

11-2017

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Recommended Citation

Fortin, Dario and Gottardi, Giuseppina (2017) "The Person-Centred Approach in Trentino: From Its Introduction by the Jesuits to Today's Social Health Educators," *Jesuit Higher Education: A Journal*: Vol. 6 : No. 2 , Article 23.

Available at: <https://epublications.regis.edu/jhe/vol6/iss2/23>

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Cover Page Footnote

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Abstract

This paper highlights the process of social empowerment, which, over the last forty years, has influenced the educational policies of Trentino, a small region in Northern Italy. A special focus is placed on the university education of social and health professionals. This specific experience is described starting from a historical and ethnographic research project, with a particular focus on the Ignatian inspiration shared by Jesuits and lay people at Villa S. Ignazio in the city of Trento. They were able to emphasise the theoretical and practical aspects of the Person-Centred Approach, a psychotherapeutic and educational method founded by United States psychologist Carl R. Rogers.

Introduction

The Person-Centred Approach (PCA) has had significant development in Italy, starting from the beginning of the eighties. Within the province of Trento, it became popular thanks to the intuitions of a Jesuit whose teacher was Carl Rogers, and of some other “pioneers” connected with the welcoming community and education centre Villa S. Ignazio (Villa St. Ignatius), in the regional capital of Trentino.¹ Among the thousands of citizens educated in this centre during years of collaboration with the IACP (The Person Centred Approach Institute) and the LED (Laboratory of Education to Dialogue), various key informants, around 200 persons (social health educators, psychologists, social workers, teachers and priests), and 164 non-profit organizations have set up a pressure and advocacy group.² The aim of the group was to convince the public institutions responsible for formal education (Autonomous Province of Trento and local universities) to launch a degree course to form educators able to support the weakest members of society. A long but efficient process of personal and social *empowerment* has recently led the University of Trento to adopt principles and strategies of *experiential learning* centred on the students.³ A very encouraging result is the Degree Course for Social Health Educators started in 2006 at the University of Trento at Rovereto, in collaboration with the University of Ferrara.⁴

The course represents a new starting point to enhance, within the so-called “formal education,” the experiential learning methodologies typical of PCA as one of the most important instruments for the promotion of health and social change within a specific area.⁵ This particular experience described in the present paper is thanks to the research carried out with key informants and the support of historical documentation. Finally, an answer will be given to the question: What were the conditions that resulted in an efficient change in the education policies of the local area?

Historical Background

A few years after the arrival of Carl R. Rogers (1902-1987) in Italy at the end of the seventies, the PCA started to spread throughout the country thanks to the pioneers who had known him and to the Person-Centred Approach Institute. From the seventies up to today, the Client-Centred Psychotherapy and the PCA have spread all over the world. In 2010, at the World Congress in Rome, there were almost 630 people, representing 35 countries from all continents. Psychotherapists, counsellors, trainers, educators, social workers, doctors, university teachers and students gave evidence of the power and the simplicity of this psychotherapeutic and psycho-pedagogical theory and practice that was able to spread naturally, helping millions of people all over the world.

To understand this success better, we have tried to focus on a small area of northern Italy, Trentino, through a historical and ethnographic research project. Looking at this local experience, connected with other ones on a national level, we asked ourselves if it could give us some hints in order to understand both the conditions that have facilitated the *empowerment* of person-centred policies and how the problems and resistance to this approach were handled. There was certainly an interaction of many factors and therefore it is not easy to

identify a dynamic context, trying to highlight the important role of Ignatian inspiration, ideas, persons, experiences and of the search for a solution to the emerging problems. Let us start from the end, that is to say, from today. Even if the historical description will follow a chronological sequence, we would like to start from pointing out an important result (see Fig. 1) obtained through this *empowerment* process thanks to the PCA within the Ignatian context.

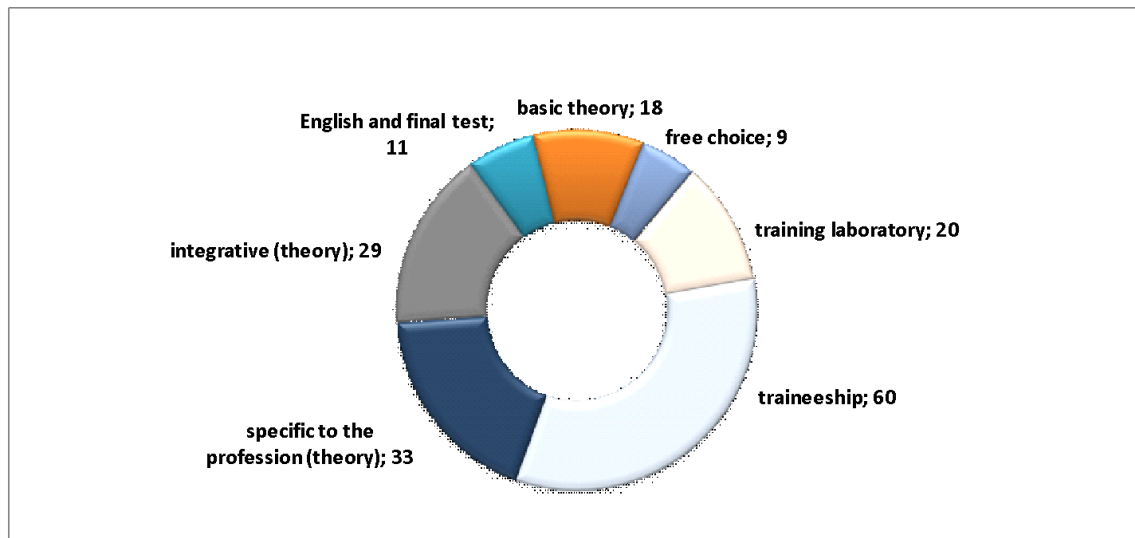


Figure 1: 180 European University Credits (ECTS) in 3 years (full time)

Structure of the Degree Course for Social Health Educators, University of Trento at Rovereto and University of Ferrara

From Figure 1, we see the original subdivision of subjects of the *Degree Course for Social Health Educators* currently co-organized in Italy by the Universities of Trento and Ferrara. Out of the overall 180 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) of the three-year course, as many as 113 ECTS are specific to the educational profession. Out of these, 60 ECTS are for internships within health and social organizations, and 20 ECTS are for an experiential training laboratory.

In brief, we observe how this type of university education has led empirical and practical experiential education (laboratory training + internships) to represent almost 50% of the overall classes of the three-year course. This represents a significant and innovative choice compared to the Italian academic scene, where traditionally too much attention and emphasis

have been focused on theoretical knowledge and on the intellectual side of education.

There are many underlying reasons that may explain the implementation of this course structure. The PCA offered a very important contribution, which was welcomed by universities after thirty-five years of successful experimentations and achievements on a local and national level.

In this paper, we will focus in particular on the important contribution of the PCA to the education of social health educators. First, we would like to point out the importance of the social context for the spread of the approach in Trentino. This was characterized, in terms of reference values (traditionally connected with Catholic religion), by a process of big changes, in particular starting from the seventies. Within this context, the willingness and openness to relationships and dialogue, as well as the search for new approaches to education brought to

Trento by the Jesuits were also particularly significant. These Jesuits had been educated on the importance of relations and trained in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, in complete accord with the considerations of the Second Vatican Council and of the encyclicals of that time.

The Beginning of the PCA in Trentino and the Fertile Ground of Villa S. Ignazio

As mentioned earlier, the PCA began and spread in Trentino thanks to the Jesuits Livio Passalacqua (1925) and Gigi Movia (1930-1998).⁶ The latter was the one who had understood the educational importance of the PCA and imported it from Rome, where he went on a sabbatical at the beginning of the seventies.⁷ According to Father Livio, when Movia came back he was convinced that he had to explain to his brothers that everything had to be changed and that “efforts were not to be focused on people and on the welcoming centre itself, but everyone had to be protagonist and responsible for themselves and for the others.” Even during the meetings for pastoral help, he used to say, “It is not right to ask questions ... and to give answers.”⁸ We can easily imagine that the disconcertment and the curiosity of his listeners and collaborators was somewhere between amused and curious. They asked, “What should we do then?”

Father Movia focused on a particular approach, connecting the psycho-pedagogical principles of the Rogerian approach with communication trainings supported by audio and video technologies for self-assessment. Together with Father Livio Passalacqua, he immediately started to experiment with active educational methods (self-knowledge, group dynamics, group research, interpersonal dialogue, acceptance and listening, interpersonal relations). These proposals immediately roused the interest of people working at Villa S. Ignazio and of various religious and lay people committed to their personal growth. Later on, Father Livio Passalacqua, Superior of the community of Trento, and at that time also director of Villa S. Ignazio, attended a four-year vocational training course in Rome (1979-1983) with Alberto Zucconi and Charles Devonshire. Here, he personally met Carl Rogers, who sometimes participated in the course as a teacher.⁹ In his final thesis, Father Livio explained why he had adopted this psychological approach, admitting

that, “the choice of the Rogerian approach was the most appropriate and maybe the only possible one, both because it was particularly close to the evangelical sensitivity, it was exceptionally based on the trust and responsibility of man for his self-promotion and also because it was free from difficult and dangerous theories and instruments that could prevent its widespread diffusion.”¹⁰

In 1979, in order to increase the spread of PCA, Father Passalacqua, together with some social workers and psychologists, founded the LED (Laboratory of Education to Dialogue), a non-profit organization specialized in humanistic psychology and, in particular, in the PCA. From that moment, he significantly contributed to the local spread of the PCA, contaminating wide areas of northern Italy thanks to his direct intervention or through his many students. He acknowledged, “the basic answer seems remarkable, also in proportion to the current feeling of anxiety and loneliness that is afflicting our generations and society.”¹¹ What are the historical, social, cultural and spiritual reference points that have positively influenced the birth and growth of the PCA in Trentino?

