region, whose history and fortune continued until the early 2000s, contributing to the education of many in the area. The attention of our research group has focused not only on honours in general, but also on identifying the names of the various well-wishers by reconstructing their profiles from a professional point of view, which are gradually being entered into database on the «Memoria Scolastica Pubblica» website. From a methodological point of view, we made use of sources that are completely unused in the panorama of school history studies.

Keywords: public school memory; honours; medals; education.

Abstracts of the contributions
to the 2nd volume

*The School and Its Many Pasts:
Official and Public Memories of School*

edited by Juri Meda and Roberto Sani

School Memories and Travelling Iconic Images of Education in the Nineteenth Century

María del Mar del Pozo Andrés
University of Alcalá (Spain)

This essay – delivered as one of the keynote lectures of the International Conference “The School and Its Many Pasts: School Memories between Social Perception and Collective Representation” – attempts to draw the attention of historians of education to a little-known primary source, the prints or engravings depicting schools of the past. Throughout the chapter I will demonstrate that these objects were the material medium through which school images travelled around the world, even many years after the invention of photography. My claims are based on the study of some cases of Nineteenth century travelling images that crossed time and space, became iconic images of the school, and probably contributed to the construction of a transnational collective memory of education.

Keywords: engravings; school memories; travelling images; iconic images; 19th century.

SECTION *The Official Memory of School and Education*

The International University Games of 1933. The Fascist Regime and the Issue of Commemorative Stamps as a Memory Policy for a “Glorious” Italian University Tradition

Luigi Aurelio Pomante
University of Macerata (Italy)

From 1st to 10 September 1933, Turin hosted the International University Games whose organisation, for Italy, was entrusted to the Fascist University Groups. This event, like many others that were held one after another during the 1930s, was part of the regime’s declared attempt to “build”, also artificially, a very specific image of Italian universities through a series of official representations and/or public commemorations promoted by the ministry on the basis of a specific memory policy. To highlight the importance of the Turin event, a set of four stamps was issued. The stamps were of different colours but showed the same iconography. Authorised by Royal Decree No. 945 dated 13 July, it was issued on 16 August 1933 and remained in circulation for four months, until 31 December of the same

year. Designed by Amedeo Pesci, the series represented a clear and transparent example of instrumental propaganda. The event celebrated, in fact, beyond its sports value, was part of that university «invention of tradition» promoted by Mussolini and slavishly implemented by the Fascist leadership throughout the Fascist period with the aim of rebuilding the “glorious” Italian university traditions, whether real or assumed. Hence the «cult of the origins», which ended up by being officiated everywhere and, in particular, during the most significant student events. No collective event of Fascism, therefore, was able to escape this inspiring logic. Even the Turin University Games and the related historical Carousel of Italian Universities, which had the task of promoting the event and recovering and celebrating the memory of a renowned cultural past, reflected the will to exhume and exalt the university tradition of the Peninsula, especially the medieval or early renaissance one to make it a pivotal and essential element in strengthening the national identity.

Keywords: public memory; invention of tradition; history of university; fascist propaganda; fascism; Italy; 20th century.

“Educational Italianness”. National Stereotypes and Pedagogical Localism in the Centenary Celebrations of Italian and Foreign Educationalists between the 19th and 20th Centuries

Juri Meda

University of Macerata (Italy)

The centenaries of the birth and death of some of the greatest Italian and foreign educators between the end of the 1800s and the beginning of the 1900s offer the opportunity to affirm the concept of “educational italianness”. Our young nation – in search of illustrious antecedents and its own cultural traditions – is committed to defining the uncertain boundaries of its national identity also in the pedagogical field. But what are the characteristics of this “educational italianness”? Using the speeches written for official celebrations, the contents of celebratory epigraphs, occasional flyers and other unpublished sources, this work will attempt to analyse this concept, highlighting how it is not substantiated by scientific evidence but rather by nationalistic stereotypes, which, however, had an easy grip on public opinion and quickly become part of the common sense. The official celebrations of Italian Aporti and Thuringian Fröbel, in addition to highlighting the differences between the pedagogical methods of these two bearers of kindergartens, for example, pointed out that the former was a Catholic and the latter a Protestant. There were several attempts to reconstruct the ancient Italian origins of the Pestalozzi family, almost as if the pedagogical greatness of the Swiss educator – who was one of the first to establish the concept of the “modern school” – could be based on a genealogical and hereditary basis. Even humanist Vittorino da Feltre was used as reference to make him the illustrious patriarch of entire generations of teachers to whom the task of “making Italians” was entrusted and continued to be entrusted. Therefore, it turns out that the “educational italianness” is not based on specific pedagogical characteristics, but on a cultural archetype that is functional to re-signifying the past and creating a solid cultural tradition to limit the dependence of our educators and teachers from foreign pedagogical thought and especially from the German one, which had always exerted a strong influence. In this context, it is also possible to identify another concept: that of the “small pedagogical homelands” that competed – according to the best localist tradition – on the topic of the origins of some illustrious thinkers and pedagogues, as if it were impossible to disregard the environmental data and the geographical context to explain their greatness. The historical dispute between Aporti’s birthplace (San Martino dell’Argine) and the city where he built his first kindergartens (Cremona), for example, was triggered by the centenaries of his birth and death. Xenomania and xenophobia thus alternate fiercely in these celebrations, which reveal their dependence on the collective imaginary, which grew over time within a given community rather than on actual historical reality.

Keywords: public memory; school; pedagogy; Italy; 19th century; 20th century.

School Architecture as Public School Memory: the Portuguese Case of “Plano dos Centenários”

Simone Dos Prazeres

Polytechnic of Guarda (Portugal)

With this paper we aimed to find in what ways school buildings may crystallize a memory that underlies educational practices. For nearly 30 years (1940-1969) a single architectural blueprint was replicated throughout Portugal, giving birth to hundreds of school buildings that would preserve political memory as well as school memory. Using bibliographic research we analyze in what way memory from these places may elevate each building to a teaching memorial. Nowadays, these schools from *Plano dos Centenários* (Centenarians Plan) evoke officiously to all those who attended them a shared felling of belonging to a certain community in a certain place and time.

Keywords: school memory; architecture; *Plano dos Centenários*.

Memory and Celebration of the “Heroic Youth”. The Youth Organisations of the Mussolini Regime, School and the Creation of the “New Fascist Man”

Roberto Sani

University of Macerata (Italy)

In 1932, the Central Presidency of the Opera Nazionale Balilla published the Heroic Youth book that «in order to remove it from the ephemeral life of the newspapers and preserve it as a noble example of virile education» included the memory «of the acts of valor performed by the Balilla and Avanguardisti in the short period from May 1927 to today». In total, there are about 161 «heroic events» involving 181 Balilla and Avanguardists, to whom we must add another 60 names of youths who distinguished themselves during major disasters for their «heroic sacrifice» and their commitment to the community. The ultimate purpose of the publication, which was reissued several times until the fall of Fascism, was to highlight, «independently of any official recognition», the «heroic value of the actions that the Presidency of the Opera deems the result of the admiration and of the example given by all the very young Black-shirts». Through an in-depth analysis of the short yet accurate reports of «heroic actions» in the publication, an analysis of the language used and the study of the type of “virtuous actions” selected, exalted and celebrated, Roberto Sani’s work highlights how the celebration of the myth of “heroic youth”, forged by the youth organizations of the regime according to the principles of Mussolini’s ideology (virile education, boldness, love for sacrifice, no fear of danger, etc.) represents a fundamental chapter in the broader project of creating the new fascist man, or rather an attempt to promote – through the memory and celebration of the “heroic youth” through the school channel and that of the associations – a civil and political education of young Italian generations integrally inspired by Mussolini’s ideology.

Keywords: history of education; public memory; fascism; propaganda; childhood; 20th century.

School Jubilees as an Opportunity for the Implementation of New Instruments of Memory Building: the Case of the 150 Years of Scuola Magistrale in Locarno (Switzerland)

Wolfgang Sahlfeld

University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland (Switzerland)

The paper describes and discusses the initiatives for an academic jubilee in Switzerland. The Teacher education school of the Italian-speaking Canton Ticino was founded in 1873, that is 150 years ago. It became a university for teacher education (now called DFA-SUPSI) in 2002, and one of the interesting questions is whether this interruption in the school’s tradition is or not still a problem. The envisaged initiatives are the result of a process-oriented approach which is partly the result of the idea

of Public history. That's why I refer to the *Manifesto della Public History of Education* as an interpretative framework for the description and discussion of our project.

Keywords: public history of education; school jubilees; teacher education; Switzerland.

