PUBLIC HISTORY IN TEACHER EDUCATION

A Dialogue with Many Voices

edited by
Gianfranco Bandini

Dialogue

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Public History in Teacher Education

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Gianfranco Bandini

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Introduction. For a Renewed Protagonism of Historical Knowledge in Teacher Education

Gianfranco Bandini

Historical knowledge, as well as studies in the humanities in general, seem today to be located outside the cone of light cast by the contemporary spotlight. Over the years, the weight of hard sciences and applied sciences, of the fundamental importance of mathematical thinking and information technologies has increasingly grown. Dramatic changes on the global scene have ceased to be echoes of distant events and have begun to make themselves felt in so many aspects of our daily lives.

In this volume, we do not focus on the causes of this progressive decline of history understood as 'magistra vitae', nor do we deal with the disconnect between academia and civil society that has long preoccupied scholars who are most attentive to the needs of society. For these two essential insights, we will refer to other readings, while here we want to focus instead on what makes historical knowledge strategic as a tool for the educational world, and especially for schools.

Our aim is to explore the transformative potential that historical knowledge can offer in the educational context, emphasising the crucial role it plays in creating aware and critical citizens. Through the teaching of history, schools can help develop a critical sense in young people, stimulating reflection on complex issues and promoting the ability to independently analyse past events and their implications for the present. History provides a conceptual connector between different disciplines, enabling students to understand the interconnections between historical developments, the sciences, the arts and society. This integrated perspective can greatly enrich the educational experience, encouraging a view of

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knowledge that contributes interpretative keys to address contemporary challenges and the ethical choices they require. By analysing historical dynamics, teachers can thus help place contemporary events in a broader context, encouraging a deeper understanding of the roots of current problems and facilitating the development of more informed and sustainable solutions.

Therefore, we do not dwell on the defence of history in the face of the onslaught of modernity, because we believe that the best way to enhance the importance of history is to put it to the test and highlight its peculiar characteristics that can be very useful for contemporary man. At the same time, the volume moves away from any opposition between hard sciences and soft sciences because we think that humanistic studies can make a personalised, interesting and original contribution precisely in the connection with the present and the past of hard sciences and technologies. In this sense, through reconnecting with the origins of public history, we want to build bridges between different fields of research, between academia and society, between schools and territories, between the classroom and the local community. It is precisely this bridging activity that history excels at, especially if practised as public history, reconnecting and not dividing, helping to contextualise complex and global phenomena that never have immediate, simple or even intuitive solutions. History, as well as science in general, teaches that human culture has freed itself from the immediate domain of the senses thanks to a multiplicity of cultural artefacts and especially thanks to the potential of measuring instruments, tools of logical and argumentative reasoning, and the constant recourse to procedures of falsification of research hypotheses that are very often counter-intuitive and defy common sense.

The authors of this volume are united in shedding light on and emphasising a particular and very important function of historical knowledge, namely its place within teacher training courses. It is a multi-voice dialogue between academics and non-academics, between professors and school leaders, between students and tutors. All those who, in various capacities and roles, are interested in and committed to enhancing historical knowledge both during training for the teaching profession and, after the recruitment phases, within educational institutions. From this common understanding come the following pages, within which there are many consonances, but also some reasonable and interesting dissonances, which are to be understood as variations of thought on the general theme of the usefulness of historical knowledge in education. We believe we have only begun unearthing the potential of this meeting ground between history, education, schooling, and professionalism. We hope this research, both theoretical and in the field, can be continued – deepened and broadened – in ways that have only been glimpsed here or not yet analysed.

Furthermore, we believe that understanding the dissonances and variations in thinking in this volume is crucial to nurturing constructive debate not only to prepare for teaching, but as a teaching style and practice in the classroom. The differences of opinion underline the complexity of the issues and open up spaces for reflection that can lead to innovative developments. Indeed, history presents itself as a particularly functional approach to address even divisive and

controversial issues in the classroom, in order not to limit education, in scientific literature but especially in public communication, to subjects that incite no reaction or protest (Council of Europe 2015; Cowan 2012; Noddings, and Brooks 2016). Training does not mean transmitting, but rather educating in critical awareness, providing conceptual tools to master the interpretative difficulty of problems.

Historical competence is a typically anthropological path that leads people to develop a lively sense of curiosity about the others, whether they lived a few years ago or many centuries back in time. It is in this wonder, arising from the encounters with the countless variations of human cultures, that lies the fascination and also the great difficulty of doing history. It is a wonder that goes beyond curiosity about the exoticism of other cultures or the simple recognition of cultural differences, prompting people to understand more deeply the complex dynamics that have shaped societies over time. This ability to put oneself in the shoes of others is an essential foundation for shaping global citizens who are aware of and are open to intercultural dialogue. We thus have at our disposal a powerful tool to dismantle stereotypes and prejudices, a critical perspective that has history as its specific research method and that allows us to explore the multiple facets of human experience, giving voice to testimonies that are often neglected or marginalised. A history that is not subservient to political and nationalistic needs, but open to understanding the past, both when mankind has followed positive paths of collective well-being and when it has chosen paths of death and destruction. The joy of historical discovery is thus always mixed with anguish and compassion for the victims of violence.

History should be understood both as disciplinary knowledge, i.e. the discipline of history in the various school grades, and as transversal knowledge, as an approach to human problems based on an investigative, logical and argumentative method. This approach is fundamental, especially for cross-curricular education, from citizenship education to intercultural education, to dialogue between people and populations. We should not think, therefore, that school subjects that do not have the adjective 'historical' in their title are extraneous to this approach. One thinks in particular of the importance of the history of medicine or, in general, the history of science and technology. How useful it is, in the sphere of the sciences, to study the history of relationships between man and the environment, of the reciprocal adaptations and transformations, which are so difficult to fit into simple patterns and repetitive structures. In this sense, every school discipline has its own historical part that serves an incredible heuristic function, that of making students realise that when we open a textbook, we are not simply coming into contact with a series of statements to be quickly digested and returned to the teacher in the form of tests or questions, but rather to engage with the multiplicity of cultures and their efforts to survive and adapt.

For what interests us most in these pages, we can say that history allows the teacher (and the future teacher) to consciously appropriate his or her professionalism, recognising his or her own styles of teaching and relating to students, discovering their long-term characteristics, permanences and discontinuities. In

the context of teacher training, the historical approach can draw on a rich heritage of historical research, which has expanded and consolidated during the 20th century, both nationally and internationally. In this way, by cross-referencing personal history with the history of teaching, it is possible to develop the cultural sensitivity that is appropriate and necessary for teachers to become reflective professionals who can fully develop their maieutic skills. School, in fact, «is not a place where one teaches. Nor, properly speaking, where one learns. It is a place where one produces (one should produce) intellectual work. By working, or even by wanting to, one learns. Just like in primary school (to read, write, do arithmetic)» (Sanguineti 1987, 3).

As Lawrence Stenhouse, a pioneer of the reflexive pedagogical approach, stated many years ago, the teacher is a researcher (Stenhouse 1975, 142ff): he continuously seeks to improve his understanding of students, of the ways in which students can learn to understand the problems he poses to them. Teaching is essentially a day-to-day act of research, crossing disciplinary skills and personality traits, and going beyond the rigid structures of the traditional curriculum.

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Theoretical and Didactic Reflections

Historical Consciousness and the Development of a Values-based Gramscian Dialectic within Current Neo-liberal Narratives of Teacher Education

Nick Mead

Abstract:

The aim of this chapter is to set out and apply the main theoretical principles of Rusen (1993), Seixas (2015), Gergen (2005) and Braudel (1958) for addressing the critical question of how historical consciousness can contribute to the development of a Gramscian dialectic in teacher education which would inform teachers' moral and political values in an era of neoliberalism. Part A of the chapter sets out the main theoretical principles while part B draws on international cases studies in order to reflect on the significance of the presence or absence of historical consciousness in trainee teacher, university and school narratives wihin pre-service teacher education. The study concludes with the recommendation that universities adopt an interdisciplinary approach across History of Education, Education and Teacher Education in order to develop a moral and political dialectic which will enable teachers to speak truth to power and challenge neoliberal policymaking.

Keywords: Historical Consciousness, Teacher Education, Gramscian Dialectic, Neo-Liberalism, Interdisciplinary Approach

1. Part A. Theoretical Background

1.1 Introduction

The starting point of this chapter is the unique opportunity afforded by the workshop of studies at the University of Florence in February 2023, from which this book takes its title. I had previously edited a collection on moral and political values in teacher education over time (Mead 2022a) which employed the Gramscian dialectic, the *Longue Durée* and historical consciousness. Professor Gianfranco Bandini, who had contributed to my collection, went a stage further and convened a forum which employed these methods but within an interdisciplinary department context. This was a unique event in a relatively new Firenze department which brings together Education, including Teacher Education and the History of Education, Languages, Interculture, Literature and Psychology. As the keynote speaker at this event, my aim was to set out some of the meth-

odological principles, reproduced from Mead (2022b) and their application in summary case studies from Mead (2022d) for addressing the critical question of how historical consciousness can contribute to the development of a Gramscian dialectic which would inform trainee teachers' moral and political values in an era of neo-liberalism. Part A of this chapter reproduces the keynote and Part B draws on international case studies in order to reflect on the significance of the presence or absence of three dominant and interdependent narratives of historical consciousness which emerged from the workshop.

1.2 Reconnecting with the Gramscian Dialectic

One fundamental difference between now and specific national eras in teacher education identified by each contributor in my edited international collection (Mead 2022a) is that not all stakeholders in teacher education feel that they are participating in a creative dialectic generated by current neo-liberal values. The causes of this, in Gramscian terms, relate to the post-hegemonic status of the neoliberal ideological project. This project is geared towards making ideology invisible, positioning itself as 'quintessentially anti-ideological' (Cammaerts 2015, 6) and natural rather than ideological. It does this by strategically emptying ideology of its radical and critical meaning, the antagonisms of hegemony are removed and there is only left non-negotiable facticity (Lash 2007). It is social democracy which is portrayed as a conservative and reactionary ideology and neo-liberalism as progressive (Hall 1988). When ideology is made invisible, there is no hegemonic struggle, no resistance from the subaltern class and ultimately «it is not possible to grasp the new dialectic through which the transcending of old philosophy is effected and expressed» (Gramsci 1971, 435). The anti-ideological stance of neo-liberalism is certainly linked to what Gramsci calls «vulgar common sense, which is dogmatic and eager for peremptory certainties and has its expression in formal logic» (Gramsci 1971, 435).This certainty intensifies when resisted externally and so my 2022 collection employed the 'long view' to identify if there is an historic dialectic with which trainees can re-connect from 'within' a current instrumentalised training.

1.3 The Role of Public History in Teacher Education

The argument underpinning my international collection (Mead 2022a) is that post-hegemonic, common-sense neo-liberalism has, through instrumental training, obscured an historic Gramscian dialectic offering «synergies of hybridity, bringing about a unity of abstract discourse and human experience, leading to a new phase of historical thought» (Gramsci 1971, 417). This gradualist dialectic is found, in various stages of health, in the historic narratives of the teaching profession and which trainee teachers need to re-connect with if their moral and political values are to underpin what they enact in classrooms. In working with Professor Bandini and his now well-established research on public history at Firenze, I have been able to deepen my understanding of how

the role of public history, and narrative in particular, can be a vehicle for reconnecting the Gramscian dialectic with the instrumentalities of current teacher education. My particular focus (Mead 2019; 2022a) has been on how those instrumentalities silence the Gramscian «synergies of hybridity» (Gramsci, 417) which might, otherwise, reinstate the critical role of teachers' moral and political values in their classroom practice. Bandini (2018) argues for re-establishing the unity between public history and teacher professional development (see also Bandini, *infra*, 101-113). He has brought together academics, teacher educators and trainee and in-service teachers in order to explore the role of public history in their professional development. In particular, this has been achieved through the collection of digitised interviews with retired teachers which is one powerful example of reconnecting the dialectic.

My own use of public history has had more of an activist motive behind it in the spirit of Armitage and Guldi's *History Manifesto*: «We use the past in the indispensable work of turning out the falsehoods established in the past, lest those mythologies dominate our policy-making» (2014, 35) Here, I believe, we have the essential idea of reclaiming the narrative of the teaching profession from the dominant neo-liberal narrative so deeply embedded in policy-making. How can public history be a vehicle for reconnecting the Gramscian narrative in current teacher education? My own archival study of English teacher education in the 1960s (Mead 2022c) was about reconnecting the more vibrant dialectic of that time with current teacher education. The focus of this study is the development of the values of trainee teachers in the social democratic era of the 1960s in England. The study explores if there was a moment in teacher education between 1960-75 when unique conditions created a seedbed for a values-based Gramscian dialectic between social democratic ideology and the culture of vocational pragmatism which was organically situated within the lived values of the institutional ethos, course content and school partnerships developed by colleges of education, which were the main site of teacher education at the time. Evidence is sought for the nature and expression of this dialectic within college of education archival material. There follows a discussion in which the evidence for the 1960s social democratic dialectic is contrasted with the absence of a neo-liberal dialectic in today's teacher education. This exemplifies how history can 'speak truth to power'

> History is a critical human science which can be a tool for reform and a means of shaping alternative futures, through understanding how much agency and free will we have and how much counterfactual thinking we can muster (Armitage, and Guldi 2014, 31).

1.4 The *Longue Durée* as Public History which Can Challenge the Certainties of Neo-liberal Teacher Education Policy

If public history is to be a vehicle for reconnecting the Gramscian dialectic in teacher education, the methodology employed must have moral and political integrity which can inform the development of trainee teachers' values and

judgments. Barton and Levstik argue that the 'long view' fosters «informed deliberation about the common good and every profession is enhanced when that occurs, both within the profession itself and in the broader social and political context» (2004, 39). The 'common good' is a value-laden concept and demands moral and political engagement and yet in the absence of any historic dialectic in an era of neoliberalism, educational issues such as social justice and inclusion have become chronologically isolated moments prompting knee-jerk training responses without the intellectual instrumentalities that operate as the sources of reflective practice, professional inquiry and observation (Dewey 1938, 39). Without those intellectual instrumentalities which Dewey believed History provided, compliance will prevail. Any enhancement of the teaching profession beyond what Hargreaves called in 2003 'technocrats', will only come through re-connecting with a previous historic, political and cultural dialectic which, through the synergies of competing views of the purposes of education, equity and social justice, will bring about transformative change.

What then of the integrity of the long view as a methodology which might achieve these ends? Braudel's *Longue Durée* (1958) was an expression used by the French Annales School of History writing. The approach gives priority to long term historical structures over 'eventful history'. The focus is on slow evolving structures with the intention of examining extended periods of time from which conclusions can be drawn about historical trends and patterns. Two things matter here which have both moral and political integrity: first, as Aldrich (2003) states, the use of History in teacher education research is to «employ evidence from the past to provide a greater understanding of the present» (Aldrich 2003, 139) as part of our duty to enhance the profession and the current generation of trainee and newly qualified teachers. The *Longue Durée* makes this possible by revealing traditions of contestation, «highlighting forgotten varieties» (Armitage, and Guldi 2014, 35) which may be the path forward:

> *Longue Durée* history allows us to step outside of the confines of national history to ask about the rise of long-term complexes, […] only by scaling our inquiries over such durations can we explain and understand the genesis of contemporary global discontents. […] The perception that local crises are now so often seen as instances of larger structural problems in political economy or governance, for example – is itself a symptom of the move towards larger spatial scales for understanding contemporary challenges. […] The longue durée has an ethical purpose […] trying to come to terms with the knowledge production that characterises our own moment of crisis, […] across the global system as a whole (Armitage, and Guldi 2014, 37).

Secondly, and most importantly, as education is a field of study central to human development and values, any 'long view' now must be a search for truth in an era when «trust has diminished because it is in short supply» (Armitage, and Guldi 2014, 42). In the long debate about independence of truth in Historical study, there have been reservations about the relationship between the latter and the use of social sciences such as Education with the risk of «present-mindedness

and politicisation» (Kessler-Harris 2002, 97). It may be best, as McCulloch does, to talk about the history of education as 'multiple histories' formed from a «broad coalition of Education, History and social science» (2011, 115). However, what cannot be lost is the specificity of historical evidence such as texts, documents and oral history. The real acid test lies in what McCulloch has described as «the struggle to interpret and contribute meaningfully to political and cultural changes that have overtaken the provision of formal schooling which is, itself, 'a site of struggle'» (2011, 23). This latter description of seeking truth points to the processes of historical consciousness which are embedded in the 'long view' and which we see as being harnessed within the content, design and pedagogies of future teacher education.

1.5 The Moral Orientation of Historical Consciousness and the Role of Narrative within the *Longue Durée*

In Gramscian terms the synergies between thesis and antithesis lead to a new historical understanding and deeper level of historical consciousness. Within the German tradition of historical consciousness (Körber 2011; Kölbl and Konrad 2015) the processes are understood to be a complex interaction of the past, perceptions of the present and expectations towards the future. The failure to distinguish between past present and future which may have led to politicising the past to meet current needs is avoided by «recognizing how much things have changed, yet still taking the past into account in facing the future» (Rüsen 1993 in Seixas 2015, 596) In more recent developments related to educational application of the methodology, Seixas (2015) and Clark and Grever (2018), drawing on Rusen (1993) identify three interrelated aspects of these processes. The first is the relevance of disciplinary historical knowledge to everyday life. The view taken is that the questions that drive historians' work arise from contemporary issues and needs:

> Historians then work with a methodology to fashion representations of the past. These become available to the larger culture to help reshape contemporary issues in the light of the past: historical sense-making for the population as a whole (Seixas 2015, 596).

The second aspect is the way in which historical consciousness calls up the relationship between knower and known. Two processes are at work here which are highly relevant to the values of trainee teachers. First, as Christou and Sears (2011) discuss, trainee teachers bring their own personal narrative of education and values to the past and if allowed to articulate these, could bridge the disconnection with earlier narratives now diminished by instrumental training. Secondly, that re-connection would have the potential to be transformative through the empathy which historical consciousness can provide, as Chang states:

> What people actually said, how they said it, contrasts with the language of instrumentalism. We need to empathise with people *in situ*. Oral accounts matter

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– generalisations and inference are not sufficient for researchers to understand why certain events happen. Situating themselves in the historical context, or establishing empathy enables researchers to feel the historical moment and explain and interpret data in the historical context (2016, 1406).

Thirdly, aspects one and two clearly demonstrate how historical consciousness is expressed through narratives and, as such, its orientation is rooted in personal moral and political value-judgements and decision-making. This orientation is in essence, how History enters into the moral relationship between our action, ourselves and our values. Narrative, then is a vehicle for historical consciousness which «functions to aid us in comprehending past actuality in order to grasp present actuality, enabling us to act now, thereby «facilitating the direction of our intentions within a temporal matrix» (Rüsen 2004, 67). In this way, the narrative becomes the future perspective:

> Historical consciousness amalgamates 'is' and 'ought' into a meaningful narrative that informs about past events to help render the present intelligible and to bestow upon present activity a future perspective. In doing so historical consciousness makes an essential contribution to moral-ethical consciousness (Rüsen 2004, 68).

Gergen argues that because historical consciousness is inherently consciousness of narrative, vital to the creation and sustenance of values and to the achievement of individual moral identity in the present, the individual's capacity to achieve moral identity in the present is «intimately linked to my relationship with the narratives of the past» (2005, 14). Within a professional context and teaching in particular, Demantowsky (2018) argues that the critical relationship between teacher professional narrative and identity ensures that action and ontology are not decoupled. This is because narrative connects «parts to a constructed configuration or a social network of relationships […] composed by symbolic, institutional, and material practices» (Somers 1994, 616): «identity references can only be sufficiently understood in their narrative character» (Demantowsky 2018, 24) The corollary here is that the development of the moral and political values of trainee teachers now is inextricably bound up with the narratives of professionals in the past. Christou and Sears (2011) capture this moral dimension in the past and present in the way that historical consciousness interweaves connections, constructions and conflicts. Rüsen (1993) describes this as a working back and forth between analytical (or deconstructive) and synthetic (or constructive) aspects.

1.6 Conclusion to Part A

Following my keynote lecture at the Firenze workshop, which so far has been the focus of this chapter, it was striking how narrative emerged as a key feature of the roundtable element and in my concluding remarks I combined this feature, not surprisingly, with the innovative interdisciplinary approach which

underpinned the entire workshop of studies. The amalgam of these distinctive features has given me new insights into how reconnecting with the Gramscian dialectic in current instrumental teacher education might be explored through interdisciplinary methodologies which can harness public history, the *Longue Durée*, historical consciousness and narrative.

2. Part B. The Interdisciplinary Nature of the 2023 Firenze Workshop and the Three Emerging Narratives of Historical Consciousness

This 2023 Firenze workshop was a landmark event modelling collaborative work on the synergies between different narratives in teacher education. Listening to and engaging with these narratives in the round table which followed my keynote was a powerful moment in time, demonstrating how such narratives may re-connect with a vibrant dialectic identified in the 'long view' and which may enable those committed to a values-based teacher education to challenge neo-liberal teacher education policies. During the interdisciplinary round table we heard the narratives of professors of education, professors and researchers within the field of the history of education, primary and secondary teacher educators and school principals and class teachers. On reflection, the immediacy of this experience enables me now to set out three dominant and interdependent narratives of historical consciousness, the presence or absence of which might determine the potential for a renewed Gramscian dialectic in teacher education.

2.1 The Personal and Professional Narratives of Pre- and In-service Teachers

History of Education academics in the workshop conveyed a professional narrative of moral and political integrity, such as I have discussed in relation to the *Longue Durée*. Conceptually, emphasis was placed on how in teacher formation and development, oral history is part of our human essence. It is part of the process of becoming, changing and constructing meaning. History gives us the meaning of our experience and the tools to construct knowledge. The point was powerfully made by Rossella Certini that we are not one-dimensional beings – what would we be without the past. Our essence would not be like this if we had not learned from the past. These interdisciplinary insights enable teacher critical consciousness to be heightened in responses to political and policy change, for example, in relation to the 1968 Movement in Italy and research which demonstrated how teacher narratives changed from wishing to be a servant of the state prior to the movement to perceiving oneself as an agent of the state afterwards (see also Martinelli, *infra*, 141-149). Such analysis of oral history, as offered by Valentina Giovannini and Matteo Bianchini (*infra*, 151-156) gives teacher educators and trainee teachers powerful insights into how an idea can become a lived value, deepening professional reflection on what is the right thing to do to improve the lives of others. Raffaele Ciambrone (see *infra*, 55-70) and Francesca Dello Preite and Dalila Forni (see *infra*, 71-85) pose a fundamental moral ques-

tion which goes to the heart of teacher education practice, for example in relation to the problem of inclusion and the lack of historical conceptions of this in teacher education courses.

2.1.1 Examples of Historical Consciousness at Work in Pre and In-service Teacher Narratives

What was particularly beneficial to me was that the interdisciplinary narrative of the history of education academics in the workshop round table resonated with the examples of pre-and in-service teacher narratives from different countries which I had collected for my 2022 collection and which I used in my keynote but which now came alive in the lived experience of the round table element of the workshop. In particular, I sensed the effectiveness of Bandini's early work in bringing together academics, teacher educators and trainees in a similar way to create a forum in which the recorded narratives of veteran Italian teachers would be the stimulus for professional reflection for current trainee teachers. In the chapter written for my edited collection (Bandini 2022), Bandini, who is professor of the history of education at Firenze, had referred to this work and *Memoria Scolastica*, the extensive database of teacher narratives held at the university. I seized on this use of teacher narrative in the reflective concluding chapter to my collection in order to evaluate the importance of the affective dimension of teacher education:

> Bandini's long view using interviews with veteran primary teachers, offers powerful insights into the one constant throughout significant political changes, which is their moral and political commitment to the child in the classroom. The values underpinning that commitment come from direct contact with children, with the feelings of responsibility for them, a belief in them and a passion to learn from them. Bandini highlights the passion, the fears and the expectations of these teachers captured within the lived experience of the long view (Mead 2022d, 172).

In spite of the narrow and prescriptive nature of primary teacher education in the Italian Gentile Reform period, these teachers sought moral and political inspiration in school communities and in the work of inspirational teacher educators such as those who founded the Educational Cooperation Movement. These were the first and most constant protesters against the later neo-liberal wave.

It is my view that these video interviews with retired teachers have enabled trainee teachers to reconnect with an earlier dialectic between policy and the moral and political commitments of teachers in frequently challenging contexts. Bandini (2018) argues that trainees' engagement with these interviews demonstrates how history can promote historical reflexivity on the job. The approach revolves around historic bi-furcation points which Bandini says, deserve to be analysed through counterfactual 'what if' questions. These questions can deepen insights into both historical and contemporary professional dilemmas, characterised by ambiguity and difficulty. Teachers, when interviewed, lay bare

some of the raw emotion surrounding the multi-problematic aspects of teaching which require daily moral choices. Bandini states that:

> What history can offer the training of a reflective practitioner is a subject able to observe what is happening as well as himself, going beyond the immediate commitments of daily routines to critically evaluate them and orientate their actions towards the improvement of their training, thus developing new knowledge (2018, 121).

Another international example of the use of teacher narrative within the 'long view' from my own collection and which I used in my keynote is Elizabeth Currin's 'long view' of the professional lives of three mature in-service doctoral students. Currin (2022), personally and professionally challenged by the onslaught of the accountability era in American education, seeks to nurture a dialectic of values within her role as director of doctoral work. In her study she uses life history narratives to explore how doctoral teacher researchers can use research into their own narrative and practice, during different points in the era of neo-liberal education reform, as a way to resist the neoliberal disconnect in the values dialectic which has sustained them in their teaching careers. Through the lens of John Keat's negative capability, she is able to identify how the teacher educator can nurture the five dispositions of an inquiry stance which can generate a dialectic between a teacher's personal moral and political values and neoliberalism. Nurturing negative capability, originally defined by the poet Keats as living with uncertainty and not knowing, promotes playful curiosity which, in turn, encourages a critical awareness that is sceptical about some of the unquestioned and common-sense certainties of neoliberalism. Currin argues that these first two dispositions invite a willingness to be disturbed and embrace the discomfort of living with ambiguity and complexity. Here, in this third disposition, we see glimpses of the problematising of teacher professional knowledge in the narratives of Currin's three case study teachers Cindy, Gail and Erik who survive high-stakes accountability by returning to one's starting point through narrative, reconnecting to past experiences and which enable them to see their professional lives differently and be better prepared.

My use of Currin's negative capability resonated with teacher educators and trainee teachers in the Firenze workshop and round table. Laura Innocenti, Ilaria Giachi (see *infra*, 169-176) and Fabrizio Rozzi (see *infra*, 177-186) are teacher educators responsible for the direct and indirect traineeship at Firenze and are committed to the integral relationship between curiosity and personal and professional knowledge. In their round table presentation they explained how the traineeship developed professional experience in school but also negative capability, nurturing doubts, playful curiosity and critical problematising through a daily journal and narrative responses to videos of research lessons shared in the lesson colloquium. The narratives here are focused on the four key areas of assessment: values and attitudes, knowledge and understanding, didactic interaction and professional community and training. It is interesting that each

area has a values-dimension intended to nurture the kinds of dispositions which Currin identifies in her study. In my follow-up seminar with the trainees after the workshop, I hoped to glimpse some of these narratives at work. In receiving written responses to my keynote using pre-prepared questions, I was impressed with the trainee teachers' level of personal and professional reflection and detected something of the «tolerance for discomfort» which Currin (2022, 105) argues is the way in which narrative can enable trainee teachers to re-connect with the Gramscian dialectic. I asked trainees for written answers to the following question, amongst others: how important is the personal narrative of both tutors and trainee teachers in developing the relationship between your values and how you teach? All of the trainee responses, some of which were shared and discussed in the seminar, were in agreement about the importance of shared narrative and echoed the effect of this on critical consciousness which can give the self-assurance and optimism to engage in a dialectic with neo-liberalism:

> My personal narrative is very important in developing my values. The personal narrative and personal values greatly affect the way we teach. For example, educational background and schooling have an impact on the way student-teachers teach and learn (Trainee E).

> Clearly, both the student and the professor intend to make improvements and to create a concept of education that expands one's view into the future, based on an awareness of the past and the present and how processing and reflecting on the latter elements creates one's own viewpoint, one's own reality. It is on the conception of one's own reality that inclusion and social justice are defined. (Trainee B).

Trainee B has strong convictions that shared narrative between tutors and trainee teachers have the potential to enable one to re-evaluate one's own reality if the discussion 'goes beyond a certain rhetoric'. This is a very perceptive insight, demonstrating how, without historical consciousness, the common sense and self-evident facticity of neo-liberalism closes down the Gramscian dialectic with neo-liberal education and teacher education policy and with that the possibility of trainee teachers re-evaluating the key concepts of inclusion and social justice.

By contrast with the work of Bandini and Currin, in my keynote I also wanted to give examples from my own edited collection of researchers using the methods of historical consciousness and the *Longue Durée* in order to show the risks of not challenging and modifying neo-liberal policy because of the absence of a university teacher education narrative.

2.1.2 Examples of the Absence of Historical Consciousness at Work in Pre and In-service Teacher Narratives

McDonald drawing on Bourdieu and Passeron (1990), provides profound professional insights in her study of post-apartheid teacher education in which

teacher education has become the site of a struggle between the transformational values of post conflict and reproductive neo-liberal values. McDonald argues that teacher education pedagogy and authority continue to reproduce rather than transform the moral and political values of trainee teachers. Her view is that the process of encouraging an alternative discourse steeped in dialecticism which can disrupt exclusionary values is highly improbable but not impossible, given the impotence of developing states within the neo-liberal global political economy. She demonstrates how historical consciousness, by means of the *Longue Durée,* exposes the hegemonic legacy of reproductive colonial and apartheid 'pedagogic work'. In exactly the way articulated by Bandini, McDonald's exposure takes us out of the here and now and enables teacher educators to perceive how neoliberal global standards and 'quality teaching' are the natural heirs of the colonial and apartheid legacy which close down the values dialectic, yet at a time when trainee teachers clearly articulate the values which would enable them to implement post-apartheid transformative education. As McDonald states, one would argue that in the post-apartheid context in teacher education, it ought to be possible for student teachers to construct and deconstruct their moral and political values, especially as McDonald's own data (McDonald et al. 2021) demonstrate powerfully how they already have the right values to transform the education system. However, such a narrative is not opened up for them in current training because of the colonial and apartheid hegemonic legacy of 'pedagogic work'. Of striking importance in McDonald's 'long view' is the evolving binary between modernity's teacher as individual professional and the cultural tradition of the communitarian teacher, the former reproduced through the bifurcation of schools across class lines in the colonial period and along ethnic lines during apartheid. The outcome is that, instead of creating a narrative in which student teachers might challenge social inequality through the construction and deconstruction of their values, teacher education inducts them, through teaching practice, into 'pedagogic work' which legitimates the teacher's position in the system and reproduces the status-quo.

Historical consciousness provides a similar level of objectivity about the absence of a teacher narrative and values dialectic in Mizuyama's (2022) analysis of the Japanese teacher development context. His analysis explores why the absence of a moral and political critique of neo-liberalism in education reflects the convenient long-standing conflation of child-centred education with the depoliticization of education. In the Japanese teacher development context, Mizuyama is suggesting that without the kind of historical consciousness he exemplifies, that conflation allows for current authoritarianism in training and development to go unchallenged, creating a debilitating disconnect between the values of trainee teacher recruits and the system within which they have to work. Mizuyama provides us with deep insights into the very nuanced historical and cultural factors which are determining the response of teacher educators and the profession to the increasingly authoritarian values underpinning Japanese neo-liberal education policies. The binaries which had generated a dialectic in post war England, Italy and Spain are absent in the fundamental cultural and social

shift away from unconditional loyalty to the Emperor to the commitment of individual and social participation in a state which is focused on doing no harm to others. The relationship between individual and societal values become critical and this is very much focused in the development of liberal child-centred education, reflected in curriculum changes set out by Mizuyama. Humanistic development and protection from the external forces of politics are at the heart of the values underpinning these developments. With the onset of neo-liberal values in responses to PISA positions, there is then, no historic teacher narrative and so no values-based critical dialectic for teachers and teacher educators to draw on.

2.1.3 Conclusion

The Bandini and Currin studies exemplify the place of historical consciousness in the development of trainee professional narratives. By contrast, the McDonald and Mizuyama studies, employing the methodology of the *Longue Durée*, expose the absence of historical consciousness in the university narrative and therefore, the absence of a moral and political teacher narrative. Can the university narrative change from being reproductive to transformational in modifying neo-liberal policy? For McDonald, her data demonstrates how black and white trainees are poised to launch their critical narrative and yet the university pedagogical and school placement practices remain focused on reproductive 'pedagogic work'. For Mizuyama, the development of a trainee teacher narrative in Japan, which might become the vehicle for a Gramscian dialectic with neo-liberal authoritarianism, has to begin with university teacher educators developing political literacy. As his research demonstrates, Mizuyama acknowledges that this would involve a significant shift in politicising the university narrative (Muzuyama 2013; 2016). This brings us, then to the university narrative as our second narrative and its potential to reconnect with a dialectic with neo-liberal teacher education policy.

2.2 The University/Training Institution Narrative

The developing interdisciplinary approach at Firenze, so very well exemplified in the 2023 workshop of studies, says a great deal about the interrelationship between the university narrative and the development of a trainee teacher narrative. There was an emerging recognition in the History of Education academics' presentations that without the foundational concepts of public history, historical consciousness and the *Longue Durée* becoming embedded within the university teacher education narrative, a dialectical trainee narrative would not emerge, as both the South African and Japanese examples demonstrate. In turn, the Education and Teacher Education academics, in their presentations, demonstrated how professional curiosity and critical problematising, underpinning the four areas of teacher assessment, might be informed by historical consciousness. Firenze has been strong on school and teacher memories (Bandini 2018; Bandini et al. 2022). What it seems to be moving towards now is a sense of the university as both a key participant in and custodian of a narrative of teacher

education which can become a vehicle for reconnecting with the Gramscian dialectic and so begin to modify neo-liberal policy. This is what I found in the case of my recent study of the University of Manchester Institute of Education (MIE) historical teacher education narrative (Mead 2023) and which I briefly alluded to in my keynote, but wish to elaborate on now as a model for the future direction of the department at Firenze.

2.2.1 Example of Historical Consciousness at Work in the University of Manchester Institute of Education (MIE) Teacher Education Narrative

In 2021 the English government required all teacher education institutions to re-apply for accreditation status. The intention of this was to ensure that training was closely aligned to neo-liberal policy for raising school standards. The MIE re-application stood out because it explicitly referred to its historic narrative in teacher education, conveying the implicit message that it was affronted by the suggestion of having to re-apply after 120 years of successful practice. That practice began with Owen's College in 1881, the original college of the university and the first teacher training day college in England. Encountering this stark juxtaposition of historical narrative and neo-liberal policy, I sought to employ the methods of public history, the *Longue Durée* and historical consciousness in order to establish if the university narrative was a vehicle for reconnecting the Gramscian dialectic in current training. From the establishment of Owen's college until the present day, Manchester University has consistently remained committed to civic ideals of inclusion and overcoming social injustice and this is made very clear in the reapplication for accreditation: «the strong moral purpose of equity and tackling disadvantage through teacher education is embedded in our history» (Jones, and Murtagh 2021, 1).

The historical methods when applied to teacher education document analysis in the Manchester University archive, reveal a Gramscian dialectic over the period 1963-75 between the university's social democratic values and the intensification of the centralisation, rationalisation and managerialism of teacher education instigated in various government reports. The managerialist trends in fact increases the university's commitment to outward-facing, collective responsibility for teacher education in an urban region with serious inclusion and social justice needs. Above all, this collective responsibility for schools, teachers, pupils and trainees at the heart of the MIE narrative enables the trainee teacher and training school narratives to emerge as equal and morally integral elements in the process of striving for inclusion and social justice. I then sought to establish if the MIE teacher education narrative was still a vehicle for the Gramscian dialectic in current teacher education. I undertook a textual analysis of the 2018 MIE inspection report (Office for Standards in Education [Ofsted] 2018) and current course documentation for the primary teacher education course. The documentation explicitly and implicitly suggests that, just as the narrative of that 1965-75 dialectic informed the development of student-teachers' moral and political values narrative of the time, so too does it continue to inform the

professional narrative, values and practice of current trainees, underpinning their outstanding inclusive practice, as analysed in the 2018 inspection report:

> Long-standing and trusting relationships are at the heart of this highly successful partnership. The genuine collaboration that exists between university staff and their school-based colleagues contributes significantly to the outstanding nature of this provision. All partners embrace their vision of 'empowering future generations'. School leaders share the university's vision to promote social justice and inclusion (Ofsted 2018, 2).

The language of the inspection report moves beyond the neo-liberal metrics and seems to capture how being part of an historic professional narrative with its inherent values-dialectic, enables a trainee to consolidate the values of inclusion by combining passion to teach with a 'realistic' understanding of inclusion which does not defeat them. It would seem that, by re-connecting with the moral and political values embodied in the dialectic at the heart of the historic partnership narrative, trainees, early on, embrace «the wider role […] [and] responsibilities of nurturing inclusion for all» (Ofsted 2018, 7). Neo-liberal outcomes-based values are modified and transformed by engagement with social democratic values in a partnership rich in diversity. Supported by school staff who are custodians of the historic narrative and who can model and engage trainees in the realities of the symbiosis of neo-liberal and social democratic values, trainee teachers become «very skilled in creating calm, purposeful and safe classrooms». We are told by the inspector that, within these classrooms, trainees are able to forge «warm and respectful relationships» (Ofsted 2018, 6). The result is that the trainee narrative becomes a confident articulation of inclusion which challenges and modifies neo-liberal instrumental understandings. This confident articulation is captured in course documentation (MIE 2022-23) which describes trainees' professional narratives as having a much broader meaning than may be found in some training contexts. For example, course documentation describes trainees as proactively researching, discussing and asking questions about different school community contexts, seeking to understand the structural causes of disadvantage and the impact of poverty on learning. Here then we may say that the historic university narrative continues to inform the trainee narrative and create a synergy between social democratic and neo-liberal values which is transformative in the development of trainees' understanding of inclusive practice. Critically, the course documentation stresses that this development of the trainee narrative develops their agency, understanding and application within inclusive and socially just classroom practices (MIE 2021-22).

2.2.2 Conclusion

My study concludes with a fundamental question about the university historic narrative as the vehicle which can sustains a values-based dialectical narrative for trainee teachers. Such a teacher narrative has the potential to deepen their commitment to socially just and inclusive practices and thereby give them

the agency to challenge and modify neo-liberal instrumentalism in their class-room practice. However, the critical issue here, which I briefly posed to the Firenze workshop, concerns the implications of my conclusions for the development of the moral and political values of trainees in institutions which may have no values-based narrative and so may be entirely subject to the neo-liberal values of the operative structures within which they must fit? The collection in which this chapter appears and which arose from the Firenze workshop, represents an innovative way forward in addressing this critical issue through interdisciplinary approaches.

What the MIE study demonstrated to me was how the MIE teacher education narrative, with its historic collective responsibility for schools, teachers, pupils and trainees, enables the trainee teacher and training school narratives to emerge as equal and morally integral elements in the process of striving for inclusion and social justice. This brings us, then, to our third and final narrative and which justifies my premise that without the historic university/training institution narrative, neither the trainee nor training school narratives will emerge sufficiently strongly to become a dialectical challenge to the common sense and facticity of neo-liberal education and teacher education policy.