A Source of Values for Social Empowerment: The Jesuits for the Oppressed

St. Ignatius and the “Liberation” of the Poor

Not everyone may know that after founding the Society of Jesus in 1540, Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) worked with his first fellow Jesuits to provide material and spiritual assistance to many needy people, especially in Rome. Even when Ignatius became the General Superior, “he never gave up the missionary apostolate,” as Paschal Mwijage, S.J. makes us notice in his brief study on the historical origins of the Society of Jesus’ commitment to justice.¹² St. Ignatius and his companions, besides being exceptional spiritual guides, were deeply involved in the most miserable situations of that time. They acted out of the kindness of a charity inspired by the direct contact with suffering people. The first Jesuits were also directly acting for social justice, trying to obtain equal treatment for the poor and the oppressed of that time. The streets in Rome were full of poor, sick, old and disabled people. Begging was forbidden and this indiscriminate ban was unfairly affecting the real poor people. Charity

was therefore not sufficient. St. Ignatius “went beyond the concept of charity and used his influence to obtain from the Pope the brief, *Dudum per Nos* (1542), moderating the ban and establishing the Society of the Orphans, which was responsible for the sick or disabled poor.”¹³ St. Ignatius became also active against the injustices towards the Jews. He appealed and moved influential persons and in March 1542 he succeeded in getting Pope Paul III to issue the brief *Cupientes Iudaeos*, which allowed baptised Jews to retain their possessions, that otherwise would have been unfairly confiscated when they were born.

We must also point out St. Ignatius’ full commitment against *prostitution*. He founded the centre of St. Martha in Rome, not only for women who wanted to enter a religious order as penitents, but also for married women abandoned by their husbands and for single women who wanted to get married.¹⁴ For Ignatius, it was not only a matter of offering charity to them, but of fighting in order to free them, as a group, from the unjust structure that was discriminating and oppressing them. The first Jesuits applied this “social philosophy,” as illustrated by the historian O’Malley, to other situations of suffering and inequalities, such as in the case of calamities, epidemics, famines, floods, sick prisoners, people sentenced to death, the release of people with debts to loan sharks, the promotion of *Montes pietatis*, orphans and children living on the street, as well as for the spiritual education and assistance to thousands of confraternities, managed by lay people, that were operating from the sixteenth century.¹⁵

A Person-Centred Spiritual Education

Since its origins, the Jesuits showed a liberating, positive missionary vocation, which was more interested in social justice than in *tout court* assistance. The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius was a surprise for the modernity of their pedagogical recommendations aimed at helping the person. Father Livio Passalacqua reminds us how this method of spiritual mentoring is very close to Rogers’ concept of *unconditional positive consideration* and *empathy*, because of the respect and love for the person and not for philosophical reasons.¹⁶ According to St. Ignatius: “a good Christian has to be willing to defend rather than to condemn a person’s achievement. If he is not able to defend it, he

should understand how it is considered from the other person; if this is considered in a wrong way, he should kindly correct it; if this is not enough, he should use all possible means so that the other understands it correctly.”¹⁷ It would be interesting to further analyse this extraordinary, for that time, closeness between the PCA and Ignatian pedagogy with regard to their relationship to the one another and, in particular, with the person in difficulty. We will refer here to what Father Livio Passalacqua wrote about St. Ignatius’ methodological “Annotation No. 2,” whose conclusion is: “it is not much knowledge that fills and satisfies the soul, but the intimate understanding and relish of the truth.”¹⁸ Passalacqua points out how the Ignatian spiritual method had anticipated by some centuries the intuition of humanistic psychology and in particular of Rogers’ method, with regard both to the contact with oneself and one’s own feelings and the importance of the organismic experience and the facilitation of insight. For both the Ignatian and Rogerian, it is a method that avoids interpretation and prefers an *empathic* view of what the subject is expressing.¹⁹

A recent study by the Italian sociologist Charlie Barnao focused on the correspondence between Ignatian spirituality and Rogers’ *actualizing tendency*. Barnao’s research also refers to the *non-directive style* that the spiritual guide should have. In fact, “the valorisation of the other’s resources is fundamental for the so-called actualizing tendency which consists in the innate capacity of every human being of aiming for the best and for the development of one’s potentialities.”²⁰ In particular, recent literature on the Spiritual Exercises by St. Ignatius shows that at present, the guide, or spiritual mentor, is no longer the confessor, nor the spiritual director, nor the counsellor who finds the solution to problems. On the contrary, the guides of the Spiritual Exercises should not put themselves above others, but are required to admit their weaknesses and to support the person by offering the competence acquired during their own spiritual paths. The task is to provide the single person or the group with a path to encounter Jesus, not through the logical development of the proposed topics but following the rhythm of the interior evolution of the person making the Exercises.²¹

If we look at the past for concrete examples of what is described above, we can mention the

Jesuit Eusebio Francesco Chini from Trento, also known as “Father Kino.”²² This name was given to him by the populations of the so-called New Spain (in particular from Arizona, Mexico and California), where he worked as a missionary between the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century. Father Kino defended a severely oppressed population, the indigenous group “Pima” from the Pimería Alta region, where he created the first Catholic mission in the province, promoting a peaceful way of living together between the different tribes and the Spanish people.²³ He was an efficient conciliator, since he organized and chaired meetings between opponents, moderated debates and prepared general and specific peace treaties. Father Kino “was asking the missions to carry out tasks that were anticipating by far the current ‘preferential option for the poor’ sustained by the modern Church”²⁴ and he was therefore facilitating and promoting the processes of community and social integration.

These examples show us how the Ignatian way of caring for the oppressed was affected by the cultural orientation of that time, a so-called culture of dependence, but also how it went even further. The need for a moral duty for those who were offering help in the Catholic world was accompanied by what we could currently define as the logic of civil rights or social political empowerment of the social community and by a high sense of respect, positive consideration and empathic understanding of the relationship with the other person.

A Further Source of Values: The Second Vatican Council

The preferential option for the poor became particularly important in the Catholic world thanks to the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).²⁵ When the Council started, it was significantly different from the one of the industrial revolution age. The success of the wealthy society on one side of the globe, with its internal contradictions between the rich and the poor, had led the outskirts of the world to “pay the price for the over-development of the others through an increase, at least relative, in their misery.”²⁶ Within this context, the encyclical *Pacem in Terris* was like a “Magna Charta of the nineteenth century Humanism.”²⁷ It started with a quotation from the radio message of Pius XII

of 1942, which underlined that “every human being is a person who has rights and duties.”²⁸ In other words, the acknowledgment of the fact that *every human being is a person*, endowed with intelligence and free will that is fundamental for a peaceful and fruitful living together. Rights and duties arise immediately and simultaneously from man’s own nature and therefore they are universal, inviolable and inalienable.

With regard to rights, Pope John XXIII clearly reminded the people of the “right to existence and to a decent standard of living.” In the same encyclical, he also pointed out that if relationships are based on rights and duties “people will open up to the world of spiritual values and understand what truth, justice, love and freedom are.”²⁹ According to John XXIII, people are becoming aware of belonging to that world and, at the same time, they are on the way that will lead them “to better understand the true, transcendent and personal God and to put the relationship between themselves and God as the foundation of their life.”³⁰ A life, which they live both in their own intimacy and in relationship with the others.

Another important stage in the Catholic world is marked by the encyclical *Gaudium et Spes*, a source of inspiration for the Jesuits and the lay people of Villa S. Ignazio, who were also the first ones in Trentino to embrace Rogers’ thought and practice and Ignatian spirituality. This encyclical immediately puts the *person at the centre*: “Hence, the focal point of our total presentation will be man himself, whole and entire, body and soul, heart and conscience, mind and will.”³¹ At that time, in our social context, every person had to face great psychological, moral and religious changes and to deal with an increasing lack of reference points. For many of the people who were trying to understand the sense of their existence in Villa S. Ignazio, this lack was compensated for, at least partially, by the PCA and Ignatian spirituality.

As to the fundamental rights of the person, we are here getting to the heart of choices based on principles. This aspect was particularly important both in the original setting of the welcoming community Villa S. Ignazio and in the following discovery of the psycho-pedagogical approach founded by Carl Rogers, with a particular focus on *unconditional positive consideration* and on *empathy*. As stated on the

twenty-seventh chapter of *Gaudium et Spes, respect for the human person* is absolutely necessary, “Coming down to practical and particularly urgent consequences, this Council lays stress on reverence for man; everyone must consider his every neighbour without exception as another self, taking into account first of all His life and the means necessary to living it with dignity.”³² Obviously, this all goes back to a reinterpretation of the holy gospel (Mt 25:40) based on the signs of the times. Thus “whatever is opposed to life itself... whatever violates the integrity of the human person... whatever insults human dignity... as well as disgraceful working conditions... all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed.”³³

The condemnation of the economic mentality that seems to permeate life and create injustices and social inequalities is particularly strong and clear. Nevertheless, there is also the feeling that “our contemporaries are coming to feel these inequalities with an ever sharper awareness” and they are thoroughly convinced that they could and should “correct this unhappy state of affairs.”³⁴

This sensitivity for the *sense of justice*, that was becoming particularly strong in many citizens made Villa S. Ignazio a welcoming community not only for people looking for cultural and political values, but also for those who wanted to give sense to their lives through the donation of themselves, their time, energies and competencies. This was the birth of modern *volunteering* in Italy, which, at the beginning of the seventies, started to express itself both through accusations, activities and concrete interventions for the benefit of people in difficulty.³⁵ The cry of pain of many people could not be ignored by the protagonists of that time of Villa S. Ignazio. The Council, the “Sixtyeight” and the General Congregations of the Jesuits had created a fertile ground, whose fruits are still well visible.³⁶

The ecclesiastical documents were explicitly asking for responsibility and participation. It was necessary both to “encourage people to play their role in common endeavours” and help citizens “to feel inclined to take part in the activities of the various groups which make up the social body.” At the same time, it was necessary to promote values “able to attract members and dispose them to serve others” as “we can justly consider that the future of humanity lies in the hands of those who are

strong enough to provide coming generations with reasons for living and hoping,”³⁷ or, as we would say today, to stimulate empowerment in the others.

