EXHIBITING THE PAST

PUBLIC HISTORIES OF EDUCATION

Edited by Frederik Herman, Sjaak Braster,
and Maria del Mar del Pozo Andrés

PUBLIC HISTORY FROM
EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVES

Exhibiting the Past

Public History in European Perspectives

Edited by
Thomas Cauvin and Karin Priem

Volume 1

Exhibiting the Past

Public Histories of Education

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OLDENBOURG

Liber Amicorum for Emeritus Professor Frank Simon

Acknowledgments

This book, dedicated to Emeritus Professor Frank Simon, documents the increased involvement of historians of education in public history, from a more moderate dissemination, (re)mediation and popularization of the history of education to more participatory approaches that engage the public in the historical enterprise and foster new approaches to crowdsourcing as well as allowing for a broader historical analysis, reflection, and storytelling. Rather than offering a systematic overview of public history projects within our field, this book project is aimed mainly at stimulating reflection on how and what stories we disclose to the public; how historians of education tell, exhibit and musealize these stories; how far the participatory turn has evolved within our field (e.g., university-community engagement and history writing from below); and last, but not least, what societal role the histories of education should/could play.

The idea for this book must certainly have originated in the period in which Prof. Dr. Frank Simon ended his career at the University of Ghent, Belgium (2009). It became a recurring topic of conversation among the three editors during dinners at international conferences on the history of education (ISCHE-Berlin, 2018, just to name one). But the book eventually took on its present form (and thematic scope) in April 2019 when the editors held thought-provoking discussions with Prof. Dr. Karin Priem and Prof. Dr. Ian Grosvenor in Palma de Mallorca (Spain) during the two-day Symposium "Photography and Educational Practice". Hence, we want to thank them for sharing their ideas and reflections with us.

Furthermore, we are also indebted to all the contributors – colleagues and friends of Frank Simon who responded with much enthusiasm to the invitation to contribute to this multi-authored volume on public histories of education. We are grateful to them for their care and patience. We are also particularly grateful to the editors of the "Public History in European Perspectives" series – Prof. Dr. Karin Priem and Prof. Dr. Thomas Cauvin – and to Rabea Rittgerodt, our editor at De Gruyter.

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The Popularity and Commonality of Educational Heritage

The cover illustration of this volume is a fragment of a photograph taken in Autumn 2017 in the entrance hall of the Faculty of Education of the Free University of Bolzano (Campus Bressanone-Brixen, South Tyrol, Italy) (Figure 1). We have chosen this photograph as our cover illustration due to how it fits perfectly with the scope of this edited volume. On the one hand, it illustrates an attempt to "exhibit/musealize the educational past" within a semi-public space and, on the other hand, it was taken during the last meeting of the Research Community "Philosophy and History of the Discipline of Education", attended by Frank Simon – a frequent visitor of museums and exhibitions, a mentor, a highly esteemed colleague, and – last but not least – a dear friend to whom we dedicate this book.

The cover illustration shows an installation composed of a handful of used schooling objects: a few school desks, a globe, a printed schoolbook, a writing slate, and a leather school bag (Figure 1). This ensemble of materialities of schooling – a gift from the St. Andrä primary school near Bolzano, donated to illustrate what South Tyrolean classrooms looked like in the 1960s – had originally been the highlight of the Research and Documentation Centre for the History of South Tyrolean Education (FDZ). There, the materialities had been hung upside-down from the ceiling of the showroom. In March 2017, the still life was flipped again and installed in the entrance hall of the university's Faculty of Education. The installation aims to draw attention to the FDZ's ongoing research on the local history of schooling and to enhance the students' historical awareness.[1]

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Interestingly enough, the same day, while strolling through the old city center, a few hundred meters away from the faculty, Frederik Herman – one of the editors of this volume – bumped into another eye-catching, toy-sized classroom replica center staged in the display window of a toy store (Figure 2).[2] Through the careful arrangement of a few puppets and a miniature blackboard, two miniature two-seater school desks, a few satchels, a wall chart of Italy and two educational posters, the shopkeeper presents a recognizable interpretation of school life; a creative interpretation which seems to combine past and present, real and imagined conceptions of school life.

Photographs from quasi-similar classroom installations could also be easily retrieved from the digital travel photo album of the two other editors of this book, María del Mar del Pozo Andrés and Sjaak Braster. A first one was taken in August 2017 at the Toy Museum in Salzburg. There they found a classroom filled with puppets, a blackboard, but also with a picture of Emperor Franz-Josef, a map of Europe, and the children's hats and school bags hanging on the walls (Figure 3). And walking through the historic center of the city, they found, in the window of a chocolate store, a school scene where a wooden hare stands next to a blackboard and points at the dangerous red fox and at the pattern that should be painted on Easter eggs. The hare seems to be teaching a number of small chocolate bunnies sitting in front of the blackboard (Figure 4).

A few things become obvious from this small sample of images of classroom representations displayed in (semi-)public spaces, taken in different cities, at different times and by different photographers. First, the classroom seems to be a popular motive in the public sphere. It must have a special attractiveness, which makes shop owners as well as curators choose it as central showpiece. Moreover, it seems to appeal to all generations as it points to a life phase we all have in common – our own school years. This seems to make educational heritage a shared commonplace or collective "memory site" (*lieux de mémoire*).[3] Second, the many similarities (e.g. classroom organization, pointer stick, a bespectacled teacher) between those installations made by totally different people in totally different contexts, hint at the existence of a popular universal image of schooling – a stereotype that seems to refer more to the past than to the present. It is this permanent remediation of these clichéd memories – as a unique gateway to the past –, which allows "memory sites" to be created, stabilized and consolidated and to function as the

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2 For a more extended discussion about these two representations of school life, see Frederik Herman, "Iconography and Materiality," in *Handbook of Historical Studies in Education*, ed. Tanya Fitzgerald (Singapore: Springer, 2020), 329–347.

3 Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations* 26 (1989): 7–24.

beating heart of collective remembering.[4] So, even without the intervention of historians of education, the educational past – accurately represented or not – seems to be (already) a public matter (See also below: Public history of education is a tautology).

Figure 1: Installation in the entrance hall of the University of Bolzano's Faculty of Education (October 19, 2017) © Frederik Herman.

The same cliché seems to inspire many school museum curators, when replicating old classroom set-ups which serve as their museums' show pieces. Indeed, driven by the turn towards everyday culture and the resulting attempt to preserve and present popular and everyday objects (cf. musealization of the popular/everyday culture) replicating classrooms gained traction beginning in the 1970's.[5] Visitors were allowed to wander around within this staged décor, to take a seat at the old desks, to take part in role-playing and, thus, to imagine a fictional past. Over the past decades, re-enactment has become a popular strategy to (re)mediate the past, as a way to improve, and multiply museum visitors' experiences through novel modes of (inter)activity. The method "*des selbst erlebten, nachvollziehende 'Verstehens'*" – initially used as research method within the field of material

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4 After Catriona Firth, "The Concealed Curator: Constructed Authenticity in Uli Edel's *Der Baader-Meinhof Komplex*," in *Exhibiting the German Past: Museums, Film, and Musealization*, ed. Peter McIsaac and Gabriele Mueller (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 81.
5 Anne Winkler, "Remembering and Historicizing Socialism: The Private and Amateur Musealization of East Germany's Everyday Life," in McIsaac and Mueller, ed., *Exhibiting the German Past*, 111.

Figure 2: School scene in a shop window of a toy store in Bolzano's shopping area (October 19, 2017) © Frederik Herman.

Figure 3: School scene in the Toy Museum Salzburg (August 27, 2017) © Salzburg Museum.

culture research –, allowed for the activation of the audiences that had previously been addressed mainly as passive listeners or spectators.[6] Pictures of such

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[6] Annette C. Cremer, "Vier Zugänge zu (frühneuzeitlicher) materieller Kultur: Text, Bild, Objekt, Re-enactment," in *Objekte als Quellen der historischen Kulturwissenschaften. Stand und Perspektiven der Forschung*, ed. Annette Caroline Cremer and Martin Mulsow (Wien, Köln, Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2017), 85.

Figure 4: School scene in a shop window in the historic center of the City of Salzburg (August 23, 2017) © Sjaak Braster.

walk-through installations are also part of the above mentioned private digital travel photography collection, which includes a picture of a life-sized, recreated classroom in the Slovenian School Museum in Ljubljana (Figure 5), and a picture taken in the school room in Historic Richmond Town, a living history town and museum complex with several historic buildings, on Staten Island, New York City, where guides wear clothes from the past to give visitors the idea that they are actually going back in time (Figure 6).[7]

These six classroom installations all serve as good entries into "doing public histories of education", in that they confront us immediately with a few key dimensions which need to be addressed. Of course, one can question – from the perspective of the historian of education – the authenticity and accuracy of these single representations and question just how much of an impact they have on their audiences or question to what degree they have anything to do with the history of education, as they are constructed in the present and stripped from their

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7 For more information about the School Museum in Ljubljana, see: www.ssolski-muzej.si. For more information about the Historic Richmond Town (New York City), see: www.histori crichmondtown.org.

Figure 5: Life-size classroom replica in the Slovenian School Museum in Ljubljana (August 3, 2016) © Sjaak Braster. This set up has changed in the new permanent exhibition opened on March 2022.

Figure 6: Classroom in Historic Richmond Town, Staten Island, New York City (July 27, 2008) © Sjaak Braster.

contexts. However, such questions – which might be raised by an inflexible academic with a claim over the past – seem to disregard the potential these installations have for making us reflect on how we present the past, why one is allowed to present the past, who is better at presenting the past and crucially, what past we are talking about? Looking for instance at the classroom installations developed by museum professionals and the one's made by shopkeepers, we have to wonder how do they differ, and which one is the better representation of school life in the past?

The main points stemming from this initial more "playful" exploration are: representations of the educational past seem to be popular and appear everywhere (from a university entrance hall, over display windows, in museums), they are made by a variety of people (from history professionals to laymen), they show the same, narrow/stereotypical image of schooling in the past, they are presented to a variety of audiences (future teachers, passers-by in a shopping street, museum visitors) and they are made with different purposes (from raising historical awareness to a less educational approach of attracting potential buyers). So, the history of education is (already) a public matter and everyone – not only the historians of education – seems to be involved in constructing/telling stories about it. The latter shows that there is a fertile soil for doing public history of education – a place where research and memory could come together. However, the narrow/stereotypical image of schooling and education or, call it, clichéd memories cultivated and (re)mediated by these installations, makes painfully clear that public historians of education are facing a major task, which is none other than nuancing, pluralizing, and diversifying the histories of education.

Towards a Public History of Education?

For several decades now public history has shown itself to be a vibrant and challenging field where historians interact with multiple audiences, ranging from experts to laymen, policy makers and policy influencers, all united by their interest in history, memory, heritage, and material culture. Not the least is the "memory boom", the booming "memory industry"[8] and the associated increasing attention communities pay to historical issues related to, among things, globalization, nationhood, gender, religion, race and identity, have triggered the so-called public history boom – from the late 1970's and 1980's onwards –[9] and have led to a consolidation of a strong academic discipline in its own right. The popularity of this field is evidenced by the many textbooks, handbooks, reference works, and

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8 Sharon Macdonald, *Memorylands: Heritage and Identity in Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 3.
9 See e.g. David F. Trask and Robert W. Pomeroy, *The Craft of Public History: An Annotated Select Bibliography* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1983).

journals that have been published recently.[10] However, historians of education haven't really identified so far with this "newer" approach and have avoided calling themselves "public historians of education". Therefore, it shouldn't come as a surprise that compiling this book was by no means a sinecure, as there are few systematic public history projects within our field so far. Nevertheless, there seems to be an increased inclination within our field to engage with public history — from a more moderate dissemination, (re)mediation and popularization of the history of education to more participatory approaches, engaging the public in the historical enterprise — to foster new ways of crowdsourcing as well as to allow for a broader historical analysis, reflection, and storytelling. With this as our point of departure, this book aims at documenting these initial steps and at gathering reflections about how historians of education can connect to and attract a public; how and what stories they disclose to the public; how they tell, exhibit and musealize their stories; in how far the participatory turn has set in within our field, and last, but not least, what societal role the histories of education should/could play. In other words, this book deals with the question of how far and to what extent historians of education were/are trying to engage with the broader public, subsequently leaving (albeit partially) the walls of the university and their traditional occupation – research, academic writing, and lecturing – to "display and transfer" scientific knowledge in such a way that entertainment and information, pleasure and learning could merge (cf. edutainment).[11] From the present anthology, it will become clear that they always were, but that they have become more public over time – transcending the select audiences of researchers and students – and have started to reflect more on the *modus operandi* for presenting the past to a broader public.[12]

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10 See especially: Thomas Cauvin, *Public History: A Textbook of Practice*. Second edition (London: Routledge, 2022); Cherstin M. Lyon, Elizabeth M. Nix, and Rebecca K. Shrum, eds., *Introduction to Public History: Interpreting the Past, Engaging Audiences* (Lanham, Boulder, New York, London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017); James B. Gardner and Paula Hamilton, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Public History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); David Dean, ed., *A Companion to Public History* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2018); Faye Sayer, *Public History: A Practical Guide* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019).

11 Barbara Maria Stafford describes, in her inspiring book *Kunstvolle Wissenschaft* (1998), the 18th century as a rousing epoch for the enlightening translation of the scientific knowledge for the broader public and this by means of a variety of entertaining educational devices. Barbara M. Stafford, *Kunstvolle Wissenschaft: Aufklärung, Unterhaltung und der Niedergang der visuellen Bildung* (Amsterdam, Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 1998), 9.

12 A few early examples of histories of education becoming public were the following. In Germany a facsimile edition of a book from 1901 with 130 engravings about education was published in 1971: Emil Reicke, *Magister und Scholaren. Illustrierte Geschichte des Unterrichtswesens* (Düsseldorf/Köln: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1971). In the Netherlands there was a book published by the Ministry of Education commemorating the 175th birthday of the first national school

Roughly sketched, one can discern three phases in this turn toward doing public history of education. The establishment of many school museums and the (more) structural involvement of historians of education in these institutions are exemplary on the first attempts to reach out to the public on a more structural basis. From then onwards until today, many accessible and image-rich catalogues – mostly showing and describing museum collections or showpieces of themed expositions – were/are published.[13] In a second phase, those historians started breaking out of their (often traditional) school museums – which were no longer the sole places to communicate research findings with the wider public.[14] New (digital communication) technologies for instance

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law: J.H. Meijsen, *Lager onderwijs in de spiegel der geschiedenis. 175 jaar nationale onderwijswetgeving op het lager onderwijs in Nederland, 1801–1976* ('s-Gravenhage: Staatsuitgeverij, 1976). In Belgium there was an illustrated book about popular education in Flanders: Karel de Clerck, Bie de Graeve, and Frank Simon, *Dag Meester, Goedemorgen Zuster, Goedemiddag Juffrouw: Facetten van het volksonderwijs in Vlaanderen (1830–1940)* (Tielt: Lannoo, 1984). In Germany an example of an educational picture book is: Horst Schiffler and Rolf Winkeler, *Tausend Jahre Schule: Eine Kultirgeschichte des Lernens in Bildern* (Stuttgart, Zürich: Belser Verlag, 1985).

13 José María Hernández Díaz and Agustin Escolano Benito, *Cien años de escuela en España (1875–1975)* (Salamanca: Kadmos, 1990); Anne-Marie Châtelet, *Paris à l'école, "qui a eu cette idée folle. . ."* (Paris: Éditions du Pavillon de l'Arsenal; Picard éditeur, 1993); Tjeerd Boersma and Ton Verstegen, red., *Nederland naar school: Twee eeuwen bouwen voor een veranderend onderwijs* (Rotterdam: NAI Uitgevers, 1996); Pedro Álvarez Lázaro, ed., *La educación en la España del siglo XX: Primer centenario de la creación del Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes* (Madrid: Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2001); Patrick Allegaert et al., *Gevaarlijk Jong: Kind in Gevaar, Kind als Gevaar/Dangerously Young: Child in Danger, Child as Danger* (Tielt: Lannoo, 2011); Marguy Conzémius, Françoise Poos and Karin Priem, *La Forge d'une société moderne. Photographie et communication d'entreprise à l'ère de l'industrialisation (ARBED 1911–1937)/Forging a Modern Society. Photography and Corporate Communication in the Industrial Age (ARBED 1911–1937)* (Dudelange: Centre national de l'audiovisuel, 2017); Óscar Barberá Marco and Alejandro Mayordomo Pérez, eds. *Escoles i Mestres: Dos Siglos de Historia y Memoria en Valencia* (València: Universitat de València, 2017); María del Mar del Pozo Andrés, ed., *Madrid, ciudad educadora 1898/1938. Memoria de la escuela pública* (Madrid: Ayuntamiento de Madrid, 2019); Antonio Moreno, Eugenio Otero, María del Mar del Pozo, and Carlos Wert, eds., *Laboratorios de la nueva educación. En el centenario del Instituto-Escuela* (Madrid: Fundación Francisco Giner de los Ríos/ Institución Libre de Enseñanza, 2019); Hans-Ulrich Grunder and Pia Lädrach, *Schul-Sachen: Gegenstände von gestern und heute aus dem Schulmuseum Bern – Ein Beitrag zur Materialität von Bildung, Schule und Unterricht* (Baltmannsweiler: Schneider Verlag Hohengehren, 2021).

14 Exemplary for this movement towards new forms of public outreach are the various themed expositions – such as "Madrid, Ciudad Educadora (1898–1938): Memoria de la Escuela Pública" (Spain, 2019) and "Forging a Modern Society: Photography and Corporate Communication in the Industrial Age (ARBED – 1911–1937)" (Luxembourg, 2017) – that managed to attract a wide range of people and got quite some media attention.

opened a totally new channel for experiments with presenting and interpreting the educational past (cf. *thinkering*),[15] which led them in turn to reflect on how these new forms of (re)mediating the past impacted their own research and the (hi)stories told.[16] In the last decades various archives were digitalized and made public, virtual exhibitions were set up and popular/accessible digital encyclopedias were written.[17] Beside their growing engagement with digital sources and technologies, historians of education were also participating in the creation of documentaries made by media professionals. The reason was that historians of education had touched on topics that happened to be interesting for the larger public.[18] A last phase, which is becoming consolidated right now and which goes beyond making the past available to the public, is characterized by a dialogue between academics and the public, for instance by the active involvement of local communities in the research itself (cf. *crowdsourcing*).[19]

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15 "Composed of the verbs "tinkering" and "thinking" – describes the action of playful experimentation with technological and digital tools for the interpretation and presentation of history." "Thinkering," Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH), accessed March 10, 2022, https://www.c2dh.uni.lu/thinkering.

16 Karin Priem, "What Happens When Archives and Research Are Transferred into the Physical Space of a Museum," in *Populäre Präsentationen: Fotografie und Film als Medien musealer Aneignungsprozesse*, ed. Irene Ziehe and Ulrich Hägele (Münster: Waxmann, 2019), 245–252.

17 See, for instance, PICTURA paedagogica, a digital image archive on the history of education (https://pictura.bbf.dipf.de/viewer/index/); MUNAÉ, *Le Musée national de l'Éducation ouvre les portes de ses collections* (https://www.reseau-canope.fr/musee/collections/); EUROPEANA, Collections, Stories, Exhibitions (https://www.europeana.eu/en); UNESCO, International Bureau of Education, Conserving & restoring an intangible heritage (https://digitalcollections.ibe-unesco.org/).

18 Especially in Spain historians of education got involved with the making of documentaries. The most famous example was the one about female schoolteachers in the Spanish Second Republic: it received the Goya award (the Spanish equivalent of the Oscar) for the best documentary in 2014. See: Las Maestras de la República, directed by Pilar Pérez Solano (Madrid: FETE-UGT; TRANSIT Producciones, 2013). This documentary was triggered by a symposium and a consecutive book: Elena Sánchez de Madariaga, ed., Las Maestras de la República (Madrid: Catarata, 2012). In the 21st century in Spain at least a dozen documentaries about histories of education were produced with the help of historians of education. An example was: Ángel Llorca: El ultimo ensayo, directed by Víctor M. Guerra (Madrid: IMAL Producciones Audiovisuales, S.L., 2010). It was based on two books published in 2008. See: Ángel Llorca y García*, Comunidades familiares de educación* (Madrid: Octaedro, 2008); María del Mar del Pozo, Andrés, ed., *Ángel Llorca. Desde la escuela y para la escuela: Escritos pedagógicos y diarios escolares* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2008). The documentary was broadcasted on national television in February 2020.

19 A large series of illustrated books (e.g. *Cahiers de morales* (2006), *Cahiers de cancres* (2006), *Cahiers de récitations* (2006)*, Cahiers d'écriture* (2007), *Cahier de géographie* (2007), *Cahiers de l'écoles rurale* (2007), *Cahiers pour Maman* (2007), *Cahiers de mathématiques* (2008)) has resulted

This pushes contemporary historians of education to reflect about "how to work" with different audiences "with the [educational] past in the present."[20]

This gradual and phased shift towards doing public history seems to be the product of internal (academia) as well as external/societal factors. In recent decades, the (public) relevance (read: direct usability) of history has been subjected to greater questioning. This kind of reasoning – doing research with public money ought to bring a direct added value for society – and associated evaluation criteria used to judge the value and *raison d'être* of discipline, are not that threatening for the health sciences or engineers. Medicines can be taken and heal, bridges allow us to cross rivers, catalysts purify the air we inhale . . . but what do histories do? So, historians were/are confronted with the challenge to profiling themselves differently within the academic field and claiming their right of existence. The need and urgency to do so only trickled down slowly and has left – sadly enough – devastating traces within our field. Indeed, the history of education – under the pressure of psychology and didactics – gradually lost terrain within universities as well as teacher training colleges and – in the worst cases – have been removed from the curriculum. Apparently, we are not good at selling ourselves and we might have been too much of a thorn in the side raising our critical voices and questioning beloved progress-stories. Moreover, the same rationale found its way into certain research funding programs (such as Horizon Europe), which have now explicitly added a public outreach section in their application forms. So, to be successful, one must come up with a sound research project proposal as well as a convincing public outreach agenda. Within this context, historians of education are willingly or otherwise forced to engage with "doing public history", whether through physical or virtual expositions, short accessible articles in popular journals, blogging or twittering. Considering that many historians of education are not trained as public historians, they often struggle with their new role – which

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from a persistent crowdsourcing project – namely the gathering of "forgotten school notebooks on attics, in schools, in the city or on the countryside" – by Rachel Grunstein, Henri Mérou, and Jérôme Pecnard in France. For a successful example of recently conducted hands-on research we refer to the project: *Voices of War and Peace: the Great War and its Legacy* – a project that offered research support and guidance for community groups around the First World War in general and in particular around the following themes: belief and the Great War; childhood; cities at war; commemoration; gender and the home front; peace and conflict. For more information, see https://www.voicesofwarandpeace.org.

20 Paul Ashton and Alex Trapeznik, *What is public history globally?* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019).

goes beyond the mere "educationalization"[21] of the past for a potential public. Now questions such as how do we attract audiences, how do we keep them interested? and how do we make history accessible to them? become key forcing them more than ever to also think in terms of the musealization, mediatization, digitalization, aestheticization as well as playification of the history of education.

External factors seem also to have led to historians of education turning towards the public and/or the public turning towards the historians/past. Fueled by the spreading public fears of "cultural amnesia" and, thus, the loss of a shared or collective sense of belonging, memory and identity became a major preoccupation in the 20th century, a preoccupation that has continued into the 21st century.[22] This societal obsession with "keeping everything and preserving every indicator of memory"[23] – often referred to as memory complex, remembrance epidemic, commemorative and archive fever, or heritage crusade[24] – are reflected in, among things, the growing popularity of local heritage societies and their online platforms (e.g. every city now seems to have a Facebook profile on which old images and other historical sources are shared and discussed), which bring together amateur and professional historians as well as audiences from different generations. Consequently, this public need to get in touch with one's own local/regional and cultural past has opened up a new role for historians, namely that of the "memory worker" or – in other words – someone who's actively involved in engineering/shaping a "memoryscape,"[25] one which fosters "cultural learning."[26] As a result, a totally new "sales market" – where historians can divulge their research – has appeared, which simultaneously has become a huge – and so far un(der)exploited – goldmine for sources (e.g. historical documents and testimonies). Within the context of cultural memory studies one can also observe a

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21 Here the concept "educationalization" is used to refer to the transformation of research/ history into learning unit-like bits.
22 Macdonald, *Memorylands,* 1–6.
23 Nora, "Between memory and history," 14.
24 Macdonald, *Memorylands*, 3.
25 Toby Butler, "'Memoryscape': Integrating Oral History, Memory and Landscape on the River Thames," in *People and their Pasts*, ed. Paul Ashton and Hilda Kean (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2019).
26 John Holden, *Culture and Learning: Towards a New Agenda* (London: Demos Consultation Paper, 2008); Natasha McNab, Richard Clay and Ian Grosvenor, "Cultural Learning: From Pedagogy to Knowledge Exchange" (AHRC position paper, "Cultural Intermediation and the Creative Economy Symposium", University of Birmingham, 2012), 2; Kevin Myers and Ian Grosvenor, "Cultural Learning and Historical Memory: A Research Agenda," *Encounters /Encuentros/Rencontres on Education* 15 (2014): 3–21. See also, Frederik Herman and Siân Roberts, "Adventures in cultural learning," *Paedagogica Historica* 53, no. 3 (2017): 189–198.

growing interest in the role of media and media ecologies in memory-making,[27] and thus in "what role media forces its audiences to play, how media structures what the audiences are seeing and thinking, and why media make its spectators feel and act as they do."[28] These insights, as well as the growing field of social network sites or online platforms, appear to have encouraged public historians (of education) the last decade to become interactive and digital "multi-media users" – aware of the potential of material/visual/digital media as "externalized or prosthetic collective memory" tools.[29] Looking at our field, one can say that many historians of education have responded to the public appeal — triggered by the contemporary changes such as unbridled globalization, rising populism, economic competition, etc. — and thus have embraced their new role as "memory workers", and more recently taken their first steps as digital historians.[30] Twittering, blogging, website-developing historians of education are no longer a curiosity.

Two time-specific factors, the contemporary struggles (e.g. the COVID-19 pandemic) as well as the attempt to deal with painful/untold pasts (e.g. *Aufarbeitungsarbeit, Vergangenheitsbewältigung*), make historians (of education) turn even more to the public. With respect to public issues, history seems to matter. The COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, received an extreme amount of attention in the news coverage over the past two years. Many of these articles, interviews, columns, and op-eds mentioned historical cases like the 14th century Black Death, the 1918–1919 Spanish flu, or the 2002–2003 SARS outbreak.[31] And although several academic historians insist that "history does not teach us lessons",[32] a broad audience is still interested in these historical cases. Therefore,

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27 Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney, "Cultural Memory and its Dynamics," in *Mediation, Remediation, and the Dynamics of Cultural Memory*, ed. Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2012), 1.

28 After Carlos A. Scolari, "Media Ecology: Exploring the Metaphor to Expand the Theory," *Communication Theory* 22 (2012): 204–224 – quoted in Petra Löffler and Florian Sprenger, "Medienökologien: Einleitung in den Schwerpunkt," *Zeitschrift für Medienwissenschaft* 14, no. 1 (2016): 12.

29 Elisabeth Edwards, "Photography, 'Englishness' and Collective Memory: The National Photographic Record Association, 1897–1910," in *Locating Memory: Photographic Acts*, ed. Annette Kuhn and Kristen Emiko McAllister (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2008), 53.

30 E.g. Karin Priem about the pandemic archive, discussed in this volume.

31 Bram de Ridder, "When the Analogy Breaks: Historical References in Flemish News Media at the Onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic," *Journal of Applied History* (2020): 1–16. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1163/25895893-bja10003.

32 Leoni von Ristok, "History teaches us nothing" (May 3, 2017). Retrieved from: https://www.ukrant.nl/magazine/history-teaches-us-nothing/?lang=en.

professional journalists like to play the card of "applied history" —[33] analyzing historical precedents and highlighting analogies for illuminating current issues.[34] In other words, pressing social issues and the quest for usable (or instrumental) knowledge seem to chase historical inquiry partly out of the ivory tower of Academia into the public arena. In recent decades, dealing with historical injustice – painful and often silenced histories – has become a greater priority, as if current generations wished to disclose and do justice for what earlier generations have done. In many cases special research taskforces were set up to give voice to forgotten/neglected minority groups and/or disclose hidden/painful stories about looted art collections, political suppression in the past, the colonial past, child murder in church-run homes, systematic abuse of children (e.g. the state-organized practice of *Verdingkinder* in Switzerland). Many of these projects aimed at disclosing these stories and processing a historical trauma (for victims as well as perpetrators) – have resulted in generations removed from the events themselves apart in public consternation, political apologies and sometimes financial compensations. Here, historians play the role of societal trauma counselors. And their public role doesn't end there, as they are now also asked for their candid opinion with regard to – what we would call – the wave of modern iconoclasm (e.g. exchanging street names named after controversial figures, removing statues of questionable figures from public spaces) resulting from pubic shame and indignation. So, as a heritage worker too, the historian takes part into the public debate.

A Public History of Education Manifesto: Looking back and forward

After having read the volume's rich variety of essays – covering a number of broad topics (e.g. case-studies, experiences, reflections) – the idea of presenting a kind of manifesto grew stronger. A public history of education manifesto that, on the one hand, values the work done so far in our field and, on the other, looks forward – by considering the reflections shared by the various authors. We find this genre to be extremely fitting, because its earlier, revolutionary uses (announcing "new"

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33 Stephen Dowling, "Coronavirus: What can we learn from the Spanish flu?" (March 3, 2020). Retrieved from: https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200302-coronavirus-what-can-we-learn-from-the-spanish-flu.

34 Harvard Kennedy School, Belfer Center, Applied History Project. Retrieved from: https://www.belfercenter.org/project/applied-history-project.

dawns)[35] as well as its popularity within artistic circles during the 20th century, where the genre was used to delineate and "perform their principles", while its imaginative power was used to express new/different opportunities.[36] We are certainly not the first ones to do so.[37] However, we take a slightly different stance here – rather than defining public history of education, fixing the methods to be applied or describing the functions it should fulfill – we choose for a "radical openness", breaking away from the current situation within our field. So, our "manifestoing" should be understood as setting out a few markers to think with. These markers — think of them as principles —[38] as they appear in the short manifesto underneath, are randomly ordered and none of them is dominant or obligatory – except the first one.

Public history of education is . . .

1) making available histories of education, nothing more, and nothing less.
2) a tautology, because it is already everywhere.
3) not new, because we have always done it.
4) not to be claimed solely by academics/historians of education but should be based on organic relationships between academia and multiple audiences.
5) less about writing and mediating historically accurate or correct stories, but all the more about allowing stories to become, to be remediated and appropriated.
6) not about leaving behind the métier of the historian, but all the more about using these skills during adventurous and creative engagements with pasts, presents and potential futures.

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35 The best example is the Futurist movement with their manifesto "The Foundation and Manifesto of Futurism" published in *Le Figaro* in February 1909.

36 Alex Danchev, "Introduction: Manifesto, Manifestoed, Manifestoing," in *100 Artists' Manifestos: From the Futurists to the Stuckists*, ed. Alex Danchev (London: Penguin Books, 2011), xxi–xxii.

37 Using the concept manifesto was also rather popular with the new public history associations founded in Spain in 2015 (see, e.g., "Historia *Pública: Convertir la historia en una herramienta democrática*," www.historiapublica.es) and Italy in 2016 (see, e.g., Walter Tucci, "The Italian Public History Manifesto," accessed September 23, 2022, https://aiph.hypotheses.org/5442). Moreover, Gianfranco Bandini published already a Public History of Education Manifesto in Italian in 2019. See: Gianfranco Bandini, "Manifesto della Public History of Education. Una proposta per connettere ricerca accademica, didattica e memoria sociale," in *Public History of Education: riflessioni, testimonianze, esperienze*, ed. Gianfranco Bandini and Stefano Oliviero (Firenze: Firenze University Press, 2019), 41–53. Also see: Gianfranco Bandini, "Educational Memories and Public History: A Necessary Meeting," in *School Memories. New Trends in the History of Education,* eds. Cristina Yanes-Cabrera, Juri Meda, and Antonio Viñao (Cham: Springer, 2017), 143–155.

38 Or answers to questions about what, where, when, who, why, and how of a public history of education.

7) not about instrumentalizing, educationalizing[39] or politicizing and thus (ab)using the past, but allowing it to become one of the frames of reference that might make a difference in people's lives (e.g. by addressing the painful, voicing the unspoken, questioning the unquestioned).

8) an incentive to reflect about how one discloses, e.g. tells, exhibits, musealizes the past, without reducing its (potential) performativity and plurality.

1) Public History of Education is Making Available Histories of Education

Making histories available, presumes having some subject matter at hand in the first place, which in turn implies the time-consuming research endeavors and often slow writing processes done before coming up with a – so to speak – "finalized" story. So, before we can offer the public a cup, we first need to "drink an ocean and piss a cupful" – to use Gustave Flaubert's telling description of the painstaking labor of historians. So, the first marker is simple, historians should stay faithful to their trade and do proper research . . . otherwise what stories would they have to offer to the public? The idea of then making these histories available, might sound a little strange as historians were never writing for themselves alone and have always made their work public for other historians or students – and in different forms and shapes (manuals, research papers or presentations, etc.). And in some cases, these academic works eventually found their way to the public and started circulating outside the walls of academia . . . Of course, the notion of making them available in the first marker, implies reaching out to a much broader audience by making use of traditional as well as more innovative formats to tell the stories and to transfer subject matter. Moreover, it also refers to the insecurity one might feel as author at this stage, not knowing who will pick up the story, how it will be used, retold, etc. In other words, one accepts the loss of "ownership" – and thus the power to steer the narrative – by releasing the story. This is exemplified, for instance, in the fact that the usual academic rules for citing the authors of original works apparently no longer seem to apply when educational histories appear in popular blogs or on social media sites or when previously published

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39 Educationalizing refers here to the transformation of research/history into learning units which is often accompanied by reducing complexity, stressing certain dimensions over other ones, etc.

research done by academics gets appropriated by novelists, without referring to the sources they have been using. In such cases, there is reason for concern.[40]

2) Public History of Education is a Tautology

As is clear from the introduction, the history of education – be it historical objects and images, memories, or imaginations – seems to be everywhere. Representations of classrooms of the past not only appear in history museums, but also on commercial streets. Moreover, in our daily lives we are surrounded by objects that might evoke memories of the time we spent in school: school exercise books, diaries, fountain pens, quill ballpoints pens, reproductions of wall charts, and globes. A highly popular object from the past are facsimile editions of textbooks. In Spain, as of the 1990s, one can still buy the richly illustrated textbooks for elementary education that children used widely in the Franco era.[41] Meanwhile, the textbooks that were in use during the Second Republic, including the ones in use during the Civil War, have also found their way back into commercial bookstores, and once reaching the houses of Spanish families.[42] In France compilations of school images and school material have become the successful bases of many French gift books, offered for Christmas to the grandparents.[43] We can still buy small blackboards for decorating our homes. Memories of schooling are shared by many and seem to be timeless and space-less. We have added this marker for several reasons. On the one hand, it highlights a point of departure or a touchpoint with the public. Indeed, as the

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40 Rudolf Dekker, *Plagiarism, Fraud and Whitewashing. The Grey Turn in the History of the German Occupation of the Netherlands 1940–1945* (Amsterdam: Panchaud, 2020).
41 Examples of popular reprints of textbooks in Spain are: Antonio Álvarez, *Enciclopedia Álvarez: Segundo Grado* (Madrid: EDAF, 1998), reprint of edition 138 of 1962. Antonio Álvarez, *Enciclopedia Álvarez: Primer Grado* (Madrid: EDAF, 1999, reprint of edition 81 of 1964).
42 Antonio Angulo and Antonio Berna, *Leo, escribo y dibujo* (Santander, CRIEE, 2021), reprint of 1931, originally published in 1930; Joaquín Seró Sabaté, *El niño republicano* (Madrid: EDAF, 2011), reprint of edition 4 of 1932; Fernando Sáinz, *Cartilla escolar antifascista* (Valencia: Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, 1937), reprint 1979; Fernando Sáinz and Eusebio Cimorra, *Cartilla escolar antifascista* (Valencia: Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, 1937), reprint 2021; Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, *Cartilla aritmética antifascista* (Valencia: Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y Bellas, 1937), reprint in 1998.
43 Examples are: *Sur les murs de la classe. Textes de François Cavanna et de nos auteurs de la Communale* (Paris: Hoëbeke, 2003); Philippe Rosssignol, *Rossignol: L'École de notre enfance* (Auvergne: De Borée, 2012). A French example of a photo book is: Robert Doisneau and François Cavanna, *Les doigts pleins d'encre* (Paris: Hoëbecke, 1989).

educational past is part of our collective memory – and makes it a "public thing" –, everyone seems to become an "expert" by experience.[44] On the other hand, in our opinion it highlights one of the major tasks public historians of education are facing, namely nuancing, pluralizing, and diversifying the stereotyped, clichéd, romanticized memories about the educational past.

3) Public History of Education is Not New

As mentioned before, the concept "public history" started to become popular in the 1970s and 1980s. Historians of education in these years were concerned with the history of pedagogical ideas, while social history, including doing oral history interviews, also grew in popularity. Nobody was speaking, however, about "public history of education". But this does not mean that historians of education were not interested in reaching out to the public. In fact, they were already doing it; their activities, especially the ones related with the establishment of school museums, were just not yet referred to it as public history. In several European countries there were already pedagogical museums at the end of the 19th century.[45] Their task was to show the latest educational objects, methods, and technologies to the educational world. Starting in the 1980s, parts of these collections were displayed in museums for the history of education – sometimes in the form of reconstructed classrooms like the ones shown in Figures 1 to 6 – to tell stories about the educational past. Although these stories were not necessarily told by historians of education working in universities or colleges, the revitalization of the 19th century museums of education in the 1980s does mark the moment when the history of education became "public" history of education. After that moment historians of education became involved

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44 In other words, everybody knows about history of education because everybody has experiences about education. This statement does not apply to other sub-disciplines of history, like political history or economic history. Is that why the former in the eyes of many academics has less status than the latter?

45 France had a national museum of education in 1879 in Paris. The collections were moved to Rouen in 1980. Spain had a national pedagogical museum in 1882 in Madrid. The first university museum of Education, the *Museo/Laboratorio Manuel Bartolomé Cossío* opened in Madrid in 1990. The Netherlands had its first school museum in 1877 in Amsterdam. It reopened in 1981 as a national school museum in Zoetermeer, it moved to Rotterdam in 1989, and to Dordrecht in 2015. According to Pablo Álvarez the first pedagogical museum was opened in London in 1854, Hamburg (Germany) followed in 1855, and Toronto (Canada) in 1857. See: Pablo Álvarez Domínguez, ed., *Los Museos Pedagógicos en España. Entre la memoria y la creatividad* (Gijón: Ediciones Trea, 2016), 22.

with exhibitions, documentaries, and many other (digital) ways for engaging with the public. Interestingly though, historians of education seldom classified their work as "public history". But they were doing it all along. In our opinion the authors in this volume are the proof of that. So, this marker – and the volume at hand – invites historians of education to look back and to reflect on earlier endeavors in the dissemination of the history of education.

4) Public History of Education is Not Solely an Academic Discipline, but should Be Based on Organic Relationships between Academia and The Public

If one takes marker two seriously and accepts that everyone is an "expert", then the next statement shouldn't come as a surprise. We should not depend solely on academics – as the only ones that have the expertise and possess "objective" tools to get the stories right. In fact, we should strive for a "shared authority" between academics and the public.[46] This goes beyond using the public memory as a mere source. It implies a permanent dialogue/negotiation and search for synergies between the researcher and the public, one which allow the latter to play an active role in the research process and outcome.

To make the tension between academic researchers and the public a little more concrete, we present a typology with different combinations of academic and public activities embodied in five ideal-typical individuals. The first three types of individuals are academics, while the fourth and fifth occupy positions that are not strongly rooted in academia. And although we refer to all types as being "public historians", we want to emphasize that the third type will be called the "model" public historian by many due to the organic relationship between academia and the public.[47] The five types are:

(1) The *ivory tower public historian* is an academic who publishes books and articles but who is not concerned about how and by whom his/her work is used. In principle, however, the research outcomes are physically present in (university) libraries, and insights and ideas are disseminated through lectures.

(2) The *traditional public historian* is an academic that does research and teaches, but that is also actively engaged in making findings known to a

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46 Michael Frisch, *A shared authority: Essays on the craft and meaning of oral and public history* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990).

47 Also see: Michael Burawoy, "For Public Sociology," *American Sociological Review* 70, no. 1 (2005): 4–28.

wider audience through book presentations, external lectures, exhibitions, and special courses.

(3) The *organic public historian* is an academic that engages with various interest groups inside or outside of the educational community, is involved in a dialogue with all kinds of associations, organizations, and communities.

(4) The *influencer public historian* is an academic or non-academic that tries to make visible and public what normally remains invisible and private, engages in political, social, and economic activities to achieve that goal, and takes an ethical position with respect to concepts about right and wrong in individual and social conduct.

(5) The *artist public historian* is a non-academic who tries to make visible and public what normally remains invisible and private, engages in artistic activities to achieve that goal, and takes an aesthetical position about concepts like beauty and harmony.

The role of the public historian can change over time. For instance, an early career researcher in the 1980s is an ivory tower historian if she does nothing more than publish a scientific article about a schoolteacher who is unknown at the time. She becomes a traditional public historian if she writes a few pages about this schoolteacher in a pedagogical textbook in the 1990s. She transformed into an organic public historian if she collaborates with an association of educational practitioners to publish a book about this schoolteacher that will serve as a script for a documentary in the 2010s. The non-academic members of this association could be classified as influencer public historians in the 2020s, if they are involved in designing an exhibition about the schoolteacher, including writing texts on panels, and taking political action to name a street after this teacher. And the non-academic member that color black & white photographs from archives to create vivid, lifelike realities of the past, and exhibits them on social media sites, could be called an artist public historian.[48]

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48 This is not a hypothetical example. The early career researcher was María del Mar del Pozo Andrés, co-editor of this book, the schoolteacher was Ángel Llorca, the association was the *Fundación Ángel Llorca/Acción Educativa* (https://www.fundacionangelllorca.org/), and the artist was Tina Paterson (Twitter @latinapaterson).

5) Public History of Education is about Allowing Stories to Become, to be Reanimated, and Appropriated

Public history of education is not about fixing the histories of the educational past once and forever. Academically trained historians are already familiar with the idea that "the" history of something cannot be written. There will always be multiple histories, and never a definitive one. Viewed from a philosophy of science perspective, historians have a preference for philosophical frameworks like social constructivism or postmodernism.[49] Nowadays, not many historians share the positivist idea that there is an external reality out there, or that anyone can claim to "show [the past] as it actually was", to quote Leopold von Ranke, with the help of objective tools and primary sources.[50] Historical sources do not speak for themselves; there are always multiple interpretations. So, even in the case of the same subject, there are different histories to be told, using different lenses, all of which assume the existence of multiple realities, narratives, and counternarratives. This is not so much a disadvantage as an advantage. There is not only room for new histories in line with new academic historical turns, there is just as much – and perhaps even more – room for the wishes and desires of a broad public, one that may have its own personal or political motives for supporting historical research (see also marker 4).

Now that history has definitively left the ivory tower, and storytelling and exhibiting have become a public affair, historians' ability to choose topics has become partly dependent on the potential popularity of a theme. Being in the right place at the right time has become an important feature for doing public history. The historian of education who writes a book on a topic that has no publicity value at the time will remain in the shadows, but the same author may find him/herself in the spotlight when the time is right, and when "the public" wants to listen to the story.[51]

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49 John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, *Fourth Edition* (London: Sage, 2018).

50 Leopold von Ranke, *The Theory and Practice of History* (London, New York: Routledge, 2011), 86 (Edition and Introduction by Georg G. Iggers).

51 An example: historian of education Narciso de Gabriel wrote a book in Galicean in 2008 about Elisa and Marcela, two female schoolteachers who married in 1901 by posing as a heterosexual couple. The book was translated into Spanish in 2010, and a Netflix movie, *Elisa and Marcela*, directed by Isabel Coixet, was made of it in 2019. The book was republished in 2019 with a prologue written by the director of the movie. See: Narciso de Gabriel, *Elisa e Marcela. Alén dos homes* (Gijón: Nigratrea, 2008); Narciso de Gabriel, *Elisa y Marcela: Más allá de los hombres* (Barcelona: Libros del Silencio, 2010); Narciso de Gabriel, *Elisa y Marcela: Amigas y amantes* (Madrid: Morata, 2019).

Stories can even slip out of the hands of historians (see also marker 1). Indeed, histories of education written by academic historians can be appropriated by anybody interested in telling these stories, adjusting them to their own frame of reference, for instance, by removing unwelcome facts. This is part of the public history game. A historically accurate biography written about a schoolteacher in a certain historical period can end up as a movie in public cinemas that, on the one hand, can deliver an inspiring educational message, but on the other, can turn a complex historical narrative into a simple, idealized story line. Public historians of education must learn to live with this phenomenon.

6) Public History of Education is about Being Equipped, but Adventurously Leaving the Beaten Tracks

Doing public history of education does not mean that the traditional ways in which historians used to do their research, such as working with primary documents found in archives, are suddenly abandoned, or replaced by new methodological approaches. It does mean, however, that public historians must be sensitive to public interests, trending topics, or whatever emotionally moves particular audiences. They should not be afraid to engage and collaborate with the public (see also marker 4) – and this is where the adventure can begin – to develop research projects, find stories, and develop them into shared public histories, meaningful for many. It also means that public historians must not be reluctant to delve into visual sources, material objects, and oral testimonies, in other words, non-textual sources.[52] Therefore, borrowing insights and/or methodologies from other disciplines, like sociology, semiotics, or communication and media studies, should also be part of the *modus operandi* of public historians. Above all, historians must find new ways to tell old stories. The issue of illiteracy in Afghanistan, for instance, is beautifully told in the Iranian movie *Buddha collapsed out of shame* by focusing on a 5-year-old girl who wants to go to school.[53] We think that presenting qualitative case studies about children living in times of the industrial revolution, for instance, would have more impact on audiences than presenting statistical data about illiteracy, school attendance, and infant mortality rates. It is the task of a public historian of education

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52 Catherine Armstrong, *Using Non-Textual Sources: A Historian's Guide* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).

53 Philip French, "Buddha Collapsed out of Shame," *The Guardian*, 27 July 2008.

to creatively connect methods and techniques of research with topics in the history of education to fully capture the attention of the public.

7) Public History of Education Might Become a Catalyst of Change, But Aims in the First Place at Offering "Thinking Matters"

As we have stated above, a public historian can play a role as an influencer. A political motive for writing certain histories – and deliberately *not* writing others – is at the forefront of these individuals' minds. In philosophical terms, this is nothing more than choosing critical theory as an interpretative framework.[54] In this world view, a transformative position is taken with respect to values. Some values are wrong, and others are right. Knowledge is not neutral, and constructing knowledge is to aid people to improve their lives, raise their consciousness, or to unshackle them from the constraints of unjust power structures. In this sense, doing public history of education might become a catalyst of change by means of participatory action, by active collaboration with marginalized groups, or by giving voice to the oppressed. Writing histories about inequalities and injustices can make a difference for the lives of people. It is equally important, however, to stress that public history is not about taking a transformative stance *per se*, but about offering a frame of reference to various groups. Public history has the potential to question matters that were unquestioned before, to address matters that were not addressed before, or to give voice to the unheard. In practice this can result in writing stories or biographies about unknown schoolteachers, silenced in times of oppression, on the one hand, and writing critical studies about famous educators or pedagogues who have become living legends, on the other. In other words, public history is about heroes and zeroes, about narratives and counter-narratives, about actively changing and thinking about change. In sum, public history is about the plurality of perspectives.

8) Public History of Education Needs Ways of Disclosing that Allow for the Past to be Performed

Writing stories based upon a systematic search of historical sources is still at the heart of a public history of education. What is new is the need to find other

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54 Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry*.

ways of presenting narratives. The performance-concept in this last marker is chosen on purpose, as it hints at artistic and experimental approaches to disseminating and mediating histories, allowing to bring these stories into the fluid states where their connections with humans may make sense.[55] Charles Dickens and Karl Marx were writing at the same time in the same city about the same thing: the consequences of capitalism. Dickens was a novelist, Marx a social scientist. Determining which of these two gentlemen had more of an impact on the public, in terms of making people aware of the problems caused by industrialization and urbanization, is a matter of debate. But many will admit that writing a fictional novel can be a powerful tool to offer people "thinking matters". The same would apply to a public history of education. Other ways of disclosing historical information instead of, or alongside writing books or articles needs to be strongly considered in order to increase the public impact of histories. Visualization of history fits well with living in the century of the Image.[56] Books can be turned into documentaries. And documentaries can be turned into movies or theater pieces. We took the "modes of presenting" – musealization, exhibiting, and storytelling – as addressed by the different authors as a backbone and structuring element for this volume.

Case-Studies, Reflections, and Experiences about Public History of Education

Musealization

In "Like a Voice in the Wilderness? Striving for a Responsible Handling of the Educational Heritage."– which could be called an "experience report" –, **Marc Depaepe** looks back on and reflects about the expositions set up within the context of the school museum in Ypres (Belgium), allowing the reader to gain insight into the curation as well as in the organization and planning of themed expositions (e.g., driven by personal motives, used to display scientific/research findings). Besides these museum activities, this chapter also sheds light on how the museum was enmeshed in a bigger network of institutions – e.g.,

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55 Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 82. Latour refers to fiction and the arts as resource in a totally different context, namely as way to gain an insight into "material actors".
56 Fred Ritchin, *Bending the Frame: Photojournalism, Documentary, and The Citizen* (New York: Aperture, 2013), 160.

"concurring" *In Flanders Fields (IFF)* museum, local government, universities – and on the difficulties/struggles experienced while maneuvering between the various aspirations of these stakeholders. Highly interesting as well is the way in which Depaepe defines how the expositions should function as "instruments to think with and about the (educational) past", rather than tools that foster a naïve consumption of ready-made, simplified (hi)stories.

In their chapter "Life after the Apology: Making the Unspeakable Visible", **Lieselot De Wilde, Bruno Vanobbergen** and **Sarah Van Bouchaute** make a passionate plea for the musealization of the painful past or trauma. On the one hand, this serves as a recognition of and apology for those who have suffered in the past, and on the other hand, as an instrument for "past, present, and/or future presencing",[57] allowing curators and audiences to engage – through the exposition – in a dialogue or debate about past, contemporary and future educational interventions. This includes the idea of dialogue, which in turn might trigger social change. The authors illustrate how the exhibition "Patch Places" (*Pleisterplekken*), kept in the Museum Doctor Guislain (1986, Ghent, Belgium) – a museum about the history of psychiatry, located in the buildings of an adult psychiatry ward – might have functioned as kind of laboratory for "adventures in cultural learning".

Iveta Kestere and **Arnis Strazdins** tell – in their chapter "Between Nostalgia and Trauma: The Representation of Soviet Childhood in the Museums of Latvia" – three different stories about Latvian childhood during the Soviet regime. They tell these stories, which include the story of the schoolchild, the child as member of youth movements, the ethnic encultured child, by means of three "iconic" materialities often exhibited in museums, namely a school desk, a red scarf and a doll (*Baiba*). The authors explore how these materialities might have functioned throughout their life story as catalysts for the circulation, transmission, and production of meanings with regard to "Soviet childhood". This chapter also provides insight into the polysemous character of these materialities which allows the museum visitors to make various connections between past, present and future and, thus, to (re- or counter) imagining. At first sight, these materialities may seem ordinary or well-known, but their musealization might also open a whole new/different repertoire of meaning-making, and even trigger a sense of alienation.

Whereas Depaepe has set his focus on the "life story" of one school museum, **Antonio Viñao Frago** reflects in his autobiographical chapter – entitled: "Public History between the Scylla of Academic History and the Charybdis of History as a

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57 Herman and Roberts, "Adventures in cultural learning," 189–98.

Show. A Personal and Institutional Experience" – on a variety of activities, which he only denominated as public history *a posteriori*. He was involved in these activities during his career as scholar at the University of Murcia, and they included his work with the Virtual Museum of History of Education (MUVHE) and the Center for Studies on Educational Memory (CEME). Central in his flashback are the tensions Viñao experienced during his rich career between the roles he carried out as "academic historian" and as "public historian", and how getting out of the ivory tower and being confronted with various expectations of different stakeholders might influence the stories told or silenced. Viñao seems to be advocating for traditional craftsmanship (*le métier d'historien* – Marc Bloch) extended/enriched by a reflected/reflective practice of "doing public history".

After introducing the reader to the specific memory culture in Spain and the various efforts made by historians and politicians to keep a foothold in the past, **María del Mar del Pozo Andrés** enumerates (retrospectively) the challenges she faced while curating the exhibition "*Madrid, ciudad educadora 1898/1938. Memoria de la escuela pública*" (2019) and elaborates on the exhibit's setup. In the last part of her "Public Voices and Teachers' Identities: Exploring the Visitors' Book of a School Memory Exhibition", she analyzes and categorizes the written comments of teacher-visitors – notes made in the exhibition's guest book – to find out what they made of their visit and, thus, to gain an insight into the meaning-making processes that might have been triggered by the museum visit. In doing so, she demonstrates the potential of visitors' books as a tool for figuring out just how historian/curators' stories and displays affect the public. Just as importantly, she points out quite accurately that impact-research and dialogue with audiences is still very much marginalized within our field.

The flowers on the grave of Sister Maria Inês Champalimaud Duff illustrate how certain (heroic) stories linger in the public memory, epic stories that over time can fall partially into oblivion. In her chapter "Flowers on a Grave: Memories of a Hidden, but not Forgotten, School (Hi)story", **Helena Ribeiro de Castro**, takes this contemporary heroine-worship as a point of departure to retell and revive the story of this heroine and her role in the establishment of a school for women in Aveiro (Portugal). While doing so, Helena Ribeiro de Castro simultaneously tells the history of the building in which Aveiro's National Art Museum is located since 1911. With her contribution, the author draws the readers' attention to two interesting characteristics in public history. First, she strives to start where "public memory" ends and to nuance and enrich the "remaining simple storyline" that lingers on in public memory. In other words, a public historian in a case like this is trying to connect with the foreknowledge and interests of the audiences. Secondly, public history also needs to forge a connection

at the local level, raising the public's awareness of the multilayered past of the regional (public) environment, its buildings, squares, streets and monuments.

Exhibiting

In "Story telling through Fine Art. Public Histories of Childhood and Education in Exhibitions in the Netherlands and Belgium c. 1980 – c. 2020", **Jeroen Dekker** reflects on the stories told about childhood by means of exhibition pieces and the exhibition set-up during six temporary exhibitions. These exhibits were curated by different stakeholders, designed with different purposes in mind, and were held at different locations. In his reflections, Dekker hints at the different levels of storytelling, be it the established story told by the individual exhibition pieces, the (imposed) story told by the selection and arrangement of all the exhibited pieces, or the orientation conferred upon the story by means of the curators' interventions as he or she steers the public's gaze and structures the response of the audiences (e.g., discussion cards, catalogues). However, just what story has been "heard" by the individual visitors while experiencing these exhibition pieces remains an open question. Exhibiting, then, implies allowing visitors to encounter Fine Arts and to potentially be addressed by the artist of the time, so as to make sense out of the story that was "heard".

In their chapter "Future Pasts: Web Archives and Public History as Challenges for Historians of Education in Times of COVID-19" **Karin Priem** and **Ian Grosvenor** focus on web archives in general, and the Education & Pandemics Archive launched by the International Standing Conference for the History of Education (ISCHE) in particular. They consider web archives as public history projects that can establish bonds between communities and reach out to global audiences and different social groups. The chapter provides preliminary insights into how web archives may affect our work as historians of education. Web archives offer different structures, opportunities for different interactions, and a different technological environment. They can be characterized by collaborative processes, by networked data within a flattened structure, and by interconnected hardware and software environments. Web archives are user-friendly and flexible, inviting us to get involved and to develop new historical dimensions.

The conservation and restoration of paintings, along with learning to paint are the practices discussed in **Joyce Goodman**'s "Conserving the Past, Learning from the Past: Art, Science and London's National Gallery". Goodman introduces the readers to these less-known forms of "museal gazing" during the 20th century at the National Gallery in London, and beyond, by telling the entangled stories of the aspiring artist Rosa Branson and the painting conservator Helmut Moritz

Ruhemann. While touching upon many facets of these vanished artistic and conservation activities, Goodman opens an often forgotten and hidden part of "museum life". These activities seem to have "reanimated" these exhibited paintings and have encouraged other forms of looking and seeing. Imagine, for instance, a museum visitor looking at a work of Botticelli and then at the sketch made by an art school student standing in front of the same original painting, allowing the same visitor to see Botticelli's masterpiece "through the eyes" of the student. Incidentally, while presenting this historical case study, Goodman hints – in a subtle way – at the potential of exhibiting "museum life" in its full spectrum, allowing other "museal gazes" (Ibid.) and experiences to occur.

In the 1930s artists in Britain started to produce art and curate exhibitions which presented a strong and radical challenge to fascist ideology. **Ian Grosvenor** and **Siân Roberts** take these initiatives as the starting point for their chapter "Art, Anti-fascism, and the Evolution of a 'Propaganda of the Imagination': The Artists International Association 1933–1945". They identify and document the rationale, content, participants, impact, and interconnectedness of exhibitions in late 1930s and early 1940s Britain that confronted the threat of fascism. They map the evolution of a "propaganda of the imagination" whereby through direct engagement with art and artists the public would look closely, rather than looking away, thus becoming advocates for the arts and progressivism.

Christine Mayer's chapter takes exhibitions about "women in art and design" as her point of departure to explore what part of history was prioritized and exhibited and what part remained underexplored, blurred, and untold. Despite the more recent attention paid to women artists and designers, the world of exhibitions (as well as of research) still mainly seems to center around 'male art geniuses', while the so-called "female art dilatants" seem to be centrifuged to the margins. "Exhibiting the Past: Women in Art and Design in the Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries" aims at addressing this blind spot by putting its focus on the educational and professional careers of women artists who invariably had to struggle more than their male counterparts to gain a foothold in the male-dominated art and design world at the time. Mayer suggests that historians (of education) should take a closer look at "public history" – e.g., past, and current exhibitions – as a point of departure to explore the unexhibited and to tell the un-told. By doing this, public history just might become more emancipatory.

In her chapter "Picturing School Architecture: Monumentalization and Modernist Angles in the Photographs of School Spaces, 1880–1920" **Inés Dussel** reflects on a series of photographs of school architecture found in Argentinean archives that belong to the period 1880–1920, in which school building became an integral part of public policies. She conceived these photographs as

public records or memory artifacts that were intersected by several histories, among them histories of architecture, of photography, and of schooling. She concludes that we cannot continue using photographs of school buildings as neutral records, and that we need to understand their choices, angles, and limitations to make room for more rigorous and complex interpretations of educational pasts and to understand how, through which materials and takes, their histories were made public.

Storytelling

Nelleke Bakker reflects in her chapter "Memories of Harm in Institutions of Care: The Dutch Historiography of Institutional Child Abuse from a Comparative Perspective", on the historiography of institutional child abuse as an example of public history. Research about child abuse is clearly connected with the educational past (i.e., Catholic Church abuses in schools are now under investigagion in several countries). In her contribution public history is about documenting the past for the sake of the public and enabling remembrance of traumatic experiences to help prevent new ones in the future. Studies into child abuse in out-of-home care aim, moreover, to serve a goal that is shared with both memory studies and oral history: making collective memories more inclusive by adding the memories of underprivileged groups, such as care-leavers, and incorporating marginalized populations and voices from the footnotes of history into the main story.

Sjaak Braster's contribution "Exhibiting Teachers' Hands: Storytelling Based on a Private Collection of Engravings" aims at revealing the research or analytical process focused on teacher's hand postures in depictions of school life in the past. In doing so, he resorts to a category of sources which has often been neglected in our field. Going beyond this critique of the source, Braster approaches these engravings as accessible "visual stories" or "visuals telling a story" (just as school novels do). The stories contain references to school life as well as fictional traits which in their circulation have mediated certain images of schooling within society and thus have impacted teachers' professional self-understanding. To analyze and compare the sample, Braster sets his focus on the teachers' hand postures to gain an insight into what stories about schooling, teaching, and learning have been visually disseminated over time. By telling the history of schooling through teachers' hands, he experiments with other ways of (hi)storytelling. Indeed, to a certain extent, it could be said that body parts and postures – and not the human actors as a whole – are the protagonists of this chapter.

In her chapter "Rocking Horses as Peripheral Objects in Pedagogies of Childhood: An Imagined Exhibition", **Cathy Burke** addresses the question of how a focus on movement, particularly rhythmic movement, can offer us new insights into the past experience of school for young children. She uses the concept of an imagined exhibition created from a "non-collection" of images that provide evidence of the presence of rocking horses in 20th century schools for young children. The rocking horse in the school room, when noticed and dwelt upon, raises questions about its intended purpose and use; siting and placement; ubiquity or otherwise, as well as possible reasons for its disappearance from the visual record.

Angelo Van Gorp and **Frederik Herman** experiment in "On the Trail of the Toucan: A Travelogue about a Peregrination in Educational History" with an alternative way of reporting about their research experiences. They conceived the account of their explorative journey within (and beyond) the field of the histories of education, as a kind of "travel writing" or travelogue. Thus, instead of presenting a finished and clear story, they opt here for a "messier" account, one that allows the public to follow the (chosen and potential) research trajectories and to gain an insight into this account's production. Their chapter consists of two main, interconnected storylines, which in turn include several sub-tales. In the first part they report about their early explorations of a territory quite familiar to them, namely the center of Belgian educational reform and experimental psychology at the beginning of the twentieth century represented by Ovide Decroly (1871–1932) and his disciples. A colorful wooden inlay puzzle of a rooster serves as a bridge to the second storyline which portrays the Swiss artist Pierre Küenzi, who developed educational toys in the 1970s.

In his chapter "Reflections of a Textbook Writer" **Wayne Urban** describes the development and reception of a history of American education seen by the author and two co-authors. It details how the textbook was conceived and initially written, it's further development in five subsequent editions, and its reception by students and by other scholars of American educational history. Textbooks are a valuable tool for students in history of education, and in history of higher education, but encouraging students to engage in their own scholarly efforts is also of great significance. The chapter ends with a brief discussion of public history resulting in a tribute to both the production of a textbook based on scholarship but geared to the needs of student, and an acknowledgment of how students can influence positively the scholarly work of their teacher through their own reactions and additions to that scholarship.

Harry Smaller introduces us in his chapter "Making Teacher Union History 'Public'" how the British Columbia (Canada) Teachers' Union made his history public with its "Online Museum". This teachers' union, founded in 1917, is but

one of seventeen independent educator unions in provinces and territories across Canada. However, it stands out owing to the emphasis, and resources, it has dedicated over past decades in researching, developing, and mounting a public record of the history of the organization and its very diverse activities. Now very much web-based, this public history reaches out to a wide audience – in addition to its own members (present and retired), it is also accessible to school officials, academics, students, policy researchers, legislators, and the public at large.

If public history provides a means to refer to the ways in which the past is presented outside academic circles, then what problems would consulting original sources like the pedagogical journals of another period pose for a public history of the magisterium? Would teachers be sensitive to such a reading of problems of the past? Would they recognize themselves in the practices of that past? Would a dialogue open up between pedagogy and public history, beyond the academic milieu? If the challenge of constructing a Public History of Education seems great, can we also say that it is necessary because it concerns both teachers and the school memory? These questions are the starting point for the chapter of **Lucía Martínez Moctezuma** entitled "The Pedagogical Press and the Public Debate about Schooling".

Having gathered these case-studies, reflections, and experiences about public histories of education, we made clear that our field is gradually getting fit for a new public era. We leave it now up to the reader – who doesn't get an overview of systematic public history projects or a clear-cut manual for doing public history of education – to think with this rich variety of contributions about why and how to turn to the public in the future.

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Musealization

Marc Depaepe

Like a Voice in the Wilderness? Striving for a Responsible Handling of the Educational Heritage

Abstract: This chapter deals with the themed exhibitions set up within the context of the Municipal Education Museum in Ypres. It allows the reader to gain insight in the curation as well as in the organization and planning of themed expositions (e.g., driven by personal motives, used to display scientific/research findings). Besides these museum's activities, this contribution also sheds light on how the museum was enmeshed in a bigger network of institutions – e.g., "concurring" *In Flanders Fields* (IFF) museum, local government, universities – and on the experienced difficulties/struggles while maneuvering between the various aspirations of these stakeholders. The main idea behind the exposé is how expositions in education museums should function as "instruments to think with and about the (educational) past" (historicizing approach), rather than tools that foster a naïve consumption of ready-made, simplified (hi)stories (educationalizing approach). Such conceptual, methodological, and theoretical assumptions concerning the nature of the history of education have been put forward on the international scene by the author as well as by his colleague to whom the Festschrift is dedicated. Both closely collaborated since the beginning of their career as partners to increase the importance of the history of education as part of social and cultural history. Their advisory role in the education museum in Ypres was only one aspect of this bigger endeavor.

Keywords: education museum, Ypres, themed exhibitions, educationalizing vs. historicizing approach

Introduction

In recent years, our research group – of which Frank Simon, to whom this work is dedicated, was an avowed member – has repeatedly succeeded in producing

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occasional contributions to *Libri Amicorum* or *festschrifts*. Usually an anecdote, or an event experienced together was sufficient for a suitable starting point. The rest of the chapter could then be related to one's own research, as it were, without much effort. However, as the celebrated person's professional career came closer to us, that maxim came under increasing pressure.

The latter certainly applies to what must follow. With no other researcher have I myself, in the most literal sense of the word, gone out into the world to promote and valorize the history of education in the same way as I did with Frank Simon – something which, by the way, has left me with a friendship for life. That is why I immediately accepted the instigators' offer to write "something" for Frank. But what? The innumerable hours we spent together have resulted in so many joint publications, and also left their traces in numerous collaborative research projects and resulting doctorates, in both national and international cooperative networks, including the management of the most prominent associations and journals in our field, as well as in guest lectures, research seminars and museum expertise provision at home and abroad. Listing these seems like an impossible task and is probably not all that interesting for the readers either. Moreover, both Frank and I have already been able to explain the crucial character of working together in both our curricula in other places.[1]

Partners in The Development of Educational Historiography, Both Nationally and Internationally

Our collaboration began in earnest in October 1977, thanks in part to the then ongoing inter-university research project on opening up the 19th and 20th centuries educational press in Belgium, led by Maurits De Vroede. Over time, we have come to realize how essential it was for our discipline, which was under increasing pressure from the emergence and flourishing of empirical approaches in *educational research*, not to get in each other's way or, worse still, to compete with each other. But, on the contrary, as a duo, to face the opportunities at an international

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1 E.g. in interviews. Sjaak Braster and Maria del Mar del Pozo Andrés, "Frank Simon: A Personal Story of Everyday Educational Realities," *Historia y Memoria de la Educación* 8 (2018): 699–737; Simonetta Polenghi and Gianfranco Bandini, "Interview with Marc Depaepe," *Espacio, Tiempo y Educación* 3, no. 1 (2016): 445–453.

level. It carried an important legacy in the history of education research: Ghent as the cradle of *Paedagogica Historica. International Journal of the History of Education* (1961) and the starting point for the annual conferences of the *International Standing Conference for the History of Education (ISCHE)* (1978). Without wanting to attribute to us the rapprochement of these two entities, which initially treated each other with some reticence, and even with some rivalry, it is clear that our contribution in this matter in the 1990s facilitated the process.

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to think that this was based on a clear plan, an explicit strategy, let alone some manner of drive for international conquest. Quite the contrary. Just like our friendship, our collaboration grew spontaneously, based mainly on informal contacts in the search for usually pragmatic answers to what occurred in the everyday problems of the field. It just clicked between us as researchers, probably because on the one hand we were on the same wavelength from a theoretical-methodological point of view, and because on the other hand we were able to transform the differences in character, talent, temperament, background, style, accumulated knowledge and skills into a win-win situation – not in the economic sense of the word, of course, but more particularly in a sporting sense. Because if we had one character trait in common, it was undoubtedly the sense of teamwork. As a former top football player, Frank was used to giving "assists" rather than always wanting to score himself. Against that record of achievement, certainly from a physical point of view, I could only contribute very little, even though psychologically, as one of the twins, since my childhood I was accustomed to sharing "emotions", in sports and games, in winning as well as losing. Furthermore, we had the common ambition to do what we did, and to do it "well", simply because we both took an intrinsic pleasure in this. As a motto, the quote from Richard Sennett's famous statement about historical crafts – doing a work well for the sake of the work itself – was entirely appropriate in the article in which we brought the reader along to the workplace of our historical research in education.[2] Last but not least, the common sense of humor, in the popular German description of *wenn man trotzdem lacht*, will also have done its work in the development of our partnership. This is how I remember the cathartic laugh when after a grueling meeting on the fifth floor of the COV building in Brussels concerning the processing of data from a historical survey on the social profile of teachers, we wanted to adjust the accompanying text quickly and suddenly saw all our data disappear before our very

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2 Marc Depaepe and Frank Simon, "Sources in the Making of Histories of Education: proofs, arguments, and other reasonings from the historian's workplace", in *Educational Research: Proofs, Arguments, and Other Reasonings*, ed. Paul Smeyers and Marc Depaepe,(Dordrecht: Springer, 2009), 23–39.

eyes. The prehistoric computer, whose orange lettering on the small screen had disappeared one by one, had packed in. What else could we do but stay behind and start all over again?

Considering the theme of this book, I suggested, from the rich range of shared experiences, only to dig out those that were related to our commitment to a meaningful handling of the educational heritage in Flanders. Which, on reflection, again caused me problems, at least if I wanted to bring new elements from our research to the surface – which was certainly the intention. In a contribution for French education museums in particular, I had already pointed out how in Flanders, and by extension throughout Belgium, consideration for school heritage is not a priority at all.[3] It is true that the centenary commemoration of the First World War gave a boost to remembrance or heritage education in secondary schools, but – as we have been able to demonstrate in an article of which Frank was co-author[4] – this had very little to do with historical research. On the contrary, in line with what the history of our profession teaches, historical knowledge is still used in a very instrumental way in most of these commemorations. It is not the intrinsic value that prevails, but the pedagogical message, which by the way must often serve as a kind of hollow rhetoric, with semi-disguised political-ideological purposes. In this sense, we have spoken of an "educationalizing" approach, whereas the innovation we tried to make in the field was precisely the connection with social and cultural historiography, which thus implied a more "historicizing" approach. And in our opinion, this not only applied to scientific research in itself, but also to the more popularizing projects in the museum sphere that Frank and I had set up from both our universities. *Educational Memory Flanders*, which we were nevertheless able to run partly with money from the Flemish government, was one of them. However, in order to obtain this support, we had to include, as it were, unrealistic objectives in the application, such as making an inventory and repertory of almost all preserved textbooks and school wall charts in Flanders – something which, despite some hopeful scientific results, inevitably encountered many material difficulties. For example, we were confronted with the closure of the *Historical Education Collection*, which was not considered a priority by the Ghent faculty (and university) involved, and which was essential for the execution of

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3 Marc Depaepe, "Au bas de la liste des priorités? Quelques réflexions personnelles sur le traitement du patrimoine scolaire en Belgique," in *Première rencontre francophone des musées de l'école. Actes Rouen 2016* (Rouen: Le Musée national de l'éducation, 2018), 65–75.

4 Karel van Nieuwenhuyse, Frank Simon, and Marc Depaepe, "The Place of History in Teacher Training and in Education. A Plea for an Educational Future with a History, and Future Teachers with Historical Consciousness," *Bildungsgeschichte 5,* no. 1 (2015): 57–69.

our project. With a great deal of diplomacy, Frank, who in the meantime had become education director at the same faculty (of psychology and educational sciences), ensured that the wall charts could, in 1999, be contractually transferred to the *Municipal Education Museum* in Ypres, which has since fallen into disuse.

Working in Tandem as Advisors of the Municipal Education Museum in Ypres

This was why, as a contribution to Frank's friendship book, from the very beginning I thought of a piece about the history of the Ypres *Municipal Education Museum* (1990–2016), which has existed for more than a quarter of a century. For years we both sat as consultants on its "steering committee", as it was known. But that idea also caused me problems, because we had already written an article about the museum.[5] Perhaps partly out of frustration, because in that working group we continued to plead for its continued existence. We had explained in it how the strong side of the education museum – the city's support and the cooperation with the other museums, and in particular with the *In Flanders Fields (IFF)* museum – was at the same time its weakness. It goes without saying that a utilitarian attitude to history prevailed in the context of an urban policy based primarily on tourism and economic interests, including among the most recent alderman for culture responsible for the Museum of Education. He expected the Ypres museums to prove their worth, not only in terms of the number of visitors they attracted, but also in terms of the message they proclaimed. The fact that the old museum of remembrance on the Great War, transformed in 1998 into *IFF* – a modern "peace museum" (with digital gadgets) – which had the noble mission of impressing the madness of any war upon the general public, was miles ahead of the education museum in that respect, is obvious. Even though the *IFF* did not always have to tackle this assignment for us with highly elaborate educational packages. In our opinion, wanting to take the public by the hand – including the many visiting schoolchildren – does not immediately testify to a truly emancipatory attitude.

Mutatis mutandis, this was also our approach to the education museum. In contrast to some practitioners – real "school foxes" (the word came from Frank!)

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5 Marc Depaepe and Frank Simon, "It's All About Interpretation: Discourses at Work in Education Museums. The Case of Ypres," in *Educational Research: Discourses of Change and Change of Discourse,* ed. Paul Smeyers and Marc Depaepe (Cham: Springer, 2016), 207–222.

like André Durnez – who, mostly from a nostalgic view of the past, felt that the museum should promote the school as an institution, we instead aimed, through the confrontation with well-selected artefacts from the pedagogical past, for a liberating (i.e. meeting, and sometimes healing) dialogue with the past, which could perhaps culminate in what is called the sublime historical experience. Such a personal, highly individual result can of course only be achieved *a posteriori* and is certainly not intended to be consumed *en masse*. In our opinion, therefore, the task of school museums is not to learn to deal with history in an educationalized way, nor to propagate some well-intentioned message (e.g. about the necessity of school and its beneficial effects), but rather to reflect critically on the role of education in society. In this sense, in our opinion, school museums could also effectively become "laboratories" from which authentic knowledge in the history of education can be generated, including on the use of school objects over time. The school desk, to which we have devoted attention in several other articles, is a good example of this. But it did not get that far in Ypres. Our plea for a more "historicizing" and thus better-founded approach (instead of the familiar utilitarian-pedagogical line, which joins up with the pattern of expectations for an old-fashioned historical pedagogy) not only yielded far too little success, but there was clearly much more to it than that. In 2005, the education museum had to deal with a huge fire, from which it never truly recovered. Legal procedures with the insurance prevented a new look, in a sense preserving the old-fashioned-ness in the permanent exhibition, which we felt tried to show too much at once. Things got even worse when some construction promoters' gazes fell upon the site – the former Saint Nicholas church in the city center – in which the education museum was located, which would eventually lead to its definitive closure at the end of December 2016.

Now that the emotions about this closure have subsided, it remains an interesting exercise to examine whether the material remnants of the education museum show any traces and/or results of our efforts in this respect. On the basis of the tension between the pedagogical-didactical objectives on the one hand and the actual educational effects on the other – a paradox that affects not only museums but, as we have explained elsewhere, every educational campaign and therefore every educational institution – I would like to make an attempt at this below. Awareness of this paradox among the public was, after all, one of the few educational effects we had in mind from the confrontation with the Ypres museum offering. Nevertheless, there were some problems here too. The same applies to the consultation of archives, due to the temporary inaccessibility caused by the Corona crisis. That is why this "test" of analysis – a prolegomena in the true sense of the word – is largely based on the (fortunately)

several publications[6] (the one more prestigious than the other) in response to the various themed exhibitions in the education museum, for which, all in all, we are very grateful to the city. The rest is based on personal memories, which of course gives the whole a subjective touch. But at the end of a career and in honor of a good friend, this is quite alright.

The Tension between Educationalizing and Historicizing as Reflected in the Thematic Exhibitions

A total of twenty so-called temporary [themed] exhibitions took place at the Ypres Museum of Education, not counting the special exhibition on the history of primary education that took place ten years before the museum was founded. If both of our contributions have had any effect, it is mainly in that context, albeit only over time. Because certainly the first themes stemmed rather directly from the personal interests and ambitions of the initiators. But to claim that these exhibitions were insufficiently scientifically substantiated is not correct either. As we will see in a moment, academic expertise was called upon from the very beginning, initially in the person of the aforementioned De Vroede; and from 1991 also structurally on the advice of the undersigned, while Frank only became a member of the "steering committee" towards the middle of the 1990s. The reason for this was actually political. The Ypres aldermen's college had a homogeneous Christian-democratic composition in the early days of the museum, and in order to satisfy the opposition (who would actually have preferred a cat museum to an education museum), Robert Barbry, the *spiritus movens* of the steering committee, suggested including a professor from a non-Catholic university. This issue became all the more urgent when, also in 1995, the city council decided to put the available space in the Cloth Hall, in which the education museum had previously found accommodation, entirely at the *IFF's* disposal. After all, as a new location, the former Saint Nicholas church came into view, which of course increased the (completely unjustified) fear that the Ypres school museum could only become an affair for "Catholics".

But let us return to the first temporary exhibition. It was dedicated to "female handiwork" and began in May 1990. That was also the official opening of the

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6 In order to cope with the limits of space set by the editors, these publications (in Dutch) are not referenced, but the titles are described in the text.

Municipal Education Museum, set up in a wing of the historic Cloth Hall and architecturally conceived from the notion of a Fröbelian box of blocks. None other than the then Minister of Education was invited to that opening: Daniel Coens, West Fleming and Christian Democrat. Through the CVP, his political party, he maintained good relations with the initiator Bertha Van Elslande, party colleague and first female deputy of the province of West Flanders, responsible for culture. She and her husband, Georges Platteau, a former teacher and former alderman for culture of the city of Ypres, obviously of the same political leaning as his wife, were involved in the creation of the collection, not only of the temporary exhibition, but of the permanent one as well. In 1980, on the occasion of Belgium's 150th anniversary, it was they who had convinced the mayor, the College of Aldermen and ultimately the entire municipal council to show some consideration for the history of Belgian primary education through an exhibition in the famous Cloth Hall (where the education museum was to be established ten years later). After all, every Belgian city council was expected at the time to take up an initiative as part of the country's 150th anniversary. And as both have told me repeatedly, the argument by which they were able to convince the mayor to set up that exhibition was the promise that it would not cost much . . . after all, they had already collected a lot of material themselves. Nonetheless, through the inspectors Durnez and Barbry, contact was also made with the University of Leuven. Through a publication on the internal history of Belgian primary education, they came to me with the question of whether material could be derived from our History of Education Department – a question which, given my status at the time, I immediately passed on to my head of department and supervisor, Professor De Vroede, who knew how to inspire great awe in almost all of Ypres. The city's exhibition, which of course also zoomed in on local conditions, was a great success, to such an extent that one began to dream of a permanent school museum . . . De Vroede, who immediately seemed to want to combine the idea with some potential doctoral research on the local history of education, also played a catalyzing role in this context. But, partly due to the financial impact, it took ten years before that dream came true. Meanwhile, Platteau was no longer an alderman for culture, but there was also a different mayor.

The fact that female handiwork had become the theme of the opening exhibition in 1990 was mainly due to the beautiful collection that Bertha had amassed, although perhaps there was more going on there too. Would she, as a female politician who had had to work her way up in a world that, back then, was still almost completely male-dominated, not have experienced at first hand just how important "equal opportunities" were? And was it therefore necessary for her, despite sometimes very traditional and conservative views on hierarchy and authority from a social perspective, to dwell for a moment on the silent

witnesses of the sex-specific education of yesteryear? Or, on the other hand, was she driven solely by nostalgia, for a world in which the Catholic Church was literally central and "order" inevitably led to God, as on one of the sewing threads shown, which had subsequently acquired a perpetual place in the education museum's personal collection? As Barbry later testified, the female handiwork in primary schools and boarding schools was not only meant to teach sewing, lacemaking, putting on stockings, knitting and so on, but also to be an exercise in the love of work, order, discipline, and cleanliness.

Willingly or unwillingly, the second themed exhibition, which was organized only the following year, was also in keeping with the idea of equal opportunities, but viewed as emancipating the people. Under the impetus of this same Barbry, it looked more closely at the phenomenon of folk literature and thus, in a sense, complemented the very first exhibition on the history of primary education. We saw how, outside of school, Jan with his cap could have developed more through all kinds of prints, songs, stories, newspapers, pamphlets, cheap novels, and the like. However, there is no comprehensive catalogue of this exhibition either, in which possible objectives, let alone possible effects, were discussed.

The subsequent temporary exhibition, in 1992, was explicitly supported by scientific research for the first time. The starting point of this exhibition, which was entitled "Church, catechism and lace", was Roos Herpelinck's doctorate on the diocese of Ypres during the three decades before the French Revolution. It is obvious that this research was particularly interesting for local historiography. It was therefore published in 1991 by the West Flemish Local History Association. The education museum even devoted an international study day to it. The focus of the exhibition was on the renewed grip of the (Catholic) Church on education, through the establishment of, for example, schools for the poor and Sunday schools. One of the pioneers in this field was the Ypres clergyman Jan Bartolomeus Van Roo, whose charitable work reached far beyond the boundaries of the diocese. The permanent collection rightly had some consideration for this as well. However, possibly due to the lack of relevant sources, not all questions of interest for educational historiography were resolved by this. Such studies of religious life in the early modern period had little consideration for the problems caused by the gap between educational goals and their effects. Usually, they based themselves on the normativity of church precepts, without much concern for the reality of everyday life. It is striking, for example, how many times Herpelinck uses the verb "must" in describing the first statutes of the diocese of Ypres with regard to education.

A much clearer link with the ongoing educational historiography was offered by the 1993 theme exhibition on "The School for Life". The concept came from

De Vroede, who also provided the introduction to the catalogue as first published, while its practical development was once again Barbry's responsibility, albeit assisted by Jan Dewilde, curator of the urban museums. De Vroede, whose general aim was to make the link between history of education and social history, described how innovations related to economic development on the one hand, and social issues on the other, have led to adjustments and/or innovations in primary schools. School savings, anti-alcohol propaganda, animal protection and consideration for economic expansion through Belgian Congo were just a few examples of this. De Vroede concluded that the school was not expected to carry out a social reform mission, but rather a conservative one. In contrast to this down-to-earth observation, the "foreword" by Frans Lignel, the then alderman for culture (and son-in-law of the aforementioned Platteau-Van Elslande couple), turned out to be an ode to the teacher's "vocation": "the Education museum in its general concept and this temporary exhibition, focused on a limited period of time, aims to pay homage to all those who have worked to educate their people, a basic requirement for a better future. Their inventiveness knew no bounds. Teaching was a vocation first and a job second." Whether everyone in the working group subscribed to this general objective of the museum is, of course, highly questionable. The picture of the profession outlined therein can also be critically contested. After all, this seems to be based on an idealized vision of the past rather than on any historical reality – which, as it happens, we also tried to demonstrate in the very same year, along with De Vroede.

Such contradictions in the discourse with which history was approached came even more starkly to the fore in 1994, when the temporary exhibition was about Congo, our former Belgian colony. This was clearly a much more sensitive subject, since at the same time genocide was taking place in neighboring Rwanda, a former Belgian mandated territory, in which Belgian soldiers had also been murdered. This time the impetus for the exhibition came from myself. As part of an ongoing research project, we wanted to show the public, on the one hand, what education was provided by Belgians in the Congolese colony, mainly through Catholic missions, and, on the other hand, how the colony was discussed in our education. Hence the title: "Congo, a second Fatherland. The Colony in Education and Education in the Colony (1908–1960)", which also the title of the introduction in a brochure of the same name. In anticipation of the book to be published the following year on Belgian education in Congo, the exhibition emphasized the patronizing nature of the colonial educational system. With a nod to Lea Dasberg, the last two sentences of my introduction read as follows: "The natives were still regarded by the average settler as servants who did not need too much knowledge or insight. And despite the fact that thousands of missionaries gave it their all, education in the colony all too often

meant 'raising by keeping small'. Although those words were carefully weighed up, their critical tone still went down badly with some visitors. Even within the steering committee, in addition to congratulations from some, I also had to deal with some negative remarks from others about style and content. They alleged that I was wrong to have railed against the Catholics and against the royal family. Fortunately, in the scientific world of educational historiography, this was perceived in a completely different way. The exhibition did not go unnoticed there. The Belgian-Dutch Association for the History of Education even organized a study day on the subject.

The subsequent temporary exhibition was four years in the making. However, this had nothing to do with the discussions above, but rather with the fact that the decision to move the Museum of Education had been made in the autumn of 1995 and in the meantime a new location had to be found. On 13 July 1997 the museum closed its doors in the Cloth Hall and on 16 May 1998, amidst great interest, it reopened in the Saint Nicholas Church, which also happened to have much more space to display things. Perhaps that was why the original and rather more playful and thematic structure had to give way to a largely historical-chronological line. Such a narrative, from the Middle Ages to the present day, with accents far beyond the *local color* of Ypres, was said to be most appropriate for a wide audience. At the same time, the working group launched a new temporary exhibition that was just as much of a hit with the public: "War and peace in education" – an initiative that presented itself as an educational-historical complement to the *IFF* that had just opened (Figure 1). The exhibition also attracted a great deal of international interest. In the summer of 1998, the annual *ISCHE*-conference was organized in Kortrijk. The program included a collective visit to both Ypres museums, which incidentally led to emotional scenes among the participants (such as the conciliatory gesture made by Richard Aldrich and Max Liedtke in response to the search for both their relatives, who had fought each other in the war). The catalogue, in a more professional layout than the previous one, was again the work of Barbry, who also wrote the introduction. The whole steering committee signed up for the collection of the material. It is true that, at the end of the introduction, a connection was made with the idea of peace that was propagated by the *IFF*, but that seemed to be a polite formula rather than an objective. The tone of the introduction was much more detached and based on historical facts on education.

This was also the case in 1999. What is more, the temporary exhibition at the time was reconnected with ongoing research. Karl Catteeuw, who since late 1996 had been working at the "archive and documentation center for the history of education" at KU Leuven, became an assistant to the same research unit in October 1998, tasked with writing a PhD on school wall charts. That dissertation was only to be published in 2005, but this did not prevent the author from

Figure 1: Municipal Education Museum, Ypres: Exhibition poster 1998.

presenting his research results as early as 1999. Incidentally, the year before, Catteeuw had put together a mini-exhibition on the same subject in response to the aforementioned *ISCHE* meeting on the Kortrijk campus of KU Leuven. As explained in the introduction to the once again beautifully published Ypres exhibition catalogue, the wall chart was the didactical medium par excellence, with which primary schools tried to achieve several of their pedagogical objectives in the course of the 19th and 20th centuries. One of them – and this was explained in detail in the exhibition – was the need to strengthen Belgium's "national" identity through historical education. This was done using several wall charts that denounced the centuries of "foreign domination" of the Belgians and presented Independence, in 1830, as a redemption. There was no doubt that there was such a thing as a Belgian identity. The confrontation with the Romans, with Julius Caesar's legendary description of the *Belgae* as the bravest

of the Gauls as an honorary title, seemed the best proof of this. This scene was therefore extensively depicted. It was also behind the choice of the title "Barbarians in the classroom", whereby Catteeuw hurried to note that barbarians did not refer to some inferior tribe, but had to be read in the sense of Homer, i.e. as foreigners who spoke a different language.

It was not educationalized in any sense. Rather the reverse: the confrontation with historical school wall charts gives visitors the opportunity to see how cultural identity is a product of history, and the extent to which primary schools have played a key role in shaping that discourse. This is something that was probably quite necessary in times of rising populism and nationalism, not only in Flanders but throughout Europe.

Mutatis mutandis, the same can be said of the 2000 theme exhibition. It dealt with the history of pre-school education and bore the title: "from nursery to preschool, or the progression of infancy in the course of the 19th and 20th centuries". This linked in with the research from both our universities, which Frank and I not only lectured upon, but also had theses written. In our joint introduction (for another prestigious catalogue edition) we pointed out, among other things, how the justified call for consideration for small children could also lead to continued pedagogy, while this would not necessarily involve complete personal development. As in the past, many of the innovations, often announced with much fanfare, were de facto aimed at little more than the socialization of the child, through school, in contemporary patterns of expectation.

Frank Simon's next temporary exhibition, which was not to take place for another two years, focused on the materiality of the museum objects. It was entitled "engraved in the memory. Icons of primary education from the *Ancien Régime* until now". There was no catalogue, but there was a well-tended "walking guide", which also happened to refer to the history of the museum (Figure 2). It was developed by two students from Ghent, Bieke Quaghebeur and Loes Vandromme, who had worked with the steering committee as part of their internship, as well as by the aforementioned Catteeuw, an assistant in Leuven, and now also a member of that steering committee. It is no coincidence that the school desk was mentioned as the first of these icons. A school museum without a school desk is simply unimaginable. This was why we returned later on in more than one co-authored article to this furniture specifically designed for education.[7] On the one hand, we drew attention to the life cycle of these. In this

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7 Frederik Herman, Angelo Van Gorp, Frank Simon, and Marc Depaepe, "The School Desk: From Concept to Object," *History of Education* 9, no. 1 (2011): 97–117; Marc Depaepe, Frank Simon, Frederik Herman, and Angelo Van Gorp, "Brodskys hygienische Klappschulbank: zu leicht für die schulische Mentalität?" *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik* 58, Beiheft (2012): 50–65; Marc

way, the move to a school museum can be considered a kind of *after-life*. And on the other hand, we kept in mind designers, patents and the chances of success for new-fangled gear, such as Oscar Brodsky's folding desk. This was partly in the hope that the integration of these dimensions could also promote a more dynamic approach to the statistical character of the benches on display in the museum. Even though – admittedly – this was not always easy to visualize. Nevertheless, that themed exhibition was founded upon scientific inspiration this time too.

Figure 2: Municipal Education Museum, Ypres: Exhibition 2002.

Depaepe, Frank Simon, and Pieter Verstraete, "Valorising the Cultural Heritage of the School Desk Through Historical Research," in *Educational Research: Material Culture and Its Representation*, ed. P. Smeyers & M. Depaepe (Cham: Springer, 2014), 13–30.

This was also the case in 2003. Bert De Munck, now a professor of early modern history at the University of Antwerp, was called upon for the occasion, partly through Frank's contacts at the *Vrije Universiteit Brussel*. He received his doctorate in Brussels in 2002 for a research project on apprenticeship in the Southern Netherlands (1500–1800), for which Hugo Soly was the supervisor (and Frank was one of the co-supervisors). Soly therefore wrote the "foreword" to the widely published catalogue for the temporary exhibition of 2003, for which De Munck signed up along with Dominiek Dendooven, a scientific research associate at the *IFF*. Its title was: "Learning through doing. Apprenticeship and trades in the Ancien Régime". The idea behind it was, among other things, to investigate the genesis of the formation of "skills" – something that was not without significance in the debate at the time about competences acquired elsewhere as an alternative to school education. This was probably why Soly made the link with "reflections on contemporary issues, in particular regarding the relationships between socio-economic changes and teaching formats". Without becoming ahistorical, De Munck returned to this in detail in his highly elaborate introduction. At the end, he subtly concluded that: "after all, an open yet critical view of the past broadens our view of the present. Only history teaches at one stroke both how today's reality has grown and how the impression of it was created. By confronting both, we learn about the past and the present". Whether all the visitors – including the city's administrators – understood it like this, however, is highly questionable. When rereading this text, which from a scientific point of view is of very high quality, but at the same time quite a tough text, it becomes clear that De Munck used the catalogue as a vehicle for an extensive summary of his doctorate, which in the end was not equally appreciated by everyone. Perhaps this had already provided a breeding ground for the aversion of certain administrators to our view that the education museum should provide a forum for the results of scientific research. In any case, this reprimand, often half hidden or half restrained, would come to the surface more than once in the later debates on the future of the museum.

Be that as it may, with the 2004 temporary exhibition that problem did not arise. For all kinds of pragmatic reasons, the steering committee opted for an ease-of-use solution, although this did cost a relatively large amount of money. They hired the rights of the famous French photographer Robert Doisneau and exhibited thirty of his coastal and, by their everydayness, touching school photographs. With a rather nice title of: "Fingers full of smudges. Impressions of school life 1930–1960". The same trick – hiring a theme exhibition (but cheaper this time) – was repeated three years later, in 2007. Then, under the title "Back to school!", the recruitment posters for the education of Herman Verbaere (1905–1993) came into the spotlight. For the very limited catalogue, Barbry,

chairman of the steering committee, wrote the foreword, while Karl Scheerlinck took care of the text. The posters came from a private collection in Antwerp.

However, this had not yet brought an end to the scientifically founded events. In 2008, the following year, Marieke Breyne (daughter of the West-Flemish honorary governor and former mayor of Ypres), a student whose supervisor was Frank, had the opportunity to present the results of her licensed dissertation on the history of educational puppetry to the public in yet another luxurious catalogue: "curtain open, mouths open. Dolls and puppetry in education". This included a shift in pedagogical objectives: from a highly normative tool for moral education in the first half of the 20th century to a more differentiated whole for emotional and social development. However, it also pointed to the often implicit moralization of new-fangled forms.

And as early in 2005, the year after the exhibition of Doisneau's photographs – lest we forget – Karl Catteeuw had been given the opportunity to return to his now completed research on the wall charts. In nicely published catalogue *Wall Charts on all Sides. Research into School Wall Charts for Primary Education in Belgium*, he sketched a picture of their use in the classroom and also paid attention to their construction. In this way, he fulfilled some of the expectations that we formulated with regard to the school bench, that other icon from educational memory.

Leuven's doctoral research would then be the subject of three more temporary exhibitions. In 2009, when Pieter Verstraete and his supervisor Walter Hellinckx received a forum for their study on "the origins and development of education for children and young people with disabilities". In 2010, when Carine Steverlynck, as a distant offshoot of her doctorate on child abuse and the resulting publications on sexuality, drew attention to "the big secret. Dealing with physicality and sexuality in upbringing and teaching during the 20th century" – a theme which, by the way, could easily be linked to the scandals of child abuse in the Catholic Church at the time – something of which Frank, however, being far from a churchgoer himself, was certainly no major fan owing to the potential a-historicity. Finally, in 2013, when Jan Van Wiele reported his research on "the history of the representation of several major non-Christian religions in Belgian Catholic religious education by means of textbooks (1870–200)". Although this initiative was in line with the global interest in historical textbook research, for which school museums almost everywhere were highly regarded, the impressive footnote apparatus and the scientific language in which the admittedly relatively short introduction was made, will again have deterred more than a layman in the matter.

This was probably not the case with the easier to digest exhibitions of theyear before and the year after. In 2012, a literally and figuratively "cheap" exercise was

chosen, especially some of the recent acquisitions. As a speaker, I tried to bring some order to this chaos through our ideas regarding a yet to be refined "historical school theory", but unfortunately I only had one page to explain this in the very modest walking guide that was to accompany the visitor. The underlying reason for this lack of attention was that the Ypres city council, in view of the centennial commemorations of the First World War that were coming up, did everything in its power to give the *IFF* a new look. The museum staff had no time left to concern themselves with the education museum.As a result, in 2014, the ultimate remedy for a hired photo exhibition was taken: that of Annemie Van Gemert on school uniforms.

But that was not the end of it. The focal point of the education museum had to lie equally in the war commemoration. Immediately, we realized that this would also be its swansong. In our joint article on the education museum, to which we referred at the beginning, and for which, in 2014, a Spanish congress on the care of educational patrimony had been the real reason,[8] we had thereforemade an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the museum. When the prestigious catalogue for the 2016 theme exhibition was due to be published and we were invited to introduce it, we thought it would be a good idea to include this text. It would be evidence of intellectual maturity, since criticism of remembrance education, the underlying motives of which are usually misunderstood, was not spared. But that was, in a manner of speaking, overlooked. The opposition from the city camp and the museum staff, who of course sided with the thriving and flourishing *IFF*, was so great that we finally delivered a purified version of that text, in which all possible negative allusions to the policy had been removed. By the way, we got sick of the whole thing, when I noticed in the proof, that the title we had proposed had been changed *in extremis*, and I myself (consciously or unconsciously?) no longer appeared in the list of editors of the book. The latter was rectified at the last minute, albeit not in the usual alphabetical order, but there was no further response on the former. The final title remained "to school in wartime? Belgian children going to school, 1914–1919", while our initial proposal had been "education is everywhere, even in wartime". With this, we were aiming to emphasize the almost universal nature of the *schooling society*. Even in periods of extreme difficulties –

8 Marc Depaepe and Frank Simon, "Sobre el Futuro del Pasado de la Educación: Museos de la Enseñanza y su Relación con la Historia de la Educación – El Caso de Ypres," in *Pedagogía Museística. Prácticas, Usos Didácticos e Investigación del Patrimonio Educativo. Actas de las VI Jornadas Científicas de la Sociedad Española para el Estudio del Patrimonio Histórico Educativo (SEPHE)*, ed. Ana M. Badanelli Rubio, Maria Poveda Sanz & Carmen Rodriguez Guerreo (Madrid: Universidad Complutense, Facultad de Educación, 2014), 35–43.

such as war (but also today in the fight against the Corona crisis) – one cannot do without the institution of school (even if that education now has to be done digitally, this is done through the teachers who pass on the subject matter to the pupils . . .). This message about the persistent school processes in our culture had apparently not been understood, as the question mark in the final title might suggest.

