

Elena Girotti

Citizenship Education and the Curriculum in the European Schools System

A multidimensional history (1957-1994)



FrancoAngeli 

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Funding institution: Department of Education, Cultural Heritage and Tourism,
University of Macerata.

The cover image was taken by the author in Leuven on 16 June 2023. It has been selected because the juxtaposition and combination of the individual decorative elements, constituted by a complex interweaving of threads, may evoke and abstractly represent the various European Schools, as well as their curriculum and approaches to citizenship education. In this work, these aspects are examined in their complex and intertwined dimensions. The proximity of the elements and the internal interweaving of each individual component suggest that, although apparently isolated, they can be interpreted from a perspective that emphasizes connections, contacts, and references. This same vantage point has been adopted in the present study.

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Introduction: research questions, organization of the work and aims

Sharing in the same games, grouped in common classes, boys and girls of various languages and nationalities will learn to know and value each other and to live together.

Being brought up in contact with each other and freed at an early age from the prejudices which divide, initiated into the beauties and values of the various cultures, they will as they grow up become conscious of their solidarity. While retaining love for and pride in their country, they will become in spirit Europeans, well prepared to complete and consolidate the work undertaken by their fathers to establish a prosperous and united Europe¹.

The above words were inscribed in the founding stone of the European School in Luxembourg and, according to some of the documents of the European Schools (ESs) published to celebrate the anniversaries of their establishment², they seem to summarize the educational objectives and spirit of these institutions, underlining their peculiar civic aim of shaping European minds. Moving from this clearly stated educational goal, the research work carried out during my doctorate began; its evolution and provisional findings, speculations and points of view will be the subject of the present volume.

The initial way I addressed the ESs and the study on them was based on the idea of retracing the main characteristics of citizenship education implemented in these Schools and its historical development, starting from the assumption of considering citizenship education as an extremely pre-

1. A. Van Houtte, *The European Schools. A paper presented to the International "Pax Christi" Congress 1960 by Albert van Houtte of the Board of Governors of the European Schools*. Geneva, 28-29-30 October 1960, p. 14. English version. Document available here: <https://aei.pitt.edu/14967/> (last access: 10.02.2024)

2. *Schola Europea 1953-1993*, Bruxelles, The European School, 1993.

cise and delineated object that recalled above all the description of post-national citizenship theorised by Yasmine Soysal³ and declined in the European Union context by Annalise Keating⁴. While doing so, meetings and dialogues took place with the sources, with the archives, with the thoughts of other scholars and people involved: consequently, some controversies and “crises” emerged; as always, in this case, it became necessary to problematise and rethink my approach and research question.

The first issue signalling a necessary readjustment was raised by facing the literature review on the research already carried out on the ESs and Citizenship Education there. The first chapter will delve into it deeper; however, the main point that emerged was that I was running the risk of treading an already beaten path while it would have been necessary to name a different angle and find another location to engage in a fruitful conversation and fill any possible gap, or at least, look at the gaps diversely.

The second relevant point featuring the will to recalibrate the research is directly linked to the first and concerns the perspective of the history of education on the concepts of citizenship education and educationalization: using the term educationalization in the field of educational research Marc Depaepe means to express «a feature of modernity», namely the tendency and process – arisen since and together with the dawn of the nation states – through which school and education have started to be and still are held accountable for solving, or ameliorating at least, social problems.⁵ This aspect will be explored further in the first chapter: the element that I believe it is necessary to anticipate here concerns the possibility and the idea of conceiving citizenship education as «an example of the educationalization of social problems following Marc Depaepe’s use of the term»⁶ and consequently as an organisational and constituent principle of modern school

3. Y. Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1994.

4. A. Keating, *Educating Europe’s citizens: Moving from national to post-national models of educating for European citizenship*, «Citizenship Studies», vol. 13, n. 2, 2009, pp. 135-151; A. Keating, *Education for Citizenship in Europe: European Policies, National Adaptations, and Young People’s Attitudes*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

5. L. Fendler, *Educationalization*, in P. Smeyers (ed.), *International Handbook of Philosophy of Education*, Springer International Handbooks of Education, Cham, Springer, 2018, p. 1182; for further information see M. Depaepe, *Educationalisation: A Key Concept in Understanding the Basic Processes in the History of Western Education*, «History of Education Review», vol. 27, n. 1, 1998, pp. 16-28; M. Depaepe, P. Smeyers, *Educationalization as an ongoing modernization process*, «Educational Theory», vol. 58, n. 4, 2008, pp. 379-389; M. Depaepe, *Between Educationalization and Appropriation: Selected Writings on the History of Modern Educational Systems*, Leuven, Leuven University Press, 2012.

6. N. Hodgson, *Citizenship education, policy, and the educationalization of educational research*, «Educational Theory», vol. 58, n. 4, 2008, p. 419.

systems, each time locally declined and therefore situated, shifting and different⁷; all of the above forced me to think of citizenship education not as a well-defined and easily recognisable discipline, but more as an ordering principle contributing to the assembling and configuration of modern and contemporary schooling⁸ giving shape to and simultaneously being molded by the curriculum.

The third central element in the reflection on the research approach to adopt was the intricate nature of these schools and the need to look at them through the lens of the *entangled history*, which, as Noah Sobe reminds us, «seeks to put phenomena of interaction at the centre of analysis»⁹. As the debate in recent educational historiography shows¹⁰, if the centrality of such an approach well emerges from the desire to go beyond the idea of reconstructing a linear or ‘easily’ diachronic history or a simply national one, and thus addresses the complex and multiple movements that characterise both ‘national’ and ‘comparative’ histories, this need was, in my opinion, particularly salient as I navigated the different threads that unfold from and, at the same time, constitute the European Schools. Indeed, bearing in mind that every history is the result of encounters, interactions, and interweavings and that carrying out historiographical research related to national school systems or to the comparison between two or more different realities always and necessarily implies a high degree of complexity, the latter appear to be even higher in the case of the European Schools due to their transnational nature: the European schools seemed like Chinese

7. For further information on this and with reference to citizenship as highly context-based see also D. Tröhler, *National Literacies, or modern education and the art of fabricating national minds*, «Journal of Curriculum Studies», vol. 52, n. 5, 2020, pp. 620-63. Tröhler defines citizenship as a «floating signifier» (*Ibid.*, p. 626).

8. I. Dussel, *The Assembling of Schooling: discussing concepts and models for understanding the historical production of modern schooling*, «European Educational Research Journal», vol. 12, n. 2, 2013, pp. 176-189.

9. N.W. Sobe, *Entanglement and Transnationalism in the History of American Education*, in T.S. Popkewitz (ed.), *Rethinking the History of Education: Transnational Perspectives on Its Questions, Methods and Knowledge*, New York, Palgrave MacMillan, 2013, pp. 99. On the concept of entanglement see also D. Haraway, *Chthulucene: sopravvivere su un pianeta infetto*, trad. italiana di C. Durastanti e C. Ciccioni, Roma, NERO ed., 2019; S. Van Ruyskensvelde, G. Thyssen, F. Herman, A. Van Gorp, P. Verstraete (eds.), *Folds of Past, Present and Future: Reconfiguring Contemporary Histories of Education*, Berlin, Boston, De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2021.

10. See Sobe, 2013, op. cit.; L. Fendler, *Critical Powers of Historical Framing: Continuity and Representation*, in Van Ruyskensvelde et al., *Folds of Past, Present and Future: Reconfiguring Contemporary Histories of Education*, cit., pp. 59-80; M. Caruso, *The History of Transnational and Comparative Education*, in J. Rury, J.E. Tamura (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Education*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2019, pp. 568-587.

boxes, or matryoshkas, whose interweavings were not immediately clear but 'evidently' present and inescapable. The present work attempts to outline and follow these different threads and assemblages while considering and describing them as «something provisional and decomposable»¹¹.

Considering these premises, the present work focuses on the European Schools System and is structured around three main research questions. The first is the following: what complex image of citizenship education can be found in the European Schools System from their origins till the '90s?

Moreover, recognizing the close link between citizenship education and the curriculum¹², the second following question was formulated: how has this image been constructed through the curriculum of the European Schools and considering the curriculum in a broad perspective and in its different layers¹³?

I believe that answers to these questions have been partially given by previous research: I will review it in Chapter 1 after having explained what the European Schools are and having indicated some fundamental stages and features in their history. However, I think that there is room to try to provide answers that go beyond the mere judgment of their value, positive or negative, and rather attempt to observe the object in a diffractive mode¹⁴, in its construction process, focusing on the different threads that are interwoven in and out of it, tracing them, hypothesizing and understanding their «interplay»¹⁵ or part of their journey. In this way, it should

11. I. Scego, *La mia casa è dove sono*, Torino, Loescher Editore, 2012, p. 36.

12. See M. Depaepe, *The Practical and Professional Relevance of Educational Research and Pedagogical Knowledge from the Perspective of History: Reflections on the Belgian Case in its 136 International Background*, «European Educational Research Journal», vol. 1, n. 2, 2002, pp. 360-379; D. Tröhler, T. Popkewitz, D. Labaree (eds.), *Schooling and the Making of Citizens in the Long Nineteenth Century: Comparative Visions*, New York, London, Routledge, 2011; D. Tröhler, *Curriculum History*, in J. Rury, J.E. Tamura (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Education*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2019, pp. 523-538.

13. See I.F. Goodson, *Learning, Curriculum and Life Politics: the selected works of Ivor F. Goodson*, Oxon, Routledge, 2005; T.S. Popkewitz, *Curriculum history, schooling and the history of the present*, «History of Education», vol. 40, n. 1, 2011, pp. 1-19; Tröhler, *Curriculum History*, cit.; I. Dussel, *The shifting boundaries of school subjects in contemporary curriculum reforms. Towards a post-disciplinary curriculum?*, «Zeitschrift für Pädagogik», vol. 66, n. 5, 2020, pp. 666-689.

14. See K. Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2007. See also S. Van Ruyskensvelde, G. Thyssen, F. Herman, A. Van Gorp, P. Verstraete (eds.), *Folds of Past, Present and Future: Reconfiguring Contemporary Histories of Education*, cit.

15. Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, cit., p. 42.

be possible to problematize the images that can emerge from here and make them dialogue with their broader context of reference.

Consequently, taking into account previous literature on the topic and not forgetting the intricate transnational nature of the European Schools and the network configuration of the European space of education¹⁶, I added a third question based on the entangled transnational perspective¹⁷, namely what influences from different traditions and actors can be detected in the European Schools' attitude towards citizenship education and curriculum?

In order to formulate answers, I will proceed as follows.

In Chapter 1, the theoretical and methodological foundations underlying the reasoning that will subsequently be constructed and the analysis conducted will be retraced: in particular, I will refer to the panorama of studies on citizenship education, the theories on the curriculum and the research on the transnational perspective and in the attempt to position my research.

In Chapter 2, I will conduct the analysis of two discourses regarding the origins of the European Schools and of the contexts in which they were pronounced: the aim is to have a look at the wider horizon the European Schools were originally part of, at which interactions can be detected there and how and if they could be significant for the images of citizenship education and the curriculum.

In Chapter 3, various documents will be analyzed in order to depict the prescriptive level of the curriculum in search of influences, transfers, pedagogical principles that had a role in defining relevant concepts. Though, since the theoretical prescriptive discourse and aims usually differ from the practice, I will then describe, in Chapter 4, a preliminary analysis on the *Pedagogical Bulletins* of the European Schools and the provisional observations derived from there on the relational dimension of the curriculum¹⁸ and its impact on the idea of citizenship education.

The sources analyzed extend over a period of time from 1957 to 1994. As approaching them and considering the different roles that historians of education may choose¹⁹, I will act as a «detective who searches for clues to

16. See S. Grek, M. Lawn, *Europeanizing Education. Governing a New Policy Space*, Oxford, Symposium Books, 2012.

17. See E. Roldán Vera, E. Fuchs, *Introduction: The Transnational in the History of Education*, in E. Roldán Vera, E. Fuchs (eds.), *The Transnational in the History of Education. Global Histories of Education*, Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, pp. 1-48.

18. See Goodson, *Learning, Curriculum and Life Politics: the selected works of Ivor F. Goodson*, cit.

19. J. Westberg, F. Primus, *Rethinking the History of Education: Considerations for a New Social History of Education*, «Paedagogica Historica», vol. 59, n. 1, 2023, pp. 1-18.

provide a more complete story»²⁰ in the second and fourth chapters, and as «a mapmaker attempting to present and package a useful presentation of historical reality»²¹ in the third chapter.

Before moving on, I would like to make one final remark on the style used: following Sword's advices²², I have often used first-person pronouns and sometimes made the attempt to engage in a direct conversation with the reader to illustrate the reasoning behind my thesis as explicitly and clearly as possible because, in my view, both these stylistic decisions contribute to making more visible the path of going back and forth between the sources and the reflections on them, revealing that «precarious exposition» mentioned by Masschelein and Simons²³ with reference to Koselleck and considered typical of the historian's profession.

Lastly, while carrying out the analysis of the documents encountered, I have often found myself working with different languages, mainly English, French and, to a lesser extent, Italian – my mother tongue – and German: in many parts of this manuscript I have reported some passages in the original language with my translation in the footnotes; in some other cases, less frequent, I have directly inserted my translation in the body of the text. The decision to report the original version derives mainly from the desire to render, even if only in a minimal part, the linguistic complexity present both in the European Schools and in the phase of analysis and drafting of the present work.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

21. *Ibid.*

22. See H. Sword, *Stylish Academic Writing*, Harvard, Harvard University Press, 2012.

23. J. Masschelein, M. Simon, *Do historians (of education) need philosophy? The enlightening potential of a philosophical ethos*, «Paedagogica Historica», vol. 44, n. 6, 2008, p. 652.

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Questo lavoro è dedicato a Giuseppe, bambino del Convitto e padre che, negli stessi anni delle Scuole europee, è venuto al mondo e ci ha salutato proprio agli inizi di questa ricerca.

Part I

1. Contextual, Theoretical and Methodological Premises

1.1. The European Schools: history, organization, and previous literature

In this section, I will briefly explain what the European Schools are and why I am interested in them concerning citizenship education and the curriculum. I will also address the main issues researched by previous literature on the European Schools, from which it is clear that the definition of «pedagogical laboratories» assigned to the European Schools since the 1960s¹ is partly questionable and partly not entirely suited to a reality that is highly complex and peculiar and therefore not so easy to replicate.

In what follows, I will go over the main issues raised, especially about the context that characterizes the European Schools and the dimension of identity, citizenship education and curriculum that emerges from them. Regarding the last two elements, I will try to understand how much space has been given to the historical reconstruction of their evolution, as well as to the practices and influences that contributed to their organization, since I would like to make my contribution to this area. At the same time, I would like to point out some of the critical points of the European Schools and how they fit into the dynamics that characterized the construction of the European space of education². Therefore, the main aim of my literature

1. A. Van Houtte, *The European Schools. A paper presented to the International "Pax Christi" Congress 1960 by Albert van Houtte of the Board of Governors of the European Schools*, Geneva, 28-29-30 October 1960, p. 11 (English version). Document available here: <https://aei.pitt.edu/14967/> (last access: 10.02.2024).

2. See S. Grek, M. Lawn, *Europeanizing Education. Governing a New Policy Space*, Oxford, Symposium Books, 2012.

review is to consider what has already been investigated to place my research in constructive dialogue with this³.

The European Schools constitute a peculiar school system whose origin dates back to 1953 when what would then become the first European School was established in Luxembourg after the founding of the ECSC – European Coal and Steel Community – to meet the educational needs of the children of ECSC workers⁴. The first school came into being for practical reasons: the children of ECSC workers did not know the languages spoken in Luxembourg, their parents were supposed to return home after some years of service abroad, and so their children did not have to lose contact with their national education system. A thorough account of the origins and the further developments of the European Schools has been given by Harry Van Lingen⁵. Thanks to the analysis of original documents of that time such as the *Draft for a European School* by Marcel Decombis⁶ and the *Annex Preliminary Concept for a European School* by Albert Van Houtte⁷, together with some collected interviews, Van Lingen points out the practical reasons that were decisive for making the first school come into being: as a matter of fact, Luxembourg didn't have any international schools and, although French, German, and part of the Belgian pupils could have been arranged into national Luxembourg schools where French and German were taught, the same possibility would not have fitted for Italians, Dutch and Flemish students. Different solutions were considered: bringing «the pupils together in one building with teachers from each of the six countries»⁸ was deemed the best solution. However, Van Lingen underlines two additional problems and circumstances: the first is the fact that the ECSC guaranteed financial support and consequently the practical and organizational matters were left to the newly born parents' association created with «the wish to arrive at the foundation of a school, partly based

3. See B. Kamler, P. Thomson, *Working with Literature*, in B. Somekh, C. Lewin (eds.), *Theory and Methods in Social Research*, London, SAGE Publications Ltd, 2011.

4. Cf. ESs Website <https://www.eursc.eu/en/European-Schools/background> (last access: 27.09.2024); see also H. Van Lingen, *The European School. From post-war idealism to a present-day cultural opportunity*, Antwerpen, Garant, 2012.

5. Van Lingen, *The European School. From post-war idealism to a present-day cultural opportunity*, cit.

6. M. Decombis, *Draft for a European School, Luxembourg*, Luxembourg, 1953, in Van Lingen, *The European School. From post-war idealism to a present-day cultural opportunity*, cit.

7. A. Van Houtte, *Annex Preliminary Concept for a European School*, 1953, in Van Lingen, *The European School. From post-war idealism to a present-day cultural opportunity*, cit.

8. Van Lingen, *The European School. From post-war idealism to a present-day cultural opportunity*, cit., p. 31.

on a number of practices in the Luxembourg model such as bilingual tuition»⁹; the second one is the fact that a private school was not allowed by Luxembourg law and so a special law had to be introduced to allow the existence of the school as «a private entity in the shape of an association without pursuit of profit»¹⁰. As a result of it, «at Easter 1953 nursery class began. On October 4, under primitive conditions, 16 German, 11 Belgian, 26 French, 43 Italian, 13 Dutch and 5 teachers started their first day in primary school in 4 language sections - French, German, Dutch and Italian»¹¹. The following year some students reached the age to attend secondary school and so the request was made to add the secondary cycle as well. However, the financial expense that this required was not conceivable under the initial conditions and therefore greater support was requested from the ECSC and the Member States; this contributed to the opening of the secondary school in 1954 and, above all, to the start of the procedures that would ultimately lead to the signing of the Statute of the European School in 1957, recognizing the latter as an intergovernmental public school controlled jointly by the Member States¹² and to the establishing of the *Baccalauréat européen*, the European Baccalaureate¹³. Scholars such as Swan¹⁴ and Van Lingen point out the historical, legal and cultural significance of the fact that the first European School was recognized as an intergovernmental institution in a time when the European project was truly in its infancy.

With the Treaty of Rome in 1957 and the establishment of the European Economic Community and the Euratom in Brussels, the possibility of replicating the Luxembourg experiment to deal with the educational challenges faced by foreign civil servants' children started to be discussed taking into account the reservations expressed by some of the Member States¹⁵. In the end, despite some doubts, it was opted for the creation of

9. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

11. Van Lingen, *The European School. From post-war idealism to a present-day cultural opportunity*, cit., p. 32. Van Lingen here as well declares that the school was also open to children of parents not working for the ECSC and, in his view, this could have explained the high number of Italians.

12. Cf. Van Lingen, *The European School. From post-war idealism to a present-day cultural opportunity*, cit.

13. In the third Chapter of the present work, space will be given to an analysis of the 1957 Statute and of the European Baccalaureate.

14. D. Swan, *A Singular Pluralism: The European Schools 1984-1994*, Dublin, Institute of Public Administration, 1996.

15. In his work Van Lingen highlights the doubts of the Netherlands and Italy: the former were sceptical about the costs that creating a new European School would have

a second European School which was inaugurated in Brussels in 1958, The European School Brussels I. Due to new research centres established by Euratom in the other Member States, and then with the expansion of the European Community before and the European Union after, new European Schools continued to be created: in Mol-Geel, Belgium, in 1960; in Varese, Italy, in 1960; in Karlsruhe, Germany, in 1962; in Bergen, The Netherlands, in 1963; the European School Brussels II in Brussels in 1974; in Munich in 1977; in Culham, in United Kingdom near Oxford, in 1978¹⁶; the European School of Brussels III in 1999; in Alicante, Spain, in 2002; in Frankfurt in 2002; the European School Luxembourg II in 2004 and the European School of Brussels IV in 2007.

Today there are 13 European Schools throughout the EU and 23 Accredited European Schools¹⁷; the former are reserved for the children of EU officials, although other students may attend the schools if places are available but this is quite uncommon and controversial.

The structure of the schools will be better analyzed in Chapter 3 focusing specifically on the analysis of curricula and syllabuses and their impact on the ESs' organization; however, it will be briefly mentioned here. Each European School was and is still composed by:

- a Nursery School nowadays called Early Education;
- a five-year Primary School;
- a seven-year Secondary cycle ending with the European Baccalaureate. In particular, the Secondary cycle consists – since its beginnings – of three parts: the Observation cycle, a *tronc commun* made of the first three years¹⁸. After the orientation cycle, two additional years of

involved, the latter instead hypothesized an active role of the Italian Cultural Institute in Brussels in the education of Italian children. See Van Lingen, *The European School. From post-war idealism to a present-day cultural opportunity*, cit., p. 46.

16. Due to Brexit, the European School in Culham was closed in August 2017; see ESs Website, <https://www.eursc.eu/en/European-Schools/locations/Culham> (last access: 20.08.2024).

17. As explained in the ESs Website, following the 2005 Recommendation by the European Parliament, the ESs curriculum has been opened up to national schools: indeed, «Accredited European Schools are schools which offer a European education that meets the pedagogical requirements laid down for the European Schools but within the framework of the national school networks of the Member States. Accredited European Schools are thus outside the legal, administrative and financial framework to which the European Schools are compulsorily subject». The information was retrieved from the ESs Website, <https://www.eursc.eu/en/Accredited-European-Schools/About> (last access: 25.01.2024).

18. According to literature, the establishment of this *tronc commun* could be considered quite innovative at that time, in 1957. For further information see D. Swan, *The European Schools, Crossroads of Education in Europe*, Brussels, The Commission of the European Communities, 1984; Van Lingen, *The European School. From post-war idealism to a present-day cultural opportunity*, cit.

Pre-orientation Cycle follow for pupils aged 14 and 15; then, two final years of Orientation cycle are provided.

Even though they underwent periods of reform – in particular in 1971, in 1990 and in 2009 – since their establishment, the Schools have been characterized by a multilingual environment; the schools' language policy aimed at promoting cooperation, and exchange is definitely a distinctive trademark since their origins. There are indeed various language sections depending on the children's mother tongue; from Secondary School vehicular languages are used in the teaching of subjects such as History, Geography and Social Sciences, as well as in the communal teaching of European Hours; the latter starts from the 3rd year of Primary School with the aim to foster communications within the various language groups through the means of «incidental learning»¹⁹ through activities such as arts and crafts, singing, painting, etc. The main aim apparently appeared to be that of realizing the following words by Marcel Decombis, Head of the European School in Luxembourg, between 1953 and 1960:

Educated side by side, untroubled from infancy by divisive prejudices, acquainted with all that is great and good in the different cultures, it will be borne in upon them as they mature that they belong together. Without ceasing to look to their own lands with love and pride, they will become in mind Europeans, schooled and ready to complete and consolidate the work of their fathers before them, to bring into being a united and thriving Europe²⁰.

The civic aim to educate young adults capable of recognizing a common sense of belonging apparently going beyond a purely national dimension seems to be quite present since the beginning. However, research has problematized and questioned this feature, in particular with regards to the development of a shared identity²¹. An examination of previous literature focused on the history and general functioning and curriculum of the ESs,

19. Swan, *The European Schools, Crossroads of Education in Europe*, cit., p. 110.

20. The aforementioned words were retrieved from the ESs Website, <https://www.eursc.eu/en/European-Schools/principles> (last access: 12.02.2024).

21. See D. Finaldi-Baratieri, *The "Only" European Schools in the European Union?*, EUI HEC 2000/6, Badia Fiesolana, European University Institute, 2000; N. Savvides, *Comparing the promotion of European identity at Three 'European Schools': An Analysis of Teachers' Perceptions*, «Research in Comparative and International Education», vol. 1, n. 4, 2006, pp. 393-402; N. Savvides, *Developing a European identity: a case study of the European School at Culham*, «Comparative Education», vol. 42, n. 1, 2006, pp. 113-129; N. Savvides, D. Faas, *Does Europe Matter? A comparative study of young people's identifications with Europe at a State School and a European School in England*, «European Journal of Education», vol. 51, n. 3, 2016, p. 374-390.

their language policy and ability to foster a sense of European identity in its students has been conducted to give a brief overview of the state of the art.

One of the first to study the ESs schools with a critical and problematizing approach was Desmond Swan, Professor of Education at the University College Dublin, who firstly carried out in 1984 a study for the Report *The European Schools, Crossroads of Education in Europe*²² based on the resolution of the European Parliament passed in June 1983 and «calling for a report on all aspects of the European School System»²³. Swan describes the legal and administrative structure that distinguishes the ESs, as well as the organizational and pedagogical aspects; particularly interesting, in my opinion, are the considerations he makes on the lack of an explicit pedagogical vision, and some of the problems he highlights. About the first, he writes that

A perusal of the official documentation reveals a strange lacuna, particularly when compared to the corresponding documents, legal or constitutional, in the member – or any other – states. This is the absence of any commitment to aims envisaged for education as residing in the individual pupil rather than in the politic, or based on a rounded concept of the pupil as a person. While it is true that some fundamental objectives of the Observation period alone are provided, one finds no such statement either in the Statute or its Protocols with reference to either the primary schooling or the education of the pupil as a whole from the nursery to school leaving²⁴.

The other interesting aspect highlighted concerns, instead, the main problems detected interviewing the personnel; among them, the following are mentioned:

Problems related to the ‘the Reform’; the need for a short Leaving Certificate; problems with the ‘European hours’; school courses 12 years shorter than Germany/Italy; History taught by a non-compatriot; matching the curriculum to wide range of pupils’ abilities; teaching Human Sciences through ‘*langue véhiculaire*’; too frequent testing; ‘European dimension’ not emphasized; difficult to maintain high standards in pupil’s mother tongue; textbooks lacking or linguistically inappropriate; study of Civics/Citizenship neglected; tests used summatively; ‘School spirit’ not cultivated; bureaucracy stifles innovation²⁵.

22. Swan, *The European Schools, Crossroads of Education in Europe*, cit.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

Some of these problems are underlined again, few years later, in the 1996 work *A Singular Pluralism, The European Schools 1984-1994*²⁶: here, the lack of adequate textbooks are for instance mentioned again, together with the not homogeneous pedagogical approach within the different language sections. The selectivity of the Schools, the isolated positions of the Schools, the not sufficient preparation of the teachers and the lack of proper developed pupil support services are also mentioned²⁷. Swan's works were also published in the ESs' official publication, *Schola Europea*, as, for instance, the article on cultural fusion or fission at the European Schools where he also investigates the perceptions of teachers and students²⁸; the latter see the European Schools as a collection of different national units and identify primarily with one of these; they also claim to be able to communicate in several languages and seem to acquire a European consciousness and identity although this does not necessarily always derive from elements within the school environment, but also from external ones²⁹. Swan also notes how a student can become lost in the highly linguistically and culturally diverse reality of the European Schools and disconnected from the local community³⁰. Furthermore, due to the complex administrative structure, Swan also points out that the whole system is quite slow at making changes, but he also acknowledges that some changes have been made over the years, such as the introduction of remedial teaching aimed at helping the weakest students³¹. As for the teachers, Swan underlines that their initial training may not always be suitable enough to meet the standards and needs of teaching at the European Schools, which are extremely different from the environment of a national school³². Following Swan, Finaldi-Baratieri also studies the European Schools and presents some of the paradoxes of the European identity they help to form by exploring the history of these schools, their structure and funding sources through interviews, questionnaires, statistics, historical resources and field-work³³. Her work reveals a certain problematic nature and a particular emphasis on the preservation of national traditions and languages and a sense of the indefiniteness of what it means to be European. Finaldi-Baratieri also examines students' points of view and shows problems with the elit-

26. Swan, *A Singular Pluralism: The European Schools 1984-1994*, cit.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 120.

28. D. Swan, *The European Schools: Cultural Fusion or Cultural Fission?*, in *Schola Europea 1953-1993*, Bruxelles, The European School, 1993, pp. 83-88.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

33. See Finaldi-Baratieri, *The "Only" European Schools in the European Union?*, cit.

ist character of these schools. The main aim of her work is to understand the problem of European identity and the construction of an elite within the process of the unfolding, expansion, and development of the European Union³⁴. It emerges quite clearly from her aforementioned work – and the later one with Shore³⁵ – that these Schools came into being for practical reasons related to the preservation of national traditions. In particular, she focuses on the teaching of European Hours understood as «a semi-ritual practice»³⁶ and of Social Sciences in foreign languages (*langue véhiculaire*). The latter, above all, seems to give rise to various doubts in teachers who find themselves having to mediate a national point of view with a «more European»³⁷ perspective where it is not at all easy to define what this implies also because the teaching is based on national textbooks³⁸. The theme of the vehicular languages is also addressed focusing, in particular, on the fact that English, French and German are used in the teaching of social sciences: Finaldi-Baratieri highlights how, in doing so, these languages are given greater power than the others and showing «how languages reflect in themselves the different cultural, political and economic power of various nations»³⁹. Also quoting the previous study by Swan (1996), Finaldi-Baratieri shows the elitist character of these schools whose students are mostly «middle class»⁴⁰ and where there are very few pupils from ethnic minorities. Finally, she addresses the issue of the academic standards which appear to be extremely high. Finaldi-Baratieri also highlights how this is more visible if we consider the fact that only in the 1980s remedial teaching was introduced in primary school and students with disabilities were admitted. Finaldi-Baratieri also highlights how, from 1993 onwards, a new logo was introduced and the style of the proposed celebratory publications and brochures changed; she attributes all this to a greater involve-

34. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

35. C. Shore, D. Finaldi, *Crossing Boundaries Through Education: European Schools and the Supersession of Nationalism*, in J. Stacul, C. Moutsou, H. Kopnina (eds.), *Crossing European Boundaries Beyond Conventional Geographical Categories*, New York, Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2005, pp. 23-40.

36. Finaldi-Baratieri, *The “Only” European Schools in the European Union?*, cit., p. 16.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

38. As already seen, this observation was also made by Swan who highlighted how the national origin of the textbooks used made it necessary for the teacher to work to develop a more “European” and transnational point of view; see D. Swan, *A Singular Pluralism: The European Schools 1984-1994*, cit.

39. Finaldi-Baratieri, *The “Only” European Schools in the European Union?*, cit., p. 27.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

ment of the European Union in the field of education⁴¹. Finally, the study shows how, in the students' perception, these schools are not political at all and have a little relevant role in creating the future European citizen⁴². Finaldi-Baratieri concludes by saying how

However, what these Schools are is an expression of an elite in the making. The Schools play a vitally important part in giving this elite the self-confidence to carry out its objective of accruing to itself more and more extensive powers. Probably the most crucial insight that this study highlighted is the ability, that these Schools have, of asserting in different ways that their ethos and pupils are more European, true European, European *sui generis*. This is the kernel by which a group of privileged people can feel to be a cohesive unit, a deserving elite. In this sense, the Schools do not simply act on the identity of the pupils, but on all actors involved in these institutions⁴³.

The structure and order of arguments used by Finaldi-Baratieri are partly taken up in the research carried out by Leaton Gray and other scholars in more recent times and requested by the European Schools themselves. The study conducted by Leaton Gray et al. was in fact commissioned by the General Secretariat of the European Schools starting from the assumption that the curriculum of these Schools has not changed much since the sixty years of their birth and from the need to understand how it should be structured an ideal twenty-first-century curriculum⁴⁴. Leaton Gray et al. point out how

The special character of the schools does not reside exclusively in their European identity, but principally in the fact that they are offering an education based on schooling elements that do not exist at the national levels, such as: early multilingual schooling, a unified curriculum across Europe, a pedagogy based on a pluralistic national perspective, and a multinational student environment. The System's intention is to foster such particularities at the same time as encouraging a sense of European awareness, promoting knowledge about the institutions, their history, and a developing sense of citizenship at the European level⁴⁵.

The study consists of the following sessions: the history of the European Schools; the changes that should be made to the curriculum of the Eu-

41. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

43. *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

44. See S. Leaton Gray, D. Scott, P. Mehisto, *Curriculum reform in the European schools: Towards a 21st century vision*, Chams, Springer International Publishing, 2015.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

ropean Schools so that it can be considered suitable for the twenty-first century; the role of languages in the European Schools; a sociological analysis of the Schools where the discourse of elitism already found in previous literature emerges; evaluation reform; the relationship between the European Schools and higher education; the possibility that such Schools could be a model for a New European Age. Firstly, the study indicates that one of its starting assumptions was to consider the European Schools System «as a set of institutions and relations between its parts, and even perhaps as a coordinating body for a number of sub-systems, which have a particular relation to the central authority and a particular position within it»⁴⁶. I indicate this consideration because it well underlines the complex and intertwined nature of this system which I also wanted to consider when formulating my research questions and approaches. Going back to Leaton Gray et al., the history of the ESs is then recalled and, compared to previous literature. In regard to this part, I would like to draw attention to the following points. Firstly, the fact that while the European Schools System mostly remained unchanged for almost sixty years, in 2009 it underwent an important reform concerning the extension of the system itself and of the European Baccalaureate to other students, governance arrangements in the system, and the division of costs among member countries. About the first point – the extension of the system – reference is made to the «development of an accreditation procedure for the creation of further European Schools at the national level»⁴⁷. In a certain sense this attempted to show how the type of education promoted in the European Schools can be exported and replicated while taking into account its particularities⁴⁸. It also led to a further differentiation of the Schools and their students into the following groups: Category I; Category II; Category III. Considering this expansion and its consequences, Leaton Gray et al. describe, in the second chapter, the current curriculum of the European Schools, the learning principles on which it is based, the shift from a content-based approach to a competence-based one following EU's policy on Key Competences (2006; 2018), the actors involved, and three possible proposals for modification and improvement. After the focus on the curriculum, the third chapter focuses instead on the role of languages in European Schools and highlights «the lack of a European Schools' overarching language policy document»⁴⁹ which sets clear goals and standards of lan-

46. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

47. See *Ibid.*, p. 6.

48. See *Ibid.*, p. 29.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

guage and content learning in all classrooms. According to Leaton Gray et al., this lack is also a lack of supporting educators in understanding the peculiarities of their work in a bilingual educational context. Furthermore, the definition of terms such as culture, multilingual and multicultural – often used in the ESs context – is also missing⁵⁰ as it is missing an explicit definition of the desired intercultural competencies⁵¹. As for the language curricula, greater attention is highlighted to the process of language learning, rather than to content⁵² and it is highlighted how effective it can be, according to the literature to use critical pedagogy in language classrooms to make language content and learning fundamental to the real understanding of what happens outside the school walls⁵³. Moving on Leaton Gray et al. address the issues of «social selection, sorting and segregation considered in relation to educational practices within the European Schools as well as their relationships with local, national and international neighbours»⁵⁴. In particular, attention is paid to the fact that the European School System aims to be inclusive, but this can be challenging especially for those with special educational needs, for those who have limited or weak knowledge of the second languages used or even for those who would like to undertake professional schools, thus favouring «inadvertent segregation»⁵⁵. It is underlined that these schools also differ from traditional international schools because of their peculiar European perspective also in terms of admissions of students, so partially justifying the thesis according to which these ESs can be considered as «company schools»⁵⁶: indeed, the admission criteria favour certain social, as well as geographical, origins of the students. Due to the aforementioned criteria, the number of non-European students is, in fact, limited; the curriculum itself favours a Eurocentric perspective «at the expense of an international perspective in the truly global sense, and potentially risks promoting what Starkey describes as a form of ‘Eurocentric cultural superiority’»⁵⁷. Another symptom of segregation is the fact that the European Schools seem disconnected from the wider and local community they are part of; the students have no contact with the local reality that surrounds them: they may live in a

50. See *Ibid.*, p. 55.

51. See *Ibid.*, p. 58.

52. See *Ibid.*, p. 61.

53. See *Ibid.*, p. 63.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

57. H. Starkey, in Leaton Gray et al., *Curriculum reform in the European schools: Towards a 21st century vision*, cit., p. 88.

particular country but have very little or no contact with the people who live there, with those who have a different social background or with other local schools. The thoughts of Stacul et al. are reported, according to whom «the pedagogical laboratory of the European Schools has resulted in exclusive institutions that try to dissolve the boundaries of national cultures at the same times as reinforcing class boundaries. This is because they are not designed to include a mass public»⁵⁸. Leaton Gray et al. also address the topic of citizenship and the forms of citizenship promoted, not based on ideas of belonging and nationalism, but rather on «various forms of social fragmentation within what is mainly the same social group»⁵⁹. Referring to the work of Swan (1996), Leaton Gray et al. also highlight how citizenship is linked to social class and how it can promote the development of an elite. What emerges above all is how complex the concept of identity is for the students at these schools. The topic of identity in the ESs has been addressed also by Nicola Savvides who investigated the theme of European identity and education in a European dimension; in the early 2000s, she pointed out how educating about European identity had become increasingly felt as important and urgent among politicians and policymakers due to the lack of legitimacy and support from European citizens for the European integration process⁶⁰. Savvides also states that it is not very clear what is meant with the idea of a European dimension in education – which values are included to in this dimension – even though it seems to mainly refer to the learning of languages, the understanding of the cultures, the knowledge of other countries' history and geography, the awareness and knowledge of the European values and rights and duties which derive from being EU citizens. Furthermore, through the analysis of how the development of a European identity is promoted among students of the European Schools, Savvides also investigates teachers' attitudes towards this European identity dimension and their contribution to its implementation; her analysis reveals different opinions and ways of approaching the matter: some teachers believe that the organization, the environment and the curriculum itself of the European Schools favors the “Europeanisation” of students and the creation of a climate of tolerance, awareness

58. J. Stacul et al., in Leaton Gray et al., *Curriculum reform in the European schools: Towards a 21st century vision*, cit., p. 90.

59. Reference to the work of D. Haas in Leaton Gray et al., *Curriculum reform in the European schools: Towards a 21st century vision*, cit., p. 93.

60. See N. Savvides, *Investigating Education for European Identity at Three European Schools*, «Research in Comparative and International Education», vol. 1, n. 2, 2006, pp. 174-186.

and respect for differences, understanding of the latter⁶¹; however, some other teachers affirm the need to give further attention to an international perspective that sees students as global citizens since they consider the European dimension alone to be a bit narrow⁶². Other teachers show some confusion regarding the founding European ideals of the European Schools and underline how the schools are now «ordinary schools»⁶³. As a matter of fact, Savvides writes:

Teachers do generally believe that the European School experience does encourage pupils to develop a sense of European identity, but they feel that this is attributable more to the fact that they are socialising in school with children of mixed nationalities and languages, rather than to any conscious effort on their part to teach about European topics or run extra-curricular activities of a European nature⁶⁴.

Then, analysing the subjects' curricula, Savvides also argues that the following disciplines contribute in a particular way to the development of a European sense of identity: history, geography, languages, economics, art, physical education/sport⁶⁵. Savvides also underlines how difficult it is to make a consideration that is valid for the curriculum of the European Schools since, although it is unique for all the Schools, it changes and is structured differently depending on the level of the students and their linguistic section to which they belong⁶⁶. Savvides also states that according to the teachers, rather than through the curriculum, it is the very experience of the atmosphere of the European Schools – with the diversity of languages, cultures and group activities that characterizes them – that gives shape to a European dimension, but non-Eurocentric, which is experienced by the pupils. Through semi-structured interviews with students from three European Schools aged between sixteen and eighteen, Savvides also investigated how the school environment and community contribute to the creation of a European dimension; how the formal curriculum of the European Schools and teachers' approaches influence the European dimension; how extra-curricular activities foster this dimension⁶⁷. From

61. See Savvides, *Comparing the promotion of European identity at Three 'European Schools': An Analysis of Teachers' Perceptions*, cit.

62. *Ibid.*, p. 396.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 393.

64. *Ibid.*, p. 402.

65. See Savvides, *Developing a European identity: a case study of the European School at Culham*, cit.

66. *Ibid.*

67. See N. Savvides, *The European dimension in education*, «Journal of Research in International Education», vol. 7, n. 3, 2008, pp. 304-326.

the interviews with the students, it emerges that the fact of being able to interact with classmates of different origins is a fundamental element that allows the development of knowledge and competence and the possibility of learning to live together by developing tolerance, adaptability, and open-mindedness. Some curricular subjects and teachers also seem to contribute to the European dimension, especially teaching carried out through *langues véhiculaires* and language teaching in general. However, it is highlighted that sometimes, according to students, not enough attention is given to their specific country⁶⁸. Less importance is given to extra-curricular activities which, however, allow students to be together and mix, thus learning about each other. Furthermore, a comparative study between the European School of Culham – now no longer a European School due to Brexit – and a regular English school shows how the environment and curriculum of the European Schools favour the development of a European dimension which does not replace the national one and which is expressed in the students' ability to deal with topics relating to European issues, to question stereotypes, to be tolerant and open towards cultural and linguistic diversity, as well as to communicate in different languages. Among the risks to consider there is that of developing a Eurocentric perspective, while an inclusive European dimension should instead be favoured⁶⁹.

What can be said from the review carried out? The analysis of previous literature presented attempted to show how the type of identity that these European Schools contribute to creating is actually controversial due to the same educational practices and social assumptions that characterize these Schools. What emerges from previous research is also that the study of the curriculum of ESs and how it has been promoting the dimension of citizenship is not actually new: this topic has been an object of interest since Swan's studies in 1980. However, what I believe has been partially missing and that I am trying to do with this work is to reconstruct the history of the curriculum and of the Citizenship Education arising from it from a prescriptive and constructivist perspective⁷⁰ by looking at the different levels involved; furthermore, I am interested in reconstructing the events and actors that contributed to the formation of the ESs curriculum and citizenship education, not so much to give a judgement on their value, their effectiveness and on their possible replicability as done, for example, among others

68. *Ibid.*, p. 325.