Gaudium et Spes certainly encouraged Jesuits and lay people to intervene against “some problems of special urgency” of that time. As to *conjugal love*, distressed by selfishness and hedonism, demographic increase, the new legal institution of divorce, new problems concerning the education of children, polygamy and the so-called free love.³⁸ “Jesuits and lay people worked on the *education to dialogue*, through the development of articulated educational proposals where both couples and singles could face conjugal, familiar and educational problems in a non-judging atmosphere, rich in spiritual values and at the same time not too clerical.”³⁹

As to the *promotion and development of culture*, believers all over the world found themselves in front of new life styles, the birth of the so-called exact sciences, specialisms, developments in psychology, industrialization, urbanization and its consequent social problems, but also in front of new ways of making use of leisure.⁴⁰ “All this led to the development of various civil and religious consciousness-raising initiatives, through conferences, workshops, vocational courses, debates, awareness raising groups, alternative holidays and all that was necessary for the cultural education of the citizen.”⁴¹ Each proposal, consideration and initiative was published in the monthly house magazine *Fractio Panis*, which pointed out how, during the seventies, Villa S. Ignazio was fully consistent with the choices of the Council Fathers.⁴² In all situations, debates and discussions, Jesuits ensured the freedom to express one’s opinion with courage and respect, without refusing people because of their belief, sex, origin or social status and offered assistance to people trying to develop their critical consciousness.

As to *economic and social life*, many people, according to Council Fathers, seem to be ruled by economics, so that almost their entire personal and social life is permeated with a certain economic way of thinking.⁴³ If the development of economic life was coordinated and directed toward the common good, “it could mitigate social inequalities.” In reality, it often “turns into the cause of their deterioration or, in some places, it even results in a decline of the social status of the underprivileged and in

contempt for the poor.”⁴⁴ People at Villa S. Ignazio agreed with the Council analysis, as the great disparities between wealth and poverty were considered unacceptable. This led to efficient and concrete answers, like the foundation of a welcoming community for adults and young people, with a particular focus on people with problems of mental health, social marginalization and poverty, offering support for their social and work integration.⁴⁵

As to the *life of the political community*, the Council warning becomes a guideline for lay people and Jesuits of Villa S. Ignazio.⁴⁶ “Rulers must be careful not to hamper the development of family, social or cultural groups, nor that of intermediate bodies or organizations, and not to deprive them of their legitimate and constructive activity; they should willingly seek rather to promote the orderly pursuit of such activity.”⁴⁷ The principles and methods of the welcoming community for marginalized people turned into a law after several years of advocacy and dialogue with local administrators. The Provincial Law, designed to “prevent and remove the states of marginalization,” became a national benchmark for the intuition of promoting and supporting the commitment of citizens organized in associations and for enforcing the principle of subsidiarity between public and non-profit private institutions.⁴⁸ In an interview on the experience of that period, Father Passalacqua states, “Faith without commitment for the works satisfies only the vertical dimension of the believer. The Council becomes aware of the culture of the world and helps the Church to keep up with it, whereas until that moment it was just reluctantly struggling, trying to stop the world...the Council brought us optimism.”⁴⁹

The “Catholic Dissent” of the Sixtyeight in Trentino

This “optimism” deriving from the Council paved the way for the birth of the PCA and the works of social justice at Villa S. Ignazio in Trentino. Another factor that led to change and generativity was the Sixtyeight student movement. The phenomenon of the student protest movement that started in the U.S. a few years before, which had quickly spread in many western and eastern countries, had found in the city and University of Trento one of the places in Italy where clashes, protests and reflections were more evident. It was a movement that

“was able to keep together the socialist request for collective action as a value and the libertarian one aimed at enhancing the autonomy of the subjects.”⁵⁰ The analysis of the so-called *Catholic dissent* can be particularly interesting for our discussion on the birth and spread of the PCA in Trentino.⁵¹

On the one side, the Italian protest started like the one in the United States, that is to say, from inside universities. The first occupation of a university building in Italy took place on the 24th of January 1968 at the Faculty of Sociology in Trento. Throughout the country, young people were reporting problems in the education system and “asking for democracy and the freedom to take part in the choices and to express themselves individually and collectively.”⁵² On the other side, it was a strong ethical-political popular protest of young people against the whole society, which ended quickly. Nevertheless, some sections of the movement continued in the following years and evolved in different directions, such as the political-electoral one, the more radical and destructive direction of the armed fight or, on the contrary, in non-violent action against militarism, or in social commitment to the rights of the weak.⁵³ Probably, these last two directions were those that developed more in the following decades in Trentino, where, more than in other areas of the country, the protest assumed a rather Catholic connotation.⁵⁴

At the beginning of the seventies, there was praise of the “collective” and of the active and revolutionary participation for the common good, but later on, once the first protests and repressions were overcome, there was a shift to an intimate and less ideological reaction. After the events of the Sixtyeight, believers and non-believers felt the need for a personal reinterpretation of political, cultural and moral failure. It was also necessary to give an answer to the desire of being completely involved, not only through the most rational, intellectual and social part, but through the emotional, corporal and spiritual part. This was what was defined in the eighties with a negative connotation as the “*private retreat*,” that is to say, behaviours connected with disappointed expectations, with a consequent retreat to the private sphere and at the same time with social and political disengagement.⁵⁵ As Father Passalacqua, founder of the LED, points out, “during those years there was a shift from the hasty slogan

‘everything is politics’ to the awareness that ‘politics is not everything’. The Marxist illusion was indeed destroyed by real socialism, on one side, and by the violent degeneration of the movement that scared many citizens, on the other.” Moreover, as the psychologist and Jesuit continues, “many Catholics started to be highly disappointed by the ecclesiastical groups that were trying to disparage the Council.”⁵⁶

Education to Dialogue

It was in this climate of “private retreat” that the Laboratory of Education to Dialogue (LED) was established at Villa S. Ignazio.⁵⁷ The LED became an association that, based on Ignatian spirituality and the PCA of Carl R. Rogers, helps people to be aware of and to accept both themselves and the others, forming citizens and educators able to help persons and groups, both professionally and through volunteering.⁵⁸ The LED was probably a way of preventing the exaltation of individualism, which, for this reaction to collectivism, violence and terrorism, could have led to withdraw and selfishness. Besides having many values in common with Ignatian spirituality, the PCA can be concretely applied in psychology, education, teaching, peace promotion, health sector and social relationships in general.⁵⁹ It was indeed necessary to support in a new way both the positive tension towards social change and the rejection of inequalities and conformism that had been highlighted by the documents of the Council, by basic Christian movements, and by Marxist-inspired student and trade union protests. The two Jesuits Gigi Movia and Livio Passalacqua started this initiative in Trento in order to promote the new psychological approach and the pedagogical non-violent method, according to which change can be “expected” only if we start with ourselves.⁶⁰ This was, indeed, the same principle used by St. Ignatius of Loyola in his Spiritual Exercises for explaining how to regulate life. By changing and improving ourselves, it is indeed possible to change the world: This was one of the most important discoveries for thousands of people attending courses at the LED during these years.

The activities of the LED are:

- Training in educational relationship (addressed to parents, couples, volunteers, young people doing their civil service and citizens)

- Training in helping relationship (addressed to social, psychological and health professional educators and to religious)
- Counselling (for people in difficulty)

Over the last ten years, with the arrival of the Person-Centred Approach Institute in Trento, the LED has also provided training for Person-Centred Counsellors.

From Volunteering to Educational Training

The eighties had highlighted the need for professionalization of those educators who had worked so far just as volunteers. Local administrations on one side and volunteers on the other side were asking for more competence to face the problems of “new poverty,” in particular for the unease expressed by young people through the phenomenon of drug addiction and existential unease, as well as the recent psychiatric deinstitutionalization and the deinstitutionalization of disabled people and minors.⁶¹ A new phase of social and health policies was taking shape, influenced by the phenomenon of the so-called *welfare mix*, which in some cases has encouraged responsible and communitarian citizenship.⁶²

The Birth of the Social Health Educator

The LED was involved in the educational planning for the three-year School for Social and Health Educators, which was started in Trento in 1987.⁶³ The aim was to guarantee the presence, in the various public and private social services, of workers more willing to understand the dynamics of recovery as compared to the current professionals.⁶⁴ It was necessary to form new educational professionals with a social-health and multi-purpose character who could complement the social worker (a well-defined figure within the sector of public social services) and other professionals too strictly related to the health sector, such as the psychiatric nurse. Throughout the country, there was a need to give a psycho-pedagogical and relational training to those workers who daily had to take care of people with serious difficulties.⁶⁵

The Rogerian (PCA) approach perfectly suited the professional multi-purpose profile of the Educator and for this reason, as Father Passalacqua explained, the School for Social and Health Educators in Trento was established,

providing a study programme which included both theory and a high amount of hours of practical experiential education. Professor Mrs. Adelaide Nicora Prodi, coordinator of the course, “had indeed accepted my suggestion to reserve at least half of the overall classes both for practical education, such as internships, and for experiential learning, according to the Person-Centred Approach. These relationship professionals could not, indeed, be prepared only on a theoretical level, with standard classes and by reading books.”⁶⁶ The group of psychologists of the LED, trained during the four-year course at the IACP and supervised by Father Passalacqua, were responsible for the subjects *Methods and Techniques of Educational Interventions* and *Training Groups*.⁶⁷ During the three-year course, there was an overall amount of 339 hours of *Methods and Techniques*, 122 hours of *Growth Groups* and 213 hours of themed seminars. This means that 674 hours out of the 1670 overall teaching hours, that is to say, one third of the classes of the School for Social and Health Educators were composed of experiential training laboratories based on the PCA and connected with the need for other theoretical and practical contributions of humanistic psychology. Besides experiential learning in class, there were 1200 hours of internships as a form of on-site learning.

