

EDITORIAL

Comprehending the Present. No Fear for the Future

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Fear lets you understand nothing. Better, fear, like any other feeling, can be a possible key to access the explanation of phenomena. Or, to an interconnected number of events. But, beware do not stop there! Intelligence would come out at least mortified.

No ideology – all ideologies without exception –, if applied as immutable scheme of interpretation and wished as reality plotter, can alone comprehend, or rather *com-prendere* (in Italian take-with you) all phenomena; even worse is the unacceptable aspect of ideologies that become goals rather than means. Thus, the “objective” is distorted, it is not anymore a noble application, it becomes a “one sided” imprecise and misleading interpretation. In one word: false.

The theme of this issue is in perfect harmony with such approaches like: *gender, new genders and education*.

This is especially true in Italy, which is the country where “Education Sciences & Society” is published.

At the same time, it applies to other European countries, one example is Putin’s Russia. Or, around the world: from a minority part of the USA to Islamic countries, or yet other countries where “religious” components are in some manner politically prevalent.

On the contrary, we have to make room for three key words that are prospectively carriers and irreplaceable banners: the person, democracy, science. Their declension should be in the plural.

To all people, in St Thomas’ approach: no person is an accident of the history.

All democracies are gradual journeys toward reality, to its comprehension and implementation, and to the practicability of new progressive forms of citizenship, which can overcome every exclusion and marginality. May they be actual or potential, and use wisdom and clairvoyance. To build the best possible history. For everyone.

All sciences are complex machines, each one of them in its own mode, they interpret (diagnosis) and manage (prognosis and therapy). Sciences belong to those investigative micro-faces of the complex and polyhedric crystals that make human societies, no one excluded. Or, on another level, the entire humanity.

For the purpose of this issue nature and culture are in opposition with each other, this has been sustained, or proposed for sustaining, and authoritatively credited even in recent times. We have deliberately forgotten the scientifically credited entwinement of the two, which has been shown by multi-scientific literature for over a century, with undisputed and clear modalities. These modalities have implicitly been known for centuries. At least in pedagogy, Rousseau, in his relationship with individuals, nature and environment, exemplified it brilliantly with his writing, especially in the *Emile*. The same is valid for the dynamics between persons and society in sociology. Or, for the explanation of personal development and choices including the sexual and affective ones, and also the social and relational ones, which are supplied by psychologies and psychoanalysis; it starts from Freud's construction of the personality, its special interpretation of childhood, all families and the adults of reference. Last but not least the parents. Yes, the parents. Who had other fathers and mothers upstream. A trans-generational script that often has never been interrupted and became increasingly complicated. Meanwhile, commerce does not create events. On the contrary, it nourishes them because it accepts them. When pontificating about separation or divorce, or in this case homosexuals, bisexuals, transsexuals and more, and even heterosexuals, we overlook the fact that even in personal redetermination it is always possible and often practicable: everybody is the chemical sum of a long preceding, and often future, history. Equally, personal freedom is always burdened by a number of variables that were not chosen but suffered. Each tree (a person) has roots deep down in a terrain that he did not choose. This does not happen as by chance, but the case must be comprehended and re-comprehended. Every event reminds to a precise cause, or to causes that surely exist even if they are "unknown" today. In other words they are "non linear", uneven or better "intricate", they do not necessarily have a determined cause-effect sequence, which could allow causes to be identified, and the predictability of the effects. In other words, a number of causes can present "interchanges" that alter their consequentiality.

This is a double reminder that education can produce and regenerate behaviours while giving life to other behaviours that can be different or of a opposite sign.

Pedagogy must be authentically scientific in every aspect, never preconceived but relationally and formally objective.

The universe reminds to the normative Logos that built it: therefore the case is denied, everything happens out of necessity; it can be sustained that the case derives from the ignorance of the cause.

Finally, Christian philosophy, with its specificity, sustains that human intellect cannot understand all causes that make the real or perceived world (for example: the gestalt-theorie), and gives to the case what *belongs* to the mysterious designs of the divine providence that presides and regulates every event.

