

PROJECT I2: INNOVATION & IDENTITY

1° ROUND TABLE - MACERATA

Location: Macerata, Italy

Hosting Partner: "Paolo & Ornella Ricca" Museum of School History of the University of Macerata (Dept. of Education, Cultural Heritage and Tourism)

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Preserving the Educational heritage in schools as a learning activity

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Would you like to build your school museum?

2011: the *Municipality of Turin - Heritage Education Sector* and I have created and made available to all schools a project called “Would You like to build your school museum?”

GOAL: involve pupils and teachers in the creation of their **school museum**.



Reflection on the MEANING and on the CHARACTERISTICS of the school museum



In line with the original identity of the school museum...



Scuola elementare, Rosignano Marittimo
(Livorno), LI, Toscana, 1930 ca.

School museum in its **nineteenth-century meaning**, as a tool for support teaching.

As you know, in fact, the school museum was born in the mid-nineteenth century as a **didactic tool** that helps students to learn not only through memory but also by observing and touching the object: it is closely linked to the introduction of **objective teaching** and the affirmation of "**lessons of things**".

The characteristics of the school museum in Turin's project...

In line with the original identity of the school museum, the project *Would you like to build your school museum?* wanted to accompany the school itself in reconstructing that set of objects, referring to various disciplines, which could support active teaching, in which pupils come into direct contact with the object, thus favouring learning by discovery and collaboration.

The keys of the school museum project in our idea were:

- 1) Direct involvement of students and teachers in the creation of the museum
- 2) Museum created inside the school building
- 3) School museum conceived as a laboratory, alive and active, in "continuous movement" according to educational needs (not a fixed space, not just a collection of objects)
- 4) Museum designed to support all disciplines (not just history)



Origins of the project *Would you like to build your school museum?*



In 2011 the City of Turin has just finished an European project dedicated to the theme "School is our Heritage" and so for two years it has been working on school heritage and has seen the great potential for activities on this theme.

Therefore, at the end of the European project, we asked ourselves how to continue it, and two fundamental aspects emerged:

- 1) the desire to help schools to rediscover their heritage, which risk dispersion. We wanted to safeguard these objects, and their value: not always economic value but certainly as a source, as a trace of the past life of that specific school, an expression of its identity. Their dispersion would have been an inestimable loss
- 2) the decision to focus specifically on the theme of the "school museum" because once this heritage has been rediscovered it has to be used, to be useful to the school, used didactically. Thus the school museum, in its nineteenth-century meaning, came perfectly to the aid for this goal, making it once again an instrument of learning.

These two characteristics seem to me to be exactly what the « Identity and Innovation project » is all about.

The working method developed in *Do you want to build your school museum?* included:

The working method developed in the Turin experience included:

Face-to-face support

1. a set of training sessions for teachers on the subject of school heritage,
2. a commitment by teachers to involve their classes in discovering the heritage within the school
3. a support in the specific planning of activities for the realisation of the museum to be divided into different tasks for each class,
4. expert support in itinere for the study and the interpretation of the historical teaching materials found,
5. a series of meetings to coordinate and help the schools.



Virtual support

Alongside the face to face support, there was also a virtual support - in the website **Museiscuol@** of City of Turin- , aimed at giving teachers a space to document and share their work and progress.



Results

<http://www.comune.torino.it/museiscuola/propostemusei/rete-scolastica-dedicata-al-tema-dei-musei-scolast-2.shtml>

- 12 school museums already built and others in construction
- 2015: creation of the Network of school museums "Rete Musei Scolastici"



scolastici nati in questi anni grazie al percorso Vuoi costruire il tuo museo scolastico?, realizzato dal Servizio Archivi, Musei e Patrimonio Culturale in collaborazione con l'Associazione Strumento Testa e con la consulenza scientifica di INDIRE.

