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## *A Project about a Museum of education in the Basque Country*

*Projekt Muzeja izobraževanja v Baskiji*

### *Izvleček*

Baskovska univerza se je pridružila drugim univerzam in ustanovila Baskovski šolski muzej - "Euskal Hezkuntzaren Museoa". Že pred ustanovitvijo muzeja je v Baskiji deloval Dokumentacijski center za zgodovino šolstva, ki ga je spodbujala skupina za zgodovinske študije in primerjalno izobraževanje, katere člana sta avtorja pričujočega prispevka (<http://www.ehu.eus/euskal-hezkuntza/espanol/>). Baskovski šolski muzej je zasnovan na različnih vsebinah, ki nam pomagajo razumeti, razložiti in prenašati različne značilnosti izobraževanja v Baskiji. Posamezne sobe so opremljene z gradivom, ki se nanaša na: »ikastole« (šole, ki izvajajo pouk izključno v baskovščini), obnovo šolstva, podeželske šole itd. Ravno tako pa so opremljene s klasičnimi elementi šolskega muzeja.

### *Abstract*

The University of the Basque Country joins the line opened by other universities, and launches the Museum of Education of the Basque Country - "Euskal Hezkuntzaren Museoa", in the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU). The creation of this museum is preceded by the existence of a Documentation Centre on the History of Education in the Basque Country, promoted by the group of Historical Studies and Comparative Education, whose members are the authors of this contribution (<http://www.ehu.eus/euskal-hezkuntza/espanol/>). This museum is being structured around a series of topics to help us understand, explain and transmit the differential characteristics of education in the Basque Country. In this sense, some rooms are being planned with material relating to: "ikastolas" (schools providing teaching exclusively in Basque), educational renewal, rural schools, etc.; as well as all the classic elements of a school museum.

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**Ključne besede:** šolski muzej, univerza, Baskija, Donostia-San Sebastián,

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<http://hdl.handle.net/11686/37664>

In the educational field, the recovery of historical-educational memory is being undertaken through valuing, promoting and safeguarding school heritage.<sup>1</sup> In the Western context, the inauguration, under a variety of names, of school and educational museums, museums of toys and games and children's museums, etc., is increasingly more common. These museums have a marked institutional dependence: universities, trusts, local authorities, private bodies, cultural associations, etc. Within this wide-ranging provision, the inauguration of educational museums in universities is a model that is being developed at a number of European universities and research centres (Padua, Crete, Rouen, Salamanca, Seville, Murcia, amongst others). The University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU), through the Group for Historical and Comparative Studies in Education-Garaian, has begun the task of launching "The Museum of Education of the Basque Country - Euskal Herriko Hezkuntzaren Museoa". In this article, we present the background of the project and the steps taken to date, focusing on its construction as a university museum and on the contributions to the project from various public and private bodies.

### 1. The Museum of Education of University of the Basque Country

There is a wide range as regards Spanish museums of school education, some of which are traditionally physical and depend on universities such as Salamanca, Murcia, Madrid or Seville. The University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU), as stated in the first article of its Statutes, directs its activity to "meeting the needs of Basque society and to the consequences of its history and its socioeconomic, political and cultural transformations, thus spreading knowledge of universal culture and science, with special emphasis on Basque culture and language". This enables us to define some of the characteristic features of our university and its commitment to the society in which it finds itself rooted. Taking part in the "enrichment of the intellectual, humanistic, cultural and scientific heritage of Basque society" is, according to its Statutes, an essential function of the UPV/EHU (Article 4).

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*Museum of Education of the Basque Country /  
Euskal Hezkuntzaren Museoa, Opening ceremony, 24. 10. 2016  
(<https://www.ehu.eus/eu/web/museoeducacion>, accessed 10. 10. 2019)*

The University 2012-2017 Strategic Plan also highlights this aspect, defining the UPV/EHU as “a university which is public, research-orientated, rooted in Basque society, open to the world, with an intellectual leadership, and which has ethical and social commitment”. This initial declaration is reinforced in the Pillar of Social Commitment, this being understood as one of the aspects on which the University will be focusing in the upcoming years. In concrete, the UPV/EHU assumes its responsibility as a body committed to society, pledged to favouring activities of scientific dissemination and to the social promotion of science, technology, the arts, humanities, and in collaboration with other bodies.

The above arguments reinforce the fact that the UPV/EHU is the fundamental reference in the Basque Country (Euskal Herria) regarding studies of a historical-educational nature. The creation of the Museum, to the extent that it is a space for the conservation, research and interpretation of historical-educational heritage, projects this image, both at the University level as well amongst Basque society as a whole.