The Public Representation of Schools in Philately

Fabio Targhetta

University of Macerata (Italy)

This work aims to investigate the contribution of philately to the public representation of school and key figures of the pedagogical and educational world. In particular, eighteen commemorative or celebratory stamps issued by the Italian Republic from 1954 to 2001 will be reviewed. The main purpose is to study not only the possible effects on the collective imagination, but also the official reasons that motivated the production of philatelic artifacts. The major sources will be the decrees published in the «Gazzetta Ufficiale» (Official Gazette) from which all the formal elements can be identified (size, value, colour, circulation, subject represented, text and series), and above all the «Bollettini illustrativi» (Illustrative Bulletins). These last sources – in lengthy texts signed by illustrious personalities (from the Minister of Education to eminent figures in culture and pedagogy, including the principals of the schools celebrated) – report the official reasons that inspired the creation of the stamp. By analysing the text it will be possible to see the gap between history and memories and the political nature of some biographical “re-interpretations”. I refer, for example, to the commemorative stamp on occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Giovanni Gentile, issued in 1991, or the commemorative stamps of historical schools designed to magnify – together with the role played by these institutions at local and national level – the commitment historically made by the Italian State in the field of education. Until now, the philatelic sources were largely neglected by historical-educational studies, but if properly investigated they can open interesting and never-seen-before opportunities to understand the public representation of history, and in particular of the school and educational past.

Keywords: stamps; public memory; school; pedagogues; education.

Ambrosian School Memories. Milan City Council's Construction of Its Own Glorious Educational Tradition from the Italian Unification through the Aftermath of World War II

Carla Ghizzoni

Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan (Italy)

This essay approaches the study of memory by drawing on the local dimension of historical-educational research to investigate the construction and layering of Italian school memories. Specifically, it documents the efforts of Milan City Council to publicize the objectively impressive outcomes of its education policies (especially in the domain of elementary education) over the period spanning Italian Unification and the Second World War. Key to the focus of inquiry is Milan's public use of its educational past, both to reinforce a sense of identity among the various participants in school communities and the population at large and to endorse the key role of the City Council in education provision.

Keywords: history of education; local history; educational tradition; Milan; 20th century.

Representations of Disability in the Great Turin Exhibitions at the Turn of the Twentieth Century (1884-1911)

Maria Cristina Morandini

University of Turin (Italy)

Many and diverse were the institutions for the disabled that took part in the great Turin exhibitions

at the turn of the twentieth century. The official documents and the press coverage of the day portray disability as confined to the domain of charity or welfare, in keeping with both the policies of the liberal State and with the pitying and pious sentiment that typically informed attitudes to persons with disabilities. In the context of the exhibitions, the institutions for the deaf and dumb, blind, rickety and mentally retarded themselves de-emphasized their educational dimension, prioritizing helping their charges to successfully integrate into society.

Keywords: disability; universal exhibitions; charity; professional domain; handicrafts.

Procession to the “Honorable Son”: Memory and Representations in the Funeral Rites of Felipe Tiago Gomes (Brasília/DF and Picuí/PB – Brazil, 1996/2011)

Ariane dos Reis Duarte

Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil)

Estela Denise Schütz Brito

University of Vale Do Rio Dos Sinos (Brazil)

This study stems from a broader survey and aims to investigate the procedures adopted in relation to conducting the funerals of Felipe Tiago Gomes, founder of the educational supporter *Comunidade Nacional de Escolas da Comunidade/CNEC*. The character received two large funerals. The first one, on the occasion of his death in 1996, in the city of Brasília-DF, with the presence of authorities and honors granted to heads of state. The second one, in 2010, in the hometown of the deceased, Picuí-PB, when his remains were transferred, resulting in an event that mobilized the local population in order to receive their “honorable son”. We infer that both events occurred in an attempt to keep the name of the character and his legacy alive, following a process of appropriation regarding the honoree.

Keywords: social memory; funeral; Felipe Tiago Gomes; appropriation.

Metamorphosis of School Memory: the Case of Adelfo Grosso between Individual, Collective and Public Memory

Mirella D’Ascenzo

University of Bologna (Italy)

Within the framework of international studies on school memories, in this contribution I will focus attention on the school memory of Adelfo Grosso, director of the Normal School (*Scuola Normale*) in Bologna after the Unification of Italy, in honour of whom a stone plaque was erected and a primary school named in the early 20th century, both still present in the city today. Following first-hand research based on previously unexplored archive materials and printed sources, the passage from the individual to the collective, and thereafter the public memory of Adelfo Grosso will be traced, aiming to outline the metamorphosis of the object of memory as well as the representation of schools and teachers within the complex game of school memory, among light and oblivion.

Keywords: history of education; school memories; public memory; Adelfo Grosso; Italy.

A Monument in Memory of the Teachers

Snježana Šušnjara

University of Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Austro-Hungary brought great changes to the countries that were under its administration. Thus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, which remained outside European currents after the Ottoman rule, began its new path and soon witnessed new approaches to education, culture, and other important areas for the country’s development. Teachers came from other parts of the Monarchy to share their experiences

and knowledge with the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. They lived the torment and toil of the people they found and they were encouraged by their approach to open up and reveal their hearts and warmth. The lives of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian people were the motives of poets, writers, painters, and other artists, most of whom also worked as teachers. One such expert was the teacher and poet Silvije Strahimir Kranjčević, who did not live long in BiH but left a rich work and remained in the memory of his comrades and ordinary people who still visit his grave in Sarajevo's St. Joseph Cemetery, where he and his wife rests in peace. This memorial was one of the few that was partly sponsored by the then Government. Teachers' tombs are of the great importance for the collective memory. They also revealed the transformations of the social image of teachers in cultural history in relation to various political and cultural contexts. However, working with students, teachers build monuments to themselves that are not immediately visible, but over time they are very evident and reveal the intellectual wealth of the individual as well as his commitment to the common good. Therefore, in this text I will present the process of creation and realization of the idea for the erection of a monument to these individuals who left a significant mark in the history of BiH and were kept in collective memory until today.

Keywords: teachers; commemoration; collective memories; monuments; government.

Obituaries to Teachers on the Pages of Periodicals of the 20th Century

Oleksandr Mikhno

Pedagogical Museum of Ukraine (Ukraine)

The article presents statistical, factual, and bibliographic information on obituaries of Ukrainian educators on the pages of periodicals of the 20th century, which are stored in the funds of the Pedagogical Museum of Ukraine. Based on the historical and chronological approach, the main trends in the writing and publication of obituaries in Soviet pedagogical journals of the 1920s-1980s have been identified. The application of the decolonial approach to the analysis of the Soviet-era obituary on the example of the obituary of Vasyl Sukhomlynskyi (1918-1970) has been demonstrated. It has been noted that obituaries of the period of 1920s-1980s in the context of decolonization and decommunization of Ukrainian humanities are an important source of the history of Ukrainian education, in particular pedagogical biographical studies.

Keywords: obituary; pedagogical journal; Ukrainian educators; biography; history of education.

Medals, Diplomas and Lifetime Allowances. Honours as a Form of Promotion for a Public Policy of School Memory

Alberto Barausse

University of Molise (Italy)

The contribution aims to focus on the origins and development of public school memory based on the awarding of honours. The awarding of honours was an increasingly widespread practice during the 19th and 20th centuries. This practice was associated with the awarding of insignia with a strong symbolic value such as medals, diplomas or cash prizes. The essay aims to explore the heuristic potential and methodological issues related to the analysis of the different forms of school honours produced in the post-unification decades, from ministerial ones to those granted on the occasion of events, both local and national, as a tribute or celebration, or as an award to pupils or teachers. Finally, the text analyses the experience of some institutions or companies producing decorations, true "memory factories", a fundamental prerequisite for the widespread diffusion of "memory practices".

Keywords: public memory of school; medals and diplomas; schooling processes; Italy; 19th century; 20th century.

“Minor Educators”? Traces of the Public Memory of the School, between the Official History of Education and the Community’s History. The Case of Emidio Consorti (1841-1913)

Marta Brunelli

University of Macerata (Italy)

The paper explores how the public and collective celebration and commemoration of educators, whom official historiography has often considered “minor figures”, has contributed to the construction of the identity of local communities. To this end, an exploratory investigation has been carried out to find out how many and what forms the public and collective memory of Emidio Consorti (1841-1913) took within the community of Ripatransone, a small center in the Marche Region, in which the educator was born and carried out his educational work. The first results evidenced that this figure has remained alive to this day and, although considered a minor educator by official educational historiography, the rootedness of Consorti in the collective imagination of his community is still able to testify how significant was the role he played between the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries. In addition, the research has brought to attention a series of new forms of public memory of the school, like commemorative souvenir-postcards as well as collective commemorations in the Web 3.0, that deserve to be investigated further by research.

Keywords: public memory of school; minor educators; postcards; web 3.0; Emidio Consorti.

Meritorious Experts of Physical Education: the Obituaries of the Gymnasiarchs in the Liberal Age

Domenico Francesco Antonio Elia

«Aldo Moro» University of Bari (Italy)

The present contribution aims at re-enacting the memory of the masters of gymnastics consulting as sources the obituaries published on printed bulletins edited by the federations and associations in the Liberal Age. The investigation aims to enhance the value of the historical source of obituaries originating from the common public practice of commemorating the school past in the press. The relevance of this source derives from the fact that individual and collective memory indivisibly merge in the press. Therefore, the author reconstructs the masterly profiles of the gymnasiarchs that acted during the challenging period of institutionalisation of gymnastics in Italian schools to point out the early features of the figure of gymnastics teachers.