69. See Savvides, Faas, *Does Europe Matter? A comparative study of young people's identifications with Europe at a State School and a European School in England*, cit.

70. See I.F. Goodson, *Learning, Curriculum and Life Politics: the selected works of Ivor F. Goodson*, Oxon, Routledge, 2005.

by Finaldi-Baratieri, but rather to try to insert them within the networks and transits that contributed to their own creation and development. I will try to clarify and better elaborate my intentions: from the literature review conducted it can be affirmed that mother tongue education was of prime concern together with foreign language teaching and the communal classes of European Hours; moreover, they all seemed to be considered as such since the beginning of the European Schools. However, from where this important role came from in terms of pedagogical influences and circulations seems, in my view, to have been not explicitly addressed and thoroughly explored. Furthermore, the whole system has been criticized, and some of its strong and weak points have been underlined. Considering all of the above, the present work addresses the possibility of looking at the European Schools through a gaze that attempts to grasp the entangled connections and results coming from different influences to detect how they relate and were influenced by different pedagogical traditions and through the interaction with various national school systems, international organizations, and single and collective actors – such as teachers or inspectors – involved with the schools. To do so, I will focus in the next paragraphs on the theoretical ideas that constitute my starting premises in the analysis of my research object, namely citizenship education and the curriculum of the European Schools.

1.2. Citizenship education: debate and definitions

I stated that the aim of this work is to show the complex images of citizenship education in the European Schools underlining the connection with the curriculum and in the attempt to retrace some influences and constitutive interactions. However, a clarifying premise is necessary, and it implies the definition of what I mean with the expression citizenship education. The transdisciplinary debate on it is immense and I will point out some aspects encountered during this research journey and the final provisional position I decided to assume. Consequently, the following section will try to outline how citizenship education has been defined, the main patterns and evolutions in its developments throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the dimensions it involved, and how educational research and History of Education research, in particular, has paid attention to them. The aim of this literature review is to clarify where the present work positions itself in relation to citizenship education and what it is the horizon of meanings I am referring to when speaking of the latter to make clear the approach that will be used towards it. I start acknowledging that the

concept of citizenship education (CE) can be considered as multilayered and partially changeable according to the perspective it is looked at⁷¹. Schugurensky, for example, identifies four main dimensions that intersect to form the concept of citizenship: status that concerns being a formal and recognized member of a community; identity within which feelings of belonging and loyalty fall in; civic virtues include values and behaviors that citizens should recognize as their own and put into practice; agency is ultimately about the ability to act and engage actively as a citizen⁷². This conceptualization of citizenship well shows, in my view, the complexity that distinguishes the latter and highlights how the discourse on citizenship cannot be reduced to simplistic categories but rather includes points of view that intertwine and mix. Nevertheless, leaving for a moment these four interwoven dimensions aside and focusing mainly on the values and concepts of identity that could be vehiculated, the discourse on CE could be approached considering different ideas of citizenship that give shape to CE. As the *Eurydice Report on Citizenship Education at School in Europe* stresses, «the fluidity of Citizenship Education is also associated with the existence of more than one definition and model of citizenship»⁷³. A similar opinion is expressed by Tarozzi, Rapanà and Ghirotto⁷⁴: drawing on the work by Walzer⁷⁵, the authors underline three different possibilities: the republican model, the liberal one and the moral one⁷⁶. In the republican model, citizenship is conceived as a mixture of «member-

71. See C. Joppke, *Beyond national models: Civic integration policies for immigrants in Western Europe*, «West European Politics», vol. 30, n. 1, 2007, pp. 1-22; D. Schugurensky, *Citizenship and Immigrant Education*, in P. Peterson, E. Baker, B. McGaw (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education (3rd Ed.)*, Oxford, Elsevier, 2010, pp. 113-119.

72. See Schugurensky, *Citizenship and Immigrant Education*, cit.

73. European Commission, European Education and Culture Executive Agency, *Citizenship education at school in Europe*, Brussels, Publications Office, 2017, p. 19.

74. M. Tarozzi, F. Rapanà, L. Ghirotto, *Ambiguities of Citizenship. Reframing the Notion of Citizenship Education*, «Journal of Theories and Research in Education», vol. 8, n. 1, 2013, pp. 201-218.

75. M. Walzer, *Sfere di giustizia*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 1987.

76. I am aware of the fact that the historical, philosophical and sociological debate on citizenship is much wider and that I am focusing on a not exhaustive angle which does not give enough space to the many articulated discourses. For further information on that see also R. Delanty, *Dilemmas of citizenship: Recent literature on citizenship and Europe*, «Citizenship Studies», vol. 2, n. 2, 1998, pp. 353-358; G. Delanty, *Citizenship in a global age: society, culture and politics*, Buckingham, Open University Press, 2000; M. Joris, M. Simons, O. Agirdag, *Citizenship-as-competence, what else? Why European citizenship education policy threatens to fall short of its aims*, «European Educational Research Journal», vol. 21, n. 3, 2021, pp. 1-20.

ship, obligation and virtue»⁷⁷ and transmitting the knowledge of the «shared historical and juridical heritage»⁷⁸ would be the main aim of citizenship education and civic education – with the latter based on the knowledge of constitutional principles and laws of the state. The focus on the knowledge and values transmitted is present also in the moral model where citizenship education is related not only to civic values but also to moral and religious beliefs and values⁷⁹. On the contrary, in the liberal model, citizenship does not only concern being part of a precise group and the sharing of common values and imagery, but it especially underlines the individual dimension of having political, civil and social rights and it is «a principle, a normative function, not a historically given status»⁸⁰ and so CE should provide pupils with the skills needed «to carry out one’s role in the society, by fully exercising one’s rights and by empowering capabilities for political participation»⁸¹. The distinction between the republican and liberal model of citizenship and CE has been discussed also in the field of the History of Education. In particular, Tröhler, Popkewitz and Labaree in their work on *Schooling and the Making of Citizens in the Long Nineteenth Century*⁸² get back to Montesquieu’s opus *The Spirit of the Laws*⁸³ in 1748 on the relationship between the peculiarities and practices of education and different political systems. Drawing on Montesquieu, the authors speak of classic republicanism and modern republicanism as «two different republican languages, competing with each other up to the present day»⁸⁴. Nonetheless, what emerges is that the creation of a republican government and the construction of the child as a future citizen have been considered the principal processes that since the 18th century made possible and essential the rise of the modern school as the institution we know today, organized on elements and technologies such as teaching, curriculum and learning that were not simply «born from one model or ideal of the citizen but arose

77. Tarozzi, Rapanà, Ghirotto, 2013, *Ambiguities of Citizenship. Reframing the Notion of Citizenship Education*, p. 209.

78. *Ibid.*

79. *Ibid.*, p. 212.

80. *Ibid.*, p. 211.

81. *Ibid.*

82. D. Tröhler, T. Popkewitz, D. Labaree (eds.), *Schooling and the Making of Citizens in the Long Nineteenth Century: Comparative Visions*, New York, London, Routledge, 2011.

83. Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, translated and edited by A.M. Cohler, B.C. Miller, H.S. Stone, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989.

84. Tröhler, Popkewitz, Labaree, *Schooling and the Making of Citizens in the Long Nineteenth Century: Comparative Visions*, p. 8.

from different historical practices»⁸⁵. Numerous works in the field of the History of Education have detected some common threads thanks to the analysis of social and educational practices from different countries and experiences. Without the possibility to be completely exhaustive, I indicate below some of the recurring trends identified in these practices, such as, for example, the transmission of virtues, religious and moral values, or the role of history since the 19th century. In particular, the creation of collective memory and the sense of civic and social belonging to a specific community through the teaching of history characterizes many national contexts; due to this, the processes of promoting national citizenship, identity and the sense of belonging have been reconstructed also through the analysis of the teaching of history, the history manuals used and the figures of the homeland described in them, together with the morals they vehiculated and represented⁸⁶. The use of history teaching to create common and civic memory and a shared symbolic and moral imagery is also underlined, for instance, in the work by Matasci and Donato Di Paola⁸⁷ focusing on the experiences of different countries in the 19th century; the two scholars also pay attention to its link with language teaching since «the learning of a common language and the transmission of a shared heritage are considered as fundamental factors of a sense of national belonging and the creation of the good citizen»⁸⁸. In addition to this, the work by Green and Cormack focusing on Australia at the beginning of the 20th-century underlines how, in Europe and beyond, mother-tongue education played a major role «as a significant cultural technology in the formation of subjectivity and the production of a distinctive national imaginary»⁸⁹ and so of a civic identity. Interesting insights on the topic come then from research characterized by approaches belonging not only to the

85. *Ibid.*, p. XI.

86. See for example A. Ascenzi, *Metamorfosi della cittadinanza Studi e ricerche su insegnamento della storia, educazione civile e identità nazionale in Italia tra Otto e Novecento*, Macerata, EUM, 2009; 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; S. Hirsch, M. McAndrew, *The Holocaust in the Textbooks and in the History and Citizenship Education Program of Quebec*, «JEMMS», vol. 6, n. 1, 2014, pp. 24-41.

87. D. Matasci, M. Donato Di Paola, *Humanités et citoyenneté: l'enseignement des lettres et des langues en France, en Suisse et en Belgique au XIX^e siècle*, «Histoire de l'éducation», vol. 149, n. 1, 2018, pp. 9-20.

88. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

89. B. Green, P. Cormack, *Literacy, Nation, Schooling: Reading (in) Australia*, in Tröhler, Popkewitz, Labaree, *Schooling and the Making of Citizens in the Long Nineteenth Century: Comparative Visions*, cit., p. 1.

perspective of the historical evolution of school disciplines⁹⁰ but also of the material culture of school and school practices⁹¹: together with the aforementioned studies on history textbooks, other studies focused on the image of citizenship and identity vehiculated through children's literature⁹²; through school manuals for reading or of subjects such as geography⁹³; through architecture⁹⁴; through visual tools such as drawings⁹⁵ or wallcharts⁹⁶ used to promote the construction of a national identity «based on children gaining a sense of intimacy with nature»⁹⁷ and experiencing «attachment to one's native soil»⁹⁸. Nature is also the visual background and environment that surrounds a study by Thyssen⁹⁹ on the promotion of common identities in some open-air schools in Belgium and Luxembourg from 1913 to 1963. The results on the role of these schools in the shaping

90. A. Chervel, *L'histoire des disciplines scolaires. Réflexions sur un domaine de recherche*, «Histoire de l'éducation», vol. 38, 1988, pp. 59-119.

91. I. Grosvenor, M. Lawn, K. Rousmaniere (eds.), *Silences and Images. The Social History of the Classroom*, New York, Peter Lang, 1999.

92. A. Ascenzi, R. Sani, *Storia e antologia della letteratura per l'infanzia nell'Italia dell'Ottocento*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2017; R. Andreassi, *The Correspondence (Corrispondenza) of «Il Giornalino della Domenica» (1906-1911): a training ground for the development of civic education and national sentiment in the Italian youths*, «HECL», vol. 10, n. 2, 2015, pp. 405-423; G. Tison, *French pupils between the two wars of 1870-1871 and 1914-1918. Reading books and their patriotic consciousness*, «HECL», vol. 10, n. 1, 2015, pp. 393-409.

93. Y.X. Tornafoch, A.I. Opisso, *National identity, civic values and school textbooks in Spain: La Enciclopedia ciclicopedagógica and El libro de España (1931-1957)*, «HECL», vol. 10, n. 1, 2015, pp. 361-367; P. Toro Blanco, *Towards a new Chile through the heart: aspects on the construction of a nationalist emotionology in school textbooks during Pinochet years (c.1974-c.1984)*, «HECL», vol. 10, n. 1, 2015, pp. 583-600; R. Caramela, *A school subject serving the nation. Geography textbooks in Romania (1864-1945)*, «HECL», vol. 10, n. 1, 2015, pp. 155-176.

94. A. Salnikova, Z. Khamitova, *School architecture as a way of promotion of Soviet identity in the 1930s' Stalinist Russia*, «HECL», vol. 10, n. 1, 2015, pp. 177-194.

95. V. Viola, *Drawing for the nation. The role of drawing classes in the construction process of the national identity and industry (1861-1891)*, «HECL», vol. 10, n. 2, 2015, pp. 391-404.

96. I.K. Uphoff, *The construction of Heimat on German wallcharts in the early 20th century, and the part it played in creating a national identity*, «HECL», vol. 10, n. 1, 2015, pp. 121-138.

97. *Ibid.*, p. 132.

98. *Ibid.*, p. 133; see also F. Targhetta, *The beloved face of the fatherland. The role of the landscape into the processes of national identity building*, «HECL», vol. 10, n. 2, 2015, pp. 139-155; R. Sani, *Discovering the best and most ignored Italy. The regional Almanacs for the primary school introduced by the Gentile Reform and the use of the cultural and natural heritage for the promotion of a national identity and a sense of citizenship*, «HECL», vol. 12, n. 1, 2017, pp. 85-113.

99. G. Thyssen, *Engineered Communities? Industry, open-air schools, and imaginaries of belonging (c. 1913-1963)*, «HECL», vol. 10, n. 2, 2015, pp. 297-320.

of a shared community coherent in terms of national identity and citizenship would suggest that the latter is extremely complex since it is characterized by various trajectories of enculturation, social stratification and religious elements coming from both a local and an international dimension intertwining together¹⁰⁰. This research also indicates different types of practices, some of which revolved around the relationship of the children with their health, hygiene, and meals. Addressing these issues constituted an opportunity to promote order and to shape cultural values and correct social behaviours to be followed. This stresses how educating the future citizen did not (and does not) only relate to being part of a community while sharing common symbolic and moral imagery; it was also about embodying values and behaviours that were not only ethical and patriotic but also related to more practical and social issues, such as food, nutrition and hygiene could be.

What I am trying to bring out through these studies mentioned so far is that, even though they do not represent an extensive sample, they, however, give valuable information, namely the fact that school practices related to citizenship education changed according to space and time¹⁰¹, and yet their main narration fell and falls within a discourse of “social utility and scope”; this is something important to remind, no matter how obvious it can seem. I will go back to this in a moment; before doing it, I believe it is also important to acknowledge the dimension that has been touched until now: as a matter of fact, in most of the case recalled the discourse is primarily related to a strictly national dimension¹⁰², with the exception of the story narrated by Thyssen. However, considering the supra and intranational status of my context of studies (the European Schools), I believed it was necessary to widen the horizon, not sticking only to a national one without “enriching” it. The historical debate itself has undergone the necessity to reflect on the nation and the national and reframe them «in a set of translational relations, entanglements, dependencies»¹⁰³;

100. *Ibid.*, p. 320.

101. On the idea of citizenship as a «floating signifier» see D. Tröhler, *National Literacies, or modern education and the art of fabricating national minds*, «Journal of Curriculum Studies», vol. 52, n. 5, 2020, p. 626.

102. On the relationship between the national dimension, the curriculum and how to approach it see A. Giudici, *Nationalism and the Curriculum: Analytical and Methodological Considerations*, in P. P. Trifonas, S. Jagger (eds.), *Handbook of Curriculum Theory and Research*, Springer International Handbooks of Education, Cham, Springer, 2023.

103. E. Roldán Vera, E. Fuchs, *Introduction: The Transnational in the History of Education*, in E. Roldán Vera, E. Fuchs (eds.), *The Transnational in the History of Education. Global Histories of Education*, Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, p. 11. I will go back to the element of transnationalism here mentioned in the last paragraph of this chapter which indeed focuses on the transnational perspective.

sociological studies on global dynamics has also conceived the national as been reshaped by the global and transnational networks¹⁰⁴, thinking it as an «in-between space»¹⁰⁵. In terms of ideas of citizenship's conception, this has had many implications such as, for instance, the formulation, in the sociological field, of a post-national model of citizenship in the European context¹⁰⁶, a model that goes beyond the idea of being «exclusively defined by the nation-state»¹⁰⁷; studies in the policy field has also shown how this model of citizenship can be connected to a citizenship education relying on the promotion of rights considered «universalistic, uniform, abstract and defined at global level»¹⁰⁸ even though national ideals and beliefs are still present. Looking at the curriculum, this implies – according to Keating – the fact that the values taught are no longer only the ones constitutive of the national culture, but space is given to more universal values such as «accepting personal responsibility, recognizing the importance of civic commitment, respect for diversity, respect for cultural heritage and the environment, promoting solidarity and equity»¹⁰⁹. Even though this change in the discourse on civic education began to take shape concretely in terms of policies after World War II when citizenship education had to foster reconciliation between the member states¹¹⁰, international scholarship in the field of History of Education suggests that the seeds of such discourses go back to previous times and that it can also be connected to themes related to active pedagogies and peace education. For instance, Andreasen and Ydesen¹¹¹ investigate how, during the interwar and post-war periods, co-

104. S. Sassen, *The global inside the national. A research agenda for sociology*, sociopedia.isa, 2010, p. 1, <https://www.saskiasassen.com/PDFs/publications/the-global-inside-the-national.pdf> (last access: 30.07.2024).

105. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

106. Y. Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1994; G. Delanty, *Citizenship in a global age: society, culture and politics*, Buckingham, Open University Press, 2000.

107. Delanty, *Citizenship in a global age: society, culture and politics*, in A. Keating, *Educating Europe's citizens: Moving from national to post-national models of educating for European citizenship*, «Citizenship Studies», vol. 13, n. 2, 2009, pp. 135-151.

108. Keating, *Educating Europe's citizens: Moving from national to post-national models of educating for European citizenship*, cit., p. 137.

109. *Ibid.*, p. 138.

110. L. Cajani, *Between cosmopolitanism, Europeanism and nationalism: the shifting focus in the teaching of history in Europe*, in A. Ross (ed.), *A Europe of many cultures. Proceedings from the 2003 CiCe Conference*, London, CiCe, pp. 225-231. See also A. Keating, *Education for Citizenship in Europe: European Policies, National Adaptations, and Young People's Attitudes*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

111. K.E. Andreasen, C. Ydesen, *Educating for Peace: The Role and Impact of International Organisations in Interwar and Post-War Danish School Experiments, 1918-1975*, «Nordic Journal of Educational History», vol. 2, n. 2, 2015, pp. 3-25.

operation within different international networks and organizations – with the League of Nations in the first place¹¹² – contributed to the diffusion of the idea that education together with social welfare for children would have guaranteed peace. In their work, the authors demonstrate how knowledge and practices from international organizations were transferred thanks to transnational circulation and were received in some experimental Danish schools through conferences and initiatives promoting peace education such as courses for teachers or the revision of textbooks¹¹³. Moreover, the authors established a link between the education for peace and progressive education inspired by Herbart, Froebel, Montessori, Dewey and Decroly, to mention a few¹¹⁴. This is testified, for instance, by the report of a schoolteacher that recollected a Danish language lesson held in one of the experimental schools set up in 1948 and where the greatest pedagogic values were considered the ones capable of encouraging cooperation «and thus a democratic attitude»¹¹⁵. What emerges from this study based on the analysis of transnational transfers is the profound connection between education for peace, diversity and tolerance with the spread of active pedagogy¹¹⁶ which places the child, his interests and interactions at the centre. Something similar can be deduced in the research carried out on the sociogenesis of educational internationalism and specifically on the work of the International Bureau of Education established in Geneva in 1925 to build peace through science and education¹¹⁷. Analyzing its origins and

112. The international organizations mentioned by Andreasen and Ydesen are the following, aside for the League of Nations: The International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC), the New Education Fellowship (NEF) and the UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization – after 1946. For further information see Andreasen, Ydesen, *Educating for Peace: The Role and Impact of International Organisations in Interwar and Post-War Danish School Experiments, 1918-1975*, cit.

113. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

114. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

115. Poulsen, 1963, in Andreasen, Ydesen, *Educating for Peace: The Role and Impact of International Organisations in Interwar and Post-War Danish School Experiments, 1918-1975*, cit., p. 16.

116. In this specific case mentioned by Andreasen and Ydesen, reference is made to the influence of Abbotsholme by Cecil Reddie and Dewey's Laboratory School (*Ibid.*, p. 16).

117. R. Hofstetter, B. Schneuwly, *The International Bureau of Education (1925-1968): a platform for designing a 'chart of world aspirations for education*, «European Educational Research Journal», vol. 12, n. 2, 2013, pp. 215-230; R. Hofstetter, Érhise (eds.), *Le Bureau international d'éducation, matrice de l'internationalisme éducatif (premier 20e siècle). Pour une charte des aspirations mondiales en matière éducative*, Bruxelles, Peter Lang, 2021, pp. 337-362; C.M. Batista Loureiro, R. Martins Assis, *Jean Piaget e a educação internacional: práticas pedagógicas de construção de um método de compreensão e reciprocidade nas crianças*, «Educação Unisinos» vol. 22, n. 4, 2018, pp. 259-267.

the thought of its founders, Hofstetter observes how, already in the years 1921-1922, a series of initiatives were held contributing to the spreading of ideas based on the necessity of «teaching of history and the international spirit to overcome some nationalist contents that could contribute to create the warlike spirit that was instead wanted to be fought for the benefit of global citizenship»¹¹⁸. Hofstetter, taking up previous works on Ferrière¹¹⁹, points out how in the latter the concepts of global citizenship and cosmopolitanism were well present and connected as instruments for overcoming nationalisms and in favour of global belonging which, however, did not exclude positions that could be considered national¹²⁰. Regarding the work of the IBE in promoting peace, it is then highlighted the importance given to the methods and principles of the New Education¹²¹ with the necessity to start from the children to promote their development and the use of language-related educational practices such as the teaching of foreign languages, interschool correspondences and promotion of children's literature to foster international understanding and cooperation¹²².

Whether we are talking about educational practices concerning the transmission of national values, or a more international and global vision of society aimed at promoting peace, what emerges, in my opinion, is an expansion of themes and levels pertaining to CE; above all, it can be noted how the different configurations and organizational structures adopted from the 18th-19th centuries onwards reflect one (or more) ideas of citizenship and societal engagement while addressing specific social topic through teaching and the curriculum conceived as functional tools for this purpose. To better put it, it can be said, quoting Marc Depaepe, that «the molding of the minds for docile citizenship by 'school' curricula» was part «of a goal in which the formation of a character played the dominant role»¹²³; in this way Depaepe

118. Hofstetter, Érhise, *Le Bureau international d'éducation, matrice de l'internationalisme éducatif (premier 20e siècle)*, cit., p. 57.

119. Hameline, 2002, in Hofstetter, Érhise, *Le Bureau international d'éducation, matrice de l'internationalisme éducatif (premier 20e siècle)*, cit.

120. *Ibid.*, p. 69.

121. Hofstetter, Schnewwly, *The International Bureau of Education (1925-1968): a platform for designing a 'chart of world aspirations for education*, cit.

122. B. Schnewwly, A. Darne-Xu, B. F. Extermann, I. Leopoldoff Martin, V. Rouiller, *Des pratiques éducatives langagières au service de la compréhension internationale?*, in R. Hofstetter, Érhise (eds.), *Le Bureau international d'éducation, matrice de l'internationalisme éducatif (premier 20e siècle). Pour une charte des aspirations mondiales en matière éducative*, Bruxelles, Peter Lang, 2021, pp. 337-362.

123. M. Depaepe, *The Practical and Professional Relevance of Educational Research and Pedagogical Knowledge from the Perspective of History: Reflections on the Belgian Case in its International Background*, «European Educational Research Journal», vol. 1, n. 2, 2002, p. 363.

has underlined the moral and pedagogical character of education and the emergence and relevance of educationalization; the latter can be considered as a process characteristic of modern school systems, the tendency – arisen since and together with the dawn of the nation-states – through which school and education have started to be and still are held accountable for solving, or ameliorating at least, social problems. As already stated in the introduction to the present work, the awareness that comes with the affirmation by Depaepe, made me feel the urge to look at citizenship education through the lenses of educationalization as Hodgson did when stating that «citizenship education is treated [...] as a contemporary example of the educationalization of social problems, following Marc Depaepe’s use of the term»¹²⁴ so underlining «the turn to educational measures in response to social problems»¹²⁵. In this way what emerges is, in my view, an idea and image of educational processes and schooling conceived as realized through different educational practices and by different actors and objects involved in the attempt to respond to the fluctuating ensemble of what were felt as pressing social problems addressed through praxis aimed at enriching ways of being in the world, of being future citizens in it. That implies a focus on the values and type of agency vehiculated through citizenship education but also on the even practical and concrete aspects of the «grammar of schooling»¹²⁶ that citizenship education permeates and orders, in a process of mutual co-construction. Consequently, the main point here is in considering citizenship education not much in relation with any precise model to which it could be ascribed but rather as a constitutive ordering principle of modern school systems that changes according to the social issues education and schools systems were started to be seen as solutions, as well as to the methods and perspectives applied, a knot of traces detectable in the teaching and in the curriculum. I will now move on and focus on the definitions of the latter.

124. N. Hodgson, *Citizenship education, policy, and the educationalization of educational research*, «Educational Theory», vol. 58, n. 4, 2008, p. 419.

125. *Ibid.*; I mention Hodgson because I find very relevant that the scholar analyzed, drawing on Foucault’s understanding of governmentality, how the European citizenship as a form of subjectivity was conceived and addressed in the contemporary European Union policy, to figure out «the way in which the term ‘citizenship’ operates, and how learning is central to this», see N. Hodgson, *Citizenship for the Learning Society. Europe, Subjectivity, and Educational Research*, Hoboken, Wiley, 2016, p. 4. I would like to point out that Hodgson’s analysis looks in particular at what happened from the ‘90s onwards and, above all, in the early 2000s in terms of educational policy and reflection on European citizenship as subjectivity achieved through learning. For further information see Hodgson, *Citizenship for the Learning Society. Europe, Subjectivity, and Educational Research*, cit.

126. D. Tyack, L. Cuban, *Tinkering toward utopia: A century of public school reform*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1995.

1.3. Curriculum Theory

In the research work that will follow, I have been focusing on the curriculum of the European Schools in the attempt to figure out how citizenship education practices and the curriculum were intertwined and organized, which influences can be traced among them and how they arose together since, as Depaepe well pointed out, school curricula played a vital role in the molding of future citizens' minds¹²⁷ and, as Tröhler et al. also stressed, the modern school, the school as we know it today, is organized on elements and technologies such as teaching, curriculum and learning that were not simply «born from one model or ideal of the citizen but arose from different historical practices»¹²⁸. Consequently, I believe that interesting conclusions can be drawn on the intersection between the 'making' of citizenship education and the functioning of this specific school system which in its own way contributed to creating a certain vision of citizenship. For this reason, I tried to explain how the 'organizational' and 'pedagogical' aspects of the European Schools can be reconstructed through looking at the curriculum. But before going straightly to the analysis, a preliminary step is necessary in my view. I am talking about the necessity to clarify the idea of curriculum and the theories on it which I considered as my theoretical framework and point of reference.

My starting point in the 'construction' of a definition of curriculum to be used was Ines Dussel's study on how curriculum from different countries organize and classify school knowledge¹²⁹. Building on «a political epistemology of school knowledge derived from histories of curriculum [...], and post-Foucauldian and materialist histories of science and knowledge»¹³⁰, Dussel took documents as her main corpus in the research, and she justified this decision by considering «curriculum texts as public documents that seek to regulate teaching and learning practices in schools»¹³¹. There is indeed, in the curriculum, an administrative dimen-

127. Depaepe, *The Practical and Professional Relevance of Educational Research and Pedagogical Knowledge from the Perspective of History: Reflections on the Belgian Case in its International Background*, cit.

128. Tröhler, Popkewitz, Labaree, *Schooling and the Making of Citizens in the Long Nineteenth Century: Comparative Visions*, cit., p. XI. See also Tröhler, *National Literacies, or modern education and the art of fabricating national minds*, cit.

129. I. Dussel, *The shifting boundaries of school subjects in contemporary curriculum reforms. Towards a post-disciplinary curriculum?*, «Zeitschrift für Pädagogik», vol. 66, n. 5, 2020, pp. 666-689.

130. *Ibid.*, p. 667.

131. *Ibid.*, p. 671.

sion that Dussel recognizes, and which is directed at the public discourse through addressing the inner work and functioning of school. Consequently, I started from the idea of the curriculum as public documents that regulate teaching and learning practices in schools and focused firstly on their textual dimension to search out concepts that could be traced back to the field of citizenship education and its main dimensions. I also let myself free to be surprised by whatever else would have come to the surface. In considering this textual dimension, I tried to keep in mind the concept of intertextuality expressed by Wodak about the Critical Discourse Analysis, according to which «texts are linked to other texts, both in the past and in the present»¹³² and discourse is not a closed unit, but «a dynamic semiotic entity that is open to reinterpretation and continuation»¹³³. This intertextual feature, in my opinion, goes beyond the textual nature of the curriculum as a public document and reveals itself to be functional in understanding the other dimensions that are parts of the curriculum. By talking of the multiple dimensions that connote curriculum, I am again making references to Dussel's work, according to which the curriculum as a document should also be approached «as a material artefact that is produced by various agents and circulates across the educational system, and whose format, wording, and visual and material qualities produce effects on its readers and users»¹³⁴. I would, therefore, say that there are different dimensions and discourses within the 'curriculum' as an extended object and that they can be traced back to a variety of actors, or at least one can attempt to do so. Indeed, drawing from previous research, Dussel suggests seeing these texts also «as part of institutional networks that connect organizations, agents (i.e. teachers' organizations and disciplinary bodies), and pedagogical traditions in ways that vary greatly»¹³⁵. Following the suggestions she made, I tried to deploy all these dimensions in my work by not considering curricular texts in isolation from the conditions in which they are inscribed¹³⁶ and considering them as documents and texts; material artefacts part of a network; administrative tools that regulates the functioning of schooling. The role of curriculum in the functioning of schooling has been underlined also by Daniel Tröhler who defines curriculum «as an or-

132. R. Wodak, *Critical Discourse Analysis, Discourse-Historical Approach*, in K. Tracy K., C. Ilie, T. Sandel (eds.), *The International Encyclopedia of Language and Social Interaction*, Boston, John Wiley & Sons, p. 5.

133. *Ibid.*

134. J. Nespor, 2002, in Dussel, *The shifting boundaries of school subjects in contemporary curriculum reforms. Towards a post-disciplinary curriculum?*, cit., p. 672.

135. *Ibid.*

136. *Ibid.*

dering principal of schooling»¹³⁷. Together with this executive dimension, two other aspects of curriculum are considered by Tröhler. Firstly, – while reconstructing Curriculum History and focusing specifically on the years 1920-1930s in the US – he noticed how «the curriculum was understood as a core public educational or instructional means to foster national integration and to reinforce U.S. citizenship in ages of change and uncertainty»¹³⁸. But, at the end of the 1970, Tröhler pointed out a change in the concept of curriculum mainly due to what he calls, referring to Pinar, a «quest to understand [...] directed toward an analysis of curriculum as cultural construction that includes particular visions of the (ideal) child, the (ideal) social order, and the (ideal) citizens»¹³⁹. The cultural dimension of the curriculum is considered in Tröhler's work binded, in his view, with the actual formal basis of curricula (or at least of curriculum making), namely, the school laws. In turn, school laws derive from the constitution. According to Tröhler constitutions «define the citizens»¹⁴⁰ and then school laws and curricula implement this vision and, from a cultural point of view, constitutions, school laws and curricula convey this cultural construction of the citizen and of the idea of social order. Tröhler particularly insists on this relationship between constitution(s), school laws and culture, also underlining how the constitutional dimension is the foundational one: by stressing this concept, he also points out that

“constitutions” not only differ in their material aspects (distribution of more or fewer rights, defining the modes of interaction) but also in their formal aspects (location in the overall legal system). They create different kinds of citizens, which makes it impossible to construct one global narrative of curriculum, even if the curricula seem to become similar when we look at the formal existence (or disappearance) of school subjects. A French citizen is not identical to a U.S. citizen; a U.S. citizen is not identical to a British citizen; a British citizen is not identical to a German Bürger; and a German Bürger is not identical to a Swiss Bürger – despite the fact that France, the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Switzerland are all constitutional democracies and that any dictionary would translate citizen as citizen or Bürger¹⁴¹.

According to the author, the aforementioned opinion on the intrinsic differences within constitutions leads to a far-reaching consequence, namely the fact that

137. D. Tröhler, *Curriculum History*, in J. Rury, J.E. Tamura (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Education*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2019, p. 525.

138. *Ibid.*

139. *Ibid.*

140. *Ibid.*, p. 528.

141. *Ibid.*

International curriculum history that looks at transnational flows needs to define the notion of the citizen first as a floating signifier that is materialized in the different cultural systems of reasoning and therefore in the different curricula in very different ways, expressing unfailingly the respective dominant views of social order and citizenship, which are also reflected in the constitutions¹⁴².

I believe it was important to directly report and mention this part to reflect on how I intend to proceed in this work with my analysis of citizenship and the curriculum of the European schools. As a matter of fact and as for my understanding, Tröhler suggests – to those who want to trace an international curricular history based on and reconstructed through different transnational flows – to first define the notion of citizen that emerges from different cultural systems and, therefore, in the diverse national curricula involved. In this work, I took this consideration into account, but, in the end, I ended up looking mainly at the composite image of citizenship that emerges from the curriculum of the European Schools, a curriculum that is also transnational and is the result of the mediated combination of other national experiences, as we will see better in the next chapters: consequently, the image of citizenship and curricula I am looking at does not emerge specifically from the analysis of the different national starting contexts, but through a gaze focused mostly on the arrival one and on the culmination of these influence, in the attempt to find out the various threads constituting it. However, despite having proceeded differently from what Tröhler indicated, I tried to keep in mind all of three dimensions he underlines: the legal, the cultural and the executive. At the same time, I tried to not underestimate the fact that in the case of these schools there is not a really a constitution to consider as the expression of the normative base of citizenship¹⁴³, while this normally happens – according to Tröhler – in the case of national states¹⁴⁴. However, I tried to consider the legal, cultural and executive dimensions of the curriculum, together with their regulating nature expressed by Dussel; moreover, I wonder if Popkewitz's idea of curriculum and approach – mentioned by both Dussel and Tröhler – could have been adopted. Firstly, I asked myself if I have been simply doing what

142. *Ibid.*

143. Article 4 of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 officially established the European citizenship even though there was not (and still isn't) any European Constitution to "sustain" it. For further information see D. Capperucci, *La scuola in Europa: politiche e interventi dell'Unione europea in materia di istruzione e formazione*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2013; Hodgson, *Citizenship for the Learning Society. Europe, Subjectivity, and Educational Research*, cit.

144. See Tröhler, *Curriculum History*, cit., p. 529.

Popkewitz would define a traditional curriculum history «that tends to examine, for example, what the schools teach, its organisation of teachers and pupils, the role of students, and how changes in schools contribute to democracy through the structuring of social equality/inequalities»¹⁴⁵. In this approach, chronological sequences are used so to understand the links and the relationships between structures and events and better delineate «the emergence of successions that form the history of schools»¹⁴⁶. According to Popkewitz, an alternative approach can be adopted to curriculum history by considering the curriculum itself as a «history of the present» which has the role to «to suspend history itself» and examine «the system of reason that orders and classifies what can be seen, talked about and acted on in schooling»¹⁴⁷. In the Online etymology dictionary the word reason is said to come from Latin *rationem* which means «reckoning, understanding, motive, cause» and the Late Latin verb *rationare* – to whom it is connected – means to «to discourse, to reckon, to think»¹⁴⁸. So, I believe it can be said that Popkewitz considered the curriculum as the system through which certain concepts and values are conceived and thought and he wanted to pay attention to the historical processes through which these principles were «assembled, connected and disconnected»¹⁴⁹. In this way, «the history of the present is a strategy to excavate the multiple historical practices that come together to give intelligibility to what is ‘seen’ and acted on as the object of schooling»¹⁵⁰. He described a grid of practices through which the curriculum formed in America: for instance, the idea of curriculum as «converting ordinance» transmitting ideas of «national belonging and salvation themes of the education sciences related to pedagogy»¹⁵¹ and also on the Social Question «which gave focus to the planning that was to respond to the economic, social and moral disorder of the city»¹⁵². To understand the such ordinances constituting the curriculum, he looked at moral and civic virtues vehiculated, which idea of the nation – a narrative that was constructed on the idea of its «uniqueness told through its scientific and technological advances»¹⁵³. He used the notion of ‘grid’, as «a methodo-

145. T.S. Popkewitz, *Curriculum history, schooling and the history of the present*, «History of Education», vol. 40, n. 1, 2011, p. 1.

146. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

147. *Ibid.*

148. Etymonline, https://www.etymonline.com/word/reason#etymonline_v_43911 (last access: 22.05.2023).

149. Popkewitz, *Curriculum history, schooling and the history of the present*, cit., p. 2.

150. *Ibid.*

151. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

152. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

153. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

logical strategy to explore different historical trajectories that travelled and came together in the nineteenth century to generate principles on what is seen, thought and acted on in schooling»¹⁵⁴. Considering this, I am not sure I have managed to create and use such a similar grid, yet I tried to pay attention to the different trajectories I had the impression to be able to retrace. While ‘thinking with’ Dussel, Tröhler and Popkewitz and considering how their ideas on curriculum can be used in the case of the ESs, I also would like to say few words on the work of Ivor Goodson on Curriculum study and history, and his constructivist perspective. I believe some considerations on it can be made, considerations that would be useful for the present research. As a starting point, Goodson underlines the fact that curriculum has a prescriptive nature, and at the same time is a «social construction», not something «timeless given»¹⁵⁵. He tried to reconceptualize the mode of curriculum study «to connect specific acts of social construction to wider social impulses»¹⁵⁶ and in doing so Goodson also suggests paying particular attention to the teachers due to the intimate interlinking of «the material interests of teachers – their pay, promotion and conditions – with the fate of their specialist subjects»¹⁵⁷. In addition to that, Goodson affirms that focusing on the teachers would help the understanding of the negotiations on the curriculum at macro and micro level¹⁵⁸. Moving away from the single focus of curriculum as a prescription and embracing the notion of «curriculum as social construction firstly at the level of prescription itself, but also at the levels of process and practice»¹⁵⁹, Goodson underlines three interdependent and possible dimensions of analysis:

- The individual: the life history and career of the single actors involved.
- The group or collective: the professions, categories, subjects, and disciplines, for instance, and how they evolved rather as social movements over time. Likewise, schools and classrooms develop patterns of stability and change.
- The relational: the various permutations of relations between individuals, between groups and collectivities and between individuals, groups and collectivities; and the way these relations change over time¹⁶⁰.

154. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

155. I.F. Goodson, *Learning, Curriculum and Life Politics: the selected works of Ivor F. Goodson*, Oxon, Routledge, 2005, p. 69.

156. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

157. *Ibid.*, p. 79.

158. *Ibid.*, p. 82.

159. *Ibid.*, p. 104.

160. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

Through the review of part of the scientific literature on the curriculum, I wanted to recall its different dimensions underlined because, in this work, although focusing mainly on the prescriptive level, I would still like to give space to all of them to try – even if only minimally – not to look only at «the content of education as it is defined in books, curriculum and syllabi»¹⁶¹, and not to commit the mistake of exploring «education out of context – detached from daily reality, from the networks of human interaction that are represented in schools, from the cultural or ethnic contexts within which ideas derive meaning and significance»¹⁶². So, I recalled the theories on the curriculum because the analysis carried out wanted to be mostly textual, in search of connections and having as its focus the curriculum in a broad sense, not only as a legal document but as an object that is constructed and shaped on and by multiple dimensions: prescriptive, cultural, constructivist. The desired result would involve the ability to look at the different trajectories and threads which could help, in my opinion, in delineating the diverse dimensions of citizenship education – as a constituent of the school system, a direct result of educationalization and understood in terms of values, identity, status and agency¹⁶³ – and of the curriculum, as well as the intertwined relationships, influences and actors that intersect in them and that contribute to their creation and co-construction.

1.4. The Transnational in the History of Education

Before moving on to the next section on the analysis of the sources and after having attempted to define the theoretical background of reference in relation to both the concepts of citizenship education and curriculum, I would like to briefly ponder carefully about the perspective from which I chose to look at the sources and that I tried to assume as my privileged point of observation: the transnational perspective. Drawing on previous literature I would like to give an outline of what the transnational perspective is and how it has been used in the field of the history of education¹⁶⁴;

161. B. Finkelstein, *Re-imagining Educational Reform: Public Schools and the Nurture of Consciousness (AESA Presidential Address)*, «Educational Studies», vol. 14, n. 2, 1983, p. 104.

162. *Ibid.*

163. Schugurensky, *Citizenship and Immigrant Education*, cit.

164. See M. Caruso, *World systems, world society, world polity: theoretical insights for a global history of education*, «History of Education», vol. 37, n. 6, 2008, pp. 825-840; M. Caruso, *The History of Transnational and Comparative Education*, in J. Rury, J. E. Tamura (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Education*, New York, Oxford

moreover, I would like to reflect on how it fitted my research¹⁶⁵. With reference to the former consideration, in my opinion, it is important to remind the recent work by Roldán Vera and Fuchs¹⁶⁶ which examined how the category of the transnational emerged and evolved, how it impacted the methods of doing and addressing research, and finally the advantages of using a category that could give the benefit «of research that goes beyond a specific locality or nation-state as a unit of analysis»¹⁶⁷. Due to the difficulties encountered in delimiting the object of my research – an object characterized by a deeply international nature and yet expressed through and concentrated in many specific localities – and since the different national trajectories seemed, sometimes, to be intricate in the reality of the European Schools, I decided to fix my gaze on the transnational approach. I also decided to select this type of perspective because, in my view, the case of the European Schools shares with what is known as the transnational history of education the fact of being risen from the convergence of discourses on internationalism and «international education and the

University Press, pp. 568-587; D. Matasci, *Note per una 'storia globale' dell'educazione tra Ottocento e Novecento. Approcci, problemi e prospettive*, «Ricerche pedagogiche», n. 195, 2015, pp. 8-14; C. Mayer, *The Transnational and Transcultural: Approaches to Studying the Circulation and Transfer of Educational Knowledge*, in Roldán Vera, Fuchs, *The Transnational in the History of Education, Global Histories of Education*, cit., pp. 49-68; R. Rogers, *Conversations About the Transnational: Reading and Writing the Empire in the History of Education*, in Roldán Vera, Fuchs, *The Transnational in the History of Education, Global Histories of Education*, cit., pp. 101-124; Roldán Vera, Fuchs, *The Transnational in the History of Education, Global Histories of Education*, cit.; N.W. Sobe, *Entanglement and Transnationalism in the History of American Education*, in T.S. Popkewitz (ed.), *Rethinking the History of Education: Transnational Perspectives on Its Questions, Methods and Knowledge*, New York, Palgrave MacMillan, 2013, pp. 93-107.

