

Bondioli, Anna; Piseri, Maurizio; Savio, Donatello

The role of pedagogy in the initial training of teachers of the Italian secondary school today

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Kulturen der Lehrerbildung in der Sekundarstufe in Italien und Deutschland

Nationale Formate und ‚cross culture‘

Casale / Windheuser / Ferrari / Morandi

**Kulturen der Lehrerbildung in der Sekundarstufe
in Italien und Deutschland**

Historische Bildungsforschung

herausgegeben von

Rita Casale, Ingrid Lohmann und Eva Matthes

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The Role of Pedagogy in the Initial Training of Teachers of the Italian Secondary School Today

by Anna Bondioli, Maurizio Piseri and Donatella Savio

Following the suggestions given at the round table organised at the 2017 Pavia Convention, the three authors of this contribution discuss the university training of teachers as professionals of secondary-school education from different points of view.

Not confined to the perspectives of experts, a broad picture of the debate relating to a controversial topic emerges from the contribution – one between light and shadow and between learned knowledge and taught knowledge.

1 Teacher training between learned knowledge and taught knowledge

The debate on teacher training, at least in Italy, takes place on two distinct levels: a non-specialist level, which involving writers, journalists, politicians etc., and a ‘learned’ level of theorisation, reflection and research conducted by scholars in the pedagogical sciences.

On the first level, we find some stances – more significant than a debate – that mostly take the form of ‘social representations’ in the sense in which Moscovici¹ speaks of them, that is, socially shared beliefs and widespread values that help ‘to familiarize with what is strange’ and work as a code that facilitates sharing. Despite their important social function, ‘social representations’ have limits in that ‘beliefs’ are not subject to critical scrutiny; their function – ‘making familiar what is strange’ – favours tradition over innovation. At this level of discourse, the Italian tradition concerning teacher training goes back to Gentile’s statement that subject knowledge is a sufficient condition to make a good teacher, especially at the high school level. The motto ‘Who knows, also knows how to teach’ is still a widely held belief. Just think of the words of Paola Mastrocola or Giorgio Israel. In the former’s book *Togliamo il disturbo* (Mastrocola 2011), she argues against the writings of Don Milani: ‘we have built over the years, thanks also to the ideas of Don Milani, a school that no longer teaches notions’. In 2009, Giorgio Israel, a few days after he was nominated by the then Minister Gelmini to be president of a ‘Teacher-training Work Group’, was asked in an interview: ‘Professor Israel, what is in synthesis the essential contribution that the work of this committee will give to the future training of teachers?’ His response was: ‘The main aspect is the recovery that is implemented in terms of content’.² This notion of recovery, often invoked when a crisis of schools or the institution of learning is perceived, is called for when such institutions appear incapable of carrying out their social function. For example, right after the Soviets launched Sputnik, the same basic call for recovery was issued in the USA in the late 1950s.³ At the level of the educational system,

1 See Moscovici 1989/2005.

2 <http://www.ilsussidiario.net/News/Educazione/2009/2/25/SCUOLA-Israel-cosi-gli-insegnanti-diventeranno-veri-professionisti/12976/>). See also Israel’s review of the book by Mastrocola 2011 (<http://gisrael.blogspot.it/2011/03/recensione-dellultimo-libro-di-paola.html>); Falcinelli 2009. (https://www.open-starts.units.it/dspace/bit-stream/10077/3015/3/17_falcinelli.pdf).

3 See Bruner 1969/1972.

this need for recovery was a strong criticism of the pedagogical activism – inspired by Dewey – that emphasized the primacy of method over the acquisition of specific content. In end effect, schools were accused of not being able to prepare the technicians American society needed in order to win the space race.

The contrast of ‘content *vs* method’ is only a step away from the contrast of ‘learned knowledge *vs* pedagogy’. Even on the part of distinguished representatives of the academic world, it is increasingly felt that ‘there is too much pedagogy’ in the legislation concerning teacher training.

