

A psychopedagogical tool for re-educating the social being to peace: the theatre of Pier Paolo Pasolini and Lorenza Mazzetti for Lifelong Learning

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Abstract: The comparative analysis examines two training projects using theatre for peace education within the historical and geopolitical context of the 1960s-1970s. In 1968, Pier Paolo Pasolini proposed the “school of linguistic re-education” for adults in his *New Theatre Manifesto*; in 1975 Lorenza Mazzetti published the results of empirical research on *Dream Theatre* conducted with the students of the S. Basilio Primary School (Rome). These educational projects deconstruct conflicts by dramatizing them, while the analysis of the thought process elicits the management of emotions, particularly violent impulses, promoting active listening and reflective thinking. Both practices are based on symmetric dialogue between educator and learner, and reciprocity within the learning community, to stimulate a transformative process, in line with the theories of Gramsci, Capitini, and Freire. It is suggested that these two practices should be combined into a training programme to develop both democratic *ethos* and culture of peace for contemporary social beings within Lifelong Learning.

Keywords: *Manifesto Theatre, Dream Theatre, Education for peace, Lifelong Learning, democratic ethos*

Abstract: L'analisi comparativa esamina due progetti formativi con il teatro per l'educazione alla pace nel contesto storico e geopolitico del decennio 1960-1970. Nel 1968 Pier Paolo Pasolini programma la “scuola di rieducazione linguistica” per gli adulti nel *Manifesto per un nuovo teatro*, nel 1975 Lorenza Mazzetti pubblica gli esiti della ricerca empirica sull'*Onirodramma* condotta con gli allievi della Scuola elementare S. Basilio (Roma). Tali progetti formativi decostruiscono i conflitti drammatizzandoli mentre l'analisi del processo di pensiero elicit la gestione delle emozioni, in particolare degli impulsi violenti, favorendo l'ascolto attivo e il pensiero riflessivo. Le due prassi si fondano su: dialogo simmetrico tra educatore-educando, reciprocità nella comunità di apprendimento per stimolare un processo trasformativo congruente con le teorie di Gramsci, Capitini, Freire. Si suggerisce la combinazione delle due prassi in un *training* per lo sviluppo dell'*ethos* democratico e della cultura della pace per l'essere sociale contemporaneo nel *Lifelong Learning*.

Keywords: *Teatro del Manifesto, Onirodramma, Educazione per la pace, Lifelong Learning, ethos democratico*

Introduction

This contribution offers a comparative analysis of two contemporaneous educational projects which employ theatre as a pedagogical-didactic tool for peace education, highlighting their shared pedagogical foundations and potentialities from a Lifelong Learning perspective. This type of analysis is, to date, unprecedented in both the Italian and international academic contexts: prior to this, Lorenza Mazzetti's *Teatro dell'Io* or *Onirodramma* (*Dream Theatre*), empirically tested with children (1975), has never