165. This work of reflection that insinuates itself in the midst of the discussion of the theoretical framework may seem “disorganized” and the result of a lack of experience with the subject matter; yet, in my opinion, it seems to be a work that is greatly needed to bridge what has also been emphasised at the theoretical level, namely that reflexivity deficit of historical research mentioned by Werner and Zimmermann; on that see M. Werner, B. Zimmermann, *Beyond comparison: Histoire croisée and the challenge of reflexivity*, «History and Theory», vol. 45, n. 1, 2006, pp. 30-50 cited by Sobe, *Entanglement and Transnationalism in the History of American Education*, cit. Moreover, I believe it represents an indispensable action since, as Mayer recalls with regard to *histoire croisée*, «reflexivity thus becomes a major question of the analysis» (C. Mayer, *The Transnational and Transcultural: Approaches to Studying the Circulation and Transfer of Educational Knowledge*, cit., p. 58). As a matter of fact, at a certain level, the study itself can be conceived «as a form of intercrossing based on the assumption that factors within the person of the researcher (such as the observer position, traditions of the discipline and academic culture) guide their perspective on the objects studied» (*Ibid.*, p. 38).

166. Roldán Vera, Fuchs, *The Transnational in the History of Education, Global Histories of Education*, cit.

167. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

transnational research project in the historical sciences»¹⁶⁸. Drawing on previous research, I will delineate briefly what this implies for the transnational history of education. In particular, with reference to the international dimension, Roldán Vera and Fuchs distinguish how, although the focus on “the international” is well present, transnational history is distinct from “international history”: the latter tends to be studied in the context of the history of diplomatic institutions with a focus on states or other institutional actors¹⁶⁹; transnational history, on the other hand, focuses on networks, entanglements, on intersecting dimensions. Furthermore, looking at the international dimension in education, the two authors emphasize how the latter appeared at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th with the idea that a «universal education in the spirit of peace and harmony among the peoples of the world»¹⁷⁰ could be realized, mainly through the action of international bodies such as the League of Nations aimed at fostering the growth of a cosmopolitan attitude dedicated to the promotion of peace; in this way, in addition to actions aimed at favoring this type of education, research was also born to study such actions, thus giving rise to the field of comparative and international education¹⁷¹.

I had the impression that the European Schools’s mission seemed to perfectly agree with this view and fit in this scenario and ideas on education, peace, and cosmopolitanism that reflect themselves also on the idea of citizenship. Consequently, I started to become interested in understanding if and how the European Schools could be collocated with this “world view” and ideas on education and international education; moreover, I begun considering the possibility of using the transnational research approach to my object of study. But how has the transnational approach in History of Education been used and studied? The purpose of this paragraph is not to comprehensively reconstruct the horizon of studies that have contributed to the so-called global or transnational turn of historical research¹⁷². However, it seems necessary to me to provide some coordi-

168. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

169. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

170. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

171. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

172. The global and the transnational turn are inescapably referred to together in the case of the reflections and literature reviews conducted on the topic by Caruso; whereas, in the case of Roldán Vera and Fuchs, the authors distinguish – albeit very briefly – the global turn from the transnational turn and then focus exclusively on the latter. See Caruso, *World systems, world society, world polity: theoretical insights for a global history of education*, cit.; Matasci, *Note per una “storia globale” dell’educazione tra Ottocento e Novecento*, cit.; Roldán Vera, Fuchs, *The Transnational in the History of Education, Global Histories of Education*, cit.

nates that may allow us to identify where the present research on the European Schools intends to place itself within the transnational approach.

Synthesising and echoing Thomas Bender, Matasci recalls that the transnational approach led to a reconsideration of the territorial space of the nation¹⁷³ in an attempt «to include and emphasize the interactions, connections and circulations between countries and regions of the world»¹⁷⁴. According to Matasci, this historiographical change in historiographical scale fits well into a traditionally strong analytical framework in the field of educational studies due to, in particular, comparative education which, since its origins, has paid attention to the international dimension and contributed to the circulation of ideas and debates¹⁷⁵. As Roldán Vera and Fuchs will do, Matasci also examines «some of the methodological and theoretical propositions that are most suited to the analysis of education as a phenomenon at the centre of global dynamics»¹⁷⁶ with a specific reference to the notions of internationality and internationalization: drawing on Jurgen Schriewer's work, the former refers – according to Matasci – to the semantic process of creation of perspectives and worldviews of external references in response to needs within a determined national or cultural space¹⁷⁷. The latter is instead associated with «a dynamic process, the manifestations and effects of the intensification of global relations of interaction and exchange»¹⁷⁸. Speaking of internationalism, Matasci underlines that a prime focus has been given on the role of international organisations in the spread of the mass schooling model initially promoted by the consolidation of nation-states. However, many are the interdisciplinary theoretical frameworks and methodological proposals referred to in the debate on the global and transnational and within them the scholar identifies the following three axes as the most promising as: the terrain of pedagogical internationalism on the circulation of knowledge or the history of pedagogical doctrines¹⁷⁹; the study of the reception of foreign pedagogical thought and practice in a

173. See T. Bender, *A Nation Among Nations. America's Place in World History*, New York, Hill and Wang, 2006 mentioned in Matasci, *Note per una "storia globale" dell'educazione tra Ottocento e Novecento*, cit., p. 9.

174. Matasci, *Note per una "storia globale" dell'educazione tra Ottocento e Novecento*, cit., p. 9. Here Matasci explicitly makes reference to P.Y. Saunier, *Circulations, connexions et espaces transnationaux*, «Genèses», vol. 57, 2007, pp. 110-126.

175. Matasci, *Note per una "storia globale" dell'educazione tra Ottocento e Novecento*, cit., p. 11.

176. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

177. *Ibid.*

178. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

179. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

given national space¹⁸⁰; the third terrain – according to Matasci the least explored – investigates «the spatial dimension of educational globalisation [...], how connections, links and the very consciousness of a global world are crystallised»¹⁸¹ with multiple possible approaches such as the analysis of educational policies in a colonial and post-colonial context and the role of international organisations¹⁸² also in so-called peripheral countries¹⁸³.

As already said at the beginning of this paragraph, Roldán Vera and Fuchs also highlight how the transnational turn in the history of education is the result of a historiographical change that occurred in other fields of social sciences, a change welcomed because it was able to intercept the interest that educational studies – and in particular comparative education – had about the international dimension, as well as the connection of the latter with an idea of education aimed at promoting peace. The two scholars point out that the transnational history derived from a context that was going beyond the nation-state due to processes of economic and political integration characterized by supranational entanglements: in this way, it was necessary to build the objects of study differently, going beyond national discourses. As they point out, transnational history «does not deconstruct the nation – it presupposes its existence, and it studies its development as a global phenomenon – but it contextualizes it in a set of translational relations, entanglements, and dependencies»¹⁸⁴. Drawing on the work by Werner and Zimmermann¹⁸⁵, they describe how in the past years it has become common not only to focus on «supranational multidirectional flows, but also reflects on and makes explicit the (entangled) conditions in which his-

180. *Ibid.*, p. 13. In this field, the studies on educational loans and transfers by David Phillips, Kimberly Ochs and Gita Steiner-Khamsi are mentioned. For further information see K. Ochs, D. Phillips (eds.), *Educational Policy Borrowings: Historical Perspectives*, Oxford, Symposium Books, 2004; G. Steiner-Khamsi (ed.), *The Global Politics of Educational Borrowing and Lending*, New York, Teachers College Press, 2004.

181. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

182. In this context the following works are mentioned: S. Kott (ed.), *Une autre approche de la globalisation: socio-histoire des organisations internationales (1900-1940)*, «Critique internationale», vol. 52, n. 3, 2011; R. Hofstetter, B. Schneuwly, *The International Bureau of Education (1925-1968): a Platform for Designing a 'Chart of World Aspirations for Education'*, «European Educational Research Journal», vol. 12, n. 2, 2013, pp. 215-230; M.C. Giuntella, *Cooperazione intellettuale ed educazione alla pace nell'Europa della Società delle Nazioni*, Padova, Cedam, 2001.

183. Matasci, *Note per una "storia globale" dell'educazione tra Ottocento e Novecento*, cit., p. 14.

184. Roldán Vera, Fuchs, *The Transnational in the History of Education, Global Histories of Education*, cit., p. 11.

185. See M. Werner, B. Zimmermann, *Penser l'histoire croisée: Entre empirie et réflexivité*, «Annales: Histoire, Sciences Sociales», vol. 58, n. 1, 2003, pp. 7-36.

torians construct their transnational objects of research»¹⁸⁶ giving space to what has been called entangled history or *histoire croisée*. Like Matasci before, Fuchs and Roldán Vera also identify some areas and research topics in which the transnational perspective has been and is being used such as the focus on the international interactions and networks of educators¹⁸⁷; on the colonial and imperial histories of education¹⁸⁸; the international formation of educational science¹⁸⁹; the institutional history with an emphasis on the internationalization of school models and curricula¹⁹⁰; the diffusion of pedagogical knowledge giving significance to the «processes of translation, appropriation and adaptation of pedagogical knowledge in a range of local contexts»¹⁹¹; gender studies emphasizing transnational relationships¹⁹²; textbook research «on the transnational character and circulation of textbook production and distribution»¹⁹³.

Considering all the above reflections, while looking at the curriculum of the European Schools and on the image of Citizenship education, I will focus also on an analysis that considers the international networks, contacts and exchanges. At first glance this could give the impression of further complicating the research object without addressing it with clear and limited questions; however, I am convinced that looking at the transnational in historical educational research not as a methodological technique but «rather a vantage point, a perspective, or a ‘posture’»¹⁹⁴, the concepts and analytical categories employed in that ‘posture’ can be observed and de-naturalized, pointing out the ways in which they guide and enhance research and, in this way, displaying the many layers of meaning carried by different concepts and discourses¹⁹⁵ – in the case of the present study the discourses on citizenship education and the curriculum.

186. Roldán Vera, Fuchs, *The Transnational in the History of Education, Global Histories of Education*, cit., p. 12.

187. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

188. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

189. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

190. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

191. *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

192. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

193. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

194. Rogers, in Roldán Vera, Fuchs, *The Transnational in the History of Education, Global Histories of Education*, cit., p. 13.

195. *Ibid.*

Part II – Working with the Sources

2. The European Schools: encounters and circulation from their origins to the early '60s

After having illustrated the theoretical premises and the research questions from which I started, I will now focus on the analysis of the documents and sources that allow me to elaborate answers and observations. In this chapter, in particular, I will not immediately look at the documents that constitute the prescriptive, legislative and cultural dimensions of the curriculum of the European Schools and the image of citizenship education found and constructed in it, but I will rather try to look at the curriculum and to the European Schools as «material artefacts»¹ which were created thanks to exchanges and interactions. A question might come naturally at this point: in which broader panorama can the European Schools be placed, and with which realities were there exchanges in the first years? In which places was the European Schools' experiment narrated, and what might these stories tell us on the ES' citizenship education and curriculum? In this way, I would like to retrace the history of the first years of the European Schools, a story which – as seen in the first chapter – has been told several times. What can be added to it, then? I intend to underline the possible connections with other contexts to better position the European Schools within those networks that were becoming increasingly constitutive of educational realities and, in particular, of the European space since, as Grek and Lawn remind us,

the governance of the European education policy space appears to be increasingly 'produced' through building relationships between actors in networks and com-

1. I. Dussel, *The shifting boundaries of school subjects in contemporary curriculum reforms. Towards a post-disciplinary curriculum?*, «Zeitschrift für Pädagogik», vol. 66, n. 5, 2020, pp. 666-689.

munities, which are themselves no longer contained within the silos and discourses of the national².

In this specific chapter, I will then tell, once again, the story of the first years of the European Schools starting from that small community of ECSC officials who met in Luxembourg in 1953 to go further and see with which other realities there were contacts and what can be hypothesized from them. The early history of the European Schools will be reconstructed on the basis of the following three documents: on the basis of the following three documents:

1. *The European Schools. A paper presented to the International "Pax Christi" Congress 1960 by Albert van Houtte of the Board of Governors of the European Schools*³.
2. The paper *An Experiment in Inter-Cultural Education: The European Schools* presented by Albert Van Houtte during the Ninth National Conference U.S. National Commission for UNESCO, Chicago - 23/26th October 1963.
3. The *Note on Creation of a Primary and Secondary International School in Washington D.C.* presented by Albert Van Houtte during the Ninth National Conference U.S. National Commission for UNESCO, Chicago - 23/26th October 1963.

As already said, the analysis of these documents does not guarantee groundbreaking results; for instance, Shore and Finaldi-Baratieri⁴, and Harry Van Lingen⁵ addressed the first one, in its 1961 version, in their

2. S. Grek, M. Lawn, *Europeanizing Education. Governing a New Policy Space*, Oxford, Symposium Books, 2012, p. 9.

3. A. Van Houtte, *The European Schools. A paper presented to the International "Pax Christi" Congress 1960 by Albert van Houtte of the Board of Governors of the European Schools*, Geneva, 28-29-30 October 1960, <https://aei.pitt.edu/14967/> (last access: 10.02.2024). An almost identical version of this document was published in the European Community Information Service, on March, 2nd 1961, and it is available here <https://aei.pitt.edu/53874/> (last access: 10.02.2024); no further mention of the Pax Christi Congress is present in the latter event though the content stayed unchanged. Since their content is practically the same and due to the interest towards the Pax Christ Congress on the basis of considerations that could be drawn on it and that will be discussed in this chapter, I decided to focus on the 1960 version.

4. C. Shore, D. Finaldi, *Crossing Boundaries Through Education: European Schools and the Supersession of Nationalism*, in J. Stacul, C. Moutsou, H. Kopnina (eds.), *Crossing European Boundaries Beyond Conventional Geographical Categories*, New York, Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2005, pp. 23-40.

5. H. Van Lingen, *The European School. From post-war idealism to a present-day cultural opportunity*, Antwerpen, Garant, 2012.

works. In my view, the focus on the content remains necessary to allow the reader to understand what the European Schools were and how they came to be created. However, I also believe that it is necessary to pay attention to the places where these discourses were delivered and who were the actors involved: this is what I will try to do after the first analysis of the content in the hope to be able to look at the entangled history of European Schools in the broader contexts of relations that surrounded their origins and development.

2.1. Albert Van Houtte and the 1960 paper at the International Pax Christi Congress

In the literature and documents about and produced by the European Schools, the name of Albert Van Houtte is a recurring one⁶. In a letter addressed to him by the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs in December 1962 and published in the celebratory brochure *Schola Europea Luxemburgensis, 1953-1963*, he is described as the «*Presidente dei Consigli d'Amministrazione delle Scuole europee*»⁷. He was indicated also as a *greffier* (clerk) of the The European Court of Justice⁸ and member of the Upper Council of the European School, the Board of Governors⁹. Van Houtte was the first «Registrar of the European Court of Justice, the first President of the Parents' Association of the European School Luxembourg and the first Representative of the Board of Governors of the European School (1954-1964)»¹⁰; as Van Lingen pointed out thanks to an interview conducted in 1995, Van Houtte was able to dedicate much of his time to the cause of the

6. For instance, it can be found in the celebratory brochure *Schola Europea 1953-1993*; it is mentioned in Shore, Finaldi, *Crossing Boundaries Through Education: European Schools and the Supersession of Nationalism*, cit., in the research conducted by D. Swan, *A Singular Pluralism: The European Schools 1984-94*, Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1996, and in the historical reconstruction proposed in Van Lingen, *The European School. From post-war idealism to a present-day cultural opportunity*, cit.

7. *Schola Europea Luxemburgensis 1953-1963*, Luxembourg, [Veröffentlichungsdienst der Hohen Behörde?], 1963, p. 15.

8. In these *Memories of the Court of Justice 1953-1982* by Van Houtte himself he is presented as Registrar at the Court of Justice from 1953 to 1982; see https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/albert_van_houtte_memories_of_the_court_of_justice_1953_1982-en-4e6dc507-7f4a-4a8f-9511-28b62088df68.html (last access: 03.12.2023).

9. See D.B. Smith, *A Report of the Ninth National Conference of the U.S. National Commission for Unesco*, [s.l.], [s.n.], 1963, https://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/conf_1963_10_23-26_chicago.pdf (last access: 10.02.2024).

10. Van Lingen, *The European School. From post-war idealism to a present-day cultural opportunity*, cit., p. 19.

Parents' Association «due to the limited number of cases brought before the Court at its inception»¹¹.

I was not able to better reconstruct his life and why and how he delivered the speech I am about to analyse. From his words and the aforementioned work by Van Lingen, it is known that he was part of the nucleus of founding parents who were the active protagonists in the foundation of the first European School in Luxembourg; I was also not capable of finding out why he was invited to deliver the papers objects of my analysis; however, I think that some hypotheses can be formulated with reference to the contexts where these papers were delivered and what these relationships might have meant for the idea of citizenship education and for the organization of the European Schools. I will now move to the content of the speech and then to the attempt of reconstructing the contexts of the Congresses and the possibility of drawing some considerations from them.

2.1.1. The European School in Luxembourg and conclusions drawn on the experience

The document is presented in a double version, English and French, and consists of the following parts: *Introduction; The Origin of the ESs; the Primary Course; the Secondary Course; the legal Status and Development of the ESs; Principles of Instruction; Organization of studies; Conclusions based on experience; Collaboration between governments; Collaboration between members of the teaching staff; Collaboration between pupils*. In the *Introduction* Van Houtte mentions the number of students that in 1959 and 1960 had passed the European leaving certificate examination, the *Baccalauréat européen*. He highlights the success of the undertaking since it managed to provide the students with primary and then secondary education, and then, thanks to the harmonized curriculum to give them the chance to meet requirements requested in each country and even proceed with higher education. Underlining the extraordinary nature of this result, he does not fail to mention the extraordinary circumstances that made it possible: he thus goes on to tell the origins of the first European school. Van Houtte recalls that the birth of the European schools is closely linked to the foundation of the ECSC, the European Coal and Steel Community in Luxembourg, in August 1952¹². The employees of the ECSC

11. *Ibid.*

12. Van Houtte, *The European Schools. A paper presented to the International "Pax Christi" Congress 1960 by Albert van Houtte of the Board of Governors of the European Schools*, cit., p. 2.

who arrived in Luxembourg from their countries of origin – Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, France and Luxembourg – soon found themselves facing the problem of educating their children. In Luxembourg, the latter would, in fact, have been able to attend national schools and high schools which, however, presented different curricula and methods compared to those to which children were accustomed in their countries of origin. In particular, students from Italy and the Netherlands did not know the languages spoken in Luxembourg; all students would also have had to attend a school course that would have allowed them to return to their homeland, at the end of their parents' working period, and to re-enter the school system of their country of origin. At the request of the ECSC, the Luxembourg government gave its consent and collaboration to open, in October 1953, a private primary school designed and managed by the parents' association; in this way, «the unity of the family» could be preserved¹³. This school welcomed, in its first year, 72 pupils and 6 teachers, each from a different country and organized into four different linguistic sections to prepare the children for the final primary school exam. From the first year, «joint lessons for students of different nationality and language»¹⁴ were provided to make them grow together – or rather to educate them to grow together – and to teach them the first basics of a second language. Over time these lessons – known as European lessons – became one of the peculiarities of the school: «each day, during the last two hours of the morning, the children all take singing, handicrafts, gymnastics and the first elements of the second language»¹⁵. As Van Houtte reminds us, this second language – the working language or vehicular language – had and still has a key role in secondary education since students must be familiar enough with it to be able to understand instructions given using it. The fourteen pupils who took the final primary school exam at the end of the first year after the school was set up, passed it successfully: consequently, their parents asked for the creation of the secondary education cycle leading to the creation of the European School. However, the creation of the secondary education cycle would have required greater responsibility that could not have been guaranteed by the parents' association alone. The ECSC – as Van Houtte reminds us – could have provided moral and financial support, but it had no expertise in the educational field. The Common Assembly could have given its political support, but Governments had to step in and establish a syllabus, and guidelines, also taking care of teachers' provisions

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

15. *Ibid.*

and the supervision of studies and diplomas¹⁶. Thus, in June 1954, the ministers and the general directors responsible for secondary education and cultural activities in the six member countries were invited to a meeting in Luxembourg; they agreed to open the first two classes of secondary school in October of that same year. During this two-day meeting, an agreement was reached on «a harmonized syllabus»¹⁷, on the qualifications and requirements necessary for teachers and the methods of inspecting their work. As members of the Board of Governors, the representatives and/or ministers of the individual national governments had «the task of guiding and observing the experiment until the end of the course»¹⁸ with the idea of extending it up to the diploma necessary to access university. In this part, Van Houtte expresses the gratitude felt towards these delegates whose task was to define a method that took into account extremely different syllabuses from country to country and to design a teaching system effective in achieving the minimum objectives necessary to obtain a secondary school diploma. In 1955, the syllables were designed, and it was a decidedly arduous task, as Van Houtte recalls¹⁹. Van Houtte also states how, by comparing the final work with the national syllabuses, it was possible to see how they coincided and how they differed while considering the adjustments made in various disciplines – such as classical languages, mathematics, philosophy, modern languages, natural sciences, history, and geography – to create a syllabus which, although balanced, was considered rather intense since it included 36 lessons per week. In his paper Van Houtte then proceeds with the reconstruction of the development and legal status of the European schools mentioning the Statute – here called Charter – signed in 1957²⁰ and refers to the new European Schools created some years later in Bruxelles, Mol and Ispra-Varese. Regarding this, in my opinion, the considerations that Van Houtte makes when he writes that «these schools are a manifestation of cultural relations between European countries since each of them contributes its national character and, by common experience, benefits from the cultural values of the others»²¹. Van Houtte then recalls that the fundamental principles regulating education in the European Schools were made explicit in Article 4 of the Statute signed in 1957 – which he refers to as the Charter of the European Schools. The

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

21. *Ibid.*

fundamental principle was that basic education had to be conveyed in the student's native language to be chosen among the official languages of the European Community: German, French, Italian and Dutch. Basic education was – and still is – delivered in each of these languages throughout the course of study. Furthermore, Van Houtte explains that within 'basic education' were also included all those subjects difficult to teach in a second language, namely – in addition to the mother tongue – Latin, Greek, Mathematics and Philosophy. In any case, he also highlights how the deadlines and objectives of the syllabuses were uniform for each of the four sections and approved by the Board of Governors. He also explains that certain subjects were taught «jointly in classes of the same level in order to promote the unity of the school and closer cultural contact between pupils of the various language sections»²². To teach these subjects a working language was used, and a second language had to be chosen between German and French. In any case, the central role of language learning is underlined since Van Houtte says that great effort is made «to provide a thorough knowledge of living languages»²³ consequently leading to the addiction of English within the languages taught. Together with this linguistic dimension, Van Houtte then also reiterates the importance of respecting the beliefs of individuals while still leaving room for moral and religious education²⁴. Van Houtte then moves on to describe the organization of the Primary and Secondary School²⁵ to finally arrive at some final conclusions based on experience. I think it is relevant to pay attention on what he says about these conclusions, namely the fact that it was «none the less possible to draw certain conclusions on the subject which will be dealt with at the 7th seminar of the International Pax Christi congress: education on international lines»²⁶. He then puts the final conclusions into four main groups: the first one on the collaboration between family of different nationality; the second one on the collaboration between governments; the third one on the collaboration among the teaching staff; and the last one about collaboration between pupils. As for the collaboration between families of different nationalities, Van Houtte starts from the assumption that the first school established in 1953 had the aim of providing an education charac-

22. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

25. I will not focus on this organizational part right now because it will be one of the central focuses of the next chapter.

26. Van Houtte, *The European Schools. A paper presented to the International "Pax Christi" Congress 1960 by Albert van Houtte of the Board of Governors of the European Schools*, cit., p. 8.

terized by the same spirit of cooperation and understanding found in the daily work of the ECSC. Furthermore, he highlights how most of the ECSC staff members had no specific preparation for this type of collaboration: they had come to Luxembourg «to make their contribution to the integration of Europe, and this spirit went far beyond the mere work required for the implementation of a Treaty»²⁷. According to Van Houtte, through their administrative and social contacts, these officials became aware of the differences in the concepts represented by their different nationalities. Van Houtte recognizes how these concepts change depending on the traditions of each country and how the differences are undoubtedly accentuated by the political nationalism that for too long had narrowed horizons, by the lack of knowledge of foreign languages that made this contact difficult and by many other historical causes²⁸. The education that everyone receives in their own country, from primary school to university, is considered by Van Houtte as another main cause of originating differences. He indeed writes that «in all too many countries education has deliberately been given a nationalist slant which goes beyond the civic and patriotic training which education should indubitably give»²⁹. This has happened in universities, too, in his view. The following consideration he makes is also interesting: in his view, all of the above was deeply perceived by the European officials who quickly understood how the differences in behaviour and thoughts «are only a veil behind which one can find the complete identity of views on the basis of principles and ideas: identity in the philosophic concept of life, such as the Christian one; identity in social aspirations and identity in the aim pursued»³⁰. Van Houtte then touches on the theme of the collaboration between governments, underlining how the Schuman Plan had had repercussions in very different and unforeseen areas compared to those for which it was initially conceived; as a matter of fact, at the foundation of the ECSC, it was not possible to foresee and imagine that it would also lead to the creation of these schools. The schools could have remained private schools while granting the recognition of the diploma in individual countries. Instead, they were included within the common cultural policy, and the creation of the European School Leaving Certificate represented «a great step towards the solution of the difficult problem of the equivalence of diplomas»³¹. Furthermore, the harmonization of the syllables with objec-

27. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

tives equivalent to those of the individual national states was a «notable success» that could have become «the interlude to a general approximation of studies in the six countries and to a comparison of the teaching methods applied»³². A final consideration on textbooks is added: since, at the time, there were no textbooks suitable for the joint syllabus created, the idea to design them from an international angle started to flourish, and Van Houtte perceived it as the possible prelude to further collaborations and developments. Indeed, he sees the possibility for the European Schools to become a «pedagogical laboratory»³³ of which boys and girl around all Europe could have benefit. Van Houtte then underlines the great importance that the teaching staff had since the success and results of these schools depended on them. They were asked to rethink their teaching methods to relate, compare and dialogue with a different syllabus and with a European spirit. To do this, they were required to have «a very open mind, much tact, understanding and tolerance»³⁴, also because they were dealing – very often for the first time – with students and colleagues of different nationalities and origins, and must consider the linguistic difficulties of the students and themselves, as well as the lack of textbooks. In the end – writes Van Houtte – «the experience of numerous contacts and many teacher’s conferences must, in the end, bring out a common concept, otherwise the European School will fail in its aim»³⁵. He actually recognizes this concrete risk of failure: there was, therefore, awareness of the difficulty and the risk that these schools, with different sections, would become only «four juxtaposed schools – moreover with subsections – according to the linguistic divisions or nationality of the teachers»³⁶; he hopes that this does not happen even if it is still too early to say. Van Houtte also hopes that the years of service at the European Schools can be, for teachers, a period of enrichment and professional growth that will lead them to develop skills and abilities that can then be reused, even when they resume service in their country of origin, where they will ensure that «wider and wider circles of teachers and pupils will benefit from the concrete contribution made by the European School to education in the international spirit»³⁷. Van Houtte emphasizes that despite being designed for the children of the officials of the European Communities, the European Schools have made efforts to not

32. *Ibid.*

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

35. *Ibid.*

36. *Ibid.*

37. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

become exclusive schools, «caste schools»³⁸. According to Van Houtte's speech, the governments involved expressed their desire to open the schools to students who reside in the country where the school is located or even to students of other nationalities, provided that certain conditions were met, and places were available. For instance, at that moment in 1960, according to him, almost a third of the students in the European School of Luxembourg had no connection with the ECSC. Van Houtte emphasizes the significant contribution made by the Parents' Association in keeping a healthy environment. He also mentions the Old Pupils' Association³⁹, which was established by the first batch of students who received their Leaving Certificates. Van Houtte notes that individuals from various nationalities typically attend its meetings, which shows that friendships were developed that went beyond nationality. Van Houtte also acknowledges that students notice and comment on differences in behaviour, dress, games, and physical and moral development based on their countries of origin⁴⁰. In his view, while this may be enriching, it could also lead to challenges in readjusting to their home countries. However, students have to deal with the effects of their education in an international environment, fulfilling the vision of the founders expressed in the founding stone of the European School in Luxembourg, the fact that:

Sharing in the same games, grouped in common classes, boys and girls of various languages and nationalities will learn to know and value each other and to live together.

Being brought up in contact with each other and freed at an early age from the prejudices which divide, initiated into the beauties and values of the various cultures, they will as they grow up become conscious of their solidarity. While retaining love for and pride in their country, they will become in spirit Europeans well prepared to complete and consolidate the work undertaken by their fathers to establish a prosperous and united Europe⁴¹.

2.1.2. Considerations on the entanglement with Pax Christi

The discourse analyzed was presented in Geneva during the Pax Christi Congress held in October 1960. I have not managed to gather many more details on the connection between the European Schools and this

38. *Ibid.*

39. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Ibid.*

specific Congress and association; however, I draw inspiration on what Carlo Ginzburg said on microhistory, namely the fact that «the obstacles interfering with research in the form of lacunae or misrepresentations in the sources must become part of the account»⁴². So, after having analyzed the discourse delivered by Van Houtte during the Pax Christi Congress in Geneva, in 1960, and having paid attention to the story of the creation of the first European School, I asked why this discourse was delivered in this specific context and setting. Moreover, which were the connections and the reasons that brought Van Houtte and the European Schools there? Trying to accept the limitation of my sources on this point, I will try to transform them into a narrative element⁴³ by pausing and describing what Pax Christi International was and is, what it represented in terms of peace education and what were the main themes discussed in Geneva. I believe that it can serve to narrate, imagine and perhaps comprehend the climate in which the European Schools arose, the actors with whom they maintained relationships, and the entanglements in which they were located.

As described in Pax Christi International's website⁴⁴ and in previous research works such as the one by De Jonghe⁴⁵, Pax Christi was co-founded in France, in 1945 by the French Bishop Pierre Théas and French woman and teacher Mrs. Marie Dortel-Claudot: their main idea was to contribute to peace and reconciliation between France and Germany after the Second World War⁴⁶. Pax Christi was precisely one of those grassroots movements born exactly to promote peace between France and Germany and, in the same period, other initiatives tried to do the same, the ECSC itself in the first place⁴⁷, but also other actions in the field of cultural diplomacy and peace education such as the revision of Franco-German history textbooks⁴⁸. Pax Christi was firstly established in France and soon after in Germany; it spread rapidly – already in the early 50's – in Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland and Belgium. It was blessed by Pope

42. C. Ginzburg, J. Tedeschi, A.C. Tedeschi, *Microhistory: Two or Three Things That I Know about It*, «Critical Inquiry», vol. 20, n. 1, 1993, p. 28.

43. *Ibid.*

44. Pax Christi Website <https://paxchristi.net/about-us/https-pcintlorg-files-wordpress-com-2019-10-timeline-posters-pdf/> (last access: 09.12.2023).

45. É. De Jonghe, *Pax Christi International: The Role and Perspectives of an International Catholic Peace Movement*, «CrossCurrents», vol. 33, n. 3, 1983, pp. 323-329.

46. *Ibid.*

47. C. Guisan, *From the European Coal and Steel Community to Kosovo: Reconciliation and Its Discontents*, «JCMS», vol. 49., n. 3, 2011, pp. 541-562.

48. M. Siegel, K. Harjes, *Disarming Hatred: History Education, National Memories, and Franco-German Reconciliation from World War I to the Cold War*, «History of Education Quarterly», vol. 52, n. 3, 2012, pp. 370-402.

Pius XII in 1950 and got fully approved «as an international Catholic peace movement in 1952»⁴⁹. Its first international president was the Cardinal Feltin of Paris who summed up «its main program in three points: prayer, study, and action. In line with this first “charter” Pax Christi always emphasized both education and research, study conferences and grassroots activities, prayer and the gathering and diffusion of information»⁵⁰. De Jonghe also underlines how it was always a movement focused on the promotion of peace where bishops and priests were particularly active collaborating together with grassroots Catholics and believers. Therefore, there was since the beginning a strong and active commitment towards the realization of peace to which problem of justice and human rights were later incorporated into during the ‘60s: indeed, «peace was linked with problems of development and world-wide solidarity»⁵¹. The connection between peace and developments appeared to be addressed already in the 1960 Congress in Geneva in the discourse by Cardinal Feltin⁵². De Jonghe also points out 3 main priorities addressed by Pax Christi International since its foundation: the commitment to disarmament and security⁵³, the work for the promotion and respect of human rights, the encouragement of «contacts with the churches in Eastern Europe and examining overall East-West problems»⁵⁴. Moreover, most of the international meetings and conferences organized by Pax Christi dealt «explicitly with nonviolence, peace education and peace spirituality» and actually «peace education may be called the cornerstone of Pax Christi’s everyday work. From the early post-war period until now many members have been teachers or educators»⁵⁵.

49. De Jonghe, *Pax Christi International: The Role and Perspectives of an International Catholic Peace Movement*, «CrossCurrents, cit., p. 323.

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Ibid.*

52. See the following sources: article from *Le Monde*, *Le sous-développement conduit à la guerre declare le Cardinal Feltin au congrès de “Pax Christi”*, 1960, https://www.lemonde.fr/archives/article/1960/10/31/le-sous-developpement-conduit-a-la-guerre-declare-le-cardinal-feltin-au-congres-de-pax-christi_2108854_1819218.html (last access: 01.01.2024); article from *The Criterion*, *Catholic effort urged for poor nations*, November 11, 1960, p. 10, <https://archindy.org/criterion/files/1960/pdfs/19601111.pdf> (last access: 18.01.2024); B. Lalande, *Paix – Développement – Charité*, in *Doctrine Action, Mission and charité*, M-C 6, Avr 1962, p. 162, https://via.library.depaul.edu/mission_charite/12 (last access: 20.01.2024).

53. De Jonghe, *Pax Christi International: The Role and Perspectives of an International Catholic Peace Movement*, «CrossCurrents, cit., p. 324.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 325.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 326. The commitment of Pax Christi in the field of peace education is briefly mentioned also in two other research: in the first one – by the scholars Amsing and Dekker about a Dutch peace education curriculum in the 1970s – Pax Christi is indicated with reference to a symposium on education and peace co-organized by Pax Christi

Taking into account what has been said so far about Pax Christi, it seems relevant to me to give space to a reflection that considers what I have noticed until now on Pax Christi and the attempt to connect it and its mission to the project of the European Schools. Regarding the latter, their birth has always been linked to a practical reason, the foundation of the ECSC and the need for the children of its workers to receive an education in their mother tongue, compatible with that of their country of origin. The schools were also linked to a climate that sought to foster peace, a peace associated with conceived as necessary after World War II. However, previous research⁵⁶ has shown how this interest in peace education began to develop already at the end of the 19th century and was greatly influenced by active education and the work of supranational organizations such as the of Nations (League of Nations) and the IBE; furthermore, studies on citizenship education show us that there was a moral component aimed at promoting «a moral regeneration based on concepts like honesty, work ethos, solidarity, culture, and citizenship»⁵⁷; Del Pozo Andres and Braster also underline how the International Conferences on Moral Education⁵⁸ – and in par-

in 1974; the second less recent work is a study on *Le mouvements de paix en Flandre* conducted by Stouthuysen in 1985. In the latter, attention is given to Pax Christi Vlaanderen – the Flemish branch of Pax Christi in Flanders - and it is pointed out how the main aims were «*prières pour la paix, étude de la paix et action pour la paix*» but «*la paix n'était plus considérée comme une question purement individuelle et morale, la prise de conscience politique et l'œuvre de formation allaient devenir des éléments importants de l'action de Pax Christi*», in P. Stouthuysen, *Les mouvements de paix en Flandre*, «*Courrier hebdomadaire du CRISP*», vol. 27, n. 1092-1093, 1985, p. 16; See also H.T.A. Amsing, J.J.H. Dekker, *Educating peace amid accusations of indoctrination: a Dutch peace education curriculum in the polarised political climate of the 1970s*, «*Paedagogica Historica*», vol. 56, n. 3, 2020, pp 360-383.

56. K.E. Andreasen, C. Ydesen, *Educating for Peace: The Role and Impact of International Organisations in Interwar and Post-War Danish School Experiments, 1918-1975*, «*Nordic Journal of Educational History*», vol. 2, n. 2, 2015, pp. 3-25; J. Droux, *Children and youth: A central cause in the circulatory mechanisms of the League of Nations (1919-1939)*, «*PROSPECTS*», vol. 45, n. 1, 2015, pp. 63-76.

57. M. del Mar del Pozo Andrés, J.F.A. Braster, *The Rebirth of the 'Spanish Race': The State, Nationalism, and Education in Spain, 1875-1931*, «*European History Quarterly*», vol. 29, n. 1, 1999, p. 76.

58. About the International Conferences on Moral Education, they were held in London in 1908, in The Hague (1912), in Geneva (1922), in Rome (1926), in Paris (1930) and Krakow (1934); for further information see M. Cicchini, *Un bouillon de culture pour les sciences de l'éducation? Le Congrès international d'éducation morale (1908-1934)*, «*Paedagogica Historica*», vol. 40, n. 5-6, 2004, pp. 633-656. Cicchini looks at the International Conferences on Moral Education while examining if and how «the International moral education congress had been a vector of pedagogy as a scientific discipline» and proposes «to consider this Congress as a plausible but little productive culture medium of this emerging disciplinary field of education», in Cicchini, *Un bouillon de culture pour les sciences de l'éducation? Le Congrès international d'éducation morale (1908-1934)*, cit., p. 633.

ticular the Third one – «had approved the ‘supranational’ concept which sought to replace nationalism and patriotism with international values in the schools»⁵⁹. The point I am trying to make is the following: it seems to me that the fact that the European Schools project was presented in its infancy in the context of an organization such as Pax Christi, aimed at promoting moral education for peace, can highlight in a certain sense the role played by moral education in directing a shift of attention, no longer aimed only at developing respect for the nation to which one belongs, but also at openness and commitment towards peace and respect for diversity.

To go back to Pax Christi, another important aspect of it pointed out by De Jonghe is the international framework that sustained Pax Christi’s work over the years in particular through the organization of the yearly International Councils where the International President and the Executive Committee were chosen. The latter «insures the follow-up of Council decisions»⁶⁰ and monitors the work of the international commissions. The stress on the international work carried out by Pax Christi reveals also the fact that «growing attention has been paid to Pax Christi representation in the main network of international organizations whose interests are close to Pax Christi’s priorities»⁶¹: De Jonghe noticed how Pax Christi had contacts with the UN headquarters in New York, with the United Nations in Geneva, with the Council of Europe in Strasbourg and with the UNESCO in Paris.

I found all of this relevant to better understand the networks the European Schools interacted with: as a matter of fact, most of the time their project has been narrated with a focus on the European dimension and as part of the building of the European Union; without denying this part – despite sometimes questioning the rethoric grandeur that accompanies it – I am trying to show how these Schools were also influenced by a broader discourse on peace education and active citizenship through the interaction with institutions and organizations not necessarily related only to the European economic and political project. I believe Van Houtte’s presence at the Pax Christi Congress could be interpreted as a sign of it; the same can be said for the speech he gave in Chicago and that I am going to analyze in the next paragraph. However, before moving on, I would like to pay attention to two final aspects.

59. del Mar del Pozo Andrés, Braster, *The Rebirth of the ‘Spanish Race’: The State, Nationalism, and Education in Spain, 1875-1931*, cit., p. 90.

60. De Jonghe, *Pax Christi International: The Role and Perspectives of an International Catholic Peace Movement*, «CrossCurrents, cit., p. 327.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 328.

The first one is the following: as already said, Pax Christi was a Catholic movement active in peace education and promotion; the fact that the President of the Board of Governors of the ES participated in the Council in 1960 to narrate the experience of the ES may suggest – in my view – that the European Schools’ project shared something with pax Christi’s aims. I would say not only the focus on the promotion of peace education, but also the Catholic and moral features of this type of education. And I stress it also considering previous literature on the moral character of education⁶².

The second and last observation I would like to offer relates to the discourse pronounced by Cardinal Feltin – archbishop of Paris and Pax Christi’s first international president – during the Geneva Council in 1960, that same council where Van Houtte was present and spoke about the origins of the European Schools’ experiments. I was not able to understand whether Van Houtte was present when that said speech was delivered; yet, again, focusing on the lacunae, I believe that Van Houtte’s speech and Cardinal Feltin’s speech at Geneva could be put in relation, if only for the fact of being pronounced in the same context; consequently, it comes naturally to ask what Cardinal Feltin’s speech could tell us about that aforementioned context. As reported in an article published by the French newspaper *Le Monde* in October 1960, Cardinal Feltin highlights the link between underdevelopment and war since he wrote that «le sous-développement conduit fatalement à la guerre, [...] le développement est le nouveau nom de la paix»⁶³). That same speech is also partly reported in the November 11, 1960, edition of the *Criterion*, the official weekly newspaper of the Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis since October 7, 1960⁶⁴. Quoting the words by Feltin, the article says that «underdevelopment is a permanent threat to peace, whereas development, covering all human needs, will become

62. See M. Depaep, *The Practical and Professional Relevance of Educational Research and Pedagogical Knowledge from the Perspective of History: Reflections on the Belgian Case in its International Background*, «European Educational Research Journal», vol. 1, n. 2, 2002, pp. 360-379; del Mar del Pozo Andrés, Braster, *The Rebirth of the ‘Spanish Race’: The State, Nationalism, and Education in Spain, 1875-1931*, cit.; Cicchini, *Un bouillon de culture pour les sciences de l’éducation? Le Congrès international d’éducation morale (1908-1934)*, cit.

