FIAT/IFTA Media Study Grant 2020

Exploring Rai Digital Archives:
a new Didactic Methodology for Social Inclusion and Discovery of the Environment

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Cover illustration: Rai aerial tower (Credits: photograph by Ornella Castiglione).
INTRODUCTION

The research project titled *Exploring Rai digital archives: a new didactic methodology for social inclusion and discovery of the environment* could be inserted in the area of interest “Tools and (digital) methods”, as stated in the Call for Projects text for the FIAT/IFTA Media Study Grant 2020. This research project turned out as one of the winners and research activity has been carried out from the end of June until September 2020 at Rai Production Center located in Milan, where the private Multimedia Catalogue (CMM) through the Teca Aperta service has been consulted under the advice of Margherita Sechi.

The objectives of the project consist in socializing students to the original documents collected in audiovisual archives and “valorize and disseminate knowledge of archive collections by means of interactive publications, multi-media presentations, digital applications and other creative demos”, in order to experiment new modalities of learning and to discover the unconventional urban spaces and their narrations.

As the project should be relevant for the history of the member archive institution, the main objective is promoting the awareness in young generations of the importance that the public television had, since from its inceptions, in describing the Italian society in all its aspects. In this way, Rai archives, collecting millions of documents, became the essential depositary of the Italian history and culture which can be considered a resource in the education design of citizens (students and people more in general). Rai Teche is a FIAT/IFTA member archive that can ensure the access to original and not manipulated documents and provides a wide medial and disciplinary range of materials (literature, music, photography, radio, cinema, theatre etc.).

The relevance of the project in research or archive communities is to enhance the connection between archives, research and school worlds. The privileged audience will be teachers (in training and/or in service) and professionals in the field of audiovisual media and archives. Consequently, the output of this study has been a ready model that could be adopted in didactic use but also a hint for other multimedial archives interested in promoting their consistency.

The research project will be presented at 51st IASA Conference and 44th FIAT/IFTA World Conference hosted by RTÉ, which will be based in Dublin but will take place in virtual
mode due to Covid-19 sanitary emergency, from 26 to 29 October 2020. After that occasion, the dissemination of objectives and results can occur throughout academic courses, workshops and conferences.

This research paper is shared in two parts: the first one, more descriptive and analytics, introduces Rai educational productions as one of the roots in the company mission since from the beginning of the national broadcast. Subsequently, the Rai Multimedia Catalogue and the Teca Aperta service are described. To better contextualize the ambit of research in which my project moves in, a synthetical framework of the main theories is displayed together with some historical critic instances in the television field. Then, the project is framed in its essence (research question, rationale, description and methodology). The second part goes more in the specifics, dealing with the practical aspects as the results of the project: the didactic model, consisting in an urban itinerary (architectural walk) departing from the Rai building and arriving at Sforza Castle in Milan, is presented in detail.

THANKS TO RAI TECHE DIRECTION FOR HAVING KINDLY GRANTED THE FILMED AND PHOTOGRAPHIC MATERIAL.
PART I

I.1. RAI AND EDUCATION

One of the big merits of the Rai of its inceptions is to have promoted a large series of lessons aimed at completing the mandatory cycle of education. This initiative was addressed to students who were living in territory not provided by schools. It was November 25, 1958 and the great TV program was called Telescuola¹ (Grasso 2020, p. 1).

With these simple and grateful words, the television critic Aldo Grasso started his short essay on the «Corriere della Sera», the main Italian newspaper. It was March 8, 2020, when the schools of every order and degree has been physically closed on the whole national territory, for the first time and without any plausible prediction of what will be happened.

In the main scopes of television broadcasting system - information, education, entertainment - the Rai Italian public company embraced the second one as its core since from the beginning of the broadcasts, on January 3, 1954. As reminded by Grasso, a few years later the Telescuola experience was being born with the purpose of representing a typical classroom model with teachers and students as actors: “a school shoot by the television”² (Rai Scuola web site).

