

## ***The Genius of Ida Magli***

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She had just finished her last new book, *Figli dell'uomo. Storia del bambino, storia dell'odio* (The Sons of Man, History of Children and of Hatred) published by Rizzoli, Bur. It is an essay of extreme harshness, which makes it difficult to read it to the end. The assumption is that children - in every place and time - have always been subjected to atrocious violence, which we cannot even imagine in the past, and often pretend not to know in the present. The reason for cruelty against children is that they are the ideal victims, since they are weak and have little economic value. This is just one example among many others of the originality of Ida Magli's thinking, off her different approach to history and reality. She never surrendered to obvious and preconceived ideas, often paying an high price for that.

Looking at her, you would never suspect that she was capable of such hardness, within her logical system as strong and shining as steel. Petite, blonde, always perfectly coiffed, with her celestial Madonna eyes; but her little voice pronounced harsh judgments that one would never expect. Ida graduated from the Conservatory and played the piano in her small neat house on a Roman hill, and cultivated roses on the terrace: these were her only leisures. She would wake up at dawn and go to bed very late, in order to study and write more, even now that she was 90 years old. She knew that time was running short, and she still wanted to donate as much as possible of the immense richness of thought and culture that she had gathered.

She will not be remembered as much as she deserves to be (other famous people died in the last days), but this would not have surprised or saddened her. She was used to it and each blow was strengthening her more. It was she who brought cultural Anthropology in the Italian Universities; she left the chair because she did not want to surrender to the university power system (the infamy of the 'baronies' without studies). It was she who disseminated Anthropology with two extraordinary essays entitled *Alla scoperta di noi selvaggi* (Discovering the primitive ourselves) and *Viaggio intorno all'uomo bianco* (Journey around the White man). She was the first ideologue of Italian feminism, but after a while she quit, judging women unable to assert themselves. She was writing on the most the most coveted italian newspapers and periodicals of the intelligentsia (*Repubblica* and *l'Espresso*); but again she quit them (without having another contract) to protest because some of her articles had not been published. In the last years she was writing for the newspaper *Il Giornale*, but she did not like to be labelled as right-wing, even tough she perfectly knew that we live in a gigantic label factory.

Take any one of her many books and you will find a surprise that can give you the great gift of a new way of thinking. The book *Santa Teresa di Lisieux* (St. Therese of

Lisieux), which turns upside down the theme of holiness; *Gesù di Nazareth* (Jesus of Nazareth), a most devout essay demonstrating that Christianity, restoring the Sacred in religion, has never really put into practice the thinking of Christ; *Sulla dignità della donna* (On the Dignity of Women), where she said that woman actually is a sacrificial figure for pope John Paul II - at a time when Wojtyla was beatified in life. She dedicated her last years to the fight against Europe. *Contro l'Europa* (*Against Europe*) is in fact the title of one of her most important and prophetic books, denouncing the loss of national Sovereignty, of Freedom and Democracy, within a system leveled downwards, according to the criteria of a new Communism. Starting from the early Nineties, she has fought against Europe virtually alone; many were mocking her for that, before realizing how right she was. Please see the website of Italiani Liberi association ( [www.italianiliberi.it](http://www.italianiliberi.it) ), which she founded without asking a cent to anybody: you will find a way if thinking that now is enormously spreading among Europeans.

In 1996 she published a book that was considered visionary, fanatic or - at best - an exaggeration, entitled *Per una rivoluzione italiana* (For an Italian Revolution) published by Baldini & Castoldi. There she spoke about politics, school, Islamization, European Union, media, health care system, Constitution. She asked apparently trivial questions, as always big questions appear: *Do we really live in a democracy? Do politicians really represent us? Does the State really care about its citizens' well being?* Ida Magli's answer always was "no". Actually, citizens have no power, and therefore most of the clichés of our social life must be turned upside down.

Most of all, she foresaw a deadly clash with the Islamic world. At that time very few knew what it was al Qaeda, the attack against the Twin Towers was beyond imagination, not to mention Isis. Therefore most people considered her writings about Islam as a form of cultural backwardness, of narrow-mindedness, if not of racism. The book was totally ignored, killed with the technique of silence, and has not been reprinted. But far from being humiliated she knew that one day it would be recognized that she was right.

She died serene and lucid, at her home, next to her son. Few years ago, in her book *Omaggio agli Italiani* (*Tribute to the Italians*) she wrote a sentence which perfectly suits her: "This is the greatness of the Italians: they always kept thinking, always created, because only the intelligence knows it is free, whatever the external coercion. Man knows that his greatness lies in his thinking, and knows that there will always be at least one other man who grasps it, passing it on.

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