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**REINVENTING EDUCATION**

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**VOLUME I**

**Citizenship, Work and The Global Age**

ASSOCIAZIONE "PER SCUOLA DEMOCRATICA"

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**ASSOCIAZIONE "PER SCUOLA DEMOCRATICA"**  
Via Francesco Satolli, 30 – 00165 - Rome, Italy

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This volume contains papers presented in the 2nd International Conference of the Journal “Scuola Democratica” which took place online on 2-5 June 2021. The Conference was devoted to the needs and prospects of Reinventing Education.

The challenges posed by the contemporary world have long required a rethinking of educational concepts, policies and practices. The question about education ‘for what’ as well as ‘how’ and ‘for whom’ has become unavoidable and yet it largely remained elusive due to a tenacious attachment to the ideas and routines of the past which are now far off the radical transformations required of educational systems. Scenarios, reflections and practices fostering the possibility of change towards the reinvention of the educational field as a driver of more general and global changes have been centerstage topics at the Conference. Multidisciplinary approach from experts from different disciplinary communities, including sociology, pedagogy, psychology, economics, architecture, political science has brought together researchers, decision makers and educators from all around the world to investigate constraints and opportunities for reinventing education.

The Conference has been an opportunity to present and discuss empirical and theoretical works from a variety of disciplines and fields covering education and thus promoting a trans- and inter-disciplinary discussion on urgent topics; to foster debates among experts and professionals; to diffuse research findings all over international scientific networks and practitioners’ mainstreams; to launch further strategies and networking alliances on local, national and international scale; to provide a new space for debate and evidences to educational policies. In this framework, more than 800 participants, including academics, educators, university students, had the opportunity to engage in a productive and fruitful dialogue based on research, analyses and critics, most of which have been published in this volume in their full version.

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## Citizenship, Work and The Global Age

### A Premise

What is education for? This philosophical question cannot be answered ignoring contributions from social and educational sciences. The growing focus on learning outcomes should have prompted discussion on the values and aims in defining policy objectives and developing accountability systems and evidence-based approaches. Whereas for years public discourse on education has most frequently been confined to a merely sector-based perspective, without addressing the relationship (i.e., interdependency and/or autonomy) with globalised societies or to face the new challenges of contemporary's world. The relationship between education and society and the issue of aims can be observed in a new context which has seen the weakening of the society-nation equation and the strengthening of global dimensions.

The crisis born of the pandemic is more and more global and multidimensional. It inevitably obliges to ask what the post-pandemic socio-economic scenarios could be and what challenges might emerge from the transformations of education and training systems and policies. Many researchers and observers think that the most relevant of these challenges is that of inequalities between and within countries. The medium-long term nature of many of these challenges poses a complex question: does the pandemic tend to widen or narrow the time-space horizons of people perceptions, rationalities, and decisions?

For decades, the field of education and training has witnessed continuous growth in globalization and internationalization: just think of the role of the large-scale assessment surveys and the increasing influence of international organisations. Phenomena and concepts such as policy mobility (lending and borrowing) or – within another field of research – policy learning, as well as global scaling up, global-local hybridization and policy assemblage might find a useful opportunity of debate and in-depth analysis in this stream. This might also be true of the related issue regarding how comparative research must be carried out and of the relationship between some government 'technologies' adopted in the latest cycle of policies – for example, quasi-market, evaluation, and autonomy of schools and universities – and the ever more criticized neo-liberal paradigm. In this framework, without any revival of the political or methodological nationalism, a critical rethinking of the national dimension, perhaps too hurriedly assumed to be 'obsolete', can be useful also for a comparative reflection. As to our continent we are in the presence not only of globalization of educational policies, but also of their Europeanisation, due to the extent of the European Commission's strategy and its Open Method of Coordination. Beyond the official distinction between formal, non-formal, and unformal learning, it seems European initiatives and programmes shape a new policy world preparing the future of education, particularly through different expert networks, new ways of conceptualizing knowledge, and disseminating standards. On these issues there is no lack of reflections and research, some of which very critical indeed, whose results deserve to be broadly shared and discussed, too.

