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***Museum of School and Popular Education
(Museo della scuola e dell'educazione
popolare) of the University of Molise, Italy***
*Muzej šolstva in ljudskega izobraževanja (Museo della
scuola e dell'educazione popolare) na Univerzi Molise, Italija*

Izvleček

V prispevku bomo analizirali Muzej šolstva in ljudskega izobraževanja ("Museo della scuola e dell'istruzione popolare") Univerze v Moliseju (Italija), njegove znanstvene in didaktične cilje ter vprašanja, povezana z muzeografskim prenosom dotične kulturne dediščine. Izhajajoč iz odnosa med spominom in šolsko zgodovinsko dediščino se bo prispevek osredotočil na posebno pobudo Muzeja šolstva, in sicer na razstavo, ki sledi 150-letni zgodovini italijanskih šol.

Abstract

The paper will analyze the structure of the Museum of School and Popular Education ("Museo della scuola e dell'istruzione popolare") of the University of Molise (Italy), its scientific and didactic objectives, the issues linked to the museographic transposition of this particular cultural patrimony. Moving from the relationship between memory and school historical heritage, the presentation will focus on a particular initiative promoted by the Museum of School, that is the exhibition where 150 years of history of Italian schools have been retraced.

Ključne besede: muzej, izobraževanje, italijansko šolstvo, razstava**Keywords:** museum, education, Italian education, exhibition15th Symposium on School Life, part 57. Visit us / obiščite nas - Sistory:<http://hdl.handle.net/11686/37711>**Introduction**

The experience of the "Museum of School and Popular Education" of the University of Molise,¹ is integrated in the frame of the historiographical renova-

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1 The Museum establishment has been deliberated by the University of Molise Senate on March 18th, 2013. For a more comprehensive illustration cf. Andreassi R. (2013), pp. 175-192.



“Museum of School and Popular Education” of the University of Molise, Italy.
(<http://musei.unimol.it/> accessed 12. 10.2019)

tion of these past decades, wherein more and more relevant has been the role played by museums, centers and institutions devoted to the identification, conservation and valorization of educational and school heritage,² thereby including not only textbooks, but all tools having didactic purposes.

The activities of the Museum are connected to those of the *Center of Documentation and research on the history of school, textbooks and childhood literature - Ce.S.I.S.*, of the University of Molise,³ that ever since its establishment, in 2006, has been dealing with the divulgation of the research, conservation and utilization of documents related to school and education with scientific purpos-

2 Among the specialized centers established in Italy are worth being mentioned the Centers of Brescia and Macerata, respectively at the Cattolica University and the University of Macerata. Education and School Museum all over Italy are several, more than forty. For a census of Italian School museums see the map by Brunelli M., Patrizi E. e Meda J. at <http://www.unimc.it/cescom/it/il-museo/rete-musei-scuola> (accessed 10. 10. 2019).

For a first reflection on this type of museums see Meda J. (2013b), pp. 167-198. For Meda the meaning of educational school heritage is an evolution of the one elaborated by Ferrari M. (2008), pp. 21-26; references to school heritage can be found also in Barausse A. (2010), pp. 127-144.

3 The Ce.S.I.S. organizational chart is the following: prof. Alberto Barausse, director; dr. Rossella Andreassi, PhD, executive; Scientific Board: Augustín Escolano Benito (Director of Centro Internacional de la Cultura Escolar - CEINCE), Cristina Yane Cabrera (Universidad de Sevilla), Carmela Covato (University of Roma Tre), Roberto Sani (University of Macerata), Anna Ascenzi (University of Macerata), Simonetta Polenghi (University Cattolica del Sacro Cuore of Milan). Experts: Michela D’Alessio, Rossella Andreassi, Valeria Miceli, Florindo Palladino, Valeria Viola; Unimol Department representatives: Rossano Pazzagli (Dept of Bioscience and territory), Alberto Carli (Dept of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences), Loredana Tullio (Dept of Law).

es. A library and a specialized archive have been established, with a patrimony of about 4.000 items mainly concerning school books, school texts written by teachers and pupils, childhood-literature books and reviews, teachers' reviews and objects related to the material school culture.⁴ The collection is particularly focused on Southern Italy from mid-1880s to 1970s. A cataloguing process of the collected items has been going on for about a year.

The first results of the researches carried out by the Center have been recently published; some others are being published thanks to a new project that brought to the creation of a book collection.⁵ The initiatives of Ce.S.I.S. and the Museum are part of a wider reflection on the connections between history, memory and historical-educational heritage that is headed towards a process of definition of a new school museology that in Italy is still undergoing.⁶

The Museum / Exhibition

A new field of activity, especially related to the exhibition and conservation of school materials, has been opened in 2012 with the realization of a documentary-historical exhibit named "Italy at school: 150 years between history and memories".