Museo scolastico Scuola primaria "G. Cena", strada San Mauro 32, Torino

inaugurato domenica maggio 2019

Museo scolastico Scuola dell'infanzia "Casa del Sole", via Valgioie 10, Torino
inaugurato venerdì 15 giugno 2018

Museo scolastico Scuola secondaria di primo grado "G. Perotti", via Tofane 22, Torino
inaugurato lunedì 21 maggio 2018

Museo scolastico Istituto Tecnico Industriale e Professionale "Internazionale", via Bonzanigo 8, Torino
inaugurato giovedì 17 maggio 2018

Museo scolastico Scuola secondaria Carlo e Nello Rosselli, via Bettino Ricasoli 15, Torino
inaugurato domenica 22 maggio 2016

Museo scolastico Scuola primaria "Padre Gemelli", corso Lombardia 98, Torino
inaugurato domenica 29 novembre 2015

Museo scolastico Scuola primaria "G.E. Pestalozzi", via Banfo 32, Torino
inaugurato l'8 giugno 2015

Museo scolastico Scuola primaria "Aristide Gabelli", via Santhià, Torino
inaugurato domenica 24 maggio 2015

Museo scolastico Scuola Primaria Santorre di Santarosa, via Braccini 70, Torino
inaugurato il 19 maggio 2013

Museo scolastico Scuola Primaria Muratori, via Bettino Ricasoli 30, Torino
inaugurato il 26 maggio 2013

Museo scolastico Scuola primaria XXV Aprile, via Cavagnolo 35, Torino
inaugurato domenica 20 maggio 2012

Museo scolastico Scuola primaria "Federico Sclopis", via del Carmine 27, Torino

Project evolution



2019: the opportunity for new fundings let us to expand the project and experiment new activities, as going right **into the classroom**, working **directly with the pupils**.



the transition from a training aimed at adults to one for pupils required the **methodological and didactic focus**



primary school



Who is the PATRIMONIERE ?



1. he is curious to know and discover the history of his school

2. he has eyes like radars that detect clues and traces of the past;

3. if he sees an old object he knows he has found a treasure!

4. he doesn't stop at the first impression but digs for new meanings;

5. he finds ways to share his findings with others.

How does the Patrimoniere work?

On which materials?

1. Historical didactic objects

2. School building

3. Photographs, archive's documents, historical books



4. Intangible aspects



How does the Patrimoine work?

with Historical didactic objects

1. “treasure hunt”

= first discovery of "forgotten" objects (cellars, warehouses, under roofs ...)

The class group then proceeds through these rooms and each pupil can request the attention of the group when some particular object attracts his mind. At that point, the object is brought to everyone's attention, observed and, through a process of uniting the data observed by the group, formulating hypotheses, checking, the group establish *if the object is actually part of the school's historical heritage or not*.

If it is, the object becomes part of a **first list** that the class creates during this "treasure hunt" and is **photographed** by the pupils with the aim of remembering in the future not only its shape, type and various characteristics, but also the context in which it was found.



How does the Patrimoniere work?

with Historical didactic objects

Once this first step is completed, the identified historical educational objects are moved and collected in a place for group work (sometimes it is the same classroom identified as the future seat of the school museum).

This operation, which also requires the help of teachers and operators, already allows a first global visualization of the set of historical didactic objects found, and represents an **important step for the entire school community** that becomes aware of its historical heritage, of which it often did not know the existence.



Group work: identification, first interpretation and sharing with the whole class.

