



El sur de Italia y pedagogía - el compromiso político: un modelo de "pedagogía sumergida" - entre la teoría y la acción.

Southern Italy & pedagogy – the political commitment: a model of “submerged pedagogy” – between theory and action.

Fabrizio Manuel Sirignano.

Università degli studi di Napoli “Suor Orsola Benincasa”.

fabrizio.sirignano@unisob.na.it

RESUMEN.

El ensayo ofrece una lectura del pensamiento de Nitti y de su pedagogía civil, destacando aspectos todavía corrientes de un pensador, injustamente olvidado, que marcó la diferencia en el contexto de la Italia de Giolitti en la que "la palabra es fácil y la acción es lenta". En el texto se recuerda la fuerza de una voz que expone todo lo que es contrario al bien de Italia: los utopismos revolucionarios, la mala información que fundamenta la opinión pública, la corrupción moral de la élite, la parasitaria actitud de los terratenientes del sur y la renuncia "supina" y "pasiva" de las masas del Sur. Se recuerda, a través de Nitti, que, empezando desde un análisis científico de los aspectos económicos, culturales y éticos, se puede imaginar planes educativos realmente emancipatorios.

PALABRAS CLAVE.

Pedagogía civil, meridionalismo, emancipación.

ABSTRACT.

This essay proposes a reading of the thoughts of Nitti and their civil pedagogy, highlighting the still current aspects of a scholar, unjustly forgotten, which have made the difference in the contest of the Giolitti type Italy, in which “words are easy and action is slow”. The text recalls the strength of a voice which unmasked all that which is contrary to the good of Italy: revolutionary utopianism, inaccurate information which substantiates public opinion, the moral corruption of the élite, the parasitical attitude of southern landowners and the “supine” and “passive” resignation of the southern masses. It must be remembered, through Nitti, that only by a scientific analysis of the economical, cultural and ethical aspects, is it possible to conceive of educative plans which are indeed emancipatory.

KEY WORDS.

Civil pedagogy, meridional-ism, emancipation.





1. Introduction. A “submerged” pedagogy: a reconsideration of Nitti in the light of education.

Although a noted scholar in the historiographical and economical field, due to contributions rendered on the debate of the Southern question (Salvadori, 1981; Barbagallo, 1984, 1985, 1987; Petraccone, 2005; Viesti, 2013), Francesco Saverio Nitti is a little known, if not entirely unknown author, in the pedagogical-educative field. In fact, apart from recent studies which have communicated and evidenced the depth of his educative reflections in relation to his civil commitment (Sirignano, 2012), his critical analyses and proposals regarding the rapport between retardation in the South of Italy, as public instruction and education, have been almost always ignored, reducing the vastness and complexity of his ideas, to a social-economical analysis subsidiary of positive determination, borrowed from Giustino Fortunato's lectures.

Yet Nitti has also been considered the Italian Fichte (Volpe, 1949), for the clear educative intentionality that permeates the entire scholar's work and also that of the intellectual, consistently engaged in debates and proposals of solutions for the main social, economical, political and cultural problems which afflicted Italy in the early 1900s: from the struggle for the solution of the Southern question, to his uncompromising opposition to fascism, which forced him into “exile in Patria” at Acquafredda in Maratea and then to abscond abroad (Sirignano, 2012).

In fact, from a pedagogical point of view, the biography of this statesman from the Basilicata area of Italy, may be considered an exemplary educative model, in that it is focused on direct testimonies in favour of the values of liberty, democracy and justice, which, in spite of the image of a scholar, dedicated only to research and the classification of facts, constitutes the ‘North Star’ of referral, also during the main dramatic phases of the history of Italy and Europe. As has been observed:

Permeated by these values, which the pages of Aristotele, Pericle, Demostene and Cicerone – to remain with the ancient intellectuals -substantiate in him, Nitti feels a moral duty, to attempt to change politics, to help Southern Italy to transform and progress, to solicit workers, peasants, the underprivileged masses of the South to “educate themselves” to recover the strength to fight and redeem themselves, to be therefore creators of their own destiny, in a proper and more humane society. (D'Amelio, 2003: 73, author's trans)