This exhibit has been a starting point of reflection on all the issues related to the museological aspects of educational heritage; at the same time, it has confirmed the great value of this kind of collections for the community. Indeed, it has witnessed the active involvement of those who have decided to deposit, lend or give their objects, which from personal memories have transformed into a significant part of collective memory, and have assumed the value of *semiphore* objects, namely bearer of non-visible meanings. The exhibit has walked through 150 years of Italian history through the reconstruction of the main historical elements accompanied by the reproduction of official documents as well as the exposition of original ones, besides a remarkable number of school objects. The division into 5 sections has allowed a facilitated reading both in a diachronic and synchronic key of the items exposed. Three sections narrate the rise and development of post-unitarian school, whereas the remaining two open big scenarios on the school world: one section is dedicated to the material reconstruction of a classroom, the other to the protagonists of the school world (like teachers, pupils, pedagogues, etc).

4 For a first presentation of the center's patrimony cf. D'Alessio M. (2010), pp. 127-146.

5 Collection directed by prof. Alberto Barausse, University of Molise entitled "Biblioteca del Centro di Documentazione e Ricerca sulla Storia delle Istituzioni Scolastiche, del Libro Scolastico e della Letteratura per l'Infanzia", published by Pensa MultiMedia, Lecce.

6 For a first reflection on the subject cf. Meda J. (2013a), pp. 9-13; Meda J. (2013b), pp. 167-198; Yanes C. (2011), pp. 19-31, Meda J. (2010), pp. 489-501; Brunelli M., Patrizi E. (2011), pp. 507-524. For the Spanish experience see Berrio R. J. (ed., 2010).



Pedagogical activities with pupils, 2017. "Museum of School and Popular Education" of the University of Molise, Italy. (http://web.unimol.it/galleria2017/CESIS_Arstarco_13_12_17/ppages/ppage4.htm, accessed 12. 10. 2019)

This latter section has been mainly focused on oral sources. A number of interviews with old teachers have been realized to avoid the dispersion of a precious patrimony. The exposition has been further enriched with the projection of vintage images, the presentation of old copybook covers, and with an Ipad browsing the copybooks pages.

At the closure of the exhibit, further extended by three months, the University has acknowledged the value of the whole operation transforming it into a permanent exhibition, thus giving rise to the "Museum of School and Popular Education",⁷ officially established in March 2013.

The Museum is the starting point for projects and initiatives involving the audience as much as possible. The Museum's interiors are designed so to allow the maximum flexibility of the space: movable boards, made in corrugated plastic, light and decomposable are easily expandable and extremely economical.

The museum is inspired by principles of openness, especially aimed at enlarging the collection through donations, responding to principles of dynamism and participation. The School Museum proposes itself as the place where the community can reflect on the principle of a more conscious citizenship: by absorbing the concept of "eco-museum", the structure wants to represent "the action carried out by a community towards its development thanks to the redis-

⁷ Its establishment has been deliberated by the University of Molise Senate in March 2013.

covery of its heritage”,⁸ which is what distinguishes the School Museum from a traditional one.

A new research line is being carried out, both on a conceptual and active level, with the involvement of local bodies and organizations into the discovery of items of “school archaeology” in several townships, through a campaign of field surveys that have brought to the finding of “cultural veins”, like the rural school of Agnone (province of Isernia) and the multi-level school of Baranello, province of Campobasso.

The main feature of the Museum, indeed, is not the merely physical space wherein the collection is kept, but to extend to the territory and its cultural heritage; at the same time, its audience is not the single museum visitor, but the whole community, which takes upon itself the task of supervising it and make it richer, according to the contemporary concept expressed by Benito Escolano of “Living the Museum”.

Within these research trend, a series of interviews have been carried out, with the intent of reviving the memories of common people, like for example the pupils of old schools; this operation has resulted in the creation of a data bank dedicated to oral sources.

The didactic section

The didactic section of the Museum deals with the development of its educational and participatory function through a series of initiatives aimed at promoting didactic activities and education to the reading. The audience is composed both by families and schoolchildren. The teaching method is based on theoretical reflections and experimentations that have been carried out at the University of Molise in the past years,⁹ giving special importance to interactive and participatory methods¹⁰ and developing an approach to cultural heritage of operational and explorative kind, especially based on games.

The pillar on which we base our work is the distinction between divulgation and didactics. The former (as you can see from the picture) can be represented as a linear path between those who send the educational message and those who receive it. The latter, instead, is represented as a circular path which puts send-

8 M. Maggi, V. Falletti, *Gli ecomusei che cosa sono*, Torino, Allemandi 2000.

9 For a classification of teaching methods and reflections on didactics: cf. Andreassi R. (2000), pp.144-149; cf. Andreassi R. and Federico M. (2005), pp. 1-6, 42-50, 61-68, 79-132, comprehensive of teaching materials; for a reflection of the museum heritage and its fruition cf. Andreassi R. (2010), pp. 83-98.