2.3 The Training School Narrative

I have said a number of times in this chapter that the Firenze workshop was innovative in bringing together interdisciplinary academics in History of Education, Education and Teacher Education. What I have not yet discussed and which, for me was perhaps the most significant feature, was the participation also of school-based teacher educators and school leaders. In my own experience of teacher education over many years I have not experienced such a forum and as such exemplifies the potential for the interrelationship between the three narratives which I am exploring in this part of my chapter. It was not therefore surprising that, as I have already stated, in making my concluding remarks at the end of the round table session, the two key factors I wanted to emphasise as critical to trainees re-connecting with the Gramscian dialectic were the interdisciplinary approach and the vital role of the training school context.

2.3.1 Examples of Historical Consciousness at Work in Firenze Training School Narratives

Matteo Bianchini (see *infra*, 151-156), the senior leader at the Firenze Pestalozzi school, and Gabriele Marini (see *infra*, 163-167), principal of a Tuscan secondary school, both conveyed school narratives which were given recognition and authority by the very assumption that such narratives have moral and political integrity within a university interdisciplinary workshop. Marini's narrative was very much focused on the importance of the school context and its history. As a leader, his sense of the role of historical consciousness was rooted in a belief that teacher development would come about if their reflections on is-

sues of inclusion and multiculturalism were framed by the history of the school, its social and cultural context and how each member has a strong need. In this way, Marini sees teachers as citizens of the school, who through consciousness of a historical school narrative, are committed to a collective responsibility for addressing inclusion and social justice.

Bianchini, in his presentation, drew on the historical consciousness of the Pestalozzi tradition of affective education, embodied in the 70 year history of the school and which is lived in the present and is a source of re-imagining the future. I was able to visit his school and so its historic narrative very much came alive through first hand experience. Very much in the spirit of Armitage, Guildo and Rusen, historical consciousness in the school narrative is about renewing social progress. This is why the school must be an experimental laboratory if it is to improve society. Central to experimentation is learning from experience based on the interrelationship between human development, subject disciplines and knowledge and skills in order to understand and navigate the complexity of life. These pedagogies are framed by democratic processes which nurture pupils' self-government of the school and autonomy of the head, heart and hands, ensuring that they are undertaking meaningful 'real' tasks. The visual reminders of the historic narrative, both in the key work areas, for example, the drama and workshop areas and the historical pictures on the walls of learning in those areas in the early days of the school are reminder of how inclusive and socially just relationships are the key to knowledge.

As contexts for teacher development, these schools have historical narratives which, when seen as integral to the university's interdisciplinary narrative of historical consciousness, have the potential to develop dialectical teacher narratives which can critically engage with and modify instrumental neo-liberal policies. The participation of Bianchini and Marini in the Firenze interdisciplinary workshop was a critical step towards building the kind of dialectical school narratives which I found in the MIE training schools. For example, the following is a statement from the web-page of the Salford Alliance of Learning Schools (SALS), an MIE training school:

> The school covers a broad demographic within the city of Salford, and encapsulates diverse educational needs, challenges and rewards that all teachers can be expected to be presented with. […] We believe that diversity is a strength and that by working in a wide range of settings each with unique challenges and rewards – you as a trainee will get the very best possible experience. […] That journey will be challenging, […] [but] your training goes way beyond learning how to deliver a curriculum. It's about learning how to change peoples' lives (SALS 2023).

2.3.2 Examples of the Absence of Historical Consciousness in South African Training School Narratives

By contrast, the absence of a university historical narrative which underpins the relationship between its teacher education and its training schools will probably lead to a disconnect between the values of the trainee teachers and those of the school. McDonald (2022), in her South African study which I drew upon in my keynote lecture, states that experiences currently associated with teaching practice are unlikely to disrupt the neo-liberal 'quality-teaching' 'pedagogic work' being done in schools. This in turn means that schools are likely to continue reproducing the current cultural capital which is in keeping with South African society, stratified along particular race/class lines and school segregation. McDonald argues that, «given that, as teachers progress in their careers at school, little opportunities are available to shift this reality and teachers' agency to reconstruct or indeed transform the educational experience appears miniscule at best» (McDonald 2022, 132). This is made more challenging because of the continuation of black and white segregated schools which trainees alternately practice in, called cross-over schools. Here is a significant challenge for teacher educators, both in the university and in the cross-over schools to become critically reflexive of their own histories if they are to develop in trainees a sense of those 'moral imperatives' which will enable them to create greater equity and social justice in inclusive classrooms, post-apartheid.

Here then, is the urgent need for a university narrative imbued with historical consciousness and which would support a similar school narrative. Instead, what we find in Sirkhotte's, observational work, is how mentors in cross-over schools may not be concerned with social cohesion «but are narrowly focused on delivering the syllabus» (2017, 151). She also highlights how black and Africaan mentors in different ethnic cross-over schools can inhibit trainees because they both may have very different ideas of what a socially cohesive South Africa is or should be. As a result, many trainees did not find the cross-over practicum transformative «because they could not effect the change they wanted» (Sirkhotte 2017, 118). Critical to the process and something which all contexts can learn from, is the need for teacher educators and mentors to have interrelated narratives so that mentors can be informed about the kind of role they need to play in helping trainees shift their existing dispositions, particularly in relation to social cohesion, inclusion and social justice. As Sosibo states, «mentors may not be so open to engage trainees in dialogue because they are unfamiliar with a pedagogy of discomfort» (2015, 143); however, it is this aspect of the school narrative which would open up the risks of living with the uncertainties referred to by Currin (2022) who argues that this is the source of the development of a trainee teacher dialectical narrative. This is exemplified in my MIE study which demonstrates how the interrelationship between the historic university narrative and the school narrative gives confidence to mentors to induct trainees into a powerful historic narrative of social justice in their schools.

In written and oral responses to the South African example, which we shared in the seminar following the workshop, Firenze trainees presented a mixed picture of the school narrative conveyed through their own experiences of mentoring:

> At school I rarely had a critical discussion with the teachers about how the curriculum is structured, the teaching methods and the methods of evaluating the students. I did not feel comfortable expressing my opinions (Trainee B).

> Yes, fortunately I did have opportunities to critically discuss curriculum design, teaching methods and pupil assessment because my team was very inclusive and open to dialogue (Trainee F).

Trainees talked about encountering closed and open minds amongst mentors and which determined their dialogic opportunities. Beyond adaption and presentation of content, some spoke of their being «closure regarding moral values and especially personal political values» (Trainee B). The same trainee wrote about noticing a tendency in the school environment to generalise about values in the context of the school narrative, 'without going into specifics'. This, of course contrasts with the kinds of school narrative which both Marini and Biachini seek to develop, as articulated in their round table papers and set out in their chapters in this collection.

2.3.3 Examples of Disconnected Narratives of Historical Consciousness in Fragmented Spanish Neo-liberal School Systems

Some of the inconsistencies which limit the benefits of the school narrative for the development of a trainee teacher dialectical narrative have arisen because of the fragmentation of national and regional school systems as a result of neo-liberal education policies. An example of this which I used in my keynote, is Otero-Urtaza's (2022) 'long view' of Spanish teacher education. In the Spanish context Otero-Urtaza demonstrates the complexity of developing trainee teachers' inclusive moral and political values when there is no unified narrative about the past which could be employed to furnish historical consciousness within training and so develop interrelated university, school and trainee narratives. The ongoing polarities of right and left interpretations of the Civil War, combined with the maneuvering by the Catholic Church to affirm its power and ceaseless swings from progressive liberal to absolutist policies, have led to social fracture with segregation as a fundamental issue in education, represented by increasing neoliberalism in the private and religious sector.

Although there have been examples of striving to establish a common narrative in Spanish teacher education such as the progressive Institute Libre de Ensenanza and its education missions, these examples are polarised by left and right political perceptions. Otero-Urtaza argues that re-connecting with such examples as part of developing a transformative dialectic means harnessing the research evidence (Sonlleva Velasco, Sanz Simón, and Martínez Scott 2020) which suggests

that trainee teachers are well-equipped with values focused on marginalisation and favouring inclusion in the classroom and have a readiness to engage in critical discussion if opportunity allowed. Secondly, training provision must provide the forum for such critical discussion in order that the university and trainee narratives can provide the criticality needed when trainees encounter public school narratives which embody marginalisation and implicit exclusion and Catholic and private school narratives which embody explicit exclusion. The regional realities of the disconnections between trainee and school narratives are exemplified in Otero-Urtaza's example of teacher education in autonomous Conservative regions such as Madrid and Catalunya, where concerted Catholic schools dominate over a handful of progressive schools, and where training may not address issues of diversity because of an absence of specific modules within training. Yet, as Otero-Urtaza points out, there is considerable debate among aspiring teachers about such issues as sexual orientation and the inclusion of trans-children «but there is no training to prepare them to work with overlooked minorities» (2022, 87). As Otero-Urtaza concludes, the disconnects in teacher education narratives, which lie outside the university department, urgently requires that historical consciousness must play a part in the university narrative.

2.3.4 Examples of Disconnected Narratives of Historical Consciousness in Fragmented, Neo-liberal School-led Routes into Teaching

Disconnections between narratives in teacher education are not only caused by the fragmentation of the school system but are also found in the neo-liberal proliferation of competing routes into teaching, evident particularly, in England, Australia and America (Apple 2001). In England, the opening up of the teacher education market as set out in the White Paper (Department for Education [DFE] 2010) heralded the break with traditional university-school partnerships and the introduction of competing 'providers' such as School Direct Alliances and School-Centred initial Teacher Training Partnerships (SCITTS) and Teach First, a charity recruiting able graduates straight into disadvantaged schools for an initial two year period. Such school-led alliances and partnerships would recruit and train those who, by training 'on the job' will «be able to develop their skills, learning from our best teachers» (DFE 2010, 23) and in so doing compete with the «best performing and fastest improving education systems in the world» (DFE 2010, 18).

In the English context, my Manchester study (Mead 2023) was an attempt to highlight what the risks are for training schools in school-led only training routes if there is no historic university social democratic narrative informing historical consciousness at different periods of teacher education. The question I pose at the end of that study (Mead 2023) is about narrative as the vehicle of historical consciousness which sustains a values-based dialectic. What then of those school-led training partnerships which have no historic narrative? Are trainees and teacher educators entirely subject to the neo-liberal values of the 'operative structures' of political ideology, itself sanitised as common sense and

lacking both context and narrative history? How do new teacher education alliances build a historic narrative which is 'a genuine symbiosis' of narratives and embodies a values dialectic, participation in which, is integral to the development of the moral and political values of their trainees?

Although school-led teacher education is not universal, it does pose a question about trainee engagement with the school narrative in any practicum context, such as the direct internship training at Firenze. It was therefore significant that in my concluding remarks at the workshop I emphasised the interrelationship between the interdisciplinary university narrative, the school narrative and thirdly, the trainee narrative which can emerge from school-based critical incidents occurring during the practicum. In England, in the light of increased school-based and school-led training favoured by neo-liberal policy-makers who do not trust 'the blob' which is how university teacher educators are pejoratively described, it is likely that the main site for any renewed dialectic will be the school and within a third space (Jackson, and Burch 2016) in which the narrative voice of the teacher educator, articulating the dynamic between personal, course and trainee values joins with the pragmatic voice of the school mentor and the emerging narrative of the trainee *in situ* as they encounter critical incidents in the classroom over sustained periods of teaching. In this way the conflictual realities of engaging in neo-liberal curriculum, pedagogical and assessment policies framed by attainment and attendance metrics, staff performance management and 'value for money' are not simultaneously complied with and subverted but as in the 1960s, as I have demonstrated (Mead 2022a; 2023), are addressed through a critical synergy generating new insights and, critically confident value-judgements for all stakeholders**.** In this way trainee teachers might achieve the self-realisation of their moral and political values 'within' the historical, cultural and political context of the school in its community. (Zeichner 2017). Such values-based professional knowledge as this, underpinning teacher identify, autonomy and agency, has the potential to overcome the demoralising sense of subjugation to those negative aspects of post-hegemonic neo-liberal values which can impact recruitment and retention.

However, this becomes so much harder in England, as a result of the commodification of teacher education. School-led training in England, as Brown, Rowley and Smith (2016) point out, exposes the personal and professional development of trainee teachers to local market forces and use of a mixed economy of training providers to suit the 'brand' of training desired. As Jackson and Burch state, this new managerialism in teacher training «tends to override values and can have a corrosive effect on one's professionalism» (2016, 513). Korthagen (1999; 2001) argues that schools which use teacher training to improve standards will not be providing 'realistic teacher education'. In England this term is used to mean learning from expert teachers on the job. By contrast, Korthagen argues that realistic teacher education is actually about a trainees' development of a cultural historical perspective which they encounter in critical incidents. There is a significant challenge here, not just for English training schools but any practicum school, to examine its own cultural and historical narrative in

its community and how that narrative can interact with the personal narrative of the trainee and the historic, as well as the cultural narrative of the profession.

3. Part C. Conclusion to the Chapter

Most importantly, the English debate about school-led teacher education brings us back to the fundamental role of an historic university narrative and whether teacher education can develop a trainee dialectical narrative and encourage a school narrative without this. In the second section of this chapter I have attempted to exemplify the significance of the presence or absence of such a narrative. My experience as an English teacher educator, invited to give the keynote on this subject at Firenze, provided the juxtaposition of views which powerfully shaped my analysis in this chapter. From an international perspective, there is an ongoing ideological struggle between the hegemonic instrumentalization of teacher education for political ends and an historical consciousness of which a university may or may not be custodian of. That historical consciousness, as Armitage and Guldi state, has the capacity to speak truth to power and «shape alternative futures through understanding how much agency and free will we have and how much counterfactual thinking we can muster» (2014, 31). The Firenze workshop manifested to me in a unique way, how a university may choose to be a custodian of the public history of teacher education which, through the embedding of historical consciousness within the narratives of all key participants, as represented in the chapters of this collection, has the potential to equip trainees with a Gramscian dialectical narrative. Of course, not all universities have a historic narrative of teacher education, closely tied to civic values and social justice, such as Firenze and Manchester, the latter being my most recent case study. Some universities and training schools now have fragmented narratives through constant change and many have lost sight of historic civic values in the face of the onslaught of corporate neo-liberal values. However, here is the challenge: if a university chooses to build on an historic teacher education narrative what does it need to do? My impression is that the relatively newly configured department at Firenze, although having done significant work on school and veteran teacher narratives (Oliviero, and Bandini 2019; Bandini et al. 2022), is posed to enter into a new interdisciplinary relationship between History of Education, Education and Teacher Education. This requires a new methodology as experimented upon within the workshop. Secondly, there needs to be a willingness on the part of academics, university and school-based teacher educators to work together in new ways which I have glimpsed at Firenze. That way of working is exemplified in the three narratives which I have discussed in the second part of this chapter. Those narratives came alive as dynamically interrelated in the workshop and round table sessions and this is why the first part of this chapter re-presents my keynote but the second part on those narratives is new and reflects the powerful insights I gained at Firenze. Here, I believe, lies the potential for historical consciousness to develop a values-based Gramscian dialectic which will enable trainee teachers to challenge and modify the current neo-liberal narratives of teacher education.

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Technological Innovation and Education Change. Some Lessons from the History of Educational Technology

Maria Ranieri

Abstract:

The chapter examines the historical evolution of educational technologies, exploring their impacts on teachers and teaching practices. It highlights the tendency to focus on future advancements while often neglecting the lessons from past. Through a historical overview, it identifies recurring cycles of high expectations and subsequent disappointments associated with new technologies. In parallel, it underscores the importance of understanding the cultural, social, and pedagogical contexts in which these technologies are embedded. By reflecting on past experiences, the chapter provides insights that can inform current and future technological innovations in education, advocating for a more nuanced and historically informed approach to integrating technology in educational settings.

Keywords: Educational Technology, Historical Overview, Pedagogical Innovation, Technological Evolution, Teaching Practices

1. Introduction

When thinking of educational technologies, there is a common tendency to speculate about the future rather than examining the past (Weller 2020). The idea of 'technology', which is implicitly assumed in the concept of educational technologies, seems to be inherently associated with that of 'development', as if technologies embody the conditions for their own (positive) advancement, thereby positioning themself in the time that is to come rather than in the time that has alredy been. This tendency likely leads us to generally overlook the past, viewing the technology as an ahistorical entity and assuming that it drives human progress towards inevitable improvements. As anticipated, a similar trend is also observed in the research field of Educational Technology, where just a few studies have as a main object the evolution of technologies for teaching and learning from a historical, cultural, and social perspective.

There are, of course, notable exceptions, as indicated by some publications spanning from the late 1960s to present. In particular, a very influential book has been written by Cuban in 1986. It is the *Teachers and Machines. The Classroom Use of Technology Since 1920*, where the author examines the historical integra-

tion of technology in education, exploring its impact on teaching practices and shedding light on the evolving relationship between teachers and machines in the classroom. In a similar vein, Saettler published two books, the first one in 1967, *A History of Instructional Technology*, and the second one in 1990, *The Evolution of American Educational Technology*: both books provide a comprehensive overview of the evolution of educational technology from ancient times to the modern era, offering an olistic examination of the cultural, societal, and educational factors that have influenced the history of technology in schools, especially in the United States. More recent publications are the volume of Ferster (2014), *Teaching Machines*, which investigates the history and impact of automated instruction systems, and the book of Dear (2017), *The Friendly Orange Glow. The Untold Story of the PLATO System and the Dawn of Cyberculture*, which explores how PLATO pioneered many features of modern computing and communication. Coming to our days, Flury and Geiss edited in 2023 the book *How Computers Entered the Classroom, 1960–2000*, where a series of case studies are discussed to examine how computers were introduced into European classrooms, tackling the issue from a multiple perspectives and considering a variety of dimensions.

While these volumes are all centered on the history of educational technologies in the Western countries, interestingly a special issue of the journal *Learning, media and technology* (Good, and Hof 2024) has been lately devoted to the history of educational technology from a cross-cultural point of view, involving countries such as Africa, India, Asia and so on. As the editors underline, the articles aim at looking beyond «the perspectives of ahistoricism and Western universalism that tend to frame traditional narratives of what educational technologies are, what they can do, and where they come from» (Good, and Hof, 1). It seems that a double challenge is coming out in the field of Educational Technology: not only a greater attention to the historical perspective, but also to the local history of educational technology to quetion the dominant narratives of Western representations of the role of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the classroom and, more generally, in the society. Moreover, the journal *Paedagogica Historica* has recently devoted a special issue to the history of educational technologies seen as pedagogical artefacts reflecting the ideological, cultural, social and economic interests of the material culture that have produced them (Polenghi 2024). In the introductory article to the special issue, Polenghi observes «School artefacts are either handmade products created by pupils and teachers, or the school equipment that is made up of commercial products, which also respond to an industrial and economic logic, linked to the achievement of mass schooling» (2024, 3).

That said, it must be recognised that, despite some books have been edited and new perspectives in the field are taking shape, we are still far from the development of a historical awareness related to the evolution of ICTs in education. And yet, we agree with the various scholars (Cassidy 1998; McDougall, and Jones 2010; Ranieri 2011; Selwyn 2011; Underwood 2004; Weller 2020) who have highlighted over the time the relevance of the past to better understand the innovation in education and meaningful change. Of course, there are many

reasons for this. Firstly, adopting a historical approach allows for assessments of long-term trends and a deeper understanding of whether and to what extent the devices that have emerged in the educational technology scene have differentiated, replaced, or – following Bolter and Grusin (1999) – been 're-mediated' In a sense, it can be argued that a thorough understanding of innovative technologies can only be achieved through an adequate knowledge of the impact of the previous ones.

At the same time, the relevance of a certain technology can only be grasped with the passage of time: temporal distance, indeed, enhances analysis and investigation. For instance, we can now start with formulating hypotheses about the socio-cultural impact of technologies like television or computers, whereas assessments regarding the influence of the Internet on society, especially education, still seem premature.

Another consideration refers to the fact that taking a historical perspective allows us for a 'cooling-off period' and retrospective reflection, away from excessive enthusiasm or unjustified fears typically associated with the introduction of new technologies. In particular, as Selwyn observed: «Looking at the history of a technology free from the initial exaggerated claims and 'hype' can be a revealing way of understanding how common-sense expectations and assumptions about technologies are formed. For instance, whereas we now assume that computers have the potential to support formal education, this was not always the case. History can therefore provide us with a clear view of the meanings and significances attached to technologies before they become seen to be inevitable, invisible and somehow natural» (2011, 42).

Finally, understanding the past can provide the ground to build a better present. Even though it is challenging to assess innovative technologies, efforts can be made to avoid repeating the same past mistakes, thereby learning from them. As Cassidy noted: «Today's educators have the benefit of hindsight; they can examine some of the problems encountered by their predecessors and imagine ways of addressing the problems that are likely to recur this time» (1998, 170).

With this in mind, in the next paragraphs, we will first provide a historical overview of the main technologies used in education throughout the Twentieth century, and then we will attempt to reflect on the lessons that come from this history to support a deeper understanding of the innovation process of education and school change. Guiding questions for our historical examination and current reflection will be: What are the usually mentioned reasons for the introduction of technologies in education? What educational potential is typically attributed to them? What are the 'barriers' or 'enabling factors' that are indicated as influential for the success or failure of a technology? What type of evidence is reported to demonstrate the educational effectiveness of a specific technology? And, finally, what can we learn from all this?

2. Education and Technologies: A Historical Perspective

The initial instances of incorporating cinema into education can be traced back to the latter half of the Nineteenth century, originating in the United States and Europe. During this period, certain schools began utilizing filmstrips as ed-

ucational aids to enhance the teaching process. The introduction of still images in education was perceived as an extraordinary opportunity for both students and educators to obtain a 'direct view' of the world, fostering enthusiasm for an education reliant on visual materials.

Nevertheless, it was the emergence and widespread adoption of moving images in the early twentieth century that marked a significant advancement, contributing to the increased popularity of audiovisual education. Notably, the Catalogue of Educational Motion Pictures, the inaugural catalog of educational films released by George Kleine in 1910 in New York, contained thousands of titles covering over 30 topics across various disciplines (Hackbarth 1996).

On one hand, the educational utilization of moving images appeared to be a fitting response to the imperative to augment and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of education. On the other hand, as cinema became a cultural phenomenon for leisure and information in the 1920s, its application for educational purposes was motivated by specific interests in the technological evolution of cinema (Selwyn 2011). This elucidates why the pioneers of cinema technology were among the first to recognize the substantial potential of video for educational purposes. For instance, in the 1920s, Thomas Edison (1847-1931), an American inventor and businessman, boldly asserted that moving images would supplant books, revolutionizing the educational system. According to Saettler (1990), Edison curated a 'multimedia' library that included films he commissioned, such as *Life History of the Silkworm* or *Magnetism*.

In Europe, scientific and educational cinema experienced a favorable period from the late Nineteenth century to the early 1930s (Farné 2002). For example, the Italian positivist pedagogue, Roberto Ardigò, in his 1893 work *La scienza dell'educazione* (*The Science of Education*), illustrated the pedagogical affordances of new visual tools, emphasizing their ability to magnify small details and represent movements. Similarly, in the early Twentieth century, the French doctor and scientist Comandon employed the camera to film the movements of microbes through a microscope, highlighting the technology's value not only for research but also for teaching in the 1930s.

Following this initial phase, an increasing number of schools in the United States began integrating cinema into their educational offerings (Cuban 1986). Classrooms were outfitted with black roller blinds, silver screens, and 16-millimeter projectors. Concurrently, numerous training initiatives were launched in universities to prepare future teachers (Saettler 1990). In tandem with the interest in advancing audiovisual technologies and establishing infrastructures for the dissemination of educational audiovisuals, optimistic depictions of the nature of these new tools emerged. The use of moving images was officially regarded as a symbol of 'modern' teaching (Cuban 1986). Advocates of film in education believed it to be a potent tool for providing public and mass education, offering a more realistic learning experience, as articulated by Hoban and Zisman (1937) in their work *Visualizing the Curriculum*.

In addition to the burgeoning interest in the educational applications of cinema and film, the period spanning the 1920s to the 1930s witnessed a grow-

ing consideration of the educational potential of radio. The earliest instances of educational radio can be traced back to the 1920s, with the inauguration of the first educational radio station at the University of Wisconsin in the United States in 1917. Subsequently, the Radio Division of the US Department of Commerce began issuing numerous licenses for the establishment of radio stations dedicated to educational broadcasts for the general public from 1920 onwards. Noteworthy among these initiatives was the RCA Educational Hour, reaching an audience of up to 6 million listeners. Simultaneously, over 60 universities integrated radio broadcasts into their educational offerings, with some schools creating radio stations and educational programs to complement classroom activities (Cuban 1986).

A particularly ambitious venture in educational radio was the World Radio University (1937), which offered courses in 24 languages to 31 countries in the late 1930s (Saettler 1990). However, the most impactful application of radio in education was embodied by the Schools of the Air. From the 1930s to the 1970s, these programs delivered hundreds of courses across various school levels, aligning with traditional school curricula. The Schools of the Air initiative originated in the United States in 1930, followed by similar initiatives that collectively reached over 1 million students.

Even in Europe, radio garnered attention for its pedagogical potential. In the United Kingdom, the first broadcast to schools took place in 1924 when the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) transmitted music programs. Subsequently, in 1928, the Central Council for School Broadcasting (CCSB) was established, with a Subject Committee comprising teachers overseeing curriculum subjects covered in broadcasts. The use of radio in education gradually expanded in the United Kingdom, with half of all British schools tuning in to educational broadcasts by 1942. In the 1980s, the BBC produced approximately 80 series per year for School Radio, broadcasting 16 hours per week. In Italy, the first educational broadcasts by Ente Radio Rurale (Rural Radio Body) date back to 1933, aiming to promote mass acculturation. The fascist regime distributed receiving devices for collective listening in public spaces, serving both propagandistic and educational purposes, including teaching Italian to students, with schools making efforts to acquire equipment through donations or lotteries (Ranieri 2019).

In summary, during the first half of the Twentieth century, radio was extensively utilized in educational contexts. Pioneering educators recognized its inherent appeal, resulting in positive implications for student engagement and motivation. The immediacy of live radio broadcasts was believed to impart a more realistic and authentic quality to teaching (Morgan 1931). Moreover, radio was perceived as a democratic tool, enabling students from diverse geographical areas and socioeconomic backgrounds to access quality educational content.

Although the first instances of the educational use of television can be traced back to the late 1930s, its widespread adoption for teaching purposes gained momentum in 1952 when the US Federal Communications Commission allocated 242 TV channels for educational use, leading to the establishment of

university TV channels funded by public and private entities (Morehead 1955). From the 1950s onward, educational television gained popularity in industrialized countries, with significant initiatives in the United Kingdom and Italy. The 1960 debut of the literacy program *Non è mai troppo tardi* (*It's Never Too Late*) on Italian TV broadcaster RAI, hosted by teacher Alberto Manzi, exemplifies the impact of television in educating thousands of Italians.

Proponents of TV were optimistic about its potential to provide educators with teaching resources, offer students a global perspective, and make learning more engaging. Educational television was seen as a means to provide authentic learning experiences for children and enhance access to education (King 1954).

This historical overview of educational technologies in the Twentieth century concludes with the introduction of digital technologies, particularly computers, into schools. From the 1960s to the present, the microelectronic revolution has introduced a variety of technologies, from pocket calculators to mobile devices, characterized by their relative affordability, durability, and ability to process vast amounts of information. Initially used for research in universities, computers began finding application in education in the early 1960s. While initially embraced by mathematics and information technology teachers, the enthusiasm for computers expanded to other disciplines from the 1960s onwards. The appeal of computers lay in their capacity to provide flexible and individualized instruction to users of all ages. Computer-assisted instruction (CAI) has been offered in various educational formats since the late 1960s (Martin and Norman 1970), with numerous examples available ranging from tutorial instruction to drill and practice, from dialogue systems to simulations, use of data base and educational video games.

Between the 1970s and 1980s, the utilization of these applications experienced widespread adoption in both schools and universities. Since 1983, computers have been employed for educational purposes in more than 40% of primary schools and over 75% of high schools in North America. Similarly, in Europe, the integration of personal computers gained traction during this period. An early example in Italy, dating back to the early 1980s, was the Initiatives and Research for Computer Science in the School (IRIS) project, initiated by the European Center of Education in Frascati (Calvani 1999). The primary objective of the IRIS project was to introduce fundamental concepts related to information technologies, such as algorithms and coding, into the conventional curriculum of compulsory schools.

From the mid-1990s onward, multimedia and the Internet have become dominant forces in the educational landscape. The ability to seamlessly combine various digital codes, such as digitized texts, videos, and audio, has been perceived as an extension of human expressive capacities. Simultaneously, a growing body of research demonstrated the positive impact of multimedia on learning, contingent upon the adoption of specific design principles. Mayer (2001) elucidated in his influential work, titled *Multimedia Learning*, that the integration of diverse digital codes may enhance learning under certain conditions, avoiding the overload of individual perceptual channels (whether visual

or auditory), minimizing redundancy, simultaneity, and proximity of related multimedia elements.

With the proliferation of the Internet, the computer has increasingly been regarded as a tool for communication and collaboration over long distances (Ranieri 2019). Novel opportunities for establishing networks among schools and developing online collaborative projects have flourished in recent years. One exemplary initiative is eTwinning, a European project leveraging the Internet's potential to create virtual communities of teachers and facilitate collaborative projects (Nucci, Tosi, and Pettenati 2023). Initiated in 2005 as a primary action of the European Commission's eLearning Programme, eTwinning has evolved into the 'community of schools in Europe' with nearly 600,000 teachers participating in it and 3,000,000 students. These staggering figures must be contrasted with the far less positive reality emerging from the work of Hattie (2009): based on hundred of meta-analyses on the effectiveness of computer-based instruction, involving evidence since the 1960s, he concluded that while interactive multimedia and videos have a positive influence on students' learning outcomes, programmed instruction or simulations or even distance education don't have a significant impact – in statistical terms – on learners' results, but just a slightly positive influence, which in turn entalis that they don't have a negative influence, contrary to the a priori opinions of those who resist technology out of principle.

Lastly, before ending this overview, it is worth spending a few words on Artificial Intelligence (AI). While it risks to become the new hype in the field of Educational Technology (Selwyn 2024), it must be clarified that AI in education is not new. In the 80s, several publications on the early applications of AI in the field of education apperead, mostly focused on Tutoring Intelligent Systems (see, e.g., Persico, and Sarti 1988; Sleeman, and Brown 1982; Wenger 1987). The main benefits of these systems were identified in areas such as personalized learning, immediate feedback, engagement, adaptive instruction, and continuous improvement. Today, we are aknowledging a new era of AI for teaching and learning, but a serious evalution of the lessons from the past still needs to be done.

3. Lessons from History

So far, we have attempted to outline, albeit briefly and relying on secondary sources, the history of the main instructional technologies that have entered our school classrooms and universities throughout the Twentieth century. What lessons can we draw from almost a century of technological and instructional innovations?

3.1 Lessons One – Educational Technology Between Historic Recurrences and Amnesias, while Something Can Be Learned

Many authors who have investigate the history of technologies in education over the last past century, have found a recurrent path of development, namely a recurring cycle in which phases of illusions and great promises are followed by moments of profound disappointement and recriminations (Cassidy 1998;

Cuban 1986; Rushby, and Seabrook 2008; Selwyn 2011). For example, Cuban (1986) describes the pattern as follows: when a new technology enters the history of innovation, foundation leaders, educational administrators, and vendors repeatedly celebrate the advantages that such technological advancements can generate, offering solutions to school problems and rendering old media (such as books), and often teachers as well, obsolete and redundant.

Arguments usually claimed for supporting these conclusions sound like the following: technologies increase the efficiency and productivity of education and provide students with opportunities to develop skills useful for the workforce. Alternatively, the liberating power of the machine is emphasized: technologies make students free to pursue their own interests according to personalized learning paths, while also making free the teachers from routine tasks, lightening management and allowing them to engage with students in a more authentic way.

Following these proclamations, for a while, researchers are predominantly focused on demonstrating the greater effectiveness of the latest innovations compared to more traditional teaching tools and technologies. At some point, confidence begins to wane, and the first criticisms emerge: complaints about usability difficulties, technical problems, incompatibilities, lack of time, and so on. Research studies then reveal that teachers rarely use the new technological tools. Administrators are then blamed as the main culprits for abandoning such expensive equipment in school storage rooms, while teachers are accused of being closed-minded, old-fashioned, or unprepared. Thus, when enthusiasm tends to fade, reliance is placed on the next generation of technologies, and the cycle begins again (Oppenheimer 1997; Ranieri 2011).

Twenty years after the analyses by Cuban (1986), Rushby and Seabrook (2008) revisit a similar interpretation of the typical trajectory of innovation processes in educational systems, speaking of 'cycles of learning technologies'. According to these authors, each new technological advancement leads to a surge in research and development activities around the possibilities offered by new technologies for learning; the proliferation of these activities, on the one hand, attracts enthusiasts who praise the potential of the new technological findings, and, on the other hand, stimulates the emergence of new research groups that eagerly attempt to explore their opportunities. However, the problem often lies in the fact that before the new learning technology consolidates and acquires its own theoretical and applicative maturity, it is overtaken by a new innovation. Typically, previous research groups are associated with old technologies, and the names of researchers tend to disappear along with the technology to which their names are attached unless the researcher becomes associated with the new technology. And the cycle starts again. For many historians of educational technologies, this cycle, based on the succession and alternation of 'hype', 'hope' and 'disappointment', is perhaps the most important lesson that can be learned from the history of the last century (Selwyn 2011). However, if history repeats cyclically, we must also draw the following lesson: we never learn from what has been done and from past mistakes. This is the bitter conclusion of various researchers from the field of Educational Technology. For example,

McDougall and Jones observe, «[…] our area, more than any other the authors can think of, seems determined to neglect or deliberately ignore its own history» (2010, 3). Similarly, Underwood points out, «some ICT research reported in the journals lacks a sense of history […] [I]n the excitement of the new we appear not to want to look back and learn from the lessons of the past» (2004, 140). It seems like if the appearance of a new technology triggers a mechanism of collective forgetting, delivering memory to oblivion and leading to a kind of 'historical amnesia' (Good, and Hof 2024; Maton, and Moore 2000; Ranieri 2011). While depicting this mechnism, Rushby and Seabrook (2008) indicate the price we pay for it. Since new technological advancements are often driven by new research groups, the experience gained by previous groups seems to dissolve with the researchers themselves, even within the same structure. Organizational memory can be lost in a short period of time, and with it, the lessons that can be drawn from previous uses of learning technologies are lost. And yet, something could have been learned.

3.2 Lesson Two – Looking Beyond the Technological Determinism to Reflect on Opportunities and Constraints

Going deeper into the examination of the 'hype-hope-disappointment' cycle, an implicit automatism fueling the expectations of its initial phase must be recognized, that is the assumption – that we have already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter – that technologies have the power to change things for the better. This assumption is based on a deterministic understanding of the role of technologies in societies and supports arguments like '[…] in equipping schools with technologies, teaching, learning, and the overall institution will improve; technologies own intrinsic qualities to generate positive effects on students, teachers, and educational institutions'. More generally, as explained by Buckingham, in deterministic perspectives,

> […] technology is seen to emerge from a neutral process of scientific research and development, rather than from the interplay of complex social, economic, and political forces. Technology is then seen to have effects—to bring about social and psychological changes—irrespective of the ways in which it is used, and of the social contexts and processes into which it enters. Like the printing press, television, and other new technologies that preceded it, the computer is seen as an autonomous force that is somehow independent of human society and acts upon it from outside (2008, 11).

These visions have been widely challenged. According to Robins and Webster (1989), they lead to a 'desocialized' understanding of technology, that is, a view which ignores the social history of media as if they influence society rather than being influenced by it. Even Briggs, Burke and Ytreberg (2020), in their social history of media and technology, emphasize how technological determinism is based on misleading simplifications. Referring to the work of American political scientist Harold Lasswell (1902-78), they argue that for describing communi-

cation, three aspects must be taken into account: who does communicate (i.e., who control the communication process), what is communicated (i.e., the content), and to whom is communicated (i.e., the audience), but also the context is relevant (Briggs, Burke, and Ytreberg 2020).

Critics of technological determinism, however, have also highlighted the dangers of opposing views, where technology is seen as a product entirely determined by social relations. In these perspectives, technology has no inherent qualities, it is neutral and devoid of values: everything depends on how people choose to use it. This view also appears reductionist. Authors like Williams (1974) advocate for a more dialectical approach in which technology is seen simultaneously as something socially shaped and shaping. In other words, its role and impact are partly determined by the uses for which it is designed; but it also contains intrinsic limitations and opportunities that constrain the ways in which it can be used. A useful concept here is that of 'affordance'. Introduced by Gibson (1979) through his ecological theory of perception, it has been adopted both in the field of human-computer interaction (Norman 1998) and in the research on ICT in education (Calvani 2007; Laurillard et al. 2000). As explained by Gibson (1979), an 'affordance' refers to the properties that can be activated through the interaction between an environment and some agent (human or animal): those properties 'emerge' precisely because of a relationship and cannot, therefore, be considered explicit potentialities, while still remaining properties of the environment itself. Moreover, the same environment can allow the emergence of different affordances for different organisms. Similarly to an ecological system where affordances for a particular organism rely on the potential interaction between the organism and the physical environment, in a learning environment, affordances for learning are provided by the interaction between the hardware, the software, teachers, students and other resources. This means that in educational environments, affordances depend not only on technologies but on the whole environment, including the teacher, students, other resources, and the processes activated in the classroom (Webb 2005).

The history of technologies in education also teaches us that we cannot attribute to a single causal factor the intrinsic power to modify education (be technology or single social aspect): hard technological determinism appears fundamentally misleading (and even its opposite view), and processes of technological innovation in education must be interpreted as complex and multidimensional phenomena (Ranieri 2011).

3.3 Lesson Three – Educational Innovation with Technologies as a Multidimensional Phenomenon

As we concluded in the previous paragraph, multiple factors are at stake when technological innovation enters the classroom, either hindering or facilitating the processes of change. Then, what are these factors and how do they operate in educational contexts?

3.4 Accessibility and Quality of Equipment

To a certain extent, the low level of integration of technologies in teaching depends on logistical and infrastructural reasons (Oppenheimer 1997). Technological equipment is often inadequate, fragile, and limited: appropriate access to them cannot be ensured due to constraints related to the use of school opportunities and schedules. Moreover, technologies often prove to be more difficult to use than claimed by their promoters, and the technical support available to teachers at school is usually scant with the consequence of threatening teachers' trust in the machine. Further critical issues are linked to the quality of available educational content. Indeed, even when equipment is available and easily accessible, high-quality programs and content to be used with students are scarce: for instance, the educational or instructional software market has been and is still dominated by products that are cognitively poor (Calvani 1999), being based on exercises with closed-ended questions and drag and drop interfaces.

3.5 Implementation of Innovation

Many technological innovations have been introduced into the school under the influence of external forces and agents, such as reformers or policymakers. From educational cinema to computer-assisted instruction, these tools were primarily introduced according a top-down approach to satisfy external imperatives rather than to meet the needs of teachers and students, responding also to «an industrial and economic logic, linked to the achievement of mass schooling» (Polenghi 2004, 3). The main benefit of top-down approaches is that they are more efficient, but they miss the point, namely that educational innovation is not just a technical matter: school change and practices' transformation occur slowly and progressively. There is, indeed, a 'grammar of the school' (Cuban 1986) as an institution that tends to resist radical transformations, especially when they come from the outside. This grammar, as we will see in the next paragraph, is given by the rigid structure of school schedules and the inflexible organization of school spaces. This rigidity is often criticized by reformers but to a certain extent it is inevitable, being the mission of the school that of educating the largest number of people. Just to make an example, think of the discussions that always arise when it comes to deciding where to place equipment in school spaces: progressive educators complain that PCs are confined to labs with specific lesson schedules, limiting uses and possible curriculum integrations; the alternative would be to provide each student with a computer, but this could generate serious management problems for teachers, who might find themselves forced to spend much of their time solving technical issues.