been considered in conjunction with Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Teatro del Manifesto* (Gianeselli, 2022a; 2022b; 2022c; 2023a) under the theoretical and operational hypothesis of applying them as a two-phase, continuous training model for the development of the social being, with the aim of educating for peace and supporting life planning through a democratic relationship with the polis. Indeed, Mazzetti's *Teatro dell'Io* has not been examined in the literature from a transdisciplinary psycho-pedagogical perspective, much like Pasolini's *Teatro del Manifesto* (*Manifesto Theatre*), at least up until 2022 (Gianeselli 2022a; 2022b; 2022c). The historical and political context within which the two authors operated spans two decades: Pasolini published his *Manifesto per un nuovo Teatro* (*Manifesto for a new theatre*) in 1968, a year in which the global status quo was being challenged by eruptive forces of both bourgeois and popular origin (Katsiaficas, 1987). Lorenza Mazzetti, whom Pasolini met during the pre-production phase of *Accattone* (1961), his debut as a film director, began her experimentation with the *Teatro dell'Io* since 1973, by which time the friendship between the two—she and the “corsair pedagogist” (Gianeselli, 2023a)—was both deep and concrete, rooted in mutual esteem (Grieco, 2015). These two decades were, as is well known, marked by wars, conflicts, and both domestic and international strife. The urgency of peace education becomes pressing, and both authors—intellectuels engagés—are fully aware of this. Pasolini himself denounces the condition of Italy (1972), rendered a vulnerable target by a pacifism that is often nominal and ineffective (Casilio, 2010), if not outright self-exonerating, particularly in the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). Pasolini and Mazzetti dismantle the notion that education—especially peace education—can be dissociated from the formation of the citizen per sé, or that it can be solely reduced to an act of ideological indoctrination shaped exclusively by Catholic moralism. In other words, it can be argued that the theatrical practices of both authors are grounded in complementary perspectives and that, notwithstanding their differences, peace for them represents the co-ontological imperative of the social being. Naturally, the concept of co-ontology (Critchley, 1999) emerged only later, thanks to the philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy (2000), yet Pasolini and Mazzetti prefigure both its theoretical framework and its *praxis*, as will be shown, in their psycho-pedagogical proposal of permanent education for the social being through theatre, attributing to it a transformative function within the learning process. In this regard, the emerging concept of transformative learning owes much to the work of American educational theorist Jack Mezirow, beginning in the latter half of the 1960s. Moreover, they assign theatre a distinct capacity to stimulate both the cognitive and metacognitive dimensions (Gianeselli 2024; Gianeselli & Bosco, 2024; 2025) of the social being engaged in the educational relationship. This contribution, therefore, seeks to address the following three research questions:

1. to what extent do Pasolini and Mazzetti's educational programmes employ theatre for the management of conflict and emotions?
2. What pedagogical-didactic elements emerge from these experiences that may foster transformative learning—first in the child, then in the adult?
3. Is it feasible to integrate these two theatre-based educational programmes into a contemporary model aimed at cultivating democratic *ethos* (Elia, 2014), and how might such integration impact individuals from a biopsychosocial perspective? (Adler, 2009; Lehman et al., 2017; Mauri & Tinti, 2006; Szadjeko, 2020).

2. Primary sources and educational framework

2.1 *New Theatre Manifesto* by Pier Paolo Pasolini

In the *New Theatre Manifesto* (1968), Pasolini adopts a distinctly Gramscian position as an intellectual-educator of the people-nation (1975, Q. 11, § 67) and outlines several programmatic trajectories. He declares unequivocally, even in the preparatory drafts (ACGV PPP. C2. II. 1. 135.), that his intent is to establish a school that re-educates both actors and spectators in the mutuality of relationships within the democratic *polis* and in language: theatre is the mediator that is chosen to implement this cultural revolution. The re-educational project is aimed at adults and is intended to engage students so that this advanced intellectual bourgeoisie collaborates with the working class,

supporting its political and social demands. To clarify how Pasolini's educational project fits into the political dynamics of Italy in the 1960s and 1970s, it is useful to consider several practical elements emerging from the reading of the *Manifesto*:

- the absolute parity between the advanced groups of the bourgeoisie and the author of the plays being performed guarantees democratic legitimacy (1999, II, p. 2482), and this becomes, above all, a methodological issue for the search for a formative paradigm for society through performing arts;
- the advanced groups of the bourgeoisie produce and consume theatre through language as a form of dialogue for the *polis* (ACGV PPP. C2. II. 1. 135.);
- language defines this new theatre, as it is through the analysis of poetic language and, therefore, of the poetic-performative discourse that a cultural ritual can be constructed (ACGV PPP. C2. II. 1. 135.);
- the cultural ritual is the workshop, the permanent laboratory for the deconstruction and reconstruction of the democratic *ethos*;
- the new theatre is a “school of linguistic re-education”: this re-education must lay the foundations for an acting style whose direct focus is not the language itself but the meaning of words and the sense of the work. This requires a “total effort” from the performer, who must be “both critically astute and sincere” because “it involves a complete revision of the actor's self-concept” (1999, II, pp. 2492-2493).