63. Cardinal Feltin in Lalande, *Paix – Développement – Charité*, in *Doctrine Action*, cit., pp. 161-162.

64. This information on the *Criterion* comes from the online website Encyclopedia of Indianapolis (<https://indyencyclopedia.org/the-criterion/> (last access: 10.12.2023) while the November edition of the *Criterion* can be found online here <https://www.archindy.org/criterion/files/1960/pdfs/19601111.pdf> (last access: 18.01.2024).

a new name for international peace»⁶⁵, a development that must happen also in the cultural sphere and that should be promoted «based on moral principles and above all must take into account the dignity of the man»⁶⁶. To promote this type of development, a major Catholic effort should have been and must be made not with the aim of ignoring the great work already carried out by other international organizations; Pax Christi aimed at animating the activities of these organizations through its presence and prayers. I believe that this discussion on development as an instrument of peace can also be useful for contextualizing the reality in which the European Schools arose and broadening our gaze on it: not only a reality characterized by the need to create the conditions for lasting peace between different European countries; not only a reality that was part of a broader project of (also) American origin but a reality that also included discussions on colonialism and the relationship with the colonized countries. Focusing specifically on the European Schools, it is not the purpose of this work to analyze how and from what positions these discussions took place; however, I believe it is necessary to mention them to move away – even when talking just about the European Schools – from a sometimes merely rhetorical discussion on peace and European integration isolated from everything else, and rather to move closer to the position recognized in the sociological field, namely the fact that «a European colonial project was also [...] integral to the project of European union itself»⁶⁷. About this, I think that underlining the presence of the European Schools and their history in a congress of an association such as Pax Christi which promoted moral and peace education and which recognized the development of developing countries as a necessary condition for peace itself is in a certain sense a very slight detail that is worth not overlooking.

2.2. The UNESCO conference on the New Europe and the United States: new directions (in education?)

I will now move on to another document in which Albert Van Houtte's name appears: the proceedings of the Ninth National Conference U.S. National Commission for UNESCO held in Chicago from 23 to 26 October 1963 where Van Houtte is associated with two presented speeches. The

65. *The Criterion*, *Catholic effort urged for poor nations*, cit., p. 10.

66. *Ibid.*

67. G. Bhambra, *A Decolonial Project for Europe*, «JCMS», vol. 60, n. 2, 2022, p. 234.

main topic of the Conference is expressed by its title: *The New Europe and The United States: New Directions*. The Conference was arranged in cooperation with The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations and held at Conrad Hilton Hotel in Chicago, Illinois. As it can be read from the Conference report by Damon B. Smith⁶⁸, this Conference aimed at investigating the crucial shifts that were happening in Europe and their implications for the United States; the main focus was on educational, scientific and cultural matters; references to political and economic subjects were considered sometimes necessary to locate the matters addressed in their broader context⁶⁹. The special attention dedicated to issues relating to educational, scientific and cultural knowledge is not surprising given that they had already been identified as central to UNESCO's action⁷⁰ during the First National Conference organized in Philadelphia in 1947 by the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO. In 1946 this commission was «established to advise and consult with the government of the United States and the United States Delegates to the General Conferences of the United States»⁷¹. In the same article from which the words just quoted are taken, Guthe and Smith recognized how UNESCO and its related initiatives could be considered as part of the broader attempt to establish international peace; UNESCO itself was seen as «a new tool which may be used in the effort to achieve international peace»⁷² through the promotion of

68. D.B. Smith, *A Report of the Ninth National Conference of the U.S. National Commission for Unesco*, [s.l.], [s.n.], 1963, https://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/conf_1963_10_23-26_chicago.pdf (last access: 10.02.2024).

As shown in the report, the main aim of the Conference was to define what the New Europe was going to be and its connections with the United States; a feature particularly decisive in the definition of the New Europe was considered to be the European unification – not only in political and economic terms but also in fields related to education, science and culture within Europe and outside of it; consequently, the discussion appeared to be not only confined to Europe while providing a focus also on the relationship between the developed and the developing countries.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

70. C.E. Guthe, M.W. Smith, *The First National Conference on Unesco*, «American Anthropologist», vol. 49, n. 4, 1947, pp. 681-685.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 681. Other references to the creation of this commission are provided, for example, by Simon Ottenberg and Phoebe Ottenberg in a 1961 article published in the African Studies Bulletin where the authors write that «the United States National Commission for UNESCO is an advisory body established by Congress in 1946 to further the aims of UNESCO by associating interested organizations and individuals in the United States with the Commission to further the knowledge and the work of UNESCO and to function as an agency through which views of Americans on the activities of UNESCO can be channeled», in S. Ottenberg, P. Ottenberg, *U.S. National Commission for UNESCO Conference: Africa and the United States*, «African Studies Bulletin», vol. 4, n. 4, 1961, p. 41.

72. Guthe, Smith, *The First National Conference on Unesco*, cit., p. 682.

precisely educational reconstruction, international understanding and fundamental education⁷³. If these were considered among the main objectives of UNESCO's action and its collaboration with the U.S. Commission, the conferences organized from 1947 onwards also focused on what was happening in different parts of the world; the Eighth Conference organized in 1961 focused, for instance, on the relations between African countries and the United States⁷⁴. In any case, what seems relevant to me to underline is precisely how these actions were part of the general objective and effort to contribute to the construction of an "environment" of peace: the presence of the European Schools within these events indicates how they also can be considered part of such concrete actions for the development of a culture of peace.

To return to the Conference of interest to us – the one held in 1963 – the themes were discussed by European and American leaders⁷⁵ during plenary sessions and symposia with a principal speaker and commentator. Van Houtte participated as principal speaker to the following symposia, addressing the following subjects:

1. *An Experiment in Inter-Cultural Education: The European Schools* presented by Albert Van Houtte during the Fifth Plenary Session and introduced by Harvie Branscomb, Former Chancellor, Vanderbilt University, Member of U. S. National Commission for Unesco⁷⁶.
2. *Note on Creation of a Primary and Secondary International School in Washington, D.C.*⁷⁷

The first speech cannot be found in the Conference proceedings; however, its summary is available in the Conference Report created by Damon Smith. Consequently, this report was used as a source to reconstruct the first speech. On the contrary, the *Note on the Creation of a Primary and Secondary International School in Washington D.C.* was partially summarized in the report by Smith and attached to the Conference Proceedings in

73. *Ibid.*

74. Ottenberg, Ottenberg, *U.S. National Commission for UNESCO Conference: Africa and the United States*, «African Studies Bulletin», cit.

75. Within the mentioned speakers, intellectuals such as Hannah Arendt, Theodore Adorno, Altiero Spinelli and Eric Fromm can be found; for further information see Smith, *A Report of the Ninth National Conference of the U.S. National Commission for Unesco*, cit.

76. Smith, *A Report of the Ninth National Conference of the U.S. National Commission for Unesco*, cit., p. 55.

77. A. Van Houtte, *Note on the Creation of a Primary and Secondary International School in Washington D.C. presented by Albert Van Houtte during the Ninth National Conference U.S. National Commission for UNESCO*, in Smith, *A Report of the Ninth National Conference of the U.S. National Commission for Unesco*, cit., appendix.

the original typed version. In the following paragraph, I will illustrate the contents of the aforementioned documents.

2.2.1. A proposal for inter-cultural education

As said, a summary of both interventions is provided in the initial pages of the report by Damon Smith where it is reflected on some of the insights received about the topic of «ties that bind»⁷⁸, of the possibility of bringing together and, to a certain extent, unifying the European and American contexts going beyond individual nation-states. The case of the European Schools brought by Van Houtte is considered as an example to weigh up in the field of educational studies while, in the field of science and culture, the floor was left respectively to Sir John Crockcroft⁷⁹ and the anthropologist Geoffrey Gorer.

To go back to Van Houtte's speech on *An Experiment in Inter-Cultural Education: The European Schools*, it was described in the writing by Damon Smith as a «comprehensive report on the successful innovation of official public schools in the European Communities»⁸⁰, a report presented «with impassioned enthusiasm»⁸¹. From what is possible to understand, Van Houtte recalled the story of the European Schools and their origins; then, indications on the number of the official European schools existing at that precise moment were given: there were 6 of them, «1 in Luxembourg, Italy, France and Germany, and 2 in Belgium»⁸² while a new one had been being arranged in Holland at that time. It is also underlined how, even though they had been originally planned for the children of the ECSC servants, «foreigners and a number of nationals in the area have been encouraged to attend»⁸³. What seems to be stressed by Van Houtte as new and important in the European Schools project appeared to be the shared effort made by the governments to overcome difficulties in different fields. The first field mentioned is the recognition of the European Schools' di-

78. Smith, *A Report of the Ninth National Conference of the U.S. National Commission for Unesco*, cit., pp. 9-12.

79. As indicated in the proceedings, he was Master of Churchill College at Cambridge University and 1951 Nobel Prize Winner in Physics; he spoke on the Development of European Cooperation in Science exemplified for instance by the creation of the CERN laboratory in Geneva. See Smith, *A Report of the Ninth National Conference of the U.S. National Commission for Unesco*, cit., p. 10.

80. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

81. *Ibid.*

82. *Ibid.*

83. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

plomas and certificates by universities and the attempt to avoid a strong emphasis on the more nationalistic aspects of education. Another important aspect recalled is the work on the harmonization of the curriculum and the negotiations conducted within the six governments to be sure that the most fundamental requirements of education in each country were met. As written by Smith,

Mr Van Houtte viewed the present curriculum as representing perhaps a synthesis of the educational systems of the six members. Detailed negotiations solved problems of curricula, particularly in the fields of philosophy, history, geography and language⁸⁴.

Space was then given to the organisation of the European Schools and their founding organizational principles such as the mother tongue teaching and the teaching vehiculated through a second language; the respect of religious opinions together with the emphasis given to «the humanistic tradition in education” and the “aim to develop judgment, wisdom, a sense of responsibility, and a feeling for solidarity among all pupils»⁸⁵. Due to the success of those schools, it is reported that Van Houtte suggested the realization of a similar project in the United States. And this leads us to the analysis of the second document.

2.2.2. A proposal for an international school in Washington

In the *Note on the Creation of a Primary and Secondary International School in Washington D.C.* Van Houtte firstly starts by saying that the creation of a great international school in Washington would answer a real necessity: he stresses how a good number of diplomats, journalists and activists were used to come to the city with their families and to stay there for limited periods. He recognizes how the standards of local American schools vary considerably and that private schools might have very high tuition fees. In addition to this, the most common problem is the necessity to integrate foreign children into the American cycle of studies; the same difficulty must be dealt with when returning to their home countries. In this last case, problems could also arise about the acceptance of the diploma when applying to universities in other countries. He also mentions that one French and one German school were recently opened in Washington;

84. *Ibid.*

85. *Ibid.*

however, they seemed to not be able to deal with the aforementioned difficulties due to the vast amount of money required and the high degree of coordination requested. In addition to this, he connects the idea of creating this type of international school not only with practical and circumstantial needs such as the ones before discussed but to reasons of «overriding importance to the United States, whose worldwide responsibilities are gradually extending to every field of human activity»⁸⁶. He further explains this by writing that

The problem of teaching and education is becoming increasingly a problem of prime importance for all countries in the world. The developed countries seek to adapt teaching to the new requirements of the modern world: development of technical, scientific and mathematical knowledge, the learning of languages and, above all, the maintenance of a vast pool of knowledge and of a vast general culture. The developing countries seek to create an educational system and network in which the example and experience of the West play a leading part. Everywhere the problem of educational reform is posed, in the U. S. as elsewhere. It would, then, be extremely desirable for the United States to seize the present opportunity of meeting a local need in Washington to initiate an educational experiment based on a combination of various systems and capable of serving as a “pilot school” or, one might say, “pedagogical laboratory” from which both national and foreign educators could draw inspiration⁸⁷.

In this sense, the proposal presented by Van Houtte is intended to be a first step towards a bigger educational experiment that might be exported and that could be realized through cooperation with other countries⁸⁸; again, as in the case of the Pax Christi Congress in 1960 the topic of development seems to be at stake in the discussion. Van Houtte also recognizes the commitment of the U.S. in assuring a system of scholarship for foreign students, but he underlines how this happens mostly at the university level while the Washington School would address the Primary and Secondary School levels. He then moves on to define the possible basic principles of such an international school and, in a couple of subsequent

86. Van Houtte, *Note on the Creation of a Primary and Secondary International School in Washington D.C. presented by Albert Van Houtte during the Ninth National Conference U.S: National Commission for UNESCO*, cit.

87. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

88. He speaks of countries «whose cultural contribution to the world has been and is essential and whose way of life derives from a common inspiration and origin», Van Houtte, *Note on the Creation of a Primary and Secondary International School in Washington D.C. presented by Albert Van Houtte during the Ninth National Conference U.S: National Commission for UNESCO*, cit., p. 3.

pages, he explains how he based himself on the experience and primary elements of the European Schools.

In his view, the first basis to be guaranteed in the establishment of the International School should be the attempt to give ample space to modern language study «and enriching the curriculum with the culture of these countries where these languages are spoken»⁸⁹. That said curriculum should come out as a synthesis of the curricula of countries with internationally renowned educational systems, as a compromise between them to favour the recognition of diplomas. Moreover, individual conscience and faith must be respected.

The last principle to be mentioned is the following: «Educating students towards mutual understanding, opening their minds widely to world problems and preparing them to be good world citizens, while retaining their pride in their fatherlands»⁹⁰. I believe that this one last principle is worth noticing: the expression world citizen appears here and it seems to vehiculate an idea of citizenship connected both to a national dimension and a more global one since it also looks at the world, at global problems and reciprocal collaboration, comprehension, and appreciation.

The discourse on language teaching and the use of languages are then considered more deeply in the next paragraph, where they are connected with the necessity to give the school a truly international character⁹¹. As in the case of the European Schools, teaching in the mother tongue should be guaranteed and organized around different language sections. Moreover, the use of a second language as a vehicular language should be strongly encouraged and pursued in subjects and activities such as «history, geography, history of art, geology [...] singing lessons, manual training, physical culture, drawing»⁹². The teaching of a third language and other languages is suggested, too; in all cases, it is underlined how «the most active methods should be employed to this end»⁹³. Despite the number of languages potentially taught, the necessity of having a balancing curriculum is also stated; a curriculum whose final goal would be the preparation for university studies and that should, therefore, be negotiated among the curricula of different countries. He explains that in the European Schools

89. *Ibid.*

90. *Ibid.*

91. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

92. *Ibid.*

93. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

The solution was found on the basis of mutual concessions made by each of the countries. They reached a unanimous agreement, preserving what each of them considered indispensable to permit the recognition of the school diploma for all civil purposes and for admission to the universities of the six countries⁹⁴.

Space is then given to the organization of studies; this part highly recalls the structure of the European Schools. Furthermore, to underline the international character of the school, emphasis is again given to the joint effort made by several countries, an effort and cooperation that would involve the pedagogic management and supervision of the school together with the duty to provide teaching staff⁹⁵. The long-term objectives would be the following:

- Direct cultural cooperation among countries;
- Joint solutions prepared by renowned international pedagogues with responsibilities in their home countries within the framework of the Pedagogical Council and the Council of Inspectors;
- Cooperation among teachers of various nationalities and backgrounds;
- Students from every corner of the world living together⁹⁶.

The idea at the basis of the described experiment would consequently be the fact of putting into being and into practice a real collaboration between different countries in the field of education. He also expresses his suggestions on the juridical statute of the school, its main organs, school buildings, teaching staff and the problems that might arise.

One last point he considers is the admission of students. According to Van Houtte, it is important for the International School not to be an «exclusive circle»⁹⁷. Indeed, he writes that

It is essential that, in addition to the foreigners applying for enrollment, there be a proportion of American students (e.g. 25 to 35 %). While it is to the interest of foreign students to have their own school for the reasons stated above, it is just as much to their interest to live an American life and to adapt themselves to it. Contacts with American comrades are very important in this respect, just as it is for the parents to know and associate with each other. Here, the Association of Pupils' Parents can play a very useful part. It is also to the interest of young Americans to associate with and know foreigners⁹⁸.

94. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

95. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

96. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

97. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

98. *Ibid.*

He concludes by saying that his discourse should be considered as a proposal capable of sparking further discussion, an idea that should be examined through dialogue while considering that it could be a project that might allow the USA to better promote «the diffusion of its culture, understanding among men and peace in the world»⁹⁹.

2.3. Van Houtte's discourses (1960/1963): final provisional considerations

Both the papers mentioned so far make it possible to observe how the case of the European Schools was brought by Van Houtte as an example on which to reflect in the field of educational studies and from which to draw inspiration. Furthermore, both the presence at the Pax Christi Congress and the presence at the UNESCO Conference demonstrate, in my view, how these Schools had contacts with networks aimed at promoting education for peace and encouraging development¹⁰⁰. In the case of the UNESCO discourse, the possibility of contributing to educating towards world citizenship also emerges, and the role of plurilingual linguistic education in this area is highlighted. Moreover, particular emphasis is placed on the need for cooperation and collaboration between governments to ensure a common recognized diploma, a harmonized curriculum, and access to such a school for students of different backgrounds. In both speeches, it is also highlighted how the creation of the European Schools – and also of the possible International School in Washington – is linked mainly and almost exclusively to an initial practical necessity related to the emergence of the social group of civil workers in the European Institutions; it is interesting to note, in my opinion, how in reality this type of reasoning and social group had two precedents which, however, are not cited by Van Houtte, despite sharing some peculiarities with the European Schools. I am referring to the International School of Geneva (Ecolint) founded in 1924 and the United Nations International School (UNIS) in New York founded in 1947; recent scholarship has revisited the myth of origins behind these two institutions, considering their founding as connected to «the desire to transmit the privileges linked to the stand of international civil servants» and to the

99. *Ibid.*

100. On the connections between International Organizations such as UNESCO and the promotion of development see also D. Matasci, *Les organisations internationales et l'éducation en contexte (post)colonial*, «Encyclopédie d'histoire numérique de l'Europe», 2021, <https://ehne.fr/fr/node/21657> (last access: 20.01.2024).

«search of recognition»¹⁰¹. We may wonder whether a similar reasoning can also be applied to the European Schools; within the limitations of the present work is the fact that it cannot provide an answer to this question, which therefore remains open.

Finally, one concluding remark is left before closing this chapter: in the speech held in Chicago, the possibility of this school becoming a pilot school, a model to be exported to developing countries, was underlined. However, at the present moment, we do not have sufficient insights into the potential influences the European Schools' model might have had in “developed” and “developing” countries.

101. L.S. Dugonjić-Rodwin, *Les IB Schools, une internationale élitiste: émergence d'un espace mondial d'enseignement secondaire au XXe siècle*, Doctoral Thesis, Faculté de psychologie et des sciences de l'éducation, Section des sciences de l'éducation (Supervisors: R. Hofstetter, G. Sapiro), Université de Genève, 2014, p. 61; see also L.S. Dugonjić-Rodwin, 'A Miniature League of Nations': inquiry into the social origins of the international school, 1924-1930, «Paedagogica Historica», vol. 50, n. 1-2, 2014, pp. 138-150. For further knowledge on international schools, see also M. Hayden, J. Thompson, *International Schools and International Education: A Relationship Reviewed*, «Oxford Review of Education», vol. 21, n. 3, 1995, pp. 327-345.

3. Curriculum analysis: prescriptive level

After having partially reconstructed some of the contexts that had contacts with the European Schools in the first years of their existence to place the latter in a broader panorama of exchanges, influences and relationships, I now proceed to analyze in more detail the organization of the European Schools and their curriculum understood in a broad sense, characterized by the different layers and dimensions underlined previously in Chapter 1, Part 1.3. In particular, the already mentioned idea by Goodson, namely the notion of «curriculum as a social construction firstly at the level of prescription, but also at the levels of process and practice»¹, is central to this part where close attention will be given to the prescriptive level; I will deal with practices and processes in more detail in the next chapter.

To return to the prescriptive level, I contemplated what Swan observed in 1984 and that I have already mentioned in Chapter 1, Part 1.1. In fact, as Swan reminds us, in the system of the European Schools and in the documents that define it – at least for the period from their origins to at least the 1990s – we find:

a strange lacuna, particularly when compared to the corresponding documents, legal or constitutional, in the member – or any other – states. This is the absence of any commitment to aims envisaged for education as residing in the individual pupil rather than in the politic, or based on a rounded concept of the pupil as a person. While it is true that some fundamental objectives of the Observation period alone are provided, one finds no such statement either in the Statute or its Protocols with reference to either the primary schooling or the education of the pupil as a whole from the nursery to school leaving².

1. I.F. Goodson, *Learning, Curriculum and Life Politics: the selected works of Ivor F. Goodson*, Routledge, Oxon, 2005, p. 104.

2. D. Swan, *The European Schools, Crossroads of Education in Europe*, Brussels, The Commission of the European Communities, 1984, p. 20.

Consequently, there seems to be a certain lack, at least as far as the early years are concerned, of documents with explicit general pedagogical guidelines. Due to this, I have tried to find traces in various types of documents, even those already considered by Swan to be ineffective in this respect. The analysed documents I will discuss in the following paragraphs are, therefore, the following:

- the *Statute of the European School* (1957);
- the *Annex to the Statute of The European School containing regulations for the European School Leaving Certificate (Baccalauréat Européen)* (1957);
- the *Convention Defining the Statute of the European Schools* (1994);
- the *Harmonized Timetables and Programmes* (1957);
- the *Harmonized Timetables and Programmes* (1963);
- the *Harmonized Timetables and Programmes* (1972);
- the *Harmonized Timetables and Programmes* (1977);
- the *Étude préparatoire à une revision des programmes de l'école maternelle et de l'école primaire of the European Schools* (1971);
- the *Nursery and Primary School Programmes' Review: report of the meeting held at the European School of Bruxelles on Thursday, October 5th, 1972* (1972);
- the *Guidelines for Nursery and Primary Education - Nursery and Primary School Reform* (1990).

3.1. Founding documents: the 1957 Statute and the 1994 Convention

The first document to be analysed is The Statute of the European School signed in Luxembourg on 12 April 1957; I managed to consult the version published in 1963 in the volume n. 443 of the United Nations Treaty Series (UNTS) and registered there by Luxembourg in 1962; in this type of publication, it is possible to find the Treaties and international agreements registered or filed and recorded with the Secretariat of the United Nations.

The documents enclosed in the aforementioned publication are the following:

1. the *Statute of the European School (with Protocol of Signature)*, signed in Luxembourg on 12 April 1957;
2. the *Annex to the Statute of the European School containing regulations for the European School leaving certificate (Baccalauréat européen)*, signed in Luxembourg on 15 July 1957;

3. the *Protocol concerning the provisional application of the Statute of the European School* signed in Luxembourg on 12 April 1957.
4. the *Protocol amending the German text of the Statute of the European School and the Regulations for the European School leaving certificate (Baccalauréat européen)*, signed in Luxembourg on 17 March 1961.

The first document – the 1957 Statute – was an agreement between the following governments: the Kingdom of Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, the French Republic, the Italian Republic, the Kingdom of the Netherlands. They were represented by:

- Mr. Raoul Dooreman, Acting Chargé d’Affaires of Belgium in Luxembourg;
- Mr. Julien Kuypers, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary;
- Count Karl von Spreti, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Germany to Luxembourg;
- Mr. Pierre-Alfred Saffroy, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of France to Luxembourg;
- Mr. Antonio Venturini, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Italy to Luxembourg;
- Mr. Joseph Bech, President of the Government, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg;
- Mr. Adriaan-Hendrik Philipse, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Netherlands to Luxembourg³.

This is the legal act establishing the official foundation of the European School at the headquarters of the *European Coal and Steel Community* (ECSC). As already noticed, this European School was not born completely unexpectedly but represented the synthesis and formalization of an experiment undertaken in the previous four years, since 1953. As explained in the preambles, in fact, account is taken of the fact that in the ECSC headquarter, there were children of the employees from the different member states to whom it was necessary to provide an education in their mother tongue (Statute 1957, p. 224). A nursery school had already been created on the initiative of the *Association for the Educational and Family Welfare of the employees of the European Coal and Steel Community*, and, over the years, this experiment had expanded – also in terms of infrastructure provided – up to and including secondary school.

Furthermore, account is taken of the

3. *Statute of the European School*, United Nations Treaty Series (UNTS), vol. 443, 1957, p. 224, <https://treaties.un.org/Pages/showDetails.aspx?objid=0800000280133742> (last access: 14.01.2024).

complete success of this experiment in providing a common education to children of different nationalities, on the basis of a curriculum reflecting as broadly as possible the common features of the national educational traditions and the different cultures which jointly make up European civilization⁴.

It is also underlined that «it is in the cultural interest of the participating States to continue and consolidate an undertaking which is in keeping with the spirit of co-operation by which they are guided» and that «it is therefore highly desirable to endow the aforesaid School with a permanent Statute, and to sanction its educational activities by ensuring recognition of the diplomas and certificates issued by it»⁵. Starting from the preambles, the idea of a «common education for children of different nationalities»⁶ and the organization of a curriculum similar as much as possible to the national ones of origin are immediately mentioned. From the sources collected, I have understood that these curriculum instructions were then concretized in the Harmonized Timetables and Programs published in 1957 and, in subsequent versions, in 1963, in 1972, in 1977. Here, in the Statute, no explicit reference is made to citizenship education; it is only said that the students who took part in this school – initially founded on the initiative of the parents – were of different nationalities, though all of them coming from one of the member states of the ECSC; another aspect worth underlining is the reference to the various cultures that together constitute a European civilization⁷. The concept of European citizenship is therefore missing, but the idea of different national belonging is clearly present, and the idea of how different cultural traditions together constitute European civilization is partially already present and suggested. No further definitions are given regarding the latter. Article 2 states that students of other nationalities can also be admitted to the European School subject to authorization from the Executive Board⁸. Article 3 deals with the organization of the School and its division into primary school, lasting five years, and secondary school, lasting seven years. Article 4 instead defines the principles to which teaching in the School must adhere; they are the following:

The teaching provided at the School shall conform to the following principles:

- (1) The fundamental education, as determined by the Executive Board, shall be provided in the official languages of the Contracting Parties;

4. *Statute of the European School*, cit., p. 225.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*

- (2) Teaching in all the language sections shall be based on uniform curricula and time-tables;
- (3) In order to promote the unity of the School, as well as understanding and cultural interchange between pupils in the various language sections, classes at the same level shall be taught together in certain subjects;
- (4) To this end, a special effort shall be made to give the pupils a thorough knowledge of modern languages;
- (5) In the process of teaching and education, personal beliefs and convictions shall be respected⁹.

It stated that fundamental education, as established by the Executive Board, was to be provided in the official languages of the contracting parties; that teaching in all language sections had to be organized around a uniform curriculum and uniform timetables which would then in fact be implemented in the form of harmonized timetables and programmes. Furthermore, in order to promote the unity of the School as well as understanding and cultural exchange between students in the various linguistic sections, classes at the same level should have shared some subjects; for this purpose, a special effort had to be made to give students as complete a knowledge of modern languages as possible. Finally, it stated the necessity to respect personal beliefs. Moving on, Article Five focuses then on the recognition of grades, diplomas and certificates obtained in the European School in the countries of the Contracting Parties – the same recognition process mentioned by Van Houtte in his speech in Chicago in 1963¹⁰ and made possible thanks to the agreement of the competent national authorities. It is explained that the final diploma is received at the end of the secondary cycle and after having taken the final exams necessary for the *Baccalauréat européen* – the European school leaving certificate¹¹. It allows former ES students to

- (a) Enjoy in their own countries all the advantages conferred by possession of the diploma or certificate issued in that country upon completion of secondary studies; and
- (b) Be entitled to apply for admission to any university in the countries of the Contracting Parties, on the same footing as nationals holding equivalent certificates¹².

Organizational issues relating to the European School Leaving Certificate (*Baccalauréat Européen*) are then explored in depth in the *Annex*

9. *Ibid.*, p. 226.

10. See Chapter 2, part 2.2 of the present work.

11. *Statute of the European School*, cit., p. 226.

12. *Ibid.*

to the Statute of The European School containing regulations for the European School Leaving Certificate (*Baccalauréat Européen*). The Annex consists of 23 articles which deal with clarifying the functioning and the conduct of the examination session, the registration for and the purpose of the examinations, their composition, the composition and deliberations of the examining board, the criteria of equivalence of the European Leaving Certificate to national certificates of secondary education.

To go back to the Statute, Article 6 clarifies the status of the European School as a public institution¹³. The subsequent titles and articles outline the roles of the various bodies, namely the Executive Board – which had the task of drawing up a curriculum and uniform timetables – the Boards of Inspection, the Administrative Board and the Director. The topic of the budget is also addressed; then, the aforementioned Annex relating to the regulations on the European Baccalaureate can be found; as already noticed, the desire to ensure that this qualification is recognized in the individual states of origin permeates the whole document, thus underlying the importance of allowing the European School students to access higher education in each of the Member States.

I now take a leap forward in time and turn my attention to the other ‘prescriptive’ document, the 1994 *Convention Defining the Statute of the European Schools*, which replaced the 1957 *Statute*: as in the case of the latter, the first three articles of the Convention also concern the purpose of these Schools, «to educate together children of the staff of the European Communities “even though “other children may attend within the limits set by the Board of Governors»¹⁴. Article 3, in particular, refers to the school levels offered within the European Schools: «a nursery school; five years of primary school; seven years of secondary school»¹⁵. As in the analysis of the Statute, even in the case of the Convention, I will now focus, in particular, on Article 4 since it outlines the fundamental principles on which the educational project of the European Schools is based. I report it in full below:

The education given in the Schools shall be organized on the following principles:

1. the courses of study shall be undertaken in the languages specified in Annex II;

13. *Ibid.*, p. 227.

14. European Communities, *Convention Defining the Statute of the European Schools*, «Official Journal of the European Communities», L. 212, vol. 37, 1994, p. 1 Also available here https://www.eursc.eu/BasicTexts/SW1_21994A0817-en.pdf (last access: 18.01.2024).

15. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

2. that Annex may be amended by the Board of Governors to take account of decisions taken under Articles 2 and 32;
3. in order to encourage the unity of the School, to bring pupils of the different language sections together and to foster mutual understanding, certain subjects shall be taught to joint classes of the same level. Any Community language may be used for these joint classes, insofar as the Board of Governors decides that circumstances justify its use;
4. a particular effort shall be made to give pupils a thorough knowledge of modern languages;
5. the European dimension shall be developed in the curricula;
6. in education and instruction, the conscience and convictions of individuals shall be respected;
7. measures shall be taken to facilitate the reception of children with special educational needs¹⁶.

Firstly, it can be noted that Article 4 of the 1994 Convention consists of seven paragraphs, two more compared to the five ones in Article 4 of the 1957 Statute; some words and expressions had been changed, though the substance appears to have remained mostly the same. After a better look, some tiny modifications emerge, and some new concepts appear to have been introduced or explained more clearly; I will now look at them in more detail. In the preamble to the article, I detect the word “teaching” in the case of the Statute and the word “education” in the Convention; however, the concept of “fundamental education” appears in the first paragraph of the Statute where it is stated that fundamental education must be guaranteed in the official languages (vs the languages specified in *Annex II in the Convention*). Moreover, while paragraph 2 of Article 4 of the *1994 Convention* concerns the possibility to amend the *Annex* by the Board of Governors to take account of decisions taken under Articles 2 and 32, in the *1957 Statute* the paragraph 2, Article 4 underlines the necessity to guarantee uniform curricula and time-tables in all language sections: as already said, partially, in the 1994 Convention there is no mention of the harmonization of curricula and timetables; I hypothesize that it might be due to the fact there is no longer need for it since it is something already accomplished; we might even say that this tell us something of the organization of the European Schools and of their needs: if, at their origins, the need for creating a well-organized system was strongly felt, in 1994 this is no longer mentioned probably because it is something now characterizing the European Schools, and, consequently, it is no longer needed.

Going back to the Convention, Paragraph 3 focuses on the need to teach specific subjects together in joint classes of the same level to promote

16. *Ibid.*

the unity of the School and mutual understanding and cultural exchange; in both texts, this paragraph expresses the same concepts even though with some light lexical variations. The following paragraph, number 4, is directly connected to the previous one and is lexically very similar in both documents, highlighting the considerable effort that will be made to ensure that students acquire «a thorough knowledge of modern languages»¹⁷. Then, a remarkable turn of events appears since, in the 1994 Convention, a new paragraph was added here, referring to the necessity to develop a European dimension in the curricula. In the previous documents, reference was made just to the harmonization of the curricula – as already noted before – while here their European dimension is explicitly referred. In my opinion, it is interesting to note, in this case, the moment in which this happened, that is, in 1994, after the Maastricht Treaty, in 1992; the latter had precisely made it explicit that the EC action was aimed at developing the European dimension of education¹⁸.

Then, paragraph 6 of the Convention is almost identical to paragraph 5 of the Statute about respect for personal beliefs and convictions. In the 1994 Convention, a seventh Paragraph was added about the necessity to take measures to facilitate the reception of children with special educational needs: no mention of them is made in the 1957 Statute but looking at the documents on the reform of the European Schools Curricula and in the *Pedagogical Bulletins* we will see how this discourse will start to emerge.

3.2. Harmonized Timetables and Programmes

As noted in the previous paragraphs, the need to provide uniform curricula and timetables was expressed in the 1957 Statute. In this regard, I will now look at the Harmonized Timetables and Programs (1957; 1963;

17. *Statute of the European School*, cit., p. 226; European Communities, *Convention Defining the Statute of the European Schools*, cit.

18. See *Treaty on European Union*, [1992] OJ C191/1, art. 126. For further information on this, see D. Capperucci, *La scuola in Europa: politiche e interventi dell'Unione europea in materia di istruzione e formazione*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2013. Moreover, I would like to remember the following: although the explicit reference to the work and efforts of the European Community in the promotion of a shared European dimension in education appeared explicitly in 1992, it should be remembered that this discourse has older origins and that first assumptions in this regard trace back to 1973 with the Janne Report. See H. Janne, *For a Community policy on education*, «Bulletin of the European Communities», Supplement 10/1973, Brussels, European Communities Commission, 1973. Further information on the *Janne Report* can be found in S. Grek, M. Lawn, *Europeanizing Education. Governing a new policy space*, Oxford, Symposium Books, 2012.

1972; 1977): they represent the first antecedents of the current Syllabi/Structure for Syllabus. I now proceed to analyze them in detail.

3.2.1. The 1957 Harmonized Timetables and Programmes

The first version of the Harmonized Timetables and Programs dates back to 1957. As explained on page 5:

The Harmonized Timetables and Programs of the European School were agreed, upon proposal of the Board of Inspectors, by the Superior Council of the School in their meetings of 6,7 and 8 September 1954; 3 and 4 May 1955; 17 and 18 May 1956; 25 and 26 and 27 January 1957. The syllabus for physical education, drawing, music, art history, manual work, and religion courses will be agreed further on the basis of practical experience¹⁹.

Before going into details about the individual subjects, information on the general organization is given; as regards the structure of the studies, it is stated how

After an in-depth study of the education systems of the six ECSC countries, the Board established that the duration could be from 12 to 13 years and that, in schools abroad, a one-year reduction was usually granted on a maximum of 13 years. Consequently, in the European School in Luxembourg, it was decided to proceed as follows: 5 years for primary school; 7 years for secondary school²⁰.

Taking into account the different national educational systems, it was, therefore, created an organizational structure and programs that tried to be as much coherent as possible. Students in each year of study were divided into the following four linguistic sections based on their mother tongue (L1):

- German linguistic section;
- French linguistic section;
- Italian linguistic section;
- Dutch/Flemish linguistic section.

As for the subjects, basic teachings such as reading, spelling and grammar, calculation, and arithmetic were part of the primary school cycle; at

19. European School, *Harmonized Timetables and Programmes 1957*, [s.l.], 1957, p. 5, trans. mine. From now on this document will be referred to with the following abbreviation *ES HTP 1957*.

20. *ES HTP 1957*, cit., p. 7.

the secondary level, grammar and literature, ancient languages, philosophy, and mathematics were taught in L1. All other teachings in the secondary cycle were taught using either two possible languages – French and German – in courses attended by students of different language sections. Students were indeed divided into classes taught in the two target languages on the basis that – starting from the second year of secondary school – all students followed a minimum number of hours of teaching in a language other than their L1.

As for the structure of secondary education, the document explains how the first three years of secondary education consisted of a common trunk. The first year was essentially conceived as a preparatory year to consolidate systematically the knowledge acquired at the primary level, while the practice of the target language was developed through intensive teaching.

In the fourth year, students could choose between three options and attend one of the following sections:

- Latin- Greek - languages section;
- Latin section - mathematics - science - languages;
- Modern languages section - mathematics - science.

Three variations in the final exam test corresponded to these sections.

It immediately emerged that, in all classes and in all sections, an important place was given to *les langues vivantes*²¹. In primary schools, all students studied one of the foreign languages between French and German for one hour a week: this language would then be used as a target language in secondary classes. The students of Dutch/Flemish origins added German to their study of French from the first year of secondary school. Belgian French-speaking students were expected to study four hours of Flemish per week from the beginning to the end of secondary school. All students were then required to study English from the third year of secondary school. Finally, students who chose the modern section learned a third ECSC language compulsorily starting from the fourth year of secondary school.

Before going into detail about the individual subjects, the timetables are provided²². Then, the content of the secondary cycle subjects are immediately presented: Mother tongue, Ancient Languages (Latin and Greek), Philosophy, *Langues vivantes* (Second Languages) such as German, French and Dutch. As for the *Langues Vivantes*, before showing the topics of

21. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

every language and the hours dedicated to them, the goals and limits of this type of teaching are illustrated, namely the fact that the teaching of the second language would have been in all classes «*éducatif, pratique et culturels*»²³. In particular, the focus on the practical aspects of the language and the linguistic elements would have been provided during the first three years, the common trunk, while in the following years, much attention would have been given to the cultural teaching with notions on the way of living of the foreign country and people.

This specific interest in individual countries is also present in the subsequent teaching, namely History; here, too, the list of contents that will be covered can be immediately found, followed however by a final note in which it is specified that

we will thus study the great moments and major aspects of our civilization, as well as the successive contributions of peoples and nations. The brief reminder alluded to above will necessarily include the essential features of the national history of each of the countries of the Community, at the various periods considered²⁴.

It then goes on with Geography, Maths, Biology Harmonized, Physics to conclude with Chemistry and start with the primary cycle's subjects. The first one is Mother tongue Teaching, followed by Arithmetic, Geography, History, and Teaching of the Second Language. Here, unlike the other previous subjects mostly made up of a list of contents, there are also methodological considerations and reflections. Speaking of 'methods', it is said that the natural and direct one should be favoured²⁵; as for the methodological guidelines, it is advised that

at the first level, teaching must be oral, intuitive and active. The teacher must, therefore, take care of her language, speak clearly and use very simple constructions. The program must follow the child's experience and focus directly on accessible resources in the environment²⁶.

Similar considerations are also found in the Italian version which points out that

L'allievo sarà iniziato a un linguaggio semplice e vivo, funzionalmente attivo. Quello di cui ci si servirà, di diretta utilità, dovrà rispondere ai bisogni reali, e

23. [educational, practical and cultural], *ES HTP 1957*, cit., p. 21 (my translation).

24. *ES HTP 1957*, cit., p. 29 (my translation).

25. *Ibid.*, p. 62 (my translation).

26. *Ibid.*, p. 63 (my translation).

si ispirerà alle necessità dell'ambiente. Nei limiti del possibile, l'insegnante terrà conto delle ricerche moderne per determinare quale vocabolario base debba far acquisire ai suoi allievi²⁷.

Both the French and Italian versions of the 1957 document indicate the following teaching techniques as effective in promoting language learning and teaching in Primary school:

Quelques techniques pouvant être utilisées:

- a) *Conférences faites par un enfant; (un élève d'une classe à ses condisciples – un élève d'une classe française aux élèves d'une classe allemande, etc.);*
- b) *théâtre de marionnettes (dialogues composés par les enfants);*
- c) *théâtre d'enfants;*
- d) *disque, radio-scolaire, sonofil;*
- e) *clubs d'enfants (on y parle alternativement l'une, puis l'autre langue);*
- f) *bibliothèques de classe – clubs de lecture;*
- g) *imprimerie scolaire: le journal de l'école (articles en différentes langues);*
- h) *échanges et correspondance interscolaire (entre différentes classes de l'école et une école étrangère)*²⁸

- a) *Conferenze fatte dai ragazzi (un allievo della classe ai suoi condiscipoli – un allievo di una classe francese agli allievi di una classe tedesca, ecc.);*
- b) *teatro di marionette (dialoghi composti dagli allievi);*
- c) *teatro recitato dai ragazzi;*
- d) *dischi, radio scolastica, registrazioni su filo;*
- e) *circoli dei ragazzi (dove si parli alternativamente l'una e l'altra lingua).*
- f) *Biblioteche di classe – circoli di lettura.*
- g) *Tipografia scolastica: il giornale della scuola (articoli in lingue diverse).*
- h) *Scambi di corrispondenza interscolastica (tra le diverse classi della scuola – tra la scuola ed una scuola straniera)*²⁹.

A series of active methods appear to be predominant, putting students' intuition and interests at the centre. I believe it is relevant to look at the

27. *Ibid.*, p. 191 [The student will be introduced to a simple, living and functionally active language. The language used, of direct utility, must respond to concrete needs and will be inspired by the environment's needs. As far as possible, the teacher will take into account modern research to determine what basic vocabulary students should acquire].

28. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 193 [a] Lectures given by the children (a pupil of the class to their fellow pupils – a pupil of a French class to the pupils of a German class, etc.); b) puppet theatre (dialogues composed by the pupils); c) theatre acted out by the children; d) records, school radio, wire recordings; e) children's clubs (where one language and the other are spoken alternately); f) class libraries – reading clubs; g) school printing press: the school newspaper (articles in different languages); h) exchanges of inter-school correspondence (between the different classes of the school – between the school and a foreign school].

aforementioned active techniques to be used in second language teaching and other subjects at the European Schools: even though I was not able to retrace where these suggestions came from, we could hypothesize that they fit and agree well with some of the ideas and actions underlying New Education/Progressive Education and what has been defined «educational internationalism»³⁰. In this regard, following the suggestion to «make connections»³¹ we could for instance try to associate the approach to language teaching and the techniques advised for in the ESs with the efforts to educate for international understanding and peace through linguistic educational practices, efforts made by the *Bureau international d'éducation* (IBE) and other institutions, and that – according to Schneuwly et al. – constitute an intricate issue³². In particular, I am referring to inter-school correspondence and children's literature. As shown by Schneuwly et al., these practices were «the subject of the very first IBE investigations and seem intrinsically linked to international understanding and collaboration»³³; I think it is worth noting how these two specific educational practices can both be found within the European Schools where they are in turn also linked to mutual understanding and cooperation.

30. See R. Hofstetter, B. Schneuwly, *The International Bureau of Education: A Precursor of the Unesco and the Factory of its Pedagogical Guidelines? (1934-1968)*, «Encounters in Theory and History of Education», vol. 21, 2020, pp. 24-51. As for the expression «educational internationalism» Hofstetter and Schneuwly explain it has been coined by themselves drawing on the literature on internationalism in the 20th century: according to them internationalism «designates the steps taken by a diversity of actors (intellectuals, experts, activists, diplomats, senior officials, etc.) to stabilize transnational exchanges via institutions, networks, and offices mobilized for common causes», in R. Hofstetter, B. Schneuwly, *The International Bureau of Education: A Precursor of the Unesco and the Factory of its Pedagogical Guidelines? (1934-1968)*, cit., p. 27; the authors also point out how the spread of internationalism in people's mind was promoted also through cultural actions and, in particular, what they refer to as cultural internationalism composed of «intellectual cooperation, artistic and literary reactions, global collective memory [...] Education is one component of this», *ibid.*, p. 28. On the links between Progressive Education and Educational Internationalism, see also C. Boss, E. Brylinski, *Le service d'aide intellectuelle aux prisonniers de guerre du Bureau international d'éducation (1939-1945)*, in J. Droux, R. Hofstetter (eds.), *Internationalismes éducatifs entre débats et combats (fin du 19e - premier 20e siècle)*, Bern, Lang, 2020, pp. 243-276.

31. M. Depaep, J. Verhoeven, *Order in Progress. Everyday Education in Primary Schools: Belgium, 1880-1970*, *Studia Pedagogica* 29, Leuven, Leuven University Press, 2000, p. 39.

32. B. Schneuwly, A. Darne-Xu, B.F. Extermann, I. Leopoldoff Martin, V. Rouiller, *Des pratiques éducatives langagières au service de la compréhension internationale?*, in R. Hofstetter, Érhise (eds.), *Le Bureau international d'éducation, matrice de l'internationalisme éducatif (premier 20e siècle). Pour une charte des aspirations mondiales en matière éducative*, Bruxelles, Peter Lang, 2021, pp. 337-362.

33. Schneuwly, Darne-Xu, Extermann, Leopoldoff Martin, Rouiller, *Des pratiques éducatives langagières au service de la compréhension internationale?*, cit., p. 338.

3.2.2. *The 1963 Harmonized Timetables and Programmes*

In this case, I only came into possession of the French version. The initial introductory part relating to the structure of the European Schools appears to be the same as that of 1957. It begins with the secondary classes, and the weekly timetable is immediately inserted; at a glance, a new teaching, previously absent, can be noticed: *Civisme*. It is present for all sections – *Latin, Grec and Langues; Latin, Math, Sciences and Langues; Moderne, Math, Sciences and Langues* – for one hour in the sixth year. Then, the list of subjects and contents that will be covered begins. The first one is again Mother-tongue Teaching (French in this case); Ancient Languages follow together with Philosophy and the new teaching *Civisme*. It is divided into four main parts: in the first, on *The individual and society*, it is highlighted how every man needs other men. The following chapters focus on the family, the school, the profession, and the different forms of work (manual, intellectual, social role of work). Finally, the last chapter of the first part focuses on society, its structure, the interdependence of nations, and human solidarity. Moving on to the second part, it refers to *The citizen and the State* with topics such as the cradle of civilization, the evolution of public services, the province or departments, the state and the nation (executive, legislative, judicial powers and comparison of different constitutional systems); modern evolution of society and the responsibility of the State³⁴; different economic systems³⁵; the citizen before the State; the ideas of Patriotism and Nationalism. The third part of *Civisme* concerns Europe, and the relations between European nations; one of the chapters of this part covers the fact that «the evolution of the world makes cooperation between European people necessary»³⁶; therefore, attempts at European unification are then explored together with the first achievements in the political and economic sphere. There is also a focus on the OECD, the Council of Europe, the European Communities, the European integration and the need for European cooperation. The fourth part finally focuses on the world with the following themes: the world organization up to the Second World War with the League of Nations and the International Court of Justice and international cooperation. It then moves on to what happened after 1945 and, in particular, to the unequal pace of evolution in

34. European School, *Harmonized Timetables and Programmes 1963*, [s.l.], 1963, p. 22. From now on this document will be referred to with the following abbreviation *ES HTP 1963*.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

36. *Ibid.* (my translation).

different parts of the world and the problems of the contemporary world at the time such as demographic problems, world hunger, under-developed countries, refugees, and minorities. The last chapter then deals with the United Nations.

The document then continues with the Second Language Teaching (*Langues Vivantes*). It is specified that its objectives must be educational, practical and cultural, just like in 1957. Shortly afterwards, however, a difference can be detected in comparison to the previous version: in the part relating to the teaching of German as a second language, in fact, the purposes of this teaching are specified, and a line of reasoning is adopted recalling what I mentioned in the previous paragraph about educational internationalism and the teaching of foreign languages as a tool to promote peaceful coexistence (and therefore also an idea of citizenship open to the understanding of the different). On p. 24, it is indicated that emerging Europe includes many states different in their way of living, traditions, and cultural, social and political perspectives. It is then highlighted how, in the past, these countries fought each other too often due to propaganda dictated by ignorance, mutual lack of knowledge, or due to unfounded prejudices. However, it is argued that «ignorance and misunderstandings almost always derive from not understanding each other, from not speaking the other's language»³⁷. For this reason, one of the main tasks of the European Schools

is therefore to make their students master German, one of the main European languages. Through knowledge of this language, the student will be put in contact with their classmates from another nation, to respect them and to see them as companions and, why not, as friends. In this way, they will acquire practical knowledge of the social and political problems of neighbouring peoples and their development; students will also be able to vigorously defend the idea of a united Europe against all prejudices, half-truths, and political slander. By learning German, students will be led to know and appreciate everything that German people achieved in the fields of poetry, art, music, science, and literature. In setting these three objectives, we go beyond the scope of school teaching; a whole lifetime is hardly enough to reach them; but the school has the duty to put its students on the right path and guide them in the first stages of their journey³⁸.

By underlining how the teaching of languages – and in particular German – may serve to overcome attitudes of ignorance and prejudice towards different cultures, peoples and ways of thinking, it reiterates, in my opin-

37. *Ibid.*, p. 24 (my translation).

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25 (my translation).

ion, how learning foreign languages could have contributed to education to peace and to open peaceful and democratic citizenship. This part can be found in the subsequent versions of the Harmonized Timetables and Programs of 1972 and 1977, but a similar discussion is not present for the other second languages (Dutch, French, Italian). History and Geography then follow. As for Geography, in comparison to the previous version, some indications are given since it is said that

Cet enseignement doit être concret et descriptif. Aussi fera-t-il une large place à l'emploi des méthodes actives (observation de photographies, de croquis, de diagrammes, etc.) et à l'étude du milieu local. On en éliminera toute explication et théorie compliquées. Un effort particulier sera fait pour initier les élèves à l'usage de la carte³⁹.

Again, here, too, it can be noted the reference to the active methods.

Then, the list of contents for Mathematics⁴⁰, Biology, Physics, Chemistry and Musical Education are indicated.

The harmonized timetables and programs of the primary cycle follow; they seem to have remained almost unchanged compared to the previous version of 1957. Some minor modifications appeared to be added to the geography programme: the necessity to start from the direct observation of the surrounding environment is indeed underlined.

3.2.3. The 1972 Harmonized Timetables and Programmes

I had access to the French version of the 1972 Harmonized Timetables and Programs. From the cover, it is possible to notice a first change: the number of the European Schools has increased, and the following are indicated on the cover: Luxembourg (1953), Brussels (1958), Mol (1960), Varese (1960), Karlsruhe (1962), Bergen (1963). Although many of these new Schools were already in existence when the previous 1963 programs were published, they were not mentioned on the initial 1963 cover. Moreover, in the 1972 Harmonized Timetables and Programs, a first variation in terms

39. *Ibid.*, p. 38. I provide the following translation: [This teaching must be concrete and descriptive. It will therefore place a large emphasis on the use of active methods (observation of photographs, sketches, diagrams, etc.) and the study of the local environment. All complicated explanations and theories will be eliminated. A special effort will be made to introduce students to the use of maps].

40. Optional extra indications are given for those students interested in continuing their path at the *École Polytechnique Belge*. See *ES HTP 1963*, cit., p. 53.

of structure can be found; or to better phrase it, the organizational structure of the study courses remains more or less the same, but some changes occur; I will better explain them in the following lines. For instance, it is stated how the Class Council (*Conseil de Classe*) and the Guidance Council (*Conseil d'orientation*) could have given indications to students on their future paths. Indeed, at the beginning of the second semester of the second year of secondary school, indications were given on which section to choose within those available. There is also a reference to students «*qui ne sont pas doués pour des études abstraites menant au baccalauréat et qui seront normalement dirigés vers le cycle terminal court au niveau de la 4^e année*»⁴¹. This is the first time students with difficulties are mentioned. Such students – defined as «less suitable for abstract studies»⁴² – were then offered the possibility to attend a vocational path at the end of the common trunk, namely after the 3rd year of secondary school. This path was called the short terminal cycle (*cycle terminal court*)⁴³ and consisted of two years, the 4th and 5th, and offered the following three routes:

- technical (*technique*);
- commercial (*commercial*);
- childcare and domestic arts (*puériculture et arts ménagers*).

Moreover, in this version of the Timetable and Harmonized Programme, there was an increase in the number of addresses to which students could enrol and specialize in after the third year of secondary school; in fact, the following sections were indicated:

- the Latin-Greek section;
- the Latin-Modern Languages section;
- the Latin-Mathematics section;
- the Mathematics-Modern Languages section;
- the Economic and Social Sciences section.

Each section led to a different variant of the *Baccalauréat* with different typologies of tests involved. The document continues showing the contents for each subject, starting with the one of the secondary cycle. As for subjects such as Mother tongue Teaching, Ancient Languages and Philosophy, their content seems to have stayed the same as in the previous versions. A similar discourse is also true for the *Langues Vivantes* (Sec-

41. European School, *Harmonized Timetables and Programmes 1972*, [s.l.], 1972, p. 5. From now on this document will be referred to with the following abbreviation *ES HTP 1972*. The lines here above mentioned can be translated as follows: [not suited to abstract studies leading to the baccalaureate degree and who will be normally directed to the short final cycle at the 4th year level].

42. *ES HTP 1972*, cit., p. 5.

43. *Ibid.*

ond Language Teaching): the part on learning German and its importance to the promotion of an attitude of mutual understanding is also present. However, what must be noticed is that English and the topics related to this discipline are included among the second languages; in previous versions, English was indicated as a possible 3rd language in the school timetable, but no indication of the contents seemed to be present.

The History program follows. Initially, there are brief indications of methods such as «accustoming students to using the manuals of other European countries and the documentation made available to them in the School Library»⁴⁴. Then, the contents are indicated. While in the 1957 and 1963 versions, it was only included the recommendation to pay attention – from the 4th year onwards – to the evolution of people’s lives, taking into account the «national history of each of the countries of the Community in the different eras seen»⁴⁵, from 1972 onwards, this is requested already in the 3rd year of secondary school; furthermore, it is specified that

in all linguistic sections, history teaching will be offered in the mother tongue during the first cycle and in the first two years of the second; from the 3rd year onwards of the secondary cycle it will be carried out in the vehicular language (*en langue véhiculaire*)⁴⁶.

Then, the programs of subjects such as Geography, Economic Geography, Mathematics, Economics, Sociology, Law are indicated. These last three subjects belong to the Economic and Social Sciences Section; the contents presented are very reminiscent of those indicated in the previous version for the teaching called *Civisme*; the latter was proposed again among the courses in the 1972 programmes, probably as an elective subject for the Latin-Greek, Latin-Modern Languages, Mathematics-Modern languages Sections. In fact, the subject is not explicitly remarked in the secondary cycle timetables, but it exists – for the aforementioned courses – the possibility of attending courses in music, art history and social education⁴⁷. The document continues paying attention to Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Musical Education. Almost at the end of the secondary cycle, there are indications for Non-Denominational Morality/Ethics: in the previous programs, it was indicated in the timetables, but I have not found any further indications of its content. Given the role of moral education in the development of modern schooling and considering that, since the 19th cen-

44. *Ibid.*, p. 24 (my translation).

45. *ES HTP 1963*, cit., p. 37 (my translation).

46. *ES HTP 1972*, cit., p. 26 (my translation).

47. *ES HTP 1972*, cit., p. 9.

tury, the moral character of education and its impact in terms of socialisation and moral formation have been brought to the fore in pedagogical discourses⁴⁸, I will briefly look at it; the course is aimed at those students who do not follow specific religious principles and has the objective of «*préparer les élèves à vivre dans le monde actuel en hommes équilibrés, généreux et libres, formés à la tolérance*»⁴⁹, and trying to orient and help them in the analysis of what happens in their individual life and in social life, but leaving them free in their beliefs. Furthermore, it is underlined that this teaching should be flexible, not rigid, in terms of contents proposed, taking inspiration from facts of life from which to start reflections. In this process, the dedicated and delicate role of the teacher is highlighted – the teacher who guides firmly, but without imposing. The topics proposed in the program are various, such as family relationships, habits of schoolchildren, health, responsibility, respect for others, behaviour towards animals, qualities and defects, the need for work and its dignity, moral values, courage, conscience, justice, respect, love for others. Topics connecting the individual life to the collective are also proposed, such as moral reflection and the need for social organization or the foundations of law⁵⁰; there is also attention towards religions and religiosity, as well as to the contributions of psychology and psychoanalysis; finally, a focus on commitment and responsibility, tolerance, interest in human issues and contemporary problems is proposed⁵¹.

Then, the harmonized timetables and programs for the fourth and fifth year of the short terminal cycle follow; as already explained, it was the path introduced for those students who were defined – in the introductory pages – as «less suitable for abstract studies»⁵² and who wanted to attend a vocational path at the end of the common trunk, after the 3rd year of secondary school. The students of the short terminal cycle could have attended the following courses together with students of the other courses: Mother tongue, First second language, Second second language (English), Geography in vehicular language, Physical education, Music, Religion or morals. The following are the teachings offered exclusively for the short

48. M. Depaep, *The Practical and Professional Relevance of Educational Research and Pedagogical Knowledge from the Perspective of History: Reflections on the Belgian Case in its 136 International Background*, «European Educational Research Journal», vol. 1, n. 2, 2002, pp. 360-379.

49. *ES HTP 1972*, cit., p. 64: [It aims at preparing the students to live in the current world as balanced, healthy and free men, formed in tolerance] (my translation).

50. *ES HTP 1972*, cit. p. 65.

51. *Ibid.*

52. *Ibid.* p. 5 (my translation).

terminal cycle: History, Economic geography in vehicular language, Mathematics, Scientific education, and Optional subjects based on the major chosen from those proposed. I will focus briefly on the latter, in particular, History and Economic Geography.

The History program is presented with some recommendations: first of all, it is underlined that its main objective is not only to allow students to acquire knowledge but, above all, to promote «*une authentique formation, qui aidera les élèves à comprendre et à affronter les réalités et les problèmes du monde dans lequel ils s'inséreront par une vie professionnelle active au sortir de ce cycle d'étude*»⁵³. Among the proposed themes, there are the following: socialism and development: syndicalism and social legislation; different models of socialist realizations; actual trends of Marxist ideologies; international achievements in the contemporary era: imperialism, colonialism, nationalism, antagonism between nations and two world wars, the problem of development. Furthermore, it is specified how the teaching should have been carried out in the mother tongue (and not in the vehicular language as normally expected within the European Schools) to allow students «*d'un niveau intellectuel plus faible d'acquérir la formation visée*»⁵⁴. The proposed topics focus on the political, technical, economic and social evolution of the world in the last two centuries and on contemporary international relations in the attempt to offer «*une préparation plus directe à la vie active et à la compréhension des problèmes rencontrés dans la vie professionnelle*»⁵⁵. Teachers were invited to focus in particular on the most contemporary issues and to make this teaching concrete through the use of iconographic and written documents such as photographs, films, TV programmes, historical texts and newspaper articles. Finally, there is the invitation to take into account the pedagogical intentions of the teachers and the interests expressed by the students, with great attention to all topics relating to the European unification.

Similar indications can be found in the Economic Geography programme, however, taught in the vehicular language in continuity with the teaching of Geography proposed in the long cycle, but also to encourage the better learning of a foreign language whose knowledge is presented as essential «*dans les emplois administratifs ou commerciaux*»⁵⁶. There is also the

53. *Ibid.*, p. 74 [an authentic education, which will help students to understand and face the realities and problems of the world in which they will enter through an active professional life at the end of this cycle of study].

54. *Ibid.* [of a weaker intellectual level to acquire the desired training].

55. *Ibid.* [an education more aimed at working life and understanding the problems encountered in professional life].

56. *Ibid.*, p. 75 [in administrative or commercial jobs].

invitation to use concrete methods to provide the elements to make students understand the present time and what lies ahead. Teachers are invited to focus on what is considered the most interesting for students, what is well-connected with current events and the pre-established pedagogical goals⁵⁷.

The optional subjects then follow such as geometric drawing, technology and manual work for the first group; accounting, business arithmetic, typing, stenography, and business correspondence for the second group; childcare, home economics (homemaking or domestic science), and art education for group three.

The document later continues with the timetables and programs for the primary school.

It starts with the Mother Tongue Teaching program (in this case French since the document is in its French version); compared to the previously analyzed versions, there are some changes: there is a longer general introductory part which partially refers to the reform attempts that the primary school was going through within the European Schools⁵⁸. Furthermore, some guidelines are given and I will try to summarize them below. For example, it is pointed out that the Mother Tongue Teaching Program must be harmonized with the spirit of a general reform of primary school centered on the children and their deep interests; in this way, it is given less attention to the transmission of contents and more to the growing need to create the material conditions that will lead the children themselves to develop by assimilating the different cultural contributions of the environment. Language is recognized as a wonderful tool that allows everyone to express what is most personal to them, to communicate with others and to have access to listening and reading the works⁵⁹. The need to effectively practice oral and written communication is then highlighted, putting students in a position to be capable of listening, writing, and speaking. It is then believed that teachers should step aside more than they have done in the past, but without reducing their role. The teacher continues to be the one who provides models and exercises a very important widespread action by ensuring that students imitate and gradually assimilate the language. It is the teacher who chooses the beautiful texts that correspond to the children's interests and who presents the poems and stories at the precise moment in which they meet expectations.

Finally, there is the invitation to take into account the contributions of linguistics: it is argued that some exercises that have proven effective in the

57. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

58. More details on this matter will be provided in this chapter, in paragraphs 3.3.

59. *ES HTP 1972*, cit., p. 92.

study of foreign languages can be transposed to the study of the mother tongue. This presupposes that teacher no longer has a purely normative attitude. They must train themselves to observe children's language, thus placing the emphasis on the students, but this does not imply total freedom and inattention for the teachers. The role that teachers, and language teachers in particular, should have in class are better expressed by the following lines:

Meeting children's real needs can be more difficult than following a set schedule. This means that teachers have a lot of initiative in organizing their classes. Since everything is done to enable the students to complete their education, teachers must try to maintain a balance between the different types of activities. It goes without saying that this free initiative can and must find its culminating moment in the comparison of ideas and experiences. This is an opportunity to share business examples and give everyone confidence in their abilities. Thanks to a friendly dialogue, it will be tried to ensure that changes are made in each structure while maintaining a spirit of moderation and harmony⁶⁰.

There is also an invitation to take into account «current learning theories based on a ternary approach»⁶¹ as follows:

- a) General intuitive understanding of linguistic structures;
- b) Functional analysis: progressive awareness of syntax and vocabulary;
- c) Synthesis: transfer of the structures acquired through impregnation; personalized management of the written language⁶².

Teachers are therefore invited to leave children complete freedom of thought or expression on the basis of

concrete themes that arouse their interest (family conversations, current events, school activities and facts, references to biological interests, etc.) or semi-concrete (commentary on a film, a story, a radio or television programme, a work of art; investigations; research; student presentations; criticism of a collective work; etc.) or imagination (concluding a story; invent dramatic games, puppets, dialogue scenes, pantomime)⁶³.

Furthermore, it is argued that this promotion of communication and the need to stimulate it considering students' motivation has consequences on classroom relationships modifying them deeply. It is indeed underlined that

60. *ES HTP 1972*, cit., pp. 92-93 (my translation).

61. *Ibid.*, p. 93 (my translation).

62. *Ibid.* (my translation).

63. *Ibid.* (my translation).

the linear relationship in which the teacher asks questions and the student answers and records is replaced by triangular exchanges from teacher to student(s), and then from student(s) to teacher and from student(s) to student. This presupposes that teachers know how to listen to their students and that they become the privileged observer of the class group⁶⁴.

Next, a reflection on the different parts to work on in learning the mother tongue follows: grammar, spelling, reading, and recitation. The contents of the program are then indicated.

The document continues with the Mathematics program. I will also briefly focus on the latter since some interesting methodological considerations and aims are introduced here, and they, in my opinion, can be framed within the attempts at reform and harmonization that were taking place in that period and from which it is possible to draw considerations in terms of traceable pedagogical influences. The document begins by recognizing that in recent years there has been the necessity to rethink and reform how Mathematics is taught on the basis of its significant penetration into a large number of new sciences and specific activities of society. As a result, debates sparked on the matter⁶⁵. One of the questions posed wonders «whether it is appropriate to adequately initiate the culture of the mathematical mind in children as soon as they enter primary school or even kindergarten⁶⁶». To respond to it, there has been a turn to psychology, which has indicated, through various studies, how are capable of dealing with real mathematical problems from an early age. Furthermore, the document points out that

these studies highlight the importance of the principle of sensitive periods, dear to M. Montessori, namely that a certain number of fundamental concepts and notions must appear in specific moments of childhood, otherwise, they will never find full fulfilment again⁶⁷.

Not only Montessori but also Jean Piaget is mentioned immediately after since he also supported the idea of an early introduction to the teaching of new mathematics; the document therefore reports Piaget's words on the teaching of mathematics, volume 12, part 4⁶⁸, in which he wrote that:

64. *Ibid.* (my translation).

65. *Ibid.*, p. 104.

66. *Ibid.* (my translation).

67. *Ibid.* (my translation).

68. This bibliographical indication and the quotation from Piaget reproduced here is given in the 1972 Harmonized Timetables and Programmes on p. 104.

Il est tout à fait possible et souhaitable d'entreprendre une profonde réforme de l'enseignement dans la direction des mathématiques modernes car, par une convergence remarquable, celles-ci se trouvent être plus proches des opérations naturelles ou spontanées du sujet (enfant ou adolescent) que ne l'était l'enseignement traditionnel de ces branches trop asservi à l'histoire (l'Enseignement mathématique – tome 12 – fasc. 4)⁶⁹.

It is then highlighted that «the essential purpose of mathematics teaching will no longer be to provide students with techniques for solving more or less fixed problems, but to make them capable of understanding mathematical concepts, assimilating them and handling them»⁷⁰. To achieve all of this the document points out that it becomes necessary to replace traditional mathematical teaching with authentic mathematical activities. Consequently, as seen before for the mother tongue and language teaching, a change and adaptation of the teacher-student relationship to the new situation are invoked. The origins of this type of pedagogical shift can also be retraced here as it is written that

A vrai dire, il suffira d'appliquer plus spécialement à la discipline de la mathématique le principe de base de l'École active' ou de l'École nouvelle', que la plupart des maîtres ont adopté dans une large mesure pour l'ensemble de leur travail scolaire.

C'est le principe de l'activité mentale véritable de l'élève au cours de l'action pédagogique: «Le maître explique et expose moins, les élèves recherchent et découvrent davantage»⁷¹.

The document goes on defining Mathematics as a great source of delight and joy for children. To be sure that this will happen advice to teachers is given; it is indeed suggested that

69. *ES HTP 1972*, cit., p. 104, translated as follows: [It is entirely possible and desirable to undertake a profound reform of teaching in the direction of modern mathematics because, through a notable convergence, these are found to be closer to the natural or spontaneous operations of the subject (child or adolescent) than was the traditional teaching of these branches too subservient to history (Teaching mathematics - volume 12 - part 4)].

70. *Ibid.* (my translation).

71. *Ibid.*, p. 105, translated as follows: [It will be enough to apply more specifically to the discipline of mathematics the basic principle of the “Active School” or the “New School”, which the majority of teachers have adopted to a large extent throughout their entire school career. This is the principle of the student’s true mental activity during the educational action: “The teacher explains and explains less, and the students research and discover more].

the teacher will consider the child as an evolving person who has the potential for originality. Teachers will, therefore, not try to mould the children according to a pre-established model, which would be equivalent, in the field of mathematics, to instilling in them formulas and processes that they would have to apply only mechanically. On the contrary, the role of the teacher will essentially be a role of stimulator and guide who will initiate the steps of the student's mind through the interest of the problems posed and who will discreetly direct this step towards a useful end, while at the same time leaving the child the joy and satisfaction of having chosen the preferred path⁷².

The influence of active pedagogy and psychological studies is clearly traceable in this part on the teaching of mathematics as in others seen previously as, for instance, mother tongue and foreign languages teaching. Indications on the latter follow the mathematics program but they are presented in a practically identical manner to that of the previous version of 1963. The same can be said for the teaching of The European Hours. However, some changes are found in the History program; among the purposes relating to the teaching of History, the following is added: *«préparer l'enfant à la compréhension internationale en soulignant l'interdépendance des peuples et en présentant les personnages et les faits avec une rigoureuse objectivité»*⁷³. Here, too, traces of the active approach can be found: in my view, part of them was already recognizable in the 1963 together with the invitation to focus on those historical figures who were considered not only decisive during the various events but that represented moral values and therefore constituted an educational example with their behaviours⁷⁴. To go back to the 1972 version, it is then added that what is important for the student to understand is «the march of the European peoples, through all the vicissitudes of past centuries, towards their current social, economic and cultural state»⁷⁵. So, the European people as a 'whole' are mentioned and considered but then there is also a strong focus on the national dimension. Indeed, it is explained that the last lessons of the course will be dedicated to evoking the achievement of national unity in each country and the main events of contemporary history to provide students with an overview of their recent national history. It is then said that this teaching will be given form on the basis of authentic documents, reproductions, models, simple and lively texts, etc.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 105 (my translation).

73. *ES HTP 1972*, cit., p. 132. I provided the following English translation: [Prepare the child for international understanding by emphasizing the interdependence of peoples and presenting characters and facts with rigorous objectivity].

74. See *ES HTP 1963*, cit., p. 94; *ES HTP 1972*, cit., p. 133.

75. *ES HTP 1972*, cit., p. 133.

Then, the Geography programme follows, identical to that of 1963, with great attention to the local environment. The Morale program can be found immediately after; even though it was mentioned in the 1963 timetables, there were no further indications on contents and methods in that previous version. As well as the case of non-denominational moral education seen in secondary schools (1972), even here the main aim is to educate students «whose moral education finds its foundations in an independent philosophical attitude among religious doctrines»⁷⁶. The objective remains that of

preparing students to live in today's world as balanced, generous, free, tolerant and open to human fraternity. The teacher's task is to guide the children entrusted to him by examining with them the problems of individual and social life and helping them to solve them. Teachers must demonstrate the most scrupulous objectivity in examining these problems and contribute to the development of their personality by allowing them to freely construct their own beliefs. Students must learn to act in everything taking into account their good, but at the same time also the good of others. They will have started to question the extent of their actions and to follow the rules that a clear and upright conscience will dictate to them⁷⁷.

In particular, there is the invitation to teach and learn morality through life,

starting as much as possible from the lived experience of daily life, [...] well beyond the lesson hours dedicated to it. Every lesson, every hour of play or work has its moral aspects that the teacher must grasp "on the fly". The teacher will try to place the children in the classroom in a moral situation, charging them with small responsibilities as necessary and will appreciate how they were made and will point out the small sacrifices or will create emulation on a personal level; the teacher will provoke exchanges of ideas on the events experienced at school, on the street, at home. Finally, the teacher will be able to use readings, stories and works suitable for this age; these stories can be illustrated, represented by children, and dramatized by their older friends. Between the ages of 8 and 10, the exposé, although occupying a larger space, will never be more than a moment in the lesson, it will be followed by a discussion in which the pupils will participate and which will lead to the formulation of a moral judgement. A summary will be noted in the moral notebook. In this phase, the teacher will use current events, local environment, film, reading and storytelling: games (traffic game), and document search. Beyond the tenth year, all media (press, radio, cinema, magazines, UNICEF publications, etc.) will be widely used. The reading will have a larger space and will be followed by oral reports and discussions.

76. *Ibid.*, p. 140 (my translation).

77. *Ibid.* (my translation).

Silent reading followed by a well-prepared questionnaire will exercise pupils' critical thinking and judgment⁷⁸.

The proposed topics concern the children's duties towards themselves, their surroundings, others and society. In particular, concerning this last area, the work of organizations such as the International Red Cross, the UN, UNESCO and Unicef, and the European Communities are addressed regarding solidarity and collaboration between people on national and international levels⁷⁹.

3.2.4. The 1977 Harmonized Timetables and Programmes

As for the 1977 programmes, a first change is noted in the structure of the Schools: among the linguistic sections indicated, there is also the Danish section at the schools of Luxembourg and Brussels, and the English section at the schools of Luxembourg, Brussels and the primary school of Varese due to the entry into the European Economic Community of Denmark, the United Kingdom and Ireland. English is also indicated as a second language shared by the various linguistic sections, whereas, previously, it was indicated only as a foreign language and not as a vehicular language (to which only French and German belonged); furthermore, I believe it is worth mentioning that the version of the document to which I had access to is in English. The structure of the secondary studies is then described, and it seems to have remained unchanged, even in the short terminal path. However, this version specifies how the short terminal cycle has been created on an experimental basis in the European Schools of Mol, Varese and Luxembourg⁸⁰. The tables with secondary school timetables appear to be the same as the ones in the 1972 version. Then, the indications for teaching the mother tongue – English in this case – in high school follow. Together with the difference in the subject – French in 1972 and previous versions, and English in 1977 – in this version, it can be noted the presence of general considerations which take up what has been said about the mother tongue teaching in primary school⁸¹ with a particular focus on the interactive nature of this teaching, to be promoted with writing, conversation, literature and experience. In particular, the concepts that are underlined are the following:

78. *Ibid.* (my translation).

79. *Ibid.*, p. 143.

80. European School, *Harmonized Timetables and Programmes 1977*, [s.l.], 1977, p. 4. From now on this document will be referred to with the following abbreviation ES HTP 1977.

81. See *ES HTP 1972*, cit.

the primacy of speech and the importance of talk as a step towards thinking; the study of the living language; training in expression as well as communication; helping children to use language creatively as well as to respond to literature; inventing learning situations which motivate children to acquire vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, grammar, absorbing the implications for the teaching of the new grammar and of linguistic knowledge; a concept of appropriate rather than correct English, and the linguistic validity for their own purposes of dialect, regional or social; [...] the aim of the mother tongue as ‘The personal development and social competence of the pupil’⁸².

Furthermore, it is underlined that the English-speaking section has to take account of those for whom English is not a mother tongue, especially the children of Danish families. The main aims are then described in the following domains: Oral English; Drama; Writing; Language Study; Punctuation; Spelling; Reading; about the latter, it is specified that «the study of literature has had a twofold function – the enrichment of pupils’ language through reading and the enrichment of their experience and the consequent development of their personality through the human situations portrayed»⁸³; there is also the encouragement to promote «extensive reading by making books available in class collections and school library, talking about them, reading from them, using the mas ways into writing or drama»⁸⁴. After that, the needs of Danish pupils and of children for whom English is not a mother tongue are briefly considered again.

The document then continues with a list of topics for Classical Languages and Philosophy. The Modern Languages program follows, always with «educational, practical and cultural»⁸⁵ purposes. Compared to previous versions, there are no indications for other foreign languages such as German, French, Dutch or Italian; indications are given only in English. Therefore, that part of the reflection regarding the study of German as an opportunity to promote peace and mutual understanding is also missing⁸⁶ even if similar hints can also be found in this version. In fact, it is stated that the study of a foreign language

should contribute to the broadening of the student’s perception of the world of reality through the medium of a different linguistic system, taking their individual

82. *ES HTP 1977*, cit., p. 7.

83. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

84. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

85. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

86. See *ES HTP 1963*, cit.; *ES HTP 1972*, cit.

and national needs into account. International understanding cannot but be promoted by giving them an insight into other attitudes and ways of life⁸⁷.

It is also interesting to note the explanation given regarding the lack of the methodological note; in fact, it is written that

no section on methodology has been included in this syllabus. This reflects the existing situation in the European Schools, where no coordinated methodology for English as a foreign language teaching has been developed. This traditional absence is due to a gradual divergence of methods over the years resulting from a lack of contact between the schools, the varied approaches of the textbooks used and the different training of teachers of various nationalities. However, this syllabus is subject to continuous revision, and it is hoped that in the near future consultations between teachers from the different schools, bringing together their long-standing and varied experience, will make possible the production of agreed methodological guidelines for English as a foreign language⁸⁸.

In this way, through these last words, we are able to have a glimpse of the situation at the European Schools and of the harmonization difficulties encountered, as well as difficulties in combining different traditions and approaches. We then move on to indicate the topics for the individual years. I will pause and briefly report what is indicated for the study of literature in a foreign language:

Studying literature in English will, moreover, enable students to become acquainted with literary values and literary conventions outside the limits of their own literature. A knowledge of literature other than one's own contributes to a better understanding of *la condition humaine*⁸⁹.

The document continues with the History program, practically identical to the version proposed in 1972, even in its general methodological indications, and then the other subjects follow without particular changes, even in the indications for the short terminal cycle. The teaching of *Civisme* seems to not be indicated under this name, but a program practically identical to the one proposed therein is found in the Social Studies teaching; a simple name change is, therefore, hypothesized. The document then proceeds with the programs for the short terminal court – identical to those of 1972 – and those for the primary school. This last section opens with a reflection and a general introduction, previously absent, on the

87. *ES HTP 1977*, cit., p. 22.

88. *Ibid.* (my translation).

89. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

objectives of primary school, also in light of the reforms undertaken and about which we will discuss in more detail later. The primary school is considered a place that contributes to the development of children and introduces them to social life. It should no longer rely on the transmission of encyclopedic knowledge:

What is the issue, then, is not so much informing the pupils as forming them. They should not so much learn but, before everything learn to learn. The material acquired is not the essential thing. What is the essential thing is the way in which the acquisition is carried out⁹⁰.

All this calls for the need for a profound pedagogical and didactic review starting from the child

with his interests, needs, potentialities, his affective and emotional life. Starting from his deep motivations, it should give to the child the maximum he is capable of acquiring just as it should provide special additional care to help him surmount those difficulties at which he could stumble⁹¹.

And starting from the child's interests implies starting from what surrounds him, from the environment, the proximal one, at the beginning, to move, then, to environments progressively more distant. Furthermore,

the utilization of the environment cannot, therefore, constitute an aim in itself. It remains an instrument in the service of knowledge of apprenticeships and of training. It allows the education of the child in an atmosphere of real life, *joie de vivre* and joy in discovery⁹².

This also involves reorganizing the disciplines to avoid that encyclopedism mentioned above. For this reason, it is proposed to group together the mother tongue, mathematical operations and the second language while the other activities are regrouped under the categories of prospective and artistic activities. Observation, expression, history, geography, and science belong to the former category; arts, arts and crafts and music belong to the latter⁹³. It is then recognized the attempt to develop a gradual synthesis of thought so as to give order to everything. Furthermore, the document stresses the importance of giving equal opportunity to all, «to allow each

90. *ES HTP 1977*, cit., p. 101.

91. *Ibid.*

92. *Ibid.*

93. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

to progress to his own peace and ability, to prepare for social life»⁹⁴ and it is said that in order to reach such a goal permanent collective teaching should be excluded. On the contrary, as often as possible, teachers are invited to split up the class into work groups, «according to the level, aptitudes and interests of the pupils. Frequently, also, they will set them investigative work individually or in groups»⁹⁵. This leads also to a change in the behaviour and approaches of the teacher: in such cases, indeed, it is advised, for the teacher, to stop acting as a leader and become, instead, «the counsellor and guide»⁹⁶. In this way, there is a change also in the organization of work and of the relationships existing between teachers and students giving more space to «understanding and cooperation»⁹⁷. Cooperation that should also favour the creation of a European spirit: in the last paragraph of this general introduction, it is indeed said that

the European Schools have, among other objectives, that of forming their pupils in the European spirit. Consequently, favourable conditions should be created, and every occasion should be tailored to achieve this»⁹⁸.

Within these encouraging conditions, the promotion of the awareness, knowledge and use of languages seem to be a central one as partially already pointed out from the previous versions of the European Schools' Harmonized Timetables and Programmes. In the version here under scrutiny, the mother tongue program at primary school is also described in English and concerns, in particular, the teaching of English as a mother tongue; it is specified that the main task of the teacher is to encourage experiences that allow the child to progress in the acquisition of the ability to read, write, speak and listen, and, above all, to love these activities⁹⁹. It also specifies how «every lesson is a language lesson in the sense that the mother tongue is being taught continually»¹⁰⁰. Then, the discourse moves on to indicate the main objectives of this teaching; the objectives are classified among the following sections: Oral English, Reading, Literature, Writing, Language Study, Drama, Punctuation, Spelling, Handwriting, and Resources. With regard to the first skill, the one relating to Oral English, Piaget is mentioned again, and it is stated that

94. *Ibid.*

95. *Ibid.*

96. *Ibid.*

97. *Ibid.*

98. *Ibid.*

99. *Ibid.*, p. 104.

100. *Ibid.*

the prime mode of expression and communication is speech, and Piaget's work has demonstrated the close link between speech and play in very young children. Almost half of their speech is in the category of monologue or soliloquy (egocentric speech) with the child speaking to himself, even in the immediate presence of other children¹⁰¹.

Teachers are, therefore, invited to create opportunities that allow the development of this type of language with game, opportunities, and tools that will stimulate this egocentric speech:

The purpose of affording opportunities for children to play, and talk while they lay, is to provide for a specific type of speech development, requiring encouragement, or perhaps intervention, by the teacher from time to time. Thus, enter incidental conversation, between child and teacher or between child and child: topics of interest to the child from home or his surroundings; topics from his occupations di lei in school or outside response to story, poem or song; the telling of stories whether reproduction or invention. With older children, the work grows increasingly sophisticated, and such resources as a tape recorder or slide projector are valuable¹⁰².

The document then proceeds with the reading skills, and teachers are invited to always have a group of books at hand so that students can get used to consulting and using them; there is also a reflection on ways to promote the development of literacy and teachers are invited to keep up to date on reading acquisition methods, but also to apply coherent and homogeneous strategies trying to structure a specific program that can act as a guide. The discourse moves on to the field of Literature where it is explained that its role

is to bring the child into an encounter with language in its most complex, varied and rewarding forms, so providing him with a personal resource in coming to terms with his experience and his fantasies, and giving him an imaginative insight into other people and their lives¹⁰³.

It continues focusing on the other aforementioned abilities; again, as for resources, the importance of having access, for teachers, to fiction and non-fiction books both in the classroom and in the school library is stated, together with the use of tape records, simple recording facilities which are considered increasingly important, «with access to a record player, a slide

101. *Ibid.*

102. *Ibid.*, p. 105.

103. *Ibid.*, p. 106.

projector, and radio and television programs where appropriate»¹⁰⁴. The program and indications for the different years of primary school are then given, based on the areas identified.

The Mathematics program follows: here too, preliminary reflections are presented which partly recall what was seen in the programs of 1972, also with reference to the reform process begun in 1971¹⁰⁵; furthermore, it is stated that

the aim of primary school mathematics, apart from supplying the child with the necessary tools for tackling life, is to develop in the child an inquiring, imaginative mind with an ability to simplify and organize in a constructive manner¹⁰⁶.

The programme is then illustrated, and the document continues with foreign languages, focusing again on English and indicating the linguistic structures to be acquired. It continues with the programs of the following subjects: European Hours, History, Geography, Moral Education, Music, Arts and Crafts, and Physical Education; the contents and methodological indications given – where present – are the same as those of the previous programmes, particularly the one going back to 1972.