Born and raised in a small bourgeois family environment, in which liberal, republican and socialist ideas circulated, educated at the University of Naples and the animated cultural Neapolitan clubs, and amongst others by Giustino Fortunato, Nitti reconciles a strict legal-economical education with passion and an ethical-political-civil commitment, further nourished by the dramatic conditions of backwardness prevailing in his native land, Basilicata:

In the harsh contrasts between the relative affluence of families of the intellectual bourgeois [...] and the tragic surrounding reality, at Venosa, as in Banzi, at Rionero, as in Melfi or in Potenza, in a reality deprived of road and railway infrastructures and any civil service, marked by a “black poverty”, in this stark contrast [...] the personality of Nitti is formed, which absorbing liberal, democratical and social legal ideas, matures the conviction of a civil commitment in favour of that static society, “in a perpetual Messianic expectation”, in favour





of those peasants, consumed by sunlight and fatigue, with whom he was in contact [...]. (D'Amelio, 2003: 79, author's trans)

Therefore, awareness, commitment and direct evidence, constitute the load bearing axis of a lifetime and employment, which aims to release marginal individuals, to redeem them from their conditions of dependence and enslavement, through a gradual process of consciousness, strictly linked to the task in favour of the expansion of areas of participation and the extension of democratic debate in the field of Italian liberal institutions at the beginning of the 1900s. There follows relations between schools, instruction, education and democracy, gathered by the scholar from the Basilicata, on its ideal balance, beginning with a critical analysis of the historic situation in force.

2. Analysis of the Southern question and the proposal of an industrial democracy. Pedagogical and social perspective for the liberation of the South.

Rejecting the pessimistic and fatalistic implications which direct the theory of the anthropological school, that presumes to "scientifically" explain the mental retardation of the South based on the racial inferiority of the Southern population (Lombroso, 1897; Niceforo, 1898, Salvadori, 1981; Teti, 2011) and at the same time, dissociating from the naturalistic determinism present in the lectures of his maestro Fortunato, Nitti became promoter of a proposal of modernisation focused on the idea of a modern democratic industry, which presupposes and at the same time, contributes to the education of individuals, socially and knowledgeably, participating in the social-economical and political-cultural process.

From a political point of view, the Southern 'Nitti like' reflections are located between the liberal -conservatory paradigm of Villari, Sonnino, Franchetti and Fortunato and the democratic-progressive paradigm of Colajanni, Ciccotti and Salvemini

If compared to a Southern liberal background, the scholar from the Basilicata, on one hand recovers the typical illuminative setting, which aims at the education, at the same time ethical and specialistic, of the elite of the country, while on the other hand separates, as having evidenced with greater determination and continuity, the urban dimension of Southern Italy, which associates to an original proposal of transformation and social-economical, political-cultural innovations, focusing on the contest of public participation together with private, above all in the relevant sectors of electrical and steel production.

Instead, in relation to Southern socialist orientation, Nitti definitely resumes the class structure paradigm – considering it a fundamental process for mass awareness – yet diminishes it in solidaristic and non radically antagonistic terms (Nitti, 1891; 1892a).

In other terms, the scholar from the Basilicata, is positioned on the left wing of liberal formation with the relaunch of the democratic-radical prospective, in the light in which the socialistic prospective works. Nitti observes that Italy has need of a Government which unites every effort in the business of production; that is, a radical Government able to destroy the wall of indifference.

Above all, Nitti requires an industrial democracy, which comprehends the more active members of the Italian population, this change should be brought about by a small number of men, namely the more active members of industry, science and politics.





In fact, according to Nitti, the best and more active members of the bourgeoisie, await anxiously for a different and wider orientation: and this could be only from the work of a new radical force, which manages to activate not only the more illuminated conservatives, but also the socialists who have already openly repudiated the programme of violence.

It is a unitary proposal, which consistent to the whole framework of the Giolitti style politics of the beginning of the 1900s, intends to overcome the limits of a liberal State, to evidence the function of high socio-political mediation between the instances of work and capital, in view of the realisation of the common goods of the whole country.

Common goods, which the scholar from the Basilicata sees threatened not only by the class struggle, degenerated in reaction on one hand and on the other in revolutionary utopianism, but also in the territorial contest between the North and South of Italy. In fact between 1800/1900s, the conviction that the State had not done other than drain wealth and capital from the laborious northern regions towards the parasitic southern regions, is affirmed.