The equipping of the new generations with the tools – knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values – to live in a plural and interconnected world is delicate matter indeed in Europe. It is the issue at stake for the encounters – and at times clashes – between old and new visions and

forms of pluralism and secularism. Around this theme are developed educational policies and strongly heterogeneous curricula. Such topic is linked also to the variability in young people's competences and attitudes towards 'cultural otherness'.

Life-long learning is another question of notable importance at international level as it implies both a diverse temporal horizon for education and its link to the dimensions of work. And a different approach to the relationship between school and extra-scholastic (life-wide) learning is also implied. From this stems the necessity of greater investment for example in both the early years (ECEC) and the adult education. We might ask, however, how much has been done to achieve this goal, and whether it risks remaining a fascinating but largely unfinished project for a long time.

Within a general rethinking of the aims and the means at the disposal of education systems, many papers ask whether until now enough has been done to educate towards citizenship and democracy and whether various national educational systems have adopted this issue as their core mission.

A second group of questions derives from some crucial challenges – such as the dramatic deterioration of the biosphere, the climate, and the health – which impose both the necessity of rethinking this mission in a planetary context and redefining the 'citizenship' as a concept not merely national, but multi-level, that is ranging from global to local; and in our continent European, too. How deeply are our nations presently involved in the task of educating their citizens in terms of knowledge of global and trans-national issues? And are they striving to build a collective common consciousness in Europe? What help is being given in this sense by proposals elaborated and experiences promoted by international organizations or the EU?

Finally, starting from infant and primary schools, what weight does citizenship education have in schools, what approaches are adopted and what have shown to be the most effective? What didactics are applied and what seem to be the most promising experiences? To what extent are teachers prepared and motivated and students interested in it? Universities and adult education should also play a role in citizenship education. What proposals and significant experiences can be described and examined?

The Volume also includes contributions on the relationship between education and economic systems which is a classic subject of social science. During the twentieth century, the functionalist perspective established a close link between 'school for the masses' and the construction of individuals personalities conforming to values and social objectives. Professions have then become more and more specialized and therefore requiring ever more targeted skills. Hence, the insistence on the need to train future workers in technical and technological skills, as well as more recently in the 'soft skills' climate, increasingly necessary in certain sectors of the economy (Industry 4.0). The alliance between the functionalist perspective and the neoliberal visions finds its conceptual and practical pivot in the employability conceptual frame. On the other hand, since the 1970s, critical research has highlighted that formal education system contributes to the reproduction of inequalities, confirming and strengthening hierarchies and power relations between different actors of the economic system. These lines of investigation have underlined the weight of cultural and social capital in determining school performance, but also the inflation of educational credentials as a combined effect of mass schooling and changes in the economic system. In more recent times, the fragmentation of the educational and training systems, because of the

multiplication of public and private agencies in charge of training citizens, in addition to the explosion of the non-formal and informal as learning places (e.g., on the Internet), challenges the school to maintain its primacy as a place responsible for training workers. Moreover, it questions its ability to continue to represent a social elevator and / or a place of social justice.

The issue of the reproduction of inequalities and differential returns of educational qualifications fuels lively and stimulating interdisciplinary debates: economic stagnation, mass unemployment and job instability affect the inclusion of young generations in the labour market. Recently, in the context of lifelong learning policies, the relationship between training and work has become increasingly central, but the definition of the goals of these policies is not neutral: in the neoliberal mantra it is a question of guaranteeing the adaptability, employability and autonomy of each individual, so that one can occupy a place in society according to the dominant values. There is no shortage of critical voices about this individualistic and functionalist interpretation of the Lifelong Learning vision. On the other hand, even the supporters of neoliberal-inspired policies want an inclusive training offer (from a meritocratic perspective), as it is essential for recruiting resources and supporting flexible production systems focused on knowledge.