The TV medium, being a public service at the same time, has faced the severe social matter of analphabetism, overcoming the action of the school in effectively diffuse a common national language³, as it was aimed to be addressed to a “unified Italian audience”, “big […] although] invisible” (Briggs, Burke 2002, p. 273). Indeed, on November 15, 1960 with the TV show It is never too late. Popular education course for the recovery of the illiterate adult⁴, a long season of lessons for adult, taught by Alberto Manzi and supported by the Ministry of Education, aimed at reaching the large portion of disadvantaged population who was not able to read nor write has begun.

In the globalized world of the III Millennium, Italian language lessons are addressed to the migrants who came to Italy from third countries: with the project “The great portal of

¹ My translation.
² My translation.
³ For more information visit http://www.Rai.it/dl/Rai/text/ContentItem-20844e48-74d8-44fe-a6f4-7c224c96e84.html?refresh_ce.
⁴ My translation.
Italian language\textsuperscript{5} Rai Cultura, in collaboration with the concerned ministries, intersected the new educational needs\textsuperscript{6}. Likewise, in 2004 the title of Manzi’s show became \textit{Non è m@i troppo tardi}: it is never too late with the “at” to denote the Rai educational proposal for the informatic literacy which Italy was really needing in those years.

The Rai reforming act of 1975 provided the foundation of the “Department School Education”, that has been merged into the Rai channel entirely dedicated to educational world Rai Educational Sat, broadcasted via satellite only. It has been annexed into the Rai Laboratory structure in 2000 and, subsequently, it changed the name into Rai Edu 1 in 2002 but started to broadcast on the DDT system only on February 3, 2004. Finally, with the name of “Rai Scuola”, since from October 19, 2019 a free thematic television channel, published by Rai and edited by Rai Cultura, is dedicated to school training and teaching.

In the recent period of health emergency due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the education and training sector had to be remodeled as well, moving entirely on digital and giving rise to various forms of experimentation. In last months, a historical vocation of television has been resurfaced: that of educating. So that, through various Rai channels, we were witnessing the airing of a wide range of educational resources (films, lessons, historical documents) collected under the format “School does not stop”\textsuperscript{7}, a daily rubric edited by Rai Cultura in partnership with the Ministry of Education, active on Instagram with the hashtag #LaScuolaNonSiFerma as well\textsuperscript{8}.

This brief and synthetic examination highlights the primary role of Rai TV into the Italian educational and cultural scenario. However, beyond the contents that are specifically designed for media education or for distance learning, accessing the Rai productions more in general could represent a worth source for the teaching/learning processes. Consequently, the choice to create an archive of Italian history in all its aspects, such as Rai Teche, underlines the commitment to preserve this heritage for the knowledge of all.

\textsuperscript{5} My translation.
\textsuperscript{7} My translation.
\textsuperscript{8} For more information visit https://www.raicultura.it/articoli/2020/03/La-scuola-non-si-ferma-a51d8ab3-ffd7-4ad0-80cc-46be7c31fdec.html.
historians and more and more often enriches museums, exhibitions and cultural reviews throughout the territory (Rai Teche web site).

In Rai Teche archive the registration of changes of Italian society, uses, places through decades of productions - the radio broadcast started in 1924 as URI and shortly after as EIAR - has been merged, so that it can be summarized as “a long great tale by steps of the evolution of the country” (Rai Teche web site) inserted by Unesco in the archive of the memory of Italy.

I.2. THE CMM AND TECA APERTA SERVICE DESCRIPTION

The mission of Teche Management is to ensure the best possible documentation service in audiovisual media archives and its main areas of activity are: multimedia cataloging of television and radio material; archiving of the rights of use of individual products; management of company’s media datasets and libraries; management of the help desk service for all company structures and service to external customers who do not have commercial but institutional purposes.

Teca Aperta service born expressively to make Rai archives available to people through the creation of the Multimedia Catalogue (Fig.1) which embodied both recent and historical documents of which, in the meanwhile, the digitization process has been started.

The Multimedia Catalogue is an audiovisual dataset consisting in overall 75 million of indexed documents whose consistency is continuously implemented with the daily television programming of five Rai DTT channels (Rai 1, Rai 2, Rai 3, Rai 5, Rai Storia) and with the digitization of historical documents of the television company. The catalogue, indeed, is configured as an informative integrated system where are conserved tv shows, news reports, theatrical shows, movies, spots, radio programs, scripts, specialized magazines and other categories.

