

## SCHOOL NAMES IN ITALY BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY

SILVIA CORINO ROVANO  
University of Turin, Italy

### **School names in Italy between tradition and modernity**

**Abstract:** Contemporary names of Italian schools stem from a culture of solid education and participation in the well-being of the nation, which was widespread in the nineteenth century. From the onomastic guidelines established by Royal Decree in 1865, the school-naming practice developed in the direction of using anthroponyms aimed at reinforcing the symbolic meaning of the school as an institution. The natural consequence was that people became more involved emotionally in their relationship with schools as seats of learning and repositories of personal memories. What was initially a mere project grew into a tradition, a fortunate idea that seems to produce positive effects even nowadays.

**Keywords:** Risorgimento, school names, anthroponym, toponym, odonym.

“Coraggio dunque, piccolo soldato dell’immenso esercito. I tuoi libri son le tue armi, la tua classe è la tua squadra, il campo di battaglia è la terra intera, e la vittoria è la civiltà umana.”<sup>1</sup> Written in 1886, sixteen years after the establishment of Rome as the capital city of Italy, *Cuore* by Edmondo de Amicis is not only one of the most popular novels of his time, but it can be considered a cultural and political programme, in which the school was a place where teachers had to build the new Italian people.

As a matter of fact, many Italian schools<sup>2</sup> are named after the author E. De Amicis, a journalist, intellectual, novelist and, of course, a patriot.

When observing Italian school names, one immediately notices that there are schools named *Dante*, *Cavour* or *Garibaldi* throughout the country, from primary schools to high schools. Going deeper into the matter, one discovers that state high schools were renamed in 1865 by Royal Decree. Therefore, the present research is aimed at investigating the nature of Italian school names after the national unification of 1861 and sketching out some guidelines that determined the choice of many school names and pervaded the image

---

<sup>1</sup> De Amicis (1889<sup>98</sup>: 17): “Courage, then, little soldier of the immense army. Your books are your arms, your class is your squadron, the field of the battle is the whole earth, and the victory is human civilization.” (De Amicis 1915: 17).

<sup>2</sup> The exact figures are: 250 primary schools, 23 middle schools and 5 high schools, in all the most important cities in the country (<http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed march 1, 2013).

of the school as an institution. Only state schools are taken in consideration, because they are the most directly affected by administrative decisions.<sup>3</sup>

After the unification, schools had a twofold mission to fulfil for the newborn Italy: (1) to train the new citizens in accordance with the values and ideology of the union under the Savoy crown; and (2) to teach the Italian language to people who mostly ignored it and spoke only dialects.<sup>4</sup> In brief, it was a twofold mission of moral and linguistic development.<sup>5</sup>

We also have to remember that in the nineteenth century many Italians were illiterate.<sup>6</sup> The unified government understood that the problem needed prompt action: in 1859 thanks to a state law named Casati, after its author, the first two years of primary school became obligatory and free, and several detailed programmes for good reading and writing Italian developed from that time.<sup>7</sup> Later (in 1877), a new statement that was afterwards famous – the Coppino law – made the first three years of primary school obligatory and free.

At the same time, a survey conducted in 1864–1865, which was aimed at observing the real use of Italian compared with dialects in Italian primary schools, provided some discouraging findings: most of the teachers in the country had to speak dialect if they wanted to be understood.<sup>8</sup> The general attitude of the administration towards dialects in schools is summarised by Cortellazzo, an Italian linguist, through the expression ‘dialectophobia’<sup>9</sup>.

People whose names were chosen to designate schools had to be role models for schoolboys and to remind them that children developed a sense of responsibility during the school years, which continued to mature throughout their entire life. Moreover, the people whose names were used as school names had to be true Italians in language and

<sup>3</sup> Many private schools pertain to the Catholic tradition, so their names are representative either of the religious group or of the saint of the congregation.

<sup>4</sup> The problem was well known by the contemporaries and opened a long-term and sometimes sharp debate: “Si tratta di dare all’Italia una lingua poiché ancora non l’ha [...]” (cf. Ascoli 1873: IX). A famous fight between A. Manzoni and G.I. Ascoli on the pages of the *Archivio Glottologico* took place at the end of the nineteenth century (cf. Bruni 1984: 140–146, among others).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Papa (2012: 8). A specific mention about the moral qualities of the teacher was stated in the law: to obtain a permanent position, the teacher had to demonstrate not only to have teaching attitudes, but also *moral dispositions necessary to carry out his job*. (RD 1876, n. 3250: 1494). From a broader perspective, there could be a link between the development of new Italian citizens and a kind of pedagogy oriented towards the nation and able to stimulate students’ emotions in relation to this nation (cf. Ridolfi 2010: 7).