This first level of debate – or, more accurately, clash of views – is also found in the current in the feud between so-called disciplinarians and supporters of teaching methods.⁴

What the contrast does not point out – and what in my opinion is important – is that there is no immediate and direct relationship between the ‘knowledge’ to be taught and what is actually taught at school. In an article from 1988, the historian of education André Chervel underlines how wrong it is to consider the concept of ‘school subject’ as equivalent to the ‘contents’ of teaching. Taking the example of grammar, Chervel shows that the grammar theory that is taught at school is not an expression of scientific knowledge on the subject but was created historically by the school for the school: ‘subjects are spontaneous and original creations of the school system’.⁵ So there is always a gap between learned knowledge and taught knowledge: ‘learning contents are neither a vulgarization nor an adaptation’.⁶ Thus the school always produces a mediation between learned knowledge and learning contents. But this mediation is mostly implicit or the tacit fruit of tradition; it is rarely subjected to critical scrutiny. Chervel also warns us against considering the school a place of simple exercise of school subjects, because in the teaching-learning process, the purposes that teachers attribute to teaching, which are also mostly implicit but strongly influence what is taught and how it is taught, play an important role. By emphasizing the gap Chervel observes between knowledge and taught knowledge, I wish to highlight the particular relevance in the translation – or, better, in the transformation – that is carried out from one to the other, that is, the degree to which it is implicit. This ‘implicitness’ is primarily tied to routine and repetition, but it can also be the result of an uncritical adherence to new pedagogical and didactic trends.

Considerations about the need to reduce the implicit and to assume the kind of awareness that allows us to think of teaching, in all its facets (didactically and even relationally speaking), as a solution to problems have stressed in the literature on teacher training for some time now the importance of reflexivity as one of the most significant skills of the professional teacher’s ‘toolbox’, starting from Schön’s oft-quoted text *The Reflective Practitioner*⁷ and, even earlier, from Dewey’s text, *How We Think*.⁸ In this text, Dewey considers reflection a way of thinking that arises from experience, i.e. from contact with concrete educational situations, which investigates, interrogates and questions these situations, then returns with interpretative hypotheses and/or proposals for solutions that have to be verified by recurring once more to experience. The reflective educational practitioner, as it is referred to in the literature, constantly re-examines objectives, practices and knowledge by first analysing experience and the dialogue with others, thus establishing a virtuous circle of improvement. Critical reflection allows one to

4 See Fiorucci 2018; Batini/Corsini 2018.

5 Chervel 1988, p. 70.

6 Ibid., p. 69.

7 Schön 1983/1993.

8 Dewey 1933/2019.

become aware not only of the effects of one's own practices but also of those implicit assumptions that constrain the way of conceiving and seeing the world.

But there are other reasons that lead us to consider reflection as an essential competence of the future teacher: teaching is always the answer to an order of circumstantial problems, so teacher training cannot be translated into the pure acquisition of techniques or into an application of theories learned in practice. A thoughtful approach is required to prepare future teachers not only to teach but also to analyse their teaching in relation to the educational and social contexts in which it occurs,⁹ and to take a critical attitude towards their own practices and beliefs, like the attitude of a researcher open to verification and debate.

Based on the considerations made so far, an important role is assigned to pedagogy, but only provided that pedagogy is not intended solely as the teaching of teaching practices and methodologies but also considered a reflection on the dialectic between theory and practice, in which the theory is put under scrutiny in a confrontation with practice and the same practice also is scrutinized from a project perspective.

With this in mind, looking at the future of teacher training, I consider the organization of the apprenticeship to be fundamental.¹⁰

How it will be organised, the roles and tasks of the figures that will accompany it, the kind of relationship that will be created between school and university are, in my opinion, crucial issues, the answer to which will strongly influence the training of tomorrow's teachers.

In the SISS curriculum,¹¹ the apprenticeship (area 4), carried out at school with a 'welcoming' teacher (a school teacher who is responsible for the trainee) and under the guidance of a supervisor (a teacher in service at university), was designed not only to test the skills learned in area 1 (the cross-sectional area of the pedagogical and psychological disciplines), in area 2 (didactics of the school disciplines) and in area 3 (didactic design laboratories), but also as a critical reflection on the problems of life in class and school, as well as the ways to address them. I believe this is the right perspective with which to think about apprenticeship both now and in the future. A perspective in which the internship can be seen as a test bench for pedagogical-didactic innovation, and does not limit itself to transmitting, by osmosis and imitation, widespread yet unverified teaching techniques, practices and strategies. The hope is to see apprenticeship as a crucial junction for that connection between knowledge and practice that can be promoted by a reflexive approach to teaching. To do this, it will be necessary to rethink the collaboration between school and university, the dialectic/negotiation between learned knowledge and taught knowledge, as well as that between tradition and innovation.

