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## Giuseppe Lombardo Radice and his reception in Spain in the first third of the 20th century<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

In this chapter the reception of Giuseppe Lombardo Radice in Spain is studied. Rather than attempting a quantitative analysis of research that makes reference to the Italian educationalist and his work, we focus instead on what was published in Spain and the degree to which he was considered an important pedagogical figure in the first third of the century.

**Keywords:** pedagogy, Lombardo Radice, Spain, reception, international influences

Lombardo Radice's reception in Spain came about in the late 1920s with the nearly consecutive publication of two of his books, *La reforma escolar italiana* [The Italian School Reform] in 1927 and *Líneas Generales de Filosofía de la Educación* [General Trends in the Philosophy of Education] in 1928. The first of these books, published by the philosophical publishing house La Lectura<sup>2</sup> (created in 1913 and taken over in 1930 by Espasa-Calpe), was translated by María Victoria Jiménez, a professor at the teacher training school associated with the journal *Revista de Escuelas Normales*, one of the pre-eminent pedagogical publications of the pre-war period. She provided its prologue and she refers to Lombardo Radice as 'a man of action, with independent criteria' (Lombardo Radice 1927, p. 5).

The publication of the second book was also linked to an important pedagogical journal of the time, Lorenzo Luzuriaga's *Revista de Pedagogía*. Translated into Spanish by Concepción Sainz Amor and with an introduction by Luzuriaga himself, *Líneas Generales de Filosofía de la Educación* was published in 1928 by the publisher associated with this journal. We can see, therefore, that Lombardo

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2 According to Francisco Fuster (2015), Domingo Barnés was a member of the journal's committee and chief editor in its later years.

Radice's introduction into Spain was driven by important elements in the pedagogical establishment of the period.

In her review of the book *La reforma escolar italiana* in the journal *Revista de Pedagogía*, Concepción Sainz Amor praises Lombardo Radice's approach: 'while it may well be a *disconnected, inconsistent and frayed* work, it is also brimming with faith, vitality, a spot-on vision of the subject and common sense, elements that so often go missing in the most carefully elaborated works' (Sainz Amor 1928a, p. 88).

In this same review we find a note by the journal's directors drawing our attention to the fact that Lombardo Radice was already known in Spain: 'Although the translator speaks of "introducing Lombardo Radice into Spain", we should point out that long before this translation, our journal had already done so, through the publication of his articles and reviews of his works' (Sainz Amor 1928a, p. 90).

Several years later, in 1933, the publisher Labor published *Lecciones de didáctica* [Lessons on didactics] in a translation by Pablo Martínez de Salinas. An unidentified editor emphasises, in a preface to the book, Lombardo Radice's popularity in Spain. 'We do not believe it necessary to present to our esteemed readers the brilliant figure of Lombardo Radice, given that he is widely known both as an eminent teacher and as the direct inspiration for the transformation of the Italian school known as the *Gentile Reform* (preface).

As we can see, a decade after his work had been introduced, Lombardo Radice had become well-known in Spain. Further proof of this can be found in the 1928 book *Las escuelas nuevas italianas* [The New Italian Schools], by Concepción Sainz Amor. In this publication the author makes numerous references to the Italian educationalist, citing many of his works and offering descriptions of Lombardo Radice as 'an artist and a sharp, idealist thinker' (8), and 'a clever, brilliant searcher' (11). Concepción Sainz Amor also refers to Lombardo Radice in his explanation of the term *escuela serena* [serene school]. Clearly, Concepción Sainz Amor was keen to disseminate the work of the Italian educationalist.

Lombardo Radice was also included in the two principal pedagogical encyclopedias of the time. His appearance, with a brief biography, in both the *Diccionario de Pedagogía* [Dictionary of Education] published by Labor (1936) and the *Diccionario de Pedagogía* put out by Losada (1936) attest to his having become a point of reference in Spanish pedagogy.

But just as important as the publication of his books was the dissemination of Lombardo Radice's thought through references in the prominent pedagogical journals of the period. These included both the *Revista de Pedagogía* and the *Revista de Escuelas Normales*. The order of exposition begins with the articles

written by Lombardo Radice, followed by those written about him and, finally, the reviews and references to his works appearing in publications.