<sup>6</sup> In 1861 the illiterates were around 78% of the population; ten years later, they represented 73%. In 1951 they were 7,46% in the cities and around 11% and 18% in the rural and disadvantaged areas (cf. De Mauro 1963: 36–37 and 94). In South Italy, in 1861 almost 90% of the population was illiterate (cf. Papa 2012: 8).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Papa (2012: 10–15).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Papa (2012: 27–28). Other studies are even more critical on this matter: “Ne scaturiva comunque il quadro di una realtà scolastica ancora precaria, con insegnanti incapaci e mal pagati, legati a vecchi metodi, scuole poco frequentate, [...]. Essi infatti ponevano il nostro, quanto ad analfabetismo, come ‘l’ultimo tra i popoli civili’, e mettevano in evidenza gravi squilibri tra le diverse zone del paese.” (De Fort 1996: 78).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Cortellazzo (1994: 556). His idea (1994: 558) is that the two places where the use of dialect was more rejected were the school and Court. Elena Papa (2012: 29) uses the expression “a true fight against dialect”.

behaviour. At that time, the idea of a model was a core element of pedagogy and it was part of several school activities.<sup>10</sup>

The naming of schools grew more important in this cultural environment and had a first official act in the *Regio Decreto* no. 2229, of March 4th, 1865. The decree simply stated that Royal high schools in the country had obtained from that moment the name specified in a table attached (summarised as follows), without mentioning the reasons for these decisions, but adding that every year, each school would have to celebrate “the most important Italian writer or thinker”, by organising a literary event.<sup>11</sup>

Region	Cities and school names
Piedmont	Turin ( <i>Carmine</i> )* → <i>Cavour</i> ; Turin ( <i>S. Francesco</i> ) → <i>Gioberti</i> ; Alessandria → <i>Plana</i> ; Casale → <i>Balbo</i> ; Cuneo → <i>Pellico</i> ; Ivrea → <i>Botta</i> ; Mondovì → <i>Beccaria Gian Battista</i> ; Novara → <i>Carlo Alberto</i> ; Vercelli → <i>Lagrangia</i>
Lombardy	Milan ( <i>S. Alessandro</i> ) → <i>Beccaria</i> ; Milan ( <i>Porta Nuova</i> ) → <i>Parini</i> ; Bergamo → <i>Sarpi</i> ; Brescia → <i>Arnaldo</i> ; Como → <i>Volta</i> ; Cremona → <i>Manin</i> ; Lodi → <i>Verri</i> ; Pavia → <i>Foscolo</i> ; Sondrio → <i>Piazzi</i>
Liguria	Genoa → <i>Colombo</i> ; Savona → <i>Davila</i> ; Sanremo → <i>Cassini</i>
Tuscany	Arezzo → <i>Petrarca</i> ; Florence → <i>Dante</i> ; Livorno → <i>Niccolini</i> ; Massa → <i>Pellegrino Rossi</i> ; Pisa → <i>Galilei</i> ; Pistoia → <i>Buonarroti</i> ; Siena → <i>Guicciardini</i>
Emilia Romagna	Bologna → <i>Galvani</i> ; Cesena → <i>Monti</i> ; Faenza → <i>Torricelli</i> ; Ferrara → <i>Ariosto</i> ; Modena → <i>Muratori</i> ; Parma → <i>Romagnosi</i> ; Piacenza → <i>Gioia</i> ; Reggio Emilia → <i>Spallanzani</i> ; Sinigaglia → <i>Perticari</i>
Marche	Fermo → <i>Sigonio</i> ; Macerata → <i>Leopardi</i>
Umbria	Spoletto → <i>Pontano</i>
Campania	Naples → <i>Vittorio Emanuele</i> ; Naples → <i>Principe Umberto</i> ; Avellino → <i>Colletta</i> ; Benevento → <i>Giannone</i> ; Maddaloni → <i>Giordano Bruno</i> ; Salerno → <i>Tasso</i>
Abruzzo	Aquila → <i>Cotugno</i> ; Chieti → <i>Vico</i> ; Teramo → <i>Melchior Delfico</i>
Basilicata	Potenza → <i>Salvator Rosa</i>
Molise	Campobasso → <i>Mario Pagano</i>
Calabria	Reggio Calabria → <i>Campanella</i> ; Catanzaro → <i>Galluppi</i> ; Cosenza → <i>Genovesi</i> ; Monteleone → <i>Filangieri</i> ;
Puglia	Bari → <i>Cirillo</i> ; Lecce → <i>Sannazzaro</i> ; Lucera → <i>Broggia</i>
Sicily	Palermo → <i>Vittorio Emanuele</i> ; Caltanissetta → <i>Ruggiero Settimo</i> ; Catania → <i>Spedalieri</i> ; Girgenti → <i>Scinà</i> ; Messina → <i>Maurolico</i> ; Noto → <i>Di Gregorio</i> ; Trapani → <i>Ximenes</i>
Sardinia	Cagliari → <i>Dettori</i> ; Sassari → <i>Azuni</i>

\* The old names of the schools are written in brackets.