Anna Bondioli

9 Cf. Fabbri 2006, p. 32.

10 Without claiming to be exhaustive, I would like to mention the text *I saperi del tirocinio* (Bondioli, Ferrari, Marsilio, Tacchini 2006), which contains, in addition to the report of experiences, reflections on training as a junction between theory and practice as well.

11 SSIS stands for the secondary-school specialization school, a two-year Italian university specialization school aimed at training secondary school teachers. The activity of the SSIS was carried out in nine biennial cycles (the second year of each cycle contemporary with first year of the following) in the period between the academic years 1999-2000 and 2008-2009. It should not be forgotten that the SSIS was born concurrently with the reorganization of the university instigated by Minister Berlinguer. In the years that followed, characterised by three consecutive Berlusconi governments, the belief that the SSIS was desired by the Italian Left started to spread, but many other problems led to its closure in 2008. For a critical analysis of the SISS experience, see Falcinelli 2009 and Cappa/Niceforo/Palomba 2013.

2 Class-group management as the promotion of citizenship competence

In the documents issued by the European Commission on teacher training, the management of the socio-relational dynamics of a group of students is indicated as one of the skills required of the teacher of the new millennium, with various emphases.

In the Communication from the Commission COM (2007) 392 *Improving the Quality of Teacher Education*, it is emphasized that social changes require teachers to be able to activate teaching/learning approaches centred on facilitating co-constructive relationships in the class group:

‘they are asked to develop more collaborative and constructive approaches to learning and expected to be facilitators and classroom managers rather than ex-cathedra trainers. These new roles require education in a range of teaching approaches and styles. Furthermore, classrooms now contain a more heterogeneous mix of young people from different backgrounds and with different levels of ability and disability’.¹²

It further specifies that among the skills required of teachers are those necessary to ‘work in multicultural settings (including an understanding of the value of diversity, and respect for difference)’.¹³ Therefore, this document connects the management of social-relational dynamics, on the one hand, to the implementation of didactics of *cooperative learning* and, on the other, to the possibility of coping in an inclusive manner with the differences represented by increasingly multicultural class groups.

More recently, in the Communication of the Commission COM (2012) 699 *Rethinking Education: investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes*, with regard to the support to be provided to European teachers, what was stated in the previous document is re-affirmed, indicating among the new skills required of the teacher the attention to diversity according to an inclusive approach. COM 699 is accompanied by a working document that underlines another aspect regarding the management of the social-relational dynamics of the group of students: in the SWD (2012) 374, based on the analysis of several surveys, it is pointed out that teachers entering the classroom in more than half of the member countries would be poorly equipped to cope with ‘diversity in the classroom, working with special needs children, addressing conflict or violence’, to mention just some of the deficiencies.¹⁴ In this case, therefore, the emphasis is placed not only on the difficulty of dealing with the differences in an inclusive way, but also, and consequently, on that of managing difficult – conflictual and violent – relations.

In essence, the European documents propose the management of the socio-relational dimensions of the class group both as a tool and as a prerequisite for teaching/learning processes: it is a tool in that the teaching methodologies that focus on cooperative and inclusive relationships are effective in supporting learning in all students; it is a prerequisite to the extent that a good class relational climate is the background that allows the teaching/learning processes to be positively carried out.

In my opinion, the explicit way in which the connection between a certain management of the social-relational dynamics of the class group and the promotion in the students of one of the eight key competences recently redefined at the European level, i.e. competence in matters

¹² European Commission 2007, p. 4.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁴ European Commission 2012, p. 32.

of citizenship, is not given sufficient consideration. This competence is described referring to, among other things, ‘the ability to engage effectively with others in common or public interest’, to the ‘willingness to participate in democratic decision-making’, and to ‘support for social and cultural diversity’.¹⁵ In these terms, it seems clear to me that such a competence can be sustained by the teacher in a privileged, if not exclusive, way through careful management of the social-relational dynamics among the students, so that they can develop relationships characterized by cooperation, democratic participation, appreciation of differences, inclusion, experiencing a community that pursues common goals. A perspective of this kind finds its grounding in Dewey’s thought, when he states that:

‘School cannot be a preparation for social life unless it reproduces, within itself, the typical condition for social life [...] The only way to prepare for social life is to engage in social life. To form habits of social usefulness and serviceableness apart from any direct social need and motive, and apart from any existing social situation is, to the letter, teaching the child to swim going through the motions outside of the water’.¹⁶

When it comes to these issues, the contribution of pedagogy to teacher training is, in my opinion, fundamental. It enables the combination of the value dimensions and an interdisciplinary approach, and this allows for the development of a discourse that is always firmly oriented toward the educational purpose. I will now attempt to more precisely characterize how this contribution can be accomplished.