In this contest of boorish polemics and short-sighted claims, in which unfounded prejudices fuelled grudges and conflicts, thus contributing to the dissolution of the public spirit and alimentering short-sighted subjectivity and conflicts, the scholar from the Basilicata was strongly animated to the intention of forming a public opinion correctly knowledgeable in the real terms of the problem, publishing a research document in 1900, which had been conducted on the territorial distribution of the fiscal revenue income and outflow of the State. This was based both on statistics and in a synchronic and diachronic key, and demonstrated that since the Unity of Italy, capital had been drained, not from the north towards the south, but from the South towards the North of Italy. As observed by the same Nitti:

It is not rare to read in newspaper in Milan, that an election in Lombardy is politically worth ten of the South; that the southerners are the cause of disorder in public Italian life. It is not rare to hear said, that since the participation of southerners in Italian political life has increased, matters have worsened. Southern Italy appears as a Vendée of absentee Barons, ignorant plebeians and corrupt politicians. The Southern railways are the cause of the difficulties in the budget: Southern employees in the administrative disorder, Southern military politics. These are what is said regarding half of Italy, but submissively, discretely, which is our evil. Now we should all tell the truth, openly as is our duty. (Nitti, 1900: 420, author's trans).

And the truth consists in the fact that:

[...] Southern Italy, since 1860, has given much more than any other part of Italy in relationship to its wealth; it pays what it could not pay [...]; that the State has, for itself, spent much less for everything, and there are some provinces in which there are as many absentees as there are landowners. The truth is – it springs out of every page of this book – that the South is reprimanded for matters of which it has no fault. All the large institutions of the State are centralized, more or less as an army, in the zones which were already the richest. For multiple causes [...] the wealth of the South, which could be the core of its economical transformation, has quickly transmigrated to the North. Severe taxes and the concentration of the expenses of the State and beyond, have continued the work of evil. There is no thing, except taxes, in which the South does not come last. (Nitti, 1900: 420, author's trans).





Therefore the scholar from the Basilicata, proposes to invert the trend and extend the advantages of the process of modernisation also to the South of Italy, by means of a comprehensive and consistent political action, yet which, at the same time, is also special as it takes the specific characteristics of diverse southern areas into due consideration, while not limiting to the agricultural areas and also included highly urbanised areas.

Nitti's attention is concentrated on the ex-capital of the Bourbon Realm, Naples, which he considered a city to redeem from its degradation, to favour the process of industrialisation in the whole Southern region.

Prior to 1860 – observes the scholar from the Basilicata – Naples was [...] the main consumer city in Italy. Other cities were also capitals: yet were capitals of small areas, and except for Rome, and partially Venice, represented centres of consume of little importance. Thus when Florence, Turin, Modena, Parma etc. ceased to be capitals, few, or little damage was felt: Naples however felt the effect enormously. As the city had not been industrial, while all its reserves lessened, it found itself at this terrible convergence: either become a main industrial centre or decay. (Nitti, 1903: 56, author's trans)

Among the measures proposed by Nitti in favour of the outset of industry in the Neapolitan city, he foresaw the potentiality and improvement of the technical and professional education, in such as way as to enlist workers and intermediate technical staff useful for the modernisation process.

Once these measures were approved by the law 1904, on the “resurgence of the city of Naples”, Nitti continued his battle for the freedom of the whole of the Southern area, not omitting to evidence, together with the responsibilities of the national governing classes, also that of the *elite* Southerners, harshly criticised by him for the execution of opportunistic and clientèle politics, which alimanted the formation of individuals characterised by an individualistic and utilitarian reductive ethos.

[...] above all after 1876 – Southern Italy has been considered a country destined to form the ministerial majorities. The prefects have almost no other function than to hold elections. An ex minister advised the Chamber of Deputies, of having e a prefect declared as an arbitrator, enabling him to commit all the Mayors of his province to prison . Ignorance and pain were speculated everywhere. Where evil should have been removed it had hardened. The whole area had been abandoned to a villainous clientèle. (Nitti, 1900: 453, author's trans)

Nitti, fundamentally believed in a continual, organized and systematic action of civil education, on one hand in favour of the formation of a competent bourgeois, dynamic, active and conscious of its precise duties, yet on the other hand favouring the liberation of the working class from their conditions of subordination and marginality.