At first sight, there is an obvious general tendency to celebrate local key figures, such as the school names *Galilei* in Pisa, *Columbus* in Genoa (named only after the surnames of the important figures)<sup>12</sup>, and so on. Only the name of King Victor Emanuel occurred twice

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Papa (2012: 35).

<sup>11</sup> RD 1865, n. 2229: 341. The table attached to the decree was organised alphabetically. In this table, the information was also grouped according to the region to which it pertained, in order to have a better view of the landscape.

<sup>12</sup> Before the royal decree of 1865, names of high schools comprised appellative phrases like

(in Naples and Palermo); other names inspired by royal personalities were *Carlo Alberto* [Charles Albert] in Novara and *Principe Umberto* [Prince Umberto] in Naples<sup>13</sup>.

In Turin the Prime Minister Camillo Benso (who died in 1861) was identified by the toponym of his county, the name by which he was always known: *Cavour*<sup>14</sup>. In this case a peculiar onomastic phenomenon is involved: a toponym denoting origin becomes an anthroponym, and then it becomes again the name of a smaller place, i.e. a school. The last transformation is marked by the definite article: *the Cavour* is, without a doubt, the school<sup>15</sup>.

As expected, several names are inspired by poets and novelists from the ancient to the recent past: *Dante, Petrarca, Guicciardini, Ariosto, Tasso, Parini, Foscolo, Monti, Leopardi*, and so on.

Most anthroponyms in school names are related to the political and legal environment and the Revolution: *Gioberti, Beccaria, Silvio Pellico, Gaetano Filangieri, Leonardo Ximenes, Carlo Botta, Pellegrino Rossi*, and so on.

Last but not least, names of scientists were also used to designate schools: *Torricelli, Galvani, Sarpi, Scinà, Lagrangia*. As regards the last example, we observe that the name of the mathematician Joseph-Louis Lagrange (born in Turin, but with a French name and surname) was the source, but it was transformed and translated into a more *Italian* version. The school still bears this name (*Lagrangia*) and its website mentions the reference to L. Lagrange and its transformation in the Italian accepted form<sup>16</sup>.

Nevertheless, the choice of the names of Galileo Galilei, Giordano Bruno, Arnaldo da Brescia, Tommaso Campanella and Pietro Giannone, free thinkers who were often persecuted for their ideas, is a clear message of the definite opposition to the contemporary Roman church, a sort of onomastic anticipation of the war against Rome, which was soon to come.

We cannot find yet the well-known heroes of Risorgimento. But we have to observe that with the exception of the name of the king and prince, no anthroponym was borrowed

---

*Royal highschool, Royal college* or toponyms, such as *Liceo Porta Nuova* (in Milan) or *Liceo Orientale* (in Genoa). Sometimes, names of high schools also contained names of saints, e.g. *Liceo S. Alessandro* (in Milan), *Liceo S. Francesco da Paola* (in Turin), *Liceo S. Giovanni* (in Florence), or expressed the religious affiliation, e.g. *Scuola Valdese*, or the specific role of the institution, e.g. *School for deaf and dumb*, and so on. There are very few exceptions to this situation (cf. CGR 1864: 845–894). It is no surprise that no women's names were recorded as school names.

<sup>13</sup> When the prince became king, the school name changed (RD 1878, n. 4647: 2514). In Palermo, in 1878 another high school was named *Umberto I* (RD 1878, n. 4549:1907–1908). Those names are still high school names: in Italy there are now 9 high schools designated with this anthroponym (<http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed March 25, 2013).

<sup>14</sup> This town, not far from Turin, is the modern name of the Celtic *Caburrium* before the Latin *Forum Vibii* (I B.C.). It originates in an ethnic name, coming from the Ligurian tribe *Caburriates*. Already in the Middle Ages, the lenition of the occlusive is attested in documents, from *Caburrium* to *Cavurrium* (cf. DTI 1990, s.v. *Cavour*: 185).