In paragraph 13, Pasolini declares that he addresses adults, particularly young adults, as his intention, as mentioned earlier, is to re-educate society and ensure direct dialogue between the advanced intellectual bourgeoisie and the working class. The reference to youth does not appear in the published version of the *Manifesto*. In the final draft, the author expands this political and educational responsibility, emphasising that the relationship between intellectuals and the working class is a “traditional and ineliminable notion of Marxist ideology, one on which both heretics and orthodoxy cannot fail to agree, as it is a natural fact” (1999, II, pp. 2487-2488). Thus, already in 1968, Pasolini assigns specific tasks to those who read the *Manifesto*, tasks of an ethical-political and self-educational nature, involving both actors and spectators. This establishes a reciprocity not only of artistic intentions but, above all, in the co-creation of an educating community. The linguistic aspect that Pasolini insists upon is always part of these ethical-political tasks: analysing the discourses of the performing arts means providing the opportunity to understand alterities, to share them, and to transmit them to the dialoguing community through the auditory experience that requires the active involvement of the body in the learning prompted by the theatrical or performative act. Pasolini's approach combines psychology and pedagogy: it focuses on the cognitive impacts of the relationship between individuals and the actual congruence between thought and action, valuing the body as a system in constant learning, subjected to and responding to various stimuli that it must learn to become aware of, particularly in the space of the *polis* and in mutual relationality with fellow social beings and, more broadly, with reality. It is no coincidence that, even in the *Manifesto*, Pasolini explicitly asks his spectators to “come equipped almost exclusively with ears” and further specifies that this theatre “is best listened to partly with closed eyes” (ACGV PPP. C2. II. 1. 135.). The *Manifesto*, in this sense, offers an important practical suggestion. When Pasolini advises the actor to become “thought transparent” so that spectators can understand that the actor has, in fact, grasped the text, he is prefiguring what we today call “metacognitive reflection” (Fodor, 1983). In other words, Pasolini's request to both performers and spectators in his *Manifesto Theatre* can now be understood, both theoretically and practically, as a stimulation to engage in reflection on individual and collective thought processes: the cultural discourse can elicit, if so understood, a transformative reaction, as it prompts participants in the “cultural ritual” to question and interrogate the political and cultural structures that define social and political relationships. The “transparency of thought” required of the actor in transmitting the drama to the spectator for re-education and mutual re-education, Pasolini indicates the need to practice metacognition (Wells 2002; Ianes 2001) as a tool for enhancing the critical thinking of the intellectual-educator and of society, thus of the