Conclusion

If we look at the evolution described above from some distance, maybe we should not be so dissatisfied after all. Ypres has given us the opportunity to bring much of what we have researched together scientifically to a wider audience. It included the topics we were working on ourselves, with themes for doctoral and/or master's students later on. Not wanting to underestimate the audience was a conscious choice on our part. Certainly, we had made it easier for ourselves by surfing the more popular, and therefore also more attractive and lucrative trends of entertainment and easy consumption. For example, by luring entire buses of elderly people to the museum and immersing them there in the melancholy of childhood memories through active role play in "historical" education; or by giving visiting school children, often on a school trip to the museum, an unforgettable journey into the past through the same role play. With the obvious, underlying message "how well they have it now compared to the past", not only in society but also at school. After all, pedagogy is moralizing – also that of the apparently innocent school outings. And we have declined to convey such messages, not only because they usually lead to a misuse of history, but also because they are usually very ahistorical. In that sense we may remain to sound like a "voice in the wilderness" because we trust that those who want to understand and interpret, can do so – at their own discretion, without the help of specific didactic or pedagogical programs and arrangements. And if we, possibly together with our involved PhD students, have learned something through the confrontation of our so-called "too scientific" and "too rational" attitude with the more pragmatic aspirations of the museum management, it will be (again and again) in the field of the methodological and theoretical self-awareness: the constant attention to the often hidden agendas in our own discourse, also at an educational or museum level. What finally matters to us in history, and *a fortiori* in its visualization in museums, can be summed up in Spinoza's words: we have labored carefully not to mock, lament, or execrate human actions, but to understand them.

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Lieselot De Wilde, Bruno Vanobbergen
and Sarah Van Bouchaute

Life after the Apology: Making
the Unspeakable Visible

Abstract: If we embrace the idea that historical representations cannot simply be true or false but should be considered as proposals to review historical realities in a certain light,[1] raising a multiplicity of interpretative repertoires by giving the past a place in the present through various ways is pivotal. In the aftermath of the many formal inquiries into historical abuse, Western welfare states should seize the opportunity to reflect on current practices and policies while being inspired by the past, in addition to finding ways to come to terms with the past. The major challenge for both academia and policy makers is to make the past relevant for the present. One way to engage in this quest is by visualizing or exhibiting the past. In order to make a questionable representation of history, we discuss the way we think about notions as 'the past' and 'the present' in this contribution. Rather than re-presenting the past, the Museum Dr. Guislain's emphasises and discusses the ambiguity of remembering the past, by mixing unique pieces with compelling anecdotes, big theories with hidden testimonies. And bringing objects, books and arts together. In that sense, dialogical representational practices should reside in contradictory and constantly shifting interpretations between the researcher, the research subjects, policy and practice.

Keywords: museums, memory, discourse, voice, cultural imagery

Memories in the Making

Across the world, (previously) oppressed and voiceless groups who suffered from violence and abuse "began to assert their rights and demand acknowledgement of, and apology for, their past mistreatment" during the second half

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1 Anton Froeyman, "Frank Ankersmit and Eelco Runia: The Presence and the Otherness of The Past", *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice* 16, no. 3 (2012), 393–415.

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of the twentieth century.[2] In this vein, the historical abuse perpetrated against children in residential child welfare and protection services has been increasingly perceived as a public concern for social justice and has become a political priority in recent decades.[3] In the context of this global development, several formal inquiries into the alleged historical abuse of children in public social work services were commissioned in the 1980s and 1990s by authorities, including in the USA, England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Canada and Australia.[4] These public inquiries often resulted from complaints and accusations about maltreatment, violence, and abuse made by former residents of public and private welfare institutions. As a result, by the end of the twentieth century, giving an official apology for historical injustice had become a widespread practice for acknowledging the suffering of various groups of victims. The inquiries contain important messages for social policy analysis, in that they discuss the responsibility of the state as it relates to, for example, the responsibility and liability of social work services and the Church.[5]

In that vein, Brooks critically observed that we have entered an "age of apology"[6] since political and religious leaders across the world have begun to express official apologies for historical injustices.[7] Löfstrom described this apology trend as an "increased political mobilization and visibility of minorities and oppressed

2 Mark Gibney, *The age of apology. Facing up to the past* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania University Press, 2008), 3.
3 Carol Smart, "Reconsidering the Recent History of Child Sexual Abuse, 1910–1960", *Journal of Social Policy* 29, no. 1 (2001), 55–71; Johanna Sköld. "Historical Abuse: A Contemporary Issue: Compiling Inquiries into Abuse and Neglect of Children in Out-Of-Home Care Worldwide", *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention* 14, no. 1 (2013), 5–23.
4 Brian Corby et al., *Public Inquiries into Abuse of Children in Residential Care* (London: Jessica Kingsley, 2001); Fred Powell et al., "The Irish Charity Myth, Child Abuse and Human Rights: Contextualising the Ryan Report into Care Institutions", *British Journal of Social Work* 43, no. 1 (2013), 7–23; Kathleen Daly, "Conceptualising Responses to Institutional Abuse of Children", *Current Issues in Criminal Justice* 26, no. 1 (2014), 5–29.
5 Smart, "Reconsidering The Recent History Of Child Sexual Abuse"; Harry Ferguson. "Abused and Looked After Children as 'Moral Dirt': Child Abuse and Institutional Care in Historical Perspective", *Journal of Social Policy* 36, no. 1 (2007), 123–139; Paul M. Garrett, "'It is with Deep Regret that I Find It Necessary to Tell My Story': Child Abuse in Industrial Schools in Ireland", *Critical Social Policy* 292, no. 30 (2010), 292–306.
6 Roy L. Brooks, *When Sorry Isn't Enough: The Controversy over Apologies and Reparations for Human Injustice* (New York: New York University Press, 1999).
7 Michael Cunningham, "Saying Sorry: the Politics of Apology", *The Political Quarterly Publishing* 70, no. 3 (1999), 285–293; Berber Bevernage, "De hete adem van het verleden. Over het verleden dat niet voorbij wil gaan en het 'presence'-debat in de geschiedfilosofie", *BEG-CHTP* 18 (2007), 183–198; Berber Bevernage, "Time, presence, and historical injustice", *History and Theory* 47, no. 2 (2008), 149–167.

groups wanting to have justice to their collective memories and experiences of the past".[8] This idea of seeking social justice for historical violence and abuses is closely linked to the emergence of truth and reconciliation commissions, which have grown in prevalence as mainly non-Western, post-conflict and restorative human rights interventions that seek to repair damaged social fabric and often "constitute an opportunity for social work to contribute to the welfare of communities recovering from violence".[9] In this particular attempt to come to terms with the failure of painful past social welfare policies and to repair human injustices the number of apologies has continued to increase since the turn of the century.[10] However, several scholars have raised questions concerning this ambition, since it is not clear what societies are exactly apologising for and to whom the apology is addressed, how and when an apology should be issued, what the goal of such an apology is and how societies can proceed after the apology.[11] One important point of criticism is that an apology should never have the intent of marking the end of public debate, but should generate discussion on how historical injustices have meaning in present day.[12] Stamato pinpoints this as what an apology could be worth in the long run: "what seems to make public apologies matter, in the end, is where they lead, what they generate, what happens as a result of them".[13] Even though local authorities and societies are looking for ways to give the past a place in the present by issuing "an official apology", this practice potentially nullifies this ambition as an apology more often than not announces the end of the

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8 Jan Löfström. "Historical Apologies as Acts of Symbolic Inclusion—and Exclusion? Reflections on Institutional Apologies as Politics of Cultural Citizenship," *Citizenship Studies* 15, no. 1 (2011), 94.

9 David K. Androff, "Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRC's): An International Human Rights Intervention and Its Connection to Social Work", *British Journal of Social Work* 40, no. 6 (2010), 1960. See also Therese Sacco and Wilma Hoffmann, "Seeking Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa", *International Social Work* 47, no. 2 (2004), 157–167; Linda M. Kreitzer and Mary Kay You, "Social Work with Victims of Genocide: The Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) in Rwanda", *International Social Work* 53, no. 1 (2010), 73–86.

10 Gibney, *The age of apology*.

11 Bevernage, "De hete adem van het verleden"; Löfström, "Historical Apologies as Acts of Symbolic Inclusion—and Exclusion?"; Sköld, "Historical abuse: A contemporary issue"; Brian Roberts. *Biographical Research* (Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2002); Lieselot De Wilde, Griet Roets, and Bruno Vanobbergen, "Discovering Dimensions of Research Ethics in Doing Oral History: Going Public in the Case of the Ghent Orphanages", *Qualitative Research* 20, *no. 3* (2020), 294–306.

12 De Wilde, Roets, and Vanobbergen. "Discovering Dimensions of Research Ethics in Doing Oral History".

13 Linda Stamato, "Peace and the Culture and Politics of Apology", *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice* 20, no. 3 (2008), 397.

dialogue, discontent or controversy. Consequently, in many cases, an apology does little more than acknowledge nothing new.[14] In the words of Gibney,[15] states and private actors now offer apologies to groups and individuals in the hope that they can thereby "close" the memory of an incident.

States fail to translate this appeal from the past into an opportunity to reflect on present day social welfare issues. This refers to a key dilemma of the post-socialist era, according to Nancy Fraser who in 1995 already pointed out that: political activism strives for the recognition and rights of certain groups rather than aiming for the redistribution of resources in society. We therefore argue that this politic of apology should not only focus on what happened in the past but should also focus on the present and the future. So, in addition to finding ways to come to terms with the past, Western welfare states also need to be in search of opportunities and sites to keep the memory alive, to give history a place in the present. The major challenge here, for both academia and policy makers, is to make the past relevant for the present. As such, Ritchie emphasises that particularly life histories "have benefitted from a truly interactive methodology, from which they have learned to listen to conflicting opinions and to incorporate multiple viewpoints into their public presentations".[16] In this way, national inquiries should search for ways to raise the historical practices under scrutiny as questionable issues rather than neutral facts, to stimulate a reflexive process of humanisation in our societies on different levels.[17] For this reason, museums are often put forward as sites in which history can be made present by shedding light on histories hidden from history.

The current discourse in the international museum sector emphasises the importance of debate and controversy that goes beyond finding a balance in the different views or engage in "telling the good stories too" but courageous engagement with the difficult narratives.[18] To give voice to the hidden, nondominant stories. The Museum Doctor Guislain (Ghent, Belgium) has played, since its creation in 1986 a distinct and important role in the international scene of museums about the history of psychiatry. The museum is located in

14 Berber Bevernage, "Writing the Past Out of The Present: History and the Politics of Time in Transitional Justice", *History Workshop Journal* 69, no. 1 (2010), 111–131.

15 Gibney, *The Age of Apology*.

16 Donald A. Ritchie, "When History Goes Public: Recent Experiences in the United States", *Oral History* 29, no. 1 (2001), 92.

17 Griet Roets, Rudy Roose, and Maria Bouverne-De Bie, "Researching Child Poverty: Towards a Lifeworld Orientation," *Childhood-a global journal of child research* 20, no. 4 (2013): 535–549.

18 Adele Chynoweth et al., *Museums and Social Change: Challenging the Unhelpful Museum* (London and New York: Routledge, 2021).

the buildings of an adult psychiatry. There was a great deal of resistance against opening this piece of heritage to the public, certainly among those who worked in mental health care. The shame they felt for the past was so strong, their own history seemed to have some sort of taboo about it. Although the scope of the Museum Dr. Guislain has in time gone further than the history of psychiatry, the starting point for exhibitions and other activities has always remained questioning the distinction between normal and abnormal. This chapter explores the ways in which the Museum Dr. Guislain, and more specifically the exhibition 'Patch Places' (Pleisterplekken) reveals voices, narratives and data that are hidden and in doing that, rethink the museum. Drawing on first-hand experiences of practitioners and by zooming in on this contribution we draw attention to the significant contributions of museums in bringing about social change.

Making Voices Heard: The Memory Discourse

On April 22, 2014, the entire Flemish Parliament apologised at the address of all victims of historical violence and abuse in Flemish residential institutions in the period 1930 to 1990. In an open letter the Flemish Parliament publicly recognised the responsibility that society bears in this suffered grief. The statement declares that it "concerns the recognition of proven physical, psychological and sexual violence towards children and young people".[19] This Flemish public apology is by no means an isolated case, as abuses in the past have become a contemporary political issue in many countries.[20] This idea of seeking social justice for past wrongdoings is closely linked to the historical emergence of truth and reconciliation commissions, which can be considered as one of the most remarkable trends of the past decades in the attempt to pursue social justice.[21] Although several truth and reconciliation commissions existed previously in other developing countries, the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, assembled in the mid-1990s, is often cited as the most influential, because it brought abuses of certain individuals in the past

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19 The Newspaper, 22 April 2014, pp. 25–2. Mediahuis: Vilvoorde.

20 Sköld, "Historical Abuse: A Contemporary Issue".

21 Bevernage, "De hete adem van het verleden"; Androff, "Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRC's)".

to the centre of international attention.[22] Many authors[23] have referred to these re-nowned truth and reconciliation commissions, active around the globe since the end of the Second World War, to situate the origins of apologies for historical abuse. The truth and reconciliation commission phenomenon is considered a non-Western practice,[24] yet dealing with a painful past also became a high priority on many political agendas in the Western world. As it became clear during the Nazi war crime trials that the traditional legal system was lacking, the quest began for alternative forms of seeking social justice as many other nation states in the West became convinced about "the idea that societies should redress injustices commit-ted long ago".[25] As Bevernage asserted, "policymakers truly feel the hot breath of the past in their neck as civil society forces them to make an official apology, give symbolic or less symbolic reparation fees or establish truth commissions".[26]

These Western versions of the truth and reconciliation commissions are pri-marily based on oral testimonies and promote the exploration and manifestation of memory as an alternative form of justice.[27] They seem to offer an alternative, often restorative, way of seeking social justice, by offering a compromise between forgiveness or punishment and between forgetting or remembering.[28] Thus, these inquiries do not seek to sentence or punish the perpetrators, they instead offer an official and public "truth-telling" about historical injustice, which is beyond forgiveness.[29] This close collaboration between historical research and politics is reflected within the concept of "a politic of apology"[30] or "a politic of regret".[31] This concept has been framed as a global project in which regret,

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22 Gibney, *The Age of Apology;* Priscilla B. Hayner, *Unspeakable Truths: Transitional Justice and the Challenge of Truth Commissions* (Routledge: New York, 2010).

23 Daly, "Conceptualising Responses to Institutional Abuse of Children"; Sköld, "Historical Abuse: A Contemporary Issue".

24 Gibney, *The Age of Apology.*

25 Katrina M. Wyman, "Is There a Moral Justification for Redressing Historical Injustices?", *Vanderbilt Law Review* 61, no. 1 (2008), 128.

26 Bevernage, "De hete adem van het verleden", 184.

27 Bevernage, "De hete adem van het verleden"; Gibney, *The Age of Apology.*

28 Bevernage, "De hete adem van het verleden"; Androff, 'Truth and Reconciliation Commis-sions (TRC's)'; Kreitzer and Kay You, "Social Work with Victims of Genocide".

29 Bevernage, "Writing the Past out of the Present"; Powell, et al., "The Irish Charity Myth, Child Abuse and Human Rights".

30 Gibney, *The Age of Apology.*

31 Jeffrey Olick, *The Politics of Regret: On Collective Memory and Historical Responsibility* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

apology and redress are central as a way of taking responsibility for the past.[32] All these developments led to (previously) "voiceless" groups getting a voice through social activists who, since the late twentieth century, started to demand attention for those who suffered violence and inequality but did not speak up for themselves.[33] In fact, "indigenous peoples all over the world also began to assert their rights and demand acknowledgement of, and apology for, their past mistreatment".[34] By the end of the previous century giving an official apology for historical injustice, as a way to acknowledge the suffering of various groups (of victims) had become a widespread practice.

Making Up for the Past: When Saying Sorry Isn't Enough

We have shown that the prevailing contemporary way to recognise or acknowledge historical abuse of any kind is principally shaped through an apology. As Sköld ascertains in her overviewing article on historical abuse "the many quotes of the different inquiries, illustrate that the content of such investigations is based on compilations of traumatic memories and the informants descriptions of abuse in different countries have a great deal in common".[35] However, many different interpretations and comprehensions of "apologies" are in circulation, much has to do with the lack of a consistent definition of the significance, procedure and content of an official apology and the fact that this practice is relatively new and under-exposed in scientific research. As Thompson puts it: "there is no agreement on what a political apology means, whether it is meaningful at all, when it should be offered, whether it is possible or appropriate to apologize for injustice of the more distant past, whether offering political apologies is an adequate way of dealing with injustices, and what relation they have to reparative justice".[36] As a result, most theoretical definitions

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32 Brooks, *"When Sorry isn't Enough"*; Philip Seaton, "Reporting the 'Comfort Women' Issue, 1991–1992: Japan's Contested War Memories in the National Press", *Japanese Studies* 26, no. 1 (2006): 99–112; Johanna Sköld, "Apology Politics: Transnational Features", in *Apologies and the Legacy of Abuse of Children in 'Care' International Perspectives,* eds. Johanna Sköld and Shurlee Swain (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 13–27.

33 Gibney, *The Age of Apology,* 3.

34 Ibid, 3.

35 Sköld, "Historical Abuse: A Contemporary Issue", 3.

36 Janna Thompson, "Apology, Justice, and Respect: A Critical Defense of Apology," in *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past*, eds. Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-

primarily focus on what an apology may consist of. As Stamato showed: "An apology can acknowledge that an injury or damage has occurred. It may include acceptance of responsibility for the mistake; recognize regret, humility or remorse in the language one chooses; explain the role one has played; ask for forgiveness; include a credible commitment to change or promise that the act will not occur again; and often, tender some form of restitution or compensation".[37] Based on Barkan's definition of an apology,[38] Löfström proposed a refined description for "apologising" in the context of coming to terms with the past: "it is a process where the claimants demand recognition of the experiences and memories of loss and pain that are formative of their collective identity and their own history".[39] Here it is highlighted that apologising is actually a process-based practice, with a clear ambition to give recognition both on a collective and an individual level.[40]

In line with Ignatieff, who formulated some fundamental doubts about the reconciliation and healing potential of telling "the" historical truth, we plea for a nuanced interpretation of "the past" that goes beyond the "truth logic" that is at stake within the politics of apology.[41] In this vein, Butler and Drakeford stressed that "the report is only one record of event".[42] It is, however, equally important that policymakers and researchers take a stance on tackling the failures of the social welfare system in the past, especially on a collective level. One universal expressed element in the collected testimonies seems to be "the need for recognition". In the Flemish report composed by the expert panel "recognition" is identified as "what the victims are in need of the most".[43] The Australian report connects the need for recognition to the notion of responsibility because: "responsibility for past abuse and neglect and the development of measures of reparations go to the heart of the

Marc Coicaud, and Niklaus Steiner (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 31–44.

37 Stamato, "Peace and the Culture and Politics of Apology", 389.

38 Elazar Barkan, "Introduction: Historians and Historical Reconciliation", *American Historical Review* 114, no. 4 (2009), 899–913.

39 Löfström, "Historical Apologies as Acts of Symbolic Inclusion—and Exclusion?", 94.

40 See also Smart, "Reconsidering the Recent History of Child Sexual Abuse".

41 Michael Ignatieff, "Articles of faith", *Index on Censorship* 5 (1996), 110–122.

42 Ian Butler and Mark Drakeford, *Social Policy, Social Welfare and Scandal: How British Public Policy is Made* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 4.

43 FR Flemish Report, *'Ondubbelzinnig kiezen voor erkenning' – Historisch geweld en misbruik in jeugd- en onderwijsinstellingen in Vlaanderen.* [An unambiguous choice for recognition: historical violence and abuse in child welfare and educational public services in Flanders] *Analyse en beleidsaanbevelingen.* Eindrapport expertenpanel. 9 december, 2013, 38.

concerns of victims of institutional abuse".[44] In Ireland the report of the Laffoy commission states in this regard: "It is important for the alleviation of the effects of childhood abuse that the State's formal recognition of the abuse that occurred".[45] The present-day method to recognise or acknowledge historical abuse of any kind principally gets shaped through an apology. In other words, the outcome within the politics of apology logic, being an official apology, is only one interpretation of how recognition can take form, which may possibly not meet the needs or wishes of all claimants or saying sorry is simple not enough. But more importantly for this contribution is the fact that, by publicly apologizing for the past Western societies as a matter of fact state that "the past" is not gone, on the contrary these societies acknowledge that "the past" is on some level still existing in present-day. This desire for presence in fact becomes most clear in the current societal attention towards the past in the spirit of memory, remembrance and nostalgia.[46] The ambiguous presence of the past has become the last decennia one of the major contemporary international political issues[47] and subsequently found its way to the research domain of history.

Within the traditional conception of the past, it is practically impossible for the historiography to contribute to the quest for justice.[48] According to Bevernage, this will only become possible if we should first leave behind the dichotomy between absent and present. In this way time becomes something that is reversible.[49] In this conceptualisation of time, it is possible for the past to be simultaneously present and absent,[50] which leads in Bevernage's view to a sharper image of the ethical dimension of history. Bevernage points towards this specific approach of history by what he calls a modern historical discourse.[51] Under the influence of various appeals by victims of historical injustice and their heirs claiming that the past is not death, historians slowly began

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44 The Senate Community Affairs References Committee, *Forgotten Australians: A Report on Australians who Experienced Institutional or Out-of-home Care as Children* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2004), 171.

45 Ryan Report, *Report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse: Implementation Plan* (Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Department of Health and Children, The Stationery Office, 2009), 22.

46 Jacques Bos, "Presence als nieuw geschiedtheoretisch paradigm?", *Krisis. Tijdschrift voor actuele filosofie* 1 (2010), 11–21, 14.

47 Bevernage, "De hete adem van het verleden", 184.

48 Bos, "Presence als nieuw geschiedtheoretisch paradigm?".

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

51 Berber Bevernage, *"'We Victims and Survivors Declare the Past to Be in the Present.' Time, Historical (In)justice and the Irrevocable"* (Ghent: University of Ghent, 2009).

to take the presence of the past more and more serious.[52] The assumption that the past is absent or is at a distance[53] from the present seemed no longer tenable. But even though historians gradually became aware of the "presence phenomena", it lacked the theory of history for a long time of an appropriate paradigm to approach the presence of the past idea.[54] In recent years several different approaches have turned up with the common project to rethink our relation with the past, in order to make the past present again.[55] In 2006, the Dutch philosopher of history, Eeclo Runia, introduced in this respect the notion "presence" which has first and foremost to do with the way the past can be present in present-day.[56]

In the scope of this chapter it is not possible to work out the "presence (paradigm)" in detail, but Eelco Runia puts forward one idea that is particularly interesting for our account because we want to think about ways to make the past relevant for the present. We want to look for a road that is not in search of the truth and not heading towards closing the memory but one that captures the ambiguities, opens up the dialogue and the limits of the quest for recognition. Runia puts forward the idea that it is ultimately not "meaning" we are looking for, but "presence". According to Runia the term "presence" can in this way break open a classical historiographical question, the problem of continuity and discontinuity.[57] Through thinking about the past in terms of presence – of the past in the present- rather than in terms of meaning we should be able to do justice to the phenomenon of discontinuity: "In order to come to grips with discontinuity we have to focus not on the past but on the present, not on history as what is irremediably gone, but on history as ongoing process".[58] If we embrace the idea that historical representations cannot simply be true or false but should be considered as proposals to review historical realities in a certain light,[59] raising a multiplicity of interpretative repertoires by giving the past a place in the present through various ways is pivotal. In that sense, Lather argues for dialogical representational practices, that reside in contradictory and

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52 Bevernage, "De hete adem van het verleden".

53 Bevernage, "We victims and survivors declare the past to be in the present."

54 Bevernage, "De hete adem van het verleden", 185.

55 Froeyman, "Frank Ankersmit and Eelco Runia".

56 Bos, "Presence als nieuw geschiedtheoretisch paradigm?".

57 Ibid.

58 Eelco Runia. "Presence", *History and Theory* 45, no. 1 (2006), 8.

59 Froeyman, "Frank Ankersmit and Eelco Runia".

constantly shifting and changing interpretations between the researcher, the research subjects, policy and practice.[60]

Making the Unspeakable Visible:
Cultural Imaginary

In the aftermath of the Flemish apology and the end report of the inquiry commission the exhibition 'Patch Places: between romance and trauma' came about. The inquiry commission recommended in its report *Choosing unambiguously for acknowledgment*[61] to give public recognition to the experiences of the former residents. This recommendation was taken up by the Museum Dr. Guislain and resulted in an exhibition about growing up in youth welfare institutions in 2014. This Ghentian Museum questions the boundaries between normal and abnormal by exhibiting past and present issues concerning mental health. More than thirty years after the opening of the museum, this ambition still stands as the museum aims to exhibit well-known as well as underreported themes and social debates. As a result of the growing of public interest and the acknowledge the museum earned in past years, the scope of interest of the museum also changed and became broader then psychiatric and mental health related issues. In recent years the museum put up exhibitions on (forced) adoption, addiction, psychiatric diseases as anxiety and depression, Internment, and so on. In preparing this exhibition on the history of youth welfare institutions the museum worked together with a steering committee. The steering committee of Patch Places consisted of experts, academia, policymakers, practitioners and other interest groups, who met on a regularly basis to explore the content of the theme, to identify sensitive issues and to discuss the selection of visual material. The goal of the steering committee was striving for polyphony, urging the museum to listen and to hear different voices and perspectives concerning the often sensitive and emotional themes they're exploring.

For a museum on psychiatry that is housed in the buildings of an old asylum and surrounded by a working psychiatric hospital and a school for psychiatric

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60 Patti Lather, "Against Empathy, Voice and Authenticity", in *Voice in Qualitative Inquiry: Challenging Conventional, Interpretive, and Critical Conceptions in Qualitative Research*, eds. Alecia Y. Jackson A and Lisa A. Mazzei (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), 17–26.
61 Ondubbelzinnig kiezen voor erkenning. Historisch geweld en misbruik in jeugd- en onderwijsinstellingen in Vlaanderen analyse, duiding en beleidsaanbevelingen. Eindrapport experten-panel 9 december 2013.

nursing, engaged voices are everywhere. There are also the voices of the visitors of the building: a constant mix of individual museum visitors, schools, groups, caregivers, caretakers of the hospital and their family. The plurality of all these involved voices can be heard best concerning the permanent presentation on the history of psychiatry. A permanent presentation of collection items can never be endless. On the contrary, a collection is only possible by means of careful preservation and by a fixed time of exposure to light. Every few years this permanent presentation undergoes a complete shift where all these voices are heard and the modifications are a returning point for discussion.

The process of including multiple voices is anything but easy as the conversations with stakeholders and experts by experience are often emotionally charged and the stories very divergent. They all want to see their perspectives and interests represented and displayed in the exhibition. In this sense, raising a multiplicity of interpretative repertoires, implies a risk of getting lost in translation with stakeholders, visitors, policy and practice while interpreting and representing layered and ambiguous findings. Nevertheless, in the course of interpreting and representing the research findings as a multiplicity of interpretable issues to different audiences, the museum embraces this ambiguity as an opportunity.[62] This quest is illustrated in the choice for the title of the project: Patch Places. 'Patch Places' sounds warm and refers to a resting place, an intermediate stop in life, but at the same time it also refers to a plaster for the wound, the place that remains if you have severe scars. In that sense, the title attempts to encompasses both the romance and the trauma associated with (a stay in) child and youth welfare institutions. Juvenile institutions provide care and protection, but can also leave deep wounds.

'Patch Places' showed both romantic images of children and education, the scientific-pedagogical approach of institutions and the current attention for youngsters and trauma. The curatorial narrative is an important recipe of the museum. The themes of the exhibitions unfold their complexity through a more or less historical narrative with a building up of images and theoretical frameworks. The exhibition started with the romantic and optimistic image of children in a family context. Unconcerned, loving, a place to call home: it showed the classic family as the ideal environment to grow up in. However, what if that family does not at all meet the expectations that society imposes in terms of hygiene, warmth and security. Intervention of the state then seems in place. The legislation on child protection (1912) and youth protection (1965) made interventions possible and sensible. "The best interest of the child" gavegovernments an argument to

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62 Roets, Roose, and Bouverne-De Bie, "Researching Child Poverty".

intervene when the child is in a problematic educational situation or when the minor themself causes problems. Youth institutions took over the idealised role of the family and were sometimes the only solution to provide a protective educational environment. However, what if the institution also fails? 'Patch Places' shows the developments in the history of youth care, with attention to both the efforts and the dark pages, the ideals as opposed to the sometimes bitter experiences. The "normal" child counts as the standard, children who deviate from the social standard are problematized, labelled and corrected. In the 1960s the optimistic faith in the institution was broken. The idea of feasibility through discipline is questioned by the broad anti-cultural movement. Schools, psychiatric institutions and prisons are criticised, but also special youth care is scrutinised. There is more attention to 'institutional' and other violence and abuse. The defective material circumstances in which youth institutions 'must' function, are being charged.

Throughout the history of feasibility ideals and the translation in pedagogical regimes, trauma is gaining a more distinct shape through real stories and scandals. A collective sensitivity is growing in which shame and astonishment are strongly present. The White March during the Dutroux period (1996) and the sexual abuse in the Catholic Church, particular for the Flemish context stirred up sensitivity to the notion of 'trauma'. In this context, the importance of testimonies cannot be overrated. When victims are not heard or are not believed, the impact of the trauma is intensified. The Museum Dr. Guislain has built up their curatorial practices on the foundations laid by the famous museum director and curator Harald Szeemann. This Swiss curator became world-wide famous for his version of Documenta. In international exhibitions as *Visionary Belgium* or *Grandfather: A Pioneer Like* Us, he incorporated contemporary art as well as cultural heritage, science and popular culture into a fascinating and disturbing narrative. The Ghentian Museum has a long history in presenting several media in an exhibition. Other than focusing on the question what art is, the museum aims full attention of visitors to the disturbing or underreported debates. By means of paintings, historical photographs and postcards, contemporary art, film fragments and original testimonies "Patch Places. Between romance and trauma" draws a versatile image of the history of educational ideals, youth institutions and children's rights. "Patch Places" wanted to highlight this tension through pedagogical paradoxes that characterise life in an institution. The exhibition questions the obviousness of institutional problem constructions through which people learn to accept social injustice, by which the "unquestioned" becomes "questionable". In that vein, as Schuyt asserts, the researcher's interpretation might create conflict between existing, taken-for-granted institutional and the suggested non-institutional problem definitions since " . . . the interpreted problem constructions of the relationship between the individual and society can

vary blatantly . . . [as] non-institutional phenomena stem from radically different perceptions of reality, they obey quite different rules of action from those underlying the existing social order".[63]

This implies that knowledge claims resulting from (oral) history research can be presented as questionable issues rather than neutral facts to stimulate a process of humanisation, which can be read in multiple ways by the different actors involved. To grasp the difference in interpretations or to capture the different visitor's experiences, the steering committee considered it pivotal to give visitors the opportunity to share their experiences, emotions and thoughts, with the idea that these data in turn could inspire future research and result in possible adjustments to the exhibition. At the end of the exhibition, visitors had the chance to leave a (anonymous) written message. A total of 94 responses were written down by the visitors. Most of the responses consist of short texts about how they experienced the exhibition, but there were also six drawings found in the book. The visitors most often reported their emotions in response to the stories told in the exhibition. Feelings of inspiration, confrontation and inspiration were described, but above all, the visitors indicated that they were "moved" by everything they saw and heard during the tour.

> The worst thing you can do to someone is that he / she has to be and remain invisible. This is no longer necessary from now on. Thanks. Thanks also for the apologies. It all doesn't seem like much, but it's super important and a start where without an apology there is no cure.

Nine entries, as the quote above, in the book turned out to be testimonies of children (7) who spend their childhood in residential care and the two other testimonies were reported by former educators. In that vein, the guestbook of 'Patch Places' turned out to give the museum and steering committee a unique insight in the mind of visitors.

> The beginning of an 'ending story' if possible. Historical abuse, indeed an item that needs to be addressed. However, it is still happening now and that is the next job . . .

The quote, from the guestbook illustrates how the exhibition on the history of youth welfare institutions serves as a bridge between the past and the present, with an eye on the future. In this approach, the museum recognised that "interpretation should be attentive to inconsistency and ambiguities in stories rather than assuming one story and a simple receptiveness of the audience".[64] In this

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63 Kees Schuyt, *Recht, Orde en Burgerlijke Ongehoorzaamheid* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1972), 25.
64 Roberts, *Biographical Research, 7.*

sense the museum Dr. Guislain does not look at history in terms of evolution or progress but considers histories as a collective learning process by questioning the ambivalent ontological status of the presence or non-absent past.

As a result, this specific history became a theme in the new presentation of the collection of the Museum in 2019. "Patch Places" proved to be not only a temporary exhibition, but the voices heard were included in the new perspectives of the museum in *Unhinged*. The exhibition not only gave insight in existing but unknown archival material, institutional archives and photography that were included in the new permanent exhibition. It also strengthened the idea of the museum of broadening the story on institutional care outside the psychiatric world and including the evolution of child and youth institutes in this presentation.

Making History: An Ongoing Process

As history cannot be considered a closed chapter, contemporary Western societies struggle with the question of how they can come to terms with their (dark) past.[65] In recent years several attempts have been made through public inquiries and public apologies to "make up for the past". However, these initiatives mainly (1) focus on the pain suffered, (2) try to avoid making the same mistakes again and (3) create one common story of history. If we embrace the idea that historical representations cannot simply be true or false but should be considered as proposals to review historical realities in a certain light,[66] raising a multiplicity of interpretative repertoires by giving the past a place in the present through various ways is pivotal. As Riessman puts it, in "the 'truths' of narrative accounts lie not in their faithful representation of a past world, but in the shifting connections they forge between past, present, and future".[67] In our view, in addition to finding ways to come to terms with the past, Western

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65 Lieselot De Wilde, *Between the Past and the Present. Government Interventions and Children in Residential Care. A Never Ending Contested Space? The Case of the Orphanages of the City of Ghent* (Ghent: Ghent University, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, 2015); Lieselot De Wilde, Griet Roets, and Bruno Vanobbergen, "Challenging the Normative Truth Logic in the Politics of Apology: A Quest for Recognition", *British Journal of Social Work* 49, *no. 3* (2019), 653–669.

66 Froeyman, "Frank Ankersmit and Eelco Runia".

67 Catherine K. Riessman, "Analysis of Personal Narratives," in *The SAGE Handbook of Interview Research. The Complexity of the Craft*, eds. Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2001), 705.

welfare states should seize this memory momentum as an opportunity to reflect on current practices and policies while being inspired by the past.

The major challenge for both academia and policy makers is to make the past relevant for the present. One way to engage in this quest is by visualizing or exhibiting the past. This entails a fundamental change in the way we commonly conceptualise testimonies: a shift from "the truth" to "their truths". In which we do not turn to memories and testimonies in search of the truth, but attempt to capture the meaning of historical narratives today. In this way, the Museum Dr. Guislain's emphasises and discusses the ambiguity of remembering the past, rather than re-presenting the past. The starting point of the exhibition 'Patch Places' therefore lies in questioning the thin line between normality and abnormality. And who's voices can be heard? The exhibition draws attention to the evolution and influence of power relations in care settings and tries to grasp the many labels that are a help as well as a hindrance. It brings the mind-body debate to the fore and shows how imagination gives perspective and makes the unspeakable visible. Since the visiting audience in turn interprets the material and the stories presented in the exhibition and gives it back to the guestbook and the public debate. In other words, the audience puts a mirror in front of the past which the museum tries to gain insight into through the guestbook. In order to evaluate the exhibition in this way, but even more so to continue working on the process that is history.

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Iveta Kestere and Arnis Strazdins

Between Nostalgia and Trauma: Representation of Soviet Childhood in the Museums of Latvia

Abstract: To analyse and reveal the representation of Soviet childhood in museums of Latvia, we formulated three research questions: (1) Which museum materialities in the post-Soviet space can be considered symbols of the Soviet era, i.e, representations of childhood under the Soviet dictatorship? (2) Who and how constructs and tells the stories of museum exhibits? (3) How do historians of education put into perspective the stories told by materialities exhibited in the public space? In 2019, an electronic survey was conducted in 100 Latvian museums and, based on the list of material objects compiled and commented by 46 respondents, we constructed and interpreted three Soviet-era childhood narratives, namely: (1) the ordinary childhood represented by traditional childhood attributes; (2) the ideologized childhood represented by the symbolism of communist youth organizations; and (3) the hidden childhood, represented by museum exhibits, where a meaning that in Soviet times was understood only by the inner circle or "insiders" is encoded. The stories of Soviet childhood in today's public space are mediated, firstly, through biographies of things and, secondly, through memories, feelings and attitudes that things provoke and awaken. The museums of Latvia are impartial in their story of Soviet childhood, and tell it emphasizing its educational function, leaving the search for different identities, assessment and discovery of contradictions to the visitors themselves.

Keywords: childhood, museum, materialities, Soviet Latvia

Introduction

The Soviet Union collapsed and became history overnight, and even more so, a completely different history. Today, to understand life in the Soviet Union is as difficult as to understand life in the 19th century, even though generations who

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grew up and were educated in the Soviet Union are still very much part of society.

The past and the present are bridged by material things, by objects around which human relationships unfold and the individual and social ties are built across space and time. Thus, many Soviet artefacts have started[1] their "new" or "afterlife" in museums, becoming keepers and narrators of the Soviet story in today's public space. The museum story of Soviet childhood is not plain and simple but complicated as it brings together and sets apart memories, emotions and knowledge currently circulating in Latvian society, and discloses the value of life in democracy.

The questions of our research are the following: (1) Which museums materialities in the post-Soviet space can be considered symbols of the Soviet era, i.e, representations of childhood under the Soviet dictatorship? (2) Who and how constructs and tells the stories of museum exhibits? (3) How do historians of education perspectivise the stories told by materialities exhibited in the public space? In order to find answers to the raised questions, we "gave the floor" to historians of education and museologists, museum staff and ourselves as witnesses to the Soviet era.

At the end of 2019, we prepared and sent out an electronic questionnaire to 100 Latvian museums of different genres (history, art, cultural history, local history, memorial and school museums). Several mixed-type questions were formulated to determine what story of childhood during the Soviet dictatorship between 1940 and 1941 and between World War II and 1991 the museums offer. In the questionnaire, the term 'childhood' was understood as the stage of a person's life up to the age of maturity, i.e. 18.

It must be admitted that the responses of the museums were modest; after sending out the questionnaire repeatedly, we received responses from 46 museums. However, the body of the respondents was diverse in terms of both, the average number of visits per year, ranging from 300 to 102,000 people, and the geographical representation, covering the entire territory of Latvia with the largest number of museum-respondents in Riga and its vicinity (32.6%). Most of the respondents (70.0%) admitted that during the last five years their permanent or temporary exhibitions addressed the topic of Soviet childhood. The staff of these museums reflected on artefacts that represent Soviet childhood and shared their

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1 Ivan Gaskell, "History of Things," in Debating New Approaches to History, ed. Marek Tamm and Peter Burke (London, New York, Oxford, New Delhi, Sydney: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 218; Andrew Jones, "Memory and Material Culture?," in Andrew Jones, Memory and Material Culture:? Topics in Contemporary Archaeology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3, accessed September 30, 2020. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511619229.002.

opinion about the story, which they think these artefacts tell. We contextualised the respondents' answers by framing them by the educational history and museology discourse. The interpretation of Soviet childhood was inevitably conditioned by our personal experience. I, Iveta Kestere, was born in Soviet Latvia and the items that currently make up museum collections were part of my childhood. I, Arnis Strazdins, was born in independent Latvia and work at the National History Museum of Latvia, which also has exhibits related to Soviet childhood. We are aware of the "sin" of our subjectivity, however, as we study recent history, we are reminded over and over again that nothing in history is neutral and that everything is constantly negotiated. Subjectivity makes an unavoidable part of the historical study.[2]

Ordinary Childhood: The School Desk

As everywhere else in the world, in the Soviet Union, children attended school. 22.2% of the materialities that represent Soviet childhood in Latvian museums are related to education; on display there are school desks, school uniforms, textbooks, notebooks, stationery, school bags, reports, diplomas, certificates of merit, school tour descriptions. These exhibits confirm the above mentioned, namely, that things, through temporal ties, establish patterns of human relations, but we want to emphasize that things also set ties between political systems. When, on September 1, 1940, Latvian pupils came to school, due to the Soviet occupation the independent Latvian nation-state had ceased to exist and Latvia had been included in the Soviet Empire as one of the 15 illusorily independent Soviet Republics. In 1941, the Nazi occupation succeeded the Soviet occupation, to be replaced in 1944/1945 by the Soviet dictatorship, which would last till 1991.

During the 20th century, we can count at least four times when the state political system, ideology and requirements for formal education in Latvia changed completely. While behind school windows troops succeeded troops, tanks drove by, demonstrations took place, monuments got demolished, a different state was built, democracy was replaced by dictatorship and dictatorship was replaced by democracy, the classroom "preserved" its school desks, bookcases, a

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2 Vita Fortunati and Elena Lamberti, "Cultural Memory: An European Perspective," in *Cultural Memory Studies. An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 129; Ericka L. Tucke, "The Subject of History: Historical Subjectivity and Historical Science," *Journal of the Philosophy of History* 7 (2013): 205–229.

blackboard and a teacher's desk, all of which were accommodated only to respective medical, hygiene and design discourses of the time.[3] The classroom "landscape's" basic function however remained untouched, and it was to create a stable infrastructure for the educational process that would stand over time and political systems.

The school desk is an obligatory item in the school stock of museums. Analysing the school desk as a cultural heritage, Depaepe, Simon and Verstraete argue that the desk has become a metaphor, icon and essence of school material culture.[4] The school desk is, as Jones maintains, "knitting societies together"[5] – children of all nationalities, social groups and genders have to take their seats at classroom desks.

Although the school desk "comes" to museums from the Soviet times, it has no stamp of political ideology. It is an accommodating exhibit, as it symbolizes the reality of the school that exists across ages, generations and borders. The school desk is familiar to everyone. A metonymy for school practice, the school desk is also an accommodating exhibit, as it provides substance for a broad, varied and personalized interpretation. It can evoke "nostalgic images of the past engraved in the collective memory,"[6] that in turn becomes a great tool for Foucault's followers to illustrate disciplining and normalization experienced at school. Visitors are attracted to the school desk, it does not leave anyone indifferent, and it can also be used in museum activities, infusing this object with vitality and dynamism. Here the Latvian saying "sit at the school desk again" can be understood both figuratively, as starting to acquire new knowledge, and directly, as taking a place at a desk and thus virtually returning to school to "the good old days," and lingering in the memories of one's youth and childhood.[7]

And yet, the school desk can be touched! It is such a solid exhibit that it cannot be damaged by a visitor's touch. More than that, it can be "bodily sensed" by

3 Frederik Herman, Angelo Van Gorp, Frank Simon and Marc Depaepe, "The School Desk: From Concept to Object," *History of Education: Journal of the History of Education Society* 40 no.1 (2011): 97–117.

4 Marc Depaepe, Frank Simon and Pieter Verstraete, "Valorising the Cultural Heritage of the School Desk Through Historical Research," in *Educational Research: Material Culture and Its Representation*, ed. Paul Smeyers and Marc Depaepe (Cham/Heidelberg/New York/Dordrecht & London: Springer, 2014), 1, 8.

5 Jones, "Memory and Material Culture?" 6.

6 Depaepe, Simon and Verstraete, "Valorising the Cultural Heritage," 7.

7 See Marc Depaepe and Frank Simon, "Sources in the Making of Histories of Education: Proofs, Arguments, and Other Reasonings from the Historian's Workplace," in *Educational Research: Proofs, Arguments, and Other Reasonings*, ed. Paul Smeyers and Marc Depaepe (Dordrecht: Springer, 2009), 10.

taking the usual position at the desk, the position our body remembers so well from all those years at school. The school desk perfectly satisfies a specific need arising in museums, the need named by Gaskell as "the sense of touch."[8] Apparently, "[p]eople generally want to touch the things they are examining. . . . Some items are seemingly irresistible."[9]

However, it must be acknowledged that observing the use of the school desk in museum practice leads to the conclusion that museum staff, who are usually so creative in their expressions, suddenly lose their imagination and fall into the trap of stereotypes and simplified representation of schooling. By and large, the researchers of the school desk biography maintain that the school desk is predominantly depicted and understood as "a piece of furniture to sit and work at."[10] Other functions of the school desk are forgotten, such as the school desk as an object of design, production and sales, as gymnastic equipment[11] and the common "place of residence" of two (usually) pupils in the classroom, where the dramas of their relationship evolve.

However, in one way or another, the school desk can offer a lesson in history, and this educational function of the museum is so passionately defended by our respondents, with 28.0% of them admitting that they want to "show modern youth objects those have never seen" or give material for comparing Soviet childhood with the childhood of today. Thus, in Latvia, too, "museum visiting is primarily about learning,"[12] which is most often understood as an illustration of historical facts taught at school through materialities of schooling. Museum exhibits make history material and offer various methodologies for its learning. The museum allows us to learn historical narratives in a more relaxed atmosphere. Museum environment is not subject to strict rules as schools are, so learning takes place there as if unconsciously,[13] which is a positive aspect. Exhibited in museums, the school desk of the Soviet era is politically neutral, and can be easily woven in a childhood story that suits any taste and political belief.

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8 Ivan Gaskell, "The Life of Things," in *The International Handbook of Museum Studies: Museum Media*, ed. Sharon Macdonald and Helen Rees Leahy (Oxford: John Wiley, 2015), 10.

9 Gaskell, "The Life of Things," 12.

10 Frederik Herman, "Iconography and Materiality," in Handbook of Historical Studies in Education. Debates, Tensions, and Directions, ed. Tanya Fitzgerald (Singapore: Springer, 2020), 331.

11 Herman, Van Gorp, Simon and Depaepe, "The School Desk," 98–99; Herman, "Iconography," 331.

12 Laurajane Smith, "Theorizing Museum and Heritage Visiting," in *The International Handbooks of Museum Studies: Museum Theory*, 1st edition, ed. Andrea Witcomb and Kylie Message (Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 461.

13 Smith, "Theorizing Museum," 462.

Ideologized Childhood: The Red Scarf

17.5% of the exhibits representing Soviet childhood consist of items related to the communist children's and youth organizations "Little Octobrists", "Vladimir Lenin All-Union Young Pioneer Organization" (Young Pioneers) and the "All-Union Leninist Young Communist League" (Komsomol).

In 1940, immediately after the Soviet occupation of Latvia, there began the formation of Young Pioneer and Komsomol organizations, which were first created by the Bolsheviks in Soviet Russia in the 1920s and pronounced incubators for new generations of communists. Unofficially, Young Pioneers' activities followed the example of boy-scouts, with the only differences being that both girl and boy pioneers worked together, and the pioneer movement participated in propagating the state ideology.

If before World War II in Soviet Latvia only a small number of children agreed to become Pioneers, then after the war the organization already acted on a large scale,[14] and it became self-evident that every Latvian pupil was either a Young Pioneer or a young communist. Non-applying to the communist youth organizations as a form of protest or non-admission there as a punishment for bad behaviour and/or poor performance meant serious difficulties on the path to education and in building a career. Soviet childhood was closely "tied" to Young Pioneers and Komsomol, they were an integral part of Soviet childhood, and therefore their rich symbolism can be found in the exposition or collection of every museum containing a special story of the life of Soviet children. Museum's collections store such items as pioneer scarves, horns, drums, pioneer dress uniform, young communist badges, organization flags, and documentation of pioneer groups. Photographs depict the admission to Octobrists and Young Pioneers, audio recordings feature stories about life in pioneer camps and pioneer songs.

The most common museum exhibit, which can be called a cliché of the life of Soviet children, is the red pioneer scarf. This scarf was tied around the neck of every Soviet pupil at the age of 10, and it had to be worn at school until the age of 14, up to the admission to the Komsomol. Day by day, the red scarf demonstrated belonging to the Pioneers and reminded of the fundamental ideas of this organization: "Every Pioneer wears a part of the red flag – the red scarf – around their neck. . . . The red scarf symbolizes the succession and unity of the

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14 Irena Stonkuviene, Maria Tilk, and Iveta Ķestere, "Children and Youth Organizations," in *History of Pedagogy and Educational Sciences in the Baltic Countries from 1940 to 1990: an Overview*, ed. Iveta Ķestere and Aīda Krūze (Riga: RaKa, 2013), 113.

three generations – Pioneers, Komsomol and communists . . . It obliges every Pioneer to defend and continue communist struggle and labour, to faithfully fulfil the precepts of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, to be fearless and courageous patriots of their homeland."[15]

The rules of communist youth organizations were the same across the vast and diverse Soviet Union. Similar ideologized youth organizations operated in other countries of the Soviet bloc, for example, in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Poland, etc. Everyone regardless of nationality, gender or social affiliation was admitted to the Pioneers. Therefore, similarly to the school desk, the canonized Pioneer scarf exhibited in the museum has a unique unifying function – it is not only a part of local history, it is a comprehensible symbol for several generations that grew up in Eastern Europe. The red scarf wakes up memories, and Soviet childhood becomes a special "place" that unites those who lived there and who still remember the silk of the scarf sliding through their fingers and a precise, square knot it had to be tied into. The common "sense of touch" contributes to building one more imagined community in Anderson's terms.[16]

However, even if the land of Soviet childhood is one, attitudes towards it in the post-Soviet space are different. There is no unchallenged representation of the collective past, and one memory discourse always excludes others.[17] Interpretations of the Soviet era cover a wide range, from traumatically negative to nostalgically romantic, which is well revealed in the answers of our respondents.

Nearly a quarter of respondents (24.6%) admit that museum expositions show the ideologization of Soviet childhood and assess it negatively: "shame for unconditional submission" and "negative memories of discipline in Pioneer camps." However, some respondents extensively described positive aspects of Soviet childhood, which were mentioned in 19.7% of the responses. Peeling off the ideology and humble conditions of life, the respondents admit that in communist youth organizations children learned to help the elderly, spent their free time usefully, had fun, their childhood was interesting, full of romance and adventure. Children learned companionship, helpfulness, a sense of responsibility, and respect. Both at school and home children were taught to take

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15 Jānis Bērziņš, Ausma Špona, and Olga Treskina, *Pionieru ceļvedis* [Pioneer Guide] (Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1989), 54.

16 See Craig Calhoun, "The Importance of Imaged Communities – and Benedict Anderson," *Annual Review* 1 (2016): 11–16.

17 Andreas Langenohl, "Memory in Post-Authoritarian Societies," in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008), 171.

learning and work seriously. Even discipline, negatively assessed by other re-
spondents, is acknowledged by one person as a benefit of youth organizations,
whereas another respondent believes that today "it is necessary to speak more
about the positive impact of Soviet children's organizations on society."

The continuous presence and popularity of the attributes of communist
youth organizations, including the red scarf, are paradoxical. These objects are
not "dead." On the contrary, through their popularity in museums, in post-
Soviet society these things have been reborn and continue to be active. They
have become objects of conflicting interpretations demonstrating different atti-
tudes to dictatorship and, therefore, democracy: positive assessment of the So-
viet era is often a protest against the "chaos" allegedly created by democracy,
the chaos being contrasted to order and predictability of the Soviet times.[18]

Hidden Childhood: The *Baiba* Doll

As elsewhere in the world, in the Soviet Union children played. Therefore, it is
not surprising that in museums, toys most often represent Soviet childhood
and account for 26.3% of all exhibited artifacts of the period. Museum collec-
tions include dolls, toy cars and trains, board games, rubber bands used for
play and inflatable toys. Among these traditional attributes of childhood also
Baiba the doll lives, an integral and a very special part of Soviet Latvian child-
hood. The doll is given a popular Latvian female name, it has a child's face,
blue eyes and long braided light hair. Baiba is dressed in a Latvian folk cos-
tume. The doll was mass-produced by the Latvian factory of electrical and me-
chanical household appliances, hardware and toys 'Straume'.

Baiba's life however was far from ordinary and simple as she was not taken
from top shelves of stores to be given for children's daily play, but was pre-
sented as a special gift at weddings, anniversaries, celebrating newborns and
other important events. Once Baiba reached her owners, she was placed on a
shelf behind the glass or seated on sofa pillows and became an object of little
Latvian girls' (including me, Iveta) yearning, the girls growing up in humble
circumstances and experiencing shortages of goods. Baiba was not for play,
she was for decoration. This special function of the doll was determined by sev-
eral circumstances. First, the doll was expensive – it cost 11 rubles. Secondly,

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18 Iveta Ķestere and Taņa Lāce, "Padomju skola: ieskats tās raksturojumā un vērtējumos"
[The Soviet School: Its Characteristics and Evaluations]. *Pedagoģija. Latvijas Universitātes rak-
sti* [Pedagogy. Proceedings of the University of Latvia] 670 (2004): 34–42.

Baiba was dressed in a Latvian folk costume, which traditionally served to demonstrate visual belonging to the ethnic community of Latvians. In the 20th century the use of folk costumes was widespread in Latvian life: they were worn at festivals and sometimes at school graduations; choirs sang and dance groups performed in folk costumes; concerts, family celebrations and weddings were attended wearing folk dress. The "life" of Latvian folk costume in the public space of Soviet Latvia was an important manifestation of ethnic identity directed against the inclusion of Latvians in the impersonal mass of Soviet people, the protest not really detected by Soviet censorship. In the eyes of the Soviet elite, Latvian folk costume was only a gorgeous ornament, which task was "to serve cosmetically to beautify aspects of power."[19] Latvians, on the other hand, had grown up with a history of folk costume which was passed down from generation to generation in their families. Since the Middle Ages national dress had been a proof of belonging to the lowest social strata – Latvians, who were mostly peasants. Latvian folk costume was not worn by gentry, who had never lacked in the land of Latvia. Consequently, Latvian folk costume became a code of belonging, a solidarity symbol of the "inner circle," which outsiders saw but did not apperceive.

Thus, Baiba, a beautifully dressed, clean and tidy daughter of Latvian people in the form of a doll, had become a hidden symbol of national belonging, a paragon of what "we", i.e. Latvians, had to be. A romanticized symbol of the past, Baiba was deprived of the doll's ordinary life and was not to be loved, embarrassed, changed into other clothes. The doll acquired a different identity: it was not a toy but a symbol through which children "learned the nation" with the teaching strategies described by Silova and Tröhler.[20] By the way, the Baiba doll is still made by hand in Latvia, and today its price is 200 euros, which could be considered almost the same as 11 rubles in Soviet times.

The discourse of hidden childhood is revealed by a small group of our respondents (9.8%) who believe that exhibits of Soviet childhood in their museums have a deeper meaning, that is, those objects demonstrate a strategy of preserving national identity and covert resistance under the authoritarian regime. For example, several respondents mention the Song and Dance Festival, which has

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19 James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), 52.

20 Iveta Silova, "Lessons in Everyday Nationhood: Childhood Memories of 'Breaching' the Nation," *Children's Geographies* (2019): 1–13, accessed August 28, 2020, doi: 10.1080/14733285.2019.16184440; Daniel Tröhler, "National Literacies, or Modern Education and the Art of Fabricating National Minds," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 52, no.5 (2020): 1–16, accessed August 28, 2020, doi: 10.1080/00220272.2020.1786727.

been held in Latvia since 1873 and has been gathering choirs from all over the country to sing Latvian songs. In the Soviet Union, Latvian and Estonian Song and Dance Festivals were allowed, but their repertoire was strictly censored and supplemented with Soviet propagandistic songs. However, the discourse of the oppressors always leaves a small space for the oppressed to express their interests,[21] and Latvian songs, recognized as "innocent" by the Soviet authorities, had a meaning that was understandable only to "insiders." Commenting on the participation of young people in the Song and Dance Festival, respondents point out that "there were songs that students sang with special pleasure . . . The festival brought up the singers who created the Singing Revolution." The Singing Revolution is the name of the liberation movement from the Soviet dictatorship. The respondents emphasize the preservation of Latvian folk traditions "despite Soviet ideology and prohibitions" and admit that the message they want to send through their museum exposition to the public space is of "outwardly inclusion in the system and internal protest."

Returning to Baiba, the unusual Soviet doll, it must be said that her life continues with dignity. From the shelves of the closet, clean and well kept, she has come to museums to represent a common doll of her time. Its secret story may be told by those who grew up in the public space of Soviet ideology and the private one of "their own." Without "the supporting message"[22] of its life story, Baiba is a beautiful but ordinary doll.

Conclusions and Discussion

Based on the list of material objects submitted and commented by the respondents, we constructed and interpreted three childhood narratives of the Soviet era in museums of Latvia, namely: (1) the ordinary childhood, represented by traditional childhood attributes such as school items and toys; (2) the ideologized childhood represented by the symbolism of communist youth organizations; and (3) the hidden childhood, represented by museum exhibits, where a meaning that in Soviet times was understood only by the inner circle or "insiders" is encoded. In museums, these three Soviet childhood narratives are constructed and conveyed, first, by biographies of objects and, second, by memories, with close interaction of the two.

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21 Scott, *Domination*, 18.
22 Depaepe and Simon, "Sources in the Making of Histories," 11.

Each museum exhibit raises a question, namely, where does the artifact come from and who made it? What has been its career so far?[23] The biography of things, like human life, can be very diverse; it can tell us about economies and technologies of the era, various uses of things, political context and the social position of the owner, political, social and cultural networks in which the objects are usually employed.[24] The biography of the thing is closely linked to the place where it was created and through which it has travelled. In museums, things are "framed,"[25] meaning that they are situated and defined in specific time and space. At the same time, people ascribe different meaning to things at different times and in different places.[26]

It is the Soviet political context that divides today's representations of Soviet childhood in museums into two categories. The first are those artifacts which biographies continue in today's world with adjustments brought by the demands of science, fashion, and technology of the age, for example, school desks and other teaching accessories, toys. In their turn, the artifacts belonging to Soviet ideology have ended their "real," originally assigned to them careers, but they continue to live as memory triggers. Objects from the lost, nowhere land retain their meaning and specific "power" in museums and constantly redefine it through knowledge and attitudes towards the Soviet era kept in the memory of different, often controversial, communities and expressed in the public space. Museum visitors make sense of the life of things, and things obtain and constantly change their immaterial aspects.[27] Things are objects "to think with."[28]

In museums, individual things become communal, unimportant – important. Artifacts of the Soviet era childhood are not unique; as witnesses to recent history, they can be found in modern homes, they are still around us, but the museum

23 Igor Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 66.

24 Gaskell, "History of Things," 222–224; Gaskell, "The Life of Things," 17; Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things," 68; Inés Dussel and Karin Priem, "The Visual in Histories of Education: A Reappraisal," *Paedagiogica Historica* 53, no. 6 (2017): 643–645; Sharon J. Macdonald, "Museums, National, Postnational and Transcultural Identities," *Museum and Society* 1, no. 1 (2003): 9; Tracy Ireland and Jane Lydon, "Rethinking Materiality, Memory and Identity," *Public History Review* 23 (2016): 2, accessed September 12, 2020, doi: 10.5130/phrj.v23i0.5333.

25 Antonio Novoa, *Remembering or Imagining?* (2004), accessed September 12, 2020, http://hdl.handle.net/10451/672, 3.

26 Ivan Gaskell, "History of Things," 221.

27 Gaskell, "History of Things," 221; Gaskell, "The Life of Things," 3.

28 Dussel and Priem, "The Visual," 646.

keeps questioning and changing their meanings. In museums, through the memories of visitors, including those kept by body and senses, this "army of actors,"[29] namely, things begin to live a new, vital, and diverse life, disclosing unforeseen potentials and abilities.[30] These are various flashbacks experienced in museums that bring exhibits to life (and power!), as they need to be discussed, commented and explained, and it raises eternal questions – which story and whose story? Exhibits are subject to multiple interpretations and contested narratives.[31] "*Past things* make up the world,"[32] they can mediate relations and they still make an impact on our lives,[33] rising different memories, attitudes, and emotions such as nostalgia, pain, anger, disgust, sympathy, and joy.[34]

The ability to remember, commemorate and feel through artifacts allows us to shape our own story, thus forming identities, solidarities, boundaries and relationships, creating diverse, specific communities[35] based on gender, class, and ethnicity.[36] To the list we can add a community of memories created by a common past under a political regime.

On the one hand, in their "land" of the past, the community of Soviet children is lonely. That time is difficult to explain to next generations and to those who have grown up in another, democratic society. Shared memories and loneliness create a sense of community and solidarity. On the other hand, shared memories and a sense of touch have not produced a homogeneous, "general" community with Soviet childhood but a grouping full of contradictions. The disagreement centres on the evaluation of the Soviet era, thus, also demonstrating attitudes toward democratic and authoritarian processes in contemporary world.

In most Latvian museums, the story of Soviet childhood is told neutrally. The "land" of Soviet childhood is nostalgic, educational, unifying and inclusive, leaving the search for different identities, assessment and discovery of contradictions to visitors themselves.

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29 Bjørnar Olsen, "Comment," in *Debating New Approaches to History*, ed. Marek Tamm and Peter Burke (London, New York, Oxford, New Delhi, Sydney: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 236.
30 Ibid., 238.
31 Novoa, *Remembering or Imagining*, 1.
32 Olsen, "Comment," 238.
33 Ibid., 238.
34 Dussel and Priem, "The Visual," 645.
35 Calhoun, "The Importance of Imaged Communities," 14.
36 Smith, "Theorizing Museum," 460, 463.

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Antonio Viñao Frago

Public History between the Scylla of Academic History and the Charybdis of History as a Show: A Personal and Institutional Experience

Abstract: This text constitutes a personal reflection on the practice of public history during the last thirty years in a specific academic-institutional and social context: that of a region – Murcia – located in Southeast Spain. After some general considerations on the nature of public history and the tension generated by its intermediate status between the academic world and the world of entertainment, some individual activities by public historians carried out from the academic world are presented, as well as two collaborative ones made between 2004 and 2020: the Virtual Museum of History of Education (MUVHE) and the Center for Studies on Educational Memory (CEME) of the University of Murcia. Additionally, a collective activity has been carried out annually since 2015 from the union teaching field entitled "An Education for the 21st Century. Views from the Sciences and the Arts". The final reflections deal, from this double experience, with some of the questions posed to academic historians by the practice of public history.

Keywords: public history, educational museums, school memory, *centro de estudios sobre la memoria educativa* (CEME), *museo virtual de historia de la educación* (MUVHE)

Introduction

"Until I heard the phrase 'public historian', I hadn't realized I'd been doing it all my life. Now I've got a label".[1] Despite my being an already-retired academic historian, I feel that I can appropriate this phrase, which Liddington attributed to all those who, without being academic historians, work in some way with

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1 Jill Liddington, "What is Public History? Publics and Their Pasts, Meanings and Practices", *Oral History* 30, no. 1 (2002): 84.

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the past and at a certain point realize that there is something that historians call Public History. In the same way, we could apply to the Spanish case – within the realm of history in general and the history of education in particular – the subtitle given to an article by Noiret about the discipline's practice in Italy: "No longer a field without a name".[2] I can finally, after all these years, put a name to these activities – mine and those of my colleagues – that involve practicing history outside of the "ivory tower" of academia, or at least presenting and sharing it, under different guises, to broad swaths of the public and in collaboration with a variety of social groups.[3]

Within Sayer's double characterization of public history as "the communication of history to a wider public or the engagement of the public in the practice and production of history",[4] most of my own activity as a public historian aligns more neatly with the former description – communicating about history with the public outside of the academic setting – than with the second, that of practicing and producing history together with certain social groups. Perhaps for this reason, as well as the fact that I was born in 1943, I have always been more of a "historian working with the digital" than a "digital historian".[5] However, given that "public historians are currently the most auto-reflexive that they have been in the profession's history",[6] and that there is a broad diversity of national and sectorial traditions in this field,[7] I believe that the auto-reflection about my experience as a public historian in which I am going to engage here may be of interest as we reevaluate the role and the identity of the historian in society, the practice of history and the uses we make of the past. I would hope that it could at least lead us to reflect upon matters such as: veracity and evidence in history; shared authority and collaborative practice; historians' commitment and activism; and

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2 Serge Noiret, "An Overview of Public History in Italy: No Longer a Field without a Name", *International Public History* 2, no. 1 (2019), 1.

3 James B Gardner and Paula Hamilton, "The Past and Future of Public History. Development and Changes", in *The Oxford Handbook of Public History,* eds. James B. Gardner and Paula Hamilton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 2.

4 Faye Sayer, *Public History: A Practical Guide* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019, 2nd edition), 6.

5 Serge Noiret, "Historia digital e historia pública", in Juan Andrés Bresciano and Tiago Gil (eds.), *La historiografía ante el giro digital: reflexiones teóricas y prácticas metodológicas* (Montevideo: Ediciones Cruz Del Sur, 2015), 73.

6 Paul Ashton y Meg Foster, "Public Histories", in Sasha Handley, Rohan McWilliam and Lucy Noakes, *New Directions in Social and Cultural History* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 160.

7 Thomas Cauvin, "El surgimiento de la historia pública: una perspectiva internacional", *Historia Crítica* 68 (2018): 3–26, and Gardner and Hamilton, "The Past and Future of Public History", 1–2.

especially, the tensions that rise to the surface in public history between education and consumerist entertainment and between academic history and history as a show.

Academic History, Public History and History as a Show

The genesis and consolidation of public history is linked to a series of critiques of academic history. For public historians, whether or not they work in the domain of academic history, the latter exists in an ivory tower, where it is content to stare at its own belly button and ignore the historical work posed by the demands of marginalized and colonized groups whose accounts of the past have been silenced by the academic world. What's more, academic history only shares its products with its own peers. Its work has "more footnotes than readers: but no matter".[8] And yet, we are told, the past as history is a social construction, one in which the professional historian is just another element. All societies recreate their past and create collective memories, and if the academic historian alluded to turns inward, retreating into himself, not only will he end up isolated and disconnected from the process of (re)constructing a social and historical memory; he will lose social relevance. Conclusion: the historian needs to go outside and face his or her task with these collective memories and recreations of the past.

Nor is there any lack, on the part of academic history, of criticism and admonitions about the perils of public history. Those who practice public history – we are warned – fail to maintain the necessary critical distance regarding the social uses made of history. They fall victim to presentism. They are more concerned with the funding linked to commemorations and fashions than with the demands of historical production itself, more attentive to the ways in which they can show, sell and publicize the product than to the content of the product and how it is produced. The medium and the audience condition the message. Liddington remarks that "some American academics remain cynical about public history, seeing it as a dumbing-down or as opportunistic". And this despite the fact that, as he affirms, "the public history movement does provide excellent examples of creative practitioner-academic collaboration".[9]

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8 Liddington, "What is Public History", 90.
9 Ibid., 86.

The reality is a bit more complex. Among the fields in which one can engage in public history activity, its practitioners include, of course, traditional endeavours such as oral dissemination or written accounts pertaining to the academic realm – conferences, texts published in journals or in the daily press, exhibitions, interviews aired on radio or television, etc. But there are more novel forms of involvement in public history: as advisor for films and documentaries where more and more we find an intermingling of past and fiction, of historical images and imaginary representations of the past; or when we work for public entities, such as in judicial cases or in advising on possible changes of street names, for example; or for private entities, whether in the domain of a family, a business or of specific social groups or communities. These myriad enterprises are accompanied nowadays by a vast digital world comprised of websites, blogs, apps, forums, museums, on-line exhibitions, social networks and platforms that allow varying degrees of interactive and/or creative collaboration by users. And finally, there is the extensive field having to do with all aspects of cultural heritage and touristic patrimony which includes everything from historical settings to theme parks or to the creation of interactive museums.

As if this weren't enough, the public historian must never lose sight of the fact that the digital medium is by nature vulnerable to narcissism – of those who are only interested in telling "their" story – and that in every society there are taboo subjects, the "difficult past"[10] that people would rather not speak about, as well as controversial ways of approaching certain topics. The past is continually recreating itself and constructing itself. It constitutes a non-place of struggles, negotiations and confrontations, where proposals, questions and answers – as well as silences – impose themselves upon one another; it is into this amalgam that the professional historian – for material reasons or out of pure vocation – ventures, as a balanced mediator, as a filter, as an expert or as a committed activist. In one way or another this historian will have to bear in mind that each society not only recreates its past but that each "present" of this past harbors its own beliefs, myths, invented traditions and hoaxes, which are passed on as historical truths, and that these beliefs, myths, traditions and hoaxes reflect and help to propagate certain social relationships ultimately linked to issues of domination and identity, i.e., to social inclusion and exclusion.

If we agree that "what is in play is the debate about our memory in which a broad range of actors with different interests is going to participate" then it all comes down to determining whether "our current challenge" as historians should include – or not – "reminding people of that which society would prefer

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10 Thomas Cauvin, *Public History: A Textbook of Practice* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 222.

they just forgot".[11] Or, taking it one step further: if we ought to perform a historical revision of all of the different beliefs and "suspicious truths" from our past.[12] The problem arises when, as we shall see, it is the people themselves, or a great many of them, who prefer to forget or would prefer to stick with a comfortable past more to their liking. Here I would like to offer two concrete examples of recreations of the past. One, very popular with the public, involved a theme park, while the other focused on the traditional festivities of one of Spain's autonomous regions. Both initiatives relied on the advice and/or silence of academic historians.

Puy du Fou is a theme park in the outskirts of Toledo that in August 2019 presented a 90–minute audiovisual show on the history of Spain starting with King Recaredo's conversion to Catholicism in 589 and culminating in the beginning of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 – this last event summarized in the space of a Tweet: "a struggle of brother against brother". The production featured "nearly 200 actors recreating some 2,000 characters decked out in 1,200 historical outfits on a set of 3,900 square meters with 30 galloping horses and water spewed from 60 dispensers." Naturally, the organizers assert that "they are not historians" and that they simply hope that "people will come away with a sense of pride about their ancestors." The fact that two academic historians should remark, after seeing the spectacle, that the account is full of "stereotypes" and that "history and legend are mixed together" is not likely to concern the show's four thousand spectators.[13] Especially taking into account the fact that, as had been announced beforehand in an economic-business journal, it had received oversight from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts and Science of Toledo and had been sponsored by the Castilla-La Mancha Council of Economy, Business and Employment and by the Municipal Government of Toledo as well as the Federation of Businessmen and the city's hotel and crafts associations. The debut took place in the presence of a variety of political figures.[14]

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11 Amada Carolina Pérez Benavides and Sebastián Vargas Álvarez, "Historia pública e investigación colaborativa: Perspectivas y experiencias para la coyuntura actual colombiana", *Anuario Colombiano de Historia Social y de la Cultura* 46, no.1 (2019), 326–327.

12 Raimundo Cuesta, *Verdades sospechosas. Religión, historia y capitalismo* (Madrid: Visión libros, 2019).

13 Manuel Morales, "España contada a través de fuegos artificiales y danzas," *El País*, September 1, 2019, 37.

14 Ana Delgado, "Puy de Fou convierte a Toledo en el epicentro cultural de España", *El Economista*, September 1, 2019, accessed June 21, 2020.

https://www.eleconomista.es/comunidades_autonomas/noticias/10062266/08/19/Puy-du-Fou-convierte-a-Toledo-en-el-epicentro-cultural-de-Espana.html.

The Context of My Activity As a Public Historian

I should begin by stating that Murcia – like so many regions in Spain and in other countries – can be viewed, over the course of a given year, as one great theme park where, in this case, a Catholic-conservative ideology prevails. This touristic-patrimonial-cultural park includes celebrations and popular parades – processions for Holy Week or other Catholic holidays, Moor and Christian commemorations, pilgrimages, the "burial of the sardine" and the "Garden Parade" both observed after Holy Week, "Carthaginians and Romans", etc. I find nothing to object to in this kind of syncretism. However, when all is said and done and the spectators have, for instance, finished applauding wildly at the final scenes, where the parade of Christian and Kabyle forces culminates in the Arab Emir's peacefully handing over the keys of the city to the Christian King, this is how the spectators remember it: as a festive event of good will, with no trace of a siege, fight or conflict of any kind.[15] Again, there is nothing wrong with any of this. Except for the fact that the myths and legends recreated this way are taken as irrefutable historical truths, truths that support current identities which result in social inclusion and exclusion, together with processes of social domination. But all people want to do – one might answer – is dress up, have some fun and enjoy themselves. Just because the Christian cathedral was built after razing the existing Mesquite, which had probably been erected upon the ruins of a paleo-Christian church, which in turn had taken the place of a Roman temple, where before there had been. How does any of this matter? The vision of the past as a story of conflicts and of the domination and exclusion of some social groups by others is too disconcerting and hard to bear; no wonder people reject it.

Not only do we fail to accept or acknowledge the past; we also dress it up. And any historian who goes picking apart these recreations is doomed to failure and to ostracism by the social groups controlled by the socio-political powers-that-be. Far better to stay on the sidelines and, at most, research and write or talk about such things with your peers – as long as these peers are not somehow involved in lending historical credence to these beliefs, myths and legends. What we have here are taboos and imaginary spaces, and the historian must choose between declining to make his work public or becoming a *persona non grata*, marginalized by a large part of his community.

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15 Valenmurciano, "Moros y Christianos de Murcia 2018. Representacion de la Embajada de la Entrega de Llaves de la Ciudad de Murcia," Youtube, September 10, 2018,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PO8re10u3dw.

Then we have the academic context, which also has its share of myths and hoaxes. Here I'll focus on one case. The institutional coat of arms of the University of Murcia includes the figure of the king of Castille, Alfonso X (1221–1284). He is shown sitting on a throne, around him the inscription "Universitas Studiorum Murciana. Anno MCCLXXII". This date, 1272, which would place the University of Murcia among the oldest in all of Europe, has no basis in fact whatsoever. Historical falsehoods aside, it is at this university, in the Department of Theory and History of Education – part of the Education Campus – where I have carried out the activity in public history which I will be describing below. In some cases, these activities, which I have been involved in since 1979, have been solitary ventures and in other instances I have worked with colleagues from my faculty or from other faculties or universities, as well as with people from outside of the world of academia. An overview of this activity will help in understanding the nature and context of this type of endeavor, which I will reflect upon in my final conclusions.

Individual Activities in Traditional Public History

I'm not certain exactly when I began partaking in activities of public history, that is, sharing and disseminating knowledge about topics – with a reasonable standard of historical rigor – relating to the history of education with diverse audiences and with the public at large. It may have been in the late 1970s, when I participated in a round table in the summer courses organized by the Movement for Pedagogical Renovation (MPR) of the region of Murcia. Since then, I have given numerous oral presentations at round tables and conferences and have published texts in specialized journals targeted to professors as well as in the daily press. To a lesser degree I have given interviews on the radio and the television and have shared-divulged to a great variety of audiences my knowledge in the field of education accumulated over all these years. There are two reflections that I would like to share here.

The audiences to whom I have spoken have for the most part consisted of people involved to some degree with the world of education, and my public interventions have usually been in response to petitions from teachers' unions, parents' organizations, teacher training centers, primary or secondary schools, municipal corporations, associations of school principals or inspectors, athenaeums, or cultural societies. On other occasions I have been contacted by groups – I am referring mainly, though not exclusively, to round tables and conferences on education during Spain's Second Republic (1931–1939), the

pedagogical exile, the teacher purges brought on with the Civil War and Francoism – linked to what has come to be known as the "historical memory."[16] These groups include organizers of acts in commemoration of some of these historical events, of the creation of new schools or of tributes to specific teachers. Finally, there is another, newer sort of demand, especially from the media: for guidance regarding the veracity of the innumerable statements, information and hoaxes circulating on social media, and about historical-educational matters in general. It seems that in this realm we have a new challenge in public history.

Perhaps I should note that in dealing with topics of current-day interest, I have always made a point of introducing a historical perspective. This is especially important in those texts – 21 of which appeared in *Cuadernos de Pedagogía*, the leading journal of the MRPs, along with others published in the teachers' union or the Spanish Confederation of Parent-Teacher Association journals and in the daily press – that were briefer and unencumbered by the academic "baggage" of the more "scientific" work carried out in the university context. In many cases it was precisely these texts that were most widely read and shared by professors and by the public with an interest in education.

It is not easy to assess the reach and the repercussion of this sort of individual public-historical activity. Given that much of it was done in response to demands from specific groups or audiences interested in the subject or that it appeared in non-academic media with a wide readership, we can probably assume that it reached a broader audience than if it had appeared in an academic journal. Beyond this observation, I can only think of one example. In one of numerous conferences on education under the Second Republic, I alluded to the aid that Murcia received from the Quakers during the Civil War and to what was known as the "English Hospital," created to attend to the child refugees in the city. I pointed out that this building – now in possession of the municipal government – had been identified through photographs found in a book by Francesca Wilson,[17] a discovery made possible owing to Siân Roberts' stay in Murcia as she prepared her doctoral thesis on Francesca Wilson.[18] I remarked

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16 This expression refers to the systematically ignored law from December 26, 2007 which "acknowledged and expanded the rights of, and provided means for, measures in favor of those who suffered persecution and violence during the Civil War and under the dictatorship".
17 Francesca Wilson, *In the Margin of the Chaos. Recollection of Relief Work in and between Three Wars* (London: John Murray, 1944).
18 Siân Lliwen Roberts, *Place, Life Histories and the Politics of Relief. Episodes in the Life of Francesca Wilson, Humanitarian Educator Activist* (Doctoral Thesis, School of Education, University of Birmingham, 2010).

on the fact that there was no plaque or acknowledgement of any sort of the assistance offered to refugees by the Friends' Religious Society in Murcia during the Civil War. A plaque was subsequently approved by the municipal government and installed shortly afterwards, a plaque which – although nothing too serious – had historical inaccuracies of its own.

Collaborative Activities in Public History: The Virtual Museum of History of Education (MUVHE) and The Center for Studies on Educational Memory (CEME) (2004–2020)

In this section, I will relate some of the collective activities in public history that I have been involved in with the MUVHE and the CEME. These activities were made possible by public funding for four research projects – carried out between 2004 and 2017 – dealing with different aspects of the preservation, study and dissemination of the educational patrimony and of the school memory and the teachers' memory.

The MUVHE opened its doors to the public in February 2010. I should acknowledge up front that the idea for its establishment, in 2003, owed to the fact that we did not have the physical space for an actual museum. We had no choice but to make virtue out of necessity; we were determined to create a museum of the history of education, even if it had to be virtual. I should also recognize – in the way of an explanation for the seven-year span between its inception and its opening – that those of us involved in the project lacked experience in such matters, at a time when virtual historical or educational museums of this kind were practically non-existent in Spain. Nor did the private business sector on which we relied for the museum's design and creation have experience in such initiatives. Many meetings were held, much debate and second-guessing took place, and many decisions were made on the spur of the moment. The long, drawn-out process – in which professor Pedro Luis Moreno played a prominent role – unfolded without our being certain about the advantages and drawbacks of the different options we were considering. Years later I summed up this experience, together with that of the CEME, as an "academic-scientific-*museumism*" adventure. I could well have added the adjective "public-historical" had I known what the term entailed.

From the time of its creation the MUVHE has been located on the server of the University of Murcia (http://www.um.es/muvhe/user). It features four galleries,

with various sub-galleries, focused on "School buildings and spaces", "Furnishings and equipment", "Scientific and Pedagogical material" and "Library." There are 19 thematic tours and a fifth gallery containing, at this moment, seven virtual exhibits. Over time the MUVHE has enjoyed a positive, growing trajectory in terms of the number of visits and people registered as well as in the array of the countries of origin of these users. In general, the thematic visits and tours and the online exhibits are the result of studies forming part of research projects and of physical exhibitions held at the CEME. As the MUVHE's opening coincided with the creation of the CEME, the former operates somewhat independently of the latter, but is functionally connected to it. An effort has been made to ensure that all of the activities carried out by the CEME have a repercussion or reflection in the MUVHE.

The existence of the MUVHE provided the research group with a virtual medium, one accessible to all kinds of audiences, in which to share – with due rigor and combining texts with images – the results of their research on historical-educational topics. However, something was missing. This something was the Center for Studies on Educational Memory (CEME), which was founded in May of 2009 for the purpose of promoting, preserving, cataloguing, studying and disseminating the educational memory and patrimony in general, and that of Murcia in particular (https://www.um.es/web/ceme). Featuring a multidisciplinary structure, the CEME is made up of some twenty educators, some retired, from different departments and areas of the Education Faculty at the city's university, the site of its physical location. It consists of several spaces for the conservation and display of its own and other collections and includes commercial catalogs of school material, didactic-scientific material, prints, maps, textbooks, notebooks, students' works, photographs, postcards and teachers' personal files; in this latter case, in collaboration with the University Archives. There are also facilities for hosting activities. Leaving aside for the moment the endeavors of a more academic-formational sort as well as those involving research, cataloguing and the study of material and immaterial educational patrimony, I would like to focus on the two activities that could be considered to pertain more strictly to the concept of public history,

The first of these two activities has to do with exhibitions – of which we have had eight so far –, some of which have traveled to other cities in the region and beyond. In general, online versions have been made available to the public through the MUVHE, while collaboration has included, along with loans of material from the CEME collections, guidance in an advisory role to exhibitions organized in schools, generally for anniversaries and commemorations.

The other activity consisted of the opening of a collaborative and participative public history involving groups unrelated to the CEME. The objective here was not to simply disseminate the history of education among a broad audience

or to preserve, catalog, study and share an educational patrimony; we were seeking to involve a certain, interested contingent of people in actually practicing and producing history – their own history. The chance to do this arose practically by happenstance in the course of a research project on the historical-educational patrimony in the region of Murcia and on the educational memory that was carried out between 2007 and 2010. One of the activities planned as part of this project had to do with a study of the MRPs — especially of the *Movimiento Cooperativo de la Escuela Popular* (Cooperative Movement of the Popular School, MCEP) — that were active in the 60s, 70s and 80s of the last century in the Murcia region and which shared many features with those held throughout the rest of Spain. This group of teachers, who were either retired or close to retirement age, had lost none of their robust sense of associative, union-oriented commitment to their mission as teachers. From the very start of this investigation, we knew that we must implicate this group in the production of their own history. All we had to do was put them in front of the camera and have them – with a minimal amount of guidance and direction – (re)create their own histories. The results can be found in seven recordings made by the technical services of the Murcia university television (TV.UM). The same format, in which the protagonists are encouraged to produce their own history, was used for two other longer recordings dealing with the genesis, evolution and activities of two collectives with a lengthy trajectory in the domain of adult education in the Murcia region. The footage on the dissemination in Murcia at the end of the last century of the ideas and techniques of Freinet served as the basis for the filming of a documentary in 2015 by Alfonso Burgos Risco. Titled *La memoria de las manos. Ecos del legado pedagógico de C. Freinet en Murcia* (*A memory of the hands. Echoes of the pedagogical legacy of C. Freinet in Murcia*), the film, which combines interviews, reenactments and animation, has been shown in different forums and has received various national and international awards.

Public History in a Collective Activity: "An Education for the 21st Century: Views from The Sciences and the Arts" (2015–2020)

There is a clear relationship between what I have expounded upon in the previous section and what follows. This connection stems from the participation-collaboration in the *Sessions,* an event which, under the heading "An education for the 21st century: perspectives from the sciences and the arts", has been held

in the city of Murcia and in several other of the region's municipalities from 2016 until the present. These Sessions are organized by different components of the collective, alluded to above, that at the end of the last century included the MRPs in Murcia, members of the Union of Education Workers of the Murcia Region (STERM) and the Teachers' Federation of the workers' union *Comisiones Obreras* (CC.OO.). Today it also includes the recently created association *Futuro de la Educación-Región de Murcia* (AFEREM).

While it may have been overwhelmed by the present and the future, it all began with the past, that is, with history. From January 12th through February 13th of 2015 the University Museum of Murcia hosted a reduced version of an exhibit that had been organized in Madrid in 2006 by the National Society for Cultural Commemorations. The subject of the exhibition was the Pedagogical Missions carried out by the Second Republic between 1931 and 1936. The show in Murcia was organized by the retirees and pensioners of the STERM and was sponsored by, among other entities, the University of Murcia; collaborators also included the CEME and the association Historical-Memory-Murcia. The exhibit, which featured documentaries by the photographer of the Missions, Val del Omar, was accompanied by musical and theatrical activities, organized school visits, and a series of talks that included members of the CEME.

The reach and popularity of this diverse array of activities – cultural, pedagogical, historical, etc., – for a diverse public was what gave the organizers the idea of establishing annual Sessions in a similar vein. Under the title "An education for the 21st century: perspectives from the sciences and the arts", the year 2020 saw the celebration of the series' fifth edition.

As regards to its diffusion and reception, suffice to say that whereas in the first edition, in 2016, activities were programmed in the city of Murcia as well as in nine other of the region's 45 municipalities, in 2020 this number reached 18 municipalities (40% of the total), including the region's largest. Where the organizing entities of the first edition consisted of the Association of retirees and pensioners together with the University of Murcia and the Museum of Science and Water, for the fifth edition of 2020 the Polytechnic University of Cartagena and the Regional Library joined in. As for the number of collaborating entities, the 26 from the first edition had nearly doubled by 2020, to 51. These included, along with the CEME, university campuses and departments, municipal governments, unions, and parent-teacher associations, together with a broad array of cultural, scientific and educational associations, collectives and athenaeums. The territorial expansion of these Sessions, along with the volume and diversity of activities and of the attending public – which includes people of practically all ages, interests, and professions – has also resulted in an extension of its length; where the January-February Session of 2016 lasted slightly

over a month, the 2020 edition, held from January to March, lasted over two months.

The subjects emphasized in the latest editions of the Sessions tend towards those considered of current interest: feminism and gender, ecology, environment and climate change, neuroscience, philosophy, technology, economy, music, theatre, and education – including its methods, innovation, professorship, curriculum, educational policy, sexual education, etc. All of this is presented in a diversity of formats, from talks, round tables and debates to workshops, courses, narrations and storytelling, documentaries, exhibits, concerts, interviews in the media, etc., all for different audiences of different ages. Notwithstanding this engagement with "current" issues, it is also true that history and the past, whether in talks or specific workshops or activities, whether going back in time or finding a novel perspective on certain topics and themes, is always present throughout the Sessions.

Of the many exhibitions, one from the 2018 Sessions deserves special mention. Conceived and put together by the group in charge of organizing the Sessions, the idea behind this exhibit – entitled "The Public School. The Future of Education" – was to provide an overview of some of the key historical moments of the public school in Spain, especially in the 20th century, culminating in a section dedicated to its current situation and its future. Some of the organizing group's members, who were affiliated with the STERM, had been involved in an exhibit in 1998 titled "Yesterday's School", which took place in the framework of a seminar on "Reevaluating the teacher's work." I myself had participated in this event with a talk and in selecting other speakers.

In the 2018 exhibition I collaborated as an advisor and observer, doing my best to keep a judicious distance from the organizing group and thus ensure that they were the ones making the decisions about the design and structure of the show. I only intervened in exceptional cases, pointing out possible anachronisms or inaccuracies, for example, or loaning or proposing the use of object or materials. As a rule, my involvement was at the organizers' request. The petition for my input had arisen in an informal conversation held in the early stages of the design and installation of the exhibit in which we discussed some of the most relevant legal and political milestones in the history of education in 20th century Spain. A chronological review of these landmarks figured prominently on a panel at the entrance to the exhibit.

The structure and distribution of the exhibition space consisted of an "old-fashioned" classroom with the students' desk in rows, another "modern" classroom where the desks formed a U-shape, a section with a sample of didactic material related to concrete methodologies – Freinet, Montessori, experimental science – and another dedicated to technologies – from the analogical blackboard

to the digital one. In a final section the visitor was presented with "the classroom of the immediate future": virtual reality and robotics.

Final Reflections

Between the Scylla of the academic historian, closed up within his ivory tower in the generally safe company of his peers, and the Charybdis of history-as-entertainment, ready to entrap anyone daring to venture into the field of public history, there is yet a considerable margin, one whose suitability depends on personal options and on one's surroundings. In the following lines I would like to offer a few reflections stemming from my own experience as an historian who has tried to juggle – especially in recent years – his academic work with that of a public historian.

The material and digital public history activities carried out in a strictly academic context – the MUVHE and CEME – owe their success to a laudable commitment and effort on the part of everyone involved. Until recently, activities such as organizing exhibits or creating museums or centers for memories, whether virtual or physical, have received virtually no academic recognition. In the criteria considered by universities for promotions and for teacher evaluations – for teachers who often bear onerous class loads – written scientific production constitutes the sole criteria. Activities involving public dissemination simply do not count, nor does anything outside of the context of the university and of the results of research. To say nothing of participating in activities with non-academic audiences, working in an advisory role or divulging scientific knowledge. This reality makes it harder for an academic historian to participate in public history.

Secondly, the path is made by walking. As related above, the first steps of both experiences were taken with trepidation, with doubts about what kind of problems we would encounter and what possibilities might open up before us. With time, and with the human, physical and financial resources available, we began to discover these possibilities. We have all learned from one another. And of the many things I have learned there is one that I would like to focus on: a pedagogical museum or a center for a school memory should tell its own story; it should contain something that distinguishes and identifies it, a common thread that brings together the disparate elements that it contains. The same is true with what is being displayed, especially if we are talking about an exhibition or route through different galleries and sections. The exhibit has to be more than a simple collection of objects for cataloguing, studying and

keeping. For there to be diffusion, there must be a narrative and a story, goals and objectives and specific ways of showing and conveying that part of reality contained in the material and immaterial educational patrimony.

Finally, some reflections relating to the collaboration-participation as a historian working in collective activities in public history. One thing that I have learned over the years is that there are historical subjects and issues that are untouchable, sometimes even in the academic realm. In a society characterized by certain beliefs regarding the past – especially beliefs relating to identity –, to hold that these beliefs, or others, are not irrefutable historical facts but rather beliefs, with their own genesis and evolution over time and therefore susceptible to being studied historically and treated like other aspects of our lives, is a Herculean task. The idea of using history as a science to stand up to recreations of an invented past which, encouraged by certain political, religious, and socio-economic powers, forms the basis for popular ceremonies and celebrations promoted by these same powers, is to run into a wall. We have alluded to how public history, especially in its digital version, can run the risk of stirring up motivations of the wrong sort; instead of "striving for popular participation in the construction of a collective memory and in historical discourse by means of digital technology", there are those who, thanks to the "narcissist potential of the Web", simply want to publicize their own individual or group story, "their" own version of the past.[19] We find ourselves with an additional task here, when as professional public historians we are called upon to act as mediators or negotiators of competing historical versions/interpretations.[20] In my opinion, and based on my personal experience, there is a certain naivety to this vision, at least with regard to certain contexts and subjects.

There are walls of silence, where the problem resides not so much in what is said but rather in what is hushed and goes unsaid, knowingly, or otherwise. Over the course of my professional life I have encountered cases of glaring silence relating to certain individuals. I have also witnessed resounding collective silences. In one way or another, when up against a wall of traditions, myths, invented legends, and silences, you have no choice but to look for openings, cracks, places in which to create other spaces. Context is decisive in allowing for certain possibilities and closing off others, in providing us with orientation in one direction or another. Subsequently, there should be nothing too surprising about the entities and institutions I have worked with, either

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19 Noiret, "Historia pública e historia digital", 87–88.

20 Sayer, *Public History*, 17; Ashton and Foster, 158.

because they sought my collaboration or because I was more disposed to work with them. These include, above all, parent-teacher associations from the public-school sector, public schools, teacher groups or unions and cultural or debate societies such as those constituted in the wake of legislation concerning the "historical memory". Neither should it come as a surprise that every year around April 14[th21] I'm called on to talk or write something about education and culture during the Second Republic. While your academic interests may lie elsewhere at the time, there is a kind of debt that you feel with certain audiences who look to you for your knowledge of a matter and your way of presenting it. To be certain, the way in which you present it is not always going to be to the liking of part of your audience or readers.

It is this confluence of interests that explains my collaboration-participation with those sectors of teachers who in the final years of Francoism and the beginning of the "Transition" were active in the MRPs and, in democratic Spain, in leftist unions. This collective was made up of teachers – most of them primary school instructors – who were either retired or close to it and who were actively committed to matters of education and to controversial issues such as ecology, feminism, the environment, and the historical memory. From the start of my work with the organization of the Sessions described above, as merely another collaborator – although this wasn't quite the case – I was aware of how my involvement was serving to confer a sort of academic-university credential to the project. I was also aware – and continue to be so – of the fact that with a group such as this, my presence gradually became less visible and less necessary, required only in certain specific instances.

These experiences have also made me see something that has been pointed out by many public historians: the rewards afforded by holding one's vision/s of the past up against those of other collectives and examining the coincidences and differences between. Not only has this given me the opportunity to rethink my position on certain matters and topics – among these, historical work itself –, but it has also made me see how the past can be recreated differently by non-academic/university historians. In this case they were primary and secondary school teachers, including instances of history graduates. This group, now constituted as an association (AFEREM), is active today and has its sights set on the future. Standing in stark ideological opposition to the conservative block that currently dominates Murcia, AFEREM seeks to disseminate its own (re)creation of the past, in opposition to others, naturally. This includes plans for the founding of its own pedagogical museum with exhibits, visits, workshops, etc.

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21 Day of the proclamation in 1931 of the Second Republic.

This particular experience in the collaboration-participation in (re)constructing the past, together with my experience overall, has made me realize how important it is that academic-professional historians reserve the time and energy necessary to practice history as a science. This is especially true in these digital times in which the acceleration, the spectacle and the audience can prevail over the rigor and the altogether different rhythm required for study, reflection and the sedimentation of knowledge. As Liddington put it, with public history, "what historians gain includes enhanced production skills and wider public reach. What they lose is control over the piece of work, becoming caught up in other people's agendas, funding, time scales, arguments".[22] Maintaining a balance between what you win and what you lose comes down to individual decisions conditioned by context. From my own, non-transferrable experience, the combination of academic work and divulgation/opening to different audiences reminds me, in part, of the differentiation that Weber established between the politician and the scientist. Except that in this case we would have to make the distinction between history that is academic – and therefore supposedly scientific – and history that is public. I would not say that the time and energy spent on one works to the detriment of the other. But they do require different mentalities, approaches, and work modes, and this is especially evident when a professional historian is making his or her living from the very start in the realm of public history. In such a context, the pressure of the media and the spotlight together with the continued, obligatory engagement with "social networks" constitute a fundamental part of the activity. This is where, to my mind and from my experience, the weakness lies, and where public history risks becoming superficial and disconnected if it is not grounded upon a prior, established practice of history as science.

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22 Liddington, "What is Public History", 90.

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María del Mar del Pozo Andrés

Public Voices and Teachers' Identities: Exploring the Visitors' Book of a School Memory Exhibition

Abstract: This work provides an example of public history, the organization of an exhibition about the educational memory of Madrid for which I was the curator. Its theme was well known to me, having been the topic of my PhD thesis and of most of my subsequent publications in specialized journals. The first question I asked myself was how to transform the academic history of education into a public history of education? Or, to paraphrase Walter Benjamin, how does a history-teller become a storyteller? After describing the challenges of constructing an immersive exhibition, I conclude that turning academic knowledge into public history of education is a straightforward process and one that catches historians very well prepared because of the different historiographical turns to which we have adapted our thinking in the last twenty years.

The most unknown part of the public history of education is the one that refers to the direct dialogue with audiences. In this exhibition, this dialogue was established through the Visitor Book, a notebook placed at the exit of the exhibition in which people could write their impressions of the visit. For this paper I have selected exclusively the comments written by educators, so the second question I asked myself was: Did the public understand the historian doing public history? And how did present-day teachers interpret and reconstruct the meaning of an exhibition about the past schooling in their city? The analysis of the entries written by visitors who identified themselves as teachers allows me to detect at least four groups of narratives: 1) the "gestures of closure" for fulfilling the last ritual of the visit; 2) the dialogues with the teachers of the past, with a rhetoric discourse reserved for the heroes; 3) the historical discourses endowed with a contemporary meaning full of pending demands; and 4) the critical voices, who expressed their disagreement with the exhibition's narrative and constructed their own narratives.

Keywords: public history of education, educational memory, historical schools, educational heritage, visitor books

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Introduction: How to Become a Public Historian of Education in Spain

Many education historians in Spain have been practicing public history for a good two decades without even realizing it. Around 1995, twenty years after Franco's death, the term "memory" began to be used – in a belated and exaggerated manner – as a way of "invoking the memory of the republic",[1] that is, of revisiting and commemorating the Second Republic, the political regime that lasted from 1931 until 1939. The regime's defeat in the Spanish Civil War by Franco's nationalists was followed by decades of repression, punishment, and censure under the general's dictatorship (1939–1975). Memory-based discourses began to occupy ever-expanding public spaces, from television programs, movies, plays and documentaries to articles in the press, popular history books, exhibits, published memoirs, novels, biographies, commemorative concerts, etc. The trend has by no means subsided; to the contrary, it has found renewed life in the social networks, where countless associations, institutions, foundations, and individuals are fervently engaged in activities aimed at "recovering the memory and combating the risk of oblivion"[2] of the country's republican chapter.