Keywords: obituaries; memory; gymnastics; school; Italy.

SECTION *The “Sites of School Memory”*

How Can History of Education Research Improve the Valorisation of the Educational Heritage in Museums and Vice Versa?

Marc Depaepe

University of Leuven (Belgium) / University of Latvia at Riga (Latvia)

As a historian of education I want to explore in this paper possible avenues for rapprochement and cooperation between cultural-historical research about education on the one hand and the museum and heritage sector on the other. Initially, I had the idea to examine in the first place the developments of both fields in order to identify possible similarities and differences, after which I would in the second place come to the essence of how both could reinforce and improve each other – a thesis that I would

illustrate finally on the basis of the study of the school desk, the icon of the school patrimony. But, as I already have published on all these three items very recently, I decided to approach the same subject differently. Instead of repeating what I have already written elsewhere, I start here from my personal experiences, first in the context of school museums, and then from some recent encounters in the context of popularising my scientific research, both in the heritage sector and in the world of pedagogical training outside the university. Apparently, there too, it is beginning to become clear what one is missing by abolishing and/or neglecting the historical reflex. But the whole issue will be how there people will eventually deal with the pedagogical past again in a meaningful way. Cooperation with scientific historical cultural research on education seems to me to be necessary in this regard. Which does not prevent historical education researchers from learning a lot from those practitioners in the field as well. Therefore, a team-based approach might well be the egg of Columbus...

Keywords: history of education; educational heritage; school museum; popularization.

Between School Memory and Historical-Educational Heritage: the Library of the “Giacomo Leopardi” National Boarding School in Macerata

Anna Ascenzi, Elisabetta Patrizi
University of Macerata (Italy)

School libraries, long confused with popular libraries, are part of the cultural heritage of a country and represent repositories of school memories that are still little known and valued. Yet, together with the school archives, they offer precious opportunities to explore the educational canons applied within actual school realities and to deepen the application of national pedagogical paradigms and their evolution over time in specific educational contexts.

This contribution intends to explore the dual interpretative value of the school library both as a “cultural asset” to be known and safeguarded, and as a “place of memory” to be interrogated in relation to the implications connected with school life, focusing on the analysis of the “Giacomo Leopardi” boarding school library of Macerata.

Founded in May 1915, the school library in question is of a considerable size (over 2.000 items) and is valuable one of its kind not only because it comes from a prestigious school with a long tradition that arose in the immediate post-unification period, but also because it has not been dismembered, and therefore allows you to travel through different historical periods.

In this study, this school library is investigated taking into account various elements: title (to appreciate the composition of the library with respect to the literary genres represented); author (to evaluate the classic authors, of manuals, of best sellers of children’s literature present); typographical data (to detect the chronological location and the most present publishers); extra-textual elements (to explore the different forms of interaction between reader and text). The qualitative analysis will be combined with the quantitative one (expressed in percentage terms), in order to highlight the peculiarities of a case study that appears representative of the enormous heuristic potential of school libraries, both as sources for school memory and as an expression of a historical-educational heritage worthy of being protected and valued.

Keywords: school library; places of memory; cultural heritage of school; school manuals; Italy; 20th century.

The Story of a School Too Good to Be a School: the Collegio di Savoia in Turin

Paolo Bianchini
University of Turin (Italy)

Built between 1679 and 1687 under the patronage of Maria Giovanna Battista of Savoy Nemours, the *Collegio di Savoia* in Turin has represented, since its very beginning, one of the most awaited and

controversial buildings in the new capital of the Duchy of Savoy. The essay examines the history of the Jesuit boarding school, focusing on the architectural and urban aspects, and using it as a case study to reconstruct the beginnings of the scholastic policy of the Duchy in the 17th century. It will therefore focus both on the educational purposes of this enterprise and on the material and representative functions that the grandiose school building has performed over the centuries.

Keywords: history of school building; boarding school; Jesuits; modern history; *Collegio di Savoia*.

Restoring Memories of an Old School in Museums and Open-Air Museums in Poland

Agnieszka Wiczorek

Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (Poland)

The aim of this article is to present one of the concepts of restoring memories of an old school in the form of reconstructed school rooms. In Poland, such undertakings are pursued in museums and ethnographic museums and in open-air museums. The reconstructions of both school buildings, classrooms modelled on existing educational institutions as well as a teacher's apartment and principal's office were analysed. In this article, attention was paid to characteristic teaching aids, both repetitive objects such as benches, boards, school aids as well as those constituting a unique element of equipment for a given community, including school certificates, textbooks and regional alphabet.

Keywords: memory; school; open-air museum; classroom; Poland.

Corporate History in the Education Business

Sergi Moll Bagur, Francisca Comas Rubí

University of the Balearic Islands (Spain)

The aim of this research study is to analyse the use of corporate history in the field of education, specifically, in private religious schools. To do so, it focuses on a prestigious school with a long history: Sant Francesc de Sales School (Ciutadella, Minorca, Spain). During the research process, an analysis was made of different components and products of this corporate history, developed and disseminated by the centre during the Spanish post-war period (1939-1945). The results of the analysis, triangulated with other sources such as verbal accounts, offer an insight into how the school's corporate history helped to legitimize it as a prestigious education centre and to build a collective memory with goals that were more commercial than educational.

Keywords: private school; religious orders; corporate history; memories of school; Franco regime.

Studying to Survive: the Representation of the Waldensian School through the Beckwith Museums

Francesca Davida Pizzigoni

University of Turin (Italy)

The population of Waldensian religion in Italy is just over 25.000 but, in a few kilometers within three Piedmonts valleys, there are five reconstructions of the classrooms built by Charles Beckwith from the first half of the Nineteenth Century. In all evidence the school, and in particular the representation of the Beckwith's school, takes on a symbolic value for the Waldensian population, of which features and meanings we can investigate through the study of the representation of citizens of today and what they make of this school of the past. What image do they intend to restore today of this unique experience that has been able to bring education in every small mountain village and whose range of action lasted from 1829 until 1971? To be able to read, in particular, for the Waldensian population is the very heart of their religion, in which direct and personal access to Bible reading is provided, and

at the same time reading and writing were the only way in the past to escape isolation and to survive persecution, maintaining the ties with foreign countries: is the school representation of today able to give back the meaning of this “study to survive”? Through the study of the Beckwith museums, in relation to diaries of teachers kept at the *Archivio della Tavola Valdese* and with the current testimonies of representatives of the Waldensian community, the contribution aims to deepen the public memory of their school system that the Waldensian community intends to celebrate.

Keywords: classroom-museum; identity; representation; Waldensian; Beckwith.

The Fame of the First Girls’ High School in Paris: the Birth of a Co-Constructed Collective Memory

Sabria Benzarti

Institute of Historical Research of the North in Lille (France)

First high school for young girls in Paris built in the wake of the *Loi Camille Sée*, Fénelon High School had to be the model of female high schools. It turned into the elaboration and the implementation of strategies aiming at seducing families while providing them with a setting and strictness in keeping with their precepts.

To do so, the school reports of former students are a transgenerational indicator of both collective and public representations conveyed by the Institution and more specifically by its representatives. Examining its content and its evolution through administrative files and records of former students will enable us to recount the outlines of feminine school experience since the beginning of the 20th century.

Keywords: female education; secondary education; France; 19th century; 20th century.

Building the Local History Curriculum in Rural Portugal: between Local Developments and Global Understandings

Ana Isabel Madeira

University of Lisbon (Portugal)

“Rescued Memories, (Re)Constructed Identities” Project sought to build a memory of education and schooling in the Portuguese rural area of Pinhal Interior Sul, by gathering oral and written testimonies and identifying the (im)material heritage of local education. We sought to build a local history curriculum through the enactment of communities of practice. As such, we departed from the MRIR website project platform as a Public History repository and a pedagogical tool for the constitution of communities of practice. This approach was based on the establishment of a network of institutions and professionals that share a cultural identity, common learning environments and similar educational requirements.

Keywords: public history; local history curriculum; rural schools; learning communities; communities of practice.

Colegio Mayor Universitario “Casa do Brasil” (1962): a Place between Stories and Memories

Tatiane De Freitas Ermel

University of Valladolid (Spain)

This study focuses on the history of the international movement of higher education students and professors, which is organized at school residences, and especially on the case of *Colegio Mayor Universitario Casa do Brasil* (Madrid/Spain). We put forth a dialogue between the concepts of *place of memory* (P. Nora), memory and forgetting (P. Ricoeur) and the historical-educational heritage from a

transnational perspective. This historical-documentary research particularly analyzes annual reports and works published on *Casa do Brasil* since its inception. As an educational space outside of the university, for the past six decades *Casa do Brasil* has held for countless activities that contribute to the formation, socialization and culture at the *colegios mayores* in Spain, and is thus a landmark where people of many nationalities approach Brazilian culture in Spain.