10 Ivo Mattozzi and Antonio Brusa's didactic theories have been considered for what concerns the relationship with cultural heritage and history. For an in-depth analysis: Aa.Vv., by A. Brusa and A. Ferraresi (2010); Aa.Vv., by Brusa A. and Cajani L. (2008); Mattozzi I. (2011). For further reflections on museums, education and learning cf. Nuzzaci A. (2008).



“Museum of School and Popular Education” of the University of Molise, Italy.
 (http://www.omegapointshop.it/1/museo_della_scuola_unimol_photo_gallery_197992.html, accessed 12. 10. 2019)

er and receiver in constant contact and exchange through a verification of the feedback. The museum didactics must act so that school heritage and childhood literature could be enjoyable by many: it is not sufficient to simply lower the contents and language register of the propositions to make them “educational”.

Upon these reflections, some laboratorial experiences of museum didactics have been carried out.

The first experience was of historical type, and was targeted to school children aged 7 to 11, entitled “La memoria... del maestro Loffredo”¹¹ (*The memory... of Mr. Loffredo the school teacher*) with a degree of complexity adjusted on the age of the participants.

The children got acquainted with different kinds of documentary sources through the playful device of an old teacher named Loffredo who has vague school memories and writes to children for help in recovering them. The learning path proceeds in a treasure hunt fashion, through “clue cards” that need to be revealed. Cards are structured in such a way to allow schoolchildren to get in touch both with complex historical facts and documentary objects. The activity, designed according to an “explorative method”, allows the participants to acquire notions of museography and orienteering skills inside the museum thanks to the help of mute maps.

Manual abilities have moreover been developed, by means of a writing lab named “The abc of the school child,”¹² engaging children in experimentations with the use of fountain-pens and inkwells.

11 Historic-ludic laboratory “The memory of... Mr. Loffredo the school teacher” carried out within the exhibition “L’Italia a scuola. 150 anni tra storia e memorie” (*Italy at school*, 2012).

12 Writing laboratory “L’abc dello scolaro (*The abc of the schoolboy*)” carried out within the exhibition “L’Italia a scuola. 150 anni tra storia e memorie” (*Italy at school*, 2012).

Another relevant experience proposed by the Museum's didactic section has been the intergenerational approach to cultural heritage and school that has gathered together children and grown-ups. Furthermore, more workshops have been organized during summer time, with ludo-cultural activities for children.

A great emphasis has been put recently on reading activities for children aged 5 to 8 with their parents. We tried to start a new education to reading and a narration pedagogy that wants to represent a moment of fun and game, without losing sight of the deep value and the meanings of childhood history and literature.¹³

The first of these workshops was realized at Christmas time in 2012,¹⁴ named "Happy readers ever after ... waiting for Christmas". The learning device used is the figure of a leprechaun coming from the Southern-Italian popular tradition, named Mazzamauriello, a naughty little one who has pranked the Museums curators by cutting in small pieces and mixing together pages of ancient, precious books (reproduced from the authentic ones to this purpose). By seconding this playful and theatrical device, curators have invited children to help them recomposing the fragments. Children, therefore, explore the museum looking for the authentic ancient books that the naughty leprechaun has hidden, retraceable thanks to the reconstruction of the pages. This preliminary stage is followed by a reading session of ancient and new books having Christmas as subject, as a device to keep the leprechaun good.

Another education to reading experience was the multisensory workshop mixing together more languages, from poetry, to music and theatre, supported by the skills of a music therapist. It took place during Carnival and was inspired to "The Carnival of the Animals" of Camille Saint Saens.¹⁵

In occasion of the Unesco *World Book and Copyright Day*, the Museum has jointly participated to the project *Books of May* with the local Library.¹⁶ The laboratorial activity that was organized, entitled "Vecchie Storie e Nuove tra immagini e parole"¹⁷ (*New and old stories between images and words*), was carried out along 4 stages where children (aged 7 to 11) have experienced with their parents the invention of stories, the construction of booklets, story listening and history learning.

The Museum has often left its walls to move to schools, where thematic seminars are held. This experimentation is generally targeted to a young audi-

13 Cf. Sidoti B. (2008).

14 Reading and ludic laboratory: "E lessero felici e contenti...aspettando il Natale (*Happy readers ever after ... waiting for Christmas*)", carried out in the "Museum of school and popular education", 2012.

15 Reading and music laboratory "Il carnevale degli Animali. Liberamente ispirato alla zoologia fantastica di Camille Saint Saëns (*The Carnival of animals. Inspired to the fantastic zoology of Camille Saint Saën's*)" carried out in the "Museum of school and popular education", 2013.