Educational historiography showed a special fascination with education under the Second Republic early on, with many of the most important and well-known works being published before or just after the death of Franco. There was good reason for this enthusiasm; the discovery of the pedagogical policies of the republican governments – which had been erased under Francoism – helped in connecting the progressivism of the 1930s with the pedagogical transformation that the educational reform movements[3] were attempting to establish in Spain in the 1970s. These movements, whose principal advocates were teachers, found in the work of the Second Republic teachers a lost tradition that bestowed legitimacy to their full-throated defense of the public school system, of their innovative school practices and of their thirst for change. This led them to choose representative figures who had taught in public schools in the 1930s for

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1 Helena López, "Exilio, memoria e industrias culturales: esbozo para un debate," *Migraciones y Exilios* 5 (2004): 27.
2 Matilde Eiroa San Francisco, "Memoria e historia en redes sociales: nuevos soportes de resistencia al olvido de la Guerra Civil española y el franquismo," *Historia y Memoria* 21 (2020): 98.
3 I consider "educational reform movements" in Spanish so called "*movimientos de renovación pedagógica*" (MRPs), composed by groups of teachers very active in the 1970s. The main characteristic of these movements was their leading idea of transforming the society through the school; their pedagogical proposals are always orientated to promote social changes.

identifying their collectives. Thus, one of the first educational reform movements, which emerged in Catalunya in the late 1960, adopted the name Rosa Sensat, who had served as principal of two public graded schools in Barcelona between 1914 and 1939. In Madrid the pioneering educational reform movement, *Acción Educativa* [Educational Action], came into being in 1975 and created the Ángel Llorca Foundation in order to preserve and divulge the legacy of its namesake, who served as headmaster of the public graded school Cervantes in Madrid from 1918 until 1936.

Fruitful collaborative efforts between the academic world and educational reform movements have given rise to numerous public history initiatives in recent decades, such as the one we are going to focus on in this chapter. Furthermore, we have the creation, starting at the end of the last century, of numerous local, regional and university museums for the purpose of preserving the historical-educational patrimony. Historians of education have curated exhibits at the national level – such as that commemorating the centennial of the establishment of the Ministry of Public Instruction (2000), which provided an overview of Spanish education in the 20th century – and have also been involved in documentaries recounting educational experiences undertaken under the Second Republic and during the Civil War. In February 2014 the film director of "Las maestras de la República" [The Republican female teachers] (2013),[4] Pilar Pérez Solano, was awarded the Goya Prize for best documentary film – the equivalent of the Academy Award in Spanish film. In her speech, aired live on television, she shared the prize with "the female historians",[5] giving their full names, "because they are the heart of this documentary", thus acknowledging their role in the construction of an historical account upon which the visual narrative was grounded.

Memory-based discourses and policies acquired even greater prominence in social debate with the Law of Historical Memory, passed by the Socialist government in 2007. In Madrid this law was simply not applied, being systematically ignored by successive conservative regional governments. The situation changed radically in May of 2015 when Manuela Carmena became the city's mayor with the support of the entire spectrum of left-wing parties. A judge by profession,

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4 The documentary has its origin in a seminar carried out in the Spanish National Library (January 2012) that resulted in a book. Elena Sánchez de Madariaga, ed., *Las maestras de la República* (Madrid: La Catarata, 2012). The 8th edition of the book has been published in 2020.
5 Historians of education that have participated in the documentary were: Sara Ramos Zamora (Complutense University, Madrid), Carmen Agulló Díaz (University of Valencia), Carmen García Colmenares (University of Valladolid) and María del Mar del Pozo Andrés (University of Alcalá, Madrid).

Manuela Carmena was an atypical political figure; with no special link to any of the traditional parties, she represented "the new Spanish left".[6] With her tenure began what has come to be called "the fourth memory cycle" in Madrid.[7] One of her actions to garner the most attention was a project to change the denomination of some of the capital's streets that had been named for prominent Francoists and instead name them after public figures acknowledged by consensus and with the support of Madrileños. Some of these figures were teachers that served in public schools, like Ángel Llorca, Justa Freire and María Sánchez Arbós.

City Hall created two organisms under Carmena's mandate: the *Comisionado de la Memoria Histórica* [Historical Memory Commissioner] and the *Oficina de Derechos Humanos y Memoria* [Office of Human Rights and Memory]. The latter launched a campaign in 2017, "Madrid, Ciudad de Memoria" [Madrid, City of Memory], that carried out projects such as the placement of plaques in historically significant settings that included several public schools built at the time of the Second Republic. A number of different collectives then set out to organize what were referred to in contacts with this author as "memorials to teachers of the Republic".[8] The project began with several exhibits, some of them education-based, such as "Diarios de libertad. Maestras y pedagogas de la II República" [Diaries of freedom. Female Teachers and pedagogues of the Second Republic] (2017), organized by the socialist trade union UGT; and "Ángel Llorca, el maestro que soñó la República desde el Grupo escolar Cervantes" [Ángel Llorca, the teacher who dreamed the Republic from the Cervantes school]" (2017). This exhibit, designed by the Ángel Llorca Foundation to commemorate the centennial of this emblematic Madrid public school, traveled to numerous neighborhoods of the capital at the request of social, cultural, and civic associations.

It was in this context that the municipal government undertook its most ambitious plan for preserving and divulging the city's educational memory. City authorities envisioned an exhibition focused on education in Madrid under the Second Republic and during the Civil War, one that would serve to discover and protect its historical-educational patrimony. This would be a way of fulfilling the objectives of the Law of Historical Memory of 2007, which sought to ensure an awareness and acknowledgement of historical events that had taken place during the Civil War and the ensuing dictatorship. The theme was controversial

6 Xavier Martín-Rubió and Marice Oró-Piqueras, "Is Manuela Carmena a politician? Spanish journalists and politicians in the spotlight," *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 19, no. 2 (2018): 247.

7 Ulrike Capdepón, "Challenging the Symbolic Representation of the Franco Dictatorship. The Street Name Controversy in Madrid," *History & Memory* 32, no. 1 (2020): 103.

8 José Luis Gordo, President of the Foundation Ángel Llorca, e-mail message to author, December 18, 2016.

enough to begin with, given that in twenty-five years of conservative municipal governments not a single historical-educational exhibit had received official support. In fact, Madrid lacked any basic consensus on a museographic narrative regarding the Civil War or even the 20th century in general. Such a shortcoming is not exclusive to the Spanish capital; for years historians had lamented "the lack of a museographic strategy capable of *exhibiting* a discourse of memory about the civil war".[9]

The municipal authorities decided that the exhibition would be held at the *Museo de Historia de Madrid* [Museum for the History of Madrid]. This museum is an example of this museographic void, as its permanent exhibition closes at the end of the 19th century, no agreement has yet been reached on how to construct the 20th century discourse. The exhibit's curatorship was put in the hands of the Ángel Llorca Foundation, owing to its role as one of the most active associations in the defense of Madrid's educational memory and to its close connection with teachers' collectives involved in educational reform. As a member of the board of trustees of the Foundation and as a researcher with forty years of experience, specialized in the history of public education in Madrid in the first third of the 20th century – the subject of my doctoral thesis and of many subsequent publications[10] –, I assumed the role of curator of the exhibition.

In this text I wish to present, first of all, some of the narrative strategies that I resorted to in order to transform my academic knowledge – which had so far appeared exclusively in specialized journals – into a story that could be both accessible and attractive to a greatly varied public. An additional challenge faced by a curator is that of reading or gauging the effect that a show has on its audiences,

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9 Antonio Monegal, "Exhibiting objects of memory," *Journal of Cultural Spanish Studies* 9–2 (2008): 240. Italics in the original.

10 María del Mar del Pozo Andrés, *Currículum e identidad nacional. Regeneracionismos, nacionalismos y escuela pública (1890–1939)* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2000); María del Mar del Pozo Andrés, *Urbanismo y Educación. Política educativa y expansión escolar en Madrid (1900–1931)* (Madrid: Universidad de Alcalá, 1999); María del Mar del Pozo Andrés, "Desde las escuelas para pobres hasta la ciudad educadora: la enseñanza primaria pública en Madrid (1850–1939)," in *Madrid. Atlas Histórico de la Ciudad. 1850–1939*, ed. Virgilio Pinto Crespo (Madrid: Lunwerg, 2001), 326–341; and María del Mar del Pozo Andrés, *Justa Freire o la pasión de educar. Biografía de una maestra atrapada en la historia de España (1896–1965)* (Madrid: Octaedro, 2013). See a summary of the recent findings in María del Mar del Pozo Andrés, "Madrid, a Showcase for National Pedagogical Renovation (1898–1936)," in *Madrid, ciudad educadora 1898/1938. Memoria de la escuela pública,* ed. María del Mar del Pozo Andrés (Madrid: Ayuntamiento de Madrid, 2019), 297–325.

what is sometimes known as "the visitor experience" or "the visitor identity".[11] One of the least explored sources for following the public voices consists of the "comment books", also known as "visitor books" or "guest books", which can usually be found at the exit of a museum and where visitors can leave comments about what they have just seen. In the realm of visitors' studies these objects are considered "*public instances of participation*", that is, a public activity that allows for interactions between a museum and its audiences. They are thought to be especially appropriate "for sites where contentious and challenging displays are presented".[12] The *Museo de Historia de Madrid* offered such a visitor book on the way out of the exhibition and from this book I made a selection of comments, limiting myself to those written by educators; I believed that, *a priori*, they brought a more direct concern to the subject and were better able to understand the exhibition. I then came up with two questions that I shall attempt to answer in this chapter:

1. How does one transform the academic history of education into the public history of education? Or, to paraphrase Walter Benjamin,[13] how does a history-teller become a storyteller?
2. Did the public understand the historian doing public history? And more specifically, how did present-day teachers interpret and reconstruct the meaning of an exhibition about the past schooling in their city?

The Making of an Exhibition

The exhibition we are going to speak about was named *Madrid, ciudad educadora 1898/1938. Memoria de la escuela pública* [Madrid, educational city 1898/ 1938. Memory of the public school]. In outlining its concept, I was inclined to give a twist to the initial idea that had been put forth by different collectives and associations, who envisioned an exhibit commemorating the "educational legacy of the Second Republic" or "a memorial for Republican teachers". The idea that I wished to place front and center in the design and history of the exhibit was the recuperation of the memory of what I called Madrid's "historical

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11 Volker Kirchberg and Martin Tröndle, "Experiencing Exhibitions: A Review of Studies on Visitor Experiences in Museums," *Curator: The Museum Journal* 55, no. 4 (2012): 436.

12 Chaim Noy, "Museum Audience's Texts: Toward a Contextual Conceptual Reading," *Visitor Studies* 24, no. 1 (2021): 52–53. Italics in the original.

13 Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller: Reflections on the works of Nikolai Leskov," in *The Novel: An Anthology of Criticism and Theory 1900–2000*, ed. Dorothy J. Hale (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2006 [First published in 1936]), 370.

public schools". This includes all of the public schools that operated in the capital as graded schools beginning in 1898 and that were funded by the central or the municipal government. These schools all had several classrooms, they all grouped students by age and/or by academic level and the majority were housed in buildings constructed specifically for use as schools, with diverse spaces in addition to the classrooms.[14] Subsequently, preparations for the exhibit began with the elaboration of a census of Madrid's historical public schools – 83 in total –, with a file being drawn up for each one that included its original location and whether it remained standing.[15] The direct objective was that of making Madrileños aware of the rich school patrimony of their city and of the importance of recovering the material heritage kept in these historical public schools. But the ultimate aim, one which the municipal authorities, the Ángel Llorca Foundation and I were all in agreement on, was recovering the historical memory of Madrid's public schools. Not only would this serve to give the younger generations an awareness of the crucial role that these institutes played in the city's modernization; it was also a way of defending and championing the public school of Madrid today, because the city has a percentage of children attending public schools significantly lower than the national average (54.6% compared to 67.7% in the 2020/2021 school year).

A second challenge was that of avoiding the traditional narrative of exhibits dealing with school history, which tend to seek an emotional identification with audiences of all ages by providing a school reconstruction that seems valid regardless of time or place. Such narratives interpret the collective memory that different generations conserve of their past schooling by recreating classrooms with all those elements associated with primary school – desks, chalkboards, individual blackboards, pencils and inkwells, maps of Spain, crucifixes, textbooks – in such a way that the only real difference between one historical period displayed and another is in the figure of the king or political leader shown on the wall. The story that I wished to tell was that of the public schools of Madrid, seen in their school practices and in the gaze of their true protagonists: teachers and children. This meant that all the objects and materials shown would actually have been made and/or used in the city's schools. Of the 83 historical public schools from the census, 41 continue to be used as primary schools and 31 had held on to at least some of their educational patrimony, parts of which were used in the exhibition. One of the narrative techniques employed was that of pairing

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14 María del Mar del Pozo Andrés, "Las escuelas públicas históricas de Madrid," in *Madrid, ciudad educadora 1898/1938*, 379–84.

15 María del Mar del Pozo Andrés, "Censo de escuelas públicas históricas de Madrid (1898/1938)," in *Madrid, ciudad educadora 1898/1938*, 385–405.

physical objects with the use that was made of them, which was illustrated in photographs from the time. (Figure 1). My goal here was not to spur an emotional identification in the audience with a school that the great majority of visitors hadn't known, but to stimulate their historical imagination so that in their minds' eye they might create an image of the Madrid public school prior to the Civil War. To this end, visitors were shown a deconstructed school that they had to reassemble in their heads.

Figure 1: Cockades made in the graded school Conde de Peñalver and photographs showing girls from this school wearing them. © Sjaak Braster.

Yet another, third challenge was that of creating a different sort of historical account, one that would explain how changes in school practices are not immediate, but rather slow, long-lasting processes that need to be studied from their

point of origin. To believe the historiographical construct that has been widely embraced by Spanish society, the cultural and pedagogical revolution that took place under the Second Republic metamorphozed the Spanish school in one five-year period. The exhibit sought to show how this transformation actually began around 1898, when the loss of Spain's last colonies and its defeat by the United States led to a movement of collective reflection, known as regenerationism, which saw education as a fundamental part of the solution to the country's problems; it also saw the novel type of school – the graded school – as representing a pedagogical model capable of forming future generations of Spaniards who could build a more modern, European nation. The so-called "republican teachers" had already contributed to the betterment of education in the decades prior to 1931, even if it was not until the advent of the Second Republic that their work received the social esteem it deserved and structural conditions were put into place that allowed them to develop their teaching. This is why I was determined to dispute the idea – so dear to many politicians – that the historical memory begins in 1931, and to instead mark 1898 as the starting point of the exhibition. The closing date was also problematic. Initially I had planned to use the year 1936, as the Civil War effectively marked the end of an era. But the war's presence in the exhibit, and at least some references to Francoism, were requirements for the Law of Historical Memory to be applied. I took the liberty of using 1938 – not 1939, when the war actually concluded – for the end date of the exhibit, as this allowed for the inclusion of a message of hope (Figure 2): scenes of boys and girls playing and working together in public schools in Madrid in 1938.

Figure 2: Photograph used to close the exhibit and introduce an alternative narrative about the Civil War. © Sjaak Braster.

An additional, fourth challenge was designing what is known as an immersive exhibition, which has been described as "a multisensory experience that 'transports' visitors to a different time, place or situation and makes them active participants in what they encounter".[16] This implied devising a type of storytelling that could offer an "additional multisensory layer that surrounds the art and helps visitors become submerged in the storyline".[17] I opted for a narrative based on the presentation of five videos recounting, in the space of three minutes each, the story of five (male and female) teachers. These presentations were accompanied by the teachers' personal objects, recordings of their voices (where possible) or those of their students and families and a generous assortment of visual and textual material. The power of these five personal histories, which were meant to give an emotional gist to the exhibit, had to do with the fact that they presented five educators who had known each other and shared numerous experiences before 1936, in teachers' associations, specialized courses, trips in/through Europe, etc. Their professional trajectories were quite similar, leading all of them to become headmasters of graded schools in Madrid during the Second Republic, before the onset of the Civil War resulted in an abrupt change in their destinies. Their disparate fortunes can be seen as prototypical of the fates of Madrid's teachers under the early years of Franco: execution and an unmarked grave; forced exile; disqualification and prison; silent continuity; and political opportunism.

A fifth challenge was that of piquing the curiosity of visitors to the exhibit,[18] for which the general strategy was to limit explanatory texts as much as possible and to let the objects, in a dialogue with the images, tell a story capable of "hooking" the audience while at the same time stimulating cognitive processes and affording them a space for reflection and participation in the exhibit. In some instances, viewers were presented with a query based on the juxtaposition of two contrasting images, the answer to which they were meant to find in the next gallery of the exhibition. In other cases, different visual and textual discourses were interwoven in order to favor the understanding of an event from a variety of perspectives, while other sections relied on the configuration of newspaper reports and personal diaries. Generous use was made of the large-format reproduction of

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16 Zoi Popoli and Izabela Derda, "Developing experiences: creative process behind the design and production of immersive exhibitions," *Museum Management and Curatorship* 36, no. 4 (2021): 386.

17 Popoli and Derda, "Developing experiences," 399.

18 Morten A. Skydsgaard, Hanne Møller Andersen and Heather King, "Designing museum exhibits that facilitate visitor reflection and discussion," *Museum Management and Curatorship* 31, no. 1 (2016): 51.

newspaper articles from the time, a way of transporting the visitor to the 1920s and 1930s. This resource served as the central design element of the gallery dedicated to the Civil War which, due to its position in the museum, did not allow for the placement of glass display cases. The fact is that the history of Madrid's schools between 1936 and 1938 has been neither studied nor published and I myself had to delve deeply into the newspapers of the time for information; in a sense, I was now encouraging viewers to participate in a process of research and to go through an experience similar to mine.

The exhibition *Madrid, ciudad educadora 1898–1938* was organized in five galleries. Gallery 1 provided the historical context in which the regenerationist movement first emerged. Here we find political and social aspects mixed with scenes from daily life together with a recreation of the only kind of public school that existed in the Madrid of the 1880s: a single-classroom school situated in a dark flat in an apartment building. The design of this gallery proved to be one of the greatest challenges of the exhibit, not only due to the synthesis that it required but because instead of the typical accompanying texts, information was projected on the wall using the video mapping technique (Figure 3). This system is considered especially effective for achieving immersive exhibitions and "for storytelling and communicating cultural heritage".[19]

Figure 3: Mounting process of the videomapping. © Sjaak Braster.

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19 Pedro Miguel Faria et al., "Enhancing Cultural Heritage of a Region Through Visual and Auditory Engagement in a Video Mapping Projection," *Journal of Digital Media & Interaction* 3, no. 7 (2020): 124.

Gallery 2 focused on the influence of the regenerationist movement on education and the development, beginning in 1898, of a pedagogical policy centered around the creation of graded schools that was supported by all of the political parties as they came in and out of power. It was believed that this was the primary school model that would transform the failed "old Spain" – which had just lost its last colonies – and align the country firmly with its European neighbors. These graded schools, which took the form of impressive, stately buildings, were a symbol of the nation, and Madrid, as the country's capital, was determined to showcase them so that foreign visitors might see the degree to which Spain had progressed. The narrative discourse offered in this gallery combined the presentation in glass display cases of the first building projects begun in 1902 with images of the royal family's participation in the inauguration of these buildings in the first years of the 20th century. Gallery 3, named "the school under construction", brought together in a display case the large-scale school construction plans from 1911 to 1936. Together with a map showing the location of each of these 83 "historical schools" (Figure 4), photographs of the school buildings were projected on a screen, giving the viewer an idea of how they fit into the urban landscape. The map was showing the distribution of the schools erected in exact five-year intervals, unrelated to any particular political events. As might be expected, the most impressive interval bears the date of 1935 and is easily identifiable with the Second Republic (which had begun in 1931).

Figure 4: Map of Madrid with the location of all of the historical schools in the order of the five-year period of their creation. © Sjaak Braster.

Gallery 4 was hidden up to this point, and visitors had to access it through a doorway made of plastic strips which made its contents invisible from the outside. This "barrier" symbolized the door leading into the school and it gave onto a "deconstructed school". The space was divided into nine corners, each one recreating the spaces of the graded school: the playground, the headmaster's office; the bathrooms and the nurse's office (Figure 5); the classrooms for basic learning (reading, writing and arithmetic); the different grades and school courses; the cafeteria; the science lab; the art rooms; and the classrooms where trades were learned. The narrative discourse of each of these corners was similar: a display case containing objects and documents from everyday school life was accompanied by audiovisual presentations showing the way these materials were used in schools at the time (we found approximately 500 photographs from between 1902 and 1936. They were displayed chronologically, with no reference to political changes, which had to be deduced from the date). Along the length of this gallery were five cylinders, protected by plastic strips, within which five screens were hidden; each of these screens recounted the history of one of the teachers whose fates we considered to be prototypical of the destiny of teachers in Madrid as a whole. At the end of this gallery visitors were shown a film made in 1929 about the Cervantes School, this being a way of offering them a chance to bring the varied sensorial experiences – they had just been exposed to – together.

Figure 5: One of the nine spaces of the "deconstructed school", this one dedicated to hygiene and health. © Sjaak Braster.

Gallery 5 occupied a completely separate space, independent of the other four galleries. To access it visitors had to go back through where they had come in and enter the patio that gives entrance to the museum. Such a placement was detrimental to the overall comprehension of the exhibit; for many visitors, this gallery appeared to be a distinct installation, while others, who assumed it must be part of the museum's permanent display, ended up skipping the first part of the exhibition. On the other hand, the gallery's distribution as a place of transit, flanked by two wooden structures, and the fact that display cases were not an option, gave us a pretext to elaborate a different kind of discourse for this section of the exhibit. Here we presented day-to-day life in Madrid's public schools during the war. Each wooden structure served to present a few months between July 1936 and the end of 1938 which visitors could follow in facsimile copies of newspaper articles, from which giant photo reproductions were placed between the wooden posts. Displayed as well were children's drawings and teachers' diaries describing how the bombardments of Franco's aviation were experienced in schools. The exhibit concluded with the last article I was able to find, which the renowned novelist Elena Fortún wrote after visiting several of Madrid's public schools. In it she remarks on the fact that the ideals of the new Spain were very much alive in these schools, among other things in the equality between boys and girls. Her comment led me to conclude that "our youth and our teachers have won the war" in 1938.

The Dialogue With the Public: Schoolteacher's Writings in the Visitor Book

The act of writing something in the Comment Book before leaving a museum can be seen as one of the rituals of the visit, a "gesture of closure"[20] that marks a definitive farewell to the visit with a few words of gratitude or courtesy towards the institution and its workers. The precise placement of this artifact can have an important impact on the use that is made of it; when placed in a location prone to inciting strong emotions in the audience it fulfils the social function of involving this audience "in a commemorative rite" in which visitors' comments can take on a quasi-ceremonial symbolic weight.[21] In the exhibit *Madrid, ciudad educadora 1898/1938* the placement of the Visitor Book (Figure 6)

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20 Katriel (1997), quoted in Sharon Macdonald, "Accessing audiences: visiting visitor books," *Museum and Society* 3, no.3 (2005): 121.
21 Chaim Noy, "Articulating spaces: inscribing spaces and (im)mobilities in an Israeli commemorative visitor book," *Social Semiotics* 21, no. 2 (2011): 159.

was absolutely crucial. It was found right at the exit of gallery 5, the space dealing with the Civil War, undoubtedly the most impactful and emotional part of the exhibit. The setting stimulated the participation of visitors, who showed themselves eager to act as "commentators and evaluators" and to express "their opinions on the exhibition theme and on the curatorial approach."[22] As a result, the Visitor Book from this exhibition acquired the significance attributed by Reid "as a kind of virtual public sphere, something like an Internet message board; they became a space for a disembodied public exchange and formation of opinion".[23]

Figure 6: Location of the guest book at the end of the exhibition. Found in https://artedema drid.wordpress.com/2019/04/14/madrid-ciudad-educadora-1898-1936-la-escuela-publica-en-un-madrid-en-guerra-1936-38/.

The exhibit was open to the public from 22 March through 6 October of 2019 and, according to the museum's records, was visited by 55.364 people, 4.609 of whom left some record of their visit in the Visitor Book. Not all of them wrote actual texts; many simply signed their name, left "emojis", scrawled graffiti or made sketches (Figure 7) showing their own particular representation of the school. These drawings typically portrayed a teacher at the front of a classroom with blackboard and desks, possibly symbolizing the visitor's preference for a kind of

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22 Ina Ross, "Uncharted territory: Visitor books of Indian museums. The Madhya Pradesh Tribal Museum in Bhopal – a case study," *Museum & Society* 15, no. 1 (2017): 101.

23 Susan Emily Reid, "In the Name of the People: The Manege Affair Revisited," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 6, no. 4 (2005): 680.

exhibit that reflected a more traditional imaginary classroom. While most of the entries were either anonymous or signed with unintelligible signatures, the one collective that did identify itself explicitly was comprised of teachers, who identified themselves in the book with the denomination that in their opinion best described them: "teacher in training"; "future teacher"; "young teacher"; "retired teacher"; "rural teacher"; "republican teacher"; "proud of being a teacher"; "an active teacher who adores her work"; "a public school teacher"; "a dedicated teacher"; "a teacher who loves her work"; "a fascist teacher"; "a grateful teacher"; "a disheartened teacher", etc. This also seems to have been the group that came to the exhibition most regularly and in the greatest numbers. This leads us to conclude that, of all the categories of museum visitors defined by Falk and Dierking, that of "professionals/hobbyists" predominated in this case, this group being understood to comprise those "who feel a close tie between the museum content and their professional or hobbyist passions. Their visits are typically motivated by a desire to satisfy a specific content-related objective".[24]
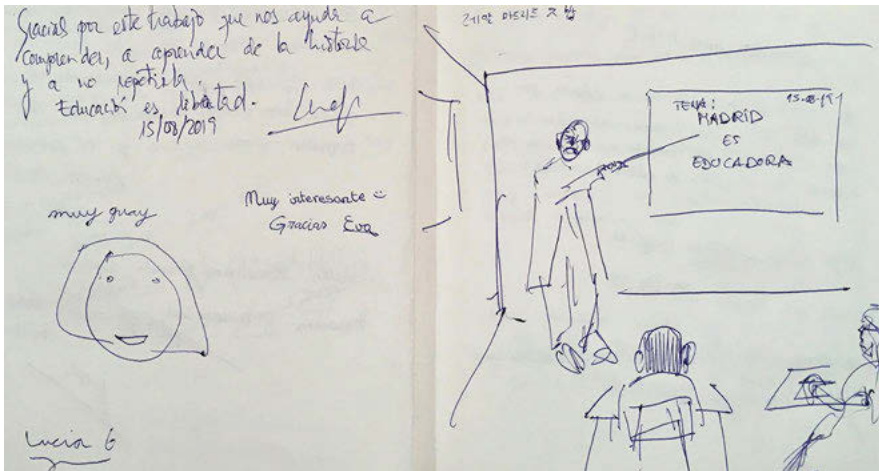
Figure 7: Pages of the visitor book, showing a dialogue between texts and images by different authors. © Sjaak Braster.

I selected and analyzed all of the entries written by visitors who identified themselves as teachers or whose teaching activity is implicit in the text. Of these, the

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24 John H. Falk and Lynn D. Dierking, *The Museum Experience Revisited* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 47.

first and most numerous groups used the Visitor Book to perform the "gesture of closure" signifying the final ritual of their visit. The most characteristic example of this type of farewell entry was that of a teacher from one of the "historical schools" who, though she came to the exhibit six times, only left a message on her final visit, knowing that it would be the last. The texts in these cases tend to express congratulations and gratitude, almost always directed towards the creators of the exhibit, the curator and, to a lesser extent, to the personnel of the *Museo de Historia de Madrid* and to City Hall. The feelings conveyed in these comments tend to be emotional, such as in this text: "I found myself crying inside one of the cabins as I read the heartbreaking story of this country's teachers".[25] Teachers in training, on the other hand, had a style of their own, which tended to be less emotional and more politically correct; without overtly opining on the exhibit's contents, they expressed their appreciation for the knowledge they have acquired and for the improvements in their professional formation. There were no significant differences between these texts and those of other conventional comments appearing in Visitor Books from other European or North American museums studied in recent years.[26]

Research into Visitor Books has pointed out that a basic characteristic of entries made in these books is that they "are comments to *someone else*",[27] which leads to the question of "who is/are addressed and by whom".[28] In exhibitions showing war and human suffering, visitors' emotional involvement can be such that they write texts "*directly communicating with the commemorated historical figures*".[29] This is a feature of the second group of teachers to visit our exhibit, whose addressees clearly seem to be teachers from the past. They feel a special identification with those who taught during the Second Republic and were persecuted under Franco, and the admiration and emotion contained in their dedications borders at times on the heroic:

Pride in being a teacher is born of the strength of those who bequeathed us their struggle.[30]

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25 Museum of History of Madrid (MHM). Visitor Book of the exhibition, vol. 5, 21 May 2019/ 4 June 2019, p. 21.

26 Chaim Noy, "Gestures of closure: A small stories approach to museumgoers' texts," *Text & Talk* 40, no. 6 (2020): 733–753.

27 Kevin Coffee, "Visitor Comments as Dialogue," *Curator: The Museum Journal* 56, no. 2 (2013): 165. Italics in the original.

28 Noy, "Museum Audience's Texts," 48.

29 Chaim Noy, "Narrative affordances. Audience participation in museum narration in two history museums," *Narrative Inquiry* 31, no. 2 (2021): 301. Italics in the original.

30 MHM. Visitor Book of the exhibition, vol. 2, 12 April 2019/ 28 April 2019, *29*.

Having been a teacher for forty years, here I pay tribute to all of these educators who preceded us.[31]

Here's to honoring teachers and to the importance of education. Such a shame those who were executed, retaliated against and had to go into exile "simply" because they were teachers during the Republic.[32]

Congratulations!! To all of the teachers [M/F] who fought to turn dreams into reality and to turn realities into dreams of progress, justice and equality. Congratulations for your legacies and your struggles!! Congratulations to all of us teachers [M/F] who continue trying to ensure that this flame never burns out!!.[33]

Just hours before the start of the new school year 19–20, with nerves and all, seeing this exhibit gave me reason to start tomorrow with even greater purpose and conviction and – hopefully – to be a little more like these regenerationist teachers. Thank you so much, wherever you are!.[34]

I carry in my heart the doctrines of the republican teacher.[35]

There are those who address and give thanks personally to the five republican teachers whose lives are portrayed in the exhibition. Justa Freire is the figure most often mentioned, owing among other reasons to the popularity that came with having her name substitute that of a street in Madrid previously named for Franco's general Millán Astray. The underlying message of these texts is the strong attachment that the present-day teachers – most of the entries were made by female teachers – feel for their republican predecessors; they clearly see themselves as heirs and followers of their legacy (Figure 8). We can even detect a process of appropriation of the memory of these republican educators, one which serves to legitimize and give meaning to the teaching practices and educational values defended by these current day teachers:

Because those teachers committed to Education are a source of inspiration for the teachers of today, for those of us who believe in a quality Public School, who imbue our classrooms with respect, equality, diversity and peaceful coexistence, who give our all in forming students who will be the tolerant, empathetic, intelligent and respectful citizens of tomorrow.[36]

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31 Ibid., p. 74.
32 MHM. Visitor Book of the exhibition, vol. 4, 10 May 2019/ 19 May 2019, 70.
33 Ibid., 83.
34 MHM. Visitor Book of the exhibition, vol. 11, 27 August 2019/ 08 September 2019, 63.
35 Ibid., 72.
36 MHM. Visitor Book of the exhibition, vol. 8, 5 July 2019/ 23 July 2019, 59.
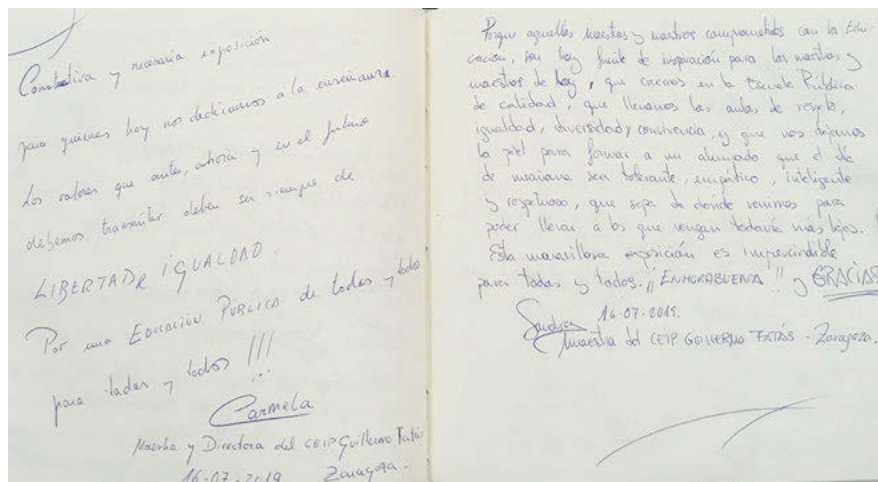
Figure 8: Pages of the visitor book with texts written by teachers from a public school in Zaragoza. © Sjaak Braster.

This last entry takes us to a third group of narratives, those expressing the wish to overcome the historical account by facing the today's problems and looking towards the future. In these entries, this discourse takes on a contemporary significance, "nothing has been learnt from History",[37] and subsequently, we must continue to fight and show our commitment today. The authors of most of these texts are members of the educational reform movement *Acción Educativa*, the oldest such association in Madrid and a sponsor of the Ángel Llorca Foundation – the association in charge of the exhibit's organization. Many of these teachers visited the exhibit in the company of members of the Foundation, to whom they express gratitude in the Visitor Book. They also directly thank the leftist mayor Manuela Carmena under whose mandate the show was organized. The messages are similar and somewhat repetitive, hailing the Republic and the public school and vindicating the larger issues revolving around education: "For a universal, public education for all. Let's make this a better world. The struggle continues!";[38] "for a secular, free and inclusive school";[39] and "for a public, secular, quality, free school for all".[40] One visitor, signing with his complete name,

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37 Macdonald, "Accessing audiences," 130.

38 MHM. Visitor Book of the exhibition, vol. 11, 27 August 2019/ 08 September 2019, 14.

39 MHM. Visitor Book of the exhibition, vol. 1, 22 March 2019/ 12 April 2019, 30.

40 MHM. Visitor Book of the exhibition, vol. 2, 12 April 2019/ 28 April 2019, 23.

allowed himself free reign with the Visitor Book, venting feelings stirred up by the exhibit:

> The exhibit is great, all the boys and girls of Madrid should see it, along with their families. But we need another exhibit reaching to the current day to look in depth and explain, with facts, documents, texts, images, etc., why the public school has deteriorated so much and why in this city and in the rest of the country so many families from different social classes have decided to enroll their children in private schools and Catholic institutes. I belong to a public educational reform project called TRABENCO in Leganés [outside of Madrid]. After 45 years it is still called EDUCATIONAL REFORM. In my work as a social educator, I am not able to talk freely about education, much less public education. What is happening? On 20 April, today, in the midst of a political campaign, there is not a politician to be found who will talk about education or about the continued public funding of the Catholic *concertadas*[41] schools [. . .] Thanks for the exhibit, but we cannot simply stay where we are, dreaming the Republican dream.[42]

This text cuts across various discursive categories. Along with its reflections on the present, we see features defined by Noy for "critical and polemic evaluations"[43] reflected in Visitor Books, which refers to entries that, while showing general agreement with the exhibit's narrative, critique certain gaps in their content. This fourth category includes commentaries that, as Noy has said, represent a small but quite important part of the total. Some teachers want to display their knowledge of the history of education in Spain by pointing to examples of subjects not touched on in the exhibit, but these subjects tend to be general and not specific to Madrid. This reflects a first characteristic found in the entries by most of the teachers: the way in which they identify Madrid with Spain and the Madrid public school with the public school in the rest of the country. Many of these texts refer to the exhibit as "The Memory of the Public School"; the lack of a reference to the capital implies a national perspective, while the local, Madrileño nature of the exhibit goes unacknowledged. Secondly, even though the exhibit's starting point is 1898, nearly all of the teachers refer to it as "the exhibition about the Republican school", as if the show's entire narrative were circumscribed to the years of the Second Republic (1931–1939). And there are those who believe that insufficient importance is accorded to primary education during those years, voicing an implicit criticism of the exhibit's narrative, which attempted to convey the idea of an uninterrupted continuum beginning in 1898. The third and most common criticism was of the fact that the exhibit only went

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41 The *escuelas concertadas* are the private schools with public funding that are subsidized by the state.

42 MHM. Visitor Book of the exhibition, vol. 2, 12 April 2019/ 28 April 2019, 65–66.

43 Noy, "Narrative affordances," 304.

as far as the year 1938. Most of these teachers wished that the Francoist era (1939–1975) had been included, as a sort of counter-narrative to the Republican phase. Lacking such an account, many created their own counter-narrative in their farewells:

> It would be a good idea to continue informing people about how so many public schools disappeared and how education was placed in the hands of the Catholic church.[44]

> During the Republic schools were more advanced than when I worked as a teacher in the year' 65 in those miserable lost little towns where I finally retired after 38 years of service.[45]

> It is very important that the Madrileños know that we endured the bombardment of our schools and that when the war was over half of all teachers who protected and taught our children in Madrid were executed or expelled and substituted by *Falangistas* [members of *Falange*, a Spanish fascist political organization] who became civil servants in education thanks to a certificate handed out by their priest or their *Falange* leader. These new fascist teachers in Madrid's schools substituted investigation and the teaching of freedom and a love of culture for the *Cara al Sol* [the official hymn of the *Falange*] and the formation of a national spirit, separating boys and girls, etc. . . If the Republican school had not been EXECUTED BY FIRING SQUAD in 1939, we would have had one of the best-formed generations in Europe and our educational system would be far better than it is now.[46]

In other words, teachers are using their own voices to recreate an account that will fill the gaping void that they perceive in the exhibit – the demise of the public school under Franco – which in the collective imaginary is inextricably linked to the brilliance of the public school under the Second Republic. The result is one unified discourse, a powerful one that has dominated virtually all existing discourse regarding the historical evolution of the Spanish school.

Conclusions

Turning academic knowledge into a public history of education is a relatively simple process, given how the different turns we have gone through in the last twenty years – visual, biographical, cultural, sensorial, material, and emotional – have prepared us historians to become storytellers and to arouse and engage our audiences. The various historiographical resources used in the exhibit *Madrid,*

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44 MHM. Visitor Book of the exhibition, vol. 3, 30 April 2019/ 10 May 2019, 19.

45 Ibid., 43.

46 Ibid., 90–91.

ciudad educadora 1898/1938, and in particular the audiovisual accounts of the lives of five teachers, delighted and moved most of the viewers. Current day educators were especially fascinated by them, seeming to find a renewed legitimacy for their classroom practices and values in the examples of these teachers from the past. At the same, a study of the comments left in the Visitor Book reveals that a large part of the public visited this exhibit with the thought that it would serve to reinforce the ideas, attitudes, and beliefs they already held. Their wish, which was to see a show on the grandiosity of the Republican school, was granted. The great majority of visitors either ignored or failed to register any narrative elements that might come into conflict with their own preconceived storylines. This conclusion aligns with prior specialized studies asserting "that exhibitions were both inefficient and ineffective methods for communicating new information or changing attitudes", but that they can be "powerful tools for *confirming*, *reinforcing*, and *extending* existing beliefs".[47]

The first exploration of this exhibition's Visitor Book is pioneering within the field of the history of education. Nor is there much research on this artifact in the realm of visitors' studies. The studies known coincide in acknowledging the importance of this document for understanding the visitor's experience and for comprehending the discourses to which audiences are more likely to react as they engage – via their entries – with the exhibit organizers or with other visitors. In the exhibit analyzed in this study, visitors were especially inclined – possibly due to the controversial subject – to register their opinions and put in their "two cents' worth". The comments left by teachers could be considered a focal group within the Visitor Book in its entirety; the fact that most of them identified themselves publicly as educators gives us an idea of its specificity. The exhibit stirred up intimate issues that directly affected their identity as teachers and their beliefs regarding the education of children. Their identification with the "Republican" educators – who for many current day teachers represent the essence of education – may have helped provide them with encouragement and hope in their daily work. In general, I believe the exhibit helped to reassure them with regard to their choice of profession and made them proud to be teachers. They may not have learned a great deal about the history of Madrid's public schools, but they left feeling moved and exultant, and that moment's contentment justified every bit of effort put into the exhibit.

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47 Zahava D. Doering, "Strangers, Guests, or Clients? Visitor Experiences in Museums," *Curator: The Museum Journal* 42, no.2 (1999): 80. Italics in the original.

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Helena Ribeiro de Castro

Flowers on a Grave: Memories of a Hidden, but Not Forgotten, School (Hi)story

Abstract: There is a National Art Museum in Aveiro (Portugal), housed inside an ancient convent since 1911. Its collection is shown in a permanent as well as in various temporary exhibitions. Its fame owes not only to the collection itself but also to the fact that the daughter of a Portuguese king lived there as a Dominican nun in the 15th century. What is quite unknown, however, something hardly noticeable to visitors, is that between 1884 and 1910 the building was used as a girls' school which proved to be crucial for the development of women's education in this part of the country. There is much documentation from the period that has yet to be brought to light, including letters, reports, photos and, more recently, a series of testimonies given by descendants of students who studied in the institution. This chapter attempts to bring together those memories of the school that, for the time being, remain hidden inside the walls of an art museum.

Key words: school memories, women education, art museum

Introduction

In passing by Aveiro, a seaside city in the north of Portugal, travelers may easily be drawn to visit the Monastery of Jesus, better known as the National Art Museum of Aveiro. Built in the second part of the 15th century as a Dominican monastery, this convent gained notoriety when the Royal Princess, Joana, King Afonso V's daughter, lived there between 1472 and 1490. After her death she began to be known as "Saint Joana", while the municipality took to celebrating her memory annually on May 12th with a long procession and a variety of other festivities. From 1460 to 1834, the building continued to house Dominican nuns, who lived and died inside its walls. In 1834, when religious orders were banned by the government, only the professed nuns were allowed to stay in the convent until the death of the last one. However, in the Monastery of Jesus, some of the young women who had not yet taken their religious vows in 1834 managed to stay on as pupils. In 1874, the remaining nuns established a small

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school for poor children and ten years later the Portuguese Dominican Sisters started a new educational project especially dedicated to the young women of Aveiro from different social classes. Then, in 1910, the Republic expelled the religious orders and appropriated their property. Such was the case in Aveiro, where the nuns abandoned the building in the days after the 5th of October and where finally, in 1911, the Monastery of Jesus was transformed into a local museum.

A large part of the building is still closed to ordinary visitors, while a significant part of the former convent awaits conservation and renovation work. Consequently, visitors – whether tourists or groups of scholars – can only visit a small part of the building, where they can admire the wonderful collection of art, especially religious art, reliquaries, sacred vessels, and vestments, as well as a large collection of paintings. The tourist route includes the room where "Saint Joana" allegedly passed away, her monumental tomb made of Carrara marble with inlays in the antechamber of the church, the church itself and the cloister.

Regarding the second phase of the convent's life, when it was the Royal College of Saint Joana, no evidence is provided to Museum visitors, meaning that this phase remains unknown, hidden, and silenced. And yet, documentation is plentiful. This includes primary sources such as letters, reports or photos, newspapers articles, archived in the *National Archive of Torre do Tombo* (ATT) and in the *Dominican Sisters' Archive* (ADSCS), as well some secondary sources, particularly the book by Maurício Gomes dos Santos (1963),[1] who studied the evolution of the Monastery from 1458 to 1911, as well as another publication about the Diocese of Aveiro authored by João Gaspar (1964),[2] which dedicates several pages to the history of the Convent. More recently, a call launched on social media, asking for testimonies of ex-students' descendants, has yielded more information about this period, including well-preserved documents, artifacts, and oral stories which, until this public crowdfunding, solely formed part of the families' histories.

The sources analyzed so far hint at the importance of the memory of this school, and of the religious community's Prioress and first headmistress of the school, Sister Maria Inês Champalimaud Duff, whom the former pupils, their families and the society of Aveiro remember as the soul of the institution. In the silence of her actions, both educational and social, she lives on, a presence still felt among all social layers of the city.

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1 Domingos Maurício Gomes dos Santos, *O Mosteiro de Jesus de Aveiro* (Lisboa: Comp. de Diamantes de Angola, 1963).

2 João Gonçalves Gaspar, *A Diocese de Aveiro: Subsídios para a sua História* (Aveiro: Cúria Diocesana de Aveiro, 1963).

The objective of this chapter is to rescue from oblivion the story of this women's boarding and day school as well as the story of Maria Inês Champalimaud Duff, the woman who, as prioress and headmistress of the center, is still publicly remembered by the fresh and simple flowers on her grave.

Infrastructure and Organization of the School

In 1874, when the last nun died, the Portuguese government intended to take charge of the building and all its revenues. But a petition from the city council, signed by 750 personalities from Aveiro, asked the King to preserve the monastery as a house of education.[3] The Government granted the petition and authorized the conversion of the convent into a school for girls under the direction of one of the nuns who had resided there for many years and had been assigned to move.

A small day school for poor girls was started in 1881, one that struggled with a lack of qualified staff and considerable financial difficulties in a building that needed major improvements. The following year the women in charge requested from the *Association for the Protection of Poor Girls* – founded and chaired by Teresa de Saldanha, who had also founded the Portuguese Dominican Sisters[4] –, a financial contribution that would last until 1894. In 1884, the bishop of the diocese,[5] Manuel de Bastos Pina, asked Teresa de Saldanha to take charge of the college and to send her Dominican Sisters there. Having previously been approached on this matter by the nuns living in the convent, Teresa accepted. In doing so she considered the "urgent public need" of such an establishment, "since there was no other in that city where the girls of all social classes (. . .) could receive, at a modest cost, the necessary moral and religious education and a solid instruction".[6] She expressed her intention to take care both of the free primary school for poor girls and of a boarding and day school for primary and secondary education of girls, who could pay a monthly fee. Because information on the free school for poor girls is scarce, we will mainly be referring here to the boarding and day school for girls under the name of *College of Saint Joana*.

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3 Gaspar, *A Diocese de Aveiro*.

4 Helena Ribeiro de Castro, *Teresa de Saldanha: A Obra Sócio-Educativa* (Lisboa: Editorial Cáritas, 2012).

5 From 1882 to 1936, Aveiro was part of the Dioceses of Coimbra.

6 *Letter from Teresa de Saldanha to the bishop of Coimbra*, 20th of September 1891, ADSCS, D 3743.

On November 6th a small group of Dominican Sisters arrived at the Convent: "[. . .] Mother Maria Inês left here with three Sisters, with Berta Lambert[7] going to teach French and English and another postulant to teach Portuguese."[8]

The official statement put out by the bishop a few days earlier describes the purpose of the sisters' presence, namely, the establishment of a boarding and day school for girls so that the families of Aveiro "and its surroundings may, without great expense, educate their daughters, not only in languages, music, the arts and the gifts of a well-educated girl, but also in religious, moral and civil instruction."[9]

Declaring his "unlimited confidence" in Teresa de Saldanha, taking into account her renowned motto, "zeal, prudence and piety", the bishop took responsibility for the presence of the sisters and the new college itself, convinced that by doing so he was responding to the expressed desire of the many citizens of Aveiro who had supported the use of the old convent for this purpose. Additionally, the bishop appointed one of the most prominent priests of Aveiro, José Cândido Gomes de Oliveira Vidal,[10] who was also – since 1886 – rector of the Lyceum of Aveiro, as his delegate to monitor the education given at the school and to help in all material and spiritual matters.

When she agreed to convert the Convent of Jesus in Aveiro into a school, Teresa was fully aware of the state of decay of the building and of what it would take to restore and maintain it:

> I went to inspect the convent and its dependencies, and I was immediately convinced that the greater part of the building, which was indispensable and most suitable for the college, could not be put to that use without enormous expenses: I put my hands to work; the old houses were converted into spacious rooms for study and work, with enough air and light in accordance with the hygienic prescriptions; a gallery was built to communicate with the other rooms of the house; beams, stoves and floors were renovated; other rooms were razed and, from the foundations, rebuilt for the good service of the college and for the free classes for the poor pupils; a large and salubrious dormitory was built, as well as new adjoining rooms; and so far I have spent on these great improvements, for the benefit of the instruction and education of the people, and consequently

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7 An ex-student of the Dominican Sisters in Lisbon.

8 *Letter from Teresa de Saldanha to a friend*, 20th November 1884, ADSCS, D 1385.

9 *Decree of the Bishop of Coimbra, Manuel de Bastos Pina*, 19th October 1884, ADSCS, D 7386.

10 Following the appeal for descendants of pupils (and others) to help complete the information already collected with evidence related to the school, a great-grandniece of this priest sent us a brochure she had written about their great-granduncle: Maria José Valente, *Cónego José Cândido Gomes de Oliveira Vidal* (Author edition, 2007).

for the benefit of the country, more [. . .] than the whole building of the old convent and its outbuildings would have been worth before.[11]

Gomes dos Santos gave an exhaustive account of the works that were carried out during the time of the school's existence, based mainly on the contracts established with the various entrepreneurs. After the first phase of construction works at the beginning of the Santa Joana School, there were two more extensive renovation phases, in 1888 and 1893. Regarding the renovations in 1888, for example, he reports:

> [. . .] the dynamic Mother Inês arranged, with António de Sousa, to carry out new major works on the upper floor, middle floor, and ground floor, which were to begin on the 21st of June. The top floor was to be divided into 3 rooms and a living room, with 7 windows facing the garden and a window giving light into the living room, along with 6 connecting doors. The middle floor would have 2 rooms and the chapel, also with 7 windows [. . .]. [. . .] The ground floor would be divided into 2 rooms, one having 3 windows [. . .] and the other a door [opening] to the garden [. . .].[12]

These works were indispensable not only for the restoration of the building, which in several places showed signs of decay, but also to respond to the growing number of students. The question raised by Teresa de Saldanha in 1891, in her letter to the bishop Bastos Pina cited above was not, however, about money:

> All of this will cost more [money], which the College itself does not earn and never will, because in addition to the very low monthly fee that was established in this way to facilitate the instruction of even the least well-off, a fifth of the pupils, daughters of distinguished persons who have fallen into poverty, or orphans in precarious circumstances of fortune, some pay a very low tuition fee, while others are supported and educated by the College free of charge; And the same is true of many of the external pupils, because the College was founded for benefit and not for gain.[13]

Teresa de Saldanha's question was indeed about the uncertainty of what would happen to the building she had "almost rebuilt".

> Who can assure us that so much effort, so much expenditure, so much labor will not be wasted in a near or distant future? [. . .] Who can give us the human certainty that Aveiro will not be robbed of the real and undeniable advantages that the existence of this College brings for the education of its daughters, for raising the moral and social level, and even for local commerce [. . .]?[14]

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11 *Letter from Teresa de Saldanha to the bishop of Coimbra*, 20th of September 1891, ADSCS, D 3743.

12 Gomes dos Santos, *O Mosteiro de Jesus de Aveiro*, 464.

13 *Letter from Teresa de Saldanha to the bishop of Coimbra*, 20th of September 1891, ADSCS, D 3743.

14 Ibid.

Looking back, we realize how right Teresa was when raising those questions. While it is true that with these works she enabled the college to exist for 26 years, taking care of the education of hundreds of girls, with the arrival of the Republic in 1910 the building once again fell under the dependence of the State, returning to a condition of decay from which it has hardly recovered.

School Life: Rules and Activities

On 10th November 1884, the school opened its doors under the direction of Sister Maria Inês Duff, a person entirely trusted by Teresa de Saldanha. The Dominican sisters, now in Aveiro, had previously lived in the School of Saint Joseph (parish of Saint Dominic of Benfica) in Lisbon, and in their move they took with them "many things that would help them in preparing and organizing the classes"[15] in Aveiro. For that reason, Teresa had already sent to Aveiro some furniture for the classrooms.[16] It should be noted that the furnishings always worried Teresa de Saldanha, who considered that "a classroom could not be organized properly without adequate furniture."[17] This led her, when organizing a new school, to send a copy of each piece of furniture (a large desk, a small desk, a stool, a blackboard, an easel) that would serve as models to be replicated by a local carpenter. Unfortunately, we have not yet found any of these models, in drawing or in kind.

The basic monthly fee included, in addition to religious and moral education, Portuguese, line drawing and handicraft. We should mention that "Portuguese" meant, besides the knowledge of the language, all the subjects legally stipulated for primary and complementary instruction. For an extra fee the young students could also learn French, English or German, drawing and painting, music, sewing and embroidery. The day students had to arrive at 9 a.m. and stay till 4 p.m. in winter and 5 p.m. in summer, profiting from the same kind of education.

The regulations, expressed in a handwritten document, entitled "Regulations of the Royal College of Saint Joana Princess",[18] were the same as in Benfica. The College of Saint Joana thus followed the same pedagogical model that Teresa de Saldanha had developed in the College of Saint Joseph, in Lisbon.

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15 *Letter from Teresa de Saldanha to a friend*, 20th of November 1884, ADSCS, D 1385.

16 Gomes dos Santos, *O Mosteiro de Jesus de Aveiro*.

17 *Letter to the Bishop of Algarve*, 17th of July 1899, ADSCS, C3763.

18 *Regulations of the College of Saint Joana Princess*, ADSCS, uncatalogued.

According to the adopted school rules, the girls were divided into six classes. From the age of four, children were enrolled and at the age of six they began with their classes. In line with the way free classes for poor girls were given in Lisbon, these young children would attend a kind of a "kindergarten class", where they learned basic things like letters and numbers, where they were introduced to a foreign language and where they could play games appropriate to their age.[19]

Each class has its color, its motto, its badges and a patron saint. The girls were to use those symbols on especial occasions such as in welcoming distinguished guests or on photography day. In fact, almost all the photos studied show the students in their uniforms, using bands and ribbons: "the girls will all wear uniform dresses with apron or uniform bib: The little girls will wear white bibs" (Figure 1).[20]

Figure 1: Holy Family Class, 1st Class, 1904.[21]

Figure 1 shows a class of younger children in their white bibs, under the protection of the Holy Family, wearing the banner corresponding to their class, as

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19 Ribeiro de Castro, *Teresa de Saldanha*.
20 *Regulations of the College of Saint Joana Princess*.
21 Photo album, ADSCS.

well as the motto on a flag: "Docility". We may notice that at least one girl appears to be of a different ethnic origin, and is noticeable in further images.

Figure 2: Group of older girls, 1901.[22]

Figure 2 displays a group of older girls, most of them wearing a dark-colored dress. We can see the same elements as in the previous picture but due to the poor photo quality we cannot make out the writing on the flags. In the right corner of the photograph, however, we can distinguish the image on the flag: Our Lady of Rosary and Saint Dominic.

This image, depicting lighter and darker ribbons with pendant medals, leads us to make another observation. The girls were encouraged to join in cultural or pious associations, where each one had a relevant role corresponding to the responsibility of specific tasks on which the functioning of the association depended. These ranged from president, vice-president, secretary or vice-secretary to treasurer or simply as organizers of events that they offered to the school community. The girls used the ribbons and medals corresponding to the associations they were members of. In this school, we identified two: the Rosarists Association,

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22 Photo album, ADSCS.

which correspond to the flag in the picture, and the Brotherhood of Saint Cecilia, a cultural association with a particular focus on organizing music events. It is our conviction that these pupil associations had an inherent pedagogical purpose in themselves,[23] namely, to educate for co-responsibility, cooperation, and taking up representative functions (e.g., as president or vice-president).

We briefly highlight here the roles of the secretary and the treasurer in these associations. The secretary was responsible for drawing up all the minutes of the board sessions or general meetings, usually organized once a year. We found several minute books where, in some cases, we were able to determine the secretary's age; we quickly realized that the election for this position often fell upon very young girls. We recognize in Teresa de Saldanha's pedagogical guidelines the sense of "doing well" that applied directly to the care of the calligraphy and the tidiness of the notebooks. Figure 3 shows an excerpt of the minutes book of the Rosarists Association in this school.
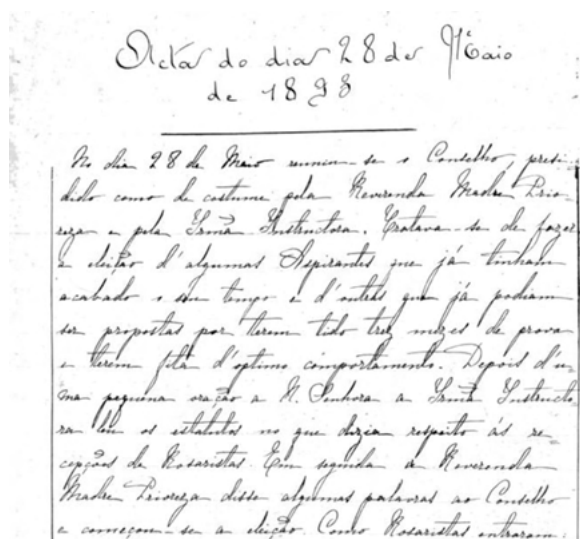
Figure 3: Excerpt of the minutes book.[24]

The treasurer of the association had to regularly present the bookkeeping at board meetings – the revenues (e.g. the members' fees or donations) and the expenses – and to present the annual statement at the general assembly. On

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23 Ribeiro de Castro, *Teresa de Saldanha.*
24 *Minutes book of the Rosarists Association*, Aveiro. ADSCS, uncatalogued.
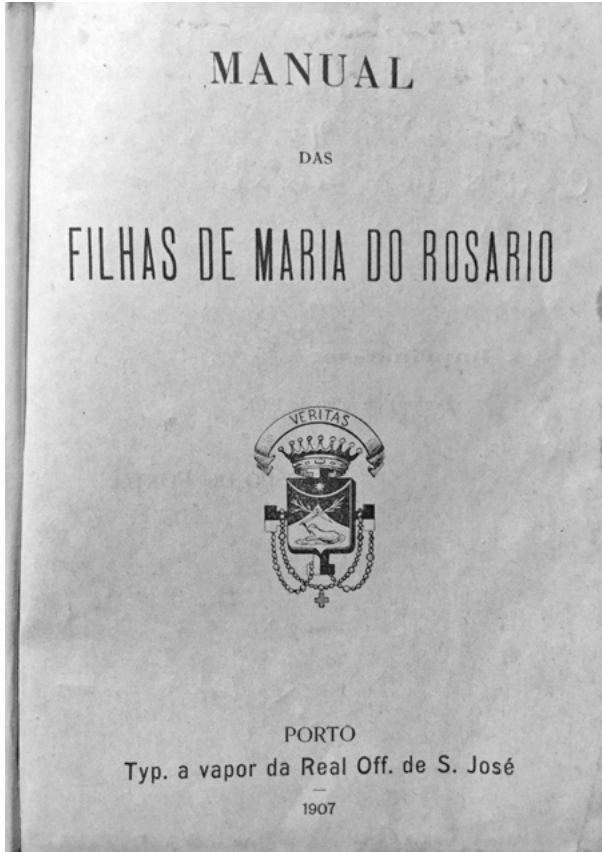
Figure 4: Front page of the Association's Manual.[25]

her performance depended, for example, the possibility, whenever necessary, to propose or weigh the viability of giving alms, buying something for the members or the association, or organizing an event.[26]

Some of the associations had their own rules in a press manual as can be seen in figure 4. In going through the school rules we can find the school's approach regarding grades: "The Girls will get good and bad marks for behavior and manners, for lessons, for order and tidiness". The spectrum for the prizes was broader: these were awarded for participation, for behavior, for order and

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25 Courtesy of Antonio Duarte-Fonseca, grandson of one of the students.
26 Ribeiro de Castro, *Teresa de Saldanha*.

arrangement and for conversation in foreign languages, and they consisted of ribbons which differed in color "according to the degree of reward: 1st white; 2nd red; 3rd purple."[27] Some were given out each month, others at the end of the year during a prize-giving ceremony, which was always preceded by the presentation of musicals and plays in which all the students were involved. At the end of the year, the prizes consisted mainly of books but also of utensils for drawing or sewing.[28]

The annual ceremony was usually presided over by the bishop or his delegate, who always gave a speech, using the occasion to reach out to other audiences, in some cases to politicians highly placed at a local and national level. The Bishop of Coimbra, Manuel de Bastos Pina, presided over many of these sessions, and his speeches with appealing titles such as "The education of the Portuguese Woman"[29] or "Religious Orders",[30] were later published in local newspapers, diocesan publications such as "Christian Institutions,"[31] or in small but carefully drawn up brochures.

Together with the agenda of the annual festival, lists of the girls who attended each class during the year were usually published, indicating their age as well as the prizes they received. We only found one of these programs, from 1889, in the archive of the current Museum of Aveiro.[32]

Looking at the list of this particular year, 1889, we discovered that there were not six but only five classes. In that year, the school had 41 boarding students and 46 day students. Boarding students were divided into five classes and day students into four. The distribution by class did not follow age criteria, which leads us to think that the girls were included in a certain class according to their prior learning. The boarding students were between eight and nineteen years old, whereas the age of day students ranged from five to fifteen.

The presentation of plays and musicals by the students was not limited to the annual party but could also take place throughout the year. One can find photographs of these events in the Sisters' Archive. Figure 5 refers to the staging of the life of Saint Helen by the students in the cloisters.

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27 *Regulations of the College of Saint Joana Princess*, ADSCS, uncatalogued.

28 Ribeiro de Castro, *Teresa de Saldanha*.

29 M.B. Pina, *A educação da mulher portuguesa – doutrinas expostas pelo Bispo de Coimbra na distribuição dos prémios no Real Collegio Ursulino de Coimbra e no de Santa Joanna d'Aveiro* (Typ. do Seminário, 1893).

30 M.B. Pina, *Ordens religiosas – discurso proferido pelo Bispo de Coimbra na distribuição dos prémios do Collegio de Santa Joanna de Aveiro* (Typ. do Seminário, 1891).

31 *Instituições christãs*, Diocesan Archive of Aveiro (ADA).

32 Gomes dos Santos (*O Mosteiro de Jesus de Aveiro*) refers to other programs, from 1887, 1890, 1891, 1893, which we will continue to look for.

Figure 5: Representation of the life of Saint Helen in the cloisters of the Convent.[33]

From the school rules we also learn that physical punishment was not accepted. However, other sources indicate that such punishment wasn't totally absent. For instance, Sister Maria Inês Duff writes to Teresa de Saldanha in 1885: "Emília started to beat the little ones, yesterday one of them came to say that she wouldn't come back because the teacher hit her too hard, [. . .] I cannot consent to her continuing to punish the children like this".[34] Instead, the punishments could be: "The reprimand given by the teacher and the call to the Headmistress to give the reprimand; public reprimand in class; deprivation of recreation in common; poor marks; reporting to the family and expulsion from the school."

The deprivation of recreation was reserved for those who "by habit" did not know the lessons; these students were made to copy the lesson during the recess period,[35] although this could never occur in the main recreations, after lunch or dinner.[36]

It is evident that besides the time dedicated to their work, the girls also had time for walks or for playing. These recreation times were considered to be important because of the role they played in the girls' education, especially regarding their ability to manage their personal time as well as to interact with others: "During recreation time everyone must take part in the games, unless

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33 Photo album, ADSCS.

34 *Letter from Sr. Maria Inês Duff to Teresa de Saldanha*, 16th of July [1885], ATT, AC, Box 43, 4(5).

35 *Regulations of the College of Saint Joana Princess*, ADSCS, uncatalogued.

36 *Colégio do Salvador: condições de admissão e disposições regulamentares*, ADSCS, D, uncatalogued, undated.

some are excused due to health problems."[37] The photo album contains some depictions of these recreation times, both indoors and outside on the farm.

Figure 6: A group of students at playtime in the convent's inner courtyard.[38]

Figure 6 shows a group of students during playtime in the inner courtyard posing for the photograph without, in some cases, interrupting their activity. By enlarging the picture one can see a doll in the hands of one, a watering can in the hands of another, books, and on the upper floor, a girl knitting. Two of the sisters are also in the picture, wearing their white habits. Furthermore, we can observe gestures of proximity between the girls who hold hands or place their arms over their colleagues' shoulders. They look relaxed, although at the time photography required some immobility given the characteristics of the cameras.

While skimming through the school photo album, one finds evidence of a variety of social skills the girls were meant to develop, such as the "art of properly welcoming" visitors. In fact, over the course of its existence the school received the visits of several significant figures from the local and national scene. We can infer from the pictures the involvement of the students in those events, while the letters exchanged between the sisters and Teresa de Saldanha certify it.

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37 *Regulations of the College of Saint Joana Princess.*
38 Photo album, ADSCS.

One of the most important visits would certainly have been that of the young King Manuel II,[39] who, as part of his tour through the north of the country, visited Aveiro on 27th November 1908. This stop-over at the Convent of Jesus, where the pupils and teachers of the school welcomed him, was hailed by the press. The national press followed the king's tour closely and documented in prose and pictures some of his stops. The picture of the reception – with all the girls dressed in white, for a very special occasion, filling the cloisters of the convent (Figure 7) –is especially exemplary.
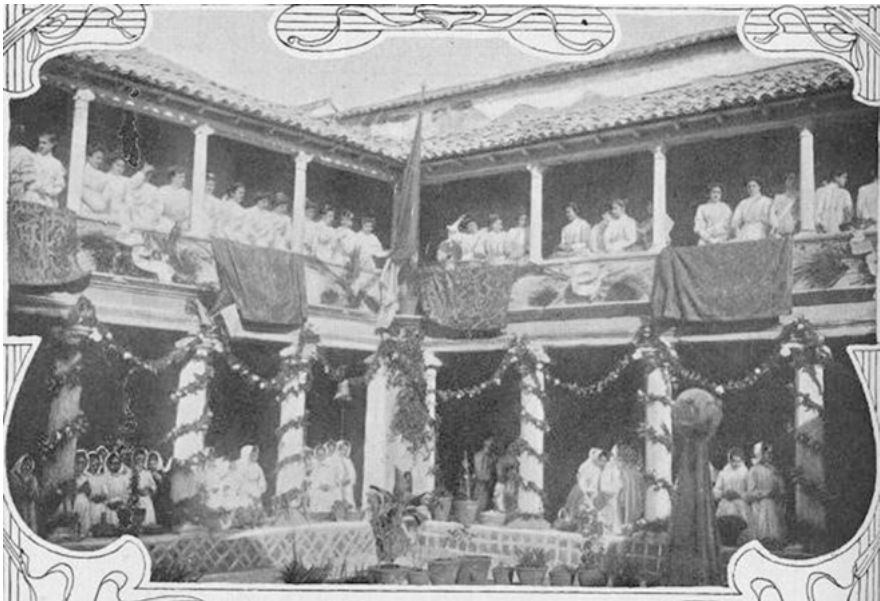
Figure 7: Reception of King Manuel II.[40]

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39 Before him, his grandparents King Luís and Queen Maria Pia with his father the future King Carlos also visited the Convent in October of 1887 (Gomes dos Santos, *O Mosteiro de Jesus de Aveiro*).
40 *Illustração Portuguesa*, 2.ª S, n. 147, 14th of December 1908, http://hemerotecadigital.cm-lisboa.pt/OBRAS/IlustracaoPort/IlustracaoPortuguesa.htm.

Pedagogical Approach

In the directory that Teresa wrote for her Dominican Sisters – the only pedagogical document we could find in the archives – there is a clear emphasis on the way that the teaching staff was supposed to behave with the pupils: maternal vigilance, attention to all form of detail and to their material or spiritual needs and, even when there was a need for admonishments, that these be administered in a way that made the children understand that they were loved.[41] Lino d'Assunção, a journalist who wrote regularly in national newspapers and who was known for his anti-congregationist ideas, penned an article in which he stated that state schools should look to religious schools as an example. As an illustration, he brought up the case of the School of Saint Joana, in Aveiro:

> [. . .] the class is relished and not hated, the stimulus is high, the punishment never depressing, the teaching procedures are the most modern and logical; that is to say, languages assisted by practice; drawing by direct copying of the model, geography on a map, history in examples; and all by a progressive method that does not fatigue but enchants and attracts. And above all the motherly affection by all the teachers and the constant care of the headmistresses.[42]

In fact, in the directory she wrote for her Dominican Sisters, Teresa recommends to those who are teachers:

> Each one, in her own branch of teaching, will seek to perfect herself by carefully preparing her lessons, instructions, handicraft, drawings, notebooks, etc. So that they never present themselves in class without being quite sure of what they must do. The Superior will provide the sisters [. . .] with the time necessary for the proper fulfilment of their duties, as well as with school material, books, etc. Everything in harmony with modern methods, which they should seek to know and to follow in all that is convenient [. . .].[43]

It is remarkable that a journalist knew so well what went on in this school. He apparently read the regulations, where it was written, for instance, that "Girls who learn French, English or German are obliged to speak these languages every day with each other and with the teachers who understand them."[44] He also knew about the fees: "a modest monthly fee from which [the Sisters] earn their living, and the means of being able to educate, free of charge, dozens and

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41 *Directory of the Sisters of the Congregation of Saint Catherine of Siena of the Third Order of Saint Dominic in Portugal*, ADSCS, uncatalogued.

42 T. Lino d'Assunção (1895, Junho 27; 29). As Terceiras de S. Domingos. *O Dia*.

43 *Directory of the Sisters of the Congregation of Saint Catherine of Siena of the Third Order of Saint Dominic in Portugal*.

44 *Regulations of the College of Saint Joana Princess*.

dozens of poor children who come to the school gate asking for bread and instruction".[45] Additionally, the article gives the impression that the journalist had been there and witnessed the kindness of the teachers and the relationship between them and the children; it is even possible that he himself may have benefitted from the Sisters' "sincere and frank manner of expression; [. . .] great delicacy of treatment; [. . .] great deal of knowledge in their conversation"; and that he eventually had had the opportunity to feel welcome as a friend "even in the early hours of the morning [. . .]."[46]

Regarding this permanent openness of the school to the outside world that was sought for and carried out in the schools under the direction of the Dominican Sisters, Teresa de Saldanha emphasized the institute's engagement with the girls' families:

> Everyone is aware of what is done and taught, and how people live in this establishment, since the families [. . .] know the intimate life of the students every day. In addition, as he who has nothing to hide has nothing to fear, the center's doors are open at all hours of the day to the parents and guardians of the pupils, who can thus see the processes and nature of the teaching that is given; they may visit, if they wish, the whole house, and it is fair to say that the praise that the teaching and administrative staff receive from visitors serves as a consolation for their work and an acknowledgment of the uprightness and integrity of their conduct.[47]

It is about transparency, but it is also about interacting with others, particularly with the children's families, and telling them that they are welcome. In other texts, this interaction can be found in the link between students and their families who love them, as do their teachers, this being a central part of Teresa de Saldanha's pedagogical thinking.[48] This is why the school rules dictate that: "The [boarding] girls will write to their parents every eight days" and will tell them about their grades monthly. Likewise, they could "go to the common room to speak with their parents as often as they wish." Transparency and truth were encouraged always:

> They [the Sisters][49] will also insist on love for the truth, so that their pupils will be frank, loyal and simple in all their actions. They will attain this end if they allow them to express their way of thinking, gently correcting any faults, so that the children will never be led

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45 Lino d'Assunção.

46 Ibid.

47 *Letter from Teresa de Saldanha to the bishop of Coimbra*, 20th of September 1891, ADSCS, D 3743.

48 Ribeiro de Castro, *Teresa de Saldanha*.

49 Sisters and teachers, of course, united in the project of educating the children.

astray by fear or trepidation, which would lead them to cheat, lie and behave secretly but that they may always feel at ease with the Sisters.

To make the students feel free to express their way of thinking, to get them motivated and involved in the pursuit of knowledge, to correct them gently when necessary, to insist on love for the truth; to act with maternal vigilance, making the students understand they are loved and respected as persons in their individuality; to value kindness, loyalty, honesty, creativity, responsibility, compassion, solidarity, cooperation. This description reflects the key principles of Teresa de Saldanha's pedagogical project.

In view of these pedagogical principles, the greatest concern of the director of the school – besides the coordination of the educational practice – lay in the choice of the teachers hired.

Despite the statement that for Aveiro "everything is too little,"[50] Teresa tried hard to find teachers with the ideal profile who would fit in with the pedagogical line defined concerning the school's teachings and values.

> I don't like the handwriting of M. Joana Delgado's protégé. I don't want to take the one from Algés. Send me Pamplona's cousin, if she wants, and I don't know if she'll be willing to subject herself to come here to take her Portuguese exam, the examiner being Eulália, who is perfect in teaching Portuguese and in analysis. She was the only person who satisfied our Sr. Maria Rosa[51] [in Aveiro].[52]

Most of the candidates came through personal acquaintances or the recommendation of people that Teresa or Sister Maria Inês trusted. For instance, the French teacher was, for a long period, Vitória de Oliveira Vidal, the niece of the delegate of the bishop at the college, José Cândido de Oliveira Vidal, mentioned above.[53]

Flowers On The Grave

Dr Sousa Gomes told me about her one day:

– *If we closed our eyes listening to her, we would have the impression that we were in front of a queen.*

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50 *Letter from Teresa de Saldanha to Sr. M. José Barros de Castro*, 29th of June 1904, ADSCS, D 6830.

51 Sister Maria Rosa Thiaucourt who was then the headmistress of the school.

52 *Letter from Teresa de Saldanha to her sister-in-law Maria*, 20th of February 1885, ADSCS, D 5474.

53 Valente, *Cónego José Cândido Gomes de Oliveira Vidal.*

I would add:

– *And, if we then opened them, we would have the even greater impression, of being in the presence of an authentic saint.*[54]

10th December 1909, Aveiro. A crowd of people from different social classes and ages gather to pay tribute to Sister Maria Inês Champalimaud Duff[55] or Mother Maria Inês – as everyone used to call her –, who died the day before, and to accompany the funeral procession to the local cemetery.

Born in Lisbon in 1836, Mother Maria Ines was one of the first women to join Teresa de Saldanha in founding the Portuguese Dominican Sisters and to go to Ireland to do her Novitiate. They became friends for life, something that is abundantly clear in the letters they exchanged. When it came to opening a new school in Aveiro, she was chosen to lead the process and superintend the new house. And although her job was, after a first stint as headmistress, to be prioress of the religious community, her involvement went beyond that task, leading her to quietly become the 'true soul' of the Convent of Jesus and of the College of Santa Joana.

More than eight decades after her death, we had the opportunity to visit her grave, which was decorated with fresh flowers. Who did this? Why?, we asked. The answer was quite unexpected: because the poorest people of Aveiro, particularly the Roma, keep her memory alive as their 'mother' and protector. Some of them continue to decorate her tomb to thank her – beyond death – for the benefits their ancestors received from her.

The journalist Marques Gomes collected in a single volume[56] the texts that were published about Mother Maria Inês in the periodic press at the time of her burial. From the different descriptions of the funeral we learn that there were people from all social levels: the authorities; the women of Aveiro "represented in great numbers";[57] "a large entourage of female students from the College of Saint Joana who were mixed with many from the free school [. . .]." There was an emotional atmosphere: "[. . .] tears flowed abundantly from many eyes and impressive, convulsive cries were heard."[58] Regarding her highly esteemed traits, the journalist wrote:

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54 João Evangelista de Lima. Vidal, *Aveiro, suas gentes, terras e costumes* (Aveiro: Junta Distrital de Aveiro, 1967), 94.

55 Born Maria Josefina Champalimaud Duff.

56 Marques Gomes, *Madre Maria Ignez Champalimaud Duff – Homenagem da Imprensa Periódica de Aveiro à sua memória* (Typ. Do Campeão das Províncias, 1910).

57 Marques Gomes, *Madre Maria Ignez Champalimaud Duff*, 17.

58 Ibid., 14.

[she] [. . .] was noble, friendly, and worthy by her merits [. . .] a modern spirit, person of her time and possessor of a vast and solid culture [. . .] associated herself with the greatest spontaneity to the joys and sorrows of the people of Aveiro, manifesting by deeds her adherence to our things and her solidarity with our destinies.[59]

During a short interview from 1993, given by one of her ex-students – an already ninety-years old Dominican nun –, she testified, always smiling, and occasionally chuckling:

Mother Maria Inês? She had all the virtues! Above all, charity. She supported poor families who were ashamed of their poverty. At night she sent the servant, Mr. José, to take things to their homes.

[. . .] Bernardino Machado[60] visited the school and, at the end, said he had the impression of having been in front of Queen Saint Isabel.

[. . .] I had a little goat that I liked a lot and it used to take me to school. When I arrived, I called Mother Maria Inês and she had the patience to come to the gate to see the little goat and bring the goat a cake.

[. . .] When we came in line and saw her at the end, wearing her cape, she would open her cape and we would all get under there.

[. . .] When, at the end of a religious practice in which the priest spoke a lot about charity [. . .] I thought it was a lack of charity to have the pigs locked up and went to let them out, Mother Maria Inês didn't punish me and even thought it was funny.

[. . .] She called me 'my torment'.

This testimony – which is very interesting, as it reveals an image of Mother Inês experienced by a child and which lingered on in the memory of this former pupil – presents Sister Maria Inês as a motherly, patient, sympathetic, caring, understanding and charitable figure; admirable characteristics which were evidenced time and again. At this point we find it opportune to quote Marques Gomes again:

She loved children as the best of mothers; she loved the poor and the unfortunate as if they were her brothers. She had exquisite gallantry for great and small; she was interested in the happiness and well-being of acquaintances and strangers. There was no virtue that she did not possess, or charity that she did not exercise.[61]

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59 Ibid., 16.
60 At the time a Minister of the Government, he would become President of the Portuguese Republic between 1915 and 1917 and from 1925 to 1926.
61 Gomes, *Madre Maria Ignez Champalimaud Duff*, 8.

Widely praised for her role as wise "director" of a school which was important for the city, she also came to be remembered as the "Saint Prioress" or "Mother of the poor" who had lost, in Marques Gomes' words, "an unforgettable and peerless benefactress, from whom they received food for their stomachs and bread for their spirits."[62]

> For these people she found jobs; she gave work to those; she recommended students to the professors [. . .] or helped them buy books and pay tuition; she clothed poor children and, finally, she inquired as to where there was hunger or sickness, to secretly send her bit there, always blessed, and discreet.[63]

Her influence was also felt outside the Convent, in social works and in the protection of culture. The progress of the College as well as the projection of the Convent and the way in which it gradually gained people's sympathy were mostly due to Mother Maria Inês' discreet and assertive intervention and intelligent decisions.

In 2021, after many years of public absence, the City Council of Aveiro decided to honor her and, on 8th May, inaugurated a street in the city with her name. However, at the museum occupying the building where she worked, the silence still calls for remembrance.

Conclusion

Although today the National Art Museum in Aveiro occupies a part of the building of the Convent of Jesus, no reference is made to the building's multi-layered past. The fact that it functioned between 1834 and 1910 as a boarding and day school thus remains hidden despite its impact in the past and the traces that are tangible to the present. Those hidden memories and stories need to be told. They have remained alive in the private space of the former students' families – in the oral histories, photographs, letters, and artefacts – as well as in the public space, in the flowers on the grave of Sister Maria Inês Champalimaud Duff, and in the building that housed the school along with the documents, scattered in the archives.

Asking who and why, in face of the evidence of a public memory, led us to better understand the way in which the practices of the college – carried out by those committed to its educational project, namely Sister Maria Inês Duff –,

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62 Ibid., 16.
63 Gomes dos Santos, *O Mosteiro de Jesus de Aveiro*, 470.

went beyond the walls of the school building and flowed out into the community. The flowers on her grave represent only one part – perhaps the most unexpected part – of the memories related to the School of Saint Joana. They set us off on a search for other evidence in our effort to (inter)connect them and explore the history of this school and to thus contribute to the local history.

Somehow, the educational actions of a school that has its own identity – as is the case of this one, in which a stable educational project persisted for almost three decades – and reaches several generations of children and young people, sometimes within the same family, is perpetuated in the transmission of values that each of the students takes with them to their present and future families or their professional and social environments. It is difficult to determine the scope of such actions and to determine what lives on in private or in public memory.

The way in which this history has unfolded until now, from an apparently simple and unimportant public memory, reveals the significance of taking these memories into consideration – even if just subtle references – when constructing histories of education, as well as the memories of the people involved in educational activities and the stories of their lives.

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Exhibiting

Jeroen J.H. Dekker

Story Telling through Fine Art: Public Histories of Childhood and Education in Exhibitions in the Netherlands and Belgium C. 1980 – C. 2020

Abstract: Since the 1980s in art exhibitions in the Netherlands and Belgium, public stories were told on the history of childhood and education. They have a large timespan with objects and stories from the Middle Ages until c. 2000. This chapter investigates the relationship between the exhibited art and the exhibition's educational messages. The exhibitions told a story about children and education in the past by showing fine art and sometimes also other objects. Two exhibitions at the start and at the end of the sample based the exhibition design on the view of children as miniature adults. The other exhibitions assume more continuity. They become more didactic in the course of the years with various didactical activities for both children and educators. Past and present were connected in various ways: by taking a timespan until the present, by connecting the seventeenth century with the present, by a complementary didactic program, and by embedding the exhibition in a broader project with Radio and TV broadcasts. All exhibitions show boys and girls of various ages, but differing in social diversity. Two of them focus on a specific social group, respectively the marginal and the upper classes, while the others tell a story of social variety notwithstanding the fact that before the nineteenth century most paintings of children were commissioned by the well-to-do. The relationship between art and reality is differently interpreted. *The Child in Our Art* and *Being Young* tell stories about miniature adults. *Pride and Joy*, while focusing on well-to-do children often seemingly dressed as miniature adults, interprets the portraits as images of children with their own world and stage of development. The exhibitions confirm Frank Simon's view on the role of artists and historians: they should work together to bring us inside the history of childhood and education.

Keywords: story-telling, fine art, exhibitions on history of childhood and education, Europe 1500–2000, cultural history of childhood and education

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Introduction

In a personal story about educational realities, the historian of education Frank Simon tells that "[h]istory for me is also about literature and visiting exhibitions."[1] The examples of exhibitions he mentions are, however, not about history of education but about modern, mostly abstract art that could stimulate you to reflect about non-abstract historical issues in a sense that "then you think: this artist brings us more inside history than a historian can do."[2] Yet, he concludes, if we as historians should do that successfully "we would not be historians anymore."[3] In the last decades and inspired by Philippe Ariès' innovative study, the visual became important for the history of education.[4] In this contribution about exhibitions on childhood and education in the past in Belgium and the Netherlands from the 1980s until the present, we will compare ways of how bringing together art and history resulted in public stories about childhood and education in the past.[5]

The exhibitions will be comparatively analysed? along, apart from information about the period covered, the people behind the exhibition, and the accompanying catalogue, four topics: the story told, the relation between past

1 Sjaak Braster and María del Mar del Pozo Andrés, "Frank Simon: A personal story about everyday educational realities," *Historia y Memoria de la Educación* 8 (2018), 766.

2 Braster and Del Pozo, "Frank Simon," 767.

3 Ibid.

4 Philippe Ariès, *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris, Librairie Plon, 1960). Also see: Jeroen J.H. Dekker and Leendert F. Groenendijk, "Philippe Ariès's Discovery of Childhood after Fifty Years: The Impact of a Classic Study on Educational Research," *Oxford Review of Education* 38, no. 2 (2012), 133–147*;* Marc Depaepe and Bregt Henkens, in co-operation with James C. Albisetti, Jeroen J.H. Dekker, Mark D'hoker, Frank Simon, and Jo Tollebeek, eds., *The Challenge of the Visual in the History of Education* (Gent: C.S.H.P., 2000); Jeroen J.H. Dekker, "The Restrained Child. Imaging the Regulation of Children's Behaviour and Emotions in Early Modern Europe: The Dutch Golden Age", in *Images of the European Child*, eds. María del Mar del Pozo Andrés and Bernat Sureda García, 17–39. Special Issue, History of Education and Children's Literature 13 (2018); Ulrike Mietzner, Kevin Myers, and Nick Peim, *Visual History. Images of Education* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2005); Jeroen J.H. Dekker, ed., *A Cultural History of Education in the Renaissance. Volume 3. A Cultural History of Education* (London, New York, Oxford, New Delhi, Sydney: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020); Francis Haskell, *History and its Images. Art and the Interpretation of the Past* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993).

5 See Susan Legêne, "Pleidooi voor historische tentoonstellingskritiek," *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 121, 4 (2008): 462 on exhibitions. Exhibitions on the child in history were organized from the early 1900s. See Paul Vandenbroek, "Aspekten van de kinderikonografie in de oude Nederlanden (voornamelijk 16e-17e eeuw)," in *Het kind in onze kunst van 1800 tot heden,* eds. Luk de Vos, Joris Duytschaever, Eliane Gubin, Marc Holthof, Paul Pelckmans, and Paul Vandenbroek (Brussel: R. Coolen, 1983), 61.

and present, diversity in regard to age, class, sex, and city / country of the people represented, and art and educational reality.[6] First, the creation of our sample of exhibitions will be discussed, followed by an analysis of each exhibition and a conclusion about continuity and change of art exhibitions about education in the past in the Netherlands and Flanders in the last forty years.

The Creation of the Sample

The main criterion for selecting exhibitions was that story telling happened significantly, mainly using fine art, and further the experience of the author who visited the exhibition and viewed the fine art. The first criterion excluded important Dutch and Belgian exhibitions on the history of childhood and education about children at risk and schooling. Among them are the Belgian exhibition *The Child in the Residential Institution* in Leuven (1986), a precursor in cultural-pedagogical exhibitions on children at risk,[7] and numerous exhibitions of the Belgian School Museum in Flemish Yper (also see the chapter of Depaepe in this volume) and the Dutch National Museum of Education, since 2012 in Dordrecht and before in Rotterdam. The role of public histories of the school deserves and gets specific attention elsewhere in this volume.

 Applying the two criteria resulted in a sample of six exhibitions: *The Child in Our Art from 1800 until the Present* in Brussels (1983–1984), *Orphans and Children at risk. Children's Homes in Retrospect* in Arnhem (1997), *Children of All Times: Children's Culture in the Netherlands From the Middle Ages Until Nowadays* in Den Bosch (1997), *Pride and Joy. Children's Portraits in the Netherlands 1500–1700* in Haarlem and Antwerp (2000), *The Art of Education* in Dordrecht (2013), and

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6 See Jeroen J.H. Dekker, "Images as Representations. Visual Sources on Education and Childhood in the Past," in *Educational Historiography, (Re)Presentations, Realities, Materialities*, eds. Jeroen J.H. Dekker and Paul Smeijers, Special Issue, *Paedagogica Historica* 51, no. 6 (2015): 706–709 on reality and the theory of representation; Jeroen J.H. Dekker, "Looking at Filtered Realities. Images of Childhood and Parenting in the Dutch Golden Age", in: *Pädagogische Reflexionen des Visuellen*, ed. Kerstin te Heesen (Münster, New York: Waxmann-Verlag, 2014), 30–33.

7 See *The Child in the Residential Institution. One hundred fifty years of care for children with psychosocial problems* Leuven (April 15 –May 16, 1986), organized by Katholieke Universiteit Leuven with KADOC (Katholiek Documentatie- en Onderzoekscentrum). See catalogue: Mark D'Hoker, Marleen Flaba, Walter Hellinckx, and Ilse Mortelmans, *Het kind in de inrichting. 150 jaar residentiële zorg voor kinderen met psychosociale problemen. Catalogus van de tentoonstelling 25 april – 16 mei 1986* (Leuven: Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Afdelingen Historische pedagogiek and Orthopedagogiek, 1986).

Being Young in the Nineteenth century: The Child in Dutch Nineteenth Century Art in Haarlem (2019–1920). In three exhibitions the author was not only involved as a visitor, resulting in an inside but possibly also biased view: in *Orphans and Children at risk* and in *The Art of Education,* he was involved in the exhibition's design and the accompanying book, and for the catalogue of *Pride and Joy,* he co-authored a chapter. The description and analysis of the six exhibitions below is in a chronological order and along the four topics mentioned.

Fine Art Exhibitions on Child and Education in the Past, c. 1980 – c. 2020

In 1983–1984, the exhibition *The Child in Our Art from 1800 until the Present* took place in Brussels at *Galerij ASLK,* a building of the General Saving and Pension Fund.[8] ASLK was not only hosting the exhibition, but was also its initiator and sponsor, with as general coordinator its Head of Cultural Affairs Bob Coolen. ASLK organized the exhibition "at this very moment [. . .] because it went together with a number of promotional activities organized by the Saving Fund for the benefit of its youthful current and potential customers."[9] The exhibition with one hundred twenty-one pieces of fine art, mainly paintings, was accompanied by a catalogue book with a description of all pieces of art displayed and six chapters on the artistic representation of the child in the past and its social-economic context.[10]

The story told is formulated as first to mirror through the exhibition the consecutive art history stages[11] in Southern-Netherlandish art by chronologically showing pieces of art on childhood, and second to show a variety of views on childhood, from lovely and happy childhood scenes to children in miserable

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8 ASLK (Algemene Spaar- en Lijfrentekas), later ending as an independent institution by merging with other financial institutions, was founded in 1865 to stimulate saving by the common man.

9 Bob Coolen "Woord vooraf," in *Het kind in onze kunst van 1800 tot heden,* eds. Luk de Vos, Joris Duytschaever, Eliane Gubin, Marc Holthof, Paul Pelckmans, and Paul Vandenbroek (Brussels: R. Coolen, 1983), 7.

10 Luk De Vos, et al., *Het kind in onze kunst van 1800 tot heden* (Brussels: R. Coolen, 1983).

11 Neo-classicism, romanticism, realism, impressionism, naturalism, symbolism, expressionism, animism, surrealism, and the styles after the Second World War: Jean F. Buyck, "Ter verantwoording," in *Het kind in onze kunst van 1800 tot heden,* eds. Luk de Vos, Joris Duytschaever, Eliane Gubin, Marc Holthof, Paul Pelckmans, and Paul Vandenbroek (Brussel: R. Coolen, 1983), 12.

conditions.[12] The period 1800–present was justified by the idea that from then a separate children's world was born: "In that period the process started of social and sociological distancing between adult and child," stimulated by authors such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and becoming considerable only far in the twentieth century. The art exhibited shows the artist's view on this nascent separate world and how "society did feel (rather late) the psychology of the child," a feeling absent in early modern Europe, where the "child was simply an adult in miniature who, after a brief initiation, could fully function in the adult world."[13] Attention for children did not start before the eighteenth century and "before 1914 there was no idea of childhood as a clear concept" with childhood "no stage of life with specific protection or attention" and with children "closely involved in the adult's world."[14] For the rest, Paul Vandenbroeck in his chapter on iconography in the early modern Southern Netherlands is more cautious about this image of childhood fully relating to modernity, taking a moderate position in the classic debate around Ariès' study.[15]

The art displayed shows children, both girls and boys, in all ages until c. fourteen, mostly in an urban environment and suggesting in particular for nineteenth century art a sharp dichotomy between happy childhood of the well-to-do and miserable childhood of the poor. Art in this exhibition is both "an image of falsehood" and "the raw reality" in naturalistic depictions of "the loneliness, the dissatisfaction, and the hereditary predestination of the child from the proletariat."[16] In a brief explanation of the selection of paintings art historian Buyck critically describes the "veiled sentimentality and trivializing anecdotic style" in the nineteenth century in genre painting as the falsification of reality and with agreement concludes that twentieth century surrealism does attack the myth of children's innocence with "parodying and provocative strategies."[17]

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12 Coolen, "Woord vooraf", 7.

13 Ibid., 8–9.

14 Eliane Gubin, "De social-economische betekenis van het kind en het gezin in de XIXe en XXe eeuw'," in *Het kind in onze kunst van 1800 tot* heden, eds. Luk de Vos, Joris Duytschaever, Eliane Gubin, Marc Holthof, Paul Pelckmans, and Paul Vandenbroek (Brussel: R. Coolen, 1983), 65.

15 Vandenbroeck, "Aspekten", 18–20. See Jeroen J.H. Dekker, and Leendert F. Groenendijk, "Philippe Ariès's Discovery of Childhood after Fifty Years: The Impact of a Classic Study on Educational Research," *Oxford Review of Education* 38, no. 2 (2012), 133–147; Jeroen J.H. Dekker, Bernard Kruithof, Frank Simon, and Bruno Vanobbergen, "Discoveries of Childhood in History: an Introduction," *Paedagogica Historica* 48, no. 1 (2012), 1–9; Willem Frijhoff, "Historian's Discovery of Childhood," *Paedagogica Historica* 48, no. 1 (2012), 11–29.

16 Coolen, "Woord vooraf", 8.

17 Buyck, "Ter verantwoording", 14.

Buyck describes part of the nineteenth century art on the exhibition as "sluggish scenes of children's virtues and vices" with "neglecting the reality of child labor" and he attacks the paternalistic attitude towards poverty or the "prevailing sentimentalism" when artists picture physically disabled children, for example the blind child.[18] Remarkably however, many exhibits do not fit the only moralizing or idealizing and "an adult in miniature" position, but brings us nearer to the reality of the child's world, as for example an undated portrait by Constantin Meunier (1834–96) of probably the painter's child.[19] With this major criticism of the nineteenth-century sentimental representation of childhood in mind, the selection of twentieth-century art was applauded. In modern art the "idyllic view is being disturbed" and no does longer show "beautifying appearances."[20] For the rest, it is no surprise that the art's suggestion of reality decreases with twentieth century artistic movements such as cubism and surrealism among other examples. This underlines the different evolution of art history and history of childhood and makes clear that for modern and contemporary history, photographs would replace paintings and drawings, although the realistic style never disappeared in modern paintings, as evidenced in this exhibition.[21]

Children of All Times: *Children's Culture in the Netherlands from the Middle Ages until Nowadays*, was held in 1997 in 's-Hertogenbosch, Noordbrabants Museum. It was based on fine art and everyday objects with a timespan from the Middle Ages until the present day. The exhibition's design was developed by Charles de Mooij, conservator of the museum's historical department, together with a work group including art and cultural historians. The accompanying catalogue contains descriptions of the two hundred sixty-three pieces of art and everyday objects exhibited and articles by the cultural historians Rudolf Dekker, Annemarieke Willemsen, and Gerard Rooijakkers on cultural history of childhood, history of children's material culture, and history of rituals in the life of the South-Netherlandish child. The articles, strongly integrated with the catalogue, show forty-eight images directly referring to images in the catalogue.[22]

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18 Buyck, "Ter verantwoording", 13. See: De Vos et al., "Catalogus", 101.

19 Luk De Vos et al., "Catalogus en bibliografische notities," in *Het kind in onze kunst van 1800 tot heden*, eds. Luk de Vos, Joris Duytschaever, Eliane Gubin, Marc Holthof, Paul Pelckmans, and Paul Vandenbroek (Brussel: R. Coolen, 1983), 112, no. 21, *Child portrait*, private collection. Other realistic portraits are nos. 8, 13, 29, 31, 33, and 36.

20 Buyck, "Ter verantwoording", 15. See Vandenbroeck, "Aspekten", 23–24.

21 See De Vos et al., "Catalogus", nos. 59, 63, 87, and 99.

22 Charles de Mooij and Barbara Kruijsen, eds., *Kinderen van alle tijden: Kindercultuur in de Nederlanden vanaf de middeleeuwen tot heden* (Zwolle: Waanders; 's-Hertogenbosch: Noordbrabants Museum, 1997).

The design of the exhibition intends to tell a child-oriented *Vom Kinde Aus* story by showing the visual legacy of a large number of generations of children that consists of objects such as clothes, toys, furniture, and of the child world's iconography. To that end when looking and reading you could almost imagine being a child in the past.[23] The exhibition's order meticulously follows the child's development stages and the life events from the Middle Ages until the present: from birth to the first steps, from baptism to food, from family to orphanages, from sickness to death, and from playing to school. Fine art is used not as part of art history but of cultural history, namely as historical sources just like the everyday objects. The exhibition through its design and lay-out tells in an attractive way a story about the history of Southern Netherlandish childhood. The time span of the exhibition from the Middle Ages to the present almost automatically makes the visitor compare past and present. Concerning the question if and from which time the discovery of the child should have taken place, Rudolf Dekker assumes that history of childhood should be considered as an emancipation history, in particular since the nineteenth century.[24]

Through its concept and design and the selection of everyday objects and fine art according to a series of themes that together picture the child's world over time the exhibition tells a story of social diversity and social inequality, only partly overcome by more schooling and child protection in modern history. A great difference with *The Child in Our Art* is that *Children of All Times* did not have the intention to show how artists represent the child but to let the visitor enter into the child's world in development stages and educational places over time. This happens by looking at everyday objects and objects of fine art and results in a strong reference to real life.

Also *Orphans and Children at risk. Children's Homes in Retrospect*, held in Arnhem in 1997 in *Gemeentemuseum Arnhem*, was based on a mix of fine art and everyday objects from the late Middle Ages until the present. It was an initiative of *Stichting Residentiële Jeugdzorg Heden en Verleden*, a charitable organization aimed at gaining more interest for contemporary Dutch youth care and its historical roots. The exhibition was designed by early modern historian Petra van Boheemen and the book written by the historians Simon Groenveld, Jeroen Dekker, Chris Leonards, Joost Dankers and Jacques Dane and psychologist Thom Willemse.[25]

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23 Ibid., 81.

24 Rudolf Dekker, "Kinderen in het verleden: Continuïteit en verandering," in *Kinderen van alle tijden. Kindercultuur in de Nederlanden vanaf de middeleeuwen tot heden*, eds. Charles de Mooij and Barbara Kruijsen (Zwolle: Waanders; 's Hertogenbosch: Noordbrabants Museum, 1997), 30.

25 Simon Groenveld et al., *Wezen en Boefjes. Zes eeuwen zorg in wees- en kinderhuizen* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1997).