3.3. Nursery and Primary School Reform: 1971

Until this point, the Harmonized Timetables and Programs that extend up to 1977 have been analysed. However, in 1971, a process of revision of the nursery and primary school programs started with an influence on the organization of the whole nursery and primary school curriculum; I, therefore, turn my attention to the preparatory study drawn up in 1971 and aimed at better outlining this revision, the *Étude préparatoire à une révision des programmes de l'école maternelle et de l'école primaire des Écoles européennes* presented by the General Inspector F. Christiaens on September 1971¹⁰⁷. The following lines sketch the mentioned preparatory study out.

In the introduction to the document, Christiaens explains that the need for the review of the programmes was suggested during a meeting on February 18th, 1971, when a proposal for the review of the History, Geography

104. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

105. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

106. *Ibid.*

107. F. Christiaens, *Étude préparatoire à une révision des programmes de l'école maternelle et de l'école primaire des Écoles européennes*, 1971, Écoles européennes, n/ref. 71-D-89. The report will be here indicated as follows: ES Report 1971.

and Science programmes was made. This fact led to the proposal for a complete review of the programmes based on the new pedagogical orientations in the six member states. As a result, a study of the current situation and prospects of the evolution of nursery and primary schools in the various ECSC countries was carried out by the different national inspectors; Mr. Christiaens then proceeds to summarize them and draft a possible future project for the European Schools outlined not only considering the situation of the various countries but also after having collected opinions and ideas from the teachers working at the European Schools. I believe that the Introduction is to a certain extent ‘compelling’ because it can tell us more about the mechanisms that contributed to the creation and development of the European Schools; Christiaens’s words are also worth mentioning in this sense. He writes that it was not always easy to get a precise idea of national educational lives and movements since he did not participate directly in them. Due to his knowledge ‘through literature’, he makes amends for any possible gaps and inaccuracies. He also asks his fellow Inspectors to provide any necessary clarifications. Moreover, he points out that this study required many days of work and that it was fascinating for him, and he was happy to have been able to undertake it. He hopes it could contribute effectively to the development of future programs in the European Schools¹⁰⁸.

The document begins with an analysis of the situation in Germany and points out that, after the start of the 1969-1970 school year, an experience of transformation of the pedagogical content of the last year of nursery school was introduced in *Rheinland-Westphalia*. This observation is based on the report about the two years of application published by the *Kultusministerium de Rheinland-Pfalz*. It is said that these innovations were also recommended in the report of the *Deutscher Bildungsrat* of 14 February 1970¹⁰⁹. The renovation is based on the idea, at that moment accepted by psychologists, that the smooth running of learning depends more on what has been previously acquired than on innate dispositions which would mature on their own. Consequently, it is said that the learning opportunities offered by the early years must be used and the fiction of spontaneous and natural learning should be abandoned. Hence, the idea of schooling for five-year-olds (*Einschulung des Fünfjährigen*¹¹⁰) and preschool training (*Vorshulerziehung*¹¹¹) for those aged three and four. In addition to this,

108. Christiaens, *Étude préparatoire à une révision des programmes de l'école maternelle et de l'école primaire des Écoles européennes*, cit., p. 2.

109. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

110. *Ibid.*

111. *Ibid.*

it is stated that the education received from 3 to 6 years old constitutes a fundamental moment for the formation of the individual; for this reason, it should be well planned, taken care of, and conceived as a crucial step necessary for the preparation to the primary school¹¹².

The document then focuses on the structure and organization of nursery schools and transition classes in Germany, pointing out their specific aims: they should help the children's development by enhancing their learning opportunities and by eliminating any difficulties that they might have. They offer the children tasks they can accomplish and skills they can develop based on their interests and needs. They promote individual and collective learning through the respect children must have for individuals and the organization of group activities. They try to consider and take care of all children's needs: intellectual, emotional, social and physical¹¹³. As for the organisation, the children are divided into groups according to developmental level criteria; children should be able to move from one group to another. Moreover, children should engage in the activities of their choice; the activities attempt to combine play and learning. Due to this, the classes are equipped with play and study materials, musical instruments, and equipment for physical development. The different activities should engage children to reflect, think and learn. It is pointed out that everything should be done in a climate of play since it is also through playing that learning takes place. However, a well-defined goal should be set; in the text, it is indeed used the following German expression: «*spielen, des doch gezieltes Lernen*»¹¹⁴, namely meaning [playing, but targeted learning]. In the transition class, dedicated to five-year-old students, there should also be introductory activities to reading, writing, calculation and logical thinking.

The text then moves on to the description of Nursery schools in Belgium according to the 1951 *Plan des Activités*; indications for a renovation of fundamental teaching are also expressed in the ministerial circular published on July 21, 1971. There is here the explicit will to start from the children and develop their potential as much as possible¹¹⁵. It is indeed written that «... *nous prenons comme point de départ de notre réflexion l'enfant tel 'qu'il est dans son originalité, dans sa totalité, dans son dynamisme*»¹¹⁶ It is also expressed that kindergarten will try to compensate for socio-cultural handicaps and promote in each child the development

112. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

113. *Ibid.*

114. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

115. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

116. *Ibid.*

of mental structures implemented from the start of primary school. The kindergarten will «systematically prepare for learning reading, writing and arithmetic techniques not teaching them, but introducing them to the children through specific exercises which will gradually lead them to the world of symbols and abstraction»¹¹⁷.

Attention is then paid to France, where nursery schools were looking for a new balance, based on the principles of the «éducation nouvelle»¹¹⁸: starting from a better knowledge of the children, nursery schools aimed at adapting themselves to the psychology, needs and development of the children's own potential¹¹⁹. There is also the invitation to make an effort to individualize teaching and, at the same time, to not lose sight of the socialization process of children with a fair share of collective exercises and group activities. Within the activities promoted at the nursery school level, there is attention to the transition to primary school and to introductory activities to reading, writing and calculus; in some schools, experiments of teaching a second language (German in most cases, English sometimes) are described, realized through the use of «very simple words of children's language during games, dances, songs or walks»¹²⁰.

As for Luxembourg, the words of Inspector Stergesard reported; according to him, the nursery schools in Luxembourg were undergoing a process of change to be more effective in the physical and intellectual development of children. This is also represented by a change in the education of teachers that was currently happening together with a review of the programmes for kindergartens¹²¹.

In the Netherlands, attempts were made to avoid the separation between nursery school and primary school with the aim of making one the «*prolongement*» [extension] of the other¹²². Due to this, the nursery schools were not organized according to age criteria but taking into consideration the levels of the students; moreover, it would not have ended at a certain age but when specific objectives regarding reading, writing and counting were reached. The main aim was to «guide the children's total growth in a climate of play and work and teach them to use elementary cultural techniques»¹²³. It is underlined how the points of view of the teachers of the European Schools on these subjects appeared to be missing, and Inspec-

117. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

118. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

119. *Ibid.*

120. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

121. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

122. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

123. *Ibid.*

tor Christiaens hopes that a meeting could be organized soon to discuss the topic. He then proceeds with a summary of the materials collected showing in a table the convergence points observed in France, Germany, Netherlands and Belgium. Luxembourg is not present since it was undergoing, at that moment, a process of reform; as for Italy, it is claimed that no documentation was received from there. The main convergence points can be observed in the following tables proposed in the next two pages of the present work¹²⁴; attention is stressed on the children and their interests as a starting point to consider, together with the fact that nursery school should prepare for primary school and that introductory activities to reading and writing should be favoured with a specific consideration given to the transition from one school to another and the level of the students and their work as individual and part of a bigger group. Furthermore, a playful dimension should not be forgotten so to favour the learning through playing:

*l'atmosphère de la classe sera donc faite de bonheur de vivre et de découvrir, d'efforts joyeusement consentis parce qu'ils répondent à un besoin et qu'ils s'exercent par le jeu. Mais attention: pas de jeu pour le jeu lui-même. La plupart de temps le jeu doit être un prétexte pour apprendre, comprendre, exprimer et créer*¹²⁵.

The discussion then moves on to primary schools in the different ECSC countries.

It is highlighted that the objective of the primary school in Germany is to promote the development of the personality; and the fact that teaching should offer equal chances to everyone while stimulating the interests of the children; the need for individualization and differentiation is underlined. Moreover, it is stressed how the children should become capable of moving themselves within the modern world and, due to this, teaching

*n'a donc pas pour objet de lui remplir l'esprit de connaissances qui ne seraient pas fonctionnelles. Au contraire il doit fournir des connaissances alliées au savoir-faire. Le but lointain est de former l'élève de telle manière qu'il puisse, ultérieurement, continuer à s'instruire par ses propres moyens. Dès lors l'enfant doit apprendre à apprendre*¹²⁶.

124. The tables were taken from the report by Christiaens, *Étude préparatoire à une révision des programmes de l'école maternelle et de l'école primaire des Écoles européennes*, cit., pp. 20, 21.

125. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

126. *Ibid.*, p. 27. The aforementioned lines can be translated as follows: [It is therefore not intended to fill his mind with knowledge that would not be functional. On the contrary, it must provide knowledge combined with know-how. The long-term goal is to train the student in such a way that he can, subsequently, continue to educate himself by his own means. From then on the child must learn to learn].

Table 1 on Convergences and Differences within the different Nursery School Systems in Christiaens, *Étude préparatoire à une revision des programmes de l'école maternelle et de l'école primaire des Écoles européennes, cit., p. 20*

- 20 - EE/2/51/71-F

Principes	A	B	F	P.B.
A. STRUCTURES				
Jardin d'enfants de type familial - 3 et 4 ans				x
Formation préscolaire - 3 et 4 ans	x	x	x	
Jardin d'enfants de 3 ans avec classe supérieure "désenclavée"			x	
Classe supérieure englobée dans l'école primaire	x	x		x
Obligation scolaire à \pm 5 ans	x	x		x
Entrée en primaire, non d'après l'âge civil, mais d'après le degré de maturation	x			x
B. OBJET, BUTS, PRINCIPES PÉDAGOGIQUES				
Point de départ : l'enfant	x	x	x	x
Utiliser les possibilités d'apprentissage des jeunes années	x	x	x	x
Jardin d'enfants dans la perspective de l'école primaire	x	x	x	x
Préparation de la transition dans la classe supérieure	x	x	x	x
Partir des intérêts et des besoins des enfants	x	x	x	x
Favoriser l'épanouissement de l'enfant, relever ses possibilités d'apprentissage, éliminer ses déficits culturels	x	x	x	x
Apprentissage individuel et collectif	x	x	x	x
Atmosphère de jeu et d'apprentissage combinés	x	x	x	x
C. ORGANISATION				
Grouper les enfants, non d'après leur âge, mais d'après des critères de développement	x	x	x	x
L'enfant doit pouvoir s'adonner à des activités de son choix	x	x	x	x
Matériel abondant de jeu et d'étude, instruments de musique, etc.	x	x	x	x
Dossier psycho-pédagogique pour chaque enfant	x	x		x
Classe ouverte seulement durant la matinée	x			
Classe tenue par une éducatrice qualifiée	x	x	x	x

Table 2 on Convergences and Differences within the different Nursery School Systems in Christiaens, *Étude préparatoire à une révision des programmes de l'école maternelle et de l'école primaire des Écoles européennes, cit., p. 21*

- 21 - NB/2451/71-F

Principes	A	B	P	P.B.
D. PROGRAMMES				
Activités d'orientation et de concentration	x	x	x	x
Observation, expression, créativité	x	x	x	x
Activités conceptuelles et verbales	x	x	x	x
Activités motrices	x	x	x	x
Activités rythmiques et musicales	x	x	x	x
Sécurité routière	x	x		x
Initiation à la lecture, à l'écriture et à la mathématique	x	x	x	x
Seconde langue	x		x	
	non généralisé			

There is also the invitation to overcome encyclopedism; the document then moves on to outline the structure of the German primary school divided into three levels: in the first, the main aim is to ensure that all students develop «*un potentiel plus élevé d'aptitude aux apprentissages et de désir d'apprendre fin de les préparer tous aux exigences*»¹²⁷ of the second degree. In the second degree, a unique program will be presented to meet the needs of each student and to give specific help to students who present difficulties. The third level prepares for the needs of secondary school level:

*Par la différenciation et l'individualisation, par l'organisation des travaux de groupe, par le compartimentage de certaines disciplines dans la dernière classe, par l'observation continue des élèves, par l'enseignement d'une seconde langue, il doit permettre finalement aux enfants de choisir, en fonction de leurs aptitudes, l'orientation qu'ils suivront dans le secondaire*¹²⁸.

As for the pedagogic indications, it is underlined the importance of working in groups based on the different levels and starting from the discoveries of the students, working autonomously and, at the same time, collaborating with the other students and developing an attitude aimed at solving problems rather than acquiring content. The school should also help in making sense of the surrounding environment and thinking of it scientifically, with a curious and inquisitive mind¹²⁹.

As for Belgium, the reference laws for primary school were the 1936 *Directives du Plan d'Études* and the 1957 *Plan*; they stressed the necessity to start from the children, their interests and needs, together with the importance of observing the local surrounding environment. Processes related to observation, expression and creativity should be given great space together with the attempt to balance different working modalities such as in groups or individually, thanks to the cooperation between teachers and students. Moreover, it is stressed the need to overcome encyclopedism and to learn to learn, «*apprendre à apprendre [...], à former plutôt qu'informer*»¹³⁰. Mention is made of a ministerial circular (21 June 1971) that should have contained the indications for a renovation of fundamen-

127. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

128. *Ibid.*, p. 28. The translation of the above lines is the following: [Through differentiation and individualization, through the organization of group work, through the compartmentalization of certain disciplines in the last class, through continuous observation of students, through the teaching of a second language, children must be ultimately allowed to choose, based on their abilities, the direction they will follow in secondary school].

129. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

130. *Ibid.*, p. 31. The translation is the following: [to learn to learn [...], to train rather than to inform].

tal teaching: what it is expressed there seems to be applied in the French speaking part of Belgium but not in the Flemish one even though a change should occur soon. As in the case of German primary school, also here it is stated that school should contribute to the development of each student and also to make them capable to face the possible changes they will have to deal with during their lives. The socialisation function of school is also recognized and, due to this, it is said that «*l'école devra donc moins se soucier d'apprendre, que d'apprendre à apprendre et d'apprendre à s'adapter*»¹³¹. There is also the invitation to practice active activities, like plays, observations, experiments and expression¹³².

With regard to France, reference is made to the primary school reforms of the 1960s which introduced «*la mise en pratique du tiers-temps pédagogique et le regroupement de certaines matières sous le vocable: activités d'éveils*»¹³³.

It is not the purpose of the present work to dwell on *le tiers-temps pédagogique* and the decisive moments it represented in the history of French education¹³⁴. However, I briefly summarize here some considerations from

131. *Ibid.*, p. 32 [The school will therefore have to worry less about learning than about learning to learn and learning to adapt] (my translation).

132. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

133. *Ibid.*, p. 35 [the introduction of the third pedagogical time and the grouping of certain subjects under the heading of awakening activities]. It is not the purpose of the present work to dwell on *le tiers-temps pédagogique* and the decisive moments it represented in the history of French education; the following reference literature is recommended to provide information on these topics: A. Prost, *Quand l'école de Jules Ferry est-elle morte?*, «Histoire de l'éducation», n. 14, 1982, pp. 25-40; P. Kahn, *L'enseignement des sciences, de Ferry à l'éveil*, «Aster: Recherches en didactique des sciences expérimentales», vol., 31, 2000, pp. 9-35. However, I briefly summarize here some considerations from Prost to better understand what the *tiers-temps pédagogique* and the *activités d'éveils* were and their possible resemblance within them and the European Schools approach to subject such as History and Geography. Prost indeed writes that the *tiers-temps pédagogique* debuted in 1964 in France as an experiment that divided school time into three parts: the first one dedicated to subject considered 'basic and necessary' such as French and calculus; the second one concerned with 'disciplines of awakening', and the last one for physical education. The challenge was therefore not only to finally pay serious attention to the development of the body, but to approach disciplines such as science or history and geography in a radically new way so to turn them into *activités d'éveils* [disciplines of awakening]. But what exactly was implied with the expression "to awake"? Instead of instilling knowledge in students, the aim became to awaken their minds, pique their curiosity, arouse their activity. From this less constrained approach, personal development and training in observation and reflection were expected, instead of a culture of memory. The events of 1968 brought these innovative projects to fruition and *le tier-temps pédagogique* was then extended to all classes. For further details see Prost, *Quand l'école de Jules Ferry est-elle morte?*, cit., p. 36.

134. For further information see Prost, *Quand l'école de Jules Ferry est-elle morte?*, cit.; Kahn, *L'enseignement des sciences, de Ferry à l'éveil*, cit.

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*les anciennes rubriques distinctes: histoire, géographie, sciences, morale, dessin, chant, travail manuel. Il s'agit moins d'éveiller l'élève à telle discipline que de remontrer telle out elle discipline à l'occasion de ce qu'on veut bien appeler l'éveil: éveil de la curiosité, de l'affectivité, de l'intelligence et tout particulièrement du sens du relatif, éveil du sens esthétique, etc... Les disciplines d'éveil prennent comme point d'appui l'étude du milieu environnant et l'étude de documents historiques, géographiques, scientifiques. A partir de l'enfant et de la découverte progressive di monde on entreprend la mise en ordre indispensable des idées et des faits. Cette méthode de travail ne peut donc pas conduire à la confusion mentale. Au contraire, elle mène progressivement l'enfant vers des synthèses et vers un ordonnancement logique, mais un ordonnancement qui ne lui aura pas été imposé à priori*¹³⁷.

135. Prost, *Quand l'école de Jules Ferry est-elle morte?*, cit., p. 36.

136. Christiaens, *Étude préparatoire à une revision des programmes de l'école maternelle et de l'école primaire des Écoles européennes*, cit., p. 35.

137. *Ibid.*: the translation of the quoted lines is the following: [the old separate sections: history, geography, science, morality, drawing, singing, manual work. It is less a

He also writes that «*les activités d'éveil seront aussi l'occasion d'exercer les divers langages, particulièrement la langue maternelle et les mathématiques*»¹³⁸. Their primary aim is to awaken the child's curiosity and motivation through exploration of the surrounding environment to try to understand it. Furthermore, by awakening curiosity, they should encourage the development of an attitude that is always open to learning. As a matter of fact, Christiaens writes that «*les disciplines d'éveil doivent aboutir finalement à la possibilité d'apprendre à apprendre. Elles doivent aussi aboutir à un entraînement moral et dégager des notions de valeur*»¹³⁹.

Regarding the pedagogical thought of reference, Christiaens specifies that it is based on methods involving active pedagogy, group work, and a process of discovery at the centre. In particular, the starting point in the selection and elaboration of the topics of study should be motivated by the interests and needs of the students. «*Ils sont suggérés par eux ou par le maître*»¹⁴⁰, they are suggested by them or by the teacher and should be developed paying attention to the intellectual, manual, artistic aspects. As such, they give rise, where appropriate, to developments of a moral nature, «*à des développements d'ordre moral*»¹⁴¹. One of the foundations of the awakening activities is «*l'étude du milieu*»¹⁴², [the study of the environment]. The following three stages which it goes through are then described

*une prise de contact globale avec l'environnement; une phase d'observation précise (analyse, examen des documents, formulation d'hypothèses); une phase de synthèse (comparaisons, relations, accès à la pensée catégorielle). Les activités d'éveil comprendront 3h. à dominante intellectuelle; 3h à dominante artistique*¹⁴³.

question of awakening the student to a particular discipline than of demonstrating this or that discipline on the occasion of what we want to call awakening: awakening of curiosity, of affectivity, of intelligence and particularly the sense of the relative, awakening of the aesthetic sense, etc. The awakening disciplines take as a point of support the study of the surrounding environment and the study of historical, geographical and scientific documents. Starting with the child and the progressive discovery of the world, we begin the essential ordering of ideas and facts. This working method cannot therefore lead to mental confusion. On the contrary, it gradually leads the child towards syntheses and towards a logical ordering, but an ordering which will not have been imposed on him a priori].

138. *Ibid.*, p. 36 [the awakening activities will also provide an opportunity to practise various languages, particularly the mother tongue and mathematics].

139. *Ibid.*, p. 36. The translation of the mentioned lines is the following: [the *disciplines d'éveil* must ultimately lead to the possibility of learning how to learn. They must also lead to moral training and identify notions of value].

140. *Ibid.* [They are suggested by them or by the teacher].

141. *Ibid.* [to moral developments].

142. *Ibid.*

143. *Ibid.*: the three mentioned stages are the following: [making global contact with the environment; a precise observation phase (analysis, examination of documents, formu-

The report then goes on and describes the main features in Luxembourg: it focuses on the 1964 programs that were still in force, programs that were not expected to be revised soon. More than the “pedagogical” principles that are briefly sketched, I find it interesting to report the comment made by Inspector Sterges and transcribed in the report by Christiaens, namely the fact that «*comme les Luxembourgeois sont des gens assez prudents, les innovations dans le domaine pédagogique sont toujours plutôt hésitantes*»¹⁴⁴, they seem to be hesitant also in the context of educational reforms. It is also said that the 1964 Plan refers to the need for teachers to use new methods and the principles of modern pedagogy. In the first two years, teachers are then invited to favour intuitive study and, in the following years, observation, discovery, reflection and evaluation¹⁴⁵. It should be noted, however, that while recommending the application of the methods of the *école nouvelle*, the 1964 Program still seemed to attribute great importance to the subjects and encyclopedic knowledge deriving from them leading to «*une surcharge des programmes qui écrase les enfants*»¹⁴⁶. Consequently, an attempt is made to look for a new balance between the materials.

The report then moves to the Netherlands where it is recognized an attitude that stresses the importance of teaching, training and educating more than the simple transmission of knowledge and a focus on the knowledge vehiculated¹⁴⁷. In this educational process, a central place is given to the children, their possibilities and interests. Keeping all of the above into account a rising number of schools in the Netherlands are said to work according to the principles of the «*Plan de Iéna (1924-1950)*»¹⁴⁸

lation of hypotheses); a synthesis phase (comparisons, relationships, access to categorical thinking). The awareness activities will last 3 hours with a predominantly intellectual focus; 3 hours with an artistic focus] (my translation).

144. *Ibid.*, p. 39 [As Luxembourgers are quite cautious people, innovations in the educational field are always rather hesitant] (my translation).

145. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

146. *Ibid.*, p. 41. [an overload of programs that crushes children].

147. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

148. *Ibid.*, p. 42. For further information on the Jena Plan and the work of Peter Petersen see M. del Pozo Andrés, *Community and the myth of the ideal school: Circulation and appropriation of the Hamburg Gemeinschaftsschulen in Spain (1922-1933)*, «*Paedagogica Historica*», vol. 50, n. 5, 2014, pp. 599-614; R. Koerrenz, *Reform(ing) Education. The Jena-Plan as a Concept for a Child-Centred School*, Paderborn, Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, Brill Deutschland, 2020; H. Retter, *The Dispute Over the Reform Pedagogue Peter Petersen (1884-1952) in Jena 2010: Review of a ‘Total Disaster’ After Ten Years*, «*International Dialogues on Education Journal*», vol. 7, n. 1, 2020, pp. 54-90; V.B. Pomelov, *The pedagogical concept «Jena-plan» of P. Petersen*, «*Perspektivy nauki i obrazovania – Perspectives of Science and Education*», vol. 50, n. 2, 2021, pp. 404-414.

and based on a 1970 law project. The report then describes the structure of the Dutch primary school as sketched by the aforementioned law. The Dutch primary school was organized on three levels to foster the intellectual, manual, artistic, moral and social development of the children¹⁴⁹; during primary school, children should acquire proficiency in their mother tongue, in reading and writing, in calculus, and should start to reflect on the world through subjects such as geography, history, natural sciences. In the programmes, space is also given to the basic knowledge of English and creative and manual activities. In terms of organization, there is the invitation to eliminate collective teaching and promote group work based on the different levels of the students. Space should also be given to creativity and subjects such as geography, history, and sciences; subjects that fall under the category of «*Wereldoriëntatie (orientation dans le monde)*»¹⁵⁰.

The report then moves on to the point of view of the European Schools teachers; it is said that different working groups are busy with proposals for the review of various subjects but the lack of a complete pedagogical doctrine is still acknowledged. The Inspector considers a mistake to not have laid the foundation for a general pedagogical structure¹⁵¹. Even though a general and a whole intervention is still missing, according to the Inspector, it is already possible to identify some stances in the European Schools that are similar to the one found in the national cases, such as the focus on how to teach math; a new approach to teaching the mother tongue – French in particular – interested in the reflection and formation of the individual rather than on mnemonical learning; a focus on creative activities is underlined and suggested during the European Hours.

At the end, a summary is presented on the situation of the primary schools: as in the case of the nursery school, a convergent trajectory is acknowledged even though there are specific peculiarities in every country. A summary table is shown; here, the different and shared characteristics of France, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and the European Schools are indicated. Also, in this case, the lack of documentation from Italy is highlighted. In general, as far as the structure of primary school is concerned, the five-year division seems to remain unchanged. There is yet the reflection on the need for the European Schools to modify their vision and their pedagogical methods, to abandon «*une pédagogie*

149. Christiaens, *Étude préparatoire à une révision des programmes de l'école maternelle et de l'école primaire des Écoles européennes*, cit., p. 43.

150. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

151. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

qui n'est plus de notre temps»¹⁵², a pedagogy no longer of our times. The «*avant-projet d'introduction general a un plan d'études des écoles primaires des écoles européennes*»¹⁵³ is then exposed and it is reiterated that the primary school must deal with the education of students not based on the transmission of encyclopedic knowledge; once again, the importance is reiterated not so much of the contents but rather of the ability to learn to learn and continue to do so, to acquire knowledge regardless of what it specifically concerns with.

All these considerations lead to the fact that a revision and a reform of the primary school must be based, first and foremost, on the review of its pedagogy and didactics. A review based on modern scientific psychology and centred on the children, their interests, needs, potentials, their emotional lives¹⁵⁴. According to Christiaens, it should be a pedagogy based on the interests, and primarily on the interest in the surrounding environment: [starting from these profound motivations, the school should give the child the maximum of what he is capable of acquiring, so it is necessary to pay additional special attention to help overcome the difficulties that the pupil may encounter]¹⁵⁵. It is also highlighted that starting from the child implies offering everyone equal opportunities and, at the same time, taking into account the need to develop differentiated teaching according to the characteristics, level, pace, aptitudes and interests of each individual. The teacher is seen as a guide and advisor who collaborates with the students and organizes the activity in the classroom, sometimes preferring collective methods with group work based on the different levels, and other times leaving room for individual work.

I would like to conclude this analysis with two further considerations; the first concerns the attention given in the text to the desire to overcome encyclopedism and a compartmentalized transmission of knowledge. This involves the attempt to conceive and group subjects in a different way compared to the past, as seen partially also for the French national case, keeping together – on the one hand – the teaching of the mother tongue and mathematics and, on the other, all those activities that are defined as «*culture générale*»¹⁵⁶. The latter include observation, expression in various forms, initiation into history, geography, natural sciences, aesthetic initiation, moral and social education, and physical education.

152. *Ibid.*, p. 50 [an outmoded pedagogy].

153. *Ibid.*, p. 51 [preliminary draft of a general introduction to a syllabus for the primary schools of the European schools].

154. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

155. *Ibid.*, p. 53 (my translation).

156. *Ibid.* [general culture].

The second interesting point, in my opinion, is linked to the topic of learning to learn, which also often appears in the document: its mention made me think about how, in the same period, the commission responsible for drawing up the *Faure Report* was working; the document was published in 1972 (in Italy in 1973) and it stressed significantly the topic of lifelong learning within a society, like the one of the Seventies, which was experiencing great transformations «between demands for renewal, demands for a redistribution not only of wealth but also of culture and requests for greater democracy»¹⁵⁷. Although the emphasis on social transformations is mostly absent in the 1971 document of the European Schools, preparatory to a revision of the curriculum of nursery and primary schools, I find significant the presence of this same emphasis on the concept of learning to learn, a concept that will also reappear in subsequent documents and which will become foundational to European educational policies and discourses, albeit with not always positive connotations¹⁵⁸.

3.4. Nursery and Primary School Reform: 1972

What is indicated in *ES Report 1971* analyzed in the previous paragraph – in relation to the plan for the revision of the nursery school and primary school programs of the European Schools – was also taken up in the meeting held on Thursday 5 October 1972 at the European School in Brussels; a detailed account of it is available – the *Revision des Programmes de l'école maternelle et de l'école primaire. Compte rendu de la réunion tenue à l'école européenne de Bruxelles, le jeudi 5 octobre 1972* – according to which the meeting started from what had already emerged in 1971; the previous 1971 report was indeed read, and from the discussion about it – a discussion centred mainly on the premier fundamental teaching and methodological tenets – 14 pedagogical principles were debated and outlined. The main idea was that the latter should have been the basis, from then on, of the primary school and nursery school programs of the European Schools: “glimpses” of these principles are also partially reflect-

157. A. Ascenzi, F. Targhetta, *Il rapporto Faure e le ricadute sul sistema scolastico italiano*, in M. Gonzalez-Delgado, M. Ferraz Lorenzo, C. Machado-Trujillo (eds.), *Transfèrenca, transnacionalizaci3n y transformaci3n de las pol3ticas educativas (1945-2018)*, Salamanca, FarenHouse, 2020, p. 241 (my translation).

158. N. Hodgson, *Citizenship for the Learning Society. Europe, Subjectivity, and Educational Research*, Hoboken, Wiley, 2016; M. Simons, J. Masschelein, *The Learning Society and Governmentality: An introduction*, «Educational Philosophy and Theory», vol. 38, n. 4, 2006, pp. 417-430.

ed in the 1977 programmes, already analysed. First of all, in the report of the meeting dated 6 November 1972¹⁵⁹, the participants are indicated: we find Inspector General Christiaens as President; then there are members from each school: Monsieur Mittler, Monsieur Hennin and Madame Pistoni for the European school of Brussels; Monsieur Jansen, Monsieur Valenne and Mademoiselle Meyer for the European school of Luxembourg; Monsieur Libotton, Mademoiselle Storm and Madame Doneux for Mol; Monsieur Arbicone, Monsieur Fijman and Madame Lo Judice for the Varese school; Monsieur Vices, Madame Aubry and Mademoiselle Gandolfo for Karlsruhe; Monsieur Wintringer, Monsieur Baumann and Mademoiselle Geurts for Bergen. Finally, Mademoiselle Diehm and Monsieur Ral and Monsieur Black are indicated as staff representatives.

The report of the meeting cites the document to which reference will be made, the *Étude préparatoire à une révision des programmes*, and there is the invitation to consult the *Bulletin pédagogique n. 26, January 1972*, pages 5 and following numbers. The aforementioned number of the *ESs Pedagogical Bulletins* is not traceable at the moment; however, it is worth mentioning that reference is made to the *Pedagogical Bulletins* because this indicates their informative role within the European Schools; we will further explore their function in the next chapter. Going back to the ES Report 1972. The agenda of the meeting is indicated and it is proposed to start with a general discussion, and then proceed to the elaboration of the basic pedagogical and methodological principles; finally, there is the suggestion to focus on the 1971 previous document to consider the project hypothesis illustrated there. As regards the general discussion, there seems to be unanimity in approving the previous document albeit with some minimal modifications and additional observations; it is also considered important to share reports from schools and to ensure that the proposed reforms correspond to a lower workload on teachers¹⁶⁰. The «*grands principes pédagogiques et méthodologiques de base*»¹⁶¹ are then illustrated. The first one is based on the assumption that education is a continuous process in which every level prepares to the next one. In this document the idea of continuous education is circumscribed to the school environment with a focus on the transition from Nursery to Primary School, and from Primary to Sec-

159. F. Christiaens, *Revision des Programmes de l'école maternelle et de l'école primaire. Compte rendu de la réunion tenue à l'école européenne de Bruxelles, le jeudi 5 octobre 1972*, Écoles européennes, 1972, n/réf. 72-D-1210/1. The report will be here indicated as follows: *ES Report 1972*.

160. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

161. *Ibid.*

ondary School, a transition that must be favoured. The secondo principle states the necessity to give equal chances to all children; the question of what to do in case of children with disabilities remains open since apparently there was not the possibility to create special classes at that moment; consequently, there is the invitation to

recourir à l'individualisation de l'enseignement, chaque maître appliquant ce principe au mieux des possibilités de sa classe. L'individualisation pour le problème du nombre minimum d'élèves par classe. Ces minima devraient être abaissés. L'individualisation pose de même le problème du passage de classe des enfants de niveau faible. Ce passage ne peut dépendre de notations purement chiffrées; on suggère une organisation plus souple des classes; on suggère aussi l'ouverture de "classe de soutien" (à population mobile)¹⁶².

The third principle states that it is necessary to consider the children and their potentials as points of departure; it is approved with unanimous agreement.

The fourth principle underlines the necessity to draw motivation for teaching from the children's interests and needs. The fifth principle states that it is necessary to practise a functional pedagogy even though it is not always simple to understand and define children's interests.

The sixth principle refers to the end of encyclopedisme and of the compartmentalization into distinct branches/subjects.

The seventh principle reiterates the need to focus on formation rather than information; it is agreed on unanimously and it is said that a minimum programme should be written down for every class.

The eighth principle focuses on the environment and the fact that its observation and use should be considered as a tool aimed at the formation of knowledge. There is also particular stress on the peculiar environment typical of the European Schools and it is advised to promote the contacts between the students and the teachers making advantage of the various language sections. Consequently, it is also recommended that the programs should be flexible so as not to bind teachers too much. Timetables should be flexible, too, to allow teachers to attend activities in other classes. The ninth principle states that subjects should be considered globally but they should also be organized considering the level of the students «elementary

162. *Ibid.*, p. 3 [individualise teaching, with each teacher applying this principle to the best of their ability. Individualisation addresses the problem of minimum class sizes. These minimums should be lowered. Individualisation also poses the problem of transferring children with lower levels of abilities. This passage cannot depend on purely numerical marks; a more flexible organisation of classes is suggested; and the opening of 'support classes' (with a mobile population) is also recommended] (my translation).

groupings in nursery school, more rational in primary school, simple summaries in the upper class»¹⁶³.

The tenth principle talks about the importance of working in groups and the assembly agrees on giving free initiative to the teachers.

The eleventh principle focuses on the relationships between teachers and children which should be based on collaboration and mutual understanding; it is stated that it is important to make the children aware of the concept of collective responsibility and become capable of use their freedom without abusing it.

The twelfth principle affirms that it was decided to not change the structure of the schools in that specific moment.

The thirteenth principle concerns the transition from nursery school to primary school, a transition which should be facilitated adequately. To do so, it is asked

que soient facilités et multiés les contacts entre les enseignants des deux niveaux, notamment par les visites réciproques dans les classes; que soient introduites, dans la classe supérieure du jardin d'enfants, les initiations à la lecture, à l'écriture et au calcul, à l'exclusion de l'apprentissage de ces techniques come telles; que le personnel soit préparé à la mise en application des ces exercices d'initiation; qu'ela classe supérieure du jardin d'enfants devienne aussi une classe d'observation et quel es élèves entrent à l'école primaire sur la base de leur degré de maturité et non plus sur celle de leur age civil; que l'obligation scolaire débute à cinq ans (dernière classe de liécole maternelle); que priorité soit réservée à la formation de groupes de 5 ans s'il y a grande affluence d'élèves; qu'il y ait des classes maternelles pour chaque groupe linguistique, quels que soient les chiffres de la population inscrite; qu'ele maximum d'enfants par classe d'école maternelle soit ramené à 25; que le climat de la première année primaire rappelle celui de l'école maternelle¹⁶⁴.

The fourteenth principle refers to the transition from primary school to secondary school and it takes note of the difficulties that such transi-

163. *Ibid.*, p. 4 (my translation).

164. *Ibid.*, p. 7 [that contacts between teachers at the two levels be facilitated and increased, in particular by reciprocal visits to classes; that introductory exercises in reading, writing and arithmetic be introduced in the upper kindergarten class, but that learning these techniques themselves be excluded; that staff be prepared to apply these introductory exercises; that the upper kindergarten class also become an observation class and that pupils enter primary school on the basis of their degree of maturity and no longer on the basis of their age; that compulsory schooling should start at the age of five (last class of nursery school); that priority should be given to the formation of groups of 5-year-olds if there is a large influx of pupils; that there should be nursery classes for each language group, regardless of enrolment figures; that the maximum number of children per nursery class should be reduced to 25; that the atmosphere in the first year of primary school should be similar to that in nursery school].

tion entails. In order to overcome these difficulties, it is asked to promote a fruitful and active collaboration between the teacher of the 5th year of the primary school and the main teacher of the secondary school so that the latter could assist to classes and meet future students and talk with them. It is also suggested to prepare the students to the difficulties and different rhythms they will have to face in the secondary school such as a different way of working and of organizing work tasks. The document then continues by reporting some changes that are suggested in relation to the proposed review of nursery and primary schools. Among these there is the suggestion of mentioning the European spirit to be promoted within the European Schools¹⁶⁵.

3.5. Primary School Reform in 1990

After the reflections in 1971 and 1972 on the revision of the programs and organization of the Primary School and the Nursery School, the discussions on their possible reform continued in the following years. They were summarized in the following two documents: the 1974 *Outline Plan of Activities for the Nursery Section of the European Schools as approved by the Board of Inspectors* and the 1983 *Report on Nursery Education*. These documents reiterate the need to start from the child and to consider nursery school education as an essential first step in the lifelong educational process of the students. These concepts are also taken up and extended in the document I will analyze here: the 1990 *Guidelines for Nursery and Primary Education - Nursery and Primary School Reform*. I decided to focus on the latter because – unlike those of 1974 and 1983 – this report concerns both nursery schools and primary schools; furthermore, it is in direct continuity with the 1971 report in the attempt to modify the structure and organization of the European Schools, at least for the primary cycle. I will now proceed to analyze it in more detail¹⁶⁶.

The document consists of a preface, an introduction, and some preliminary considerations. A part on the aims of the European Schools follows together with the practical implications for the curriculum and school organisation. Mention is made of the school buildings and equipment, and

165. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

166. The document we are going to pay attention to in the present paragraph is the following: A. Hollander, *Guidelines for Nursery and Primary Education*, European Schools, 1990, ref. 90-D-68. The document will be also mentioned here as follows: *ES Guidelines 1990*.

there is a reflection on the separate identities of each school; finally, some conclusions close the document.

The document dates back to 1990, but its gestation began a few years earlier: in the preface, it is indicated how, during the meeting of the Committee of Inspectors in March 1986 in Brussels, the 1971 document *A preliminary study for a reform of the curriculum of nursery and primary schools* was examined taking note of how this document was at that time dated and limited in the descriptions offered. Three additional documents and reports are mentioned: *The Philosophy and Aims of Primary Education* produced by the United Kingdom Inspector Mr W.E. Husband upon his retirement in 1985; the report of Mr. Papapietro for the European Parliament in 1983; the report by Professor D. Swan for the European Commission, in 1984, also considering the aims of Primary Education in the European Schools¹⁶⁷. They all highlighted the need to define very precise objectives and goals, the need to create stimulating learning environments and improve support for students with special needs and particularly gifted students, together with the need for greater contact between teachers of different school levels within and outside the various language sections, as well as the need to review testing and evaluation procedures¹⁶⁸. The need to consider the aims of primary education in the European Schools was also made clear so that the Committee of Inspectors decided that any future development of the curriculum must have been based on a specific philosophy whose absence would have made any attempt to bring about reform ineffective; it was, therefore, necessary to develop it. Consequently, the work commenced and, as a result, these Guidelines were conceived as an attempt to both examine the principles already highlighted in the previously adopted documents and reflect on curriculum reform in the schools in the twelve Member States. Furthermore, the work on this document was carried out considering the aim of the European Schools to provide cohesive education to young people called to live in a united Europe¹⁶⁹. For this reason, under the chairmanship of the Dutch Inspector Ch. A. Hollaender, a working group was established with members from the various European Schools: among them, there were primary and nursery school teachers, two vice-principals and a parent representative for a total of three female and four male members all coming from the European Schools present in Belgium, Luxembourg and Germany (Karlsruhe, Brussels I and II, Luxembourg, Mol). Among them, I would like to point out Mr. A.J. Smith, Depu-

167. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

168. *Ibid.*

169. *Ibid.*

ty Headteacher of the European School Brussel I, since his name will also reappear in the *Pedagogical Bulletins* we will examine in the next chapter. The group began its work in December 1986 based also on surveys carried out with parents, teachers, headmasters and inspectors, and published in the *Pedagogical Bulletin* n. 99, December 1987. The educational philosophy of the different Member States was also taken into account. The Preface already shows us how the process that led to the drafting of this document was long – approximately four years – and considered the voices of different actors within the European Schools and the diverse national philosophies and curricula. Among the elements to not forget when outlining the educational philosophy for the curriculum reform, it is affirmed that there should be attention to special needs students and gifted ones. The particularity of the educational context is also underlined together with the aim of the European Schools to provide a systematic education to young people called to live in a united Europe. The reference to the various national realities always remains present, as well as that of the European dimension. In the introduction, however, it is reiterated that this document has the purpose of describing the fundamental ideas at the foundation of the European Schools' principles and aims, and it is not meant to give specific details relating to individual subjects in the curriculum. This is, therefore, a document that wants to show links to previous documents and discussions from which outline future developments for a common reference framework by underlining the various challenges and difficulties to be faced, as well as the possible solutions to work in a more unitary and organic manner within the school system. Teachers are also invited to analyze the ideas put forward, reflect on them and work together to figure out and realize new practices. The main ideals of the European Schools and their educational aims are also illustrated, as well as the practical implications for teachers and teaching, for the infrastructures and the organization of school resources. Hence, there is an attention to the concept of school and education that looks at its totality and material dimension. Preliminary considerations are provided regarding how the European Schools look like and how they could develop under the influence of the surrounding society, the contemporary vision of the child and the family, and the role of teachers and parents. It is repeated that due to the economic collaboration of some countries in the 1950s, the European Schools were created to provide a structured education to the children of the first European employees; new linguistic sections were created following the gradual enlargement of the then European Communities, also taking inspiration from individual member states. In this way, the absolutely practical purpose due to which these schools were born is reiterated. However, in point 3.1.3 on page 4, it is said

that these schools are not a simple juxtaposition of different linguistic sections but that

they seek to develop a harmonised educational approach and to assimilate the best traditions and practices of the national systems of the Member States. The schools have an innovative role, especially in the areas of multicultural education and of language teaching¹⁷⁰.