The pedagogical training of teachers should primarily focus on the socio-relational management of the class group as a way to educate them in democratic citizenship. This is an exquisitely pedagogical proposal, as it interweaves value references together with goals that look to the growth of the person in a broad sense and within the horizon of the ‘concrete’ construction of a certain type of human society.

It is, therefore, necessary for pedagogy to offer training courses capable of providing future teachers with the tools for the management of class groups in the sense described above. Since it is a question of promoting complex pedagogical skills, the directions to be taken need to be articulated.

A first direction concerns the dimension of values: the pedagogical training of future teachers must provide them with the cultural framework that provides the roots for the values of democratic citizenship. At this level, pedagogy can certainly engage in a fruitful dialogue with other humanistic forms of knowledge – above all with philosophy, in which it could contribute to the training of future teachers by offering, for example, studies focusing on the philosophy of education. In essence, it is a matter of welcoming and ‘practising’ both Nussbaum’s¹⁷ proposal to train ‘citizens of the world’ and Morin’s¹⁸ aim to educate ‘complex thought’ and build ‘human and terrestrial identities’. In other words, the proposal that future teachers meet humanistic knowledge by taking up a pedagogical perspective: an encounter aimed at consolidating their role not only as democratic citizens but mainly as trainers of their students in a similar framework of values.

15 European Council 2018, p. 13.

16 Dewey 1903, pp. 13f.

17 See Nussbaum 2010/2011.

18 See Morin 1999/2000.

Another direction concerns the operational dimension, that is, the training of teachers in skills that allow them to sustain an experience of democratic social life in the 'live' relationships that pass through a class group. In this case, it is a matter of proposing to future teachers training courses that, from an interdisciplinary point of view, refer to different disciplinary fields to acquire theoretical and operative devices to be considered in a pedagogical perspective. A first area of useful knowledge in this sense is the sociology of education. With reference to the thought of Bernstein, Strodbeck and Goffman, we can define, with Becchi¹⁹ and Bondioli,²⁰ the concept of *latent pedagogy* as the set of implicit beliefs that unconsciously determine the teachers' practices (their way of relating, of teaching, of characterizing the environment, etc.). This is a key concept when it comes to creating reflective paths with future teachers: paths that lead them to analyze the concrete context in which they operate to reveal if and to what extent the implicit meanings conveyed by spaces, temporalities, roles, and their own insight are coherent with a frame of democratic values and with the possibility of socio-relational dynamics characterized in this sense. In this regard, studies of sociology of education inspired by symbolic interactionism²¹ are particularly significant, in that they permit the setting up of framework for observing the physical and relational context of the class which represent effective tools for revealing latent pedagogies.²²

Another area of knowledge to be referred to with regards to the pedagogical training of teachers in accordance with this line of thought is systemic psychology.²³ First and foremost, it invites us to look at the group as a 'totality', with an added value with respect to the sum of the individual parts, which is realized in the 'here and now' of the unfolding of the relational dynamics. This perspective gives teachers the ability to activate a wide-ranging look, which allows them to read the quality of each single relational exchange as a piece of information on the socio-relational identity of the whole group. Along these lines, bullying, for instance, can be caught and faced as an expression of the class group, avoiding defensive and non-responsible dynamics that lead teachers to build 'scapegoats' and to identify the guilty party outside of the 'here and now', e.g. in their parents. Secondly, it allows us to read relational exchanges in terms of power games. This reading makes it possible for the teacher to monitor both their own interpersonal interventions and those of the students, keeping their eye on the group as a whole and promoting a balanced management of power in the dynamics of confrontation as the road to education for democracy. Also in reference to systemic psychology, it is possible to develop frameworks of analysis of relational exchanges to be applied to the dynamics observed in the class groups.²⁴

To conclude, a third direction to be taken for the pedagogical training of teachers, and not only on the topic of class group management as citizenship education, concerns the possibility of testing the cultural and operational tools I have referred to in *live* situations. I am thinking of a close connection with an internship that allows the future teacher not only to analyze situations with the proposed tools – remaining in the position of participant observer in which they

19 Cf. Becchi 2005.

20 Cf. Bondioli 2000.

21 Delamont 1976/1979; Fele/Paoletti 2003.

22 I have developed and used frameworks of this kind for teaching purposes as teacher of 'Analysis of Educational Situations' (Savio, unpublished handouts), in the TFA (ay 2012/2013; 2014/2015) and PAS (aa 2013/14) courses for secondary-school teachers established at the University of Pavia.