So, why should we fear the present complexity? After all, tomorrow everything could change or be *something else*?

On the background of all sciences: biology and neurosciences could provide, in the future, new interpretative keys to “govern” history.

Finally, the theory of Catastrophes distinguishes the above sciences in positive and negative ones. It interprets history as a breakneck catastrophic system. In any case, it is history in the making that splits them.

Therefore: respect. We accept its etymological meaning of *re-aspicio*. We should see the others for what they are and not what we would like them to be, welcoming without interpreting them through lens altered by prejudgments, distortions and emotionality. To *linger* on them, approaching the limits *without invading them*. We should see the others again, *whenever needed*, to feel them as “next” and not as a “threat”. We can truly give way to solidarity; but not only as we like it to be: favouring someone, but saying no to another one. However, to live in true solidarity we must always be welcoming to all its possible forms and manifestations. Here too, intelligence and judgment are needed. Society will *finally* become human. Since, it is not human yet. So that the person can display all his potentials. So that we can all be protagonists ourselves. Being fully responsible toward the others.

There is a long journey to be travelled. Alone or in company. Sciences are expected to take this path in their becoming. This is pertinent to pedagogy as “human science in its becoming”. It belongs to education too. And to the highly righteous intertwinement of the two, opening to all forms of learning.

We started the journey with this issue. Articles from previous issues will surface at times. In the light of the philosophy here explained, we wanted open choral voices to refer to hermeneutics that differ at sources and come from different parts of the world. Lay and Catholics. Italians, Spaniards,

Brazilians and Americans. We privileged English as it is the most vehicular language to increase confrontation. Women and men. Everyone's experience is an added value, hermeneutic and projecting. In other words, it is a meta-interpretative element in a non trivialised con-text. This Editorial has a triple signature, one Brazilian: Maria Beatriz Rodrigues from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre; and two Italians: the Director and Massimiliano Stramaglia – from the University of Macerata. They represent different generations too. They bring reasons for the complexity of human and scientific experience. The two countries experience different pluralities. In distant unresolved forms. Whose transnational miscegenation is undeniable. The present globalised work stays in the background, with its import-export of everything: goods, lifestyles, behaviours, hopes and disappointments. Solitude.

This explains Stramaglia's contribution which alternates between affectivity and sexuality, with a special emphasis on intimacy. Intimacy is the opposite of solitude, the sick or the absent one in our contemporaneity. But, it is also the good fuel, hard to die, the starter of all possible solidarities. Human, relational, social and planetary solidarities at the highest level. Our attention is turned especially toward the couples, which means all possible forms and dimensions of being couples. Intimacy is not intimism – or complicity, although the latter ones derive from the earlier. To become real, intimacy needs also rules. For example, in Italy this acknowledgement is denied to the homosexuals and to the "new genders". The situation produced in the same week, from June 13 to June 20, two different opposite events in the same city, Rome: *gay pride* and *family day*.

We do not intend to judge these two diverging happenings. Or if their statements are right or not. There is reason to be proud in being homosexual – because it inevitably produces the pride in being heterosexuals. The latter could be one of the "statements" of the second event, which supports a single family model. Model disavowed, rightly or wrongly, by the history of the last decade in Italy and the rest of the world. This includes the Catholic, or Christian, worlds.

In some way, the continuing absurd lack of legislation produced emotions, and to a lesser extent "thoughts" that concern the former (there are all kinds of resolving hypotheses, sometimes unusual and imaginative ones: yes, to same sex couple's recognition, should pay taxes like everyone, but no reversible pension – even if they have "always" been together – which is

allowed to separated heterosexuals – because homosexuals are second class citizens, despite the universality of principles and democracy); while the latter invoke high distinctions like the walls of Jericho or Berlin, the Great China wall and the announced Hungarian wall at the Serbian border. In this view, a wall should be built against the law draft by Senator Monica Cirinnà, that is now examined in the Upper House, and that would discipline civil unions for cohabiting and same sex couples, introducing a new juridical institution (surely not sacramental or civil “marriage”) based on the second article of the Italian constitution.