<sup>15</sup> The same happens to the minister Massimo Tapparelli d'Azeglio and the *D'Azeglio highschool*, founded in Turin in 1882 (RD 1882, n. 1022: 3914).

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.istitutosuperiorelagrangiacv.it/new-lagrangia/index2.asp?TARGET=home> (accessed March 26, 2013).

from living people. To have a school named after Manzoni we have to wait until 1884 (when a Manzoni high school is recorded in Milan<sup>17</sup>), and until 1888 for a Garibaldi high school in Palermo<sup>18</sup>.

It was not only schools that entered a new naming period: before school names, street names had already been changed in 1862–1863. Unlike with schools, this happened without an official statement: only in 1923 did the State give local authorities some precise rules for street names. Nevertheless, all around Italy local administrations decided to change the street names with the aim of celebrating the Risorgimento. Only Venice succeeded in thwarting these plans for a while, thanks to the prestige of its dialect<sup>19</sup> (the official language of the Venice Republic); however, in 1889, it had a Garibaldi street. Similarly, Turin, even if it was not any longer the capital of the kingdom in 1866, changed its via Dora Grossa, an old and central street of the city, into via Garibaldi.<sup>20</sup>

From a wider perspective, very soon after the unification, but also later in liberal Italy, many circumstances of celebrating the heroes of the Risorgimento disseminated their memory throughout the country, creating a sort of ‘civil religion’<sup>21</sup>.

With subsequent occasions for the celebration of the Risorgimento, especially at its fiftieth anniversary, the main heroes of the movement gained new relevance. The celebration made by the poet G. Pascoli<sup>22</sup> renewed the memory of Garibaldi as a true myth of the Risorgimento. According to this interpretation, Garibaldi represents the ideal defendant of republican rights and his character is complementary to Giuseppe Mazzini<sup>23</sup>, the democratic activist, father of Young Italy.

For this reason, but also due to the persistence of a positive image of various figures, when we think about the contemporary public space related to schools, we must consider that some personalities of the past are not directly a certain indicator of the time when a school was established: they are a kind of evergreens. The decree of 1865 became a guideline for subsequent naming.

In fact, we can find later schools named after the fathers of the Italian language: from the Middle Ages, Dante, a ‘political and literary myth’ and a symbol of the Italian unification,<sup>24</sup> and Petrarch, as well as other well-known poets from the seventeenth century,

<sup>17</sup> RD 1884, n. 2113: 782. Manzoni died in 1873. There were toponyms named after living people in the nineteenth century (in Florence in 1858 a street was named after King Vittorio Emanuele II and another after Giuseppe Garibaldi, both alive at that time). The first state law that forbade the naming of public spaces in relation to living people appeared in 1927. From that moment, it became necessary to wait ten years after the year of death. (Cf. Mastrelli 1998: 425–426).

<sup>18</sup> RD 1888, n. 5782: 3448. Garibaldi died in 1882.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Raffaelli (2010<sup>3</sup>: 266).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Bollone (2011: 176–177).

<sup>21</sup> Building citizens as patriots through rituals and places of memories (cf. Ridolfi 2010: 11).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Ridolfi (2010: 28–29).

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Pivato (1999: 65). Mazzini: 83 primary schools, 36 middle schools and 9 high schools; Garibaldi: 53 primary schools, 29 middle schools and 13 high schools. The information about school names was taken from an institutional website of the Government: <http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/> (accessed in February and March 2013).

<sup>24</sup> Even before the unification, Dante became a political and literary myth and afterwards a symbol of the Italian unification (cf. Pivato 1999: 62–63).

like Vittorio Alfieri<sup>25</sup>, or the nineteenth century, like Ugo Foscolo, Giacomo Leopardi and finally, of course, the author who can be considered the father of modern Italian: Alessandro Manzoni. We find schools with their names all over the country.<sup>26</sup>

Some personalities were both heroes of the unification and novelists, such as Ippolito Nievo<sup>27</sup>, who was not only one of the Thousand (*I Mille*), but also one of Garibaldi's closest collaborators, whose most important novel *Le confessioni di un italiano*<sup>28</sup> was very popular at that time and it is now considered a classic novel of the Italian Risorgimento.

Exceptional personalities in Italian history and art, like Leonardo Da Vinci<sup>29</sup> and Marco Polo (the first high school in Venice in 1867<sup>30</sup>) were also onomastic sources of inspiration.