community that co-creates the cultural ritual of the new theatre and leads to transformative ethical-political practice. Pasolini realised that it was necessary to activate an educational-cognitive and therefore formative process for the advanced intellectual bourgeoisie, which, in the interim, should be able, if guided by the permanent poetic laboratory of neo-Aristotelian verse dramas (Pasolini himself defines them as “neo-Aristotelian” in a loose note in ACGV PPP. C2. II. 1. 135.), to apply dialectic and deconstruct the conflict in advance, disarming the social being and the collective. In this regard, it is useful to specify that, for Pasolini, recovering the indications of catharsis contained in Aristotle’s *Poetics* means restoring to that process of identification between spectators and characters a value of political act. To this, the intellectual educator adds the intention to validate catharsis as a tool that stimulates those who participate in the “cultural ritual” to engage in critical and reflective practice on the shared reality in the polis. When Pasolini in the *Manifesto* advises his spectators to participate in the cultural ritual of the new theatre with closed eyes (ACGV PPP. C2. II. 1. 135.), he is seeking a clear and direct way to suggest that they allow the drama to stimulate their imagination: he shifts the space of conflict into a dimension open to the analysis of political dynamics. Indeed, even during his teaching experience in Friuli, Pasolini had noted that “curiosity is the only instinct that the educator can legitimately use” (1993, p. 269). Becoming transparent in thought, therefore, means initiating two processes: the first, metacognitive, leads to engaging in a critical reflection on the subjective mirroring of those proposing the artistic-performative discourse; the second, transformative, requires the actor to become an educator for the community of spectators, offering an interpretation that activates a total metacognitive process in this group of intellectuals, reflecting on individual and class-level mirroring. In other words, the neo-Aristotelian peculiarity of the *Manifesto Theatre* lies precisely in considering the language of the performing arts as a cross-cutting poetic language that proposes typical characters in typical circumstances and elicits reflection on what it presents, a reflection that, however, does not aim at therapy or healing, but at the individual and class awareness of the advanced intellectual bourgeoisie and then of the working class regarding political and social dynamics. In summary, educating for peace through Pasolini’s *Manifesto Theatre* means structuring a school of linguistic re-education for society so that it may self-educate in analysing behaviours, ideas, and thought processes within a permanent workshop dimension (Gianeselli, 2023b). Within this workshop space, the advanced intellectual bourgeoisie can learn the causes and consequences of interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts and reflect on which behaviours to choose to avoid the decay and destruction of violence. Theatre thus becomes the ideal space for questioning both individual and collective conflicts, for conducting analysis and self-analysis at the individual, class, party, and societal levels. An undoubtedly ambitious educational project, but a necessary one: only when confronted with the “disorienting dilemma”¹, as Mezirow (1981; 1991; 2000) will indicate, the adult truly should explore intellectual and behavioural alternatives and initiate cognitive reconstruction. By observing the dramaturgical structure of Pasolini’s works, it becomes evident that the dream or nightmare experienced by the characters—whether adults or young adults—serves as the key to accessing a disorienting dilemma and to analysing both social and individual drives, repressed impulses and desires, which are symbolically connected to the protagonists’ ethical-political and behavioural choices. It is precisely through the analysis of the characters’ dreams in his dramas that Pasolini develops a sophisticated and functional pedagogy of desire (Gianeselli, 2023c), which restores to the social being the responsibility for their actions, enabling them to perceive, understand, and process the roots of violence as well as the possible alternatives to it.

2.2 Dream Theatre by Lorenza Mazzetti

The *Onirodramma (Dream Theatre)* for children, conceived and experimented with by Lorenza Mazzetti from 1973 onwards, undoubtedly owes much to Pasolini’s *Manifesto Theatre*. It inherits its dialogical-Socratic structure, the transdisciplinary hybridity that enables psychology and pedagogy to interact within educational practice, and the use of the dream as a key to accessing the disorienting dilemma and facilitating cognitive reconstruction. In the volume published in 1975, which collects the

¹ The “disorienting dilemma” marks the outset of a transformative learning experience, often signifying a life crisis that prompts the re-evaluation of assumptions and leads to revised beliefs (Taylor, 2000).

qualitative outcomes of Mazzetti's experimentation² in two primary schools in San Basilio, Rome, directed by Vittorio Soriani, the director clarifies that the *Teatro dell'Io* (*Theatre of the Self*) considers symbolic experience as both a therapeutic tool and an educational medium. The foundational postulate is the structural identity of fairy tales and dreams: the dream is a symbolic process with fixed stages whose sequence is invariable, and the characters within the dream, while varying in form, remain constant in function (p. 9). The purpose of the *Dream Theatre* is to allow the child to experience with open eyes what was previously experienced with closed eyes. If the dream is interrupted before the completion of the oneiric journey, the aim of the dramatisation—through dialogical interaction—is to enable the dreamer to elaborate the oneiric drama symbolically, reaching a positive resolution. Thus, Mazzetti recovers the pedagogical-didactic value of the cathartic staging of dreams and reaffirms the idea that the workshop may become a space for analysing the disorienting dilemma expressed by the dream. What proves truly revolutionary is Mazzetti's intent to offer even children the opportunity to become autonomous in the cognitive reconstruction and modification of their beliefs and behaviours. Mazzetti specifically notes that dreams habitually halt now of damage, that is, the death of the Self, which symbolically appears through the dreamer's own corpse: symbolic elaboration of a positive solution takes place through dramatisation of the unconscious. Awareness of the dream not as an external object, but as a symbolic product of which one must take ownership, is fundamental to the educational process of the *Drama Theatre*. According to the researcher, through this symbolic experience, it becomes possible to transform the symbolic solution into an actual change in behaviour (p. 9). The *Theatre of the Self* is thus based upon symbolic experience as a means of therapy and Self-formation. The formation of symbols is an archetypal activity, and the aim of symbolic activity is to represent lived experience through images. Every experience is transformed into a symbol, and the practice of *Dream Theatre*—which unfolds in four phases: the conscious level, the pre-conscious level, the unconscious level, and the overcoming of anguish (pp. 55–57)—enables children to undertake the journey of the Self, from death to rebirth, using the aggression necessary to destroy the Antagonist, but ultimately elaborating and transcending this aggression in a final reconciliation. Mazzetti recognised the necessity of initiating a therapeutic activity that enables elaboration of hatred and death: children commonly dream of their own death as a punishment for rebelling against parents who, in turn, have punished them bloodily within the dream. Mazzetti identifies thirteen phases in the dramatisation process (pp. 18–19):