The creation of a Museum of Education of the Basque Country responds to the importance of these spaces and centres for historical memory – including educational memory- , and of pedagogic museums in general, of great relevance and tradition in Europe and which, as we have pointed out, is a phenomenon being consolidated in university bodies.

The creation of the Museum at the UPV/EHU involves institutional backing in the form of the signing of contracts with other bodies for recovering or restoring material, for organising scientific events and meetings involving the cooperation of specialists or for establishing academic relations with international-level pedagogic museums. In this way, a number of exhibitions linked to historical-educational topics have been organised in university spaces on school exercise books, children of the Spanish Civil War, women and education, etc.

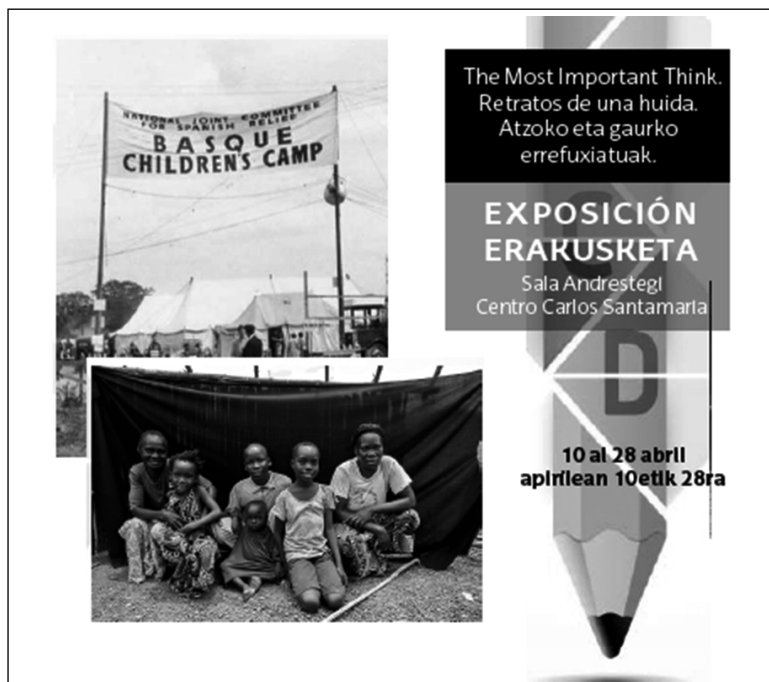
The principal objective of the Museum is to recover, safeguard and make known both the historical memory of education in the Basque Country as well as to undertake the habitual uses and aims of pedagogic museums (cataloguing and conservation of historical-educational heritage), added to which are academic studies, research and teaching use.

The Museum of Education of the Basque Country is a response to the need to preserve, study and disseminate the memory and the historical-educational heritage of the Basque Country, making it a training space for everything involving the history of material culture of educational institutions and of school practices in the contemporary history of the Basque Country, besides being an exhibition space aimed at the country's schools and open to the public at large. The Museum also aims to stimulate gifts or donations of items or collections from private individuals or from institutions, both public and private; to create an audio-visual and visual archive of school images and interviews with or life histories of the lives of teachers, pupils or persons who have had a connection with training or teaching activities; to promote the creation of specific collections such as school manuals, exercise books and workbooks and educational-scientific material; to cooperate with any other body promoting the same objectives and, above all, with those institutions which have historical-educational collections. Also highlighted amongst other activities is the organisation of courses, seminars or cycles of conferences linked to the study, reconstruction and dissemination of educational memory

In drawing up this project, techniques in documenting and cataloguing of school and educational material were taken into account, adapting such items to the characteristics of a physical museum. To this end, we used the previous experience of a Centre for Documentation on Education in the Basque Country, an initiative from the same research team. The sources employed correspond to the cataloguing of school and educational material, following the model of this type of museum.

## **2. Antecedents for the Museum**

The Museum project emerged from the Group for Historical and Comparative Studies in Education -Garaian, which had been managing the above-mentioned Centre for Documentation on the History of Education in the Basque Country for a number of years, thus representing a clear precursor to the Museum. The material deposited at the Centre involves a wide-ranging documentary collection which was started at the beginning of the eighties by its principal promoter, Dr. Paulí Dávila, who began classifying all the documentation obtained from the various research projects undertaken by himself and by other colleagues at the Department of Theory and History of Education at the UPV/EHU. Arising from this classification of documentary and bibliographical material was a database which facilitated the search and recovery of the collections deposited.