3.6 Compliance with Classroom Routines

As well known, the work environment influences the behavior of individuals operating in it. This is true also for schools, where the space is physically or-

ganized in a certain way, the content is structured by difficulty levels, the time is allocated based on various tasks throughout the workday, and certain rules govern the behavior of both students and teachers. As previously underlined, this organization reflects the demands linked to the same mission of public schools, that is ensuring that the majority of students acquire certain knowledge and develop specific values, while maintaining order and promoting a safe environment. While students are exepected to spend a certain number of hours each day in the same room, the teachers are expected to control the class, teach specific content, capture students' interest and demonstrate students' achievements. Being required to confront with multiple tasks, teachers need to optimize time and energy. Therefore, when they experiment solutions proving to be the simplest and most effective to manage a number of students in a predetermined space over a period, they tend to transform this experience in a practical knowledge to be used daily (Cuban 1986). For instance, the desks are arranged in rows to allow the teacher a better view of classroom activity and keep control more easily. In addition, classroom routines such as raising one's hand to speak or ask a question, speaking only when authorized by the teacher etc., are examples of behaviors that establish an orderly pattern which is functional to ongoing activities. By constructing solutions, establishing classroom routines, and employing specific teaching methods, teachers navigate the numerous and sometimes conflicting daily pressures inherent in classroom life. In such a context, what is the role that technologies play? In his examination, Cuban (1986) underlines that over time the tools teachers have integrated into their repertoire are characterized by simplicity, durability, flexibility, and suitability for the specific problems teachers face in daily teaching, such as books and traditional chalkboards.

3.7 The Nature of the Professional Role of the Teacher

Another factor influencing innovation processes concerns the professional culture of teachers. The selection of teaching staff, teacher training, their experiences, and their values all contribute to fostering attitudes that are generally reluctant to change common practices and a general unwillingness to introduce technological tools in the classroom. As Cuban (1986) emphasizes, those aspiring to become teachers arrive in the profession having already experienced a kind of involuntary apprenticeship as students. Teaching is indeed one of the rare professions where those becoming teachers have already spent years in school: they enter the classroom with hours of lessons behind them based on an implicit models of teaching, having previously experienced their teachers. Recruitment and selection bring into the profession individuals who tend to reaffirm rather than challenge the role of the school, tilting the balance towards stability rather than change. Generally, teaching generates and reinforces cautious attitudes towards innovation. From the first day of teaching, the teacher struggles to establish routines that will allow them to keep the class orderly while they explain. Teachers tend to rely on practices they already know or that have been recommended by more experienced colleagues. Experienced colleagues tend to pro-

vide informal advice and assistance, thereby continuously exposing novices to the norms and expectations of the school and what is necessary to deal with it.

3.8 The Limited Choice Influenced by the Situation

All the aforementioned arguments find evidence in the history of school innovation and, taken together, they provide a reasonable explanation for why teachers are generally reluctant towards the adoption of new tools. Nevertheless, according to Cuban (1986), some factors are more relevant than others and the prevalence of continuity over transformation can be explained through the idea of 'arena of situationally constrained choice', which includes two of the previously mentioned arguments, namely: a) the structure of the school and classroom environment; b) the teaching culture, including the social and individual beliefs of the teacher.

The structure and organization of the school environment and classroom define the limits within which the individual beliefs of teachers and professional ethics can be expressed. The constraints, pressures, and challenges generated by school and classroom settings represent the invisible environment influencing the daily organization of teaching by the teacher. For istance, the structural differences between primary and secondary schools make the first more flexible than the second one, allowing teachers to be more open to innovation. Teachers in lower grades, indeed, spend much more time in class with the same students than secondary school teachers, the schedule is less rigid as is the curriculum; these differences impact on the arrangement of teaching practices. Sometimes practices change: in these cases, however, it can easily be observed how teachers are more prone to embrace those changes that solve the problems they already perceive as important rather than problems considered such by non-teachers. They are therefore willing to modify their practices, when a technological innovation helps them doing better. In other words, according to Cuban (1986), given the limitations of the contexts where teachers operate and the constraints coming from the imperatives of their professional culture, teachers adopt those tools that prove to be more effective in solving problems they already perceive as relevant.

4. Conclusions

Our analysis of the factors influencing technological innovation and school change has deliberately privileged the historical perspective with the aim of learning something from the past. Reflections from scholars, especially Cuban (1986), who devoted their research in the understanding of innovation mechanisms provided a solid ground to draw some lessons. We didn't directly focused on teacher training, which is often mentioned as a determinant preventing innovation uptake (Calvani 1999). And yet, we are convinced that nurtiring and cultivating an historical understanding of the evolution of educational tools and technologies can be itself a training tool to develop teachers awarenes about the

opportunities and the challenges that innovation rise in the school context. In other words, while the lack of training is widely identified as a barrier for innovation, we are suggesting that a deeper reflection should be undertaken on the focus and content of that training. Well-known models are widely adopted such as the TPCK framework, also known as TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge), elaborated by Mishra and Koehler (2006). From a quick look at this framework, it emerges how the historical knowledge of the educational technology and related lessons are basically missing. Indeed, while describing the types of knowledge educators need to effectively integrate technology into their teaching practices, three primary types of knowledge (and their intersections) are highlighted: Technological Knowledge (TK), Pedagogical Knowledge (PK), and Content Knowledge (CK). If the TPCK model appropriately emphasizes the importance of understanding how technology interacts with educational theories and content knowledge to create effective learning environments, it overlooks the ideological, cultural, social, material history of educational innovation and technologies. Again, we believe that in order to train more aware teachers on pedagogical innovation, certain historic amnesias should be overcome not only in the 'research field' of ICT in education, but also in the "training field" of ICT in education. From this perspective, the work is just beginning.

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The Importance of Historical Knowledge in Teacher Training for School Inclusion

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Abstract:

This chapter summarises the main steps that, from 1975 to the present, led to the current definition of training courses for support teachers. Historical knowledge was soon removed from the curriculum, in which clinical skills initially prevailed. In more recent times, special pedagogy skills were enhanced, accompanied by more and more space devoted to school regulations. In such a scenario, what role can historical knowledge play in the training of future teachers in the Italian school? Legislative Decree 66/2017 provides for an increase of 60CFU on inclusive education for new courses in Primary Education, as well as a revision of the content. This could be an opportunity to include historical knowledge, with its irreplaceable educational value, in the curriculum.

Keywords: Historical Knowledge, Teacher Training, Support Teachers, Inclusive Education, Special Education

1. Introduction

In keeping with the title of this essay, we consider it useful to begin our discussion with a 'historical' excursus, summarising the essential steps that led to the current definition of training courses for support teachers. By doing so, we will be able to identify both the positive elements and the weak points, which would require an urgent revision of the system. After all, in Italy, teacher training for school inclusion dates back almost fifty years and, therefore, can be seen with the necessary distance between factual elements and reflection on the same.

The first law regulating the training of 'support teachers' dates back to 1975.

Let us briefly recall that it was in those years that the knot of problems was untied that would lead Italy to become the first (and still the only) country in the world to abolish 'special classes'. It was in 1975, at the instigation of the then Minister of Education, Franco Maria Malfatti, that the Study Commission, chaired by Franca Falcucci, was set up to give its opinion on the vexed question of whether it was right to include the most seriously handicapped, those with severe mental retardation, in mainstream classes, or whether integration should be limited to the less severely handicapped, those with sensory disabilities. The Falcucci Commission came out in favour of the first hypothesis, paving the way

for the enactment of Law 517/1977, which definitively abolished special classes and sanctioned the right of all pupils to attend mainstream classes.

In order to give effect to this right, the founding decree stipulated that

> the management and teaching staff of institutions or schools with special purposes must be provided with a specialisation qualification to be obtained at the end of a two-year theoretical-practical course in schools or institutes recognised by the Ministry of Public Education. The programmes of the above course are approved by decree of the Minister of Public Education after consulting the National Council of Public Education[1].

We can therefore proceed with a brief excursus to give an idea of this training, pointing out from the outset that historical knowledge has been removed from the curriculum, in which clinical skills initially prevailed, only to be supplemented over time – and especially in recent years – by specific pedagogical skills, accompanied by an ever-increasing space devoted to school regulations.

2. From Special Needs Teacher to Support Teacher

To get a more complete picture of the events we are dealing with, it is necessary to take a step back in the history of school inclusion, going back to the beginning of the 20th century.

This is because, in the mid-1970s, the figure of the specialised teacher for educational support resumed the profile and functions of the 'special teacher', i.e. the teacher who, at the beginning of the last century, dealt with the education of pupils with physical, mental or sensory disabilities (Trisciuzzi 2002; Zappaterra 2003).

In this context, it should be noted that the revival of concepts, organisations, facts and initiatives that took place in the past is sometimes done without the necessary in-depth analysis, i.e. without investigating the motives and causes that led to these events and initiatives and, above all, the rationale behind them (to be aware of this would require historical expertise and culture).

A general framework was thus extracted without contextualising the figure of the special teacher in relation to the cultural climate and social conditions of the time, but, more importantly, without conceiving the essential elements that held the whole project together. As we shall see, psycho-pedagogical knowledge was given little consideration, partly because of the changes that were taking place in the epistemological status of those sciences.

Even if this is an extreme synthesis, recalling some of the essential aspects of the matter, it is easy to see how the organisational structure and the cultural framework that governed the courses set up at the beginning of the 20th century by Maria Montessori and Giuseppe Ferruccio Montesano, together

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[1] Presidential Decree No 970 of 31 October 1975, *Norme in materia di scuole aventi speciali finalità*, Art. 8.

with Clodomiro Bonfigli, did not suffer from the predominance that the clinical aspects would later assume in the educational project.

As a matter of fact, Maria Montessori was convinced and had demonstrated that the pupil with mental difficulties or disorders «is not incapable of learning, but only incapable of following normal methods» (Molineri, and Alessio 1899, 122-23). In doing so, she highlighted an eminently pedagogical issue. Indeed, when she founded the first Scuola Magistrale Ortofrenica (Institute for Training Teachers in Education for Mentally Disabled Children) in Rome in April 1900, Montessori stated that the aim was «to enable primary school teachers to know the various forms in which mental deficiency manifests itself», but also «to know the most appropriate educational *methods* in each case» (Associazione Pedagogica Nazionale 1901, 21). She thus experimented with children using a series of didactic materials, the application of which she had studied in other European schools or institutes, based on Séguin's model of differentiated educational needs (a kind of ante litteram 'differentiated teaching'). Montessori had studied with Giuseppe Sergi the 'Biographical Chart' – devised in 1886 –, and it was here that she noted the progress made by the children, tracing critical paths in what was to become her Pedagogical Anthropology (Cives 2001, 125-26). Thus, the didactic methodology was at the heart of the teachers' experience in implementing educational interventions, based not on mere psychological and clinical knowledge but on pedagogical anthropology, i.e. an understanding of the human being from an educational perspective.

On the other hand, the new courses introduced in 1975 promoted specialised but one-sided knowledge, lacking in educational-social issues (Trisciuzzi 1995, 341) and, above all, didactics.

These were two-year 'monovalent' courses, i.e. focused on the study of a single disability; they were therefore different for each type of disability: deaf, blind and psychophysical[2]. For example, in the course dedicated to visual disabilities, for two years, the didactic and communication methods for teaching blind pupils were studied, Braille was learnt, and typhlology was studied in depth (which is obviously no longer possible today, as there are only thirty course hours to devote to it).

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[2]   Presidential Decree 970/1975, which laid down rules for special schools, prescribed – in Article 8 – that the management and teaching staff had to be "provided with an appropriate specialisation qualification to be obtained at the end of a two-year theoretical-practical course". The same decree abolished courses in the physiopathology of physical and psychic development, while the orthophrenic teaching schools and method schools were authorised to continue their activities. Two months before Law 517/1977, the programmes of the courses were approved with the Ministerial Decree of 3 June 1977, which specified in its introduction their dual characteristic: polyvalence of specialisation and a unitary vision of the pupil, albeit with differentiated difficulties.

From a pedagogical point of view, the most relevant aspect is the transition that had just occurred in those years, from the 'Emendative Pedagogy'[3] to the 'Special Pedagogy'[4].

At the end of the 1950s, we can still find many texts on the physiopathology of physical and mental development that devote entire chapters to emendative pedagogy, in which children with disabilities – defined as 'abnormal' – are described as follows: «those who present (due to hereditary or acquired defects) defects of an intellectual, affective, characterological order, capable of diminishing their power of adaptation to the regular social life» (Albino 1959, 191). By specifying that «these are defects and not diseases» and that «defects can and must be corrected, while diseases must be treated», they clarify the distinction between clinical and educational competence.

Towards the end of the same years, texts on special education became widespread. In this context, the works of Roberto Zavalloni, whose texts were widely read by professionals, assume great importance, as they are the expressions of a new sensibility[5]. *La Pedagogia Speciale e i suoi problemi* (1967) and *La Pedagogia Speciale e i suoi metodi* (1969) outline a systematic and coherent framework for the discipline. The pedagogical framework is based on the essential assumption that 'taking charge' of the pupil with difficulties requires knowledge of the human subject[6], regardless of the precluding distinctions between stages of normality and abnormality. The epistemological framework is very solid and envisages an autonomy of pedagogy from other sciences, particularly psychology and medicine, based on the conviction that anthropological knowledge of the human subject is a proprium of pedagogical science[7].

This fundamental question has since become considerably entangled, starting with the work of Mialaret (1976) in France, taken up by Aldo Visalberghi with his *Pedagogia e Scienze dell'Educazione* (*Pedagogy and the Science of Education*) (1978), in which the plurality of scientific contributions has dramatically diluted the autonomy of research and the scientific instrumentation of peda-

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[3] «Normal pedagogy guides the development of the pupils towards an average line of social coexistence: emendative pedagogy tends to educate or re-educate abnormals, as they are in any case reluctant to the coexistence mentioned above; but, when it fails to do so, it must fall back on the external environment to prevent the anti-social actions of abnormals» (Albino 1959, 190).

[4] «Special pedagogy is the science of psychic difficulties, delays and disturbances of all kinds in the bio-psycho-social development of children and young people, considering them from an educational and didactic perspective» (Zavalloni 1967, 26).

[5] «If it had not taken on a pejorative meaning, one could use the term *abnormal* to indicate the individual who deviates in some way from the norm, i.e. from the average subject position. In our opinion, a term that expresses this concept well and appears at the same time more acceptable is that of an *atypical* subject» (Zavalloni 1967, 17).

[6] Compare also Zavalloni 1961.

[7] In this regard, see also Aldo Agazzi (1964), in which one of the fundamental competences in teaching is the teacher's ability to adhere to the developmental level, learning processes and characteristics of the learner.

gogy, delegating large areas of research to other disciplines – so much so that it remains an unresolved knot.

The subdivision of Pedagogy into Pedagogical Anthropology, Methodology and Teleology, which we still find in this century in various authors (Laeng 2001, 52; Portera 2020, 157), was already questioned in the 1970s, precisely with the works of Visalberghi, but without reaching a unanimous or widely accepted agreement. In particular, the delicate question of the competence of the study of the human subject, although presupposed by many[8], does not find shared theoretical outlets, despite various attempts in recent years, where the hypothesis of a 'clinical pedagogy'[9] has even been outlined. In our opinion, this is a matter that needs to be resolved, and in this sense, historical-pedagogical reflection, in addition to purely theoretical reflection, can make an essential contribution to unravelling complicated knots.

Continuing with our excursus, we see that on 3 June 1977, the Ministerial Decree approved the «programmes of the two-year theoretical-practical specialisation courses for managerial, teaching and educational staff referred to in Presidential Decree no. 970 of 31 October 1975", which replaced the previous "physiopathology courses of physical and mental development» (established by Royal Decree 1297 of 1928), which had become widespread in the 1960s, after having been modified by Ministerial Decree 315 of 1963.

The new course was a two-year course – as opposed to the six-month courses in the pathophysiology of physical and mental development – and each year consisted of 300 hours of theoretical lectures and 350 hours of practical activities, including 200 hours of internships.

Theoretical lectures were common for teachers of all school levels (also for assistant teachers), while the practical activities took place in the institution to which the trainees belonged. In total, this amounted to 1,300 hours of teaching commitment, including theoretical lessons, practice and work placements.

The decree approving the new programmes reaffirms the «polyvalent character of the teacher's specialisation and the unified vision of the pupil, despite the differentiation of difficulties»[10] (Ministerial Decree, 3 June 1977).

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[8] For example, this passage: «we can only differentiate if we know the characteristics, the peculiarities, the potential, the skills, the personal background of our children» (D'Alonzo 2016, 58).

[9] Clinical Pedagogy began with the work of Maurice Debesse in 1964, 'La pédagogie curative'. In Italy, it finds points of reference in the works of Trisciuzzi and Crispiani and still has several university master's degrees and a professional association (ANPEC). See Leonardo Trisciuzzi (2006) and Piero Crispiani (2002).

[10] Since «the specialisation qualification the student obtains at the end of the two-year theoretical-practical course must enable ... to respond to multiple needs and differentiated situations. This is because the specialisation course is intended for teachers and educators working in the various types and grades of schools (nursery, primary, secondary and art schools) in favour of both the general population and, in particular, of subjects with physical-psychic-sensory difficulties and with disorders in the affective-behavioural sphere». (Ministerial Decree 315 of 1963).

The programme was very rich and articulated. Lectures in the first year, in the 'information area', included a first module on 'Biological Foundations', with notions of biology, genetics and physiological anatomy. A second module focused on 'Human Development and its Dynamic Correlations', with the study of somatopsychic and psychomotor, linguistic, cognitive, emotional-affective and psychosocial development, as well as communication. A third module was devoted to the 'Elements of pathophysiology' of the nervous system. This included motor, sensory and speech functions. A fourth module was devoted to the study of 'Elements of developmental psychopathology', with an outline of the pathological dynamics of development and learning. The fifth module was devoted to the study of Pedagogy. It included the Philosophy of Education, Cultural Anthropology, Sociology of Education and the study of 'Pedagogy and Institutions'. There was no mention of the History of Education. This was followed by a module on 'Psycho-pedagogy', which provided knowledge of the neurophysiological basis and relationships of learning. It also covered teaching methodology, organisation and programming, and educational technology. Lastly – as a seventh module – on 'Didactics of learning', which included 'praxognesical and expressive' education, graphical-lexical education, logic-mathematics education, play and social education.

As can be seen, out of seven modules, at least four were dedicated to the study of clinical aspects, while three were nominally devoted to Pedagogy, which was significantly diluted between the study of Cultural Anthropology, the Sociology of Education and elements of Neurophysiology. No space was allocated to historical knowledge.

The 'training area', with its 350 hours, was divided into activities involving 'group experiences' (discussion groups, research groups, interdisciplinary seminars) and at least 200 hours of 'guided internships', in which the observation of somatopsychic and pedagogical-didactic aspects of individualised teaching, the observation of the relational dynamics of the learning group and the experience of the relational dynamics of the teaching group (team teaching) were carried out.

The second-year curriculum included a theoretical course divided into four modules. The first was devoted to studying 'Pathological Structures and Dynamics', with in-depth analyses of neuropsychopathological structures in the developmental age and family and social pathological dynamics. The second module dealt with 'Therapeutic Intervention Criteria' in the neuropsychological, psychotherapeutic and rehabilitation fields (physiotherapeutic, acoustic, logotherapeutic, and orthoptic techniques). The third module was dedicated to the study of 'Methodology and didactics of educational and re-educational intervention', with exercises for psychomotor and sensory-perceptual development; practices for the acquisition and development of language and expressive activities (plastic, pictorial, musical, theatrical and others); exercises for vocational, pragmatic and educational work, play and pre-sports activities; practices for the instrumental and functional learning of reading and writing; exercises for the development

of logical-mathematical operations; and, finally, the teaching of curricular disciplines (historical-geographical-scientific observations, technology and work).

The last module of the second year of the course introduced what has remained a constant element in subsequent specialisation courses to this day: school legislation or, as it was called at the time, 'legislative aspects of social services and professional deontology', where sectoral legislation (including 'benefits for civil invalids') and aspects of the teaching profession from a deontological point of view were studied.

This was followed by the activities of the 'second year of training', with the 350 hours again divided into 'group experiences' and 'guided internship'. The latter would focus on the observation of the neuropsychopathological aspects of sensory-perceptive disorders and learning pathologies (on the operational experience of interprofessional diagnostic methodology and operational programming), then on the technical-professional experience of therapeutic intervention criteria (neuropsychological treatment, psychotherapeutic rehabilitation) and prevention, as well as on the technical-professional experience of methodology and didactics of educational and re-educational intervention.

In the second year of the course, as well, more emphasis was placed on clinical knowledge, with the novelty of introducing the study of legal and bureaucratic aspects: an element that has now taken on a predominant dimension, not least because of the proliferation of school regulations and the obligations they entail. This aspect of bureaucratic hypertrophy, which swallows up large areas of teacher training, must be carefully monitored. In his *Réveillons-nous!*, which deals with the crisis of thought, Edgar Morin (2022) warns that administrative, political and bureaucratic elements seem to have become the end of education, not the means. The human being seems enslaved to feed a bureaucratic system, not vice versa.

To return to the two-year course, it was intended to be unitary in organisational and didactic terms. However, separate sections were envisaged for preschool, primary and secondary school teachers and educators, and possibly for assistant teachers. In practice, however, this unitary character was not achieved, as the courses for visual, hearing and psychophysical disabilities were also separate.

This was because the courses had to provide continuity in the training of teachers for Special Institutions. Therefore, as the decree itself indicates, the application of the programmes had to take into account, among other things, «the nature of the disability» and «the plurality of situations related to the different incidence of the disability itself on the sensory capacities and psychic behaviour of the subject» (Ministerial Circular No. 3415 of 28 September 1976). Other legal provisions followed[11].

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[11] The orthophrenic magistral schools and method schools (operating in the training of special class teachers) are authorised by this circular to continue their activities, pending new legislative regulations implementing Presidential Decree No. 970.

The curricula were changed again after only five years (in the meantime, Law 517/1977, promulgated on 4 August, had intervened and definitively abolished the 'special classes').

> The need was thus felt to formulate new specialisation programmes that no longer distinguished between different types of disability (blind, deaf, psychophysical). The "polyvalent" specialisation was introduced, which, in the same two-year period, was able to provide a discrete initial preparation in the didactics of generalised integration, replacing the many hours of medical teaching envisaged in the previous programmes with specific disciplinary teaching (Nocera 2021, 65).

The course retained its two-year duration but became multi-purpose, maintaining the 1,300 hours overall, with an increase in pedagogical-didactic subjects instead of technical-sanitary ones.

Three areas were identified. The first, called 'Disciplinary Areas', included Pedagogy, Psychology and Clinical teachings, aiming to provide the fundamental knowledge upon which to base operational and methodological-didactic competencies. In the second area, called the 'Operational Dimension', a subdivision was made into six sub-areas related to practical action in the situation (observational methodology, curricular planning, analysis of relational dynamics, functional assessment, organisational integration, and strategies related to technologies and aids). In the last area, 'Curricular Didactics', activities and content were planned to provide skills for translating 'general didactics' into 'special didactics', i.e. aimed at the particular type of disability to be dealt with (albeit with an emphasis on visual and hearing impairments).

The internship activities were increased to 250 hours per year and divided into 'guided' direct internships (150 hours), to be carried out in schools, and 'guided' indirect internships (100 hours), consisting of practical exercises[12].

Previous legislation required courses to be run by bodies recognised by the Ministry of Education. Following Law 104 of 1992, the provision of these courses was entrusted to the universities rather than to the recognised state bodies and specialised institutes. However, the latter continued to operate as an exception, as the universities were still being prepared to organise the specialisation courses[13].

3. The Reforms of the 1990s

Following the 1987 Constitutional Court ruling, the adoption of the 1992 framework law and the innovations in the pedagogical-didactic field, as well as

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[12] Following Constitutional Court Ruling No. 215 of 3 June 1987, which sanctioned the right of disabled students to attend any school, including upper secondary schools, the curricula were adapted with the Ministerial Decree of 14 June 1988.

[13] From 1993 to 1996 the authorisations for the operation of the specialised affiliated institutions were suspended. Ministerial Ordinance No. 76 of 1996 again assigned ownership of the courses to recognised state and non-state institutions.

the new organisational and administrative perspectives resulting from the start of school autonomy, the need for a further revision of the curriculum arose, which led to a further reform of the curriculum of the two-year courses in 1995[14].

The need to devote attention and build competencies for intellectual disabilities was becoming more and more cogent due to a considerable increase in the number of students at school (especially after the Constitutional Court's ruling that students with disabilities should also be accommodated in High Schools), which came with «different training needs of the teacher assigned to support activities» (Ministerial Decree, 27 June 1995, n. 226).

The Ministerial Decree stipulated that the support teacher had to ensure that he or she possessed «relational, disciplinary and, above all, methodological skills, as well as general knowledge relating to disability situations», aiming to «bring out clearly the link between content and method, from which, therefore, a perfect welding between cultural needs and operational skills, between theoretical content and application aspects can result»[15].

The need for widespread training emerged forcefully, which could no longer

> be exhausted nor therefore limited to the training of 'specialised' personnel, instead highlighting the imperative need for all school personnel to be retrained in order to implement strategies and techniques that allow for full and effective school integration (Ministerial Decree, 27 June 1995, n. 226).

Therefore, a programme was envisioned to create a coordinated system of courses – distinguishing initial teacher training from recurrent and in-service training – aimed at updating and retraining the teaching staff, paying particular attention to those with consolidated teaching experience. All this according to a principle of graduality, which could be transformed into a system of permanent and recurrent refresher courses in the long run, giving greater value to professional experience.

A central theme – which has been emerging since the early 1980s and is still at the centre of attention today – is that of the so-called 'delegation process', i.e. the attitude of the curricular teacher who, in the presence of a colleague specialised in support, delegates the 'taking charge' of the pupil to him or her. In this regard, the decree specified that all teachers were called upon to

> identify the *specific personal needs* of the subjects in difficulty, both concerning the impairment that affected them and with regard to the individual's experience of the resulting impediments[16] (Ministerial Decree, 27 June 1995, n. 226).

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[14]   The regulatory instrument was Ministerial Decree 226 of 27 June of that year, which still referred to Presidential Decree 970/1975.

[15]   Ministerial Decree no. 226 of 27 June 1995 on 'New programmes for specialisation courses pursuant to Presidential Decree 970/75'.

[16]   «It was emphasised that the presence of specialised support teachers should not be a source of 'separation'. Separation, we should remember, undermines the very foundations of action to achieve integration, not segregation or mere tolerance of presence. In this regard, it seems

As for the general organisation and duration of the course, there was a reduction in the total number of hours to 1,150. The layout was well structured, always combining practical time and operational practice alongside theoretical input.

Particular attention was paid to the coherence of the curriculum, the interdisciplinarity and the coordination of teaching, with a 'steering group' being set up between all those responsible to avoid repetitions or gaps in the curriculum. Finally, a maximum number of trainees (no more than 40) was set to ensure the quality of teaching.

The subject disciplines were grouped into five areas, each of which included the following:

1. *The framework*: legislation, sociology and pedagogy (250 hours);
2. *The subject*: psychology and biology (200 hours);
3. *The method*: problems of methodology (120 hours);
4. *Languages*: non-verbal communication, language, logic and mathematics (280 hours);
5. *Professionalism*: re-evaluating personal experience and organisation of professional skills (300 hours).

The last area, transversal to all the others, replaced the activities grouped under the 'operational dimension' and 'indirect internship' in the previous programmes.

It should be noted that this time, the curriculum also included content on the History of Pedagogical Thought, reported as follows: «Outlines of the history of pedagogical currents and the thought of the most important authors» (Ministerial Decree, 27 June 1995, n. 226).

The attention paid to the pedagogical, methodological-didactic and relational rather than the clinical element is amply demonstrated in the programme annexed to the ministerial decree, which warns, for example, that

> each classification is both a 'wealth' of references, useful for an in-depth knowledge of the psychological framework in which the individual case is placed, but also the 'danger' of an interpretative cage, which must, of course, be avoided (Ministerial Decree, 27 June 1995, n. 226).

reasonable, in fact, to emphasise how the exercise of professional-teaching action, on the part of the teacher who has attended the course, cannot in any way be a substitute for that usually exercised by colleagues, but must instead be a sort of support, destined to highlight to colleagues the methodological and didactic-disciplinary nodes in which the action of education and instruction concerning subjects in a situation of handicap is most jammed. The identification and highlighting of knots will then be followed by joint work to find strategies and techniques (also in the disciplinary sphere) to untie or cut the knots themselves. It is not possible to hypothesise proxy solutions for overcoming the difficulties. Still, instead, it seems very important that the additional and specialised teaching resources (the so-called support teachers) can be spent on collaborative work both in terms of planning and programming school action and in terms of the operational implementation of the project itself» (Ministerial Decree, 27 June 1995, n. 226).

4. From Two-year to One-year Courses

Just one year after Minister Lombardi's reform of the two-year courses, an amendment to the Finance Act was approved, reducing their duration to one year. This was prompted by a particular and fortuitous circumstance, namely the need to make use of redundant teachers and the concomitant need to fill auxiliary posts, the number of which had increased significantly. Law no. 662 of 23 December 1996 (1997 Finance Act) therefore provided for the creation of intensive courses of 450 hours for redundant staff[17].

This legislative intervention provoked protests from many associations representing people with disabilities, who called for its abolition. At the same time, it fuelled the dissatisfaction of all those teachers who had specialised in the two-year courses. Nevertheless, the one-year intensive courses continued until 2001, i.e. for a good four years, resulting in a general reduction in the skills of the new specialised teachers, who were trained with a halved curriculum (some courses were not even held due to lack of time, as in the case of sensory disabilities, leaving the participants with a general refresher course on the subject and personal further studies in the field)[18].

Once the decision was taken to shorten the one-year course, it was extended to other pathways, adopted to offer the opportunity to specialise as a support teacher to undergraduates of the new degree course in Primary Education from the academic year 2001-2.

The specialisation course was integrated as an additional postgraduate semester into the training course itself for future pre-school and primary school teachers. With 400 extra hours, gaining the title of 'Support Teacher' was possible.

The 400 hours were also added to the SSIS[19] course for future secondary school teachers. Finally, an 800-hour course was offered again at the SSIS for teachers already qualified to teach in secondary schools.

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[17] Law no. 662/1996: «For redundant staff who are, compared to the provincial staff allocations, with an open-ended employment relationship, in addition to the vocational retraining courses provided by art. 473 of the Consolidated Text approved by Legislative Decree no. 297 of 16 April 1994, intensive courses *of a duration not exceeding one year* will also be set up to obtain the specialisation qualification required for the activity of support for the school integration of disabled pupils. Collective bargaining will also establish the criteria for the ex officio mobility of the same personnel». Intensive courses were regulated by the Ministerial Decree of 16 June 1997.

[18] Art. 4, Ministerial Decree of 27 June 1997: «Teachers who have acquired the professionalism... must follow specific refresher and in-depth training initiatives on the integration of pupils in particular situations of sensory handicap... a priority condition for service on support posts for pupils with sensory handicaps».

[19] Art. 3, Ministerial Decree of 26 May 1998: «Specific additional teaching activities, of at least 400 hours, relating to the school integration of pupils with disabilities are provided for, in order to enable students who so wish to acquire the educational content based on which the degree may constitute a qualification for admission to competitive examinations for learning support activities».

The one-year duration was stabilised by Ministerial Decree 249/2010, which established the one-year (60CFU) postgraduate specialisation course in its current form[20].

5. The Future of Teacher Training

The historical 'excursus' should exhaustively account for the drastic reduction in the duration of courses. Integration has become more complex (we are now working towards inclusion) but has yet to become more straightforward. Suffice it to think of the greater accuracy of the diagnostic process and the parallel increase in the number of certifications; of the presence of foreign pupils, who represent about 13% of the total school population, of whom over 43,000 have disabilities, the pathology of which is aggravated by the obstacle of poor knowledge (or complete lack of knowledge) of the Italian language; of the concentration of different types of special educational needs in classes and often in the same class...

So why shorten the course?

According to the associations of people with disabilities represented in the National Observatory on School Inclusion, this training would be insufficient to equip new teachers with the necessary skills to manage the complexity of the school inclusion process.

There is an urgent need for systemic action to strengthen the general level of skills, focusing on initial and in-service training. And this is what is currently being worked out at the ministerial level, in the various technical tables convened to implement the delegations provided for in Legislative Decree 66/2017.

For all these reasons, Legislative Decree 66/2017, in Article 12, provides for an increase of 60 CFUs in the training course for pre-school and primary school teachers on school inclusion (unfortunately, the same is not provided for secondary school teachers). And, very appropriately, the increase in CFUs is not included in the specialisation course for support teachers, but in the ordinary course, to say that all teachers, even the 'curricular' ones, need to strengthen their competence in inclusion, given the complexity and heterogeneity of our classes. Unfortunately, more than six years after it entered into force, Legislative Decree 66/2017 has still not been implemented as far as this issue is concerned. There has been an attempt to introduce (compulsory) in-service training for all teachers on inclusion issues, but the decree has only been in force for one year. Although there is a broad consensus on the need for an 'enhanced' course for all teachers on school inclusion, the implementing measure has not seen the light of day, and its implementation has even been postponed to the school year 2025/26.

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[20] The courses took the permanent form of annual duration, except for the establishment – between 1998 and 2000 – of courses in agreement with specialised institutes and training bodies (Interministerial Decree No. 460 of 24 November 1998), which were then suspended in 2001 (ministerial note prot. No. 10496/DM of 24 April 2001).

It should also be stressed that it is essential that the internship does not end with passive observation but that the candidate is increasingly involved in taking on responsibility for the disabled pupil. This is the direction dictated by the law, which is currently shared by all the parties involved, although it has yet to be implemented.

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At this point, we can ask ourselves the following question: what role can historical knowledge play in training future teachers in Italian schools?

And especially in relation to the topic of this article: what historical knowledge can be useful in the training of a support teacher?

As we have seen, in the evolution of the training of these special needs teachers, the historical aspect has been eliminated, even though those who teach special needs sometimes use historical knowledge. However, the historical aspect appears outside national training plans and academic curricula.

The difficulties and stumbling blocks on the road to full inclusion of all pupils should make us question the goodness of what we are doing – starting with the curricula and methodologies adopted – to see if we should change.

The emphasis on professional skills, the importance of personal motivation, the deepening of knowledge and the right attitude for this particular vocation are evident.

We have seen a problem with the timing, i.e. the length of the courses, as can be deduced from the excursus that has reduced the teacher training courses from two years to one (and also reduced the content on an extensive range of subjects).

The standard that foresees the inclusion of 60 CFUs in school inclusion in the courses of study in Primary Education Sciences is undoubtedly an excellent solution that should be pursued. The contents and methodologies remain to be defined (translated into university regulations: the scientific disciplinary areas and the characterisation of the training activities).

'Training' does not mean 'giving instructions', let alone 'transferring concepts'. This is something that is affirmed in all quarters, academic or otherwise, and on which everyone agrees. However, it is often paradoxical to see the re-proposal of work programmes which, in essence, produce a 'gorging on ideas' by those who are to be trained without an actual training project.

'Forming' means giving oneself a new shape, mould and bring to light unexpressed 'potentials', reinforcing muted others. Then what? How can we achieve all this with marathon lessons lasting four or five hours during an entire afternoon[21], where legal aspects and bureaucratic issues (relating to document compilation) take up more and more time?

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[21] Support courses mostly train teachers – precarious or tenured – who are already in service, and therefore, classes have to be held in the afternoons or, often, at weekends.

Some argue that laboratory and internship hours complement and enrich the structural framework of courses. The workshop aspect is essential; undoubtedly, internships and laboratory hours help to provide an orientation towards concreteness. However, 'doing' without 'planning', or lack of planning, and theory divorced from application do not positively impact teaching.

Something more is needed, which is encapsulated in a 'vision', in the overall perception of the human being placed in a context while an educational relationship takes place.

There is now an opportunity for change. The rule to be applied, contained in Legislative Decree 66/2017, therefore, opens up the concrete possibility of revising the content of the training pathway. This could be the opportunity to include historical knowledge in the training pathway, to focus more on teaching skills and, finally, to create a bridge between clinical and pedagogical expertise.

I am convinced that historical knowledge can contribute to the production of fundamental factors for educational processes, such as the ability to 'synthesise', i.e. to organise the concepts learnt into broad frames of reference, opening up the possibility of comparison and contrast with the experiences of others (contemporary or from other times) and with one's own.

In order to put forward a proposal that takes into account what we have written so far, it is necessary to focus on the types of historical knowledge that can be useful in the training of a support teacher. But to do this, it is necessary to clarify the meaning and function that we ascribe to history, which is not only what we find in the dictionary definition, i.e. «the ordered presentation of past events, resulting from a critical and rigorous investigation that examines both their veracity and their interrelationships». It is something more, which has an essential value in the formation of a teacher.

6. About the Utility of Historical Knowledge in Teacher Training

What is History? From a certain point of view, it is the unfolding of the human essence in the world. History describes this unfolding, interpenetrates with it, tries to interpret it, reconstruct it… in order to render each of us as much as possible in his 'Humanity'. This brings man closer to man, human being to human being. When Emmanuel Lévinas (1961) speaks of the 'face of the other', he is focusing on the human being's relationship with the other in his becoming, which is History.

If this is History – a narrative that unites human beings in relationships – it is profoundly formative because it leads us to 'identify' with our fellow human beings, to be other than ourselves, to escape the personal ego, in other words, to create the conditions for true sociality.

'To identify oneself' is to shape oneself, to build a critical consciousness, to channel inner forces according to a precise direction that comes from the conscious choice of having learned – from the other – what is right. In this way we build values.

In the end, the figures of the great educators, but also of the humble teachers, of all those who have fought for an idea – in our case, an idea aimed at improving the lives of others, in the sense of better developing their potential – become elements of inner reflection, of comparison with our thinking and acting. Characters such as Don Milani or Italia Donati, with their 'history', show us the human path, make visible how coherence can be embodied in concrete action, and teach us how an idea becomes life with their testimony.

What lesson could be more useful for those who are about to help other beings in training to grow? Life is learned from life, not from words. And values are learned from living examples.

For several years now, I have had teaching experience in special needs teacher training courses, and I have increasingly noticed a lack of historical awareness, of conceptual frameworks of the world of inclusion that only historical knowledge can help to create. And this, I believe, is the consequence of removing the teaching of the History of Education from these courses. It should therefore be reintroduced, according to new perspectives and new ways.

In this respect, I find the *longue durèe* approach interesting – I believed in the 'Nouvelle Histoire' and I am convinced that space should also be given to the study of long-lasting phenomena – but I believe that, in addition to it, because of the brevity of the period in relation to the events of school inclusion that have taken place over the last fifty years, it is useful to adopt, as I have said, the biographical approach. Moreover, the same French school of the *Annales* had also recently adopted this approach. In this regard, I recall an expression of Sofia Boesch Gajano (I was her student) speaking of 'Louis IX. The Saint' by Jacques Le Goff: «Biography is once again the plot of history» (1997). There are many examples of this in historical studies, finding common orientations and denominators with other research fields and approaches, such as 'public history'.

These last remarks are obviously of methodological value, but they are also substantial: the possibility of summarising experiences, methods, and operational guidelines through the biographical approach has the power to give orientation to oneself, and therefore to 'educate and shape' in the deepest and truest sense.

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Historical-educational Memory in Teachers' Training to Promote an Equal and Inclusive Culture

Francesca Dello Preite, Dalila Forni

Abstract:

The chapter highlights the potential of historical training to facilitate a critical reinterpretation of gender as a possible analytical category in the study of the History of Education. The chapter focuses on the use of autobiographical narration as a tool to reconstruct personal and professional history. It demonstrates how this process can facilitate not only the creation of a shared historical memory but also a process of emancipation and social awareness through the inclusion of new voices. The construction of a gender-sensitive collective memory through autobiographical narration is illustrated by a project of research-action-training with educators, teachers, and families carried out from 2020 to 2022 with the municipality of Livorno and the University of Florence.