3. Education as a “central” ruling for the liberation of the South.

In criticising the degeneration of the centuries old humanistic traditions in abstract rhetoric verbal phrases, Nitti hopes for the formation of a new governing class through a new educative paradigm focused on the “truth of science” (Nitti, 1901: 7). Addressing young university students, the scholar from the Basilicata, urges them to review the basis of their own education, in favour of the innovation of a social-economical and political-cultural Italian style:





Do not trust, young people – exclaimed Nitti – in anything but yourselves: expect nothing from the men of the past: you who are the truth and strength, do not aim backwards if the future tempts you. If you want to follow our people, who have already traced the path, more than vain exercises of the word, learn to love, to bow down to research and investigate the truth of science: if you abandon this deprivation which corrupts and kills; if you become industrial and traders and love only employment; if you discuss the still hidden national energies; you will make this Italy great for the third time. (Nitti, 1901: 6-7, author's trans)

Coherently in the profound process of revision of the pedagogical-educative paradigm, in which there is a problematical and never linear passage from the formative models of theological-metaphysical orientation and those scientific and social-political (Sirignano, 2003), the proposal of the scholar from the Basilicata, is characterised for its specific declination, never layered nor speculative, of the education of an individual who is independent and consciously critical. It is not by chance that ethical-political balance towards the integral education of an individual, diminished by Nitti, enters the historical horizon of problems that characterise the era of Giolitti viewing Nitti as a clear headed actor, interpreter of its underlying contrasting trends:

Italy – observes Nitti – does not have foreigners within its walls: it has its poverty, its traditions of factionalism and violence, and the weight of its prejudices. It is among one of the chief countries which has more killings: it is also amongst those where the minds of its people more-so germinate error and ignorance and violence ferments. It is necessary to concentrate all our forces to depart from this state. If ideas conduct individuals and populations are in agreement that they are flesh of our flesh, they should then unite to our sentiments and determine our actions. Words are not enough, above all we need action, and it is much more necessary where words are easy and action is slow. (Nitti, 1901: 6, author's trans).

It is the delineation of a global educative model, in which values, knowledge, ability and competence are a varied whole, in such a way to favour the formation of an active and positive individual not merely contemplative, able to descend to the level of practice in a conscious and reflective way. A model which the scholar from the Basilicata, proposes to new generations, with the educative intention of motivating them from the climate of starvation and resignation, which seems to characterise them in the tortuous history of between 1800-1900s, and also from the presumption, of rhetorical-literary ancestry, of belonging to a great nation of Latin and a humanistic-renaissance civilisation.

Specifically, according to Nitti, it is necessary to review and readdress cultural, academic and governable politics, in such a way as to reconcile individual habits to the educative needs and requirements of a country beginning to industrialise, favouring the progressive expansion of the technical-scientific faculty against the judicial-humanistic. Above all, Southern Italy needs to promote and systematically realise integral works of education and professional orientation of the local *élite*, so as not to reduce the project of construction of a modern *industrial democracy* and a simple and reductive economical system.

The first Southern Members of Parliament – observes Nitti – chosen from amongst the more noted patriots, almost completely ignored the South. They were mainly ideologists; aged refugees; lawyers, masters of speech and the living traditions of old literature. On every occasion they repeated that Southern Italy was rich, instruction was enough to illuminate the





mind and liberty to start industries. Hence the illusion of immense natural wealth, left to languish only for the fault of despotism, was diffused everywhere, also and above all among the Northerners. (Nitti, 1901: 114, author's trans).

Also, the scholar from the Basilicata evidences that the Southern population is characterised for its negative character, which besides being an anthropological-racist attribute, was instead, the result of a long and tormented historical process, making the Southern Question not only a question of economical character but also and above all an ethical, cultural and educative question. According to Nitti, Southerners often have an antisocial attitude: little spirit of union and solidarity, the tendency to enlarge matters and even conceal them, for the love of false grandeur and little interest towards the truth. Many perish so as to be thought of as rich; so those viewing the real situation, almost do not want that the truth is shown to others. The work spirit in the middle classes is lacking: industrial education is lacking. It is tolerated that administration and politics are often in the hands of unworthy people, in order to gain personal advantages.