The April 1926 issue of *Revista de Pedagogía* contained an article titled 'Consejos a los maestros' [Advice for Teachers], written by Giuseppe Lombardo Radice. The author defends the practice of art in schools and stresses the role that artistic education can play in *calming* the soul. He also gives advice on teaching languages and on grammatical exercises. Footnotes to the article highlight his importance as well as his position as *Direttore generale dell'Istruzione elementare e popolare* and a close collaborator of Giovanni Gentile (Lombardo Radice 1926, p. 145).

In October 1927 the same journal included an article, *La falsa libertad y la libertad verdadera en Educación* [False Freedom and True Freedom in Education] in which Lombardo Radice defends the idea that each child has his or her own idiosyncrasy with regard to the adult, one that leads them to strive to be at the same level. However, one has to avoid the child's adopting 'an attitude of pure veneration or passive admiration, of servile acceptance or superficial imitation'. But these risks do not justify losing sight of the 'awareness of the child's subordination to the adult' (1927, p. 470). He also expounds on the figure of the teacher and the disciple, on individual work and on the program. He explains the way that the new education offers the child the thoughts of great men and he sees every child as an original soul, whatever they choose to do, whether they become a poet, or a scientist... Lombardo Radice makes an analogy with terrain, describing how the programme is the terrain in which the child tries things out and that a good programme provides the child with more options to try. He explains that individual work that does not take into account the collective programme will lead to a false sense of freedom that will only weaken the child.

In an article titled *El folklore y la educación de los niños en Italia* [Folklore and Childhood Education in Italy], published approximately a year after the September 1928 issue, Lombardo Radice draws attention to the renewed interest in folklore resulting from the Gentile Reform and its amendment by Pietro Fedele.

In addition to these articles penned by Lombardo Radice himself, we find numerous works referring to his figure and his ideas. The *Revista de Pedagogía* from 1924, for example, carries the article *Pedagogos contemporáneos: Giovanni Gentile* [Contemporary Educationalists: Giovanni Gentile], in which Orenco Muñoz expounds on the rebirth of Italian studies and the militant idealism of Lombardo Radice, among others. This same article cites Lombardo Radice's work *Lezioni di didattica* and its difference from Gentile's *Sommario*, in terms of philosophical dualism. In the second part of this article Muñoz emphasises the defence and impetus that Lombardo Radice and Gentile have given to Italian

culture by supporting the cause wholeheartedly through every possible means (books, conferences...). In the *Selected Bibliography* of the same issue of the same journal, the section on Pedagogical Studies and foreign publications includes a work by Lombardo Radice titled *Educazione e diseducazione* (Muñoz 1924a).

Lombardo Radice's presence in the *Revista de Pedagogia* continues in 1925. Once again it is Orencio Muñoz who in his article *La reforma escolar italiana* [The Italian School Reform] names Lombardo Radice (in a footnote by the editor) in relation to an article on Italian school reform that he was meant to submit together with Gentile. In the text Lombardo Radice is defined as 'an enthusiast and extremely competent educationalist' (Muñoz 1925a, p. 152). Quotes are also taken from Lombardo Radice's *La Riforma Gentile e la nuova anima della scuola* [The Gentile reform and the new soul of school]. Muñoz continues the article in the next month's issue, citing several works.

An article from April 1927, written by Giovanni Vidari and titled *Ferrante Aporti y el problema de la educación de los párvulos en Italia* [Ferrante Aporti and the Problem of Child Education in Italy] contains a footnote that presents the author Vidari (Professor of the University of Turin) and provides an overview of the representatives of the principal pedagogical currents, where Lombardo Radice is referred to as the representative of Hegelian idealism.

In an issue from December 1929, we find his name mentioned again in the section 'More on the education of today and tomorrow', which provides a glimpse of the panorama of educational approaches in different countries. From Spain, we find mention of Francisco Giner and Manuel B. Cossío, while the Italian figures named are Luigi Credaro, Giovanni Gentile and Giuseppe Lombardo Radice. The author says of them, [...] they confer to pedagogy and education a dignity that they were lacking until now. Thanks to them and to many others whom we shall not name here, pedagogy has found its place in the universities, and teacher-training will soon be a university career that is given the same consideration as any other socially respected professions' (1929, p. 568).