The attention of scholars focuses on the effects of the 'knowledge society' in the educational system of European countries. In this perspective, several studies have focused attention on the orientation processes that contribute to the reproduction of inequalities as the students from the lower classes tend to orient themselves, and are oriented by their teachers, towards the vocational paths, stigmatized within the educational systems.

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## Religious sense and dialogical experience as educational commitment. Reflections in view of Montessori, Panikkar and Korczak

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**ABSTRACT:** *An authentic educational process should lead to learn the beauty of living together, to promote the desire to know the other and to weave solidarity plots of Peace; a process involving the integrity of the person, supporting integrity (spiritual, corporeal, mental and emotional awareness). Educational concerns call for knowledge and action, question what it is necessary to know and what it is necessary to know how to do to promote and preserve integrity in relationships. Peace is an action that expresses full awareness, full decision-making capacity and self-mastery, respecting and considering the Other. As the Panikkarian reading suggests – recovering its Latin etymological root alter – the other is not the adversary, but the other of two, the other part of oneself, that through which one's identity matures in a relational sense. The existential nature of the human being – as well as of every existing form and force – is constitutively relational and unitary (Schroeder, 2002). This awareness is the aim of an educational experimentation adherent to the strong and urgent existential questions, projected towards the full realization of humanity – a quality implicit in the human being, but which needs to be cultivated in order to be able to express itself, as problematized by the human and pedagogical experience of Korczak (2017a). Observing the relationality of existence and the unity of mind-body-spirit – valued also within the Montessori pedagogical model (Cives, 2009) sensitive to the construction of peace and knowledge – the religious dimension is grasped in its being a fundamental experience of interconnection; religiosity is an expression of being in a condition of conjunction – as its etymological root, from the Latin re-ligo (re-join, re-connect) – helps us to consider.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Religiosity, Otherness, Inter-Being, Sense of Wonder, Education*

### Introduction

Pedagogical model of Montessori, as well as that of Korczak and Panikkar's cosmo-vision – are interwoven in the direction of a commitment to shake up thought, speech and action in support of the quality of Life, rooted on 'interbeing'. It is possible to intercept implicit

meanings that deserve to be explored in greater depth for their innovative potential in a perspective of education for citizenship, that is knowledge of how to live together, which requires the exercise of knowledge, understanding and respect for one's own dignity and that of others, which is never separated from knowledge, understanding and respect for the sacredness of life and therefore from a feeling of care, concern, protection and love. Some themes can be identified and explored for their – radically – transformative value, insofar as they question the meaning of education and the urgency of forming thought, word and action as an intra- and inter-subjective dialogue, fruitful in view of the flowering of humanity (Guetta, 2021). Some macro-areas can be intercepted as needful to be valued:

- education to interiority and spirituality;
- education to the experience of the universality-chorality of the existence;
- education to peace and democracy, through dialogue;
- education to meditation as a practice of silence as a matrix of listening and welcoming;
- education to experience the unity of body – mind – spirit, as a flowering of humanity.

I would like to start by referring firstly to the title of this second congress *Reinventing education* and the specific theme of the panel I attended: *Religions in the Face of Planetary Issues: What Would Be the Contribution for Education to Citizenship*. I will begin with some considerations that aim to configure the relevance of the religious dimension in the education of the person, in his or her entirety.

Not to fragment the person, but to recognize and value the person in his/her totality, is, perhaps, the first experience of a religious feeling and act (Tulku, 2002).

## **1. Religiosity as an experience**

It is fundamental to recognise the human being's need to access a vision of himself/herself and of the cosmos, cleansed of stereotyped and stereotypical representations; and it is necessary to give legitimacy to this need through an educational project that places him/her in a deep bond with the nature of which he/she is a part.