The exhibition, opened by the Secretary of Justice, Elisabeth Schmitz, told the story of at risk children brought up outside their family in Dutch out-of-home institutions. This history started with orphanages in the late Middle Ages in the urbanized part of Europe. From the nineteenth century increasingly also institutions were founded for criminal children, neglected and abandoned children, and after the Second World War for children with behavioral problems, psychological disorders and psychiatric diseases.[26] The story told aimed at stimulating people with experience in out-of-home child-care to think about the historic development of this care to get insight in continuity and change of out-of-home child care by showing the history of its material world and the discourse about out-of-home-care. Much attention was given to the child's out-of-home daily life, and to private and public investments by first churches and local governments, from the nineteenth century increasingly enlightened and evangelically inspired philanthropists, and from c. 1900 the central government with its child protection laws. These institutions also addressed the educational relationship and the change from non-professional and often religious personnel into educationally, psychologically, and sometimes also psychiatrically trained professionals in the twentieth century. The selection of the exhibits depended on their value for the particular history to be told.

Connecting past and present formed the starting point of exhibition and book, aimed at stimulating insight in the long-term development of out-of-home childcare. The vast timespan showed that childcare was considered necessary for child and community from the late Middle Ages and that children were considered as a specific category that needed protection, care and education, also when their family could not provide for them because of the death of parents, inadequate parenting, or children's behavior problems.

The focus on children at risk and on out-of-home institutions meant a focus on the poor and lower classes. It is true that becoming an orphan happened also for the rich, and in Dutch cities there was often a dichotomy between orphanages for the citizens and those for the poor. The majority of orphans in orphanages were, however, poor because orphans from well-to-do families were mostly cared within the family. Moreover, the out-of-home institutions for the non-orphans, such as neglected and criminal children, admitted in great majority children

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26 Jeroen J.H. Dekker, "Children at Risk in History: A Story of Expansion," *Paedagogica Historica* 45, no. 1–2 (2009), 17–36; Jeroen J.H. Dekker, *The Will to Change the Child: Re-education Homes for Children at Risk in Nineteenth Century Western Europe* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2001), 41–140; Jeroen J.H. Dekker, *Educational Ambitions in History. Childhood and Education in an Expanding Educational Space from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010), 106–119.

from poor families. This did not change in the twentieth century.[27] The story about out-of-home child and youth care from the late middle ages until the present intended to give insight into the material and educational reality of out-of-home education in the past with art and everyday objects bringing the viewer and reader closer to the historic actors, the children, the caregivers and educators, and the private and public agencies. This was a descriptive story that did not raise a discussion about the pros and cons of out-of-home education and its effectiveness.[28]

Pride and Joy. Children's Portraits in the Netherlands 1500–1700, held in Haarlem in *Frans Halsmuseum* and in Antwerp in *Koninklijke Museum voor Schone Kunsten* in 2000–2001 brings us in another world. While *Orphans and Children at risk* confront us with children's problems and, apart from pride of the boards of the institution a lot of trouble and misery, *Pride and Joy* is about success, pride, wealth, and happiness. It was exclusively based on fine art, eighty-five beautiful children's portraits, all reproduced in the catalogue in full-plate color plates and put into context by articles on the scope for education, on toys and plays, and on children's costume in the late Renaissance and Baroque period.[29] The exhibition, a sequel to the exhibition *Portretten van Echt en Trouw* (1986) about marriage and the family in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, focused on children.[30] Organized by the two museums and a farewell gift for the outgoing director of *Frans Halsmuseum* Derk Snoep, the exhibition was designed by art historians Jan Baptist Bedaux, Rudi Ekkart, and Katlijne Van der Stighelen.

The story about parents' pride of joyful children was told by showing beautiful art and this was possible because of the level of the portrayal of children, then extremely popular in the Northern and Southern Netherlands. The "key role the

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27 See Groenveld et al., *Wezen en Boefjes*, 9–10.

28 See Marieke Dekker, "Effectiviteit aan de horizon. Een studie rond onderzoek naar resultaat op het gebied van de justitiële kinderbescherming in Nederland tussen 1945 en 2005," (PhD diss., University of Groningen, 2016).

29 Jan Baptist Bedaux, and Rudi Ekkart, eds., *Pride and Joy. Children's Portraits in the Netherlands 1500–1700* (Ghent/ Amsterdam/ New York: Ludion and Abrams, 2000); Jeroen J.H. Dekker, Leendert F. Groenendijk, and Johan Verberckmoes, "Proudly raising vulnerable youngsters. The scope for education in the Netherlands," in *Pride and Joy. Children's Portraits in the Netherlands 1500–1700,* eds. Jan Baptist Bedaux, and Rudi Ekkart (Ghent, Amsterdam, New York: Ludion and Abrams, 2000), 43–60.

30 Derk P. Snoep, and Paul Huvenne, "Foreword" in *Pride and Joy. Children's Portraits in the Netherlands 1500–1700,* eds. Jan Baptist Bedaux, and Rudi Ekkart (Ghent, Amsterdam, New York: Ludion and Abrams, 2000), 6; Eddy de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw. Huwelijk en gezin in de Nederlandse kunst van de zeventiende eeuw* (Zwolle: Waanders, 1986).

Dutch Republic and Flanders played in the development of children's portraiture" was an important reason to bring those painting traditions together. That "[q]uality was an important and often decisive factor in the selection process" emphasizes the intention to let experience the visitors with sometimes stunning beauty.[31] But bringing the visitors and readers in aesthetic delight was not the whole story. That was, as the striking title shows, about parental pride and the children's joy. It was also about parental pride evident from the children dressed at its best, expressed by the Dutch title of the exhibition, *Kinderen op hun mooist*, and important within the upper classes that commissioned painters to portray their children. Joy demonstrates that parents prefer their children to be joyful, a message made clear from the catalogue blurb to foreword, preface, introduction and the various chapters. This intended story determined the selection of paintings made on initiative of parents or painter-parents "in which the primary intention was to record the features of a specific child." As a consequence genre paintings, earlier dominating *Portretten van Echt en Trouw*, were excluded entirely.[32]

With its focus on early modern Europe there was no strong relationship with the present. The exhibition intended to give insight into parents' and family's pride of their children in the past, which resulted in them being portrayed by excellent artists. But the portraits, selected for an age-span until circa fourteen, do more than show pride. The message of the catalogue essays is that childhood was also in those times a specific stage of life, notwithstanding the seemingly adult clothing and the physical posture when posing. At first sight this posture looks like a miniature adult, but when observed closely it turns out as a child holding a posture, ready to start playing as soon as possible after posing.[33] A beautiful example is the portrait of Susanna De Vos, daughter of Cornelis De Vos (1584/85–1651), the famous South-Netherlandish painter. Susanna is dressed as an adult, but no less a child than a child of the present (Figure 1).

In contrast with *Orphans and Children at risk* the design and its selection of exhibits inevitably lead to the upper-class, the rich bourgeoisie that profited from the flourishing economy. The individual portraits show parental pride and children's joy, but also family wealth because of possible future connections or marriage deals, including local government positions such as a mayor, in reality often seemingly hereditary positions. Art represents reality at this exhibition of portraits commissioned by parents or made of the painter's own children

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31 Snoep and Huvenne, "Foreword", 6; Bedaux and Ekkart, "Preface", 8.
32 Bedaux and Ekkart, "Preface", 8.
33 Ibid.

Figure 1: Cornelis De Vos (1584/85–1651), *Susanna De Vos*, 1627,
oil on panel, 80 x 55,5 cm, Frankfurt, Städelsches Kunstinstitut.

because we look at real people.[34] As a matter of fact the joyfulness is partly posed, but that is no reason to assume that children from well-to-do families with good clothes, enough food, proud parents, and a plenty of toys could not be happy and joyful. It is true that the dark colors of life, also happening in those families, are absent. The real and joyful children with their proud parents refer to the positive sixteenth and seventeenth centuries realities of the well-to-do.

The Art of Education in *Dordrechts Museum*, held in Dordrecht in 2013, was mainly based on fine art. The topics and sources, among them paintings and drawings, from Dekker's *Het Verlangen naar opvoeden* [The Longing for Education] formed the basis for the exhibition as part of the multimedia project with the same name with as partners the University of Groningen, NTR (Educational

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34 Bedaux and Ekkart, "Preface", 8: apart from individual or group portraits of children, also group family portraits with children playing a central role were added.

and Cultural Broadcasting Corporation), *Dordrechts Museum*, *Museum Slot Zuylen* in Utrecht, and *Radio 5*. Concept and design of the project were developed by Jack Fila and Yolande Wildschut and of the exhibition by conservator of *Dordrechts Museum* Sander Paarlberg. The accompanying book follows the structure of the project in the exhibition, television and radio broadcasts and contains reproductions of most of the exhibited pieces.[35]

The Art of Education shows fine art but with another goal than *Pride and Joy*. Paarlberg, a specialist of seventeenth century iconography, tells that he intends to attract a broader group than the usual museum visitor, namely: "Parents with children, parents made aware of the exhibition through the TV broadcasts, and who ask themselves: how did that [child rearing] go before?" Looking at the fine art and everyday objects "should offer recognition, emotion. And nice if people could learn something from it for the education of their own children."[36] Fine art should thus stimulate people to reflect about education and child rearing in past and present. There were also available a set of discussion cards for parents, on the front side the image of an exhibited painting and on the back side a description of the depicted scene with a discussion question, for example with the scene of an unruly household by Jan Steen with children doing what they want to do, if children should participate in the decision process about what to eat this evening, about the time to go to bed, and about the destination of next holiday.[37]

The Art of Education systematically related past and present and stimulated discussions about child rearing by combining fine art with present educational challenges. Notwithstanding a timespan from the Renaissance until the present, child rearing in the seventeenth century was most often used to connect past and present. This happened with the themes structuring the exhibition and television broadcasts, namely childhood and the family, motherhood, educational ideals, power balance between parent and child, parental concern and children's risks, going to school, play and toys and the new media, and father and son relationships. Each broadcast started with the presenter looking at a painting about the theme from the exhibition and then moved on to an actual educational dilemma about the same theme in a present educational setting and with comments by educational experts.

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35 Jack Fila, Jeroen J.H. Dekker, and Yolande Wildschut. *De Kunst van het opvoeden* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2013).

36 Sander Paarlberg, interviewed by Robin Gerrits, "Van de schoonheid en de troost", in Fila, Dekker, and Wildschut, *De Kunst van het opvoeden* 8.

37 *De Kunst van het Opvoeden: Discussiekaarten* (Dordrecht: Dordrechts Museum, 2013), during the exhibition available in the museum shop.

While also in this exhibition many paintings represented well-to-do children and families, in contrast to *Pride and Joy* lower middle-class and poor families were not missing. The intention to use art to stimulate people to discuss about education and child rearing resulted into more social variation in the selection of paintings than *Pride and Joy*, with for example also genre painting, highly popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with stories about the bad consequences of wrong child rearing, and on the exhibition with paintings by the Dutch painter Jan Steen and the Flemish painter David Rijckaert III.[38] While the children's and family portraits do represent real people as in *Pride and Joy*, genre painting did not show real people but patterns of parental behavior with often the message that children do always imitate their parents be it good or bad behavior.

Being Young in the Nineteenth Century: *The Child in Dutch Nineteenth Century Art* was held in *Teylers Museum* in Haarlem in 2019–1920. It was based on fine art and on photographs.[39] The exhibition was designed by chief conservator of the museum, Michiel Plomp, internationally known as an expert of drawings of the great masters of the Renaissance such as Michelangelo. The accompanying catalogue contains a list of all exhibited pieces – sixty paintings, pastels and drawings, and thirty-five photographs– and two essays by conservator Plomp and the historians Arianne Baggerman and Rudolf Dekker in which also most pieces exhibited are described and reproduced.

Being Young in the Nineteenth Century tells a story about the nascent world of the child during the nineteenth century, in the exhibition flyer summarized as "From mini-adult to child", a view that matches with that of *The Child in Our Art* from 1983–1984 in Brussels. Around the exhibition several lectures were organized and, to make this exhibition attractive for adults and children, workshops for families were organized and in the Museum restaurant a huge primer was made by pupils of Haarlem schools to attract as many families as possible to this child-oriented exhibition. Notwithstanding the timespan ending around 1900, the relationship between past and present is crucial in this exhibition too. Its intention was namely to show the visitor that it is only in the course of the nineteenth century that our idea of childhood as a specific stage of development and life started. In early modern Europe children were considered as small adults, a view changed radically in the Enlightenment, in particular by Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Émile* (1762), himself present in an etching (c. 1795) by Augustin Legrand,

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38 Fila, Dekker and Wildschut, *De Kunst van het opvoeden*, 54–59.
39 See Brandt Corstius, *De kunst van het moederschap*, catalogue of the exhibition with the same name in Haarlem 1981–82.

whereupon he hands with approval a field bouquet to a mother who feeds her child.[40] Plomp summarizes the historical change leading to this exhibition as follows: "The mini-adult steps aside, the child may be child."[41]

Figure 2: Floris Arntzenius (1864–1925), *The Match Girl* (Het lucifermeisje), *c.* 1890, oil on canvas, 131 x 76 cm, Haags Historisch Museum, The Hague.

The exhibition shows a diversity of children: boys and girls, babies and toddlers and schoolchildren, children from the city and from the country, and from the well-to-do to the poor. The making of children portraits commissioned by their parents was as in the seventeenth century a lifestyle belonging to well-to-do families. But in this century of increasing class differences because of the

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40 Baggerman and Rudolf Dekker, "De jeugd heeft de toekomst", 55.
41 Michiel Plomp, "Jong in de 19^e eeuw. Het kind in de Nederlandse kunst van 1780 tot 1914", in *Het kind in de Nederlandse 19^e-eeuwse kunst*, eds. Arianne Baggerman, Rudolf Dekker, and Michiel Plomp (Bussum: Uitgeverij Thoth; Haarlem: Teylers Museum), 12.

first phase of the industrial revolution, painters gave more attention to the life of children of the poor, for example to child labor. *The Match Girl* from c. 1890 was inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale and painted by Floris Arntzenius (1864–1925).[42] The disabled girl, aged c. ten, in the evening leaning against a wall in dark and cold The Hague, waits for people ready with their dinner in a well-heated restaurant nearby and willing to buy some matchboxes (Figure 2).

According to Plomp, "for most children's portraits in the first half of the nineteenth century only the toys present in the paintings tell you that they are representing children [. . .] For the rest they look like small adults. Depicting children as real children almost does not occur in the Netherlands in the nineteenth century."[43] This means that we should not see much of a reality and that for example the painting with which the exhibition started, a portrait of one year old Catharina Elisabeth Rente Linsen, elegantly dressed and with red coral jewelry around her neck and wrists, made in 1831 by Jan Adam Kruseman (1804–1862), could only

Figure 3: Jan Adam Kruseman Jz. (1804–1862), *Portrait of Catharina Elisabeth Rente Linsen (1830–1890)*, 1831, Oil on canvas, 77.2 x 66 cm, Teylers Museum, Haarlem.

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42 Floris Arntzenius (1864–1925), *Het lucifermeisje*, ca. 1890. Collectie: Haags Historisch Museum, Den Haag.

43 Plomp, "Jong in de 19^e eeuw", 22.

be interpreted as that of a small adult. However, and just as with *Pride and Joy* portraits from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, also this portrait could be interpreted as both evidence of parental pride because of the elegant dress and the precious jewelry, and as, behind the dress and jewelry, an image of a one-year-old girl with the plump feet and shoulders of a real baby with a roguish child face (Figure 3).[44]

Conclusion

Together, the exhibitions have a large timespan with objects and stories from the Middle Ages until *c.* 2000, with *Orphans and Children at Risk*, *Children of All Times* and *The Art of Education* covering the whole period and *The Child in Our Art*, *Pride and Joy* and *Being Young* covering respectively the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the nineteenth century. They were organized by museums with the exception of *The Child in Our Art*, organized by a bank, which also was the exhibition's host, and *Orphans and Children at Risk*, initiated by a charitable organization. Whether the location could have been of influence on the public is not clear. But as a matter of fact, people with the intention of visiting a museum will look at art, while customers of a bank will visit a bank for financial matters and then still become interested in art when present in the very bank's building. The design of the exhibitions was made by art historians (*The Child in Our Art*, *Pride and Joy*) and by a cooperation between historians and historians of culture and education, and with *Orphans and Children at Risk*, also in the person of Thom Willemse a psychologist specialized in special education. The story telling in exhibitions with an interdisciplinary team, like *Orphans and Children at Risk* and *The Art of Education*, contained more explicitly historical and educational elements, while the exhibition *Pride and Joy*, designed by art historians, first and foremost focused on the beauty of the pieces of art exhibited. All were accompanied by a catalogue with the exhibited fine art together with, for *Children of All Times*, *Orphans and Children*, and *The Art of Education*, also everyday objects.

The exhibitions showed fine art and told a story about the child and education in the past. For *Orphans and Children at risk*, art was secondary in telling the story about childcare from the Middle Ages until the present, the other exhibitions used first of all art for their story, with *Pride and Joy* showing exclusively a beautiful world of childhood and parenting. Two exhibitions, chronologically the

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44 See Dekker, 'Van mini-volwassene naar kind?', 40–42.

start and the end of our chronologically composed sample, namely *The Child in Our Art* and *Being Young* based the exhibition design on the view of children as miniature adults until far in the nineteenth century. The other exhibitions do not have such strong views and assume more continuity. A strong view is also behind *Pride and Joy:* it is the opposite of children as miniature adults as an interpretation framework for the portraits of preciously and elegantly dressed children that seeming look like small adults. The exhibitions become more didactic in the course of the years with various didactical activities accompanying the exhibition for both children and educators.

Past and present were connected in those exhibitions in various ways: by taking a timespan until the present, by connecting past, for example the seventeenth century, with present through a strong view about the historical development of childhood as a distinct stage of life, by a complementary didactic program, and with *The Art of Education* the embedding of the exhibition in a broader project with Radio and TV broadcasts.

All exhibitions show boys and girls from various ages, but concerning social diversity they differ. Two of them, *Orphans and Children* and *Pride and Joy* focus on one specific group respectively the marginal and the upper classes. The other exhibitions try to tell a story of the various social groups but the fact that before the nineteenth century most paintings of children were commissioned by the well-to-do makes this group dominate the early modern period.

The relationship between art and reality is differently interpreted. *The Child in Our Art* and *Being Young* tell the visitor that what she / he sees is sometimes far from the reality of childhood and more about miniature adults, while it is possible to see the same pieces of art totally different, as discussed above. Striking for *Pride and Joy* is that the focus on well-to-do children often seemingly dressed as miniature adults was not impediment at all for interpreting them as images of children with their own world and stage of development. Moreover, all those portraits were of real people, and so realizing a strong reference to reality, as with portraits in the other exhibitions. One way or another all exhibitions wanted to tell a story about childhood and child rearing in past and present about the reality of children's life and parenting and about educational ambitions, for example by showing genre painting.

With this visit in retro respect of the six exhibitions in mind, we turn again to Frank Simon's view on the role of artists and historians in bringing us inside history. Indeed, the solution is not that historians would pursue and perhaps even achieve the same effect as artists do, because they would then "not be historians anymore". There is, however, another option: working together. Cultural historians and historians of education can so to speak work together with artists from the past, by looking at and analyzing their art as sources for bringing us

inside history. That is what was intended in the exhibitions that were analysed in this contribution.

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Future Pasts: Web Archives and Public History as Challenges for Historians of Education in Times of COVID-19

Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic has not only sparked a renewed interest in history; it has also focused our attention on how the present can be historically preserved. Therefore, it is safe to predict that the COVID-19 crisis and its documentation will be analyzed by future historians, and it will bring about methodological and technological changes that affect our ways of working as historians of education. This chapter will examine the following: First, it looks at some basic characteristics of web archives and how they challenge our work as historians. Second, it offers reflections on different modes of archival access and on how this may affect current concepts of the past. Third, the chapter discusses how web archives relate to public history and, next, introduces the Education & Pandemics Archive launched by the International Standing Conference for the History of Education (ISCHE). The chapter will also provide preliminary insights into how web archives may affect our work as historians of education. Web archives offer different structures, opportunities for different interactions and technological environments. They can be characterized by collaborative processes by networked data within a flattened structure, and by interconnected hardware and software environments. Web archives are user-friendly, flexible and invite us to get involved and to develop new historical dimensions.

Keywords: COVID-19, web archives, collaboration, mediation, community response

> The human response to the virus has been to find to limit contamination, complemented by techno-optimistic hopes about tracing apps and the race to achieve herd immunity through a vaccine. Yet as an underlying potentiality, the virus is concretely *there* as a gigantic distributed entity that implies a number of obstructions to a linear temporality moving forward.
>   Henriette Steiner and Kristin Veel, *Touch in Time of Corona* (2021).

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only posed a challenge to society in all kinds of areas, including public and social life, work, consumption, mobility, health systems, technology, and education; it has also demonstrated the limits of human agency. At the same time, the notion of living in an extraordinary present has filled many of us with hope that the COVID-19 crisis will become a historical turning point and serve as a stimulus and encouragement to work towards better, post-anthropocentric futures and new ecological relations.

During the "second wave" of the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to lockdowns in many parts of the world in 2020 and 2021, the German government released three short videos entitled *#besonderehelden* to encourage people to stay at home.[1] While the videos were aimed at the general public, they specifically targeted young adults in their late teens or early twenties. The hashtag *#besonderehelden* ("special heroes") was circulated on Twitter and, indeed, the videos were soon given English subtitles and began to draw worldwide attention on social media. A tweet by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau featuring one of the videos received some 16,000,000 likes within 15 hours (@JustinTrudeau, November 15, 2020).

The videos project the COVID-19 pandemic into the past of a potential future. This past, in turn, is documented through biographical interviews with an older generation that is imagined having been young and heroic in 2020. These fictional memories also feature a COVID-19 album made in 2020, an artifact presenting the COVID-19 pandemic as a remarkable past that, in the videos, is used to generate narratives connecting different generations and dimensions in time. The ironic quintessence of the videos is that staying at home and doing nothing was the extraordinary contribution of the younger generation during the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The everyday lives of the young COVID-19 heroes were defined by being lazy, eating take-out food, participating in digital communities, and sitting on the sofa or lying in bed while isolating physically, alone or with a partner or close friend. The videos were made in the style of war testimonies; however, the "weapons" and "heroic" virtues of the young COVID-19 generation are somewhat surprising: in the videos we are told that it is passivity and patience that made these young men and women stand out.

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1 "Videos der Bundesregierung #besonderehelden – Zusammen gegen Corona," Die Bundesregierung, accessed July 29, 2022, https://dserver.bundestag.de/btd/19/257/1925769.pdf.

The German video clips suggest that much like a war, the COVID-19 crisis was and is a threatening, extraordinary, and critical moment in history. With the continuing spread of the pandemic, both politicians and scientists around the world have been adopting a kind of wartime rhetoric by suggesting that the people must stand united and heroically fight the virus.[2] War and pandemics are made to relate to and mirror each other. Indeed, as early as 1947, Albert Camus, in his novel *La peste* (*The Plague*), used a contagious virus as an allegory for the horrors caused by the German invasion and the Second World War. The wartime rhetoric of the COVID-19 crisis is also heightened by the fact that most propaganda has concentrated on the safety and internal unity of nation-states while ignoring the global geographies of the crisis, the immense diversity of vulnerable populations, and the related inequalities and hardships.[3] In the meantime, national vaccination campaigns have been rolled out and governments have been competing as to their achievements in fighting the crisis while producing new internal divisions – such as, for example, between vaccinated and unvaccinated people – and failing to show solidarity with the Global South.

As has been pointed out, the widespread rhetoric of war has also raised awareness of living in an extremely threatening moment in history. Viral diseases and wars are perceived as catastrophes of the same kind: they both force us to face up to our vulnerability, ignorance, and lack of foresight; they both elicit horror, monotony, and exhaustion; and they both make it difficult for us to envisage better futures from which we can look back and celebrate our achievements.[4] This may explain why the COVID-19 crisis quickly prompted people to discover how previous generations dealt with similar health crises. The plague and the so-called Spanish flu have been held up as prominent examples of historical threats to humanity. People have been interested in how health crises were fought in the past, how isolation and new hygiene measures impacted both private and public lives, and how nation states, legal authorities, and international organizations evolved into the primary agents of control. However, the selection of historical reference points has been highly subjective, and recent pandemics (e.g., swine

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2 See: Henry Irving, "What the Second World War Tells Us about Enlisting 'the People' in the Fight against Covid-19," *School of Cultural Studies and Humanities Blog*, March 29, 2020, accessed July 22, 2022. https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/blogs/school-of-cultural-studies-and-humanities/2020/03/fight-against-covid19/.

3 See, e.g., Priscilla Wald, *Contagious: Cultures, Carriers, and the Outbreak Narrative* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008).

4 Elisabeth Bronfen, *Angesteckt: Zeitgemässes über Pandemie und Kultur* (Basel: Echtzeit, 2020).

flu, HIV/AIDS, etc.) have generally not been part of the picture. Much like colonial concepts of infection, disease has been represented as a distant and alien external threat requiring a collective (national) change in behavior, containment, and immunization, rather than something that can bring about structural ecological and social change at the global level.[5]

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only sparked a renewed interest in history and in how human health affected all aspects of societies in the past; it has also focused our attention on how the present can be historically preserved in order to become part of public debate and a fruitful future harvest.[6] History departments, cultural organizations, national archives, and museums worldwide have started discussion forums and initiatives to gather and create collective memories of individual and community responses to COVID-19.[7] Indeed, the COVID-19 crisis has marked the launch of numerous open-source web archives collecting experiences of everyday life around the globe.[8]

These initiatives provide an abundance of material documenting how key areas of society have changed during or as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, although it seems highly likely that the most troubled communities have lacked the technological means to contribute their own experiences and stories. Nevertheless, these archives also make us aware of the fact that individual and local experiences can connect us with distant parts of the world and different social strata – even if the intensity of pandemics, their duration and effects, and their social, political, and economic contexts vary tremendously. In August 2020, the

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5 Isolation and containment policy in general were and still are measures applied towards those who don't belong in times of migration: see, e.g., Rosa Salzberg, *Welcome to Venice: Arriving in the Renaissance City*, accessed September 16, 2021, https://uploads.knightlab.com/story mapjs/553127cc2148d9582332d733c55f7a65/venice-arrival-city/index.html; Rosa Salzberg, "Controlling and Documenting Migration via Urban 'Spaces of Arrival' in Early Modern Venice," in *Migration Policies and Materialities of Identification in European Cities: Papers and Gates, 1500–2000*, ed. Hilde Greefs and Anne Winter (London: Routledge, 2018), 27–45.
6 Shiqi Lin, "Archives of the Future: Documentary Impulse in a Time of Crisis," *positions – episteme issue 2: covid-19 pandemic*, accessed September 19, 2021, http://positionspolitics.org/epis teme-2-lin/.
7 See, e.g., the discussion forum series organized by the Raphael Samuel History Centre, accessed July 22, 2022. https://raphaelsamuelhistorycentre.com/2020/10/14/covid-19-in-historical-perspective-an-in-conversation-series/; for more information on digital COVID-19 archives, see https://covidmemory.lu/; https://coronarchiv.geschichte.uni-hamburg.de/projector/s/coronar chive/page/welcome; and https://cc.au.dk/en/warcnet/warcnet-papers/.
8 See, e.g., the information on COVID-19 archives on the website of the International Federation for Public History: Thomas Cauvin, "Mapping Public History Projects about COVID 19," International Federation for Public History, updated April 24, 2020, accessed July 22, 2022. https://ifph. hypotheses.org/3225.

New York Times published an article entitled "In New Jersey, Tanzania, Peru, TV Lessons Replace Online Learning."[9] Documenting how TV and educational podcasts, as well as mobile apps, e-learning and education by radio, are used in both poor and wealthy regions of the world, the article vividly brought home the pandemic's educational consequences around the globe.

While it is safe to predict that the COVID-19 crisis and its documentation will be analyzed by future historians, it seems clear that it will bring about methodological and technological changes that affect our ways of working as historians of education. This is what we want to reflect upon in this chapter. We will first look at some basic characteristics of web archives and how they challenge our work as historians. Second, we will reflect on different modes of archival access and on how this may affect current concepts of the past. Third, we will discuss how web archives relate to public history and, next, introduce the Education & Pandemics Archive launched by the International Standing Conference for the History of Education (ISCHE). Finally, we will close with a brief preliminary conclusion on how web archives may affect our work as historians of education in an "age of abundance" ruled by digital technologies.[10]

The Structure and Materiality of Web Archives

Made By Us, a group of U.S.-based history and civic organizations, in August 2020 mapped more than 450 COVID-19 crowdsourcing initiatives worldwide, all of them designed to encourage the general public to self-document and share their COVID-19 memories and to upload images, audio files, texts, videos, and other content.[11] To visualize the number and locations of COVID-19 web archives, Made By Us placed pin icons on a Google map of the world. This visualization overwhelms the

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9 Benjamin Mueller and Mitra Taj, "In New Jersey, Tanzania, Peru, TV Lessons Replace Online Learning," *New York Times*, updated August 20, 2020, accessed 22 July 2022. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/17/world/coronavirus-television-schools.html.

10 Ian Milligan, *History in the Age of Abundance: How the Web Is Transforming Historical Research* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019); Alexis C. Madrigal, "The Way We Write History Has Changed," *The Atlantic*, January 21, 2020, accessed July 22, 2022. https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2020/01/smartphone-archives-history-photography/605284/.

11 See Made By Us, "YOU Are the Primary Source," *Medium*, April 16, 2020, accessed July 22, 2022. https://medium.com/history-made-by-us/you-are-the-primary-source-211c33053bcf; Cauvin, "Mapping Public History Projects." Another collection of COVID-19 web archives is available at https://archive-it.org/collections/13529.

viewers through the sheer quantity of icons; it also shows the global imbalance in the distribution of digital COVID-19 memory projects, mirroring the economic, technological, cultural, and political differences that in turn determine which voices are or will be collected. Thus, the technological divide not only creates an imbalance in terms of what will be recorded by whom, but also which populations will be able to build communities at a distance by participating in the creation of local, national, and international web archives.

Indeed, many scholars stress that web archives are incomplete and problematic because of a lack of accessibility, trust, transparency, and inclusivity.[12] This concerns both technological and knowledge infrastructures, as well as institutional barriers and copyright issues: "In gathering, preserving, curating, publishing, and/or analyzing an intangible and massive born-digital heritage, key stakeholders, whether they are libraries, private companies, scholars or others, face challenges which are particularly critical when they concern the sustainability, accountability and inclusiveness of, and engagement with, web archives."[13] Therefore, many smaller web archives and blogs run by universities, individual scholars, and scientific associations avoid copyright conflicts, data loss, and data storage problems by linking some of their contents (e.g., URLs to websites or videos and audios hosted on YouTube, Vimeo, Spotify or Soundcloud) to gigantic digital preservation initiatives like the Internet Archive (IA)/Wayback Machine whose contents are preserved, searchable, and time stamped.[14]

Historians also need to be aware of the importance of born-digital documents as primary sources and gain a fresh and comprehensive understanding of what should be perceived as historical record. Born-digital and digitized documents invite historians to think about how they relate to non-haptic archives, and to reflect upon different forms of authenticity, orders of historical time, and sensory relationships with historical sources.[15] Moving beyond the idea and authority of the traditional (national) archive therefore involves a major shift in perspective.[16]

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12 Nils Brügger and Ian Milligan, *The Sage Handbook of Web History* (London: Sage, 2019), 5–6; Valérie Schafer and Jane Winters, "The Values of Web Archives," *International Journal of Digital Humanities* 2 (June 10, 2021): 129–144. https://doi.org/10.1007/s42803-021-00037-0.

13 Schafer and Winters, "The Values of Web Archives."

14 For a brief overview of the history and structure of the Internet Archive, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_Archive. The Internet Archive can be accessed at https://archive.org/.

15 Milligan, *History in the Age of Abundance*.

16 Benjamin H. Bratton suggests a vision of the future in which the nation state as an ordering principle of modern historical thinking will be replaced by a rather accidental, "more plural, more contradictory, more composite, and more polyscalar" planetary IT megastructure that is

Traditional archives and museums were and continue to be perceived as physically immobile buildings where historical sources are collected, conserved, restored, and administered in scientifically organized and structured ways. Catalogs, inventories, directories, collection descriptions, and guides on collection-specific archiving procedures (most of which are now online as well) are typical means of supporting, framing, and shaping historical research. During the nineteenth century (and beyond), a central purpose of archives and museums was to represent the glory of the nation state, as well as the causal structure of progress and achievements in time and space.[17] Another fundamental rule of traditional archiving is the principle of provenance defined as the relationship between historical documents and their creators rather than their subject matters. The German philosopher Hans Blumenberg has pointed out that the metaphorical use of the term "source" in historical research directly refers to this obsession with discovering the authentic origin of a tangible document.[18]

Meanwhile, historians are eager to extend the use and principles of traditional source criticism to born-digital and digitized documents.[19] This also means that we need to reflect on the material and technological changes of archiving. Indeed, one of the most important issues we need to consider is the materiality or physicality of web archives.[20] Drawing on the philosophy of technology, media history, and the concept of material hermeneutics, it can be argued that technologies create physical mass, meaning, and memory by means of mediati-

connected by design, interfaces, and machines. See Benjamin H. Bratton, *The Stack: On Software and Sovereignty* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015), 17.

17 Sina Steglich, "The Archive as Chronotopos in the Nineteenth Century: Towards a History of Archival Times," *History and Theory* 60, no. 2 (2021): 234–48; Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995).

18 Hans Blumenberg, *Quellen, Ströme, Eisberge* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2012); see also Karin Priem and Lynn Fendler, "'Rationale Trennung' oder 'Marriage d'Amour': Zum Verhältnis von Geschichte und Philosophie in der Erziehungswissenschaft," *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik* 61, no. 5 (2015): 643–63. According to Priem and Fendler, there are six basic fetishes of modern history: archive, chronology, humanist agent, causality, continuity and progress, and nation-state.

19 For a wonderful example of teaching students digital source criticism, visit https://ranke2.uni.lu/. See also Stefan Krebs and Tizian Zumthurm, "COVID-19 Digital Memory Banks: Challenges and Opportunities for Historians of Education," *Paedagogica Historica*, forthcoming.

20 Andreas Fickers, "Authenticity: Historical Data Integrity and the Layered Material of Digital Objects," in *Digital Roots: Historicizing Media and Communication Concepts of the Digital Age*, ed. Gabriele Balbi, Nelson Ribeiro, Valérie Schafer, and Christian Schwarzenegger (Berlin:

zation.[21] This also applies to analog media and paper archives. History, after all, is always mediated. What has changed, however, are the media with which we record historical experience, their material nature, and the technological ecologies of web archives that invite infinite (re-)mediation processes.[22] Because of these technological properties, web archives can be described as layered and networked data assemblages, and their technological physicality and operational modes differ tremendously from traditional paper archives:

> From an etymological perspective, the digital does not refer to the electronic or computer-based processing of information, but to the numerical representation of information in a finite series of discrete elements – ones and zeros. The measurement of the quantity of data in defined units – bytes and bits – dates back to the 1960s [. . .] Data as 'objects' and historical sources thus always have mass and momentum, i.e. their material properties determine both the costs and the physical possibilities or storage, retrieval and use [. . .] In order to make the information encoded in the bits and bytes readable and usable, transcription and migration, i.e. translation or decoding by computer programs (software) and the transfer of data to different stage media (hardware), are required.[23]

The specific materiality of web archives, therefore, is characterized by the "interweaving of hardware and software environments" that is usually not transparent to users and professional historians.[24] Indeed, contents of web archives consist of accumulated, mobile, and reproducible files or data and thus are characterized by physical plasticity. Data are curated in the invisible backend and are presented and made searchable by specifically designed interfaces, keywords, tags, and other metadata assigned to the files by the curators of web archives. Similar to the traditional archive, curators' decisions are not always transparent, especially as many web archiving initiatives are not under the auspices of national archives and their conventions. Archivists and professional historians therefore need to understand and critically deal with the specific design of web archives, and they also need to reflect upon the impact of technology on the quality and trustworthiness of born-digital and digitized documents. Digital source criticism and curation also need to look at the provenance of digital documents and add relevant information to the metadata of a file. What has

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De Gruyter, 2021), 300. The essay can be downloaded at https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9783110740202/html.

21 Don Ihde, *Expanding Hermeneutics: Visualism in Science* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1999); see also Fickers, "Authenticity," 303.

22 Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999).

23 Fickers, "Authenticity," 304.

24 Ibid.

been abandoned in digital web archives, however, is the strict principle of chronologically ordered collections. To the contrary, web archives generally are more permeable systems providing data arranged by themes, keywords and tags within a flattened backend structure and offering interfaces that manage these structures in interaction with users. These interfaces allow users to access the archive, perform searches, and download data sets for the further reproduction or even manipulation of data. In order to be able to check the "integrity and consistency" of historical data and to make productive use of documents in the digital age, historians should consider collaborating with web designers and IT specialists. This way they will learn to feel more familiar with born-digital and digitized historical records, and to embrace more diverse sources and modes of collecting, writing, and presenting history.[25]

Closeness at a Distance and New Concepts of Thinking about the Past

"Reading is never a placeless activity," writes David N. Livingstone, stressing the influence of spatiality on acquiring knowledge and information.[26] The same applies to the users and creators of COVID-19 web archives. Users are situated in physical places, but local curators cannot control the different locations from where web archives are accessed. Given the different localities and geographies of reception and curation, spatiality obviously affects the selection, compilation, reception, and interpretation of born-digital and digitized documents.

In the following section, we briefly want to discuss how users may experience access to digital documents. When visiting traditional archives, we take it for granted that we are able to touch and see "real" documents presented to us in chronological order within specific collections. We experience what is generally referred to as the "aura" of a document. When working in digital environments, direct touch and sight are transformed into touch and sight at a distance: touchpads, touchscreens, keyboards, computer mice, and screens facilitate human interaction with interfaces and provide a kind of nearness that is mediated by the sensorial properties of technologies and networked data.[27] Sensorial technologies

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25 See, e.g., Paul Frosh, *The Poetics of Digital Media* (Cambridge: Polity, 2019).

26 David N. Livingstone, "Keeping Knowledge in Site," *History of Education* 39, no. 6 (2010): 784.

27 Mark Paterson, *The Senses of Touch: Haptics, Affects and Technologies*, 2nd ed. (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 127–45; see also Don Ihde, "The Experience of Technology: Human-Machine Relations," *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 2, no. 3 (1975): 267–79.

allow us to handle, explore, and manipulate "distant" objects in various ways; we are, for example, able to pull them "close" to us and look at them in detail. Thus, we experience a "presence" that is created by means of technology. The presence of born-digital or digitized sources is, of course, a different kind of presence, but it still attracts us, makes us marvel, and inspires our work as historians.[28]

Changes in our understanding of proximity, touch, and sight in digital environments correspond to changes in our understanding of causality in time. It could be argued that web archives represent alternative chronotypes within a structure of networked data.[29] While traditional archives and their chronological order facilitate linearity, continuity, and progress within a rational structure, web archives represent multilayered networks that make history appear to be fragmented, contradictory, and accidental.

Web archives and memory platforms are living archives and often preserve seemingly fleeting daily experiences of various communities. Recently created web archives that focus on the COVID-19 pandemic are centered around a sense of urgency to capture the present crisis in all its dimensions, according all its elements the same level of significance. These recordings of an exceptional presence make us wonder which future we will face, as the connection and transition between past, present, and future seems to have been fundamentally disrupted.

The impact of a rather unpredictable and even frightening future on our notion of history is the subject of an essay entitled "Historical Futures" by Zoltán Boldizsár Simon and Marek Tamm.[30] Challenging our widely established notion of historical time as determined by progress and betterment, Simon and Tamm argue that "today's technoscientific, anthropocentric, and sociopolitical prospects seem to escape human control in several ways" and that this loss of control leads to new concepts of thinking about the past and the future.[31] They contend that

> today, the future looks different than the past to an extent that was simply unimaginable in the modern period. New futures have emerged and have been emerging since the mid-twentieth century. These new futures are historical in ways other than scenarios of continuity – progress, development, or, for that matter, decline – that we have been accustomed to in the last two centuries or so.[32]

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28 Paterson, *The Senses of Touch*, 145.
29 For a more detailed discussion on the management of historical time through archives, see Steglich, "The Archive as Chronotopos," 245.
30 Zoltán Boldizsár Simon and Marek Tamm, "Historical Futures," *History and Theory* 60, no. 1 (2021): 3–22. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/hith.12190.
31 Simon and Tamm, "Historical Futures," 3–4.
32 Ibid., 7.

This implies that modernity and the scholarly work of modern historians no longer has any connection to post-structuralist, and even less to post-anthropocentric, transhuman, and planetary futures. It seems as though a threatening present and the urge to collect as many voices as possible on the COVID-19 crisis in web archives encourage us to question history as it has been written and discussed in the modern era.[33] Both the digital age and the COVID-19 crisis have led to an increased awareness of establishing new dimensions from where we connect to and reflect upon the past.

Web Archives as Public History

Collecting as many voices as possible means establishing collaborative processes with public audiences when preserving, curating, editing, and presenting history. Such collaboration entails negotiating and producing narratives of the past that connect archival sources with their communities and constitute meaning that may challenge archival classification systems and the work of historical experts.[34]

These principles are also at the core of public history, and it is not surprising that most COVID-19 web archives are labelled as public history projects; they are based on community response and dedicated to the idea of making history together.[35]

Many concepts of public history are very much dependent on specific recording technologies that allow the massive mediation and circulation of daily experiences and specific moments in public space – in both the analog and the digital era. Elizabeth Edwards' thoughts on "photographs as public history" in her book *The Camera as Historian: Amateur Photographers and Historical Imagination* may be true for born-digital sources (such as Twitter feeds, podcasts, videos, etc.) as well – that is that digital audio-visual and textual productions may well be

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33 See Priem and Fendler, "'Rationale Trennung,'" 643–63; Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism* (London: Verso, 2019); and Madrigal, "The Way We Write History."

34 One of the most cited works in public history is Michael Frisch's *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (New York: SUNY Press, 1990); Nina Simon's *The Participatory Museum* (Santa Cruz, CA: Museum 2.0, 2010), which is accompanied by an interactive website at www.participatorymuseum.org, is another seminal work of public history; for a post-colonial perspective on deconstructing the abusive power of archives and history, see Azoulay, *Potential History*.

35 Cauvin, "Mapping Public History Projects."

Figure 1: Landing page of A Journal of the Plague Year (https://covid-19archive.org/s/ar chive/page/welcome).

associated or even equated with the making of public history by preserving an abundance of collective memories. Digital technologies are facilitating practices that we use to record our daily experiences which we then share on social media, in web archives and memory banks addressed at global audiences and users. At least in the global upper and middle classes, digital technologies have become popular tools to preserve historical moments and make them available for future generations. What Edwards writes about amateur photography and the British survey movement at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century can also be said to apply to born-digital mass recordings of our lives during the COVID-19 crisis: "In this way, the past could resonate through the future, multiplying, dis-seminating, and repeating the existentially unrepeatable."[36] Both public history and web archives rely on the effects of mass media as technologies of memory making that enable circulation, articulation, and debate – by spreading historical moments from the local and regional to the national and to the global. This way, web archives as public history projects can establish bonds between communities and to reach out to global audiences and different social groups.

While mass recordings widen the scope of public participation in history making, they are subject to ethical and thematic filters applied by curators

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36 Elizabeth Edwards, *The Camera as Historian: Amateur Photographers and Historical Imagination, 1885–1918* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 211.

once they have been submitted to web archives. Furthermore, the aesthetical and operational dimensions of web archives are created by web designers and, as mentioned earlier, their content is searchable by interfaces and the filters provided by them. Both design and interfaces are based on previous decisions that are usually not transparent to users. However, within these limitations, web archives do allow for individual and multiple approaches to the past.

One of the most prominent web archives that was initiated at the start of the COVID-19 crisis in the spring of 2020 is A Journal of the Plague Year, a project of the School of Historical, Philosophical, and Religious Studies at Arizona State University.[37] It offers many insights into how closely digital technologies and public history are interconnected, though a considerable amount of data is supposedly submitted by members of the upper and lower middle-classes or collected by curators. The landing page (Figure 1) shows a banner with the different features and functions of the archive. It starts with "Share your story," a page that asks users to submit content and also provides a link to the Spanish version of the archive, which indicates that A Journal of the Plague Year is reaching out to both Americas – north and south – and beyond national borders. The "Welcome" section describes the archive and its aims; it lists the members of the international curatorial team and also includes information on external collections from around the globe that are dedicated to COVID-19. The next section of the archive is called "Browse the stories" and allows the public to search the archive. The advanced item search offers thirteen search filters (e.g., creator, medium, chronology, hashtags, and tags) for finding matching content. For example, a simple full text search for the tag "education" resulted in 3,368 matches. The list of matching items came with short descriptions per item and offered links to websites, journal and newspaper articles, and opinion papers; in addition, one can find student papers, Twitter feeds, podcasts and other oral materials (sometimes including transcriptions), photographs, flyers, and many more. The archive is abundant, and each of the entries is enriched with metadata that also indicate which tags were given by a curator and which by a contributor. Thus, the authority of archiving is divided and contributors' classifications are respected. The next item on the banner of the landing page is a "Global Pandemic Map" that shows the geographical origin of submitted materials. This is followed by "Calls" for specific contributions and a section that includes information about "Exhibits" that were created by members of the curatorial team to highlight specific contributions and their thematic scope. Next there is a section on "JOTPY Workshop Series," a call for collaboration ("Join us"), and a "Map browse" link that filters content-related tags.

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37 See https://covid-19archive.org/s/archive/page/welcome.

To sum up, A Journal of the Plague Year confirms that web archives share their data generously, that they are accessible, flexible, and user-friendly, and that they operate across national borders in a spirit of collaboration. Like traditional archives they too are reservoirs for curating exhibitions; however, their content is mediated differently, consists of data sets, and allows remediation and multilayered digital display.

ISCHE's Education & Pandemics Archive as a Collective Project

In December 2020, the International Standing Conference for the History of Education (ISCHE) initiated the Education & Pandemics Archive. After several months of hard work, it was ready to be launched and introduced to the public in June 2021 (Figure 2). With the COVID-19 crisis threatening the livelihoods of millions and shining a harsh light on existing inequalities in education, ISCHE only felt it appropriate to start this initiative.[38] In addition, ISCHE wanted to establish its own web archive to introduce historians of education to digital source criticism by organizing workshops that would not only offer insights into the hidden features of web archives but also into the functioning of the backend structure, web archiving, and related decisions usually not transparent to users.

The Education & Pandemics Archive was designed and developed by a group of professional web designers and IT specialists based in Milan (Italy) in collaboration with a group of historians of education (two senior scholars and six early-career researchers).[39] Work started with a few online meetings and an online questionnaire to gather information and ideas, followed by a first random collection of COVID-19-related material (URLs, Twitter feeds, videos, podcasts, digitized print matter and photographs, and community responses of various formats). Based on initial decisions within the team, the web designers started to develop the front- and backend and to design the user interface and the user submission form. The ISCHE team continued collecting material for the

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38 The ISCHE Education & Pandemics Archive has been initiated by the authors of this chapter and was approved by the ISCHE Executive Committee in December 2020. It is funded by ISCHE and the Stichting Paedagogica Historica.

39 The archive is hosted on https://www.ische.org while being fully independent from the ISCHE main website in terms of both data management and design; see https://www.ische.org/education-and-pandemics-archive/#/. The members of the ISCHE Education & Pandemics Archive working group were Karin Priem, Ian Grosvenor, Ami Kobayashi, Lilli Riettiens, Inês Felix, Rafaela Silva Rabelo, Stefanie Kesteloot, and Yver Melchor.
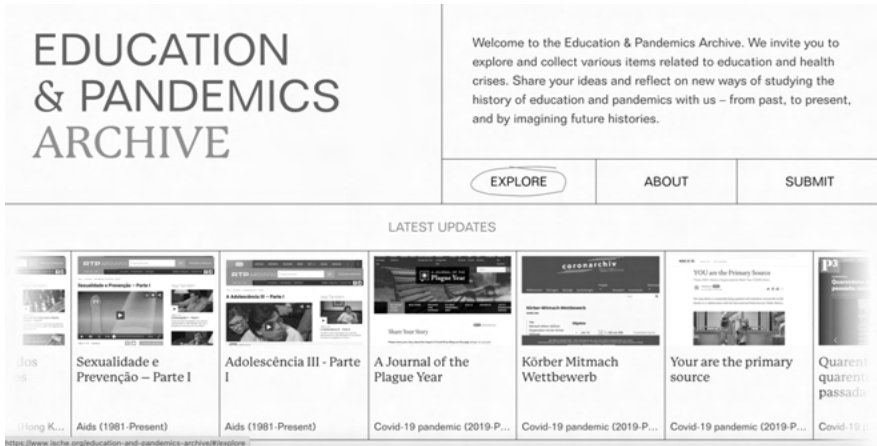
Figure 2: Landing page of the Education & Pandemics Archive (https://www.ische.org/education-and-pandemics-archive/#/).
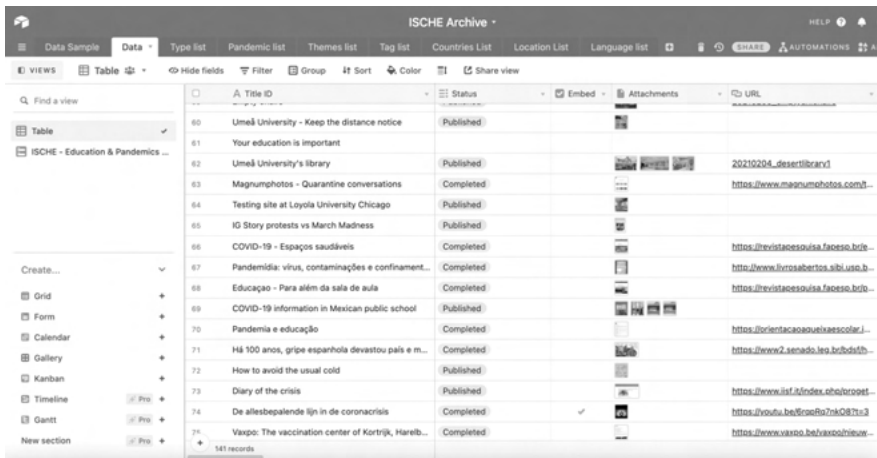
Figure 3: Part of the backend of the Education & Pandemics Archive (https://www.ische.org/education-and-pandemics-archive/#/).

archive and had intensive (sometimes daily) discussions online and on Slack about what the interface should look like. Another exchange revolved around the key themes and the final list of keywords and tags, the submission form, etc. The aim was to achieve a long-lasting, simple, and rather general structure that could be extended and changed by users depending on their submissions to the archive. Finally, three historians from the ISCHE team volunteered to curate

the backend that was hosted at airtable.com, a free-of-charge application that can be customized and adapted to different workflows and data collections (Figure 3).

The most difficult decisions the team had to make were defining the themes, keywords, and tags. Most of these discussions are documented on Slack, and the plan is to publish and comment on these exchanges in the near future, as it is important to share a web archive's epistemic structure with its users. The team members working at the backend also shared many thoughts on how their decisions may shape future research and why the web as an archive will influence our future research as historians of education. A key decision of the ISCHE team was to include not only sources that refer to COVID-19 but to extend the scope to other epidemics and pandemics, past and present. As mentioned earlier, historians have looked to previous influenza pandemics to understand how former generations dealt with similar health crises.[40] The so-called Spanish influenza pandemic of 1918–20 has become the global crisis against which COVID-19 is measured. It is estimated that the Spanish flu pandemic infected between twenty and forty percent of the world population, with more than fifty million dead. The Spanish flu had been almost forgotten but was "rediscovered" in recent years by public health specialists studying the avian influenza epidemics in 2005 and 2009. As a result, Guillaume Lachenal and Gaëtan Thomas describe the Spanish flu as an "omnipresent reference in the pandemic preparedness scenarios that have guided global health security in the last two decades."[41] However, Lachenal and Thomas also criticize this desire to learn from the past and their research has been described as countering an "over-reliance on the allure of 'pandemic precedents'" by advocating "an enhanced understanding of the capacity of present crises to resist historical interpretation."[42] According to Lachenal and Thomas, the current situation deserves something other than "a scholarly 'spot the difference' game between more or less recent pandemic precedents," "stressing analogy, parallels or difference between the . . . crisis" and "embroidering the present crisis into a quasi-mythical structure of panic and quarantine" which has the effect of "smoothing over the intricate historicity of pandemic events."[43] Writing as

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40 Parts of the following paragraph are similar to a call for papers for a special issue of *Paedagogica Historica* written by the authors of this chapter. The special issue will be forthcoming in 2022.

41 Guillaume Lachenal and Gaëtan Thomas, "COVID-19: When History Has No Lessons," History Workshop, March 30, 2020, accessed July 22, 2022. https://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/covid-19-when-history-has-no-lessons/.

42 Lachenal and Thomas, "COVID-19."

43 Ibid.

medical historians, Lachenal and Thomas focus on explanations and analyses based on cause and effect, similarities and differences, and on precedents that do not "map onto neat narratives." As researchers they have looked beyond influenza pandemics (to include, e.g., HIV/AIDS, SARS, and Ebola) and there are, of course, still other pandemics (measles, smallpox, polio, tuberculosis, legionnaires), each with their own situated histories of content and conjuncture, each with their own historians and historical interpretations that we may want to revise. In *The Pandemic Century: A History of Global Contagion from the Spanish Flu to Covid-19*, Mark Honigsbaum, after reviewing the last hundred years of epidemic outbreaks, concluded that "the only thing that is certain is that there will be new plagues and new pandemics. It is not a question of if, but when. Pestilences may be unpredictable, but they *will* recur."[44] Certainly, more than 300 new infectious diseases have emerged in the second half of the twentieth century, and there has been, and continues to be, a zoonotic spillover as microbes leap from mammal to human hosts as a consequence of habitat destruction and industrialized agriculture.[45]

These considerations by Lachenal, Thomas, and Honigsbaum also imply the necessity of finding new, more-than-human dimensions to connect to the past and write different histories of education that evolve from historical disruption and do not follow established epistemological pathways of research.

Preliminary Conclusions

This chapter has argued that we need to rethink our concepts of history, archiving, and curating. Web archives offer different structures, opportunities for different interactions, and a different technological environment. They can be characterized by collaborative processes, by networked data within a flattened structure, and by interconnected hardware and software environments. Web archives are user-friendly and flexible; they invite us to get involved and to develop new historical dimensions.

The ISCHE Education & Pandemics Archive came to life during an extraordinary present. However, it is not only dedicated to the COVID-19 crisis but also considers other epidemic and pandemic outbreaks as a series of crises often

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44 Mark Honigsbaum, *The Pandemic Century: A History of Global Contagion from the Spanish Flu to Covid-19* (Cambridge, MA: Penguin, 2020), 283.

45 See Andreas Malm, *Corona, Climate, Chronic Emergency: War Communism in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Verso, 2020).

overlooked in local, national, and transnational histories of education. ISCHE's initiative thus acknowledges what Honigsbaum called the "pandemic century" with its many disruptions and challenges to approaches to history that tend to prioritize humans and human control.[46] While each crisis has its own history, all of them call for post-anthropocentric reflections to explore new historical horizons for the future. In sum, we call for a fresh start in the history of education that reflects on possible shifts in historical perspective. On a technological level, we call for designing flattened and permeable structures of archiving and for preserving and embracing born-digital and digitized sources. More generally, we call for interdisciplinary and collaborative research that includes web designers and IT specialists and for engaging in vibrant and important debates in the post-anthropocentric and digital age.

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46 A groundbreaking exception that has also inspired historical research is Bruno Latour's actor-network-theory; e.g., Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); see also Karin Priem, "Emerging Ecologies and Changing Relations: A Brief Manifesto for Histories of Education after COVID-19," in *Paedagogica Historica* (Sept. 9, 2022), doi: 10.1080/00309230.2022.2075230.

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Joyce Goodman

Conserving the Past, Learning from the Past: Art, Science and London's National Gallery

Abstract: This chapter examines the entanglement of art, science and education in the National Gallery in London and beyond during the 20th century through the activities of the student artist, Rosa Branson (b.1933), and the German emigré painting conservator, Helmut Moritz Ruhemann (1891–1973). It discusses the changing place of copying in the education of student painters at Camberwell School of Art and at the Slade School of Art and the five years that Rosa spent copying paintings in the National Gallery to learn the Renaissance layering technics that she would use to paint contemporary topics. It traces the European painting conservation networks that supported Ruhemann's appointment as consultant restorer at the National Gallery after his expulsion in 1933 from the Kaiser Wilhem Museum in Berlin on the grounds of his Jewish heritage. It considers the relation of art and science in the conservation of paintings at the National Gallery through which knowledge of the Renaissance layering technics that Rosa would use became increasingly understood. It also discusses the curriculum that Ruhemann devised for student restorers at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, which included both art and science and which he disseminated via the International Institute for Conservation, of which he was a founder member. The curriculum Ruhemann developed for student restorers at the Courtauld Institute included time spent copying in the National Gallery, where Ruhemann provided encouragement to Rosa as he supervised student-restorers copying. The conclusion argues that together these artistic and conservation activities illustrate a meshwork of forms of exhibiting where threads of informal and formal education and learning at the Slade and in the National Gallery knot together the exhibiting of "old masters" and explanations of the scientific restoration processes that were central to Ruhemann's conservation work and which inform the Renaissance layering technics that Rosa uses to paint contemporary topics.

Keywords: art, science, conservation, copying, gender

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Introduction

This chapter considers the entanglement of art, science and education in the National Gallery in London and beyond. It was sparked by interviews with the artist Rosa Branson (b. 1933) who pointed to the importance in her education as an artist of her encounters during the 1950s at the Camberwell School of Art and the National Gallery with the Gallery's consultant restorer,[1] the German emigré Helmut Moriz Ruhemann (1891–1973).[2]

The chapter begins by discussing Rosa's[3] desire to become a painter and traces her path as a young woman through the Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts (from 1949), the Slade School of Art (from 1953) and London's National Gallery, where she spent more than five years copying paintings to learn the Renaissance layering technics[4] she would use to paint contemporary topics. This section also considers the shift in pedagogical approach to art education at the Slade that underpinned the opposition of the Slade's director, William Coldstream (1908–1987), to Rosa's application to copy at the Gallery where she would encounter Ruhemann and his student restorers. The second section moves to Ruhemann and focuses on the relation between art and science in the conservation of paintings at the Gallery through which knowledge of the Renaissance layering techniques that Rosa would use became increasingly understood. This section also traces the networking around the League of Nations International Museums Office that facilitated Ruhemann's relocation to Britain in 1933 and his appointments at the National Gallery and the Courtauld Institute of Art. The third section moves to education for restorers and discusses the balance between art and science in the curriculum that Ruhemann developed from his early days as chief conservator at the Kaiser Wilhelm Museum in Berlin and which he disseminated

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1 I use the term restorer and conservator interchangeably following their deployment in the primary sources. Helmut Ruhemann, *The Cleaning of Paintings: Problems and Potentialities. With Bibliography and Supplementary Material by Joyce Plesters and Foreword by Sir Philip Hendy* (New York: Frederick A Praeger, 1968), 67 notes that restoring embraces consolidation, cleaning, retouching and varnishing and is a wider concept than conserving.

2 Rosa Branson, *The Life of Rosa Branson* (Unpublished manuscript, n.d.), 7.

3 I use Rosa's first name but the surnames of the men as a means to highlight the analysis of gendered power relations that informs the chapter and the gendered nature of art discourse in the period, where the phrase "old mistress" cannot be used as a substitute for "old master" due to its sexual connotations. See Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 1981), 8.

4 Technics is a technical term deriving from the Latin *teckne* (to do with art) that covers details and methods. I use both technics and techniques following their usage in the primary sources.

via the International Institute for Conservation of which he was a founder member. The conclusion argues that together these artistic and conservation activities illustrate a meshwork of forms of exhibiting where threads of informal and formal education and learning knot together to inform the Renaissance layering technics that Rosa uses to paint contemporary topics.

Becoming a Painter

Rosa pinpoints her desire to become a painter to a visit with her mother, Noreen, to the National Gallery aged six. She recounts that her mother showed her a Rembrandt and said, "your daddy says this artist is the greatest in the world". Rosa's father, Clive Ali Chimmo Branson (1907–1944) was an English artist and poet[5] and Rosa writes in her memoir that she looked up at paintings by Botticelli, Titian and Leonardo, and thought "when I am grown up I will do pictures like this".[6]

For Rosa, becoming a painter was not a straightforward process, however. After having attended three progressive schools,[7] Rosa entered Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts, founded in 1896 through a gift from W. Passmore Edwards at a time when technical education was expanding.[8] Camberwell was held in high regard because of the reputations of its artist-teachers. William Johnson, Camberwell's principal from 1938, brought together many artists associated with the Euston Road School of Painting, which had been founded in 1937 by Coldstream (a friend of Rosa's father), Victor Passmore (1908–1998) and Claude Rogers (1907–1979). Although the Euston Road School was disbanded at the start of the war in 1939 it was 'virtually' reconstituted at Camberwell from 1945,[9] where it permeated the teaching of artistic practice long after

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5 Clive and Noreen Branson were active communists. Clive was a regular exhibitor with the Artists International Association and some of his paintings are displayed in London's Tate Gallery.

6 Branson, *The Life of Rosa Branson*. Interviews with Rosa were conducted in 2016 and 2019. Discussion of memoirs, interviews, memory and the Self is beyond the scope of the chapter.

7 (i) Dora Russell's School (ii) Beltane School (iii) Springfield Grange Farm School.

8 Geoff Hassell, *Camberwell School of Arts & Crafts: Its Students & Teachers 1943–1960* (Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club, 1995), 12–13.

9 Anon, *Painting the Visible World: Painters at the Euston Road School and at Camberwell School of Arts & Crafts, 1930–1960* (London: Austin/Desmond Fine Art, 1989), especially p.11 & 15; see also Bruce Laughton, *The Euston Road School: A Study in Objective Painting* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1986); Bruce Laughton, "Euston Road School (Act. 1937–1939)," Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 2004, accessed October 9, 2020. https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-64717.

the departure of Passmore, Rogers and Coldstream (the latter to the Slade).[10] Like Rosa's father many Euston Road artists were left-leaning, and some were communists. Against the contemporary trend of avant-garde abstraction, Euston Road artists favored realism. They asserted the importance of painting traditional subjects in a realist manner and used their modernist approach to make naturalistic imagery of everyday life, which they hoped would make art more accessible to the general public and create a widely understandable and socially relevant art.[11]

Rosa arrived at Camberwell determined to become a painter. At Camberwell she was told her painting was very good, but she found Camberwell's approach to painting problematic. As head of painting at Camberwell from 1945 to 1949 Coldstream's personal concern with 'integrity' as an artist meant that anything considered romantic or beautiful was deemed old fashioned. Instead, Camberwell Green in the rain and "depressing dustbins" were thought to show 'integrity'.[12] Coldstream's concern with 'integrity' was also translated into teaching an approach to artistic technique based on the particular style that he admired. All students were taught to follow Cézanne and use *alla prima* technics. This meant "mixing up the exact color and putting it on in one brush stroke and if it went wrong scraping it off".[13] At Camberwell there were to be no shadows and sable brushes and painting in layers was frowned upon. Painting in a way that did not allow light and shadow to make optical forms emerge from the background was not what Rosa had imagined for her future in painting. To make matters worse Gilbert Spencer (1892–1979), head of Camberwell's painting department, was unsupportive of women wishing to paint. He reiterated a view that stretched back to Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Artists* (1500),[14] when he told Rosa, "You shouldn't be a painter. Women aren't any good. You've got to paint for six hours a day".[15]

But one event at Camberwell did enable Rosa to glimpse a future as a painter. She was transfixed as Ruhemann painted a copy of a Reubens over three lectures each a week apart. With a print to one side of his easel he worked

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10 Hassell, *Camberwell School of Arts & Crafts*, 18.

11 National Portrait Gallery, "Euston Road School", accessed March 14, 2020, https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/group/1132; Anon, *Painting the Visible World,* 7.

12 Branson, *The Life of Rosa Branson.*

13 Rosa Branson Interview 2019.

14 For this genealogy see Parker and Pollock, *Old Mistresses,* 8.

15 Rosa Branson interview 2019. When Rosa entered the Slade in 1953 life rooms were differentiated for women and men. Models were draped in the women's life room and female students spent preparatory time in the antiques room which tended not to be the case for male students (Branson interview 2016).

on the stage to recreate the Reubens copy using a stratigraphic (layering) approach. In week one he added a first layer of raw sienna, during week two he put on a second layer of colors for the light and in week three a third layer of highlights to "put the sparkle on the top".[16] Other Camberwell students remained polite but dismissed his demonstrations as hopeless. But in Ruhemann's demonstrations Rosa glimpsed the layering technics that would enable her to become the painter she desired.

When Rosa transferred to the Slade in 1953, the institution was still undergoing a transition following Coldstream's appointment as Slade professor in 1949. On his move to the Slade Coldstream appointed a number of former Camberwell tutors and introduced the philosophical approach to art education that he had previously established at Camberwell. Students were encouraged to work in similar ways to Coldstream himself. As at Camberwell, his emphasis was on representing the visible world through rigorous observation and meticulous measurement based around mapping coordinates that were materialized via a series of dots on the paper or canvas. His innovations differed in important ways from previous Slade professors.[17] Under Alphonse Legros (appointed 1876), Frederick Brown (appointed 1882) and Henry Tonks (appointed 1918), the focus of art education at the Slade had been on contour, copying and memory work. Legros' teaching was based on that of Italian 'masters' and included drawing with the point and an emphasis on contour. He was a firm believer in copying and established a collection of full-sized photographs of drawings by Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael, which were framed and hung on the walls of the Slade. As Slade professor he also encouraged students to study and copy the technique of paintings in European art galleries. Tonks, too, drew Slade students' attention to the drawings of Michelangelo, Rubens, Rembrandt and Ingres and like Legros organized reproductions of their work to be hung on the Slade's walls.[18] He considered learning to draw to be about learning to see and taught a method of drawing where students were expected to look intently at a model in order to understand the form; and he used Italian drawings from the Renaissance period to show how the observation of anatomical form should be translated into two dimensions. He emphasized the value of study from 'old masters' and encouraged students to draw from artworks in the National Gallery and the British Museum Print

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16 Branson Interview 2016.

17 Emma Chambers, "Prototype and Perception: Art History and Observation at the Slade in the 1950s," in *The Concept of the 'Master' in Art Education in Britain and Ireland, 1770 to the Present*, ed. Matthew C. Potter (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), 197–198.

18 Stuart Macdonald, *The History and Philosophy of Art Education* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 1970), 273, 277.

Room. Randolph Schwabe (appointed 1930) continued to emphasize the importance of studying 'old masters', although not in a slavish spirit.[19]

The approach that Coldstream initiated from 1949 did not depend on a pre-existing knowledge of anatomy, nor on 'old master' drawing to interpret observation. Neither were students to produce a drawing or painting that they had mentally prepared in advance. Instead, the painting was to be worked through directly on the canvas.[20] Under Coldstream's regime at the Slade copying as means to learn to paint was frowned upon. However, Tonk's earlier arrangement whereby Slade students copied at the National Gallery had not been formally withdrawn. When Rosa learned of this agreement she requested permission to attend the Gallery, which elicited the response from Coldstream that copying in the Gallery would ruin her as a contemporary painter.[21] Nonetheless, the National Gallery became Rosa's place of education. Each week during academic year 1953–1954 she carried her palette to the Gallery to search for details and methods of painting and copied paintings by artists such as Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian and Monet. Later she returned a day a week for a further five years after her children were old enough to attend school.[22] At the National Gallery she once again encountered Ruhemann, whose lectures at Camberwell were imprinted in her memory.

Art, Science and the National Gallery

Ruhemann's interactions with the National Gallery began while he was working at the Kaiser Wilhelm Museum (renamed the Bode Museum, 1956), where he was employed from 1929 as chief restorer and curator. In 1932 Augustus Moore Daniel (1866–1950), the National Gallery's director, asked his advice about a restorer the National Gallery was using.[23] In 1930 Philip Antiss Hendy (1900–1980) also consulted him about the cleaning of a painting.[24] Hendy was the curator of paintings at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (1930–33). Hendy would

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19 Chambers, "Prototype and Perception", 190, 195.

20 Chambers, "Prototype and Perception", 198, 200.

21 Branson, *The Life of Rosa Branson.*

22 Rosa Branson Interview 2019.

23 Morwenna Blewett, "The Art of Conservation V1: Helmut Ruhemann, Paintings Restorer in Berlin and London," *The Burlington Magazine* 158 (2016): 641.

24 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 44.

Figure 1: Peacocks with Butterfly and Rainbow, by Rosa Branson.

become director of the Leeds City Art Gallery in the North of England in 1934 and director of the National Gallery from 1946 to 1967.[25] Through his involvement with the League of Nations International Museums Office (IMO, established 1926) Ruhemann was also networked with other museum directors and individuals involved in conservation work. He attended the international conference on the conservation of paintings that the IMO convened in Rome in 1930, where he was appointed to a sub-committee for the restoration of paintings charged with liaising between the IMO and Rome Conference attendees. He served on this sub-committee with Arthus Pillans Laurie (1861–1949), professor of chemistry to the Royal Academy of Arts in London and William George Constable (1887–1976), the National Gallery's assistant director, who acted as sub-committee chair.[26] At the end of March 1933 Ruhemann travelled

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25 James Byam Shaw, "Hendy, Sir Philip Anstiss (1900–1980), art administrator," *Oxford Dictionary of NationalBiography*, accessed October 1, 2020. https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-31219 .

26 Anon, "Conclusions de la conférence de Rome," *Mouseion* 13–14, no. 1–11 (1931): 126, 129.

to the International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation in Paris[27] for a meeting of a committee of experts that the IOM had asked to prepare a handbook on the preservation of works of art, where he again served with Constable.[28] This handbook would be steered to publication by Ruhemann, Harold Plenderleith (1898–1997), head of the research laboratory of the British Museum, and George Stout (1897–1978), founder of the first laboratory to study art conservation in the United States at Harvard's Fogg Art Museum.[29]

Within a few days of his Paris visit Ruhemann appeared on a Nazi "black list" under the *NS-Gesetz bur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums* (the Nazi law to "restore" the civil service of April 1932). Under this law the Nazi regime removed people of Jewish lineage from civil service positions, including from state-controlled museums and galleries. In September 1933 Ruhemann was dismissed from his post without pension entitlement or severance pay.[30] He emigrated with his family to London, where he drew on his contacts in the art and museum world and on refugee organizations[31] to set up as a private restorer working from a studio in Soho.[32] In 1934 Kenneth Clark (1903–1983), the newly-appointed director of the National Gallery, invited Ruhemann to work at the Gallery on a part-time basis,[33] where he focused on cleaning early Italian paintings. During the second world war he was evacuated with some of the Gallery's paintings, which he continued to clean and restore.[34] On returning to London in 1946 he became consultant restorer (part-time) at the National Gallery, where Hendy was now the director. He remained in post until his retirement in 1953, after which he continued to undertake extensive work for the Gallery on a freelance basis until 1972.[35] In addition to his post at the National

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27 League of Nations Intellectual Cooperation Organisation, "The Conservation of Paintings. A Meeting of Experts, Paris, March 30–31, 1933," *Information Bulletin of the League of Nations Intellectual Co-operation Organisation* 1, no. 9–10 (1933): 298.

28 League of Nations Intellectual Cooperation Organisation, "International Museums Office: Second Session of the Committee of Directors, Paris, December 15–16 1932," *Information Bulletin of the League of Nations Intellectual Co-operation Organisation* 1, no. 7 (1932): 199.

29 Philip Hendy, "Helmut Ruhemann," *The Burlington Magazine* 115, no. 846 (1973): 607.

30 Blewett, "The Art of Conservation", 641.

31 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 44.

32 National Portrait Gallery, "British Picture Restorers, 1600–1950 – R", accessed March 30, 2020. https://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/directory-of-british-picture-restorers/british-picture-restorers-1600-1950-r.

33 Ibid., Blewett, "The Art of Conservation," 642.

34 Kenneth Clark. "Helmut Ruhemann," *The Burlington Magazine* 115, no. 849 (1973): 810.

35 Harold J. Plenderleith, "A History of Conservation," *Studies in Conservation* 43, no. 3 (1998): 135.

Gallery, from 1934 he also worked at the Courtauld Institute of Art (founded 1931 as part of London University with Constable as director),[36] and as a restorer for the Glasgow Art Gallery (1941–43). In addition, he restored paintings for many other galleries, including the Tate, the Wallace Collection, the Walker Art Gallery, and for private collections.[37]

Ruhemann became a central figure in changing the approach to treating paintings in Britain.[38] He drew on a synthesis of technical studies of painting techniques based on his understanding of the layering that had so fascinated Rosa at Camberwell. Ruhemann originally trained as a painter and in 1914, while he was copying paintings at the Prado in Madrid, he realized that although early nineteenth century artists had rendered the surface impression of what they saw through one solid layer, it was hopeless to attempt to imitate the surface of the paintings he was copying because it was impossible to try to match each tone directly by applying modern pigments in one solid layer. He later recorded, "I dimly guessed that there was more to the painting than just the top layer that was actually seen – or only half seen through the veil of dark varnish which then still covered nearly all the masterpieces in the museum".[39] Like art historians of his day he had assumed that the discolored varnish which contributed to a painting's 'golden glow' was part of the original work. He came to the realization that older paintings did not simply exist as the surfaces of the works of art, but had been built up through many layers and with many materials below the finished surface. This realization led him to search through treatises on technique, including those of Francisco Pacheco (1564–1644) and Cennino Cennini (1360–before 1427). While he was trapped in Spain during the first world war he made friends with Prado restorers to learn more of their techniques and restored his first picture for a Madrid art dealer.[40] On his return to Germany in 1919 he continued to paint to earn money[41] but from 1921, when an art dealer asked him to restore a Rubens, he increasingly worked as a freelance restorer. When he became inundated with restoration work from art dealers and private collectors, he decided to devote himself entirely to restoration.[42]

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36 League of Nations Intellectual Cooperation Organisation, "International Museums Office, December 15–16, 1932", 199.

37 National Portrait Gallery, "British Picture Restorers – R".

38 Blewett, "The Art of Conservation", 641.

39 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings, 32.*

40 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 32–33.

41 Blewett, "The Art of Conservation", 639.

42 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 33.

Ruhemann's approach to cleaning paintings sparked controversy, however. He insisted that only a completely cleaned painting could provide an accurate reading of an artist's technical approach[43] and considered that retouching (in-painting) should be kept to a minimum.[44] When the National Gallery's evacuated paintings were returned to London in 1946 the Gallery staged an exhibition of cleaned paintings that caused controversy. As Morwenna Blewett charts, to reassure the public that paintings were not being damaged during cleaning the Gallery mounted an exhibition in 1947 of seventy-five paintings cleaned by nine different restorers between 1936 and 1947. This exhibition also included photographs, color prints, explanatory diagrams, and photographs of the scientific apparatus employed in the examination and analyses of the works. Partially cleaned paintings were also shown and the safeguards and methods that had been used in the treatment of these paintings were explained. A committee of inquiry into the cleaning and care of paintings in the National Gallery exonerated Ruhemann.[45] But what was seen as the Gallery's controversial cleaning policy rumbled in the press and amongst restorers, art historians and critics into the 1960s.[46]

Joyce Hill Stoner and Rebecca Rushfield argue that many of the controversies around cleaning paintings from the inter-war period onwards map onto the differentiation that Robin George Collingwood (1889–1943) made in 1938 between an idealist theory of art and a technical (positivist) theory of art. Collingwood argued that from an idealist position a work of art exists principally in the mind of the artist and the resulting painting is the externalisation of the 'true' work of art. From this perspective art is the expression of emotion and the craft process is the channel through which the imagination of the artist is made visible. Because a painting is considered to be a tangible expression of the artist's emotions, an idealist approach to cleaning paintings is a reflective one in which the restorer aims to be conscious of aesthetics and the weight of the 'meaning of the painting. At the positivistic end of the spectrum, where Stoner and Rushfeld position Ruhemann, paintings are seen as physical objects in line with what Collingwood terms a technical theory, where art is positioned as a craft or physical process where the artist takes certain materials and turns them into an art object. From this perspective the approach to cleaning paintings is through investigation to

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43 Blewett, "The Art of Conservation", 643.

44 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings*, 127.

45 Blewett, "The Art of Conservation", 642.

46 See particularly *The Burlington Magazine* for 1962/1963 for what became known as the Ruhemann-Gombrich controversy.

establish the physical state of the painting and conservation is a matter of chemistry, physics and mechanics along the lines of the natural sciences.[47] These positions impacted the extent to which painting might be cleaned and the degree of inpainting undertaken.

In his own practice Ruhemann constantly sought new methods to improve safety when cleaning and restoring paintings.[48] From the end of the nineteenth century physics and chemistry began to be harnessed systematically in the treatment of pictures. At first isolated restorers had made use of scientific inventions such as x-rays and a little later ultra-violet rays for diagnosis.[49] By 1915 the *Vienna Kunsthistorische Museum* had begun to use x-ray photography. Ruhemann also promoted the use of x-rays as an analytical tool at the Kaiser Friedrich Museum.[50] As early as 1888 the Berlin State Museum founded its own science laboratories. The British Museum followed in 1921, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Mass. USA and the Louvre in 1930 and a scientific department was opened at the National Gallery in 1934. The laboratories of the *Institut Royal du Patrimonies Artistique* in Brussels and the technology department of the Courtauld Institute both dated from 1935.[51] By 1949 work on paintings at the British Museum was undertaken in both its scientific department and its conservation department.[52]

Up to 1946 the National Gallery employed only private restorers or firms and their assistants[53] but one consequence of the controversy over the cleaning of paintings was the establishment in 1936 of the Gallery's conservation department, headed by Ruhemann, and the expansion of its scientific department. Ruhemann collaborated with Joyce Plesters (1972–1996), who joined the Gallery's science department 1949. Plesters had studied science at Royal Holloway

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47 Joyce H. Stoner and Rebecca Rushfield, *The Conservation of Easel Paintings* (London: Routledge, 2012), 488–498. The work of German *emigré* restorer Johannes Hell exemplified the idealist position. See also David Bomford and Mark Leonard, *Issues in the Conservation of Paintings: Volume 2 Readings in Conservation* (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 2004) and Steven W. Dykstra, "The Artist's Intentions and the Intentional Fallacy in Fine Arts Conservation," *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation* 35, no. 3 (1996): 200.

48 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 43.

49 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 54.

50 National Portrait Gallery, "British Picture Restorers – R".

51 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 54.

52 John Mills, "Obituary: Joyce Plesters," *The Independent* Wednesday 28 August (1996), accessed March 30, 2020. https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary-joyce-plesters-1311884.html.

53 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 56.

College, London University.[54] She became a world authority on the use of the microscope and microphotography to investigate the stratigraphic layering technique used by painters and an expert on the use of paint cross-sections, which she explained were taken at the National Gallery only to assist conservators test solvents and see their potential effects on the painting as a whole. Her work on paint cross-sections contributed to knowledge of the layering structure of paintings, including where repainting had occurred, whether preliminary drawings existed, where original paint was lost, whether varnish was original, and many other aspects which assisted inpainting when this occurred during the restoration process. Plesters' publications provided numerous examples of paint-cross sections that widened understanding of works by artists such as Manet, Durer, Renoir, Titian, Giorgione and others.[55] She wrote that while painting had varied down the ages, "one broad principle underlay them all – that any painting might be regarded structurally as a series of superimposed layers".[56] Starting from the back, these comprised: a) the support i.e. the wall panel or canvas on which the picture is painted; b) the ground, a special preparation laid on the support to provide the surface for painting; c) the paint layers proper, which might be numerous; and d) the protective coating or varnish.[57] It was Ruhemann's demonstration of this layering technique that so fascinated Rosa at Camberwell and sparked her determination while at the Slade to copy in the Gallery. Here, just as he encouraged his student restorers with their copying, Ruhemann encouraged Rosa as she copied.

Becoming a Restorer

The teaching that Ruhemann organized for future restorers crossed and recrossed the boundaries between art and science. Prior to his appointment at the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Ruheman's personal knowledge of restoration

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54 J.E. Molly Seegers, *Brief Biography and Bibliography of Joyce Plesters, Painting Conservator.* 2014. HA 602 Theory and Methodology course work, accessed March 30, 2020. https://www.academia.edu/10851344/Brief_Biography_and_Bibliography_of_Joyce_Plesters_Painting_Conservator.

55 Joyce Plesters, "Cross-Sections and Chemical Analysis of Paint Samples," *Studies in Conservation* 2 (1956): 110–157.

56 Joyce Plesters," The Preparation and Study of Paint Cross-Section" Reprinted from the *Museums Journal* 54, No. 4 (1954): 97–101, in Bomford and Leonard, *Issues in the Conservation of Paintings,* 185.

57 Ibid., 185.

techniques was gleaned solely from the books he read. The Kaiser Friedrich Museum afforded him the opportunity for in-depth study of the Renaissance paintings on which the collection focused. His appointment coincided with a period when a number of picture restorers in Italy, Germany and Holland were working to raise the standards of restoring. While earlier generations of restorers had only taught their techniques to their sons, Ruhemann was determined to share his knowledge. His early impressions of restoration work at the Kaiser Friedrich Museum strengthened his determination to introduce a scheme of apprenticeship and teaching and to develop methods to enhance learning for restorer apprentices. He saw teaching and supervising apprentices and assistant restorers as part of the role of a chief or senior restorer.[58] Beginning in his own professional practice in the 1930s he taught restoration techniques to men and women of all backgrounds and nationalities up to the 1970s. Due to pressure of work in his private studio he employed up to nine restorers[59] and ensured his supply of assistants by instituting paying apprenticeships and then paid apprentices as they became more proficient.[60]

In addition to working at his studio and as a private restorer for the National Gallery, from 1934 Ruhemann also lectured at the Courtauld Institute, where between 1931 and 1937 Constable was director. Between 1946 and 1951 Ruhemann was in charge of the Institute's technology department and divided his time between the Institute and the National Gallery.[61] As part of London University the Courtauld Institute offered the first degree course in art history in Britain.[62] Its technology department was founded initially to provide technical knowledge to the art history students but when Ruhemann took over the department he introduced a program for future restorers. By 1961 eight former students had become museum restorers and the others were working freelance. Students studying art history at the Institute also spent time watching restoration work in the laboratory, which was considered excellent preparation for museum curators. In addition, the department organized summer courses for gallery curators, museum staff and curators of the National Trust and the Ministry of Works, who looked

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58 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 31, 34, 41, 43, 75.

59 Blewett, "The Art of Conservation", 638–639.

60 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 34.

61 Ibid., 45, 46.

62 Alec Clifton-Taylor and Rosemary Mitchell, "Constable, William George (1887–1976), Art Historian and Gallery Director," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), accessed March 30, 2020.
https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-30960.

after historic houses and art works.[63] A few students from Hornsey College of Art also studied with Ruhemann two days a week, financed through county council education grants.[64]

When selecting apprentices and students Ruhemann looked first for "integrity", which he tested through graphology (the study of handwriting through which to infer a person's character), and second for "talent",[65] for which he considered "sensitivity, flair and a sharp eye" to be necessary.[66] To test for "flair" prospective students were asked to differentiate originals and forgeries from a set of photograms (pictures produced with photographic materials like light-sensitive paper but without a camera). Their eyesight and color vision were also tested as well as their "artistic gifts", which were judged from a drawing of a hand.[67] Students who did not pass the drawing test were advised to focus on preservation techniques with a view to becoming "specialist restorers", while those who passed were to aim for positions as "artist-restorers", dealing with cleaning, retouching and varnishing paintings, which Ruheman wrote required "artistic judgement and skill".[68]

Ruhemann was clear that both science and of art were necessary in the curriculum for prospective restorers.[69] But how much science was a matter of debate. Some restorers argued that a two or three year's course in science was necessary, but Ruhemann advocated a general scientific program of a few weeks only on the grounds that the more intricate scientific work in museums was increasingly being undertaken by museum scientists. He thought students could spend part of their course with peers who intended to restore objects in other media but they needed separate sessions to learn specialist elements, including painting samples of every substance, adhesive, medium, pigment or varnish they were likely to require, which they were to practice on glass and on canvas.[70]

Ruhemann was aware of the debate about whether restorers should be artists and of the view that letting an artist loose on a painting could result in too

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63 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 72, 73, 77.

64 Morwenna Blewett: interview with Ambrose Scott-Moncrieff, 2014, Foundation for the American Institute for Conservation (FAIC) Oral History Project, cited in Blewett, "The Art of Conservation", 638.

65 Helmut Ruhemann, "The Training of Restorers," in *Recent Advances in Conservation: Contributions to the IIC Rome Conference, 1961*, ed. G. Thomson (London: Butterworth, 1963), 203.

66 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 73.

67 Ruhemann, "The Training of Restorers", 203.

68 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 66.

69 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 74; Ruhemann, "The Training of Restorers", 202.

70 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 74.

much inpainting.[71] But like Germain Bazin (1901–1990), chief curator of paintings and drawing at the Louvre (1951–65), he believed that restorers must be painters because they needed to be familiar with all the painter's materials, which he thought was almost impossible without years of practical experience as a painter. Above all when seeing a dirty, damaged and repainted picture the restorer had to be able to visualize how it was intended to look and this, Ruhemann argued, depended more on "artistic feeling and aesthetic tact" than on mastery of the materials and the ways in which they had to be used. At the same time, he was aware that the qualities that made the "greatest artist, genius originality and dynamic energy" would not make a good restorer: "They will not be found among [. . .] candidates who, like myself, lack [. . .] some of these gifts and have given up the hope of becoming first-rate painters".[72] Nonetheless, every student was to make at least one copy of part of a painting under a teacher's guidance. As Rosa recalls, Ruhemann stood quietly behind the students copying in the National Gallery and made suggestions to aid their work.[73]

A central principle for Ruhemann was that conservation should be guided by the artist's intention.[74] As Steven Dykstra discusses, the National Gallery cleaning controversy led to the formalization of a technologically defined meaning of 'following the artist's intentions' that mapped onto positivist perspectives around observable scientific 'facts'. Ruhemann, like positivist restorers, claimed that consistent application of scientific observation, study and experimentation validated systematic art conservation technologies that accurately exposed, preserved and truthfully presented the materials originally laid down by the artist. This, they argued served the intentions of the artist equitably without interpretive distortion.[75] In contrast, art historian Ernst Gombrich (1909–2001) argued that strictly technical approaches to conservation yielded paintings whose condition and appearance were newly artificial.[76] For Gombrich, "prudent aesthetic and historical interpretations" were to take precedence over "technologically determined expositions."[77] This was to be achieved by controlling the conservation treatment with art historical understanding and connoisseurship.

71 See, for example, Guy Iznard, *Les pirates de la peinture* (Paris: Flammarion, 1955).

72 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings*, 74, 76.

73 Rosa Branson, Interviews 2016, 2019.

74 Ruhemann, "The Training of Restorers", 202.

75 Dykstra, "The Artist's Intentions", 198–200.

76 Dykstra, "The Artist's Intentions", 202; Ernst H. Gombrich, "Dark Varnishes: Variations on a Theme of Pliny," *The Burlington Magazine* 104 (1962): 51–55.

77 Dykstra, "The Artist's Intentions", 202.

Ruhemann, too, argued for the importance of connoisseurship in the curriculum for restorers. Bettina Jessell (1917–2003), who was apprenticed to Ruhemann between 1938 and 1940 and assisted him during the second world war with the restoration of the National Gallery paintings,[78] notes that from his days at the Kaiser Wilhelm Museum onwards Ruhemann regarded the restorer as a connoisseur.[79] Jessel's argument that Ruhemann insisted on following the methods of the original painter exactly and on understanding the painter's artistic intention and that this required connoisseurship, nuances the idealist-positivist debate. Christopher Hopkinson traces the notion of connoisseurship back to the early nineteenth century when German scholars began to study private collections of paintings in British aristocratic homes to provide judgements on attribution, 'authenticity' and the quality of paintings. Whereas art critics were mainly concerned with aesthetic responses to art, connoisseurs focused on authorship and context in order to construct a chronology for art works. As well as expanding public 'taste', connoisseurship began to establish art history as a recognizable discipline. Although the primary aim of connoisseurs was to identify 'authentic' works of art, the elimination of copies or forgeries was also part of connoisseurship, although not its intended outcome.[80] Jessel writes that connoisseurship was important to Ruhemann because following the methods of the original painter and understanding their artistic intention required not only a thorough knowledge of their technique, but also of the visual experience they were trying to communicate. Jessell notes this has to do with "a sensitive feeling for the rhythm of contrasting warm and cool tones, and [. . .] for the way light interacts with form and space".[81] In Ruhemann's schema for future restorers, the teaching of connoisseurship was to be organized via seminars with art historians, guided visits to galleries and picture sales, and lectures on the methods of the "old masters" and the detection of forgeries.[82] Ruhemann himself disseminated his ideas about conservation and the education of restorers via lectures at museums, art colleges and universities in Britain, Europe and the USA and was a founder member of the International Institute for Conservation (established in 1950 as the International Institute for the Conservation of

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78 Barbara Ventresco, "Bettina Jessell, 1917–2003." *Studies in Conservation* 49, no. 1 (2004): 63–64.

79 Bettina Jessel, "Helmut Ruhemann's Inpainting Techniques," *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation* 17, no. 1 (1977): 1–8.

80 Christopher Hodkinson, *A Question of Attribution: Art Connoisseurship in the Nineteenth Century* (Wrightington: Hunger HIll Press, 2014, kindle edition), locs.100–104, 125–127, 208–209.

81 Jessell, "Helmut Ruhemann's Inpainting Techniques", 1.

82 Ruhemann, *Cleaning of Paintings,* 75.

Museum Objects)[83] at whose congresses he presented his ideas on teaching prospective restorers.[84]

In his day-to-day work as a restorer and an educator Ruhemann crossed and recrossed the boundaries between what C.P. Snow would characterize in 1959 as the "two cultures" of humanities and science.[85] This crisscrossing informed all of Ruhemann's work and is exemplified in his co-authored book, *The Artist at Work*.[86] Published in 1951, *The Artist at Work* originated from an exhibition organized for CEMA (the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts) that toured civilian and army centers between 1941 and 1943.[87] A section of *The Artist at Work* outlines different ways individual painters built up their paintings in layers and the types of paints and techniques they used. T*he Artist at Work* became Rosa's reference book for the early painting techniques that Ruhemann and Plesters illuminated and which Rosa uses to paint contemporary topics to this day (see Figure 1).

Conclusion: Forms of Exhibiting and of the Gaze

The educational activities of the student artist Rosa Branson and the painting conservator Helmut Ruhemann illustrate a meshwork of forms of exhibiting and of informal and formal forms of art education and learning[88] that include both artistic and scientific aspects. Rosa's visit aged six to the National Gallery with her mother was a key moment of informal education that sparked Rosa's desire to become an artist. Here the exhibition space where the Rembrandt hung became a learning space where Noreen took on the role of the mother-as-pedagogue as she pointed out the Rembrandt to her daughter. At the Slade informal and formal educational

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83 IIC History, "A Brief History of IIC", accessed October 5, 2020. https://www.iiconservation. org/about/history .

84 Ruhemann, "The Training of Restorers".

85 Charles Percy Snow, *The Two Cultures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959).

86 Helmut Ruhemann, and E.M. Kemp, *The Artist at Work: Contrast, Similarity, Influence* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1951).

87 Hendy, "Helmut Ruhemann", 607.

88 As Stephanie Spencer discusses, 'informal education' and 'informal learning' differ conceptually. See: Stephanie Spencer, "Out of the Classroom: 'Informal Education and Histories of Education." *History of Education* 50, no.4 (2021): 468–84. Bourke, O'Neill and Loveridge argue that informal learning is not assessed, so is not an educational process with declared outcomes and that there is a degree of intentionality on the part of the child or learner. See: Roseanna Bourke, John O'Neill and Judith Loveridge, "Children's Conceptions of Informal and Everyday Learning," *Oxford Review of Education* 44, no. 6 (2018): 771–786.

and learning opportunities were brought together through the exhibition and copying strategies that several Slade professors promoted. There were informal learning opportunities as students walked past the full-sized framed photographs of drawings by Leonardo, Michelangelo and Raphael that Legros exhibited on the walls of the Slade, a practice continued by Tonks, who organised for reproductions of work by Michelangelo, Rubens, Rembrandt and Ingres. Under both Legros and Tonks copying from 'old masters' formed an integral part of the formal curriculum. Students were encouraged to draw from artworks exhibited in the National Gallery and the British Museum Print Room, as well as from art works exhibited in European art galleries. Rosa, too, carried her palette to the National Gallery in her search for details and methods of painting as she copied paintings by Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian and Monet that were exhibited; and she did so in the company of the student-restorers whom Ruhemann encouraged as they worked.

It was the search for painting techniques among the 'old masters' exhibited in the Prado that led Ruhemann to understand, albeit dimly at first, that older paintings did not just exist on the surfaces of paintings but had been built up through many layers, a realisation that drove his search for scientific methods for cleaning paintings. And it was not just art that was exhibited at London's National Gallery. Science itself was on display in the wake of the cleaning controversy that followed the return of the evacuated paintings to the gallery after World War Two. Photographs, color prints, explanatory diagrams and photographs of the scientific apparatus employed in examining and analysing the cleaned paintings were exhibited alongside partially cleaned paintings and explanations of the safeguards and methods used in their treatment. This exhibition was intended to enable visitors to observe the science of cleaning paintings in order to provide reassurance that no damage had occurred during cleaning.

This meshwork of forms of exhibiting also engendered a meshwork of 'gazes' that incuded students and visitors to the gallery. As the six-year-old Rosa and her mother looked together at the painting by Rembrandt they gazed in a unidirectional manner attenuated by the difference in height of their bodies. Formal education in copying constituted a specific education of the gaze, in which 'learning to see' and particular observational skills were regarded as central to the ability to reproduce what was observed. Galleries and museums remained open to visitors while students copied. As Aviva Briefel discusses, one result was that students busy copying might themselves be observed and in gendered ways, with women more likely than men to become the object of the gaze.[89] In the

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[89] Aviva Briefel, *The Deceivers: Art Forgery and Identity in the Nineteenth Century* (Ithata: Cornell Univeresity Press, 2006), 37.

complex meshwork of gazes that criss-crossed the educative spaces of gallery exhibitions the gaze of gallery visitors observing students observing paintings constituted an additional thread to those of students as future professionals.

Taken together, forms of exhibiting and forms of the gaze in the educative space of the gallery knot together the exhibiting of 'old masters' and the explanations of the scientific restoration processes that were central to Ruhemann's conservation work and which inform the Renaissance layering technics that Rosa uses to paint contemporary topics today.

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Ian Grosvenor and Siân Roberts

Art, Anti-fascism, and the Evolution of a "Propaganda of the Imagination": The Artists International Association 1933–1945

Abstract: The artist and art educator Nan Youngman recalling the 1939 *Art for the People* exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery, London said 'we wanted everyone to use their art, whatever it was, in a political way.' In the fight against the growing threat of fascism in the 1930s artists in Britain became increasingly concerned with producing art or curating exhibitions which presented a strong and radical challenge to fascist ideology. This agenda was also linked to desire to reach out to audiences beyond those of the metropolitan centre and in the late 1930s and 1940s anti-fascist art exhibitions toured to regional museums, civic centres, factories, and barracks. This essay identifies and documents the rationale, content, participants, impact and interconnectedness of exhibitions in late 1930s and early 1940s Britain that confronted the threat of fascism, including *Artists against Fascism* (1935), *Guernica* (1938), and *For Liberty* (1943) and in particular map the evolution of a "propaganda of the imagination" whereby through direct engagement with art and artists the public would look closely, rather than look away and become an advocate for the arts and progressivism.

Keywords: anti-fascism, spain, war, exhibitions, propaganda

> . . .Today the forces of life and progress are on one side, those of reaction and death on the other. We are having to choose between democracy and fascism, and fascism is the enemy of art. It is not a question of relative freedom; there are no artists in Fascist countries.
>
> Cyril Connolly, 1938.[1]
>
> painting is not done to decorate apartments. It's an instrument of war for attack and defence against the enemy.'
>
> Pablo Picasso[2]

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1 Cyril Connolly, *Enemies of Promise* (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1938), 2.