History teaches that all these “borders” *crumbled* down, ruinously. The Empire of China made room for Mao’s communism, DDR’s communism to unified Germany, the Euro and Ms Merkel anything but Marxists. And the propagandist announcement of the Hungarian government must deal with President Draghi of the European Central Bank. At the end of the day, sovereignties have become mostly trans-national.

Rules have their roots in reciprocal respect and thrive on it – respect makes the tie and the chance to make educational relationships – instead, according to Thom they create the “positive catastrophes”. Or, they make history and society more human and welcoming, assuring all people’s life, no one excluded. They reduce the deafening noise of the confrontation of the reciprocal opposition: from the pro-vocations of the *gay pride* to the “slogans” of the *family day*.

Readers of this editorial would have understood that the choice we are making here differs from previous issues. The choice is not to summarise the articles contained in this issue. Articles will speak for themselves. The purpose is not to lessen the argumentative, pedagogical and civil impact. Even if they remain with their differences. Because these are *texts part of other texts* (with many reminders and openings contained inside, which are made of contents and quotations, of values and interpretations) which can contribute, each with its specific, little or big, to connote the creation of an “inclusive specificity”.

It is here that the voices and notes of the interventions of this issue begin: from the “feminine” present in the contributions of Angela Aparisi Miralles and Giuseppina D’Addelfio to the “masculine” – and the “paternal” – in Jason A. Laker and Carmela Covato; to “gender identity” – and “gender” – that is found in the perspective of familial educating relationships and the international polices related to them, which are discussed by Aurora Bernal and Antonio Bellingreri. From there we reach “social

and cultural conditionings” that conceal in a not that thin a filigree the “formation of identity” in Irene Biemmi; from the “asymmetrical identities” explored by Simonetta Ulivieri to the “fleeting intimacy” analysed by Massimiliano Stramaglia: a real kaleidoscope of different viewpoints, which are precise and solid, which give the reasons of an equally varied and multiple humanity. Wealthy. We found wealth in all aspect. These elements are nobly suspended between educational projects and complex operations of full citizenship for everyone: singles, genders, groups and categories. The final landing is a civilization really equal to the society that characterises it for the most, as well as its constitutional meaning, to the persons with disabilities, a theme treated in the articles by Simone Aparecida Capellini and

Finally, there is the contribution in “Alia” by Vasco D’Agnese, who discerns about emancipation and violence on the plane of the paradoxes found inside educational processes, to con-textually complete the picture rendered in this article.

To support the issue, there is the “pedagogical Lexicon” and the “reasoned Bibliography” carefully edited by Giuseppe Burgio.

A final note to end this Editorial.

Overall, we believe that this issue can be inserted as a “text” at object-study level: the one of “gender”, “new genders” and their “education”. While it is a “meta-text”, on the pedagogical disciplinary level – a new challenge to be picked up – which is constituted by human and civil “full citizenship”. Therefore, representative rights and duties are to be recognised and inescapably given to all citizens of the world, who ask “not to be – or feel – refugees from themselves”, almost like a “political asylum”.

We “end” with a last “provocation” drawing from one of the greatest and illuminated spirits who proposed the “value of freedom”, thought and thinking, to their contemporaries and future generations, François Marie Arouet – known with the pen name Voltaire – and some of his famous quotes, especially for those who may not agree with some views or perspectives contained in this issue.

From the most famous: “do not agree with what you have to say, but I’ll defend to the death your right to say it” to lesser famous ones: “Tolerance has never provoked a civil war; intolerance has covered the Earth with massacres” – while “intolerance produces nothing but hypocrites or rebels: what a deadly alternative!”; and, finally “Love is a canvas furnished by nature and embroidered by imagination”, sending us home with a hope : “time is an honest man [who] puts everything in place”.