*Museum of Education of the Basque Country / Euskal Hezkuntzaren Museoa, Exhibition 2017: The Most Important Think. Portraits of an escape. Refugees yesterday and today (https://www.ehu.eus/eu/web/museoeducacion, accessed 10. 10. 2019)*

The Centre currently has a considerable volume of documentation about the history of education in the Basque Country (more than 3,500 documents). All this has been photocopied, originating from various provincial and local archives in the Basque Country as well as from the General Archive of the Administration of Spain, the University Archive of Valladolid, the National History Archive, etc. It also has collections from Secondary High Schools, Teacher Training Colleges, Art Schools and Professional Colleges, as well as from private colleges (Dávila and Naya, 2009).

The documentation is very varied and encompasses copies of Minutes of provincial institutions – in more or less complete series –; correspondence between provincial governments; inspectors' reports, files on teachers, correspondence between different institutions, reports from High Schools and other schools, rules of private colleges, statistics, reports from Boards of Governors, statistics on literacy, texts on the teaching of Basque, and documentation on the *Real Sociedad Bascongada de Amigos del País* (Royal Basque Society of Friends of the Country), etc. As we have pointed out above, this documentation arose from previous research, and while obtained with a specific objective in mind, has not impeded using wider-ranging descriptors when classifying it, in order to

facilitate the use of these documents for ends other than those established for the initial investigation.

The Centre does not depend solely on this type of material; it also possesses a series of theses, research reports and monographic works in this field. We should point out, moreover, that, together with all this material from primary sources, the Centre has an important bibliographic collection which contains, above all, works on the History of Education in the Basque Country, a general bibliography of the History of Education, books of statistics, various yearbooks referring to the Basque Country, contemporaneous history and educational journals, etc. It also has audio-visual material and audio tapes with interviews, which act as support for a number of lines of research. Also deposited at the Centre is an important bibliographic collection, donated by the Teresian Institution and made up of classic Spanish and international educational texts, the history of education, reports, regulations, legislation, educational programmes and textbooks. This material encompasses a XX-century timeframe between the 1920s and the 1960s.

To date the principal users of the Centre have been degree students in Education studying the subject of History of Education in the Basque Country, as well as students on master's and PhD programmes and doing research in this field. The possibility of having primary-source documentation *in situ* is a great advantage and incentive to stimulating historical research and, in many cases; the monographical work undertaken is complemented with other documentation located by the students themselves. All the documentation may be consulted on the <http://www.ehu.eus/euskal-hezkuntza/espanol/> web page, hosted on the UPV/EHU server. When the space is up and running, the Centre will be transferred from the Central library at the Gipuzkoa Campus to the Museum site in Donostia-San Sebastian, although an important volume of old school texts and manual has already been deposited there.

### **3. Anticipated organisation and tasks undertaken**

The Group for Historical and Comparative Studies in Education-Garaian currently has a space of about 250 m<sup>2</sup> in a villa which is the property of the UPV/EHU and which is currently completing the appropriate formalities with the University's Legal Services for the approval of the Museum's Statutes.

#### **3.1. Organisation of the Museum**

The space adjudicated for the Museum of Education of the Basque Country is divided into six rooms, the largest being 80 m<sup>2</sup> and the smallest 25 m<sup>2</sup>. In the initial design of these, the following distribution has been established:

- School classroom

We have recovered eight school double desks from the Francoist period, together with a teacher's desk, two double blackboards, and various other items. With all these elements we have recreated a classroom from the 50s-60s. This is



*Museum of Education of the Basque Country / Euskal Hezkuntzaren Museoa, est. 2014, opened 2016 (Juan Carlos Ruiz/ Argazki press, [https://www.berria.eus/paperekoa/1976/038/001/2016-10-26/hezkuntzak\\_badauka\\_memoria.htm](https://www.berria.eus/paperekoa/1976/038/001/2016-10-26/hezkuntzak_badauka_memoria.htm) ; accessed 10. 10. 2019)*

an important element as it will enable visitors to situate themselves in a school model and which, either can be recalled by themselves through personal experience or, being teaching degree students, will know of it through classes in the history of education.

We have also received more modern material, corresponding to the educational reform of the 1970s, and which has been installed next to the previously mentioned material, in such a way that visitors can see at a glance the structural changes that have taken place in school furniture. This same space hosts a great quantity of encyclopaedias and textbooks used from the 1920s to the 1970s, all of these catalogued and classified; they will be available for all those interested on the Museum of Education of the Basque Country website. This section aims to extend the collection with the incorporation of photographs and uniforms from various schools in the city of Donostia-San Sebastian.