I start from the appreciation of religiosity as an experience (Casadei, 2018), which is why I link it with the aesthetic dimension, which in turn is an experience of the wholeness of the person in his/her place in existence, with a sense of wonder and beauty. The sense of wonder and the sense of beauty – mutually nurturing – should not be forgotten by pedagogy and education. In the recognition of mind-body-spirit unity, the aesthetic dimension is valued as a way of probing and experiencing the I-Other relationship according to a religious spirit which, even before being an ideology and/or belief system, is

manifested as a need: the breath of the self and of the life. The contemplative experience – in the conscious exercise of silence and breath – calls the body to composure, attention to awareness, emotion to balance and contributes to an existential posture open to the unknown, to feel and live religiously-minded. Wisdom traditions from all cultural and geographical latitudes share a common feeling: appreciation for nature, the link between mankind and the cosmos, beauty and the importance of living in harmony. Education is co-extensive with life and provides process for human beings to realize their being and inter-being. In the involvement of an educational experience aimed at unfolding the 'being', the person is not closed only to his/her own person, but through the deep experience of himself/herself matures the disclosure of the existential condition which is relational and interconnected. An education centred upon the care of being matters to the interiority and to the intersubjective relationship. Human being should be valued in his/her unity of body-mind-heart, in his/her dimension of choral relationality, of cosmic interconnection.

From a pedagogical perspective that recognizes within discernment bodily intelligence and sensitivity, effective educational action should involve the person's wholeness for the construction of his/her full integrity; from the current urgencies, we could define such an educational perspective as ecological, eco-systemic, aesthetic and ethical one. Education could be drawn upon vitalizing and constructive forces, aiming at the development of radiant possibilities of actualization, helping to unfold inner potential and the personal growth to be embraced. An educational project cannot be limited to the objective of a mere notional and technical acquisition, but must aim at the realization of the flowering of the person in his/her right to be: recognizing, accepting, loving, transforming and realizing oneself. Learning to be has to do with constructive energy, dynamic power: exploration, knowledge, understanding, listening, reflection, imagination, expression, creativity. These processes require to be applied through care, gentleness and respect, so that they can be realized as meaningful experiences in order to being and not to just having or merely exhibiting. Taking into account not only the intellectual dimension but also the corporeal, the emotional and the spiritual one (and the whole sensory universe), discovery is a vast experience in relation to the world and profound in relation to oneself (Montessori, 1970a). The aesthetic-religious dimension within which knowledge matures – as deep exploration, understanding, feeling and imagining – favors the emergence of the feeling of beauty, joy and love for what is done, for what is explored, for what is shared. And gratitude!

Knowledge, which is configured to be experimentation of oneself, of the world and of oneself in relation to the world, weaves the threads of a responsibility that is configured as awareness, care and commitment. Education is also an expression of love, therefore it requires



responsibility and decision-making capacity. With reference to the demands of lifelong education and sustainability a question rises: which means are essential to live together and to support the life of every living being? Which experience promote 'humanity' as a multifaceted dimension to be developed? Which sensibility has to be nurtured to understand and live properly the inter-being: the religious dimension challenges education for citizenship in its being the construction of visions, consciences and behaviors consistent with the commitment to know how to live together, in harmony, peace, respect and love – which means not sentimentality but care, thoughtfulness, courage and decision making capacity. For an authentic concept and reality of citizenship – that is a realized comprehension of the need to live together, as humans being aware to be connected to other living beings – the religious dimension is inescapable, since it locates the person in his/her constitutive link with his/her possibility of being and being fully.

The religious dimension also exerts its inspiring power in guiding education to coherence and pragmatism, being engaged through: a) action-behavior witnessing the commitment for citizenship and creating a reality consistent with it; b) words and communication truly expressing the aspiration to citizenship and promoting cooperative relationship; c) thought and feeling – not in terms of mere contents but in terms of their quality and nature – consistent with the idea of citizenship and nurturing its possibility to grow significantly fair, sustainable, reliable (Francesco, 2015).