1. The child recounts the dream in the past tense;
2. The child recounts the dream in the present tense;
3. The child dialogues the dream by embodying the various dream characters;
4. Through dialogical practice with the educator, the following are discovered: the reasons why the Antagonist oppresses the Hero; the reasons why the Hero or the magical Helper defeats the Antagonist; the type of transgression committed before dreaming; the goal towards which the Hero strives;
5. Through the symbol, the symbolic father or mother is concealed;

² Lorenza Mazzetti was able to empirically experiment with the *Theatre of the Self* thanks to the support of the Teatro Stabile di Roma. In two primary schools located in the San Basilio district of Rome, two teams of educators—comprising students of sociology and psychology—were established in collaboration with Jungian psychologists Francesco Caracciolo, Vincenzo Loriga, and Elio Zagami. The experiment was able to continue beyond 1973 thanks to the support of the Italian Ministry for the Performing Arts. At the time, San Basilio was still considered a 'closed ghetto', created under fascism to isolate poverty and hidden from the view of those passing along the well-known Via Tiburtina. The decision to implement the *Theatre of the Self* with children marginalised from the bourgeois class thus bore significant political implications. The report published by Mazzetti in 1975 suggests that the *Dream Theatre* helped children to positively resolve their symbolic dramas, thereby unlocking self-destructive defence mechanisms. The second part of the volume (pp.67-235) is dedicated to individual case studies, presenting children's "onirodramma"—the dramatizations of their dreams—accompanied by images documenting the performances that concluded the educational process.

6. Through slips and contradictions, the existence of a Self—different from the Self the child initially presented (guilty and violent)—which feels good and just, is discovered;
7. It is revealed that the good and just Self, previously rejected, harbours hostile and aggressive feelings which are now made explicit;
8. In the killing of the Antagonist—i.e., in the symbolic figure of the magical Helper—the child's repressed aggression is discovered;
9. The child is liberated from the guilt and shame of their hatred and aggressiveness by recognising that such emotions are natural and not criminal;
10. The real Self is accepted, aggression is lost, and the capacity to love—typical of the good Self—is regained;
11. The enemies previously attacked and destroyed are reconstructed through love, given that love causes magical rebirth, just as hatred causes death;
12. The masks of the victimised Self and the victorious Self, of the symbolic parents and real parents, and of the magical Helper are constructed;
13. The sociodrama: the child empathises with the parent within their social context.