- The “Second Republic” space

The Space known as the “Second Republic” aims to bring together the educational activities and child protection programmes undertaken by the Basque Government in its short-lived existence (8 months). With reference to the assistance given to and the protection of children the actions of the Basque Government were adapted to the wartime conditions of the period. One of its first actions was to organise the evacuation of children from war zones and their transfer to “colonies” established in a number of European countries and Mexico,

the most numerous being sent to the United Kingdom, nearly 4,000 children who, shipped from the Port of Santurce, arrived on Sunday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May, 1937 in Southampton, from where they were immediately transferred to a camp at North Stoneham and then dispersed to different colonies in England, Wales, and Scotland. Some of these children returned to the Basque Country at the end of the Civil War, and a significant number, for different reasons, stayed permanently in the UK and subsequently organised themselves around the *Basque Children of '37 Association*, which is still functioning and the members still known as “niños” in the United Kingdom. To this end, we have 15 panels which record the odyssey that these children struggled through.

As regards the educational actions of the Basque Government in the Second Republic, one of the main elements was the development of a new University, a very complicated task in times of war, but an objective that was achieved, although for a brief period of time. To this end, we have a series of panels which explain the progress and significance of the first “Basque University”. This room is completed with a series of photographs of rural schools and urban neighbourhood schools which were very successful for their time.

- The first ikastolas space

During the Francoist period, a number of schools emerged in various locations in the Basque Country and which operated in an irregular manner – although it was not allowed, they taught in the Basque language. We are in the process of recreating one of these “*etxe-eskola*” (home-schools), in which fundamentally active teaching was carried out, with a large input of walks and informal learning. To this end, we have a number of school exercise books used therein and with photographs of and testimonies from those who were pupils at this kind of school.

- Scientific instruments in education

These instruments, which have come from various public and private centres, will enable us to familiarise ourselves with the school culture of the time. Research into scientific material reflects specific pedagogic intentions (Bernal and López, 2007) and the level of provision of instruments has been an element of “distinction” for certain schools. We have obtained part of this material from some of these schools on permanent loan.

Besides these spaces, the implementation of which is currently under way, the creation of spaces around pedagogic renewal is also being planned – bringing together work undertaken by Educational Renewal Movements in the Basque Country: school voices with stories about the lives of schoolmasters and schoolmistresses; extramural activities (drum parades, beach football, and so on); a chronology of educational legislation, etc.

Finally, with the transfer of the Documentation Centre, mentioned above, and the collections from various donations, what we have here is a significant source of resources for the study of the History of Education in the Basque Country, creating a museum with the projected targets.



#### 4. Conclusion.

The creation of the Museum of Education in the heart of the University of the Basque Country links up with the work, recently initiated, of a number of Spanish universities, which have launched this kind of project. The Group has promoted this Museum for Historical and Comparative Studies in Education-Garaian, recognised by the Basque Government. Amongst the objectives of this group is the recovery of historical-educational heritage, a goal which is being achieved through implementing an exhibition space and a series of diverse material items related to classroom layout, school copybooks, maps, scientific material, etc. and which represents important educational heritage of the Basque Country.

One of the most relevant aspects of this Museum is the incorporation of Centre for Documentation on Education in the Basque Country, thus most appropriately complementing the objectives of a Museum of Education. The presentation we have carried out is adapted to the reality of the project while, within the strategic plan undertaken in order to implement the Museum, we have a series of educational and didactic use proposals which will enable the entity to be a reference for museums in the Basque Country. Also of increasingly great interest is the teaching use to which both the Museum and the Documentation Centre is being put, in order to favour research projects and course work for Teacher Training and Education degree students.

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### *Summary*

## ***A project about a Museum of education in the Basque Country***

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*In the current museum panoramic in Spain, school museums installed on university headquarters are achieving an increasingly important presence. In different parts of Spain (Albacete, Galicia, Cantabria, etc.) there are education-related museums with different names such as School Museum, Children's Museum, etc. There are also other types of museums which can be personal or private (toy museum); or museums installed in both private and public schools. With respect to the museums installed in universities, it is necessary to highlight the ones placed in Murcia, La Laguna, Seville, Salamanca, Huelva, etc. Some of them have a remarkable presence on the Internet, working as virtual museums.*

*To this line opened by other universities, it has to be joined the recent launch of a Museum of Education of the Basque Country - "Euskal Hezkuntzaren Museoa", in the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU). The creation of this museum is preceded by the existence of a Documentation Centre on the History of Education in the Basque Country, promoted by the group of Historical Studies and Comparative Education, whose members are the authors of this contribution <http://www.ehu.eus/euskal-hezkuntza/euskara/>. This museum is being structured around a series of topics to help us understand, explain and transmit the differential characteristics of education in the Basque Country. In this sense, some rooms are being planned with material relating to: "ikastolas" (schools providing teaching exclusively in Basque), educational renewal, rural schools, etc.; as well as all the classic elements of a school museum.*