In January 1930 the *Revista de Escuelas Normales* published an article titled *El educador italiano G. Lombardo Radice* [The Italian Educationalist G. Lombardo Radice] in its section 'The classics and moderns in Pedagogy'. The subject is presented as a 'Faithful interpreter of Gentilian thought [...] If we add to this the Italian-ness of his spirit, his rich and varied writing, his joviality and noble kindness - those traditional qualities of great educationalists - it is no wonder that such stature is accorded to this great thinker and teacher' (1930, p. 19).

The inclusion of Lombardo Radice here shows the degree to which he was considered a pre-eminent thinker in Italy. The article gives a summary of his different posts, of the journals that he was or had been directing and his most

important works. It concludes with a list of his works - including two in Spanish - so that the journal's readers could know his writings first-hand.

The December 1935 issue of the *Revista de Escuelas Normales* contains a transcription of a paper read by Mariano Sáez Morillo on 'The formation of primary teachers in Spain', given as part of the Science and Education sessions at the Universidad Internacional de Santander and the 'Cultural meetings of Spanish and foreign teachers'. Giuseppe Lombardo Radice is described as 'an illustrious figure', his name being paired with others such as Giovanni Gentile and Maria Montessori. The author's goal here is to have these figures invited to the International Congress on Pedagogy that is going to be held in 1939. Morillo explains that their presence would be a boost for the congress and that perhaps an exchange could be made, showing them in turn the methods used in the teacher training schools in Spain. In speaking about the reform, the author refers to Lombardo Radice as a great educationalist.

In October 1931, on the occasion of its 10th anniversary, the journal *Revista de Pedagogia* took a look at different pedagogical publications, among them the series 'La pedagogía contemporánea', in which Lombardo Radice is named alongside others such as Dewey, acknowledging their role as eminent representatives of pedagogical thought' of the time. A year later, in October 1932, a section dedicated 'to our readers' makes reference to a work that will pay homage to Decroly, with the participation of Lombardo Radice.

Lombardo Radice was in charge of the journal *Educazione nazionale*, *Organo di studio dell'educazione nuova*, a position acknowledged by other journals. The foreign section of the November 1924 issue makes mention of his position at the publication, an indication that his professional trajectory was being followed. The brief note alludes to criticism levelled at Lombardo Radice, who 'from his journal has launched a defence of his directorship, attacked by some figures from the professional press' (*Revista de Pedagogia* 1924, p. 440). More information is published in *Educazione nazionale* in October 1926, including news about the joint publication of a competition promoted by the *Revista de Pedagogia* to commemorate the centenary of Pestalozzi. This would seem to indicate an amicable relationship between the two journals, as does the fact that the December issue refers to Lombardo Radice as a collaborator for the first time.

But there was also an institutional element to the link between the *Revista de Pedagogia* and Lombardo Radice, due to the fact that he was a member of the International Committee of the LIEN [International League of New Education], whose official means of communication in Spain was this same journal (April 1927 issue). Thus Luzuriaga shared a position with Lombardo Radice on the International Committee of this association while the journal became a twin

publication with that published in Italy under Lombardo Radice, *L'educazione nazionale, Organo di studio dell'educazione nuova*.

In the July 1927 issue we find a section titled *Journals of New Education*, a compendium of all publications belonging to this movement. *L'educazione nazionale* is included here, as is an article by Lombardo Radice. A review in *L'educazione nazionale* from the September issue of the same year describes a course in educational hygiene for teachers in Italy.<sup>3</sup> Notices such as these serve for keeping up to date with developments in Italy and in Lombardo Radice's career.