Keywords: Gender Identity, History of Education, Collective Memory, Autobiography

1. Introduction

The topic of gender is currently at the center of an urgent interdisciplinary debate that involves various fields of study, including Educational Sciences and Pedagogy. These disciplines analyze human behavior and its educability in both intra-and interpersonal relationships, which occur in constantly changing spaces and times.

Since the latter half of the 20th century, Social Pedagogy and the History of Education have increasingly focused on the relationships between men and women at different stages of life, highlighting the power imbalances in these relationships, where the male gender has historically held a privileged and superior position to the female gender (Cantarella 2019; Cagnolati, Pinto Minerva, and Ulivieri 2013; Connell 2009; Covato 2014; Seveso 2001; Ulivieri 1995; 2014).

It is from this ancient asymmetry that education itself has reproduced gender inequalities and conditioning, whose effects can be manifested both in aberrant and harmful behaviors and actions, such as femicide, and in more subtle and indirect discriminatory attitudes, such as sexist language and hate speech, which permeate the everyday life and existence of all of us through increasingly sophisticated channels of information and communication (Loiodice 2020; Dello Preite 2019a; Pinto Minerva 2013).

Gender binarism, a product of a still deeply rooted patriarchal culture, leads to a contrasting understanding of male and female, placing them at two opposite poles, with different possibilities and privileges, and tied to a harmful double standard. The ensuing sexist bias often results in predetermined existential paths that do not take into account the individual's attitudes, but are based on norms and values related to socially constructed gender canons that are transmitted almost unconsciously from one generation to the next, perpetuating practices and destinies canonized from the earliest years of life (Ghigi 2019; Dello Preite 2019b).

Therefore, the purpose of this contribution is to clarify how education and historical training of educational figures, especially educators and teachers, can create the prerequisites and conditions for stimulating a critical reinterpretation of the construct of gender and initiate an emancipatory, egalitarian and sustainable process that can take identity and social complexity as its main paradigm in order to generate new inter-gender relations.

2. The Role of Education and Educational Contexts in the Construction of Gender Identities

In recent decades, studies in Gender Pedagogy have shown that individuals construct their own identities and learn the meaning of gender through interactions with others in various social contexts. This process is defined and created on the basis of the interconnection of constantly changing interpretations of gender. As stated by Simonetta Ulivieri, this is partially due to the movements and studies that have given voice to the feminine throughout the 20th century and have transformed traditional paradigms of gender education:

> By valorizing women's experiences and subjectivities, women's studies deepened the investigation of the structures of the imaginary and the symbolic, elaborating concepts and categories that allow for the reformulation of knowledge. Thus, it can certainly be said that it has carried out a radical transformation of the theoretical and methodological order that has challenged the traditional model of education (Ulivieri 2011, 23).

Therefore, identity development cannot be understood as a unidimensional process, nor as a replicable process for all individuals in the same manner and under identical conditions. Instead, gender identity is the result of a multifaceted process that develops through various trajectories influenced by transformative growth models. On the one hand, these models may facilitate freedom of choice in new forms of being male or female; on the other hand, they may foster conventional standards and shape identity development according to strictly heteronormative logics that tend to dichotomize humans into distinct and hierarchical categories.

From early childhood, girls and boys go through their own identity maturation processes by building relationships that are initially concentrated within the family sphere through interactions with close parental figures. Successive-

ly, these relations gradually expand to formal educational contexts where children form meaningful bonds with educational staff and peer groups. In the early stages of growth, caregivers have a crucial role in giving the first imprint on the subject and in providing the right educational attention that is beneficial to harmonious and secure growth. Thus, it is essential for educators to be aware of the cultural matrix of the models of care they refer to and which, in educational practice, constitute the main framework within which the new generations take shape and give meaning to their existence. Therefore, analyzing and reconsidering the education provided and practiced in these places is a key initiative to intentionally deconstruct binary and Aristotelian thinking, which are still determining a significant proportion of human identity. These patterns lead to discriminatory and sexist behaviors that persistently exist in everyday life. Dismantling the existing is a significant task that requires the conscious choice and use of unprecedented and plural tools of reflection and action (e.g., the use of the interpretive category of gender and oral and public history, discussed below) aimed at stimulating and supporting the development of a mindset capable of grasping the value of difference and promoting an egalitarian and respectful culture of otherness (Musi 2008; 2020).

> Growing in the awareness of gender identity as an inherent aspect of human experience requires education on recognizing, respecting, and acknowledging the diverse identities within and outside of ourselves, in others, and in our relationships. This encompasses understanding the influence of tradition on our choices and judgments, recognizing it as a guiding force that shapes our thoughts and actions. Reclaiming personal identity from a gendered perspective involves gradually becoming more conscious of the ties that bind individuals to the world around them, including relationships that carry the weight of the past yet strive for future achievements. This implies the need to cultivate questioning thinking as a condition for giving depth and roundness to one's existence […]. Thus, examining gender differences through educational inquiries constitutes a fundamental dimension of existence, and is constituted as a trust in life and its resources, a commitment to pursue opportunities for change and self-design. It is not simply a matter of examining and keeping in mind the salient features that have characterized the masculine and the feminine over time, but of searching within ourselves for the memory – often dormant or unconscious – of these features in order to enter into dialogue with them […]. In this way, the responsibility for gender difference does not only concern ourselves, but also others (our difference is established in the encounter with the other and, at the same time, seeks his or her being, setting in motion a virtuous circle that benefits both) (Musi 2008, 22).

Within this perspective, the training of caregivers should be considered essential in order to rely on figures with hard and soft skills that can accompany the identity development of children according to an equal and non-violent perspective grounded on dialogue, confrontation, mutual respect, and empathy. This is an educational challenge that must be intentionally conceived and

planned to be later transformed into a conscious and responsible professional action that constantly questions current social instances and transformations.

3. Gender as an Analytical Category in the History of Education

In addition to transformative actions designed for professionals working in educational settings, we believe that a second element aimed at supporting an appreciation of difference is history and memory. Given the historical roots of gender-based discrimination, tracing the developments that led to new social, economic, and cultural conditions for women and marginalized groups is an interesting strategy not only for academic research, but also for those who wish to give voice to their own experiences in view of a broader action of cultural change that moves from the individual to the collective and public sphere. The act of autobiographical narration or self-narrative will be examined in the report of the research-action-training with educators, teachers, and families. Such narration allows individuals to reconstruct their personal and professional history and growth. Additionally, it enables the creation of a socially constructed and critically rethought memory through new voices and gender-sensitive self-narratives.

The use of the gender category in the reinterpretation of the past invites us to recognize the cultural legacies and stereotypes that have been conditioning historical thought and knowledge, making them dogmatic. Forming critical skills aimed at stimulating counterfactual reasoning in teachers allows us to build narratives capable of highlighting the plurality of human experiences and broadening our gaze towards alternative futures, deconstructing those stereotypes and patriarchal legacies that are still present in the dominant imaginary transmitted in the training of future teachers. In addition to being an individual reflective process, the awareness of stereotypical representations and narratives must become a collective and transformative process to be developed in teacher training through an inter-gender and inter-generational dialogue that leads to the elaboration of shared values based on equal democracy and inclusion. Therefore, it is necessary to encourage the construction of a gender-oriented historical memory aimed at equal and inclusive teaching-learning processes.

Our historical heritage has been elaborated from an androcentric point of view that has given visibility and power to the male gender, making it the main protagonist of human history. Over the centuries, women or differing genders have been relegated to the margins of history: a secondary voice, «mis-remembered and dis-remembered» (Melman 1993, 6), often ignored or voluntarily silenced, part of a memory rooted in the intimate and domestic sphere. As women were not allowed to be part of political and cultural life, they could not find their place in history as well. Even when women were not totally canceled and managed to appear in history books, they were portrayed as emblems of specific virtues and values, they were conceived as symbols, as models for a precise feminine standard (Covato 2014; Melman 1993). Nowadays, within historical narratives, the female gender still assumes a secondary role, subordinated to the male, which is still considered the main subject and agent of history (Ulivieri 2019).

The questions and answers that historians identify in the process of reconstruction of the past can have a strong influence on the knowledge produced and transmitted in specific cultures, thereby triggering (or disrupting) processes based on prejudice and discrimination. Hence the importance of considering the variable of gender, and more generally of a perspective that allows minorities of all kinds to have a voice from an intersectional perspective (Crenshaw 2017; Lopez 2018; Passerini 2005). Historical representations offered by traditional cultures have been promoting values and dynamics that adhere to the ideal community of a nation, but suppress minor subjective and collective memories (Glassberg 1996, 12). If the interpretation of major images of the past within a particular society reflects its political culture, then as a first step toward an inclusive approach to history and education it is necessary to restore women to history and to explore the meanings of historical experiences held by women or minority groups (Bridenthal, and Koonz 1977; Ulivieri 1995).

Over the centuries, the feminine voice has emerged on some valuable occasions, thereby encouraging broader perspectives in the interpretation of male and female experience and, more recently, of forms of identity beyond the construct of gender from a binary perspective (Burgio 2015). Quoting Billie Melman:

> The concept of the historicity of women is quite novel. It was alien to historiography and to Western historical thought and political tradition. Hence the very emergence, around the middle of the nineteenth century, of the female historical subject and its incorporation in collective memory brought about the evolution of a discourse that challenged the hegemonic language of history and politics (1993, 6).

Consequently, in recent centuries and particularly during the 20th century, a new awareness emerged: in order to understand the subaltern classes, history cannot be studied by focusing exclusively on the dominant classes and adopting their point of view, but it is necessary to listen to the different forms of otherness that are part of society (Passerini 2005, 7). As a result, gender can provide new evidences, perspectives, and interpretive keys to memory and history: «gender is historically significant» (Rose 2010, 11).

However, while a counter-history of women began as early as the nineteenth century, even nowadays it is not possible to speak of a history studied and transmitted from an equal gender perspective. The knowledge and historical memories and values we find and transmit in the teaching-learning paths (starting from primary school to university) are considered and treated erroneously as 'neutral' cultural products, making us lose sight of the dimension of gender, which remains hidden and ignored despite being highly influential. Therefore, it is crucial, especially in education, to capture a female historical discourse and to understand its meaning and pedagogical significance in order to create a counter-narrative that does not remain at the theoretical level but implements a concrete influence on the personal and professional lives of those who work in educational spaces.

Indeed, the value of history is not simply conceptual: «The writing of history and its reading were not meant merely to provide information, but to educate

citizens and apprentice them in a useful life of active civic service» (Melman 1993, 10). History gives us lessons that can encourage a critical look toward the present or the future, actively and concretely educating citizens. It is precisely education and its embedded look to the future, to new generations, that should turn to history to carefully read the past, even in its silences, and to build the future through new memories and new values (Mead 2022). In the words of Kenneth Burke, «a way of seeing is also not seeing» (1935, 70): the absence of a gender-specific analytical category in the study of history is indicative of a disregard influenced by various social and political factors that have marginalized women, despite their undeniable importance in the realms of education, academia, and caregiving (Ascenzi 2019; Ulivieri 2019; Covato 2014).

Even today, a comprehensive study of the history of education and schooling from a gender perspective remains largely unexplored, not only in terms of training for those working in schools and educational settings, but also for students of all ages. Hansot and Tyack (1988) argue that addressing this gap requires an institutional approach that has yet to be fully considered, and this remains as relevant today as it was over thirty years ago. Moreover, this approach could be implemented through public awareness campaigns conducted both in academic and institutional settings and outside the academic or scholastic world, that is, in the wider field of Public History, in order to plan a broader action with more pronounced social feedback, interweaving different perspectives (Kelley 1978; Glassberg 1996; Bandini, and Oliviero 2019).

Using the category of gender in Public History and in narratives created by and addressed to popular audiences favors the emergence of what remained implicit in the history of education (and not only), giving visibility to marginal figures and, in particular, to girls and women, usually excluded from the narrative and absent in the memoirs. Therefore, gender could be conceived as an interpretative and critical-reflective dimension of educational and scholastic phenomena and experiences.

4. Autobiographical Narratives as a Tool for Self-awareness and Historical Consciousness

Biography and autobiography have been and continue to be essential tools for challenging dominant models and disrupting conventional norms. Self-narrative provides a valuable opportunity to create a socially shared imaginary that follows new voices. Women's life stories are capable of stimulating different perspectives and, since the twentieth century, have been fostering a counter-proposal to collective memory and dominant gender definitions, stepping out of the domestic walls to create new collective memories.

As highlighted by Melman: «The remembrance of the past was recognized as a potent tool in the politicization of groups which had not been considered political before the beginning of the twentieth century, such as women and the working classes. [...] Memory could mean membership» (1993, 35). Through the voice of a female collectivity that goes beyond domestic memory, and thus

through a canonical 'gendered' historical consciousness, self-narratives can ve-hiculate change, reflect on the origins of discrimination, identify new paradigms, and arrange a different way of reading the past and, consequently, the present and the future (Gergen 2005; Musi 2008):

> The acknowledgement that women were active historical agents was probably one of the most significant changes in the historical imagination and in historical writings between, say, the 1870s and the outbreak of World War II. There is during that period a swing from the remembrance of heroic individuals towards the recapitulation of the experience of majorities of women. This swing involved a perceptible change in the ways in which experience was defined, recorded and emplotted (Melman 1993, 17).

Thus, there is a transition from the transmission of a single history, unified and based on a single point of view – the male one – to a concentric history aimed at the promotion of multiple subjects, contexts and perspectives; a history increasingly aware of the relevance of women's issues and of the new movements on the subject, which called for a redefinition of the relationship between history, memory and gender (Passerini 2005, 5; Melman 1993, 18). The studies of some Italian pedagogues (Ascenzi 2019; Covato 2014; Seveso 2001; Ulivieri 1995; 2019) have offered new representations and meanings to the history of school and education based on personal and collective narratives. New pedagogical research emphasizes the potential of autobiographical narration (Demetrio 1996; Cambi 2002; Ulivieri 2019) to shape the self and create a shared historical, social, and educational heritage that includes disadvantaged or marginalized identities.

Self-narrative practices have the potential to be formative and transformative (Bruner 1988; Formenti 2006; Smorti 2007) by allowing us to connect with different perspectives and become conscious of our place in human history through storytelling – whether written or oral (Ulivieri 2019, 6).

> Precisely because autobiographical paths are connoted as self-formative and transformative processes with clear planning purposes, there is a need for confrontation with others, and also for becoming other. Through the practice of distancing, as Demetrio defines it, we achieve such becoming other, distancing from ourselves as if we were another person; this allows us to analyze and understand more clearly certain choices, actions or renunciations that have caused our life path to unfold in a certain way rather than another, but above all, it is precisely by becoming aware of these factors that we are able to see more clearly where we are going or rather where we might still go (Sirignano, and Maddalena 2012, 87).

Autobiographical narration is a useful method for questioning unchallenged assumptions. Our understanding of history is frequently distorted by canonical interpretations, resulting in the transmission of a historical narrative based on biases, assumptions, and predetermined analytical categories, as noted by Jordanova (2000, 13). To overcome biases, it is essential to engage in storytelling and subsequent dialogues between individuals from various generational groups,

including educators, teachers, and parents. Through these intergenerational inter-actions, a shared, self-conscious, and multifaceted vision of the past and the present can emerge. Providing a historical background for identification and examining similar narratives that establish empathetic connections between past and present broadens and validates the viewpoint of oppressed or marginalized groups: «the rediscovery of female voices has affirmed the need for female voices now, and viceversa» (Passerini 2005, 6). In this case, teachers' and educators' narratives can contribute to the creation of an intergenerational and inclusive school memory, which is the culmination of a chorus of experiences both inside and outside of educational contexts. When shared, these accounts can enrich not only collective memory (Meda 2019; Yvanes-Cabrera, Meda, and Viñao 2017) but also the work of professional educators from a gender perspective (Dello Preite 2019b).

5. The Research with Teachers and Educators

5.1 Context and Theoretical Framework

An effort to reconstruct personal and professional histories from a gender perspective was made in the projects *Gender, Literature and Education. Educating for Acceptance of Differences through Children's Literatur,* and *Education for Differences, Gender and Narratives for Children.* These projects were carried out in collaboration with the Municipality of Livorno and the University of Florence during the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years. The research was not directly aimed at the construction of a collective school memory. Rather, it was a necessary step in achieving a broader purpose, the details of which are discussed below. This broader purpose led to interesting results in terms of self-narrative and collective memory in education. Consequently, in the study memory was viewed as a tool for shaping the future and encouraging counterfactual thinking here (Armitage, and Guldi 2014).

The partnership between the University of Florence and the Municipality of Livorno has been ongoing since 2016 with the goal of promoting gender awareness in educational services in the Livorno area. In continuation with the previous action-research activities, the projects presented in this paper sought to implement a gender culture oriented towards the valorization of differences, starting from a meaningful reflection on the words, discourses and narratives that are commonly used in interpersonal relationships and that activate the processes of identity construction (Brambilla 2016; Ulivieri 2019; Forni 2022). The projects defined a number of specific goals, namely: to raise awareness of gender stereotypes and invite participants to reflect on the issue across past and present times; to recognize the presence of sexist stereotypes in verbal and non-verbal languages, narratives, games and toys with reference to one's own experience and current methods and tools used in educational settings; to identify educational practices that can encourage girls and boys to experience new intergenerational relationships based on equality and mutual respect; and

to critically recognize the ongoing social transformations by comparing them with one's personal and professional experience.

To achieve these objectives, multiple actions have been carried out over the years, including trainings, seminars, workshops, observations on the field, opportunities for exchange and self-narration, involving not only educators and teachers, but also parents and family members. Specific goals have been achieved in training environments aimed at promoting active dialogue amongst educators, teachers and families, starting with a participatory and shared reflection on one's experiences in the personal, professional, and family spheres.

The selected theoretical framework is participatory action research (Baldacci, and Frabboni 2013; Demetrio 2020; Trinchero 2002; Whyte 1991) as it is considered capable of enhancing three fundamental aspects of knowledge: research, aimed at systematically investigating emerging issues in relation to gendered social and pedagogical problems; action, through which the subject knows and learns by interacting with the reality around him or her and, simultaneously, works collectively to shape it according to his or her needs and expectations; and participation, to enhance the subjects who are part of the research and generate rational and emotional interactions which are useful for the development of the two previous points. Thus, the research was conducted with a participatory perspective, utilizing constant and active sharing of tools, reflections, processes, ideas, and proposals. Its final goal was to work towards collective change from the bottom-up, not only to reshape the contexts of investigation and action, but also to transform the participants themselves (Mezirow 2016).

5.2 Experiencing Autobiographical Narration

Some of the actions planned by the research during its two-year period (namely the focus on the personal and collective narratives of the teachers and educators working with the 0-6 age group and the family members of the children belonging to these services in the Livorno area) will be specifically presented here. These actions were carried out at different points during the action research program. They were either implemented during a preliminary phase of self-reflection or as a workshop phase in a more advanced stage of the project. In either case, self-narration was suggested as a collective practice with a reflective focus. This approach was considered necessary for the historical contextualization of the narrated experiences and to develop gender awareness:

> For those charged with educational responsibilities (parents, educators, teachers), turning diversity into an experience of growth means knowing how to contextualize one's own gendered subjectivity in time and society, to establish a mature and conscious relationship with culture, discrimination and the potential it contains, so that the relationship with the other can enjoy a wider margin of expression and freedom (Musi 2008, 1).

Participatory action research allowed for utilizing the transformative potential of narratives as a tool for building a shared memory. This potential was ac-

tivated through the reconstruction of the experiences in educational contexts, tracing life stories across different decades that could capture the needs, resources and transformations of women's existence in school contexts. Therefore, a space for dialogue and self-narration was created in order to share the participants' personal and professional stories from a gender perspective, to interweave the educational experiences of the participants with their own backgrounds, and to re-narrate the role of female educators and teachers in the services of Livorno from a new standpoint. These dialogues and self-disclosures permitted a confrontation between genders and generations, between educational personnel and family members, resulting in an exchange of knowledges, ideas and life stories that were able to generate a dilemma that is essential for questioning the norm and opening up new equal horizons (Nussbaum 2000).

For this particular action, an unstructured oral narration based on some structured prompts was preferred to an interview or survey. The oral narrative was conceived as a source of change, a tool to create dialogue and a bottom-up empowerment practice. Indeed, oral narratives create a stimulating triangulation between the speaker, past events or experiences, and present contexts of memory (Frisch 1990, 22; Bornat 1977).

Autobiographical narratives and oral histories are closely linked to gender studies, especially women's studies. Oral history has often been employed to investigate women's history. For example, since the 1970s, there has been a growing need to expose a hidden history and provide a space for the «missing voices of unprivileged to create 'a new history from below'», starting with oral testimonies (Passerini 2005, 4). Orality is volatile and subjective, but it can serve as a vehicle for creating awareness through fruitful peer-to-peer dialogue, where subjectivity can become a resource for shaping new forms of memory in both private and public ways. This research begins with the individual participant's subjectivity and subsequently brings their personal dimensions into the collective group dialogue. Indeed, self-narrative is intertwined with the narratives of others, resulting in an enriching exchange that makes autobiography both a subjective and collective process (Bell, and Yalom 1990).

A long-term approach was also favored in these autobiographical actions in order to move away from a simple representation of the here and now and to create a systematicity and continuity with the past that would take into account the slow changes and evolutions of the past decades, outlining particular trends and points of interest (Armitage, and Guldi 2014; Mead 2022). The research involved over fifty educators and teachers and some family members, representing a complex sample with different professional and personal backgrounds, such as the wide range of age groups involved, from new educators to almost retired staff. The collective memory was reconstructed with consideration for different spheres of action and research. This is a limited time history, dating back to the latter half of the 20th century. However, it has the potential to inspire thoughtful reflections and generate a public debate on the diverse life and work experiences of recent decades.

The ultimate goal of the autobiographical narratives was to raise awareness of personal and collective gender stereotypes and to increase the teachers' historical consciousness before proceeding with their work with children (Musi 2008). The purpose of shared narratives – and of the research in general – is to explore the past in order to find insights to deconstruct the present, to break down the most common assumptions in educational contexts and develop new knowledge based on inclusive values. Contemporary values are strongly interconnected with the narratives of past professionals: narratives that can help us to elaborate biases and inequalities in school services (Gergen 2005). Historical consciousness can help professionals find a balance between personal values and the system's values (Mead 2022).

This activity involved sharing personal experiences from a gender-sensitive viewpoint, in order to reflect on private and societal memories linked to identity development. The approach was based on the formation of heterogeneous groups of a dozen people in a circle and the use of different narrative tools depending on the occasion and the group of participants. For example, prompts that facilitate voluntary recalls and sharing of significant memories related to the construction of their gender identity, as follows:

- Semi-structured questions: both wide-ranging and specific questions were asked to the participants to solicit some specific reflections on their education from a gender perspective. These questions encompassed a wide range of topics, such as personal, professional, family, and childhood experiences. Specific questions included: What models (family, educational, narrative) have shaped me from a gender perspective? What stories have conditioned my expectations? How have the stories I've been exposed to shaped my expectations? How does my gender influence my personal and professional decisions? How do individuals from different generations understand their gender identity and roles within educational institutions? What narratives from my past - whether from childhood, adolescence, or adulthood - have established models for me to follow or reject?
- Visual prompts: a selection of images to be interpreted and 'narrated' were shown to the participants. For example, a collection of images featuring a bear with stereotypical attributes or objects was used to create a brief narrative exploring 'instinctive' gender stereotypes related to the figures. This prompted a collaborative analysis of their reactions, searching for factors that might have led to stereotypical or anti-stereotypical interpretations in their own life experiences, whether personal or professional;
- Readings of stories such as fairy tales and picture books, followed by a reflection on some of the emerging stereotypes, related to their own personal and professional experience, and a discussion on a possible re-reading (both of the story and of their own experience) according to new perspectives;

- Graphic diaries: starting with a page from the book *Wreck This Journal* by Keri Smith, participants completed a grid independently. This grid allowed them to insert spots, symbols, drawings, and clippings related to their own story from a gender perspective, from childhood to adulthood. Then, they verbally shared and compared the insights that emerged in the group (Forni 2021).

All stimuli, whether visual or verbal, were combined with moments of reflection and sharing. The central aim of the study was not to systematically collect data on the subject, but to facilitate a biographical exchange that would prompt participants to consider various viewpoints and experiences. This exchange would help construct a multifaceted, socially shared memory enriched by previously unexplored, divergent perspectives.

6. Conclusions

The theoretical analysis and participatory-action research project explored the importance of education and historical training for educators and teachers from a gender perspective. The action-participatory research in early childhood services in the Municipality of Livorno was designed to foster greater awareness of those gender constructs that influence social behavior and can unintentionally manifest in professional action. The goal is to foster an inclusive and equal culture for future generations by recognizing and sharing stories and narratives created by humans in the relational and social mosaic of their encounters with others. Therefore, this training – that should be encouraged both in the initial university courses and in professional practice – aims to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for educators and teachers to trace, recognize, and deconstruct historical and logical categories that have divided humanity into two separate universes, characterized by unequal and opposed levels of power. In addition, the training wants to equip educators and teachers with the necessary tools to deconstruct the cultural dichotomy that has historically granted male gender and patriarchy the privilege of asserting and imposing their dominance in both private and public spheres. This dichotomy has also perpetuated the exclusion of women from the main socio-political-cultural scenes, thereby obscuring their experiences and knowledge.

The analyses conducted on the collected data confirmed that formal and non-formal educational contexts have an impact on the training of teachers in both personal (childhood memories, family, relationships) and professional (training on the subject, experiences, exchange among colleagues) spheres. Thus, it is important to simultaneously work on two levels: with childhood, in order to promote stereotype-free images directed towards the future, and with educational professionals, in order to offer the appropriate reflective and didactic tools and to train for greater gender awareness in and out of the work sphere. Additionally, autobiographical storytelling has proven to be an effective tool. Personal storytelling encouraged teachers to develop social and historical awareness and challenge

self-perpetuating stereotypes associated with femininity and female educators. The teachers' narratives also highlighted recurring themes and key perspectives:

- The importance of childhood experiences in the development of certain gender standards that lead to fixed norms which are not always easy to deconstruct during adulthood;
- The evolution of gender identity at different stages of life and the factors that influence it;
- The effectiveness of being exposed to different models on several levels (family, school, imaginary) both during childhood and adulthood;
- The interplay of the personal and professional sphere in the unconscious transmission of long-lasting stereotypes;
- The importance of collective awareness and consciousness-raising for the benefit of both the subjects and the educational contexts in which they work on a daily basis;
- The construction of a shared historical memory, taking into account different subjectivities and experiences, so as to give voice to those counter-narratives that go beyond the canon.

The exchange of narratives in various formats fostered intergenerational interaction on two primary levels: educators who had recently entered the profession were able to reconstruct a historical perspective on both gender and the work of educators; at the same time, educators who had been in the profession for many years had the opportunity to look at the same issues from a new perspective. Professionals were involved in a process of «rescue from historical oblivion» (Passerini 2005, 2) by constructing a collective memory with diverse perspectives and shared awareness.

This critical awareness may enable teachers to introduce new perspectives in the classroom and explore new ways of living, teaching and conceiving femininities and masculinities in the future. Therefore, non-traditional views give rise to innovative concepts – new stories and histories – and foster a stronger connection with younger generations. These processes reinforce the growth of critical pedagogies in different contexts and create new spaces for new counter-narratives.

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The Historical Thinking Skills of Future Teachers Through the Development of Materials for/with Schools[*]

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Abstract:

In this chapter we begin by succinctly exploring some theoretical keys to the meaning of history for the subject. We continue by highlighting in an argued way the importance of educational historical thinking in teacher training. We close the text by presenting the experience gained in recent years through a research and teaching innovation project focus on the elaboration of entertaining-didactic materials inspired by contemporary pedagogical thought by infant school teachers in training. However, on the basis of this experience, we plan to refocus the initiative, from now on, towards a public history initiative, in which shared authorship, community participation and embedding in the territory become the fundamental axes on which to work.

Keywords: Historical Thinking, Teacher Education, Collaborative Creation of Knowledge, Play-based Teaching Materials

1. Introduction

In the world of education, methodological strategies are constantly being revised. We continually seek to improve teaching-learning processes. This is nothing new: it is a constant in contemporary education. Nonetheless, changes are never easy. The goal is to innovate, but innovations can differ substantially depending on the approach that is taken. In any attempt to innovate, however, it is always essential to have a clear idea of preceding events and previous innovations in the history of education. It is important to know where we have come from, where we are, and where we wish to head, because failure to distinguish among the past, present and future may have led to the politization of the past, as suggested by Mead (2022, 13). In the words of Rüsen (1993), «recognizing how much things have changed, yet still taking the past into account in facing the future» (Seixas 2017, 596) is something that we should not lose sight of.

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One key factor in all this is training for schoolteachers. What this training should be like and what kind of knowledge teachers should build up are burning issues and subjects of debate in education. To ensure good practices by researchers, teachers and pedagogues in their role as experts and to guarantee the necessary social, ethical and educational commitment, it is important to ask what is being done by the educational community and, within it, by schools, working teachers and universities. To contribute to the development of these roles, cross-cutting efforts are required through the different subjects on the curriculums of teacher training degrees. It is also essential to take into account the reality, the geographical context, internal processes in schools, and the work of practitioners, because, in order to contribute to the training of competent professionals, initiatives must be developed that are tied in with the local community and local area.

In our professional field – the history of education –, we uphold the need for training in this discipline by fostering the development of historical thinking skills. These competences are currently under threat due to neoliberal, instrumentalist, and industry and market-oriented curriculums which overlook the need for a grounding in humanism, history and critical thinking – all key factors in a teacher's performance. In efforts to perfect the education system and to innovate in teaching, it is crucial to foster an awareness of the history of education among teaching professionals, even more so if we bear in mind today's immediacy, ever-faster pace of life, angst, and emphasis on productivity, individualism and consumerism.

As Morras (2020) suggests, history allows us to see things from a distance and to gain a better understanding of what is happening in the 'here and now'. Faced with the immediacy of the present, urgent demands for responses, and the changes that we come up against in our everyday lives, both generally and in education in particular, it is important to analyse other times, other temporalities and other experiences in history that might help us to reflect on education more effectively. In short, we must stop and think and, through history, we can take a step back, see things in perspective, and consider the present from a different standpoint so that, in the words of Rockwell and Caruso (2020), we can «look at what is going on and not just act on what is going on». This is a basic premise, both for teacher training students at university and teachers working in schools.

Over the past three decades, growing academic research into history teaching, learning, and cognition has led to the promotion of historical thinking skills in response to broad academic rejection of history teaching as a mere function of knowledge transmission and memorization. However, there is an immediate problem involved in any attempt to define historical thinking. There is no agreed definition in the field of history teaching. Concepts such as 'skills', 'processes', and 'competences' are often used interchangeably in educational jargon to refer to historical thinking (Lévesque, and Clark 2018). To gain a broader vision of this issue, we recommend the aforementioned work by Stéphane Lévesque and Penney Clark, with its review of salient North American and European literature and proposed ideas for future research and applications in history teaching.

Universities play a key role in this complex scenario. There is much debate nowadays on whether universities should equip people with tools to understand

the world or train them to carry out a specific professional function. In theory, the two alternatives are not incompatible (Imbernón 1996, 50-51). Nevertheless, in the field of social science and, more specifically, the history of education, we believe that priority should be given to a more general university training, aimed at fostering independent critical thinking skills and at providing the necessary tools to understand the world since there is time for professionalization later. In training processes, the background context is always a key factor to take into account, since a person's development is conditioned by their social and historical backdrop (Imbernón 2001).

That recommended (or even mandatory) look back at history for all professionals from the education sector must be encouraged through interesting, motivating initiatives, linked in with the present and with reality. Today's academics are conscious of the need to maintain ongoing contact with society, the local community and the local area. Better outcomes are always achieved through collaborative work than one-sided efforts. Analyses in the field of education are no longer the sole prerogative of teaching professionals. The whole community and the means at its disposal can now be involved, with new participative relational models in education (Imbernón 2001).

Indeed, interesting options include proposals for activities developed from a public history perspective (whether the concept is construed in a broad or narrow sense), where precedence is given to shared authority and collaborative knowledge generation. The *Public History of Education. Theories, Experiences, Tools* series is one example. The aim of this series is to offer «reflections and practical proposals to schools and local communities, in the belief that history is indispensable for educating citizens, training and updating education and care professionals, promoting the development of local communities, and safeguarding and enhancing both material and immaterial cultural heritage».

Following along these lines, in this chapter, we begin by taking a brief look at some key theories on the meaning of history for individuals. We go on to argue and justify the importance of historical thinking in teacher training. Then, an outline is given of a research and educational innovation project held in recent years, which we believe to be highly effective, focused on the development of play-based teaching materials by infant education teacher training students, grounded in contemporary pedagogical thinking and with guidance from experts in different fields (music, art etc.) and working teachers. We now plan to adapt it to the field of public history, based on the concepts of shared authority, community participation and local embedment.

Although the project was not initially envisaged from a public history perspective, when it is seen in retrospect, we believe that it could fall into this framework in a broad sense. We think that, in the future, the project could be adapted and given a public history application, because these play-based teaching materials that are developed by teacher training students and used in schools are cultural and social expressions and, as such, they are a valuable framework for deliberating on meanings of the past and enriching or challenging those constructed in written history at different points in time and in different social contexts. If

this activity helps to meet a demand by schools and calls by innovative teachers wishing to change or improve teaching practices and to do so in a shared, collaborative way with experts and academics from universities, then it can be considered to be an initiative in the field of applied or public history.

2. The Meaning of History for Individuals

History is not the story of the past. It is not a record of events that happened long ago. It is a form of inquiry that helps us construct an understanding of our own lives (individually and collectively) in time. It is an interpretive discipline, requiring that students determine the validity and credibility of evidence in order to analyse and to construct and reconstruct narratives about people, events and ideas of the past (Foster, and Yeager 1999).

History or histories are narratives. This narrativity is an inherent aspect of how we relate to the past. It also allows us to organize facts, events or acts in order to infuse them with meaning (Mendanha Cruz 2020). There is also a diachronic facet to all narratives, with the first point in time being the present, used by the narrator, and the second being that of the narrated fact(s) or event(s). Koselleck (2006) even came to propose a semantics of historical times. In essence, narrativity allows us to infuse events and time itself with meaning.

For teacher training students and working teachers, an awareness of the past will allow them to form more rational, precise expectations of the future. This is where two fascinating concepts posed by Koselleck (2006) come into play: the space of experience and the horizon of expectation. As explained by Mendanha Cruz (2020), these are core concepts in understanding the role that Koselleck assigns to history today. For him, the space of experience refers to the 'past-present'; that is, the knowledge of the past that individuals acquire either through experience or through other types of learning. It is in the space of experience, through different methodological strategies, that our students build up historical and educational knowledge of different techniques, ideas, teaching concepts and materials used in contemporary times. From this, they can come up with present applications and rethink current practices. The horizon of expectation refers to the 'future-present' and to an individual's future expectations, conditioned by the present and facilitated by that space of experience.

Rüsen (2014) follows a similar line of thinking. He works on these dynamics, reflecting on the relationship between a historical consciousness as a brake and/or as a facilitator of a utopia, doing so by exploring the concept of 'meaning'. Meaning is regarded as being responsible for making human life feasible, for making mankind's experiences meaningful, and for allowing us to relate to our surroundings and to ourselves. For Rüsen (2014, 47), it is when we lack orientation in our everyday practical life that we mobilize the past so that it enables us to gain a vision of the future. Hence, we use our knowledge of the past to explain the present, to take decisions, and to make future forecasts.

As Morras (2020) argues, history allows individuals to think in terms of continuities and ruptures: what remains constant and what changes. History gives

us the capacity to observe changes where continuities are normally seen and continuities where changes are commonly perceived. Through a broad, long-term vision, it is possible to identify inertias, routines, and resistance to change, and to understand them. In short, history enables us to identify subtle nuances and transitions. Any teacher skilled at doing this will have an awareness that facilitates and improves their work as a professional.

In the present era, it is even more important than ever to take a step back from the present because, as Bianchini, Peiretti and Vagliani (2022, 41) put it, having lost faith in the past and future, we tend just to stick to the present as the only time we believe that we can master. However, the effects of this attitude are clearly perceptible: on the one hand, we lose our capacity to reflect on personal and collective pasts, and to rethink memories and experiences; and, on the other, this memory loss also contributes to 'identity problems' and to that sensation of impotence and disorientation that people experience on a daily basis (Bevilacqua 2007). As with memory in the case of individuals, one of history's functions is to provide an identity to groups. Historical thinking clearly helps us to develop a critical mind and to question dominant narratives. It ties us in with previous generations, allowing us to understand the origins of our traditions, values and beliefs.

The meaning of history and the need to think historically play a key role in our understanding of the world and ourselves. History invites us to participate actively in narratives (of diverse kinds), reminding us that we are part of a continuum that stretches across time. At the same time, as Arteaga and Camargo (2014) point out, it is vital to opt for a history based on problematization, because as Lucien Febvre (1975, 43) stated in his day, we must do away with a history subject to a «puerile and pious respect for 'facts' […] which we have only to record». We should add that implicit in this problematization is the relationship of the historian who interprets the chosen (or discovered) sources, and, by extension, there must be a breakaway from the sacrosanct value given to documents. In this way, the spotlight can be focused on what has been deleted and our ears attuned to what the 'official narrative' has left out. It is from this broad, complex standpoint that new connections can start to be made, allowing us to push back the established frontiers and to explore issues such as symbolism, gender or new social actors – subjects that can only be understood from a multidimensional, polyphonic, diverse perspective.

Public history has a lot in common with all this, given the key role that it ascribes to calls by different social groups in the reconstruction of history as a way of drawing attention to ignored episodes and forgotten figures from the past and as a means of compensating oppressed marginalized groups and helping to overcome traumas. Public history is a difficult concept to define although, essentially, it encompasses those activities that aspire to make history in the public domain more relevant and more useful. It is a framework for exploring possibilities and relations, mainly aimed at democratizing the production and dissemination of historical knowledge, uniting different plural groups of citizens in the joint construction of different possible historical narratives. In the words of Torres-Ayala

(2020), public history is mainly characterized by a bid to divert the production and dissemination of historical knowledge away from traditional activities in the field of history toward collaboration between professionals from the social sciences and citizens who are increasingly interested in their past and present.

3. Historical Thinking in Teacher Training

Historical thinking in education refers to the capacity to analyse, interpret and understand past events in education from a historical point of view. It implies a critical, contemplative approach to history, together with the capacity to contextualize and relate historical events to the present and to forecast the future. Historical thinking seeks to understand the causes and consequences of past events and to examine different perspectives. Hence, it entails going beyond isolated events, exploring underlying causes and connections between different points in time. It allows us to identify recurrent patterns, to understand the motivations for decisions, and to analyse the long-term repercussions. In educational contexts, thanks to research in recent decades into the history of education, many of these potential benefits of historical thinking have been corroborated. By thinking historically, we learn to appreciate the complexity of situations and to avoid simplistic interpretations that might lead to mistaken conclusions. This is particularly important in a world where news and information are often presented in a fragmented, simplified way.

Developing an ability for historical thinking allows teachers to tackle contemporary issues in an informed, carefully considered way. We must not forget that current problems often have deep-rooted historical origins, and understanding them is essential in order to face up to present challenges. As Morras (2020) states, by exploring what is going on in schools and in contemporary educational practice from the perspective of their cultural and historical dynamics, education centres can be analysed in terms of the accumulation and sedimentation of the different cultural resources that have been introduced over the years (Rockwell 2007, 176) and over the centuries. School cultures are historical constructs and, as such, they reveal the progressive linking or transformation of practices (Rockwell 2007, 177-8).