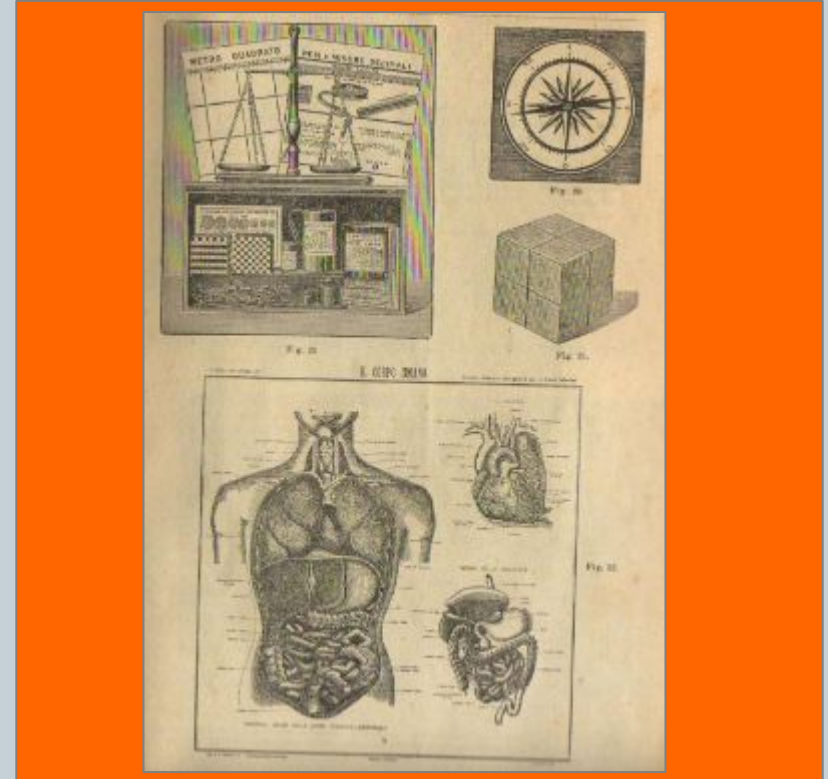


example of Patrimoine's form

- object name
- reference discipline
- year / period of production
- manufacturing company
- particular signs
- what was it for
- documentation or memories related to this object (was found with its instruction booklet? or with a teacher's notes?)

Patrimoniere tools to study historical didactic objects

- 1) Photocopies of the historical catalogues of didactic objects
- 2) Support provided by new technologies (internet, youtube, ...) to find elements that help identify and understand the object.

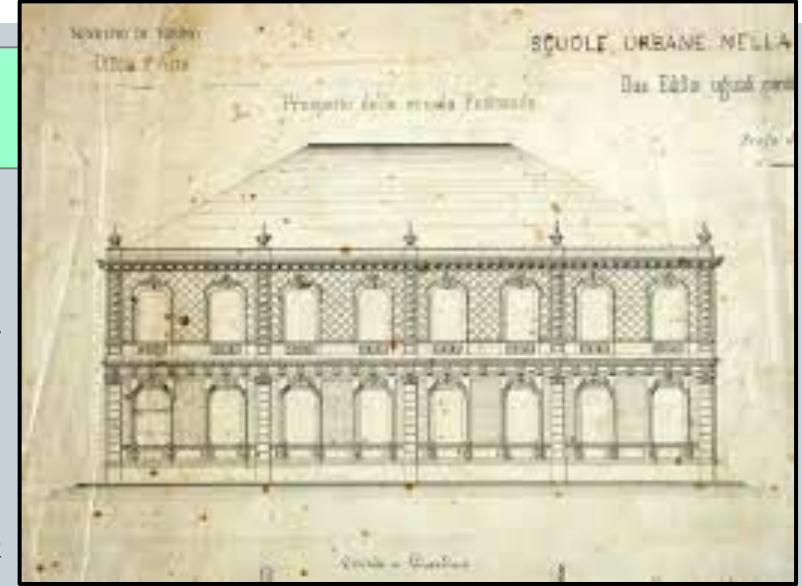


At the end of the activity each group **shares** the result of their work with the rest of the class and presents their object. This is an opportunity not only for further verification of the information, but also for the **first identification of correlations** between different objects. We are still in an embryonic phase of interpretation, but it is usefull to establish the ***Patrimoniere's working method.***

How does the Patrimoniere work?

with the SCHOOL BUILDING

1. copy of the school's original architectural plan
2. group walk inside the school to observe the changes compared to the original project



Why have there been any changes?
Are they only structural or are they also
"symbolic"?



Class title plate, inserted in 1929 - example of symbolic insertion (during the Fascist period, the classrooms were dedicated to the memory of the soldiers who died during the First World War)

example of working with pupils: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbkNFxSQsLg&feature=youtu.be>

The Patrimoniere analyzes the exterior of the school



Plate of Circulating municipal Library that the City of Turin had opened as an experiment at the beginning of the twentieth century (Rayneri school -Turin)

How does the Patrimoniere work?



**with PHOTOGRAPHS, DOCUMENTS and
HISTORICAL BOOKS**

If in the school building there is a school archive or a historical library, they are visited and analysed with the class group in order to understand their meanings, organisation and contents divided into macro-themes.

[illegible]

How does the Patrimoniere work?

with PHOTOGRAPHS, DOCUMENTS and HISTORICAL BOOKS

Each group is provided with "Patrimoniere's form" which invite to extrapolate elements from the sources found at school and to interpret them. The group is brought into direct contact with the document (or copy of this) and guided to "interrogate" it. This is another characteristic of the Patrimoniere: he knows « **how to make the documents talk** ».

