

Recensioni

Strollo, M.R. (a cura di) (2014). *Promuovere la “democrazia cognitiva”*. *Scritti in memoria di Bruno Schettini*. Napoli: Luciano Editore.

by Michela Romano

The volume in memory of Bruno Schettini will be able to be appreciated not only at the local level, but also nationally and internationally: Schettini, in fact, was really famous in university contexts and in the field of education, for his skills as a mature researcher, attentive to the relationship between politics and education, in particular in the field of the adult education.

He desires to invite everyone to give priority to the issue of commitment to promote a cognitive democracy, the construction of which involves everyone who would like to be citizen and not subject of the prodromal of tyranny ignorance. He believes that if the school that works well is dangerous as much as justice, as a “healthcare market” that works with the rules of democracy, it’s necessary to promote and realize a school which is not empty rhetorical, but substantial, and that goes to the essence of the things. It is evident, therefore, that the power of access to knowledge is not politically neutral and irrelevant and that knowledge itself is a condition of a substantial democracy (Schettini, 2010, p.16).

Schettini (2010) believes that in the Knowledge Society, where the globalization brought a planetary communication and increased the range of usable simple and articulated concepts, the school system has not been able to control and organize these powerful communication tools. At the same time, it need to be careful for what may be considered as a sort of technological totalitarianism (2010, p. 13), which prefers quantity to quality of the contents, and undergoes to a time logic which doesn’t fit with a reflection and a personal learning. Following this line of thinking, the Author claims the importance of an “education to an active citizenship” (Schettini, 2006, p. 63), whose principles may be:

- 1- The integration of the politics with the social dimension
- 2- A humanistic culture and approach to the relationship between education and citizenship, also to identify the model and the ideal of man to pursue
- 3- The centrality of the man in educational processes
- 4- The power of the thought, and the ability to think critically
- 5- A shared feeling of belonging
- 6- A principle of interdependence in everything and in all the world.

The name “citizenship” is a of substantive of collective gender, because people are not citizen alone, but in the relationship with the others. The citizenship is, from one hand, “to feel part of”, and from the other hand, “care of being part of”. An active citizenship refers to the esthetic dimension of the feeling and of the care in being in the world, because it requires attention, interest, motivation, commitment, solidarity,

In continuity with this hypothesis, Franco Frabboni, recalling that Schettini has acted as spokesman for the defense of the rights of younger generation to think for themselves (a thought which doesn’t follow the mainstream, like thinking of dissent) and to dream with their hearts (loving the distance, and the utopia), identifies the peculiar theoretical and empirical ways of the “pedagogical tree”: starting with the rehabilitation, in our education system, the role of culture, of the society and of the policy which doesn’t undergo the logic of power, it is possible to create the foundation of the school and of the universities. Schettini admits that we should talk more about a society of the widespread opinion (Schettini, 2010, p. 13), than about a society of the knowledge and of the information. This common sense logic overshadows an authoritative knowledge based on continuous study and on research.

The paper by Paul Goldsmith deals with a subject most dear to Bruno Schettini, the theme of adult education, tracing its stages of development in Italy. From the seventies to now, there’s still the hope that the innovations of the Adult Education can flourish in a new spring of the policy, of the research and of the professions of the Lifelong lifewide Learning, across the generation .

Along the same lines, there’s the contribution of Francesco Susi who underlines that today in Italy as adult education continues to remain education of only some lucky adults, with the aggravating circumstance that the political, economic, social and cultural rights that have taken place in recent decades have led in large sections of the population, particularly those socially and culturally deprived, the false and self-defeating belief that education is irrelevant.

On the other hand, in her essay, Anna Maria Piussi argues that the involuntary effects postmodern are a kind of inert political conservatism and, consequently, the dominance of the market, which has reduced the world and life in illusion and goods, giving rise to models which are deaf to differences (starting with the sexual difference) and to all human needs. According to Schettini, human needs may be to be there in person, aware of oneself and of his/her limits and potentialities, and to participate in free relationship with other to recreate the world.

Enricomaria Corbi focuses, otherwise, on the limited process of schooling and on the political-ideological functionalization of the Italian education system: it seems to have made particularly serious the problem of adult education, with effects certainly not favorable for the modernization of the Italian reality.

Maura Striano explores the processes of globalization that currently affect the social contexts and human planetarium level, defined as the result of a mix of composite trends, in terms of deterritorialization, interconnection and social acceleration, which have significant implications for cultural, political and social life. They have an impact on the processes of human and social development, and they should have a thorough attention through the use of a multivariate approach, borrowed from economic, political and social sciences, conceptualized as Dewey's sources of educational research.

The Cosmopolitanism of this conceptualization is deeply interconnected with the essence of the interculturality, which is not simple crossbreeding and hybridization, but is a flexibility of identity, a feeling of cohesion, a mutual enrichment, and always something more, never something less.