The connection with the internship activities through the re-elaboration of personal experiences was fundamental for the school programme. During the laboratories, students themselves used to ask for a closer examination of specific aspects of the helping relationship faced, sometimes with difficulty, during the internships. This integration between theoretical contents and professional methodologies, such as the PCA, and the strong relationship with the local territory through well-structured internships, has led the three-year course for Social and Health Educators to gain a good reputation both within public organizations (especially in the psychiatric field) and in the private social sector. The professional integration of Social Health Educators in the job market was very smooth and, according to Carl Buzzi’s research group at the University of Trento, the average time between the end of the school and the beginning of an activity was only three months, with many examples of students hired before the diploma or just immediately after the internship.⁶⁸ One of the initial wishes of the founders of the school in Trento was

going to be fulfilled. The Social and Health Educator could indeed become an agent of personal, social, health, cultural and political change “in order to give answers to the emerging needs of socialization, learning and acculturation,” in relation to the objectives of prevention and fight of social exclusion.⁶⁹

The Dark Days of Social Health Education in Trentino

Unfortunately, as it often happens in Italy, what works well has to be “renovated” or “re-organized.” Therefore, the regional schools for social and health educators had to close down due to new regulations, according to which the education for social and health professions was to be exclusively provided by universities.⁷⁰ Without the school for educators, everything in Trentino was stuck for six long years in a “confused state,” where most of the time the different parties (the university, the Autonomous Province of Trento and the Regional Institute of Social Studies and Research) were “passing the buck” of responsibility and blame from one institution to the other.

From Desolation to Hope: The Process of Empowerment

At this point of the paper, I will use a different communicative style, probably less academic and more centred on the person, which is the autobiographical style.

When I found myself in the middle of this “confused state” of the institutions, I had been a Social Health Educator and General Coordinator of the Cooperative Villa S. Ignazio for twelve years. There were too many expressions of unease in the local community. There were people in difficulty with new and more complex needs, neighbourhoods going through a stage of radical change due to the extraordinary increase in immigration, problems with recruitment of competent educators, need for training and re-motivation of the teaching staff, a slow and inexorable national cultural involution and lack of solidarity. I was facing these main macro problems every day at work. My volunteer assignment at a political level as Regional Coordinator of the National Association of Welcoming Communities (CNCA) and member of the National Council of the Jesuit Social Network (an Italian federation of social centres linked to the Society

of Jesus) had given me the chance to get in direct contact with the institutions through a formal representative role.⁷¹ Meanwhile, I was completing my degree in Educational Sciences in a university outside my region where, thanks to 42 exams and the attendance of various courses, I had the chance to assess the precarious (health) state of the Italian university, despite its huge potential. I was feeling a terrible sense of desolation under different aspects: the health and the existential state of the weakest members of society; the need to train social and health educators; and, the indifference of the institutions concerned. On top of this, there was the silence of educators, teachers, volunteers and of the private social sector, including the cooperative. Those who were paying the consequences for all this were the weak and the young. I could no longer stand the “pass the buck” game started in 2001 regarding responsibilities: Health or Social Policies? Faculty of Sociology or of Medicine? Province or Regional Institute? All the actors were waiting for somebody else to take the initiative. At a certain point, I was completely aware that I could and “had to” put myself on the line, trying to reinforce the unexpressed expectations of many people. So I took the initiative, and even though I knew that I would have many obstacles, I was determined and willing to get over them all. I listened to my conscience, stimulated by my closeness to the weakest individuals and by the influence of Ignatian spirituality, and I immediately found some influential policy makers who encouraged me to pave the way. The personal encouragements from Father Livio Passalacqua were particularly precious, especially for discerning problems.

Together with other two well-known and appreciated Social and Health Educators of the area, I wrote a draft addressed both to the Rector of University of Trento and to the Governor of the Province and I coordinated the activities to gain consent for the setup of the Degree Course for Social Health Educators. The Proposal Document had a great success and it was signed by as many as 164 organizations from the private social sector and by 200 key informants.⁷² Villa S. Ignazio was the operational centre for the coordination of the advocacy actions and this translated into higher reliability for both specialists and public opinion. All public and private institutions that needed Social and Health Educators took part, along with former teachers, managers of social, health

and educational institutions, priests and journalists. The entire sector was making clear requests, also because this would have improved the employability of future graduates. A trade association, National Association of Social Health Educators (ANEP), also played an important collaborative role.⁷³ The press gave prominence to the requests of this “syndicate” of representative persons and associations, and the reply of the Rector and the Governor was not long in coming. As they both listened to and understood the requests of so many influential citizens highly committed to the common good, the process for the setup of the Degree Course for Social Health Educators started.⁷⁴ There were many difficult moments, such as the identification of the most appropriate faculty, which postponed the beginning of the course for a year due to debates between the university and the province. In the end, the protagonism and the voice of many citizens involved in the field and organized in associations, cooperatives and foundations prevailed over the ultraconservative institutions, the Italian bureaucracy, political tricks, envy and personal resentment.

The Launch of the Degree Course for Social Health Educators

The first result of this process of political and social empowerment was the setup of the Degree Course for Social Health Educators in the academic year 2006-2007. The young and courageous Faculty of Cognitive Sciences at the University of Trento in Rovereto organized this, in collaboration with the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery at the University of Ferrara and with the financial support of the Autonomous Province of Trento.⁷⁵ The second result, which is particularly interesting for us, was the acceptance by the Faculty of Cognitive Sciences of the request for a high amount of hours for technical-practical education with internships and experiential learning laboratories (see Fig. 1). This result was particularly innovative for an Italian university and it allowed a *phenomenological and person-centred* characterization of the student, respectful of the history and needs of the local area. Moreover, it provided the future educators with a theory of interpersonal relationships (Rogers’ theory), necessary in order to work with hope and trust in the difficult and delicate field of relationships with people who, more than others, have been badly affected by the

events or by the dysfunctional relationships in their life.

The Person-Centred Approach in the Degree Course

Through the historical background and the highlight of cultural processes, we have been able to reconstruct the process of development of ideas and experiences which led Rogers' PCA to have an important role in the Degree Course for Social and Health Educators. The use of a specific approach by universities depends on its contribution to the development of future professionals.

The Decree of the Ministry of Health no. 520 of the 8th of October 1998 and its following changes and integrations define graduate students as health care professionals with specific competencies; these are, indeed, at the base of the *specific goals of the course*.⁷⁶ Laboratories provide *Experiential learning* for the training of educators that is organized by psychologists and educators trained in the PCA. The experiential training laboratories are part of a series of classes aimed at *building the role identity* of the future educators and at *developing specific professional competences*.⁷⁷

They are focused on the following specific topics:

- First year: *Self-awareness*;
- Second year: *Helping relationship and individual meetings*;
- Third year: *The group and its educational potentialities*.

Experiential learning offers the chance to:

- Direct the work of the class group towards the work group.⁷⁸
- Centre the teaching/learning process on the student as a *person* and on the *learning group* in order to increase the involvement and active participation of all students and to promote significant learning.⁷⁹
- Provide the class-group with the possibility to develop the required competencies for on-site learning and, in particular, the ability to reflect on the experience and to integrate theory and practice in a continuous action-research process, which is necessary to meet the

emerging needs in a flexible and suitable way.⁸⁰

- Develop an educational working methodology by building a learning community and sharing experiences.⁸¹
- Promote competence in an integrated way in the three areas of learning: “knowing,” “knowing how to do” and “knowing how to be,” so that students can develop relationship and communication skills in different contexts, integrate theory and practice, and reflect on themselves and on the experience. In this way, it is possible to facilitate the personal and professional growth of future educators and to promote a constructive change in their field of work.⁸² The activities of *experiential learning* thus require a *specific setting*, which is characterized by agreed educational objectives; specific methodology (activities with specific characteristics; targeted procedure; adequate space, time and instruments); a scientific psychological reference theory for the educational training in class; a climate of psychological safety; rules suitable for experiential learning. We will now briefly focus on some of these different aspects.