In this sense, Evans (1991, 64) reaffirms Wineburg (2001) and Wilson's (2001) assertion that a solid training in pedagogical aspects of a subject impacts on how it is taught and how it is learnt by students because a teacher's historical knowledge of their subject and practical knowhow have a profound impact on what they teach and the way they do it. A teacher's capacity for historical thinking offers them an insight into the multiplicity of educational practices and knowledge that coexist in the classroom, dating back to different times. The reason why they were included and why they still remain may differ from the initial reason, and we will not be aware of this unless we develop a capacity for historical reflection. Many educational practices even reflect pedagogical trends from abroad, and they coexist with local traditions in teaching (Rockwell 2007). Teachers who have different historical references at their disposal or who

research them will be in a better position to grasp the complexity of educational practices and experiences.

Hence, historical thinking in education automatically implies the recognition that education is a sociohistorical construct, seeking to reveal traces of the past in present practices. Even more importantly, by identifying and reviving past figures and their experiences, we will be shedding light on a more hybrid, varied history of education, with examples of transgressive educational ideas that challenged the coexisting established norms. Through historical thinking, certain hallowed notions of the evolution of education can be revised, allowing us to move away from mainstream judgements and beliefs. It also enables us to think of school cultures in the plural, each with their own dynamics. Whether we cast our eyes back at the past or situate them in the present, we will be able to gain a vision of a wide variety of schools and wide diversity of practices, exploring other narratives in order to see and reflect on the history of modern schooling (Morras 2020).

It is interesting to introduce teacher training students and working teachers to the ideas of Mexican historian Andrea Sánchez Quintanar (2006, 45), who says that everything in the present is rooted in the past. According to Sánchez Quintanar, societies are not static. They are in a constant state of change due to certain intrinsic mechanisms, regardless of the wishes of the people who make up these societies. In this scenario of change, past processes condition the present, and I, as a member of society, and each individual have a role in this process of social change. Consequently, the past is part of me and it makes me – my social self – what I am. Lastly, the present is the past of the future and I am immersed in all of it, and so I am partly responsible for building that future. And, by extension, I form part of that corresponding historical movement and, if I wish, I can take a stance with regard to it; that is, I can participate consciously in changing society (Arteaga, and Camargo 2014, 120-21).

Josep Fontana (2003) refers to the role of history teachers, saying

> Our function [...] must not be to inculcate our students with a series of established truths about the past, but to nourish their minds, not just with specific historical knowledge for them to operate with, but by helping to foster a critical attitude. In this way, they will realize that it is they who must use this learning to judge their social milieu, based on their acquired experience, without letting anyone tell them that it is the outcome of a natural, logical, inevitable evolutionary process that should be unquestioningly accepted (Arteaga, and Camargo 2014, 121).

All the above aspects were taken into account in the design of the innovation project presented below. Its aim was to serve as an example and to pave the way for a future initiative in the field of public history.

4. The Creation of Materials for/with Schools

In 2018, a project was set up at the University of the Balearic Islands entitled *Creating games and teaching materials based on contemporary pedagogical thinking:*

uniting theory and practice for infant education teacher training students and working teachers. The main aim was to organize a series of initial experiences with infant education teacher training students, based on the creation of games and play-based teaching materials grounded in contemporary pedagogical thinking. The originality of the project was, firstly, to work on fostering a critical approach to historical thinking among teacher training students and working teachers and, on the other, to meet a demand by schools wishing to collaborate with the university in order to improve teaching-learning processes. Lastly, it also aspired to tie theory in with practice; a call continuously voiced by teacher training students from the first year of their degree course.

These were the main cornerstones on which the initiative was based, although, at the same time, it was also inspired by a desire to introduce university students to the real problems and ups and downs that they would come up against on a day-to-day basis when they completed their studies and became teachers. As mentioned above, the aim was also to put schools into contact with the university in order to work in a joint collaborative way on the creation of materials that could be useful for every-day work in the classroom. Consequently, the initiative was a response to a joint demand, and these shared efforts were expected to have positive benefits for both groups. On top of all this, as outlined in the first part of the chapter, it was also important to foster historical thinking skills among the teacher training students and working teachers.

Our original project was not intended to be viewed from a public history perspective. However, when we look back on it, we realize that it could be given this kind of application in the broad sense of the term. It could be adapted to fit in with this kind of framework in future versions, since the games and play-based teaching materials that were developed are cultural and social expressions. This makes them a useful tool in reflecting on meanings of the past and enriching or challenging the narratives found in written history. If future initiatives meet calls by schools or teachers wishing to innovate in teaching methods and the ensuing work is done in a shared way with experts and academics from universities, then we are talking about examples of applied or public history.

Future initiatives would be directed at the shared generation of historical knowledge, using the creation of games or materials inspired by contemporary pedagogical thinking as a vehicle, with collaborative work by academics, teachers and teacher training students. Another basic premise would be to forge links with the local community and local area. This hypothetical project could be made known to the public through exhibitions open to large numbers of people, in this case represented by the populations of each of the municipalities where the schools are located, and through the university, which is open to the public in general. To put it concisely, this is an approach that subscribes to the public construction of history for its subsequent dissemination and representation, with the participation of professionals from the field of history in joint, multidisciplinary projects like the one proposed here. This kind of approach also involves the construction of broader, more comprehensive historical narratives, in this case on the main

developments that have been made thanks to the contributions of key male and female figures in the history of contemporary pedagogical thinking in Europe.

One question that should be asked is why games are used as a vehicle for the project. It is because games are a way of coming into closer contact, appropriating, and learning from our immediate surroundings, and so they are a superb all-round tool in the classroom (Payà Rico 2013, 37). Today, it is impossible to imagine a child's life without games, although, in past centuries, several progressive educators (Fröebel, Montessori, Decroly, Claparède etc.) put forward pioneering pedagogical proposals in which schoolwork was converted into a fun activity (Payà Rico, and Jover 2013, 14). Hence, in modern pedagogical thinking, games are viewed as a key tool in education and their effects on child development have been widely illustrated. Play activities form part of the culture of children. They are highly motivating, offering ways of making meaningful connections. Games are fundamental in children's physical, affective, intellectual and social growth, and so a well-assorted, planned series of opportunities for play must be envisaged, providing models, materials adapted to different stages in childhood with information or scope for representational play and experimentation, and different types of games (heuristic, rule-based, symbolic, board games etc.).

Infant school is one possible setting for games. As Sarlé (2008, 4) states, infant school facilitates certain types of games (depending on the materials, places and times made available to the children) while also discouraging others (in particular motor activities that might be dangerous). Games take a certain format in schools, and it is the teacher who decides on the format and the rules to be followed. There are also certain peculiarities to the way the players (the teacher and children) function in schools, depending on the circumstances of the activity (Sarlé 2001). For instance, the way the teacher intervenes in a game will differ from one type of activity to another.

During early childhood, it is essential for children to have access to simple materials, taking advantage of objects from their natural surroundings, so as to encourage investigation, manipulation, motricity and, in general, all-round autonomy. As Bautista (2001) states, there can be several reasons for designing play-based learning materials. For instance, in the case of manipulative play activities or coordination games, in addition to improving a series of psychomotor skills, such as motor coordination, balance, strength, manipulative dexterity, command over the five senses, sensory discrimination, the capacity to imitate, and visuo-motor coordination, they also help to develop certain facets of social or affective thinking of various types and considerations. Games play a very important natural cognitive role. Most games help to develop a child's intellectual capacity. Small children like to play at building things, they like games that involve imitation, and they enjoy playing with real things and using them to imagine other realities. That is, games can be considered to «use intelligence through playful behaviour» (Vial 1988, 28).

According to Darling-Hammond and Snyder (2000, 523), «As schools include a greater range of students from different backgrounds and with different approaches to learning, formulas for teaching that do not take account of stu-

dents' experiences and needs are less and less successful». These authors have also shown that active participation in the creation of educational materials boosts pedagogical skills and helps to transfer theoretical knowledge to teaching practice. Furthermore, when materials are designed, they can be tailored to suit certain contexts. In other words, they can be adapted to meet certain local needs and demands, specific to each particular context, unlike commercial teaching materials, which tend to be designed to suit an 'ideal context' that does not actually exist (Bautista 2001).

These reflections, made with a view to possible future initiatives, were sparked off by a project run by the University of the Balearic Islands (UIB) from 2018 to 2022, which we will proceed to outline (although some articles with more detailed descriptions can be found, such as González, Barceló and Payà Rico (2021); or González (2020). The project, headed by the author of this paper, was presented at a call for innovation projects for teacher training students and it was finally awarded funding by the Consejería de Educación y Universidad (CEU) and Instituto de Investigación e Innovación Educativa (IRIE). The project involved teaching staff from the UIB and external specialists with recognized research experience in the field of games in history, including Andrés Payà Rico from Valencia University and María José Ruiz-Funés from Murcia University. In total, five schools in Mallorca took part in the project, working in collaboration with the university through five of their teachers. First-year teacher training students from the Degree in Infant Education who were enrolled on the subject Thinking and Contemporary Educational Contexts, given by Dr. Sara González, worked on the project for four consecutive academic years.

Each year, the first step consisted of introducing the first-year students to contemporary theories, thinking and educational movements, while also exploring their validity today. Through the input they received and worked on in the above subject, the students came into contact with the first modern pedagogical theories (Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel etc.); the ideas, methods and educational institutions that emerged throughout the world in connection with the New School movement (Dewey, the Agazzi sisters, Montessori, Decroly, the Dalton Plan etc.); anti-authoritarian trends and so on. In the case of those students who had not already studied for a Diploma in Early Childhood Education (about 50% of them), they were being introduced for the first time to some of the ideas that have had the biggest repercussions on contemporary pedagogical trends and on all the day-to-day practices of some schools.

Through small working groups (4 to 5 students), materials began to be drawn up. The idea was for the materials to tie theory in with practice. Each of the groups was asked to select a series of interesting ideas, principles or techniques by one or several authors in the field of contemporary pedagogical thinking and to use them as a springboard to create a game or teaching materials. Their final creations were then presented to their peers and later shown at small seminars to the teachers taking part in the project. The next step was to transfer the materials to the collaborating education centres.

The students were given freedom in the management of the whole decision-making process and creation of the materials. The university teacher merely acted as a guide or consultant. The students were asked to envisage a particular situation or to choose a school and teaching scenario observed during the several visits that had been arranged to the collaborating centres. If the schools had voiced some kind of specific need or problem situation, the university students could take it as a reference and create their material in collaboration with the school. They were only given a basic work plan as a starting point. This had to be handed in at the end, together with the game, in the style of an instruction booklet. In the work plan, the following aspects had to be specified: 1) Theoretical basis; 2) Design of the situation; 3) Objectives; 4) Method; 5) Presentation of the material; 6) Reasoning; 7) Critical assessment.

During the four years, over one hundred materials and games were created, and some of them have been used in schools. The process has contributed to the training of future teachers and it has been shown to motivate them and bring them into real contact with day-to-day work in schools. The creation of materials by working teachers and teacher training students, rooted in contemporary pedagogical thinking, can be a good tool in reviewing theoretical aspects and introducing changes to teaching practices. Based on this conviction, the active engagement and participation of teacher training students and veteran teaching staff are fundamental in any collaborative innovation process. For positive outcomes to be achieved, these teachers and teacher training students must have time and space to share and discuss problems and solutions. Without this, it is very hard to rethink educational practices. It is equally necessary to have time and space to draw up the projects and materials that will be used in educational interventions, and this implies conducting the research that is necessary when innovations in any field are made. In short, in education today, it is crucial for innovation processes to be designed where theory is tied in with practice and research with action. In this way, innovations in schools will combine theory, practice and a commitment to the local community where these practices are carried out (Imbernón 1996, 50-51).

5. Conclusions

In this chapter, a past project is outlined and reflected on as a springboard for a future initiative. This is a process that is intrinsic in teaching: teachers must reflect on their own practices and have the necessary critical capacity to assess themselves and to make any changes that will improve the quality of their work. After all, pedagogical innovations are grounded in the way in which teachers impact on changes in school cultures, modifying traditional practices and improving the quality of education and learning methods in schools. In this sense, a historical perspective can be a huge help in these innovation processes, and games or play activities can also contribute positively to change.

Public history tends to be defined as history that goes beyond the walls of a classroom; history that is built with the community or with a group from the

moment that the processes begins and not the end. Traditionally, history and its products – to describe them colloquially – have been targeted at a passive, non-participative public, offering them ready-made products for their possible consumption. In the case of public history, on the other hand, the spotlight is turned on the public: not only do they play a key role in the construction of history, but they are also indispensable in terms of their possible concerns, desires, needs and proposals. This is the premise on which our envisaged future initiative is based, one which aspires to unite the community, the local area and the university in a single working group, awarding history a fundamental role in the project and using it as a vehicle for activities.

There will be certain difficulties to the process, from the management of this shared authority (meetings, organizational factors etc.) to diverging opinions, memories and knowledge, and even the limits of this shared authority. More importantly, however, we will be working on a way of building history for (and, above all, with) the public, starting out from the precept that the past is a shared human experience and so it is open to reflection and dialogue, based on a broad range of sources and means of communication (Ashton, and Kean 2009). This kind of public history is partly inspired (albeit not totally) by history constructed in universities, since universities have a commitment to the community in general to preserve the local culture and to provide services and access to information. This can be done in different ways, from exhibitions and heritage programmes to guided tours and podcasts.

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Teacher Education.
A Perfect Place for an Applied Public History Approach

Gianfranco Bandini

Abstract:

The chapter examines the declining role of history in teacher education and calls for a renewed emphasis on its importance. It highlights the mismatch between historical knowledge and societal needs, and how this has led to a diminished presence of history in teacher education programmes. Indeed, it argues for the integration of public history approaches into teacher training, making history a practical tool for professional development. This approach would promote a deeper understanding of diverse cultures and democratic values, and would align the teaching of history with the evolving needs of contemporary society.

Keywords: Public History, History of Education, History Teaching, Reflective Practitioner, Transformative Learning

1. History and Society: An Interrupted Dialogue

There is no doubt that the teaching of history, and more generally the discipline of history, has progressively lost its pivotal role within the knowledge that is commonly recognised as central to the education of citizens. It is a process that began many years ago, after the Second World War, which has progressively distanced historical knowledge from the vital needs of society. The rupture of this relationship between academia and society has been felt with great force and intelligence, first in Great Britain, especially with the efforts of Raphael Samuel and the activities of Ruskin College, then almost simultaneously in the United States, giving rise to an approach that is now known, not only in the Anglo-Saxon world, as Public History (Cauvin 2018; Noiret 2009). It is necessary to start from this clear perception of the difficulty of establishing a link between academic research and the needs of society in order to be able to make a well-founded argument on the role that history can play today in teacher training, i.e. for a specific professional purpose (Demantowsky 2018).

There are many reasons that have led to increasing disillusionment with history. Certainly, we are witnessing the emergence of a technological society in which scientific, mathematics-based knowledge is of absolute importance: all

that is perceived by everyone as indispensable, not only for understanding the world, but for the everyday organisation of social life.

On the other hand, we cannot fail to recall the ideological uses of history, especially school history, right from primary school, in Italy and elsewhere (Christou, and Sears 2011). A history with truly peculiar characteristics, with intentions that more than once have been influenced by political, religious and ideological motives of various types and tendencies.

At the same time, certain individual elements of historical knowledge are still often used in public discourse today, decontextualised and used as the 'crowning proof' of an argument, as a demonstration of a certain idea or political objective. The public use of history by politics has consistently operated in contrast to the complexity of history, as a court of law that passes clear-cut judgments on problems of the present in relation to more or less distant historical elements (MacMillan 2010).

This public use of history (far from public history, despite the pun) makes us realise clearly that what we need is not history that is subservient to objectives that are alien to the passionate and professional study of history (Ferro 1981). What we need, rather, is a plurality of histories that are elaborated in various scientific communities, animated by a sincere and deep desire for knowledge. History, driven by ongoing curiosity for the knowledge of mankind, from the dawn of its presence on earth and in all its many and varied cultural situations.

From this perspective, history is an intellectual tool that allows us to explore and learn about the variety of the past, enriching our awareness of our humanity and also shedding light on the present world (Mead 2019; 2022). The history we need is therefore a plural history, which leaves behind cast and prescribed roles from above, to become a cognitive tool entrusted to experts who will develop it in a participative and collaborative direction: thus teachers will bring students into contact with the state of the art of the discipline, while at the same time they will play an equally important role as activators of knowledge processes based on public participation, on the relationship between their educational needs and historical knowledge (Herman, Braster, and Pozo Andrés 2022; Parkes, Donnelly, and Sharp 2023).

Understood in this way, history is by no means static and far removed from the interests of students (or any other kind of audience): instead, it becomes an intellectual tool that responds to the desire to learn about others and their experiences, aware of the fundamental importance of this open-mindedness for life in a democratic and pluralistic society (Van Nieuwenhuyse, Simon, and Depaepe 2015; Vinovskis 2015). Although school history has often been centred, exclusively or for the most part, on the nation of belonging and national identity (Procacci 2003), only a history that is open to the world can be considered suitable for civic education because it educates to respect cultures, through a thorough historical knowledge of their variety. Indeed, one of the fundamental contributions of the historical approach is to train our thinking to look outside our mental habits, through a rigorous methodology based on the incessant analysis of sources and verification of their reliability.

Despite insistent voices in Italy claiming the need for a national and identity-centred focus on history taught in schools (Galli Della Loggia 2019; Galli Della Loggia, and Perla 2023), a different and contrary position is argued here: to conceive of history as a cognitive bridge of humanity, analysed in its multiform and variegated configurations, with an approach that is oriented in the direction of world history (Bentley 2011). Only in this way can history fulfil its role as an intellectual tool, aimed at understanding the complexity of the past, the incessant movement of people and ideas that characterise it. In this way, history does not play an informative or confirming role in the (presumed) identities of students: instead, it serves to deconstruct identities, which are often invented traditions (Hobsbawm, and Ranger 2014), allowing one to critically grasp both obsolete elements and those that are still vital today.

The reference to public history, mentioned above, is not simply a tribute to one of the relevant historical paradigms of the 20th century, but is actually an indication of perspective and action (Bandini 2023). Indeed, public history, in its various declinations and also in the originality of differentiated linguistic communities, offers valuable suggestions for recomposing the rift between history and society. In these pages we deal with teacher education: with reference to this specific use of history, the connection with public history is particularly suggestive and important. Wanting to be very precise in the use of terms, we could speak of teacher education as a field of applied history. A type of history that we can rightfully include within the broader category of public history of which it retains all the characteristics, but accentuates its expendability for political decisions or, as in our case, professional utility.

It should be remembered that university teaching chairs specifically dedicated to the training of future teachers, especially primary school teachers, sprang up in Europe during the 20th century. In addition to elements of contemporary or modern general history, these were often very closely linked to school life; for example, the history of: school, pedagogy, didactics, childhood, education and so on. The scholars who began to work on these topics, while starting from a national or regional approach, have over time formed a true international community, of which the *International Standing Conference for the History of Education* (ISCHE, founded in 1978)[1] currently represents the most authoritative and longest-lived academic society.

The initial close ties with the school environment, on the one hand confined these historians to a very specific field with obvious thematic limitations, but on the other hand allowed them to consolidate their academic presence, to refine their historical research methodologies, and to gradually detach themselves from general pedagogy, understood above all as a predominantly philosophical and value-based exercise (Caruso and Maul 2020; McCulloch, 2011; Popkewitz, 2013) This rapprochement with historical culture and methodology, while not forgetting its educational roots, has been increasingly marked and, since the

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[1]   <https://www.ische.org>.

2000s in particular, can be considered an accomplished process, at least in the majority of cases. This has also entailed an interesting broadening of thematic horizons on the part of historians of education, who have begun to address issues related to informal and non-formal education, communication, technology, and the family, and have done so in convincing ways and with research processes that are increasingly international in scope.

2. History as a Tool for Teacher Training

To date, history, with the characteristics mentioned above, has been a component of teacher education. However, over time, its teaching hours have been reduced and its incidence on the training pathway has increasingly diminished.

Historians who have dealt with educational issues (and especially contemporary and educational historians) have made a great effort to understand the role of schools in society, the role of teachers, and the functions schools have performed over time, with very interesting connections with sociological research, oral history, and microhistory. However, over the same period of time, these important cultural contributions have not influenced institutional decisions: the result has been that the role of history within educational preparation courses has continued to decline. We can cite, as a significant example, the recent Italian legislation on the initial training of secondary school teachers. In fact, in order to become a teacher, it has been made compulsory to complete the preparation with qualifying courses for a total of 60 university training credits in the anthropo-psycho-pedagogical disciplines and in didactic and linguistic methodologies and technologies. These qualifying courses (cf. All. 1 Prime Ministerial Decree of 4 August 2023), aimed at all future teachers, in fact provide for very limited historical content, we might say it is merely symbolic.

Various thematic areas are envisaged in the training pathway: pedagogy, inclusive education of people with special educational needs, the linguistic-digital area, psycho-socio-anthropological disciplines, teaching methodologies, teaching disciplines and methodologies of the reference disciplines, disciplines related to the acquisition of skills in school legislation. Out of a total of thirty-seven thematic cores, only two have explicit historical content: the pedagogical area provides a very brief study of the 'history of schools and educational institutions in Italy and Europe' (entrusted to university lecturers in the pedagogical area, including historians of education); the legislative area provides an even shorter 'outline of the history of training processes and school institutions' (entrusted to university lecturers of public law institutions).

What is most interesting to note is the thematic configuration of these mini-programmes, which remain essentially those of thirty or forty years ago, when historical-educational research was beginning the journey of its internationalisation with some difficulty. We therefore find ourselves in an absolutely unbalanced situation, with paradoxical aspects: current historical research proposes an appreciable variety of research approaches, rich in methodological innovation, participatory activities, and broadening of thematic horizons. The minis-

terial approach, on the other hand, envisages a traditional teaching of school history basics (useful for learning about more or less recent legislative changes and little more). On the one hand, we have skills and awareness processes; on the other, knowledge and information.

If we move from the period of teacher training to the teacher recruitment processes, we realise that history appears, of course, if the teaching qualification is of a historical nature, but it is never considered as a transversal competence of the teacher. It is worth remembering that this applies to both teachers and school leaders.

It does not get any better in in-service training (cf. Italian digital platform S.O.F.I.A., Operational System for the Training and Refresher Initiatives of School Personnel)[2] which sees a progressive and accentuated interest in many aspects of everyday school life, from assessment to inclusion, ecology, nutrition, evaluation and so on, but only sporadically historical content appears, usually within other disciplinary approaches.

However, this does not mean that schools do not express a desire for history. On the contrary, many signs point to the opposite: for instance, the many proposals presented at the annual conference of the Italian Public History Association[3] or at the ministerial public competition dedicated to history workshops[4], demonstrate a lively desire for history that comes from teachers, from the students who are involved in the projects and more generally from the local communities in which the schools operate.

In this regard, I would like to emphasise that history needs to be understood not only as a specific discipline and a specific school subject, but also as a general intellectual tool that we can use in every area of school subjects, whether mathematical, physical, literary, philosophical, etc. (Barton, and Levstik 2004). The school implements a series of transversal educations (e.g. on interculturalism, sustainability, citizenship, health), which also need a solid historical approach: an effective way of eliminating and deconstructing a series of prejudices, oversimplifications of the processes of change, visions crammed into the few years of our experience as living beings, completely neglecting the pressure on today from the forces of the past (Schratz 2010; 2014).

This is why I would like to advocate the use of historical knowledge for teacher training as a training tool that, together with and on a par with other disciplinary and didactic tools, allows for a profound reflexive exercise on the teaching profession, i.e. to increase one of the fundamental characteristics of a quality school (Gómez Carrasco, Miralles Martínez, and López Facal 2021; Simões, Lourenço, and Costa 2018).

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[2]   <https://www.istruzione.it/pdgf/>.

[3]   <https://aiph.hypotheses.org>.

[4]   See Headmaster's Note Office III, no. 6459 of 19-6-23; Ministry of Education and Merit, National Competition 'History Workshop', first edition in the school year 2022-23, <https://www.miur.gov.it/web/guest/-/concorso-nazionale-laboratorio-di-storia-prima-edizione-nell-anno-scolastico-2022-2023> (2024-03-01).

To work in this direction, we need to include historical knowledge in the initial training of teachers, in recruitment processes and in service training. We need the competent ministries to listen carefully to schools and have confidence in their competence to play a proactive, autonomous and intellectual role in social life. Let us not forget that schools in Italy are endowed with their own specific autonomy, albeit shaky and with obvious limitations. Revitalising this autonomy means opening up possibilities to use historical knowledge starting from the experience of individual teachers and individual institutes, but also of broader aggregations that have demonstrated great competence and passionate commitment. I am referring above all to two types of experience: the first regards historical and educational associations that have developed intriguing proposals that deserve to be recognised and used for teacher training. These associations have been invented by teachers who have joined forces to offer the scholastic world new ways of developing didactics, as a way to break free from the suffocating confines of the frontal lecture and the textbook. A traditional and consolidated didactic union that still does not allow the richness and beauty of historical knowledge to be fully grasped.

The second type of experience, again linked to a grassroots initiative and passion for history, are school networks, museum and archive initiatives, and the activities of local authorities. It is a vast set of historical resources and experiences that can help schools to get out of their four walls and reconnect to the surrounding area as well as to the global world which we are constantly connected to, thanks to our digital tools. There is no discipline, in fact, better suited than history to help understand this unprecedented 'glocalization' in which we are immersed.

History is an extremely flexible intellectual tool that can be adapted, through the work of teachers, both to the diversity of educational needs and to the variety of students' life contexts that call for in-depth studies in different directions, on different scales of analysis, from local to national or global.

3. What History for Teacher Education: Approaches and Contents

If we exclude history teachers, all other teachers have a historical expertise related to their schooling, but not to their university education. Therefore, unless they have personally delved into the subject or we have encountered innovative teachers, they have an image of historical knowledge that amounts to what is in our school textbooks. Secondary school textbooks, in particular, are centred on political-economic history, with social and religious annotations, but generally with little or no focus on many other types of history that inhabit universities today (Ashby, Gordon, and Lee 2005).

It is difficult for them to have a specific awareness of the history of women (which is perhaps the most significant and emblematic example), the history of childhood, the history of communications, medicine or the environment, to limit ourselves to a few topics that are both extremely important and of great interest to the learner.

It is also rare that they have had experiences that allow them to fully understand how history is made, what ways are used and shared in the research

community to produce new and original historical knowledge. These inevitable shortcomings, in terms of content and research methodology, lead to a static view of history, often internalised as a chronological sequence of facts. A concept, that of historical fact, which was largely deconstructed during the 20th century, but which still remains one of the most common historical concepts in the collective imagination, as can be seen if we take a look at digital communication on these topics.

The first step in making history understood must therefore start with a phase that deconstructs the image of history that future teachers have internalized (Biesta 2004). This is a critical first step because teachers' expectations are based precisely on the subject model they have internalised. A second element to be taken into account is related to their specific training needs: instead of relying on standardised and top-down training programmes, we should favour an approach to historical knowledge that is as personalised as possible, with exploratory and participative characteristics, i.e. those characteristics that they have most rarely encountered in their school career. In a theoretically optimal condition, this means constructing a training path, depending on the school grades and subject being taught, that takes their specific needs into account. The mathematics teacher, the art teacher, the Italian literature teacher will have some topics in common, but certainly also other interests that require separate in-depth studies.

At this point, one cannot fail to emphasise that if we want teachers who work in the school in such a way as to encourage student participation and interest, we should also use the same methods for their training, favouring collaboration and community in every way (Monti-Jauch et al. 2020; Vangrieken et al. 2015). In this context, topics that interest everyone (such as the history of evaluation, for example) can go together with very specific topics such as the history of medicine or the history of literature, and could become a real common heritage in the exchange of knowledge between teachers.

In this training process, it is necessary to strongly emphasise the indispensable anchoring of historical sources and methodologies of interpretation that enable us to make them a tool for understanding and contextualisation. The 'hand-to-hand' encounter with sources, even if forcibly limited during a training course, is an obligatory step to understanding the nature of historical research and its fundamental requirements (Ginzburg 2011). The great wealth, both quantitative and qualitative, of digitised (or original digital) sources that we have at our disposal today, creates an environment particularly suited to developing this type of learning.

Once the specific objectives have been outlined and a path of understanding has been built through constant contact with the sources, we can progressively accentuate the significance of historical learning by making the past communicate with the present, history with memory. These are not simple operations and can easily be the subject of criticism and problems, but it is precisely from these intersections that subjects realise the significance of history: when they manage to situate it, challenging as it may be, within their own personal history.

This leads us almost naturally in the direction of public history or more specifically applied history in teacher education. Rather than working on the history of school regulations, understood as a sequence of connected legal norms, we must concern ourselves with understanding the contexts in which laws and decrees were born and applied, sometimes disapplied, and often contested. From a historical point of view, the debates, parliamentary and in public communication, both before and after the enactment of the law, are of great interest.

It is never a matter of memorising a series of elements and arranging them on a chronological axis, but rather of performing an exercise typical of historical knowledge of interpretation and contextualisation, of understanding the often complex and intricate dynamics that led to changes. These concepts have been clear for a long time. Let us read, for example, these statements from the 1971 programmes of the European Schools (a particular school system started in 1953 in Luxembourg: Haas 2004; Girotti 2024):

> The aim of history teaching is not simply to provide information, i.e. to enable students to acquire a body of knowledge, but also and above all to promote a genuine education that will help students to understand and deal with the realities and problems of the world in which they will find themselves in an active professional life at the end of this course of study (Écoles européennes 1971, 5).

A good historical education will make us reflect on the discontinuities and continuities of schooling, professional roles, ministerial policies and European policies; it will make us understand the absolute non-static nature of history, but its incessant becoming that rapidly involves us even when we do not have a clear perception of it in our contemporary life.

As you may well understand, I do not believe that training can be centred exclusively on the school and the teacher because teachers always need a broader contextualisation that heightens those essential and important links that the educational world has with society, with its dynamics and its conflicts.

In this regard, I would like to emphasise the importance of training with a historical approach to dealing with so-called conflictual and divisive issues (Council of Europe 2015; Cowan, and Maitles 2012; Noddings, and Brooks 2016). Indeed, the teacher's task is not to indoctrinate his or her students with a monolithic view of his or her discipline or to carefully avoid all issues that might raise criticism and problems. Instead, it is precisely in these cases that one can train one's mind to reason, to discuss, to argue by weighing up the pros and cons of the situations presented. When we study historical dynamics, we often have to engage with their frequent conflictuality and the complexity of situations.

However, much pressure there has been in the last two decades in some democratic countries to limit the topics a teacher can legitimately deal with (think especially of sexual and gender issues), there is no doubt that a democratic education cannot consider any topic within the school walls as taboo.

In fact, the task of teachers is neither to provide state education according to government guidelines, nor an education necessarily in continuity with the family, slavishly following their educational objectives. As the 1989 New York

Convention on the Rights of the Child authoritatively reminded us, the only goal for the teacher is the well-being and best interests of the child. The 'best interest' from an intellectual point of view must be seen precisely in becoming aware of the reality of the world, without blinders and without preclusions, putting on the table for discussion both historical issues that enjoy great agreement and consensus and those that create strong arguments (sometimes only among academics, sometimes only in civil society, and sometimes in both spheres). It is only in this way that the historical approach becomes a useful approach to self-care and the autonomous formation of the identity of those undergoing training. In this way, history provides some of the fundamental building blocks for understanding oneself and the world around us, precisely from conflictual and divisive issues, because it makes people engage in a dialogical exercise in which not only the willingness of the argumentation, but the solidity of the supporting historical sources counts.

4. A Case Study: Don Milani as the Theme of a Refresher Course

It is not, therefore, a question of making teachers assimilate a lot of content and perhaps only what is strictly related to their role as teachers, but rather of making history meaningful for their professional role, in a collaborative process that helps the school build an educating community. In support of this working hypothesis, I briefly present an in-service training course aimed at the teachers of a comprehensive institute in Tuscany, the Massimiliano Guerri middle school (Reggello, Florence).

The theme chosen directly by the teachers was Don Lorenzo Milani, a leading figure in Italian cultural and social history, especially for the world of schools and education (Betti 2009; 2017). He has long been the subject of opposing judgments that have made – and in part still make – a historical analysis and awareness of his legacy difficult. The course started from the educational and social context of the post-World War II period to study the characteristics of his school (the famous Barbiana school) and frame his contribution to the cultural debate on social exclusion and marginalization (Corzo 1983; 2014; Santoni Rugiu 2007). The course also sought to discuss the problems of today's school in light of Don Milani's legacy, starting from two reference texts (*Letter to a teacher* and *Obedience is no longer a virtue*: Scuola di Barbiana 1967; Milani 1968). The training course, based on historical sources, was constructed in a collaborative framework, made up of in-depth studies, discussions and sharing of the different positions within the school community.

From the various materials produced and discussed, an awareness of the difference in social contexts emerged. Highlighting the historical discontinuities with respect to the Italian school situation, some aspects stood out, which we can read in the acute considerations of Professor Laura Menicalli, a mathematics teacher in the middle school:

From reflecting on inclusion and also thinking about possible school models to compare, one aspect that comes to mind is the question of time. To put it in a nutshell, what I envy most, thinking of Don Milani's school, are *the extended times*. I am aware that no school model could reproduce a school that involves pupils and teachers all day, every day of the year. However, it would be desirable to have a school model in which we are no longer slaves to programmes and deadlines.

The awareness of this major change in the management of school time, sharpened by historical perspective, makes it possible to propose possible changes:

Lighten and reduce the content and related objectives to leave more space for more inclusive and creative methodologies. Working calmly on words, on understanding the text, giving more space for comparison to stimulate critical thinking is possible, but it requires time and the courage to make choices between what is a priority versus what is less important.

Contact with historical sources that tell us about lessons at Barbiana, every day of the year, holidays included, allows an invisible aspect of today's school to emerge: the extreme difficulty in respecting learning times, breaks, difficulties that must be quickly overcome so as not to limit the execution of the curriculum:

When asking pupils a question or requesting their opinion, *the time of silence* must be taken into account, which so frightens us and makes us anxious, because we associate it with the loss of time or the ineffectiveness of our teaching. True inclusion, creativity, the involvement of pupils as active subjects of learning requires more extended time.

The various contributions of the lecturers, well exemplified by the words above, testify to the significance of the historical approach leading to new didactic ideas, developed by comparing the past with the present (Canfora 2014). The two dimensions are not disjointed, but linked within a reasoning that may also lend itself to possible simplifications or improper uses of this dialectic: however, the mediating activity of the public historian makes it possible, at best, to avoid these problems and to orient working groups towards awarenesses that are extremely important for the professional profile held.

Historical education, in fact, increases critical and reflective capacity, particularly when working on historical continuities and discontinuities: this enables us to overcome the false perception of our everyday world as entirely natural. It leads us, instead, to consider it as the product of a series of historical processes which, in the case under consideration, have led to a change in the sense of time experienced at school, to assign a negative rather than a positive meaning to the slowness of education.

As can be seen, these paths do not aim to develop new, generally valid interpretations of history, but lead to an increase in significance for the individual teachers involved, supporting them in their professional development. The historical approach provides help to move from an executive role as an employee

of the state to a role as an intellectual working with his or her students on a cultural project on a daily basis.

School, as John Dewey reminded us many years ago, is the place par excellence that leads the citizen to understand democracy and act democratically. Without democratic education in school, one that is open to the pluralism of cultures, in our case with the support of historical knowledge, we will only have a form of instruction, but not education for democracy, and at worst we will have a form of indoctrination.

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Historical Consciousness and Global Competence in Teacher Education

Davide Capperucci, Laura Boynton Hauerwas[*]

Abstract:

In this chapter we explore the interplay between global competencies and historical consciousness in teacher education. Italian and US American teacher education students participated in an intercultural virtual exchange, developing global competencies through a migration project-based learning experience. The affordances and challenges of this learning experience were revealed in the intercultural dialogue and in collaborative projects. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the pedagogical learning for future teachers and emphasized the importance of historical consciousness, values, and competencies to teaching globally.

Keywords: Global Competencies, Historical Consciousness, Intercultural Virtual Exchange, Teacher Education

1. Introduction

Globally competent teachers are essential for preparing children to be citizens of our rapidly changing, globally interconnected and interdependent world (Europe Council 2019; Asia Society/OECD 2018; U.S. Department of Education 2018). In today's globalized society we must nurture citizens with strong intercultural competence, personal and historical consciousness, and a view of the planet in which all are valued (Goren, and Yemini 2017). Being a global citizens means first of all being aware of one's personal, cultural and historical identity, knowing the values on which this identity is based in order to be able to open up and work with others. From this perspective, historical awareness does not refer so much to the knowledge of past events. Rather historical awareness reflects the values that underlie one's sense of belonging to a community, an expression of common values generated by proximity, recognition, reflection, and sharing. In a more general sense, historical consciousness refers to an individual's awareness and understanding of the past and how it influences one's perspective of present and future. It encompasses the recognition that the present is influen-

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[*] This chapter is the result of joint work between the two authors. Davide Capperucci wrote sections 1, 2 and 4, Laura Boynton Hauerwas wrote section 3.

ced by past events, and that studying history is essential for comprehending the global complexities of human societies and cultures.

This chapter first explores these interrelationships between global competencies and historical consciousness in the context of teacher education. Then the authors share details of an intercultural teacher education virtual exchange where Italian and US American teacher education students developed their global competencies through their participation in the project-based learning experience related to migration. Perspectives on the affordances and challenges of the intercultural dialogues and the collaborative project for Italian and US American students and faculty are included. Chapter concludes with discussion regarding pedagogies that supported preservice teachers' development of global values, competencies and historical consciousness.

2. Global Values, Global Competencies, and Historical Consciousness

Academic literature around the importance of developing the global competence of teachers may give the impression that this is a 'new' notion, however it is not new at all. In fact, many countries around the world are already working to integrate global competence into primary and secondary education (Caena 2014). Global competence is a multi-faceted construct that educators, scholars, governmental entities, and advocacy groups have linked to concepts such as intercultural education, global citizenship education, twenty-first-century skills, deeper learning, and socio-emotional learning (Ramos, Wolf, and Hauber-Özer 2021). Among the many definitions present in literature, the one that seems to have the greatest consensus is the one reported in the OECD's 2018 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) which frames global competency as the

> [...] capacity [...] to: 1) examine issues of local, global, and cultural significance; 2) understand and appreciate the perspectives and worldviews of others; 3) engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions across cultures; and 4) take action for collective well-being and sustainable development (Mostafa 2020, 2).

In other words, global competency is the capacity to critically examine historical and contemporary issues of local, global, and intercultural significance and experiences in diverse societies in such a way that human rights are respected and where democratic participation and the rule of law is guaranteed to all (Bender-Slack 2019; Huber 2012). Historical consciousness represents the element of synthesis and attribution of meaning across the multiple components that underlie global competence, to the extent that it holds together local and global facts and issues, social relationships, exchanges between different cultures built over the course of the time and modified due to historical, economic and political causes produced by human beings.

In more detail a student is globally competent and historically conscious when he/she can:

Investigate the world beyond their immediate environment, and understand how local and global communities are influenced by the history of individuals and communities.

This type of inquiry can lead to a better understanding of the interconnectedness of various aspects of the world and foster a more informed and globally aware perspective. Historical consciousness involves an awareness and understanding of historical events and their impact on the present and plays a crucial role in enhancing our understanding of local and global problems. By examining the historical roots of facts and problems, learners can better understand how and why certain challenges have developed. In this way, through the study of history students can identify patterns and trends in human behavior, societal structures, and geopolitical dynamics, offering insights into the potential outcomes of current actions, and as Vico's said recognize the courses and re-courses of history (Mead 2019; Cauvin 2018).