The good faith of commerce is often lacking, and often all interest regarding public matters. Yet, Nitti, at the same time sustains that it is necessary to say, that in all this, there is nothing inevitable and the day of diffusion of the truth will arrive and determine in the Southerners the idea that health is only in themselves, in their spirit of opposition, in the intolerance of abuse, in the grand spirit of solidarity, and mean that a great step on the road to a solution will have been made. The Southern question is economical, but also a question of education and morals: it is the spirit of opposition to the abuse of Government officiousness and the development of public morale that will benefit more than any matter and allow the South to departure from this state, which is truly extremely sad.

For Nitti, Southern Italy should not request anything: it must only form its conscious, to react to the continuation of a state of matters which impoverish and degrade. It must, above all, necessitate major security of order, major respect for the law: it must, even more prefer the increase in expenditure to the decrease in more exorbitant taxes (Nitti, 1901: 130-131).

Therefore Nitti, begins by recording the presence of a passive individual, acquiescent, antisocial, narrow-minded and individualistic to counter the needs of critical and supportive formation, aimed at the pursuit and realisation of common goods, since they will have an adequate civic spirit. Within this prospective, in the political and Southern reflections of Nitti, education configures as a central ruling act in favour of the processes of consciousness, professionalism and selection of the *elite* on one hand and the emancipation and liberation of the popular masses on the other.

If the first in line have to form and select both from an ethical and cultural point of view, to guide the *trans-formative* processes of the nation, the second in line, have to also be put in the condition of being able to integrate in an active and knowledgeable mode, through adequate reforms, which concern the rapport between popular education, technical-professional education and the Southern question.

In relation to the base instructions, Nitti evidences that, in spite of the registered progresses of the decades following the Unity of Italy, the Southern problem resides in illiteracy. Certainly, observed the Basilicata scholar, the introduction of education and military service have covered a fundamental role in the process of illiteracy and civil growth in the Southern rural masses:





[...] we have imposed – observes Nitti – even if with little effectiveness, obligatory schooling and the population has learnt many useless and some useful things. The army, luckily ours is not yet based on territorial order, which would herald the end of Unity, has been advantaged: hundreds of thousands of our citizens have left their land, have seen new cities, have above all forgotten. Hatred transmitted by inheritance, heightened by closeness, exasperated by justice, have in some way diminished. The peasant has acquired a higher concept of himself: those who resort to him, even for the vote, for the fictitious sovereignty of the moment, will not always be inhuman. (Nitti, 1899:74, author's trans)

Despite this, social and productive relations characterised by a steely rapport of subordination of workers regarding against owners and by the use of intensive practices of exploitation of under age and female workers, according to Nitti have not favoured a more ample, diffused and capillary process of emancipation of the Southern population. In this way, the Basilicata scholar, shows to gather the valued intrinsic de-training of social relations, in which precariousness and its brutality, contribute to the reproduction and grounding of a cynical, supine and passive mentality:

[...] although – affirms Nitti – in the natural intellectual vivacity of Southern people, the level of same in the grand mass of workers is extremely low. A working day of 13 or 14 hours begins to weaken even the strongest men and does not allow them great intellectual development. All this explains, how men treated worse than animals, support with resignation the hardest game. (Nitti, 1892b: 176-177, author's trans)

Drawing both from ample and meticulous statistical comparative documentation, and from interviews and questionnaires, not only aimed at institutional representatives but also peasants, in his research the scholar from the Basilicata, lingers on the rapport between illiteracy and the conditions of Southern schools.

In so far as specifically concerning Calabria and Basilicata, which are characterised as having the highest level of illiteracy nationally, Nitti evidences that the causes of the phenomena are multiple and closely knitted.

The actual demographical and economical conditions partly explain the causes of the permanence of illiteracy, while a relative indifference of the executive classes and the poverty of municipal finances explain the scarce energy with which evil is fought. (Nitti, 1910: 399, author's trans).

However, while in the decades immediately following the process of national unification, the Southern bourgeoisie had shown all its "indifference" (Nitti, 1910: 337, author's trans) and "indifference" (Nitti, 1910, author's trans) towards the popular school, according to the scholar from the Basilicata, the immigration phenomena intensified between 1800-1900 has contributed to generate radical *transformation* in the educative field:

If still – observes Nitti – gentlemen are often diffident, or indifferent, it is often the population which demands a better instruction. Peasants returning from America, regret more than others their inability to read, and demonstrate the damage. The Americans have in fact, in this sense, a wider propaganda, and certainly more believed, against illiteracy.