23 Cf. Watzlawick/Beavin/Jackson 1967-1971.

24 See note 22.

are often confined as a trainee – but also to design improved interventions based on conducted analysis and verify the results. In this way pedagogical training is intertwined with the research experience, because the future teacher is given the opportunity to test the different processes that scan the investigation paths following Dewey:²⁵ observation, analysis of what has been observed and clarification of problematic nodes, definition on this basis of a hypothesis of solution, test stage and verification of the hypothesis.

Donatella Savio

3 Pedagogy in secondary education in Italy

In this short text dedicated to the relationship between pedagogy and secondary education, I would like to bring not only the considerations of the historian of school institutions but also my experience as a young secondary-school teacher at the time of the implementation of the Berlinguer reform, which establishes the entrance of pedagogy in Italian middle school, and later as teacher in the SSIS.

First of all, as a historian, the datum that emerges is the complete separation between pedagogy and secondary school in the Italian school system since its birth with the Casati law (1859) up to the 1970s. This is a separation that affects not only pedagogy but also didactics, something the teachers had to more or less make up as they went along. Also over the course of the twentieth century, the acquisition of the right to access secondary teaching was placed in the hands of universities and was dependent, without specific paths, on degree courses aimed at the transmission of highly scientific and professional skills that were extraneous to the needs of teachers to acquire the techniques of teaching.

We stumble upon an exception in Italy, noting that other European countries privilege specific university or higher education paths, when it comes to the training of teachers. It is an anomaly, if you will, amplified by the precociousness with which Italy realised a unified path in the lower cycle (ages 11 to 14) of secondary education compared with the divisionist system of the other Western European countries. However, the democratising intent of the school system brought by law n. 1859 of 1962 (Law on unified middle school) is not always accompanied by a significant pedagogic and didactic reflection able to sustain the educational and cultural objectives of this new school institution. Where this did occur, it was often thanks to the commitment and good will of individual teachers faced with the substantial indifference of the school system managing bodies towards the in-service training of teachers.

In fact, the primary aim of the 1962 law allows us to uncover the reasons behind the clear separation between pedagogy and secondary teaching in Italy. After the signs of an expansion of the access to secondary education during the Giolitti years (1899-1914) – an expansion favoured by the industrial development of the country, which the increase of technical and vocational schooling demonstrates – fascism saw the stagnation of secondary schooling, which ensured that the Republic had a sufficiently large portion of the population with low or very low schooling (in 1961, 4/5 of the population that was of school age under fascism had a qualification equal to or less than the primary school diploma).

The elitist dimension of Italian secondary schools played a role in the disconnect between pedagogy and didactics, on the one hand, and the good practice of secondary teaching, on

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the other. The manifestation of this disconnect was most pronounced in the teacher's subject knowledge, in which the actual didactic techniques were considered just a useless corollary. The Gentile secondary school not only reiterates but amplifies the formalist heritage – founded on the canon of tradition – already present in the Italian and European school. Denounced by W. Benjamin in the case of Germany, this school remained distant to the interest of its students and their social contexts and cultural needs.²⁶

To this we must add the cultural resistance – with decisive outcomes in politics – to the revision of the Gentile reform in the post-war period, so much so that even today the Italian school has neither fully realised this reform nor, after the rejection of the Berlinguer reform (law n. 30 of 10 February 2000), have politicians shown a shared and explicit will to act in that sense.²⁷

So the Italian school system entered the second half of the twentieth century, the age of automation, maintaining an old educational model, both anchored to a traditionalist ideology and precarious in its scientific bases, like the Agazzi activism filtered by the programmes of the fascist school. It goes without saying that such a pedagogical approach ended with primary school and that there was no room for it in secondary schools. This explains the 'artisanal' nature of secondary teaching, entrusted to the culture of the teacher and their didactic sensitivity.