The archives that compose the CMM are Multimedia Archives; Editorial data bases; Specific data bases; Personal data bases and warehouses; Papery; Costumes and furnishings; Personal

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9 My translation.
10 My translation.
11 For more information visit http://www.teche.Rai.it/chi-siamo-2/.
working area. Inside of the first archive may be available for consultation four sections: TV and Radio; Palimpsests; Radiocorriere; Photos. As displayed in the figure below:

![Multimedia Catalogue home page.](image)

For rights protection reasons, the CMM is not an open access online archive but searches can take place only in the Rai regional venues under the advice of a service manager. For using the CMM materials for research, artistic, documentative or other purposes need to be asked for the authorization at release to the customer service. Rai does not possess the rights to use of the entire consistency of documents inserted into the CMM but, in general, the company possesses the rights to use of the in-house productions such as tv shows, news report, sector printed publications.
I.3. FRAMEWORK OF THE MAIN THEORIES AND CRITIC CONTRIBUTIONS

In the Nineties, TV critics was focused on the influence the main mass medium has had on the people, especially in relation both to the increasing low quality of contents and to the prevalence of images on the other communication forms. For instance, Karl Popper addressed his analysis on the fruition of television by young people, noting how it became a substitute of other primary educational agencies, such as school and family. Whereas Pierre Bourdieu expressed his concerns about the censorship that would be exerted into tv programs, hiding the important things for displaying the trivial ones. With a similar purpose, in the US, the TV quickly became “the universal eye” so that the architect Frank Lloyd Wright affirmed that, in fact, it was a chewing-gum for the eye (Briggs, Burke 2002, 298) referring to the function of hiding reality to people.

Giovanni Sartori stressed the prevalence of the (video)image in the modern communication, which would have transformed the human being from homo sapiens into homo videns. According to the Italian politics scholar, the risk since the early age (tele-bambino) is the habit to see without understanding that would lead to make political choices dictated by manipulation and not by awareness. Jean Boudrillard highlighted the lack of distinction between objects and their representation as a typical phenomenon of the world of media, where technological devices are widely diffused (Bourdon 2000, pp. 25-26).

As can be detectable in the brief framework above reported, contemporary to the spread of media education, TV critics has been emerged by scholars of different fields of study and countries. Homogeneously, they have discharged on television fears more properly attributable to the social situation more in general (censorship, change in the structure of families e.g.). In my opinion, the real risk is not the fruition of media but overexposure, as we all may note with the more recent phenomenon of the abuse of devices and of internet connection. In the case of a massive and repetitive vision of images through the media – mostly if not alternated with the vision of the same events/objects in the reality – representation turns into influence: images enter directly into spectator’s mind without any kind of aware mediation. Obviously, there is a high degree of difficulty to certainly establish what happens into human beings’ mind; therefore, this inference is difficultly demonstrable (Bourdon 2000, pp. 62-63).
Should be reminded here the importance of balancing activities and tools and of assuming a critical approach. Indeed, media education is “an educational and didactic activity aimed at developing critical information and understanding in young people about the nature and categories of media, the techniques they use to construct messages and produce meaning, specific genres and languages” (MED web site).

The contribution proposed by David Buckingham goes a little bit ahead, positing that students should be provided by an updated digital (media)literacy which includes both critical and creative approach (Buckingham 2007).

A detailed treatment of digital revolution, Prensky’s digital native concept, application of ICT at school or the story of media education, for obvious reasons, cannot take place here. Therefore, the discussion is circumscribed to the specific topic of the research project, such as the design of educational activities which involve the use of digital archives as didactic tools aimed at promoting new and effective teaching/learning practices.

As we all know, the ease of access the contents has got strengths but also weaknesses, as unreliability of sources, inability to correctly understand messages or to identify the context of origins e.g. Those are preeminent hints teachers should take in count when they choose digital learning sources; mostly because, as Calvani reminds, “the idea that intellectual technologies model cognitive and cultural processes is having an increasing value since from McLuhan, Mumford and Postman intuitions, which are nowadays confirmed”12 (Calvani 2013, p. 56).

Although it happens under the teacher’s guidance and supervision, the consultation of archives means for students an active managing of the learning contents (search, analysis and choice) which leads to the original composition of new cultural products. About this, pedagogists assert that “a good classroom management is retraced into the tension […] between need of control and ask for participation”13 (Mameli, Molinari 2015, p. 15).