The psychology of peasants in this sense is different. Thirty years ago it seemed natural to not know how to read, now they feel the damage and the humiliation of not being able to read. (Nitti, 1910, author's trans).





In other terms, the scholar from the Basilicata, evidences how the experience of the emigrant, has contributed, in Southern rural centres, to mature the awareness of the importance of education for their emancipation.

Now according to Nitti, the Italian State, has the precise duty to evaluate such awareness, developing basic education in the areas of the South of Italy, arrogating elementary schools, to ensure that school buildings are constructed, enhancing not only the third year class for the fulfilment of obligatory schooling, but also for evening and weekend adult schooling, establish public gardens and infant nurseries, implement governing bodies and inspection, therefore encouraging the best teachers. As observed Nitti, regarding this proposal:

It is evident that Southern towns are not, in the majority, in the condition to be able to significantly increase the allocation of elementary instruction expenditure, and if they call for the passage of services of elementary instruction to the state, it is not so as not to pay [...] but as they are not able to pay more. It has now been proved [...] that the towns of these provinces sustain high duties, in relationship to their finances, and it is impossible, for the majority of them, to sustain an ulterior expansion of their services, and instead is always more stimulated by the obligatory regulations of law and public opinion. (Nitti, 1910: 343, author's trans)

4. Adult education as an instrument of freedom.

Returning again to confront the problems of education of the population, during the postwar years of the Second World War, while acting as President of the Union for the struggle against illiteracy, Nitti indicates the formation of adults as the new frontier of the national education system:

We – affirms the scholar from the Basilicata – turn to the young and adults to bring to everyone the 'bread' of education, the crumbs of a unique wisdom, so that no-one is really without. In other countries, institutions like ours have already existed for many years and have prosperous lives: Italy is only now starting to feel that it is not enough to educate children, it is necessary to educate adults as the unused forces of adults are still formidable. (Nitti, 1953: 6, author's trans)

By directly addressing his research and inquests on Calabria and Basilicata, Nitti does not miss the occasion to again highlight the new civil function of freedom of culture and instruction, above all when there are not artificially lowered from above, but are the fruit of a single act of conscious by those who should be directly interested in the process of self liberation:

I remember – writes Nitti – in towns in Calabria lost amongst the mountains, interviewing the peasants [...] and having asked them what their main wishes, desires and hopes were, they answered that what they most desired was schooling. I was deeply disturbed and moved. That population, living separated from the rest of the world, had understood that it was their worst problem. (Nitti, 1953: 9-10, author's trans)

Therefore, almost at the end of his life, Nitti had the possibility to reiterate that the constant and systematic commitment against illiteracy and in favour of the process of instruction and formation of the adult, represents some of the essential aspects of the Southern question, taken by him and connected to themes for the reconstruction of the whole country. Themes always declared using the keywords, unitary and national, and never, local or parish. "I –





sustained Nitti – confide that Italy will renew itself uniting even more and that all those stolid words pronounced on ignorance, ignorance of history, ignorance of our social life and ignorance in our feelings, will prove to be incorrect. Italy will unite or it will not be”. (Nitti, 1953: 8, author’s trans).

The scholar from the Basilicata, does not only study in depth the various aspects of instruction and education with respect to the Southern question, he also systematically points his critical studies and surveys, towards technical-professional training, offering specific contributions on the various aspects of agricultural training. In conducting his research, Nitti found that one of the main causes of lack of development in the South, lies in the cultural factor: the parasitical mentality of landowners, whilst being gentlemen, openly disdain manual and working activities. As he himself observed:

Farming had, for centuries, been left to the peasants, and what is there to say regarding the social conditions of the landowner, born ‘gentleman’, it is not to wonder at the backward state of agricultural techniques and the scarcity of more modern knowledge, which elsewhere have led to important progress, neither is it to wonder at the persistence of traditional methods of agriculture which can be observed. Much needed therefore is, the diffused teaching of the practice of new methods of agriculture, adapting to suit the local contingencies, and much needed is the example of the boldest landowners, having removed stale prejudices, of dedicating to the land, with love, experimenting new ways, obtaining profit, to convince others to try (Nitti, 1910: 343, author’s trans).