A part was played by linguists, due to their important role in normalising the language for all Italian citizens. The name of N. Tommaseo still appears on numerous school walls (he was the author of a very important dictionary of the Italian language that appeared at the end of the nineteenth century).<sup>31</sup>

This attitude was so successful that it created a tradition; thus, the new schools that were established in the twentieth century followed the same model. Nowadays, we can find a landscape with ancient schools with traditional names and new schools with names selected from the past or from the recent past but following the same pattern. Therefore, in naming a new school, this traditional method can lead to two solutions: one could either choose an old, traditional name like *Mazzini*, or the name of an eminent personality in contemporary literature or politics. The second option may be preferred: e.g. Luigi Pirandello won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1934 and Eugenio Montale in 1975: many schools have their name<sup>32</sup>. However, this second variant is not always put into practice.

With reference to contemporary times, it is worth remembering that names given in 1865 have been maintained almost entirely. The reason is that, often, the fame and

<sup>25</sup> A monument devoted to his memory was erected in Turin in 1851 (ASCT, Atti del Municipio di Torino, vol. 2°, 1851–1852, Index of acts, p. 660, CC 29 marzo 1851, 27, 1, 145).

<sup>26</sup> Dante: 100 primary schools, 55 middle schools and 12 high schools; Petrarca: 17 primary schools, 16 middle schools and 2 high schools; Alfieri: 5 primary schools, 19 middle schools and 4 high schools; Foscolo: 15 primary schools, 33 middle schools and 5 high schools; Leopardi: 34 primary schools, 37 middle schools and 9 high schools; Manzoni: 123 primary schools, 91 middle schools and 7 high schools (<http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed February 22, 2013).

<sup>27</sup> 22 primary schools, 19 middle schools and a high school (<http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed March 1, 2013).

<sup>28</sup> Translated into English as *The Castle of Fratta*.

<sup>29</sup> 26 primary schools, 46 middle schools and 40 high schools (<http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed March 1, 2013).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. CGR 1867: 401. It is interesting that it is mentioned also on the high school website ([http://www.iismarcopolo.it/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=14&Itemid=15/](http://www.iismarcopolo.it/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=14&Itemid=15/), accessed March 25, 2013). Marco Polo: 27 primary schools, 7 middle schools and 15 high schools (<http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed March 1, 2013).

<sup>31</sup> 12 primary schools and 5 middle schools dedicated to his memory (cf. <http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed February 1, 2013).

<sup>32</sup> Pirandello: 19 primary schools, 32 middle schools and 3 high schools; Montale: 14 primary schools, 7 middle schools and 11 high schools (cf. <http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed February 1, 2013).

importance that a school gains determine the preservation of its name, as it happens at the level of higher education with famous universities like *Harvard* or *La Sorbonne*. Almost every Italian knows the high school *Il Tasso*<sup>33</sup> in Rome, *Il Beccaria*<sup>34</sup> in Milan and *Il d'Azeglio* in Turin, and the same holds for names of primary and middle schools in every city. There is also an element of affection found in an individual's memories.

This leads to a general attitude of conservation. In fact, the strong tendency to preserve the names is surprisingly evident when we consider fascist names: while no school nowadays is named after Mussolini or other fascist leaders (as this would be markedly inappropriate), there are six schools in memory of the minister of fascist education, G. Gentile.<sup>35</sup>

Towards the end of the last century, two contemporary writers are key figures in school onomastics: Italo Calvino and Primo Levi<sup>36</sup> (author of memories from Nazi camps). Italo Calvino is very well represented in school names<sup>37</sup> and a reason of such success, even if he died only in 1985, can be seen in the fact that his literature often plays an important role in school lessons. A possible interpretation of the use of the two writers' names to designate schools lies in the potential age group that is considered suitable for the evocation of their memory. I. Calvino is related to the first years of school, triggering a positive image that makes him the ideal anthroponym source for primary schools. However, Primo Levi's important and very sad memories about Nazi camps, as well as his dramatic end in 1987, make his name an appropriate choice to designate high schools rather than primary schools.

Thus, historical reasons and emotional motivation define a context in which local administrations make decisions related to naming schools, which can become a way of promoting local poets and personalities, rather than following an intellectual tradition or ideology (with a wider spatial and temporal horizon).

Another level of the present analysis takes into account a specific and important element of Italian public sensitivity, relating to the celebration of victims of wars<sup>38</sup>. Key figures of the Risorgimento<sup>39</sup> are the main target of such celebrations, which may also commemorate victims of the Two World Wars and certain periods in Italian history, like the 70s and 90s, which were marked by terrorism or tragic events related to mafia crimes. These aspects play a crucial part in the onomastic choice.