In this regard, as guidelines for research, I identify the following questions: Do we speak what we seek? Do we witness what we think? Do we live what we feel? (Katagiri, 2000). I thought of Panikkar, Montessori and Korczak: their lives are a witness of religious work of care and commitment to make their thinking and feeling real in concrete action and at the service of life. Their view are significant in this regard: religiosity is recognized as constitutive of the nature of existence, starting from its deepest meaning of co-participation, co-existence, inter-dependence, equally keen to consider the sacredness of life from which all of them draw the inalienable sense-right-duty of human dignity. And all these quotes do not seem to be at odds with a genuinely scientific approach: «the experience of cosmic religion is the strongest and noblest driving force of scientific research» (Einstein, 2016, 23). Therefore, this is an essential plot for the formation of a human being who is fully realized in his *capax universi* – to quote Thomas Aquinas – who knows how to recognize the immensity within himself/herself. Citizenship should be rooted in this perspective of belonging to the vastness of human and cosmic experience. Education for citizenship needs to be rooted in the reality of things, which resides in the vastness and interdependence of every existing form and force. Human being is made up of this and participates in this order. In the same way, the sense of immensity and interdependence nourishes a

feeling of intimacy, intensity and energy that is oriented as joyful responsibility. It is possible to identify in their example some coordinates necessary to renew education so that it can effectively be a driver of transformation – a transformation that must take place concretely within the person, in each one of us, in a profound, sincere and radical way.

## 2. Being a responsible citizen: *Capax Universi*

Religiosity has to do with the radicality of being and is therefore the driver for an unreserved commitment. The religious sense invites us to consider that the fabric of relationships is much wider and more complex than what an ordinary, habit-distracted gaze can intercept. Commitment is played out not only on the level of mere action, however dictated by 'good' and 'right' intentions. It is necessary to sift through the concept of right and the concept of good, taking care to discriminate well within what is passed off as truth, just because it is supported by common sense and the majority – and from which to distort the meaning of democracy as dictatorship of the majority (Panikkar, 2000). The commitment to realizing oneself as a citizen<sup>1</sup> is towards an understanding of what it means 'to be', then to be 'human'; then this might lead us to realize that being is inter-being. The relationality within which existence takes place (human and otherwise) is the condition for living.

Being citizens, qualifies us as beings who have acquired and internalized the correct vision: that is the one that recognizes the relational nature of existence, and strive to refine the capacity to live together, in harmony, according to a common project of solidarity, cooperation, sustainability. In this respect I find the reference to Thomas Aquinas and his concept of man (and woman) *capax universi* congruent (Pérez Prieto, 2011). In the first place, because it redevelops the term capacity not only in its strict meaning of ability, as if it were

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<sup>1</sup> From the classical Greek *polites*, that is who is able to live the sense of relationship, able to intercept meaning and direction of a thinking that accepts dialogues and matures in it. The citizen is 'capable', willing and open to live the chorality as a space in which to express intelligence and responsibility. Intelligent and responsible citizen sees the relational dimension as constitutive of existence and aspires to know how to live together, to live the 'public thing'. On the contrary, ignorance of all this leads the person to be *idiotes*, closed in the myopia of one's own gaze restricted to the 'private thing', incapable of a gaze adherent to the reality that is irremediably vast and relational. From this perspective, religiosity – freed from a meaning restricted to the confessional sphere of a specific religion, but assumed in its being the experience of a necessity and a sense of the vastness of life – is reconfigured as a capacity, an expression of human intelligence and sensitivity in grasping the fabric of reality in the depth of its mystery and complexity. From this outlook, then, arises a healthy search for all congruent resources to achieve a healthy living in harmony, which today we might define with the term sustainability.

reduced to a technical application of learned notions, but rather in its broader, more articulated and profound meaning of a disposition to welcome: calling into question vision, feeling and action. Capacity is the act of accepting and containing that calls for – in order to be realized – a certain way of seeing and feeling oneself and the world, as well as oneself in relation to the world. I think it would be appropriate to recall, here, Thomas Aquinas's vision in the following words:

*Capax universi*, capable of the universe are your arms when they move with love. And I know it is true that your feet are never more alive than when they are in defence of a good cause. I want to fund your efforts: stay near beauty, for she will always strengthen you. She will bring your mouth close to hers and breathe – inspire you the way light does the fields. The earth inhales God, why should we not do the same? This sacred flame we tend inside needs the chants of every tongue, the communion with all. As capable as God are we. (Daniel Ladinsky, 2002)