Keywords: history of education; university residences; *Colegio Mayor*; student exchange.

Abstracts of the contributions
to the 3rd volume

*The School and Its Many Pasts:
Collective Memories of School*

edited by Juri Meda and Roberto Sani

SECTION *The Representation of School between Press, Literature and Collective Imaginary*

Iconographical Sources and History of Italian Schools in the 19th and 20th Centuries

Lorenzo Cantatore, Luca Silvestri
Roma Tre University (Italy)

Over recent decades, from the starting point of the studies of Philippe Ariès, the iconographical sources have acquired a significant place in the work of education historians, casting doubt on the exclusive authority of the written sources. Visual representations of formal education (school) and informal education (the family) are now an indispensable subject of research which was pioneered, in Italy, by Mario Alighiero Manacorda. From this perspective, historians are increasingly in need of specific skills and interdisciplinary dialogue. For the history of school, there is work (Demetrio Cosola, Leo Lionni) that highlights details and revealing insights into ideals, stereotypes, material contexts and educational experiences of great research value.

Keywords: history of school; iconography; Demetrio Cosola; Leo Lionni; Mario Alighiero Manacorda.

Between History and Memory: The School Souvenir Portrait in Spain

Francisca Comas Rubí
University of the Balearic Islands (Spain)

School souvenir portraits, with stereotypical iconography, have become the iconic representation par excellence of the school history in Spain, and are used from the present to both evoke school memory and disseminate the school history in exhibitions, documentaries, book covers, blogs, and all sorts of products of academic history as well as public history. Based on different collections of photographs of this type taken above all during the Franco regime, but also in later decades, and even in present-day recreations of these portraits, offered here is a reflection on the complex relationship between image, history, and school memory.

Keywords: school souvenir portrait; school memory; school history; public history of education.

Female Teachers in Italy in the 19th and 20th Centuries. The Teacher Training Schools in Literary Narratives and Archive Papers: Destiny or Emancipation?

Carmela Covato

Roma Tre University (Italy)

In enquiring into the relationship between the expansion of schooling in post-unification Italy and the survival of gender and social class-based pre-established and asymmetrical social destinies, the intention of this paper is to examine the literary sources on the *scuola normale* set up by the Casati Law of 1859 to train male and female teachers, but which rapidly became almost exclusively female. In literary fiction and educational practice, as emerges from the archive sources and autobiographical accounts, the conflict between historic prejudices and new aspirations in the experiences of mainly lower middle-class girls training to be teachers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries hovered between destiny and emancipation.

Keywords: normal school; literature; female teachers; gender; history.

The “Excellent Head Teacher” in Professional Manuals

Giuseppe Zago

University of Padua (Italy)

The essay reconstructs some representations of the figure of the “ideal head teacher” as proposed in the main training manuals for this profession. The time span considered goes from the 1890s to the end of the 1960s, i.e., from the moment in which the figure of the primary school head teacher was legally recognised in Italy until the dawn of its professional transformation in the 1970s.

Keywords: head teacher; primary school; history of education; school management; educational training manuals.

Portrayals of the Head Teacher in Forty Years of the Journal “Scuola Italiana Moderna” (1946-1985)

Carla Callegari

University of Padua (Italy)

This essay is the result of research on the portrayals of the head teacher in the journal «Scuola Italiana Moderna». Taking as its starting point a quantitative analysis aimed at identifying articles dedicated to the head teacher and the managerial role, it moves on to a qualitative analysis in order to understand what the head teacher’s real role was, and above all the intended portrayal of that role. The relationship between gender difference and professionalism is also examined, bearing in mind that the number of female head teachers was much lower than that of their male colleagues. The research explored the collective memory of these female school workers in relation to that of their male colleagues, and the representation that was intended to be conveyed of them to the journal’s subscribers.

Keywords: «Scuola Italiana Moderna»; head teachers; school managers; collective memory; obituaries.

A Memoir of How Italian Secondary Schools Changed in the Second Half of the 20th Century: Birth and Development of a Concept of Innovation and Experimentation in the Private Papers of the Principal Tranquillo Bertamini

Giordana Merlo

University of Padua (Italy)

The purpose of present contribution is to investigate, through individual school memory, the birth

and development of an idea for innovation and experimentation in the second half of the 20th century. Tranquillo Bertamini is the figure around which the period of renewal is reconstructed, from the end of the Second World War to the implementation of the experimentation at the “G.B. Brocchi” high school in Bassano del Grappa (North-Eastern Italy), where he was principal. The main sources for our research were his private records preserved at the Museum of Education in Padua, including personal correspondence, and drafts for speeches, printed contributions, reform projects, and reflections on important aspects of education theory. Private and no private papers for represent the school memory of a complex period of transformation, through the real experience of one of its protagonists.

Keywords: history of secondary school; educational experiments; Project 80; Erminio Filippin; Giovanni Gozzer.

Portraits of Headmasters and Headmistresses. How is School Authority Depicted in Children’s Literature?

Marnie Campagnaro
University of Padua (Italy)

Stories about school adventures or settings are deeply intertwined with the history of children’s literature and constitute a significant legacy. Research into such stories generally pays considerable attention to portraits of teachers, the teaching process, its social, cultural and political implications and the moral values of schooling. However, little attention has been paid to the representation of school authority and of principals, headmasters and headmistresses. This study aims to fill this gap. It focuses on classic children’s stories published in the 19th and 20th centuries, comparing recurring representational characteristics of headmasters and headmistresses. A gender bias emerges when school power and authority is embodied by a woman.

Keywords: headmaster/headmistress; history of children’s literature; authority; role model; gender bias.

Illustrations and Cartoonists in the Collodi Conflict Context. Childhood at School and School-Less Childhood

Milena Bernardi
University of Bologna (Italy)

This essay reflects on depictions of school and forms of schoollessness in the illustrations of the illustrators Mazzanti and Chiostri for Carlo Collodi’s *The Adventures of Pinocchio*. Paradigmatic visual sources interpreting late 19th century school images, these illustrations took part in the historical backdrop to Collodi’s inner conflict, with his ambivalence about school and preference for an adventurous childhood suffusing the poetics of his novel and being enhanced by the cartoonists’ art. These marginal artists illustrated Collodi’s school books in the visual complexity of an underlying imagery in which three childhood figures stand out: school children, adventurous children and poor, school-less children. Pinocchio, his companions, Lampwick and school-less children.

Keywords: illustration; Pinocchio; childhood; conflict; school.

Dystopian Schools between Reality and Narrative Fiction

Anna Antoniazzi
University of Genoa (Italy)

The imposing educational-training apparatus established in Italy during the Fascist period showed, in a disconcerting and dramatic way, that school is not a “protected” and “safe place”, but, on the

contrary, it is a very effective means of control and propaganda of one's ideas. Borrowing this awareness from the dictatorships of the 20th century, the Science Fiction Literature of the 20th Century shows that there is a close relationship between dystopian thinking and educational institutions that transmit its models. The protagonists of dystopian novels often decide not to conform themselves to the proposed educational models and to subvert the rules imposed by political regimes.

Keywords: dystopian novels; educational models; storytelling; young adult literature; divergent thinking.

Memories of Students and Yearbooks: the Religious Schools in Spain Twentieth Century

Irati Amunarriz Iruretagoiena, Pauli Davila Balsera, Luis María Naya Garmendia

University of the Basque Country (Spain)

Religious schools in Spain during the contemporary period have not been a privileged object of educational historiography, even if their study has been gaining more interest recently. The aim of this paper is to highlight the value of yearbooks as a new source for the study of this type of school. To this end, we analyse the limits that they may have as a document that can be used as a primary source in the historical construction of this type of schools by contrasting the content of the yearbooks with the oral testimonies obtained through in-depth interviews with groups of former students. We conclude that the fact that this documentary source allows us to carry out the history of the school representation that this type of school has tried to disseminate is reason enough to incorporate these documents into the field of the History of Education.

Keywords: yearbooks; religion; private school; Spain.

The Recovered Memory of the Students of Bordeaux

Marguerite Figeac-Monthus

University of Bordeaux (France)

Through the reviews of alumni or student associations and the directories of high schools (public/private education) and the University of Bordeaux, the aim is to identify from 1886 to 1930, all the elements that contribute to a feeling of belonging and to examine how they were able to allow the building of an identity while being today most often forgotten by the educational community. Thus, these documents, for which the governance of institutions does not always see the benefit of conservation, allow phenomena to be analyzed and better understood. They constitute, in a way, the database of a recovered memory. Three axes will be addressed: a source reflecting political and societal issues; write, remember, build community of belonging; the recovered memory of a lost identity.

Keywords: memory; identity; high schools; public education; yearbooks.