Elaborating hatred, recognising the legitimacy of justified resentment for an injustice suffered, serves to strengthen the wounded Self of the child and to transform homicidal hatred towards the parental figure into a tolerable resentment. The child is gratified by the “onirodramatic” educators who, far from punishing or blaming them, act as accomplices in their indignation in which they recognise themselves as not guilty and as good, thereby transforming the unjust parent into a fallible human being. The child's Self, no longer originating from guilt, no longer fears reprisal: by eliminating their own crime or offence, the child eliminates the necessity of their own punishment (pp. 13–17). The *Theatre of the Self* thus eliminates—by allowing children to process their parents and to acknowledge their faults—all those defence mechanisms that arise from the fear of accepting one's own aggressiveness or a Self that differs from that prescribed by others. Being able to recognise the origin of aggression and of repressed aggressive behaviour as it manifests within the dream can thus activate a transformative process in the child, enabling access to cognitive reconstruction through metacognitive reflection elicited by the dramatisation, which is subsequently followed by theatricalisation with the group (that is, the phase of sociodrama). Educating individuals in the proper analysis of their own emotions and feelings—diminishing violence and fostering the acceptance of compassion—challenges the mechanisms of revenge and aggression. In other words, Mazzetti, like Pasolini, intuited that to educate for peace means, above all, to educate in self-analysis within relational contexts, as a means of disarming the emotional suffering and repressions that underpin violent and exclusionary behaviours.

2.3 Educational framework

Pasolini's educational praxis with adults and Mazzetti's pedagogical engagement with children can both be situated within the broader tradition of educational philosophies rooted in an explicit repudiation of Nazism and Fascism. Both intellectuals are guided by the democratic values that emerged from the Italian Resistance, positioning them in close affinity with Aldo Capitini's conception of a “liberated reality” and his “pedagogy of nonviolence” (1953; 1962; 1966). However, unlike Capitini—whose perspective is shaped by liberal socialism (Bobbio, 1975)—Pasolini and Mazzetti ground their educational vision in Marxist philosophy. This ideological divergence notwithstanding, all three share a commitment to an emancipatory pedagogy that aims to restore the ethical and relational dimensions of the social being. The connection between their approaches lies in the shared recognition of the need to restore the co-ontological dimension of the social being—namely, the capacity to understand the Other and to embrace the Self within relational dynamics, without shying away from exploring the ethical and behavioural grounds of one's choices. The analysis of the language of reality through dreamwork and theatre does not serve as a means of self-exoneration; rather, it functions as a cognitive and ethical exercise aimed at constructing a society composed of free individuals who actively care for one another's freedom. The fact that both Pasolini and Mazzetti idealistically address the working class—Mazzetti notably develops her *Dream Theatre* in a *ghettoised* neighbourhood of the Roman subproletariat—is a concrete enactment of Antonio Gramsci's *philosophy of praxis* (1975, Q. 10, § 43).

This same philosophical lineage would later inform Paulo Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed and Jack Mezirow's *Transformative Learning Theory* as developed further by Kokkos (2021). Both practices are based on symmetric dialogue between educator and learner, and reciprocity within the learning community (Hare, 1972; Baldacci, 2023). Like Freire, both Mazzetti and Pasolini regard Marxist philosophy as foundational; however, they pursue distinct aims. Pasolini seeks to raise the consciousness of the ruling *bourgeois* class regarding systemic social injustice. His focus is on the progressive intellectual *bourgeoisie*, whom he urges to engage in an ethical-political process aimed at transforming social inequality, safeguarding democracy, and ultimately deepening its foundations. The hope is that this enlightened segment of the *bourgeoisie* will initiate dialogue with the working class. Freire, by contrast, directs his pedagogical effort toward the oppressed themselves. His objective is to foster in them an awareness of their capacity to resist domination through dialogical engagement rooted in democratic leadership. Mazzetti's approach aligns closely with Freire's, as she endeavours to nurture self-awareness among children from the subproletariat through her *Drama Theatre* practice. Her aim is to facilitate processes of self-education, enabling children to achieve a form of independence from familial constraints and entrenched social prejudices. Freire began drafting *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) during his exile in Chile in 1967. In a manner parallel to Pasolini's and Mazzetti's thinking during the same period, Freire identifies theatre as a medium capable of encoding the beliefs and cognitive frameworks through which individuals interpret reality, behaviours, bias and social relationships. He then advocates for a process of critical decoding, allowing for the deconstruction and transformation of these internalised narratives through reflective and emancipatory analysis. Recently, Carter and Guerra (2022) published a valuable volume illustrating how the performing arts, and theatre in particular, can stimulate peacebuilding processes and perspectives by showcasing the use of techniques such as storytelling, testimonial and forum theatre, political humour, and arts-based pedagogy in various formal and non-formal educational contexts across different age groups. The two researchers emphasise that engagement with the performing arts motivates learners to communicate across diverse cultural backgrounds and to explore 'alternative realities', thereby generating new perspectives (Hawes, 2009). This interaction thus enables intercultural connection (Carter, 2003; Hunter, 2005; Pruitt, 2011), fosters deep relational engagement (Cabedo-Mas, 2015), facilitates expressions of co-creation, and encourages mutual recognition of shared involvement across other subject areas (Colley, 2012). Carter and Guerra further highlight how the embodied nature of theatre enables the active and concrete enactment of peace-oriented responses to conflict (Cohen, Varea, & Walker, 2011; Malm & Löfgren, 2007), while also offering sensory experiences of therapeutic alternatives for disaffected and traumatised students (Karkou, 2010; Thompson & Neimeyer, 2014). Moreover, enactive participation—namely, the active engagement of embodied cognition—is presented as one of the core objectives of a holistic approach to peace education (Noddings, 2012). Carter and Guerra also revisit Montessori's insights (1972), concluding that the activation of sensori-motor processes in early childhood may support the aims of peace education by fostering bodily awareness as a foundation for relational engagement with both community and reality (Keskin, Keskin, & Kirtel, 2019).