We also find the summary of an editorial, titled *Liga Internazionale de Educação Nuova. Revista de Pedagogia* [International League of New Education. *Revista de Pedagogia*], that was published in *Pour l'ère nouvelle*, run by Adolphe Ferrière. In the editorial Ferrière speaks in the following terms of the two figures, Lombardo Radice and Luzuriaga: 'As of early 1927, two eminences, two journals and two countries have found their place in our ranks. The executive committee has welcomed them enthusiastically, hopeful about the fruitful exchange of ideas, services, and experiences that this collaboration is sure to foster. [...] They are well aware that there is one proper way, that for science there are no Pyrenees [...]. The peace that we all believe in will not be achieved by adults exchanging ideas but rather by constructively finding a greater balance in the spirit of children' (Editorial 1927, p. 207).

The journal looks toward the League again in October 1927. In the section on journals special mention is made of those belonging to the LIEN, among them that headed by the 'eminent' Lombardo Radice.

Lombardo Radice's works also receive mention in the April 1924 issue of *Revista de Pedagogia*, in the Books section. The review provides an overview of what education meant to Lombardo Radice and emphasises his conception of education as 'a concept that is living, dynamic, spiritual' (Muñoz 1924c, p. 152).

The *Revista de Escuelas Normales* also discusses the new publications by Lombardo Radice. His work *Vita nuova della Scuola del popolo*, is covered in the January 1926 issue, in which, in addition to dealing with its contents, the author's claim that he was merely 'the notary' of the famous Italian school reform is underscored. The journal also discusses *Quaderni de Pestalozzi*, which was overseen by Lombardo Radice and consisted of six notebooks about the Swiss educationalist.

The *Revista de Pedagogia* (1926) included, in the contemporary section of the journal's Reading List, Lombardo Radice's book *Reforma escolar en Italia*, an indication of the interest that his works provoked. Also published as part of *La Nuova Educazione* we find *Las escuelas nuevas italianas* by Concepción Sainz Amor. In the realm of contemporary pedagogy, his work *Líneas generales de*

*filosofía de la Educación* (1928) is presented alongside others by Dewey and Ker-schensteiner, yet another sign of the importance afforded to his work in Spain.

In 1928 the same journal carries an article by Concepción Sainz Amor focusing on *Las Escuelas Nuevas Italianas* and carrying an assertion by the author that what good is to be found in Italian public schools should be attributed to Giuseppe Lombardo Radice, whose many works and positions are also discussed. In April of the following year we also find a review of the book *Il problema dell'educazione infantile* [The problem of Child Education], including a notice that it would soon be published in Spanish. The book refers to Lombardo Radice in the following manner: 'there is no question that Lombardo Radice occupies a position front and centre - if not among the *pioneers*, given that he is not really an elementary school teacher - certainly among the champions, supporters, defenders and inspirers of the newest educational trends' (Sainz Amor 1929, p. 185).

Although some of these mentions may not seem overly important, we should remember that at the time educationalists followed these publications closely, as it was their only way of keeping abreast of the latest events and novelties in their field. Professional educationalists also relied on such lists to be up to date with the educational advances and publications in other parts of the world.

A summary of the publications covered in these journals shows Lombardo Radice to have had a quite complete trajectory, (...) during which he acquired the profile of a multifaceted intellectual, one capable of renewing the role of the teacher and student. He was driven by a kind of thoughtfulness that sought a careful balance between theory and practice, pedagogy and educational action, theology and pedagogical methodology, to the point where he became one of the key figures in the history of Italian pedagogy and the Italian school in the first half of the 20th century' (Scaglia 2021, p. 8)<sup>3</sup>.

María Victoria Jiménez (a teacher in the Escuela Normal and a key figure in introducing Lombardo Radice in Spain) was of a similar opinion and saw the Italian educationalist as both a great thinker and a man of action. The interest Jiménez had in Italy seems to have stemmed from a visit she made there, after which she spread the news of the Gentile Reform and of the figure of Lombardo Radice throughout Spain (García/Vilafranca/Vilanou 2016).