Several names from the anti-fascist tradition are frequent in names of schools: the liberals Piero Gobetti and the brothers Rosselli, the socialist deputy Giacomo Matteotti and Antonio Gramsci, who founded the Italian Communist party in 1921<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>33</sup> The name was given to the high school in 1890 (RD 1890: 1124).

<sup>34</sup> Cf. <http://www.liceobeccaria.it/> (accessed March 2, 2013).

<sup>35</sup> Cf. <http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/> (accessed March 1, 2013).

<sup>36</sup> 2 primary schools, 5 middle schools and 22 high schools (cf. <http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed February 1, 2013).

<sup>37</sup> 32 primary schools, 13 middle schools and 10 high schools (cf. <http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed March 1, 2013).

<sup>38</sup> De Luna (2011:15–16 and 39–43).

<sup>39</sup> "I caduti per la patria e il loro culto divennero una fondamentale fonte di memorie risorgimentali da rappresentare attraverso rituali civili e forme artistiche, raccontare in testi letterari e libri scolastici, materializzare grazie a lapidi e monumenti." (Ridolfi 2010: 9–10).

<sup>40</sup> Gobetti: 3 primary schools, 7 middle schools and 13 high schools; Rosselli: 3 primary

The Resistance during the Nazi occupation involved only the northern regions of Italy, while the South was freed by the US Army and Allied Powers in 1944. In late history, this terrible fight between the two different fronts was preserved even after the end of the war in private and public memories. Even nowadays, being fascist or antifascist is still an element of ideological identification. To avoid sharp political opposition, the local administration sometimes makes conciliatory onomastic choices by turning to generic, universal martyrs (as it happens with *odonyms*), who are often known by the expression ‘martyrs of freedom’<sup>41</sup>. This solution can unify the martyrs of World War I, World War II, the Resistance, Cefalonia, and so on. These are the only cases that do not use anthroponyms as onomastic sources.

We can also find modern victims, examples of contemporary martyrs, whose names occur in school names throughout Italy: A. Moro, a Christian democratic deputy who was killed by terrorists in 1978<sup>42</sup>; G. Falcone and P. Borsellino, two judges, friends and colleagues, killed by the mafia<sup>43</sup>, who are often together also in school names<sup>44</sup>.

Not many politicians are highly considered nowadays, but some of them preserve a high level of affection with the people. Among them, one is universally admired: Sandro Pertini, the seventh Italian President of the Republic (in 1978–1985), whose name frequently occurs as a school name<sup>45</sup>.

Some personalities that are used by certain communities as onomastic sources for school names are strictly related to a given region. Examples in this respect include dialectal poets like Costantino Nigra in Piedmont, whose name is found in two schools, one in Ivrea (Turin) and another in Turin. At the same time, there are cases in which schools have double names, i.e. the name of an important local figure appears next to the name of a famous national personality, in view of underlining the value of the former, as in the example of the middle school *Giacinto Bianco – Giovanni Pascoli* in Fasano (Puglia)<sup>46</sup>. Other schools display a sort of (onomastic) evolution: the high school *Pietro Verri* in 1954 became a scientific high school named *Gandini*. Gandini was a physicist from Lodi (the town where

schools, 2 middle schools and 15 high schools; Matteotti: 29 primary schools, 15 middle schools and 2 high schools; Gramsci: 26 primary schools, 26 middle schools and 12 high schools (cf. <http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed February 1, 2013).

<sup>41</sup> 31 primary schools, 14 middle schools, 12 high schools are “Martyrs of freedom” (Cf. <http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed March 1, 2013).

<sup>42</sup> 51 primary schools, 25 middle schools and 3 high schools (cf. <http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed February 1, 2013).

<sup>43</sup> Both have been killed in Palermo in a car explosion: G. Falcone in May and P. Borsellino in July 1992.

<sup>44</sup> Giovanni Falcone: 51 primary schools (20 of them also bear the name of Paolo Borsellino), 34 middle schools (10 of them also contain the name of Paolo Borsellino, and one includes the name of Francesca Morvillo, Falcone’s wife, who died with him) and 33 high schools (cf. <http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed February 1, 2013).

<sup>45</sup> 36 primary schools, 26 middle schools and 29 high schools (cf. <http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed February 1, 2013).