3. Comparative qualitative analysis: the dialogue between Pasolini and Mazzetti

The comparative qualitative analysis of the two frameworks was conducted by taking into consideration the following structural, thematic, and formal dimensions. As a first step, the educational aims of the two proposed programmes were analysed, along with the methodological and didactic structures underpinning their praxis, the expressive modalities employed in the process of forming the social self, and the psycho-pedagogical practices aimed at managing emotions and conflict within a peace education framework. Building on acknowledging that the performing arts share the aims of peace education—albeit with the caveat that theatrical performances do not always explicitly seek to foster a

culture of peace (Carter & Guerra, 2022, pp. 4–8)—the comparative analysis of Pasolini’s and Mazzetti’s practices identifies peace education as an emergent category. This category is examined primarily in relation to the extent to which the two educational projects enable both adults and children to reflect upon and cognitively reconstruct not only beliefs and attitudes, but more crucially, emotions and behaviours, through a process of reality analysis. Here, ‘reality’ is conceived as a construct encompassing the Self in its relationship with Otherness. Accordingly, Table 1 provides a schematic representation of the comparative analysis.

Comparative analysis of Pasolini’s and Mazzetti’s trainings

Dimensions	<i>Manifesto Theatre by Pasolini</i>	<i>Dream Theatre by Mazzetti</i>
Educational aims	To linguistically re-educate the advanced intellectual bourgeois class, the students, so that they can contact the working class and subordinate classes. The objective is to challenge the hegemonies of the status quo, interrupt violence and inequalities, and build a fair society that respects otherness.	To support the children of the ‘closed ghetto’, that is, the subordinate classes (proletarian and underprivileged), in the process of recognising violent emotions, enabling them to overcome anguish and transform vengeful violent potential into compassion and understanding, while facilitating their relationship with adults and with their own selves.
Beneficiaries of the educational project	Adults	Children