Notes on School Photographs as Material Objects and Social Objects

Tiziana Serena

University of Florence (Italy)

This paper presents a reflection on the analysis of photographic sources. It explores the advantages of using methodologies that consider photographs not only as flat images but rather as a material objects and social objects. The paper discusses the themes of the agency of pictures and their materiality in the field of school photography. Themes relating to identity and memory construction processes are highlighted, as are the ways in which the interpreters of school photographs are involved over time in relation to feeling.

Keywords: visual memory of school; history of photography; social object; materiality; feeling.

SECTION *The Representation of School in Mass Media*

“Maria Montessori. Una Vita per i Bambini”: a Biopic That Blends Memory, Interpretation and Reality

Simonetta Polenghi
Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan (Italy)

In 2007 the TV movie *Maria Montessori. Una vita per i bambini* (Maria Montessori. A life for children) was broadcast in Italy, becoming one of the most watched films of the year. It is a biopic of Montessori, covering her life from her entry to the Faculty of Medicine in Rome in 1893 up to 1934, when she left Italy. The movie concentrates on her love story with Montesano, her relationship with her son Mario, and the creation of the *Casa dei Bambini* in Rome. Although some parts are historically accurate or plausible, others are fictional or incorrect. The movie was also broadcast in France and the Czech Republic, and the DVD was then dubbed in German and subtitled in Spanish on YouTube. This paper aims to explore the memory held of Montessori internationally, by analysing audience reactions.

Keywords: Montessori; biopic; history of education; collective memory; cinema; television.

The Diverse Representations of Women Secondary Teachers in Selected Italian Films from the Past Fifty Years. A Case Study

Evelina Scaglia, Alessandra Mazzini
University of Bergamo (Italy)

From the Seventies to nowadays, the figure of the female secondary school teacher has been the object of numerous filmic representations in Italy, making it a particularly original case study within the line of inquiry that examines the “collective school memories” communicated through audio-visual media. The analysis of some significant Italian filmic sources is aimed at identifying the intrinsic dimensions of school settings and the educational practices adopted therein, to answer three research questions: what imaginary surrounding the woman high school teacher is communicated; do these memories reflect the actual conditions in the secondary schools of the period and if so in what way; what are the main thoughts, expectations, or doubts elicited in viewers.

Keywords: collective school memory; cinema; woman teacher; Italy; 20th century; 21st century.

Il Giornalino di Gian Burrasca: Trajectories of Memory from the Literary Text to Filmic Mediations

Sabrina Fava
Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan (Italy)

This research analyses the changes that involved *Il Giornalino di Gian Burrasca*, written and illustrated between 1907 and 1908 by Vamba (pen name for Luigi Bertelli) in the children’s magazine «Il Giornalino della Domenica». The story became a film directed by Sergio Tofano in 1943, then adapted for TV between 1964 and 1965 by Lina Wertmuller for RAI and revised in a new format in the children’s magazine «Corriere dei Piccoli» (1964-1965). The rewriting process of the text describes how the imaginary and the collective memory has been constructed and how the new elements introduced have modified the interpretation of the past and the representation of school and of the relations between pupils and teachers.

Keywords: school memory; children’s magazines; cinema; television; 20th century.

The Image of the Female Elementary School Teacher in the Works of Edmondo De Amicis across Literary and Visual Sources

Ilaria Mattioni

University of Turin (Italy)

To investigate whether and how the collective imaginary surrounding women elementary schoolteachers changed over the twentieth century, I analyse cinematic, TV, and cartoon adaptations of literary works by De Amicis. What elements of collective memory concerning the image of the female elementary teacher survived beyond the nineteenth century? And what, vice versa, was modified to suit the sensibilities of twentieth century viewers? In the ongoing trade-off between change and resistance to change, representations of the schoolmistress appear to retain their hold over the popular imagination.

Keywords: teacher; collective school memory; filmic sources; Italy; Edmondo De Amicis.

Collective and Public School Memory: the Case of Professor Kosta Vujić

Aleksandra Ilić Rajković, Đurđa Maksimović

University of Belgrade (Serbia)

“Professor Kosta Vujić’s Hat” is a story based on real events and personalities, adapted into a film, book, and television series, recounting the adventures of a class of high school graduates and their teacher. The paper’s introductory section presents our analysis’s theoretical and methodological framework. In the first part, we explore the historical facts and individual school memories associated with Vujić and his era. Subsequently, we analyse and interpret the collective memory constructed and popularised by the book and films, situating our discussion within the critical theses of post-critical pedagogy.

Keywords: collective school memory; history of education; cinema; book-to-film adaptation.

The Janitor on Screen. A Proposed Study of the School Imaginary in Twentieth-Century Italy

Paolo Alfieri

Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan (Italy)

The silence that surrounds the figure of the janitor in educational historiography may be filled by drawing on filmic sources that allow us to analyse the place of janitors in the construction of collective school memories, especially in terms of their contribution to students’ informal education and their peculiar role within the school system. In this essay, I apply the most recent methodological criteria for the historiographical examination of cinematographic material to the only Italian film that features a janitor as its main character, going on to suggest starting points for future research on representations of the janitor, particularly in relation to key socio-economic, political-educational, and cultural factors in the history of Italian schooling across the twentieth century.

Keywords: collective school memories; janitor; filmic sources; Italy; 20th century.

Images of School Inclusion: Education for Persons with Disabilities in 1970s Italy across Big and Small Screens

Anna Debè

Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan (Italy)

In the 1970s, a complex process of integration of students with disabilities took place within the Italian school system. A limited number of audiovisual productions for cinema and television have focused on this controversial phase, namely two documentary-style films (*La bicicletta* [*The bicycle*] by

L. Comencini and *I "diversi"* [*The "different"*] by V. De Seta, released in 1970 and 1978 respectively) and two drama films (*Rosso come il cielo* [*Red like the sky*] by C. Bortone, 2007, and *La classe degli asini* [*The class of dunces*] by A. Porporati, 2016). These productions are analyzed here within the historical-educational paradigm of research into school memories, with a view to comparing how they recorded contemporary reality or re-evoked and revisited an earlier historical phase.

Keywords: collective school memories; disability; filmic sources; Italy; 1970s.

The Traditional Jewish School and Its Many Pasts: History and Memories

Yehuda Bitty

Herzog Academic Institute in Jerusalem (Israel)

This article explored the historiographical sources of the Eastern European traditional Jewish school known as the *Heder* through literary accounts, memoirs, photographs, and folk songs. It differentiated between the historical core of these documents and the imaginary constructs behind them. Rather than dismissing the historical image in favor of historical reality, this approach views the historical image as a reality in itself, which acts as a repository of human perceptions, values, and meanings. A considerable part of this article was devoted to methodological issues related to the analysis of historical documents.

Keywords: Heder; Jewish education; methodology; historical image; culture.

School as Seen by the Radio (1945-1975)

Luca Bravi

University of Florence (Italy)

In Italy, the first distance learning experiments involved Italian radio, when Benito Mussolini expressed the need for each school to have its own "listening point". From 1934, the Rural Radio Authority started its transmissions for schools. Radio played a role not only in fascist propaganda, but also in the wider social history of our country's education. In the post-war period, an innovative experiment took place in the form of *La radio per le scuola* (Radio for schools), a broadcast that integrated classroom activity and was structured as a cultural experience to be constructed both remotely and in person, in relation to art, music and theatre. The advent of television then changed the role of radio in the cultural and educational context in our country.

Keywords: radio; radio for schools; distance learning; social history of education; Rai.

Cinema in Greece during the Interwar Period under the Lens of History of Education

Panagiotis Kimourtzis

University of the Aegean (Greece)

The article discusses the reasons why films were not used for educational purposes in the case of Greece during the interwar period. It attempts to show the first, however mostly hostile, debate about cinema and its pedagogic use in the historical and social frame of the time. It also attempts to present the first – sometimes direct, others indirect – voices of some inspired advocates of the film and its educational value in a deeply conservative society.

Keywords: educational practices; educational reforms; cinema; youth morality.

Resist! Italy's Teachers and Students in the Face of Neoliberalism in Education

Gianfranco Bandini

University of Florence (Italy)

In the last twenty years, Italy's school system has undergone reforms and legislative changes that can largely be traced back to neoliberalism. The political debate and in part also the cultural one looked at education in a new light, giving public opinion a new narrative on education, based on individual merit and competition between schools. Listening to the voices of teachers and students means bringing to light the aspirations, widely shared and consolidated, of the progressive pedagogy and emancipation that is currently on the fringes of government action and the prevailing culture. Between active resistance and indifference, we are discovering an educational community that wants to be heard and included in the decisions that necessarily involve it.

Keywords: neoliberalism; oral history; school reform; collective imaginary; progressive education.

The Role of Secondary Grammar School Traditions in Hungary under Communism

Beatrix Vincze

Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest (Hungary)

The study aims to present, through the recollections of teachers and students at a small-town high school in Hungary, one of the traditional student day events that for decades taught thousands of students the rules of multiparty democracy within the framework of the one-party system. The essence of the "Reversed Day" was that students nominated a student director and conducted a regular election campaign, delivering speeches for the elections. The one-day student government was an exceptional opportunity to tutor students about democracy, take responsibility, organise, and lead programs. The case study reconstructs student traditions and analysis school documents and memories. The research aims to answer how a student tradition could influence young people's political and civic knowledge.