→ always sharing the survey results of the individual groups + write a report



If the school hasn't an archive...



...in order to bring the Patrimoniere into contact with the original school document, we use the materials preserved in the **Historical Archive of the City of Turin**. In this way it is possible to provide pupils with copies of headmasters' reports or inspection visits from the early years of their school. They often contain references to the « **material life** » of their school in the past: the furniture, the existing teaching aids, and so on. These references to the "materiality" of their school in the past allow the pupil to imagine almost visually their school in the past.



Very usefull step for the creation of future school museum

it helps the pupil to understand that the school **is not just a collection of old objects** found in the school, but that it is a **mirror of the life of the school, in which each object is the synthesis of a really big range of messages, meanings and correlations.**

How the Patrimoniere works on the intangible aspects of heritage

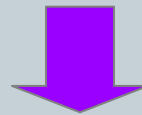
Attention!

He has to work on something he can't see and he can't touch



Solution: be well prepared on the "immaterial" theme that is being faced

→ transform the Patrimoniere into an expert on the subject



So it is an activity that is developed in the **second part of the path**, when the student has already acquired sufficient information and working method.

By intangible aspects we examine, for example:

- school habits ("getting in line", the ringing of the bell, the break),
- school parties,
- songs,
- memories.....

How the Patrimoniere works on the intangible aspects of heritage

Regarding memories, the most used source is an interview with old students or old teachers. The preparation work make the Patrimoniere not simply to act as a pupil listening, but as an expert questioning a source. It is almost a relationship between equals: the ex- pupil possesses the lived experience and his subjective memories, while today's student-Patrimoniere has **objective knowledge of the context**, reconstructed through certain sources. —————→
The Patrimoniere in some way during the interview leads, redirects, asks for feedback



Since one of the main feature of the Patrimoniere is to be committed to sharing and valuing information, the group analyses the different testimonies collected, evaluates and compares them, and reflects on the best method to share them. In relation to the final aim of the Patrimoniere work of setting up the school museum, the question is how to make these testimonies available in the school museum (audio, video clips, transcripts, etc.).

The Patrimoniere creates the school museum

Moment of deep reflection:

The aim is to bring together all the school objects found and all the information collected and analysing them in a comprehensive way.

Once he has a complete picture of the elements collected during the whole project, he has to decide which of them communicate, what the focal point is.

In fact, the school museum will have a dual nature:

- to support the school community by offering interdisciplinary educational opportunities,
- to open up to the general public in order to show the history of the school.



The Patrimoniere creates the school museum

The pupils discuss whether, on the basis of the elements that emerge during the project, to bring out all the elements, or to highlight only particular aspects, whether to choose a chronological criterion, or whether to emphasise only specific material aspects of particular significance.

Consequently the group selects which materials and information are suitable for the aim and how to present them. This is a complex phase, where the young Patrimonieri need a solid guide able to help them in the overall synthesis and to direct them in the negotiation and reflection.



When the age and autonomy of the class allow it, the Patrimoniere is called upon to work in groups to design the exhibition plan of the museum.