Devoid of using simple, rudimentary methodological settings to explain the backwardness of the Southern agriculture, the scholar from the Basilicata, associates the cultural factor with other factors, nature, economy, finance, hydrogeological and for example, malaria, deforestation, and the lack of regular and canalised water courses. Given the complexity of his analysis of the Southern question, also in an agricultural dimension, Nitti does not give supremacy to the importance of the cultural and instruction factors and favours the activation of the *transformation* process in the South of Italy.

It is only the ridiculous simplicity of a visionary – observes the scholar from the Basilicata – (not theoretical as theory, in serious studies, does not separate from reality) who understands transformation on sight, or makes everything depend on the alphabet or the school, which are powerful weapons of renewal, yet are not the only arms. (Nitti, 1910: 270, author’s trans).

According to Nitti, that which is needed to resolve the problem, is an integral approach, which requires on the part of the state, a systematic intervention, in such a way as to coordinate all the initiatives leaning towards innovation, to “produce more, produce better, see better” (Nitti, 1910: 275, author’s trans). Regarding education, the scholar from the Basilicata, emphasises the need to notably strengthen professional formation in the agricultural field, as:

In the Basilicata and Calabria, local agricultural teaching was limited, until a short time ago, to very few matters: in the Basilicata at the Technical Institute of Melfi in the surveying section: in Calabria, in Cosenza and Catanzaro both schools deal with agriculture; institutes suitable to train some professionals or an employee or some steward; or to better the personal knowledge of some small landowners (even if it is not necessary to give whatsoever education to their less intelligent children) rather than acts of useful influence on





the peasant and farming mass of tenants and share croppers. The scarce attendance of students, in those schools which teach agriculture, shows the little consideration which is held for the advantages of attending such institutes. In fact in the school year 1907/1908, 24 boarders had enrolled at the school which taught agriculture in Cosenza although no day students; in that of Catanzaro 41 boarders and 4 day students. (Nitti, 1910: 270, author's trans).

According to Nitti, it follows that rather than strengthening the agricultural colleges, it is necessary to improve the travelling agricultural, viticulture, oenology, dairy and livestock teachers, already instituted in Basilicata and Calabria under specialised laws in 1904 & 1906, not only through the allocation of more significant financing for these types of educated travelling professors, and also through a much more practical preparation of Agricultural Science graduates and the establishment of an Agricultural Experimental Station for arboreal culture in the South. Citing among others, the report, received from the travelling professors of Lagnonero, the scholar from the Basilicata, evidences the lack of adequate economical resources for the execution of their duties:

Regarding the means available to this chair, it must be declared that only on 1st July this year, an actual fund of 8000 lire was available; while in the previous years *there was nothing*, as the special law 11904, table A, did not allow for any expenses for agrarian propaganda.

It was managed as best possible and the bank inspector had always proven, with commendable praise to remedy and assist. This was, however damaging for the chair, especially at first, to win over the diffidence of these farmers and their distrust of governmental assistance, considerable means were necessary to succeed, many more than local initiatives, except for in some exceptions, in the early days.

Moreover, even 8,000 lire, which in the future will be reduced to 7,500. is very little; in fact for example the province of Parma is, so as to say, roughly the half of the surface of this district and spends more than triple this amount for propaganda.

Yet if this chair and others should function well, other funds are necessary to improve the fate of personnel who are without malarial compensation, without sessions and badly paid, so much so that despite frequent competitions the chair is always understaffed. (Nitti, 1910: 225, author's trans).

In conclusion, it can be observed that in Nitti's analysis and educative proposals, the ethical-political balance, is in itself *trans-formative*, towards the progressive realisation of ideals of justice and liberty, shall inform civil pedagogy, diminished in a pedagogy of the *elite* and mass pedagogy, in turn never rhetoric, abstract and speculative, always identified with relevance to the special historical contests of referral.