2 Gijs van Hensbergen, *Guernica. The Biography of a Twentieth Century Icon*. (London: Bloomsbury, 2005), 24.

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Introduction

Guernica by Pablo Picasso is a twentieth century icon, painted as a passionate protest against the fascist violence which on 26 April 1937 rained death on innocent Basque civilians. It was a painting born out of the reality of total war. As a painting it is iconic as both a visual statement against war and fascism, and the chaos and brutality it depicted captured the imagination of both artists and publics when it was displayed first in the Spanish Pavilion at the Paris Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la vie modern in July 1937 (see Figure 1) and then in London at the New Burlington Galleries in October 1938. In Paris four members of the Artists International Association [AIA] decorated rooms in the Peace Pavilion which was located 100 meters from the Spanish Pavilion.[3] The London exhibition was organized by the Surrealist Roland Penrose who was a member of the AIA. Profits from the sale of the London exhibition catalogue went to the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief. *Guernica* was praised by the critic Herbert Read and condemned by the art historian Anthony Blunt and Kenneth Clark, Director of the National Gallery, respectively as "obscure" and "elitist". At the same time as the painting was being displayed in London preliminary paintings, sketches and drawings were exhibited at Oriel College Lecture Room, Oxford in November[4] and in Leeds City Art Gallery in December 1938. Organized with the support of the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief, Leeds had hoped to also display *Guernica*, but it was too large for the Gallery. At the opening the Chair of Leeds Libraries and Arts Committee observed that the pictures were done "as a protest against the sufferings of the Spanish people at the hands of the Fascists" and were "bound to arouse controversy, but the committee took the view [. . .] that Leeds people should have the opportunity of seeing different phases of modern art."[5] A view reinforced in the local press by Bonamy Dobrée, who wrote a short essay on the significance and meaning of the painting and concluded that "art is not a soothing syrup, it is an explosive to make us see afresh, to force us to readjust our preconceived ideas."[6] At the beginning of 1939, the preliminary works re-joined *Guernica* at the Whitechapel Gallery in the East End of London. This was a fitting location as it was an area of London with a large Jewish community and had been the site of a major

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3 van Hensbergen, *Guernica,* 88. The four artists were Mischa Black, Betty Rea, Nan Youngman and James Holland.
4 Tate, "Pablo Picasso: Weeping Woman 1937", accessed October 1, 2020. https://www.tate. org.uk/art/artworks/picasso-weeping-woman-t05010.
5 *Leeds Mercury,* 6 December 1938; *Yorkshire Evening Post,* 6 December 1938.
6 *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* 13 December 1938. Dobrée was Professor of English Literature at Leeds University.

demonstration against Mosley's British Union of Fascists in October 1936. The exhibition proved to be a success both in attracting visitors, some 15,000 in the first week, and raising funds for the Republican cause. The exhibition was accompanied by documentary films on the Spanish Civil War and workshops. Read and Penrose both offered to help the public understand the painting. From Whitechapel *Guernica* travelled to Manchester where it was exhibited in a car showroom just north of the city center. Again, the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief was involved. Proceeds from the exhibition were used to charter a food ship to send relief in what was becoming a humanitarian crisis. Funds were also gathered through the distribution of 150,000 collecting envelopes and appeal letters to 20,000 homes. Women in Manchester were particularly active in raising funds.[7] After Manchester Guernica returned to Picasso and France.

Guernica was not the first anti-fascist painting to be seen in Britain, nor was it the first anti-fascist art exhibition. Nevertheless, this brief story of its sojourn in England provides a useful framing device for the present essay as it highlights many of the elements which will be told here – art as propaganda and creativity as a political act, debate and disagreement on the merits and meaning of contemporary art, artefacts on the move and new spaces of civic engagement, and individual, institutional, and organizational collaboration and cooperation in a common cause. That said, the story to be told is different from that originally conceived, not in its focus on the AIA and its role in promoting a propaganda of the imagination, but in the sources used. COVID-19 closed down our traditional spaces of historical enquiry – archives and universities – and instead forced engagement and immersion with the digital world of newspapers. In some ways this proved particularly fruitful with local reporting having equal exposure as the national, but as with all history what is presented is only one part of the story of the AIA and its "propaganda of the imagination."[8]

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7 *Manchester Evening News* 28 January 1939; Jim Fyrth, *The Signal was Spain. The Aid Spain Movement 1936–1939* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1986), 257–260. On the role of women in anti-fascist politics see Sue Bruley, "Women Against War and Fascism," in *Britain, fascism and the Popular Front*, ed. Jim Fyrth (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1985), 131–156 and Julie V. Gottlieb, "Feminism and Anti-fascism in Britain: Militancy Revived?" in *British Fascism, the Labour Movement and the State* ed. Nigel Copsey and David Renton (London: Palgrave: Macmillan, 2005), 68–94.

8 The archive of the Artists International Association is deposited at the Tate Gallery Archive, Tate Britain and covers the period 1933–1971. It consists of a large amount of printed material in the form of circulars, exhibition catalogues, news sheets, bulletins, newsletters, prints, private view cards and press cuttings, together with manuscript material: see https://www.tate.org.uk/visit/tate-britain/library-archive-reading-rooms . The bulk of the material dates from after the Second World War as very few of the documents from the 1930s have survived. Lack
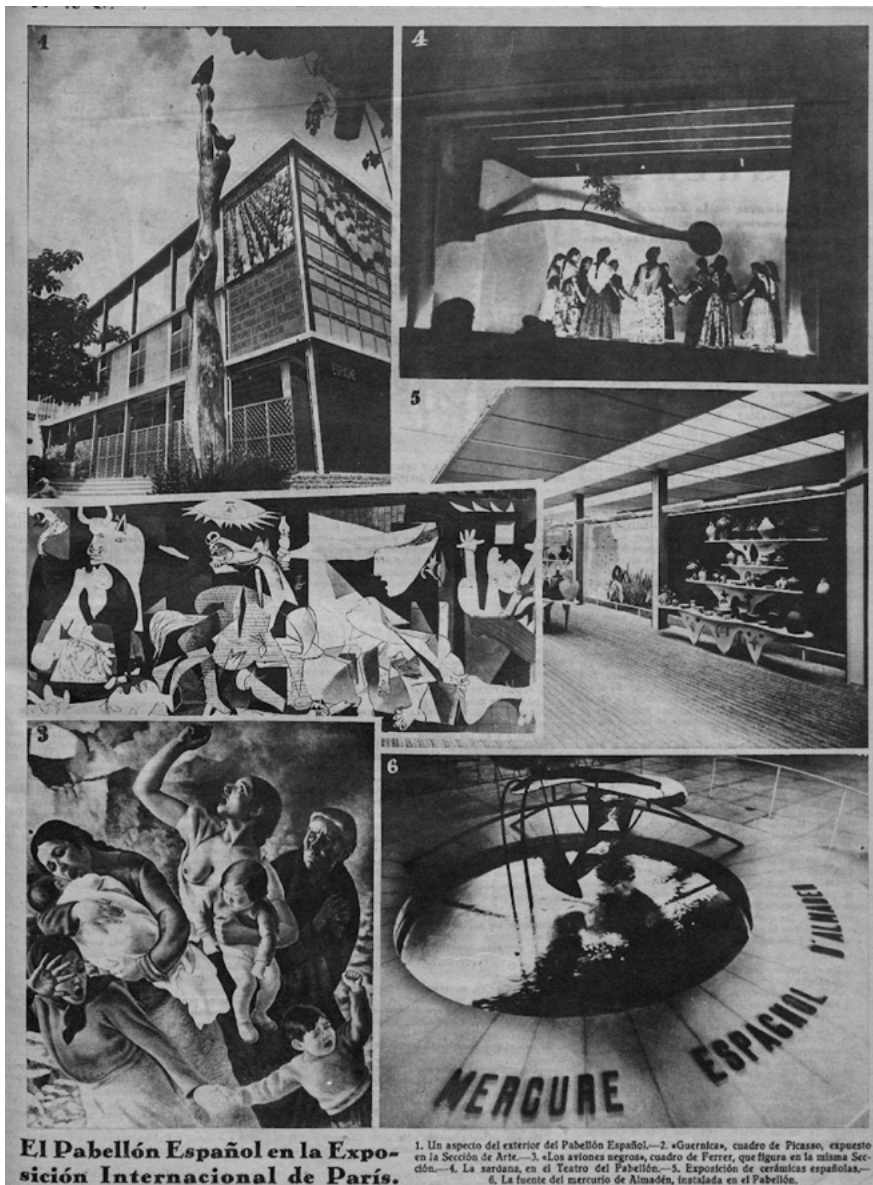
Figure 1: Guernica and the Spanish Pavilion at the Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la vie modern, *Crónica*, 410 (19/09/1937).

Uniting Artists in the Fight against Fascism

Established in 1933 the Artists International [AI] was born out of the political and social conflicts of the period with the aim of mobilizing "the International Unity of Artists Against Imperialist War on the Soviet Union, Fascism and Colonial Oppression." This was to be achieved through "the uniting of all artists in Britain sympathetic to these aims" into working units ready "to execute posters, illustrations, cartoons, book jackets, banners, tableaux, stage directions," the "spreading of propaganda by means of exhibitions, the Press, lectures and meetings," and maintaining "contact" with similar groups in 16 other countries.[9] In a letter to the *Manchester Guardian* A.L. Meblin, secretary of the AI (British Section) added " artists, if they are to become economically secure and are to perform their proper function in society, must organize themselves to fight for an ordered socialist system [. . .] art which ignores social conditions and the needs of the people" was reactionary and instead "a new art" will emerge out of "the struggle for progress."[10] Two exhibitions were organized by the AI in 1934. An anti-War exhibit by the "revolutionary artists group of England" at Cambridge University which later toured (see Table 1) and *The Social Scene* in a shop in London which attracted some press coverage and was described by the artist Eric Gill as made up of "works depicting the hardship of the proletariat, the brutality of the police, the display of armed forces against street demonstrators, orators, starving children and slum conditions."[11] The following year the AI changed its name to the Artists International Association [AIA] and modified its aim to: "The Artists' International Association stands for the Unity of Artists against Fascism, War and the Suppression of Culture."[12] The commitment to a socialist political program remained, but the more specific focus on anti-fascist sentiment allowed a wider circle of artists, both modernists and more traditional established artists, to join alongside social realists in a common cause. As the AIA stated:

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of access to the archive due to Covid-19 and no archive material being available online meant that many lines of inquiry were not able to be pursued including explorations of ideological and intellectual connections with other left movements such as André Breton, Diego Rivera and Leon Trotsky's "Manifesto: Towards a Free Revolutionary Art" (1938).

9 Lynda Morris and Robert Redford, *The Story of the Artists International Association* (Oxford: The Museum of Modern Art, 1983), 11.

10 "Letter from A. L. Meblin, Secretary of the Artists International to the Editor of the Manchester Guardian" *The Manchester Guardian* 9 July 1934.

11 Quoted in Morris and Redford *Artists International Association,* 14.

12 Morris and Redford *Artists International Association*, 28.

> Many artists feel that art and politics should be very separate things, but Fascism is not one of the usual political movements that the artists can perhaps afford to ignore. We see that Fascism not only cripples and lowers the conditions of the working class, but, in fear of liberty of expression, deliberately exterminates progress in art and culture, and persecutes professional and manual laborer alike in its endeavor to crush freedom of thought and speech.[13]

The exhibition *Artists against Fascism and War* was the first successful product of this new artistic alliance. The organizers were determined that it would be "an outstanding artistic event," "a protest against Fascism and War," and "against cultural reaction."[14] Open for just two weeks it attracted some 6,000 visitors[15] and as the critic Montagu Slater wryly observed in *Left Review*, "Those whom art and politics have put asunder, an exhibition against war and fascism has joined together."[16]

"A Sermon to Preach"

In 1937 the AIA rented a large empty house in Grosvenor Square, one of the most fashionable parts of London and covered every room with art. One room devoted to the peace movement consisted of posters produced by the Madrid Defence Committee which ridiculed Franco alongside other images of children killed in air raids and a British recruiting poster showing a sunburnt soldier to which was affixed a photograph of a war cemetery. In another, Hitler is seen debating over guns or butter. In other rooms were works by the "Ashington Group," (miners from Northumberland), naïve paintings, European surrealist paintings selected by Henry Moore, and works by Barbara Hepworth and Stanley Spencer. The AIA described the exhibition "as a demonstration" by British and foreign artists "of their unity in support of peace, democracy and cultural development."[17] Harriet Atkinson has argued the use of the word "demonstration" represented a deliberate decision by the AIA to adopt "the language of politics," and for the AIA "exhibitions-as-demonstrations acted as a form of agitprop, as embodied protests to raise the profile of a cause, rather than displays

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13 Artists International Association *We Believe* leaflet quoted by Jutta Vinzent, *Identity and Image. Refugee Artists from Nazi Germany in Britain (1933–1945)* (Weimar: VDG, 2006), 201.

14 Publicity Poster reproduced in Morris and Redford, *Artists International Association*, 29.

15 van Hensbergen, *Guernica*, 86.

16 Quoted in Margot Heinemann, "The People's Front and the Intellectuals" in *Britain, fascism and the Popular Front*, ed. Jim Fyrth (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1985), 164.

17 *Nottingham Journal* 15 April 1937.

to be consumed passively."[18] Certainly, this interpretation mirrors contemporary commentaries. Atkinson makes her case by focusing on the 1943 exhibition *For Liberty*.

A report on the opening of *For Liberty* syndicated in *The Manchester Guardian* under the headline "Art Among the Ruins," began with the observation that it was "the creed" of the AIA "that art, being an integral part of everyday life, should be seen in everyday places," and therefore it was no surprise that having already held an exhibition in the ticket hall of Charing Cross Underground Station (see Table 1), the AIA had chosen to stage *For Liberty* "in the basement under the battered ruins of John Lewis's shop in Oxford Street as a pulpit." The report continues, "'Pulpit' is not a mischosen [sic] word, because this exhibition has a sermon to preach."[19] The AIA had called on its members in 1942 "to organise themselves as propagandists" and this translated into a clear message in both the exhibition catalogue and the exhibition's design. The catalogue presented a new role for the visual artist as an agent in the evolution of a "propaganda of the imagination":

> Here is a demonstration that artists feel they can contribute more than is at present being asked of them: that the function of art in wartime is not only to record what is happening and to give enjoyment and recreation, but to stimulate and encourage, by vividly representing what we are fighting for.[20]

In design, it translated into an exhibition centerpiece which visually and textually celebrated the "Four Liberties" of the United Nation's 1941 Atlantic Charter: "Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Want, Freedom from Fear." Other sections addressed, "How we are fighting, what we are fighting for, what would happen if we lost."[21] *For Liberty* drew artists from across England and consequently received local press coverage. The *Western Morning News* which covered the southwest of England reported on the contributions of locally based artists including John Tunnard and Oskar Kokoschka. The former was praised for his large mural *Focal Point* which seemed to symbolize "the dawn of the freedom for which we are fighting" and latter for his "strongly

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18 Harriet Atkinson, "Exhibitions as political 'demonstrations': Artists International Association's *For Liberty* exhibition, London 1943," ICDHS Conference Proceedings 2020, 3.

19 *The Manchester Guardian* 16 March 1943.

20 Quoted in Lynda Morris and Robert Redford, The Story of Artists International Association 1935–1953 (Oxford: Museum of Modern Art, 1983), 66.

21 *The Manchester Guardian* 16 March 1943; *Liverpool Daily Post* 15 March 1943. The exhibition was given "an emotional unity" through connecting the art with a piece of free verse by Cecil Day Lewis.

painted study of many horrors of the war."[22] Kokoschka had fled the Nazis and arrived in England in 1938 and settled in Cornwall. The unnamed painting was *What We Are Fighting For*.

Reaching Out

In putting on *For Liberty* the AIA cooperated with the Free German League of Culture (FGLC).[23] The FGLC was established in 1938 as a confederation of anti-fascist and anti-Nazi refugee artists, writers, musicians, and scholars and was founded by, among others, Kokoschka. It was only natural given their political affinities that the two organizations would collaborate and in 1941 they organized an exhibition of sculpture which included the work of refugee artists. In the accompanying catalogue Herbert Read described the exhibition as "modest" as it was an art form that had been "neglected, indeed almost forgotten".[24] It was he noted, "composed in the main of the works of artists who have been uprooted, deprived of their studios, their materials, their very tools. They work tentatively with great difficulty, without adequate economic support in their exile."[25] The same year also saw a second sculpture exhibition and two other exhibition collaborations: *Exhibition of English and Refugee Art* and *Works by Refugee Artists and their English Friends*. Jutta Vinzent is of the view that despite the political orientation of the two organizations the joint exhibitions were generally non-political in content except for Socialist Realist subject matter.[26] This may be the case, although the exhibition documentation is fragmentary, but the key point is that the collaboration was a political act as it gave refugee artists, many of whom had been the subject of the Nazi Degenerate Art Exhibition, a place of display and a public platform.[27] Read's concern regarding

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22 *Western Morning News* 18 March 1943. The news report wrongly names Kokoschka as Lokoschka and identifies him as Czech when he was born in Austria. That said, he fled to England from Czechoslovakia and Jutta Vincent has argued that "he identified himself as a Czech and with the Czech people," Vinzent, *Identity and Image*, 122.

23 Charmian Brinson, "The Contribution of German-Speaking Refugee Artists to British Wartime Propaganda," in *Insiders Outsiders. Refugees from Nazi Europe and their Contribution to British Visual Culture* ed. Monica Bohm-Duchen (London: Lund Humphries, 2019), 219.

24 Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer 8 November 1941.

25 Herbert Read, "Sculpture and Pottery" *AIA and FGLC Exhibition of Sculpture and Drawings* (1941), s.p.

26 Vinzent, *Identity and Image*, 114.

27 See Lucy Wasensteiner and Martin Fass, *London 1938. Defending 'degenerate' art.* (London: Weiner Library, 2018).

the lack of "economic support in exile" was shared by the AIA and it acted "as a valuable source of contacts and exhibiting opportunities" for exiled artists.[28] It also gave political and material support to German, and Austrian refugee artists who were interned as Enemy Aliens following the outbreak of the War.[29]

The AIA worked with other cultural organizations "to achieve unity of action" and it had close and ongoing collaborations with the Left Theatre, the Christian Left Arts Group, the Left Review, the International Peace Campaign, the Council of Civil Liberties and Society of Industrial Artists.[30] Collaborations were also local and particular, such as in 1941 with the Sheffield branch of the Anglo-Soviet Union. Together they organized an exhibition of pictures showing the "many phases of Russian life and progress" and the event was marked by a presentation in Sheffield of a casket from "the steel city of Britain" to "Stalingrad, the steel city of Russia," which depicted the "British Lion rampant, and the Hammer and Sickle."[31]

The AIA actively encouraged the formation of "provincial groups" across the country the first being in Edinburgh in 1937,[32] and others quickly followed including Dundee, Liverpool, Cambridge, Sheffield, Oxford, Durham, Cardiff, Hull, Leamington Spa and Nottingham. By 1944 there were 17 such AIA groups with the opening of one in Belfast.[33] To support the development of such groups the AIA produced "a schedule of advice and procedures", including recommending affiliation to other similar politically aligned bodies such as Left Book Clubs and Peace Groups.[34] Groups were encouraged to help raise morale by participating in the AIA's mural decoration program, using their skills to decorate buildings commissioned to meet the needs of wartime administration. These included British Restaurants, government operated communal kitchens created in 1940 to help people who had been bombed out of their homes, had run out of ration

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28 Emma Chambers and Karin Orchard, ed., *Schwitters in Britain* (London: Tate Publishing, 2013), 10.

29 Peter Wakelin, *Refuge and Renewal, Migration and British Art* (Bristol: Sampson and Company, 2019) 67. See also Klaus E Hinrichsen, "Visual Art Behind the Wire," in *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain,* ed. David Cesarini, and Tony Kushner (London: Frank Cass, 1993), 188–209. For a discussion of the experience of internment see Ian Grosvenor and Angelo van Gorp, "At school with the avant-garde: European architects and the modernist project in England," *History of Education*, 47, no. 4 (2018): 544–563.

30 Artists International Association Membership Leaflet 1938 reproduced in Morris and Redford *Artists International Association*, 30.

31 *The Manchester Guardian* 28 November 1941.

32 *The Scotsman* 21 December 1937.

33 *Belfast Newsletter* 10 November 1944.

34 Morris and Redford, *Artists International Association*, 65.

coupons, or otherwise needed help. Established by the Ministry of Food, there were 2,160 British Restaurants across the country, serving around 600,000 meals per day. Schools and churches were often used because they had dining halls and kitchens.[35] Exhibitions were also organized such as in Dundee in November 1937 when a 100 drawings and paintings by Spanish children in Montrose, Cambridge and Valencia were exhibited and as the press commented the drawings, not unnaturally showed a preoccupation with "bombing aeroplanes, air raids and bombardments."[36] The first major exhibition arranged by a provincial group was *Art for All* in 1943. Organized by a group of Midlands' artists at showrooms in Nottingham, it presented the work of international and local artists alongside examples of architecture, pottery, furniture and fabrics, theatre and film designs which collectively demonstrated "the place which art [. . .] claims in the day-to-day life of the community." Formalized landscapes were displayed alongside Henry Moore's tube shelter drawings, abstract art next to studies executed in local factories which conveyed the "power and weight of machinery," but the centerpiece of the exhibition was a half dozen panels by Kokoschka and Edward Le Bas of the "Four Freedoms" previously installed at the *For Liberty* exhibition in London. Described as both "correspondingly provocative" and likely to raise "paeons and paroxysms among visitors," the local press concluded that the message of *Art for all* was that by working together artists and designers could produce design of a higher standard and that exhibitions were a mechanism for stimulating wider public interest.[37]

Reaching out also meant looking beyond London and AIA provincial groups if the desire to preserve peace and democracy through art was to be translated in action. Smaller communities struggled to have access to contemporary artworks "of more than strictly local interest" and some urban communities had no public art collections.[38] In 1939 it organized its first travelling exhibition, selecting work that had been previously exhibited in its *Art for the People* exhibition in London's Whitechapel Gallery. A mixture of Social Realism, Surrealism, and abstract art its purpose was to be both political and educational and it toured England for

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35 See Peter J. Atkins, "Communal Feeding in War-Time: British Restaurants, 1940–1947 "in *Food and War in Twentieth Century Europe*, "In *Food and War in Twentieth Century Europe*, ed. Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, Rachel Duffet and Alain Drouard (London: Routledge, 2012) 139–153.The British Restaurants were disbanded in 1947 but some continued as civic restaurants run by local councils.
36 *The Courier and Advertiser* 27 November 1937.
37 *Nottingham Evening Post* 6 August 1943; *Nottingham Journal* 14 August 1943.
38 Brian Foss, *War Paint. Art, War, State and Identity in Britain 1939–1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 182.

a year, the itinerary including Southport, York, Bradford, Hanley, Kidderminster, and Carlisle. The latter venue attracted some 32,000 visitors. A second travelling exhibition called *Britain To-day: Cross Section* travelled to Manchester and Liverpool and presented to the public 84 unframed prints, mainly lithographs of "everyday tasks, diversions, and living conditions of the British working class" and toured "the halls of trade union branches, co-operative societies and settlements" to bring "aesthetically good work, with some social and political meaning, into the hands of a new and wide public."[39] Travelling exhibitions introduced new artists to local audiences, a feature signposted by the *Aberdeen Evening Express* in 1941 when an AIA exhibition included war paintings by Nan Youngman, Leo Hardy and Clifford Rowe.[40] The content was not always contemporary art. One of the 1944 travelling exhibitions (Hanley, Birmingham, Nottingham) curated by the Marxist art historian Francis Klingender and organized jointly with the Council for the Encouragement of Music and Arts (CEMA) was *Hogarth and English Caricature*, which located "the ancestry" of his work in "native English forms," his successors in England (Rowlandson, Gillray, Cruikshank) and in Europe (Goya, Daumier, Gericault) and served "as a reminder that the bringing of art to the people is in the best tradition of English culture."[41] Other exhibitions were held in libraries, canteens, shops, department stores, and British Restaurants (see Table 1). The AIA produced catalogues to accompany its travelling exhibitions, and these acted as a vehicle for persuasion during and after the exhibition had moved on. The catalogue for the second travelling exhibition was described as throwing "down the gauntlet to those people who declare that there is no place for art in time of war and it forces a claim for wider State recognition of the arts."[42]

The AIA's political message was not just delivered through exhibitions. Street demonstrations and festivals brought artists together to produce the political ephemera of history: posters, banners and decorated billboards (see Figure 2). As one AIA member recalled:

> We were convinced anti-Fascists and [. . .] we were all [. . .] involved in Anarchist groups, Communist Party Groups, Socialist groups, Labour League of Youth, and [. . .] the factor that kept us together was the anti-Fascist business and the Civil War in Spain [. . .] All

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39 *The Manchester Guardian* 13 June 1939.

40 *The Aberdeen Evening Express* 25 July 1941.

41 *Staffordshire Advertiser* 26 May 1944; *Birmingham Evening Despatch* 14 June 1944; *Nottingham Journal* 17 August 1944.

42 *Derby Daily Telegraph* 15 March 1941. The catalogue was written by the artist Carel Weight and the art historian Anthony Blunt. It praised the Government's commissioning work from war artists as "a beginning," but it needed to be expanded and "not allowed to die between wars as so far been the case."

these groups would come together for the massive May Day demonstrations. Big groups of artists would be formed to make the decorations for these festivals, making banners and floats; there would be as many as several hundred of us combined together. Nothing survived, everything went into the dustbin afterwards.[43]

Figure 2: "Anti-fascists creatively engaged in producing propaganda posters and banners in the halls of Christ Church, Watney Street, Commercial Road, London (1918)." Reproduced with kind permission of the Whitechapel Gallery Archive, London.

The AIA hired 22 prominent billboard sites in London and on the 17 February 1939 some 50 artists came together to "paint pictorial appeals for Spain." Art as both intervention and spectacle, which attracted crowds, press attention and publicity.[44] Workshops, talks and lectures were organized. February 1942 saw the AIA given free access to the National Gallery, London to organize a series of weekly lectures by, among others, the Marxist art historian F. D. Klingender, the artist Nan Youngman, the architect and business partner of Walter Gropius, Maxwell Fry, and Mischa Black, one of the AIA founders.[45] A monthly bulletin documenting activities was sent to members. AIA members also were highly visible and active in other political agencies, such as the Artists' Refugee Committee.[46]

Sympathetic journalists circulated their ideas. *The Manchester Guardian* described the AIA as, "[. . .] conscious of their responsibilities as members of the community and anxious to use their skill in the interests of peace and liberty, believing that these are essential conditions for the free development of all creative work" and committed to the breaking down "the barriers between artists and the people," and the *Birmingham Daily Post* reported the organization's desire to

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43 Reg Turner quoted in Morris and Redford, *Artists International Association* 34.
44 *Daily Herald* 17 February 1939.
45 *The Manchester Guardian* 5 February 1942.
46 Morris and Redford, *Artists International Association* 52.

"bring together artists of all nationalities and all schools, and to secure closer relationship with the public."[47] London newspapers were syndicated regionally extending knowledge of AIA activities and political messaging. In 1937 *The Manchester Guardian,* for example, reported on the AIA's *Portraits for Spain* initiative whereby members offered to make portraits in painting, sculpture or drawing for any client, the money going to supply medical equipment to the British artists' ambulance in Spain. The report ended with a clear statement of the AIA's position that it was "vitally necessary to stand with all progressive-minded people against the forces working for the destruction of peaceful democracy."[48] While the *Shields Daily News* in 1940 had a detailed account which, alongside a description of the Surrealist Corner, praised as a "triumph" a roomful of paintings by Austrians and Germans most of whom had been, or still were in British internment camps despite being refugees from Hitler and classed as "degenerate artists." The report detailed the works among others of Martin Bloch (interned), Hannes Hammerschmidt, Fred Uhlman (interned), and John Heartfield, and condemned the continuation of internment of refugees.[49] The press also offered an effective mechanism for the AIA to function as a professional collective and lobby on issues central to members' interests including work for unemployed artists, reform of art education, and the need for government finance and patronage.

Towards a Propaganda of the Imagination?

At the opening of an exhibition of prints in Manchester June 1939 Professor T. L. Webster observed that the founders of the AIA believed "that their skills should be used to help the organised people of this country to resist [. . .] fascism and the suppression of culture." But there was a problem which "bothered" him and which he felt many in the audience shared, "the problem [. . .] as to how much artists should go in for propaganda." He continued, "Was that the job of the artist?" His answer was that "in times like the present artists had a duty to the community [. . .] [and] that they were justified in using their powers to help the community in the way the Artists International Association aimed at."[50] Webster's comments reflect a widely held view in 1930s Britain that propaganda was a

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47 *The Manchester Guardian* 10 February 1939; *The Manchester Guardian* 13 June 1939; *Birmingham Daily Post* 17 September 1941.
48 *The Manchester Guardian* 16 December 1937.
49 *Shield Daily News* 26 September 1940.
50 *The Manchester Guardian* 15 June 1939.

creative instrument, part of a process of education which if used properly was, in John Grierson's words, an instrument for the "practical fulfillment [. . .] of the democratic ideal."[51] What then of the evolution of AIA's declared "propaganda of the imagination"?

Propaganda of the imagination involved both the production of art and its consumption. In terms of the former the AIA was able to bring together in exhibitions many different artists representing different movements, addressing a wide range of subject matter. At the beginning the AIA focused on producing posters, illustrations, banners, and tableaux which demonstrated the unity of artists against fascism and in the cause of peace, but with the outbreak of war artists increasingly shifted their creative focus onto the conflict's impact on daily life. The AIA also drew on the work of refugee artists, offering them support and a platform. Vinzent has interestingly written of refugee artists seeing themselves as "rooted in the imagined 'community' of 'modern artists'."[52] This raises an interesting point about how the various publics – who the AIA tried to reach – were perceived and whether they can usefully be understood as constituting different parts of Benedict Anderson's idea of the nation as an "imagined community."[53] Certainly, the travelling exhibitions helped through art to unify the regions and the metropolis.

Public interest can be gauged by the number of exhibitions staged by the AIA and the fragmentary evidence that survives of visitor numbers. As Table 1 shows between 1934 and 1945 the AIA organized at least 48 exhibitions in 25 different locations throughout Britain with visitor numbers ranging from 6,000 to 150,000.[54] The travelling exhibitions and activities organized by provincial groups all functioned as distributed interventions in achieving AIA aims. Art was not to be seen as a marginal feature of society but accepted as an important means of communication. This the AIA believed would help to gain for the profession "a considerable increase in power and influence," and in turn help to foster "progressive cultural opinion."[55] As Nan Youngman remembered, "we

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51 Quoted in *Ian Grosvenor,* "No hay poder sin control de la imagen: "en la escuela aprendemos a leer, pero no aprendemos a ver,"in *Totalitarismos europeos, propaganda y educación. Una historia visual desde los NO-DO,* ed. *Eulàlia Collelldemont and Conrad Vilanou* (Gijón: Ediciones Trea, S. L, 2020), 23.

52 Vinzent, *Identity and Image,* 172.

53 See Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

54 Some of the locations outside of London hosted more than one exhibition, some of the travelling exhibitions had different titles at different venues and could be counted as separate exhibitions, and not all venues for travelling exhibitions are identified.

55 Reproduction of the Manifesto of the AIA British Artists' Congress 1937 in Morris and Redford *Artists International Association,* 35.

just wanted everyone to use their art, whatever it was, in a political way," but not all art produced and displayed, and not all exhibitions staged by the AIA presented a strong and radical challenge to fascist ideology.[56] Nor were all exhibitions well received by the public or the critics, but they nevertheless generated debate. Exhibitions aimed to inform, but also to provoke. Attitudes could be transformed through engagement with art; attending an exhibition, hearing a debate, participating in a workshop were all activities geared to facilitating civic engagement. The aim was to produce a public that would look closely, rather than look away and transform the viewer into someone "who speaks on behalf" of the art itself.[57] In this sense the "propaganda of the imagination" was radical and emancipatory.

The AIA had always been international in focus and links were made and sustained with other similar associations advocating common cause in promoting artistic freedom, democracy and opposition to fascism, but events following the end of the War tested this commitment. Economic instability at home coupled with growing concerns around Soviet expansionism in Europe, the Czechoslovakian Crisis of 1948 and the Berlin Blockade of 1949 combined to produce political splits within the AIA and the removal of anti-fascist statements in its statutes and the political clause in its constitution. The AIA was transformed into an apolitical exhibition focused association. Fascism had been defeated and British art for a time moved in the direction of "national allegiance", the celebration of Englishness and a moderate form of modernism. It was moving in this direction before the War ended as war art focused more and more on the impact of the conflict on the daily life of communities and the consequent shaping of a national story.[58]

Looking Forward, Looking Back

"History," as Timothy Snyder observed "does not repeat, but it does instruct."[59] In recent decades neo-liberalism and global capitalism have combined to produce the conditions in which discord, instability and social polarization have flourished and fascist traits have emerged in political discourse and practice.

56 Morris and Redford *Artists International Association,* 55.
57 Ariella Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography* (New York: Zone Books, 2008), 117. Azoulay is referring to photography, but her comment applies equally to other forms of art.
58 See Foss, *War Paint*, chapter 6.
59 Timothy Snyder, *On Tyranny. Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* (London: Bodley Head, 2017), 9.

Enzo Traverso, in the *New Faces of Fascism* (2019), has described this phenomenon as "post-fascism."[60] Whether what we are seeing is new or old, what is clear is that there is a growing ascendancy of the radical right, with its nationalist, racist and xenophobic discourse that identifies both internal and external enemies and one which has gained both institutional acceptance and sponsorship. Racist vocabulary has been mobilized to promote "new identitarian nationalisms" and loose, transnational social networks have emerged online which are "united by misogyny . . . [and], racism."[61] At the same time there is a new "normal" in global politics where history is being abandoned in favor of "forgetting, misremembering and mistaking the past"[62] and as partisan narratives gain traction historical revisionism has become more widespread.[63]

Fascism did not disappear with the collapse of fascist regimes in the 1940s, but rather as Angela Dimitrakaki and Harry Weeks argue (after Stuart Hall) the residues of fascism have "sporadically re-congealed from the 1960s to the present day" and the social and political conditions which enabled fascist traits to begin to *re*-emerge as such point to a renewed growth of fascism.[64] Some artists and activists have begun to recognize this threat and responded accordingly. For example, *We are Here*, the Amsterdam based refugee collective, has been involved since 2017 in an interdisciplinary summer school with BAK (*Basis voor Actuele Kunst*) that brings together artists, curators, activists and theorists to "think through, learn about, and imagine critical, politically-informed artistic practices" that address "looming and present fascisms" and envision and actualize "ways of being together otherwise."[65] Similarly, in Poland in 2018 a group of artists, art historians, curators and activists in Krakow began to work together to create a network of anti-fascist and anti-war cultural events across the country which culminated in September 1, 2019 (on the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of WW2) with the launch of the Anti-fascist Year, "to commemorate all anti-fascist activists [. . .] who actively resisted fascism in the

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60 Enzo Traverso, *The New Faces of Fascism. Populism and the Far Right* (London: Verso, 2019).

61 Markus Miessen and Zoë Ritts, introduction to *Para-Platforms. On the Spatial Politics of Right-Wing Populism* ed.Markus Miessen and Zoë Ritts (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2018), 9.

62 David Andress, *Cultural Dementia: How the West has Lost its History, and Risks Losing Everything Else* (London:Head of Zeus, 2018), 47.

63 See Ian Grosvenor, "Populism, Nationalism and the Past. An English story of History in the Present," *Rizoma Freirano,* 31 (2021), accessed July 22, 2022. http://www.rizoma-freireano.org/.

64 Angela Dimitrakaki and Harry Weeks, "Anti-fascism/Art/Theory. An Introduction to What Hurts Us," *Third Text* 33, no. 3 (2019): 287.

65 BAK, "We Are Here (Amsterdam)". Accessed September 2020. https://www.bakonline.org/person/we-are-here-2/ The annual course is organized by BAK, Utrecht with HKU University of Arts Utrecht. BAK also runs a program called, *Propositions for Non-Fascist Living*.

past, and to oppose the reoccurrence in the public domain of neo-fascist and neo-Nazi movements as well as, and all parties, endorsing and idolizing fascist ideas, discourse and practices."[66] 2019 also saw the exhibition *Never Again. Art against War and Fascism in the 20th and 21st centuries* at the Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw. The final paragraph in the online exhibition guide directly addresses the re-emerging fascist traits that have been observed, "The riots in Chemnitz, the rally of Unite the Right in Charlottesville, the National Radical Camp marching hand in hand with Forza Nuova on the Independence Day in Warsaw – is this already fascism? The contemporary artists who engage with these issues are unanimous: when this question can be answered with absolute certainty, it will already be too late."[67]

Fascism has a history, but so does anti-fascism and it is the latter's history that at the present conjuncture is important for both fostering ongoing anti-fascist mobilization and political education so that what continues to stir in the undergrowth of politics is recognized and challenged. As Kokoschka wrote as the War was drawing to a close, "We artists have a responsibility towards the young generation of Europe, which has all reasons to doubt justice [. . .] Culture is at stake and therefore we artists must by no means dare to be indulgent. Our duty is to be honestly critical of everybody and everything at present."[68] Words as prescient today as in 1944.

66 Rokantyfaszystowski, accessed October 1, 2020. https://rokantyfaszystowski.org/en/ .
67 Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, "Never Again: Art Against War and Fascism in the 20th and 21st Centuries", accessed October 1, 2020. https://neveragain.artmuseum.pl/en/ .
68 Extract from Kokoschka's "Opening Address at the Foreign Artists Conference," April 22 1944 quoted in Morris and Redford *Artists International Association*,72.

Table 1: Artists International Association Exhibitions 1934–1945.[69]

1934	*Anti-War Exhibit*, Artists International 'revolutionary artists group of England,' Cambridge University
	The Social Scene, Artists International, 64 Charlotte Street, London, September – October
1935	*Arts against Fascism and War*, 28 Soho Square, London, November 13–27. 6,000 visitors
	Cambridge Anti-Fascist Exhibition, Artists International Association [AIA], 27 Soho Square, London, November 18–27
1936	*War and Fascism* [Cambridge Anti-Fascist Exhibition], Workers' Film Society, Presbyterian Church, Hull
	AIA *Memorial Exhibition of Drawings by Felicia Browne*, 46 Frith Street, London October 15–29
	Artists Help Spain, AIA, London, December
1937	*Unity of Artists for Peace, Democracy and Cultural Development*, AIA, 41 Grosvenor Square, London 14 April – 5 May. 10,000 visitors.
	Exhibition of Handicraft Objects, AIA, London, April
	5,000 Years Young, AIA, 79 Charlotte Street, London, November. Exhibition of Chinese drawings and woodcuts to remind British public of Japanese aggression.
	Spanish child art exhibition, AIA, Dundee Training College
1938	*Twentieth Century German Art*, AIA a sponsor, New Burlington Galleries, London, July 8–30.
	London Life in Concrete, AIA, 36 Soho Square, London. Solo exhibition of Peter Peri
1939	*Living Art in England*, ARC [Artists Refugee Committee] and AIA 'in aid of Czechoslovakian and Jewish Refugees.' London Gallery, London, January

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69 This working inventory is based on newspaper reports and secondary sources used in this essay.

Table 1 (continued)

		Art for the People as a demonstration of Unity of Artists for Peace, Democracy and Cultural Development, AIA, Whitechapel Gallery, London, 9 February – 7 March. 40,000 visitors
		An Exhibition of Modern Art, AIA, Museum and Art Gallery, Hanley, Staffordshire, May
		AIA Touring Exhibition, York, York Educational Settlement, March; Bradford, Hanley, Kidderminster, and Carlisle – until Autumn 1940. Bradford alone attracted 32,000 visitors
		Surrealism Exhibition of Work of AIA Members, Brighton Art Gallery, 3–27 August
		Modern Pictures: British and Foreign Artists, AIA, Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle, July
		Britain Today, AIA touring graphic art exhibition, including Toynbee Hall, London 16–28 January, Manchester Ancoats Settlement, June; and David Lewis Theatre, Liverpool
1940		*Modern Art: Paintings and Drawings*, AIA, Art Gallery, Northampton, 5–31 January
		Modern Art, AIA Derby Art Gallery, Derby May; *Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings*, AIA Cartwright Memorial Hall, Bradford July 31 – September 1; *Exhibition of Modern Art*, AIA Middlesbrough Art Gallery, Middlesbrough September
		Everyman Prints, AIA, Picture Hire Gallery, 56 Brook Street, London, 31 January – 24 February, Bristol, and Durham [simultaneous opening] March and touring exhibition – Luton, Winchester and Mid-Rhondda
		Art for the People, AIA loan exhibition with British Institute of Adult Education, Branch Library, Church Lane, Leytonstone, London, 6 February – 9 March
		Exhibition of *Modern Paintings*, AIA, Ministries of Shipping and Economic Affairs canteen and Ministry of Information, London, April. Followed by a factory canteen tour starting at the Cowley Works, Oxford
		Touring exhibitions to British Restaurants [Government operated communal kitchens] organized by AIA and Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts [CEMA]
		Modern Art exhibition, AIA, Royal Society of British Artists, London, September

Table 1 (continued)

1941	*Russian art exhibition*, AIA and Sheffield branch of the Anglo-Soviet Union, February – March
	Exhibition of War Pictures, AIA, Charing Cross Underground Station Ticket Hall, London, 16 September – 9 October. 150,000 visitors
	Artists International Travelling Exhibition no2, AIA toured municipal art galleries, February onwards including Bluecoat Chambers, Liverpool, February – March, Derby Art Gallery, 15 March and Aberdeen, July
	Exhibition of English and Refugee Art AIA and Free German League of Culture
	Exhibition of Refugee Artists and their English Friends, AIA and FGLC, 36 Upper Park Road, London, July – August
	Exhibition of Sculpture and Drawings, AIA and Free German League of Culture [FGLC], Jack Bilbo's Modern Art Gallery, London, 19 July – 9 August
1942	*AIA Members Exhibition*, Royal Society British Artists Gallery, London, 7–27 February
	Aid to Russia AIA Members, Willow Road, Hampstead [home of émigré architect Emil Goldfinger] London 4–18 June
	Artists Aid Russia, Central Institute for Art and Design [CIAD] and AIA, Wallace Collection, Hertford House, Manchester Square, London 1 July – 4 August
	Pictures to Live With works, AIA members travelling exhibition under the 'Art for the people' scheme by the British Institute of Adult Education, for the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Art, October
	The Soviet Union in Peace and War, AIA, London
1943	*For Liberty*, John Lewis department store, Oxford Street, 12 March – 11 April
	Hogarth and English Caricature, AIA, London 13 Mar – 11 Apr, and touring 1943–4 including Birmingham, Barrow Stores basement, June and Nottingham Corporation War Time Gallery, August
	Art for All, AIA Midland Regional Group, Henry Barker's department store, Nottingham, August 14–2 September
	After Duty, AIA, 24 Charlotte Street, London, 16 November – 18 December

Table 1 (continued)

1944	*John Bull's Home Guard*, AIA, 34 Charlotte Street, London, January
	Exhibitions by Individual Artists (Cliff Rowe, James Boswell, Austin Cooper and David Burton), AIA 34 Charlotte Street, London
	AIA 1944 Members Exhibition, Suffolk Street Galleries, London, 15 April – 6 May
	Paintings of Today, AIA, across three regional branch libraries (Matlock, Dronfield, Staveley), Derbyshire 3–24 June
1945	*Picture Postcards. Popular Art in the Age of Post-Impressionism*, AIA, 34 Charlotte Street, London, June
	This Extraordinary Year AIA, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, 8–29 September
	Sculpture in the Home, AIA Heal & Son, 195–9 Tottenham Court Road, London, 4–27 October

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Christine Mayer

Exhibiting the Past: Women in Art and Design in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

Abstract: Two years ago, the Bauhaus in Weimar celebrated its 100th anniversary with a number of exhibitions and events. Founded in 1919, this institution gained international renown as a fount of innovative and experimental ideas in both free and applied arts. In the context of these celebrations, there were also commemorations of the lives and artistic contributions of the often neglected women who were central to shaping the Bauhaus style. But even in earlier times there have always been exhibitions on women in art and design. What all these exhibits connects is that they brought to public attention the largely unknown impulses women gave to art and design, their careers, and their artistic and innovative potential. By moving these historical facts into a public space, they effected a knowledge transfer that contributed to enriching public history. In this contribution, however, a kind of change of perspective is made, insofar as the question is not asked about the public impact of these exhibitions, but about the ideas, suggestions and impulses that these exhibitions provide for further research for the history of education. Special attention will be paid to the professional careers of the women artists and the educational opportunities that allowed them access to professional employment in art and design. And from a gender-historical perspective, the question is asked about the reasons that led to the extensive exclusion of these successful women in art, crafts, design and architecture from the historical record.

Keywords: art and design, women, exhibition, education, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries

Introduction

Last year, the famous Bauhaus, internationally renowned fount of ideas and experimentation in fine and applied arts, celebrated the centenary of its founding in Weimar in 1919. The occasion was marked by numerous exhibitions and events which also memorialized the previously much neglected women of the Bauhaus

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whose many designs and works in weaving, ceramics, painting and graphic arts, interior and furniture design or metalwork contributed centrally to the institution's style. However, scholars of art and cultural history had already organized exhibitions in the past that presented their findings and highlighted the artistic achievements of women and their contributions to modernity as artists, designers, photographers or architects. These included the exhaustive travelling exhibition *Women in Design. Careers and Life Histories since 1900* at the Design Center Stuttgart (1989),[1] showing the contribution women had made to the history of design, or the exhibit *Profession ohne Tradition* at the *Berlinische Galerie* (1992)[2] that presented the history of the 1868 *Verein der Berliner Künstlerinnen* (association of Berlin women artists) together with works of women artists associated with it. In Dessau, there was the exhibition *Die Neuen kommen!* (2004) which focused on women in 1920s avantgardist architecture[3] while the Hamburg Art Gallery hosted the exhibit *Künstlerinnen der Avantgarde in Hamburg zwischen 1890 und 1933* (2006).[4] The Munich City Museum opened its exhibition *Ab nach München! Künstlerinnen um 1900* in 2014,[5] focusing on the institutions dedicated to training women as professional artists in Munich, then a significant artistic center, and showing the works of their former students. Yet it was only the Bauhaus-related centenary exhibits that attracted greater attention and media coverage. Exhibitions on individual women designers of the Bauhaus were shown in Cologne, Düsseldorf and Krefeld under the joint title *Bauhaus-Frauen treten ins Licht* (Bauhaus-women step into the light).[6] Other exhibits widening the focus on women's work as professional artists were created in the context of these activities: Shown in Dresden (2018) and later in Hamburg (2019), *Designerinnen der Deutschen Werkstätten Hellerau 1898 bis 1938* first traced the early significant role of women as designers working in the *Deutsche Werkstätten*, a furniture-manufacturing business, that had been founded by Karl Schmidt in Berlin and later integrated into

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1 *Women in Design. Careers and Life Histories since 1900*, (exhibition catalog), 2 vols, ed. Landesgewerbeamt Baden Württemberg (Stuttgart: Haus der Wirtschaft, 1989).

2 *Profession ohne Tradition. 125 Jahre Verein der Berliner Künstlerinnen*, (exhibition catalog), ed. Berlinische Galerie (Berlin: Kupfergraben, 1992).

3 Ute Maasberg and Regina Prinz, *Die Neuen kommen! Weibliche Avantgarde in der Architektur der zwanziger Jahre*, (exhibition catalog), 2nd. ed. (Hamburg: Junius, 2005).

4 *Künstlerinnen der Avantgarde in Hamburg zwischen 1890 und 1933*, 2 vols, (exhibition catalog), ed. Hamburger Kunsthalle (Bremen: Hachmannedition, 2006).

5 *Ab nach München! Künstlerinnen um 1900*, (exhibition catalog, Münchner Stadtmuseum) (München: Süddeutsche Zeitung Edition, 2014).

6 Anke-Sophie Meyer in the newspaper *Die Welt,* 24 April, 2019.

his Hellerau Garden city project.[7] Further exhibits in Frankfurt (2018) and Hamburg (2019) studied the 100-year history of women as professional architects[8] while the then Museum for Ethnology (now MARKK) in Hamburg honored its former staff draughtswomen through the exhibition *Ausgezeichnet – Künstlerinnen des Inventars* that displayed drawings depicting objects from the collection captured with great artistic skill.[9] In all these exhibitions, the broad and varied work women did as professional artists and designers in the development of modern art in Germany was presented to the public, often for the first time.

The lives and works of the women represented in these exhibitions of fine art, applied art and architecture were embedded in the historical context of an age characterized by a will to reform and renewal. Entering a new century, it rejected the established aesthetic conventions, cultural norms and politics of the Wilhelmine era. This created a space in which artistically active women were able to begin laying claim to their place in art and design. They were part of a greater avantgardist movement that was able to unfold more fully in the context of rapid social and political change in Germany. This movement, like the ideas behind the Bauhaus project, was interwoven with various other reformist movements of the early twentieth century such as life reform (*Lebensreform*), education reform, the art education and dance and gymnastics movements,[10] and above all with the German arts and crafts movement (*Kunstgewerbebewegung*) and the efforts at aesthetics renewal advocated by the *Deutscher Werkbund*[11] since its foundation in 1907. Art was viewed as a stimulus and enrichment to life and was accorded particular importance as a principle to live by in this age.

A further shared element of these exhibitions and the media response to them was that they traced the paths of women in art and design from their origin in the late 19th century, presented the lives and works of previously unknown women

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7 *Gegen die Unsichtbarkeit. Designerinnen der deutschen Werkstätten Hellerau 1898 bis 1938*, (exhibition catalog), ed. Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Dresden, Tulga Beyerle and Klára Němečková (München: Hirmer, 2019).

8 *Frau Architekt. Over 100 Years of Women as Professional Architects,* (exhibition catalog. Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt am Main), ed. Christina Budde et al. (Tübingen: Wasmuth, 2017).

9 Rahel Wille, *Ausgezeichnet – Künstlerinnen des Inventars*, (exhibition catalog) (Hamburg: MARKK, Museum am Rothenbaum, 2019).

10 See e.g. Renate Foitzik Kirchgraber, "Lebensreform und Künstlergruppen um 1900" (Diss., Universität Zürich, 2003); Christine Mayer, "Education reform visions and new forms of gymnastics and dance as elements of a new body culture and 'body education' (1890–1930)," *History of Education* 47 (2018): 523–543; Beatrix Vincze et al. (eds): *Hidden Stories – the Life Reform Movements and Art* (Berlin [et al.]: Lang, 2020).

11 A German association of artists, architects, designers, and industrialists.

artists to a wider public, and, by moving history into the public space, effected a knowledge transfer in the sense of public history. The following study will, however, not focus on the public impact of these exhibitions, but raise the question what ideas and impulses they can provide to the history of education. I will pay particular attention to the professional careers of the women artists and especially the educational opportunities that allowed them access to professional employment in art and design and from a gender-historical perspective I will ask for the reasons that led to the fact that these women, all of them successful in arts, crafts, design and architecture, remained excluded from the historical record.

Becoming a Woman Artist

In contrast to countries such as Britain or Russia, Germany did not open its art academies to women until after the First World War.[12] As late as 1918, the professors of the Munich Academy of Fine Arts rejected the idea of admitting women to the study of art with the argument that their work was mainly limited to portraits, landscapes, still lives, and crafts: "Free composition and monumental tasks," – the document stated – "appear less congenial to the nature of women. This self-limitation by the great majority of women active in artistic employment is surely not rooted in a lack of opportunity to study, but in a correct appreciation of the limits of their own gifts."[13] Women wishing to pursue a professional career in art needed a great degree of creativity and mobility to find education and training. While the professional biographies of women featured in the exhibits are varied and complex, they follow a certain recurrent pattern: Artistic training usually began early, in the workshops of individual artists or private art schools.[14] Painter Dora Hitz, for example, was sent to Munich by her

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12 Some academies of fine arts such as those in Kassel, Königsberg, and Stuttgart, but especially Weimar, were open to women before 1919, but this was always linked to specific restrictions (separate ladies' classes, no access to nude studies etc.).

13 "Gutachten des Professorenkollegiums der Kgl. Bayerischen Akademie der bildenden Künste in München," in *Die bildende Künstlerin. Wertung und Wandel in deutschen Quellentexten, 1855–1945*, ed. Carola Muysers (Amsterdam, Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 1999), 319.

14 On the limited training opportunities for women see also Renate Berger, *Malerinnen auf dem Weg ins 20. Jahrhundert. Kunstgeschichte als Sozialgeschichte*, 2nd ed. (Köln: DuMont, 1986), 87–94; Anne–Kathrin Herber, "Frauen an deutschen Kunstakademien im 20. Jahrhundert. Ausbildungsmöglichkeiten für Künstlerinnen ab 1919 unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der süddeutschen Kunstakademien" (Diss., Universität Heidelberg, 2009), 34–47. https://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/volltextserver/11048/, accessed July 30, 2022.

parents in 1869 at the age of thirteen to attend a ladies' painting school (*Da-menmalschule*) and later become pupil to the respected art professors Wilhelm von Lindenschmit (the Younger) and Heinrich Stelzer.[15] These various forms of private education were usually – as in the case of Dora Hitz – followed by further study abroad. Many women artists, like Käthe Kollwitz or the Hamburg painter Valesca Röver, attended the famous Paris *Académie Julian* founded by the painter Rodolphe Julian in 1868 (Figure 1) or – like Julie Wolfthorn – the *Académie Colarossi* of sculptor Filippo Colarossi, where traditional structures of academic art training were dismantled and women were permitted to study the nude figures that were fundamental to the genre of historical painting.

Figure 1: *In the Académie Julian,* 1881 (Marie Bashkirtseff, 1860–1884).

The educational biographies of women artists further show that many of them attended institutions that had been founded by other artistically active or interested women in an effort of self-help. One of the first such foundings was the drawing and painting school opened by the *Verein der Berliner Künstlerinnen und Kunstfreundinnen* in 1868, which would soon develop into one of the most important schools for women artists.[16] Its purpose was to offer its pupils a full and

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15 Margrit Bröhan, "Dora Hinz (1856–1924), Malerin," in *Profession ohne Tradition,* 49.

16 Dietmar Fuhrmann and Klaus Jestaedt, "'. . . alles Das zu erlernen, was für eine erfolgreiche Ausübung ihres Berufes von ihnen gefordert wird . . . '. Die Zeichen- und Malschule des Vereins der Berliner Künstlerinnen," in *Profession ohne Tradition*, 353–366.

comprehensive, systematic artistic education that contrasted with the limited training available in many private artist's studios by following the canonical curriculum of academies of fine art.[17] Many other women artists went to study at the Munich *Damen-Akademie* (ladies' academy) founded by the *Münchner Künstlerinnenverein* in 1884, which would also gain renown beyond the borders of Bavaria. Here, as in Berlin, instruction followed the academic curriculum. Its teachers included future Art academy professors Ludwig Heterich, Maximilan Dasio and Angelo Jank.[18] Women painters such as Käte Kollwitz and Maria Slavona first attended the Berlin school and later the Munich *Damen-Akademie*, which also trained Gabriele Münter and Käte Lassen. The model of Berlin and Munich motivated the foundation of other art schools for women such as the Karlsruhe-based Grand Ducal *Malerinnenschule* founded in 1885 under the tutelage of Grand Duchess Luise of Baden.[19] However, private art schools founded by leading women artists have so far been given less attention. One such was the Hamburg *Malschule für Damen* (painting school for ladies) in Hamburg founded by painter Valesca Röver in 1891, whose curriculum was managed by Alfred Lichtwark, a patron of modern impressionist painting in the city, and where avant-garde women painters like Gretchen Wohlwill and Alma del Banco received their artistic training (Figure 2).[20] Such art schools created by and for women immeasurably improved the educational opportunities and played an important role in the developments of many renowned female artists. Yet they would never be able to match the breadth and intensity of training in various artistic subjects that the public art academies could offer.

Another aspect that the biographies of the artists studied in these exhibitions share is their origin from wealthy bourgeois or aristocratic families that could afford the financial burden of many years of education. In his 1895 book *Die Frau in der Kunst* (Woman in Art), Georg Voß estimated the cost of six years of study at 18,000 marks. He assumed three years of study at one of the well-managed

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17 Ibid., 355–356.

18 Yvette Deseyve, *Der Künstlerinnen-Verein München e.V. und seine Damen-Akademie. Eine Studie zur Ausbildungssituation von Künstlerinnen im späten 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert* (München: Utz, 2005); Antonia Voit, "Die Damen-Akademie ebnet den Weg in die Professionalität," in *Ab nach München*, 23–31.

19 Cornelia Matz, "*Die Organisationsgeschichte der Künstlerinnen in Deutschland von 1867 bis 1933*" (Diss., Universität Tübingen, 2001), 55–63, accessed July 22, 2022. https://publikationen. uni-tuebingen.de/xmlui/handle/10900/46170.

20 Valesca Röver, *Hamburger Frauenbiografien*, https://www.hamburg.de/clp/frauenbiografien-schlagwortregister/clp1/hamburgde/onepage.php?BIOID=3071&qR=R; Maike Bruhns, "Gretchen Wohlwill"; Friederike Weimar, "Alma del Banco," in *Künstlerinnen der Avantgarde*, vol. 1, 63–79; 83–102.

Figure 2: *Malschule für Damen*, Hamburg, c. 1910.

schools for women artists in Berlin or an equally long training in private work-shops as is customary in Munich, followed by a further three years of working and seeing in other cities of art and with other masters. Only then could they hope to begin a professional career as artists.[21] Thus the cost for professional artistic training facing women amounted to many times that asked of men admitted to public academies. Tuition fees for one year at the Munich *Damen-Akademie* in 1917 ran to 400 marks while the public *Akademie der bildenden Künste* (academy of fine arts) charged only 70.[22] Successful painter Dora Hitz who had personally experienced the economic hardship this caused stated: "Young girls and women who today intend to dedicate themselves to art should only do so, in my opinion, if they are placed beyond economic worries. Many women artists of great talent were destroyed artistically as they were forced to paint to secure their income and thus to submit to the taste of the public."[23]

Little is known about the economic situation of women artists after the end of their professional education. There were a number of institutions based on the example of the Berlin *Künstlerinnenverein* that sought to further the careers of female artists and served as a nexus between them and the art market as well as offering support to improve their social and economic situation.[24] However,

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21 Eliza Ichenhaeuser, *Erwerbsmöglichkeiten für Frauen. Praktischer Ratgeber für erwerbssuchende Frauen*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Ebhardt & Co., 1898), 108–109.

22 Voit, "Die Damen-Akademie," in *Ab nach München*, 31.

23 Ichenhaeuser, *Erwerbsmöglichkeiten*, 108.

24 For the different female artists' associations and their networks see Matz, "*Die Organisationsgeschichte*".

contemporary studies show that by the early twentieth century, few artists of either gender could survive by their art alone.[25] The art market and a class of consumers with a taste for and understanding of art was yet to be opened up by an effort at artistic and aesthetic education.[26] Thus, the famous painter Tina Blau eked out her income by teaching at the Vienna *Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen* (art school for women and girls) long after her work had become established.[27] Some women painters attempted to found schools of their own, others – like the Hamburg painter Gretchen Wohlwill – sought employment as art teachers in public schools[28] or worked as museum draughtswomen.[29] Some also turned to decorative art as book illustrators or in fashion and applied arts.

Applied Arts: An Opportunity for Women in The Artistic Field?

After the world fairs (London in 1851 and Paris in 1855) had demonstrated the superiority of Britain and France as industrial competitors, the guiding principle of German export industry – "cheap and shoddy" (*billig und schlecht*) mass production[30] – attracted increasing criticism. As Franz Reuleaux pointed out in his *Briefe aus Philadelphia* in 1877, it showed "lack of taste in applied art, lack of progress in the purely technical."[31] This led to increasing support for artistic production in Germany, following the examples of other countries. Copying the South Kensington Museum and its Schools of Design founded in 1857, museums of arts and crafts (*Kunstgewerbemuseen*) and schools of applied arts (*Kunstgewerbeschulen*) were founded throughout Germany in the second half of the nineteenth century. Their purpose was to improve the aesthetic education of the nation and thus aid its economic success. Apart from a few outliers, these schools were closed to women. Though the school of the Berlin *Kunstgewerbemuseum* created special

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25 According to Bülow (1911), barely one-eighth of the 30,000 artists in art-related professions were able to survive on their art alone; Klaus von Beyme, *Das Zeitalter der Avantgarde. Kunst und Gesellschaft 1905–1955*. (München: Beck, 2005), 181.
26 Gudrun M. König, *Konsumkultur. Inszenierte Warenwelt um 1900* (Wien: Böhlau, 2009).
27 Angelika Burger, "Ihrer Zeit immer ein gutes Stück voraus, " in *Ab nach München*, 34.
28 Maike Bruhns "Gretchen Wohlwill," in *Künstlerinnen der Avantgarde in Hamburg zwischen 1890 und 1933*, (exhibition catalog), ed. Hamburger Kunsthalle (Bremen: Hachmannedition, 2006), 68.
29 Will, *Ausgezeichnet*, 37.
30 Franz Reuleaux, *Briefe aus Philadelphia* (Braunschweig: Vieweg, 1877), 5.
31 Ibid., 6.

professional drawing classes for women as early as 1868[32] and the *Kunstgewerbe-schule* in Munich, founded in the same year, instituted a curriculum for female drawing teachers in 1872, most such institutions did not open their doors to women until the boom in art and design led to increased employment opportunities – and demand – for artistically trained industrial designers. Even then, they were only admitted under specific conditions, sometimes only to separate departments or limited classes, or to places not claimed by male candidates.[33] Some early attempts at coeducation were made, yet still with segregated foci. Thus, the Hamburg *Kunstgewerbeschule* was only willing to admit women students because their classes used less well equipped and less used facilities. By 1909, a "*Werkstätte für weibliche Arbeiten*" (workshop for female crafts) was established in the hope of extending artistic influence on local crafts and to introduce the novelty of "workshop classes" imported from Britain to the female sphere.[34] As the 'female' departments of German schools of applied arts multiplied, a new field of employment opened up to successful women artists and designer at the beginning of the twentieth century. Gertrud Kleinhempel, for example, was called to the *Handwerker- und Kunstgewerbeschule* in Bielefeld in 1907 while Margarete Junge joined the *Dresdner Kunstgewerbeschule* the same year. Both would be among the first women to be named professors in Prussia in 1921.[35] *Kunstge-werbeschulen* became important centers of artistic education for women in early 20th century Germany, but a systematic study of this field in terms of art history or history of education is yet to be undertaken.

The fact that women were long limited in their access to public art academies and schools of applied arts meant that dedicated women's schools founded mainly by *Vereine zur Förderung der weiblichen Erwerbstätigkeit* (associations for promoting the employment of women)[36] in the second half of the nineteenth

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32 Monika Franke, "Entstehungsgeschichte des Königlichen Kunstgewerbemuseums in Berlin," in *Packeis und Pressglas. Von der Kunstgewerbebewegung zum Deutschen Werkbund*, (exhibition catalog), ed. Werkbund-Archiv, Museum der Alltagskultur des 20. Jahrhunderts Berlin (Giessen: Anabas, 1987), 179.

33 Berger, *Malerinnen*, 90–91.

34 Susanne Harth, "Frauenstudium. Werkstätte für weibliche Handarbeiten," in *Nordlicht. Die Hamburger Hochschule für bildende Künste am Lerchenfeld und ihre Vorgeschichte*, (exhibition catalog), ed. Hartmut Frank (Hamburg: Junius, 1989), 114.

35 Graham Dry, "Gertrud Kleinhempel. Die zweite Frau mit Professorentitel in Preußen," in *Ab nach München!*, 210–213; Bianca Berding, "Klassisch, stilvoll und praxistauglich. Margarete Junges Kunstgewerbe: Beruf und Vermarktung," in Marion Welsch and Jürgen Vietig (eds), *Margarete Junge. Künstlerin und Lehrerin im Aufbruch der Moderne* (Dresden: Sandstein, 2016), 70–83.

36 These associations founded institutions of professional education for middle class girls in many German cities. Besides the *Lette-Verein* in Berlin, the schools of the associations in

century were central to providing educational and professional opportunities for women in art and design. Publications about women in art and design mostly refer only to the Berlin *Lette-Verein*,[37] a groundbreaking endeavor with its *Setzer-innenschule* (typesetter school) founded in 1875 and a *Photographische Lehran-stalt* (photography school) in 1890. It also offered women opportunities to train for professions in art and design e.g. through the *Zeichen- und Kolorirschule* (school of drawing and coloring) which was founded in 1875, but closed again in 1890 due to competing public education offered by the municipality, or the *Kunst-handarbeitsschule* (school of textile arts, later *Kunststickereischule*, school of embroidery art) opened in 1897.[38] It is often overlooked that similar foundations by such associations occurred in many other cities, offering education in art and design to women.[39] Thus the Hamburg *Gewerbeschule für Mädchen* (trade school for girls) offered training in many aspects of applied arts whose curricula were quickly responsive to a rapidly developing market.[40] As early as 1873, these included drawing, porcelain painting, pattern design, and lithography. In the same year, the school also began to train women as drawing teachers. The development towards a freer artistic and ornamental design added a curriculum in embroidery (machine-aided on different models, including freehand cord embroidery).[41] Meanwhile, the drawing school of the Dresden *Frauen-Erwerbs-Verein* founded in 1872 developed into a kind of *Kunstgewerbeschule* for women.[42] The numerous women's trade and work schools (*Frauengewerbe- and Frauenarbeitsschulen*), the latter mainly founded throughout southwest Germany, established a network of educational opportunities in art and design whose breadth has as yet been barely noted, much less systematically studied.

Hamburg and Dresden were among the first foundations; for further information see Christine Mayer, "The Struggle for Vocational Education and Employment Possibilities for Women in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century in Germany," *History of Education Researcher* 80 (2007): 85–99.

37 See e.g. Berger, *Malerinnen*, 87–89.

38 Jenny Hirsch, *Geschichte der fünfundzwanzigjährigen des unter dem Protektorat Ihrer Maje-stät der Kaiserin und Königin Friedrich stehenden Lette–Vereins zur Förderung höherer Bildung und Erwerbsfähigkeit des weiblichen Geschlechts* (Berlin: Berliner Buchdr.–Aktien–Ges., 1891); Doris Obschernitzki, *"Der Frau ihre Arbeit!" Lette Verein. Zur Geschichte einer Berliner Institu-tion 1866–1986.* (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1987), 51–52.

39 See e.g. *Handbuch der Frauenbewegung*, vol. 4: *Die Deutsche Frau im Beruf*, ed. Helene Lange and Gertrud Bäumer (Berlin: Moeser, 1902), 366–471; 226–252.

40 Mayer, "The Struggle for Vocational Education", 91–96.

41 *Bericht des Vereins zur Förderung weiblicher Erwerbsthätigkeit in Hamburg* 1873/74, 1875/76, 1876/77. (Hamburg: Reese, [1875, 1878]).

42 Antonia Voit, "Ausbildung von Künstlerinnen in Dresden und München Ende des 19. und Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts," in *Gegen die Unsichtbarkeit*, 33.

The educational careers studied for the exhibition *Designerinnen der Deutschen Werkstätten Hellerau* indicate that the career path into applied arts could be very different for individual women, but that the conditions under which they began it were fundamentally different from those facing men. Though no comprehensive data could be found for all the women featured, the profession of drawing teacher was a springboard to an artistic career for many of them. Several had attended the *Zeichenschule* of the Dresden *Frauenerwerbsverein*, many others trained at the Munich *Kunstgewerbeschule*.[43] In their further careers, Gertrud Kleinhempel and Margarete Junge graduated from the Dresden school in 1895 to join the Munich *Damen-Akademie* while younger women could continue their education in the *Damenabteilung* (ladies' class) of the Dresden *Kunstgewerbeschule* opened in 1907. Yet other designers had been privately trained in drawing and painting and went on to the Munich *Damen-Akademie* or, after 1902, to the *Lehr- und Versuch-Ateliers für angewandte und freie Kunst* (experimental and teaching workshops of fine and applied arts), also known as the *Debschitz-Schule*, in the same city. Others yet moved between the Munich and Vienna *Kunstgewerbeschule* and the reformist, coeducational *Debschitz-Schule*, where teachers influenced by the British Arts and Crafts movement sought to integrate craftwork into an artistic curriculum under the banner of applied arts.[44] One important element of this school's reformist orientation – shared by the Berlin-based *Reimann-Schule* also founded in 1902 and the later Bauhaus – was work in subject-specific workshops.[45]

These schools were part of a broad reform movement that sought to change art in its entirety. Sick of an eclecticism that followed the lead of previous artistic traditions, it sought to unify fine and applied arts and to carry a new artistic style suited to modern reality into all aspects of life. An important actor in this renewal were the *Deutsche Werkstätten Hellerau*,[46] that, in concert with the *Deutsche Werkbund* founded in 1907, tried to foster a new aesthetic quality in industrial goods through designs created by artists to further art orientation in production

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43 Claudia Schmalhofer: *Die Kgl. Kunstgewerbeschule München (1868–1918). Ihr Einfluss auf die Ausbildung der Zeichenlehrerinnen* (München: Utz, 2005).

44 Angelika Burger, "Die Debschitz-Schule. Eine neue Schule im Stil der Zeit," in *Ab nach München!*, 191.

45 Hans M. Wingler, *Kunstschulreform 1900–1933* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1977), 9–19, 66–92, 246–282; Swantje Wickenheiser, "Die Reimann-Schule in Berlin und London (1902–1943) unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Mode und Textilentwurf" (Diss., Universität Bonn, 1993).

46 Founded as the *Dresdner Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst* (Dresden Workshops for Artisanal Arts) in 1898, they merged with the *Werkstätten für Wohnungseinrichtungen München* (Workshops for Interior Design Munich) in 1907 to form the *Deutsche Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst* (German Workshops for Artisanal Arts) based in Dresden/Hellerau and München.

and ultimately a new aesthetic culture. As the exhibition and catalogue of *Deutsche Werkstätten Hellerau* show, it was the *Lebensreform* devotee and company founder Karl Schmidt who not only brought Émile Jaques-Dalcroze and his school of rhythmic gymnastics to the garden city (*Gartenstadt*) in Hellerau, but also offered women the opportunity to try their hands at new forms of art and craft. He saw women as "an integral part and engine of the applied arts movement as well as an economic power".[47]

Among the earliest artistic contributors were the previously mentioned Gertrud Kleinhempel and Margarete Junge, artists who returned from their training in Munich in 1898 to become successful furniture designers. Their work combined simplicity and elegance with function, characterized by a simplified form and attention to the characteristics of the material itself.[48] It was shown at many exhibitions representing the new style. Another successful designer was Margarethe von Brauchitsch who completed five years of training under Max Klinger in Leipzig before turning to ornamental design, particularly machine and cord embroidery. Her work, produced in dedicated embroidery workshops, led the innovative artistic forms these techniques made possible to new heights.[49] Women designers worked in many fields and their ideas of a contemporary interior design are encountered in a corresponding breadth of contexts. Their designs were adapted by leading manufacturers and shown in exhibitions. They created furniture, carpets, fabrics and wallpapers, worked in graphic arts (especially children's book illustrations), advertising, stationery and jewelry design as well as developing ideas for new, high-end reform toys influenced by the artistic education ideas of the art education movement. In connection with the life reform movement, they designed innovative women's clothing and accessories. Their training as pattern draughtswomen gave them an edge over male competitors, but they often had to acquire the necessary basic artisanal and technical understanding of industrial production e.g. in furniture making or wallpaper printing by self-study. Though women were successful as designers in many fields, their work was often limited to areas that were conceded to them as women, their artistic capabilities limited to ornamentation, surface and interior design. The new aesthetic culture retained traditional ideas of gendered division of labor and strictly separated the interior and exterior of a building. Such concepts continued to dominate a contemporary discourse that was not free of competitive anxiety. Thus, the monthly *Deutsche*

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47 Klára Němečková, "Designerinnen werden sichtbar – die deutschen Werkstätten als Wegbereiter," in *Gegen die Unsichtbarkeit*, 45.

48 Dry, "Gertrud Kleinhempel," 210–212; Berding, "Klassisch, stilvoll und praxistauglich", 72–76.

49 Kerstin Stöver, "Zwei Facetten engagierten Unternehmergeistes – Charlotte Krause und Margarethe von Brauchitsch," in *Gegen die Unsichtbarkeit*, 57–59.

Kunst und Dekoration writes about women in applied arts (1914/1915): "The thing that serves to the entire advantage of the massed accumulation of exterior architectural design (*Außen-Architektur*), its pure logic, leads to sobriety and coldness in the inhabited interior. This offers an opportunity to woman to lend her ability to useful arts, to gainfully employ one of her qualities of taste in a pleasing fashion."[50]

The Bauhaus: A New Artistic Vision for Women Too?

A new form of artistic education was established with the founding of the public Bauhaus by Walter Gropius in Weimar after WWI in 1919. The Bauhaus idea did not just embrace the "utopian aesthetic of a new age,"[51] but also a reform program extending to education, labor, and all aspects of society. Though the modern world was prefigured and its artistic scene offered numerous points of contact for these concepts already, it was the shattering experience of war along with the human suffering and social upheaval of the postwar years that forced a turn away from past conventions in a far more radical fashion. It was under these conditions that visions of a new, more humane society and a "New Man" could emerge as exemplified in the Bauhaus idea. The underlying notion of the new artistic school was guided by medieval practices of marrying art and craft, pursuing the goal of a "unitary work of art" (*Einheitskunstwerk*)[52] that would integrate all artistic disciplines in the renewal of architecture. Training followed the artisanal tradition, progressing from apprentice through journeyman to master (*Lehrling, Geselle, Meister*), divided into an elementary program obligatory for all students (the *Vorkurs* combined with required classes in artistic design) and an apprenticeship in a subject-specific workshop. Johannes Itten introduced ideas of education reform to the *Vorkurs* with the concept of free learning while the influence of *Lebensreform* inspired experiments in combining art, life and community in new, liberated forms of communal life flanked by innovative theatre, dance and body culture. Students were to be admitted "without regard for

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50 W. Th. Wirz, "Die Frau im Kunstgewerbe," *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* 35 (1914/1915): 226.

51 Philipp Blom, *Die zerrissenen Jahre 1918–1938* (München: dtv, 2016), 237.

52 Walter Gropius, *Programm des staatlichen Bauhauses in Weimar* (April 1919), 2, accessed July 29, 2022. http://files8.webydo.com/94/9495476/UploadedFiles/AE227154-F565-F891-A285-22D292573D04.pdf.

age or sex" if their previous (artistic) education was judged sufficient by the council of masters and facilities allowed the addition.[53]

The visionary character of this new institute of artistic education drew influential artists such as Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, Oskar Schlemmer, László Moholy-Nagy, and Lyonel Feininger as well as many women students. In the first summer term of 1919, more female than male students enrolled,[54] and the proportion in following semesters remained close to fifty percent, though it steadily decreased.[55] Altogether, we can number 462 women among the students of the Bauhaus in the broadest sense, though only 181 of them completed more than the introductory *Vorkurs*.[56] Even those who only stayed briefly were inspired by the Bauhaus in their avant-gardist artistic work, as the exhibitions show. An example of this is the career of ceramic artist Margarete Heymann-Loebenstein who spent a short span in the male-dominated ceramic workshop of the Bauhaus following her *Vorkurs*.[57] Most women of the early phase of the Weimar Bauhaus had either studied previously at schools of fine or applied arts or had qualifications in art education. They came to explore new artistic paths and to learn crafts. Thus Gunta Stölzl, textile designer and later head (junior master) of the Bauhaus weaving workshop, had studied at the school of applied arts in Munich under Richard Riemerschmid before beginning her apprenticeship at the Bauhaus which ended with her journeywoman's exam as a weaver in 1923.[58] Ilse Fehling, a sculptor, set and costume designer, studied between 1917 and 1923 first at the *Reimann-Schule*, then at the *Kunstgewerbeschule* in Berlin, before training in the theatre and sculpture workshops of the Weimar Bauhaus.[59] Marianne Brandt, a metal designer whose creations are still widely used today and who would go on to head the metal workshop of the Dessau Bauhaus, had worked as a free artist following six years at the Grand Ducal Saxon Academy of Fine Arts in Weimar before apprenticing at the metal workshop in 1924 to obtain a Bauhaus diploma.[60]

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53 Gropius, *Programm*, 3.

54 Ulrike Müller, *Bauhaus Frauen. Meisterinnen in Kunst, Handwerk und Des*ign. 2nd ed. (München: Sandmann, 2019), 12.

55 Magdalena Droste, "Women in the Arts and Crafts and in Industrial Design 1890–1933," in *Women in Design. Careers and Life Histories since 1900*, (exhibition catalog), vol. 1, ed. Landesgewerbeamt Baden Württemberg (Stuttgart: Haus der Wirtschaft, 1989), 192, 199.

56 Patrick Rössler, *Bauhaus Mädels. A tribute to pioneering women artists* (Köln: Taschen, 2019), 40.

57 Ulrike Müller, *Bauhaus* Frauen, 72–77.

58 Ibid., 32–39; Rössler, *Bauhaus Mädels*, 136–143.

59 Müller, *Bauhaus Frauen*, 72–77; Rössler, *Bauhaus Mädels*, 110–111.

60 Müller, *Bauhaus Frauen*, 118–125; Rössler, *Bauhaus Mädels*, 88–99.

However, liberal and tolerant ideas of relations between the sexes and the breach with many social conventions did not lead the Bauhaus to turn away from traditional gender roles entirely or produced the theoretically postulated equal treatment.[61] Thus, Gropius instructed the council of masters (*Meisterrat*) in 1920 to respond to a large proportion of female students with "a severe (sic) selection"[62] and to admit women "only in case of entirely extraordinary talent".[63] In the same year a "women's class" was founded which would soon come to effectively be the textile arts class and could not be finished with a journeyman's examination.[64] Though the opportunity to select a workshop after the *Vorkurs* exam remained formally unchanged, the council of masters was instructed to avoid "unnecessary experiments" and to assign women graduates of the *Vorkurs* to the weaving, ceramic or bookbinding workshops.[65] Most of the women trained at the Bauhaus thus concentrated on weaving, training as an architect was not intended for them.[66] The Bauhaus student Gertrud Arndt (née Hantschk, (Figure 3)), who actually wanted to study architecture, commented on this in a later interview as follows:"They all went to the weaving workshop. Whether they wanted to or not. Yes, that was simply the way out . . . I never wanted to weave. It wasn't my goal at all. No, it wasn't. All those threads, I didn't like that at all. No, that wasn't my thing."[67]

Gertrud Arndt completed her studies at the Bauhaus with a final apprenticeship examination at the weavers' guild in Glauchau, but she never worked in textile design or weaving again afterwards; from then on, her focus was on photography.[68]

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61 See in detail Anja Baumhoff, "What's in the Shadow of a Bauhaus Block? Gender Issues in Classical Modernity," in Christiane Schönfeld (ed.), *Practicing Modernity. Female Creativity in the Weimar Republic* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2006), 50–67; Katerina Rüedi Ray, "Bauhaus Hausfraus: Gender Formation in Design Education," *Journal of Architectural Education*, 55 (2001): 73–80.

62 Meisterratsprotokoll, 20 September, 1920, quoted after Baumhoff, "What's in the Shadow", 53, 64.

63 Circular to the Meisterrat, 02 September, 1920, quoted after ibid., 64.

64 For the development of the weaving workshop see Anja Baumhoff, *The Gendered World of the Bauhaus. The Politics of Power at the Weimar Republic's Premier Art Institute, 1919–1932* (Frankfurt a.M. [et al.]: Lang, 2001), 76–99.

65 Circular to the Meisterrat, 14 May, 1920, Droste "Women in the Arts", 189.

66 Baumhoff, "What's in the Shadow", 54.

67 Gertrud Arndt in conversation with Monika Stadler, Dessau 1994 in Müller, *Bauhaus Frauen*, 53.

68 Grand Tour of Modernism, "Gertrud Arndt," accessed July 30, 2022, https://www.grand tourofmodernism.com/biographies/details/23/.

Figure 3: Weaving workshop at the Bauhaus in Weimar:
Gertrud Arndt (right) and Marianne Gugg at the loom,
1925 (photographer Walter Hege, Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin).[69]

Even after Hannes Meyer introduced the new architectural department in the Dessau Bauhaus, the number of female graduates remained small, though more women now completed their training in this field.[70] According to Magdalena Droste, access to women was made difficult in the Weimar era of the Bauhaus and they were forced into textile arts. Connected with these endeavors were fears of an overwhelming drift towards applied arts and the symbolic and actual goal of the Bauhaus, the architecture, was seen as endangered.[71] This fear was proven groundless as the Bauhaus weaving workshop was reorganized under the leadership of Gunta Stölzl who introduced new technology and instituted a journeywoman's examination or Bauhaus diploma. The textile arts workshop continued

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69 For Marianne Gugg see Rössler, *Bauhaus Mädels*, 267–269.

70 Maasberg and Prinz, *Die Neuen kommen!*, 48.

71 Droste, "Women in the Arts", 190; on the hierarchy of the arts see Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, *Old Mistresses. Women, Art and Ideology* (London, New York: I.B.Tauris, 2013), 50–81.

to innovate by adapting elements of shape and color from modern painting, experimenting with synthetic fibers, and developing an original artisanal orientation towards a focus on industrial design.[72] It would become one of the most successful workshops of the Bauhaus among whose graduates, along with Gunta Stölzl, were avantgardist artists such as Benita Otte, Anni Albers, Gertrud Arndt and Otti Berger.

The Concept of "Genius" as a Gendered Creation

Numerous exhibitions have given visibility to previously forgotten female artists and women in artistic professions. Nonetheless, the question needs to be raised what kind of mechanism excluded successful women artists from the historical record in the first place. According to Carolyn Korsmeyer, one of the most important reasons is rooted in the historical development of the modern concept of what an artist is. This idea emerged in close connection with Enlightenment philosophy and aesthetics and through "imported gender distinction into the concepts of beauty, sublimity, pleasure, and the aesthetic itself [. . .] helped to intensify the idea that both artists and the best critical judges of art are ideally male."[73] Ernst Cassirer sees the fundamental questions of aesthetics revolving around the concepts of the "sublime" and of "genius", both of which were strongly gendered in the framework of Enlightenment thoughts.[74] Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757) proposes a gendered basis for beauty[75] and Immanuel Kant develops a counter-relationship of the sexes in his *Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen* (Observations on the Sentiments of Beauty and the Sublime, 1764) by opposing the feminine-connoted beautiful and the masculine sublime.[76] His concept of genius in the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Critique of Judgement, 1790) defined as "the (natural) talent that gives its rule to art" whereby "fine arts must necessarily be regarded as arts of

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72 Droste, "Women in the Arts", 192.

73 Carolyn Korsmeyer, *Gender and Aethetics. An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 37.

74 Ernst Cassirer, *Die Philosophie der Aufklärung (1932). Mit einer Einleitung von Gerald Hartung* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1998), 440–443.

75 Korsmeyer, *Gender and Aesthetics*, 41–44.

76 Immanuel Kant, "Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen," in *Philosophische Geschlechtertheorien. Ausgewählte Texte von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Sabine Doyé et al. (Reclam: Stuttgart, 2002), 199–209.

the *genius*,"[77] is framed in gendered terms, as Korsmeyer shows.[78] It is, in the end, no less a luminary than Wilhelm von Humboldt who gave the idea of an artistic genius its explicitly gendered quality. His anthropology of gender, laid out in the *Plan einer vergleichenden Anthropologie* (Outline of a Comparative Anthropology, 1796) defines the different characters of the sexes at various levels. Along with the physical, intellectual and sentimental sphere, he addresses the aesthetic where he distinguishes a female "sense of beauty" from a male "sense of art".[79] The female character, he argues, naturally lacks the strength, imagination, independence and objectivity "to attain the balance needed for the production of genius."[80] Furthermore, the discourse on dilettantism in the late eighteenth century and specifically the question how to distinguish dilettantes from legitimate artistic geniuses produced a shift in the meaning of a previously positive term. A dilettante now is a figure defined by deficits,[81] lacking seriousness, artistic ability and education. It became not merely a tool of exclusion,[82] but would come to define the feminine in art as such. Even women who had serious and successful careers in artistic professions were open to the charge of dilettantism. Lichtwark's later efforts to give a positive interpretation to dilettantism in contemporary German art as an opportunity to foster a greater appreciation and knowledge of art throughout society as a whole would not affect the fundamental problem.[83]

The traditional model of male creative genius dominated the masculine discourse of art history well into the early twentieth century. Thus, famous art critic Karl Scheffler wrote in *Die Frau und die Kunst* (Woman and Art, 1908) that "in order to dedicate herself to productive artistic work," woman needed to "violently make herself one-sided and particularist [. . .] to deny her true nature and become mannish."[84] Yet this was possible, Scheffler stated, only to a certain degree:

> Never can she become so masculine in her feeling and thought as to create independent masterpieces. A valuable, original work of art can only emerge where its creator is wholly in agreement with his nature [. . .]. And because that is so, works created by women

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77 Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2001), 235, 236.
78 Korsmeyer, *Gender and Aethetics*, 29–31.
79 Wilhelm von Humbodt, "Plan einer vergleichenden Anthropologie," in *Wilhelm von Humboldt. Werke,* vol. 1, ed. Andreas Flitner and Klaus Giel (Stuttgart: Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 1995), 368.
80 Ibid., 370.
81 Uwe Wirth, "'Dilettantenarbeit' – Virtuosität und performative Pfuscherei," in *Genie, Virtuose, Dilettant. Konfigurationen romantischer Schöpfungsästhetik*, ed. Gabriele Brandstetter und Gerhard Neumann (Würzburg: Könighausen & Neumann, 2011), 278.
82 Ibid., 282–283.
83 Alfred Lichtwark, *Erziehung des Auges. Ausgewählte Schriften*, ed. Eckhard Schaar (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer, 1991), 83–109.
84 Karl Scheffler, *Die Frau und die Kunst* (Berlin: Bard, 1908), 40.

never become definitive in the history and development of art. They are all more or less dependent. Man enhances his nature by becoming an artist; Woman disjoints hers.[85]

To Scheffler, a woman artist is "an imitator par excellence," a "born dilettante".[86] He admits that she may be productive in artistic crafts and decorative arts, but cautions against overestimating her contribution.[87] Even by the late 1920s, when artistic discourse was more varied and women's voices such as that of Rose Schapire were heard with contrary conceptions,[88] the dominant idea that women were not capable of independent artistic creation went largely unchanged. Hans Hildebrandt, a prominent art critic, argued that despite the changes in women's in the Weimar Republic, feminine art remained an accompaniment to masculine. "She is the orchestra's second voice" – he wrote in 1928 – "taking up the themes of the first, changing them, giving them a new color, but she lives and resonates through the first."[89]

It does not come as a surprise to find the cult of (male) genius common currency among the Bauhaus artists (the masters of form). Anja Baumhoff sees their idea of genius based on a secularized religious concept. "God was seen as *the* creator, not just of mankind but of male creativity itself."[90] Women did not fit this concept. They could not be expected to create great art and were thus relegated to a reproductive role. Banished to the weaving workshop, they ranked at the lowest tier of the creative hierarchy: "You [woman weavers] were industrious: but genius is not industry [. . .]. Genius is genius, is grace is without beginning and end. Is begetting" – can be read in the magazine of the Bauhaus in 1928.[91] This view of women artists had concrete consequences. The catalogue of the 1938 Bauhaus exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, one of the most widely read publications of the school, includes few pictures or names of female students.[92] The role of women in the artist couples of the Bauhaus, too, often goes underestimated. Thus the photographer Lucia Moholy developed the photogram technique together with László Moholy-Nagy in 1922, but all photograms were subsequently

85 Ibid, 40–41.

86 Ibid., 42.

87 Ibid., 61, 63.

88 Rosa Schapire, "Die Frau in der bildenden Kunst, 1927," in *Die bildende Künstlerin. Wertung und Wandel in deutschen Quellentexten, 1855–1945*, ed. Carola Muysers (Amsterdam, Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 1999), 170–174.

89 Hans Hildebrandt, "Die Frau als Künstlerin, 1928," in ibid., 191.

90 Baumhoff, *The Gendered World*, 154.

91 Bauhaus, no. 2/3, 1928, 17. BHA, quoted after ibid., 155.

92 Rüedi Ray, "Bauhaus Hausfraus," 77.

credited to her husband.[93] Similarly, the collaboration between Lilly Reich, a versatile artist, craftswoman and exhibition designer, and Mies van der Rohe starting in 1925 produced exhibitions and interior designs later mainly attributed to van der Rohe.[94] Similar tendencies to edit out the contributions of women are seen in design, where e.g. the work of women designers were attributed to male colleagues, husbands, or, in the case of Gertrud Kleinhempel, her brother. Along with such misattributions, it is in the handling of their estates that the lack of regard for women's creative work becomes evident.[95] Altogether, we see how traditional patterns of thinking and entrenched misogyny in judgement and practice throughout the artistic sphere resulted in a historical narrative that largely focuses on the work and achievements of male artists. Recent exhibitions, publications and other forms of public history have increasingly undertaken to counteract this erasure in art and design. Yet unless this research is taken up by mainstream scholarship rather than being consigned to "a byway of art",[96] little will change.

But this also means that further efforts must be made to continue exploring and exhibiting what has not been exhibited. In this sense, interesting research perspectives also open up for the history of education. In the context presented here, for example, it becomes apparent that there is still a lack of relevant systematic research on the question of educational and training opportunities for women in art, especially in the field of applied art, and it also becomes obvious that there is still a need for further research on women in art education professions, especially with regard to drawing teachers.

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93 Müller, *Bauhaus-Frauen*, 152; Robin Schuldenfrei, "Images in Exile: Lucia Moholy's Bauhaus Negatives and the Construction of the Bauhaus Legacy," *History of Photography* 37 (2013): 182–203.

94 Droste, "Women in the Arts", 185.

95 Pepchinski, Mary. "Wie die Designerinnen unsichtbar wurden," in *Gegen die* Unsichtbarkeit, 31.

96 Angelika Schaser, "Quellen der Kreativität in geschlechtergeschichtlicher Perspektive," in *Karrieren in Preußen – Frauen in Männerdomänen*, ed. Ingeborg Schelling-Reinicke and Susanne Brockfeld (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2020), 130.

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Inés Dussel

Picturing School Architecture: Monumentalization and Modernist Angles in the Photographs of School Spaces, 1880–1920

Abstract: Photographs are an important way in which histories are made public. Emerged as part of the "mechanical arts" in the 19th century, photography transformed the iconosphere and changed the ways in which the world was experienced. How did the emergence of photography change the way in which schools were perceived, and how has it shaped the imaginaries about schooling? In this chapter I would like to reflect on a series of photographs of school architecture found in Argentinean archives that belong to the period 1880–1920, in which school buildings became an integral part of public policies. The series includes pictures taken by professional photographers, working in ateliers or in state departments. I conceive these photographs as public records or memory artifacts that were intersected by several histories, among them histories of architecture, of photography, and of schooling. They have sought to build an educational iconography and narrative about schools, and they did so through specific stylistic choices and visual rhetorics that need to be interrogated and considered by educational historians.

Keywords: school history, school buildings, history of photography, history of architecture, Argentina

Introduction

Photographs are an important way in which histories are made public. Emerged as part of the "mechanical arts" in the 19th century, photography transformed the iconosphere and changed the ways in which the world was experienced.[1]

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[1] Vanessa Schwartz and Jeannene Przyblyski (eds.). *The nineteenth-century visual culture reader* (New York: Routlege, 2004); Walter Benjamin, "Small History of Photography," in *Walter Benjamin. On Photography,* ed. Esther Leslie (London: Reaktion Books, 2015).

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The perception was that, from then on, human beings were able to record, condense, or capture an instant or a slice of time that could be shared with and archived for distant viewers.[2] As artifacts that could travel in space and time, photographs became increasingly important for defining public memories. In some fields such as art history, "history became that which is photographable",[3] and archives were inundated with photographic records.

In the history of education, this shift took place at a slower pace, and it was only in the last decades that historians of education turned decisively to visual records and particularly to photography.[4] In great part, this turn was due to the spread of digital technologies of archiving and the growing availability of records that they brought, but it was also related to historiographical changes that brought an awareness of the limitations of written sources to study the multiplicity of educational experiences and propelled a search to find new sources to understand the past. In some cases, these visual records, as much as -and sometimes even more so than- written documents, were and still are taken for granted as unmediated windows into the past. It is as if in some historiographies of education the use of photographs reinstated a sort of positivistic belief, now based in the objectivity of the camera and the mechanical eye.[5]

This chapter would like to challenge this unproblematized use of photographs in educational histories. As a contribution to the broader project of this book on public histories in education in honor of Frank Simon's work, so relevant for the renewal of theories and methods in the field, in this chapter I would like to reflect on a series of photographs of school architecture, collected in different archives as part of a research project on the transformation of school spaces in that period.[6] I will focus on photographs found in Argentinean archives

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2 Mary-Anne Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time. Modernity, Contigency, the Archive* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

3 André Malraux, quoted by Constanza Caraffa, "From 'photo libraries' to 'photo archives'. On the epistemological potential of art-historical photo collections," in *Photo Archives and the Photographic Memory of Art History*, ed. Constanza Caraffa (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag GmbH, 2011), 11.

4 María del Mar Pozo Andrés and Sjaak Braster, "The Visual Turn in the History of Education. Origins, Methodologies and Examples," in *Handbook of Historical Studies in Education. Debates, Tensions and Directions,* ed. Tanya Fitzgerald (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2020) DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-2362-0_53; Inés Dussel, "Visuality, Materiality, and History," in *Handbook of Historical Studies in Education. Debates, Tensions and Directions,* ed. Tanya Fitzgerald (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2020) DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-2362-0_8.

5 Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2007).

6 Archives visited include the Archivo General de la Nación (AGN), Biblioteca Nacional del Maestro (BNM), Biblioteca Nacional de Argentina (BNA), and CEDIAP (Centro de Documentación e

that belong to the period 1880–1920, in which school building became an integral part of public policies. The series includes pictures taken by professional photographers working in ateliers or doing commissioned work for state departments.[7] I conceive these photographs as public records or memory artifacts that have sought to build an educational iconography and narrative about schools, and they did so through specific stylistic choices and visual rhetorics that need to be interrogated. How did the emergence of photography change the way in which schools were perceived, and how has it shaped the imaginaries about schooling? Through a reading that considers their intermediality, I will claim that photography is not external to architecture or to pedagogy. Photographs are intersected by several histories, among them histories of architecture, of photography, and of schooling, and images of schools were produced within particular socio-technical contexts that have to be taken into account by educational histories.

The analysis will proceed as follows. In the first section, I introduce some theoretical and methodological reflections on the work with architectural photographs. In the second and larger part of this text, I analyze three groups of photographs of school buildings, the first one related to the monumentalization of schools, the second to recording the modernization of school buildings, and the third one linked to a new type of view of buildings, which Barbara Penner calls metabolic, that emphasizes the veins and guts of schools.[8] The photos show some degree of continuity in the construction of a particular iconography of schooling,[9] but also shifts and ruptures, as the photographs were produced within different political and constructive projects, and with different technological affordances. My argument is that their contexts of production and their locations are significant for producing particular visualities of school architecture, as will be shown in the analysis.

7 Other studies about photographers working on school architecture and pedagogies are: Ian Grosvenor and Martin Lawn, "Portraying the School: Silence in the Photographic Archive," in *Visual History. Images of Education,* ed. Ulrike Mietzner, Kevin Myers and Nick Peim (Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 2005); Olivier Lugon, "Nouvelle Objectivité, Nouvelle Pédagogie. À propos d'Aenne Biermann. 60 Photos, 1930," *Études Photographiques*, 19 (2006), 28–45.
8 Barbara Penner, *Bathroom* (London: Reaktion Books, 2014).
9 Frederik Herman, "Iconography and Materiality," in *Handbook of Historical Studies in Education. Debates, Tensions and Directions,* ed. Tanya Fitzgerald (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2020). DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-2362-0_21.

Reading School Building Photographs: Methodological Standpoints

Old photographs of school buildings can have a hypnotic effect. Most of them were taken by professional photographers, who knew how to make an impact. Many portrayed beautiful and glowing views of school façades and interiors, which were supposed to be testimonies to the progress of schooling and civilization. As historian Peter Hales remarked, writing about photographs of U.S. urbanization, photography as a "medium served as one of the most important outlets for ideas about how the city should be built, understood, and appreciated. [. . .] It served as a form of cultural education,"[10] and as propaganda of a particular state order.

However, as Marc Depaepe and Frank Simon say, historians should avoid this kind of fascination with sources, which precludes the task of interpretation.[11] One way to follow their advice is to study these photographs as a series, which allows to see some patterns and discontinuities diachronically and synchronically. This makes the relationships of a given record to its context much more complex and nuanced. Also, discussing the content of the photographs may open other venues for interpretation. For example, the series of photographs of school buildings can be analyzed as a reflection of the architectural transition from the one-room schoolhouse to the school palace or temple, and then to a modern, lean school building, oriented towards functionalism and the efficiency of materials. These photographs depict schools as state monuments, particularly at the turn of the 20th century, while others appear as highly individualized creations of architects, mostly related to the modernist movement of the 1920s and 1930s.

Yet, in this reading of photographic records of school buildings as a reflection of the history of school architecture, little attention is paid to the means and artifacts of representation. My aim in this chapter is to discuss the photographs of school buildings not as metonymical and transparent representations of schoolhouses,[12] but as artifacts that have a specific indexical quality, an (in)

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10 Peter B. Hales, *Silver Cities. Photographing American Urbanization, 1839–1939* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 132.

11 Marc Depaepe and Frank Simon, "Sobre el treball amb fonts: Consideracions des del taller sobre la història de l'educació," *Educació i Història. Revista d'Historia de l'Educació*, 15 (2010), 99–122.

12 Claire Zimmerman, "Photographic modern architecture: inside 'the new deep'," *The Journal of Architecture*, 22, no. 5 (2017a), 968–991, DOI: 10.1080/13602365.2017. 1351812.

fidelity to the referent, and as visual records that produce particular rhetorics about space and school experience with their own historicity.