It is underlined that these Schools are unique due to their intergovernmental status and that their prime purpose, although not the only one, is to «provide a general answer to the problem of the education of the children who are temporarily expatriate»¹⁷¹ so to secure continuity of children's educational path. In order to accomplish all of the above different school levels are foreseen, from childhood to secondary school as well as psychological and logistical support for families, guaranteeing education in the mother tongue. Regarding mother tongue education, it is stated that

The European Schools recognize the inestimable value of a clear cultural identity, expressed through a dominant language. They consider teaching in the mother tongue to be the keystone of the curriculum, organized in separate language sections¹⁷².

Other interesting affirmations, in my view, are expressed in the following points:

3.1.6. The European Schools are anchored in a democratic Europe, showing a profound respect for each child, without distinction of race, sex, nationality, language, belief or social class.

3.1.7. Despite the apparent homogeneity of their families, both socially and intellectually, the children of the European Schools represent a very wide range of intellectual capacity, of school skills, of levels of physical, social and emotional development. The European Schools accept them on a non-selective basis. The schools try to respond to the needs of each child, whatever his age, by adapting themselves to him and by adopting appropriate approaches¹⁷³.

Consideration is then given to the ability of expatriated children to adapt and integrate into the new surroundings which become the “lodestar”

170. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

171. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

172. *Ibid.*

173. *Ibid.*

in building their notions of the world and society¹⁷⁴. In fact, it is the host country where the children are located that becomes a point of reference for the children. Further reflections on the latter are then exposed: for example, it is noted that students of the European Schools enjoy a high standard of living and have many chances of taking part in many inspiring cultural and social activities but sometimes at the expense of free time and at the cost of being overloaded. The impact of mass media and the growing electronic games is also underlined to be responsible to «provide the child with only ‘second-hand’ experiences»¹⁷⁵ contributing in creating an artificial image of the surrounding environment or making the children separated from nature and natural cycles. Considering all of the above, it is said that:

3.2.7. Subjected to stimulations of many kind, the child is often confused and his powers of concentration develop all too little. He moves from one activity to another and is reluctant to committ himself to anything seriously. He readily assumes the passive consumer attitudes which are sometimes resorted to by parents and teachers in order to save time.

3.2.8. In spite of that, most children have a fund of vitality and of spontaneity befitting their age. Today’s children are the objects of much adult consideration. It is recognized that children are first of all children in their own right, having specific needs and with every opportunity to blossom and to be happy¹⁷⁶.

Then the attention goes back again to the experience of living in a foreign county and the various possible difficulties linked to the migratory relocation are indicated, such as linguistic difficulties, the absence of familiar reference points, the sense of unfamiliarity in a foreign context, the distance from the natal country, one or both parents absent for work, sometimes the presence of a very complex cultural make-up of the family. It is worth mentioning, in my view, that those difficulties are not extended to all types of migratory experiences, especially those having underprivileged contexts and dynamics as the main background. So, the idea of a migratory journey it is reflected upon appeared to be only the one related to the specific environment typical of the European Schools. Despite this narrowness of the field, the central role of the school is then acknowledged, conceiving it as «an important reference point for many families, especially in the early years of their expatriation. It is, therefore, called upon to be a place of welcome, of advice and support for both parents and children, a focal point for the expatriate European Community»¹⁷⁷.

174. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

175. *Ibid.*

176. *Ibid.*

177. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

Some other reflections on parents and on their role are shared, to move on after to the educational team made up of teachers and other figures such as assistants, psychologists and speech therapists. The document also briefly explains how the teaching staff selection mechanisms work: most of them are seconded by their national governments for a limited period according to national procedures, while a shorter amount of teachers are recruited locally by each school.

It is then underlined that teachers of the English, French and German sections are expected to teach their mother tongue as a second language: due to this, special initial training is given to them¹⁷⁸. However, in-service training is generally organized for any teacher to harmonize teaching approaches and keep up to date with developments in the field of education. Furthermore, teachers are invited to use their linguistic, creative or sporting skills to organize activities during the European hours¹⁷⁹.

The next paragraph in the *ES Guidelines 1990* provides some information referring to management and administration; I will briefly focus on them because one of the highlighted figures appears relevant to curriculum reform and its harmonisation. I am referring to the Deputy Head Teacher, to whom the discussion will also return later about the *Pedagogical Bulletins*. Going back to the *ES Guidelines 1990* it is explained that the Headteacher is responsible for the educational project and the management of the three levels of education provided. It is added that, with specific regard to nursery and primary school and considering the vast amount of work they involve, the Headmaster is helped by a Deputy Head who is responsible for carrying out the reforms of the curriculum approved by the Board of Governors. Moreover, it is said that

3.6.5. The Deputy Head is the leader of a European teaching team. He provides the link between the different language sections and oversees the harmonisation, the quality, the coherence and the continuity of the work of the school at nursery and primary level.

3.6.6. For this purpose he must show a great receptivity to the different cultures of the member states. Especially in the area of education, thus widening the limits of his previous national experience.

3.6.7. Since most of the teachers are expatriates and are called to live and to work in unfamiliar and sometimes demanding conditions, the Deputy Headteacher must concern himself with the general ambience of the school and with the well-being of each one¹⁸⁰.

178. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

179. *Ibid.*

180. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

Although remaining at the prescriptive level, I believe that this passage on management and the people involved is relevant because it briefly introduces us and allows us to catch a glimpse of further figures who found themselves concretely involved in the practical implementation of the curriculum and its organization and modification; at the moment this allows us to identify only one role – the Deputy Headteacher – and other administrative subjects, but going deep into the analysis of the sources it might also be possible to give faces, names and identify stories connected to this.

In the following section of the document, considerations on society are reported, addressing the most disparate topics from the privileged and recognized role of children in society¹⁸¹ to the various family compositions, the different lifestyles, the use of technological tools, the risks that life presents for children such as «traffic, noise, atmospheric pollution, over-abundant demands on their attention, tobacco, alcohol, drug abuse»¹⁸². Reference is also made to migrant workers, mixed marriages and professional mobility which have promoted the development of a multicultural society «whose potential is often overshadowed by daily problems»¹⁸³. I believe that it is also interesting to consider the reflections on technology, which affects private and personal life, and on work, which «demands a greater degree of flexibility, of personal initiative, of inventiveness and commitment. It requires new skills and a receptive mind»¹⁸⁴. The last considerations are on the changing social values leading space «for greater equality, shared responsibility and independence»¹⁸⁵ and the growing possibility for everyone to make their voice heard and have a positive impact on policy.

After these initial premises the document focuses on a thorough description of the curriculum, «a curriculum centred around the Child»¹⁸⁶. In particular, it is said that

in the light of the general considerations described in the previous chapter, and in the perspective of a more closely united and enlarged Europe, the European Schools adopt as their aim the all-round education of their pupils in a European and international context¹⁸⁷.

181. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

182. *Ibid.*

183. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

184. *Ibid.*

185. *Ibid.*

186. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

187. *Ibid.*

Due to this, various are the objectives of the ES educational policy: to make the children aware of themselves, their identities, potentials and limits; to know their bodies and to consciously balance body and mind; to become aware of others and be tolerant and respectful of them; and also, «to develop a feeling for what is right and a constructive critical approach to life; to learn to form part of a group, to show commitment, solidarity and team spirit and to discover the rules governing partnerships»¹⁸⁸. Consequently, there seems to be an attention to the development – a keyword here – of the individual child and, at the same time, to their attitude towards life in general and life in a community, in particular. To this community and to creating the best conditions for life in it the European Schools' mission seems to be devoting itself with the effort «to recognise, protect and develop the cultural identity of its pupils, far from their home countries; to encourage a European spirit»¹⁸⁹ while recognizing and respecting children's potential and differences. Teachers play a central part and the importance of their role it is also reiterated stating that they should have mature, well-mannered and balanced personalities, open to others and different cultures. Furthermore, teachers should be eager to be part of an international group and be «committed Europeans»¹⁹⁰ who speak at least one of the working languages of the Schools. As already said before, teachers are chosen by national authorities; in my view, this is an element that shows the network of relationships defining the European Schools since national authorities are asked to collaborate with the school concerned. The document then underlines the fact that new staff should be given adequate information, preparation and support. At the same time, they are required to be up to date on the most recent scientific discoveries and to maintain contact with the national system of their country of origin, as well as to have an interest in the educational system of the country in which they work and of the other Member States. It seems that in-service training sessions are promoted to encourage the exchange of good practices and the possibility of assimilating the ideas proposed and implementing them in daily reality. Furthermore, there is the idea that for these students far from home the European Schools should have been conceived as «a warm and secure place of welcome, a home from home»¹⁹¹. It is recognized to teachers a vital function in ensuring and making all of the above possible since they work to favour the development of the pupils and

188. *Ibid.*

189. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

190. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

191. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

especially of the knowledge of their mother tongue. In addition, teachers are asked to embody the people who will maintain the traditions and cultures of children's countries of origin, but who, at the same time, will help the parents and the child to avoid an overly national vision of education and society. The research for a "balanced movement" within the national and the international/European dimensions seems to be present. Those who teach a second language or European hours are also considered and defined as cultural ambassadors¹⁹² who must help students appreciate cultural differences. It also states how it is necessary to respond to the global educational needs of students and for this reason, schools must be a stimulating environment. In this regard, it is underlined that the opportunity must be given to carry out activities outside of school to allow children to come into contact with and learn about the environment and the surrounding world, or to «invite people or groups of people to school to enrich its cultural and social life»¹⁹³. The next page also states how the European Schools want to respond to the needs of the expatriate community by organizing cultural and social activities; it is also stated that they wanted to open the doors to the local community to promote mutual understanding and the sharing of places and equipment. From all of these preliminary considerations derive various consequences, some of which are characteristic of the European Schools such as the supranational and multicultural nature of these Schools, their particular structure and organisation; the additional subjects foreseen such as foreign languages or European hours; the different and variable sizes of schools in diverse European countries, as well as their growing number. All of these has a direct influence on the organization of the curriculum and teaching approaches in the European Schools. In particular, these curriculum guidelines state that

the curriculum must reflect a unity of purpose, and it must be presented in a clear and precise way, appealing to all language sections equally;

Taking account of child development and of the progressive stages of learning, the curriculum must avoid discontinuity and must ensure a coherent educational philosophy from the nursery school, through primary and through secondary;

The curriculum must likewise take into account the specific needs of children with learning or behavioural difficulties, disabled children and those who are particularly gifted;

It must be alive to the physical capacity and biological rhythms of the children and teachers;

192. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

193. *Ibid.*

The curriculum must present concrete examples as an inspiration for the teachers, within the limits of what is possible;
The curriculum and related documents must be available in all languages¹⁹⁴.

Furthermore, it is highlighted that the introduction of a new curriculum must always be followed by training for the staff based on confrontations, discussions of practical cases.

The document then turns to the weekly and daily timetable, underlining how important it is to consider the needs of everyone, students and teachers. Moreover, it is highlighted how, at the dawn of the European Schools, «the timetable [...] was basically a national timetable to which had been added the teaching of a foreign language and the European Hours. The resulting number of periods is a heavy workload for children and for teachers»¹⁹⁵. Recognizing how too long teaching periods constitute an obstacle to learning, quality teaching and the meeting of children's needs, it is suggested to proceed with a revision of the existing timetables considering the weekly timetable and children's ages together with a different number of periods attributed to each subject and «the introduction of more flexible approaches, such as inter-disciplinary work, for example»¹⁹⁶.

There is also the invitation to use different teaching approaches to encourage creativity, physical and sensory development, communication and sociability. Whatever the modalities chosen – teacher lecture, group work or open discussion – the role of the teacher remains vital. To encourage the development of children's full potential teachers are invited to choose flexible and personalized approaches where possible; to give importance to children's interests and give them the proper space and time and the possibility to make choices.

As already in the *ES Report 1971* and *ES Report 1972* and in the *ES HTP 1977*, it is here also mentioned the necessity of departing from the children at the centre and of taking account of their curiosity and spontaneity involving all their senses and various skills. Moreover, «imagination and a careful choice of material will eliminate monotony from the children's learning. Healthy competition also has its place for children to enjoy and are stimulated by comparing results»¹⁹⁷. As we can see, the idea of 'healthy' competition appears followed also by the necessity to monitor student progress to promote self-evaluation and assess everyone's route along the learning path.

194. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

195. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

196. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

197. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

Recommendations are then provided for teaching the second language: it is recommended to encourage recreational activities and to ensure that there is contact with other cultures through songs, popular stories, literature, festivals and national customs¹⁹⁸. In terms of advised teaching practices and ways of behaving, the document encourages the promotion of team work and mutual help in the classroom; finally, it is underlined how the teaching of the second language should be favoured by using functional real life situations connected to creative activities or to other subjects such as the Environmental Studies or European Hours¹⁹⁹. Considerations on the latter then follow. It is recognized how this subject offers third, fourth and fifth-year students the opportunity to meet children and teachers from other language sections and, in this way, it promotes the practical realization of the wish expressed in the Statute of the European Schools to harmoniously enjoy each other company and live together. The document also underlines how important it is to ensure that this teaching – European hours – does not remain isolated but rather integrated with other activities and subjects and in particular the second language conceived as a support in real-life situations²⁰⁰. According to the document, the teaching of European Hours provide a chance for «verbal and non-verbal communication between pupils of different language sections» but it is necessary to remove them «from their relative isolation by associating them with other disciplines or with project work»²⁰¹; teachers are then invited to plan European Hours together and share the results of their work through shows, exhibitions or a school newspaper; moreover, it is reiterated their connection with second languages and it is underlined how children should be left free as much as possible so to choose between the activities available on the basis of their interests.

Point 5.6, on page 24, touches on the issue of students with special needs. In the *ES Report 1971* and *ES Report 1972* the topic had already been partially addressed and the difficulty of taking care of students with special needs had been strongly underlined. A few years later, in 1990, a change can be detected. As a matter of fact, the *ES Guidelines 1990* inform the reader that remedial teaching had been recently introduced for students with learning or behavioural difficulties who receive individual help from a teacher trained in that field²⁰². The conditions that are

198. *Ibid.*

199. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

200. *Ibid.*

201. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

202. *Ibid.*

thought to make remedial teaching particularly effective are indicated such as observing students and providing help already in nursery school and guaranteeing continuity up to secondary school. However, it is also underlined that «the integration of disabled children into the schools is one of the great challenges facing the schools in our time»²⁰³. Due to this, the invitation to consider each specific case follows, and it is mentioned that it is necessary to also take into account what the European Schools can offer both in terms of infrastructure and specialized personnel. It is indeed explained «that sometimes, in big cities, better and easier solutions for support and remedial teaching might be found in local schools but the choice falls in any case on the European Schools due to the language spoken there»²⁰⁴.

Considerations on the size of classes are then expressed and it is also noticed that «different activities and ages demand differing class sizes»²⁰⁵; working in small groups could be particularly suitable in the case of nursery school, in the first year of primary school and, during second language teaching, experimental work in Environmental Studies, the multi-cultural groups in European Hours.

The document reflects on school environments based on the idea of the school being conceived not only as a place of study but also as an environment and a community that offers real-life experiences for its students: this should be reflected in the organization of spaces. So, the spatial dimension of the curriculum that is addressed here. As for space, the need to have specific rooms for different activities and courses such as European hours is expressed. Pointing out the need for apposite areas for physical education and sport, halls for «drama, music and movement, exhibitions, various projects and activities» together with «specialist rooms adaptable to a variety of activities in Environmental Studies and European Hours [...], study and meeting rooms»²⁰⁶. If the aforementioned spaces are necessary for the essential activities in the schools, it is also pointed out that there are other components of the school's infrastructure to which give attention such as canteens, sanitary installations and infirmary. Moreover, attention must be given also to the external surroundings of the schools; it is indeed said that

The yard, for example, should give the children enough possibilities for movement and play (sand pit, play and climbing equipment, adventure corners, benches) and should also be suitable for use during P.E. lessons (sports fields).

203. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

204. *Ibid.*

205. *Ibid.*

206. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

In bad weather, the children should also have the possibility of playing and running about in the fresh air, and parts of the school playground should be covered. School gardens and nature study pools enrich the school environment. Conveniently close to the classroom, children can observe and study nature at first-hand, in their environmental studies syllabus²⁰⁷.

Attention to the spatial dimension is demonstrated also in the indications about class equipment that should favour

class teaching, group work, individual work and free choice activities [...], maps and wall charts [...], audio-visual aids [...], materials for Art and Craft [...], a reading corner for individual reference work or silent reading [...], simple instruments for music making [...], facilities for keeping animals in class and for growing plants²⁰⁸.

One of the main aims that should be promoted through spatial organization and classroom equipment is the ability to foster children's curiosity, desire for learning, creativity, interest and expression. As for the latter, it is also pointed out that in classes and halls, there should be space «for exhibiting and for storing children's work, including pin boards, glass showcases and shelving»²⁰⁹. Among the most crucial environments, the library is indicated: with an area for studying, it is suggested that it should contain specialized books on particular disciplines and themes; children's literature for each linguistic section; and books for support teachers.

The final sections of the documents deal with the desire to create a harmonized system, a desire that is at the basis of the European Schools system. However, it is reiterated that local conditions change from school to school due to the size of individual schools, the number of language sections, the number of pupils, the cultural climate, and the local environment. In this way, significant repercussions are felt on the application of the syllabus, the organization of timetables, the second languages proposed, the organization of European hours teaching, and the school's participation in local events²¹⁰. Space is also given to the community feature that should characterize the school; therefore, cooperation between the administration bodies, teachers, other staff members and parents is highly desired. It is said that, to facilitate the transition of students from one

207. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

208. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

209. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

210. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

school level to another, committees for a joint curriculum are created²¹¹. At the end of the document, there is an appendix with all the documents published up to then: there are also references to the syllables of the individual subjects that had to consider the general guidelines as the ones analyzed.

What can be noted at the end of the close reading of the *ES Guidelines 1990* is the re-emergence of some themes already present in the *Harmonized Timetables and Programmes* and the 1971 and 1972 preparatory documents: within them, it is worth mentioning the necessity to start from the students following their needs and respecting their development; to arouse interest and promote an active methodology. Compared to the previous documents, the possible influences from which these attitudes derive appear to be less visible: in the analysis of the *HTPs* and the *ES Report 1971* and *ES Report 1972*, I have highlighted some passages that recall activism, Montessori, Piaget, and the situation of the different countries; on this last point, I cite for example the references that emerged to the *activités d'événements* mentioned by Christiaens in the *ES Report 1971*. All this is no longer explicitly referred to and traceable – in terms of influence exercised and openly recognised – in the *ES Guidelines 1990* while some of the same objectives and considerations are reaffirmed there (e.g. the ideas of differences, promoting a national and international/European vision), and new focuses of attention and stances emerge and are directly affirmed such as the discussion on spaces dedicated to school time (classrooms, gyms, canteens) or the debate on remedial teaching.

211. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

4. *Pedagogical Bulletin: a glimpse on the relational and individual dimension of the curriculum?*

4.1. Chapter's Introduction

In this chapter, I am going to talk about the *Pedagogical Bulletins* that circulated within the European School System from 1962 till 2003. As it will be better seen from the source analysis in the following paragraphs, the *Pedagogical Bulletins* were created to be used internally and not to express pedagogical views or the official pedagogical principles of the European Schools outside of their circuit. They were considered an instrument to foster and reflect on the harmonization and to share teaching practices and observations. Even if the creators of the *Pedagogical Bulletins* themselves had not thought of them as pedagogical journals to spread the thoughts of the European Schools and to encourage dialogue outside them, I believe that these *Pedagogical Bulletins* share some essential characteristics with the pedagogical press, first of all the space given to the topic of teaching¹ and the possibility of giving partial access to the «door of a classroom that introduces the internal plots of school life, providing data to reveal the less obvious mechanisms²». For this reason, it seems necessary and important to me to consider them within the typology of sources of the pedagogical press and, while taking into account the specific peculiarities of the case, I will proceed to refer initially to the scientific literature in the teaching press to underline the relevance of this type of source in the field of the History of Education. Secondly, I will explain how I approached and

1. S. Polenghi, *Italian Academic Pedagogical Magazines in the History of Education in the XX Century*, «PEDAGÓGIATÖRTÉNETI SZEMLE», vol. 1, n. 4, 2015, pp. 1-22.

2. G. Chiosso, *La Stampa Pedagogica e Scolastica in Italia tra Otto e Novecento*, «História da Educação», vol. 23, 2019, p. 6.

considered the Pedagogical Bulletins and which questions I had in mind while observing them. I will then move on with their description, their structure, and the main themes treated to focus, in the end, on some of the possible reading paths constituting the multiple and entangled threads they contributed to creating.

4.2. Relevance of the source

In an article on pedagogical journals circulating in Mexico at the beginning of the 20th century, Lucía Martínez Moctezuma considered «pedagogical journals as a ‘mirror of the epoch’»³ and also «as witnesses of what was once the daily school routine»⁴ not only by including published official documents, but also «unofficial texts, as well, ones that reveal the working conditions of teachers, their influence on the elaboration of textbooks, and the dissemination of articles that served the community»⁵. The same point is underlined also by Giorgio Chiosso in an article on the role of pedagogical journals in Italy at the end of the 19th century; their analysis provided information on many different points such as – to name just a few – the modes of teaching, the daily life of schools and the working and living conditions of teachers⁶. Looking at these sources, alongside other more traditional ones such as laws, school programs and organizational models, has made it possible to “move from the school ‘described’ as ideal to that ‘realized’ in everyday teaching”⁷. I also find relevant to be mentioned what Marc Depaepe claims regarding this type of source material whose content analysis could show links with the history of educational reality in classroom⁸. As a matter of fact, an aspect not to be overlooked, according to Depaepe, is that

educational periodicals lend themselves perfectly to ‘thick description’. They enable us to take a look behind the scenes at classroom practice and to gauge the

3. L. Martínez Moctezuma, *The Pedagogical Press and the Public Debate about Schooling*, in F. Herman, S. Braster, M. del Mar del Pozo Andrés (eds.), *Exhibiting the Past: Public Histories of Education*, Berlin, Boston, De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2022, p. 419.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 420.

5. *Ibid.*

6. Chiosso, *La Stampa Pedagogica e Scolastica in Italia tra Otto e Novecento*, cit., p. 7.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

8. M. Depaepe, J. Verhoeven, *Order in Progress. Everyday Education in Primary Schools: Belgium, 1880-1970*, *Studia Pedagogica* 29, Leuven., Leuven University Press, 2000.

strategy, ulterior motives, reservations and hidden meanings behind pedagogical and didactic practice. Professional journals do not, after all, limit themselves to practical matters. They can also concern themselves with general pedagogical and general social issues⁹.

Moreover, as for the connection with the curriculum and the light they can bring on it, they can definitely offer remarkable insights about «the topos in which prescribed organization and concrete pedagogy constantly intermingle»¹⁰. For sure, as Depapepe points out, a careful selection of the sources is necessary to make them be considered representative.

Considering all the above, I also believe that this type of source can contribute to the understanding of «how the curriculum has been negotiated at macro and micro level over time»¹¹ by paying attention to the interdependent dimensions of contact and mutual shaping between the individuals and the collective they are part of¹² and that can be detected in these sources. So, given their potentialities in terms of information and in depicting the different layers composing any school system they refer to, I am looking at them with the following questions in mind (the same of the whole project): what images of this specific school system do emerge from here? How did the system function especially in terms of harmonization, organization and practical realization of the curriculum? Which images of the child, the future citizens, and the role of education were given shape to? What were the opinions of the teachers? How could alternative voices and dissent have space, if they had any space?

9. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

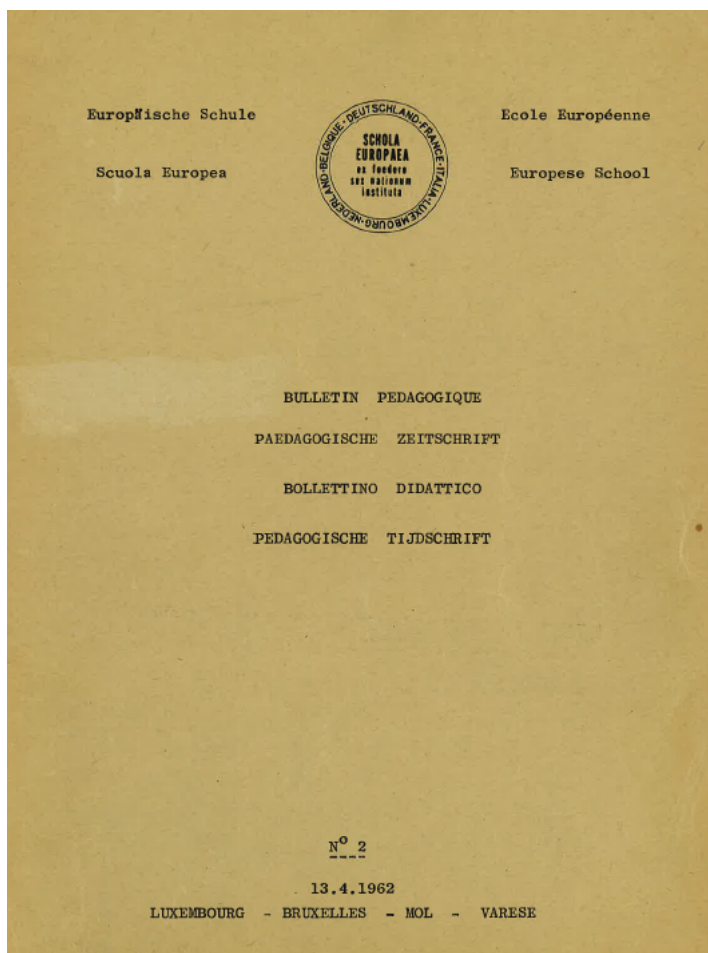
10. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

11. I.F. Goodson, *Learning, Curriculum and Life Politics: the selected works of Ivor F. Goodson*, Routledge, Oxon, p. 81.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

4.3. The Pedagogical Bulletins in the European Schools: features and functioning

Cover PB n. 2, 1962 *Schola europaea*, *Pedagogical Bulletin n. 2*, 1962



The picture above is the cover of the oldest Pedagogical Bulletin I came into contact with: it is number 2 published on April 13, 1962¹³, and circulated within the European Schools of Luxembourg, Bruxelles, Mol,

13. The full title of the publication is *Schola europaea*, *Pedagogical Bulletin n. 2*, 1962. From here on it will be indicated in the footnotes with the following abbreviation: *PB 1962 n. 2*.

and Varese. There is no information about the publisher who materially realised this publication and how it spread in practical terms within the different schools. Yet, looking at this specific number and the following ones, I would try to make some deductions. On page VI, in the text *En Guise de coup d'envoi. Ce que le Bulletin Peut Vous Apporter. Ce qui'Il Attend De Vous*, it is explained both in French and in German what the Pedagogical Bulletins could bring and what was expected from the readers – the teachers of the European Schools and the members of the different committees: these booklets aimed at testifying «the vitality of our Schools and our will to renovate ourselves»¹⁴. The events that favoured their creation are narrated; on Sunday, 12 January 1962 – during a meeting – twelve professors together with the delegate of the Superior Council and the four Directors of the Schools discussed the idea of having an organ of communication, but not to function as a pedagogical voice. Greater importance and urgency were recognized at that specific moment to the necessity of creating fruitful collaboration within the European Schools. Consequently, the Bulletins were originally thought to be used internally, just within the European School System. I am reporting the translation of the exact words according to which

the bulletin should be first and foremost a place of pedagogical meeting, this permanent means of mutual enrichment which we all feel all the needs. His field of research should consequently be limited to the problems of their European teachings that it is open to all of our pedagogic worries, that nourish our experience with the experience from others, but that it does not become in any case a review of general literature, an intimate journal or a politic tribune¹⁵.

I believe that from those words it can be detected the hope – for the *Pedagogical Bulletins* – to encourage dialogue between multiple voices; to be fruitful, it must have been located within the realities of the European Schools and the contributors should have tried to be as concrete and authentic as possible so to identify and formulate problems. Then, the intended general structure of the publication is described. It is composed of the following sections: Introduction; General articles on the European School and Pedagogy; focus on Nursery and Primary School; focus on Secondary School with specific zoom in on certain subjects such as Mother tongue, Philosophy; *Civisme* - History - Geography; Second Language; Old/Ancient Languages; Music - Physical Education - Artistic Education;

14. *PB 1962* n. 2, p. 9 (my translation).

15. *Ibid.*, p. VI (my translation).

Bibliography or book recommendations; Personalia: News from the People; administrative documents and news from the Schools.

The structure tends to remain the same throughout the years even though the part related to the administrative documents will be later moved to the centre of the publication and it will be made visible by printing it with a slightly different paper in terms of colour and consistency.

From 1977 on – maybe some years before but some of the copies are missing, so I am not able to tell it with certainty – five publications per year were produced, even though not always regularly (for instance, in 1986, only one Pedagogical Bulletin appeared, n. 96). Then, from 1996, the number of publications decreased to one or two copies per year, while in the years 2000-2003, only one copy was produced.

To go back to the first ones originally produced, in the Bulletin n. 2 of 1962 some information on their circulation and production is given; there is indeed the invitation to be responsible and get engaged with this type of publication; it is also said that in every school a committee had been established for promoting coordination, receiving suggestions and gathering the copy for next number; there was a responsible person and then five or six colleagues of different nationalities. Each committee stayed closely in contact with the Luxembourg équipe – the names of MM. Hautum, Quencez and Vivès are present here – who were responsible, in the starting years, for the publication of the whole Bulletins. Taking this into consideration, I would argue that probably the practical publication was done in Luxembourg, at least at the beginning. No further details on their circulation are given. On page VIII of the PB 1962 n. 2 it is then underlined how the Luxembourg team – coordinating the project – counted also on the support of the others because otherwise nothing could have been done: this bulletin should have been conceived as the Spanish inns of the past where you could only find what you brought there¹⁶. The invitation to take the pens and write then follows as it is testified by the following lines:

*Avez-vous des idées, même non conformistes? Vous heurez-vous à des difficultés particulières? Êtes-vous insatisfait de vos méthodes, ou, au contraire, en êtes-vous enchanté? Voulez-vous connaître un titre d'ouvrage, une référence qui vous serait utile? Avez-vous lu un livre intéressant pour vos collègues? Prenez alors votre plume et mettez-vous à l'œuvre. Vous pouvez écrire dans toutes les langues de l'école, voire en anglais ou en latin. Quel que soit le moyen d'expression que vous choisirez, vous rendrez service. Rien que cela doit suffire à vous décider. Nous avons tant à apprendre les uns des autres!*¹⁷

16. *Ibid.*, p. VIII.

17. *Ibid.*, p. VIII [Do you have any ideas, even non-conformist ones? Do you encounter any particular difficulties? Are you dissatisfied with your methods or on the contrary,

The numbers from the years 1963 to 1966 are missing and the preface – written in German, French, Italian and Dutch – of number 6, 1967, gives us some information on them¹⁸. Here it is said that the number of people working for the Pedagogical Bulletin decreased considerably and after that the original founders had left, it had not been published for a while. I believe this is important information that gives light on the fact that teachers and people working for the European Schools moved within them and also went back to their home country at a certain point. To go back to the Preface in the PB 1967 n. 6, it is also said that new European schools had been created in the meantime, the other ones – already existing – had widened, while the number of teachers had increased. This fact made more urgent and visible the necessity to «establish frequent contacts e promote collaboration between the different European Schools»¹⁹.

The authors of the Preface, therefore, propose to publish this bulletin on a regular basis twice a quarter, however avoiding the publication of special issues dedicated to a single topic, unless the need arises. Teachers were asked to send: info on ongoing experiences in each of the European schools; the report of the meetings of the specialists of each subject; responses to articles or suggestions on pedagogical and didactic matters; personal info. The editorial committee undertook to timely publish the calendar and agenda of the various meetings as well as the decisions of the Superior and Inspection Councils. Finally, for practical reasons, they requested to attach a summary in German to each article written in French or Italian, and a summary in French to the others.

There are other two numbers that provide information on the functioning of this publication. The first one is number 52 published in 1977 where a Questionnaire proposed by the Editorial Committee can be found in three different linguistic versions: German, English and French²⁰. The aim of it is to collect opinions on the presentation of the Bulletin and, in particular, it is asked if, according to the readers, the Bulletin should have a new cover with photographs, another form of index, bigger headlines, more

are you delighted with them? Would you like to know the title of a book or a reference that would be useful to you? Have you read an interesting book for your colleagues? Then, pick up your pen and get to work. You can write in any of the school's languages, even English or Latin. Whichever medium you choose, you'll be doing a service. That alone should be enough to make up your mind. We have so much to learn from each other!].

18. *Schola europaea, Pedagogical Bulletin n. 6, 1967*. From here on it will be indicated in the footnotes with the following abbreviation: PB 1967 n. 6.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 5 (my translation).

20. See *Schola europaea, Pedagogical Bulletin n. 52, 1977*. From here on this publication will be indicated with the following abbreviation: PB 1977 n. 52.

information about the authors of the articles, include a brief summary of the articles, include drawings, include a smaller or different selection of typefaces; there is also space for other criticism or aspects that the readers would have liked to point out²¹. I have not been able to retrace the results of such a Questionnaire; in number 54 of June 1977, it is said that only three local correspondents (so, three Schools) had sent back replies from the Questionnaire and there is an invitation to take part in the survey²². Moreover, it can be noticed that since 1978 an image is almost always present on the cover. Another information that can be deduced from the Questionnaire is the fact that in every school there was at least one local representative for the Pedagogical Bulletin (it is indeed said that after having filled in the questionnaire, it should have been passed to the local representative by 1 March 1977²³).

Another article, probably useful in shedding light on the mechanism of production of such Bulletins, can be found in number 53 published in April 1977, in the section Forum, on page 3²⁴. I will further discuss this piece, since it deals with the theme of censorship, in the next paragraph; however, here attention will be given to the fact that the Pedagogical Bulletin published on June 1976 arrived late and it was difficult to reply to an article in it since the following months – especially the ones of the first semester of the new scholastic year 1976/1977 – were very busy²⁵. Again, I believe we have here a glimpse of how the Bulletin moved within the system – sometimes with delays – and the possible communication it sparked and facilitate.

Another interesting fact on the functioning of this type of publication is the presence of special numbers: for example, in 1978, a Special Issue was published to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the first European School in Luxembourg²⁶.

If we look at the content, in general, the main themes treated revolve around the following points: the harmonization of the European School System and how to promote it; examples from national cases; problems encountered; discussion on specific subjects; reflections on the curriculum and its implementation; reforms of the European Schools; experiences

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-5.

22. *Schola europaea, Pedagogical Bulletin n. 54, 1977*, p. 4. From here on this publication will be indicated with the following abbreviation: *PB 1977 n. 54*.

23. *PB 1977 n. 52*, cit., pp.3-5.

24. *Schola europaea, Pedagogical Bulletin n. 53, 1977*. From here on this publication will be indicated with the following abbreviation: *PB 1977 n. 53*.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

26. *Schola Europea Special Edition 1953-1978, 1978*.

realised in the different schools. Furthermore, these publications are multilingual because they respect the linguistic diversity and richness of the European Schools; in this regard, it is not unusual to find the recurrence of articles already published and re-proposed in a subsequent issue but translated into other languages (French, English and German are the most common; however, other languages are also present).

I will now focus on some specific articles that appear to have a different tone in comparison with the majority; I believe they can help us in perceiving some of the tensions that characterized this school system; tensions and trajectories that, in a way, differ from the main tone used and the main image of children, future citizens and teachers normally depicted.

Before focusing, in particular, on some numbers, I will indicate how I proceeded with the analysis. As already mentioned, the first Pedagogical Bulletin I came into contact with was *PB 1962 n. 2*, the only number traced for that year. There are also some gaps before *PB 1967 n. 6*. The PBs published after the latter and up to n. 51 of 1976 have not been traced; from n. 51 of 1976, however, there are no other gaps, and all the editions are present up to n. 88 of 1984, with an average of around 4 issues per year. Some numbers are missing from the years 1984-1986, but all the numbers up to n. 130 of 1999 are available. The last available numbers – 131, 132, 133, 134, and 135 – were published in 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003, but they underwent a change in their name: in fact, it is no longer talked about Pedagogical Bulletins but of *Panorama*. As already mentioned, the variety of topics covered is generally very wide; the table below indicates how many times some of the identified macro-themes recurred in the titles of the articles that appeared during the following three time periods: 1962-1970; 1971-1980; 1981-1990²⁷. I decided to focus on these time spans since they correspond to the years in which the changes in the curriculum described in the previous chapter occurred.

27. It should be noted that this table is the result of the analysis of the titles of the published articles only and not of the content; furthermore, it should be remembered that for some years, in particular from 1962 to 1970, it was not possible to consult all the numbers produced.

Table 3 - Most quoted macro-themes in the title of articles of the PBs 1962-1990

<i>Topics quoted in the title of articles</i>	<i>Years 1962-1970</i>	<i>Years 1971-1980</i>	<i>Years 1981-1990</i>	<i>Total – All the Time Spans</i>
Curriculum Harmonisation	1	4	3	8
School Reform		8	5	13
Citizenship/Civic Education	1		1	2
European Hours/Identity/Common Heritage	2	9	9	20
Language Teaching	5	10	21	36
Remedial Teaching		5	6	11
Reflections on Curriculum and Didactic and Pedagogic Practices	1	3	4	8

I now proceed, in the following paragraph, to briefly describe and analyze some of the articles which, in my opinion, offer an unprecedented insight and a “look from below” on life in the European Schools and which can constitute a valuable contribution to the reflection on the image of the student, the future citizen promoted through the official curriculum, even with all its contradictions.

4.4. The Pedagogical Bulletins in the European Schools. Focus on specific articles: a space for different voices?

4.4.1. Article on censorship

The first article I am focusing on is in *Schola europaea*, Pedagogical Bulletin n.53, 1977 (PB 1977 n. 53) printed in April 1977; it can be located under the Section called Forum, just at the very beginning of the publication²⁸; it was written by Mr Didelot who was based in Varese and signed himself as the General Secretary of the SIPEE. While reading it, we get acquainted with the fact that the SIPEE is a teacher trade union, but no further explanations are given²⁹; in the article, Mr Didelot explains that,

28. *PB 1977 n. 53*, pp. 3-4.

29. This trade union is mentioned also in the Special edition of the Pedagogical Bulletin published in 1978 for the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the European School in Luxembourg.

in a previous number of the PB, published in June 1976, an article against SIPEE had been published since the association had apparently spoken of censorship in relation to the content published in the Pedagogical Bulletins. He then points out that if the Pedagogical Bulletin is a place created to promote exchange and collaboration, also problems should be discussed and there should not be space for censorship³⁰. In addition to this, he also notices how the committee responsible for the selection of the articles to be published is composed mainly of members of the administration while, in his view, it should be more open to teachers. He also underlines how often the writers of articles censored themselves so as to have their pieces published with the result that usually highly specialized texts are present, texts that do not constitute a really useful contribution to promote fruitful collaboration; as an example of this, he quotes a piece on Maths teaching published in a previous number³¹.

It has been not possible to collect further information about this censorship episode and the SIPEE; however, I thought it important to mention this article because it reports an example which, in my opinion, offers a broader look at the daily reality of the European Schools and at the possible episodes of dissent that might have occurred and which also testify about a certain “disconnection” between the prescriptive and formal dimension described in the official documents and the practical and daily implementation realized by the all the subjects involved, with their own beliefs, attitudes and behaviours.

4.4.2. Aidan Smith: A school for all talents

The second article I am focusing on was published in the same number, the *PB 1977 n. 53*; it was written by Aidan Smith, a British teacher arrived at the *École Européenne de Bruxelles I* in 1974 and who worked there as Primary School Deputy Head till 1996³². His name was also present among those constituting the committee that dealt with the Primary School Reform proposal in 1990 and who worked on it since 1986³³. Furthermore, his name also reappears in other PB articles relating to the teaching of the European Hours³⁴ and the inauguration of the new school

30. Didelot, in *PB 1977 n. 53*, p. 3.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

32. This information was collected during an interview with Aidan Smith's wife, Judy, which took place online last 15.06.2023.

33. In this regard, see the previous chapter.

34. See *Schola europaea*, Pedagogical Bulletin n. 58, 1978, p. 37.

library³⁵. Going back to the article in question, it stresses the necessity for the European Schools to promote a model of education that takes care of all children and of all talents and differences, a school not worried about the survival of the fittest, but concerned with «the happiness of all children»³⁶. Speaking of primary education, Smith indeed recounts the episode of a boy who had shown him «a plate of jam tarts»³⁷ and says that he does not remember the boy's name but that he has not forgotten «his pride in his efforts, the justified self-esteem which comes from a job well done»³⁸. In fact, Smith underlines how to create that specific plate of cakes, the boy had to use different skills and learn various things, concepts and processes such as, for example, preparing the ingredients, patiently waiting for the final result, cleaning and arranging the equipment used, and also having to deal with results that were not always optimal as expected. He underlines precisely how this cooking activity had implied «a wealth of integrated work, providing an activity at which many children could shine»³⁹. He also acknowledges the fact that this particular boy would almost certainly not become a chef, but what matters was that «he had been engaged in at least one activity which he could well, and which was meaningful for him. Above all, in his results, he could recognize his own achievement»⁴⁰. According to Smith, the most important thing is that this achievement contributes to creating and strengthening «the child's self-esteem, helping him to develop into a well-balanced person, happy with himself and with other people»⁴¹. The adjective "happy" is probably the key word in this case: quoting the Scottish pedagogist Alexander Sutherland Neill (1883-1973), Smith states that the purpose of education is «above all else to make people happy»⁴². I find it significant that Neill is mentioned firstly because it can be assumed that his name was part of the background references and influences valuable to Smith and, moreover, because Neill was a pedagogue and teacher who founded the Summerhill School characterized by a community-based decision-making process⁴³, and so his name is related to

35. See Anselmi in *Schola europaea*, Pedagogical Bulletin n. 57, 1978, p. 81.

36. A. Smith in *PB 1977 n. 53*, p. 41.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

38. *Ibid.*

39. *Ibid.*

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Ibid.*

42. *Ibid.*

43. For further information see J. Darling, *A.S. Neill on Democratic Authority: A Lesson from Summerhill?*, «Oxford Review of Education», vol. 18, n. 1, 1992, pp. 45-57.