Keywords: school rituals; school memory; education; communism; collective identity.

Abstracts of the contributions
to the 4th volume

*The School and Its Many Pasts:
Individual Memories of School*

edited by Juri Meda and Roberto Sani

School Life and Teachers' Diaries. Echoes of the Gentile Reform in the Archivio Didattico Lombardo Radice Diaries: Educational Theories and Educational Practice

Francesca Borruso

Roma Tre University (Italy)

School diaries written by teachers are extraordinarily important documents in historical education research as they are capable of getting down into the subsoil of educational life, its everyday dimension and listening to the voices of those directly involved in it. The aim of this paper is to analyse the teaching diaries contained in the Archivio Didattico Lombardo Radice at MuSEd (Roma Tre University), with a view to retracing some of the educational practices brought into primary schools, especially rural ones, with the implementation of the Gentile Reform. I will seek to outline themes, issues and emerging difficulties by means of these teachers' diaries, enquiring into the relationship between theory and practice in educational life.

Keywords: school diaries; teachers; autobiographical narratives; Gentile Reform.

Albino Bernardini and the Representation of Italian School

Andrea Marrone

University of Cagliari (Italy)

Albino Bernardini was one of the most important authors who collaborated to change the collective representation of the Italian school in the second half of the twentieth century. He published a series of school memoirs in which he recounted his experiences. Bernardini deconstructed the idyllic narrative of education, documenting dramas, injustices, and violence with extreme realism. At the same time, the memoirs of his own teaching activity were aimed at promoting a revolutionary teacher "icon", oriented to the principles of "activism", hostile to social discrimination and authoritarianism. This contribution aims to investigate the new image of teacher and school promoted in Bernardini's work and the spreading of them, highlighting the multiple directions of its diffusion.

Keywords: history of education; school memory; teaching; school violence; Italy; 20th century.

Teaching in Post World War Two Italy: Anachronism and Change in Autobiographical and Literary Narratives

Chiara Meta

Roma Tre University (Italy)

This paper explores depictions of teachers' social role in the second half of the 20th century. The difficulties involved in identifying significant memories of school life in autobiographical narratives notwithstanding, I have decided to focus most of my attention on the literary sources. A further decision involved restricting the field of enquiry to women's narratives while not neglecting significant accounts from men, and shining an especial spotlight on lower and upper secondary school teachers. This is designed to bring out a *longue durée* phenomenon consisting of a constant alternation between demands for emancipation and the survival of the internal and external constraints which made the development of a new professional and social identity for teachers so fraught with difficulty.

Keywords: teachers; schooling; literary memories; autobiographies; Italy; 20th century.

Chronicles about School Life between Intimate Diaries and Educational Documentation

Lucia Paciaroni

University of Macerata (Italy)

This contribution intends to investigate the historiographical relevance on the space reserved for the chronicle about school life in school registers, where teachers had to write down news, data and facts relating to school life. Through the analysis of the chronicles by Giovanni Lucaroni, a teacher at the primary school of Mogliano, in the province of Macerata, from 1910 to 1956, we intend to demonstrate how these sources can be useful in decrypting that "black box of schooling" to which educational historiography has repeatedly referred in recent years. In fact, in these chronicles, the teacher did not punctually reported only what was prescribed by legislation, but he shared personal observations and comments about his pupils and matters relating to school.

Keywords: school memories; school archives; teachers' archives; 20th century; Italy.

The "Brilliant" School of Elena Ferrante

Monica Galfré

University of Florence (Italy)

This essay looks at how Elena Ferrante's novel *L'amica geniale* (My Brilliant Friend), one of the greatest literary successes of recent times, tells the story of Italy in the postwar period, a time that seemingly encapsulates the great hopes and disappointments of the 20th century, partly because of the roles of education and culture as tools for redemption. By going beyond a methodological discourse, this study compares the historical narrative with another type of conversation about the past, examining any points of convergence, contrast or complementarity in the knowledge that nothing is so ambiguous as the relationship between history and literature.

Keywords: literature; history; school; 20th century; Italy.

Restless and Longlasting Cuore. Readings of a Classic between Text and Images

Susanna Barsotti, Chiara Lepri

Roma Tre University (Italy)

Cuore by Edmondo De Amicis is a classic of children's literature that cannot be ignored if we want to investigate the idea of school as conveyed by novels for young people. What is needed is an

analysis of the work at its deepest level to bring out the literary dimension, by means of which the image of school was channelled via the three narrative registers into which *Cuore* is divided (school diary, monthly stories, letters from family members). School – *Cuore*'s real main character – is not seen simply as an institution but as the driving force behind education, as also emerges from the iconography around which the novel develops. It is also by analysing this, sometimes coherently with the original work, other times satirically, that the idea of school can be outlined. In this sense *Cuore* is, in fact, an enduring and restless classic whose formal and symbolic meanings have been redefined in its various republications. From this, it is possible to observe not only the changes which have taken place in Italy's cultural and educational priorities but also the impact the novel has had on the popular image of education in the minds of generations of Italians over one hundred years.

Keywords: Cuore; Edmondo De Amicis; school; memory; imaginary.

Here Starts "Penelope's Web". Education and Social Prejudices as Seen in Women-Teachers' Diaries in Greece (1800-1920)

Polly Thanailaki

International Hellenic University (Greece)

In her diary, Eleni Boukouvala, a Greek woman -inspector of girls' elementary schools, expressed her satisfaction because at the turn of 19th century many girls' schools of secondary level of education had been operating all over the country. However, Boukouvala noted that there still existed a lot of social prejudices regarding the presence of women-teachers in the remote, rural areas of the country. In the present study, the diary of Frances Hill, wife of the American protestant missionary John Hill, is also explored in which her plans for disseminating female education in Greece and for training women-schoolteachers are studied.

Keywords: women-teachers; diaries; Greek schools.

Using School Memory to Get to Know "Frontier Realities". Angelina Lo Dico: Teacher in the Land of Basilicata

Vittoria Bosna

«Aldo Moro» University of Bari (Italy)

Increasing attention is being paid by educational historians and educational institutions to "life stories and school memories". These are strands of real value for a careful reconstruction of aspects of everyday life in our country.

In this study I specifically analysed a life story, that of the teacher Angelina Lo Dico (born in Marianopoli, in the province of Caltanissetta, on 8 April 1900) who moved to Basilicata to be a teacher in 1921. From a methodological point of view, I analysed the precarious state of education in the Land of Basilicata; secondly, I analysed Lo Dico's work in the small village of Pisticci. For these reasons, I used archive material and testimonies taken from school registers.

Keywords: education; school; teacher; religion; memory.

Teachers in Transit: Memories of Doings and Knowledge from a Transnational Viewpoint (1882-1914)

Terciane Ângela Luchese

University of Caxias do Sul (Brazil)

Claudia Panizzolo

Federal University of São Paulo (Brazil)

Between the end of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th century, an intense process of immigrants entering Brazil brought about changes, among which were ethnic schools constituted by the language used and the ways in which they operated routinely. The objective is to understand this movement, as well as the knowledge and memories involving the practices constructed by teachers who e/immigrated from Italy and worked in schools, many of which had ethnic marks. In the luggage of these teachers, a diversity of cultural practices was transported and confronted with the various ways of living in the places where they settled. We conducted a historical document analysis based on an empirical corpus composed of laws, photographs, newspapers, interviews and letters. Teachers' stories, between what was learned in Italy and what was reinvented in Brazil.

Keywords: memories; teachers; school; transnational history; emigration; immigration.

School Memories from Croatia: Autobiographies of Mijat Stojanović and Imbro Ignjatijević Tkalac

Vlasta Švooger, Zrinko Novosel

Croatian Institute of History in Zagreb (Croatia)

This paper analyses school memories of two prominent Croatian intellectuals: teacher and school inspector M. Stojanović and publicist I. I. Tkalac. The analysis is based on their published autobiographies. The autobiography by Tkalac is titled *Youth Memories from Croatia* (Leipzig 1894). Stojanović edited for print his autobiography *Adventures and Misadventures of my Life* (published in 2015). They describe their formal and informal education. Stojanović described the situation of the 19th century primary school system in Croatia from a double perspective – that of a pupil and of a teacher. Tkalac wrote critically about his secondary school days. Their evaluations of the situation in the Croatian school system largely corresponded with observations noted in other types of sources.

Keywords: school memory; autobiographies; Mijat Stojanović; Imbro Ignjatijević Tkalac; Croatia; 19th century.