In particular, I want to argue in favor of giving more relevance to the changes in photographic genres and technologies,[13] and to the visuality of urban public spaces and educational spaces that these changes produced, which can also be connected to new pedagogical discourses of freedom and naturalness.[14] These changes were embedded and sometimes pushed by technical and stylistic changes, not only in how photographs were produced but also in their means of circulation. That is why Claire Zimmerman, author of several groundbreaking studies on the relationships between architecture and photography, claims that

> photographs [. . .] are revealing diagnostic devices, speaking with more than one tongue to say more than one thing. Reading photographic evidence, then, complicates the architectural historian's task by adding multivalent, nonexclusive, sometimes contradictory visual "texts".[15]

I propose to read photographs of school buildings intermedially, that is, considering how they intersect by several histories, among them histories of architecture, of photography, and of schooling. As said before, photography is not external to architecture or to pedagogy: their visualities were produced within particular socio-technical contexts in which available technologies and discourses played a part. To take just one thread, the very experience of space was transformed by photography. For several commentators, photography, com-

13 Neil Levine, "The Template of Photography in Nineteenth-century Architectural Representation," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 71, no. 3 (2012), 306–331; Olivier Lugon, *Le Style documentaire: D'August Sander à Walker Evans, 1920–1945* (Paris: Macula, 2017); Gustavo Brandáriz, *Dos siglos de imágenes de arquitectura. Registrando y proyectando con el lápiz, el obturador y el ratón. Seminarios de Crítica No. 219* (Buenos Aires: Instituto de Arte Americano e Investigaciones Estéticas, Universidad de Buenos Aires, 2018).
14 Anne Higonnet, "Picturing Childhood in the Modern West," in *The Routledge History of Childhood in the Western World,* ed. Paula Fass (London: Taylor & Francis, 2012). Higonnet has argued that photography, since its emergence, has gained a hold over images of childhood. In her view, photography was the medium that was best able to capture the Romantic ideal of childhood, both because it shared the value of naturalness and because it conveyed a sense of fleeting evanescence. Thus, this visual technology seemed perfectly equipped to capture the ephemeral nature of children's lives as well as mundane, everyday scenes.
15 Claire Zimmermann, "Reading the (Photographic) Evidence," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 76, no. 4 (2017b), 446–448. DOI: https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26419047, 446.

pared to painting, was democratic, not only because only the wealthy could afford paintings,[16] but also because it captured the essential as well as the insignificant and weakened existing hierarchies.[17] From that moment on, images of city and rural landscapes could circulate in different media and became part of a popular visual culture. For modern architects, the eye was the eye of the camera, and size could shift depending on movement and angles.[18]

The relationships between the history of architecture and the history of photography has received more attention in the last decades.[19] In particular, Peter Hales' *Silver Cities* (2005), a study on the photographs of U.S. cities, brought to the fore the connections between photographic studios, architecture, mass media, politics, and commercialization, and showed how the social and technical practice of photography produced urban imaginaries.[20] Another relevant study is Miriam Paeslack's *Constructing Imperial Berlin* (2019), which built on Hales' work to analyze photos about the modernization of the European city in the late nineteenth century.[21] Paeslack added a preoccupation with the role of state commissions, much more relevant in Bismarck's Germany than in the United States, and of photographic archives and collections. Both studies highlighted the relationship between media, politics, and architecture, and stressed the role of photographs in educating the public in the new qualities of space at the turn of the 20th century. Their studies were very inspiring for undertaking the analysis of the series of photographs of Argentinean school buildings, which are presented in the next section.

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16 Hales, *Silver Cities,* 3.
17 Andreas Huyssen, *Miniature Metropolis. Literature in an age of photography and film* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 125–126.
18 Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity. Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1996); Beatriz Colomina, *Domesticity at war* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2007).
19 Zimmerman, "Photographic modern architecture: inside 'the new deep',"; María Antonella Pelizzari and Paolo Scrivano, "Intersection of Photography and Architecture – Introduction," *Visual Resources*, 27, no. 2 (2011), 107–112, DOI: 10.1080/01973762.2011. 568142.
20 Hales, *Silver Cities*.
21 Miriam Paeslack, *Constructing Imperial Berlin. Photography and the Metropolis* (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 2019).

Photographs from School Buildings, Argentina 1880–1920

Architectural views were one of the most traditional genres in the history of photography,[22] and Argentina was no exception to that. Since the first daguerreotypes, produced by European *emigrés* in the early 1840s, vistas of urban landscapes were common and became part of the visual construction of the nation.[23]

Yet schools, even if prominent in the liberal imaginaries of the nation as a beacon of civilization and enlightenment, were not part of these early efforts to picture its achievements. This can be seen in the lack of photographic records of two school buildings that were the first to be designed for that specific purpose in the post-civil war era, built between 1857 and 1860 and on which school authorities invested heavily.[24] For these schools, the only visual records were plans and drawings, together with myriads of documents that spoke of its characteristics and donors. Photographs were expensive and were not considered central pieces of official locutions.

This situation changed in the late 1870s and 1880s, when professional photographers, most of them of European background, started to take pictures of school buildings and school groups.[25] Photography as an urban practice was growing rapidly in Argentina at that time, and there was a dissemination both of photographic ateliers and of photographic practices among the public.[26] Due to technical advancements in cameras, films and printing techniques, it became much more common to document social events with pictures. In the period took under consideration in this chapter (1880–1920), photographs of buildings were created for and circulated in albums, books, illustrated journals, and exhibitions, and started to be part of the portfolios of architectural offices, be them private or public.

22 Lugon, *Le Style documentaire*, 23.

23 Abel Alexander and Luis Priamo, "Notas sobre la fotografía porteña del siglo XIX," in *Buenos Aires, Memoria Antigua: Fotografías 1850–1900*, ed. Luis Priamo (Buenos Aires: Fundación CEPPA Ediciones, 2018); Juan Gómez, *La Fotografía en la Argentina. Su Historia y Evolución en el Siglo XIX, 1840–1899* (Temperley, Argentina: Abadía Ediciones, 1986); Verónica Tell, *El lado visible. Fotografía y progreso en la Argentina a fines del siglo XIX* (San Martín, Argentina: UNSAM EDITA, 2017).

24 Inés Dussel, "El patio escolar, de claustro a "aula al aire libre". Historia de un espacio escolar, Argentina 1850–1920," *Historia de la Educación. Anuario*, 19,no. 1 (2019), 28–63.

25 Alexander and Priamo, "Notas sobre la fotografía porteña del siglo XIX."

26 Gómez, *La Fotografía en la Argentina*, 145–147.

In the analysis of this series of photographs, I would like to distinguish three groups. In the first one, which includes pictures taken by a professional photographer, buildings are monumentalized by photographs, which tend to isolate schools and take angles that enhance their size and grandeur. In the second one, at the turn of the 20th century, photographs are more austere and operate as records of progress and modernization, with clean vistas; they were taken by an unknown photographer and included in an official publication on school buildings. In the third one, photographs contribute to disseminate a metabolic view of buildings, more aligned with the engineering view than to the monumentalization of schools and the city. These photographs pertain to a state archive and were produced by the Ministry of Public Works; the photographer remains unknown. The shifts among these groups are related not only to changes in architectural styles but also to photographic genres and to the different locations of production, as will be shown in the following analysis.

Photographs and the Monumentalization of School Buildings

The first group I would like to present is a series of photos taken by Samuel Boote (1844–1921) for the album *Vistas de Escuelas Comunes* that was sent to the Paris World Exhibition of 1889, commissioned by the National Council of Education. These *Vistas* have been used extensively in books and in documentaries.[27] Boote was an acclaimed photographer, the son of English immigrants, and owned the largest photo *atelier* in Buenos Aires, which edited most of the photo albums and postcards of that period.[28] His atelier also included a printing workshop and a store where he sold photographic equipment and taught photography lessons to amateurs.[29]

Boote took these pictures at a time when the Argentinean state developed impressive public works in areas such as sanitation, education, transports, and communication.[30] In terms of school buildings, the 1883 National School Census recorded 170 schools in the whole country, of which only 20 had been built with that purpose and 150 functioned in rented houses deemed unhealthy.[31] In

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27 Fabio Grementieri and Claudia Schmidt, *Arquitectura, educación y patrimonio: Argentina, 1600–1975* (Buenos Aires: Pamplatina, 2010).

28 Alexander and Priamo, "Notas sobre la fotografía porteña del siglo XIX," 19.

29 Gómez, *La Fotografía en la Argentina*, 108.

30 Grementieri and Schmidt, *Arquitectura, educación y patrimonio*, 32.

31 Nicolás Arata, "La escolarización de la ciudad de Buenos Aires (1880–1910)" (Ph.D. diss., Departamento de Investigaciones Educativas del CINVESTAV-México, 2016), 121.

the following years, the rhythm of school constructions sped up: between 1881 and 1886 54 new schools were built.[32] By 1934 the national state had built 788 new schools, with a pace of 15 new schools each year.[33]

This infrastructure was developed under the orientations of the Office for Architecture of the National Council of Education (NCE), initially directed by Carlos Altgelt (1855–1937).[34] The styles of the buildings built by this Office were eclectic and diverse, but all shared the principle that schools had to be monuments to the state's powers. The two main models that were adopted were the temple, usually with Greek or Roman columns, and the palace, as a secular fortress to be opposed to religious buildings. Besides Altgelt, Italian and French architects participated in this campaign and developed what is called as an "international style," mixing German classicism with Italian and French academicism.[35] Historian Francisco Liernur speaks of "respect and devotion" to public buildings in this period,[36] which created a "ghost-like effect" of the grandiosity of the state.[37]

The pictures taken by Boote were included in one of the albums sent to the 1889 Paris World Exhibition, devoted completely to schools. Commissioned by the National Council of Education, it contained images of recently built schools.[38] Of a total of 41 images, 38 had buildings in them, and the other three portrayed school battalions. The photos of the buildings were mostly of façades (31), and seven showed school interiors such as galleries, schoolyards, and classrooms, of

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32 Arata, "La escolarización de la ciudad de Buenos Aires (1880–1910)," 142–145.

33 Carlos Bozzoli, *Las escuelas del Plan Láinez. El valor de significación de una propuesta educativa, 1884–1934* (Buenos Aires: Nobuko, 2011), 262.

34 Altgelt was a relevant figure in this period: born in Buenos Aires of a German father, he trained at the Royal Academy of Architecture in Berlin with Martin Gropius and Karl Bröticher, worked at the Gropius & Schmieden bureau, and returned to Buenos Aires in the late 1870s. Along with his brother Hans, Altgelt designed some of the most iconic school buildings, including the school palace that today houses Argentina's Ministry of Education in the city of Buenos Aires. See Claudia Schmidt, *Palacios sin reyes. Arquitectura pública para la "capital permanente". Buenos Aires, 1880–1890* (Rosario, Argentina: Prohistoria, 2012).

35 Grementieri and Schmidt, *Arquitectura, educación y patrimonio*, 68–70.

36 Jorge Francisco Liernur, *Arquitectura en la Argentina del Siglo XX. La construcción de la modernidad* (Buenos Aires: Fondo Nacional de las Artes, 2001), 69.

37 Jens Andermann, *The Optic of the State. Visuality and Power in Argentina and Brazil* (Pittsburgh, PE: Pittsburgh University Press, 2007), 2.

38 Alexander and Priamo, "Notas sobre la fotografía porteña del siglo XIX," 19. Of the eight albums printed for the exhibition, only five have been preserved, not all of them in good conditions. A few years later Boote was also commissioned to produce the album of *Vistas escolares* for the World Columbian Exhibition in Chicago in 1893.

which there are only two, probably due to the technical limitations to picture interiors. 24 photos showed people in them, mostly in static positions.

I will present three of these pictures in more detail, which are telling of the stylistic choices made by Boote and of the technical limitations of the period. The first one depicts a normal school in the city of Buenos Aires, founded in 1874 but whose building was erected in 1881 (designed by architect Ernesto Bunge) (Figure 1). It was considered a palace school, built with funds from the National Congress in a neo-gothic style. This building was impressive, having a large library, an auditorium, a museum for natural history, and well-equipped classrooms, one of which was also photographed.

The picture intended to capture the building from a wide angle; it was part of a grand-style photography, which presented "vistas too extensive to witness"[39] that depicted particular visual hierarchies and put a high value on state buildings as icons of growth and progress. It must have been taken from an opposite building, from an upper floor or roof, and with the corner view presenting the construction as a majestic building.[40]

However, the quality of the photograph is not good: there are shadows in the left lower corner, and the skyline does not stand clear, probably because of an excess of exposure. Yet, the grandeur of the school is properly conveyed in the image, which shows an impressive building standing on its own, and the tramway lines running close to it, another sign of progress. Even if some people can be seen in the street, and a cart is visible in the left side, the building seems to be excised from its surroundings with "surgical skill,"[41] conveying a sense of order and monumentality, and a power of the state that was much larger than that of pedestrians.

A different angle is taken in the picture of the graded school for girls, designed by the Italian architect Francesco Tamburini (1846–1890), director of the new National Department of Engineers, and inaugurated in 1886 (Figure 2). The building seems smaller and is surrounded by other constructions, making it

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39 Saskia Sassen, quoted by Paeslack, *Constructing Imperial Berlin,* 1.

40 Hales' study describes the shifts in angles and views very clearly: "Shooting from above, the photographer could isolate the building from the street to draw it out from its site or to gain enough distance to enclose the entire building into one frame. As lens and camera technology improved, and the basic architectural camera "movements" that allowed the photographer to match up a building's lines with his framing edge came more and more into the hands of commercial urban photographers, this most rudimentary function of the high-angle view became outdated. It was far better for an architectural photographer to work from the street, so that he might exaggerate a building's scale." (Hales, *Silver Cities,* 179).

41 Hales, *Silver Cities,* 203.

Figure 1: Teacher training college or Normal School for Female Teachers, City of Buenos Aires, 1889, taken from the album: República Argentina – Consejo Nacional de Educación, *Vistas de Escuelas Comunes*, sent to the Paris World Exhibition 1889 (Photo by Samuel Boote) BNA_FO005591_35.

difficult for the photographer to get a total view. The two-storey building seems simpler and smaller than the Normal School, but the columns and balconies, aligned with the school-as-temple model, show a stylish façade that is probably consistent with the interior. Boote chose once again to include some people that could act as a comparative point to grasp the dimensions of the building, and who seem tiny in relation to the columns and windows. This picture is technically more accurate and clearer than the previous one, and close to the school there is a partial view of a shop and of a vacant lot. It was also shot from above the street level, although not too high; the lateral view aggrandizes the building and makes it possible to observe both the tiles in the floor and the ceiling of the upper gallery, as well as the details in the columns. The building seems compact but beautifully ornamented.

The following image depicts the interior of a primary school, adjacent to Normal School No. 2 (Figure 3). The school building was designed by the same Italian architect, Francesco Tamburini, with a neo-renaissance style, and was inaugurated in 1889. It had several internal schoolyards and galleries, with

Figure 2: Graded School for Girls, Peru 728, City of Buenos Aires, 1889, taken from the album: República Argentina – Consejo Nacional de Educación, *Vistas de Escuelas Comunes*, sent to the Paris World Exhibition 1889 (Photo by Samuel Boote) BNA_FO005591_30.

clear hierarchies between spaces.[42] The picture taken by Boote, again shot from an upper standpoint, is outstanding for several reasons. On the one hand, it portrays a common scene of girls and boys in what seems a school break, but the presence of the photographer remains visible both in the shadows of some stairs and in the direction of the gazes of some children. One girl is protecting her eyes from the sun, and a group of three girls seem to be smiling to the photographer. Immediately behind, at least two Afro-Argentinean girls can be distinguished, which is rare in urban pictures at that time. There is only one adult in the picture, leaning on one of the columns to the right of the picture. The shot

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42 Grementieri and Schmidt, *Arquitectura, educación y patrimonio*, 46–48.

from above, taken from a lateral angle, is not too pronounced, and it could be at mid-level, making the building more impressive when compared to the bodies of children.

Figure 3: Teacher Training College or Normal School No. 2 (Departamento de Aplicación – auxiliary primary school), City of Buenos Aires, 1889, taken from the album: República Argentina – Consejo Nacional de Educación, *Vistas de Escuelas Comunes*, sent to the Paris World Exhibition 1889 (Photo by Samuel Boote). BNA_FO005591_38.

On the other hand, the quality of the pictures makes several details of the construction and of children's bodies and attire visible. Two playgrounds or schoolyards can be seen, one on the ground floor, mostly of gravel, and another one on the first floor, with a railing consistent with the academic style that quoted Greek architecture but adapting it to modern requirements. There were no trees or plants in the schoolyard, perhaps related to the fact that the building had just been built. The classrooms opened into the schoolyard through window-panels, and there were some galleries or colonnades that organized the transition between class time and school breaks. These transitional spaces that could mediate between different situations and times, and host different programs, were a modern trait of this building, that tended to integrate spaces.[43]

    Boote's choices of lateral views and shootings from above helped him produce an "urban grand-style" that emphasized the buildings' monumentality

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[43] Mariana Fiorito, *Diseño integral como política estatal. Arquitecturas para la enseñanza media. Argentina, 1934–1944* (Rosario: Prohistoria Ediciones, 2016), 228.

and disseminate a narrative of progress and modernization. Produced for European audiences, the pictures highlighted "what seemed most glowing: [. . .] cultural life on a European scale and within European tastes."[44] These brand-new buildings with international architectural styles, with children or citizens in orderly positions, showed almost no traces of the precarious city of wood and metal sheets that was the norm by then,[45] and of the much more common rented and barely healthy houses in which most schools worked. These pictures produced a particular iconography of schools that, as said in the initial sections, cannot be taken as mere reflection of school life at that time.

Photographs as Records of Progress and Transformation

The second group of pictures do not follow the grand-style photography of Samuel Boote. They accompanied a shift in school architecture, both in its techniques and working processes. If the palaces and temples of the 1880s and 1890s were monumental in size and the government spared no expense to make them even more grandiose, with ebony stairs, marble columns, and glass domes, soon their high cost raised important debates, even more so after the 1890 economic crisis that defunded public works.[46] In 1899 a new set of regulations was issued that established three basic building types, much more austere, for 200, 320 and 400 students. Their design, by the Italian architect Carlos Morra (1854–1926), showed the traces of militarism in Argentinean education, with regular forms that facilitated inspection and control.[47]

These simplified types were built all over Argentina. In 1902, the Council of Education published a booklet that publicized the construction of 14 schools in the city of Buenos Aires that followed Morra's types. Their construction was presented as the result of the confluence of educational, medical, and architectural knowledge.[48] Even if the designs were more austere, the booklet was very luxurious; its almost 100 pages, printed in glossy paper, contained 19 plans and 20

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44 Hales, *Silver Cities*, 125.

45 Adrián Gorelik, "Buenos Aires, 1850–1900: una ciudad en tránsito," in *Buenos Aires, Memoria Antigua: Fotografías 1850–1900,* ed. Luis Priamo (Buenos Aires: Fundación CEPPA Ediciones, 2018), 30.

46 Other objections that are relevant for historians of education were related to the fact that their size made it difficult to keep them clean and to control the students, and that they lacked natural light and green areas (Grementieri and Schmidt, *Arquitectura, educación y patrimonio*, 38).

47 Grementieri and Schmidt, *Arquitectura, educación y patrimonio*, 40.

48 Arata, "La escolarización de la ciudad de Buenos Aires (1880–1910)," 141.

photos. Photographs were a major innovation for public works and had already been used by engineers and companies to document building processes since the 1850s and 1860s.[49] But the photographs in the booklet seem closer to the illustrated journals that were starting to be the main means for the dissemination of photography at that time. The printing process was not as careful as in Boote's workshop, and the result was a picture of lower quality, but of ample circulation.

The inclusion of plans and photos of the same building makes this 1902 booklet a unique source for studying school space; unfortunately, there are no reference to the photographers. Of the 20 photos, 12 depicted the school façade, as it was usual in album sent to world exhibitions. The view of the pictures was frontal, and the shots were taken at street-level, with no people; the only continuity is the willingness to excise the building from its surroundings. In Figure 4, the building, more austere, shows some traits of international-style frontispieces, with built-in columns. There are some new trees in the sidewalk, expression of a city that was expanding itself into the suburbs.[50]

Escuela calle Triunvirato, entre Malabia y Acevedo, D.° 17

Figure 4: Primary school façade. Consejo Nacional de Educación (1902). Edificios para escuelas. Su inauguración. Digna conmemoración de los sucesos de mayo de 1810. *El Monitor de la Educación Común*, Año XXII, T. XVIII, Núm. 351, pp. 7–109 (unknown photographer).

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49 Already in 1855, Cuthbert Bedem had said that "Photography can be made most serviceable to Engineers and Architects in illustrating -wither for themselves or their employers- the progress of the works on which they may be engaged" (quoted in Paeslack, *Constructing Imperial Berlin,* 69).

50 Gorelik, "Buenos Aires, 1850–1900: una ciudad en tránsito."

The eight pictures that showed the school interiors, such as corridors, school-yards, and stairs, presented some stylistic innovations. In these pictures there is a weakening of hierarchical models. In one picture, wooden stairs were given full prominence, following modernity's new value for the ephemeral and transitory (Figure 5). The banal started to be seen as beautiful.[51] The photo portrayed geometrical forms that played with sunlight; its whiteness and clean shapes seem aligned with the European avant-garde.

Escuela calle Triunvirato, entre Malabia y Acevedo, D.ª 17

Figure 5: Primary school, interior view: corridor and stairs. Consejo Nacional de Educación (1902). Edificios para escuelas. Su inauguración. Digna conmemoración de los sucesos de mayo de 1810. *El Monitor de la Educación Común*, Año XXII, T. XVIII, Núm. 351, pp. 7–109 (unknown photographer).

In this booklet, there is a rare picture of the bathroom pavilions (Figure 6). According to the plans, all 14 schools had latrines or WCs; in some cases latrines and urinals integrated into the same room, which echoed the emerging trend to make all artifacts and functions converge in one single room.[52] The photo shows a two-floored toilet pavilion connected to the main building through a covered gallery. In this picture, despite its low quality, it is possible to observe the lack of doors at the entrance and, in lieu of windows, high openings without glass; it can be said that the pavilion concealed visibility, but it did not isolate the sounds of this space. Even if no one can be seen in the photo, windows and curtains are half-open. Again, the

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51 Huyssen, *Miniature Metropolis*, 183.
52 Inés Dussel, "The pedagogy of latrines. A kaleidoscopic look at the history of school bathrooms in Argentina, 1880–1930", *Oxford Review of Education* 47, no. 5 (2021), 576–596. DOI: 10.1080/03054985.2021.1956887

picture is taken at street-level, which might exaggerate the size of the buildings but provides a horizontal point of view.
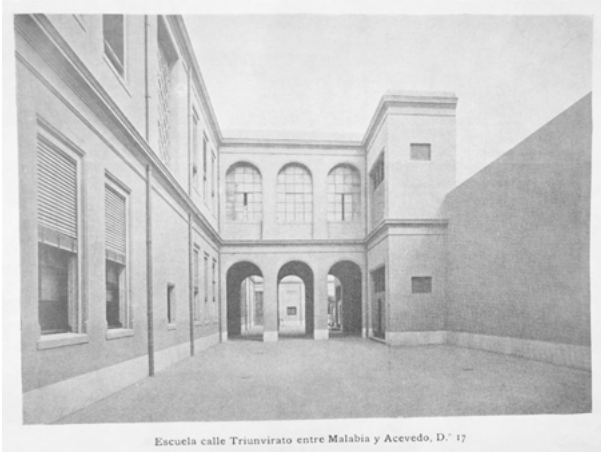
Figure 6: Primary school, interior view: schoolyard and bathroom pavilion. Consejo Nacional de Educación (1902). Edificios para escuelas. Su inauguración. Digna conmemoración de los sucesos de mayo de 1810. *El Monitor de la Educación Común*, Año XXII, T. XVIII, Núm. 351, pp. 7–109 (unknown photographer).

These pictures, made for a local audience of teachers and citizens, stand in sharp contrast with Boote's *vistas*. The buildings they depict are more austere, but the angles and stylistic choices are also more sober and clean. Buildings are not necessarily grandiose, but they are orderly and friendly, placed on an equal footing with the viewer. The quality of the picture is sacrificed to reach a broader public. Photographs are no longer pictorial or grand-style, but their beauty lies in the banality of the scenes and the aestheticization of common artifacts and places.

The Metabolic View

The third group I consider in this chapter marks another shift, that of turning photography to the "guts" of the buildings. Barbara Penner has spoken about "the metabolic view" of buildings[53] that saw through their surface and walls to understand and govern patterns of circulation of air, light, water, waste, or microbes. A new engineering visibility emerged by the turn of the 20th century

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53 Penner, *Bathroom,* 13.

that highlighted pipes and sewage, airing and heating, as if they were the veins or arteries of the constructed space. In this view, the buildings were "alive," gaining depth and movement; this feature would continue in subsequent decades, becoming increasingly refined. This shift was possible by new technical affordances not only of photographic equipment but also of electric lightning.

The pictures selected within this group come a corpus of thousands of photograps available at the archives of the Ministry for Public Works (MOP), created in 1898 and responsible from 1910 on for most of the new constructions developed by the state.[54] This Ministry was a real "laboratory" for the development of ideas in terms of composition, style and urbanism.[55] In 1913 a French architect, René Villeminot (1878–1928), educated at the École des Beaux Arts in Paris, joined the MOP as Chief of Projects and started a new wave of school constructions influenced by hygienist principles, which followed the structure of hospital pavilions.[56] The façades became again majestic, with visible quotes to the Beaux-Arts style, more academic and elegant than Morra's schools.

Villeminot conducted the building projects with careful planning and documentation, drawing hundreds of plans and taking several photographs throughout the construction process of a single building, a procedure that followed the Beaux-Arts system and most of which are still available at the MOP archives. As far as I have progressed with my research, the photographers are unknown. Buildings were deemed to last, and there was extensive study of the soils and of water drainage. According to Grementieri and Schmidt, in Villeminot's projects "the choice of the architectural language for each school was arbitrary and experimental,"[57] and this made them versatile and unique.

The two pictures that are analyzed here were selected of a group of approximately 300 photos of school buildings that were reviewed at the CEDIAP-MOP digital archives. They are evidence of the metabolic view of buildings, highlighting water drainage and air circulation. In a picture of a rural school in the northwest province of Catamarca taken in 1916, before its remodeling, it is possible to see the structure and appearance of outhouses. The picture stands in stark contrast with Boote's palaces and temples and the 1902 clean and sober schools (Figure 7). It was taken at street-level and with a slightly lateral view, that emphasizes the isolation of the building from the rest of the school. The choice to show the water

54 Anahí Ballent, "Ingeniería y Estado: la red nacional de caminos y las obras públicas en la Argentina, 1930–1943," *História, Ciências, Saúde* 15,no. 3 (2008): 827–847. The archives are hosted by CEDIAP (Centre for Studies and Information on Public Architecture)-MOP.

55 Grementieri and Schmidt, *Arquitectura, educación y patrimonio*, 104.

56 Ibid., 128.

57 Ibid., 135.

running out of the bathroom, worn-out painting, entrances with no doors, dark interiors, and what appears as an ominous shadow in the right entrance of the toilet, probably sought to advocate for school reform along hygienic guidelines.

Figure 7: Outhouses. School in Chumbicha, Catamarca (Northwest Argentina) (picture taken in September 1916, school built in 1910). Document pertaining to CeDIAP- Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Arquitectura Pública/AABE- Agencia de Administración de Bienes del Estado, Argentina (Code CEDIAP 0049–04023).

Another picture taken after the 1924 remodeling of the Normal School in the city of Buenos Aires, built in 1913, also could have had hygiene as its inspiration (Figure 8). As in Figure 7, the infrastructure of circulation and light is given prominence, in this case as positive example. The picture depicts an internal covered schoolyard with a group of lavatories, with signs of order, cleanliness and silence, and an inscription on the wall that refer to order, duty, and tidiness. The lavatories are made of marble, and the drinking fountains are distributed throughout the room; at that time, it was still uncommon to include lavatories and toilets or urinals in the same room, and lavatories were usually placed in schoolyards, so that children could clean themselves after playing or doing physical exercise. The construction shown in this photograph is more austere than the school palaces, for example in the tiles and the roof, but it is more modern, as there is electric lightning and a clock centrally placed. In the floor, it is visible what appears to be the lid of a water sewage. The photograph seems to have been taken at mid-level, enlarging the perspective of the space, with abundant light coming from the right side. It shares with the second group the will to find beauty in the banal.
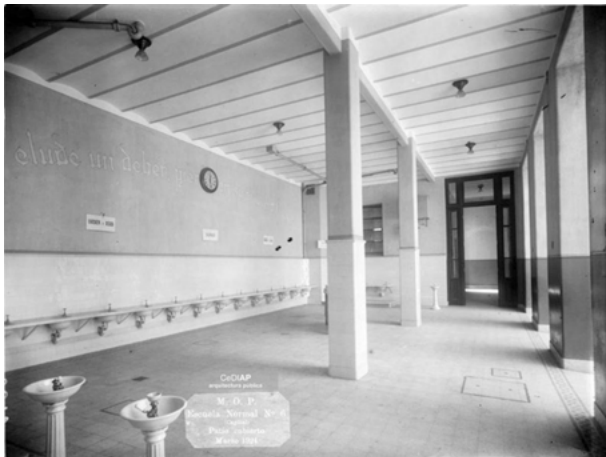
Figure 8: Covered schoolyard and lavatories, Normal School No. 6, City of Buenos Aires (picture taken in March 1924, school built in 1913). Document pertaining to CeDIAP- Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Arquitectura Pública/AABE- Agencia de Administración de Bienes del Estado, Argentina (Code CEDIAP 0032–08645).

In the photograph, the schoolyard looks clean, tiled, and perspires an aesthetics of washability implying that walls and floors should not only be clean but also cleanable, subjected to a perpetual action of erasing the traces of life. This aesthetics went against any kind of decoration, aligned with Adolf Loos' condemnation of ornament as crime.[58] Yet this is not a vacant space. The photograph shows a space full of artifacts and partitions, with columns, doors, windows, corridors. For Mark Wigley, historian of architecture, in modern buildings there are always masks "whose surface is scrutinized for clues about what lies beyond it but can never simply be seen [. . .]. [A]rchitecture no longer simply reveals what it houses. [It has] an economy of vision founded on a certain blindness."[59] Paradoxically, this "blindness" is revealed by photography, that shows corridors, windows, and lids as hints of what may lie beneath them.

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58 Robin Schuldenfrei, "Sober Ornament: Materiality and Luxury in German Modern Architecture and Design," in *Histories of Ornament: From Global to Local,* ed. Alina Payne and Gülru Necipoğlu (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).
59 Mark Wigley, "Untitled: The Housing of Gender," in *Sexuality & Space,* ed. Beatriz Colomina (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992), 345.

Conclusions

If photographs speak "more than one tongue to say more than one thing,"[60] then which are the tongues spoken by these photographs? In this chapter, I have analyzed a series of photographs of Argentinean school buildings taken across four decades to show that there were not unmediated records but positioned, tainted views of constructed spaces. As public records of the history of school buildings, they produced distinct visual rhetorics about schools. Through their angles and points of view, location of the camera and technical possibilities, and the analysis of the projects in which they were produced, I could distinguish three types of pictures that have a very different architectural language about what schools are and how they should be depicted.

The first group was aligned with the grand-style photography of the late nineteenth century and sought to portray schools as monuments to the grandeur of the state. The photos were made by one of the most famous photographers at that time and were part of an album sent to the Paris 1889 World Exhibition. School buildings were depicted as impressive, and children and adults were shrunk in comparison to these majestic constructions that intended to please and captivate European eyes. Technical high quality, shots from above, lateral views, and focus on ornated façades were common traits of this group.

The second group includes pictures taken to illustrate another wave of school buildings, more austere and sober. Pictures were made to circulate in an educational journal and were addressed to teachers and the broader public. The buildings were in the new suburbs, signs of the urban expansion. Photos were taken at street-level, mostly of façades but also of interiors. School corridors, stairs, and bathroom pavilions were pictured as part of a modern shift towards beautifying the banal. Yet it is important to stress that photographs did not only reflect these architectural changes but helped produce them: photography was an integral part in the making of the frivolous or ephemeral as more glowing and appealing.

The third group contains photos taken as part of a building process commanded by architects and engineers that sought to document it. They were part of a shift that turned photography to the veins and arteries of the buildings, towards "the metabolic view" of constructions. This view was interested in visibilizing and governing patterns of circulation of air, light, waste, and water, in line with the hygienic movement. Photographs were also taken at street-level, but had a focus in light, sewages, and air, showing details that might have been hidden by earlier photographers. Their view of the building combined the

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60 Zimmermann, "Reading the (Photographic) Evidence," 446.

vision of the engineers with the medical doctors and educators and constructed a narrative of school reform as a break with the past.

To summarize, I would like to come back to the initial argument in this text: photographs of school buildings are visual records that produce particular rhetorics about space and school experience. They are part of a public memory of schooling and have contributed to shape "a larger dynamic visual-material field, in which schooling is permanently (re)framed, visually materially performed, and (re) configured."[61] These records have their own historicity, spoken by the tongues of the histories of photographic techniques and genres, but also of school architecture and school pedagogies, of professional and bureaucratic knowledge. I hope that what I have presented here will be followed by other research that will show more nuances, detours, and even corrections to the histories I studied here. But one thing stands clear: we cannot continue using photographs of school buildings as neutral records. We need to understand their choices, angles, and limitations in order to make room for more rigorous and complex interpretations of educational pasts and of how, through which materials and takes, their histories were made public.

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61 Herman, "Iconography and Materiality," 332.

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Storytelling

Nelleke Bakker

Memories of Harm in Institutions of Care: The Dutch Historiography of Institutional Child Abuse from a Comparative Perspective

Abstract: This chapter discusses the Dutch historiography of institutional child abuse from a comparative perspective. It does so by comparing the outcomes of three recent large-scale inquiries into child (sexual) abuse and neglect in state-sponsored out-of-home care, including foster care, and into child sexual abuse in Roman Catholic institutions with the findings of similar inquiries and truth commissions in other countries. While the first reports chose a quantitative approach, focusing primarily on survey and archival data, only the last report on child abuse in out-of-home care meets the requirements of the testimonial driven and victim-centered model of inquiry that was first developed in Australia and copied in English-speaking and northern-European countries. In this De Winter report victims' stories confirm data from archival sources. By using this approach, it has given care-leavers a voice and an opportunity to reconcile to their harmful memories and the wider public the knowledge a society needs to prevent abuse of children in the future.

Keywords: historical child abuse, historical child sexual abuse, inquiries and truth commissions, testimonial driven inquiries, victim-centered model of inquiry

Introduction

Since the mid-1990s across the West inquiries and truth commissions are established by national and provincial governments to investigate historical child abuse in out-of-home care. These activities provide an answer to towering public concern after media exposure of scandals concerning abuse and neglect in state-sponsored institutions for children.[1] Extensive reports have been published after years of

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researching archives and collecting large numbers of oral and written testimonies of care-leavers. The stakes are high, not only because of public attention, but also because these commissions' terms of reference often include recommendations for redress and financial compensation for past harm, aiming at reconciliation and healing of victims. In other words, they connect the past with the future. Sometimes, after an outburst of cases covered by the press, official apologies preceded the commissions, sometimes they followed in the wake of an unsettling report. While the focus and format of the reports vary, the majority share a commitment to listening to the testimonies of victims (often called "survivors") and to putting their experiences in the center of the model of inquiry.[2] Using this model the reports serve a public goal by documenting the past to reconcile survivors to their painful memories and help society to prevent future harm.

Among these inquiries two strands can be discerned: one concerning child abuse and neglect in state-sponsored out-of-home care, including foster care, and the other focusing on child sexual abuse in religious, mostly Roman Catholic, and other institutions. The first one started with the Australian report *Bringing them Home* (1997) presented by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity's National Inquiry into the Separation of Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families, which was the first to adopt the testimonial-driven model. What became known as the Stolen Generations inquiry revealed the trauma of forced child removal and resulting familial and cultural dislocation. Subsequently, the campaigning of other Australian care-leaver groups, which formed in the wake of the Stolen Generations inquiry, transformed historical abuse in out-of-home care from an Indigenous issue into a wider and systematic problem. In 2001 another "very sorry chapter" in Australia's history was revealed by an inquiry into child migrants who had been shipped from English children's homes, the *Lost Innocents*, followed three years later by a report on all Australians who had experienced out-of-home care, the *Forgotten Australians*.[3] The victim-centered model of inquiry was copied in many countries and regions, primarily English speaking, but also in Scandinavia and Germany.[4]

Criminology and Crime Prevention 14 (2013): 5–23; Johanna Sköld, "The Truth about Abuse? A Comparative Approach to Inquiry Narratives on Historical Institutional Child Abuse," *History of Education* 45 (2016): 492–509.

2 Johanna Sköld and Shurlee Swain, eds., *Apologies and the Legacies of Abuse of Children in 'Care'* (Basingstoke/New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

3 Katie Wright and Shurlee Swain, "Speaking the Unspeakable: The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse," *Journal of Australian Studies* 42 (2018): 139–152.

4 Sköld, "Historical Abuse".

It took almost ten years, until 2013, before the Australian government established a Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, that reported in 2017.[5] The Australian historian Shurlee Swain conceives of this late emergence of child sexual abuse as cause of national concern as an expression of it being considered the most harmful of all kinds of abuse and therefore the most difficult to come forward with in the public or confidential hearings that are part of the victim-centered approach. This argument can likewise be applied to England and Wales, where the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse was not commissioned until after Wales and Northern Ireland had launched investigations into abuse in general.[6]

Nevertheless, this second strand of inquiries focusing on child sexual abuse in, first of all Roman Catholic, institutions has its roots in the 1980s, when the concept of child sexual abuse was first used and its harmful reality in the lives of the most vulnerable human beings was finally recognized. This long-hidden evil was first addressed in the United States in 2002, where groups of male survivors of pedophile priests in boarding schools and homes run by religious orders successfully caught media attention and started to bring to court perpetrators who had not been prosecuted in the past. At the time Church authorities had at best transferred a perpetrator to another diocese. Justice seeking and financial compensation on an individual basis created the initial impetus behind investigations led by judges or public prosecutors, in which public naming and shaming became key elements. In its wake hundreds of accused priests and three bishops resigned, a few priests killed themselves and one victim killed his perpetrator.[7]

Some countries with a substantial Roman Catholic population, particularly Canada and Ireland, followed the example of the United States with inquiries into particular cases of perpetrators and bishops who had sustained a "culture of silence" by systematically looking away from predator priests' sex offenses and simply transferring them to new posts.[8] As these crimes were as a rule not liable to prosecution, because of a bar by limitation, the accused who were still in office only had to resign. This iconoclasm included highly ranked persons, such as the Belgian archbishop Godfried Danneels, who was first held responsible by the court for allowing prolonged sexual abuse by a parish priest from Brussels before

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5 Wright and Swain, "Speaking the Unspeakable".

6 Shurlee Swain, "Why Sexual Abuse? Why Now," in *Apologies*, eds. Johanna Sköld and Shurlee Swain, 83–94; Adrian Bingham et al., "Historical Child Sexual Abuse in England and Wales," *History of Education* 45 (2016): 411–429.

7 John T. McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom: A History* (New York: Norton, 2003).

8 Joep Dohmen, *Vrome zondaars. Misbruik in de Rooms-Katholieke Kerk* (Amsterdam: NRCboeken, 2010), 52–70.

he had to step down in 2010 because of the accusation of having known all along about the Bruges' bishop Roger Vangheluwe's systematic sexual abuse of his nephew.[9]

Belgium is one of the few European countries with a Roman Catholic population[10] that did not escape an exposure of a painful past. However, the Belgian inquiry into sexual abuse in the Roman Catholic Church never passed the stage of collecting oral testimonies and was published in 2010 only in an unfinished version, because the public prosecutor seized large parts of the research materials, as well as the archbishop's archive, on judicial grounds. He suspected the commission of covering up the responsibility of individual Church leaders.[11] Perhaps even more painful is the fact that in Flanders the commission (*Experten-panel*) charged with advising the government on the best way to recognize the harm done to victims of violence and abuse in institutions turned out to see no additional value in a large-scale inquiry.[12] Belgium's neighboring country, the Netherlands, is privileged to have four extensive national reports on historical child abuse, three focusing on sexual abuse and one on abuse and neglect. As these were published in Dutch, they have as yet drawn hardly any international attention.

This chapter reflects on the historiography of institutional child abuse as an example of public history: documenting the past for the sake of the public and enabling remembrance of traumatic experiences in order to help prevent new ones in the future.[13] Studies into child abuse in out-of-home care aim, moreover, to serve a goal that is shared with both memory studies and oral history: making collective memories more inclusive by adding the memories of underprivileged

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9 "Godfried Danneels," accessed April 28, 2020. https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Godfried_Danneels; "Roger Vangheluwe," accessed April 28, 2020. https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_Vangheluwe.

10 Spain is an example of recent exposure of cases of predator priests in the press without a follow-up in terms of an inquiry and truth commission as yet. The newspaper *El Pais* covered many of these cases: accessed August 28, 2021. https://english.elpais.com/society/2021-02-01/child-abuse-in-the-spanish-catholic-church-in-spain-no-one-does-anything.html.

11 Peter Adriaenssens, *Verslag activiteiten Commissie voor de behandeling van klachten wegens seksueel misbruik in een pastorale relatie* (S.l.: s.n., 2010).

12 Carinda Jansen et al., "Onderzoek naar geweld in de jeugdzorg. Lessen uit andere landen," in *Commissie Vooronderzoek naar Geweld in de Jeugdzorg: Bijlagen* (Den Haag: s.n., 2016), 373–408: 388.

13 Rachel Donaldson, "The Development and Growth of Public History," in *Handbook of Historical Studies in Education*, ed. Tanya Fitzgerald (Singapore: Springer, 2020), 923–941.

groups, such as care-leavers, and moving marginalized populations and voices from the footnotes of history to the main story.[14]

Considering the many different designs and methodologies used by the inquiries and truth commissions, we may ask to what extent do their reports serve these goals? The article questions the three national Dutch research projects and their four reports, published between 2011 and 2019, from a comparative perspective and with a focus on the immediate causes, aims, methods, sources and results of the inquiries. To do so, firstly, the two reports on child sexual abuse in Dutch Roman Catholic institutions are compared with comparable inquiries in other countries. Next, the Dutch inquiries into child (sexual) abuse in out-of-home care are set against some other reports on abuse in state-sponsored institutions.

Sexual Abuse in Roman Catholic Institutions

In the first decade of the 21st century the American National Review Board, the Dutch Deetman Commission and the Belgian Adriaenssens Commission, the latter two named after their presidents, were each mandated to establish an official account of the sexual abuse in their national episcopates of the Roman Catholic Church as a response to growing outrage in the media. After no less than two decades of journalistic reporting the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops commissioned the John Jay College of Criminal Justice to conduct scientific research.[15] The Dutch Conference of Bishops established the Deetman Commission in the wake of a rush of cases reported in the media early in 2010.[16] The establishment of the Adriaenssens Commission, however, preceded the outburst of cases that followed the testimony of Vangheluwe's nephew. Immediately after this story came out, many victims sent complaints to the Commission, therewith

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14 Angela M. Riotto, "Memories, Memory, and Memorial: Researching Remembering and the Methodology of Memory Studies," in *Handbook of Historical Studies in Education*, ed. Tanya Fitzgerald (Singapore: Springer, 2020), 877–891; Mirelsie Velázquez, "Lessons from the Past: Listening to Our Stories, Reading Our Lives: The Place of Oral Histories in Our Lives," in *Handbook of Historical Studies in Education*, ed. Tanya Fitzgerald (Singapore: Springer, 2020), 863–875.

15 Dohmen, *Vrome zondaars*, 42–57.

16 A series of journalistic articles by Joep Dohmen in the newspaper *NRC Handelsblad* covering the stories of male victims of predator priests and friars in Roman Catholic institutions goes back to as early as 2002. Some new articles by the same author that appeared early in 2010 in the same newspaper caused a media storm. The establishment of the Deetman Commission on 7 March 2010 was the Church's answer to the public indignation that was caused by this storm.

stimulating media interest.[17] All three were commissioned to reveal the truth about the abuse, but each commission did so in a different way.

The American John Jay research team of criminologists consisted of experts in social sciences such as forensic psychology. They used reports made to Church authorities by victims or their parents as starting point. Their first report (2004) focuses on the nature and extent of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic priests since the 1950s, the second (2011) on the causes and context of this abuse. The team committed itself to the positivistic empirical research tradition, aiming to explain the phenomenon by factors that were included in the design beforehand, which left little room for specific historical contextual conditions. They used surveys with standard questions that each diocese and religious institute was asked to fill in. The collected information could be standardized, including items such as the number of reported cases, the age and gender of victims and the career of an accused priest. The surveys consisted of three parts that corresponded with three measurable research objects: the organization as social context in which the abuse took place, individual perpetrators and individual incidents, all with a set of standardized qualities. In this way the team could establish causal relations, their most remarkable finding being that the abuse, that had peaked in the late 1970s and early 1980s, was causally related to "social and cultural changes" in previous years.[18] The motives of the perpetrators and subjective meanings of their behavior were irrelevant in this account. The abuse was conceived as the effect of organizational, situational and personality factors.

The Belgian Commission Adriaenssens, chaired by a professor of child psychiatry, used a completely different point of departure. Like a number of commissions in other countries,[19] they chose the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (1995–2002) as inspiring example. This model prioritizes the interests of the survivors. Exposing the truth and creating conditions in which the suffering of the victims can be acknowledged are more important than prosecuting the perpetrators. It is based on realism as to the impossibility of bringing all perpetrators to court and the expectation that most of them will be willing to admit their guilt and make an apology to their victims and resign from their positions. Only those who refuse to cooperate will be brought to court. Public recognition of

17 Adriaenssens, *Verslag*, 114–124.
18 Karen J. Terry, *The Causes and Context of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests in the United States*, 1950–2010 (New York: John Jay College of Criminal Justice, 2011), 2.
19 Most literally the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, that investigated the abuse in industrial schools: Johanna Sköld, "Apology Politics: Transnational Features," in *Apologies*, eds. Johanna Sköld and Shurlee Swain, 13–26.

the victim's suffering is crucial. That is why public hearings, next to "therapeutic" story-telling in closed sessions, are key elements in the process of truth-seeking for reconciliation.[20] The unfinished report published in 2010 by the Adriaenssens Commission reflects the victim-centered approach. Half of it consists of the literal texts of the 488 victim testimonies received in the wake of the memory boom caused by the public statement of Vangheluwe's nephew and his uncle's resign. Two thirds of the stories came from male victims, the sexual abuse peaked in the 1960s and 1970s, the age of onset was – as in the United States – usually between ten and thirteen, and the abuse impacted very seriously in later life, particularly by undermining feelings of basic security and safety. Recommendations pointed at a change of attitude of the Church, that was advised to create a "solidarity fund" for victims to compensate for therapy costs.[21]

The Dutch Deetman Commission, chaired by a protestant ex-politician and staffed by representatives of both the humanities and social sciences, conceived of truth-seeking yet in another way. In 2011, in a voluminous report of more than 1,250 pages, they established the extent of the sexual abuse by priests and friars, using a survey among a representative sample of the Dutch population (covering almost 35,000 people) over forty years of age, of whom 31 percent was raised as a Catholic and three percent in a Catholic institution. This survey was the basis of the estimation that between 10,000 and 20,000 Dutch men and women experienced as children sexual abuse by a servant of the Church. It also made clear that institutional sexual abuse was not an exclusively Roman Catholic affair. The nature of the abuse was established on the basis of victims' reports made either to the Church from 1995, when a council was established to provide help and justice (*Hulp en Recht*) to victims coming forward with stories of abuse, or directly to the Commission itself. Almost 1,200 of these cases concern sexual abuse in post-Second World War decades, e.g. the 1950s and 1960s, 774 of which were considered detailed enough for an analysis. A questionnaire among those who reported their stories to the Church shows that most victims were male (85 percent), experienced moderately severe abuse (repeated touching, 85 percent) from school-age (six to fourteen, 81 percent), which most often occurred in boarding or day-schools (67 percent). Institutionalized children were victimized twice as often as children who lived with their parents. Interviews were done with more than hundred victims, perpetrators, former Church authorities and experts. Their stories do, however, not figure in the final report.[22]

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20 Sköld, "Apology Politics."

21 Adriaenssens, *Verslag*, 114–153.

22 Wim Deetman, et al., *Seksueel misbruik van minderjarigen in de Rooms-Katholieke Kerk. Uitgebreide versie* (2 vols). *Deel 1: Het onderzoek* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2011), 52–79.

Apart from the quantitative part on the extent and nature of the sexual abuse, the Deetman Commission focused on archival research into the policies of the bishops and leaders of the religious congregations in charge of Catholic schools and institutions that blossomed between 1945 and the early 1970s, when the Church's staff and flock shrank rapidly and Catholic institutions either disappeared or transformed into non-religious ones. Surprisingly, the documents show that Church authorities had been more open as regard to unacceptable sexual behavior in the first post-war decade than afterwards. Only from the late 1950s a "culture of silence" developed, that was actively promoted by activism from Rome aiming to silence the voices who wanted to discuss these things openly or criticized celibacy. Up to that time psychiatric involvement with *aberrant* priests ("sexual psychopaths") was the standard, as was their hospitalization in a special department of a Roman Catholic psychiatric clinic, which in rare cases provided castration as cure for these priests' "difficulties".[23]

Traces of awareness of the danger of sexual abuse and attempts to prevent it by Catholic leaders abounded in documents that predate the suppression of this openness, the Deetman Commission reveals. Concrete cases of sexual abuse in the 1940s and 1950s, mostly in schools, caused priors to formulate new rules and standards of behavior for their congregations. These concerned primarily the admission of candidates, particularly requirements as to chastity, and punishments for sinners. The board of the Friars of Utrecht, who specialized in primary teaching of boys, discussed for example in 1954 the problems caused by "mentally weak members" of their congregation, meaning friars with a pedosexual orientation, and mentioned "homosexuality" explicitly as a counter-indication for entry. In 1949 the prior of the Salesian Congregation of Don Bosco, who taught mainly adolescent boys and later turned out to be responsible for one of the Dutch hotspots of sexual abuse, listed the punishments for members of his congregation who violated the rules of chastity *cum victim*a ('with a victim'). The sanction became more serious as the sinner ranked higher in the hierarchy: transferal to another convent for a novice, demotion to layman's status for a friar, and removal from the congregation for a priest.[24]

Though not motivated by the interests of the child but by their congregation's reputation, priors of the teaching orders not only attempted to prevent sexual abuse, but were also keen on recidivism and the need for punishment. The Directorate of the Brothers of Maastricht – who rank second on the black list of reports of sexual abuse to the Deetman Commission – ruled against any

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23 Deetman et al., *Seksueel misbruik*, 118–127.

24 Deetman et al., *Seksueel misbruik*, 106–107, 118–127.

one-to-one or physical contact with a boy. The many cases of sexual abuse of boys in which "weak" members of the congregation were involved, include three unconditional sentences to prison around 1960. These friars also lost their teaching license. The Friars of Tilburg, who figure on top of that list, were responsible for six out of 135 cases of withdrawal of a teaching license because of sexual abuse that occurred between 1947 and 1957. These cases were at the time studied by a criminologist on behalf of the Minister of Education. The psychiatric reports in the files shed light on the abuse, recidivism and measures taken by authorities. Soft sanctions prevailed. One friar was sentenced conditionally to one year in jail after having mutually masturbated with four 10–12 year-old boys. The order accommodated him with a job as editor of a youth journal, which did not prevent that he repeated the abuse in later years. The psychiatrist qualified him as a "manifest homosexual." A 27-year old friar was sentenced conditionally to half a year in prison for touching an eight-year-old boy's genitals. The prior advised him to leave the order, which the young friar refused. After five years in the convent's kitchen, he tried in vain to regain his teaching license, his application being blocked by the prior himself. Court documents reveal clearly that child sexual abuse was known and, if brought in the open, punished in postwar years.[25]

Comparing the present health condition of groups of (non-)victims of sexual abuse the Deetman Commission sees that victims of priests or friars who actively reported their experiences to the Church or the Commission suffer almost twice as often from mental health complaints than respondents reporting sexual abuse by a Catholic perpetrator in the survey and three times as often as respondents without these experiences. Survivors who actively reported their abuse also struggle harder with their memories and are more keen on redress and financial compensation. Their complaints include attempts at suicide. Of the complaints brought to the attention of the Catholic council for help and justice 42 percent of 286 cases was accepted and 49 percent was rejected, whereas only nine percent was deemed unsusceptible.[26] In subsequent years, 703 victims, including 146

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25 Deetman et al., *Seksueel misbruik*, 108–118, 395, 411, 426.

26 Deetman et al., *Seksueel misbruik*, 428–502. 49% rejections are a bad score, compared to 6.6% in Ireland, 9.7% in Australia, 22% in Norway and 23% in Canada, and positive only compared to Sweden's 58% rejections of applications for redress because of child abuse in residential settings: Sköld, Johanna, et al., "Historical Justice through Redress Schemes? The Practice of Interpreting the Law and Physical Child Abuse in Sweden," *Scandinavian Journal of History* 45 (2020): 178–201.

survivors of rape, received 21,3 million euros of financial compensation from the Dutch episcopate, the amount being related to the severity of the abuse.[27]

At the confidential hearing in 2011, where the voluminous Deetman report was presented to an audience of survivors, they expressed the will to learn more about girls as victims and about the physical and emotional abuse that had often accompanied the sexual abuse. That is why a second report was prepared and published in 2013. Female victims of abuse by servants of the Church were now specifically invited to come forward, which created a new database of about four hundred reports. Their personal stories about harsh and violent practices of nuns in boarding schools and children's homes do, however, not appear in this report either. Again, quantification of the victims' experiences and archival research make up the main body of the report. Compared to the men, women reported more often serious sexual abuse, such as rape, by adult male perpetrators, who often also threatened the girls. Half of the sexual abuse of girls went together with other kinds of abuse. Sisters could be violent and they often treated children in a loveless way, which was likewise noticed at the time and discussed by Church officials as the problem of "difficult sisters", archival documents show. Their mental condition was ascribed to personal mental health and sexual problems, as well as to convent life that was qualified in 1965 in an internal report as "of a neurotic structure".[28] As in the first Deetman report, victims' testimonies were not used to understand what it meant to be a defenseless child at the mercy of such "care" takers.

Sexual Abuse in Out-Of-Home Care

In 2010 press releases about sexual abuse in a Dutch Roman Catholic boys' home in the 1950s brought out-of-home care into the spotlight. Non-religious institutions for neglected and delinquent youth, next to foster care, were soon discovered as dangerous places as well. Reformatories for juvenile delinquents are run by the state, whereas state-sponsored private guardianship societies accommodate neglected or "difficult" children in homes and in foster care. Since

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27 These cases are published on the website of the *Stichting Beheer en Toezicht* that manages the financial compensations for the Roman Catholic Church. Another 342 victims chose for mediation. These cases remain undocumented, the victims are silenced, and the amounts of money paid remain unknown: Robert Chesal and Joep Dohmen, "Destijds moesten ze zwijgen, Nu weer," *NRC Handelsblad,* March 19/20, 2016.

28 Wim Deetman, *Seksueel misbruik van en geweld tegen meisjes in de Rooms-Katholieke Kerk* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2013), 71–81.

the 1970s these societies are secularized and have grown into large organizations that run smaller and cozier homes with coeducation and more democratic relationships between educators and children, where professionals no longer live on the spot.[29]

The investigation of sexual abuse in out-of-home children's care was commissioned by the Dutch government to a team of social scientists led by a former chief state prosecutor, Rieke Samson. Although the assignment of the Samson-Commission concerned a long period (1945–2010), their focus was pointed to the present. The published report (2012) is short, but much more accessible than the Deetman reports: a mere 160 pages summarize the research findings and give recommendations for the future. The research itself is relegated to appendices that cover more than 2,000 pages. Of these only a few chapters discuss historical sexual abuse, mostly in the last two decades.[30] The report's focus on the present is related to, first, a lack of surviving institutional archives – even the inspectorate at the Ministry of Justice kept few documents[31] – and reinforced by many institutional moves to new buildings from the 1970s, as well as by a lack of historical interest within the children's care sector. Second, it relates to a lack of traces of abuse in the surviving papers and a tendency to cover up unpleasant things for outsiders, a practice that has extended into recent times, when child abuse was already exposed as extremely harmful. Third and most importantly, the Commission chose to learn about the nature of sexual abuse by means of a survey among (former) children's care professionals concerning their knowledge and suspicions about sexual abuse at the workplace. Unsurprisingly, the inquiry produced only information about roughly the last two decades and no "hard facts" as to prevalence.[32]

Despite lip service paid to the interests of the child, the analysis of the cases that were actively reported by victims to the Commission is in the Samson report relegated to the appendices, as is the case with the very brief summary of no more than forty interviews with victims. It is emphasized that these were not

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29 Jeroen J.H. Dekker, *Jeugdzorg in Nederland. Resultaten van deelonderzoek 1 van de Commissie-Samson: Historische schets van de institutionele ontwikkeling van de jeugdsector vanuit het perspectief van het kind en de aan hem/haar verleende zorg* (Groningen: Rijksuniversiteit, 2012, 2 vols.). Vol. 1 *Tekstgedeelte* (Appendix 1 of Commissie-Samson).

30 Commissie-Samson, *Omringd door zorg, toch niet veilig. Seksueel misbruik van door de overheid uit huis geplaatste kinderen, 1945 tot heden* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2012). Historical data is presented in only four out of 21 appendices.

31 Jeroen J.H. Dekker, *Overheid en gedwongen jeugdzorg: een nader onderzoek naar toezicht en inspectie in de periode na de Tweede Wereldoorlog tot midden jaren tachtig* (Groningen: Rijksuniversiteit, 2012) (Appendix 13 of Commissie-Samson).

32 Commissie-Samson, *Omringd*, 46–58.

representative and, therefore, deemed unworthy of a more serious discussion or even a quote. Of the 741 victim reports, only 498 provided sufficient information for a quantitative analysis. These cases reveal that the sexual abuse occurred frequently (weekly or more often in 52 percent of the cases) and often continued for a long time (for one year or longer in 65 percent of the cases). The abuse started during the child's schooling age and it concerns very often serious abuse (genital penetration in 47 percent of the cases). Almost all perpetrators were adult males, both professionals and foster fathers, while the victims were almost equally divided between the two genders, with a majority of males before 1980, when most abuse occurred.[33] The report does not present any qualitative analysis of victims' testimonies or make an attempt to put their experiences in the spotlight.

As regard the parts of the Samson report that describe the historical institutional children's care culture on the basis of official documents and professional journals,[34] one is struck by an unnoticed discrepancy between the high number of male survivors in the early years and an emphasis in the sources on sexually problematic or defying behavior by girls as a "threat" to male professionals. Another aspect of this culture provides, however, an explanation for the increasing importance of male peers as perpetrators of girls: from about 1970 more liberal sexual standards and openness about sexuality correspond with the shift toward mixed-gender groups. Referring to the international literature, we can draw the conclusion that as far as a culture of silence existed in Dutch out-of-home children's care, this concerned primarily homosexual relations before the 1970s and that, in the next decades, coeducation and liberal sexual standards created a poisonous mixture for girls in a sector that could not stand up to too many changes at a time.

Abuse in Out-Of-Home Care

In Australia and England and Wales research into abuse in general preceded research into sexual abuse in out-of-home care, the latter being "the ultimate sin against innocence" according to Swain.[35] Nonetheless, in the Netherland we see the inversed order, not only with regard to the Roman Catholic Church

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33 *Statistische analyse meldpunt*, in Commissie-Samson, *Omringd* (Appendix 16), 2042–2048.

34 This concerns appendices 1 and 6: Dekker, *Jeugdzorg*; M.C. Timmerman et al., *Aard en omvang van seksueel misbruik in de residentiele jeugdzorg en reacties op signalen van dit misbruik (1945–2008)* (Groningen: Rijksuniversiteit, 2012) (Appendix 6 of Commissie-Samson).

35 Swain, "Why Sexual Abuse," 85; Bingham et al, "Historical child Sexual Abuse."

but also with regard to out-of-home children's care. The Samson report confirmed findings of Irish and Scandinavian researchers that sexual abuse went as a rule hand in hand with physical and emotional abuse, such as violence, bullying and threats.[36]

A victim-oriented approach to historical abuse ("violence") in state-sponsored out-of-home care with due attention to victims' testimonies, next to archival sources, was not chosen in the Netherlands until 2015, when the Commission De Winter was installed. It was, again, named after its chair, a professor of education, and staffed with experts of various backgrounds. The team was commissioned to investigate the history of abuse and neglect in all out-of-home care for children since 1945, including not only state-guided care for neglected and delinquent youth but also institutional care for children with disabilities or a mental illness. The total number of care-leavers who had spent time in one of these sectors was estimated to be around 200,000.[37] The government proceeded very carefully by commissioning at first only a preliminary inquiry into the possibilities to do research into this wide array of fields. Experts of all kinds wrote advice on the feasibility of research in each of these sectors and about possible archival sources for traces of abusive practices in those fields. Their preliminary reports were remarkably positive.[38] In their wake it was decided to continue the research into the extent and nature of the physical and emotional ("psychological") abuse and neglect of children in these institutions, the enabling conditions, the signs of abuse and neglect that reached the government and their responses, and the victims' experiences and long-term effects on their lives. Two years later a voluminous report was published in three parts (a summary, a series of sectorial and thematic studies and additional "source studies")[39] that received far less press coverage than the reports on sexual abuse had.

Despite warnings of international experts against estimations of the extent of historical abuse because they can never be exact,[40] like the Deetman Commission, De Winter and his team decided to use a large-scale survey among a sample of

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36 Sköld, "The truth".

37 Christiaan Ruppert et al., *Onvoldoende beschermd. Geweld in de Nederlandse jeugdzorg van 1945 tot heden* (Den Haag: Commissie Onderzoek naar Geweld in de Jeugdzorg, 2019), 19.

38 *Commissie Vooronderzoek naar Geweld in de Jeugdzorg, Bijlagen* (Den Haag: s.n., 2016).

39 Ruppert et al, *Onvoldoende beschermd*; Commissie Onderzoek naar Geweld in de Jeugdzorg, *Sector– en themastudies* (Den Haag: s.n., 2019). The additional source studies (*bronstudies*) are published on the commission's website.

40 One of the major problems concerns the huge differences between the outcomes of surveys among professionals and those among children. The first tend to produce lower rates (about two in every 100 children) than those reported by children and youths themselves (up to 29 victims in every 100 children): Jansen et al., "Onderzoek."

the Dutch population to establish the extent of the abuse and neglect. Only a little more than one percent spent time in out-of-home care. Of these care-leavers (763) almost a quarter had no experience with abuse, but as many as sixty percent experienced emotional abuse by a member of the peer-group, whereas physical abuse by a professional or foster parent was experienced by no more than one third of the care-leavers in this survey. Abuse by adults and peers often coincided. Boys were more often beaten up by adults than girls and respondents who had lived in a children's home or a reformatory experienced more violence than former foster children, whereas care-leavers who had been placed by a juvenile judge had significantly more experience with all kinds of abuse than those who had been placed voluntarily.[41]

Again, most of the abuse reported in the survey occurred in the 1960s and 1970s. Older respondents reported more often physical abuse by a professional or foster parent, younger ones – who had left care more recently – reported more often emotional maltreatment by a member of the peer-group, whereas physical violence by peers occurred during the whole period under study.[42] 414 victim reports to the Commission concerned experiences with abuse or neglect in one of the sectors under study. Though not representative, these stories confirm the results of the survey. Emotional abuse was reported most frequently, followed by physical abuse and emotional neglect, all of which occurred most often in residential institutions and between c. 1960 and 1980. Slightly more women (56 percent) reported abuse and most of the victims who came forward did so in order to help prevent this from happening in the future.[43]

The first volume of the report summarizes the research findings of the many sectorial and thematic studies that make up the second volume. Both volumes use extensive quotations from more than 130 interviews with victims. The survivor stories support both the qualitative parts on the abuse and neglect in particular sectors of care and the quantitative parts on the survey outcomes and the victim reports. These stories also provided material for the parts on the way the victims' experiences have impacted their lives. They are detailed, moving and convincing and fill the reader with disgust: children being beaten up

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41 Christiaan Ruppert et al., *Onvoldoende beschermd*, 49–52.

42 Christiaan Ruppert et al., *Onvoldoende beschermd*, 49–52; Joris Beijers and Janneke Wubs, "Analyses data bevolkingspanel Kantar Public," in *Sector- en themastudies*, ed. Commissie Onderzoek naar Geweld in de Jeugdzorg, 451–468.

43 Ilse Cijsouw, Joris Beijers and Janneke Wubs, "Analyse van meldingen bij het meldpunt van de Commissie Onderzoek naar Geweld in de Jeugdzorg," in *Sector- en themastudies*, ed. Commissie Onderzoek naar Geweld in de Jeugdzorg, 417–449.

with a belt regularly or humiliated before a group with their wet underpants or sheets over their heads.

In spite of few available and accessible[44] archival sources and despite the fact that abuse was as a rule not documented, at least not before the 1990s, the sectorial research teams managed to gather enough data of all kinds to tell the story of the abuse in their respective fields and the factors that had enabled it. They concern residential institutions, reformatories, foster care, psychiatric hospitals, and institutions for mentally disabled, blind, and deaf children and asylum-seeking youth.

During the first two decades after the war the educational climate in the institutions was usually very repressive. Disciplining wayward youth was the core aim of the educators. Maltreatment occurred frequently and some abusive practices were at the time conceived as normal. Although advised against by progressive spirits, punishing a child severely was often considered a useful part of the necessary "re-education" of children in reformatories and other residential institutions. Children-in-care mostly had a background in what was called "anti-social" families and had often experienced abuse at home before they were subjected to an institutional regime. The abuse was manifold and varied. Deaf children were beaten on their fingers for using forbidden sign language, bed-wetters were publicly showered with cold water or their heads were kept under water, food refusers were forced to eat their own vomit, psychiatric patients were isolated, delinquent and foster children were subjected to forced labor, and rape was reported to have occurred regularly in reformatories and homes for disabled, especially deaf, children.

From the mid-1960s both the language and institutional practices changed. "Re-education" of neglected or delinquent children became "help", professionals were more often trained for their jobs, psychologists and psychiatrists became involved and physical abuse by professionals in institutions decreased substantially as an effect of both professionalization and open discussion of its detrimental effects in professional journals, improvements for which foster and deaf children had to wait relatively long. However, with more freedom more violence between pupils also entered the institutions. At the same time, emotional abuse by professionals and peers was recognized easily, while institutions became even less safe places because of drug use and acts of violence by pupils. Looser morals and a new openness about sexuality made sexual relations on the one hand

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44 Some institutions did not want to cooperate, some archives were lost, personal files are as a rule destroyed after 15 years and the inspectorate did not give free access to their archives: Ruppert et al., *Onvoldoende beschermd*, 21.

more acceptable, but created on the other hand more room for rape and sexual assault, of which first of all girls became victims.

The mid-1980s brought a new matter-of-factness in children's care. Rules became stricter and pupils were called "clients". Complaints were officially registered, and violence had to be reported. Professional journals more often discussed aggression, maltreatment and sexual abuse. At the same time pupils exhibited more often serious behavioral and mental problems, as part of the pupils in residential settings seemed to belong rather in a psychiatric clinic or a home for mentally disabled children, which may explain the increasing physical violence between pupils and against educators. Next to isolation, psychiatric hospitals more often used forced medication, while sexual assault and intimidation were now reported in all settings.

After a series of fatal incidents in children's care in the early 2000s, public interest in child abuse and failures of helping professionals increased. This was answered by higher demands as to accountability. At the same time, the institutional climate became harder in response to more difficult and aggressive pupils and some institutions transformed from open into closed ones with fences and barbed wire, while physical disciplining was rehabilitated as part of a "method". Fixation and isolation had never disappeared from reformatories and psychiatric clinics, but forced registration of incidents and access to procedures for complaints provided some relief, as did the improved selection and tutoring of foster parents.[45]

A complex web of societal, sectorial and personal factors is mentioned by the Commission as cause of the institutional violence, in which – despite professionalization – a high work load, large groups, and low salaries of educators in youth care are a constant factor. Another one is the negative social attitude toward children's care clients. Improvements, such as protective laws and procedures for complaints, were unable to keep children safe at a time when their profile became even worse, professionals felt more powerless and threatened by aggressive clients, and a multitude of theories and methods failed to provide them with adequate tools to handle these problems. Control and inspection have, moreover, continued to fail to protect children in care. Internal control was, up to the late 1980s, hardly organized and, as far as it took place, too infrequent and too little independent from the guardianship societies themselves. As in other countries, children were not listened to. External control by the government was fragmented and focused on materialities such as buildings and hygiene. From the late 1980s

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45 Ruppert et al., *Onvoldoende beschermd*, 49–61; *Sector en themastudies*, ed. Commissie Onderzoek naar Geweld in de Jeugdzorg.

the national Inspectorate of Youth Care provided control "at a distance", leaving responsibilities with the care organizations. The Inspectorate of Health Care tended to overlook the whole sector of child psychiatry. What is more, unlike some guardianship societies, neither of the two inspectorates provided admission to their archives to the Commission.[46]

On the basis of the survey, the victim reports and the interviews the Commission draws the conclusion that at the time of the abuse almost all children kept silent because they were afraid of not being believed and of being instead beaten up. In adult life anxiety and low self-esteem have in many cases brought about physical and mental ill-health for the victims, such as posttraumatic stress, nightmares and burnouts. Many care-leavers struggle, moreover, with relationships and many suffer from feelings of inferiority and loneliness. The impact of the abuse is lifelong.[47]

After the publication of the Samson report in 2012 the national *Schadefonds Geweldsmisdrijven* ("Fund for Victims of Violence") was assigned the task of taking care of financial compensation of justice-seeking victims of sexual abuse in state-sponsored out-of-home care. However, the victims had to present documented evidence of their abuse, which is very hard if not impossible to get. Amounts had been established at between € 1,000 and € 35,000, dependent of the severity of the abuse. This procedure was immediately and severely criticized for producing too many dismissals for want of "valid" proof. Therefore, it was decided in 2020 by the responsible ministers to set up a single redress scheme with € 5,000 for all victims of abuse in state-sponsored out-of-home care as recognition. Another kind of recognition of the victims' suffering is perhaps even more important: upon the presentation of the De Winter report youth care and psychiatry and the responsible ministers of Justice and Health offered their excuses for the abuse, in the way the authorities of the Dutch Roman Catholic Church had done before. Victims' stories will be kept for future generations on an official website and plans are currently made to create a material monument for all victims of abuse in out-of-home children's care to support its prevention in the future.[48]

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46 Ruppert et al., *Onvoldoende beschermd*, 61–75; Jacques Dane et al, "Archiefstudie Sporen van geweld in de jeugdzorg na 1945," in *Sector en themastudies*, ed. Commissie Onderzoek naar Geweld in de Jeugdzorg, 315–380.

47 Ruppert et al., *Onvoldoende beschermd*, 76–81.

48 Hugo de Jonge and Sander Dekker, *Beleidsreactie Cie. de Winter – Februaribrief* d.d. 21–02–2020.

Conclusion

The testimonial driven and victim-centered model of inquiry into historical child abuse and neglect, as developed in Australia and copied in English-speaking and northern-European countries, was not chosen by the first Dutch inquiries that focused on sexual abuse in the Roman Catholic Church and in state-guided out-of-home children's care. They chose surveys and archival research rather than victims' stories as sources of information. However, these commissions produced extensive reports that present well-documented and valuable information about the way children's interests were ignored by Catholic teaching orders and children's care authorities, who were incapable of protecting vulnerable children in a rapidly changing sector. The De Winter Commission chose, finally, the best from both sides: on the one hand they put the victims' stories in the center and on the other hand they produced valuable data about the extent and nature of physical and emotional abuse in out-of-home care based on both a survey and a wide range of archival sources. In their report the victims' stories confirm other data, which make it even more convincing. By using this mixed approach, the inquiry has given care-leavers a voice and an opportunity to reconcile to their harmful memories, while at the same time presenting solid information about the scale and seriousness of the abuse and the conditions under which it could occur and continue. To prevent abuse of children in the future a society needs both kinds of knowledge. In this way historical research into child abuse in out-of-home care serves the goal of public history: documenting the past for the sake of the present and the future.

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Sjaak Braster

Exhibiting Teachers' Hands: Storytelling Based on a Private Collection of Engravings

Abstract: The starting point of this chapter is the observation that certain hand gestures, such as the raised index finger, appear to be typical among teachers as a professional group. Using a private collection of 379 educational engravings, we[1] have attempted to identify patterns in the gestures teachers make when interacting with students, using social science research methods and statistical techniques. In doing so, we ultimately tell a story about teachers whose image in the public sphere has changed from authoritarian to authoritative. We also pay special attention to the differences between male and female teachers, as well as the gender composition of classrooms. We do not find confirmation of the stereotypical image of dominant male and submissive female teachers.

Keywords: teachers, gestures, public history, engravings, visual turn

Introduction

Google the word "teacher", select images, and what do you see? People in front of white screens or black boards with raised hands and pointing fingers. The uniformity of the gestures of teachers is striking; it almost seems as if there were typical or universal gestures for the teaching profession. In any case, gestures are of great importance to the art of communication in general, and to teachers in their role as knowledge and value transmitters specifically. In fact, in the history of communication, the gesture came before the spoken word. Even today, gestures are still important for effective communication. There is empirical support establishing a positive relationship between the use of hand gestures by teachers and better comprehension of texts by students. In fact, within educational science there is a rich tradition of research

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1 I speak about "we" because this chapter is based on engravings collected by Maria del Mar del Pozo Andrés and myself over the past decades. This text, however, was written only by me.

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on this relationship.[2] The coordination of speech with gestures is even connected with changes in speakers' problem-solving behavior. Results from neurosciences, for instance, show that gesturing has a larger impact on problem-solving than action, even when action is accompanied by words.[3]

The study of gestures in general, not just among teachers as a professional group, is a topic that has been on the scientific agenda for centuries. In the words of Thomas Keith, there is nothing new about the study of gesture.[4] From the time of the Renaissance, Giovanni Battista Della Porta (1535–1615), Charles le Brun (1619–1690), and Johann Caspar Lavater (1741–1801) codified facial expressions of emotions and character. The English philosopher Francis Bacon (1561–1626) wrote in 1605 that gestures "are as transitory hieroglyphics, and are to hieroglyphics as words spoken are to words written, in that they abide not; but they have evermore, as well as the other, an affinity with the things signified".[5] Gestures were also central to the work of the Italian lawyer Giovanni Bonifacio (1547–1645) and the English physician John Bulwer (1606–1656).[6] Both men started from the assumption that there was a universal, natural language of gesture that was comparable in different countries, and could serve as a language of communication for international trade.[7] In the 19th century, Charles Darwin (1809–1882) made his contribution to the field by supporting the view that

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2 Susan Goldin-Meadow, and Martha W. Alibali, "Gesture's Role in Speaking, Learning, and Creating Language," *Annual Review of Psychology* 64 (2013): 257–283; Mitchell J. Nathan, Martha W. Alibali, and R. Breckinridge Church, "Making and Breaking Common Ground: How Teachers Use Gesture to Foster Learning in the Classroom," in *Why Gesture? How the Hands Function in Speaking, Thinking and Communicating*, eds. R. Breckinridge Church, Martha W. Alibali, and Spencer D. Kelly (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2017), 285–316. In history of education journals "hands" are not a topic of interest. An exception, although not related with teachers or gestures, however, is: Christian Roith, "Representations of Hands in the Florentine Codex by Bernardino de Sahagún (ca 1499–1590)," *Paedagogica Historica*, 54, no. 1–2 (2018): 114–133.
3 Caroline Trofatter, Carly Kontra, Sian Beilock, Susan Goldin-Meadow, "Gesturing has a Larger Impact on Problem-Solving Than Action, Even When Action is Accompanied by Words," *Language, Cognition and Neuroscience* 30, no. 3 (2015): 251–260.
4 Keith Thomas, "Introduction," in *A Cultural History of Gesture. From Antiquity to the Present Day*, ed. Jan Bremmer and Herman Roodenburg (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 2–3.
5 Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning* (London, Paris & Melbourne: Cassell & Company, Limited, 1893) [1605], https://www.gutenberg.org/files/5500/5500-h/5500-h.htm.
6 James R. Knowlson, "The idea of Gesture as a Universal Language in the XVIIth and XVIIIth Century," *Journal of The History of Ideas* 26, no. 4 (October-December 1965): 495–508.
7 Thomas, "Introduction", 2.

physical expressions might be biologically inherited.[8] His work would inspire ethologists who stressed the similarities between humans and animals with respect to bodily movement and facial expressions of emotion. One of the popular authors in this field, the English socio-biologist Desmond Morris, famous for his book *The Naked Ape: A Zoologist Study of the Human Animal*, published in 1967, took up the challenge in his writings about human gestures and body language.[9] These topics have gotten the renewed attention of international audiences thanks to the work of Allan Pease.[10] To mention just one example, his talk *Body language, the power is in the palm of your hands* was viewed more than six million times on the Internet.[11] Desmond Morris has recently moved the study of gestures and body language into the world of art, while museums are also paying attention to body language in special exhibitions.[12]

In the historical attention paid to gestures and body language, and to the possibly universal nature of gestures, teachers have remained invisible. However, our observations of the possible existence of gestures typical of the profession lead us to broach the issue of whether teachers' gestures have been subject to change over the centuries, or if these gestures are just visualizations of stereotypes with historical roots taking us back to times of discipline and order in the schoolroom and part of a grammar of schooling that has remained unchanged over the years.[13] In this chapter, we will go back in time and explore the ways in which teachers used their hands when teaching their students. We will specifically look

8 Charles Darwin, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (London: John Murray, 1872). http://darwin-online.org.uk/content/frameset?itemID=F1142&viewtype=text&pageseq=1.
9 Desmond Morris, *Manwatching: A Field Guide to Human Behaviour* (London: Jonathan Caps; New York: Harry Abrams, 1977); Desmond Morris, Peter Collett, Peter Marsh, and Marie O'Shaughnessy, *Gestures: Their Origins and Distribution* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1979); Desmond Morris, *People Watching* (London: Vintage, 2002).
10 Allan Pease, *Body Language. How to Read Others' Thoughts by their Gestures* (London: Sheldon Press, 1981); Allan Pease and Barbara Pease, *The Definitive Book of Body Language. How to Read Others' Thoughts by their Gestures* (Buderim, Australia: Pease International, 2004).
11 Allan Pease, "Body Language, the Power is in the Palm of your Hands," TEDx Talks, November 17, 2013, Accessed July 22, 2022. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZZ7k8cMA-4.
12 Desmond Morris, *Postures: Body Language in Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2019); Wendelien van Welie-Vink, *Body Language: The Body in Medieval Art* (Utrecht: Museum Catharijne-convent, 2020).
13 David Tyack and Larry Cuban, *Tinkering toward Utopia. A Century of PublicSchool Reform* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).

for the typical, and perhaps even universal, gestures of teachers that have stayed the same over the centuries.

We will use engravings and prints that circulated among several audiences during the 17th to 20th centuries. We are referring here to educational engravings, a source that, while constituting a blind spot in educational historiography,[14] can be quite useful for the reconstruction of the public images of teachers in the past.[15] These engravings, which are part of a private collection of 379 items (counted in 2021), show both male and female teachers interacting with boys, girls, and mixed groups. There are prints from different language areas and from different centuries. To investigate the existence of typical teachers' gestures prints have been coded in line with the Grounded Theory Method, an inductive approach well known in social science research.[16] Induction means that we take data as the starting point and via empirical generalizations we try to arrive at theoretical statements about, in our case, hands in education. So, we will focus on describing the empirical patterns that emerge from the analysis of several hundred engravings from the 17th to the 20th century depicting teachers interacting with students. But as mentioned previously and based on our own observations and conversations with other scholars, there are certain expectations about what we are going to see when it comes to teachers' hand gestures through the ages. More specifically, our theoretical inspiration comes from two typical cases that we have come across.

The first case is the image of a teacher made in 1781 by Johann Caspar Lavater. Lavater worked within the tradition of physiognomy, a pseudo-scientific but popular field that from the 17th century onward tried to map the character traits of people by means of facial expressions. The most famous example of this approach is probably the work of Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909), who linked specific facial features to certain types of crime. Physiognomy was popular because, like the science of psychology developed in later years, it gave its practitioners the idea that human behavior could be predicted just by looking at somebody's face. A sense of recognition may also have been evoked with Lavater's image of the

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14 Maria del Mar del Pozo and Sjaak Braster, "Exploring New Ways of Studying School Memories: The Engraving as a Blind Spot of the History of Education," in *School Memories: New Trends in the History of Education,* eds. Cristina Yanes-Cabrera, Juri Meda, and Antonio Viñao (Cham: Springer, 2017), 11–27.

15 Antonio Nóvoa, "Ways of Saying, Ways of Seeing. Public Images of Teachers (19th–20th Centuries)," *Paedagogica Historica* 36, no. 1 (February 2000): 21–52.

16 Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory. Fourth Edition* (Newbury Park: Sage, 2014).

teacher (Figure 1). We will use this image as a reference point for our analysis of the other images of teachers from Lavater's time and subsequent periods.

Figure 1: Lavater, 1781 (Private Collection Del Pozo/Braster).

The most striking feature of Lavater's teacher is the raised right hand with the finger pointing upwards, a gesture that could also already be found in a book by Bulwer published in 1644.[17]

This gesture was named *Attentionem poscit,* (demand for attention) and it was shown together with several other pointing gestures (Figure 2). Lavater's physiognomy was not only about faces; some images, like the one of the teacher and his pupils, were also about gestures. In this sense the work of Bulwer and Lavater were coming together.

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17 John Bulwer, *Chirologia: or the Naturall Language of the Hand. Composed of the Speaking Motions, and Discoursing Gestures thereof. Whereunto is added Chironomia: or the Art of Manuall Rhetoricke etc.* (London: J. B. Gent Philochirosophus, 1644).

Figure 2: Bulwer, 1644, p. 95.

Another striking feature of the image of Lavater's teacher is the left hand pointing downwards, holding a stick. If we look at them both, the right hand tells us to pay attention, while the left hand is telling us that we could be punished if we don't. The central message of the image is also mentioned in one word in the accompanying text: teaching is about keeping "order". In summary, the raised hand with the teacher's index finger pointing upwards represents a demand for attention, the stick represents discipline and punishment, the holistic view of the image being about authority.

The second case we want to present as a reference is a colored picture from the beginning of the 20th century showing two teachers (Figure 3). This image was part of a richly illustrated children's book, published in 1901, that portrayed the world of the past (1801) and the world of the present (1901).[18] On one page of the book the old and the new classroom were presented. The teacher from the past shows clear similarities to Lavater's teacher from the 18th century. Discipline is the motto. But the modern teacher from the early 20th century communicates with his pupils in a different way. The arms are down, and the open palms point upwards. It is this difference in particular, the contrast between the closed hand pointing upwards and the open palm facing upwards, that the artist of the illustration seems to have focused on in order to emphasize the difference between "old" and "new" education. In fact, in Allan Pease's work in the field of body language there are three possible positions of the palm: (1) the submissive palm position with the palm facing upwards; (2) the dominant palm position when the palm is turned to face downwards, and (3) the aggressive palm position where "the palm is closed into a fist and the pointed finger becomes a symbolic club with which the speaker figuratively beats the listener into submission".[19]

The submissive palm position is a non-threatening gesture; you are showing others that there are no concealed weapons in your hand. In an educational context the palm-up position can have different meanings. In general, it means openness and trust. More specifically the open hand can be about asking, as in a beggar's opening his hand as the universal symbol of pleading for a coin. In an educational context, however, it can also be about offering, explaining, and showing. Important to note is that not one of these meanings has an authoritarian connotation.

This is quite the opposite of the palm-down position, which expresses immediate authority. A hand with the palm–down can grab anything it wants. It

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18 Fredericus Hendrikus van Leent, *Toen en nu: Van 1801 tot 1901* (Amsterdam: Gebrs. Koster, 1901).

19 Pease, *Body Language*, 31.

De meester was in vroeger tijd
de schrik van stoute snaken,
Want wie toen ongehoorzaam was
kon met "de plak", gevoelig kennis maken.

't Is of ze van geen jonger ondeugd weten,
Zoo stil zijn hier de knapen neergezeten.

Figure 3: Then and Now: From 1801 to 1901 (Private Collection Del Pozo/Braster).

can cover and hide objects. In education this hand position can also have a negative meaning when the hand is placed on top of an object, expressing ownership or domination. Hands with palms facing down can also be used to direct a group of pupils, much like a conductor conducting an orchestra or directing a choir. In general, the gesture with the palm down is more about control than the palm-up position, but clearly less than the palm-closed-finger-pointed position. Like we said earlier, the pointed finger is like the stick used for beating.

The theoretical exploration of the two cases presented raises several questions. The first question is: What hand gestures do teachers use when interacting with their students in past centuries, and what do those gestures mean? The second question is: To what extent do differences exist between the gestures used in different centuries, and to what extent do these differences reflect changes in pedagogical views? What we do not see in Figures 1 and 3 leads us to a third question. These two images show only male teachers in classes with boys. Females and girls are not displayed. The third question therefore is: To what extent do the hand gestures of male and female teachers differ, and what relationship does the gender composition of the class play in this? In line with the biological evolutionary perspective already mentioned, one could possibly expect a less dominant role for (or a more subtle/body-controlled approach of) female teachers than for male teachers. But in previous centuries, when physical punishment was the rule rather than the exception, women – for their survival, so to speak – may have played as dominant a role in education as men. While the presence of women in the teaching profession or of girls in higher forms of education may have been less pronounced than that of male teachers or boys in earlier centuries, they were certainly not absent. Thus, in addition to trying to find a typology of gestures of the teaching profession, we will look at not only whether there have been changes over time in terms of those gestures, but also whether there are differences between men and women in classes with boys and/or girls. But before we take on this task, let's tell the story of the collection we will analyze for this purpose.

The History of a Collection

Old prints are abundant and affordable in the antiquarian market, but exceptional engravings are very rare and valuable. The characteristic of the good print collector is the clear and precise definition of his/her topic and the accuracy with

which he/she sticks to it.[20] The collector must balance two criteria: the quality and excellent condition of the specimen that can be found in the market, and the power of this specimen for visualizing or illustrating a pre-defined concept.

When we started our collection in July 1992, we did not have such a clear intention in mind, we only wished to gather educational prints from the past for two purposes: an aesthetical aim, to decorate the walls of our study rooms; and a didactical objective, to use them in our lectures for making education in the past more understandable. From the very start we collected prints from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries, with a clearly defined topic: the inside of primary school classrooms. We noticed from the first moment that this was quite a rare topic in educational iconography, so therefore we broadened our search, including themes closely connected with the classroom. We were never interested in the most popular educational subjects of prints, i.e., school or college buildings, but we cannot say that the collection does not include some of these. In recent years we have also opened the collection to include some school material, mainly rare wall charts. We gradually noticed that most of the engravings could be classified in several "genre pictures". The approximately 400 original prints that are now in our collection can be grouped into several categories that correspond to turns and disciplinary (sub)fields in history:

- Inside the classroom, pupils and/or teachers in several educational activities (practice turn; cultural turn).
- Going in and out of the school.
- Teachers punishing or rewarding pupils (disciplinary regimes).
- The school in an uproar, in the absence of the schoolteacher.
- Educational methods, i.e., individual systems, the monitorial system, simultaneous teaching, Froebel, Pestalozzi, object lessons, classroom organization, etc. (curriculum history).
- The teaching of specific subjects.
- Children in the courtyard, or children doing physical exercise (health regime).
- Male and female teachers (gender history).
- School design and school materials (material and spatial turn).

Another characteristic of the collection is its global nature. The prints come from several countries (Australia, United States, Great Britain, Austria, Hungary, Germany, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Poland, Italy, Spain, and Japan), but

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20 Vicenç Furió, *La imagen del artista. Grabados antiguos sobre el mundo del arte* (Barcelona: Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona, 2016), 9.

there are many more nations and cultures represented in the collection. The topics are also rather transnational and allow us to see the cultural transfer of pedagogical ideas and practices. But some images are of a specific nature – i.e. a particular or model school – which allows us to perform national studies or to make comparisons between countries. We gave much consideration to the criteria of quality in our first years of collecting the prints, buying only those engravings that we believed to be "original", with explicit references to the artist, painter and/or engraver and a caption explaining and defining the gravure. If we already had a specific image, we never bought the same one again. At the time we knew nothing about the history and techniques of printmaking, but upon reading some of the key works in the field we were completely shocked. We learned of the difficulties that exist for guaranteeing "that the print is an «original» created by that artist" and how complicated it has become to define an "original" print from the moment in which printmaking became a process of photomechanical reproduction.[21] We also learned about the pirated copies of popular works that ignored the original authorship, made possible by the lack – even in the middle of the 19th century – of a legal framework regarding intellectual property rights and copyright.[22] Our delving into this fascinating world has allowed us to view the print from a different perspective, not only as an art object, but also as a historical object that has played an important role in the life of ordinary people. The print "crosses language barriers and political borders, can influence public opinion for better or for worse, and on a fragile piece of paper may carry messages of far-reaching importance and cultural impact. [. . .] It enters the homes of the poor and the rich, the ruler and the ruled".[23] We also realized that Walter Benjamin's observation linking the invention of photography with "the age of mechanical reproduction", in which the original and authentic works of art have lost their "aura" because of the fact that they can be reproduced in great quantities, can also be applied to the expansion of the print.[24] We see then that long before the invention of photography, as early as the end of the eighteenth century, mechanical reproduction existed in the form of the mass production of prints.

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21 Anthony Griffiths, *Prints and Printmaking: An Introduction to the History and Techniques* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1962), 12.

22 Hilary Guise, *Great Victorian Engravings: A Collector's Guide* (London: Astragal Books, 1980), 11–15.

23 Fritz Eichenberg, *The Art of the Print: Masterpieces, History, Techniques* (New York: Harry N. Abrahams, Inc., Publishers, 1976), 4.

24 Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations,* ed. Hanna Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1935), 1–26.

This awareness prompted us to change the original concept of the collection, introducing cheap copies and, especially, prints published in illustrated newspapers from all over the world. Around the year 2000 we started to buy all the existing versions of several prints already present in the collection, i.e. the ones that appeared to have a kind of global popularity. And we began to gather educational images included in illustrated magazines, mainly those of primary school classrooms, that we had discarded previously. These journals became popular among the bourgeois social class around 1842–1855, the period in which Herbert Ingram and Mark Lemon started *The Illustrated London News* in England (1842), Jean-Baptiste-Alexandre Pauline and Édouard Charton created the French *L'Illustration. Journal Universel* (1843), inspired in the previous one,[25] and Frank Leslie founded the *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* (1855), "America's first weekly illustrated news magazine".[26] At this point we had started to sense the possibilities that the gravures could offer to the historians of education, conceptualizing our collection as a research source.[27] Our identity as collectors was thus fused for the first time with our identity as researchers, a fact that has changed the nature of the collection.

The Analysis of a Collection

The first articles we wrote based on our collection were studies of single cases: "Jobs as a school teacher"[28] and "The school in an uproar".[29] In the latter case, we had a multitude of versions of the original English print which was the focus of a chapter in a book about new methodologies for telling school stories.

25 Jean-Noël Marchandiau, *L'Illustration (1843–1944): Vie et mort d'un journal* (Toulouse: Privat, 1987).
26 Andrea G. Pearson, "Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper and Harper's Weekly: Innovation and Imitation in Nineteenth-Century American Pictorial Reporting," *The Journal of Popular Culture* 23, no. 4 (1990): 81.
27 María del Mar del Pozo Andrés and Sjaak Braster, *Understanding Images of Secondary Education (Spain, Second Half of the 19th century).* Paper Presented in the 24th Session of the International Standing Conference for the History of Education, ISCHE XXIV, Paris, 10–13 July, 2002.
28 Sjaak Braster, "The People, The Poor and the Oppressed: The Concept of Popular Education through Time," *Paedagogica Historica* 47, no. 1–2 (2011), 1–14.
29 Pozo and Braster, "Exploring New Ways of Studying School Memories," 2017; María del Mar del Pozo, "The Undisciplined Child: The Image of the Rebellious Childhood in an Age of Educational Disciplining (1809–1840)," *History of Education & Children's Literature* 13, no. 1 (2018): 71–97.

In another book contribution, the French-language version of "The school in an uproar" received particular attention.[30] These articles were all characterized by a qualitative research approach and insights from social semiotics were used in the visual analysis. For this new chapter we will perform a quantitative analysis preceded by an open coding of the 352 prints collected until 2021; of the original 379 we have eliminated the 27 engravings that were copies. Of these remaining 352, 246 portrayed interactions between teachers and pupils. The remaining prints depicted only teachers (11), only pupils (51), or only material educational objects or buildings (44). In answering the research questions, we will only use the 246 images that show interactions between teachers and pupils.

After an initial exploration of the selected images we decided to construct two variables related to the position of the teacher's hand in the images. The first variable was the type of gesture. We do this for both the left and right hand. We include a second variable that indicates whether the teacher is holding an object, and if so, what object. We do this for the right as well as the left hand. This exploration results in four so-called dependent variables (Table 1). They are related to four independent variables consisting of descriptions of the context of the images that are analyzed. These independent variables are:

(1) Gender composition, i.e., the gender of the pupils pictured in the image, with the categories: only boy(s), only girls, and a mixed group.

(2) Teacher gender, i.e., the gender of the main teacher in the image, with the categories: man, and woman.

(3) Century, i.e., the century in which the image was produced. We should note that this did not necessarily coincide with the period portrayed in the image. For instance, engravings of 17th century paintings were reproduced in later centuries as well. Unfortunately, the year that a particular engraving was printed could only be determined for a limited number of the prints. However, it was possible to come up with a rough idea of the period in which an engraving was produced. We eventually kept to two periods: 16th–18th century, and 19th–20th centuries. It must be noted that in the 20th century, engravings are available only in the first decade.

(4) Language, i.e., the language used in the caption of the engravings, with eight categories for single languages and one category for engravings with multiple languages. This last category illustrates the fact that one specific print could be distributed in several countries at the same time. It was also

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30 María del Mar del Pozo and Sjaak Braster, "An Image Travelling Across Europe: The Transformation of 'The School in an Uproar' into 'Le Désordre dans L'école' (1809–1850)," in *Images of Education: Cultuuroverdracht in Historisch Perspectief*, eds. Hilda Amsing, Nelleke Bakker, Mineke van Essen, and Sanne Parlevliet (Groningen: Uitgeverij Passage, 2018), 84–97.

not uncommon for some engravings to be printed with captions in different languages. Both observations illustrate the universal character of engravings and their international distribution. For our analysis we recoded the language variable into four language categories corresponding to four different geographic regions: American English, British English, West-Germanic (German, Dutch), and Romance (French, Spanish, Italian).

Table 1: Variables constructed to describe the patterns of gestures used by teachers in engravings, 17th-20th century.

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables
Gender composition	Type of gesture right hand/ left hand
Teacher gender	Object in right hand/ left hand
Century	
Language	

In addition to the two variables relating to hand gestures and the four context variables, further teacher and pupil characteristics can be distinguished, relating, for instance, the emotions of teachers and pupils. In this chapter, however, we limit ourselves to the two sets of variables mentioned. We will connect them by presenting the relationships between categories in cross-tabulations, and by subsequently reporting the independent variable categories whose column proportions differ statistically from each other to a significant degree.

Of the 246 engravings analyzed, in 59.2 percent only boys can be seen, in 18.3 percent only girls, and in the remaining cases both boys and girls are present. When only boys are present, a male teacher is seen in 90.8 percent of the cases. When there are only girls, a female teacher is present in 75.0 percent of the cases. Men are slightly more likely to be involved in mixed classes than female teachers (63 versus 37 percent, respectively). The engravings generally show more male than female teachers (72.6 versus 27.4 percent, respectively), a finding consistent with the actual dominance of men in this profession in the 16th through 19th centuries. In our collection, the distribution between male and female teachers in the 16th–18th centuries is almost the same as that in the 19th–20th centuries. It is important to note that 75.4 percent of the engravings can be dated to the 19th century and 17.5 percent to the 18th century. The share of engravings from the 20th century is small (4.1 percent) and that of the 16th–17th century even smaller (2.9 percent). We should therefore bear in mind that if we make a distinction in time, we are making a comparison between the 18th and 19th centuries. As for the origin of the engravings, we have more variation: the proportion of French engravings is the highest, at 30.2 percent, followed

by British engravings at 22.7 percent, German at 12.8 percent, American at 11.6 percent, Dutch at 10.7 percent, Spanish at 4.1 percent, and Italian at 1.2 percent.

An Empirical Typology of Teachers' Hands Gestures

In Table 2 we have presented the results of distribution of the first dependent variable. We should remark on a factor that has consequences for the interpretation of the results: when we see a right hand in an engraving, it is not necessarily the right hand of the person portrayed. It so happens that when engravings are drawn as representations of reality, the printed version of those pictures are displayed in mirror image. We often see this happen, for example, when engravings are made using paintings (or other engravings) as models.

Table 2: Typology of gestures, right and left hand of teachers.

Right Hand	Left Hand
Aggressive palm position Palm-closed-finger-pointed: 11.6%	**Aggressive palm position** Palm-closed-finger-pointed: 6.3%
Dominant palm position Palm down: 14.9%	**Dominant palm position** Palm down: 17.9%
Submissive palm position Palm up: 5.4%	**Submissive palm position** Palm up: 4.6%
Other positions (from dominant to submissive) Fist 3.3% Hand holding object: 41.9% Palm-open-finger-pointed: 7.9% Holding hands with another person 2.1% Hand touching another person 1.7% Not visible 11.2%	**Other positions (from dominant to submissive)** Fist 8.3% Hand holding object: 34.6% Palm-open-finger-pointed: 5.4% Holding hands with another person 1.3% Hand touching another person 5.0% Not visible 16.7%
Total 100% (N=241)	Total 100% (N=240)

We took an open, inductive approach to coding the teachers' hand gestures, but there were at least three types of gestures that were the result of deductive reasoning. Indeed, we find those types in the analyzed collection. The aggressive and dominant positions are more common than the submissive position, which occurs only in 5 percent of the cases. It was obvious that when education was depicted in engravings produced in previous centuries, a friendly student-centered approach was unlikely to be found. Schooling in the distant past was about order and discipline, and not about having fun. The aggressive palm position, however, is not seen as often as was expected: 11.6 percent for the right and 6.3 percent for the left hand. The same is true for the dominant palm position: 14.9 percent for the right and 17.9 percent for the left hand. This general picture, however, changes if we also take into account the other hand positions that can be distinguished next to the three that were the result of closed, deductive coding.