Thanks to the analysis of historical precedents, individuals can identify similar situations and reflect on how they were addressed (or not) in the past. This analysis can help in predicting potential outcomes and understanding the effectiveness of various approaches. In a certain way, history allows us to observe cause-and-effect relationships in various contexts; studying the consequences of past actions, students can better anticipate the potential effects of current decisions on different aspects of society, politics, and economics. In doing this, what Olick called 'social memory' (1999, 346) or what Misztal (2003) called 'collective memory' is constructed, which is based not only on the knowledge of historical events but on the meaning that those who were involved assigned to them. Contemporary societies are complex systems with interconnected components, and within this complexity historical understanding enables today's citizens to grasp the multiple perspectives of social, political, and economic systems, helping them anticipate the ripple effects of decisions across different sectors. People and societies often exhibit recurring patterns of behavior. Historical knowledge and consciousness allow individuals to recognize these patterns and predict how certain behaviors or decisions might lead to specific outcomes based on historical analogies. Historical analysis often reveals instances where well-intentioned actions led to unintended consequences; this awareness helps people consider potential unintended outcomes of current actions and make more informed and contensious decisions. History is filled with examples of mistakes and failures, from which citizens and societies can learn from and make choices that are more likely to lead to positive outcomes (Myers, and Grosvenor 2014).

Historical consciousness allows us to learn from the successes and failures of the past. Understanding historical mistakes and achievements can inform decision-making and contribute to the development of more effective solutions to contemporary problems. By studying different disciplines of the school curriculum, students should come into contact with different sources of information (sites of government bodies, transnational organizations, recognized humanitarian organizations, local authorities, etc.). On the one hand, these sources chronicle the present contemporaneously describing the actual events for what

they are through a chronicle approach. On another hand, they try to read using the lens of history, paying attention to how the events of the past continue to influence what happens now. In that sense historical consciousness expands knowledge on issues that can be encountered both locally and globally (such as poverty, social inequalities, and economic opportunities, migration, inequity, environmental risks, conflicts, cultural differences, pandemics, stereotypes), rejecting the principle of absolute randomness and considering perspectives that brings a students understanding closer towards casuality. The large-scale knowledge of economic, social, health, cultural, and educational phenomena should provide students with new interpretative tools to understand the reality around them, with the contradictions that characterize it. That knowledge should also distinguish the reliability of certain information based on its origin, up to the formulation of ideas supported by data and historical evidence (Seixas 2017; Demantowsky 2019).

In essence, historical knowledge and consciousness can represent a guide that provides a wealth of information about human behavior, societal evolution, and the consequences of various decisions. By drawing on this historical wisdom, individuals and policymakers can make more informed choices and navigate the complexities of the present with a greater understanding of potential outcomes.

Recognize, understand, and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others across time.

Students who are globally competent develop a multi-perspective view of the world and the phenomena that occur in it. They are aware that the reading of the same event, of a historical fact, can be conducted in different ways according to those who lived it, according to the cultural and philosophical models of reference, the values of a community, the consequences that certain facts produced. The interpretation of historical facts can vary significantly based on the perspectives and lenses through which they are examined. This phenomenon is often referred to as 'historical interpretation' seen as the product of how different readings of the same historical fact can occur. Different cultures may approach the same historical fact with varying emphasis on certain aspects, influenced by cultural values, traditions, and collective memory. Political ideologies can also shape how historical events are portrayed, emphasizing certain narratives that align with a particular political perspective. People interpreting historical facts may bring their own biases and preconceptions to their analysis; personal experiences, beliefs, and values can influence how a student approaches and interprets historical information (Duquette 2015).

When integrated with the recognition, understanding, and appreciation of diverse perspectives, historical consciousness enhances our ability to grasp the depth and complexity of human experiences over time. It adds a temporal dimension to our understanding, emphasizing the historical context that has shaped the various worldviews we encounter. Understanding that multiple interpretations of historical facts exist is essential for fostering a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of history. It emphasizes the dynamic and evolving

nature of historical scholarship, and encourages students to consider various perspectives to gain a more well-rounded view of the past (Crawford, Higgins, and Hilburn 2020).

Recognizing the existence of diverse interpretations of historical facts is not only a scholarly necessity but also a key to unlocking a richer, more nuanced comprehension of history. It underscores the dynamic and subjective nature of historical analysis, encouraging a thoughtful and open-minded engagement with differing perspectives to construct a more comprehensive and well-rounded understanding of the past. All this implies that embracing diverse interpretations opens the door to a deeper and more sophisticated understanding of the past. It implies that by exploring various perspectives, layers of complexity and subtlety are revealed, enriching our grasp of historical events. Each interpretation serves as a key, allowing us to access a broader and more intricate narrative, fostering a comprehensive awareness that goes beyond surface-level understanding (Grever, and Adriaansen 2019).

Recognizing, understanding, and appreciating the perspectives and world views of others encompasses cultural awareness, empathy, open-mindeness, and a commitment to inclusivity. By embracing this concept, individuals contribute to the creation of a more tolerant, interconnected, and harmonious society. Globally competent individuals are aware of the complexity of the world and the diversity of cultures – and are fascinated by it. They constantly ask new questions but the results they reach do not represent absolute truths; instead, they are contextualized cultural and historical products that have value for places and for the people who elaborated them. This has the potential to make them less susceptible to prejudices and stereotypes and more open to dialogue, to interaction with others who are different from themselves, and to meeting other social groups, thus developing a wider and less geo-localized sense of belonging.

Communicate ideas effectively with diverse audiences by engaging in open, appropriate, and effective interactions across cultures.

Globally competent students understand that people from different cultural backgrounds may interact and communicate in different ways. This sort of understanding is possible when students possess cultural and historical awareness in fostering global competence, because it underscores that students with global competence appreciate the diversity of cultural norms and communication styles worldwide (Clark, and Peck 2019). It implies an understanding that effective cross-cultural interaction requires sensitivity to and awareness of the variations in how people express themselves, convey meaning, and engage in interpersonal relationships. This perspective is fundamental for navigating an interconnected world where cultural diversity is a defining feature of human interaction. In that sense, globally competent students are able to adapt the communicative style, the vocabulary, the content and the communicative register of the people with whom they interact, demonstrating understanding and willingness to accept ways of thinking and feelings different from their own. They pay attention to how they express their beliefs, affirm their needs, adopt

a relativistic approach to the problems they deal with, avoid deterministic and one-sided positions, ask questions, know how to manage conflicts and ideological differences, are available to change their opinion following interaction with others while remaining faithful to their values. They are able to communicate interculturally. Intercultural communication is a dynamic process that involves navigating through cultural differences to achieve effective and meaningful interactions using verbal and nonverbal communication. It requires a high degree of cultural sensitivity, respect and appreciation of cultural differences, avoiding stereotypes, and being open to diverse perspectives. To do that is necessary to adapt and cultivate communication flexibility, active listening, conflict resolution, and cultural intelligence (Byram et al. 2017; Tierney 2018).

Cultural intelligence includes cognitive, emotional, and behavioral competencies that contribute to successful intercultural communication. Overall, these characteristics paint a portrait of students who possess not only cultural sensitivity but also the interpersonal skills necessary for effective global engagement. These qualities are foundational for building connections, resolving conflicts, and contributing to a more harmonious and understanding global community. Globally competent students are empathic, and with a critical consciousness have the potential to demonstrate they are sensitive to the needs and feelings of others, and have a sincere and genuine interest in the life and ideas of others. In essence, their empathy serves as a bridge for building meaningful connections, fostering a collaborative global community characterized by mutual respect and understanding. It demonstrates how interpersonal qualities can play a transformative role in bridging cultural gaps, suggesting that by cultivating empathy, individuals contribute to the construction of a global community where cooperation, respect, and understanding form the foundation for positive, collaborative and intercultiral interactions (Risager 2017).

Take Action for Collective Well-being and Sustainable Development both Locally and Globally

Taking action for collective well-being and sustainable development, both at the local and global levels, involves a proactive and holistic approach that considers the interconnectedness of social, economic, and environmental factors. In addition to knowing the main problems that threaten the stability of the planet both globally and locally, globally competent people are able to respond effectively and responsibly to a local, global or intercultural issue or situation producing effective actions oriented to change (Horner, and Hulme 2019). Although in most cases the younger generations do not directly manage the strong powers of contemporary society, such as the economic and political ones, they are still able, to influence public opinion (often through social media), to report situations of inequity and discrimination, draw the attention of states to respect human and civil rights, and promote campaigns for the respect of ethnic, cultural, social and gender minorities. Students can represent the nodes of a broader network that aims at the enhancement of respect, diversity, and rights, calling political decision-makers to implement concrete policies aimed at caring

for humanity and the environment both at the global level and at the individual community level (Kerkhoff 2017). Students can foster community involvement through active participation and collaboration, creating platforms for dialogue, ensuring diverse voices are heard and respected, engaging in decision-making processes. This inclusive approach contributes to the development of solutions that address the unique needs of the community according to its history, values and traditions (Myers, and Rivero 2019).

Globally competent students are both a resource and an instrument for prioritizing social equity and inclusion in all development efforts, addressing issues of inequality, promoting social justice to achieve collective well-being, and advocating for policies that ensure fair access to resources, opportunities, and services regardless of social, economic, or cultural backgrounds. They can support local economies by promoting sustainable business practices, fair trade, and ethical consumerism. They can encourage entrepreneurship and initiatives that create economic opportunities, particularly for marginalized communities (McKeown, and Hopkins 2014). And they can contribute to the overall well-being of society. The familiarity they have with technology and social networks advocates for international cooperation on sustainable development goals, supporting and engaging in partnerships with global organizations, governments, and non-profits to address shared challenges, leveraging collective resources for positive and long-term impact, and developing initiatives that contribute to the advancement of sustainable practices and technologies. Considering the potential impact of natural disasters, pandemics, or other emergencies on collective well-being, the implementation of strategies for crisis response and resilience sees the prioritizing role of students in building community resilience through preparedness, resource allocation, and effective response mechanisms (Leduc 2013). This kind of sensitivity and involvement for the common good contributes to the dissemination of a culture of lifelong learning and adaptability, recognizing that solutions for sustainable development may evolve over time combining strategies, individuals, communities, and organizations to contribute to the collective well-being and sustainable development of society, fostering a more resilient, equitable, and harmonious world (Boix Mansilla 2017).

3. Global Competency Education

These competencies must be acquired not in abstract, but they have to be applied in the resolution of tasks and complex situations that require intentional actions with local and global significance. For this reason, global competency should become curricular aim of all schools and be pursued through specific educational actions and evaluation tools. Instead of an extemporaneous activity in addition to ordinary teaching activity, global competency should be a focus and contribution of each subject.

To gain all these competencies, students need to practice them in the classroom and apply them to real-world topics. The pedagogy to develop global competence must be inspired by a heuristic and problematic approach starting from

the work that students do in the classroom. This work must be the expression of collaborative, participatory, laboratory and authentic teaching methodologies which, while not denying the effectiveness of more transmissive and traditional approaches, aim both at the resolution of concrete problematic situations and at a broader understanding of global problems. Many of these problems take on global proportions and are difficult to overcome through individual solutions or to the choices of individual national governments; it is therefore important that – starting from work in the classroom – students understand the strong interconnectivity that characterizes the great ecological, economic, technological, health, migration challenges of contemporary society as well as those that affect the daily life of each of us. The causes of many local situations could be found very far away; in the same way, our daily habits and our lifestyle can have a strong impact on the entire planet and represent a problem for populations which live thousands of kilometers away. If the teaching inherent to these great issues does not translate into concrete and authentic experiences, the risk of falling into a notional, demotivating, mnemonic and not very meaningful teaching for the younger generations is very high.

Collaborative Virtual Exchange: an International Experience with Preservice Teachers

We, an Italian and US teacher educator, worked together to intentionally design a virtual experience that could be embedded into our existing teacher education courses[1]. The purpose was to build future teachers' global values and competencies and preparedness to be culturally responsive and globally conscious educators. Our two institutions had previously collaborated on intercultural learning experiences in face-to-face environments as part of a customized study abroad program in which the US American students studied in Italy. Ten US American undergraduate elementary teacher education students at an urban college in the northeastern United States and sixteen Italian student teachers from a large public university in central Italy participated along with the three faculty-two of whom are authors of this chapter. In the US, the virtual exchange was part of a required literacy and social studies methods class and in Italy it was a part of theories and methods of teaching, learning and assessment course. To integrate teaching for global competence into our classrooms, future teachers must learn how to teach for global competence (Kerkhoff, et al. 2019; Yemini, Tibbitts, and Goren 2019). In this section of the chapter, we will discuss the specific global learning praxis we selected to incorporate into our courses:collaborative virtual exchange and authentic practice of global teaching through project-based learning.

Collaborative virtual exchange is a pedagogical approach emerged at the beginning of the Internet, albeit by different names and in different educational

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[1] Details about this virtual exchange experience were previously published in Hauerwas, Capperucci, and Salvadori (2023).

contexts (O'Dowd 2013; 2018). Common models of virtual exchange are practices that engage «groups of learners in extended periods of online intercultural interaction and collaboration with partners from other cultural contexts or geographical locations as an integrated part of their educational programmes and under the guidance of educators and/or expert facilitators» (O'Dowd 2018, 5). Based on their experience with effective exchanges, O'Dowd and Ware (2009) outlined a simple task-based framework where students: 1) exchange information, 2) compare and analyze content and 3) create a collaborative project. We began developing our virtual exchange with future teachers with this frame to structure our eight-week exchange, but also incorporated opportunities for building routines of critical and historical consciousness and reflexivity throughout the experience (Hauerwas, Kerkhoff, and Schneider 2021; Dervin et al. 2020).

Central to the virtual experience was the incorporation of project-based learning. Project based learning is a collaborative teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills for an extended period to investigate and responds to an authentic, engaging, and complex question or challenge. The project results in a product (Helle, Tynjälä, and Olkinuora 2006). This pedagogical approach was chosen as it provided the future teachers an authentic experience that necessitated them to use and develop their global competencies as they worked together in intercultural groups. Specifically, students investigated how to integrate global competencies and values into their teaching when addressing the global issue of migration in their hypothetical 5th grade classroom. Linguistic, cultural and racial diversity has become a salient feature of classrooms as transnational migration has increased world-wide (Banks, Suárez-Orozco, and Ben-Perez 2016; Pratt 2015). This shifting global context demands that teachers be prepared to be culturally, linguistically and pedagogically competent and able to address global issues like migration and create equitable and inclusive learning environments for all students (Cushner, McClelland, and Safford 2019; Goren, and Yemini 2017).

To prepare the students for the project we modeled global teaching. The global learning praxis we used included situating our investigation of the issue of migration both globally and locally, modeling the use of counter narrative pedagogy (Delgado 1989; Nieto 2013) with the story of Guatemalan immigrant Claudia Patricia, and facilitating dialogue using the thinking routine 'See, Feel Think, Wonder' (Boix Mansilla, and Suárez-Orozco 2020). These pedagogies provided our students the space and facilitated means to critically reflect on the global issues of migration and share their perspectives with each other. Simultaneously, they authentically participated in global teaching and had the opportunity to reflect on its impact on their learning as students and future teachers. This session concluded with a discussion of global teaching praxis and the introduction of their Migration Teaching project.

Participating in the project-based learning experience in a virtual intercultural context necessitated teacher education students to use all four global competences. Students investigated the world by identifying and learning about a migrant's story. The paths of migration investigated spanned periods of

history and geographical contexts. This required that they carefully consider the complexity of the political, cultural, historical, and social reality for each individual as they journeyed from one home to another (Boix Mansilla, and Suárez-Orozco 2020). Students biographies included Yusra Mardini[2], the Syrian refugee and an Olympic swimmer who was appointed the youngest Ambassador of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2017; Samia Yusuf Omar, the Somali sprinter who died in 2012 crossing the Mediterranean see from Libya to Europe; Michele Iaccarino, an Italian who moved from South Italy to New York City in the early part of the 20th century and Ana, the mother of one of the American students who immigrated as child from the Azores, Portugal in the United States in 1973.

When sharing the migrant's stories they investigated, narratives emerged that challenged stereotypes and humanized individuals who were frequently marginalized in both are Italian and US American communities. The teacher education students listened to each other and considered the different perspectives and experiences. This in turn lead to the students to take up the task of how to bring these powerful migrant stories into their future classrooms and designed instructional activities that would help children build their global competencies and values. For each migrant the groups developed a slide presentation with the biography narrative (words and images) to be used with 5th grade pupils and an explanation of why they selected the immigrant to teach pupils, and how they would use the biography in American and Italian classes to promote global competences. Woven throughout the project students were holding open and effective intercultural interactions in the virtual space. Our aim was to let the students approach an intercultural task authentically by working together democratically, renouncing their own ideas in favor of the group's shared vision, and inquire together about the teaching pedagogies that were culturally relevant and global conscious.

Affordances of Virtual Exchange for Developing Global Competent and Historically Conscious Teachers

In this final part of the chapter, we highlight affordances of experience for future teachers and the teacher education faculty to learn globally through project-based learning and develop critical perspectives about our histories and actions as humans, teachers and global citizens. Experiencing global pedagogy and collaboratively completing an authentic task provided the future teachers the opportunity to develop a more nuanced understanding of how global teaching can transform practice.

Affordances Revealed in Intercultural Dialogues

The students advanced their intercultural communication skills as they learned together and came to common understanding about their projects.

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[2]   Note two groups choose the same person for their biography project.

I had a hard time expressing my views in a foreign language, but with a bit of effort I managed to improve and grow. I learned that dialogue and the continuous sharing of ideas can strengthen yourself and the group.
We listened a lot about what everyone's idea was. We asked questions to each other, we were curious about the differences and similarities that we found. I think we all tried to be open and positive and this experience taught us how to improve our behavior in this way.

In the final synchronous session of the project another student shared she was «listening more deeply […] making us learners who want to know more, that there are so many stories behind each of us». Students recognized the importance of listening, valuing others' perspectives and experiences and clarifying to their group's success communicating and their learning.

The future teachers' thinking about immigrants was made visible through their dialogues during the virtual exchange sessions.

In the words of one student:

We cannot understand the history of someone by just looking at them, we must try to have a dialogue to be curious and ask about their history in order to learn more. History makes us think about the immigration problem and our own access to our countries and how we might help others access them as well.

and from another:

we value personal connections and personal stories. We heard Claudia Patricia's story and now were starting to make connections with our own worlds – we hear, oh a boat arrived in Sicily or statistics like 300 people died.

To support the intercultural dialogue we integrated the thinking routine: In what ways might those you met be similar to you? Different from you? Connected with you as human beings? What would you like to ask, say or do with the people if you had a chance? To provide the future teachers as space to critically reflect on their intercultural experience throughout the virtual exchange and develop a critical conscience that attends to personal history and place (Boix Mansilla, and Suárez-Orozco 2020). The use of this thinking routines led the students to see themselves in others – not only their peers in the exchange, but also in the migrant whose stories they learned and their imagined future students.

In imagining a connection with Yusra Mardini, a Syrian refugee – As human beings we need the same sense of safety and it's our right. We also are attached to our family, we love our friends and often we missed them so much. We also try to reach our objectives and what we love to do in life.

Working with the Italian students allowed me to see the different perspectives that we hold, and the beauty that lies within it. I think it is important that we respect the comfort and challenges that come along with perspective taking.

This on-going opportunity for reflexivity shifted student orientation from comparing and judging others to allowing for more fluid and nuanced perspective taking about who we are, who we are in relation to others, and how to share the world and our history with others (Wahlström 2014).

In sum, students expressed empathy for each other as they worked to communicate interculturally and for immigrants whose stories they heard. They felt connections with others, and respected differing perspectives that others might hold. Communicating interculturally and understanding multiple perspectives with empathy are essential global competencies for taking action to improve the world and challenge xenophobia (Asia Society/OECD 2018).

Affordances revealed in the collaborative projects

The affordances of the authentic collaboration were also evident in their instructional projects. The teacher education students highlighted different values and global competencies, making connections between personal, historical, and global dimensions central in instruction. The students centered migrant storytelling in their lessons, reflecting the modeling of the counter narrative pedagogy they experienced. Migrant stories shared included journeys of both going to and running away from one's home; the bias immigrants experience as non-native speakers in the classroom or attaining a job; multigenerational experiences of hard work to establish one's family in a new country; and descriptions of migrant as passionate about their sport and achieving their goal of the Olympics. One group included the modeled pedagogy of thinking routines to scaffold students' critical thinking about systemic bias and privilege; most included reflection opportunities to make personal connections with the migrant's story.

In establishing the 'why' of the immigrant stories for the Italian and American classrooms we saw different foci emerge. The future teachers framed the US American lessons as cross-cultural where children would be learning about others (e.g. life in Syria), while the purpose espoused for the Italian lessons was to establish an emotional/personal connection to migration (e.g. 'a face on all the talk about refugees'). For example, one group had their American students use discipline tools (maps, timeline) to organize primary source research about the Syrian war and communities' refugees fled. And in an imagined Italian classroom, one group proposed using different sources to 'talk about stereotypes of immigrants and about similarities between us' stating an objective of developing empathy. In both contexts the future teachers made connections to 'our' immigrant history – reflecting a narrative of the United States as a country of immigrants, including many Italians. For instance, one group had students in Italy researching Italian migration to US through Ellis Island and another having students in America look for examples Italian culture in their communities.

The migratory biographies of the cases examined by the students involved in the virtual exchange project highlight a very close link between individual stories and the stories of humanity, between individual existences and the global issues that in past or present times have accompanied the evolution of societies and the world. These experiences contribute not only to developing a greater

understanding of the local and global issues of the past and present on a purely cognitive level – through greater knowledge of the facts, situations, the causes that triggered them and the consequences produced – but also on the emotional level when they activate processes of identification, empathy, profound understanding of emotions, moods, experiences, often difficult or even dramatic, suffered by subjects who are distant from a space-time point of view, but who are perceived close due to the sense of solidarity, partnership and sharing that they are able to generate. In this we must find the strong formative significance of narrations, stories, biographies are never just storytelling, understood as chronicles of events that have occurred, but which are also the sharing of extra-textual aspects that call into question emotions, values, beliefs of individuals or social groups who, even in the absence of mutual knowledge, are able to aggregate, to unite very different people and cultures, to trace similarities between the experiences of others and ours, so as to make us perceive ourselves within a common historical evolution that we all help to build.

Students specifically reflected on the power of storytelling in building their awareness and empathy for others and a pedagogy to use with their future students to learn more about the world.

> Hearing an immigration story is an incredibly eye-opening experience and I wished that I had learned more about it when I was younger... Being aware of this can teach students lessons that will surpass the classroom and help them to develop more empathy.

> It made me realize even more that respect for other people, cultures and perspective is fundamental because we never know what others have been through, their stories or their family's stories. I really understand now how important it is to teach that to children, to know different stories and to understand that their actions could have consequences across the world or could impact someone's life.

> I hope to teach of the differing identities and values of cultures around the world, not with an intent to instill a sense of disunity. Instead, I hope to show my students that differences should be celebrated and not condemned. Along with this, this project showed me how impactful it can be to hear the varying stories directly from the people who participate in that culture. Actually, hearing the person describe their story makes it so much more real and really puts it into perspective, which is something that is crucial for students within the classroom.

These exemplar quotes from future teachers demonstrate how they valued the diverse identities of immigrants; they stressed the importance of learning about each other and empathy building as their actions have consequences both locally and around the world. However, our future teachers' choice of not centering frameworks for critical discussion of power and privilege and systemic bias in their migrant project, but rather focus on the personal connections and building empathy suggest that this component of global teaching is more diffi-

cult for our pre-service teachers. This involves further emphasizing a shift from what Oliveira de Andreotti (2014) identifies as soft global citizenship education to critical global citizenship education.

Many also shared that their own education included limited global perspectives that challenged a dominant narrative, and this experience helped them understand the importance of learning more about other perspectives and teaching for global competence.

> As a future educator I am in a unique position where I nurture young students as they explore and understand the world. I have the ability to influence how they form their perceptions of the world, and thus there is great significance in incorporating global thinking and perspectives. I recognize that even in my own personal experience with education, I have often been limited to my local environment and unaware of the world beyond us as an interconnected system where the actions of one community or nation can impact others around the globe.

> I also understood that knowing what is going on around the world is important and that anything that happen far from me can affect what surrounds me; I realized that I should open my eyes and look at what is going on around me.

> This experience made me realize that there are many things that I need to learn about other cultures as well as my own. There were many times that the Italian students knew more about American laws or policies than I did. I also realized that I knew nothing about Italian culture or government.

> We have all the opportunities to grow personally and professionally in our life but at the same time there are people in the world also near our house that don't have them and then we have to appreciate them, also if we never think about this and also if we always take this for granted.

Experiencing global pedagogy impacted the students' views of their future classrooms. They expressed some criticality – in their reflections about their own educational experiences and understanding of the world – and the importance of their changing, growing, learning with the world to transform their practices as teachers (Hauerwas, Kerkhoff, and Schneider 2021). These important first steps include essential values which underlie global education practice – teachers who critically understand privilege and recognize our interdependent global histories as they teach the future global citizens in our local classroom communities.

4. Conclusions

The virtual exchange project described in the previous pages – although representing an exploratory study conducted with a small group of future teachers in training, requires a larger sample and other data sources to future document impact – has allowed us to explore new methodological approaches and models

related to initial teacher training through online collaborative learning experiences (Hauerwas, Capperucci, and Salvadori 2023).

In this specific chapter we focussed above all on the close link between the development of global competence and historical consciousness in future primary school teachers. Investigating the relationship between these two factors is not simple, from what scientific literature tells us (Bandini 2023) and from what we have been able to detect during this virtual exchange experience, there is no sequential or causal relationship between them, but rather a constant interaction capable to enrich both aspects. In fact, global competencies are based on the knowledge of local and national instances, shared values, dispositions, dialogic attitudes, and forms of intercultural communication which have historical roots. Global competencies are products of mental and cultural representations produced by social groups and based on individual and collective stories. These stories generate our sense of identity and belonging (Carretero, Rodríguez-Moneo, and Asensio 2012). To know our historical background, with its positivities and negativities, represents the first step towards recognizing the distinctive traits of our identity and sense of citizenship. Being able to open up to global citizenship requires a further step which involves the ability to decentralize, overcome prejudices, avoid generalizations, and try to assume a multiperspective vision of the world (Sayer 2019). As Bauman (2000) also theorized, global citizens are capable of incorporating the other's point of view, mediate between different positions, give importance to historical evidence and welcome the perspective of change and fluidity of contemporary society.

This virtual exchange project has intended to promote reflection on one's personal history, on one's identity and sense of belonging by making education students dialogue with a broader historical perspective, also attributable to very distant geopolitical contexts and situations, such those ones connected with the migration processes. In some cases this work of analysis and reflection has led to bringing out similarities, common aspects, attributable to one's personal experience, while in others it has developed the students' awareness of how some realities are totally distant from their previous experiences, without representing a reason for disinterest in knowing them better and considering them as relevant contents for teaching activities. Future teachers made visible thoughts, feelings and connections to migration, as well as collectively imagined ways to integrate teaching for global competence into their praxis (O'Dowd 2020). Regular opportunities to embed reflexivity of who we are, who others are, our global values, and how we can take action as both future teachers and global citizens emphasized the importance of historical consciousness, values and competencies to teaching global (Caluianu 2019; Reimers, and Chung 2018). While we incorporated some critical pedagogies into our model, in future exchanges, we recognize the need to further amplify critical perspectives in global teaching (Byker 2016; Standish 2014).

At the same time the project was also significant for the development of specific teaching competencies – competencies in curriculum design, balancing asynchronous and synchronous sessions with the use different technologies,

providing inclusive and accessible learning material for pupils with different family conditions, learning characteristic, cultural and linguistic contexts, building international peer-to-peer relationships and teaching pedagogies. Our work extended previous virtual exchange models in teacher education to not only focus on intercultural communication and global competencies, but also address core objectives in pedogogy and learning. Incorporating the modelling of teaching for global competence in an integrated, interdisciplinary manner and facilitating collaborative learner-centered projects in our virtual exchange made it possible for all of us to achieve pedagogical learning objectives of both teacher education programs. The virtual experience strengthened the collaboration between our two universities which previously used a study abroad model and a focus on intercultural awareness and communication (Hauerwas, Skawinski, and Ryan 2017). From this experience we have learned that the pedagogical model of developing teaching for global competencies can be implemented effectively in a virtual cross-cultural learning experience to increase both historical consciousness and teaching competencies for future teachers. Including such a model in our partnership expands the opportunities for our future teachers and inservice teachers in our communities when a study abroad experience is too expensive, logistically difficult to achieve and sustain across institutional constraints (Howard, and Ilyashenko 2021; Huang, Helgevold, and Lang 2021).

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Educational Experiences and Testimonies

Neoliberalism and Teachers' Mentality:
The Contribution of Oral History

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Abstract:

The last few years have been characterized by a notable flourishing of publications dedicated to neoliberalism and its rise towards the end of the 1970s. However, little attention has been paid to how oral histories can be used to investigate the diffusion of neoliberal values in people's mentalities. This chapter aims to address this topic by analyzing interviews given by several Italian teachers about their professional lives. The interviewees can be divided into two groups: the first consists of teachers born roughly between 1940 and 1950, while the second includes teachers born afterward, who seem to embrace neoliberal views on the relationship between the individual, work, and private life.

Keywords: Teachers, Italy, Neoliberalism, Oral History, History of School

The abolition of special classes for people with disabilities. The reform of the school boards in 1974. The introduction of teachers' teams in primary schools, in 1990. The Gelmini Law, in 2009. These ones are only some of the reforms that every handbook of scholastic legislation should list and analyse to highlight outcomes and changes in the Italian schools. That's an analysis we can deepen thanks to an 'internal' approach, which makes the most of teachers' oral interviews. Following such an approach, it will be possible to investigate how these reforms have affected teachers' everyday scholastic life. Indeed, these outcomes deal with changes affecting teachers' cultural mentality during the last decades, as several studies have assessed an increasing number of teachers in accordance with neoliberalism values (Bandini 2023; Harvey 2005, 2). This contribution aims at reaching these tasks thanks to the contribution of the dataset collected within the project 'Educative oral memories' (*Memorie educative in video*): hence, it aims at highlighting how Italian teachers' mentality changed over decades.

In this contribution, memory will be considered as a historical source. This procedure should not surprise anybody. During the last decades, memory has become the protagonist of the debate among human sciences as its epistemological value has been newly appreciated throughout the twentieth century (di Pasquale 2018; Ricoeur 2000). In the context of ancient and medieval philosophy, memory has been interpreted as the epistemological way people should undertake for improving their knowledge, as philosophers deemed it as

unchanging and permanent. Memory lost its privilege because of seventeenth-century scientific revolution. Cartesian and post-cartesian philosophy, as Spinoza, confined it to the lower step of the knowledge process, because it was not seen as a suitable way for improving knowledge, while scientific knowledge, after the Scientific Revolution, proved itself as continuously changing.

The 20th century gave rise to a new epistemological season for memory. Indeed, Henri Bergson and eventually phenomenological philosophies valued memory as the leading channel towards which a person can interact with reality (Rossi Monti 1991, 59-84). Memory was considered firstly a public's domain, as Maurice Halbwachs' studies assessed; however, throughout decades, acknowledgment about the presence of individual memory came out. Hence, memory has been considered an individual's most personal possession and it has been considered possible to educate it with a pedagogical process. The latter, as stated by Duccio Demetrio's *Pedagogy of Memory* (*Pedagogia della memoria)*, has been implemented in Italian primary curricula thanks to 2012 'National didactical Indications for infancy, primary and middle schools' (*Indicazioni nazionali per il primo ciclo*) (Demetrio 1998, 16, 53-55).

Furthermore, memory has become a topic which has aroused several questions and debates among history scholars. The establishment and the progressive legitimation of oral history proved it (Passerini 1988, 31-42). Not casually, oral history has been established and legitimated throughout the Seventies, after the 'long Sixty-Eight' contestation highlighted how strict the boundaries with which social and statal institutions obliged each individual were (Martino 2018). Therefore, the role of individual emotions and feelings became one of the most debated topics in oral history, as scholars tried to use it in order to analyse how economic and social changes affected people. The firsts oral history works tried to give the same relevance to individuality as well as to economic and social structure; but eventually, starting from the 1908s an increasing relevance has been given to the development of individuality and researchers has been focused on psychological as well as on emotive issues (Passerini 1988, 53; De Luna 2001, 138). Therefore, nowadays it seems to be necessary to focus on oral history works that could give economic and social changes the relevance they need. It is true oral history derives from the unicity of each single life; but it is also true that each life is highly influenced from outcomes generated by social, economic, cultural and political processes (Halbwachs 2001, 133-34). Hereafter, this paper aims at highlighting how these collective changes can emerge from oral interviews. Following this approach, oral history could offer other, richer, perspectives to understand social and cultural collective processes.

Oral interviews have been already used several times in pedagogical studies (Cagnolati and De Serio 2019; Paciaroni 2020; Barausse 2021). This paper considers as its preeminent sources the oral interviews primary and secondary teachers gave within the broader project 'Oral Educative Memories' (*Memorie educative in video*) overseed by the University of Florence. This project, which led to the establishment of a digital dataset, has been developed thanks to the broader PRIN (Project of National Relevant Interest) project 'School Memories

between Social Perception and Collective Representation' (Paciaroni and Montecchiani 2019; 2020). The PRIN has involved several Italian universities – among them, the University of Macerata, the Third University in Rome, the Sacred Heart University in Milan[1]. Oral interviews are in Italian languages; they last usually between twenty minutes and one hour and half. All the oral interviews collected were inserted into a database; and later each of them has been historically contextualized with a 500-word paper. So far, the dataset managed by the University of Florence has recorded 284 teachers', former pupils', and early childhood educators' oral interviews. Among them, 247 deals with former pupils' scholastic and educative memories (Martinelli 2022a); 23 deals with teachers' memories; 14 with early childhood's professional career. This dissonance could appear remarkable: however, the high number of former pupils eventually trained to work into schools contributes to equilibrate such a situation. It is important to note that these oral interviews have been conducted by students attending the course 'History of education' and 'History of formative processes' held in the Education, Psychology and Foreign Languages Department of the University in Florence between 2020 and 2022. More specifically, the students were expected to produce these interviews to pass their exam. During lessons, students were trained at conducting an interview and recording it. Even though students have been set free in choosing whatever question they want, the following list has been suggested:

How was your familiar context? How was your educational path?

In which year did you start to work as a teacher?

Did you work as a temporary teacher? If you did so, how many years did you work with these contracts?

When did you obtain a permanent contract as a teacher? Did you obtain it after winning a competition or pursuing another way?

Have you ever taught only in a specific kind of school, or have you ever taught in more than one kind of school?

Have you ever attended any teachers' professional course? Could you say anything about them?

Have you ever questioned your didactical skills? Have you ever tried to improve them?

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[1] Its researching work can be read at the following link: <https://www.memoriascolastica.it/> (2024-03-01).

In your opinion, which scholastic reforms affected everyday school life the most?

Do you feel possible to reconciliate working time and family/free time?

In your opinion, which skills should characterize a prospective teacher?

It has been already reminded that oral interviews have been uploaded in a dataset. Such a process allows to index oral interviews following chronological and territorial criteria. As far as the time span considered, eleven people interviewed started to work during the 1970s and retired between 2009 and 2015. During their career, they witnessed momentous years for the history of school, as they were teaching when schools went forward from the hope for reforms in late 1970s to the dramatic financial cut realised in the first years of the new century (Galfré 2017; Santamaita 2021). Anyway, this generation constitutes the main part of teachers interviewed. Indeed, among the 23 teachers interviewed, six started to work during the 1980s, five during the 1990s. The youngest one has started to work in school in 2000: hence, all the people who have been interviewed could count on at least twenty years of working experience. It has been a period long enough for musing exhaustively about how historical changes affected on scholastic environment, working relationships and, finally, changes in teachers' cultural and social perceptions.

As far as territorial criteria, the main part of students have chosen to interview a Tuscan teacher. Few are the exceptions: a teacher working in the Marches and one in Naples. Furthermore, three other ones started their career in Northern Italy (two in Lombardy, one in the Veneto region).

The last issue deals with gender division. It is not surprising to see that, among the teachers interviewed, only one is a man. The feminization of the school career, especially in the lower grade (i.e. infancy and primary schools), constitutes a process that has been affecting Italy (and other European countries, even though at a lesser grade) since the last decades of the 19th century (de Fort 2015, 186; Covato 2012). Only the economic crises hitting Italy between 2009 and 2019 has changed working prospectives as a growing rate of male people decide to choose a stable working path and to apply for teaching temporary and permanent positions.

1. Changes in Teachers' Mentality between the Seventies and Nowadays. Some Suggestions

In the previous paragraphs, it has been summed up how the collected interviews can be regarded and analysed. Hence, what did they highlight about the transformations in the teachers' mentality?

One of the events most narrated in teachers' memory deals with changes in scholastic laws. The years between 1970s and nowadays were marked by a sweeping shift from inclusive and socially advanced laws to neoliberal,

conservative approaches. Examples of such a policy could be the 'Gelmini law', in 2009, and the 'Buona Scuola' (Good school) law, in 2015. More specifically, the 'Gelmini law', named by the Minister of Education Mariastella Gelmini, operated a dramatic cut to financial sources devoted to schools. It eliminated teachers' teams in primary school, which were introduced several years before thanks to the so-called 'Mattarella law' in 1990; it increased the number of pupils allowed for each class; it cut scholastic programmes, especially in vocational schools, traditionally attended by the poorest and needier part of the Italian society (Santamaita 2021). 'Gelmini law' is almost uniformly quoted by teachers, who shared a negative opinion towards its outcomes. Indeed, interviews deemed it as a way for prompting private initiatives in schools; eventually, it began to be considered as the first step neoliberal policies took into school. Paola Sergio, who has been teaching religion in Naples since 1994, claimed Gelmini's reform was the first step Italian governments considered in order to privatise education (Martinelli 2022b). In Maria Gisella Catuogno's opinion, the school, through 'Gelmini Law', «[school] must became a sort of industry, let's say it, the most part of us does not like such a reform, I do not like it because it cannot be possible to strain in such a way the aims the school pursues, hence the Gelmini reform in my point of view proved to be wretched» (Martinelli 2022c, 661). Regret for the enthusiasm of the 1970s and the very first years of 1980s is shown by those teachers who started to work at those times. Among them there is the infancy school teacher Laura del Lungo, who said: «I regret the expectations, yes, my expectations, because at that time I was really young and I trusted in school as I still do, even though what happened later» (Martinelli 2021, 430).

However, did teachers' mentality also change alongside scholastic policies? If we are going to analyse oral interviews, it seems almost spontaneous to divide teachers into two generations. The first one includes people born between 1940 and the very first years of the following decade. For female teachers of this generation pursuing a teaching career was a familiar matter, as parents decided which career path daughters should pursue. As oral memories remembered, fathers and (in a lesser grade) mothers or elder siblings were the ones who decided girls' future career. This was the situation of Maria Grazia Fazzi, born in Arezzo in 1941. She attended teachers' high school (the so-called *istituto magistrale*) as her brother decided for her (Dati 2021a). «I did not want to be a teacher» admitted Paola Chiriconi, born in Pescia (a little town in Tuscany) between 1941 and 1942. She dreamed to work as an accountant, but her father preferred to enrol her in an *istituto magistrale* (Dati 2021b). Teaching was seen as a suitable career for women, as it was assumed that they would have more time for raising their prospective children. Love for teaching, even if remarked, came later, and it was not considered as one of the possible reasons people should take into account their career decisions. Fazzi's oral interview highlighted such an assumption: «You know, when our generation was studying, teaching was considered as women's most suitable job […] I liked it. Even though I did not come up with the idea of teaching, then I liked this job» (Dati 2021b, 382). Such ideas, though they promoted the genderization of this job, encouraged also a clear division between working time

and free time: if prospective teachers' families decided to pursue such a career for these reasons, women perceived they had no need to work intensively. Furthermore, male teachers were an exception: already in 1940s and 1950s, finding one of them was rare; teaching in primary schools was a profession men pursued only if they were strongly convinced to. For example, in his interview as a former pupil Giulio Olmastroni, born in Siena in 1939, remembers clearly his first day of primary school in 1945. The reason lies in his mother's behaviour, as she laughed out loud as she discovered his son got a male teacher (Martinelli 2022c). In this context, having a male relative working as a primary school teacher played a pivotal role in motivating them, as clearly reported (Dati 2021c).