First, the *educational objectives* for Social Health Educators established by the faculty must be clarified and reviewed by two work groups: 1) the work group of teachers and educators; 2) the class group. In both groups, it is necessary to aim for the highest degree of clarity, collaboration and co-responsibility in order to be able to count on the active contribution of all members and on the development of the potentialities of the group itself. One of the specific tasks of the teachers and educators of experiential learning is to move from the description of the *professional profile* and the *general objectives or aims* to the identification of *specific educational objectives* and *expected results* according to performance *indicators* that can be evaluated through an agreed procedure.⁸³ The review of the professional educational objectives within the class group will aim at making every participant focus on *personal objectives* for experiential learning. This is a fundamental step in order to add a dimension of co-responsibility and collaboration between educators and students, which is necessary for the fulfilment of the different aspects of the educational

proposal, from the building and maintenance of the setting to the evaluation of the results.⁸⁴

Second, it is necessary to have a *specific methodology* aimed at facilitating learning from experience, at developing professional competencies and at transferring learning to the workplace. In order to maximize the learning opportunities, *the concrete activities aimed at the personal and professional training* require personal involvement, collaboration and co-responsibility of students and educators. Within these activities, everyone should have the possibility to participate in an active way; put themselves on the line as global people; express themselves in an open and transparent way; foster a climate of mutual listening, trust and support; offer their experience and competence and learn from shared experiences.⁸⁵ These activities, aimed at increasing the students' self-awareness level of their experiences, must facilitate the processes of psychological growth and expand both the area of "knowing how to do" and "knowing how to be." The activities thus require a *global involvement* of the participants, not only at a cognitive level, but also emotional and affective. *A climate of psychological safety* aimed at reducing the threat connected with self-exposure and the *creation of a learning community* are also necessary. This means that the class group should continuously share experiences and reflections, offering the possibility to learn from each other.⁸⁶ Moreover, according to what is stated above, the methodology must be based on a procedure that allows for a process of shared learning and the acquisition of methodological competence for on-site learning in a continuous research-action process.⁸⁷

This targeted procedure will involve:

- *A concrete experience*: this implies the global involvement of the person;
- *Observing and reflecting on the experience*: a necessary step for the personal and professional awareness;
- *Sharing within the "learning community" in order to learn from each other*: this facilitates a higher level of awareness of one's subjective point of view (personal theories), encourages the analysis of disagreements and leads to a more articulated, complex and intersubjective view;
- *Integrating theory and practice*: the reflection on oneself and on the experience,

shared within the learning community, leads to the integration of the different types of knowledge and to the development of the ability to use scientific theories for professional purposes;

- *Experimenting in specific contexts*: the hypotheses of explanation of the observed facts can be tested through experimentation, whose results can be applied to problems that in turn lead to a process of continuous action-research;
- *Carrying out self-evaluation and sharing evaluations*: self-evaluation and shared evaluation are an integral part of the educational process, both because they are functional to a correct process for the gathering and evaluation of data, and because they represent specific professional competences.

A particular challenge concerns the development of an innovative evaluation system of experiential learning in universities. Evaluation is indeed a necessary step in the educational project and it implies a *process of communication between teacher and student*, which in turn, can or cannot contribute to the *process of learning and psychological growth*.⁸⁸ Moreover, it is also necessary to ensure a *climate of psychological safety*, which is fundamental for experiential learning. Adequate space, time and instruments are those typical of group work.

As to the scientific psychological reference theory for educational training in the laboratory, we already mentioned the importance of Rogers' PCA. Nevertheless, during the degree course as well as during the internships, there is a consolidation and integration of different professional competencies and experiences. Therefore, no psychological or pedagogical approach that can contribute to the professionalism of the educator will be excluded. The PCA is suggested as a theoretical and practical reference approach and as lowest common denominator for the educational work of the teachers and for the orientation to the educational relationship of the students.

In fact, the main psychological and pedagogical reference theory must:

- Be a theory accepted by the world scientific community.

- Offer a theoretical and practical approach within the bio-psychosocial paradigm that should facilitate and not exclude the specific contribution of other scientific theories.⁸⁹
- Offer a relationship model, which promotes the psychological growth of all the persons involved in a way that is synergistic and congruent with the epistemological assumptions of the work in the educational field.⁹⁰

Rogers' fundamental hypotheses concerning the quality of the relationship are considered necessary (although not sufficient) by the world scientific community for the promotion of a growth process. Moreover, this approach does not exclude the contributions of different psychological approaches.⁹¹ Finally, by considering the self-concept of the person as central for the behaviour and the relationship quality as explanation for the growth processes, the PCA is also congruent with the epistemological assumptions of phenomenological pedagogy.⁹²

The PCA can also be a working tool for the experiential learning educators of the Degree Course for Social Health Educators, since it makes a specific contribution to:

- Significant learning: Directs the formalization of experiential learning proposals towards the active involvement and the development of a learning community where it is possible to learn from each other.
- Quality of interpersonal relationships: Promotes in a clear and efficient way positive and constructive interpersonal relationships.
- Quality of educational relationship: It is synergistic and non-contradictory with respect to the pedagogical theories introduced in the courses related to role identity.
- Quality of the helping relationship in the educational field: Highlights the importance of specific characteristics of the relationship in order to facilitate the psychological growth and the empowerment of the person in difficulty.

The use of this theory as a main reference for experiential learning means that teachers, even if

providing theoretical and practical hints from different psychological and pedagogical approaches, refer in particular to Rogers' PCA in the educational relationship with the class group. We can add that the PCA provides not only a theory of personality development and of positive personality transformation (psychotherapy theory), but also a theory of interpersonal and group relations within the field of hypotheses that have already been scientifically confirmed.⁹³

Focusing on the relationship between people and on what happens between them on a communicative level, Rogers points out the conditions that support and facilitate a positive growth process aiming at the well-being and fulfilment of a person or, on the contrary, a process of decline and increasing unease. He underlines that "growth-promoting" attitudes (congruence, unconditional positive regard, emphatic understanding) are connected to a "way of being of the person" offering help which can be adopted also by therapists using a different approach, irrespective of the theoretical beliefs concerning the methodology to be adopted. These hypotheses can be applied to all interpersonal relationships and groups and they concern psychological growth effects, which are proportional to the objectives, contents and duration of the relationship.

In the *experiential learning* activities, Rogers' theory offers the possibility to future educators to test a theory of interpersonal relationships, necessary to manage with trust and courage the relationships with people who, more than others, as we already said, have been badly affected by the events or by the dysfunctional characteristics of the relationships in their life.⁹⁴ Finally, Rogers' theory provides teachers with a model to follow during the concrete work of experiential activities, and it consequently represents an example of educational relationship for the students: a relationship, that does not decrease but, on the contrary, increases awareness, freedom, responsibility and trust.

Conclusion

From Informal to Formal Education: The Conditions That Facilitate Change

Moving towards the conclusion of this paper, we deliberately want to encourage those who consider the setting up of a degree course for

social health educators to be of strategic importance for their local area and for the people who live in it. However, what are the *conditions* that allow the different actors of a local area (public and private social sector) to *promote* and *provide* university courses that meet the real needs of the region? Based on our experience, these conditions are often very specific, sometimes exceptional. They are the consequence of spiritual, cultural, political, economic and social aspects and are influenced by the different levels of the environment (local, national and international). In fact, due to the process of globalization that often takes away power from citizens, most of the people are “tempted” to give up. However, we have focused here on what educators, committed to the improvement of the social health situation of their local area, can try to achieve.

In this paper, we have analysed the “good practice” of the small autonomous region of Trentino, since we consider it significant, especially for the results so far obtained during the start-up stage of the degree course.

The successful ingredients of the process of empowerment for the setting up of the course were various and here we can mention just a few:

- The strong *need* for educators in the macro area of social work, in the social/health sector and in the local voluntary sector which, through non-profit associations and cooperatives, has led to the development of the “Proposal Document.”⁹⁵
- The excellent collaboration between Jesuits and lay people at Villa S. Ignazio, where the spiritual inspiration started, first translated into psycho-pedagogical competence, as “men for the others” at the service of the specific needs of people, then improved thanks to the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm and finally became advocacy action for social justice.⁹⁶
- The *motivation*, not exclusively professional, of the group of policy makers who have supported the promotional activity. Their commitment to the health promotion of their territory allowed them to proceed with the proposal even in the most difficult moments, promoting

communication both with people in power and, through the press, with citizens in difficulty.

- The personal and professional *reputation*. First, the one of the policy-makers, built over years of on-site work with results acknowledged both by the social and health sector and outside it. Secondly, the good reputation of educators already active in the labour market who had obtained a diploma in the old course of the IRSRS. Finally, the acknowledgment of the institutions who had signed the proposal document.
- The *clarity* of the project regarding both its general objectives, the explanation of the needs of the sector and the identification of the objectives to be reached by the advocacy network in the short term.
- The *involvement* of all parties interested in the project, in particular the Autonomous Province of Trento (local authority with special autonomy and wide legislative and administrative powers) together with the Universities of Trento and Ferrara and the ANEP.

All of these ingredients permitted the achievement of a result, which was not only formal but also very significant.

At a methodological level, we can point out:

- The building and maintenance of a relationship network based on a common objective
- The setting up and maintenance of an accurate formal communication system that could recall, enhance and formalize the most significant aspects emerging from informal communication
- The commitment to dialogue between all parties involved

All these ingredients have led to the achievement of a high quality result, represented by that sweet “pie” that welcomed us at the beginning of this paper (Fig. 1), where we can see a structural balance between theoretical, experiential and practical courses. In this time of wars, terrorism, mass migrations and common sense of fear, we believe that this collaborative and non-violent approach for the development of both personal and professional competencies is particularly up-to-date and necessary. As

already proposed by the founding fathers who mostly inspired the authors of the present paper, St. Ignatius of Loyola and Carl Rogers, we encourage ourselves and other researchers and educators to continue in this direction in order to help guide social and health professionals “to realizing and relishing things interiorly” rather than learning exclusively through the intellect.⁹⁷ HJE

Notes

¹ Villa S. Ignazio is a welcoming and spiritual community, founded by the Jesuits of Trento, which has acted as a reference point for believers and non-believers for eighty years. The two main activity fields are assistance to young people with social integration difficulties and personal and professional education. The voluntary commitment of lay people and Jesuits has led to the creation of a non-profit group, or better said, of a network of associations that are part of the St. Ignatius Foundation. The latter currently represents a connection point between the religious order of the Society of Jesus and the society of Trento. For an overview of the activities and history of Villa S. Ignazio, see: Dario Fortin, *L'esperienza di Villa S. Ignazio* (Trento, IT: Erickson, 2004); for an overview of the results of the educational interventions see: Dario Fortin, “Educational Interventions for People with Social and Health Difficulties in Italy: The Case of a ‘Welcoming Community’ for Young and Adults,” *European Journal of Social Work* 18, no. 3 (2015), doi: 10.1080/13691457.2014.923383

² Franck Turner, S.J., “Ignatian Advocacy,” *Promotio Justitiae* no. 101 (2009). IACP was founded by Rogers himself together with Charles Devonshire and Alberto Zucconi, the latter being a real promoter of the Italian Rogerian movement; The Ignatian advocacy is a critical and constructive engagement with centres of power; it is done from the perspective of the oppressed and excluded, but in an open spirit; it is a communitarian process; it involves contemplation and self-awareness; it has a clear framework of reflection and purpose; it involves discernment.