There were five that we have ranked from dominant to submissive: (1) Fists, or closed hands not holding any object. They are less common: 3.3 percent for the right and 8.3 percent for the left hand. (2) The closed hand holding an object. It is by far the most common category of all gestures: 41.9 percent for the right and 34.6 percent for the left hand. (3) The open palm with pointing finger: 7.9 percent for the right hand and 5.4 percent for the left hand. Furthermore, there are two gestures in which teachers use their hands for touching. (4) The hand touching the body of another person. (5) The hand holding another hand.

What do these hand gestures signify? The meaning of the first gesture, the hand holding an object, depends of course on the type of object that is held, which takes us to our second dependent variable. Empirically there were five options listed in Table 3. There are some differences in the percentages found for the right and left hand. For example, the most popular object is the book, but it can be found more often in the left than in the right hand: 39.0 versus 23.0 percent, respectively.

Table 3: Gestures of teachers, holding objects with right and left hand.

Object Right Hand	Object Left Hand
Stick or rod 24.0%	Stick or rod 18.3%
Pointer 18.0%	Pointer 11.0%
Pen 10.0%	Pen 11.0%
Book 23.0%	Book 39.0%
Teaching object 3.0%	Teaching object 3.7%
Another object 22.0%	Another object 17.1%
Total 100% (N=100)	Total 100% (N=82)

Teachers have pointers, but also sticks or rods in their hands which, in principle, can be used to point something out, but which can also serve to strike a pupil. The pointer, stick or rod can be found in 42.0 percent of the cases in the right hand and in 29.3 percent of the cases in the left hand. In about 10 percent of the cases, teachers handle a writing implement. Other teaching objects are used sporadically. So, in general, we see a distinction between sticks, rods, and pointers on one hand, and books on the other; a dichotomy that broadly corresponds to a closed/directive or an open/communicative pedagogical style. Both styles occur at similar rates, but contextually there are some relevant differences which we will discuss later.

The hand holding a pointer, stick or rod, including the hand clenched like a fist, can be considered dominant or more authoritarian types of gestures. The open-palm-finger-pointed is a gesture that, in terms of meaning, is literally in the middle between the aggressive and the dominant hand palm position.

Pointing with the index finger of the right hand (with open and closed palm) is done by teachers in 19.5 percent of the cases, and in 11.7 percent with the left hand. The question that arises then is, what are they pointing to? To begin with, teachers point to education-related objects (n=30), the textbook (n=10) and the blackboard (n=8) being the most popular ones. Sequentially, teachers may also point to individuals (n=11), with students being the obvious favorite (n=9). Finally, teachers do not necessarily have to point to a specific object or to a person (n=32), and if this situation occurs, relatively often their hands point upwards (n=17). Two examples of female teachers with their fingers pointed can be found

Figure 4: Female teachers with closed-palms-fingers-pointed (Private Collection Del Pozo/Braster).

in Figure 4. They are contrasting images: in the 18th century engraving the woman is pointing her right index finger upward (towards God?) while holding a rod with her left hand; in the 19th century engraving the women is pointing her right index finger toward her listeners, while holding a book with her left hand. The older engraving shows a clear resemblance to Lavater's physiognomic representation of a typical teacher, calling attention with the right hand and threatening punishment, if necessary, with the left hand. In the newer image, the teacher addresses the students directly with her right hand, armed with her source of knowledge – a book without religious symbols – in her left hand. The differences are subtle but may indicate changing pedagogical practices over time. We look at this in more detail in the next section.

Most of the hand gestures mentioned so far indicate considerable authority on the part of the teacher. Their hands are used to hold things, to point things out, and to call for attention and silence. The submissive palm-up position, or any other signs indicating openness, are largely absent. Touching students is also rare: for the right hand we record 1.7 percent, and for the left 5.0 percent. In the present era this may be called self-evident, but in the centuries preceding the 21st there was not much physical contact between teachers and pupils either. A more specific form of "touching," or holding each other's hands, is also rare in the old engravings; for the right hand it is 2.1 percent and for the left, 1.3 percent. Holding children's hands seems to be reserved for progressive educators like the Swiss pedagogue Pestalozzi, who in every picture where he is depicted is surrounded by children, but also ordinary teachers could be touched by pupils (Figure 5). Touching and holding hands seems in general to be an act of friendliness. Touch can be a gesture of empathy and connectedness, or carry religious symbolism related with healing. However, there are negative examples too; teachers may grab children by their ears as punishment, while in the case of male teachers gently touching girls with their finger to their face there may be sexual overtones. A systematic study of the teachers' hands positions may therefore subtly reveal examples of potential sexual harassment in the classroom.

Contextual Differences between Gestures

Following the above description of the most common teacher gestures, we are going to focus on the differences by context: period, language, gender composition of classes or schools, and the gender of teachers (Table 4). We have found ten statistically significant contextual differences. This is a relatively low number as there are potentially 72 possible relations, or: 9 categories x 2 dependent

Figure 5: Pestalozzi in Switzerland and an unknown teacher in Vienna, Austria (Private Collection Del Pozo/Braster).

Table 4: Typology of gestures, right and left hand of teachers, by context characteristics: categories whose column proportions differ significantly from each other (z-test; p<.05; Bonferroni corrected).

Right Hand	Left Hand
Gender composition Palm-closed-finger-pointed: 25.0% girls' school vs 7.7% boys' school	**Gender composition** Fist: 12.8% boys' school vs 0.0% girls' school
Teacher gender Palm-closed-finger-pointed: 19.7% female teacher vs 8.6% male teacher Hand holding object: 46.9% male teacher vs 28.8% female teacher	**Teacher gender** Fist: 11.4% male teacher vs 0.0% female teacher
Century Palm-closed-finger-pointed: 20.4% 16th–18th vs 9.5% 19th–20th	**Century** Not visible: 19.6% 19th–20th vs 6.1% 16th–18th
Language Palm down: 32.1% USA vs 7.1% German/Dutch Palm up: 12.5% German/Dutch vs 0.0% UK	**Language** Palm down: 37% USA & 21.2% France/Spain/Italy vs 3.6% German/Dutch

variables x 4 context variables. However, we should keep in mind that not finding differences can also be a relevant result. For instance, the submissive palm up position is not seen more often in the more recent engravings from the 19th and the first decennium of the 20th century. It also applies to the usually friendly gestures where there is physical contact between student and teacher. In sum, a child-centered approach does not appear yet if we use a collection of engravings mainly produced in the 18th and 19th centuries together.

There are differences, however, with respect to the aggressive palm position, or the palm-closed-finger-pointed, which appears twice as often in the engravings of the 16th–18th century (20.4 percent) as in the engravings of the 19th–20th century (9.5 percent). This specific position also occurs no less than three times more often in educational situations involving girls (25.0 percent) than with boys (7.7 percent). It also appears that female teachers are using this more directive hand gesture about twice as often (19.7 percent) as male teachers (8.6 percent). The connection between these last two findings is understandable because it is primarily women who stand in front of groups with girls. However, the fact that women are more likely to use the more aggressive palm position does not mean that they play a more authoritarian role in education than men. In this respect it is important to mention that male teachers and teachers in boys' schools clenched their hands into fists more often than female teachers and teachers in girls' schools. These generalizations do not contribute to a picture in which women have a more authoritarian position than men in education. Men seem to be in control too. For instance, they appear to hold more objects in their hands (46.9 percent) than women (28.8 percent). And these objects could potentially be used for punishment. Therefore, it is relevant to focus on the contextual differences for the objects that are used by the teachers.

First, sticks or rods for punishing pupils are used four times more often in teaching situations with boys (34.4 percent) than with girls (8.3 percent) or with mixed groups (7.4 percent). Second, books are used three times more often in schools with girls (58.3 percent) than in mixed schools (18.5 percent) or schools with boys (18.0 percent). Finally, tools for disciplining were more common in the 16th–18th century (44.4 percent) than in the 19th–20th century (17.5 percent), but no differences can be observed regarding other objects held by teachers between these two periods. There are no differences between male and female teachers when it comes to the use of objects that can be interpreted in terms of discipline and order. Both men and women carry instruments for beating children if necessary. In some cases, women even appear to be more in control than men (Figure 6). All these generalizations fail to confirm the stereotypical image of an authoritarian male and a submissive female teacher.
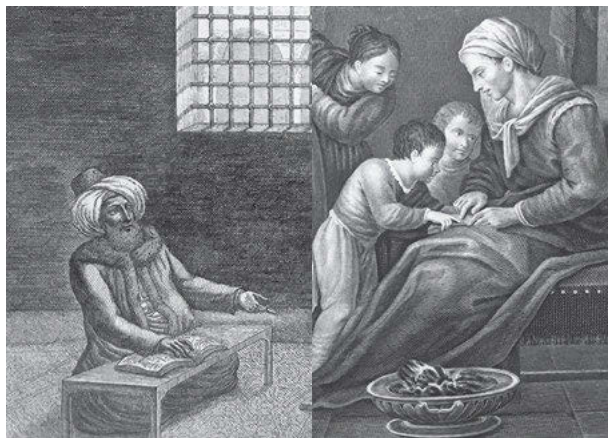
Figure 6: Male and female teachers (Private Collection Del Pozo/Braster).

Table 4 also shows some contextual differences between the sites of production of the engravings. However, interpreting those differences is tricky. What, for instance, does the absence of open upward facing palms of teachers in engravings of English origin mean? Or the relatively frequent presence of downward-facing palms in American engravings? We have no answer to this yet.

Conclusion and Discussion

In this chapter we presented an analysis of a collection of educational engravings. It is an example of a systematic analysis of a total collection with which we try to paint a picture of the central characteristics of a teacher through the ages. Although there is sufficient variation among the engravings in terms of age, it should be noted that the bulk of the engravings were published in the 18th and 19th centuries. Because of the way the engravings were collected (over a long period of time in different countries), we cannot claim generalizability as we could have if we had drawn a random sample from a population at a particular time. However, we do maintain that the collection has helped to construct a public image of teachers over the centuries.

To draw a teacher with his or her index finger pointed at a blackboard, as we would draw a blacksmith with a hammer striking hot iron on an anvil, is in any case too simplistic. To begin with, the teachers depicted use not only their index fingers or pointers, but also sticks or rods to strike pupils with. Thus, in the 18th and 19th centuries, the image of the teacher as a professional specialized

in keeping order and enforcing discipline does indeed emerge. A teacher with a raised right hand holding a stick or with an index finger pointed upwards is not at all unusual. It is an image more common up until the 18th century than in the 19th or 20th century. With this, we can indeed conclude that educational engravings show a pedagogical change over time. However, we are not inclined to see this change as a shift from a teacher-centered to a child-centered approach. Rather, it is a change from disciplining with physical force to explaining by literally pointing things out. Or, put in other terms, it is a change from an authoritarian to an authoritative way of acting.[31] There is certainly no openness or child- centered approach even in the more recent engravings from the first decennium of the 20th century. The submissive hand with the palm facing upwards hardly ever occurs.

In contrast to the right hand that punishes or points, there is the left hand that not infrequently rests on a book. The book symbolizes the knowledge being transferred to the pupil. With a little imagination, we can see a vector running from the book in the left hand to the teacher's right hand. The fact that the book is more often seen in classroom or school situations with girls than with boys is remarkable, as is the way that teachers in schools or classrooms with girls are less likely to have sticks in their hands than in classrooms with boys. But the latter finding can be explained by the fact that male teachers deal with boys in 91 percent of cases, and females deal with girls in 75 percent of cases. The stereotypical image of authoritarian male and authoritative female teachers cannot be confirmed.

With the above methodological exercise, we have tried to show that simple observations, such as those in which academics share their experiences about an iconic image of the teacher, can be substantiated, relativized, or criticized if we have access to the right material. In our case, this material consisted of a private collection containing several hundred engravings from different centuries and from different parts of the world. Such collections are important for telling public histories of education, but not until a systematic analysis of the material has been carried out. In other words, the public historian will not only have to immerse him or herself in historical methods but will also need a toolbox with social science research methods and techniques. This will certainly be necessary if new sources of data are to be tapped, such as educational engravings.

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31 See also the concept psychologisation, or the debodiment of the disciplinary regime in schools: Frederik Herman, Marc Depaepe, Frank Simon, and Angelo Van Gorp, "Punishment as an Educational Technology: A Form of Pedagogical Inertia in Schools," in *Educational Research: Networks and Technologies*, eds. Paul Smeyers and Marc Depaepe (Cham: Springer, 2007), 203–219.

Only then can we move from the phase of collecting to that of storytelling. A story about hand gestures that were used in the past, but still seem to appear in images of teachers in the present. A story that can and should be expanded to include multiple stories about the power of the hand in education. The opportunity for this exists if our private collection is shared publicly in a project where a broad audience gets "hands-on" exposure to the engravings.

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Catherine Burke

Rocking Horses as Peripheral Objects in Pedagogies of Childhood: An Imagined Exhibition

Abstract: In this chapter, I address the question of how a focus on movement, particularly rhythmic movement, can offer us new insights into the past experience of school for young children. I use the concept of an imagined exhibition created from a "non-collection" of images that provide evidence of the presence of rocking horses in 20th century schools for young children. I discuss the implications of Jan Masschelein's concept of "poor pedagogy" in the context of attending over time to possible intentions and meanings of these material objects that appear more often at the edge rather than the centre of our frames of reference. Taking the material object of the rocking horse as our focus moves us "beyond an 'immobile' vision of space and (helps us) look towards different spatialities both physical and virtual" (Nóvoa). It essentially helps to take our eye from the static around which movement occurs towards the movement upon which the static is rooted. Arguably this perspective leads us towards an appreciation of how in school environments time and space are integral, one and the same.

Keywords: rocking horse, rhythm, photography, "poor pedagogy", movement

Introduction

Attending to the theme of this book – *Exhibiting Education* – what follows is a visual essay around a non-collection of potential exhibits in an imagined exhibition. A small selection of images, hinting at the possibilities of such an exhibition, form a starting point towards illuminating the presence and considering the significance of rocking horses in twentieth century school environments. Each exhibit presents to the viewer a school space within which a rocking horse can be observed. Most items are photographs but the selection includes one architect's drawing. Often, the images show the rocking horse as one item among many contained in a room designed for the education and care of younger children. As such, any significance that this object might represent in the

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history of education is easily overlooked. But once recognized as a material presence it becomes possible to discover further evidence of these objects in school interiors or yards. In photographs illustrating nineteenth century classrooms, filled with ranks of pupils, a single rocking horse can occasionally be found towards the edges of the frame, peripheral and clearly of secondary regard at least to the photographer. But later, in the twentieth century, there are examples where the rocking horse within the school space is clearly the central and focal point of the constructed image. This suggests a recognition on the part of those commissioning the photograph of the value of the object in communicating something about the educational aspirations of the institution. Such examples literally argue for the case of the rocking horse, and potentially of rocking more generally, to be taken seriously in understanding experiences of past schooling.

Were we to mount this exhibition, we might give it the title *Rocking horses as peripheral objects in pedagogies of childhood*. The eyes of the visitor to the exhibition, guided by this title, would inevitably be drawn to the object of the rocking horse locatable in each image and they would note a range of contextual matters. First, they might pay some regard to the space of the room, classroom or other environment in which the rocking horse has been placed. They will note clues such as the presence of a teacher or other institutional characteristics that suggest this space is a school rather than a home. They may note whether the rocking horse fills the frame of the photograph or whether it appears as a marginal presence. It is likely that a number of questions will arise in the minds of visitors to the exhibition about the possible meanings and uses of these objects in educational contexts. Memories might be prompted including personal experiences of rocking in school or nursery environments. Those interested in design will recognize how the rocking mechanism was subjected to changes over time.[1] Those interested in interpretations of time in education will ponder on the impact of experiencing the pendulum swing of the body through space. These considerations might lead to questions regarding safety and the potential of accidental injury caused by the unsupervised use of the rocking horse.

Exhibitions organized around a theme, such as this, allow the viewer to see perhaps for the first time a phenomenon that they have previously taken for granted or ignored. Once the theme is established, decisions have to be made as to how the exhibition should be designed and what the overall purpose and

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1 Such design alterations are well described in Ruth Bottomley, *Rocking Horses* (Princes Risborough: Shire Publications, 1994).

argument should be in justifying the selection and arrangement of exhibits. The process of mapping such an imaginary exhibition begins to produce a network out of items that have until this point in time had no connection. In this sense, the exhibition presents a non-collection of a hitherto ignored object in the experience of schooling. Photographic historian and anthropologist Elizabeth Edwards has recently considered the identity of the non-collection asking, "Are non-collections invisible or merely unacknowledged objects of terror at the boundary of the unknown?".[2] The non-collection of the representation of the rocking horse in school environments forms a starting point here. Once acknowledged, these "objects of terror" are drawn into view from the edges of past experience, potentially enriching our interest in and knowledge of material, emotional and sensorial histories of education.

Taking the Image as Starting Point

As historians of education, with a particular interest in material contexts and visual sources, our research over recent years has been enriched by efforts to broaden the repertoire of available evidence in order to explore the many different dimensions of experience in past classrooms. The problematic nature of working with images as sources of evidence has created new avenues of enquiry and stimulated innovative formats for reporting. The various attempts to include the complexities of documentary film in our research have inevitably added the elements of sound and movement to the mix.[3] So we have become interested in expanding our understanding of the dynamics of educational space, the biographies of objects designed for schooling and ways that these objects have engaged the senses of inhabitants of school spaces.[4] With regard to the latter, the body of the schoolchild, in stillness and in movement, as well

2 Elizabeth Edwards, "Thoughts on the "Non-Collections" of the Archival Ecosystem," in *Photo-Objects: On the Materiality of Photographs and Photo Archives in the Humanities and Sciences*, ed. Julia Bärnighausen et al. (Berlin: Max Planck Research Library for the History and Development of Knowledge, 2019), 79.
3 Catherine Burke and Peter Cunningham, "Ten Years On: Making Children Visible in Teacher Education and Ways of Reading Video", Paedagogica Historica 47, no. 4 (2011): 525–541. https://doi.org/10.1080/00309230.2011.588236.
4 Geert Thyssen and Ian Grosvenor, "Learning to Make Sense: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Sensory Education and Embodied Enculturation," *The Senses and Society* 14, no. 2 (2019): 119–130. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17458927.2019.1621487.

as the various soundscapes of school, has already started to be explored.[5] While there has been some progress in exploring the possibilities of a sensory history of education, few scholars have seriously considered the particular sensory experience of rhythmic movement in school spaces, or what has been called the *complex polyrhythmy of place*.[6]

The so-called spatial turn has been fueled by the visual so that material histories of the paraphernalia of classroom objects, furnishings and fittings have been given as much attention as the histories of buildings, their design and the lives of individuals associated with their coming into being.

We can regard the rocking horse as one of a range of time-inflected objects that have been introduced into the school for the education, comfort and well-being of young children. Taking this point of view allows us to potentially bring into consideration other rocking equipment such as rocking chairs designed to the scale of young children and commissioned for infant and primary schools during the 1950s and 60s.[7]

Here, I want to address the question of how a focus on movement, particularly rhythmic movement, can offer us new insights into the past experience of school for young children. I will experiment with a micro-material approach exploiting visual and text based evidence in the hope and expectation that this will stimulate the research imagination of others who are equally committed to taking the road less travelled and prepared to embrace risk in their scholarly endeavours.[8] I first began to reflect on the significance of rocking horses for young children when putting together the book *The School I'd Like* with Ian Grosvenor.[9] In carrying out research for the book, I came across an article in which an American journalist, reporting on the so-called revolution in 1960s English primary education included some suggestions from young children with the request "give us a rocking horse where we can think".[10] This struck me as a powerful example of how the embodied experience of certain school spaces

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5 Burke and Cunningham, "Ten Years On", 525–541.

6 Tim Edensor, "Walking in rhythms: place, regulation, style and the flow of experience", *Visual Studies* 25, no. 1 (2010), 69.https://doi.org/10.1080/14725861003606902.

7 An earlier example of rocking furniture is found in the experimental and progressive Prestolee school in Lancashire where from the 1920s–40s, various rocking mechanisms were designed and made by the head teacher and children including a rocking reading bench and outdoors Gondola. See exhibit 5 below.

8 Antonio Nóvoa, "Letter to a Young Historian of Education," *Historia y Memoria de la Educación* 1 (2015): 23–58, https://doi.org/10.5944/hme.1.2015.14111.

9 Catherine Burke and Ian Grosvenor, *The School I'd Like* (London: Routledge, 2003).

10 Barbara Villet, "The Children Want Classrooms Alive with Chaos," *Life Magazine,* April 11, 1969, 60.

for young children could be poorly understood or appreciated by adults at the time and since. Thinking is often associated with, and arguably supported by, rhythmic movement – walking, rocking, swinging, moving – and children are inclined towards these kinds of activities as any close observation will demonstrate. Yet the rhythmic movement of children has, outside of a few progressive exceptions, challenged the traditional model of the stilled and seated schoolchild established in the nineteenth century.[11]

The imagined exhibition explored in this chapter focuses on evidence of the presence of rocking horses in twentieth century school environments in England and Wales. This geographic focus will act as a starting point that can lead to discoveries through wider research beyond the UK. Taking the object of the rocking horse seriously has the potential of leading us to explore aspects of the history of education "beyond an immobile vision of space".[12] In essence the example of the rocking horse takes our habitual mode of seeing school spaces from a position of regard for the static around which movement occurs towards the movement upon which the static is rooted.

Introduction to the Exhibition

Every exhibition requires a summary explanation of its purpose and content. What follows is an imagined introduction to the exhibition Rocking horses as peripheral objects in pedagogies of childhood.

How ubiquitous were rocking horses in twentieth century British schools and beyond and how were they used? When and where were they most popular and when and for what reason did their presence decline? When did a young child's proclivity towards rocking in school spaces become recognized by teachers as acceptable and a positive activity and when did it become recognized as a nuisance? There is not a lot of evidence to draw on but this exhibition can in itself become a research exercise as it is likely to lead to more discoveries and stimulate further questioning about the significance, for the past schoolchild, of rhythmic movement.

Beyond the images gathered here into a collection, there is some evidence of serious attention being paid to the uses of rocking horses in the administrative

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11 Some of those exceptions have been explored by Roy Kozlovsky in *The Architectures of Childhood: Children, Modern Architecture and Reconstruction in Postwar England* (London: Ashgate, 2013), 126–129.
12 Antonio Nóvoa, "Letter to a Young Historian of Education," 52.

records of early twentieth century English School Boards. Elementary school teachers commonly requested the purchase of rocking horses for their schools. On occasions, this prompted a lively discussion as School Board members debated and contested the supposed educational value of such objects. Thus, in August 1899, the elected members of Cleethorpes School Board considered a request from one head teacher who required a rocking horse in order "to keep the children quiet".[13] The request was denied as it was considered by the Board members that the purchase was not necessary. Their discussion revealed a degree to which it was feared that if rocking horses were purchased for one school, there might be an avalanche of similar requests; such was their popularity. Their potential use for play, exercise and fun was clear but Board members were forced to consider the educational value of these objects more accustomed to being associated with domestic environments.[14] However, evidence exists to demonstrate that some teachers did recognize the educational value of rocking horses. An article entitled *Spelling and the Rocking Horse,* published in the *London Daily News,* revealed some imaginative pedagogical use of the object.

> The best way to teach spelling is still moot point, but the managers of a Board school in Battersea have found that a rocking horse is a powerful stimulus. In the large hall of the infant school of Ethelburgh-street there stands a quite magnificent rocking horse, with cosy basket seats fixed high on the ends of the rockers. The horse is thus enabled to carry in exciting career three triumphant little people, as, in fact, it does every Friday morning. On that day there held weekly spelling bee, and the three boys or girls who remain longest in the class (the children drop out as they make mistakes) get half-an-hour's ride[. . .][15]

The author of the piece indicated, in this final comment, that these were children not of nursery age but older: "These little folk, six years of age, are getting most careful training of eye and hand in connection with their object lessons." Some evidence can be found that teachers used the object of the rocking horse to teach basic numeracy, encouraging children to count the numbers of children riding at any one time.[16]

Not surprisingly, there are very few scholars who have paid serious attention to the rocking horse in school spaces, past or present. In a clinical context, homeopathic specialist in children's diseases, Kathleen G. Priestman, observed and recorded the reactions of young children when invited to ride a rocking horse in her surgery. She found that in addition to the usual clinical assessment, their

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13 *Hull Daily Mail*, August 14, 1899.

14 Meeting of Cambridge School Board, *Cambridge Independent Press,* October 18, 1907.

15 *London Daily News*, November 6, 1903.

16 Henrietta Brown Smith, *Education by Life: A Discussion of the Problem of the School Education of Younger Children* (Baltimore: Warwick and York Incorporated, 1914), 68.

reactions to the rocking horse were often useful in assessing the children's temperament.[17] There is one tantalising reference to the presence of a rocking horse in a research paper published in 1933 examining the phenomenon of group play and quarrelling among pre-school children but no details are given.[18] More recently, in an early years setting on a small Greek island, a child was reported to have taken a researcher by the hand to show them a rocking horse hidden behind a screen at the back of the classroom. It is however not clear from the record whether or not this was an object suitable for a small child to ride.[19]

More generally, it has been recognized in various studies how rhythmic movement, when accompanying a learning exercise, enhances performance.[20] Certainly, we know that the practice of restraining children and confining their limbs by means of conventional desks and benches came to be questioned in progressive circles during the inter-war period. In post war school design, at least in England, the arrival of rocking chairs for teachers and scaled down models of the same for pupils signified a shift towards attending to the sensibilities of young children who were observed to be naturally inclined towards rhythmic rocking movements.[21]

Rocking implies a loosening of external control replaced with a kind of self absorption or intrinsic control. Rocking, like walking, is a rhythmic embodied experience. It is essentially personal and private affording comfort, excitement or delight. In the context of the institution of school, rocking might be associated in the mind of the onlooker, such as the teacher, with disengagement and resistance to authority. There is evidence of teachers regarding the rocking horse as useful for rewarding children's good behavior and of disciplining others through denial of their access to it. However, in the wider context of progressive attitudes towards the encouragement of creative expression and imagination, rocking

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17 Kathleen Priestman, "Children and the Rocking Horse," *British Homeopathic Journal* 79, no. 1 (1990): 66–70.

18 Elise Hart Green, "Group Play and Quarrelling among Pre-School Children", *Child Development* 4, no. 4 (1933): 302–307,https://doi.org/10.2307/1125769.

19 Aimilia Rouvali and Vassiliki Riga, "Listening to the Voice of a Pupil with Autism Spectrum Condition in the Educational Design of a Mainstream Early Years Setting", *Education 3–13: International Journal of Primary, Elementary and Early Years Education*, Vol. 49, no. 4 (2020), 1–17,https://doi.org/10.1080/03004279.2020.1734042.

20 Paul Chandler and André Tricot, "Mind Your Body: the Essential Role of Body Movements in Children's Learning", *Educational Psychology Review* 27 (2015): 365–370, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-015-9333-3.

21 Frederik Herman, Angelo Van Gorp, Frank Simon, and Marc Depaepe, "The School Desk: From Concept to Object," *History of Education* 40, no. 1 (2011): 97–117. https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760X.2010.508599.

could be seen to be an essential and necessary experience of early childhood. Head teacher Edward O'Neill of Prestolee school in Lancashire regarded rocking as a useful mechanism in self-designed furniture for the classroom and school yard (Exhibit 5 below). Pioneering Movement and Dance advisor Diana Jordan noted in her book *Childhood and Movement* how she considered awareness of rocking to be a feature of sound pedagogical knowledge underpinning excellent early childhood education:

> From the first pleasurable experience of being rocked in his mother's arms, a child will rock and swing when he gets an opportunity, and most infant schools provide apparatus to help him do this [. . .] offering adventures in space and speed which extend effort.[22]

The rocking horse is not merely a plaything but an object with strong cultural associations and since the first examples were associated with the elite, conveys association with the wealthier sectors of society. As an English phenomenon, from the time of its becoming a popular addition to the middle-class nursery in the nineteenth century, it became a fashionable play object in other European contexts. Evidence of the domestic setting for the rocking horse as plaything is somewhat more extensive than of the school environment.[23] Associated so much in the public mind with the nurseries of middle-class households it is therefore remarkable to find so many examples in the interiors of ordinary state schools in England and Wales.

Images of school spaces that include a rocking horse are more often than not to be found in illustrations of environments for the youngest children; within infant and junior schools. These sometimes emerge in random collections where the subject matter is the classroom. As such, they occur as material features in large crowded nineteenth century school rooms as well as sparse and spacious Froebelian interiors. They crop up in school corridors and hallways; they are featured in progressive open-air schools that appear to wish to emphasize health and well-being; they range in size and shape and show the signs of much use. Often, they appear towards the edges of the image, seemingly as a mere distraction or incidental decoration. They also appear as single subjects in the frame. The exhibits presented here in the imagined exhibition are arranged chronologically covering the period 1932–1966.

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22 Diana Jordan, *Childhood and Movement* (London: Blackwell & Mott, 1966), 12.
23 The earliest examples I have found in English school settings are from the 1870s.

BUDDING JOCKEYS.—Fun on the rocking horse in the toy room at the Shipley school. (By a " Mercury " photographer.)

1932.

Figure 1: Shipley Infant school, Yorkshire. Leeds Mercury, June 22nd 1932.

Exhibit One

The first examples of images that provide evidence of the rocking horse in use are of 1930s northern English schools (Figure 1). In this newspaper report, two children are shown riding the horse and the caption reads "budding jockeys". The image was published in *The Leeds Mercury*, an English regional newspaper, in June 1932.[24] The horse appears to be a fine example of an "old rocker" and the space in which the horse has been placed is referred to as the "toy room". Complete with saddle and stirrups the rocking mechanism is provided by curved wooden bow rockers. During the nineteenth century there was a flourishing in the manufacture of rocking horses in Britain and many factories were established. This horse resembles a model made by manufacturers G. and J. Lines[25]

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[24] The image was discovered through a search of the digital British Newspapers Archive.

[25] For a history of the Lines family of toy manufacturers see https://www.classicrocking horses.co.uk/.

shortly after the turn of the twentieth century.[26] This is clearly a school for very young children, and it is evident that an adult is needed to watch that the children do not come to harm; she appears to be holding on to the children. In contrast with the two children captured rocking in *exhibit eight* these, a boy and a girl, appear to be less free and less in control of the movement. Their faces are turned towards the photographer and their expressions are sullen. In fact there is little to suggest the implied movement is happening at all. The requirements of the photographer for stillness are dominant. There are several clues that indicate that this is an institutional rather than domestic setting: the overalls worn by the children as well as the nursery assistant; and the nearby furniture scaled to the bodies of the children.

Figure 2: Rocking horse at Burncross school, Chapeltown, South Yorkshire, 1930s, with permission of Chapeltown and High Green archive.

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26 Bottomley, *Rocking Horses*, 17.

Exhibit Two

The horse in this exhibit appears to be a dapple-grey c.1925 made by the English manufacturer, Hamleys (Figure 2).[27] Two children appear in the image: one, a boy, riding; the other, a girl, attending. No teacher or other adult is present in the photograph, but the rider is presented as in full control of the action. Riding boots, that may or may not have belonged to the child, complete the authenticity of riding sought by whoever commissioned the photograph. As in the example below (exhibit seven), the wall space close to the horse is decorated with a view to engaging the eye of waiting children. Behind the head of the male child, who is alert and playing the role of one in control, are the words "Men (at) Work". With a cane in his right hand, the boy appears to assert his power over the horse and, by implication, the attending girl seems to be embracing its rear-end. Movement and fun are implied but not captured by the photographer in this image. We are informed by the archive that the horse-ride was used in this school as a reward for good behaviour.

Figure 3: Westminister Road school, Hoole in the north-west of England, 1936.

Exhibit Three

The classroom has been filled with pupils in various poses (Figure 3). Here we have two rocking horses, dapple-grey on safety stands. They are both being ridden

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27 A very similar model is presented by Ruth Bottomley – Bottomley, *Rocking Horses,* 26.

by boys. It is a curious and unusual photograph, not merely due to the number of rocking horses but because of the variety of ways that the children are presented to us. A large number are seated in rows, closely aligned, each clutching their mid-morning milk drink. The clock face confirms that it is ten-thirty am. Below the desks, prone on the floor, are two blanketed children. Various model houses and towers are presented and these, alongside the toys clutched by some of the individual children seated on the floor, present an atmosphere of play and fantasy. Our twenty-first century eye is pulled towards the left-hand bottom corner where a girl sits cuddling her black doll, a fashionable plaything of the period. Some children are waiting in line to wash and dry their hands. There is little indication of how the horses have been intended to be used in this classroom or whether the two together in this one space was the usual configuration. As to the riders, they are still and poised but for how long they enjoyed the ride is difficult to tell.
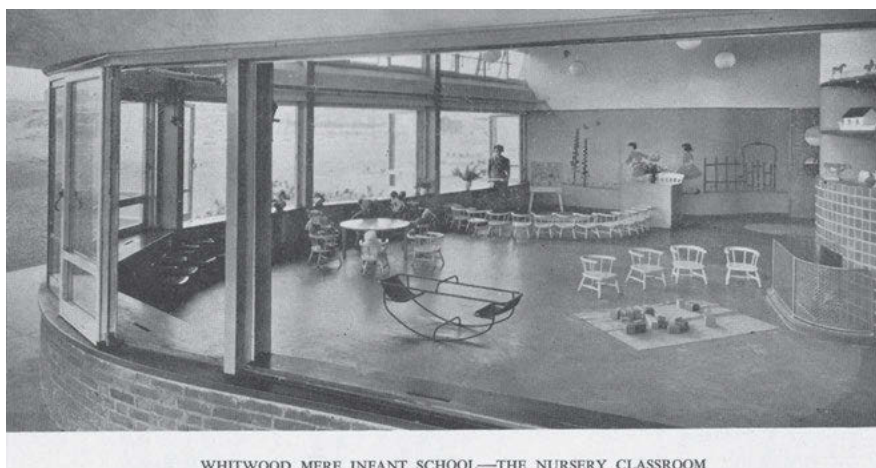
Exhibit Four

Here are two images from the same school (Figure 4 and 4i). The first image shows the entrance and reception area of Whitwood Mere Infant School, (later Three Lane Ends) in Castleford, West Yorkshire. The image was one of several illustrating spaces in the same school in a war-time publication – *Education Handbook*[28] – edited by E. W. Woodhead (1943).[29] Whitwood Mere school (constructed 1937–1943) was a well known example of modern school design and was frequently shown to national and international visitors as an exemplary building containing beautiful furnishings, fittings and decorations. The architect responsible for the design was Oliver Hill (1897–1968), an established modernist designer who poured into the school design features that he had become well known for. The visitor to the school was initially met with a tiled frieze of life-sized, leaping beasts by the artist John Skeaping before encountering two horses – the larger most likely a rocker – in the main entrance hall. Rocking, by its nature being curvaceous, suited this building which was abundant with sweeping curved walls, circular windows, rounded corners and an atmosphere of lightness and care. The same publication contained an image of the school's nursery classroom, complete with a metal rocker. This school was pioneering in its design, embraced modernism in its architecture and through the presence of the rocking horse, demonstrated its regard of the child's requirement for rhythmic movement and joy through play.

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28 E. W. Woodhead, *Education Handbook* (Norwich: Jarrold and Sons limited, 1943).

29 Woodhead was at the time Director of Education for Norwich, England.

WHITWOOD MERE INFANT SCHOOL—ENTRANCE HALL

WHITWOOD MERE INFANT SCHOOL—THE NURSERY CLASSROOM

Figure 4 and 4i: Whitwood Mere infants school, Castleford, West Yorkshire, 1943.

Exhibit Five

This exhibit extends the notion of the school rocking horse to include a unique example of a swing bench, specifically designed to enhance children's experience of reading (Figure 5). At Prestolee school in Lancashire, England, pupils were directed by head teacher Edward O'Neill to reconfigure and build out of recycled materials, furniture suitable to support their enjoyment and learning. Rocking benches and "swinging couches" were constructed by the children for both

Figure 5: Swinging reading bench, Prestolee elementary school, Lancashire, 1945.

the interior and the school gardens. The swing bench appeared in a short film made by Pathé News in 1945 and the exhibit is a still from that film.[30] There is no mention of any rocking horse at Prestolee school but the quiet needs of children to swing to and fro were met by a head teacher who was considered to be exceptionally child-centered in his approach to teaching.[31]

Exhibit Six

At first glance one senses that the purpose of this image (6) is specific and differs from other examples discussed here. The most obvious difference is the color, but color was essential in the telling of this story for this is an image of an early Hertfordshire County Council school: Burleigh infants school at Cheshunt,

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[30] Lessons without tears, aka Lessons without Fears (1945), accessed July 22, 2022. https://www.britishpathe.com/video/lessons-without-tears-aka-lessons-without-fears/query/prestolee.

[31] For more on Prestolee school, see Gerard Holmes, *The Idiot Teacher. A book about Prestolee and its teacher E. F. O'Neill* (London. Faber, 1952); Catherine Burke and Mark Dudek, "Experiences of learning within a 20th-century radical experiment in education: Prestolee school, 1919–1952", *Oxford Review of Education,* Vol. 36, no. 2 (2010): 203–218, https://doi.org/10.1080/03054981003696705; Catherine Burke, "The School Without Tears: E. F. O'Neill of Prestolee School", *History of Education* Vol. 3 (2005): 263–275, https://doi.org/10.1080/00467600500065167.

Figure 6: Burleigh infants school, Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, opened in 1948.

opened in 1948. A single child is seated upon a rocking horse. The child and horse are presented at an angle enclosed by a shaft of bright sunlight emanating from a large window-wall to the left. A bright square of yellow forms a backdrop to the pair while a further square of bright orange wall completes the impression that the institutional image of the school environment has been usurped.

The school, with its light and airy construction and carefully designed color scheme, was considered to have broken the mold in traditional school building and was widely admired as a modernist project. The building's pioneering architectural features have been remarked upon in scholarly works such as Andrew Saint's *Towards a Social Architecture*.[32] Since the provenance of the photograph is with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) image archive, we can assume the intended subject of the image is the building within which the child and horse are situated. But one has to acknowledge the powerful effect of the ratio created between the open space, the materiality of the horse and the presence of the child. One might conclude that the composition of the image was intended to communicate a message that, regardless of its modernist features, the place was beyond any doubt designed with children in mind: children at play, at ease, delighting in their experience of being there. This image allows us to note a shift in the projection of the popular image of the English school.

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32 Andrew Saint, *Towards a Social Architecture: The Role of School Building in Post-War England* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).

Figure 7: Bryncrug school, February 1952. Photographer: Geoff Charles.

Exhibit Seven

This image (7) could be said to be about waiting. While the rocking horse being ridden is the clear subject of the photograph, the staging of the image suggests a high degree of control as to who out of the assembled pupils might be chosen next to ride. The waiting children gather, for how long we do not know. A sub-theme of this image might be time itself. Time passing; all too little time for the child riding the horse. Time controlled by the teacher. Time to wait, stock still, in sharp contrast to the anticipated delights of the singular rocking movement to come. The horse once again appears to be a typical dapple-grey of painted wood on a safety stand. This may have been manufactured in England or it may be a European import. Around the second decade of the twentieth century, rocking horses were imported into England from Germany and Switzerland. These were less expensive, lighter mass-produced horses with papier-mâché heads.[33] This horse is complete with a mane on to which the rider holds. Since his feet are not engaging the stirrups, he is not in control but rather sits posed for the camera and all is still. The teacher looks towards the photographer, re-assuring the onlooker that she is caring for the safety of this individual rider.

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33 Bottomley, Rocking Horses, 27.

The waiting children gaze at the spectacle, imagining the fun. Only one girl looks directly towards the camera. Should the children glance to one side, directly confronting them on the wall is hung a fine lithographic print.

Figure 8: Rocking horse at Middleton infant school, Yorkshire 1950.

Exhibit Eight

Two children, both boys of a similar size, ride a small rocking horse together (Figure 8). Their bodies wrap closely around each other. Their legs are placed at matching angles. No other person is present apart from the photographer. The rocking mechanism appears to be "the swinger", a type of safety stand which was patented in 1880 by W. A. Marqua of Cincinnati, Ohio, USA. The horse's legs were attached to a pair of parallel planks which swung on metal brackets mounted on a stationary wooden trestle.[34] The image is slightly blurred which conveys the feeling of movement and an exciting dynamic. The viewer of the photograph is pulled into the movement, the to and the fro, the here and there perspective experienced by the children.[35]

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34 Bottomley, Rocking Horses, 19.

35 I wrote about the collection of images discovered by this student in Catherine Burke, "Hands-on history: towards a critique of the 'everyday'", *History of Education* Vol. 30, no. 2 (2001): 191–201, https://doi.org/10.1080/00467600010012463.

There is a sense in which the implied movement of bodies and object to-gether constitutes the "punctum" of the image.[36] This is an intimate capturing of the experience of rocking. Nevertheless, the children's faces are turned to-wards the photographer who is content that the rocking will ultimately produce a blurred picture. The immediate context is a classroom for very young chil-dren. This is made clear by the close proximity of a model house and examples of literacy work displayed above the children's heads. Time is absent from the photograph except in the sense of the time it takes for the horse to rock from head to foot and back again.

Diagram 1. AN OLD TWO-CLASS SCHOOL
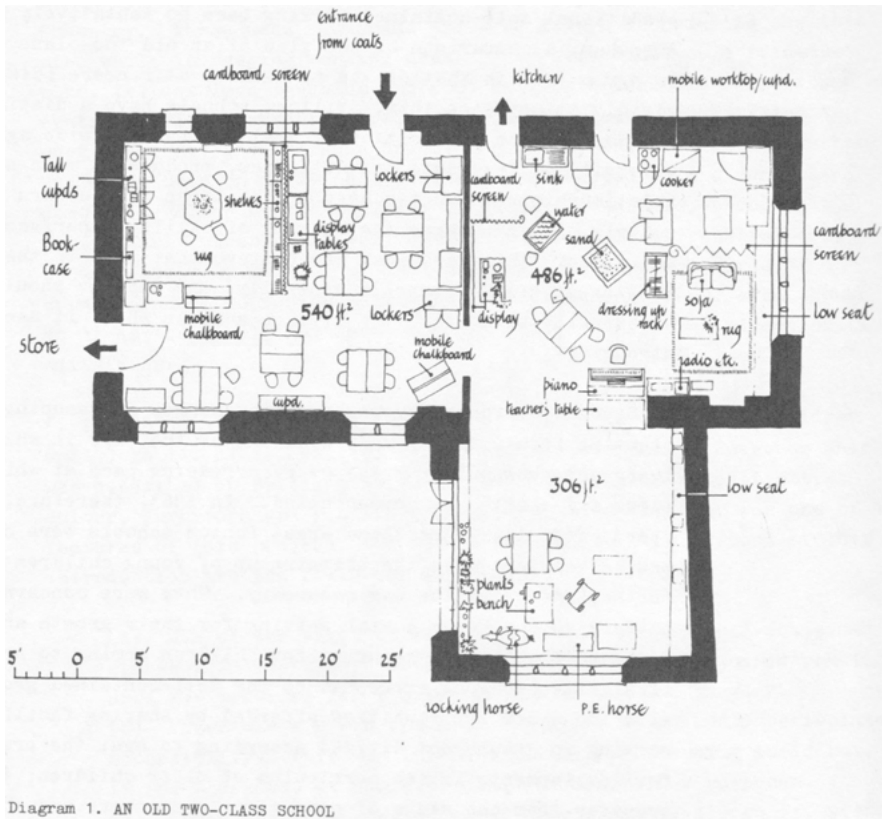
Figure 9: Diagram of a classroom at Brize Norton school, Oxfordshire in Building Bulletin 36, Eveline Lowe primary school, London, 1966.

36 For 'punctum', see Roland Barthes *Camera Lucida* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1980).

Figure 10: Outside play area, Eveline Lowe School with rocking horse. RIBA images by permission.

Exhibit Nine and Ten

The first image is a diagram used by the architects David and Mary Medd to explain some of their thinking in determining the design ideas for Eveline Lowe school (Figure 9). It is a scaled drawing of a classroom space at Brize Norton primary school in Oxfordshire. The diagram appears in the Building Bulletin which set out in detail the origins of the design of Eveline Lowe and its features. At Brize Norton, head teacher George Baines had attempted to create a less formal and more child-centered classroom environment. Among the many features noted by the visiting architects who were keen to observe what was considered at the time to be best practice is a rocking horse, minutely drawn.

Eveline Lowe was celebrated at the time of its opening as a best example of a "Plowden" school, meaning that it expressed through its design the essential elements of progressive education for young children as promoted in the two volumes of the Plowden Committee Report: *Children and their Primary Schools.*[37] The second image shows an important characteristic of such schools: the outdoor

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[37] Department of Education and Science, "Eveline Lowe Primary School", *Building Bulletin 36* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office (HMSO), 1967).

environment accessed easily from each classroom area (Figure 10). Here, alongside other physical features supporting play, we find a rocking horse.

"Poor Pedagogy" and Attending to Evidence of the Rocking Horse in the History of Education

> Photographs help; but they help only a little, since movement is in its nature dynamic, and a photograph freezes into stillness only one moment of a process. To recognise what is called 'movement' one must have observed it in action, and to appreciate it fully one must have experienced it within oneself. (L. C. Schiller in Jordan 1966, vii)

These words of Louis Christian Schiller, first senior inspector of primary education in the post-war government, remind us that to access the experience of schooling requires engaging with action, movement and process. This suggests that while images may provide evidence of experience, they are inevitably only starting points for entering into the sensory life of education. In imagining an exhibition of "non-collected" images of school spaces containing rocking horses, I have attempted to explore how a particular kind of dynamic rhythmic movement occupied a significant space for a period in twentieth century schooling. As a research exercise, collecting the "non-collected" has become a less than conscious act of attentiveness. Making sense of this, the work of Jan Masschelein has introduced me to the concept of "poor pedagogy" and the value of attending, paying attention, and practicing *waiting* as a research strategy. In essence, the term "poor pedagogy" is used to describe a range of unconventional research practices that aim not to "arriv[e] at a particular perspective or vision" but to help "[displace] one's gaze so that one can see differently", having the effect that the possibility of transformation is opened.[38] In a similar frame of mind, John Berger, in *The Shape of a Pocket* speaks of opening the door or the gate to what confronts us.[39]

Drawing from the writing of Walter Benjamin on the activity of walking, Masschelein observes, through being "attentive" the walker "exposes" their self to the world, suspending judgement and follows wherever their attention may lead; a process of continual movement through which spaces of possible transformation are opened up.[40] He suggests that "Educating the gaze is essentially about liberating or displacing our view; about becoming attentive; about

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38 Jan Masschelein, "E-ducating the gaze: the idea of a poor pedagogy", *Ethics and Education* 5, No, 1 (2010): 45, https://doi.org/10.1080/17449641003590621.

39 John Berger, *The Shape of a Pocket* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2001).

40 Masschelein, "E-ducating the gaze", 46.

paying attention".[41] In this sense, "attention entails the suspension of judgment and implies a kind of waiting [. . .] which brings the subject into play and defers the expectation of any benefit".[42]

Walking is characterized and assisted by attention to and acceptance of bodily rhythm. Becoming attentive to the rocking horse on the periphery of the history of education opens up the possibilities of exploring the experience of rhythmic movement in the wider context of school spaces and the material features of such environments. The body in rhythmic self-regulated movement is happening through the experience of the child seated upon the rocking horse which confirms that "thinking with and through the body and through embodiment retains significant potential [. . .] to inspire engaging and relevant questions that historians of education are uniquely positioned to answer'.[43]

Attending to evidence of the rocking child in the history of education leads us to pay attention to questions of time and space bringing the peripheral subject into play. To suspend judgment and allow for possibilities to arise in viewing these exhibits may lead to questions that take our knowledge of the history of education forward. The act of drawing *attention,* in this case to the rocking horse in randomly collected images of school spaces, according to Masschelein "does not offer me a vision or perspective, [rather] whose brackets? it makes an opening for what presents itself as evidence".[44] Using the presence, placement and ultimate disappearance of the rocking horse as evidenced in images of school spaces, the exhibition demonstrates a method of working with images of education and begins to consider the significance of the experience of rocking as an overlooked aspect of the experience of the school child, past and present.

In this imagined exhibition I have offered the opportunity to think about the experience and disciplining of rhythmic bodily movement in school environments. This enables our attention in future research to move beyond the rocking horse to consider the significance of objects and furnishings that are also designed to rock such as rocking chairs and benches designed for school interiors as well as various outdoors equipment. Paying attention to dynamic and rhythmic movement in the history of educational spaces and places means thinking about the range of interpretations and meaning attached to the idea over time and reveals how significant the materiality of schooling is in this respect.

41 Masschelein, "E-ducating the gaze", 43.

42 Masschelein, "E-ducating the gaze", 48–49.

43 Mona Gleason, "Metaphor, Materiality, and Method: The Central Role of Embodiment in the History of Education", *Paedagogica Historica* 54, no. 1–2 (2018): 1–16.

44 Masschelein, "E-ducating the gaze", 48.

From a theoretical and methodological standpoint, paying attention to the meaning and function of rocking horses in educational environments touches on matters of space and time; movement and rhythm; freedom and imagination; discipline and risk. There is also a rich seam of emotional engagement to be exhumed as identification of the object as a friend and companion has been referred to as easing children's passage from home to school. The rocking horse in the school room, when noticed and lingered with, raises questions about intended purpose and use; siting and placement; ubiquity or otherwise as well as possible reasons for their disappearance from the visual record.

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Angelo Van Gorp and Frederik Herman

On the Trail of the Toucan: A Travelogue about A Peregrination in Educational History

Abstract: This essay explores various storylines knotted to and woven around a wooden inlay puzzle of a rooster (educational toy) and a climbing frame (play sculpture) shaped in the form of a toucan – artistic designs we initially attributed to the Swiss artist Pierre Küenzi. Conceived as an open-ended travelogue that allows readers to embark on an explorative journey together with the authors and feel a bit of the "historical sensation" that pushed us off the beaten track, this account is a first tentative attempt to describe our journey exploring both known and unknown territories and crossing between the worlds of art, urban development, educational reform, experimental psychology, and the publishing industry. This journey started when we revisited several sources regarding Ovide Decroly's educational games and tests and stumbled upon a detail we had been overlooking all the time, namely the image of a rooster puzzle on the cover of a 1978 reprint of Ovide Decroly and Eugénie Monchamp's *Initiation à l'activité intellectuelle et motrice par les jeux éducatifs*. This cover image triggered many questions and urged us to tell the story of these educational and artistic interventions, ultimately leading us to a toucan climbing frame designed for a public playground (ca. 1970).

Keywords: interdisciplinary storytelling, travelogue, art and education, play sculptures and educational toys

> If you look at a dog following the advice of his nose, he traverses a patch of land in a completely unplottable manner. And he invariably finds what he's looking for.
>
> – W. G. Sebald[1]

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[1] Joseph Cuomo, "A Conversation with W. G. Sebald," in *The Emergence of Memory: Conversations with W. G. Sebald*, ed. Lynne Sharon Schwartz (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2007), 94.

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And taking the travel metaphor further, on any journey to a territory which is strange and exotic – however defined – the traveler seeks for the possibilities of adventure and discovery.   – Catherine Burke[2]

Prologue

In 1908, the Belgian educational reformer Ovide Decroly (1871–1932) for the first time presented a "program for a school for life."[3] In keeping with the contemporary discourse on social hygiene, he emphasized the importance of dedicated, conscientious, and well-trained staff, suitable methods and schedules, and a rational program of studies. At school, the focus should be on the child, and the teacher should be the child's intellectual and moral guide. In contrast to the passive role of teachers in the "old" schools, the teachers in the "new" schools should play a more active role by ensuring the most favorable conditions for the child's development.[4] This discourse was obviously not new and had been around since Rousseau, but it nevertheless challenged the child-centered character of the New Education. At the Decroly School, what mattered much more than the wealth and abundance of the material was the understanding of the teacher.[5] It would be necessary to *know* the most favorable conditions in order to be able to organize them. Decroly linked this to the idea of an "evolutionary pedagogy."[6] For him, it was important that small innovations stood the test of experience, no matter what theoretical arguments one put forward in their favor. Among those innovations, Decroly considered educational games to play a crucial role.

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[2] Catherine Burke, "Personal Journeys: An Examination of the Use of the Concept of Time Travel in Constructing Knowledge of Past Educational Spaces," in *Visual History: Images of Education*, ed. Ulrike Mietzner, Kevin Myers, and Nick Peim (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2005), 233–42.

[3] Ovide Decroly, "Le Programme d'une école dans la vie," *L'Ecole nationale* 7, nos. 11–12 (1908): 323–25, 360–62. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are by the authors.

[4] Ovide Decroly, *L'examen affectif en général et chez l'enfant en particulier* (Brussels: Maurice Lamertin, 1926), 7.

[5] Lucie Libois-Fonteyne, "Observation et mesure," in *Initiation à la Méthode Decroly*, ed. Germaine Gallien and Lucie Libois-Fonteyne (Uccle-Brussels: Ermitage, 1946; orig. 1937), 66.

[6] Ovide Decroly, "La pédagogie évolutionniste," *L'Enseignement pratique* 17, no. 1 (1907): 3–5. See also Angelo Van Gorp, "From Special to New Education: The Biological, Psychological, and Sociological Foundations of Ovide Decroly's Educational Work (1871–1932)," *History of Education* 34, no. 2 (2005): 135–49.

Fast forward to a hundred years later. In 2008, at ISCHE 30 in Newark, NJ, we presented a paper whose aim was to demonstrate the historical connection between Decroly's educational games and the intelligence tests he developed.[7] Judging from his 1908 statement, Decroly believed that teachers were not adequately prepared to fulfil their demanding role.[8] He noted that his staff "were unsuccessful, discouraged and on the verge of resignation, like a doctor who, at his wit's end, is abandoning his patient."[9] In 1921, Decroly and Gérard Boon emphasized that it was time to make school a more fruitful experience for a greater number of students.[10] This plea intersected with the emerging educational sciences and a professionalization discourse that had its roots in the nineteenth century.[11] After the introduction of compulsory education in Belgium in 1914, reform became all the more pressing in the post-war context of national restoration: "Now that primary schools keep all students, no matter who they are, until around the age of 14, it has been observed that a very small number of them manage to assimilate the program in the required time [. . .]. Hence the need to increase efficiency"[12] and to introduce both educational games and intelligence tests.

As we further explored the entanglement between games and tests, our initial narrative followed a rather classical or traditional approach to the history of educational sciences – a field of research to which we have contributed extensively, often in collaboration with Frank Simon and Marc Depaepe.[13] However, more recently, and inspired by an ecological approach, we have started to

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7 Angelo Van Gorp and Frederik Herman, "Ovide Decroly's Educational Games: Student's Materials at the Intersection of Pedology and New Education," paper presented for the Standing Working Group on Educational Media in Comparative Perspective at ISCHE 30, Newark, NJ (July 24, 2008).

8 Decroly, *L'examen affectif*, 7.

9 Gérard Boon, *Essai d'application de la Méthode Decroly dans l'Enseignement primaire* (Brussels: J. Lebègue, 1924), 10.

10 Ovide Decroly and Gérard Boon, *Vers l'Ecole rénovée. Une première étape. Classement des écoliers–Programme d'Idées associées–Méthode des centres d'intérêt* (Brussels and Paris: Office de Publicité/Fernand Nathan, 1921), 9.

11 Ovide Decroly and Raymond Buyse, *Introduction à la pédagogie quantitative: Eléments de statistique appliqués aux problèmes pédagogiques* (Brussels: Maurice Lamertin, 1929), 47.

12 Ovide Decroly and Raymond Buyse, *La pratique des tests mentaux: Avec figures et planches* (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1928), 4. See also Ovide Decroly and Raymond Buyse, *Les applications américaines de la psychologie à l'organisation humaine et à l'éducation* (Brussels: Maurice Lamertin, 1923), 10.

13 This collaboration has found its culmination point in Marc Depaepe, Frank Simon, and Angelo Van Gorp, *Ovide Decroly (1871–1932). Une approche atypique?* (Theory and History of Education Monograph Series, Vol. 4) (Kingston, Ontario: Theory and History of Education International

untangle a more explorative or adventurous storyline.[14] In this essay, we want to demonstrate how one small detail in a single source – a book on educational games – managed to lead us off the beaten track, prompting us to ask what connects Decroly and his seminal book on educational games to a plaything at a public playground and a living Swiss artist. Leaving the beaten for the unbeaten track and crossing liminal zones that led us astray several times, we stumbled across an as yet un(der)-explored field of research that extends from the closed environment of the classroom to the public space. Hence, this essay presents itself as a travelogue about and ultimately *beyond* Decroly's work – or, to put it differently, a travelogue about a journey that has taken us away from a "pilgrimage" to classical sources towards a "peregrination" that allowed us to wander from one source to the next without knowing where the journey would lead us.[15]

On the Beaten Track

Although newer generations of Decrolyans seem to have difficulty reconciling Decroly's "quantitative pedagogy" with the New Education's romanticized, spiritualized rhetoric, it is precisely the entanglement of both strands in his work that makes Decroly the fascinating figure he is and that explains his success and status within the New Education Fellowship (N.E.F.). Efficiency would become a keyword in Decroly's postwar psycho-pedagogical work.[16] To achieve this, Decroly proposed a series of measures whose systematic application would yield appreciable results and prepare for the advent of more radical reform. The application of

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Research Group, Queen's University/Queens Library, 2022). Free download: https://queens.scholar sportal.info/omp/index.php/qulp/catalog/book/222

14 See, e.g., Frederik Herman and Ira Plein, "Envisioning the Industrial Past: Pathways of Cultural Learning in Luxembourg (1880s–1920s)," *Paedagogica Historica* 53, no. 3 (2017): 268–84; Angelo Van Gorp, Eulàlia Collelldemont, Inês Félix, Ian Grosvenor, Björn Norlin, and Núria Padrós, "'What Does This Have to Do with Everything Else?': An Ecological Reading of the Impact of the 1918–19 Influenza Pandemic on Education," *Paedagogica Historica* (DOI: 10.1080/00309230.2022.2053555). The latter in particular exemplifies the ecological approach that has been the focus of the History of Educational Ecologies International Research Group (HEC), of which both authors are members.

15 Jens Bartelson, "We Could Remember It for You Wholesale: Myths, Monuments and the Constitution of National Memories," in *Memory, Trauma and World Politics: Reflections on the Relationship between Past and Present*, ed. Duncan Bell (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 44–45.

16 Decroly and Buyse, *Introduction à la pédagogie quantitative*, 10, 42.

a program of associated ideas and a method of centers of interest – the two key elements of what is known as the Decroly Method – could only bear fruit if the measures allowed teachers to take more individualized action.[17] These measures make clear why the application of "an individual pedagogy" should be based on a "differential psychology."[18]

The aim of the measures was especially to homogenize classes and to break with collective didactic traditions in order to adapt education as much as possible to the intellectual capacity of each student. It required sorting out the mentally impaired, eliminating the unstable, determining the probable causes of delinquency, and selecting the more gifted students. Knowing the intellectual capacities of an individual was to take an essential step towards his/her vocational guidance.[19] In addition, class size had to be reduced to allow intensified action on the part of the teacher for the benefit of the individual child.[20] Hence, one of the problems that had to be solved to enable individualized instruction was how to group students.[21] For that purpose, intellectual testing was considered important. The two main goals were to diagnose and classify different types of students. Tests were also of great value in terms of didactic organization and teaching methods. By using tests also in the educational process itself, it was possible to install a "pedagogy of efficiency" and allow teachers to monitor and control the results of their teaching.[22] In the context of this "pedagogical therapy," tests turned into games and vice versa.[23] The *test-games* were intended to facilitate the task of the educator and were the fruit of experiences with both "abnormal" and "normal" children. Conceived in a "psychological spirit," they had received the "sanction of praxis" and were designed for use in the classroom.[24]

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17 Decroly and Boon, *Vers l'Ecole rénovée*, 20.

18 Decroly and Buyse, *Les applications américaines*, 41.

19 Decroly and Buyse, *Les applications américaines*, 40, 42; see also Decroly and Boon, *Vers l'Ecole rénovée*, 9–10.

20 Amélie Hamaïde, *La méthode Decroly: Quatrième édition* (Neuchâtel and Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1946; orig. 1922), 26; see also Decroly and Boon, *Vers l'Ecole rénovée*, 20.

21 Ovide Decroly and Raymond Buyse, *Essais d'application du test de Ballard: Test verbal, collectif, économique* (Brussels: Maurice Lamertin, 1932), 5.

22 Decroly and Buyse, *Les applications américaines*, 39, 43, 51–52.

23 Alice Descoeudres, *L'Education des enfants anormaux: Observations psychologiques et indications pratiques* (Neuchâtel: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1916), 82.

24 Ovide Decroly and Mlle (Eugénie) Monchamp, *L'initiation à l'activité intellectuelle et motrice par les jeux éducatifs: Contribution à la pédagogie des jeunes enfants et des irréguliers* (Neuchâtel: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1914), 8, 14.

Tests and games gave the class the character of a laboratory or workshop where each unit worked according to its capacities, supervised by a competent teacher.[25] In other words, the teacher had to be a "maître-observateur."[26] This emphasis on observation drew our attention to the role of the teacher. According to Jeanne Deschamps, the appeal made to "the spirit of observation" was the most important innovation Decroly introduced in the field of teaching.[27] Another Decrolyan, Julia Degand, wrote that for an educator aiming to overcome difficulties and reach a goal, observation was a powerful source of knowledge.[28] This observation work was essential, because it was at once objective, concrete, and precise. Moreover, it could be easily linked to the study of the child's needs.[29]

Observation work created the ideal environment for the awakening of a scientific spirit in the Decrolyans' minds. For them, the Ecole de l'Ermitage, the school Decroly had founded in 1907, was a dream center for educational studies and functioning as a model laboratory for the application of progressive educational methods. Decrolyans designated their school as an avant-garde school that would pave the way for wider educational reform in Belgium.[30] However, to avoid serious mistakes, it was necessary to carefully define the role teachers had to play in improving school practices. Decroly and Buyse stressed the importance of differentiating between the scientific work that *specialists* needed to do, such as developing intellectual tests and educational games, and the application of such tests and games by "intelligent and specially trained practitioners."[31] Like in medicine, one needed to get rid of "the cunning of the charlatan, the empirical tricks of the *rebouteur*, the dogmatic prescriptions of

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25 Hamaïde, *La méthode Decroly*, 110.

26 Lucien Lefèvre, *Le maître-observateur et acteur: Conduite de la classe. Orientation scolaire* (Paris: Les Editions sociales françaises, 1967).

27 Jeanne Deschamps, *L'Auto-éducation à l'école appliquée au programme du Dr. Decroly, avec une introduction du Dr. Decroly* (Brussels: Maurice Lamertin, 1924), 11.

28 Julia Degand, *Initiation à la Méthode Decroly: Expérience pédagogique de langage visuel graphique. Méthode globale* (Uccle: Centre National d'Education, n.d.), 3.

29 Boon, *Essai d'application*, 33, 57.

30 Angelo Van Gorp, "'Like Air Bricks on Earth': Notes on Developing a Research Agenda regarding the Post-War Legacy of New Education," *Espacio, Tiempo y Educación* 7, no. 1 (2020): 10; Angelo Van Gorp, Frank Simon, and Marc Depaepe, "A rede cultural da Escola de Decroly em Bruxelas: A teoria da organização e a função de guardião da história," *Cadernos de História da Educação* 9 (2010): 345; Marc Depaepe, Maurits De Vroede, and Frank Simon, "The 1936 Curriculum Reform in Belgian Primary Education," *Journal of Educational Policy* 6, no. 4 (1991): 371–83.

31 Decroly and Buyse, *Introduction à la pédagogie quantitative*, 42; see also Decroly and Buyse, *Les applications américaines*, 39.

quacks" in favor of "the skilled art of the experienced practitioner, aided by the science of the laboratory scientist."[32] Under the direction of Decroly, several of his collaborators had become experienced practitioner-researchers or even specialists. Any tribute to Decroly should therefore also include his collaborators. This gradual shift from Decroly to the wider circles of Decrolyans, however, did not immediately result in a biographical perspective on the so-called lesser gods.[33] Although there is still potential for new research and someone like Amélie Hamaïde would be a good starting point to explore the public outreach of Decroly's network – just think of her role at congresses and in the organization of exhibitions[34] – the volume at hand, on public histories of education, stimulated us to move *off* the beaten track.

Off the Beaten Track

Ultimately, our focus on the Decrolyans aroused our "ruminant curiosity," for which the German writer W. G. Sebald used the image of a dog running around in a field and following "the advice of his nose." This "persistent canine sniffing" takes you from one thing to another, culminating in an assemblage of things.[35] As Sebald explained: "If you look for things that are like the things that you have looked for before, then, obviously, they'll connect up. [. . .] So you have to take heterogeneous materials in order to get your mind to do something that it hasn't done before. [. . .] Then, of course, curiosity gets the better of you."[36] This statement made us revisit the 1978 (i.e., the very last) reprint of Decroly and

32 Decroly and Buyse, *Introduction à la pédagogie quantitative*, 44.

33 Marc Depaepe, Frank Simon, and Angelo Van Gorp, "The 'Good Practices' of Jozef Emiel Verheyen: Schoolman and Professor of Education at the Ghent University," in *Educational Research: Why 'What Works' Doesn't Work*, ed. Paul Smeyers and Marc Depaepe (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), 17–23.

34 See, e.g., Alexander S. Neill, "The Exhibition," *The New Era* 2 (1921): 219; Adolphe Ferrière, "The New Schools," *The New Era* 2 (1921): 228; Amélie Hamaïde, "L'œuvre du Dr. Decroly en Belgique," *Pour l'Ere nouvelle* 1, no. 1 (1922): 16–18; Adolphe Ferrière, "Discours d'inauguration," *Pour l'Ere nouvelle* 2, no. 8 (1923): 78; J. L. Claparède, "Exposition de Matériel d'Enseignement," *Pour L'Ere nouvelle* 6, no. 32 (1927): 265. See also "Freedom through Creative Art: New Ways in Art Teaching (Exhibition of Teaching Apparatus)," *The New Era* 8, no. 32 (1927): 165.

35 Jed Rasula, *Genre and Extravagance in the Novel: Lower Frequencies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 180.

36 Cuomo, "A Conversation with W. G. Sebald," 94; see also Patrick Joyce, *Going to My Father's House: A History of My Times* (London: Verso, 2021), 318.

Monchamp's key work on educational games.[37] The cover shows a colorful wooden inlay puzzle of a stylized rooster with a modern, abstract touch, designed by Pierre Küenzi and manufactured by Jeux Delachaux et Niestlé (Figure 1). It is not the kind of game, at least not in its design, that we associated with Decroly's educational games, for it stands out for its "artistic quality," as André Michelet, the editor of the book, rightly emphasized.[38]

Figure 1: Rooster inlay puzzle by Pierre Küenzi. Reprinted from Ovide Decroly and Eugénie Monchamp, *El Juego Educativo: Iniciación a la actividad intelectual y motriz. Cuarta edición de la 7.ᵃ edición francesa corregida y actualizada por (André) Michelet* (Madrid: Ediciónes Morata, 2002).

An obvious explanation for why the rooster is on the cover of the book is that the publisher, Delachaux et Niestlé (D.N.), wanted to promote its own educational games.[39] D.N. had a long partnership with the Decrolyans. Alice Descoeudres (1877–1963), who had completed a short internship at Decroly's Institut d'Enseignement spécial in 1909, played a key role in this partnership. While she discovered that several teachers did in fact invent educational games, she realized that making games required considerable time, which not all teachers had.[40] With Decroly's permission and the support of the Institut J. J. Rousseau in Geneva, she managed to publish a series of educational games based on the work

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37 Ovide Decroly and Mlle (Eugénie) Monchamp, *Initiation à l'activité intellectuelle et motrice par les jeux éducatifs, 7e édition complétée et actualisée par A. Michelet* (Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1978).

38 Decroly and Monchamp, *Initiation à l'activité intellectuelle: 7e édition*, 154.

39 The rooster is also on the cover of a Spanish edition of the book: Ovide Decroly and Eugénie Monchamp, *El Juego Educativo: Iniciación a la actividad intelectual y motriz. Cuarta edición de la 7.ᵃ edición francesa corregida y actualizada por A. Michelet* (Madrid: Ediciónes Morata, 2002).

40 Descoeudres, *L'Éducation des enfants anormaux*, 83, 285.

of Decroly and Monchamp.[41] This was followed by a series of complementary editions, the most famous of which is undoubtedly the French edition published by Fernand Nathan.[42]

In his introductory chapter to the book, André Michelet, who revised the book and also added some chapters, emphasized the topicality of Decroly's educational games. He noted that it was no exaggeration to say that the 1914 volume was "a fundamental book from which derive the current form of pre-school education, and the design of modern educational material, almost all of which is inspired by Decroly."[43] Besides the fact that this statement is indeed an exaggeration, it is also important to point out that the games were largely *not* an invention of Decroly, as he indicated himself.[44] That Michelet had a very loose conception of "Decroly games" is apparent from his overview of so-called contemporary editions, which he distinguished from the original editions. By doing so, his objective was not to establish an exhaustive list of "Decroly materials in its current form, moreover constantly adaptable," but to provide a guide allowing teachers – "as Decroly would have wished it" – to build a collection of essential materials. In that regard, he decided to include, without limitation, material "of classical appearance," as well as "the best modern adaptations."[45] According to Michelet, Küenzi's wooden inlay puzzles belonged to this last category.[46]

In our opinion, the same artistic quality that characterizes the rooster also applies to a wooden inlay puzzle of a toucan that is shown on a flyer promoting a selection of "jeux créatifs" from the D.N. catalogue (Figure 2). For us, this reference to Küenzi, who we thought to be a Decrolyan, was the ultimate push to get off the beaten track. We had become curious and wanted to find out more about the artist behind the puzzles. Soon we found his name in an article featuring images of so-called *sculptures-jeux* (play sculptures).[47] Among those play

41 These first games were published as *Jeux éducatifs d'après Dr. Decroly et Mlle Monchamp pour les jeunes enfants et les élèves arriérés* in two series of 15 games each. This must have happened between 1912 and 1914, for the Institut J. J. Rousseau was only founded in 1912 and the first edition of Decroly's and Monchamp's book, published in 1914, already contains an advertisement for them.

42 Decroly and Monchamp, *Initiation à l'activité intellectuelle, 7e édition*, 147.

43 Decroly and Monchamp, *Initiation à l'activité intellectuelle, 7e édition*, 9.

44 Decroly and Monchamp, *Initiation à l'activité intellectuelle, 7e édition,* 9.

45 Decroly and Monchamp, *Initiation à l'activité intellectuelle, 7e édition*, 148.

46 Decroly and Monchamp, *Initiation à l'activité intellectuelle. 7e édition*, 154. Michelet misspelled the name as "Kuenzli."

47 "France: sculptures de jeu," *Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* 166 (1973): 29–34. See The Playground Project Architektur für Kinder, accessed November 3, 2021, http://architekturfuer kinder.ch/sculptures-jeu-france/.

Figure 2: Flyer (sales brochure) of Pierre Küenzi's toys selected from the D.N. catalogue on "creative games."

sculptures was a climbing frame of a toucan that looked very similar to Küenzi's toucan inlay puzzle. That link between educational games and play sculptures caught our attention. We decided to follow the trail of the toucan and thus discovered territory that would finally take us *beyond* Decroly.

But what story is there to be told about an inlay puzzle and a climbing frame, two at first sight completely different artistic interventions from two different contexts in the 1970s? Even without putting the inlay puzzles and the climbing frame in their respective contexts of design, creation, and use, one can easily associate them with children playing. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, both bird interpretations could be said to have an artistic quality, as opposed to mass-produced toys and games – and could thus be called forms of public art. While they are familiar and taken-for-granted environmental features for many of us, they have been frequently overlooked and neglected by educational and art historians.[48] Therefore, we would like to take them as a point of departure for our second storyline.

In what follows we will approach the rooster and toucan inlay puzzles and the toucan climbing frame – which we both attributed to the same designer – through the perspective of Pierre Küenzi himself. In other words, we will add two more threads to the meshwork of storylines about educational games (e.g., on people, institutes, locations, methods, theories, and objects).[49] After gathering some information about Küenzi online, we managed to obtain his contact information and schedule an interview. Because Küenzi had told us during our first phone call that he had not been designing toys for a long time and that he had left the educational field some four decades earlier, the interviewer (F. Herman) brought along some printed documents – a book cover, a sales brochure, newspaper articles – to trigger Küenzi's memory. He visited the artist in the small village of Orges in the canton of Vaud, close to Yverdon-les-Bains. He was cordially welcomed and shown to Küenzi's studio on the first floor. It was a

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48 See, e.g., Catherine Burke, Jeremy Howard and Peter Cunningham, eds., *The Decorated School: Essays in the Visual Culture of Schooling* (London: Black Dog, 2013), 9.

49 Tim Ingold, *Lines: A Brief History* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007); Tim Ingold, *Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011). Such ecological arrangements could also be called, for example, a "network," a "rhizome," a "system," or a "map." See, respectively, Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 121, 133; Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (London and Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987); Fritjof Capra and Pier Luigi Luisi, *The Systems View of Life: A Unifying Vision* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Michel Serres, *Atlas* (Paris: Editions Julliard, 1994).

small but cozy room, with a colorful draftsman table that Küenzi had made himself and that was partly covered with boxes of watercolor pencils (Figure 3).

Based on both the online information and the interview, we will tell the story of Küenzi, his inlay puzzles and the climbing frame through a biographical lens. As it turned out, the story contained surprising elements and confronted us with both hasty conclusions and the messiness of history.[50]

Figure 3: Pierre Küenzi in front of one of his paintings in his home studio in Orges (Switzerland), October 14, 2021, touching one of his educational games (photograph: Frederik Herman).

The puzzle of the rooster (Figure 1) turned out to be the first wooden educational game made by the then eighteen-year-old Küenzi, who was born in Bern in 1945. He made it for his sister, who was at the time working as a kindergarten teacher. Around the age of 18 or 19, he, like many adolescents and young adults, was searching for the meaning of life and dreamed of changing the world for the better. As an idealist and politically engaged young adult living in the tension-filled

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50 See Hans Renders and Binne de Haan, eds., *Theoretical Discussions of Biography: Approaches from History, Microhistory, and Life Writing* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2013); Peter Viereck, "Clio Is No Cleo: The Messiness of History," *Society* 41, no. 3 (2004): 10–14.

Cold War period with its expanding nuclear arsenal, he sought to catalyze his feelings, dreams, and uncertainties artistically – for example, by writing poems, being part of a jazz quartet, and designing and making toys. He made his first toys at his kitchen table in Lausanne in the evenings and on the weekends. To make ends meet and to stay in touch with the world, he also worked in different jobs, with these "supplementary activities" taking up nine hours a day.[51]

It was mainly in the artistic creation and manual fabrication of toys that he found meaning, as he believed that these toys would make a difference in the life of children: "If one wants to change the world, one has to start with the children, because they will be the carriers of change."[52] Quite early in his life, he was convinced that his life task was to create toys with an educational value (as opposed to what he saw as the simplicity and naïveté of existing toys). He also believed in a trial-and-error process of experimentation while imagining, designing, and building the toys.[53] In his opinion, playing was more than just experiencing "pleasure" while being occupied. In fact, playing was real labor for the children, which adults should not belittle by referring to "the byproduct pleasure" only. Toys were tools – whether for knowledge acquisition or therapeutic purposes – allowing children to communicate, discover the world, engage in role-play, fantasize and/or relive situations they had experienced (e.g., suffering).[54] Retrospectively, Küenzi reflected on education as a kind of steering or herding. In his view, teachers and educators as well as educational toys were "herdsmen leading the flock of children progressively to adulthood."[55]

Küenzi started by making wooden 2-D inlay puzzles. The puzzles could be assembled within their wooden casing, and some of them even made it possible to create variations. The *fish wave* (Figure 4), for example, made it possible for the child to make several fish and/or waves from the puzzle pieces; they could also be put in an upright position to create a sea landscape.[56] Later, Küenzi would also develop more complex wooden construction games in 3-D consisting

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51 MHK, "Le Centre ASI principal partenaire de Pierre Kuenzi: Une fabrique de jouets pas comme les autres," *L'Impartial*, April 17–18, 1976, 3.

52 Pierre Küenzi, interview by Frederik Herman, Orges (CH), October 14, 2021, tape recording, 00:06:45–00:06:50.

53 At this point in the interview, Küenzi for the first time referred to Jean Piaget (*tâtonnement expérimental*). He also mentioned other educational reformers like Célestin Freinet, Maria Montessori, and Edouard Claparède, but throughout the interview, the Swiss Piaget was his reference point.

54 Küenzi, interview, 00:16:00.

55 See also MHK, "Pierre Kuenzi, homme des bois de la meilleure veine: 'Le jouet, un peu berger de la vie,'" *L'Impartial*, April 14, 1976, 3.

56 Personal communication, October 27, 2021.

of wooden building blocks and always combining two key dimensions: construction/stability (represented by the cubes) and mobility/movement (represented by the spheres). He gave all his toys and games poetical names, from *Horse to love* to *Square ball* and *After the rain the good weather* to *Heart in the tree* and *The black sheep*. The toys, as well as their names, should function as "conductors of dreams," as "dischargers of sparks" and as "little shepherds of life," as Küenzi explained.[57] In fact, a journalist once suggested that the toys' material and artistic quality – the wood, the design and simple shapes, the carefully polished edges, the well-considered color schemes, the painted or satined surfaces – invite observers to touch, caress, and engage with the objects.[58]

Figure 4: The *poisson-vague* (fish wave), game no. JC-004 in the D.N. catalogue of creative games.

During the interview, Küenzi called his toys "wooden Lego," suggesting that his toys had the same characteristics as the successful and colorful mass-produced plastic bricks. The building blocks of different toy sets could be combined, used to rebuild a model or to create something totally different, and they could be easily stored away in wooden boxes. Some toy sets and building blocks could be attached, via a string, to a wooden truck for transport. According to Küenzi, he found inspiration for his toys in the theories of his compatriot Jean Piaget, who turned out to be the *leitmotif* of the interview. Already early in his career, Küenzi immersed himself in Piaget's theories. Whether this was really an *a priori* inspiration or an *a posteriori* appropriation of Piaget's theories remains an open question.

The toys Küenzi made soon earned a reputation for being beautiful and solid. Several parents of children with disability got in touch with him. He invited them and their children to his home to figure out what toys he could make especially for them. He was deeply touched by the fact that children with

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57 MHK, "Pierre Kuenzi," 3.
58 MHK, "Pierre Kuenzi," 3.

disabilities were often discriminated against and did not have access to custom-made toys. At this point, he felt the need to complete an internship at an institution for people with disabilities. During this six-month traineeship at the Maison Blanche (White House) in Leubringen,[59] where he was part of a small unit working with children with cerebral palsy,[60] an internal conflict arose between the unit's chief physician and the institute's director. The latter wanted to shut down the unit, which triggered a revolt within the unit's team. Three of them, including Küenzi, wrote to the main physician of the canton of Bern, stressing the importance of the unit. The director of public health of the canton accepted their reasoning, and the unit was relocated to the Wildermeth Children's Hospital in Bienne.

Once the unit was transferred, Küenzi was asked – as one of the few men active in this field and supported by the female staff – to serve as director of the unit. He agreed to fill this role for one year, as he wanted to continue to create toys for children. Word got out and Küenzi was subsequently contacted by the director of the recently opened Cité des enfants (children's city) in Saint-Légier in the canton of Vaud. The institute had been established in 1969 for approximately 130 children with disabilities.[61] The head of the Cité des enfants, who had learned about Küenzi from the physician responsible for disability studies at the University of Fribourg, offered Küenzi the opportunity to enroll part-time in the university's training program in *pédagogie curative* (orthopedagogics) and immediately hired him as a *responsable pédagogigue* (educational director). In this role, which he held from 1971 onwards, Küenzi was asked to improve the living environment, materials, and games for children.[62]

Quite early in his career, his efforts were rewarded with a scholarship in applied arts by the Federal Council of Switzerland, a distinction he received three years in a row (in 1969, 1970, and 1971). Afterwards, he was taken more seriously.[63] Besides designing toys, Küenzi was also actively involved in the

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59 The *Kindersanatorium Maison blanche Leubringen/Maison blanche, Sanatorium pour enfants* in Evilard in the canton of Bern was initially founded in 1907/08 to treat children susceptible to or suffering from tuberculosis.

60 In this unit, the Bobath concept was applied, a multidisciplinary approach to treating patients with neuromotor dysfunctions and anomalies of the central nervous system.

61 As part of the *Oeuvre d'Eben-Hézer*, initiated by Sister Julie Hofmann in 1899. For more information about this foundation and its institutional development, see Fondation Eben-Hézer, "Historique," accessed November 3, 2021, https://www.eben-hezer.ch/historique-la-fondation.html.

62 MHK, "Le Centre ASI," 3.

63 MHK, "Le Centre ASI," 3.

field of orthopedagogics and disability studies. Among other things, he taught for ten years at the Ecole d'études sociales et pédagogiques (EESP, School of Social and Educational Studies) in Lausanne, where he trained social workers, kindergarten teachers, and specialized teachers.[64] He also organized training sessions for adults (e.g., parents), inviting them to play like children and thus revisit childhood.[65]

Even though many people advised against it, he nonetheless started a small one-man business for designing toys, crafting them by hand at his kitchen table and selling them at local markets. As the orders were multiplying and his various educational jobs, including the training program at the University of Fribourg, were taking more and more time, he outsourced the production, marketing, and sales to the Centre ASI at Chaux-de-Fonds, a sheltered workshop for people with disabilities.

> But why people with disabilities? Why not a factory? There were undoubtedly many who would have been glad to start a business with Küenzi's toys, which were becoming more and more well-known, recognized and appreciated. [. . .] Küenzi wanted to remain faithful to a line of reasoning: to produce only artisanally – each toy made by hand, because the object that was touched while being manufactured has a totally different value; and to market without intermediaries, without excessive profit, providing not only an after-sales service but also opportunities for engaging in a dialogue with buyers.[66]

In 1976, twelve people with disabilities were involved in the production process, and they manufactured approximately thirty toys a day by hand, starting with a rough piece of wood and turning it into a nicely polished, colorful toy. Their productivity naturally depended on the model's level of complexity; at the time, the workshop produced about sixty different toys.[67] Whereas Küenzi favored selling the toys in the associated shop and to smaller toy stores in Switzerland (Interlaken, Zürich, Bern, etc.), the Centre ASI wanted to scale up and increasingly turned to larger vendors, which they found, for instance, on the

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[64] This institute is now integrated into La Haute école de travail social et de la santé Lausanne (HETSL). For a more detailed timeline of the institute's history, see Haute école de travail social et de la santé Lausanne, "Historique," accessed November 3, 2021, https://www.hetsl.ch/organisation/fondation-hetsl/historique/.

[65] He combined these two roles of artistic designer and curative educationalist until his forties when he left the educational sector to focus solely on his artistic career. Küenzi, interview, 00:43:00.

[66] MHK, "Le Centre ASI," 3.

[67] MHK, "Le Centre ASI," 3.

German market. A savvy German seller with connections to the Germany Ministry of Education made videos of the toys and showed them at schools in Germany.[68] This strategy was so successful that the Centre ASI soon decided to produce exclusively for the German market. However, as soon as the production manager at the Centre ASI raised prices to defray the costs resulting from the complicated and time-consuming production process, Germany canceled the deal. This was the beginning of the end of this small production workshop. Küenzi and the Centre ASI contacted Delachaux et Niestlé (D.N.), first for the distribution of his toys and later also for their production, and eventually the workshop closed its doors.[69]

Through international marketing campaigns, Küenzi's toys became known around the world, from the United States to Japan. They were presented at the annual Spielwarenmesse (toy fair) in Nuremberg, Germany, one of the biggest international trade fairs for toys and games since 1949/50,[70] and advertised in widely distributed promotion folders. The publishing house, D.N., acted independently and did not always inform Küenzi about its promotion campaigns. For example, Küenzi was not even aware that his rooster inlay puzzle was used as a cover illustration for the 1978 edition of Decroly and Monchamp's book.[71] As mentioned earlier, it was in this edition that we found the flyer showing Küenzi's toys (Figure 2), which D.N. apparently added to their topic-related books. Despite their efforts, the sale of Küenzi's wooden toys did not run smoothly. Times were changing and the demand for expensive wooden toys was decreasing. Moreover, after D.N. had moved the production site to a factory in France, the company was confronted with the country's high value added tax (VAT) of 33% on toys, which made them even more expensive. As a result, the business gradually faded.

As part of Le Groupe Granit, a collective of artists, designers, and architects, Küenzi – together with Etienne Delessert, Pierre Jaquier, and Poncet de la Grave – also designed a playground sculpture train but *not* the toucan climbing

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68 Küenzi, interview, 00:39:00.

69 Küenzi, interview, 00:31:20. Founded in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, in 1882, Delachaux et Niestlé, from the 1910s, specialized in books on (new and special) education and psychology – e.g., by Robert Baden-Powell, Jean Piaget, Edouard Claparède, Célestin Freinet, Amélie Hamaïde. For more information on the publisher's history, see also Jacques Rychner and Michel Schlup, *Editeurs neuchâtelois du XXe siècle* (Neuchâtel: Bibliothèque publique et universitaire, 1987).

70 Küenzi, interview, 00:31:44.

71 In fact, Küenzi was not even familiar with Decroly's work and publications. Thus, contrary to what we had assumed, Küenzi was not a Decrolyan, i.e., an ardent supporter of Decroly's pedagogical ideas.

Figure 5: Play sculptures designed by the collective *Le Groupe Granit*. The sun and moon seesaw and the toucan were designed by Etienne Delessert, the train by Pierre Küenzi. Source: The Playground Project Architektur für Kinder, http://architekturfuerkinder.ch/sculptures-jeu-france/ (accessed November 3, 2021).

frame (Figure 5), as we had wrongly assumed because of his toucan inlay puzzle (see Figure 2). It was the Swiss painter, children's book author, and illustrator Etienne Delessert (born in Lausanne in 1941) – the only member of the collective with an established career at the time – who had taken the lead and imposed his style. With the increasing focus on play areas for children in urbanized areas,[72] the group, just like other collectives such as le Groupe LUDIC and le Groupe Artur (art urbain), thought that they had found a niche in the

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[72] See, e.g., Håkan Forsell, "Die großstädtische Kindheit," in *Kindheiten in der Moderne: Eine Geschichte der Sorge*, ed. Meike S. Baader et al. (Frankfurt and New York: Campus Verlag, 2014), 191–225. Quite early, Pro Juventute, a Swiss foundation for youth welfare established in 1912, had put the organization of leisure time in urban and industrial areas on the agenda in Switzerland. In 1953, they organized the Fifth Congrès des écoles de plein air, which also paid attention to playgrounds. See "The Playground Project Architektur für Kinder–Schweiz," accessed November 3, 2021, http://architekturfuerkinder.ch/ch-zuerich/.

market.[73] They hoped that their designs would be mass produced and find their way to many playgrounds, but only one piece of each sculpture was made. Later on, the pieces were installed at a playground in Lausanne, and it remained a one-time experiment – perhaps also because the collaboration between their "star" member Delessert and the "three small dwarfs" proved to be somewhat difficult. In hindsight, Pierre Küenzi considers the playground project as "not significant at all" in his career as a designer of "artistic, educational games."[74] In his opinion, his train climbing frame is something totally different from his educational toys.

Outlook

While the format of a conventional travelogue would require us to finish this essay by "returning to the starting point of the journey ('home')" – in this case, Decroly –, we rather feel the need for "resisting closure," for emphasizing our "uncertainty, wandering or openness to multiple stories," and for seeing our "contemporary" travelogue as unfinished business.[75] Starting from our juxtaposition of two storylines – one *on* beaten, the other *off* beaten tracks –, we would like to continue catering to our need "to experience new, 'genuine' sensations of exploring unknown lands," which we also relate to Johan Huizinga's "historical sensation."[76] We deliberately refer to Huizinga, as hardly any study of children's play goes without mentioning his seminal work on "homo ludens." In this work, Huizinga describes the main characteristics of play in its relationship to culture, paying special attention to its social manifestations across time and space.[77] Our journey made us particularly aware of both these dimensions. Both storylines,

73 See, e.g., Maryse Rodriguez, "Le jeu et l'architecture scolaire: étude de quelques dispositifs architecturaux de nature à favoriser le jeu de l'enfant," special double issue, *Chantiers dans l'Enseignement Spécial* 11–12 (June – July 1977).

74 Küenzi, interview, 00:01:50.

75 Ekaterina Purgina, "Imagined Geography of Russia in Western Travelogues: Conceptualizing Space through History," *Social Science Information* 59, no. 2 (2020): 266.

76 Purgina, "Imagined Geography," 265. See also Jeroen J. H. Dekker, "Dangerous, Seductive, and Innovative: Visual Sources for the History of Education," in *Folds of Past, Present and Future: Reconfiguring Contemporary Histories of Education*, ed. Sarah Van Ruyskensvelde, Geert Thysen, Frederik Herman, Angelo Van Gorp, and Pieter Verstraete (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2021), 388.

77 Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture* (London, Boston and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949), 7–10.

although connected through manifold "lines of flight,"[78] force us to stress the importance of distinguishing between the closed epoch of New Education and, in this case, a post-Decrolyan epoch.[79] However, our travelogue reveals an "imagined geography" that extends far beyond the beaten track.[80] Hence, the Decrolyan case turned out to be only one plateau of the rhizome we discovered and explored on our journey. We will now allow curiosity to lead us further off the path, where more stories wait to be discovered.[81]

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78 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*. Possible lines of flight include, e.g., the social-reform agenda and its concern with disabled children as well as different institutional contexts, materialities of schooling, public spaces, and forms of public art.

79 Van Gorp, "'Like Air Bricks on Earth'," 15.

80 Purgina, "Imagined Geography."

81 See also Donna J. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2016), 127.

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Wayne J. Urban
Reflections of a Textbook Writer

Abstract: This essay describes the development and reception of a history of American education textbook written by the author and two co-authors. It details how the textbook was conceived and initially written, its further development in five subsequent editions, and its reception by students and by other scholars of American educational history. A relatively positive acceptance by students and teachers of those students is contrasted with a relatively diffident response from historians of education. Acceptance from students and teachers indicates a different orientation in their experience with history of education from that of those who produce research in the field. That difference is complicated, at least for the author, in his own recent experience as a teacher of the history of American higher education. His efforts to get students to value research as a way to learn, in addition to reading a textbook in the field. Textbooks are a valuable tool for students in history of education, and in history of higher education, but encouraging students to engage in their own scholarly efforts is also of great significance. The essay ends with a brief discussion of public history as both a product of scholarly research and as a field for student involvement in the production of that research.

Keywords: textbooks, teaching, research, scholarship, relationship among these topics

Introduction

This essay is prompted by an invitation to contribute to the volume in honor of Professor Frank Simon, retired from the University of Ghent, in Belgium, and from the editorship of *Paedogica Historica*, a noted international journal devoted to the History of Education. When asked to contribute to the volume, I hesitated because of my lack of background in its stated theme, public histories of education. When reassured by the volume's editors that having a textbook in print for over two decades qualified for consideration in a volume dedicated to public histories of education, I happily agreed to participate. To me, students who read a

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textbook in the history of education are indeed, part of a public larger than the historians of education, those who do and those who don't, write textbooks.

Though the first edition of the textbook I co-authored with Jennings Wagoner, *American Education: A History*, was published in 1996, the roots of this project date back to the 1960s, when Jennings and I were doctoral students at Ohio State University. A group of four or five Teaching Assistants, including Jennings and I, taught multiple sections of a history of western education course and spent a good bit of time in each other's classes as well as in our own classes, and in those we were taking from our professors. The point is we valued teaching as a more than individual enterprise; we considered it an activity in which we interacted with each other in pursuit of effectiveness, as well as our own individual improvement as teachers and scholarly historians of education.

Thus, when Jennings invited me to work with him on a history of American education textbook for which he had contracted with the McGraw-Hill company, I was inclined by my doctoral adventures, and my personal regard for Jennings, to say yes. My positive response was reinforced by two other circumstances: 1) my wife had encouraged me toward a scholarly project which might have a monetary payoff, rather than the university press monographs which had held my attention and done little to benefit our household economically since the beginning of my academic career; and 2) Lane Akers, the McGraw Hill editor with whom Jennings was working on the manuscript was originally from Atlanta, where I lived and worked, and was someone whom I had gotten to know and respect over the years.

I'm not sure when Jennings began work on the manuscript for our textbook, but it was several years before I entered the picture in the early 1990s. Jennings was making little progress on completing the manuscript beyond his treatments of the pre-colonial and 17th and 18th century periods, which he had drafted and was continually working on improving. To say that Jennings was a perfectionist in his academic work is to simultaneously credit his commitment to excellence in his scholarship and his reluctance to see any work as finished, even when further revisions might have been superfluous to most people. I, on the other hand, was the kind of academic who valued productivity in the concrete senses of pages produced and projects completed, rather than in terms of any overarching goal of perfection. I had more faith, perhaps misguided, in editors' ability to improve my work than did Jennings. It was with these contrasts in mind, though not necessarily precisely as described above, that Jennings and Lane invited me to participate in the textbook project. I took on the task of preparing drafts of chapters beginning with the common school reforms of the 1820s, 30s, and 40s and covering the periods after that up to the 1990s. Jennings, as noted earlier, was working on the pre-colonial and early American chapters discussed above. He was also completing a

chapter on education in the South through the entire nineteenth century, which overlapped to some extent with my two chapters on that century. When we finally finished the manuscript which reflected the work we both had done on drafts of chapters, and reading the suggested changes in the chapters written by the other author, we arrived with a volume totaling 393 pages of text. My original drafts accounted for 217 pages of the published manuscript, a situation which prompted Jennings graciously to arrange to have me as first author of a work which he had initiated. I, perhaps not so graciously, accepted this arrangement and so the book became Urban and Wagoner, *American Education: A History*.

Writing a Textbook

I had never written anything like a textbook, though I had been teaching a history of American education course consistently since my arrival at Georgia State University in Atlanta in 1971. Sometime around 1990, a student in my class asked if he could tape the class sessions as an aid for his comprehension. I had no objection and, a year or so later, when I agreed to work with Jennings on the text, I asked him for a copy of the tape(s). Those tapes turned out to be the basis for most of my chapters in the textbook. I hesitate to call these tapes of "lectures," since I relied a good bit on class discussion of the materials under study in the class. Yet I also had a relatively clear idea of what I wanted to deal with in each class session and made a good faith effort to "cover" that material in our class discussions.

I remember Lane Akers, and his editorial successors, having our text read and commented on by scholars who were using it and having those readers make suggestions regarding additions, subtractions, change of emphases, etc., prior to each new edition. I also think I remember Lane having that done prior to publication of the first edition. I cannot say that we assiduously followed the suggestions of our critical readers in any of our editions, though we did go over their suggestions and make changes in reaction to them on more than one occasion.

The textbook universe in the history of American education was relatively small when we first published our work in 1996.[1] Intellectually dominant in the historiography of American education was the volume co-authored by R. Freeman Butts and Lawrence Cremin, *A History of Education in American Culture*, published

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[1] Wayne Urban and Jennings Wagoner, *American Education: A History* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1996).

initially in 1953.[2] The product of two of the most eminent scholars in the field of history of education, the volume stood as a landmark effort in the field, and sold well long after its initial publication, though it was never revised. A competitor that was more text-like than Butts and Cremin, at least one that had fewer pages and was written for the student market as much as it was for other scholars, was S. Alexander Rippa, *Education in a Free Society: An American History*.[3] Rippa's work went through five revisions culminating with a sixth edition in 1988.

The Butts and Cremin volume was comprehensive and relatively true to its titled emphasis on American culture in its treatment, while the Rippa volume had a more politically oriented slant on the topic, though it was not produced by a scholar particularly versed in the literature of American educational history. I used neither of these volumes in my teaching, preferring instead to use a series of three or four paperbacks on various aspects of, and with various approaches to, educational history, and filling in the blanks between those treatments with supplemental readings and brief class treatments of issues not covered in them. There was one of these paperback volumes that, like a text, spanned most of the historical period from pre-colonial times to the Great Depression during which it was published. This was a 1935 book by the noted American intellectual historian Merle Curti on the social ideas of America's leading educators. A second edition of the Curti volume was published in 1959, with a chapter added covering the twenty-five years since initial publication.[4]

The Butts and Cremin volume was over 600 pages long, and steeped in a cultural approach that had little appeal for me, one who was nurtured by the political radicalism of the 1960s. The Rippa volume, while overtly political, stopped short of rigorous political critique and paid scant attention to historical scholarship relevant to the topic. The Curti work, by far the oldest of the three, appealed to me for its comprehensive historical treatment of those it studied and its near Marxist analysis of American institutions, including schools; however, it also was dated in that it did not, or more correctly it could not, consider the scholarship in American educational history of the 1960s that had simultaneously enriched and complicated its neo-Marxist political, economic, and social reform thrust.