In this actual age of globalisation, Nitti's civil lectures seem to be still current, in that a pedagogical-educative alternative to technical reduction, persuasions can be drawn from them, y ever more prevailing today, as are generic and unachievable utopias, which are silhouetted on the smoky paths of *desire*, to envisage formative models ethically orientated towards the future yet, at the same time also en-trenched in the problematic and complex reality of the present, to allow people, individually or collectively, to participate actively and knowingly to the contradictory processes in act.





5. References.

- Barbagallo, F. (1984). *Nitti*. Torino: Utet.
- Barbagallo, F. (a cura di) (1985). *Francesco Saverio Nitti. Meridionalismo e europeismo*. Roma-Bari: Laterza.
- Barbagallo, F. (a cura di) (1987). *Il Mezzogiorno in una democrazia industriale*. Roma-Bari: Laterza.
- D'Amelio, S. (2003). *Francesco Saverio Nitti*. Roma-Bari: Laterza.
- Lombroso, C. (1987). *L'uomo delinquente in rapporto all'antropologia, alla giurisprudenza ed alle discipline carcerarie*. Torino. Fratelli Bocca.
- Niceforo, A. (1898). *L'Italia barbara contemporanea. Studi e appunti*. Palermo: Remo Sandron.
- Nitti, F.S. (1891). *Il socialismo cattolico*. Torino: L. Roux e C. Tip. Edit.
- Nitti, F.S. (1892a). *Socialismo scientifico e socialismo utopistico*. Firenze: M. Ricci.
- Nitti, F.S. (1892b). *La legislazione sociale in Italia e le sue difficoltà*. Napoli: s.n., ora in Nitti, F.S. (1958). *Scritti sulla questione meridionale*. Vol. I. Bari: Laterza.
- Nitti, F.S. (1899). *Il brigantaggio meridionale durante il regime borbonico*. Firenze: s.n., ora in Nitti, F.S. (1958). *Scritti sulla questione meridionale*. Vol. I. Bari: Laterza.
- Nitti, F.S. (1900). *Il bilancio dello Stato dal 1862 al 1896-97. Prime linee di una inchiesta sulla ripartizione territoriale delle entrate e delle spese pubbliche in Italia*. Napoli: Società anonima cooperativa tipografica. In Nitti, F.S. (1958). *Scritti sulla questione meridionale*. Vol. II. Bari: Laterza.
- Nitti, F.S. (1901). *L'Italia all'alba del XXI secolo. Discorso ai giovani d'Italia*. Torino-Roma: Roux e Viarengo.
- Nitti, F.S. (1903). *Napoli e la questione meridionale*. Napoli: L. Pierro. In Nitti, F.S. (1978), *Scritti sulla questione meridionale*. Vol. III. Bari: Laterza.
- Nitti, F.S. (1907). *Il partito radicale e la nuova democrazia industriale*. Torino: Società tipografica editrice internazionale. In Nitti, F.S. (1978). *Scritti sulla questione meridionale*, Vol. III. Bari: Laterza.
- Nitti, S.F. (1910). *Inchiesta sulle condizioni dei contadini in Basilicata e Calabria*. In Nitti, F.S. (1968). *Scritti sulla questione meridionale*. Vol. II. Bari: Laterza.
- Nitti, F.S. (1956). *Discorso inaugurale*, in AA.VV.. *L'educazione degli adulti. Discussioni e esperienze*. La Nuova Italia: Firenze.
- Petraccone, C. (2005). *Le 'due Italie'. La questione meridionale tra realtà e rappresentazione*. Roma-Bari: Laterza.
- Salvadori, M.L. (1981). *Il mito del buongoverno. La questione meridionale da Cavour a Gramsci*. Torino: Einaudi.
- Sirignano, F.M. (2003). *La pedagogia della formazione. Teoria e storia*. Napoli: Liguori.
- Sirignano, F.M. & Lucchese, S. (2012). *Pedagogia civile e questione meridionale. L'impegno di Francesco Saverio Nitti e Gaetano Salvemini*. Lecce: Pensa Multi Media.
- Teti, V. (2011). *Per la razza maledetta. Origini del pregiudizio antimeridionale*. Roma: Manifestolibri.





- Viesti, G. (2013), *Il Sud vive sulle spalle dell'Italia che produce. Falso!* Roma-Bari: Laterza.
- Volpe, G. (1949). *Italia moderna*. 2 vol. Firenze: Sansoni.

