

Abstract

The evolution of the Italian system of sanctions, on the one hand, has contributed to shifting attention from the criminal "fact" to evaluating the "person" to be punished, and on the other has also led to a profound change in the very concept of a prison institution. Without any doubt, in fact, the historical-social evolution has influenced both the function of the sentence and the techniques used to punish the perpetrator.

The transition from corporal punishment to prison sentences up to alternative punishments, has accelerated the historical process that saw the torture of the prisoner, physical suffering, the punishment no longer at the center of condemnation, but replaced by the humanization of punishment.

However, it took years to embrace the awareness that making a condemnation human does not only mean avoiding corporal punishment, but above all reasoning on the limits and consequences that can lead to forced institutionalization without any purpose of social reintegration.

In this regard I propose a modern analysis - critical and social - of the current contexts of detention, therefore, I evaluate the state of the penitentiary institutions, analyze the social function of the sentence and above all I question the actual usefulness of the prison. To this I add a detailed ethnographic study - lasted four years - on the House of Benevento and an equally meticulous comparison with the aforementioned reality and the prisons of Salerno, Eboli and Pozzuoli.

I conclude the research with ample results and interesting ideas that could be resumed in the future for further analysis and comparison. The purposes of the sentence today revolve around three principles - retribution, prevention, re-socialization - and the combination of these perspectives, or the prevalence of one over the other, reflects both an internal logic of the penal system and the tendencies of the social political context. and cultural reference.

With the prison reform of '75 what is highlighted is the re-educational character of the sentence, so the whole prison machine had to adapt to this logic.

But was it really like that?

In light of this question, I propose a reinterpretation of the 1975 reform.

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