A certain tendency existed to couple together Spain and Italy, to see them as two similar countries with comparable problems and analogous solutions. However, María Victoria Jiménez, who had translated and written the prologue for *La reforma escolar italiana*, held that the two countries were quite oblivious of each

3 [in Italian originally].

other and that Spaniards were unaware of events taking place in Italy. 'Rarely does the destination of our pedagogical visits take us in that direction, and while we try to assimilate school ideals and customs from peoples with whom we have scant – or zero – ethnic affinity, we ignore others, such as the Italians, with whom we could have so much common interest' (Lombardo Radice 1926, p. 11). This comment is in agreement with the observation by Canales and Zago (2021) that Spain looked primarily towards Germany as the principal source of the production of knowledge.

The similarity and accompanying obliviousness of the two countries that Jiménez points out may help explain the publication in Spain of certain works, such as *La reforma escolar italiana*. We must remember that, of the two journals mentioned here, *Revista de Pedagogía* carried more publications by Lombardo Radice, possibly owing to the author's affinity with Luzuriaga. 'The two men were Lombardo Radice and Luzuriaga; the two journals, *L'educazione nazionale* and *Revista de Pedagogía*; the two countries, Italy and Spain. In comparing the two, one had to keep in mind that the Liga could not be labelled an *association* nor a *federation*, rather, it was a *bond* between two educationalists who have an interest, both theoretical and practical, in New Education' (Viñao 1994–1995, p. 21).

As we have seen, the work and figure of Lombardo Radice received considerable attention during the pre-war period in journals as well as in books. As important as his role alongside Gentile in the educational reform was, it is his reputation as a great educationalist with a true knowledge of what a school is that receives special emphasis. We can certainly affirm that he was one of the leading influences on the Spanish pedagogical community during this period. As Canales and Zago (2021) have pointed out, Spanish educationalists showed considerably more interest in Lombardo Radice than in Gentile, partly due to the strong affinity between him and Lorenzo Luzuriaga. After the Civil War and under Franco, Lombardo Radice's legacy managed to endure, despite the new authorities' complete razing of the pre-war pedagogical tradition, including Luzuriaga and his *Revista de Pedagogía*.

Lombardo Radice's work *Lecciones de didáctica* appears in the bibliography of the book *La escuela grata*, by Alfonso Iniesta, one of the foremost authors of post-war pedagogy. The same volume is included by Eduardo Bernal as one of the few bibliographical references on general didactics in Bernal's *Orientaciones Escolares. Normas para organizar y dirigir una escuela*, from 1945. In chapter 23 of this book, which deals with the subject of the school textbook, the author includes a quote from the Italian educationalist, who states that the book is like another teacher.

The destinies of the educationalists responsible for introducing Lombardo Radice into Spain differed; whereas Orenco Muñoz was exiled in Mexico, Concepción Sainz Amor, translator of *La reforma escolar italiana*, remained in Spain and completed her thesis in 1945. Pablo Martínez de Salinas was the only survivor of the Department of Pedagogy in Barcelona after the Francoist victory (Álvarez González 2019).

Naturally, Lombardo Radice continued to be an influence on Luzuriaga in his exile. In his book *Ideas Pedagógicas del Siglo XX* (1961), Lorenzo Luzuriaga includes works by Lombardo Radice together with authors such as Dewey and Decroly. The work by Lombardo Radice published here was 'Consejos a los Maestros' ('Advice to teachers'), a volume with its roots in writings that had originally appeared in *Revista de Pedagogía*, as Luzuriaga explains in his preliminary notes. The articles were selected because they constituted important references in the principal pedagogical trends of the century's first decades.

We also find books written about Lombardo Radice. In *Ensayos precursoros de la escuela activa italiana: Portomaggiore y Mompiano* [Three Pioneers of the New School in Italy: Portomaggiore and Mompiano, 1949] and *Tres heraldos de la nueva educación: Hermann Lietz, Giuseppe Lombardo Radice y Frantisek Bakule* [Three Heralds of the New Education: Hermann Lietz, Giuseppe Lombardo Radice and Frantisek Bakule, undated], we see that the educationalists, in addition to important writings of his own, constituted a figure worthy of study by others.

Lombardo Radice was a pre-eminent intellectual in the eyes of the educationalists and journals dealt with in this article, and his presence was assured by the continued publication of his works as well as by references to his figure in the writings of others.

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