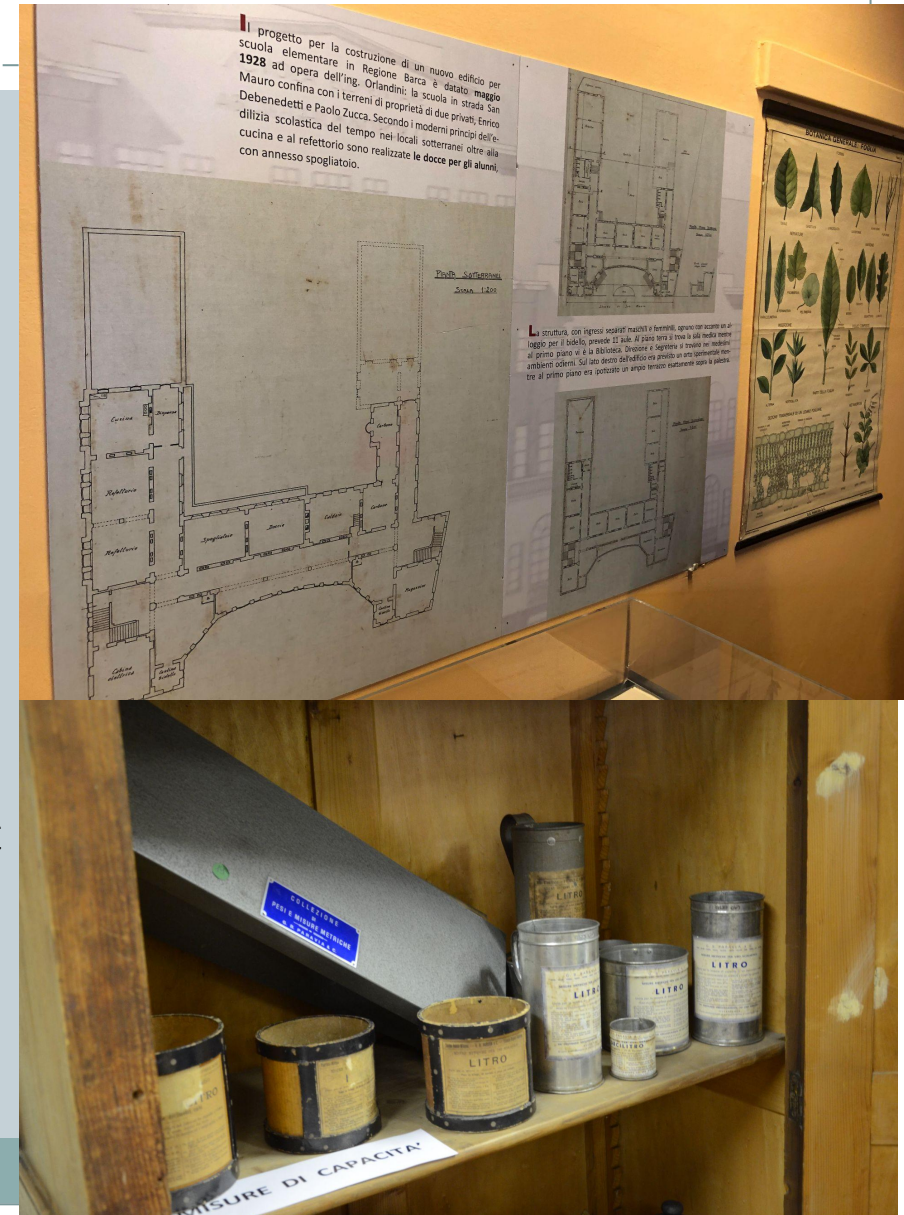
The Patrimoniere communicates

The characteristic of the Patrimoniere is not to keep for himself the patrimony of information he has discovered, but to share it and therefore to be a good communicator. The aim is to be a **good cultural mediator**, and therefore to be able **to transmit the set of meanings and relations** that the Patrimonieri themselves have discovered during the project.

Being the protagonists of the discovery, starting from no knowledge about the subject, allow them to identify with the cognitive needs of the museum's visitors. Through group brainstorming, we create a list of the macro-information necessary to allow the visitor to understand both the general project and the themes addressed.

The Patrimoniere shares this informations trough **panels with text and images** that introduce the visitor to the discovery of the museum.

In addition to this, the Patrimonieri naturally create **explanatory cards** for each material on display.











So, what method does the Patrimoniere use?



methodology



The approach is NEVER that of the expert who addresses the student who DOESN'T KNOW

knowledge building community (Scardamalia & Bereiter): like a research team that works together, asks questions and seeks answers through observation, reflection, negotiation, real experience in the field.



co-construction of knowledge



authentic learning

What does this work leave at its end?

The “Patrimoniere’s method” is **not a rigid and pre-packaged structure** but it must **adapt** to the specific characteristics and needs of the individual school, of its pupils, of the preserved historical heritage.

At the end it leaves:

- a learned working method (through sources, by discovery, observation, induction and co-construction of knowledge)
- new information about the school's heritage and history
- a new space - understood as the school museum environment - laboratory and interdisciplinary, available to the whole school



In conclusion....

If we continue to use the school museum for teaching purposes over the years, to continue to discover heritage objects and to interrogate them in order to understand their meanings, then we have seen from our own experience that **it becomes a real working method** that characterises the didactics of that school.

A school where the school museum is not seen as a mere collection but as a stable environment for experimentation, learning, multidisciplinary and laboratory work.





**Thank you really
so much for your
kind attention!**

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