It is significant that only at the start of the 1970s did the need for a reflection on the pedagogical approach of secondary school arise. We find ourselves, finally, in a context where the working classes were being granted access to secondary education, and important changes (although without ever questioning the Gentile system) in the secondary schools were underway, with the explicit aim of making it more responsive to the demands of social mobility. The first attempt in this direction is the 10-point reform programme, following the comprehensive Anglo-Saxon model, fixed in the Frascati discussion of 1970 and embraced by the Biasini commission.²⁸

However, not least for the ideological connotations taken on by the debate at the political level, the previous system remained unchanged. The answer to the new needs arising from the expansion of access to secondary schools was solved with the proliferation of 'experimentations' of systems and structures, especially in technical schools, and in the reform of collegial bodies (delegate decrees of 1974). Even the attempt by the Brocca commission (1988-1992) to set up a reform of secondary school system ended up with the sole definition of new school programmes.

The Berlinguer reform forced secondary high schools to leave behind the Gentile system. Set aside by the Moratti reform (which also remained – all things considered – a dead letter) it managed to introduce two new items: one is school autonomy (actually only a decentralisation of functions consistent with the reform of public administration launched by the Bassanini law of 15 May 1997; only law n.107 of 2015 truly realised full autonomy, providing schools with the status of legal entities); the other is the definition of new paths to access teaching via SSIS (Scuole di specializzazione all'insegnamento secondario - Secondary Teaching Specialisation Schools), implemented at universities in 1999.

To discuss the Berlinguer reform, I will now remove my historian's robe to don that of a teacher who lived through the school reform and then offer several brief considerations about my experience as an SSIS teacher.

26 Cf. Benjamin 1913.

27 See Pazzaglia 2001; Pruneri 1999; Bonetta 1985.

28 Cf. Reguzzoni 1970, pp. 621ff.; pp. 743ff.

The years of the Berlinguer reform coincided with my tenure as a teacher of literary subjects at a socio-psycho-pedagogical high school. Unlike many of my colleagues (often, but not always, those over 40 years old), I agreed with many aspects of the reform such as collegiality, which had to be translated into sharing objectives and into a participated planning of activities and didactics; the opportunity for schools to manage quotas from 10% to 20% of the total number of hours, which enabled the organisation of alternative activities (meetings with specialists, actors, musicians etc.) and was often appreciated by the students; the possibility for schools to dialogue with local organisations and institutions.

However, there was a sense that the reform might risk the cultural role of the teacher in the name of a didactic technicism and a pedagogy aimed at asserting itself over the epistemological statutes of the subjects to the point of incorporating them. An emblematic case is the docimological emphasis firmly established since the Berlinguer reform. The demand for an objective evaluation superseded, in time and also due to later events, the value and the actual nature of the subjects. So, in the name of docimology, fundamental exercises and activities for the acquisition of language skills were abandoned; the primacy of the multiple choice test and problem solving detracted from the ability to critically approach a text and, more generally, knowledge. And in the name of a misunderstood distrust of knowledge, it also led to a privileging of topographic knowledge of texts over the autonomous processing of the logical sequence of their content. Education for all cannot entail renouncing an evaluation centred on merit; instead, it should promote formative paths able to develop the skills of every individual.

I think a certain pedagogy should ask some questions – and possibly do some self-criticism – on its possible responsibility for the current decline of technical schools, i.e. the schools that up to about 15 years ago represented the most important social elevator of the Italian school system. In addition to the opportunity to enter the job market, these schools set themselves, also in terms of knowledge, goals that would provide their students with a genuine possibility to successfully face the challenges of an academic career.

On the other hand, we witnessed the progressive cultural impoverishment of teachers, also in terms of the conscience and self-representation of their social roles, while the recruitment mechanism that ensured the necessary generational turnover of teaching staff stopped working. Alienated from knowledge, and acquiring tenure at a much later point in life, many teachers tend to feel incorporated into bureaucratic mechanisms that prefer the production of documents and paperwork to culture.

This is a perception that has been a constant in my teaching in SSIS. Certainly, there have been people marked by a passion for teaching and culture. But others, if not the majority (certainly too many), were already mentally predisposed to the role of pencil pushers within the secure framework of a public job. Of course, there is a lot of qualified literature that testifies to how we are facing a phenomenon which is not recent and is connected to mechanisms regarding the distortions of the job market and the degree system: a mismatch between demand and offer compensated by public employment.²⁹ However, it is also true that those who started their career as a teacher with this spirit found themselves in a minority and did not feel, like today, validated by the praxis of the fulfilment of administrative obligations masked as pedagogic principle.

Maurizio Piseri

²⁹ Barbagli 1974, Barbagli/Dei 1969 to quote the most famous one.

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