³ Bruno Bortoli and Fabio Folgheraiter, “Empowerment,” *Lavoro Sociale* vol. 2, no. 2 (2002): 273-281; Guiseppe Burgio, “Empowerment,” *Lessico oggi: orientarsi nel mondo che cambia*, Rubbettino, Soveria Mannelli (2003): 83-89.

⁴ Dario Fortin, “Exploring Social Work in Italy: The Case of University Training of ‘Social Health Educators’” *Social Work Education* 32, no.1 (2013), doi: 10.1080/02615479.2011.636421.

⁵ Alberto Zucconi and Patty Howell, *La promozione della salute. Un approccio globale per il benessere della persona e della società* (Molfetta Bari: La Meridiana, 2003).

⁶ The Jesuits’ interest in Rogers was not accidental. In fact, at the beginning of the seventies, the Jesuit Superior General Father Pedro Arrupe (elected in the last years of the Second Vatican Council) had already started a great internal renovation phase within the Company. There were many initiatives in the field of social justice and spiritual education, as well as a proposal for an intense psychological training for the Italian superior fathers.

Among the participants were Father Passalacqua himself, superior in Trento, and Father Carlo Maria Martini, who then became cardinal and Archbishop of Milan.

⁷ Father Gigi Movia, S.J. (1930-1998) attended a specialization course in group dynamics and non-directive listening at the Gregorian University of Rome with Father Arvesù, a Cuban Rogerian Jesuit. He stayed at Villa S. Ignazio for 15 years providing psycho-pedagogical and biblical training to adults and young people, with a particular focus on the national Catholic Scout movement (Association of Italian Catholic Guides and Scouts, AGESCI) and on the Conscientious Objection Movement.

⁸ Livio Passalacqua, S.J., interview by Dario Fortin, October 20, 2016, transcript, Archive of Villa S. Ignazio, Trento, Italy.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Livio Passalacqua, S.J., “Una esperienza di proposta dell’Approccio Centrato sulla Persona in ambiente di ispirazione cristiana” (unpublished manuscript, Archive of Villa S. Ignazio, Trento, IT, 1983), 2.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Pascal Mwijage, S.J., “Origini storiche dell’impegno della Compagnia di Gesù per la Giustizia,” *Promotio Justitiae* no.76 (2001): 3, <http://www.sjweb.info/sjs/PJ/index.cfm?PubTextId=2956>

¹³ Ibid., 4.

¹⁴ At that time, the other associations were only helping unmarried prostitutes who wanted to take religious vows.

¹⁵ John W. O’Malley, S.J., *I primi gesuiti* (Milano, IT: Vita e pensiero, 1999), 183-220; *Montes Pietatis* were organizations offering loans at a low interest to help the poor. They were established in Italy at the end of the fifteenth century and were inspired by the Franciscans.

¹⁶ Livio Passalacqua, S.J., “Ignazio di Loyola e Carl Rogers alla base della formazione di Villa S. Ignazio,” in *Tra Psiche e spiritualità*, ed. Dario Fortin (Trento, IT: Fondazione S. Ignazio, 2004), 81.

¹⁷ St. Ignatius of Loyola, *Esercizi Spirituali* (Napoli, IT: Centro Ignaziano di Spiritualità, 2001), 31.

¹⁸ Passalacqua, *Ignazio di Loyola e Carl Rogers*, 79-80.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Charlie Barnao, “Ignazio di Loyola e Carl Rogers per la formazione degli osservatori partecipanti e per la conduzione di ricerche ‘centrate sulla persona,’” *Studi di sociologia* 2 (2009): 66.

²¹ Michele Lavra, S.J., “Il nostro modo di dare gli esercizi,” *Appunti di spiritualità* 48 (1999): 73.

²² Father Kino is the only Italian among hundreds of founders of the United States of America. In fact, in 1965, the state of Arizona donated a bronze statue of Father

Kino to the National Statuary Hall of the Capitol of the United States in Washington, where the main founders of the different states are remembered. To celebrate the Jesuit, two Mexican cities of the State of Sonora are called “Bahía Kino” and “Magdalena de Kino.” In Italy, he is known only in his fatherland, in Trentino (Dolomites), thanks to the *Associazione P. Eusebio Chini*, which is located in Segno, the hometown of the missionary in the *Non Valley*. His popularity in Arizona and Mexico is so great that there are many streets, monuments and squares named after him.

²³ Domenico Calarco, *L’apostolo dei Pima* (Bologna: EMI, 1995), 248.

²⁴ Charles W. Polzer, S.J., *Kino un’eredità* (Cles: Mondadori, 1998), 113-114.

²⁵ At the same time, the thirty-first General Congregation of the Society of Jesus was being held, where Pedro Arrupe was elected as the new Father General.

²⁶ Daniele Menozzi, “I poveri nella storia della chiesa,” *CNCA Condivisione e marginalità* (Torino: EGA, 1984), 40.

²⁷ Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris: Lettera Enciclica di Sua Santità*, April 11, 1963, accessed September 29, 2016, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/it/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html; Emilio Butturini, *Istituzioni educative a Verona tra '800 e '900* (Verona: Mazziana, 2001), 185.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 25.

³¹ Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes* [Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World], December 7, 1965, sec. 3, accessed September 29, 2016, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_it.html

³² *Gaudium et Spes*, 27.

³³ *Pacem in Terris*, 27.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, sec. 63.

³⁵ Luciano Tavazza, ed., *Verso uno statuto del volontariato*, vol. 1 (Bologna, IT: Dehoniane, 1982); Coordinamento Nazionale Comunità di Accoglienza, *Cittadino volontario*, (Torino, IT: EGA, 1988).

³⁶ Fortin, *L’esperienza di Villa S. Ignazio*, 19-31; The Sixtyeight was an important social, cultural and political protest movement, which developed in the United States, Europe and other countries around 1968.

³⁷ *Gaudium et Spes*, 31.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 47-52.

³⁹ Livio Passalacqua, S.J., interview by Dario Fortin, October 20, 2016, transcript, Archive of Villa S. Ignazio, Trento, Italy.

⁴⁰ *Gaudium et Spes*, 53-62.

⁴¹ Fortin, *L’esperienza di Villa S. Ignazio*, 302.

⁴² *Fractio Panis* is Villa S. Ignazio’s monthly magazine, founded in 1969, edited and printed by a large group of volunteers. It has been available also online for some years now at: http://coop.vsi.it/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&cid=44&Itemid=47; Fortin, *L’esperienza di Villa S. Ignazio*, 303-312.

⁴³ *Gaudium et Spes*, 63-72.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 63.

⁴⁵ Fortin, *L’esperienza di Villa S. Ignazio*, 189-299.

⁴⁶ *Gaudium et Spes*, 73-76.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁴⁸ Fortin, *L’esperienza di Villa S. Ignazio*, 21-31; Provincial Law 35/1983 for the “*Discipline of interventions aimed at preventing and fighting the cases of social marginalization.*”

⁴⁹ Livio Passalacqua, S.J., *L’esperienza di Villa S. Ignazio raccontata da P. Livio Passalacqua* (Trento, IT: St. Ignatius Foundation, 2008), DVD.

⁵⁰ Alessandro Chini, *Il dissenso cattolico in Italia e a Trento* (Trento, IT: Edizioni UCT, 2010), 11.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*, 15.

⁵³ The interpretation made by the intellectual Mario Capanna, leader of the Italian student protests, defines Sixtyeight as a revolution like no other before for two main reasons. Firstly, for its dimension and global simultaneity, as it spread all over the continents, and secondly because “its goal was not seizing power, as in all classic revolutions, but rather radically calling into question the prerequisites on which power had been historically based and claiming to be different from the people who hold it”; Mario Capanna, *Il sessantotto al futuro* (Milano: Garzanti, 2008), 38.

⁵⁴ Roberto Beretta, *Il lungo autunno. Controstoria del Sessantotto Cattolico* (Milano: Rizzoli, 1998); The testimony of the Jesuit Carlo Maria Martini is particularly interesting. During a convention, when he was still Archbishop in Milan, he said: “There has probably been a fusion between council and post-council requests and the requests of Sixtyeight... In particular, I remember three different kinds of provocations, raised by the Second Vatican Council and heightened by the Sixtyeight, forcing us to tackle them. These were poverty, politics and consistency with the Gospel.” Carlo Maria Martini, S.J., “Imparare dal passato una maggiore pazienza storica. Una riflessione sul sessantotto,” *Aggiornamenti sociali* 1 (1999), 85.