A Common Narrative? Civics Teachers of the German Democratic Republic between Memory and Identity

Jascha Hook

University of Kaiserslautern-Landau (Germany)

This article draws upon the memories of former civics teachers of the GDR to examine not only what happened at school but also to reconstruct their counter-memories, which can be seen as an attempt to affect the collective memories of East Germany's controversial school past from within. The reconstruction of their life narratives shows how their memories of civics and the GDR school are influenced by both the past they experienced and the current discourses surrounding the GDR school. The memories of civics outlined in this way run between the poles of authenticity and scientificity while suggesting that even the early teaching staff of the ideological core subject may have been more diverse than commonly assumed.

Keywords: teacher's school memories; GDR; civics courses; life narratives; biographical research.

Memories of Teachers and School Inspectors in Post-War Greece. Visions of the Past and Interpretations in the Present

Despina Karakatsani, Pavlina Nikolopoulou

University of Peloponnese (Greece)

This contribution presents and analyses the oral testimonies of five teachers that took their first steps as young teachers in the 1950s to rise in the educational hierarchy and serve as school officers a few years later. We attempt to look into how teachers selected to serve this very role in the post-civil war state form, maintain, employ and communicate the memory of the 1950s school; what they choose to recall and what they consign to oblivion. We further seek to explore how their memories interact with later representations of school life, impacting their interpretation of the events and re-signifying their past experiences according to the dictates of their present individual, social and national identity. Apart from the oral testimonies, our contribution draws on contemporary pedagogical journals, in an attempt to study how the image of the post-civil war school these journals suggest is at odds with the image constructed and reconstructed in the memories of our informants.

Keywords: oral testimonies; memories; school teachers; post-war period; Greece.

Daily Notes in Diaries: Traces of Teaching in Personal Archives (Porto Alegre/BR, 1995-2014)

Dóris Bittencourt Almeida

Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil)

The article explores regularities and dissonances in the paths of a university professor, having as documentary corpus nineteen personal diaries, which are understood as ego-documents. The examination of these materials enabled conducting an exercise of perception of the subtleties of the existence of this woman, professor, researcher, mother and daughter, through her notes on these writing supports.

Keywords: history of education; diaries; ego-documents; school; memory.

“With Faith and Knowledge, All Can Be Overcome”: Memories of an Orphanage and of Vocational Education for Abandoned Children (Porto Alegre/RS – 1947 to 1955)

Luciane Sgarbi S. Grazziotin

University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos (Brazil)

This study concerns the analysis of an institution that has been taking children in and working as shelter and school for orphans in the city of Porto Alegre since 1895. The institution known as “Pão dos Pobres de Santo Antônio” has been discussed in other studies that dealt, mostly, with the history and social role of the charity work. The investigation I present is methodologically based on Oral History and Document Analysis of Personal Archives. The time frame concerns the years between 1947 and 1955 and is related to the life of one of the residents of the orphanage and his representations about the space as a place of living, studying and training for work. Mister Barbosa’s recollections bring forth the dimensions of affection and gratitude for the opportunity of, in his words, “becoming someone”, which is related, especially, to the learning of a trade.

Keywords: school memory; oral history; orphanage; vocational education; 19th century.

Narrating the School of the Past and the Future. A Preliminary Analysis of the “Educational Memories on Video” (MEV) Database

Stefano Oliviero

University of Florence (Italy)

This paper aims to explore the impact of stereotypical school narratives, conveyed by collective memories, on individual memories. Prejudices and stereotypes that are difficult to uproot. In particular, I will examine some recurring themes and opinions in the public debate around school issues, and then compare them with the memories and imagery that emerge from the testimonies of ordinary people

collected in the *Memorie Educative in Video – MEV* (Educational Memories on Video) database, edited by the University of Florence research unit and hosted on the portal www.memoriascolastica.it. This paper will thus also be an opportunity to describe, albeit briefly, the MEV database.

Keywords: teacher; video testimonies; oral history; school memory; stereotypes.

Educational Policy in Greece and Educational Discourse throughout 1963-1965: Male and Female Student Memories

Evangelia Kalerante, Georgios Tzartzas

University of Western Macedonia (Greece)

This study focuses on the education policy of the period 1963-1965, emphasizing the political discourse and the emerging educational intentions of that period. This specific period is representative of movement actions and a relevant promotion of democratic requests for a short period in the 1960s. Their social experiences are particularly explored both in the university and social space, hosting the conflict between democratic and conservative educational discourse. At the same time, an attempt is made to showcase the education policy of that time in direct correlation with both the left wing and scientific institutes' political intentions. The scientific institutes, through the aid of research and communication with the scientific community in Europe and the U.S.A. enhance the democratic discourse in a different form of education and society.

Keywords: education policy; student memories; social experience; educational discourse; Greece; 20th century.

Table of contents of the volumes of *The School and Its Many Pasts*

Volume 1: *The School and Its Many Pasts:
The Different Types of School Memory*, edited by Lucia Paciaroni

PREMISE

Lucia Paciaroni

- 7 Introduction to the Different Types of School Memory

CONTRIBUTIONS

Cristina Yanes-Cabrera

- 11 The Future of Memory: Initial Steps in a Research Career and Emerging Historiographical Perspectives

Davide Allegra

- 25 Images of the Changing School in Luigi Comencini's Television Documentary "I Bambini e Noi" (1970)

Elisa Mazzella

- 35 The Infant School on Set. The Film "Chiedo Asilo" by Marco Ferreri and the Educational Imaginary in 1970s Italy

Dalila Forni

- 45 Pupils and Teachers at School: Memories and Social Imagination through Cinema

Chiara Naldi

- 55 Between School Memory and Visual Culture: the Photo Albums of the Porta Romana Art Institute in Florence (1939-1962)

Silvia Pacelli, Valentina Valecchi

- 67 School Life Representation in the Photographic Images of the Dossier Series "Biblioteca di Lavoro" by Mario Lodi

Chiara Martinelli

- 77 Representing the Institutions between 1968 and Coming-of-age Novels: the "Educational Video Memories" Database

Rossella Andreassi, Valeria Viola

- 85 The Construction of an "Archive of Memory". School Memory through the Voice of Its Protagonists in 20th Century in Molise

Francesco Bellacci

- 97 The School of "Fascism in Crisis" through the Memories of Pupils of the Time

- Tommaso Petrucciani
107 Learning Memory. The Impact of the Racial Laws on Three Roman High Schools: between Oblivion and Remembrance
- Rocco Labriola
119 Rebuilding and Enhance Memory. The Activity of the Lower School “G. Perotti” of Turin
- Teresa Gargano, Simone di Biasio
129 The Collodi School. School Atmospheres in the Work of Carlo Lorenzini
- Martine Gilsoul
139 The Palidoro Children’s House Diaries of Irene Bernasconi (1915-1916)
- Monica Dati
151 “She Told Me to Read, Always Read”. Itineraries of Reading Education through the Oral Testimonies of Teachers and Students of Yesterday
- Piera Caocci
163 The “Diario di una Maestrina” of Maria Giacobbe and the Sardinian School
- Maura Tripi
173 Formation and Transformation. Memories around Early Childhood Educational Services in an “Educationally Poor” Context
- Giulia Cappelletti
181 School Architecture and Furniture in Italy, 1950-1970. Forms and Spaces of a Collective Memory
- Valentino Minuto
191 Plaques and Statues as School Memories. The Case of the Monumental Tributes to Giovanni Cena
- Sofia Montecchiani
207 Child-Care Institutions. Memories between Public Celebrations and Collective Representations
- Giulia Fasan
217 The “Raggio di Sole” Open-Air School and Its Directors in Collective and Public Memory
- Silvia Panzetta
227 Villa Emma in Nonantola between History and Public Memory
- Annarita Pilla
241 Public School Memory between Centralist Policies and Local Instances. Giulitta Ferraris Well-Deserving of Education and the Termoli “Gesù e Maria” Boarding School in the Early 20th Century

Volume 2: *The School and Its Many Pasts:*

Official and Public Memories of School, edited by Juri Meda and Roberto Sani

PREMISE

- Roberto Sani
259 Introduction
- Juri Meda
265 Introduction to the Study of School Memory

- María Del Mar Del Pozo Andrés
269 School Memories and Travelling Iconic Images of Education in the Nineteenth Century