Convinced of the inseparability of the nexus Education/Politics, Semeraro, quoting Freire, says that it is insufficient to have a critical conscience, but that the authenticity of awareness is achieved when the practice of the unveiling of reality is a dynamic and dialectical unity with the practice of the transformation of reality. The tribute, therefore, most important that we can do to the memory of Schettini, concludes the author, is carried out in an utopian tension that emanates from his writings, a great antidote to the failure of the current mode of production, to the exhaustion of nature, to the emptying of the policy, to the disqualification of education and to a world without meaning. Schettini was really interested in the endeavor of making education real pedagogical devices of active citizenship.

Peter Mayo, in honor of Bruno Schettini, addresses the issue of permanent learning, providing an overview of its evolution, in waiting for a suitable upgrade. Mayo, in the critically retrace sections of the Memorandum of European Union, focuses the little attention paid to the basic competence of the critical literacy, or the ability to read the word and the world.

Vasco D'Agnese, taking up the theme of education for Democracy in Dewey, addresses the dilemma of global citizenship, ancient theme, which is still unresolved because, the author says, people are well aware that their gaze towards the world is anything but innocent, much in their thinking as their action, and, therefore, in their education.

Antonia Cunti, proposing an interview with Danilo Dolci, has provided a historical adult education in Italy that offers significant elements for rethinking the concept of education and educational work: the complexity

and the internal conflict of educating transpire from Dolci's concept of Socratic training related to the work of a group in which each person becomes a midwife thought of each other, for which education is both acceptance and respect for the other's thinking.

Vittoria Paolo, following the Schettini's thought, starting from a critique of the neo-liberal system and of its contradictions and inequities, as the commodification of education, remember that the proposed ideas and practices in adult education (the right to speak, and then to dialogue, narrative, participation, creativity) which are not aligned with this system, represent important aspects of the didactic formation. Schettini believes that the risk of our time is that the neo-liberistic economy, free from each control and government regulation, tries to influence also the educational and teaching systems, to the point that it gets to the commercialization of the educational offer, and to the commodification and merchandising of cultural products. Pupils are now seen as customers and users, not as people with their potential and their ability and skills.

Massimiliano Fiorucci, reconstructing historically the Italian situation with respect to the issue of immigration and multiculturalism, focuses on the current condition and role of the professional figure of the mediator, as an agent of "democratization", whose presence and guidance in the hospitality services should contribute to the reconfiguration of the intercultural hospitality services, going beyond the emergency type, to build channels of reception and response to specific needs.

The essay by Francesca Marone is inspired by Schettini's researches on changing family contemporaries structures and on the importance of family mediation centers. The public or individual mediator, then, appears to be a fundamental figure in cases of conflict of marriage, especially in order to preserve the interests of the child.

Laura Formenti highlights the role of narrative to give voice to the stories, and to preserve the four dimensions of learning, human and social, pragmatic and ethical values

Maria Rosaria Stollo examines the inseparable bond among formation/narrative/identity, dear to Schettini, who had spent many written on this topic, highlighting the emancipatory aspects (by the dual imprisonment of natural and cultural imprinting), connected the narrative as a tool through which to reflect on the Self and on intentionality, understood phenomenologically.

Fernando Sarracino, assuming that the continuous digital technology is rapidly transforming the organization and the social supports of our time, considers important the inescapable promotion of a digital citizenship, that

leads people to reconsider how everyone is interconnected with the sphere of information in all the global world.

On this trail the contribution of Orazio Miglino and Angelo Rega addresses the issue of the use of technology games in the processes of learning, emphasize how the Institutional Members and places of the government (schools, universities, professional training) seem to completely ignore this objective taking place revolution due to the advent and the development of new technologies.

The volume seems to follow an anti-reductionist line, integrating and mixing different aspects of the educational problems and emergencies: the criterion of unity of education, which overcomes the traditional separation between humanities and technological sciences, has been one of the most important theoretical principles of Schettini, and appears to be the *fil rouge* of this book. This criterion involves a work of synthesis between divergent languages and approaches, all interested in the educational field, and the work of synthesis is the same also for everyone, who desires to face the world of the future, doing correct choices between the various options. It is necessary, in fact, to do a work of synthesis between cognitive and affective dimensions, as it is necessary to do a work of synthesis between the social-collective and individual level of identity development.

In a democratic society, where there's the space for a democratic cognition and a cognitive democracy, the role of the educator (Schettini, 1998) has some priorities, such as the acquisition of the ability to encounter, to meet the other without prejudices and considering the other as the co-existent subject (Schettini, 1998, p. 27). The same process of education is not a linear route, but is transformation, change, organization and re-organization, interpretation and attribution of meaning to the experiences. The educator seems to be him/herself a person continuously changing, forever evolving.

According to Schettini, it is necessary a reform of the teaching that should lead to a reform of the way of thinking, teaching and learning how to live, and how to convert the information in knowledge. More than searching a widespread knowledge, it could be useful searching a cognitive democracy and a democratic cognition, in which sciences and knowledge are interdependent and each type of knowledge answers to a search of meaning at a planetary level.

The planetary identity, proposed by Schettini, is an achievement of human conscientization, and the awareness is one of the most fundamental characteristics of an active citizenship.

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