⁵⁵ In Chini's interpretation, it was clear that "the old problems of social inequalities in Italy were never solved, the militaristic principles were never questioned, the exploitation of underdeveloped countries had never changed, nor was it possible to prevent the cultural and intellectual commodification imposed by the logic of profit. ... Institutions were, indeed, too strong to be affected by a student movement which was not entirely united... and never able to turn into a national movement." Chini, *Il dissenso cattolico in Italia e a Trento*, 20.

⁵⁶ Livio Passalacqua, S.J., interview by Dario Fortin, November 8th, 2016, transcript, Archive of Villa S. Ignazio, Trento, IT.

⁵⁷ Ibid. "The LED was established when we noticed that many people were still suffering, despite the Sixtyeight. We found out that the Sixtyeight had not healed the sick nor helped with sentimental crises, so we decided to use our energies to help people also from a psychological and relational point of view. We tried to do it as free of charge as possible, as very few wealthy people could afford psychoanalysis. Humanistic psychoanalysis is indeed much more close to people, as it both starts from and lead to a healthy person, whereas the psychoanalysis starts from and concentrates on sickness. The same happened in the ecclesiastical field, where people were more concerned with sin, devil and hell rather than with the love of God and the mercy of Jesus Christ."

⁵⁸ Fortin, *L'esperienza di Villa Ignazio*, 121-123.

⁵⁹ Mohandas K. Gandhi, *Teoria e pratica della non violenza* (Torino, IT: Einaudi), 1973; Dario Fortin, ed., *Dall'obiezione di coscienza al servizio civile universale* (Trento, IT: Il Margine, 2014).

⁶⁰ Especially in the decade from the mid-seventies to the mid-eighties.

⁶¹ The promulgation and implementation of the Provincial Law 35/1983 for the "Discipline of interventions aimed at preventing and fighting the cases of social marginalization" was particularly innovative. It represented the first and real "liberalization" of the social and health care services of the area. This law, still in force, has enhanced and supported the interventions carried out by the so-called "social private" sector, which was created, both in Trentino and in other parts of Italy, thanks to the boost of volunteers organized in Associations and Social Cooperatives; CNCA, *Una storia di accoglienza. Antologia dei documenti CNCA 1982-2005* (Rome, IT: Comunità Edizioni, 2005).

⁶² Catherine Jones, *New Perspectives on the Welfare State in Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993); Pierpaolo Donati, and Ivo Colozzi, "Institutional Reorganization and New Shifts in the Welfare Mix in Italy during the 1980s," in *Shifts in the Welfare Mix*, ed. A. Evers and H. Wintersberger (Vienna: Eurosociology, 1988), 63-97; Lambert Maguire, *Il lavoro sociale di rete* (Trento, IT: Erickson, 1989); Costanzo Ranci, *Oltre il welfare state. Terzo settore, nuove solidarietà e trasformazioni del welfare* (Bologna, IT: Il Mulino, 1999); Pierpaolo Donati and Fabio Folgheraiter, eds., *Gli operatori sociali nel welfare mix* (Trento, IT: Erickson, 1999); Martin Bulmer, *Le basi della community care* (Trento, IT: Erickson, 1992); Fabio Folgheraiter and Pierpaolo Donati, eds., *Community care: Teoria e pratica del lavoro sociale di*

rete (Trento, IT: Erickson, 1991); Marian Barnes, *Utenti, carer e cittadinanza attiva. Politiche sociali oltre il welfare state* (Trento, IT: Erickson, 1999).

⁶³ Vittorio Cristelli, "Presentazione," in Adelaide Nicora Prodi, ed., *La Scuola Triennale Sperimentale per Educatore Professionale* (Trento, IT: Scuola Superiore di Servizio Sociale, 1988), 5.

⁶⁴ *Annali della Scuola Superiore di Servizio Sociale I-1982/83*, Edizioni Scuola Superiore di Servizio Sociale, Trento, 1984; The three-year course for Social and Health Educators started with the Decision of the Autonomous Province of Trento (no. 4163 dd. 8.5.1987), according to the Decree of the Ministry of Health of 10th February 1984, the so-called "Degan Decree." This recognized the Social Educator as one of the new atypical professions referred to in the Presidential Decree no. 761 of 20th December 1979, which regulated the legal status of the staff of Local Health Units. The school was established thanks to the pressure of a series of policy makers and organizations of the area, such as the Diocesan Caritas, the Murialdo Community, Villa S. Ignazio, *Maso San Pietro* and others that were familiar with the social and health problems of people living in Trentino. The course, coordinated by Professor Mrs. Adelaide Nicora Prodi, was part of the Regional School of Social Services (which was later named Regional Institute of Studies and Social Research), chaired by Tarcisio Grandi and directed by Vittorio Cristelli. The School had already been operating since 1947, with good reputation for the education of Social Workers; When it was founded, the first teachers involved in the methodological and didactic planning, together with Professor Nicora Prodi, were: Vittorio Cristelli, Bruno Bortoli, Maria Rosa Dossi, Fabio Folgheraiter and Carlo Merzi, supported by Renzo De Stefani, Dario Ianes and Livio Passalacqua. The School had an agreement with the CRTI (Research Centre for Education Technologies) of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan, which was supervising the entire school together with Prof. Mario Groppo and his team (Olga Liverta Sempio and Manuela Tomisich, in particular). Applications to the three-year course ended in 1999, when competence was transferred to universities. In 2003, when the School ended its activities, more than 350 Social Educators had already obtained a diploma.

⁶⁵ Duccio Demetrio, *Educatori di professione, Pedagogia e didattiche del cambiamento nei servizi extrascolastici* (Firenze, IT: La Nuova Italia, 1990); Adelaide Nicora Prodi, *Educatore professionale e percorso formativo nell'esperienza della scuola triennale di Trento* (Trento, IT: Scuola Superiore di Servizio Sociale, 1993).

⁶⁶ Livio Passalacqua, S.J., interview by Dario Fortin, October 14, 2002, transcript, Archive of Villa S. Ignazio, Trento, IT.

⁶⁷ *The Ratio Studiorum: The Official Plan for Jesuit Education*, trans. Claude Pavor, S.J. (Boston: Institute for Advance Jesuit Studies, Boston College), accessed November 2016, <http://jesuitsources.bc.edu/the-ratio-studiorum-the-official-plan-for-jesuit-education>. We have to take into consideration the important pedagogical competence that many fathers of the Society of Jesus gained thanks to the extreme clarity of what they had learned in their spiritual and educational training. The official document, universally recognized, was the *Ratio Studiorum* which listed the

pedagogical successful results of the first decades, showing the necessity to combine theoretical lessons with “a full array of drills, repetitions and disputations—*exercitia*, or *exercitationes*—in which the students had to demonstrate mastery of the subjects,” O’Malley, *I Primi Gesuiti*, 239.

⁶⁸ Carlo Buzzi, unpublished research, Regional Institute of Social Studies and Research, University of Trento, Italy.

⁶⁹ Adelaide Nicora Prodi, *La Scuola Triennale Sperimentale per Educatore Professionale* (Trento, IT: Scuola Superiore di Servizio Sociale, 1988), 7.

⁷⁰ M.D. no.509/1999 Regulations concerning the didactic autonomy of universities; M.D. no.520/1998 Regulations concerning the definition of the professional profile of the social and health educator, in accordance with article 6, paragraph 3, of the legislative decree of the 30th of December 1992, no.502, accessed July 14, 2017, <http://www.sordelli.net/spazio-educatori-mainmenu-80/riflessioni-e-strumenti/-notizie-per-educatori-mainmenu-82/1037-equipplenza-titoli>

⁷¹ National Association of Welcoming Communities CNCA, accessed July 14, 2017, <http://cnca.it>; Jesuit Social Network, accessed July 14, 2017, <http://jsn.it>

⁷² Dario Fortin, Michelangelo Marchesi, and Stefano Bertoldi, *Stare con i più deboli, per una formazione efficace dell'educatore* (2005), accessed July 14, 2017, <http://www.explorans.it/modules/core/lib/d.php?c=apC&f9>.

⁷³ National Association of Social Health Educators (ANEP), accessed July 14, 2017, <http://anep.it>.

⁷⁴ During this initial process, the leaders who were particularly active were Davide Bassi (Rector) and Marco Tomasi (Managing Director) for the University and Lorenzo Dellai (Governor) and Giorgio Lunelli (President of the 4th Standing Committee on social and health policies) for the Autonomous Province of Trento.

⁷⁵ Dario Fortin, “L’educatore professionale oggi,” *Lavoro Sociale* 2 (2006); Ronald D. Laing, *La politica dell'esperienza* (Milano, IT: Feltrinelli Ed., 1968). The contribution of the Dean Remo Job, and the collaboration of Marco Dallari and Massimiliano Tarozzi, professors in the field of pedagogy, were essential at that time.

⁷⁶ Degree Course website, University of Trento, accessed on December 4, 2017, <http://www.unife.it/medicina/educatore-sanitario/scegliere/perche-isciversi-al-corso-di-studio-in-educazione-professionale>

⁷⁷ Dario Fortin, “Un ruolo professionale per l’educatore autorevole,” in *Accoglienza e autorità nella relazione educativa. Riflessioni multidisciplinari*, eds. Charlie Barnao and Dario Fortin (Trento, IT: Erickson).

⁷⁸ Gian Piero Quaglino, Sandra Casagrande and Anna Castellano, *Gruppo di lavoro, lavoro di gruppo* (Milano, IT: Cortina, 1992).

⁷⁹ Carl R. Rogers, *Libertà nell'apprendimento* (Firenze, IT: Giunti Barbera, 1973); Gian Piero Quaglino, ed.,

Autoformazione. Autonomia e responsabilità per la formazione di sé nell'età adulta (Milano, IT: Cortina, 2004).