D. Limond, «[A]ll our Scotch education is in vain»: *The construction of Scottish national identity in and by the early Dominie books of A.S. Neill*, «History of Education», vol. 28, n. 3, 1999, pp. 297-312.

a school experience that tried to contribute to democratic education. Going back to Smith's text, he underlines how the attention of Primary teachers should be directed above all to all those activities that promote children's talents and development. In support of this, he also cites the *Plowden Report* on Primary Education, a significant document of reform in post-war England⁴⁴. He writes:

The Plowden Report on Primary Education 1966 says: 'the best preparation for being a happy and useful man or woman is to live fully as a child'. We could take that short sentence as our Credo. If we really believe it, and more important still, if we can act upon it, our schools will become schools for all talents, for all abilities, where no child can develop as children and in which they can register achievements which are significant to them. We are laying some of the foundations which go to make up happy adults. As parents and as teachers we cannot have a nobler purpose⁴⁵.

He believes that the Reformed Primary Programme for the European Schools, the result of the revision work of 1971 and 1972, was going in this direction and offered opportunities to create an environment that educates happy children and, therefore, future happy adults; he also underlines how teachers and educators had «the creative role»⁴⁶ to translate this objective and this environment into practice, building a school that welcomes and leaves space and offers possibilities to all, «a school where we are not concerned with the survival of the fittest, but with the survival and happiness of all»⁴⁷.

4.4.3. Pedagogical Bulletin Schola Europea 1953-1978: The Child or the Curriculum?

I will briefly look at two articles published in 1978, in the Special edition for the 25th anniversary of the European Schools. The publication consists of an initial part of official thanks, then followed by a historical reconstruction of the first 25 years of the European Schools; among the

44. For further information on the *Plowden Report* see M. Kogan, *The Plowden Report Twenty Years on*, «Oxford Review of Education», vol. 13, n. 1, 1987, pp. 13-21; P. Cunningham, *Plowden in History: popular and professional memory*, «FORUM», vol. 49, n. 1-2, 2007, pp. 21-32; K.W. Clausen, *Ontario's Plowden Report: British influence on Canadian education in the 1960s*, «History of Education», vol. 42, n. 2, 2013, pp. 204–221.

45. A. Smith in *PB 1977 n. 53*, p. 41.

46. *Ibid.*

47. *Ibid.*

proposed documents, the name of Albert Van Houtte is visible since he sketches the background of «The Legal Constitutions»⁴⁸ of the Schools. The next part of the bulletin is dedicated to the current situation with a focus on the different schools; the attention then shifts to the main pedagogical themes in a section that collects teacher contributions on the reform and harmonization processes of the curriculum, with a gaze continuously oscillating between a national and a European perspective. The publication also contains “excerpts” from real life told by employees, educators and students; the volume is finally closed with observations and proposals for the future.

In the following lines, I will briefly focus on two articles: the first, *The Curriculum or the Child?*, proposed both in English and Irish Gaelic by Margaret Brennan, an Irish primary school teacher who collaborated with Aidan Smith at the European School Brussels I⁴⁹. The second article is written by the Italian Section of the Luxembourg Primary School and focuses on *Le concezioni dell'insegnamento nazionale paragonate a un sistema di insegnamento europeo armonizzato*⁵⁰ [*The conceptions of national teaching compared to a harmonized European teaching system*].

Brennan starts from this question: «The Curriculum or the Child?»⁵¹ because, in her view, it well expresses «the basic difference between the harmonized European system and the national system in Ireland»⁵². In fact, she remembers having come from a school where «the teaching was ‘child-centred’ rather than ‘curriculum-centred’»⁵³: according to her, this was due to some different reasons. The first one was the fact that there was basically no break and difference of approach between Nursery school and Primary school; this led to the second reason, namely the fact that great attention was given, since 1951 at least, to individual differences promoting a mixture of individual, group and class activities. The third reason she acknowledges was the fact that the principle of individual attention characterising Nursery school had been also applied in other school cycles starting from Primary school where children were much more active and where «at the different stages of his development the child is allowed full scope to express his own personality, to experience the joy of discovery and to consult a variety of reading material»⁵⁴. This progressive attitude

48. *Schola Europea*, 1978, p. 43.

49. Information collected during the interview with Judy Smith on 15.06.2023.

50. The article is initially presented in the Italian version followed by the German and English ones.

51. M. Brennan in *Schola Europea*, 1978, p. 174.

52. *Ibid.*

53. *Ibid.*

54. *Ibid.*

was implemented also thanks to some changes that occurred, such as a different organization of the school's physical environment with new furniture and more floor space in the classrooms⁵⁵; reductions in the pupil/teacher ratio together with an increased knowledge of group-teaching methods are other factors she underlines⁵⁶, and also the fact that almost every national school started created own library with more books beyond the textbooks normally used. On the contrary, she has the impression that the harmonized curriculum of the ES is much more similar to what she calls «the old curriculum, [...] that the curriculum is subject and progress-oriented»⁵⁷. She believes this could easily change if the aims of Primary education are clearly stated, which, in her view, are the following: «To enable the child to live a full life as a child. To equip him to avail himself of further education so that he may go on to live a full life as an adult in society»⁵⁸. She affirms that a curriculum based on the two aforementioned goals and principles should be able to put the children's development at the centre while taking great care of «the needs of children who differ in natural ability and in the cultural background»⁵⁹. This differs widely from a curriculum-centred education characterized by a logical approach, not a psychological one and that «places emphasis on what the child ought to be taught rather than how he learns at the different stages of his development»⁶⁰. She also refers to recent research which highly values the child as «the most active agent in his own education»⁶¹ both as an individual and as a group member. Like Aidan Smith before her, she also recognizes the role of the teachers who have to guide and inspire the children, «adapting and moulding the curriculum to the needs of each individual child»⁶².

Considerations similar to those of Brennan are also found in the contribution proposed by the Italian linguistic section of the Luxembourg Primary School: it is here recognized the value of harmonized programs and timetables as a tool at the basis of the organization of the complex and bold initiative carried out by the European Schools, but, nevertheless, the article highlights some weaknesses, in particular those encountered by Italian teachers who have the 1955 Italian programs as a reference point. While on the one hand, there is no doubt that the ES harmonized timetables and programs «are designed to cover the numerous aspects of national teaching

55. *Ibid.*, p. 175.

56. *Ibid.*

57. *Ibid.*

58. *Ibid.*

59. *Ibid.*

60. *Ibid.*

61. *Ibid.*

62. *Ibid.*

systems and aim to educate responsible citizens, aware of their place in society, sensitive to changes in the world around them and ready to take part in the development of a United Europe»⁶³, on the other it is stressed how difficult it is to put them into practice since the programs of the European Schools are «influenced by technicalities unknown to traditional Italian teaching» which is instead more focused «above all on understanding the child, the center of all school activities»⁶⁴. Consequently, there are also practical and organizational difficulties regarding, for example, timetables or difficulties caused by the second language teaching; furthermore, an element is missing in the ES harmonized programs which are instead defined as constitutive of the spirit of Italian syllabuses, namely «suggestions, advice and warnings on the best way of understanding the child in order to ‘adapt the teaching to the psychology of the child’»⁶⁵. Where these indications were partially present, however, it is noted a severity of rules and contents which makes it difficult to realize what is mentioned in the introduction of the harmonized programmes, the fact «to start from the child»⁶⁶ which remains more a rather generalized recommendation. Instead, in the context of the European Schools – despite some isolated cases – «the structures, the timetables and syllabuses impose on» the teachers⁶⁷, thus making it difficult to reflect on the children’s efforts, on their development and what happens in class. In fact, on this point the contribution is very clear: the Italian syllabuses of 1955, while expressing the need to start from the children and therefore to be aware of their different stages of development, are not «strictly scientific» because they do not want to provide «a model, a preconceived idea, or to try to standardize his class on the basis of a plan which has nothing in common with reality and the interests of the children, but by assessing all signs given, recognizing the efforts made by each child in relation to his personal commitment»⁶⁸. For this to happen in the European Schools in a more incisive way, the writers highlight the need for an organizational and structural rethinking of the ES to ensure that an increase in the number of duties and tasks assigned to the teachers is the only consequence, therefore to avoid causing to only overload the teachers. The article ends with the hope of having provided useful ideas to fuel «the continuous, enthusiastic and democratic debate to which the European Schools have given rise for twenty-five years»⁶⁹.

63. *Schola Europea*, 1978, p. 181.

64. *Ibid.*

65. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

66. *Ibid.*

67. *Ibid.*, p. 183.

68. *Ibid.*

69. *Ibid.*

4.4.4. *Livre de l'Association Quart Monde*

The next article I am going to focus on is in the *Schola europaea, Pedagogical Bulletin n. 68, 1980* and, in particular, in its section Bibliographie: here it is said that La Maison européenne ATD *Quart Monde*⁷⁰ – active in Moleenbeek and other headquarters of Bruxelles – had delivered to the Pedagogical Bulletin Committee the presentation of a work on «unhappy childhood», «sur l'enfance malheureuse» in the original text⁷¹. The Editorial Committee thought that this book could be interesting to be talked about in the PB, to make it known. The title of the book is the following: *Livre Blanc des Enfants du Quart Monde* realised «by researchers from all walks of life who have reflected on the living conditions of the most disadvantaged children in our industrialized countries. It will undoubtedly draw the attention of all teachers to the problems that affect childhood»⁷². A brief presentation of the book follows; with the expression Fourth World reference is made both to the European Community and outside of it. The situation of children of the Fourth World is discussed in relation to their family, their relationship with the school, the place of the children in daily life, work, health, violence, environment, religion and the future. The writer also underlined what, in their view, it is put into question by *le Quart Monde* – a milieu that is subjected to injustice and exclusion in all the industrialised countries: there is no look outside of industrialised countries, but yet the view is wider that only Europe and the assumed “good things” happening there. I believe this text can be a sign of how, within the European Schools – and within a certain environment that was, in a certain sense, reserved only for a specific category of people – there was attention, at least partial, to the wider environment and context. And this view and this *Quart Monde* specifically aim to put into question

a model of economic development realised by oppressing a part of the population; and, also, a model that has been imported in the developing countries in the process of a development which excludes the poorest from progress; a democracy that deprives a portion of citizens of the right to speak⁷³.

70. The *Mouvement* and the *Association* – originally born in France and founded by Père Joseph Wresinski – kept on growing and also spread in the Flandres and also had contact with the KU Leuven and the Université de Tours. More info here: <https://atd-quartmonde.be/qui-sommes-nous/notre-histoire/atd-quart-monde-en-belgique/> (last access: 23.06.2024)

71. *Schola europaea, Pedagogical Bulletin n. 68, 1980, p. 57*. From now on the document will be indicated as follows: PB 1980 n. 68.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 57.

73. *Ibid.*, p. 61.

Especially, those children of the *Quart Monde*, without their rights and a proper experience of childhood, ask a fundamental question, according to the writer: what were the meanings given to childhood and the child in that moment?⁷⁴. There is also a short part under the title of *Pour une politique de l'enfant*⁷⁵ with some suggestions and proposals for the next 20 years.

4.4.5. Experiments on Support and Remedial Teaching

In this paragraph, I will focus, without going into too much detail, on the following three articles published in the *Schola europaea, Pedagogical Bulletin n.69, 1980*, and concerning the topic of Remedial Teaching:

1. *What is Remedial Teaching?* by Christina Campbel - Brussels I⁷⁶.
2. *Le remedial teaching a l'école européenne de Bruxelles I* by Andréé Mousse - Bruxelles I⁷⁷.
3. *Esperienze di Remedial Teaching a Bruxelles* by Maria Luisa Giachino⁷⁸.

These three articles address the topic from three slightly different angles, though they originate from the same circumstance, namely the fact that in the European School of Bruxelles I, in January 1980, a stage started for the training of six teachers – one from each linguistic section – on Remedial Teaching; the project had been approved by the Board in December 1979 and was supposed to last for one year and a half⁷⁹. Giachino explains that the teachers taking part in the project were supposed to participate in lessons about

development problems; personality and psychology; adaptation of learning rhythms and consequent evaluation; methodological innovations; interdisciplinarity; lessons taught by the class teacher and the remedial teacher; initiatives carried out in countries where Remedial teaching is already present, and the possibility of doing in England is also envisaged⁸⁰.

74. *Ibid.*

75. *Ibid.*

76. C. Campbel, in *Schola europaea, Pedagogical Bulletin n. 69, 1980*, pp. 9-10. From here on the document will be indicated as follows: *PB 1980, n. 69*.

77. A. Mousse, in *PB 1980, n. 69*, pp. 11-12.

78. M.L. Giachino, in *PB 1980, n. 69*, pp. 13-15.

79. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

80. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Furthermore, experiences already carried out are listed such as, for example, the visit to specialist centres and schools in Antwerp and Brussels (including the British School) where remedial classes are already active. Dutch schools in Zeist, Baarn, Lelystaad, Leeuwarden, and Utrecht had already been visited for a week to observe “the practice in the field” and to be able to discuss it immediately afterwards. It is also clarified that Remedial Teaching concerns «able-bodied students with an academic delay due to occasional circumstances or mild learning difficulties»⁸¹, but it is not used in the case of permanent handicaps or other situations, particularly complicated ones that require specialized teaching. The remedial teachers are invited to follow the collegial programming and, at the same time, adapt their activities and methods to the peculiarities of the individual child also on the basis of a profound observation carried out in class. Once the difficulties encountered have been overcome, «the student can be reinstated in her class»⁸². The first contribution is instead more theoretical and reflects on the nature of Remedial Teaching and who it is aimed at. As the author writes, «the word ‘remedial’ implies putting something right that has gone wrong in the child’s educational progress»⁸³; in order to make this teaching effective, it is fundamental to set clear goals focusing on the child’s potential and to greatly cooperate with all the other teachers involved since remedial education is part of the normal curriculum and should not be considered as special. It seems relevant to mention that in the article the following work by W.K. Brennan is quoted, *Shaping the Education of Slow Learners*, stressing «the need for a movement away from a subject-oriented curriculum for the remedial pupil towards a concern for the slow learner in his own right, as a person involved in relationships with others»⁸⁴. Mousse’s contribution clarifies again who Remedial Teaching is aimed at by quoting the words of Inspector Pollentier pronounced on 8 January 1980 at the opening of the Project⁸⁵: remedial teaching is designed for students with difficulties due to occasional circumstances such as illness or family problems, in any case, temporary difficulties. Mousse also indicates different methods of remedial teaching such as the co-presence lesson, with the teacher in charge while the Remedial teacher deals especially with the most fragile students⁸⁶; or the division of the class into two

81. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

82. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

83. C. Campbel, in *PB 1980*, n. 69, p. 9.

84. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

85. A. Mousse, in *PB 1980*, n. 69, p. 11.

86. *Ibid.*

groups that carry out the same lesson, with the weaker group together with the remedial teacher⁸⁷; or again, the possibility of working in homogeneous groups by age and level or individually with students⁸⁸. He also highlights the need for collaboration between the various teachers.

4.5. The Pedagogical Bulletins and their perspective on the curriculum and citizenship: some final considerations

The topics addressed in this chapter were intended to provide a first, brief and not in-depth or systematic analysis of the universe behind the *Pedagogical Bulletins* of the European Schools, starting from the assumption that they can give teachers a voice and, therefore, show us something also from their perspective⁸⁹. The analysis conducted is not extensive and was limited to only a few articles and a few years; consequently, it can be considered a preliminary analysis which, moreover, did not cover the entire period during which the *Pedagogical Bulletins* were published. In this case, I recognize a difficulty in the analysis due to the lack of sources concerning certain years, and to a particular complexity typical of the European Schools System itself: while recognizing that all school systems are extremely complex, I think that the European school system is even more so due to the different ‘mixed origins and influences’ that come from multiple points, in a disorderly manner, and which are also reflected in the *Pedagogical Bulletins*. Considering all of this, what conclusions can be drawn from this preliminary analysis? What images, what visions of citizenship, of the curriculum do they offer? After having carried out a major excavation to go beyond the massive amount of rhetorical and specialist material – which, however, tells very little about the lives of the people who were part of the ES contexts – small spaces seem to emerge where it was still possible to show dissent; I believe that this is also significant from the perspective of a reflection on the idea of citizenship since it shows that among the values embodied by some of the teachers – and therefore perhaps also taught by them – that of dissent was present. In the case, for example, of the article on censorship, I was not able to find further information on the specific episode recounted, but I hypothesize that the author of the article could have behaved similarly in his classes,

87. *Ibid.*

88. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

89. Goodson, *Learning, Curriculum and Life Politics: the selected works of Ivor F. Goodson*, cit.

inviting his students to demonstrate some dissent, if necessary. Moving on to Aidan Smith's article and also to that of Margaret Brennan, I believe it was first of all possible to trace a further influence on the context of the European Schools, to add to the original ones initially outlined in the 1971 Report. The Anglo-Saxon and Irish contexts, the *Plowden Report*, A. S. Neill and the Summerhill School entered the scene for a moment, albeit fleetingly. All these elements reiterate the need to pay attention to the children, to their image and self-esteem, to the adults they would have become. As Smith reminds us, the goal should have been to educate happy people, capable of experimenting and learning about their abilities; although it is an element that can be traced back only to Smith's single case, this article introduces the element of happiness as an element to be considered in the educational project. I also believe it is not much distant from the ideas expressed by Brennan and the Italian Section in Luxembourg in 1978. The Italian contribution also shows the difficulty in the practical implementation of the harmonized curriculum, and in doing so it proves, in my opinion, and together with Brennan's contribution, to be another expression of dissent, more calm than the article on censorship. However, the acknowledgement remains that the curriculum of the European Schools, although subject to a first reform in 1971 and 1972 which added elements attributable to active pedagogy and psychologization of education, still remained very technical and very curriculum-centred rather than child-centred. Thus, the invitation to rethink it follows, paying attention, as the Italian Section of Luxembourg reminds us, that any changes carried out for good purposes would not fall only on teachers, increasing their workload. The need and request for organizational restructuring therefore seems to emerge.

Finally, as for the values that can be traced back to the image and idea of citizenship education, Margaret Brennan's article suggests, in my opinion, the importance of giving real space to both cultural and physical differences. Among the values to be taught and put into practice, what seems to emerge is not only that of looking at the needs and talents of each student but also that of giving space to everyone, regardless of their diversity and peculiarities. This seems to materialize in part in the start of Remedial teaching experiments which, for example, in 1971-1972 was not foreseen and which was actually considered very difficult, if not impossible, to carry out. Other issues and articles of the *Pedagogical Bulletins* also talk about Remedial Teaching and my research on them is still ongoing. However, I felt it was important to mention the topic because I believe it can lead to a reflection on the connection between citizenship education

and what is today defined as an inclusive perspective⁹⁰, a perspective that is realized through networking and the action of different influences. The reconstruction is fragmented and incomplete, but it testifies to the intertwining and convergence of different trajectories. An incomplete analysis is also that on the *Livre Blanc des Enfants du Quart Monde* which, however, in my opinion, illustrates a possible opening beyond the “bourgeois” and mostly socially homogeneous reality of the European Schools, inviting a revision of the idea of the child to which reference is made. In conclusion, I believe that reading closely these *Pedagogical Bulletins*, although rhetorical in some respects and although they do not accompany us in the classroom, do however offer a broader look at the reality of the European Schools.

90. C. Ydesen, F. Acosta, A.L. Milner, Y. Ruan, T.R. Aderet-German, E.G. Caride, I.S. Hansen, *Inclusion in Testing Times: Implications for Citizenship and Participation*, Paris, UNESCO, 2020.

5. *Conclusions and further prospects*

Far from being a teaching that can be summarized through a series of skills or a list of topics, in this work, I started from the assumption that citizenship education involves different practices and aspects that permeate «the grammar of schooling»¹ and which are connected to the very pedagogical and moral goals of a peculiar school system², also responding to specific social demands that are in turn constructed as the results of interactions between various actors and ideas. Furthermore, the aforementioned practices through which schooling systems and citizenship education are assembled can relate to the different dimensions of citizenship identified by Schugurensky³ and, therefore, there can be diverse ways of investigating them, and diverse perspectives from which to frame them, as indicated by some of the studies carried out in the field of the History of Education and illustrated in Chapter 1. However, whatever perspective one chooses to adopt, it is evident, in my opinion, a close link between citizenship education and the curriculum. Consequently, I have recalled the theories on the curriculum because the textual analysis carried out wanted to underline possible connections while having as its focus the curriculum in a broad sense, not only as a legal document but as an object that is constructed and shaped on and by multiple levels: prescriptive, cultural, constructivist,

1. D. Tyack, L. Cuban, *Tinkering toward utopia: A century of public school reform*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1995.

2. M. Depaepe, *The Practical and Professional Relevance of Educational Research and Pedagogical Knowledge from the Perspective of History: Reflections on the Belgian Case in its International Background*, «European Educational Research Journal», vol. 1, n. 2, 2002, pp. 360-379.

3. D. Schugurensky, *Citizenship and Immigrant Education*, in P. Peterson, E. Baker, B. McGaw (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education (3rd Ed.)*, Oxford, Elsevier, 2010, pp. 113-119.

transnational. The desired results would have entailed the ability to look at the different trajectories and threads that outline the different constitutive dimensions of citizenship education and of the curriculum, as well as of the intertwined relationships and the influences that intersect in them and contribute to their mutual creation. The idea was also to go beyond the mere judgements on their values as outlined by the previous research on the European Schools. Nevertheless, I believe this work has some limitations that must be acknowledged; as said in the Introduction, the present work is based on my doctoral dissertation and, to a certain extent, reflects the steps backwards and forwards that characterizes the learning process that comes with the doctorate path and the discovery, reformulation and realization that «writing is also a way of knowing»⁴; for instance, someone might see “this potential weakness” in the journey taken within the sources and the different theories used to look at them, going back and forth between the two and adjusting the latter when confronting the former, and vice versa, in a trial-and-error process. I have the feeling that sometimes the present writing runs the risk to not effectively conveying this movement and shifts that address two different levels: in the first place, as I have already said, it is the movement between the sources and the theories chosen to look at them; I started from a preconceived notion of citizenship education and I ended up abandoning it, with the aim of looking at it and at the curriculum through the lenses of educationalization; however, I arrived here after several re-considerations and I think that at times I have dragged myself within these shifting whirls, sometimes losing a steadier – and to a certain extent more effective – gaze. At the same time, I tried to describe and follow what seemed to emerge from the sources even though – and this leads us to the second level – it has not always been easily possible to visualize and follow the different strands in detail. Due to the complexity of the research object – given its transnational nature – the access to archives, times constraints and my educational path as a “training” historian of education (to be), at times it was not always possible to delve deeper into some of the threads initially outlined and I often had the impression of ending up in dead ends or of being distracted; moreover, it seems that I have just started to scratch the surface. Beyond the limitations here outlined, I tried to go beyond simple information in the attempt to translate and transform⁵: what conclusions can be drawn from what we have seen so far?

4. L. Richardson, 1994, in B. Kamler, P. Thomson, *Working with Literature*, in B. Somekh, C. Lewin (eds.), *Theory and Methods in Social Research*, London, SAGE Publications Ltd, 2011, p. 196.

5. See B. Latour, *Reassembling the Social. An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.

In Chapter 2, through the analysis of Albert Van Houtte's speeches between 1960 and 1963, the image of a harmonized school curriculum emerged as a result of cooperation between different national states and aimed at promoting a citizenship based on multilingualism and collaboration; an idea of citizenship outlined by a global and intercultural dimension. If this had already been observed by previous research, the element of originality that I wanted to add was the focus on the contexts in which these speeches were delivered: in the first case – in the speech of 1960, held at the Pax Christi Conference – a link, albeit weak, was found with a movement active in the field of moral and peace education, as well as attentive to development issues. At the moment, I have no other elements that confirm the non-sporadic nature of this link, yet its presence, albeit single and therefore marginal, indicates, in my opinion, a connection with the theme of (citizenship) education and promotion of peace and development. Van Houtte's speech, given in Chicago in 1963 at the Conference organized by UNESCO, in my opinion, partly confirms this connection and brings an even broader and more international dimension. In fact, Van Houtte talks about international citizenship in this case and explains the need to cooperate to create new educational experiences that would have been up to the times and the challenges to be faced. On the model of the European Schools, Van Houtte proposes the possibility of organising a future international school of the United Nations in Washington without, however, mentioning the experience of Ecolint in Geneva and UNIS in New York⁶, international schools which seem, in my opinion, to share some similarities with the European Schools on shared values and the narratives of their birth as a response to the practical needs of a particular social group. Thus, at the moment, I do not have sufficient elements to state with certainty that there has been contact with these other experiences of international schools, even if I find their possible absence strange. I believe that this topic can be explored further in the future also in an attempt to broaden the discussion on educational internationalism⁷.

Moving on to the provisional results, in Chapter 3, I have focused on the close reading of the documents linked to the organization of the curriculum in a "prescriptive" sense; as seen, those documents did not present an

6. L.S. Dugonjić-Rodwin, *Les IB Schools, une internationale élitiste: émergence d'un espace mondial d'enseignement secondaire au XXe siècle*, Doctoral Thesis, Faculté de psychologie et des sciences de l'éducation, Section des sciences de l'éducation (Supervisors: R. Hofstetter, G. Sapiro), Université de Genève, 2014.

7. R. Hofstetter, B. Schneuwly, *The International Bureau of Education: A Precursor of the Unesco and the Factory of its Pedagogical Guidelines? (1934-1968)*, «Encounters in Theory and History of Education», vol. 21, 2020, pp. 24-51.

overall pedagogical vision, especially at the beginning, but some recurring threads can also be seen here: first of all, and at least at the beginning, there is a centrality given to the national dimension since the condition to be able to return to one's country of origin and be able to integrate into the educational system there seems necessary; in this way, it is seen clearly the nature of the European Schools as a transnational institutions characterized by the fact of «taking into account, or even building on national structures to transcend them»⁸. Language and language education appear to be fundamental tools to allow all of this; moreover, (multi)linguistic education is conceived as the cornerstone of the curriculum and it is, at the same time, the tool that promotes the exchange and mutual knowledge considered necessary to avoid misunderstandings, identify with others and promote a climate of peace as can be seen, for example, from the considerations on the teaching of the German language in 1963⁹. Even the teaching of reading and literature are considered tools capable of promoting this understanding and, therefore, a climate of peaceful coexistence starting from primary school. Since the 1960s, the specific teaching of *Civisme* has emerged in secondary schools, alongside the central role that has also been given to history and geography, as well as moments of collective work carried out through the European Hours. If what has been stated so far adds little to the observations made by previous literature on the European Schools, I believe it is significant that, in the present study, we have attempted to trace the origins of such attitudes so to make clear that the European Schools did not come out of the blue but built on specific traditions; I might be stating the obvious and yet I believe it is useful to provide some 'context' to go beyond rhetoric considerations: in the *ES Report 1971*, for example, the role of the different national laws emerges – especially French, Belgian and German – mostly characterized by an approach that recalls active pedagogy (and the very wide horizon of experiences that comes with it); furthermore, the mention of French laws and the reference to the *tiers-temps pédagogique* constitutes, in my opinion, an example of the influences found and which played a significant role in the place occupied by language teaching and in the definition and organization of disciplines such as the European Hours, History and Geography, disciplines considered central in the creation of the multilingual and open-to-diversity model of “identity” proposed. It is also relevant to point out that the concept of the *tiers-temps pédagogique* is made explicit through the writing of

8. Hofstetter, Schneuwly, *The International Bureau of Education: A Precursor of the Unesco and the Factory of its Pedagogical Guidelines? (1934-1968)*, cit., p. 27.

9. ES HTP 1963.

the Inspector Christiaens who, however, admits that for him not everything is clear about it and that further explanation would have been given by the French Inspector whose name unfortunately remains unknown. Going back to language studies, in the indications on language education, references to an active methodology and alternative pedagogy can be found since the 1957 programmes – such as the advice to use cooperative methods, creating a class' library and printing and writing text in a way that might have some Freinetian echos at the beginning (while in a second moment, after the UK entrance in the European Communities, explicit reference to Linguistics is made) – and they are progressively made more explicit in the subsequent years, also in other subjects such as social disciplines, the European Hours and Mathematics; in the latter explicit mention to Piaget and Montessori is made. From the analysis of the preparatory study for a reform of the curriculum conducted in 1971, part of this influence from active pedagogy can be traced back to the single national experiences that are analyzed; as already said, the case of France is particularly significant, in my view. In the document published in 1972, it is then stated the necessity to give some pedagogical principles to the European Schools based on the centrality of the children and of their curiosity, motivation, and psychology and so leading to a reflection – at least mentioned in the prescriptive documents – on classroom management methods and the teacher's role as mediator and guide. These reflections on teachers' role and their relationship with students appear also in some of the subjects indicated in the 1977 Harmonized Timetables and Programmes. In the 1972 document, a reference to the need to ensure that students develop an attitude inclined towards learning to learn is also present.

Moreover, I believe that the emphasis on the active dimension of education present in the European Schools' documents and aimed at responding to the needs of individuals and, at the same time, stimulating their participation and involvement together with their ability to learn have in some way contributed to the definition of an image of citizenship and citizenship education relying on the importance – and to a certain extent necessity – of the individual initiative, so giving importance to agency and, in a certain sense, prefiguring those characteristics that have been identified in the idea of an active citizenship and later a citizenship conceived as a way of being, a learning to be¹⁰.

10. On this concept see G. Delanty, *Citizenship in a global age: society, culture and politics*, Buckingham, Open University Press, 2000; M. Simons, J. Masschelein, *The Learning Society and Governmentality: An introduction*, «Educational Philosophy and Theory», vol. 38, n. 4, 2006, pp. 417-430; M. Joris, M. Simons, O. Agirdag, *Citizen-*

In addition to this, in the last reform document analyzed, in the 1990s, many of these concepts are reiterated due to the need to reinforce the underlying pedagogical visions of the European Schools. The European dimension is given greater emphasis, too, as it is explicitly mentioned in the 1994 Convention, just after the signing of the Maastricht Treaty. Going back to the 1990 document, more attention to the contemporary environment and social context is also present: for example, mention of a democratic and multicultural Europe is made and there are descriptions of social problems and of the social reality of the European Schools at that time such as the relationship between children and their families, communication means and issues related to the migration experience; what is interesting, in my view, is again how the idea of a multicultural Europe and a multilayered social reality seems to emerge while looking at the educational contexts.

Another element that has emerged since the 1970s and which has slowly developed and come to focus is the theme relating to the inclusion of students with special needs and difficulties: if, in the 1970s, the total unpreparedness of the European Schools to welcome and work with these students was recognized, in the 1980s we witnessed training experiences on Remedial Teaching, and, in the 1990s document, some initial methods of intervention were outlined. There is still much to uncover around the Remedial Teachings experiences at the European Schools and yet, the *Pedagogical Bulletins* analyzed suggest – for the European Schools Brussels I – the influences of British Schools in Antwerp and Brussels, together with schools’ observations in the Netherlands. Moreover, in terms of “inclusion”, it seems relevant to me to point out how the Schools also attempted both to welcome students who are different from those belonging to the milieu of the European officials – at least at the beginning, as demonstrated by Van Houtte’s discourse in 1963 – and to give space to those interested in undertaking an educational path not necessarily aimed at an academic future but of an occupational nature: in the programs of the ’70s there are indeed subjects belonging to a shorter experimental vocational trunk where an attempt was made to give both practical knowledge – relating to learning a job – and also cultural, theoretical knowledge and knowledge linked to the world of rights: for example, in history, the study of trade union organizations was also proposed. The contemporary reality of the European Schools no longer includes this type of proposal, yet it seems

ship-as-competence, what else? Why European citizenship education policy threatens to fall short of its aims, «European Educational Research Journal», vol. 21, n. 3, 2021, pp. 484–503.

relevant to mention it, in my view, because it represents an effort to be ‘inclusive’, and so to vehiculate ‘inclusive values’ that promote participation and could be nowadays considered part of Citizenship Education, too¹¹. I believe this inclusive turn can be read also in light of the educationalization process and, at the same time, it can be considered as an answer to peculiar contextual matters such as the confrontation with students coming from different social backgrounds, or students facing certain difficulties either related to occasional or more permanent circumstances.

As already said, the analysis in Chapter 3 was focused on the prescriptive level, linked to a programmatic dimension far from practical reality; I have attempted to have a glimpse of the latter in Chapter 4, focusing on the *Pedagogical Bulletins*. The topics addressed in Chapter 4 were intended to provide a first, brief and not in-depth analysis of the universe behind the *Pedagogical Bulletins* of the European Schools, starting from the assumption that they can give teachers a voice and, therefore, show us something also from their perspective. The analysis conducted is not extensive and was limited to only a few articles and a few years; consequently, it can be considered a preliminary analysis which, moreover, did not cover the entire period during which the *Pedagogical Bulletins* were published. In this case, I recognize a difficulty in the analysis due to the lack of sources concerning certain years, and to a particular complexity typical of the European Schools System itself: while recognizing that all school systems are extremely complex, I think that the European Schools system is even more so, due to the different ‘mixed origins and influences’ that come from multiple points, in a disorderly manner, and which are also reflected in the *Pedagogical Bulletins*. After having carried out a major excavation to go beyond the massive amount of rhetorical and specialist material – which, however, tells very little about the lives of the people who were part of the ESs contexts – small spaces seem to emerge where it was still possible to show dissent and also some critical aspects; I believe that this is also significant from the perspective of a reflection on the idea of citizenship since it shows that among the values embodied by some of the teachers – and therefore perhaps also taught by them – that of dissent was present. In the case, for example, of the article on censorship, I was not able to find further information on the specific episode recounted, but I hypothesize that the author of the article could have behaved similarly in his classes, inviting his students to demonstrate some dissent, if necessary. Moving on to Aidan Smith’s ar-

11. C. Ydesen, F. Acosta, A.L. Milner, Y. Ruan, T.R. Aderet-German, E.G. Caride, I.S. Hansen, *Inclusion in Testing Times: Implications for Citizenship and Participation*, Paris, UNESCO, 2020.

ticle and also to that of Margaret Brennan, I believe it was first of all possible to trace a further geographical influence on the context of the European Schools, to add to the original ones initially outlined in the *ES Report 1971*. The Anglo-Saxon and Irish contexts, the *Plowden Report*, A. S. Neill and the alternative and democratic experience of Summerhill School entered the scene for a moment, albeit fleetingly. All these elements reiterate the need to pay attention to the children, to their image and self-esteem, to the adults they would have become. As Smith reminds us, the goal should have been to educate happy people, capable of experimenting and learning about their abilities; although it is an element that can be traced back only to Smith's single case, this article introduces the element of happiness as an element to be considered in the educational project. I also believe it is not much distant from the ideas expressed by Brennan and the Italian Section in Luxembourg in 1978. The Italian contribution also shows the difficulty in the practical implementation of the harmonized curriculum, and, in doing so, it proves, in my opinion, to be another expression of dissent together with Brennan's contribution, even though they are both 'quieter and lighter' than the article on censorship. However, the acknowledgement remains that the curriculum of the European Schools, although subject to a first reform in 1971 and 1972 which added elements attributable to active pedagogy, still remained very technical and very curriculum-centred rather than child-centred. Thus, the invitation to rethink it follows while paying attention – as the Italian Section of Luxembourg reminds us – to the fact that any changes carried out for good purposes should have not fall only on teachers, so increasing their workload. The need and request for organizational restructuring therefore seems to emerge.

Finally, as for the values that can be traced back to the image and idea of citizenship education, Margaret Brennan's article suggests, in my opinion, the importance of giving real space to both cultural and physical differences. Among the values to be taught and put into practice, what seems to emerge is not only that of looking at the needs and talents of each student but also that of giving space to everyone, regardless of their diversity and peculiarities. This seems to materialize in part in the start of Remedial Teaching experiments which, for example, in 1971-1972 were not foreseen and which were actually considered very difficult, if not impossible, to carry out. Other issues and articles of the *Pedagogical Bulletins* also talk about Remedial Teaching and my research on them is still ongoing.

A not very deep analysis is also that concerning the *Livre Blanc des Enfants du Quart Monde* which, however, in my opinion, illustrates a possible opening beyond the "bourgeois" and mostly socially homogeneous reality of the European Schools, inviting a revision of the idea of the child to

which reference is made. In conclusion, I believe that reading closely these *Pedagogical Bulletins*, although rhetorical in some respects and although they do not accompany us in the classroom, do however offer a broader look at the reality of the European Schools and the dimensions of citizenship education and the curriculum.

One final consideration that pertains to all the three chapters must be made. I believe that while interacting with other International Organisations such as UNESCO or international associations like Pax Christi, or again while considering the prescriptive curriculum and the Harmonized Timetables and Programmes, and the ideas on school reforms and, finally, while listening to teachers' voices, a key concept can be traced, fundamental – in my view – in the definition and construction of citizenship education and the curriculum: I am referring to the idea of development that is conjugated embracing different shades. Within the interactions with International Organizations, development is considered as a synonym for peace and, at the same time, as economic development, as something to export from developing countries through developed ones and also through the means of education. This education should be multilingual and open to differences (such as the citizenship education and the curriculum it is based on). Development is also looked at with a psychological connotation as the development of the children starts to be more and more considered and put at the centre of educational processes implying, consequently, a progressive degree of individualization and personalization of teaching based on individual differences and developmental learning stages: this is reflected in the discourses on the organization of the curriculum and transition periods, and also on the discourses on a child-based learning and what today we consider as inclusive processes. Lastly, the idea of economic development comes back again in the writing on the *Livre de l'Association Quart Monde*¹², where it is contested as a concept to refer to, to the point that it is suggested if a new idea – not only of development – but of the child and education themselves should be considered.

What emerges, in the end, is a developmental, progressive and – to a certain extent – performative idea of identity and citizenship vehiculated to students so that they progressively learn to live together and “become in mind Europeans” while receiving a citizenship education that is both national and global – at least ‘on paper’ – based on dialogue and peace, respect for the individual, collaboration and active participation; a citizenship that calls for the recognition of all differences and yet made such process more difficult in practice.

12. ES PB 1980.

At the end, as I have already said, I have the impression to have barely started to scratch the surface and just started to follow the connections and the actors involved; due to this, I believe the words by Ursula K. Le Guin can be borrowed to say that the story of the European Schools does not have the shape of «the arrow or spear, starting here and going straight there and THOK! Hitting its mark»¹³ but that of a «bundle. Holding things in a particular, powerful relation to one another»¹⁴; in this bundle of trajectories, I have been carrying myself from one side to the other, sometimes with a blurring vision, and yet other relations remain to be investigated; some biographical stories and stories related to material culture in the European Schools are, for instance, still waiting for being reconstructed. In particular, the following paths could be addressed in the future: the individual stories of teachers such as Aidan Smith and Margaret Brennan, their life trajectories and their individual contributions to the European Schools; the further possible connections of the European Schools with other International Organizations and with individual national states or individual European Schools; a deeper analysis of the *Pedagogical Bulletins* and the creation of initiatives such as Remedial Teaching; finally, in light of the critical readings on Lifelong learning, it could be interesting to delve deeper into the theme of learning to learn, which already appeared in the 1970s and it is expanded in the 90s, especially in the most recent documents pertaining the Secondary cycle. Definitely, various possible paths still remain to be uncovered.

13. U. Le Guin, *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction in Dancing at the Edge of the World*, New York: Grove Press, 1986, p. 169. Available online here: https://monoskop.org/images/9/96/Le_Guin_Ursula_K_1986_1989_The_Carrier_Bag_Theory_of_Fiction.pdf (last access: 04.10.2024).

14. Le Guin, *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction in Dancing at the Edge of the World*, cit., p. 169.

List of Abbreviations

European Schools: ESs

European Coal and Steel Community: ECSC

Citizenship education: CE

Harmonized Timetables and Programmes 1957: ES HTP 1957

Harmonized Timetables and Programmes 1963: ES HTP 1963

Harmonized Timetables and Programmes 1972: ES HTP 1972

Harmonized Timetables and Programmes 1977: ES HTP 1977

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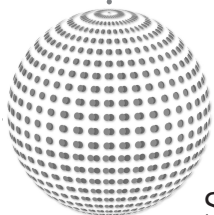


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The present volume examines the European Schools system focusing on the citizenship education they promote and their curriculum from the late 1950s to the early 1990s.

A literature review is presented to understand how previous research has described these Schools and their sketched image, which - in the author's view - is fairly static and accompanied by a value judgement. However, the work attempts to look at these Schools from a historical-educational, phenomenological and performative perspective. It considers citizenship education not so much as an a priori discipline or idea but rather as a constitutive and organisational element of school systems aimed to respond to specific social demands and realised through the use of concepts, teaching methods and educational practices, thus realised through the school curriculum seen as a multi-layered element, not crystallised rigidly but dynamically formed due to the actors involved. The volume goes through the prescriptive and, in part, relational level of the curriculum of the European Schools in an attempt to disentangle the entanglements and retrace the national and international elements and influences that have contributed to its constitution. In particular, taking a diffractive and transnational view, some pedagogical influences underlying the curriculum are mapped, especially in primary school; contacts, albeit transient, with international organisations such as Unesco and Pax Christi are traced; the voices of some teachers emerge lastly, though in a blurred manner. The work thereby provides an initial reconstruction – as well as an indication of potential further explorations - of the network of processes, actors and instances that contributed to shaping citizenship education and the curriculum in these Schools.

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