The youngest generation shows different perceptions about teaching career. Firstly, it is visible because all the teachers interviewed insisted on the fact that they chose actively their prospective career when they were adolescent. Therefore, the career has been revendicated as a personal choice. It has been, as they said in a uniform manner, a 'matter of vocation'. «I was really struck by this job» admitted Paola Sergio, who teaches religion in Naples (Martinelli 2022b). «I was always dreaming to be a primary school teacher» remarked Tiziana Petronella, born in 1970 (Martinelli 2022f, 698). Teaching was perceived as a personal choice which relates to the inner part of individual personality. For the oldest generations, work appears as something which, firstly, had to be necessary for living; for the youngest ones, instead, living properly means choosing the job they are made for. Also, for this reason, boundaries between work and private life seemed to not exist in the younger generations. While the oldest ones remarked that their family has chosen their school career in order to make carrying on family lives possible, the youngest generations revendicated that they usually think about work all day, sometimes without any limit. In this context, what Paola Sergio remarked appeared extremely interesting. In her oral interview deemed the first months of 2000 as the best moment of her working life. It occurred immediately after Parliament enacted the 'Bassanini Law', in 1999. 'Bassanini Law' affected deeply scholastic institutions as it gave them room for autonomous decisions in several matters (e.g., didactic ones). Paola Sergio was included in the team which would define the autonomous project her school carried out. Having to reach this task, she worked more than ten hours per day; however, she recalled those months as challenging and satisfying: «the experience was exciting; we worked a lot of hours per day but we desired a lot to achieve the task because we believed in scholastic autonomy» (Martinelli 2022b, 603). Cristiana Puggioni, who works in a primary school in Fermo, the Marches, defines her work as 'totalizing' her family and her free time, claiming she does never stop thinking about school (Martinelli 2022e).

As concluding remarks, we could state that the oldest and youngest generations are characterised by different ways of conceiving their jobs. While for the first-generation their teaching career was pursued because of their own family's decisions, the youngest one saw it as a way of expressing their individuality. Furthermore, older teachers showed a certain attention in dividing their working time from their free time. On the other side, the youngest revendicate their totalizing

mental and physical connection with their job. Such an attitude could be a way for expressing their emancipation from traditional women's duty, as the main part of teachers interviewed are women. However, it could also express the interiorization of one of the most important neoliberalism canons: the assumption that the role that work and careers played in social acceptance and self-esteem was incredibly relevant (Ciccarelli 2022). Remarkably, the shifting in teachers' mentality occurred several years before the changes in scholastic policies. Hence, the ground was ready (though partially) for accepting neoliberal transformations.

Further questions can emerge. Remarkably, the two generation are separated by the 1968 movement. Recent studies have pointed out the importance that anti-authoritarian movements had in exalting individuals and their role in society (Martino 2018); eventually, they claimed that the emergence of neoliberalism could have been influenced by post-68 insistence on the autonomy that individuals should enjoy from their collective social demands. Hence, we could ask if the 1968 cultural movement has played a role in defining such a shift in teachers' mentality. Deepening the analysis of teachers' oral memories can be one of the ways to answer to such a question.

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Scuola-Città Pestalozzi:
An Example of Experimental School Where
Past and Present Intersect to Look Towards the Future

Valentina Giovannini, Matteo Bianchini

Abstract:

This chapter proposes two perspectives for the role of historical knowledge in teachers' education, both rooted in Scuola-Città Pestalozzi in Florence. The first perspective concerns the school, inspired by a democratic conception of both social and school life: giving references for an historical awareness of the development of the school, materials and methodologies evolve and adapt within a broader horizon. A second perspective is History teaching. At Scuola Città Pestalozzi, the curriculum consists of learning experiences that lead students to 'live' in first person some historical contexts; the didactics of history, freed from the mechanisms of studying by rote, offers endless opportunities to create a link with the various meanings of history.

Keywords: Transformative Learning, Collaborative Creation of Knowledge, Experimental School, Historical Consciousness, Students in Action

Teachers, perhaps more than anyone else, live in the present and always have the future in front of their eyes. Every teacher is completely absorbed in the present, in the needs and interests of their students. They need to understand, interpret, embrace the present, and imagine the future.

However, every time a cycle closes, the reality appears different, and it's not always easy to decipher it and resist the temptation to reject change, taking refuge in the belief that what 'we have always done' cannot be questioned, especially concerning processes that question the very nature of school and education.

Teachers thus move between two 'tensions': the transformative tension that accompanies the changes in society and knowledge, and the conservative tension that prioritizes the defense of the school itself and its practices.

So, what is the role of the 'past' for teachers? To delve into the role of historical knowledge in schools, we refer to our common experience as teachers at the Scuola-Città Pestalozzi in Florence and as internship tutors for the Primary Education Sciences degree, engaged in both primary education and the training of future teachers.

The Scuola-Città Pestalozzi has a long and 'special' history. It was founded in 1945 by Ernesto Codignola, a pedagogue from the University of Florence. Codignola's idea was to create a school that was like a city, to shape new citizens.

At the end of Fascism and the World War II, even before the birth of the Italian Republic, Codignola's urgency was to offer a context of democratic practices, participation, openness in thinking, and responsibility in action.

Why is it called Scuola-Città? Codignola, with the insight that by recreating the functioning of a city, young people could later become citizens, is a precursor of the learning environment. The reference to J. H. Pestalozzi pays tribute to the thought, essentially proto-activist, attributed by Codignola to the Swiss pedagogue who lived in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Pestalozzi places the mind and knowledge at the center, adding to it the hand, representing the know-how, and the heart, signifying the way of being. When Codignola had the opportunity to meet Carleton Washburne, who came for the Marshall Plan to Italy, he translated the thoughts of Dewey for the publishing house he founded, 'La Nuova Italia', and brought active pedagogy to Italy.

The name 'Scuola-Città Pestalozzi' thus represents a program, a commitment, and also an obligation to act within a system of pedagogical and didactic values and references.

Scuola-Città Pestalozzi was included in the Devoto-Oli Italian language dictionary, where it is described as an educational organization based on the community of life and work in the application of the democratic principle of self-government.

This school had an organization modeled on that of a city and its institutions. There was a mayor who was elected from those who wanted to compete, changing approximately every trimester and had to campaign to be voted for. Then there were assessors, such as the leisure time assessor in charge of organizing games, the health assessor who greeted the students at the entrance to check if they had cut their nails and washed. Even from the perspective of school organization, it anticipated the idea of the learning environment: the students were in charge of managing the entire school, thus being engaged in authentic tasks. There was a group of people who went shopping because they had to eat, prepare lunch, and perform calculations to buy pasta, tomatoes, and so on. This approach is still present today in the form of the student council, composed of two representatives from each class, as a formalized structure, and a series of activities in which the students are entrusted with tasks and responsibilities.

In the original Scuola-Città Pestalozzi, there was a generalized laboratory-based approach, far from the Gentilian approach to knowledge. The learning environments were diverse and not 'typically' school-like. The students also learned a trade, as there was a carpentry workshop, a printing press, and gardening.

The school organization was a small community, and the students learned by doing and making the entire organization function.

Therefore, Scuola-Città Pestalozzi is a small school with a long history, characterized as a context of innovation, experimentation, and laboratory teaching practice. It has always been a school that welcomed students from 6 to 14 years old, covering eight years, not with two separate schools, but with a curriculum organized in four two-year periods with the progression of pairs of classes entrusted to a team of teachers. This allows for the valorization of verticality and

cooperation both for the students, who work in disciplinary continuity and in groups with different roles and possibilities in learning and collaboration, and for the teachers who work constantly with a strong exchange between the two school levels.

Placing Scuola-Città Pestalozzi in the historical roots of its institution and some of its connotations, we can identify two perspectives through which the relationship between the school and historical knowledge can be interpreted.

The first concerns the school institution itself, a kind of framework that could represent a model for educational institutions in general. Scuola-Città Pestalozzi does not have a 'method', but it has tried to interpret the words of Prof. Laporta, another pedagogue from the University of Florence and its long-time Director: «an experimental school must contemplate both figures of the operator: the researcher-teacher and the teacher, with a peculiarity that makes an experimental school a privileged place for pedagogical research».

Thus, the school as a context for research and experimentation. In this perspective, we can see Scuola-Città Pestalozzi within three frames. The first frame is today's school, the priorities it has chosen, and its organization. For example, there are optional workshops to encourage students and teachers to understand their interests, from the perspective of orientation and interdisciplinary knowledge. There is affective education, not a discipline in the limited sense of the term but a curriculum in the dual sense of modus operandi and key themes to address, such as: emotion management, conflict mediation, intercultural education, sex education, media literacy, etc. These and other themes that develop throughout the eight years are accompanied by actions aimed at educating for citizenship, for example, having student representation in school bodies like the student council, as well as actions that increase awareness of being an active part of the learning community. Every student in the last four years has a tutor who accompanies them in the awareness process of their learning journey. There are technologies for collaborative work and for different subjects. Teachers bring ideas, stimuli, and practices that are shared and sometimes become structural. Projects to be carried out and studied are built in collaboration with the research world (Universities, Indire...) and the school world.

The second, broader frame concerns a longer perspective: practices and references that have been structurally organized and represent explicit choices (for example, there are no textbooks in primary school) and that 'implicit curriculum' so important and difficult to define.

Among the many examples drawn from daily life, we can mention, first of all, an approach to the teaching of knowledge that starts from experience, self-assessment and feedback practices, daily reading, how silence is requested, with everyone's participation, how the cafeteria is managed by the students, field trips that last for several days from the first year.

In particular, the dimension of collegiality assumes central importance, i.e., how the culture of teaching is negotiated, constructed, grown, and given shape at a particular moment. This depends on how teachers collaborate and how human resources are employed, with an exchange between primary and lower sec-

ondary school and between different classes, with time for middle-management actions for everyone (the 'resource centre', a kind of 'time bank').

Scuola-Città Pestalozzi is part of the Wikischool network along with two other schools: Don Milani in Genoa and Rinascita Livi in Milan. The network was established in 2006 with the school laboratory project authorized by the Ministry of Education pursuant to article 11 of Presidential Decree 275/1999.

In addition to teaching, the legislation assigns these schools the task of experimental research that contributes to the renewal of the national school system. The network aims to create a community of practices with structural elements of particular relevance for an approach like that of visiting innovative schools, including the introduction of reflectiveness and research into teachers' activities, support for cooperation and sharing to achieve the objectives. Experimental schools can select teaching staff already in roles in the state through a public competition where the evaluation through the curriculum and interview of candidates is entrusted to the peer community and therefore to colleagues already in service at the School.

Wikischools practice good experimental teacher training and evaluation: «in these realities, from their entry into the school, new teachers are assisted by tutor figures who observe them in typical work situations: in the classroom, in the labs, in planning, in class councils. Experimental schools use specific protocols for supervising professional behaviors, summary sheets with appropriate descriptive rubrics, particularly appreciating the ability to work with colleagues» (Di Stasio 2017, 270). Recruitment is just the beginning of the initial and ongoing training and evaluation path that these schools have devised to «valorize a sense of belonging to the professional community and highlight the complexity and specificity of the tasks assigned to teachers» (Bertone, and Pedrelli 2013, 38). In order for individual professional development to be shared and monitored by the entire community, especially by a tutor and other colleagues, this continuous training path is self-assessed and assessed by peers, considering the coherence between the individual teacher's growth path and the one set by the Institute. The willingness to share and discuss one's experience seems to be the foundation that makes it possible to build a school community as a cultural community.

This set of practices exists and continues to operate thanks to documentation and training, which allow each new teacher to reconnect their actions to many 'red threads' that run through the school.

Around all this, the third frame, rooted in the origin of the school and constituting a style, a way of living in the school community. A framework of values and attitudes inspired by democracy, participation, and the view of students as protagonists of the school. These values and attitudes shape choices, even though the forms change over time.

In this way, different souls coexist in the school (not always without conflicts!) but are rooted in a pedagogical and didactic thought in which every choice dialogues and confronts those present and from the past.

We believe that every school, even if not experimental, can 'construct' its own frames if it can define an idea of school, transform it into organizational

choices with a process of deep sharing, document and narrate practices, and live as an open educational context primarily for teachers and their professionalism. This is a metacognitive operation that we can liken to the processing of historical content related to the history of the school and a narrative of the school itself, through which a teacher or a group of teachers give value and learn from what has been accomplished. This translates into a higher operational quality of planning and action and also of being teachers. Documentation gives teachers awareness of the complexity of processes, which is one of the fundamental knots of teaching professionalism: it is documented to formalize and give a complete sense to what has been achieved, collect contributions from multiple subjects, bring out implicit aspects, reflect critically, evaluate, communicate, and socialize the experience. It documents for transformative purposes, but it also documents to fuel reference values at multiple levels of elaboration and reflection: beyond the didactic level – techniques and tools – cultural and pedagogical references – authors and conceptions – and broader issues of meaning – approaches and principles.

We believe it is important, for the initial and ongoing training of teachers, to provide references for a historical awareness of the development of the school, which provides the tools to distinguish different levels of meaning. Materials and methodologies evolve and adapt, but the broader horizons guide the choices.

The second perspective considered relates to historical knowledge and history teaching. At Scuola-Città Pestalozzi, the curriculum consists of learning experiences that lead students to 'experience' historical contexts: practicing the historian's trade with a suitcase of documents to interpret; reenacting the arrival of the Trojans in Carthage to understand what refugee hospitality is; simulating a discussion in the agora of Troy to personally support the reasons for peace or conflict; making a film about Cavour's death to delve into the issues of Italian unification; creating another film, awarded at the Memories of Migrants competition, to relive Italian emigration to America, and another to step into the shoes of children in Florence in the post-war period; pretending to be archaeologists who have discovered an ancient unknown civilization and demonstrating an understanding of what constitutes a civilization.

There would be many more examples, but we believe that these are paradigmatic of a disciplinary 'status' that, using historical methods, emphasizes a representation of historical knowledge as something that belongs to everyone, emphasizing formative and transversal aspects and public connection with the past.

Alongside experiences of 'exploring' history, predominantly focused on its aspects of a grand narrative of human events (the social and humanistic profile of the discipline), there is also a study dimension in which history interacts with other disciplines in a multidisciplinary approach to certain themes, in the form of environmental research, such as the study of the Arno River and Piazza Santa Croce. This approach, called 'project work', characterized Scuola-Città Pestalozzi's didactic proposal for a long time, and there are still examples and opportunities for development, such as when lower secondary students addressed the theme of caring for the territory on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the November 1966 flood.

We believe that the teaching of history, freed from the exclusive study of 'great events', offers infinite opportunities to create a connection with the meanings of history itself through motivating proposals, complex experiences, and the acquisition of knowledge that once again roots values and attitudes.

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The Importance of Historical Knowledge.
Intergenerational Testimonies.
The 'Vite di IMI'* Museum in Rome

Raffaella Biagioli

Abstract:

The problem of memory in the field of education is a real challenge to initiate a process of reflection and categorisation of experience, so as not to get lost in the indifference of the present. The museum is today one of the privileged places to encounter the past in public, representing an institution capable of concretely realising phenomena of democratisation of culture, guaranteeing everyone the right not to be excluded. The 'Museum Vite di IMI - Percorsi di vita dal fronte di guerra ai lager nazisti 1943-1945, in Rome', proposes to bear witness to memory, to honour it with humility, with objectivity not lacking in indispensable passion. A museum that is above all a place for teaching moral principles, the indispensable values from which the Italian Constitution was born, which has so far succeeded in guaranteeing us the supreme good to which we have the right to aspire together with the new generations, namely peace. The project was drawn up by the ANRP's Monumental Heritage Department, specifically by architects D. Scrofani, F. Mazza and G. Francone.

Keywords: Pedagogy, Remembrance, Teaching, School and Extra-school, 'Vite di IMI' Museum in Rome

1. History as a Key Category of Pedagogical Discourse

For the pedagogy of the third millennium, the problem of memory in the field of education poses a real challenge to initiate a process of reflection and categorisation of experience, so as not to impoverish the historical present and anchor it to history, in order not to get lost in the indifference of the present (Biagioli 2019). How much formative charge is there behind the reflection of past human phenomena? There would be no knowledge without knowing, and it is the procedural correctness of the cognitive process that justifies and validates the cultural and operational value of human knowledge. As Dewey states (2018), knowledge is the capital of labour, the indispensable resource for further learning. Every learning activity must allow students to appropriate the knowledge transmitted by previous generations. History must be known and must be the

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* IMI: Internati Militari Italiani (Italian Military Internees).

heritage of everyone, and cultivating memory is an ethical value that cannot be shirked. Through history, education can reveal to the individual the intimate depth that experiences hold within them. The link between education and life passes through culture, through the possibility of symbolising, of connecting one's own experience to that of others, of historicising the individual vicissitude to place it in a broader context. It is through culture that the personal story is connected to the collective heritage, enlivening it, but in turn being enlightened by it in its multiple aspects (Biagioli 2015): this affirms the desire to rethink training methods and paths in a contemporary and inclusive manner, not continuing to reduce them to reassuring and controllable practices, but promoting them as a possibility of human growth for all in the multifaceted educational and scholastic contexts. These are paths of awareness dictated by the will to oppose oblivion and forgetfulness Pedagogy, in support of this project, restructures itself in its epistemology, in its exercise, in its openness to 'neo-paradigms' capable of expanding cognitive possibilities in the interconnections operating in material, social and human reality.

In recent years, all historical disciplines, with increasing urgency, have been involved in a process of rethinking their social presence, the ways through which historical knowledge is – or is not – recognised as useful and important knowledge, Bandini and Oliviero state (2019), and Public History, as a grassroots fabric, enables the participatory dissemination of historical and memorial heritage on their respective territories. We should also consider the fact that, while the community of historians has long since developed a high degree of introspection and reflection on the foundations and, above all, on the usefulness of the professed discipline, pedagogues have recently been dealing with, and reflecting on, the importance of the pedagogical intention in all social systems. Among the skills required in plural school contexts in which multiculturalism presents itself according to different characteristics (cultural, sociological, values, practices), the ability to acquire a study and research competence that favours reflection on experience and elevates educational and didactic practice to an object of rigorous analysis in the formalisation of knowledge is necessary. It is therefore necessary to constantly anchor oneself to the experiences and knowledge of the reality of school life in which they are formed and rooted. But it is even more necessary to dig down to the roots of the attitudes and ideas that initiated the history and multiple narratives of negations, cultural resistance, and identity obsessions still dramatically present in our increasingly plural social realities and, in figurative terms, acting as shadows in our schools. In the relationship with life stories, one learns about people, one enters the existential field to generate change wherever possible. Pedagogy, in the light of the principles of a discipline such as Public History fosters understanding and encounters between people from different backgrounds, different generations and with sometimes conflicting memories for the development of a new public sphere (Tognon 2019).

2. The Educational Function of the Museum: The 'Vite di IMI' Museum[1] in Rome

The instance of inclusion, of recognition and valorisation of differences, imposes a renewed architecture of that knowledge that must intercept the multiple traits of today's human reality and transpose this renewed anthropological vision on the level of the implementation of new democratic educational practices. The clear separation between 'school times and spaces' and 'out-of-school times and spaces' thus loses its meaning on the strength of a lifelong and lifewide learning model according to which an individual's education is realised as a result of and in interconnection with society, i.e., in combination with history (Muscarà and Romano 2021). This relationship of exchange and communion of reciprocal cultural assets takes on the image of a school system that goes out into the environment daily to elevate its assets/resources to decentralised teaching rooms (Frabboni 2011). The museum is today one of the privileged places to encounter the past in public, representing an institution capable of concretely realising phenomena of democratisation of culture, guaranteeing everyone the right not to be excluded. In this way, it can foster learning because in it is functionally organised the set of cultural resources inherited from the past that heritage communities choose to preserve and transmit, acting as devices of memory and identity and that contribute, all together, to the process of acculturation. In this sense, education is a chance to escape from conformism and to direct the gaze of every man and woman in the direction of respect for life and human dignity, equal rights, social justice, cultural diversity, international solidarity, and shared responsibility for a sustainable future (Muscarà 2021). The communication that the museum establishes with young students qualifies as a dialogue, in which the moment of listening, of the return of meaning by the visitor himself, becomes fundamental.

The same challenge is proposed by the 'Vite di IMI' Museum – *Percorsi di vita dal fronte di guerra ai lager nazisti 1943-1945* – in Rome[2], which proposes to bear witness to memory, to honour it with humility, with objectivity not lacking in indispensable passion. A museum that is above all a place for teaching moral principles, the indispensable values from which the Italian Constitution was born, which has so far succeeded in guaranteeing us the supreme good to which we have the right to aspire together with the new generations, namely peace. Peace that, these days, seems to be going through difficult times and, above all, with warnings that it has not been conquered once and for all, but that we must always be committed so that it continues to be guaranteed for the future.

The rich documentation in the museum makes the participatory dimension of the new generations immediately perceptible and communicative.

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[1]   *Vite di IMI* Museum in Rome, via Labicana 15, snc, 15/a-17, within an area belonging to the Ministry of Defence. The venues offer strongly characterising spaces from a scenographic and evocative point of view and are suitable from a volumetric and distributive point of view.

[2]   Registered Office and Management 00184 Rome - Via Labicana, 15/a. <www.anrp.it> e-mail: info@anrp.it.

The project was developed by the ANRP's Monumental Heritage Department[3], specifically by architects Davide Scrofani, Ferdinando Mazza and Giuseppe Francone, which has already been presented to Italian and German institutions, and under which the same premises were granted by the Italian Ministry of Defence.

The exhibition is basically divided into seven rooms and an outdoor area. The entrance from Via Labicana gives direct access to the entrance hall: this is both the first reception room and the exhibition hall where visitors can learn about the subject matter, the historical context, and the information necessary to better understand the subsequent rooms. It features a reception desk and the first exhibition screens, as well as graphic and didactic material printed and displayed on the walls. The next four rooms are the actual exhibition spaces and are characterised by display cases for the exhibition of objects, documents, works of art, personal effects and other material testimonies that belonged to the IMIs; by screens for the reproduction of multimedia documents; and by Q-R codes for the reproduction of documents and multimedia content on one's mobile devices (mobile phones and tablets). The sixth room is both the concluding room of the tour, which ends with a series of films documenting the latest developments and updates on the subject addressed, and the foyer of the next conference room, with an additional service room behind the stage. From the foyer, it is possible to leave the building to access an outdoor area, a small garden in which works of art are set up, and to walk along the portico back to the first entrance hall and thus exit the exhibition.

The project is based on several principles, drawn up following an in-depth analysis of the client's needs and the requirements to be met. First, reversibility: the structures, in fact, can be dismantled at any time and their realisation (with exclusively dry systems and without intervening on the pre-existing walls) has not in any way compromised the state of the places, as they were at the time of the start of the exhibition.

Secondly, flexibility: the assembly system of innocent pipes, thanks to its characteristic joint, made it possible to avoid any complications during assembly, adapting the structure according to the tolerances of the woodwork, the electrical system, and the conformation of the rooms.

The idea for the exhibition *Vite di IMI* was born from the study of the personal experience of many IMIs who have passed on their testimony to us through their own stories and often through various forms of Art. Especially from the latter, the rawest and sharpest horror of internment emerges: the deprivation of freedom, the constriction of the camp, forced labour, hardship, the loss of one's dignity, death. All this to defend a choice of resistance, a 'No!' paid in most cases with the highest price. The phrase extrapolated from one of the poems by Franco

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[3] Associazione Nazionale Reduci dalla Prigionia, dall'Internamento, dalla Guerra di Liberazione e loro familiari (National Association of Survivors from Prison, Internment, and the War of Liberation and their families).

Mazzanti, an IMI deported to a Nazi lager, summarises the most frequent images found in the artistic expressions and works of art that have come down to us, but also in the memories of all survivors: iron, as a material but also as a sensation, as a dull sound, as sharp cold, as death; the wood of the barracks, an ineffective refuge; the silence and resignation of dying souls.

The exhibition spaces necessarily had to contain the echo of those same sensations, and this desire guided the conception and design of the exhibition structures and their insertion in the assigned rooms, so that they themselves could be strongly characterised formal elements that could coherently give a key to the entire exhibition. Each room had to be a figurative composition with its own imbalance between light and matter capable of conveying the intention of a message simply through visual and spatial experience. The architecture of the exhibition is resolved in the reiteration of a structural module in each room, which supports the functions of the exhibition itinerary but is at the same time endowed with a great expressive charge; its strong characterisation makes it capable of structuring the itinerary and marking out the different moments of the exhibition. It is a sculpture made by assembling numerous iron tubes painted black, in a logic of subverted weights, that is, creating a greater density of tubes as one rises from the floor. Wooden furniture elements cling to the same structure, effectively masking the few vertical elements and consequently creating the illusion of a heavy metal weave suspended on floating boxes, a few centimeters above the floor. As the structure moves away from the floor, the wefts become larger and larger, the tubes become more numerous and longer, until they reach very significant dimensions at ceiling height; as a result, the lines of the module seem to gather the objects, the walls, the light, the gazes of the visitors from every corner of the room to lead them to the structural and figurative fulcrum of the element. It has a great dynamic force, unifying the space and condensing it in the exhibition module, in which the main contents of the exhibition and the functions of the route are concentrated. The lightness of the composition is contrasted by the weight of the material; the iron black, prickly, cold; the wood rough, raw, frayed. Everything is crystallised in a freeze-frame, just an instant before the inevitable collapse, the effect of which can be imagined, the sound of which can already be heard. One of the main objectives of the exhibition is precisely to reach and involve the youngest, many of whom are still unaware of the history of the IMI through the possibility of viewing or listening to information and allowing them to filter it according to their own knowledge, to the desired degree of depth. At the end of the exhibition there is also a PC station through which to consult on the web the Register of IMIs, designed, developed, and continuously updated by the ANRP, based on the constant work carried out by the Association itself and by any professional who is making their research work available to the community.

The IMI Museum, thanks to the positive and virtuous connections with institutions and subjects operating in the area, enables active and participatory education, involving young people with profound competence and infinite passion in multiple and varied activities forming their civil conscience, prepara-

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tory to knowledge of the past to build a better and sustainable future. This is the context for the reflections gathered by the students of a class of the 'Angelo Frammartino' High School in Monterotondo who, accompanied by the school headmistress and teachers Irene Cini and Sara Ventrone (Zucco 2022) on 13th April 2022 , said that the museum tour gave them the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of the past from their school books, giving it form and substance: a means of learning not to forget painful realities such as those of the Second World War, which they thought were over but which now seem to be tragically repeated in Europe. The relationship between educational institutions and the museum institution, because of its social and educational implications, constitutes an excellent partnership for the recognition of an educational urgency regarding understanding the evolution of our belonging to the present world that requires penetration of meanings. Education is, in fact, a key category agreed upon today as a complex path of evolution and change to be carried out through co-operation and co-planning actions to build a sense of belonging, especially in the younger generations.

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Teacher Training Between Structured Pathways and Communities of Practice

Gabriele Marini

Abstract:

This chapter synthesises the issues of the Teacher Training according to Historical approach. The author underlines that School must give importance to History, to the relationship between the past and the present, to get to a better understanding of what school is, what school will be. Public History can be an effective tool to make communities understand their role in a modern society. Thanks to the historical perspective by reflecting on the values of teaching and taking in long term vision. The author reports some examples of activities for studying the History of territories, that are real best practices important to be shared and compared. The importance of the Teacher Trainig in accordance with Public History of Education is thanks the opportunities for theachers' professional awareness.

Keywords: Teacher Traning, Community, Education, Teacher's professional awareness, Pubblic History

School must give, should give, importance to History, to the relationship between the past and the present, to get a better understanding of what school is, what school will be, in addition to the current and the future role of the teachers in their own communities. History, according to Cicero should be considered as 'magistra vitae', as a subject that we need, as School and Society, in order to train students and citizens and guide them in their current-life thanks to the recollection of the past events (Bandini 2022).

Recently a field of research has been established, before in the USA, then in Europe and in Italy as well; a field of research aimed at finding a more effective relationship between historians and society: Public History, whose main aim is establishing a spread and shared knowledge of the past, to give importance to History and to underline the importance of thinking historically, useful for people and for school and for education. Public History can be an effective tool to make communities understand their role in a modern society and allow people play their role in the learning History. This approach can provide School and Education, not only with the learning tools for the pupils, to deeply understand the complexity of current society, but it can be also useful to define teacher's professional identity, always changing (Mamoura 2013).

Public History of Education must consider, for teachers and pedagogues, the opportunities for their professional awareness that is possible to be acquired thanks

to the relationship with the Labour Public History and with what this approach develops in particular in order to the History of the School (Bartolini 2019). Public History practices give opportunities and tools for a deep comprehension of the historical contexts in order to deal with complexity at School and in Education (Causarano 2022). Public History is a field of research faced not only by Historians but also by other people, in the Universities or out of them. For this reason, Public History is valuable resource to social cohesion, as it creates meeting opportunities among different people with a different professional background (AIPH 2023). It is required that the experience got in History is shared not only in the Academic sectors but also and in the educational ones.

In general Teachers in Italy are not sufficiently trained to deal with the issues of the Historical approach; High School's teachers, differently from Primary Schools ones who must do a training dedicated to teaching, followed, and still do a too short university training to be completely skilled to reflect on the real value of teaching. For this reason, Public History approach is very important as it can give School many opportunities, to increase teachers' awareness on their own professional behaviour (Bandini 2022).

The Educational environment is one of the most interesting fields of the research in Public History. The idea of writing a Public History's Manifesto (AIPH 2023) is powerful to give practical indications to work in the educational field by suggesting good practices, from the teaching of History to the importance of a specific training to cooperate with local communities, thinking to the past to be more aware of current times and to feel deeply part of that community. In the educational scope Public History establishes an approach that allows pedagogues to increase awareness of their own values and behaviours that have deep roots and to provide effective tools to understand the complexity of current society, useful to improve their professional practices in the school contexts.

Teachers' professional identity has been characterized by deep changesets, during the passage between the 20th and 21th centuries. Public History of Education can be a valuable tool to think about hypothesis to work at School. History of Education is effective for this kind of goals (Bandini, and Oliviero 2019).

The first field where it is possible to work with History at school is the concept itself of 'time' that contains all the dimensions: past present and future. 'Time' is a notion that every person knows in an experimented way, and it influences the space and the time where and when they live. But History, thanks to its research's tools, make people able to rebuild past's events. First, to make teachers reflect more on the most important Third Millenium's issues, they should know the History of School and Education to better understand the context where they work, as well as the social and cultural context of the classrooms where the pupils are different from each other and with different and specific stories.

Public History can be used as a powerful tool for teachers' training. It gives the possibility to observe the current process of teaching and learning, inside the historical process that has been built from the past to the present. At School we have to/should promote, thanks to the historical perspective, a real awareness of teachers' professional identity, giving them useful tools to take into

great values and vision for more cohesive and effective communities oriented to the wellbeing of the students. This is possible thanks to the students' citizen skills elicited by the subject 'educazione civica', the new subject introduced in Italy in 2017 by a specific law, and also thanks to special activities promoted with the methodological approach called 'Service Learning' that goes back to Dewey and his idea of pedagogical activism. In effect, if teachers reflect on the importance of the Public History method, they can become aware of their own role in the past and in the present. By following that approach they will be able to catch the features of being teachers and of teaching today and in the future, dealing with the current and the future challenges of Education and Society.

The Historical knowledge, the knowledge of the History of the School and Pedagogical movements can help teachers to consider their behaviour related to the historical context and to the results of the field of research that investigates the study of History in education.

Thanks to the historical perspective by reflecting on the values of teaching and taking in long term vision (logos – pathos – ethos, per Aristoteles' categories), teachers can make real sense of their role inside society, among their colleagues and the other figures of the educational community. The historical knowledge and the history of the school and the educational movements and the most important pedagogical 'Maestri', taking De Mauro's definition, make teachers reflect to the main educational issues, starting from innovation, the importance of the ICT in the educational process, to the multicultural classrooms, and cohesion.

An excellent educational experience that is a practical expression of the pedagogical activism, that the teachers must know is Scuola-Città Pestalozzi, born, thanks to Ernesto and Anna Maria Codignola, in 1945 in Florence with the aim of transforming a primary school in a little community. Scuola-Città Pestalozzi became very soon a laboratory of educational research, a pattern, thanks to the effective exchange between the school and the territory. If teachers studied an experience like this one, they could reflect about their current role and compare it with the current educational experiences like, for example, the pedagogical movement known as 'Senza Zaino'.

It is important to consider that thanks to History perspective at School the possibility of rethinking teachers'-training increases. The Public History of Education, by underlining historical process at School and Education, has connected to a laboratory idea of learning and teaching, according to what the Educational Ministry establishes.

The historical approach highlights that History is not only a theoretical subject but also a practical one, if you consider the research of historical sources; for this reason History is an inclusive subject.

Another very important aspect is the relationship between the school and the territory, thanks to the laboratory historical approach, that can promote the realisation of local history museums, by means of research on local traditions and on local history, interviews to witnesses of historical local events and the recovery of documents to rebuild the identity of an area. The whole community,

starting from the school community, should result improved in its own identity and sense of belonging (Bandini, and Oliviero 2019).

That project to promote the history of the community can be adapted according to the age of the pupils, but the aim should be the same: make the community involved in a special project to share their territory opportunities and potential. The students would be real protagonists of their School and the territory where they live thanks to kind of projects.

There are many examples of activities for studying the History of territories, that are real best practices important to be shared and compared. The most effective methodology is 'Service Learning', that makes students protagonists, giving an input from the community to get to know some areas, to study them and to give back the results of their studying. We can offer many examples of activities, all meaningful and representative of the effective experiences that were made at School in recent times. For this kind of activities visit 'Buone pratiche di Public History per la formazione e il territorio' (Bandini et al. 2022, 139-208).

An important activity, among the several ones made at school according to the Historical Approach is 'The museum activity'. Museum tells the History between past and present. A museum at School is a good project to start with research on its own school History and to attract different abilities in accordance with the different roles in the school community. A project that establishes an effective appreciation of school's remembrance. School's remembrance becomes the crux of a process of communication and education in that school community that can join the stakeholders, ex-students included. Teachers can improve their educational practises and increase their professional identity thanks to methods that they use for this kind of activity.

Another crucial point is the need of overtaking the strict distinction among the knowledge, and speaking about history, the nationalistic conception of History that does not make people understand the current processes, like immigration, climate change, globalisation, etc. As Bandini declares 'it is necessary', to think of a new idea of School, promoted by Public History, «to have a picture…of a wide and detailed legislation that has regulated their – teachers' – work, including initial training, recruitment procedures, professional development and independent forms of professional development that have been gradually tried out. This entire set of aspects contributed to determining the profile of the teachers' personal commitment, their ethical values, and their work in school» (Mead 2022).

This new paradigm of teaching and of training is in accordance with the Italian Constitution that at Article 3, establishes that all citizens are equal in front of the law, independently from their genre, race, culture, social context where they live and the duty of the Republic is remove all the those obstacles that can constrain citizens' freedom and equality, thereby impeding the full development of the human person and the effective participation of all workers in the political, economic and social organisation of the country. «This instruction …constitutes the fundamental element of schoolwork and an essential ethical reference for teachers' work» (Mead 2022), as Bandini confirms, and you don't

agree with him. Public History approach can do the difference to take roots to this constitutional principle.

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The Dual Mode of the Traineeship as an Opportunity to Equip Future Teachers with an Embedded Pathway

Laura Innocenti, Ilaria Giachi

Abstract:

This chapter points out the essential role of the mandatory traineeship in the Primary Education degree course as an opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in a real educational setting. The traineeship is a central part of the educational path and allows for critical rethinking of the different skills acquired in lectures and workshops, providing an opportunity for situated learning of teaching professionalism. The optional eTwinning ITE traineeship further develops international collaboration, digital literacy and intercultural competence. Both traineeships promote in future teachers a broader understanding of the education's role and of the importance of moral values to foster coherent and valid responses to social changes and to a global world. The chapter closes with a summary of the feedback provided by some students regarding their perception of the functionality and the moral value of their internship.

Keywords: Traineeship, Students in Action, Skills and Values, Professional Development

1. Traineeship at the Course of Study of Science in Primary Education in Florence

This contribution wants to focus on the traineeship, its organisation, its compulsory and optional courses which help in training the future teachers of nursery and primary schools through the years they have to attend at the University of Florence. The purpose is to see how much and in which ways moral and political values are enhanced and to give the opportunities to reflect on the development of teaching and education.

The traineeship plays a crucial role in the education and training of future teachers for nursery and primary schools at the University of Florence. It is designed to provide students with a protected and guided learning experience, enabling them to practise and develop the skills and abilities necessary for their professional profile (Bandini, Calvani, and Capperucci 2018).

The traineeship is divided into two modules: indirect traineeship and direct traineeship. Indirect traineeship takes place at the university under the supervision of Teacher Educators, while direct traineeship is carried out in schools with student teachers. This combination of experiences allows students to gain both theoretical knowledge and practical skills in a real educational setting.

The traineeship is mandatory and begins in the second year of the Course of Study. Throughout their university education, students are required to complete a total of 600 hours of direct and indirect traineeship. These hours are crucial for integrating practical activities with academic preparation, as they provide students with opportunities to gradually acquire teaching skills within the school context and discussing ideas and problematising them at the University.

By engaging in the traineeship, students establish their first contact with the real teaching profession. This experience helps them gain insight into the challenges and rewards of being a teacher, and it plays a pivotal role in shaping their future career choices. Moreover, the traineeship allows students to apply the moral values and principles they have learned during their studies in a practical setting, further reinforcing the importance of ethical conduct and professionalism in the field of education.

Overall, the traineeship pathway at the University of Florence offers a comprehensive and well-structured approach to training future teachers for nursery and primary schools. It combines theoretical knowledge with practical experience, ensuring that students develop the necessary skills and gain valuable insights into the teaching profession before they enter the workforce.

Through all these experiences students acquire skills, abilities and competencies but teacher educators focus also on other aspects which we can summarise as 'negative capability' as used by Elizabeth Currin (Mead 2022). We really liked this expression and it can be useful going back to the author who used this expression for the first time. 'Negative capability' is a concept coined by the English poet John Keats. It refers to the ability to embrace uncertainty, ambiguity, and the suspension of judgement in the face of complex or contradictory information. This concept has been applied in various fields, including literature, philosophy, and psychology. In our case Elizabeth Currin uses this expression referring to education and meaning to be able to live «with uncertainty and not knowing - to nurture the dispositions of uncertainty and not knowing- to promote a playful curiosity by using questions in the syllabus» (Mead 2022, 170)

Teacher educators have been asked if they are really able to promote playful curiosity and nurture doubts in students during the indirect traineeship in order to make them live their experiences in schools cultivating a capacity for critical thinking, humility, and an openness to revising their beliefs and assumptions when confronted with new information.

What has come out is that according to any dispositions and cultural background and through the tasks students have to carry out during the different years of the traineeship and to describe narratively in their essay teacher educators can assess if they reached the objectives.