⁸⁰ Gian Piero Quaglino and Gian Piera Carrozzi, *Il processo di formazione. Dall'analisi dei bisogni alla valutazione dei risultati* (Milano, IT: Angeli, 1996).

⁸¹ Carl R. Rogers, *Un modo di essere* (Firenze, IT: Martinelli, 1983); Igor Salomone, *Il setting pedagogico, Vincoli e possibilità per l'interazione educativa* (Roma, IT: Carocci, 1997); Piergiorgio Reggio, *Il quarto sapere. Guida all'apprendimento esperienziale* (Roma, IT: Carocci, 2010).

⁸² Pierre Goguelin, et al., *La formazione psicosociale nelle organizzazioni* (Milano, IT: ISEDI, 1972); Adalgisa Battistelli, Vincenzo Maier and Carlo Odoardi, *Sapere, Fare, Essere: formazione come percorso di cambiamento nelle organizzazioni* (Milano, IT: Franco Angeli, 1992); Susanna Barsotti and Enrico Euli, *Apprendisti neuroni, Formazione attiva degli insegnanti nella Scuola e nell'Università* (Molfetta, IT: La Meridiana, 2011).

⁸³ European Consortium for Accreditation, “Dublin Descriptors (Bologna process),” accessed November 2016, http://ecahe.eu/w/index.php/Dublin_Descriptors; AIEJI, “The professional competence of social educators. A conceptual framework,” Montevideo, 2005, accessed July 14, 2017, <http://aicji.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/A-conceptual-framework.pdf>; Francesco Crisafulli, Laura Molteni, Luca Paoletti, Paola N. Scarpa, Luca Sambugaro and Stefano Giuliodoro, *Il “core competence” dell'educatore professionale* (Milano, IT: Unicopli, 2010).

⁸⁴ Rogers, *Libertà nell'apprendimento*, 10-390; Gian Piero Quaglino, *Fare formazione* (Bologna, IT: Il Mulino, 1985); Claudia Piccardo, *Empowerment, Strategie di sviluppo organizzativo centrate sulla persona* (Milano, IT: Cortina, 1995); Salomone, *Il setting pedagogico, Vincoli e possibilità per l'interazione educativa*; Roger Hiemstra, “Apprendimento auto diretto: il modello della responsabilità personale” in *Autoformazione. Autonomia e responsabilità per la formazione di sé nell'età adulta*, ed. Gian Piero Quaglino (Milano, IT: Raffaello Cortina Editore, 2004); Marie Christine Josso, “Camminare verso di sé” in *Autonomia e responsabilità per la formazione di sé nell'età adulta*, ed. Gian Piero Quaglino (Milano, IT: Raffaello Cortina Editore, 2004).

⁸⁵ Rogers, *Libertà nell'apprendimento*, 187-198.

⁸⁶ Carl R. Rogers, *Terapia centrata sul cliente* (Firenze, IT: La Nuova Italia, 1997); Carl R. Rogers, *I gruppi d'incontro* (Roma, IT: Astrolabio, 1976); Carl R. Rogers, *Potere personale* (Roma, IT: Astrolabio, 1978); John Wood, “Communities for Learning: a Person-Centered Approach,” in *Client-Centered Therapy and the Person-Centered Approach: New directions in theory, research and practice*, eds. Ronald Levant and John Shlien (NYWood: Praeger, 1984); Barbara McCombs and James Pope, *Come motivare gli alunni difficili* (Trento, IT, Erickson, 1996); Stefano Cacciamani, *Psicologia per l'insegnamento* (Roma, IT: Carocci, 2002); Giuseppina Gottardi and Mariapia Sacchi, “Il contributo dell’approccio centrato sulla persona nella formazione alle life skills,” in *Climi scolastici e life skills*, ed. Nicoletta Zanetti (Trento, IT: Didascalie Quaderni, Provincia Autonoma di Trento, 2007).

⁸⁷ David Kolb and Ronald Fry, "Toward an applied theory of experiential learning," in *Theories of Group Process*, ed. Cary Cooper (London, UK: John Wiley, 1975); David Kolb, *Experiential Learning* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1984); Olga Liverta Sempio, "L'osservazione nella prospettiva psicologica in campo educativo," in *L'osservazione in ambito pedagogico, psicologico e terapeutico*, eds. Mario Groppo and Giuseppe Scaratti (Casale Monferrato, IT: Marietti Scuola, 1990); Liliana Leone and Miretta Prezza, *Costruire e valutare i progetti nel sociale* (Milano, IT: Franco Angeli, 1999); Paolo Zanelli, Barbara Sagginati, Elena Fabbri, eds., *Autovalutazione come risorsa* (Azzano San Paolo, IT: Edizioni Junior, 2004); Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., "Linee di pedagogia della Compagnia di Gesù," in *La pedagogia della Compagnia di Gesù*, eds. Franco Guerello and Pietro Schiavone, S.J. (Messina, IT: ESUR Ignatianum, 1992); Rosanna Carmagnani, Mario Danieli S.J., and Vitangelo Denora S.J., *Un paradigma pedagogico didattico per la scuola che cambia. Una sfida educativa per il terzo millennio* (Milano, IT: Ed. Principato, 2006); Beth Brin, "Work-Readiness Training, Ignatian Pedagogy, and Neuroscience: Implications for Serving Disadvantaged Students at Jesuit Institutions," *Jesuit Higher Education: A Journal* 4, no. 1 (2015), 5, <http://epublications.regis.edu/jhe/vol4/iss1/5>.

⁸⁸ Joseph Luft, *Introduzione alla dinamica di gruppo* (Firenze, IT: La Nuova Italia, 1973); Piccardo, *Empowerment, Strategie di sviluppo organizzativo centrate sulla persona*; Marc Brackett, Maria Regina Reyes, Susan Rivers, Nicole Elbertson and Peter Salovey, "Classroom Emotional Climate: Teacher Affiliation and Student Conduct," *Journal of Classroom Interactions* 46, no. 1 (2011): 27-36.

⁸⁹ Zucconi and Howell, *La promozione della salute*, 12-51.

⁹⁰ As to the criteria described above, see Sheldon J. Korchin, *Psicologia clinica moderna* (Roma, IT: Borla, 1977), and see the research by Alberto Zucconi and Piero Petrini, *Psicoterapie e neuroscienze* (Roma, IT: Alpes, 2011).

⁹¹ Carl R. Rogers, "The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of the Therapeutic Personality Change," *Journal of Consulting Psychology* 21(1957): 95-103, also available in: <https://app.shoreline.edu/dchris/psych236/Documents/Rogers.pdf>, accessed January 2017; trad. it. cap. II of: *La terapia centrata sul cliente* (Firenze, IT: Martinelli, 1970).

⁹² Demetrio, *Educatori di professione*; Piero Bertolini and Letizia Caronia, *Ragazzi difficili. Pedagogia interpretativa e linee di intervento* (Firenze, IT: La Nuova Italia, 1993); Marco Dallari, *I saperi e l'identità. Costruzione delle conoscenze e della conoscenza di sé* (Milano, IT: Guerini, 2000); Piero Bertolini, *Ad armi pari. La pedagogia a confronto con le altre scienze sociali* (Novara, IT: UTET Università, De Agostini, 2005).

⁹³ Carl R. Rogers and Marian Kinget, *Psicoterapia e relazioni umane: Teoria e pratica della terapia non direttiva* (Torino, IT: Boringhieri, 1970).

⁹⁴ Rogers, *Un modo di essere*, 98-119.

⁹⁵ International Federation of Social Workers, "Global Definition of Social Work", accessed November 2016, <http://ifsw.org/get-involved/global-definition-of-social-work/>; Fabio Folgheraiter, *Relational Social Work. Toward Networking and Societal Practices* (London, UK: JKP Ltd, 2004).

⁹⁶ Pedro Arrupe, S.J., *Men for Others: Education for Social Justice and Social Action Today*, address at the Tenth International Congress of Former Jesuit Students of Europe, Valencia, Spain, July 31, 1973 (Washington, D.C.: Jesuit Secondary Education Association, 1974); See the most important Italian study on the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm: Rossana Carmagnani, Vitangelo Carlo Maria Denora, and Mario Danieli, *Un Paradigma Pedagogico Didattico per la scuola che cambia* (Milano: Principato, 2006); See also: <http://www.loyolajesuit.org/IPP.htm>; Brin, *Work-Readiness Training, Ignatian Pedagogy, and Neuroscience*, 102-109; "We can encourage the laity toward the apostolic priority of the service of faith and the promotion of justice with a preferential love of the poor. By responding in this way, we offer who we are. As persons whose lives are centred on loving and serving God in all things, we should help others recognize and discern the apostolic possibilities of their lives and work. Laity who collaborate in Jesuit apostolates can expect from us a specific formation in Ignatian values, help in discernment of apostolic priorities and objectives, and practical strategies for their realization." See Society of Jesus, General Congregation 34 (1995), Decree 13, *Cooperation with the Laity in Mission*, accessed July 14, 2017, <https://jesuit.org/mt/wp-content/uploads/sites/29/2017/06/CG34-Decrees-ENG.pdf>

⁹⁷ Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*, annotation 2; The initial plea of the founding father Ignatius of Loyola to relishing things interiorly was later pedagogically described in 1599 in the famous *Ratio Studiorum*, a collection of examples of good practice that Jesuits had experimented in the first schools, colleges and universities in different parts of the world. In particular, they "adopted from the *modus parisiensis* the focus on the active appropriation of knowledge and skills—*exercitium*!—based not only on written compositions and oral repetitions in classrooms, but also on plays, disputations and other performances open to the public"; O'Malley, *I Primi Gesuiti*, 249.