<sup>46</sup> *Giovanni Pascoli* is the second name of another school in Tuscany. Named in 1865 *Pellegrino Rossi*, this Tuscan school became *Rossi-Pascoli*, a new name which does not refer to any person (the website of the school mentions the old anthroponym. Cf. <http://www.istitutoperiorossi.it/sites/default/files/STORIA%20LICEO%20ROSSI.pdf>, accessed March 26, 2013).



the school is located) and had been headmaster of that high school. In this case, the choice of the new name is strongly related to the old one and to the place.

There is a general tendency of school names is to add a name, thereby creating a sort of redundant name that is no longer related to a single anthroponym. In some circumstances, this is a consequence of the administrative policy to spare money by reducing number of headmasters. Thus, two schools function as one but continue to bear two names. For instance, in 1998 the *Marco Polo* high school in Venice was merged with *Tommaseo*, also a high school. The website of the ministry of education records them separately, but the presentation of the *Tommaseo* high school is preserved on the *Marco Polo* website<sup>47</sup>.

Such situations are more frequent than expected (the numbers are higher than our statistical possibilities and the website of the administration gives answers for both keys).

There is yet another way of naming schools, which is quite new, apparently easy and neutral, but is met with the strongest opposition by local population. Sometimes new schools have only the name of the street where the school is located or the name of the educational profile and there are circumstances in which the school and the community are at odds. For example, in Turin there is a school that was named after the street on which it is situated, but it is dedicated to the memory of Ilaria Alpi, a journalist killed in Somalia in 1994. The website of the school contains a link to an explanation and an identity statement, answering the question “Who was Ilaria Alpi?”<sup>48</sup>.

From a linguistic point of view, the last naming pattern is quite marked: there are schools whose names contain anthroponyms that go beyond the Italian (and sometimes European) tradition. In the last years, names like Martin Luther King, Gandhi, Kennedy, A. Frank, and other, are chosen as school names<sup>49</sup>. We consider these choices to be a form of maintaining the tradition of martyrs as models for the youth and a proof that there is no longer a widespread need to support the use of the Florentine dialect as a common language. Moreover, the English language and the American culture are part of everyday life and their influence grows in “geometrical progression”<sup>50</sup>. Thus, it comes as no surprise that a certain local administration would choose *Kennedy* as a name for its school, especially if the school is on *Via Kennedy*, as a sort of toponymic coherence.

A different motivation can be provided for borrowing Anne Frank’s name. The author and her diary<sup>51</sup> are quite well known in Italy, but her name exists in the Italian landscape as *Anna* not *Anne*, which is why the schools are dedicated to *Anna Frank*. A curious aspect

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.iismarcopolo.it/> (accessed March 25, 2013).

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.scuolaviacimarosa.it/> (accessed February 1, 2013).

<sup>49</sup> *Anna Frank* and *Kennedy* are frequent names for schools. *Anna Frank*: 41 primary schools, 18 middle schools; *Kennedy*: 18 primary schools, 16 middle schools and 6 high schools. There is also an *A. Lincoln* primary school in Cinisello Balsamo near Milan (cf. <http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/>, accessed February 1, 2013).

<sup>50</sup> “La traiettoria d’afflusso degli anglicismi in italiano non consce ritorni su se stessa in battute d’arresto, [...], e si configura, decisamente, come una linea di sviluppo in progressione costante e di tipo geometrico.” (Cartago 1994: 721).

<sup>51</sup> It was translated in Italian and published in 1954 by Einaudi, one of the most important Italian publishers of that time.

is worth noting: the true name of the author was printed on the front page of the Italian edition of the book, but after each letter to Kitty the signature was *Your Anna*<sup>52</sup>.