At the end of each year of traineeship the debate with students ends with an essay, a sort of journal they take during their experience, and through a critical problematizing approach they can tell activities, methodologies and they should acquire awareness of their path but also about some aspects which still remain uncertain: «We should learn to navigate on a sea of uncertainties, sailing in and around islands of certainty» (Morin 1999, 3).

2. Assessment and Educational Values

Students at the end of each year of their traineeship undergo evaluation both at school and the University. The evaluation process involves filling a module that summarises all the skills the students should have attained and be assessed on. These skills are based on the achievement of standards, referred to as S3PI model, which are essential for teaching in primary education. The standards are categorised into four areas, each encompassing specific skills that are observed and evaluated during the traineeship.

The first area is called 'Values and Attitudes', which focuses on fundamental dimensions of personality, including empathy, listening skills, self-control, sensitivity to differences, and a sense of responsibility. These qualities are crucial for creating a positive and nurturing learning environment for students. We will delve deeper into this area later in our discussion.

The second area, 'Knowledge and Understanding', pertains to the development of core skills. This includes the students' knowledge of various subjects such as Reading, Writing, Mathematics, History, and Drawing. Additionally, proficiency in upper-intermediate level English, digital competences, teaching methodologies, evaluation techniques, and an understanding of school laws and guidelines are also evaluated in this area. A strong foundation of knowledge is vital for effective teaching.

The third area, 'Didactic Interaction', revolves around the students' ability to plan, prepare, and execute teaching activities. This aspect is analysed throughout the teaching traineeship and may involve assessments through a recording procedure called VIDEO MARC. Evaluating didactic interaction ensures that trainees can engage with students effectively and employ appropriate teaching strategies.

Lastly, the fourth area, 'Professional Community and Training', centres on the trainees' motivation to be a part of the teachers' community, their willingness to shoulder responsibilities, their commitment to ethical conduct, and their dedication to continuous professional improvement (Bandini, Calvani, and Capperucci 2018).

While studying the text on Moral and Political Values, an intriguing aspect comes to light – the concept of 'phronesis', which originates from philosophy and is now applied in the educational context and in particular it was explained as the «reassertion of the significance of Aristotle's phronesis (practical wisdom) in professional contexts is particularly useful in terms of developing value-based analyses of the relationship between teachers' personal moral and political values. Flyvbjerg has championed phronesis in the face of 'the dominance of rule-based rationality over practical science which is a problem for the vast majority of professional education'» (Mead 2022, 2).

Bringing the discussion back to the first and fourth areas, it can confidently be stated that the Course of Study of the University of Florence fosters the development of phronesis – a quality that goes beyond mere knowledge or intellectual skills. Phronesis encompasses empathy, emotional intelligence, and an awareness of the broader implications of one's actions. It involves reflecting on

one's values and understanding how they align with the needs and interests of others. By acquiring these abilities, future teachers can strike a balance between their personal aspirations and the well-being of the community, fostering harmony and a sense of collective responsibility.

Developing phronesis requires a commitment to ongoing learning, self-reflection, and engagement with diverse perspectives. It involves cultivating critical thinking, humility, and openness to revising one's beliefs when confronted with new information. Phronesis is not an innate quality but rather a skill that can be developed through experience, mentorship, and a deep engagement with the complexities of the world.

The university facilitates continuous exchange and debate among different stakeholders, especially in the last two years of the traineeship. During this period, students are encouraged to take action and record their teaching experiences. The trainees are required to maintain a diary in which they observe and document various activities and tasks they perform during their traineeship. This diary serves as a narration of their journey, including descriptions, pictures, diagrams, and charts, while also containing reflections on themselves and the strategies and methodologies that proved most effective.

In conclusion, the traineeship evaluation process is comprehensive and designed to nurture well-rounded and competent future teachers. It emphasises not only knowledge-based skills but also the personal qualities necessary for effective teaching and professional growth. Through a focus on phronesis, ongoing learning, and reflection, the university prepares trainees to be insightful educators, capable of making sound decisions that positively impact their students and the broader community.

3. Students in Action: Video MARC

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, students are required to record themselves during the last two years of their traineeship while they are carrying out their lesson/activity which has been planned in agreement with their school teachers and following the steps discussed with the teacher educators and the other students.

This procedure is called MARC which is an acronym that stands for Modelling, Action, Reflecting and Conveying (in the idea of sharing), and it is based on the Model of the Lesson Study and the Microteaching[1]. The Lesson Study model comes from the East, thanks to the research conducted by Lewis and colleagues (2006) in Japanese schools. Its objective is to improve the effectiveness of teaching through classroom behaviour analysis: teachers are called upon to observe and systematically examine themselves and others to become more effective instructors. Microteaching is a method that uses video recording of the teacher to help improve the quality of their teaching interventions. It was

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[1] See <https://sites.google.com/st-umaform.unifi.it/qualita-formazione-maestri/tirocinio/m-a-r-c?authuser=0> (2024-03-01).

developed and implemented for the first time in 1963 at Stanford University in a teacher training program. It might be considered teaching in a situation for a short time and with a few students.

This task of recording themselves and watching the lesson plan at the university rooms began in 2011-12 as a pilot project for some groups of students and it became compulsory in 2015-16 after some years of experimentation.

Through this video procedure students are really in action and they can construct their own methodological and didactical path with the support of their teachers in school and can bring into practice what they have learned during the academic lectures and the different workshops. In the whole traineeship students can become agents of change and provide teachers with their digital and inclusive competences in a continuous exchange between school and university and vice versa.

During indirect traineeship students and teacher educators watch together some of these video recordings and debate among themselves using a sheet which considers three important aspects: the cognitive, the communicative and the managing dimension. Each person has to fill up a chart with a cross to underline relevant pros and cons of the activity shown in the video; just to have an idea of some of the items which are considered and evaluated we summarise some of them.

By recording themselves students should be able to:

- activate assumptions;
- modulate rhythm and intonation of the voice properly;
- use non-verbal language properly (proxemics, gestures…);
- add verbal language correctly using other supports (such as images, graphic organisers, objects…);
- have inclusive behaviour interacting with everyone, use feedback correctly.[2]

After watching the video together students try to underline if something could be done in a different way or if could be applied other strategies or methodologies and can be made explicit other perspectives which try to focus and to build on positive aspects.

During the meeting with Professor Mead on the 8th February (see paragraph 5) there was an insight on traineeship and the Video Marc procedure and one of the students explained her video about Dante and all the didactic tools she realised during the lesson with the primary students.

4. eTwinning ITE Traineeship as an International, Digital and Cooperative Experience

The University of Florence's involvement in the eTwinning ITE Traineeship (Initial Teacher Education), since its beginning, underlines the commitment of

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[2] See <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fCYdoaaR3iNIlIXIBMCSzm99iQJ_y9Gk/view> (2024-03-01).

this Course of Study to provide student teachers with comprehensive and globalised learning experiences. The exposure to diverse cultures and educational systems enhances the student teachers' intercultural sensitivity, making them more effective communicators and empathetic educators. By engaging with peers from different countries, student-teachers learn to navigate cultural differences and build bridges of understanding, essential traits in an increasingly globalised world. As student teachers interact with others from around the world, they learn the value of teamwork and the significance of collective efforts in achieving educational goals. This collaborative mindset develops their approach to teaching, fostering a sense of community within classrooms and schools. Moreover, the eTwinning ITE Traineeship cultivates a sense of curiosity and lifelong learning in student-teachers. Through their participation in international projects, they gain exposure to innovative teaching practices, educational research, and cutting-edge methodologies. This exposure inspires them to seek new ways to enhance their teaching strategies and remain at the forefront of educational developments. It also brings numerous advantages to student teachers, such as the development of digital and intercultural competences. Through their involvement in eTwinning projects, students gain proficiency in using digital tools, fostering their technological literacy and equipping them with skills essential for modern teaching practices. Taking a step back to its beginning, the University of Florence has been at the forefront of educational innovation and international collaboration, especially when it comes to teacher training. In 2012, the university took a significant decision by becoming one of the first institutions to join the Teacher Training Initiative (TTI), which has now evolved into the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) program. This enables the university to provide its student teachers with enriching experiences, preparing them to become competent educators in a globalised world. Throughout the years, the university has facilitated collaboration between students and teachers, encouraging them to embark on a comparative analysis of various training systems and European curricula. This approach has proven to be invaluable as it exposes student-teachers to different educational paradigms, pedagogical approaches, and cultural contexts. By studying and understanding diverse education systems, aspiring teachers can critically reflect on their own practices and develop a broader perspective on education. Over the years, this program has gained recognition and prominence, becoming an officially recognized and integral part of the teacher training curriculum (Nucci, Pettenati, and Tosi 2021). This acknowledgment reflects the value that the university places in preparing future teachers who are adaptable, open-minded, and well-versed in contemporary educational methodologies: «The added value of eTwinning for student teachers is multifaceted, but the main aspect is in the improvement of foreign languages (especially English) and the use of ICT. eTwinning for future teachers focuses a lot on cross-curricular approaches (Agenda 2030 or European citizenship) and interactive and effective methodologies such as problem solving, peer education, and cooperative learning» (Giachi, and Innocenti 2023).

Nowadays the eTwinning ITE Traineeship is an additional and optional path of the degree course, with its eTwinning modules and is supervised by both Teachers and Teacher Educators. Along with the traineeship, eTwinning is integrated into some other teachings and is a cross curricular subject of thesis and research. Furthermore, the significant collaboration between the development of three main areas – curriculum integration, project implementation, and research outputs – led the Course of Study in Primary Education to receive the prestigious European eTwinning ITE award in 2022 (Centi 2023) This achievement reflects the successful outcome of a well-integrated and cooperative team work.

5. Steps, Aims and Contents of the eTwinning ITE Traineeship

The eTwinning ITE Traineeship is characterised by a structured and well-defined approach, ensuring that student-teachers make the most out of their experience. The program sets clear objectives and outlines specific methods to achieve them. Students are exposed to the practical applications of eTwinning, exploring its potential as a powerful platform for international collaboration, cross-cultural learning, and the exchange of best practices in teaching: «exchanges between colleagues also favour the sharing of ideas on strategies and functional teaching activities with respect to certain objectives: in other words, not only resources are shared but also problems and solutions, especially through the exchange of good practices» (Gabbi, and Ranieri 2021, 161). By fostering collaboration and embracing innovative methodologies, the university equips its students with the knowledge, skills, and mindset needed in the dynamic and interconnected world of education. The eTwinning ITE Traineeship prepares future educators who can make a positive impact on the lives of their students and contribute to the advancement of education on a global scale. Moreover, the program follows a carefully planned timeline, incorporating eTwinning activities and projects into the overall teacher training journey. By integrating eTwinning into the curriculum, the university ensures that student teachers are exposed to «a cooperative approach, inspired by the flipped classroom model, structured in three main stages: selection and assignment of useful resources to students, collaborative task execution using assigned digital and paper materials, and final feedback» (Grilli et al. 2022). They indeed have the chance to immerse themselves in the eTwinning community, connect with educators worldwide, and actively engage in meaningful projects that contribute to their personal and professional growth. The objectives of the eTwinning Traineeship are divided into different academic years with specific aims for each year. In the second and third year, students focus on understanding the aims and characteristics of the eTwinning project and learning about good practices for pre-school and primary school. They also become familiar with the eTwinning platform and its tools. In the fourth year, students support school tutors in using the eTwinning platform, participate in project design and implementation, and collaborate with other university institutions as part of the eTwinning ITE

Project. In the fifth year, students also document an eTwinning project to share good practices and collaborate with other university institutions.

Throughout the course, students attend 8 hours of training sessions with eTwinning Ambassadors. In the final year of the traineeship, students who have opted for this path must complete 16 hours of indirect traineeship and achieve the specified objectives. They are also asked to sit a final interview and report the whole path in the Final Traineeship Report, due for their dissertation. Provided they completed this optional traineeship at least in the fourth and fifth year and they have successfully completed all the tasks of the eTwinning ITE Traineeship students grant an additional point towards the final grade.

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Values, Reflexivity, and Critical Thinking in Teaching and Internship Activities: The Experience of a Group of Primary Education Science Students in Florence

Fabrizio Rozzi

Abstract:

The chapter illustrates an activity that involved a group of students from the Master's Degree program in Primary Education Sciences at the University of Florence, engaged in internship programs. The goal of the work was to make students reflect on how their course of study is able to develop a critical professional approach that is connected to and supported by the individuals' ethical and political values. The students were presented with three open-ended questions regarding the spaces and opportunities that the University course and internship offer them to reflect on the connection between the educational path they are following and foundational values such as social justice, inclusion, and the promotion of diversity and the potential of all in schools.

Keywords: School Internship, School Inclusion, Teacher Training, Professional Development

1. The Context

This contribution aims to illustrate an activity that involved a group of students from the Master's Degree program in Primary Education Sciences at the University of Florence, engaged in internship programs. The goal of the work was to make students reflect on how their course of study was able to «generate a critical and strategic professional knowledge which is underpinned by their personal moral and political values» (Mead 2022, 159).

The idea and inspiration for the realization of this activity originated from the organization, on February 6, 2023[1], of a Workshop of studies titled "The *long view* approach and the public history: A proposal to make a historical consciousness and values-based dialectic in teacher education". The workshop's main focus is Professor Nick Mead's Keynote lecture, titled "Re-connecting the dialectic:

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[1] The workshop of studies was organized by the Department of 'Formazione, Lingue, Intercultura, Letterature e Psicologia' of the University of Florence.

Implications of the long view of values in teacher education for the collaborative work of international teacher educators".

During his presentation, Professor Mead reaffirms, to use the words from one of his publications, that «the key question for teacher education in the neo-liberal era is how are trainee teachers nurtured as citizens who can exercise that dynamic relationship between personal moral decision-making and political action in the classroom» (Mead 2022, 4). Also, to investigate this aspect in preparation for the meeting, students were invited by Professor Mead to answer, in a voluntary and optional manner, to the following three questions:

1) Do you feel that you have opportunities in University sessions to discuss your beliefs and values about education, such as inclusion and social justice?
2) When in school are you encouraged to critically discuss with teachers how the curriculum is designed, the teaching methods used and ways of assessing pupils?
3) Does the course provide you with the opportunities for you to reflect in writing on the development of the relationship between your personal moral and political values and how you teach in the classroom?

The students involved were in their third year of their Master's Degree program and in their second year of internship. They were being supervised by the writer in the role of a Teacher Educator and were currently halfway through their academic and professional training. As a side note of the conference, classroom sessions were organized, during which students discussed the topics raised by Professor Mead, starting from the given responses.

The traineeship is a «protected and guided learning experience»[2] that offers students the opportunity to practice and develop directly or indirectly skills and abilities to achieve the aims required by the professional profile. The traineeship is mandatory. The traineeship consists of 'direct traineeship', carried out at school, in classes and under the supervision of teachers ('school tutors'), ad 'indirect traineeship' carried out at the University under the supervision of teacher educators. The role of teacher educators is to co-organize internship activities for University students and to plan moments of discussion, debate, and reflection with them on what occurs during their field experiences.

Over the course of 4 years of study (from the 2nd to the 5th year), the students are required 400 hours of internship in schools and 200 hours in University for activities with teacher educators and tutors. The traineeship integrates practical activities into student preparation, facilitating the gradual acquisition of teaching skills in a school context. It establishes a 'on-the-field' connection with the profession and guides students in their career choices.

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[2] Cf. the *Internship Regulations of the Master's Degree program in Primary Education Sciences at the University of Florence*, p. 2 at the link <https://www.formazioneprimaria.unifi.it/uplo-ad/sub/tirocinio%20REGOLAMENTO_TIROCINIO.pdf> (2024-03-01).

The traineeship assessment is based on the achievement of standards known as 'S3PI' (Bandini, Calvani, and Capperucci 2018, 71-79), which are expected to be met to qualify for teaching in Primary Education. These standards are divided into four areas that encompass skills to be evaluated through the observation and assessment of the trainees.

'Area 2' ('knowledge and understanding') and 'area 3' ('teaching interaction') are associated with the development of theoretical knowledge and practical skills related to the teaching and learning processes, as well as the acquisition of solid methodological and assessment competencies.

On the other hand, 'area 1' and 'area 4' are more directly related to the dimension of the teacher's professional personality.

'Area 1', 'values and attitudes', concerns the basic dimensions of personality: empathy, listening skills, self-control, sensitivity to differences, and a sense of responsibility.

'Area 4', 'professional community and training', pertains to motivation and the desire to belong to the teachers' community, the willingness to take on responsibilities, and the development of ethics and a continuous search for professional improvement.

The internship program, proposed to the students, dedicates, therefore, two important areas related to the development of professional attitudes linked to the ethical and deontological dimension. But are the students sufficiently aware of this aspect? Do the students feel actively involved in the development of these attitudes, or do they experience their training in these aspects passively, feeling poorly engaged as active individuals with personal values, political visions, and ethical and moral beliefs? The activities proposed by Professor Mead, combined with engaging classroom discussions and meaningful dialogues with students, based on their responses to the previously mentioned questions, enable us to address these issues more effectively.

2. Answers to 'question 1'

Let's start with a first analysis of the students' answers to the first question: *do you feel that you have opportunities in University sessions to discuss your beliefs and values about education, such as inclusion and social justice?*

Total number of responses: 43.
Responses stating that there are few opportunities for discussion: 39.
Responses mentioning the lack of space and time for discussion: 25.
Responses attributing the lack of discussion to the high number of students: 16.
Responses emphasizing the shyness of students: 11.
Responses noting that some discussions take place during labs or internships: 9.
Responses suggesting a greater need for education-related discussions: 7.
Responses indicating that some discussion opportunities are present but limited: 6.
Responses mentioning the negative influence of the pandemic on discussion opportunities: 3.

In general, students agree that there are few opportunities during their University courses to discuss values and beliefs about education. Many responses cite the high number of students in the classroom and the predominantly frontal teaching method as obstacles to discussion. Some students also point out that the shyness of their peers can be a limiting factor. However, some responses indicate that in some cases, it was possible to discuss these topics during labs or internships. Overall, students seem eager to have more opportunities for discussion about education-related values during their academic courses.

The occurrences of expressions and keywords in the students' responses are now examined:

1. 'University lectures': mentioned 47 times;
2. 'inclusion': mentioned 37 times;
3. 'discussion': mentioned 36 times;
4. 'values': mentioned 29 times;
5. 'social justice': mentioned 22 times;
6. 'rote' mentioned 18 times;
7. 'internship': mentioned 15 times;
8. 'shyness': mentioned 15 times;
9. 'peer comparison' or 'Peer-to-peer comparison': mentioned 14 times;
10. 'laboratories': mentioned 13 times;
11. 'high number of students': mentioned 10 times;
12. 'frontal teaching': mentioned 10 times;
13. 'exam': mentioned 9 times;
14. 'pandemic': mentioned 7 times.

The answers were reviewed with the students during the indirect internship activities. During this exchange, the students highlighted some expressions that appear in the responses and, according to them, deserve special attention. Here is the result of the classroom debate.

1. 'Opportunities for discussion': this is a key expression that appears in many responses and reflects the concept of having opportunities to engage in discussions during University lectures;
2. 'Educational values': the terms 'values' and 'education' are frequently referenced when discussing one's principles and beliefs concerning the field of education;
3. 'Inclusion': this word emerges in several responses as part of the debate on inclusion and social justice in education;
4. 'Social justice': is another phrase that relates to the concept of discussing societal values during classes;
5. "Frontal teaching': many students mention frontal teaching as an obstacle to classroom discussion;
6. 'Rote learning': this term reflects lessons oriented towards the mere transmission of facts rather than active discussion;

7. 'Student shyness': the students confirm that shyness of some can hinder classroom discussion;
8. 'Internship': it is mentioned as a context where there is sometimes the opportunity to discuss education values;
9. 'Small group work': some students suggest that discussion might be more feasible in small groups rather than in large lecture halls.
10. 'Time management': some responses highlight the importance of time management during lectures to allow for broader discussions.

In summary, a common need emerged to foster open discussions about students' ethical and political stances, values, and beliefs regarding education during University lectures, with a special emphasis on inclusion and social justice. However, it seems (as also indicated by the occurrence of key terms) that the primary obstacles are related to the limited space for discussion, influenced by various factors, including a high number of students, predominantly rote-style lectures (except for indirect internship meetings), and student shyness. In some way, the students felt responsible for their inability to firmly request a different approach to their training as future teachers. In any event, they request encouragement and motivation from the University to help them overcome their inertia. In general, there is a desire for an education that goes beyond mere knowledge transmission, one that also emphasizes active student participation and an approach that places a high value on inclusion, social justice, and the role of education as a genuine instrument for civic and social advancement.

3. Answers to 'question 2'

Let's now proceed to examine the answers to the second question posed to the students: *when in school are you encouraged to critically discuss with teachers how the curriculum is designed, the teaching methods used and ways of assessing pupils?*

This second question focuses on students' internship experience directly in schools. It is also worth noting that some of the respondents, who are engaged in internships, also work at schools as teachers with fixed-term contracts. Therefore, the latter reflect not only on their internship experience but also on their experience as teachers.

The responses to this question describe a greater variety of cases and situations, compared to what was described in relation to question number 1. This variability of cases has also been confirmed in classroom discussions.

Here is an initial, concise summary of the responses provided:

Total number of responses: 40.

Responses in which students state that they had the opportunity to critically discuss with teachers: 18.

Responses in which students state that they were involved only passively (they were provided with explanations or simply asked for feedback): 7.

Responses in which students state that they did not have the opportunity to critically discuss with teachers: 7.
Responses in which students highlight differentiated situations (in some cases, discussion was facilitated, in others not): 6.
Responses in which a student states that they had the opportunity to critically discuss with teachers only rarely: 1.
Responses in which a student states that they had the opportunity to critically discuss with teachers only when they attended high school: 1.

It could be said that students have more opportunities to engage in discussions about curriculum design and educational assessment during their direct internship compared to what happens in university courses. This is certainly facilitated by the individual relationship established between the school mentor and the university student.

Here are the number of occurrences of some of the key words or expressions in the students' responses:

1. 'teachers': mentioned 20 times;
2. 'internship': mentioned 20 times;
3. 'curriculum': mentioned 14 times;
4. 'school tutors': mentioned 14 times;
5. 'student assessment': mentioned 13 times;
6. 'discuss': mentioned 12 times;
7. 'teaching methodologies': mentioned 12 times;
8. 'opportunities': mentioned 11 times;
9. 'critical': mentioned 7 times;
10. 'worker': mentioned 6 times;
11. 'feedback': mentioned 5 times.

Discussing with the students about their answers and passing to a more in-depth level of analysis, it is possible to notice how they touched upon and highlighted themes and critical aspects that, from a more superficial reading of the responses, might not seem to emerge.

1. 'Lack of opportunities': often, students mentioned a lack of opportunities or insufficient occasions to critically discuss curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and assessment methods with school teachers. Some emphasized that their role, during the internship, was more observational than active, which limited their chances of involvement in these discussions. These students noted that during their internships or school experiences, they do not have enough opportunities to actively engage in such discussions or do not receive encouragement from teachers or school tutors;
2. 'Differences in experiences and the role of school tutors': experiences vary significantly among students. Some have teachers who are willing to ac-

tively involve them and answer their questions, while others encountered difficulties in engaging critically with their tutors. School tutors play a significant role in students' experiences. Some are available and actively encourage student involvement in curriculum and methodology discussions, while others are less receptive to these conversations;

3. 'Differences between primary school and early childhood education': some students reported differences between their internship experiences in primary school and early childhood education. In some cases, they have more opportunities for active engagement in primary school compared to early childhood education;

4. 'Desire for involvement': in spite of the difficulties, many students expressed a desire to be more involved in discussions about curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and assessment methods. They see the value of these conversations in improving their preparation as future teachers.

The students' discussion arising from the analysis of the responses generally describe a variety of dynamics between internship students and school mentors in schools. Some students have the opportunity to actively discuss curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and student assessment with teachers, while others have highlighted the lack of involvement in such discussions. Differences in the willingness of school tutors to engage students in critical discussions clearly emerge. Some teachers have been open to answering questions and promoting constructive dialogue, while others seem to have been less inclusive or interested in student opinions. There appears to be greater engagement and dialogue with primary school teachers compared to those in early childhood education.

Most interns express, more or less explicitly, the desire and hope for greater involvement in discussions about curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and student assessment at school. Many believe that this involvement can be a valuable learning opportunity. In the context of the discussions, some of the participants highlight certain issues within the system that they describe as 'bureaucratic burdens'. Indeed, they note the organizational complexity both in internships and regular school practices, and express the hope of simplifying and streamlining school procedures related to design and assessment, with a greater emphasis on substance rather than on formalities.

4. Answers to 'question 3'

The third prompt asked the interns to explain how the degree program provide them with the opportunity to reflect in writing on the relationship between the student's moral and political values and their classroom teaching practice. The responses from the students to this prompt describe a substantially homogeneous picture, when compared to what was expressed in relation to the two previous questions.

Here is an initial, concise outline of the responses that were provided:

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Total number of responses: 38.

Responses in which students answer 'no' to the question asked: 34.

Responses in which students claim to have had the opportunity *to write*, in University, about the relationship between their personal political and moral values and teaching practice, but not in writing: 2.

Responses in which students claim to have had the opportunity *to reflect* in University on the relationship between students' political and moral values and teaching practice, but not in writing: 2.

Responses in which students mention the 'internship diary' as the only opportunity to reflect in writing, but on topics unrelated to students' political and moral values: 1.

Responses in which students state that it would be important to encourage discussion on the proposed question: 20 (of these, 4 affirm that it is still a sensitive topic).

Responses in which students state that the discussion on students' political opinions and personal values is too personal and risky to be publicly addressed: 8.

Students then add that it would not be possible to discuss such topics in University due to the excessive number of students enrolled in various courses. University courses, furthermore, are predominantly theoretical and essentially reduce to theoretical lectures. Only laboratories and indirect internships could be the only opportunity to facilitate such discussions.

Some also claim that they would not feel comfortable addressing these topics during lectures. A couple of students also state that they have had the opportunity to discuss such topics only with their University teacher educator.

The most recurring keywords in the text are as follows:

1. 'reflect': 29 times;
2. 'teach': 28 times;
3. 'moral values': 18 times;
4. 'personality': 14 times;
5. 'course of studies': 15 times;
6. 'ideas': 16 times;
7. 'political values': 11 times;
8. 'opportunities': 12 times;
9. 'debate': 6 times;
10. 'critical thinking': 5 times;
11. 'information': 3 times;
12. 'resonance': 1 time.

While discussing the answers to this question with the students, they emphasized the following terms and concepts that are central to the text, focusing their reflection and attention on them:

1. 'Reflect': this word appears frequently and is central in the context of students' responses. Students express the desire to reflect on their values and their teaching approach, emphasizing the importance of personal reflection as an integral part of their education;
2. 'Teach': the term 'teach' is one of the cornerstones of students' responses, as they are examining how their values will influence their approach to teaching. It is associated with concepts such as 'teaching style' and 'relationship development';
3. 'Moral values': this term reflects the focus of students' responses on morality and how their moral values will influence their role as teachers. It is often linked to the ethics of teaching;
4. 'Political values': similarly to moral values, political values emerge as a key concern. Students want to reflect on how their political orientations may influence their approach to teaching;
5. 'Opportunities': students express the desire to have the opportunity to reflect and discuss these issues during their course of study. The lack of opportunities is often cited as a deficiency in the academic context;
6. 'Ideas': the term 'ideas' is associated with the need to explore and articulate one's own opinions and beliefs, as well as to understand and respect the ideas of others;
7. 'Debate': some students mention the importance of debate and discussion as a tool for developing critical thinking and open-mindedness:[;]
8. 'Critical thinking': this concept emerges as a key goal in students' education. Students express the desire to develop the ability to critically evaluate ideas and concepts;
9. 'Information': the need to inform students and enable them to examine a variety of perspectives and sources of information is emphasized in some responses;
10. 'Diversity': some students mention diversity as an important aspect to consider in teaching and interacting with others.

Students, in general, express their concerns and aspirations regarding their training as future teachers, highlighting the importance of reflection, open-mindedness and ethics in their educational role. Commenting on the responses and their reflections on this topic as a whole, it emerges that most interns generally assert that their course of study does not allow them to write about the connection between their personal moral and political values and their teaching methods in the classroom. This appears to be a point of convergence among many responses.

Some students express the desire to have the opportunity to delve deeper into these topics during their University experiences, believing it to be important for the development of critical thinking and their future role as teachers. Some note that, despite the lack of formal opportunities for reflection, they can still address these issues informally through discussions with colleagues and

professors. Some find it challenging to address personal moral and political topics in an University environment, given the diversity of opinions among the students themselves.

In summary, therefore, on this aspect, the majority of students appear to be dissatisfied with the current lack of opportunities to reflect on their moral and political values in relation to their future role as teachers. There is, thus, a general desire to have the opportunity to address these topics in a more structured and in-depth manner during their course of study.

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Crushed by the Present, Nostalgic for the Past. The Point of View of a School Principal

Patrizia Giorgi

Abstract:

This chapter explores the challenges and opportunities in the role of a school leader in the context of Italian educational autonomy. It reflects on the pressures faced by school leaders, including increasing administrative demands and the tension between innovation and regulatory constraints. The role of the principal is analysed through a historical lens, questioning whether past approaches have been more effective in fostering a positive school climate. The chapter highlights the importance of historical knowledge in shaping educational practice and argues for a balanced integration of past experiences and current challenges to guide future improvements in the education system.

Keywords: School Leadership, Educational Autonomy, History of School, Administrative Challenges, Educational Innovation

1. The School and Autonomy: Caught Between Problems and Opportunities for Improvement

I write these reflections from the point of view of my professional role, that of school principal. It is important to clarify this in the introduction, because my point of view is specific and inevitably subjective. My daily work, the administrative and managerial tasks, teaching and direction, are linked to a continuous network of relationships: with the teachers at the school I manage, but indirectly also with many others – principals and teachers – of other schools, especially in the regional territory. Those who run a school cannot do so unless they listen to and relate to many people who constitute a community oriented towards improving teaching and achieving national and local educational objectives.

The regulations on school autonomy have provided individual schools with a certain degree of independence in designing and implementing educational courses. This new relationship between the centre (the Ministry) and the periphery (the individual educational institution) has inaugurated in Italy a period full of potential, hopes and promises, only partly kept, to tell the truth (Attinà 2020; Viteritti 2014). Autonomy has been conceived and defined in the legislation as:

a guarantee of freedom of teaching and cultural pluralism and is substantiated in the design and implementation of education and training interventions aimed at the development of the human person, adapted to the different contexts, the demands of families and the specific characteristics of the subjects involved, in order to guarantee their training success, consistent with the general aims and objectives of the education system and with the need to improve the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process (Article 1, paragraph 2, Decree of the President of the Republic no. 275 of 8 March 1999).

The areas of intervention are those of educational, organisational, research, experimentation and development autonomy. In concrete terms, it is a matter of relating the national context with the local one, respecting the numerous constraints that weigh on the possibilities of innovation, both conceptual and economic. It is not possible to elaborate on the issue here, but it is important to point out that this regulatory context, which is apparently very open to change and innovation, often clashes with non-uniform ministerial directives, from one government to the next, and with a continuous decrease in resources that can actually be used by educational institutions (well below the European average, especially for university education; De Santis, Pirani and Porcu 2019).

In the last twenty years, there are some aspects that have strongly marked the school life of all staff, teachers and administrators. In particular: the increase in the number of documents to be produced, stored and updated periodically; the increase in the number of deadlines and the complexity of administrative procedures that computer systems actually only partially simplify; the increase in a widespread anxiety that pervades teaching and management action, which are increasingly subject to controls and formal obligations at several levels. In this regard, limiting the examples only to the main documents, the multiple deadlines relating to the three-year 'Plan of the Training Offer', the elaboration of the 'School Self-Evaluation', the 'School Improvement Plan', the 'Social Report', the supplementary bargaining of the school, and the 'Risk Assessment Document'.

2. History, a Forgotten Intellectual Tool

As it is easy to see, I have used the recent history of the school to indicate a change: this allows us to make a further reflection that is not only theoretical, but also operational. In fact, we can ask ourselves if the previous situation was more suitable for building a good school climate and achieving the training objectives. Or if the use of confrontation with the past assumes only the traits of nostalgia, perhaps neglecting problematic aspects that were certainly not lacking then. This relationship between the past and the present can therefore develop in at least these two different directions: the careful historical evaluation of the discontinuity of work and educational contexts or the mourning of an alleged golden age, when things were always better than they are today.

Whenever we deal with the history of our professional role, we are faced with at least these two alternatives: the first consists of a historical approach that allows

us to understand school aspects in continuity and discontinuity with the past, in relation to different social and cultural contexts. This can lead us to critically evaluate the situation in which we live today, especially because it allows us to understand what pressures we unconsciously receive from the recent or remote past. In essence, we can develop improvement projects that will benefit from a broad look because they are historical and therefore not naive.

The second alternative, as mentioned above, consists of turning to the past to complain about the current situation, generally idealising personal memories and historical aspects isolated from the context in which they developed. Sometimes this modality is not only a protest within the corridors of schools, but also takes on the traits of elaborate arguments, with evocative but deceptive recourse to the past to support the idea of the deterioration of today's school compared to the seriousness of the past (Mastrocola and Ricolfi 2021).

In the context of school life, the principal can certainly make use of historical knowledge, but only at the level of personal choice, because his or her recruitment does not provide for it, as can be seen from the list of disciplinary areas covered by the written and oral tests of the last national open competition that is worth remembering:

a) school regulations
b) managing complex organisations
c) planning, management and evaluation of educational institutions
d) organisation of learning environments
e) work organisation and personnel management
f) school evaluation and self-evaluation
g) elements of civil, administrative and criminal law
h) state accounting
i) educational systems of the countries of the European Union.
(Article 7, paragraph 2, Decree no. 194 of 13 October 2022).

As can be seen from the thematic list, in many cases a reference to history would be possible and certainly useful, of which, however, there is no official trace.

Moreover, even in national open competitions for the recruitment of teaching staff, the situation is similar. Let's take a look at the latest recruitment procedures for teaching positions in secondary schools: we note that candidates must demonstrate the possession of both a set of a series of general requirements and skills related to the subjects taught at secondary level. Obviously, in the latter case there are subjects that include historical skills, such as 'Philosophy and History' (A-19), or 'Literary and Latin disciplines' (A-11). But there are no historical elements in the general part that all teachers must demonstrate that they possess, and which includes numerous and broad topics:

knowledge of the fundamentals of developmental psychology, school learning psychology, and educational psychology

pedagogical-didactic knowledge and social skills aimed at activating a positive educational relationship

knowledge of the methods and tools suitable for the implementation of individualised and personalised teaching

digital skills related to the educational use of technologies

knowledge of the principles of school self-evaluation

knowledge of school legislation and regulations

knowledge of some European documents on education

(Annex A of the Decree of the Italian Ministry of Education and Merit no. 205 of 26 October 2023).

Also in this case it would be possible and certainly useful to refer to history, which is the invisible discipline through which teachers could grasp many hidden connections between the topics listed above. By way of example: it is possible to discover the relationships between the development of international legislation on the rights of the child and the greater attention to the interpersonal and empathic aspects of the teaching profession; or to analyse the link between the development of the quantitative evaluation of learning (since the 1920s) and the progressive expansion of the use of tests in Italian schools (since the 1970s, with a predominantly academic interest until the establishment in 1999 of INVALSI, the Italian National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education and Training System); or, again, to highlight the links between many aspects of Italian national policies and the undisputed expansion of neoliberalism, also in the educational field.

3. The Dialogue Between Past and Present as a Resource to Design Change

In my experience as a school principal, I note that teachers of literary, historical and philosophical subjects are naturally more likely than others to value historical knowledge, but this does not translate into a general interest. Often it is primary school teachers, perhaps unexpectedly, who value the historical approach, thanks to a specific university education that represents a unique case in the preparation for the teaching profession. The degree course in primary education sciences, in fact, already envisioned in the nineteen seventies, was only established at the end of the century (Italian Presidential Decree no. 471 of 31 July 1996) and today represents the only degree course enabling teaching of the entire university educational offer: it prepares for the role of teacher of kindergarten and primary school, through a specific course of study (currently lasting five years) and oriented from the beginning in a professional sense. Through some specific historical teachings, the carrying out of many hours of training in the classroom and participation in educational workshops, future teachers are able to grasp and appreciate the meaning of history, its cultural and social usefulness, as well as, of course, its didactic usefulness.

In the current situation it can be said that history does not appear, if not sporadically, in ministerial training and in particular in the so-called «scope

networks» (Article 1, paragraphs 70-72, Italian Law no. 107 of 13 July 2015). Likewise, the teachers express independently a desire for historical in-depth study, especially if of a general nature, free from the desire to improve the teaching of history.

However, it is interesting to note that the establishment of two Italian public holidays with a strong historical connotation has given impetus to a greater attention and didactic depth of the study of the twentieth century and also to an enhancement of history as a transversal approach to the different school disciplines. These are, as is known, two tragic events on which schools are called to make students reflect well beyond the ordinary educational activity, in the direction of citizenship education: on 27 January, Memorial Day, «in memory of the extermination and persecution of the Jewish people and of the Italian military and political deportees in the Nazi camps» (Italian Law no. 211 of 20 July 2000) and on 10 February, day of remembrance of the victims of the Foibe massacres, «in memory of the victims of the Foibe massacres, of the Julian-Dalmatian exodus, of the events of the eastern border and the granting of recognition to the relatives of the people thrown into the foibas» (Law of 30 March, 2004, no. 92).

The activities of the schools in relation to the two days allow us to clearly observe the link between the concerns of the present and the events of the past. Something that is clear to everyone's eyes is the return of anti-Semitic stances that champion contempt and hatred, the first step towards the justification of violence. The construction of a democratic society cannot develop without a full awareness of these dynamics, of their deep historical roots, and of the complexity of their interpretation. While in school we recognise the urgency of peace education, which in Italy has been embodied by characters of the calibre of Aldo Capitini, we cannot help but turn to history (Catarci 2013; Pironi 1991). The contribution of the school to design a positive change in the new generations necessarily passes through an approach that intersects history and memory, with great methodological rigour and maximum attention to the significance of learning.

From this point of view, the initiatives of the schools on 27 January and 10 February represent an extremely interesting example and a very precise indication of what can be done concretely, also in terms of other issues: with various experiences that often last for weeks, with educational trips (take as an example the project of the *Train of Memory,* launched in 2002 by the Tuscany Region; Bravi 2014; Santi 2005) and activities with the cultural institutions of the territory. In this way, history becomes an intellectual tool suitable for making people think, reflect and discuss. And to design a future that depends on the reasoned and informed choices we can make today: bringing history out of oblivion, but at the same time avoiding ideological uses of history, which are useful only to take sides according to a dichotomous and rigid vision of reality. Our social behaviours can sometimes have very deep historical roots, especially when it comes to educational issues, starting from family life: neglecting them means rejecting the largest, most extensive and worldwide repertoire of experiences we have at our disposal. On the contrary, the work of competent and passionate teachers

can aim to untangle this enormous variety of cultural positions, identity traits, conflicts and relationships between peoples, of which we often only scratch the surface. In this way, we guarantee students a privileged way to understand the world and themselves, providing them with the basic elements for an autonomous and conscious presence in society.

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Historical knowledge, often overshadowed by mass media communication, plays a crucial role in educating conscious and critical citizens. We want to explore the transformative potential of history in teacher education, particularly through a public history approach, highlighting its ability to foster critical thinking, interdisciplinary understanding and informed decision-making. By integrating historical perspectives, teachers can contextualise and better understand contemporary issues, promote cultural sensitivity and help break down stereotypes and social stigmas. This book promotes history as disciplinary knowledge, but also as a transversal skill, essential for citizenship and intercultural education in a democratic context. It presents a rich, multi-voiced dialogue between academics and non-academics, professors and head teachers, students and tutors.

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