SECTION *Official and Public Memories of School*

- Luigiaurelio Pomante
293 The International University Games of 1933. The Fascist Regime and the Issue of Commemorative Stamps as a Memory Policy for a “Glorious” Italian University Tradition
- Juri Meda
305 “Educational Italianness”. National Stereotypes and Pedagogical Localism in the Centenary Celebrations of Italian and Foreign Educationalists between the 19th and 20th Centuries
- Simone Dos Prazeres
317 School Architecture as Public School Memory: the Portuguese Case of “Plano dos Centenários”
- Roberto Sani
325 Memory and Celebration of the “Heroic Youth”. The Youth Organisations of the Mussolini Regime, School and the Creation of the “New Fascist Man”
- Wolfgang Sahlfeld
341 School Jubilees as an Opportunity for the Implementation of New Instruments of Memory Building: the Case of the 150 Years of *Scuola Magistrale* in Locarno (Switzerland)
- Fabio Targhetta
351 The Public Representation of Schools in Philately
- Carla Ghizzoni
361 Ambrosian School Memories. Milan City Council’s Construction of Its Own Glorious Educational Tradition from the Italian Unification through the Aftermath of World War II
- Maria Cristina Morandini
373 Representations of Disability in the Great Turin Exhibitions at the Turn of the Twentieth Century (1884-1911)
- Ariane Dos Reis Duarte, Estela Denise Schütz Brito
383 Procession to the “Honorable Son”: Memory and Representations in the Funeral Rites of Felipe Tiago Gomes (Brasília/DF and Picuí/PB – Brazil, 1996/2011)
- Mirella D’Ascenzo
395 Metamorphosis of School Memory: the Case of Adelfo Grosso between Individual, Collective and Public Memory
- Snježana Šušnjara
407 A Monument in Memory of the Teachers
- Oleksandr Mikhno
421 Obituaries to Teachers on the Pages of Periodicals of the 20th Century
- Alberto Barausse
431 Medals, Diplomas and Lifetime Allowances. Honours as a Form of Promotion for a Public Policy of School Memory
- Marta Brunelli
447 “Minor Educators”? Traces of the Public Memory of the School, between the Official History of Education and the Community’s History. The Case of Emidio Consorti (1841-1913)

- Domenico Francesco Antonio Elia
465 Meritorious Experts of Physical Education: the Obituaries of the Gymnasiarchs in the Liberal Age

SECTION *The “Sites of School Memory”*

- Marc Depaepe
477 How Can History of Education Research Improve the Valorisation of the Educational Heritage in Museums and Vice Versa?
- Anna Ascenzi, Elisabetta Patrizi
487 Between School Memory and Historical-Educational Heritage: the Library of the “Giacomo Leopardi” National Boarding School in Macerata
- Paolo Bianchini
505 The Story of a School Too Good to Be a School: the *Collegio di Savoia* in Turin
- Agnieszka Wieczorek
515 Restoring Memories of an Old School in Museums and Open-Air Museums in Poland
- Sergi Moll Bagur, Francisca Comas Rubí
527 Corporate History in the Education Business
- Francesca Davida Pizzigoni
537 Studying to Survive: the Representation of the Waldensian School through the Beckwith Museums
- Sabria Benzarti
547 The Fame of the First Girls’ High School in Paris: the Birth of a Co-Constructed Collective Memory
- Ana Isabel Madeira
559 Building the Local History Curriculum in Rural Portugal: Between Local Developments and Global Understandings
- Tatiane De Freitas Ermel
569 Colegio Mayor Universitario “Casa do Brasil” (1962): a Place between Stories and Memories

Volume 3: *The School and Its Many Pasts: Collective Memories of School*, edited by Juri Meda and Roberto Sani

SECTION *The Representation of School between Press, Literature and Collective Imaginary*

- Lorenzo Cantatore, Luca Silvestri
587 Iconographical Sources and History of Italian Schools in the 19th and 20th Centuries
- Francisca Comas Rubí
597 Between History and Memory: the School Souvenir Portrait in Spain
- Carmela Covato
607 Female Teachers in Italy in the 19th and 20th Centuries. The Teacher Training Schools in Literary Narratives and Archive Papers: Destiny or Emancipation?
- Giuseppe Zago
617 The “Excellent Head Teacher” in Professional Manuals

- Carla Callegari
629 Portrayals of the Head Teacher in Forty Years of the Journal “Scuola Italiana Moderna” (1946-1985)
- Giordana Merlo
641 A Memoir of How Italian Secondary Schools Changed in the Second Half of the 20th Century: Birth and Development of a Concept of Innovation and Experimentation in the Private Papers of the Principal Tranquillo Bertamini
- Marnie Campagnaro
651 Portraits of Headmasters and Headmistresses. How is School Authority Depicted in Children’s Literature?
- Milena Bernardi
661 Illustrations and Cartoonists in the Collodi Conflict Context. Childhood at School and School-Less Childhood
- Anna Antoniazzi
671 Dystopian Schools between Reality and Narrative Fiction
- Irati Amunarriz Iruretagoiena, Paulí Davila Balsera, Luis María Naya Garmendia
683 Memories of Students and Yearbooks: the Religious Schools in Spain Twentieth Century
- Marguerite Figeac-Monthus
693 The Recovered Memory of the Students of Bordeaux
- Tiziana Serena
707 Notes on School Photographs as Material Objects and Social Objects
- SECTION *The Representation of School in Mass Media*
- Simonetta Polenghi
721 “Maria Montessori. Una Vita per i Bambini”: a Biopic That Blends Memory, Interpretation and Reality
- Evelina Scaglia, Alessandra Mazzini
733 The Diverse Representations of Women Secondary Teachers in Selected Italian Films from the Past Fifty Years. A Case Study
- Sabrina Fava
745 *Il Giornalino di Gian Burrasca*: Trajectories of Memory from the Literary Text to Filmic Mediations
- Ilaria Mattioni
757 The Image of the Female Elementary School Teacher in the Works of Edmondo De Amicis across Literary and Visual Sources
- Aleksandra Ilić Rajković, Đurđa Maksimović
769 Collective and Public School Memory: the Case of Professor Kosta Vujić
- Paolo Alfieri
781 The Janitor on Screen. A Proposed Study of the School Imaginary in Twentieth-Century Italy
- Anna Debè
791 Images of School Inclusion: Education for Persons with Disabilities in 1970s Italy across Big and Small Screens
- Yehuda Bitty
803 The Traditional Jewish School and Its Many Pasts: History and Memories

- Luca Bravi
819 School as Seen by the Radio (1945-1975)
- Panagiotis Kimourtzis
829 Cinema in Greece during the Interwar Period under the Lens of History of Education
- Gianfranco Bandini
839 Resist! Italy's Teachers and Students in the Face of Neoliberalism in Education
- Beatrix Vincze
853 The Role of Secondary Grammar School Traditions in Hungary under Communism

*Volume 4: The School and Its Many Pasts:
Individual Memories of School*, edited by Juri Meda and Roberto Sani

- Francesca Borruso
871 School Life and Teachers' Diaries. Echoes of the Gentile Reform in the *Archivio Didattico Lombardo Radice* Diaries: Educational Theories and Educational Practice
- Andrea Marrone
881 Albino Bernardini and the Representation of Italian School
- Chiara Meta
893 Teaching in Post World War Two Italy: Anachronism and Change in Autobiographical and Literary Narratives
- Lucia Paciaroni
903 Chronicles about School Life between Intimate Diaries and Educational Documentation
- Monica Galfré
915 The "Brilliant" School of Elena Ferrante
- Susanna Barsotti, Chiara Lepri
921 Restless and Longlasting *Cuore*. Readings of a Classic between Text and Images
- Polly Thanailaki
931 Here Starts "Penelope's Web". Education and Social Prejudices as Seen in Women-Teachers' Diaries in Greece (1800-1920)
- Vittoria Bosna
941 Using School Memory to Get to Know "Frontier Realities". Angelina Lo Dico: Teacher in the Land of Basilicata
- Terciane Ângela Luchese, Claudia Panizzolo
951 Teachers in Transit: Memories of Doings and Knowledge from a Transnational Viewpoint (1882-1914)
- Vlasta Švogelj, Zrinko Novosel
967 School Memories from Croatia: Autobiographies of Mijat Stojanović and Imbro Ignjatijević Tkalac
- Jascha Hook
977 A Common Narrative? Civics Teachers of the German Democratic Republic between Memory and Identity

- Despina Karakatsani, Pavlina Nikolopoulou
 989 Memories of Teachers and School Inspectors in Post-War Greece. Visions of the Past and Interpretations in the Present
- Dóris Bittencourt Almeida
 999 Daily Notes in Diaries: Traces of Teaching in Personal Archives (Porto Alegre/BR, 1995-2014)
- Luciane Sgarbi S. Grazziotin
 1011 “With Faith and Knowledge, All Can Be Overcome”: Memories of an Orphanage and of Vocational Education for Abandoned Children (Porto Alegre/RS – 1947 to 1955)
- Stefano Oliviero
 1021 Narrating the School of the Past and the Future. A Preliminary Analysis of the “Educational Memories on Video” (MEV) Database
- Evangelia Kalerante, Georgios Tzartzas
 1033 Educational Policy in Greece and Educational Discourse throughout 1963-1965: Male and Female Student Memories

ABSTRACTS

- 1047 Abstracts of the contributions to the 1st volume *The School and Its Many Pasts: The Different Types of School Memory*, edited by Lucia Paciaroni
- 1055 Abstracts of the contributions to the 2nd volume *The School and Its Many Pasts: Official and Public Memories of School*, edited by Juri Meda and Roberto Sani
- 1067 Abstracts of the contributions to the 3rd volume *The School and Its Many Pasts: Collective Memories of School*, edited by Juri Meda and Roberto Sani
- 1075 Abstracts of the contributions to the 4th volume *The School and Its Many Pasts: Individual Memories of School*, edited by Juri Meda and Roberto Sani