## References

- Ascoli, G.I. 1873. *Archivio glottologico italiano*, vol. 1, V–XL. Roma, Torino, Firenze: Loescher.
- Bollone, S.M. 2011. L'italianità del Piemonte attraverso gli odonimi di Torino. In *Onomastica e lessico tra Risorgimento e Italia unita*, D. Cacia and E. Papa (eds.), 165–183. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso.
- Bruni, F. 1994. *L'Italiano. Elementi di storia della lingua*. Torino: UTET.
- Cartago, G. 1994. L'apporto inglese. In *Storia della lingua italiana*, L. Serianni and P. Trifone (eds.), vol. III, 721–750. Torino: Einaudi.
- CGR1862 = *Calendario Generale del Regno d'Italia*. Torino: Stamperia dell'Unione tipografico-Editrice.
- CGR1863 = *Calendario Generale del Regno d'Italia*. Torino: Stamperia dell'Unione tipografico-Editrice.
- CGR1864 = *Calendario Generale del Regno d'Italia*. Torino: Stamperia dell'Unione tipografico-Editrice.
- CGR1867 = *Calendario Generale del Regno d'Italia*. Torino: Stamperia dell'Unione tipografico-Editrice.
- Cortellazzo, M. 1994. I dialetti dal Cinquecento ad oggi: usi non letterari. In *Storia della lingua italiana*, L. Serianni and P. Trifone (eds.), vol. III, 541–559. Torino: Einaudi.
- De Amicis, E. 1889<sup>98</sup>. *Cuore*. Milano: Fratelli Treves Editore.
- De Amicis, E. 1915. *Cuore (Heart), An Italian schoolboy's journal*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company.
- De Fort, E. 1995. *Scuola e analfabetismo nell'Italia del '900*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- De Fort, E. 1996. *La scuola elementare dall'Unità alla caduta del fascismo*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- De Luna, G. 2011. *La Repubblica del dolore. Le memorie di un'Italia divisa*. Milano: Feltrinelli.
- De Mauro, T. 1991. *Storia linguistica dell'Italia unita*. Bari: Laterza. (First edition: 1963).
- DTI 1990 = G. GASCA QUEiRAZZA, C. Marcato, G. B. Pellegrini, G. Petracco Sicardi e A. Rossebastiano (eds.). 1990. *Dizionario di toponomastica. Storia e significato dei nomi geografici italiani*. Torino: UTET.
- Mastrelli, C.A. 1998. L'odonomastica nella legislazione italiana. *RiOn* (IV) 2: 423–447.
- Papa, E. 2012. *Con naturale spontaneità. Pratiche di scrittura ed educazione linguistica nella scuola elementare dall'Unità d'Italia alla Repubblica*. Roma: Società Editrice Romana.
- Pivato, S. 1999. *Il nome e la storia. Onomastica e religioni politiche nell'Italia contemporanea*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Raffaelli, S. 2010. I nomi delle vie. In *I luoghi della memoria. Simboli e miti dell'Italia unita*, M. Isnenghi (ed.), 3rd edition, 263–288. Bari: Laterza.
- Ridolfi, M. 2010. Risorgimento. In *I luoghi della memoria. Simboli e miti dell'Italia unita*, M. Isnenghi (ed.), 3rd edition, 5–47. Bari: Laterza.
- RD 1865, n. 2229. Regio Decreto per la denominazione dei Regi Licei e per l'istituzione di una festa annuale letteraria da celebrarsi nei medesimi. In *Raccolta Ufficiale delle leggi e dei decreti del Regno d'Italia*, vol. XLVII, 341–343. Firenze: Stamperia Reale.
- RD 1876, n. 3250. Legge sul miglioramento della condizione dei maestri elementari. In *Raccolta Ufficiale delle leggi e dei decreti del Regno d'Italia*, vol. XLVIII, 1493–1495. Firenze: Stamperia Reale.
- RD 1878, n. 4549. Regio Decreto col quale al secondo liceo istituito in Palermo è data la denominazione di Liceo Umberto I. In *Raccolta Ufficiale delle leggi e dei decreti del Regno d'Italia*, vol. LIV, 1907–1908. Firenze: Stamperia Reale.

<sup>52</sup> In the recent version (1991) by the same publisher, it was changed to *Your Anne*.

- RD 1878, n. 4647. Regio Decreto con cui viene mutato il nome del regio liceo Principe Umberto di Napoli. In *Raccolta Ufficiale delle leggi e dei decreti del Regno d'Italia*, vol. LV, 2514. Firenze: Stamperia Reale.
- RD 1882, n. 1022. Istituzione in Torino di un 3° liceo con la denominazione di Liceo Massimo d'Azeglio. In *Raccolta Ufficiale delle leggi e dei decreti del Regno d'Italia*, vol. LXVII, 3914. Firenze: Stamperia Reale.
- RD 1884, n. 2113. Provvedimento col quale al regio liceo in Milano vien data la denominazione di "Alessandro Manzoni". In *Raccolta Ufficiale delle leggi e dei decreti del Regno d'Italia*, vol. LXXI, 782. Firenze: Stamperia Reale.
- RD 1888, n. 5782. Provvedimento che dà al 3° liceo di Palermo la denominazione di "Giuseppe Garibaldi". In *Raccolta Ufficiale delle leggi e dei decreti del Regno d'Italia*, vol. LCI, 3448. Firenze: Stamperia Reale.
- RD 1890, n. 6838. Provvedimento che dà al IV ginnasio di Roma il nome di Torquato Tasso. In *Raccolta Ufficiale delle leggi e dei decreti del Regno d'Italia*, vol. XCVI, 1124. Firenze: Stamperia Reale.