16 Provincial library "Pasquale Albino" of Campobasso.

17 Reading and ludic laboratory: "Vecchie Storie e Nuove tra immagini e parole" (*New and old stories between images and words*), carried out in the "Museum of school and popular education" and at Provincial library "Pasquale Albino" of Campobasso, 2013.



Pedagogical activities with pupils, 2017. "Museum of School and Popular Education" of the University of Molise, Italy. (http://web.unimol.it/galleria2017/CESIS_Arstarco_13_12_17/ppages/ppage4.htm, accessed 12. 10. 2019)

ence, with captivating images and languages, and it is followed by a practical laboratorial activity aiming at assimilating the acquired information. Activities are followed by an evaluation phase, through the use of tests aiming at evaluating both the comprehension of the historical component, and the pedagogic results. Adults (parents and teachers) are given closed-ended tests, which have so far revealed the high appreciation for the initiatives; children, instead are asked to produce free compositions that are afterwards analysed; so far, they have showed an excellent acquisition of the technical vocabulary, as well a good comprehension of the contents dealt with.

The Museum is currently creating a network of cooperation with local bodies devoted to historical research (like the Regional Institution for Historical studies "Vincenzo Cuoco" of Campobasso), as well as with private organizations. The Museum experiences are becoming more and more part of the study curricula of a number of Degree Courses at the University of Molise, like Primary Education, the Undergraduate Degree in Literature and Cultural Heritage, or even Graduate Degree in Archaeology and Tourism.¹⁸ We wish this to be the start

¹⁸ For a more recent presentation of the Museum's activities cf. Rossella Andreassi, Alberto Barausse, Michela D'Alessio: Museo della scuola e dell'educazione popolare Università degli Studi del Molise - Campobasso, Italia / Museum of School and Popular Education Università degli Studi del Molise - Campobasso, Italy. In: CABÁS - revista digital sobre el PHE, diciembre 2016, pp. 143-167; <http://revista.muesca.es>; <https://www.academia.edu/31347439/cabas.dicembre2016.pdf> (accessed 10. 10. 2019)

of a path that can conjugate the historical-educational research with the conservation and fruition of cultural and school heritage, towards the dissemination and sensitization to the value of it.

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Exhibitions:

- Historic-ludic laboratory "The memory of... Mr. Loffredo the school teacher" carried out within the exhibition "L'Italia a scuola. 150 anni tra storia e memorie" (Italy at school, 150 years between history and memories) April - July 2012.
- "L'abc dello scolaro (The abc of the schoolboy)" in "L'Italia a scuola. 150 anni tra storia e memorie" (Italy at school, 150 years between history and memories), May 2012 for primary schools. Teaching design and contents by Andreassi R., D'Alessio M.; didactic production by D'Alessio M.
- "E lessero felici e contenti...aspettando il Natale (Happy readers ever after ... waiting for Christmas", carried out in the "Museum of school and popular education", 14 and 19 December 2012 for children aged 5-8. Teaching design and contents by Andreassi R., D'Alessio M., Carli A.; didactic production by Andreassi R., Carli A.
- "Il carnevale degli Animali. Liberamente ispirato alla zoologia fantastica di Camille Saint Saëns (The Carnival of animals. Inspired to the fantastic zoology of Camille Saint Saëns)" carried out in the "Museum of school and popular education", 8 and 12 February 2013 for children aged 5-8. Teaching design and contents by Andreassi R., Carli A.; didactic production by Andreassi R., Carli A. In collaboration with the music therapist Di Nucci S.
- "Vecchie Storie e Nuove tra immagini e parole" (New and old stories between images and words), carried out in the "Museum of school and popular education" and at Provincial library "Pasquale Albino" of Campobasso, 22-23 May 2013 for children aged 7-11. Teaching design and contents by Andreassi R., Carli A.; didactic production by Andreassi R., Carli A. In collaboration with the Provincial library "Pasquale Albino" of Campobasso.

Summary***Museum of School and Popular Education (Museo della scuola e dell'educazione popolare) of the University of Molise, Italy*****Rossella Andreassi**

The most recent historiographical reflection at European level on education has mostly emphasized the analysis on the material culture of it; at the same time, though, a most significant debate was emerging on the role of Museums of Education and their function for the preservation and valorization of the heritage related to the story of school and education. This is the framework of our presentation, which intends to illustrate the activities that the Museum of School and Popular Education ("Museo della scuola e dell'istruzione popolare") of the University of Molise (Italy) is currently carrying out in this respect. The paper will analyze the Museum structure, its scientific and didactic objectives, the issues linked to the museographic transposition of this particular cultural patrimony. Moving from the relationship between memory and school historical heritage, the presentation will focus on a particular initiative promoted by the Museum of School that is the exhibition where 150 years of history of Italian schools have been retraced. With the aid of video clips and images teaching/learning experiences with families and school groups carried out at the Museum will be presented. Also related upcoming projects will be illustrated.