In the concept of the citizen – a being who perceives himself/herself in a relationship with other beings, with nature and with life – lies the maturity of an intelligence that knows how to *inter-read*: it intercepts, decodes, represents and expresses the sense of inter-being. Panikkar, Korczak and Montessori are referred to for their conception of educational-existential planning in terms of human maturity, considering the human being in his/her constitutive complex simplicity (Panikkar, 2007): the recognition of the reciprocity of the bodily, emotional, mental and spiritual dimensions. The wholeness of the person is at the heart of a transformational project (Montessori, 2017) towards the integrity (Korczak, 2013) as a realised expression of being in harmony with oneself and therefore a promoter of harmony in the world – social and natural one. For the three Authors, peace is the result of a profound and intimate process of knowledge: a knowledge that wants to go to the heart of self-experimentation, understood as exercise and self-control. A control that is never bent to compression-repression, but rather elevated to full self-mastery, the only true favorable factor of a joyful and gratified expressiveness. The full recognition of each of the constitutive dimensions of the person is at the heart of the message of each of the three authors in their intense work to reaffirm human dignity as the founding value of intra- and inter-subjective relationships, from which the authentic recognition of the dignity of Life, in all its forms, matures. Thus, preparing for a profound pedagogical reflection in terms of ecological-ecosystemic-sustainable education.

### **3 Education for citizenship: learning how to see, feel and act one's being in the world.**

Religiosity, as a capacity of viewing, feeling and acting in a vast fabric of relationship, can be also intercepted as an aesthetic experience – sprouting for and supporting a deep sense of awe and wonder at being alive. This posture assures a warding off a triple reduction: of being, exclusively to human; of human, exclusively to the intellectual dimension; of the intellectual dimension, to mere reason (Panikkar, 2005). In this regard, it can also be said that a deep religious sense value the corporeal-sensory experience as a relevant resource of personal growth and fulfilment. When a free spirit exists, it has to materialize in some form of work, and for that hands are needed. The hand of man has followed his intellect, his spiritual life and his emotions. The hands make all the changes in man's environment. (Montessori, 2008). Accordingly, free personal expression – which is linked, in the one hand, to the right to be guided into the process of exploring oneself, the world and oneself in relation to the world and, in the other hand, to the need to be encouraged towards the search for the meaning of existence – is combined with the sense of dignity, irreplaceable aspect for the realization of humanity (Korczak, 2017). Recalling these three Authors could be helpful in revitalizing some questions of meaning, among which I highlight the following: which themes can be identified, explored and actualized for their – radically – transformative value insofar as they question the meaning of education and the urgency of forming thought, word, feeling and action in view of the flowering of humanity?

In the light of an overview that considers religious experience to be relevant, as a personal path that opens up to a vision at the world geared to grasping the reality of interconnection and interdependence as fundamental, it might be possible to realize that not to fragment the person – but to recognize and value him/her in his/her wholeness – could be the first experience of a religious act. Thus it means:

- interest in the interiority of the person;
- scientific attitude that promotes a spirit of 'religiosity' (awareness of the relational and interdependent dimension of existence: openness, sharing, cooperation, solidarity);
- construction of an ecological identity, consciousness and reality of peace;
- dialogue not as a conversation but as an existential attitude;
- reflectivity competence;
- sense of wonder.

## Conclusion

To sum up I would like to highlight for each Author some key-issues, in which the religious sense is recognized as a growth resource for an ecological and cosmic identity.

With regard to Maria Montessori I would like to emphasize the concept of «joyful industry» and the sense of beauty in working for peace, rising the question: how to build achievement and harmony?

- Considering human nature in its constitutive unity of body - mind - spirit;
- involving the entirety of the person for the construction of his/her full integrity;
- valuing the sensory universe as a source of vast experience in relation to the world and deep experience in relation to oneself;
- building responsibility through an awareness of care from which arises the feeling of beauty, joy and love;
- promoting educational environments that are in themselves an experience of harmony and peace; working on the inner balance of the self (practice of silence).