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2 R. Freeman Butts and Lawrence Cremin, *A History of Education in American Culture* (New York: Henry Holt, 1953).

3 S. Alexander Rippa, *Education in a Free Society: An American History* (New York: David McKay, 1967). The 6th edition was published by Longman in 1988.

4 Merle Curti, *The Social ideas of American Educators:* Part X of the Report of the Commission on the Social Studies, the American Historical Association (New York: Scribner's 1935). Published in 1959, with the same title and a special chapter on the last twenty-five years by Pageant Books.

These three volumes all shared a kind of "Whiggish" interpretation of American history and American educational history. What I mean by that is that they were all generally favorable toward the American common schools of the early nineteenth century, and the public schools of the twentieth century that were built to a large extent on the common school principles. These schools were not seen through completely rose-colored glasses, but it seems fair to say that all three volumes saw American history, and American educational history, as a movement, though not uniform in intensity or direction, that attempted to support American society as a developing democratic enterprise. Curti's book, as mentioned earlier, was the most radical politically of the three texts, featuring an economic analysis that tied the schools to the structures of American society and economy and acknowledged that neither the schools nor that society existed in a convincingly democratic context. Curti's added chapter in his 1959 publication attempted to assess the schools critically as progressive institutions, that is as institutions that had tried to develop in conformity with the progressive political principles of equality of opportunity and social amelioration that characterized the political and educational reform movement of the first half of the twentieth century. Though Curti found schools less than satisfactory in many respects, he also saw the reforms of the post-depression years, as proffered by John Dewey, George Counts, and other progressives, as genuine attempts at politically and economically democratic amelioration.

The Revisionist Challenge

What none of these histories had, and could not have had, was an analysis that acknowledged the revisionist scholarship that had coursed through American educational historiography in the late 1960s and after. This scholarship, often and correctly associated with scholars such as Michael Katz and Clarence Karier, was an earthquake on the scholarly landscape of educational history. Katz may be said to have fired the first shot in the revisionist attack on Whiggish history and its positive interpretation of the development of the common school in his 1968 volume, *The Irony of Early School Reform*.[5] Katz pioneered a quantitative approach to educational history in this volume but, more controversially, he argued that his evidence showed that the common school in Massachusetts, from its inception, was an institution geared to the maintenance of class distinctions, not their

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5 Michael B. Katz, *The Irony of Early School Reform: Educational Innovation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Massachusetts* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968).

amelioration. This argument hit at the heart of traditional educational history's contention that the common school was an institution which sought to support social mobility and, thus, further the democratization of American society.

The revisionist attack on the common school and its successor institution the public school as democratic institutions was waged by historians other than Katz, though most of these were scholars without the quantitative skills or social history bent that he represented. Clarence Karier spearheaded an intellectual history-based assault on American society, and its schools, as anti-democratic and on American society itself as the antithesis of democracy in a series of publications, beginning with *Roots of Crisis* (1973). In that work, Karier and two coauthors saw the American crisis of the Vietnam War era as having its genesis much earlier in the twentieth century.[6] A particular target of Karier in his work was John Dewey, noted educational philosopher and social critic and reformer, and a darling of many American educators, particularly those who associated their work with the progressive education reform movement. The critique of liberal progressivism in general, and of Dewey in particular, pointed to a tendency of liberals when confronted with revolution or reaction, to embrace the latter rather than the former.

While Wagoner and I had studied at Ohio State, an institution noted as a stalwart of the progressive education movement, neither of us were reflexive defenders of progressive education, or of the common schools. I myself had attended Roman Catholic schools in the city of Cleveland and a Jesuit university also in that city. While I was no slavish defender of Catholicisim or Catholic education, I understood personally how it provided an alternative, especially in large and ethnically diverse cities, for Catholic students to get an education which honored their backgrounds, rather than question them.

Jennings and I wanted in our textbook, therefore, to recognize the challenge of revisionist historical analyses like those of Katz and Karier and his colleagues. Yet we also wanted to subject those analyses and the revisionist argument they represented to the same rigorous criticism that the revisionists had lodged against American public schooling and its historical apologists. What we were attempting to do in our textbook then was to present a coherent story of the development of American schooling that alerted students both to the promise of the American public school and the rigorous historical criticism which had been lodged against that school, and American society, for failing to deliver on matters of social amelioration and political and social reform. We

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6 Clarence Karier, Paul Violas, and Joel Spring, *Roots of Crisis: American Education in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1973).

indicated our approach to the evidence and interpretation in our text in the Preface to the first edition when we noted: "Our own approach has been to try to avoid one-sided judgments and to look at evidence that supports multiple views of particular events and individuals. Thus, we stress the narrative, the story of American educational history, as well as the interpretive, in our treatment."[7] Acknowledging and embodying the value of the narrative approach to history, as well as the interpretations of scholars who produced the materials that underlay our narrative was no easy task.

Audiences of Students and Scholars

Given that a textbook is written primarily for students, and not for other scholars, our focus on producing a convincing and attractive narrative seemed straightforward. Less straightforward as an objective was the stress on interpretation and its relationship to students. We wrote our book for a market that was made up primarily of students in departments, schools, and colleges of education. That is a group interested in working in schools. The largest part of that group was, and still is, interested in public schools as their place of work. Thus, we stressed the social and political role of public schools, and the scholarly interpretations of this role. We needed, we thought, to steer a middle course between the extremes of Whiggish support for public schools as a staple in an evolving American democratic society and revisionist critique of public schools as part and parcel of the problem in achieving a genuinely democratic society. But the primacy of the narrative as a tool for engaging students to study and reflect on the history of education was never far from our minds, or our word processors. Ultimately, the market was the ultimate judge of our enterprise, and the relatively good sales of the book since 1996 suggest that we were doing something correctly, or at least something attractive to our readers.

Before considering the readership of the textbook further, a brief foray into the scholarly reception of our textbook seems appropriate. That foray reveals an initially shocking, at least to me, reality. As I searched the JSTOR data base for reviews of our book, I could find only one review, published shortly after the book went into print. That review was published in the *History of Education Quarterly,* the leading journal in history of education in the US, in its first issue of the 1997 volume year. The review is a straightforward, rigorous, and balanced treatment of the textbook. The author is critical, noting omissions such

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7 Urban and Wagoner, *American Education: A History* (1996), xvi.

as non-school educational issues and agencies everywhere in the text except in the first few chapters. She is also ultimately positive in her evaluation, though perhaps a bit condescending. She concludes the review by asking if she, or anyone else, could have done a better job, and answers her question, "Probably not." She then discusses the weakness of trying to represent the complexities of our national educational history in any text.[8] This is not a place to quibble with a reviewer who did a conscientious evaluation of our text. Rather, it is the place to note that this is the only published review I could find of our textbook and this, in itself, is worthy of some discussion.[9]

Many, if not most, of those who write in the field of history of education have appointments in departments, schools, or colleges of education. These institutions, particularly those in publicly funded settings, are involved in training teachers for the schools, most often the public schools in their surrounding communities and elsewhere. Other scholars have come to the history of education from more disciplinary settings, history departments in particular. Still others have administrative jobs in educational institutions, schools, colleges, universities, and related settings. More recently, others are "independent scholars," those who write about history of education from a variety of relationships, and non-relationships, to educational institutions. Jennings Wagoner and I, as mentioned above, were both trained at a large public university, a land-grant university imbued with a commitment to service to its state. We were both also subsequently employed in education faculties in public universities which paid homage, in different ways, to school teaching as a profession and the training of individuals for that profession. And that is the major audience, future teachers and other educational professionals, for whom our text was written.

The larger group of educational historians, as described above, does not at all subscribe to our commitment to future educational professionals. We have relied on that larger group as the target group for the scholarship that undergirds the analysis in our text. We stress the interpretive aspect of scholarship and seek to get our students to think critically about the content that is being interpreted and

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8 Edith Nye MacMullen, review of *American Education: A History* by Wayne Urban and Jennings Wagoner in *History of Education Quarterly* 37 (Spring 1997): 78–81, 81.

9 Since beginning this essay, I have been made aware of a review published electronically in early 2020 in the *Teachers College Record*. It is more uniformly positive than the 1996 review, though not uncritical. See Chara Hauessler Bohan, Review of *American Education: A History* by Wayne Urban, Jennings Wagoner, and Milton Gaither, *Teachers College Record* (March 18, 2020), accessed July 31, 2022.,https://journals.sagepub.com/pb-assets/cmscontent/TCZ/Book%20Reviews/2020%20Book%20Reviews/March%202020/American%20Education-%20A%20History,%206th%20Edition-1656441991.pdf.

the stances, political, social, and/or economic, taken by the interpreters. So, it seems that there is a tension between our approach and the commitments of many of our disciplinary colleagues. This is simply a statement, not a judgment. However, it may go some way toward explaining the relative lack of attention within the profession of educational historians to the text we have written, not for them, but for students aspiring to work in educational institutions and settings. This tension, perhaps, is also related to the lack of relationship between the relatively frequent sessions on teaching history of education at meetings of the History of Education Society,[10] and our work, and the work of others[11] involved in the production of textbooks in educational history. Neither Wagoner, nor I, were ever asked to participate in any of these teaching sessions. I am not sure that we would have responded positively to an invitation, though we would have appreciated one. The focus of much of this work at HES sessions is to foster scholarly methods and approaches in students. This, is a laudable focus, and one which, as I will show later, I have encouraged in some of my own teaching. But it is a focus fundamentally in tension with, if not at odds with, the effort to provide aspiring educational professionals with information about the evolution, current place, and future prospects of their profession. We acknowledge the primacy of our commitment to teachers and students of the history of education in the final lines of the Preface to the 4th edition of the work, published in 2009. There we note: "It is the teachers of the history of American education and allied subjects and their students who animate our effort at improving this work. We salute both groups and look forward to continuing positive interaction with them."[12]

It may be that this tension between history of education scholars on the one hand, and some of those who teach history of education and their students, on the other, also characterizes other work in public history, or public histories of various sorts. The obligation of an historian to his or her professional colleagues is not the same as is the obligation of a public historian or a public history to the larger audience of non-historians, that is to the particular section, or segment, of the public that is the target of the work. In a textbook, it is the students for whom it is written. In a state or local historical society, it is those who consume the

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10 In fact, there is a Teaching and Research Methodology affinity group, one of fifteen affinity groups that are part of the History of Education Society. These groups foster sessions on their concerns at HES. Also, in 2018, there were three sessions devoted to teaching at the HES meeting. I will say more about this near the end of this essay.

11 For one other relatively recent text see Gerald L. Gutek, *A Historical Introduction to American Education* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2013, [3rd ed.]).

12 Urban and Wagoner, *American Education: A History* (New York. Routledge, 2009 [4th ed.]), xxiii.

work of that agency, in print, photo, digital form, or otherwise. In a museum, it is to those who will see the various exhibits and artifacts. The point is that a public historian or a public history is produced for an audience of readers who are not professional historians. And the criteria of effectiveness for such a product is inherently different than it is for a work of traditional scholarship.

Judging a Textbook

Having stated this difference, it should also be said that specific criteria for judging a textbook are not agreed on. Two sets of possible criteria might be the judgment of professional historians and the judgment of those teachers using the textbook. These groups do not overlap to any great extent. For example, in the Preface to the third edition of our book, published in 2004, we acknowledged the work of eleven academics who had evaluated the text and made suggested changes. Of the eleven, five were known to me as historians of education. The other six came from various backgrounds, in history or in professional education, backgrounds that left them teaching a course in the history of education or in a related area such as social foundations of education, that used our book as a course text or supplementary reading.[13]

While we relied on these, and earlier reviews, dating as far back as to before initial publication, to point out errors and missing emphases, we always kept in mind our vision of what we were doing. A substantive discussion in the Preface to the fourth edition of our textbook, indicates how we resisted feedback that did not reinforce our own sense of what we were about. In that Preface, we noted a relatively consistent theme of reviewers and stated our own reservations about honoring it.

> Almost from the beginning, some readers of our book have sought the addition of a chapter or long section of a chapter that deals exclusively with competing educational philosophies or theories. We have considered this suggestion seriously, but have chosen not to extract and rarify various philosophies of education outside of their historical context. Philosophies such as traditionalism or essentialism, perennialism, and social reconstructionism were given definition and substance in reaction to the progressive education movement and were grounded in specific social, economic, and political settings.[14]

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13 Urban and Wagoner, *American Education: A History* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004 [3rd ed.]) xx. The area of social foundations of education encompasses various humanistic or social studies deemed "foundational" to the preparation of teachers such as history of education, philosophy of education, sociology of education, and a few others.

14 Urban and Wagoner, *American Education: A History* (New York. Routledge, 2009 [4th ed]), xxii.

We discuss educational progressivism in various chapters of our book, beginning with discussion of the Enlightenment in an early chapter. Many, if not most, of the later chapters discuss various strains of progressive educational thought and practice as they arose in different chronological, social, and political contexts. The point is, as we argue, that progressivism in one or another form, has been, and is, prominent, if not dominant in educational thought and, influential to a lesser extent, in educational practice in the United States of America. The tension between progressive theory and educational practice is a theme which deserves, and receives, attention in several of the latter chapters in our textbook. Thus, while we agree with those who see progressive educational thought as important, we intended, and still intend, that educational thought should be contextualized historically in the practical situations in which it sought influence, and in the administrative arrangements which claimed to represent that thought, rather than in dialectical discussions of the relationship of progressive thought to other theories. Perhaps we take a position here more aligned with professional historians than with teachers and other educators who used our book but were not practicing historians, a position in tension with, if not opposition to, our commitment to students and their teachers and not to historians. Acknowledging that tension does not resolve it, but instead realizes that one's commitment as an historian and as a textbook writer are not necessarily the same, and may be in some tension with each other.

Adding an Author

The latest (6th) edition of *American Education: A History*, has involved a third author, Milton Gaither, of Messiah College. Jennings Wagoner passed away just before publication of the fifth edition in 2013. He had worked on revising that edition with me, and that work was incorporated into that edition. Since that time, I was contemplating on how I could handle another revision if that possibility presented itself. Professor Gaither intervened, fortuitously for me, with an inquiry about a future edition of the textbook.[15] I had known Milton from the time he was a graduate student at Indiana University in Bloomington. Since he had studied with Don Warren, a long-time friend and colleague of mine, and of Jennings Wagoner, I discussed adding Gaither to the textbook authors with Warren, and moved to offer Gaither co-authorship a short time later when the

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15 Gaither to Urban email (December 28, 2015).

publisher proposed a sixth edition. That move was certainly fortuitous for me, as Gaither took on the bulk of the work in preparing for this latest edition.

Milton Gaither brings a different background to our project, one which I think offers a broader perspective than heretofore. He teaches at an avowedly "Christian" college and has published in the areas of home schooling[16] and religion and education. Neither of these qualities were prominent in my work, or in the work of Jennings Wagoner. Yet neither Wagoner nor I can be described as irreligious or anti-religious, and we had a brief mention of home schooling in the first edition of our text and expanded that discussion in subsequent editions. But adding Gaither's authorial presence ensured that we acknowledge the influence of an increasingly activist religious influence in American educational policy discussions and the growth of a home school movement centered in conservative Christianity. Gaither has contributed much more than this additional emphasis to our text, however. The changes noted in the Preface to the 6th edition can largely be attributed to Gaither. They include changes in every chapter, updating of endnotes and further reading sections to "reflect recent scholarship," and expanded discussions of "Indian education, teacher education, institutional history, special populations, minorities, classroom practices, and recent policy developments." Gaither is particularly strong in the history of Indian education in the United States, a topic we highlighted in the initial chapter of the first edition of our text. That topic has been expanded in subsequent editions, primarily due to the attention it has garnered from scholars in the field such as Gaither and David Adams.[17]

Public Schools

An important development in the more recent editions of our textbook is its increasing acknowledgment in the last chapter of the attacks on public schools from various parts of American society. Anti-public-school sentiment in American society has a long history, but it has experienced enormous invigoration starting with the 1984 publication of the volume *A Nation at Risk*.[18] These attacks, mounted in pursuit of a theme of "educational excellence," were wrongheaded

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16 Milton Gaither, *Homeschool: An American History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

17 David W. Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995).

18 National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (Washington DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1984).

from their inception, in our view. However, they animated the educational agenda of the Republican administrations of Ronald Reagan, both George Bushes, and more explicitly as simply anti public schools, in the Trump administration. Even in the Clinton and Obama administrations, educational policy featured various "reform" moves to supplement or augment, or otherwise improve American education by challenging the principle of public education and the practice of American public schools. Reacting to this movement, our text became more positive about the public schools, perhaps more Whiggish in the sense discussed at the beginning of this essay. The reason for this is not a change in our final evaluation of public schools, but rather our understanding that replacing the public schools with various options such as charter schools or educational vouchers, as recommended by recent critics, would be a distinct setback for the democratization of American education and American society. This commitment was strongly felt by both Jennings Wagoner and I. It is reflected anew in the 6th edition. Its fate, as well as the fate of the public schools, undoubtedly will be a featured topic in subsequent editions of our textbook, if and when, they do occur.

Teaching and Scholarship in the History of Higher Education

Earlier I discussed a tension between the professional historians who provide the bulk of the material on which our textbook is based and the consumers of our textbook, teachers and their students, who use the book. I have also discussed a movement from some of the teachers who used our text to broaden our treatment of educational thought beyond historical analysis, and our resistance to do that, motivated in some part by our identification as professional historians. What I want to do in the next part of this essay is to show how my own approach to history of education, in this case as developed in the teaching of the history of higher education, that is of colleges and universities in the United States and elsewhere, reflects the commitment of the professional historians whom I have criticized, if gently, earlier in the essay more than that of the non-historians who often teach history of higher education, and their students.

I retired from Georgia State University at the end of 2005, after thirty-four years at that institution. Though for various reasons, my enthusiasm for remaining at Georgia State had dwindled, I was not interested in permanent retirement. Fortuitously, a position opened up at the University of Alabama in its Education Policy Center and its department of Educational Leadership, Policy, and Technology Studies. I went to Tuscaloosa to teach half-time and to work in

the Policy Center the other half of the time. I made it clear at the inception that I intended to do both halves of my work in conjunction with my interest and training in history of education.

My work in the policy center consisted largely of producing policy briefs on issues of the day such as charter schools.[19] The briefs were intended to bring a scholarly analysis and perspective to discussion of important educational issues and concerns. In addition to policy briefs, I followed up on long-standing interest in federal educational policy in my policy center work at Alabama. That work involved uncovering and highlighting the influence of two Alabama legislators in the development and passage of the National Defense Education Act of 1958. It culminated in the publication of a book on the subject in 2011.[20] My work on federal educational policy continued after publication of the NDEA book. It culminated in a chapter on federal educational policy that was published recently in an Oxford University handbook on education policy.[21] A final thrust of my effort in the Policy Center was to involve faculty colleagues in discussion of policy issues.

In addition to my work in the policy center at Alabama, I taught half-time in the Department of Educational Leadership, Technology, and Policy Studies. That teaching was mainly in the history of higher education, rather than in the history of elementary and secondary education where I had done the bulk of my previous teaching. I had taught a history of higher education course occasionally at Georgia State, but at Alabama it became the course I offered during most of my decade there. My reason for bringing that course up in this essay is that it reflects a reality that, if not in conflict with some of the points made earlier in this essay about history of education, is one in which my actions and approach are not in total conformity with my earlier commitments.

My students in history of higher education were mostly working or aspiring college and university administrators. For them, taking a history course was not a major priority, though most were willing to give history a chance to enrich either their current or future work in higher education. I used a textbook in this course, an excellent treatment of the history of American higher education by

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19 Wayne J. Urban, "Charter Schools: An Analysis of the Issues," Policy Brief, Education Policy Center, the University of Alabama (February, 2012).

20 Wayne J. Urban, *More than Science and Sputnik: The National Defense Education Act of 1958* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2011).

21 Wayne J. Urban, Federal Education Policy, in Paula Baker and Donald T. Crichlow, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of American Political History* published electronically by Oxford University Press in April, 2020. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199341788.013.15 .

John Thelin.[22] I most often used the 2011 edition, the second edition of a book originally published in 2004. Since then, there has been a third edition of Thelin's work, published in 2019, a few years after I stopped teaching the course. I recount this publishing history to say that Thelin's textbook has become widely used, likely the most widely used, in the history of higher education course, a course that provides a service for students in the history of higher education analogous in many ways to the situation for the Urban/Wagoner/Gaither textbook in the history of American education course. Thelin's work is engaging to students, well-written, and combines a fealty to historical scholarship with a commitment to relevance for students engaged in the practice of teaching and administration, particularly the latter, in American colleges and universities.

No textbook, however, provides a completely fulfilling experience for students, particularly for graduate students. At least in my own teaching, I have always tried to involve my students in some genuinely historical activities, in addition to consuming information from textbooks and other sources. And I found the most productive way to accomplish this objective, at least for me, was to make my own historical research relevant to student interests, concerns, and activities. While teaching the history of higher education at the University of Alabama, to an audience largely composed of working administrators, I was also involved in a research project on the career of the noted chemist, and Harvard university president, James Bryant Conant.

My project on Conant began before my coming to Alabama, when I was working on the National Education Association, the largest body of educators of many kinds in the USA. As part of that work, I looked closely at the Educational Policies Commission (EPC), a sub-group of the NEA founded in the 1930s to help the public schools survive the economic crisis of the Great Depression. After the 1930s, the EPC continued as a prestigious group of high-status educators devoted to the well-being of the public elementary and secondary schools in pursuit of an increasingly prosperous larger society. Conant was a member of the EPC for four three-year terms beginning in 1940. As president of Harvard he was sought by the NEA as a spokesperson for all of American education and a symbol of symbiosis between higher education and the public elementary and secondary schools. Conant embraced his EPC membership and larger educational role enthusiastically and spoke often at length with the leading administrators of US public schools on the EPC. His contributions to the discussion of

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22 John Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011).

educational issues are well documented in the verbatim minutes of the twice-yearly meetings of the EPC.[23]

I struggled for a considerable time trying to conceptualize a volume on Conant and education, using the publication of his 1959 book on the high school in the US as a starting point.[24] In this work, Conant advocated for a "comprehensive" high school, one that combined academic and vocational studies in its curriculum and encouraged genuine interaction between the largely different groups of students who took one or the other curricular emphases. The problem was that Conant's work on the high school, while thorough and pointed, was not ultimately convincing, either to the educators and citizens of that era, or to scholars and analysts of the high school then, and subsequently. My work on Conant thus languished as I sought a way to construct an account of his educational career that could surround his high school advocacy with a context and a set of related educational concerns that might lead to a more compelling analysis and argument.

I found a pathway toward that analysis through the teaching of Conant and his presidency of Harvard to my students at the University of Alabama. My teaching was offered to students in a higher education administration program. The students were mostly employed as middle-level administrators in various higher education institutions in the state of Alabama and elsewhere, and they seemed interested in my interest in Conant, as he was a somewhat famous leader of the most famous university in the US, an individual and a position to which they might aspire in their fantasies and/or plans about their future. I found a way to immerse the students in both the nuts and bolts of Conant's presidency and the educational issues that consumed his interest, by having them read his annual reports as the president of Harvard, published each year that he served. These reports, which are easily available electronically, allowed students to see first-hand the ways in which Conant mixed concerns with the actual workings of Harvard with his larger intellectual, educational, and social concerns about the US and education in the US. Student discussions of the reports and the issues raised in them were thoughtful, timely, and serious.[25]

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23 The minutes were kept by the National Education Association in their own Archives for a number of years. They are now available at the Special Collections division of the George Washington University Library.

24 James B. Conant, *The American High School Today: A First Report to Interested Citizens* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959).

25 The reports were described by one scientific colleague of Conant as "oases, broad in conception, lofty in aspiration, sound and practical in application." See Vannevar Bush, "James Bryant Conant: President of the AAAS for 1946," *Scientific Monthly* 67 (March, 1946): 197.

In fact, it was through these discussions and further work on the nuts and bolts of Conant's presidency that I found a path to a fulfillment of my research project. I wound up producing a volume on Conant's educational leadership of Harvard, and its aftermath, in which I explored his wide-ranging intellectual interests, scholarly accomplishments, and teaching, especially in a liberal education program required of all Harvard undergraduates, Conant as university president was an extension of these other roles, and his presidential success was intimately related to his understanding of the needs of his faculty and students, as well as of his university.[26] The reality of teaching informed by scholarship, and scholarship in turn enriched by teaching interaction, stands as a final statement on the relation of a teacher/scholar to his students. While the major portion of this essay has explored the impact of a textbook on students, and on its authors, this final section has shown how students can, and did, enrich, actually more than enrich, the scholarship of their teacher.

Conclusion

In a volume considering public histories of education, my contribution ends with a tribute to both the production of a textbook based on scholarship but geared to the needs of students, and an acknowledgment of how students can influence positively the scholarly work of their teacher through their own reactions and additions to that scholarship. One cannot do better, it seems to me, than to acknowledge the mutual and rewarding influence of teachers on students, and students on teachers. The particulars of those influences in various iterations of the field of public history would undoubtedly reveal additional permutations and combinations of the relationship between the two sets of actors.

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26 Wayne J. Urban, *Scholarly Leadership in Higher Education: An Intellectual History of James Bryant Conant* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020).

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Harry Smaller

Making Teacher Union History "Public": The British Columbia (Canada) Teachers' Union, and Its "Online Museum"

Abstract: The British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF), founded in 1917 with a present membership of 43,000 teachers, is but one of seventeen independent educator unions in provinces and territories across Canada. However, BCTF stands out in relation to the emphasis, and resources, it has placed over past decades in researching, developing and mounting a public record of the history of the organization and its very diverse activities. Now very much web-based, this public history reaches out to a wide audience – in addition to its own members (present and retired), it is also accessible to schooling officials, academics, students, policy researchers, legislators and the public at large. Its portal is located at https://wayback.archive-it.org/16900/20210707181403/https://bctf.ca/history/. This chapter consists of three main sections. It starts with a history of the union, placing an emphasis on its activities at the community, national and international levels, particularly those related to their collaborative struggles for social justice and solidarity. The second section explores the background to the development of this "public record," both the historical and contemporary aspects. Finally, I provide a survey and brief description of the various sections of the overall web portal.

Keywords: museum, teacher, union, public archives, school history

Introduction – Brief History of Canadian Teachers' Unions

Like many other nations, Canada's history is also marked by regional, linguistic, gendered, raced and classed divisions. The development of teacher unions[1]

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1 It is certainly recognized that the terms "union," "federation," "association" and "organization" each have very specific, and differing meanings – including ideologically. However, for the sake of expedience, they are used interchangeably in this text.

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across the nation certainly has been affected by these differences. To begin, the country's founding "constitution,"[2] initially enacted in 1867, established a "confederation" of provinces, each with its own separate powers and responsibilities – not the least of which was control over the schooling of their residents. As their respective schooling systems evolved,[3] associations of teachers employed within them developed in tandem – for the most part in response to the increasing bureaucratization of their employers. These activities began in the later half of the 19th century, as teachers in municipalities in a number of provinces grouped together in local associations, held meetings based on their concerns about salaries, (lack of) benefits, and working conditions, and wrote letters to provincial education officials outlining these concerns. In many provinces these early local associations of teachers were initially founded on the basis of identity and location of the specific group of teachers who had come together. Thus, there was often more than one association in each municipality or region, based on differences of geography (often rural vs. urban), language (usually English vs. French), religions (Catholic vs. Protestant), status (elementary vs. secondary school teachers vs. principals) and gender.[4] British Columbia was no exception in this regard, with rural teachers, urban teachers, women teachers and secondary school teachers all forming their own local groups over the course of the later 19th century.[5]

By the second and third decades of the twentieth century, teachers in a number of provinces worked to merge their local organizations into province-wide structures, in part to increase their influence in response to the ever-expanding reach of provincial governments. Founded in 1917, the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) in many ways mirrored the development of similar associations across the country. Delegates to founding meetings of these province-wide teacher organizations often represented colleagues who had come together in previous decades within local municipalities, and who looked forward to the possibility of

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2 Canada as a formal political unit was legislated into being by the British legislature in 1867, through the passage of the British North America Act, which served, with many ensuing amendments, as its "constitution."

3 Four provinces were identified in the original 1867 Act; British Columbia was added as an official province in an 1871 amendment to the Act.

Cf. for example, Paul Axelrod, *The promise of schooling: education in Canada, 1800–1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

4 Cf. for example, Bruce Curtis, *Building the educational state, Canada West, 1836–1871* (London: The Althouse Press, 1988).

5 Cf. for example, Terry Wotherspoon, "Occupational divisions and struggles for unity among British Columbia's Public School Teachers," *B.C. Studies* 107 (1995): 30–59.

increased strength through a larger organization.[6] Not surprisingly, the differences in membership which had developed at the local level often replicated themselves when province-wide organizations were established, resulting in more than one regional association. Eventually however (with two significant present-day exceptions[7]) in each province teachers coalesced into one over-arching organization. (However, there is no question that, even after amalgamation, these internal social differences continued to plague many teacher unions.[8])

The British Columbia Teachers' Federation – Early History

While very similar in many ways to other early province-wide teacher associations (voluntary membership, democratic structures, annual conferences), BCTF's historical record suggests that, almost from the outset, this organization stood out. For example, in contrast to most, if not all, other provincial unions, the BCTF became much more assertive, even during its early years, in actively – even aggressively – assisting teachers in their struggles for improvements in their material working conditions. In 1919 the first teacher strike in the British Empire was held in the provincial capital city of Victoria. At that time, 178 teachers refused to work for two days over a salary dispute, quickly resulting in a negotiated settlement. Two years later, teachers in New Westminster went out on strike for a week, before the school trustees agreed to negotiate. Again, in the late 1930s and early 1940s, the Rural Teachers' movement occasioned renewed militance, and in 1943 teachers voted to engage in a province-wide strike over wages. That same year, the BCTF became the first provincial teacher union to join the national Canadian Trades and Labour Congress.[9] By comparison, teacher unions in other provinces,

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6 Ibid.

7 In Quebec, teachers in the province's two schooling systems – Catholic and Protestant – belong to separate unions representing the two divides. In Ontario four separate teachers' organizations still exist: teachers in the province's separate Catholic and French school systems, as well as elementary and secondary school teachers in the dominant English (non-religious) school system, each supporting their own union.

8 Cf., for example, Wotherspoon, "Occupational divisions."

9 "Decade 3: 1937–38 to 1946–47," accessed September 2, 2021, https://www.bctf.ca/about-bctf/bctf-history. A number of historians have suggested that these radical activities of teachers on the West Coast resulted at least in part as reflecting, and being supported by, the overall radical labour movement embedded in the province's large and extensive primary industries – mining, logging and fishing (Cf., for example, Anne Hales, "A multitude of wedges: Neoliberalism and

particularly in Eastern Canada, were much slower at developing militant postures in advocating for improved salaries, benefits and working conditions.[10]

Another important initiative taken by the BCTF early in its existence was in promoting teacher union activities beyond its own provincial borders. In 1919 a national "Conference on Education, Character and Citizenship" organized by the federal government and held in Winnipeg Manitoba,[11] provided Charlesworth with the opportunity to arrange a meeting with teacher union leaders from the other western provinces. As a result, they agreed to establish a pan-provincial organization of teacher unions. Accordingly, the founding meeting of the Canadian Teachers' Federation was held the following summer in Calgary Alberta, with Charlesworth serving as its first president.[12]

The BCTF also stood out in engaging in activity at the international level. In 1923, Charlesworth participated in an international education conference in San Francisco, organized by the National Education Association of the USA. The main outcome of this meeting was a resolution establishing the World Federation of Education Associations. Representing Canadian teachers, Charlesworth was elected to serve on its first Board of Directors, serving as vice-president; he remained active in this organization until its demise during the Second World War.[13]

The British Columbia Teachers' Federation in the Post-Second World War Era

BCTF's activist orientation did not diminish as a result of the Second World War and its aftermath. In fact, the new era served not only to recommit to its involvement in community, national and international affairs, but also to initiate, and

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micro–political resistance in British Columbia's public schools 2001–2014," *Workplace* 25 (2015): 53–63.

10 For example, by comparison, the first teacher strike in Ontario did not occur until 1973, over 50 years later.

11 This national conference was organized by the federal government in response to a lengthy general strike held in Winnipeg earlier in the year – in the hopes of developing plans for restructuring general societal relations to avoid further such disturbances (Cf., for example, David Camfield, "Reflections on the Winnipeg General Strike and the future of workers' struggles," *Studies in Political Economy* 101 (2020): 59–76.

12 Gerald Nason, "The Canadian Teachers' Federation"(Ed.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1964).

13 Harry John Smaller, "An Elusive Search for Peace: The Rise and Fall of the World Federation of Education Associations (WFEA), 1923–1941," *Historical Studies in Education* 27, no. 2 (2015): 96–119.

broaden, its activities. In particular, the BCTF devoted itself to actions related to social equality, human rights and global peace. Women's issues became a major concern for the Federation, and in 1970 the Task Force on the Status of Women was established. Within three years, a major Status of Women Program was established within the organization, supported by a standing committee and a staff person. Encouraged by these events at the centre, local teacher chapters across the province enhanced their activities in promoting women's issues in schools across the province.[14]

Concerns for other social issues were also soon taken up formally by the union. In 1975 a Task Force on Racism was established, followed by the founding of a province-wide "Program Against Racism" supported by a BCTF staff person. In 1980, these activities were supported by the establishment of a standing Anti-Racism Committee, along with a Committee on the Rights of Children. In the 1980s, support was provided to address increasing concerns about the environment and global peace. An "Environmental Educators" association was established in 1981, followed in 1985 by the "Teachers for Peace and Global Education," and in 1989 by the hiring of a Global Education coordinator. In 1994, these efforts were augmented by the initiation of the "Ed May Social Responsibility Education Fund" which provided project grants to teachers.[15]

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14 In a personal reflection on working in the national office of the BCTF, staffer Donna Coulombe wrote movingly about how the strong anti-sexist culture within that workplace had been achieved, and how in turn it provided much motivation for effecting changes across the province: 'In my prior jobs the "bosses" had all been male and I had witnessed capable women passed over for promotion in favour of younger men strictly because of their gender. The BCTF was quite different. I saw that women held positions of authority, women's issues were discussed, women made decisions that affected the direction of the organization, women supported, trained, and nurtured one another not only in the BCTF workplace but in their activist roles. I thought it had always been this way at the BCTF. I was not aware of the battle that was being waged by the brave BCTF women activists who were fighting to be heard in their organization. The Status of Women staff position and the Status of Women Committee were still fairly new to the Federation. The work these women were doing astounded me and informed my own developing sense of what was right and how society should be. *Teacher Magazine 29*', no. 2 (January/February 2017): 17.

15 For an official detailed chronology of these activities, see: "Social Justice Unionism," accessed September 3, 2021,

https://wayback.archive-it.org/16900/20210707191539/https://bctf.ca/history/rooms/social justice.aspx.

International Activities of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation

There is no question that all of its earlier national and international activities held the BCTF in good stead as it expanded and deepened its international commitment in the decades following the Second World War, particularly in supporting teachers and schools located in the (so-called) Third World. In 1961 the International Assistance Fund was created, based on a contribution of $1 per member per year. In 1963, five BC teachers joined the Canadian Teachers' Federation delegation to Project Overseas, an international outreach initiative which had been founded the previous year. BCTF quickly became the strongest provincial supporter of this initiative, both in numbers of teachers participating and in financial contribution.[16] By 2008, 314 BC teachers had taken part in summer Project Overseas assignments in the Global South.

However, in the context of engaging in these official programs, criticism began to mount about the nature of these officially-organized interactions. For a number of BCTF activists, these programs were increasingly seen as verging on neo-colonialism – top-down "experts" from the West going to instruct seeming neophytes on how best to teach from a Western perspective. These criticisms also evolved from the reflections of a number of BC teachers who had become active in community organizations working in solidarity with grass-roots organizations in a number of nations, particularly Latin America and Southern Africa, as they struggled for liberation from colonial oppression as a result of continuing control by Western empires, or by oppressive, comprador oligarchies which had taken over after "liberation" from former colonial status.[17]

As a result, BCTF began shifting the direction of its international efforts significantly. Rather than relying mainly on supporting the traditional approaches undertaken by other provincial teacher unions, the BCTF turned to exploring ways in which it could more directly interact with classroom teachers in developing nations, supporting their interests and needs. In keeping with this new approach, the Federation's International Assistance Fund was restructured, and in 1982 renamed the W.R. Long Memorial International Solidarity Fund, marking the start of solidarity outreach with teachers in South Africa and Latin America. The following year a formal Committee was established to supervise the operation of the fund. Two years later, a province-wide "BC Teachers for Peace and Global

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16 Larry Kuehn, "*Intercambio* – Social Justice Union Internationalism in the B.C. Teachers' Federation" (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2006): 45.
17 Ibid.

Education" group was established, and through the work of this group, solidarity efforts focused on working directly in South Africa and Latin America. To this end, in 1989, solidarity work in Namibia was initiated. In the same year, a Global Education coordinator was installed at BCTF, enhancing the establishment of direct contacts with grass-roots teacher and community organizations. As former BCTF president Larry Kuehn explained,

> [These activities would be] respectful of the opinions and needs of teacher unions in the South. By intention, if not always in practice, these have not been just soft versions of trade union imperialism. Development solidarity is a significant step on the road to relationships that are really built on the exchange and interchange of *intercambio* internationalism, rather than union imperialism, and reflects values of social justice.[18]

The concept *intercambio* was developed by the BCTF to describe the ways in which they hoped to interact with their partners in the Global South. It was established partly as a critique of, and counter to, what a number of critics have described as "trade union imperialism" – unions in the West dominating relations with unions in the South, and imposing Western values and practices on their "partners."[19]

Public Outreach of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation – Publications

Much of BCTF's provincial, national and international activities rested on the need for public outreach and involvement, and again, the organization was an early innovator in this regard. Prominent undertakings included the publication of a monthly journal, beginning in 1919 soon after the association's founding, and, perhaps not coincidentally, following a meeting of association leaders of the four western provinces – a prelude to the founding of a national teachers' association. Originally titled "The Educator of Canada, and listed as "the official organ of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation," it touted support not only from teachers but also such organizations as the "Federation of Parent-Teachers' Associations," "Women's Music Club," Daughters of the Empire," "Art, Historical

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18 Ibid, 50.

19 Often, unions in the USA are identified, not only as the dominant force in these relations, but also working in conjunction with the foreign policies and engagements of various department of the government of the USA (See, for example, "Reverse Solidarity," accessed September 3, 2021, https://zcomm.org/znetarticle/reverse-solidarity-by-jeb-sprague/.

and Scientific Society," and the "Natural History Society." In addition, as the editors stated in an early issue, the scope of this publication was not limited to British Columbia:

> Our circulation is growing to large proportions and we feel confident that within a very short time the magazine will be in the hands, not only of the teachers of British Columbia, but in those of the four western provinces, every month during the school terms.[20]

Much of the content of the early issues dealt with matters of curriculum and pedagogy at the elementary and secondary school levels across a number of disciplines –language, mathematics, science, music, arts, and so on. A number of prescriptive articles focused on what was seen as the need for improvements in various aspects of a growing state schooling system, including technical and vocational schooling, rural schools and so forth. In addition, most issues included reports on teacher association activities, both across British Columbia, as well as in other provinces and in other countries.[21] In this regard, an early issue provided lengthy coverage of teacher conventions in Alberta and Manitoba, as well as reporting that the Alberta Teachers' Alliance was contemplating joining the larger labour network.

It is interesting to note that coverage of teacher association interests in joining in with labour groups was not presented in opposition to a simultaneous and pronounced interest in the promotion of professionalization (ideologically and materially). In this regard, also predominant were articles with titles such as a title page article "Teachers Demand Public Recognition."[22] In fact, during the later 1930s there was much debate within the Federation over whether to make it a "professional organization" or to affiliate with labour.

In the fall of 1921, as a result of Federation annual convention decisions, significant changes were made in the journal. From that point, it was officially structured as "the official organ of the B.C. Teachers' Federation [. . .] entirely under the control" of the Federation. Its new editorial board included two prominent university officials and the City of Victoria librarian, along with two BCTF teacher/officials. While its initial masthead was entitled the "B.C. Teachers' Federation Magazine," the lead editorial made clear that this was just a placeholder, that "[a]t present it is without a name, and the task of finding a suitable one it to be left to its readers." To that end, the issue included information about a

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20 *The Educator of Canada* 1, no. 4 (June 1919): 7.

21 *Ibid., 3.*

22 *The Educator of Canada*, no. 8 (January 1920), 1.

"competition" to determine the new title.[23] The lead editorial in this new first issue made clear what its overall purpose was to be:

> While the main purpose of the organ will be to keep all members fully in touch with the activities of the Federation, yet it is hoped to give each month articles containing information, and inspiration for those engaged in the work of education, whether as teachers, administrators, trustees, or parents. The education of the child is suffering, in this present day, largely because our adult population is not sufficiently enlightened to correctly appreciate the extreme importance of our schools in the life of a people. We intend to devote some of our energies to missionary enterprise in this regard.[24]

Regardless of the structural changes, typical issues seem to continue to reflect closely what had previously been featured across a number of themes. Curriculum and pedagogy-related articles for classroom teachers appeared regularly – for example, new ways of teaching a science or literature units at various levels of the elementary and secondary school. Often, Department of Education notices would be reprinted – ranging from new legislation relating to school courses of study, to changes in legislation pertaining to teachers' employment, pensions, etc. Local and provincial BCTF conventions garnered much coverage – both in being promoted ahead of time, and then, following their occurrence, entire proceedings would be reported on in detail – including business conducted, motions/resolutions passed, and full texts of (often lengthy) speeches by education experts, and Federation and Department of Education officials. Underlying much of the content of each issue was the promotion of professionalism – both ideological and material aspects – both to teachers and the larger community, as well as emphasizing what was seen as the important role which teachers played in the promotion of education across society.

Instalments of the journal continued to include one or more articles looking more broadly across a national and international scope. Descriptions of schooling structures/methods in other jurisdictions, activities of related teacher organizations including reports of teacher activism, strikes, etc. appeared regularly. In addition, articles relating to larger labour issues, such as coverage of the annual conferences of the national Trades and Labour Congress[25] and reports on the International Labour Organization[26] were included. At times, even opinion about social/labour/political issues would be published, such as a 1949 commentary

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23 *B.C. Teachers' Federation Magazine* 1, no. 1–2 (Sept-Oct 1921): 2.

24 Ibid., 1.

25 *B.C. Teachers' Federation Magazine* 29, no. 4 (January 1950), 171.

26 *B.C. Teachers' Federation Magazine* 28, no. 4 (January 1949), 139, 149.

entitled "Truth about Communism".[27] However, it is certainly the case that an ideology of "professionalism" pertained in a majority of the journal's contents.

Public Outreach of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation – Other Activities

In addition to the publication of the journal, the BCTF has been very active over the years in engaging with the larger community in a number of ways. From the outset of its founding, Federation officials were often featured as speakers at meetings and conventions of other education-related organizations, such as those of schooling officials, school board trustees and parents. More recently, the union has developed a widespread program of public presentations for parent groups on a range of educational issues -–themes include "Aboriginal Content in the Curriculum," "Advocating for your child," and "Antibullying."[28] These presentations, involving volunteer teacher presenters, are available for free across the province.

By the turn of the 21st century, the BCTF – like most other Canadian teacher unions – became well-versed in new media approaches, starting with much updated web sites. By 2012 a "social media coordinator" position was established in the union headquarters, to supplement the existing communication and campaigns division. From then on, social media became an integral aspect of all Federation communications, both internal and public. Some of the new content was directly mainly at teacher members themselves. For example, in 2014 TeachBC was launched, an online site with teaching resources and materials developed for teachers by teachers. Designed as a "creative commons," the site was set up to facilitate teachers uploading materials to share and downloading materials to use. In the same year, "Starling Minds" was launched. Developed in partnership with psychologist Dr. Andrew Miki, the site provided support for members dealing with stress, anxiety, and depression.

Perhaps just as important was the use of social media to reach out beyond teachers, to the community at large. For example, in 2014–15 the BCTF created

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27 *B.C. Teachers' Federation Magazine* 28, no. 5 (February 1949), 195). Not surprisingly, a very critical perspective.

28 For a complete list of topics, and a description of the overall program, see: "Book Workshops for Parent Advisory Committees," accessed September 4, 2021.

https://www.bctf.ca/services-guidance/workshop-requests/book-workshops-for-parent-advisory-committees.

a comprehensive resource package entitled "Project of Heart: Illuminating the Hidden History of the Indian Residential Schools of BC." While intending on the one hand to support members in learning and teaching about the legacy of the residential schools, this resource has been shared widely, and in other provinces, with other unions, community groups, and so on.

Public History of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation – the "Online Museum"

In 2017, in part to help celebrate the 100th anniversary of the BCTF, President Glen Hansman announced the launching of the Federation's Online Museum. As he explained,

> Within the virtual walls of our museum, you'll find stories of strikes and solidarity to be sure, but also stories of people and places that played important roles in the history of public schooling in our province. We've tried to capture diverse voices in ways that visitors will find engaging, and we hope you enjoy browsing through our collections of political cartoons, protest songs, publications, photos, and more.
>
> The exhibits depict our collective struggles in building BC's public school system, which today stands among the finest in the world. And the lessons learned in a century of teaching and learning offer much food for thought as we go into our second century as a union of professionals.
>
> Have fun exploring our museum![29]

Even the briefest view of the "museum" online suggests a cornucopia of information about the history of the BCTF – not only the conceptualization and development of its structures, policies, programs and practices, but also coverage a broad array of themes relating to bargaining, professional development, international solidarity and social justice unionism.

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29 "Welcome to the BC Teachers' Federation online museum!", accessed September 4, 2021, https://wayback.archive-it.org/16900/20210707182757/https://bctf.ca/history/welcome.aspx.

Developing the British Columbia Teachers' Federation's "Online Museum"

In researching for this chapter, I was very fortunate to be able to conduct lengthy interviews with two of the original proponents/researchers/developers (still ongoing) of the museum[30] – Nancy Knickerbocker and Larry Kuehn. Nancy has been an activist, elected official and staffer at BCTF for many years; she is presently (2021) Director of Communications and Campaigns for the provincial organization. Larry, recently retired, was a former elected president of BCTF, and subsequently served on its secretariat for many years.[31]

As they both explained, the motivation for the museum was twofold – first, as part of plans for celebrating, in a number of ways, the 2017 centennial of the founding of the BCTF. However, it was also the ultimate outcome of long-standing aspirations, held by a number of union activists, to collaboratively research and write the history of the union. Writing a book together was one obvious route. However, as Nancy put it, it was generally felt that a book would end up being the perspectives of just the authors. What they desired was "something with a broader perspective and more points of view, something more accessible that a print production." She quickly added that "the concept [of a virtual museum] came from Larry." They both saw the primary audience as teachers themselves. Nancy noted that they were particularly "hoping to recruit and engage new members in union activities – learning more about the history of where the federation came from."[32] At the same time, both reflected the hopes that the museum would also reach a much larger audience – labour movement generally, as well as the broader education/schooling community.

Nancy and Larry emphasized how supportive the federation was overall to the project. A staff team was struck, a budget was established, and a staffer from the information tech department was appointed as project manager. Other staff members included librarians, the archivist, the webmaster and a graphic designer. In addition to the staffers, a number of other individuals – retired BCTF members for the most part – were enlisted to assist with the researching

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30 Interviews were undertaken by telephone, on September 10 and 11, 2020.
31 Among other national and international activities, Knickerbocker was on leave from BCTF for four years (2006–2010) to serve on the staff at Education International in Brussels. Kuehn was president of the BCTF from 1981 to 1984, and Director of Research and Technology from 1988 until retiring in 2019. He had responsibility for the International Solidarity Program and was one of the founders of the Tri-national Coalition in Defense of Public Education and the IDEA Network of union and education community activists throughout the Americas.
32 Knickerbocker, September 10, 2020.

and writing of material and collecting of images relating to specific themes of the history. Monthly committee meetings were held – although, as Nancy pointed out, given that this activity was being supported "from the side of their desks"[33] (that is, in addition to all of their ongoing work responsibilities), members would attend whenever they could.

When asked about the possibility of differences of opinion among the committee members in relation to the historical content of the museum, both respondents were adamant that, as Larry noted, it was certainly "possible to imagine differences, but those issues didn't come up in our process." As he explained, the project was "not an interpretive history, it really was an archiving in a sense – never an issue of, can we include this [historical item]? [. . .] The interpretative aspects would have to be done by those looking into our [collection], or the articles we have cited, [where] the authors were responsible for the interpretations."[34] As Nancy put it, there were "no controversies over what to include or not – no issues about how to frame things politically – just get something basic on the record."

Both noted that, where there was discussion, it lay in determining the overall design and layout of the museum. Nancy felt that they "floundered around for a while – how does the content determine the form?" "We felt we were inventing a wheel – looked a few models [but with] positive attitudes, supportive of each other's' ideas, suggestions."[35] Both took pains to acknowledge the work of those staffers responsible for the design and layout, digitizing and posting the material as it was developed.

Visiting the British Columbia Teachers' Federation's "Online Museum"

A visit the museum is a treat indeed. The home page[36] offers a very moving picture of a teacher demonstration over pension issues which took place in 1980. The visitor is next "welcomed" by Glen Hansman (president of union when the museum was inaugurated) with a brief history and overview of the museum (full text above). Then, in keeping with an image of an actual museum, the

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33 Ibid.

34 Kuehn, September 11, 2020.

35 Knickerbocker, September 10, 2020.

36 "BC Teachers' Federation Online Museum," accessed September 4, 2021, https://wayback. archive-it.org/16900/20210707181403/https://bctf.ca/history/.

viewer is presented with ten "doors," (as shown in Figure 1) each opening up to a particular thematic "room" of the museum, and the history of the BCTF' activities ("Bargaining," "Building Our Profession," "International Solidarity," etc.).[37]

Figure 1: Image of the "doors" webpage.

Opening a "door" to any of the "rooms" allows the visitor to explore a wide variety of material relating to the room's theme. In the "Social Justice" "room," for example, its home page opens with a welcoming invitation, and a very appropriate quotation from Eduardo Galeano. "I don't believe in charity. I believe in solidarity. Charity is so vertical. It goes from the top to the bottom. Solidarity is horizontal. It respects the other person. I have a lot to learn from other people."[38] In addition, the home page provides an extensive "Social Justice Timeline" of the union's activities over the past half-century, as well as links to the five major themes comprising social justice – Antiracism, Status of Women, Antipoverty, LGBTQ, and Peace and

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37 The other "doors" are: "Pensions," "Social Justice Unionism," "Building Our Democrtic Union," "Political Action," "National and International Leadership," "Aboriginal Education," and "BCTF in the House of Labour." As of September 2021, the latter four "doors" are as yet unopenable – these "rooms" have yet to be "filled" with historical data.

38 "Social Justice Unionism," accessed September 4, 2021, https://wayback.archive-it.org/16900/20210707191539/https://bctf.ca/history/rooms/socialjustice.aspx.

Global Ed, along with a link to all of the archived copies of their Social Justice newsletter, dating back to 2005.

The Antiracism webpage provides a timeline of a number of antiracist programs and activities undertaken by the federation since 1941, each linked to sites for further descriptions. For example, one link leads to a first-hand report by a classroom teacher, describing the union's "Program Against Racism" and how she was able to draw on its support during the 1980s to deal with racist incidents in her school.[39]

In addition to the ten "Rooms" pages, the "Online Museum" also includes two other major sites. The first, entitled "Collections," provides a wide variety of material relating to the history of the BCTF – ranging from reproductions of ads and cartoons which appeared in the union's publications over the years, to a collection of (U-Tube playable) union-focused songs often performed by teachers themselves, and collections of photos, teacher stories and "milestones" of the union's history.

The final major site, entitled "Resources," provides a very extensive list of more formal documents pertaining to the history of the union. In addition to collections of "governance documents" (AGM minutes and resolutions), "historical briefs, reports and submissions" to governments, and a compendium of the union's legal cases, a very useful (for the aspiring historian) is an extensive bibliography of secondary material pertaining to the BCTF – over 65 notations of books, theses, and published articles in both academic and more popular journals.

Finally, like many similar websites, there is a "Search" function.[40] In every way, this "Virtual Museum" has much to offer, in displaying the history of BCTF.

Conclusions

For teacher unionists interested in augmenting their historical "presence," the BCTF Virtual Museum has much to offer in the way of ideas – and potential solutions to historiographic challenges. However, it is clear that the founders of this virtual museum also had a much larger audience in mind – not only classroom

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39 "BCTF Program Against Racism," accessed September 4, 2021, https://wayback.archive-it.org/16900/20210708085225/https://bctf.ca/history/rooms/antiracism.aspx?id=45327.

40 Seemingly very efficient – on entering the name "Charlesworth," 183 citations embedded within the overall website were listed.

teachers but also students, parents, educators, education and government officials and the public in general. Many of the "exhibits" offer important historical information – for example, about how teacher-school board relations and contract negotiations developed and changed over time, or how teachers and their union assisted in the larger struggles towards social equity in the workplace, and in larger society.

To be sure, visiting a virtual museum is not the same as viewing exhibits and artifacts in "real life" – or being able to interact with knowledgeable guides and mentor in the original places. However, it does offer the possibility of visiting at a moment's notice, anytime day or night – quickly searching for and viewing material, some which may have been updated and augmented just an hour before.

Additionally, perhaps the founders also had in mind the possibility of enticing other unions or organizations generally to consider developing virtual museums of their own. (Already, a sister union in British Columbia, the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators has sought out the BCTF for ideas and assistance in developing their own virtual museum.[41]) When asked about her experience in working on the project, Nancy emphasized that it was "so much fun to learn about how people worked in the federation in the past!" Her advice to unionists pondering whether to take on such a project? "Go for it!"[42]

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41 To date, they have developed and mounted a preliminary "resource archive" https://www.fpse.ca/members/resource-archive.

42 Knickerbocker, September 10, 2020.

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Lucía Martínez Moctezuma

The Pedagogical Press and the Public Debate about Schooling

Abstract: If public history provides a means to refer to the ways in which the past is presented outside academic circles, then what problems would consulting original sources like the pedagogical journals of another period posit for a public history of the magisterium? Would teachers be sensitive to such a reading of problems of the past? Would they recognize themselves in the practices of that past? Would a dialogue open between pedagogy and public history, beyond the academic milieu? If the challenge of constructing a Public History of Education seems great, can we also say that it is necessary because it concerns both teachers and the school memory. This approach leads me to present my explanation in the following terms. The first section of the essay illustrates the richness of pedagogical journals as sources of information for the history of education. After that, I characterize some of the pedagogical journals that circulated between 1904 and 1908, authored by people of the period who were familiar with, proposed, questioned, created, and worked to ensure that useful information circulated among teachers in order to bring to fruition a project of modernity in the schools. In the final section, I present three topics that could form part of an exposition –or a virtual pedagogical museum– in Mexico. Here, my objective is to reflect on three issues that impact the present: the gender of the profession, the evaluation of textbooks prior to the imposition of the free textbook program in Mexico, and the practice of physical activities in schools.

Keywords: pedagogical journals, primary sources, school memory, virtual pedagogical museum, mexico

Introduction

I met Frank Simon in the decade of the 2000s, an event significant for me because I had previously read his article in which he examined subjects seldom addressed in Mexico: the statistical development and pedagogical evolution of

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preschool education in Belgian schools.[1] My first impression has not changed. Aside from being a good friend and a magnificent singer,[2] Frank has also become a leading figure in the field of the history of education in Mexico. His most recent publications in Spanish on the formation of Belgian teachers and the textbooks that circulated in the Congo present new ideas and elements for comparing societies in which he emphasizes the importance of the indigenous element, language, culture, and local history.[3] Another topic that interests Frank is studying pedagogical journals from the 1970s when De Vroede proposed a project designed to record pedagogical life in Belgium in the 19th and 20th centuries. His research experience showed that pedagogical journals, especially those that circulated in primary schools, were a valuable source of information because they presented a reflection of the epoch in the form of diaries prepared by teachers for teachers that contained true guidelines for both the theory and practice of education and teaching. Their value for research in the history of education has led Frank, along with Marc Depaepe, to consider them the "mother lode" of all historical pedagogical sources, as he confirmed in a recent interview: "my biggest source of inspiration were these educational journals. What you can read in these journals that is fantastic! That is the whole educational world"[4]

This affirmation confirms the richness that this source contains because virtually everything that happened in the pedagogical life of the country captured the attention of teachers who formed part of the educational administration, or of the authors of textbooks, speakers at national and international

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1 I first confirmed that he was a serious historian and, since then, we have endeavored to listen to each other's advances when we meet at congresses. I recall, especially, one in Canada (*Colloque International, Le manuel scolaire, d´ici et d´ailleurs, d´hier a demain*, Montreal, April 2006), and another in Geneva (ISCHE 34, Geneve 2012), perhaps because the latter was one of the last occasions when Luz Elena Galván was with us. Marc Depaepe and Frank Simon, "Les écoles gardiennes en Belgique: Histoire et Historiographie," *Histoire de l'education*, no. 82 (1999): 73–99.

2 In 2007, Simon and Depaepe entoned a difficult Belgian song on a bus carrying the members of the *Red PATRE-MANES* coordinated by Gabriela Ossenbach. His talent as a singer, added to his experience as a soccer player, and his undeniable virtue as a historian make Frank a true personage.

3 Honoré Vinck, Frank Simon, and Marc Depaepe, "Gustaaf Hulstaert (1900–1990), autor de manuales escolares en el Congo: pionero paradójico y controversial", in *Más allá del texto: Autores, redes de saber y formación de lectores,* ed. Luz Elena Galván Lafarga et.al. (Mexico: El Colegio de San Luis, 2016), 433.

4 Sjaak Braster and María del Mar Pozo Andrés, "Frank Simon: A personal story about everyday educational realities," *Historia y Memoria de la Educación* 8 (2018): 756.

congresses, members of pedagogical academies, and teachers of diverse subjects in primary and n generic? schools.

This idea provides the basis for my contribution to this homage to our friend Frank Simon, where I take up his proposal to consider pedagogical journals as a "mirror of the epoch"; an approach that can be applied fruitfully in countries like Mexico which lack broad knowledge of what the schools from yesteryear were like, and the nature of their teachers and of educational projects.[5] Reading and analyzing these original sources can be helpful in bringing society as a whole closer to the problems of the school in the past and those that are still manifest in the present.

If public history provides a means to refer to the ways in which the past is presented outside academic circles, then what problems would consulting original sources like the pedagogical journals of another period posit for a public history of the magisterium? Would teachers be sensitive to such a reading of problems of the past? Would they recognize themselves in the practices of that past? Would a dialogue open between pedagogy and public history, beyond the academic milieu? If the challenge of constructing a Public History of Education seems great, can we also say that it is necessary because it concerns both teachers and the school memory?[6] This approach leads me to present my explanation in the following terms. The first section of the essay illustrates the richness of pedagogical journals as sources of information for the history of education. After that, I characterize some of the pedagogical journals that circulated between 1904 and 1908, authored by people of the period who were familiar with, proposed, questioned, created, and worked to ensure that useful information circulated among teachers in order to bring to fruition a project of modernity in the schools. In the final section, I present three topics that could form part of an exposition –or a virtual pedagogical museum – in Mexico. Here, my objective is to reflect on three issues that impact the present: the gender of the profession, the evaluation of textbooks prior to the imposition of the free textbook program in Mexico, and the practice of physical activities in schools.

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5 Since its creation in 1921, Mexico's *Secretaría de Educación Pública* (SEP) has never shown interest in protecting or giving meaning to the patrimony of the history of education. There are no records of the establishment of museums, and the most recent exhibition on aspects of schooling was *Formando el cuerpo de una nación. El deporte en el México posrevolucionario (1920–1940)*, March-June 2012, at the *Museo Estudio Diego Rivera y Frida Kahlo*, which lasted only a short time, had little promotion, and was staged in a room with no tradition of presenting similar themes.

6 "we are of the conviction that history, as knowledge, belongs to everyone [. . .] and is of concern to the living", *Public History of Education: riflessioni, testimonianze, experienze*, ed. Bandini Gianfranco and Stefano Oliveiro (Italy: Firenze University Press, 2019), XII.

The Value of Pedagogical Journals for Proposals Related to Public History

As Frank Simon indicates in his works, the components of an educational model can be discerned in the contents of pedagogical journals, and may prove to be of interest for the wider society as witnesses of what was once the daily school routine. While these sources published official documents (circulars, programs, rulings, statistics), they include unofficial texts, as well, ones that reveal the working conditions of teachers, their influence on the elaboration of textbooks, and the dissemination of articles that served the community, many of them on topics of hygiene and health. In short, these journals are a space that represents an educational experience for the teaching and learning of the history of education, one that can arouse memories, experiences, feelings, and emotions.[7] They further constitute a space that permits a dialogue with the present, "[. . .] not only an attempt to revive and relive a tradition, but a manner [. . .] a way to confront the educational problems that our epoch poses from the perspective that historicity offers".[8]

Such a dialogue could be activated through virtual pedagogical museums devoted to the study, conservation, exhibition, and dissemination of the cultural patrimony of the school that, once uploaded to a network, could have enormous potential for research on didactics and the history of education. The network of a pedagogical museum would provide various levels of study: a space for thinking and reflection, cultural production, human relations, and socialization, a vehicle for constructing its own identity, a pedagogical mediator, an environment for learning, and a resource for calling attention to diversity.[9]

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7 Pablo Álvarez Domínguez,"El Museo Didáctico Virtual de Patrimonio Histórico-Educativo Andaluz como recurso para la enseñanza de la Historia de la Educación," in *El largo camino hacia una educación inclusiva: la educación especial y social del siglo XIX*, ed. María Reyes Berruezo Albeniz and Susana Conejero López (Pamplona-Iruñea: Sociedad de Historia de la Educación, 2009), 591–592.

8 Agustín Escolano, "El sujeto en el nuevo paradigma historiográfico de la cultura de la escuela," in *La Escuela y sus escenarios*, coord. Manuel Beas et al. (Sanlucar de Barrameda: Ayuntamiento de El Puerto de Santa María. Serie Encuentros de Primavera, 2007), 7.

Carmen Álvarez and Marta García Eguren (2013). "La utilidad de las TIC para la promoción de aprendizajes en un museo pedagógico en internet: diseño, desarrollo y evaluación" *Revista Teoría de la Educación: Educación y Cultura en la Sociedad de la Información* 14 (2) (2013): 196, doi: http://campus.usal.es/~revistas_trabajo/index.php/revistatesi/article/view/10220/10629.

9 Alvarez and Garcia, *Un museo*, 96.

But how can we preserve, research, interpret, study, disseminate, use, and consume the past today using the Internet and new technologies? This proposal has not captured the interest of historians of education in Mexico.[10] While no clear path has been traced in this regard, Cauvin (2020) proposes creating spaces to debate public history and relate them to local, national, and thematic practices. Using the metaphor of a tree, he proposes encompassing four aspects: creating and conserving sources, analyzing and interpreting sources, disseminating interpretations, and developing multiple public uses of those interpretations via radio, television, exhibitions, podcasts, specialized journals, and comics, among other means.[11]

Therefore, prioritizing the analysis and interpretation of sources and disseminating the richness of pedagogical journals from the perspective of three spaces of interest – which I develop in the third part of this essay – will bring us closer to contacting people interested in the topic of the school and to transforming them into actors in the process instead of treating them as a passive public. My proposal is to analyze the contents of these journal records those teachers made on a daily basis and place it in a broader context. Working to construct spaces can contribute to developing interest in analyzing, interpreting, and disseminating history and in "the democratization of knowledge while, at the same time, maintaining a critical and methodological interpretation of the past".[12]

These spaces of analysis and dissemination could contribute to creating exhibitions or even a virtual pedagogical museum that would conserve these experiences of other times. Mexico has not participated in "museum fever";[13] indeed, it constitutes a woeful exception because while countries in Europe have witnessed the inauguration of museums of pedagogy, schooling, and education to display the wealth of their educational-historical patrimony, in Mexico no such initiative exists even as a future project.[14] For this reason, it is important

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10 See the map that shows the number of participants from 26 countries at the World Conference on the History of Public Education, 2018, in Sao Paulo, Brazil. No Mexicans attended. Thomas Cauvin, "Campo nuevo, Prácticas viejas: Promesas y desafíos de la Historia Pública," *Hispania Nova. Revista de Historia Contemporánea* 1 (Extraordinario 2020): 10, https://doi.org/10.20318/hn.2020.5365.

11 Cauvin, "Campo nuevo," 14.

12 Ibid., 38.

13 Antonio Viñao cited in Paulí Dávila and Luis María Naya, eds., *Espacios y Patrimonio Histórico-Educativo* (Spain: EREIN Universidad del País Vasco, Museo de la Educación, 2016), 20.

14 With the arrival of a new government in Mexico in 2019, a decentralization of power was planned that would cause some ministries to leave Mexico City and move to another country entity. One of these was the Ministry of Public Education that would leave the majestic building it has occupied since 1921 in the historic downtown and in which place the Museum of

to demonstrate that there is information in pedagogical journals that could be of interest to diverse publics.

This is the premise which guides the construction, or recreation, of the diverse spaces that will offer an interpretation of educational-historical reality. Pedagogical journals provide the information required to recreate these spaces, which will make direct reference to both tangible and intangible aspects that speak of lived experiences, but also of social representations that build an imaginary; spaces where the lives of children, teachers, parents, authorities, and communities in general play out, where relations among them are established, and where the experiences of those lives are produced and, once over, leave behind a patrimonial trail.[15]

Pedagogical Journals in Mexico: A Useful Source for Reflecting in Groups

Today, we have no data on the volume of the circulation of pedagogical journals in Mexico, but we know that they were organized by teachers working in primary schools in the early 20th century. In that epoch, there were approximately, 11 000 schools and 23 000 teachers, and great interest in disseminating those publications to transmit the modernizing project of Mexican schools. An innovative project adopted by General Porfirio Díaz (1877–1911) was modeled on developments in France, based on a modern, cosmopolitan, urban nation and the perception of a homogeneous, westernized construction oriented towards international markets. In relation to education, that project presented the image of a liberal, positivist country that placed priority on free, secular, obligatory education designed to procure the harmonious development of children's physical, moral, intellectual, and esthetic faculties. The educational authorities of the time agreed to adopt an objective method in the learning process.

To ensure that this educational project reached every school in Mexico, several pedagogical journals were published, a clear reflection of the implementation of an innovative educational project in which practices crisscrossed and

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Muralism would be built to commemorate the 200 years of the Independence of Mexico. This decision confirms two issues: the missed opportunity to build the first Pedagogical Museum in Mexico and the lack of interest from the State to take advantage of this space and bring the history of education closer to a wider audience.

15 An interesting reflection proposed during the *VII Jornadas Científicas de la SEPHE* and *V Simposio Iberoamericano*. Dávila and Naya, *Espacios y Patrimonio*, 19–25.

sociability networks were made visible. Their protagonists were actors and authors that recorded facts and pondered the meaning of building, and contributing to, the circulation of a series of ideas by writing and translating articles that would shape the educational project of the time. The items published included speeches and practices that condensed and enriched the educational paradigm of the period, though they also reveal tensions, contradictions, postures, and ruptures.[16]

Pedagogical journals began to appear in Mexico in the decade of 1870, first by private authors (1870–1890), later as products of resolutions taken by the Congress of Public Instruction (1889–1890), and then through the initiative of primary school teachers in Mexico City (1900–1921).[17] Their writers were leaders that formed intellectual networks both national and international and whose stature gave those journals prestige. *Enseñanza Normal*, for example, was edited by the *Dirección General de Enseñanza Normal* in Mexico City and printed in the *Escuela Normal de Profesores* there. Its director was a teacher named Alberto Correa. In those journals, teachers and students at Normal Schools in Mexico City contributed articles whose main goal was to unify the criteria applied in schools across the nation. Issues appeared on the 8th and 22nd day of each month, usually with around 16 pages, at a cost of 10 cents. They circulated between 1904 and 1910 in primary schools in the capital and some Normal Schools around the country. Content varied but included sections devoted to school legislation, bibliographic novelties, announcements for parents, information on grants and donations to schools, articles on diverse topics of scholarly importance, and ads by Mexican and foreign publishers that sold books and pedagogical materials.

Another teacher, Gregorio Torres Quintero, directed *La Enseñanza Primaria*, which debuted in 1904. Its content addressed the same general topics: methods for teaching children to read, the methodology of intuitive teaching, household economy, gymnastics, singing, and other themes included in the new knowledge incorporated into primary school curricula. Those journals gradually led to the construction of discourses that targeted not only teachers in Mexico, but also students at Normal Schools who were training to take up this profession. These discourses addressed innovation and proposed an educational model designed to form young cosmopolitan, urban, Mexican citizens.[18]

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16 Liliana Weinberg, "Redes intelectuales y redes textuales: las revistas del Reformismo Universitario," in *Revista de Historia de América* 158 (2020): 191–193.

17 Irma Leticia Moreno Gutiérrez, "Una historia del pensamiento pedagógico en México (1870–1910)". (PhD diss., ISCEEM, 2005).

18 For the Minister of Public Education in Mexico, Justo Sierra, the word innovate in primary schools"served to foment in children special aptitudes and faculties to develop their natural

The School Space: The Gender of the Profession

In recent years, historiography on the pedagogical press in Mexico has examined the presence of female writers and editors as historical subjects that contributed to the construction of new spaces that defined their own identity and their relation to what was largely a masculine universe. This approach has been an instrument of female visibility and a means of claiming their place.[19] The practice of the so-called pedagogical missions revealed the feminine side of the profession. From 1904 onwards, travel to foreign countries increased, as teachers both male and female were commissioned to study the institutions, methods, publications, and features of pedagogical innovations that were being put into practice in Europe and the United States. The aforementioned Alberto Correa, editor of *La Enseñanza Normal*, encouraged this practice by inviting the best teachers to disseminate what they learned in reports, books, conferences and, above all, articles published in pedagogical journals.[20] Those pedagogical explorations fueled production on foreign schools that stimulated reflection based on comparative experiences. Trips were limited to a group of specialists and experts that went to foreign countries to gather a repertory of examples and then propose school policies or reforms at home based on their findings; a series of *idealized representations* in the process of adopting educational reform.[21]

Women teachers in Mexico recorded their experiences in reports that showed small details which proved useful for reforms and led to changes in the educational system. The trip by the teacher Rosaura Zapata is an example of what Matasci (2012) defines as the first globalization, as women teachers in the U.S. shared their knowledge of the methods of Froebel and Maria Montessori, which coincided in the notion that physical activity is essential to learning to read and write.

Between 1904 and 1908, pedagogical journals published numerous reports, articles, poems, and advances of books that women teachers in Mexico wrote based on their experiences abroad. Their presence in this space became

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dexterity [. . .] forming through moral education the volition and character of the children", the equivalent of "forming men", *Boletin de Instrucción Pública* III (1902): 801 and XII (1907): 99.

19 Lilia Granillo Vázquez,"La escritura de la historia como gestión de la identidad, perspectiva de género", in *La escritura de la historia de las mujeres en América Latina, El retorno de las diosas*, ed. Sara Beatriz Guardia (Perú: Centro de Estudios de la Mujer en la Historia de América Latina, 2005), 89.

20 "the pedagogical missionary must open horizons [. . .] seek causes and effects, analyze, deduce, know that the prescription for countries full of life can be applied to our anemia ", *La Enseñanza Normal*, 164 (1906): 89.

21 Damiano Matasci, "Jalons pour une histoire de la circulation internationale du "modele scolaire" suisse a la fin du XIXeme siecle," *Itineraria* 32 (2012): 189.

so important that it was captured in the photographs that illustrated their articles where, over time, images showing them only marginally and statically were followed by new ones that portrayed them as true protagonists of the accompanying texts. Their reports on trips overseas and teaching – especially at the kindergarten level – included exceptional photos of women teachers in action, images that registered the presence of female inspectors like Clementina Ostos at a Normal School, the medical inspector Columba Rivera, and Esther Huidobro, Vice-Principal of the *Escuela de Párvulos*, an annex of the Teachers' College, with teachers like Juan León, Principal of the *Escuela Práctica Anexo*. That photo also shows two American teachers: Emma L. Johuston, principal of the Normal Training School for Teachers in Brooklyn, New York, and Dr. Thomas M. Balliet, Dean of the School of Pedagogy at New York University.

These images, Figures 1 and 2, reinforce the notion that the U.S. model of education was in a process of consolidation in Mexico, and that women teachers occupied an important space within the guild. At least, this is what one perceives in the reflections by Leopoldo Kiel, a teacher who, in his report on the teaching of manual labor in the Exposition in St. Louis Missouri (1904), questioned two features of American public schools: mixed education and feminization:[22] "For some time now, I have been concerned about [. . .] the idea that Americans have thought that their women were superior. I could not comprehend that before, but today I understand, they are"[23]

In their articles, women teachers presented information of a different order. First, their texts made it possible to recognize the deficiencies and particularities of the Mexican system where, despite "good books on pedagogy [. . .] and public instruction in the hands of committed pedagogues", traveling teachers

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22 During the international exhibitions that took place in the U.S. there was contact with methods, plans, programs, and projects for attending to poor children, school architecture, and a series of educational proposals implemented in Germany, Switzerland, England, Belgium, Japan, and other nations. In the U.S., four universal expositions were held (Philadelphia 1876, New Orleans 1884, Chicago 1893, and St. Louis 1904). Advances in primary school instruction in the U.S. impressed the Mexican visitors. In his report on the event in Philadelphia, Inspector Ferdinand Buisson declared: " it is not the work of a few philanthropists or religious societies [but] a public service for which states, communes, and villages include in their ordinary budgets a sum that no other country in the world could conceive of assigning to education". Cited in Matasci, "Jalons pour une histoire," 48.
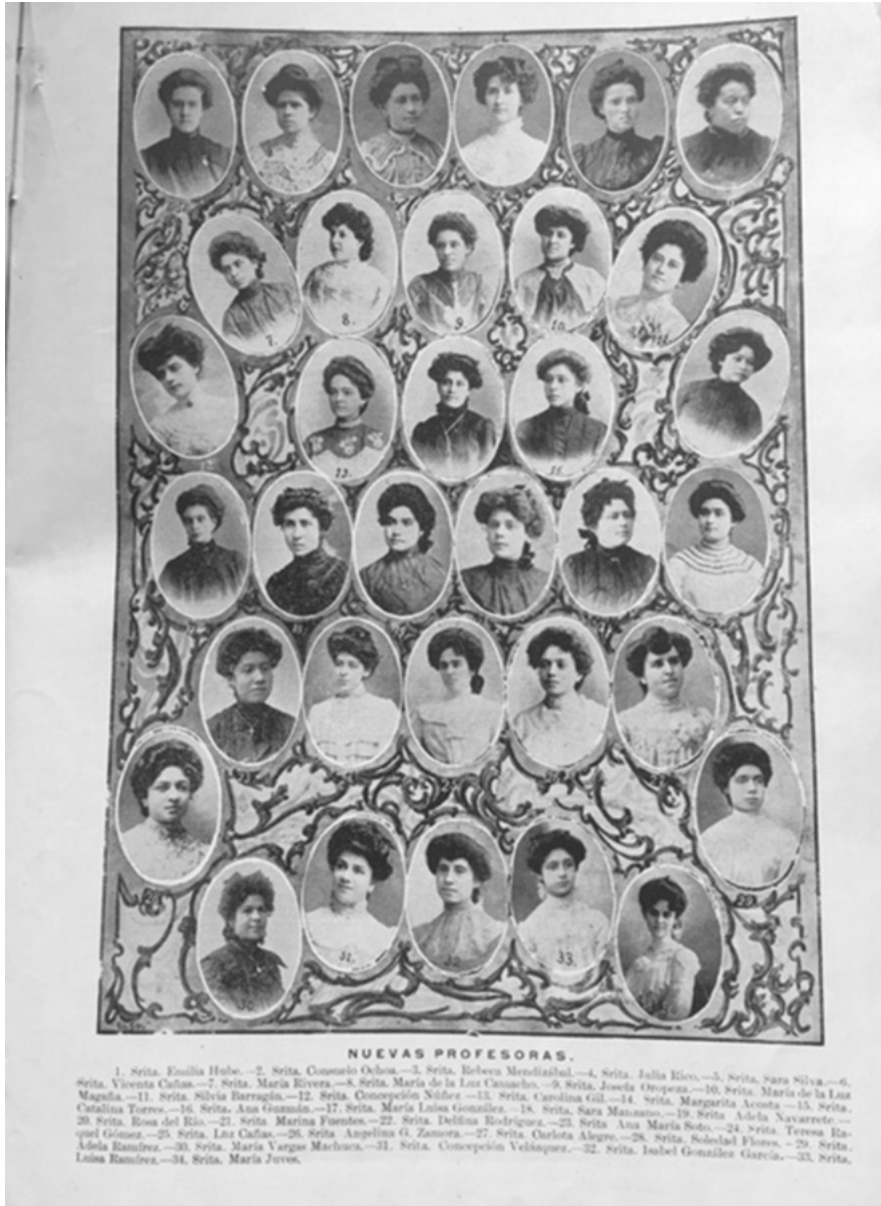**23** *La Enseñanza Normal* (1904):45.

Figure 1: Certified women teachers. Source: *La Enseñanza Normal* (1904): 97.

Figure 2: Travelers to the United States. Source: *La Enseñanza Normal* (1904): 129.

focused on highlighting a series of long-ignored details that could be useful for reforming the level of studies.[24]

A teacher named Laura Méndez de Cuenca was one of the first travelers to observe such differences in Mexico's school system:

> The German kindergarten is, in my opinion, ideal, the most delicate, the most loving; proper for producing thinkers, artists, poets, mothers, and wives. The American system is not involved in the home or the arts, Mexico's to date has been routine, false, poorly-adapted to our needs, a cornerstone of that romanticism that undermines our youth, and of that sentimentalism that devours us.[25]

Her report also highlighted the fact that the school environment in the U.S. had rules that were usually followed because there was no confusion as to each actor's role and place. Neither teachers nor caretakers lived inside the school's installations, nor were there any assistants, and Principals assumed all responsibility for the school because they were not forced to give classes.[26] The contributions of female Mexican teachers were apparent in the pedagogical renovation of the country. As was the case of earlier travelers, these women were also active, professional teachers who performed the functions of mediating the reception of new

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24 Laura Méndez de Cuenca observed: " it is said that comparisons are detestable, but for me it is impossible to make judgments about things without falling into detestable comparisons", *La Escuela Mexicana* (1905): 207 and 240.

25 *La Escuela Mexicana* (1905): 96.

26 Ibid., 292.

pedagogical trends, and then introducing, adapting, and disseminating them in Mexican schools. They formed a solid group that sought an imaginative way to conciliate theory and practice by directing the first kindergartens in the country.[27]

In 1907, the Academy of Teachers solicited the reading of the reports of those teachers and their publication in monographs as ways to help teachers clarify diverse issues. This practice soon led to the enactment of a law in 1908 that granted scholarships to teachers to participate in pedagogical missions overseas. Upon their return, they were expected to put what they had learned into practice in the framework of studying the school – as pedagogues – to ascertain how society and school influenced the country.[28]

The Textual Space: Textbooks and their Evaluation

One of the most widely-discussed topics in those pedagogical journals were textbooks. This is important because those debates were abruptly suspended in 1959 when the National Commission for Free Textbooks (*Comisión Nacional de Textos Gratuitos*) was founded in Mexico to distribute, free of charge, books that students required for their studies. With this measure, the Mexican State usurped the functions of author, editor, printer, and distributor, and entered the publishing market as a huge competitor to the traditional European houses of the 19th century, such as *Casa Herreno Hermanos* and the *Librería Bouret*, which later became *Libro Francés Unido* (SELFA, 1921). That initiative imposed the edition and use of one sole textbook for each subject. Those textbooks were given to all students in urban and rural areas, while the circulation of other schoolbooks published since the late 19th century was restricted. This affected teachers because they were used to selecting the books they deemed most appropriate for their classes, worsened by the fact that access to contents from unofficial sources was restricted.

By the end of the 19th century, a study plan had been defined for primary schools in which each subject required a program, a method and, above all, a book. Much of the published material came from France, Spain, and the U.S. Some

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27 Rebecca Rogers and Françoise Thébaud, "Éditorial," *Clio. Histoire, femmes et sociétés* [En ligne], 28 | 2008, mis en ligne le 15 décembre 2008, consulté le 27 january 2020, http://journals.openedition.org/clio/7563.

28 *La Escuela Mexicana* (1904): 3.

of those school manuals were translated and adapted to Spanish, others were used to inspire Mexican teachers to write books with content more closely-related to what Mexico's educational elite expected of citizens. At the Second Congress of Public Instruction (1889), educational authorities and teachers met and agreed that school manuals should be short, clear, precise, and economic, according to the programs elaborated by didactic authors who were experts in the field and its readers.[29]

In general, teaching literacy proceeded with the simultaneous use of normal words, calligraphic exercises with lower- and upper-case letters, recitation, and describing images. In subsequent years, graded readings were included that covered a broad range of school knowledge of the time: moral and civic instruction, and lessons on various topics, such as geography and history. Authors were in charge of writing school manuals, while the publishing houses promoted them through sales to state governors or directly to Normal Schools. Commissions were formed to evaluate the pedagogical merit and errors of the works before they were accepted for use in schools. Once approved, schoolbooks were edited and circulated for up to three years. After 1889, various titles were published for teaching literacy in the first grade of primary school. Pedagogical journals published reports that evaluated those materials, guided not only by pedagogical arguments but also by the privileges that their authors enjoyed. Examples of the works assessed include a textbook by Claudio Matte that circulated widely in Mexico between 1884 and 1926, and the two most popular textbooks of the period, one by Enrique Conrado Rebsamen, the other by Gregorio Torres Quintero.

After 1887, control of the contents of manuals for primary schools was overseen by the Normal School, which submitted its judgements to the Board of Public Instruction for approval and dissemination. Due to the increased production and commercialization of textbooks in the last decade of the 19th century, an agreement was reached to delegate this task to the Academy of Teachers in each state. Those groups would elaborate catalogues to help principals and teachers orient their decisions.[30] Each state would choose the textbook it considered the best fit for its interests. Veracruz preferred the one by Enrique Rebsamen, but in Nuevo León a special edition of Claudio Matte's book was edited, while Colima

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29 Lucía Martínez Moctezuma Lucía, "El modelo francés en los textos escolares mexicanos de finales del siglo XIX," in *Manuales escolares en España, Portugal y América Latina (Siglos XIX y XX),* ed. Jean-Louis Guereña et.al. (Madrid: Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 2005), 414.

30 Archivo Histórico de la Benemérita Escuela Normal Veracruzana Enrique C. Rebsamen. Sección Gobierno, Serie Programas, 1890–1903. Box 258.

selected the textbook by Gregorio Torres Quintero. The arguments presented to select these texts were varied because, as we will see, the process involved a variety of postures, both pedagogical and political in nature.

The evaluation that supported using Matte's text in Nuevo León won the day because of the excellent results it achieved in practice due to certain properties; namely, it was short, simple, and practical, and facilitated children's progress through the school grades based on examples that made use of objects from the family environment. In 1907, there was an attempt to replace Matte's text with the one by Torres Quintero, but a counterargument held that while it had allegedly been tested in a school there were no reports to support that it had actually been applied.[31]

When Professor Rebsamen died in 1904, many textbooks were submitted to evaluation for the purpose of modifying them. His prestige was associated with the Normal School of Veracruz, where all the pedagogical innovations of the modern epoch had emerged. Many assessment processes judged books by comparing them to the texts by Rebsamen; in fact, this approach went unrivaled until the publication of the text by his disciple, Gregorio Torres Quintero. The controversy that this spurred went beyond the bounds of evaluations and, as shown in this photo (figure 3) that accompanied the report of a visit by Normal students to the primary school in Xochimilco, where special treatment is apparent as the children show the readers the textbook they used to learn to read: the one by Rebsamen.

Torres Quintero's method was not published until after Professor Rebsamen's death. The Academy of Pedagogy of Veracruz issued its judgment in 1907. Its comparison of the two texts concluded that neither one was perfect, but that both showed noteworthy advances. The evaluating committee recognized that there were no completely original methods, neither those used in Mexican schools nor independent proposals. What Rebsamen had done was collect, adapt, and disseminate principles known in Germany but unknown in Mexico. Torres Quintero did the same, though his work also showed the influence of American teachers. This practice continued through the 1930s, as teachers in rural areas enjoyed the freedom to choose the method they would use to teach their students literacy. In Oaxaca, the teacher Florencio Cruz recalled that during the Cultural Missions some teachers used the methods they already knew – Rebsamen or Torres Quintero – because they were afraid of failing or because they considered them well-adapted to the environment in which they

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31 Norma Ramos Escobar, *La niñez en la educación pública Nuevoleonesa, 1891–1940* (Monterrey: Fondo Editorial de Nuevo León, UANL, 2015), 93–95.

Figure 3: The textbook used in a rural school. Source: *La Enseñanza Normal* (1907): 35.

taught, while others elaborated their own materials based on their observations of students' needs. In the regions where indigenous languages predominated, Torres Quintero's method was preferred because it did not require materials and was considered "ideal", since it adopted a simple approach that began with letters, then went on to forming syllables and, finally, words. This was especially useful in marginalized or indigenous communities where, according to Professor Guillermo Ramírez, good results were obtained in a span of just two months.[32]

Although the broad dissemination of Matte's, Rebsamen's, and Torres Quintero's methods had the advantage of having been written by authors who occupied administrative positions, it is also true that they were attractive to teachers. One particularly important feature that all three shared was a method that proposed handling the teaching of reading and writing as two aspects of the same activity. Publishers also played an important role by integrating a new element in teaching literacy: the intuitive procedure included in teaching with things, where students began by observing objects or images, then describing and comparing them. Books designed to teach reading and writing opted for a phonetic approach that associated images with sounds, an innovative feature that publishers worked

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32 Secretaria de Educación Publica, *Los Maestros y la Cultura Nacional, 1920–1952* (México: Museo Nacional de Culturas Populares-Dirección General de Culturas Populares, 1987), 3: 21, 42, 44; 5: 170, 208.

diligently to incorporate into their textbooks. For the first time, readers were brought into contact with objects in their family environment through a teaching strategy that facilitated learning not only literacy, but also other subjects. This reflected the fact that the Congresses of Public Instruction of 1890 and 1891 had agreed that reading must function as a way to learn about other fields, such as geography and history.

The interests of the publishing houses that specialized in schoolbooks was also apparent in their desire to form a team of didactic writers who could well have been considered rivals. Rebsamen and Torres Quintero authored the *Libreria de la Vda. de Bouret*, but triggered disputes by sending the text to different organisms entrusted with evaluating proposed schoolbooks. The texts by Matte, Rebsamen, and Torres Quintero circulated in different states – Nuevo León, Veracruz, and Colima – and from those spaces sought to capture the interest of teachers not only in other areas of Mexico, but in countries in Central and South America. Beyond the controversy that diverse entities sought to stir up among these different texts, it is important to recall what Rebsamen wrote in his *Guide*: "There must be no uniformity because that would take away the teacher's freedom and initiative, which would be more detrimental than useful." In 1926, Rebsamen's and Torres Quintero's methods were re-edited by the Ministry of Public Education, but in the decade of 1930, rural teachers could still exercise their freedom and demonstrated that children who spoke indigenous languages learned more easily and quickly using the Onomatopoeic Method that did not require special didactic material. Their freedom, however, was curtailed – as we mentioned earlier – with the introduction of free textbooks in 1959.

The Ludic Space: Teaching Physical Education

From the early decades of the 20th century, Mexico received news on developments in physical education in Sweden, France, Belgium, and Germany, and on sports more generally from England. Those novelties circulated in pedagogical journals of the epoch that stressed the need to teach physical education and good hygiene practices for "corporal education" in Mexican schools. Regulations specified that in order to offer these classes, schools had to have simple, hygienic installations on one floor, a courtyard destined for physical exercise, and three or four rooms large enough for physical education classes. This requirement, however, was rarely observed because most primary schools in the country lacked space and had insufficient budgets because they depended on municipal funding that often barely covered teachers' salaries and the cost of

rent. As a result, physical education classes were given almost exclusively in urban schools, accompanied by discourses on the formation of citizens who were "healthy in mind and body" and so would be able to develop their physical, moral, and intellectual abilities.

The teaching of physical education and military drills was gender-based and children who were sick or suffered from some abnormality were exempt. Only male students received physical education with the required equipment and graduated to military drills combined with practicing "free games," all with the aim of procuring the progressive, harmonious development of strength by exercising every part of the body.[33] The study plans for these subjects were disseminated in pedagogical journals. Since no schools existed to train teachers in these disciplines, one suggestion was to complement their training with texts like the *Cartilla de Ejercicios Militares* edited by the Ministry of War and the Navy. Other texts, like those by Delfina C. Rodríguez, were written for girls and stressed the topic of exercise as a synonym of health and happiness. Girls' physical activity, however, was limited to recess, when they were allowed to run, skip rope, sing, talk, and even scream, using all the muscles in the female body.[34]

The training regimens presented in the programs and texts debated between two teaching styles: German physical education with apparatuses and Swedish gymnastics. The former sought to train athletes and soldiers through practice in the gym supervised by specialized teachers that employed schemes based on the repetition of movements and the acquisition of skills and abilities in their teaching. The Swedish proposal, in contrast, focused on knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the body, including circulation and respiration, thus prioritizing health over vigor. Its advantage over the German method was that it could be practiced in schools with large groups that simultaneously performed series of movements.[35] In addition, this teaching was related to artistic development, so it was accompanied by songs and tambourines used to mark the rhythm.

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33 Carlos A. Carrillo, *Artículos Pedagógicos* (Mexico: Instituto Federal de Capacitación del Magisterio, 1964), 345.

34 Delfina C. Rodríguez, *La Perla de la Casa (México*: Librería de la Vda de C. Bouret, 1910), 153–156.

35 Swedish gymnastics had the advantage that it was available to the whole world because it did not require apparatuses to exercise the muscles and other functions of the organism (respiration, circulation, nutrition, and nervous transmission). In physical education classes, this form of gymnastics was used to perfect citizens of the school and regenerate peoples. L.G.Kumlien and Emile André, *La gimnasia sueca. Manual de Gimnasia Racional al alcance de todos y para todas las edades* (Mexico: Librería de la Vda de C. Bouret, 1904), 5–8.

One important change in training that occurred between 1904 and 1910 consisted in paying greater attention to harmony, though without losing sight of the uniformity, precision, and scaled nature of the drills being taught. Knowledge of the physical characteristics of the child's body facilitated planning activities; for example, exercises using the head for students under 16 were to be minimized and of low-impact. Sessions were held daily for children in the 1st and 2nd years and were not scheduled before classes on drawing or writing because they altered the pulse. They were also programmed for a half-hour before eating or two hours afterwards. Body position was always primordial: 'head up and chest out' was the posture that people believed provided a sense of bravery, while expanding the chest improved respiration. During class, students were reminded to keep their heads and chins up, their chest out, and their arms extended in a natural posture with their feet at an acute angle and, above all, their little fingers touching the seams of their pants.[36]

Discipline continued to be rigorous, but now under the argument that physical development was beneficial for health. To achieve this, teachers and principals were in charge of checking that children's attitudes were always physically correct. Another aspect of discipline was the distribution of time: each hour of exercise required a rest period of ten minutes that was used to ventilate the classrooms and attend to cases of fatigue. For the first time, the topic of overloading the children with work was addressed, the so-called *surmenage intelectual*.[37] This practice imposed a series of innovations regarding physical development. In the absence of schools for special education, pedagogical conferences for teachers, fiestas, school excursions, and the publication of textbooks oriented towards training teachers and students were practiced. School trips allowed students to take classes outdoors to nourish their perception, spirit of association, and discipline. An important figure who influenced this area was the Spaniard Pedro de Alcántara García, who defined *instructive or school trips* as the accompaniment of the teacher in the field, factories, monuments, museums, or establishments of any kind where students received explanations. These outings allowed children to *escape from the school*; at least, that was what teachers reported in pedagogical journals, pointing out how children exercised their muscles in *gymnastic games* and developed their senses with intuitive lessons on the objects around them.[38]

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36 Kumlien and André, *La gimnasia sueca*, 70–72.

37 *La Enseñanza Primaria* (1908): 82.

38 *La Escuela Mexicana* (1910): 341; *La Enseñanza Normal* (1906): 87.

This European model of physical development came to involve an interaction between two proposals; that is, Swedish gymnastics and military training. In Mexico, physical education was made mandatory in 1898, and schools were required to hold exercises of infantry military tactics for students with perfect order and discipline. Classes on military tactics were given on Saturdays beginning in 1901 using rifles made of wood, a clarion, and war drums. Budget restrictions forced some schools to replace wooden rifles with sticks, which the students used while learning to make formations, master different steps – lateral, backwards, quick marching, etc.– open and close ranks, and form columns of honor.[39]

Although these pedagogical journals promoted physical activity throughout the country, it is clear that such practices were limited to urban areas and the male gender. This fact can be observed in both the school curriculum, where physical education classes were replaced by sewing classes for girls, and in the photographs that accompany articles that clearly manifest the lack of materials of spaces adequately conditioned for practicing physical education in schools (figure 4).
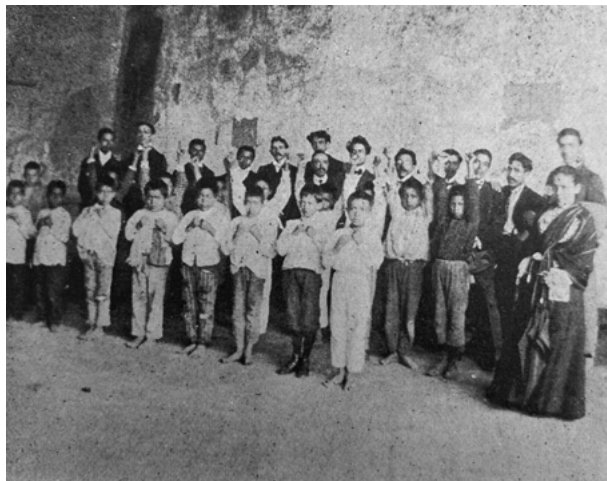

Figure 4: Physical education class in a rural school. Source: *La Enseñanza Normal* (1907): 328.

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39 *Mílada* Bazant, *Historia de la educación durante el Porfiriato (*Mexico: El Colegio de México, 2002), 180–184.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the topic of the use of Mexican pedagogical journals in educational research. The first important task consisted in localizing these materials, since no suitable mechanism for their conservation exists in a country like Mexico, which lacks specialized libraries or repositories of this kind. My approach continued with the analysis and interpretation of this source, in which I highlighted three issues that may be of interest for education in Mexico today: the strategies that women teachers adopted to make their work visible in a profession that, in the late 19th century, was so clearly male-dominated; the opportunity that teachers enjoyed to choose the textbook they considered most adequate for the environment in which they taught; and the practice of a knowledge that is still being questioned today when results regarding health at the international level are obtained. A series of problems that could arise from the definition of an educational model that pertains to a particular period might also serve as a basis for constituting a space for dialogue with the present; one capable of conserving, revealing, and disseminating the school patrimony. As we have seen, Cauvin (2020) argues for creating these spaces in order to debate public history and relate them to local or national practices. Adopting the metaphor of the tree, it is necessary to create, then conserve, the source, interpret it, disseminate it, and support its public use that, in this case, would center on constructing a virtual pedagogical – or school – museum.

In the analysis and interpretation of these issues, Frank Simon's proposal acquires relevance in terms of evaluating the pedagogical press as a key source of information, not only for researchers, but also for other readers interested in knowing the project of education in the 19th century and the early decades of the 20th in Mexico. Together with other documents from that period – textbooks and their evaluations, yearbooks, and reports by teachers both male and female – these pedagogical journals must be valued as sources both textual and iconographic that allow one to observe, in close-up, the school and its actors, and appreciate the value of the foreign component in the construction, circulation, and integration of new ideas into debates on education in Mexico. One can also follow a series of problems in these collections because the journals were designed to disseminate agreements on education taken at congresses, expositions, and academic meetings, as well as discourses and representations by teachers of their pedagogical mission, and the translation, adaptation, and elaboration of books for use in primary schools where diverse subjects were taught to form the 'new citizen'. As Simon acutely points out, we have no definitive source of information for research, nor any one, terminal interpretation or explanation, simply because no such thing has ever existed. Analyzing the content of these

pedagogical journals, and evaluating other types of sources, will better equip researchers to distance themselves from the narrations of the original actors; texts and photographic images with respect to which it does not matter if one takes sides as an iconophobe or iconophile, as long as the results of the research conducted are valid.[40]

The content of these pedagogical journals recreates spaces that include not only references to lived experiences but also social representations that construct an imaginary in which the lives of the actors in the school transpire, and relations are established through which experiences of their own lives are produced, leaving behind a patrimonial trail.[41] These discourses, both textual and iconographic, which reveal "the authentic normality through the normativity of the source", could form the basis for constructing a museum, organizing an exposition, taping a series of podcasts, writing vignettes, or perhaps even applying a broad survey that would help us better understand the historical memory of instruments like the free, official textbooks that began to be distributed in Mexico in 1959. A task that is still pending.

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40 Simon, "Qui Ascendit cum," 47–50.

41 Dávila and Naya, "VII Jornadas Científicas," 19–21.

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in *Media Matter*, edited by Francisa Comas Rubí, Karin Priem, and Sara Gonzalez Gómez (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2022), 94–115 (with María del Mar del Pozo).

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