Methodological and teaching structures	Staging of the author's dramas that contain disorienting ethical-political dilemmas. The performers must present these to the audience through a process of transparent thought. The performance should be followed by a democratic, egalitarian debate on the themes of the proposed work: the audience is guided by the director-author and actors to linguistically analyse the drama. The practice must stimulate critical and reflective thinking. The analysis leads to the questioning of ideas, attitudes, and social, individual, and collective behaviours.	The child is assisted by the educator in dramatising their dream in a school setting. The dramatisation phase is structured in thirteen stages. The goal is to create a sociodrama: the child becomes the director of their own dream and stages it with the help of their peers and the educator. The process stimulates the child to recognise the archetypal functions emerging from the dream, the reasons behind the dream's development, and to identify what triggered the violent reaction. This process allows for the elaboration and transformation of violence into compassion and understanding of both the self and the other.
Expressive modalities employed in the educational process	Egalitarian dialogue between the author-director, actors, and audience. The roles are quite clearly defined: the audience does not participate in the drama, but after its performance, they analyse it linguistically together with the actors and the director. In this way, the process of individual thought is brought into relation with the small polis gathered for the cultural ritual. The violence emerging from the relationships of the characters in the dramas becomes the subject of study and reflection for the community.	An egalitarian dialogue takes place between the child and the educator in the early stages, followed by an egalitarian dialogue between the child and the small community of playmates. Children express emotions and thoughts by reconstructing the dream and analysing it linguistically, guided by the educator. Children become directors of the dramatisation of their dream, sharing its theatrical realisation with their playmates. The theme of violence is moved to the symbolic plane, becoming a subject of reflection that is no longer subjective, but communal.

<p>Psycho-pedagogical practices to manage emotions and conflict within a peace education framework</p>	<p>The Pasolinian method is more closely aligned with a <i>cognitive-behavioural reconstruction</i> (Beck, 2019), as the Socratic dialogue promoted during the analysis of the drama prompts a questioning of cognitive strategies and behavioural habits</p>	<p>Lorenza Mazzetti works with a group of researchers who employ an empirical method based on <i>Gestalt</i> psychology and structuralist theories. The dream becomes the object of linguistic study and reflection on one's emotions, ideas, attitudes, and behaviours. The educational process must provide a possibility for the positive resolution of the conflict expressed at the unconscious level during the dream.</p>
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4. Discussion and conclusions

As emerged from the comparative analysis of the two methodologies, Mazzetti draws on two essential elements of the “school for linguistic re-education” proposed by Pasolini in his *New Theatre Manifesto* (1968). The first is the Socratic and symmetrical dialogue between educator and learner in the construction of a research community that renders objective the *disorienting dilemmas*, so that the psycho-pedagogical process brings about a transformation that is not only individual but also communal. The educator, therefore, acts as a facilitator, establishing a symmetrical relationship with the learner: the goal is the emancipation of the individual and their ability to self-educate in total autonomy, having developed critical thinking and analytical skills to interpret the languages of reality that underlie both interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships. The two trainings can, therefore, be considered complementary because both involve the stimulation of active listening and reflective thinking through theatre (Michellini, 2022). Mazzetti introduces an innovative element: she manages to empirically experiment with the techniques of *Onirodramma* (*Dream Theatre*), which allows her to establish the actual extent of the transformative potential elicited by the educational process with children. Pedagogically, the two programmes converge: in both cases, although the target audience differs (Pasolini addresses adults, Mazzetti works with children), the goal is to offer an opportunity for cognitive reconstruction and deconstruction of relational logics and dynamics to the participants in the training. The social being must become aware of their thinking processes and emotions, not so much for a form of coercive self-control, but precisely to be able to choose different attitudes and behaviours from those that are not mediated by reasoning and the analysis of reality. We can consider the two practices complementary in that, in Mazzetti's case, children's dreams become a tool to analyse violence and conflict, just as Pasolini's dramas provide adults with a workshop space to understand the dynamics of violence and conflict within political and social frameworks. The two practices highlight the importance of reciprocity and mutuality in social relationships, starting from an active and constant cognitive reconstruction and from cognitive-behavioural self-analysis. Future studies could explore how Mazzetti's *Dream Theatre* might serve as a preparatory stage for Pasolini's training, guiding the social being throughout their life to challenge ideas, biases, attitudes, and behaviours through dramatization and theatre. It is therefore possible to consider the two theatre-based educational programmes as integrated into a contemporary model aimed at cultivating a democratic *ethos* as they offer embodied cognition—the body in its entirety—the opportunity to engage in an experience that is not only intellectual or cognitive, but also sensory and behavioural, addressing contemporary needs to embrace

an educational training for peace capable of respecting biopsychosocial perspectives in *Lifelong Learning*.

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