With regard to Raimon Panikkar I would like to emphasize the concept of «blissful simplicity», rising the question: how to unveil the constitutive religious existence?

- Refraining from the threefold reductionism: of being to exclusively human, of human exclusively to the intellectual dimension, of the intellectual dimension to reason alone;
- reconnecting to a common root (not to ideology and/or belief system): the need to breathe;
- consciously experiencing the vital need to connect to a breath that runs through every existing form, deep and mysterious link between the inner and outer dimensions;
- valuing the otherness (lat. *alter* – the other of two) the other is not the adversary, the other part of oneself, through which one's identity matures in a relational sense;
- seeing the religiosity (lat. *re-ligo* - rejoin) in the inter-being of existence.

With regard to Janusz Korczak I would like to emphasize the concept of relationship between children and adult, rising the question: «how to love the child»?

- Taking care, pay attention not to kill the child's soul;
- watching out for hypocrisy and absolutes that generate violence and undermine respect for the sacredness of life;
- respecting the sacredness of life giving relevance to the query;
- learning to wait instead of claiming the answer;
- learning to think about what is right, about what gives joy;
- education at the service of life.

In conclusion, I would like to focus on the sense of wonder, as an essential disposition for a responsible living. capable of attention, care, but above all courageous in looking at the vastness, at the mystery of the existence. And above all courageous in wanting to be fed on it. The

sense of wonder is a fundamental energy to be kept alive. In the human it acts to motivate towards the desire for knowledge, from which the feeling of love and protection can be consolidated. Awe is an attitude that preserves from becoming trivialized, leading to neglect, indifference and disregard, which are certainly not the traits that should constitute citizenship. What it is necessary to know and to know how to do in order to promote and to preserve integrity in relationships? Viewing religiosity as an experience allows it to be linked to the aesthetic dimension, which in turn is an experience of the entirety of the person, in his/her place in existence, with a sense of wonder and beauty – which should not be forgotten or overcome by pedagogy and education. According to Montessori:

it is necessary to give the child so generously, let us give him a vision of the whole universe [...] The idea of the universe [...] will do much more than arouse his interest, because it will arouse in him admiration and wonder [...] Offering him the vision of the whole will help his intelligence to develop fully, since his interest spreads towards everything, and everything is connected to the others and has its place in the universe, which is at the centre of his thought (Montessori, 1970, 19-20).

From this perspective emerges the existentially strong sense of education and the religious sense of work that builds peace as the fruit of knowledge. The sense of wonder trains one to recognize the mystery as something to wonder about, even if it is not possible to say everything, as an exercise in ridding oneself of arrogance and resignation. Each individual perspective is limited «but there is always the possibility of an exchange and even a broadening of perspectives, and intercultural and inter-religious dialogue aims to do just that. Valuing the other's perspective and trying to be aware of it, even without understanding it, presupposes the beginning of overcoming the dichotomy between knowledge and love» (Panikkar, 2002, 9-10) For Korczak, too, the tenet of love and acceptance is underpinned by the need for knowledge - as co-constructed work. The acceptance of each child – which is a distinctive feature of Korczak's life – is accomplished through an educational relationship: teaching-learning the rules of coexistence, discussing them, choosing and sharing them. In his view, the sound groundwork of the educator does not disregard the energy of love in becoming a committed observation and engaged action «Years of work have confirmed with increasing certainty that children deserve respect, trust and friendship: that it is good to live in a serene atmosphere of delicate feelings, joyful laughter, enthusiastic first efforts and pure, clear, beloved joy; then work becomes challenging, fruitful and beautiful» (Korczak, 2011, 41-2).

Religious sense grounds – on a vast scale of existence – the sense of community: the word originates from two latin terms (*cum* and *munus*)

meaning 'to share a task'. The religious sense – by educating to the depth and the search for a feeling of closeness to the mystery – constitutes a possible view to recognize the most basic of all communities: the Universe.

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