This kind of active didactics could be related to the Henry Jenkins’s concept of “participatory culture” focused on how young people take the potentiality offered by new technologies: “the new ‘participatory’ culture is rising as youth culture absorbs - and reacts to - the explosion of new digital technologies that make possible, for the average consumer, activities such as archiving, commenting on, appropriating and re-circulating media content in

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12 My translation.
13 My translation.
new and powerful ways” but also on the responsibility that should be assumed by teachers to manage this process, which are invited to: “promote the cultural skills and knowledge necessary to use these tools to achieve [the] goals” (Jenkins 2009, p. 66). Jenkin’s study could be related to the main theoretical horizon of the modern school: the socio-cultural constructivism approach proposed by Vigotskij, Papert, Bruner and based on Jean Piaget’s theory. In learning environments addressed to the active participation, cooperation, sharing and negotiation between the teacher and his/her pupils is a continuous exchange process which enhances motivation. This is the context where the co-construction of contents and knowledge can be carried out experimenting different didactic methodologies in order to adopt more effective teaching/learning processes.

The outputs of learning activities based on archives are new and personalized contents, that can be enriched by videos, photos and drawings made by students as well. Consequently, the phenomenon of centrality of student and of communicative protagonism is satisfied (Ferri 2011, p. 100) by their creativity in making personal and unusual cutting inspired by the mash up and remix techniques and likely comparable to interactive TV fruition.

In the Nineties, the concept of “interactivity” – and of “creativity” - started to be discussed probably more than that of “convergence” about the television, as it is a mass medium. Indeed, interactivity was linked to devices used in museums and at school, to home television and to e-commerce (Briggs, Burke 2000, p. 333).

As in early age access the media contents was serialized and synchronic, the experience was regulated and collective. By contrary, at the end of the XX Century, due to the large increase of media channels - and the consequent higher occasions to access - and to the digitization of various materials which compose the cultural products - changing the broadcasting system – the postmedial condition has been determined (Eugeni 2015, p. 23), in which media had a “complex and complete integration with the technological and social environments in which we live”14 (Eugeni 2015, p. 25). Our pupils historically belong to the “postmedial” generation and this could be a reason why, in a cultural and anthropological change of paradigm, which involves both communication and learning style, the relationship with the “medial” teachers could be difficult. As a proposal that school could carry out, Eugeni glimpses a “not planned by the system window opening”15 such as complex narrative forms,

14 My translation.
15 My translation.
ability to design and project, critical overview on postmedial condition (Eugeni 2015, pp. 27-29).

Besides, according to Cullen’s research, is reasonable to retain that a teacher able to establish a personalized dialogue with pupils by using the web 2.0 tools could have much more chances to promote an empathic complicity climate in drop-out high-risked classrooms and, more in general, e-learning inspired policies could obtain results in promoting e-inclusion, e-participation, e-citizenship (Cullen 2007).

Is reminded here that the use of audiovisual contents “can be particularly useful to anticipate a topic […], leverage motivation and the emotional dimension […] or can be useful tools into a learning activity to deepen in particular some aspects, making it pleasant and varied”¹⁶ (Scapin 2014, p. 118). I sustain that the change of paradigm in the design of an inclusive and effective didactics is generate motivation, appeal emotions, make pleasant and varied the learning process, making students active and responsible. The mandatory step could be from mechanical learning to meaningful learning¹⁷ that means “a learning that mobilizes motivations and interests, because it is not detached and inert, but sinks into the life of the subject, it is transferable, applicable, provided by meaning. It is a knowledge that a person brings inside and outside the school” (Ianes, Tuffanelli 2011, p. 84).

Is reasonable to retain that a linked-to-the territory learning method¹⁸ could be more effective because promotes an active didactics not detached from the other aspects of students’ life and enhances the concept of identity intended not for separate but to include. Indeed, nowadays this approach is particularly appreciated in multicultural urban contexts. Edgar Morin posits the concept of “identity” together with “terrestrial consciousness” as one of the seven necessary knowledge for the education of the future: “we should learn to be there on the planet. Learning to be there means learning to live, to share, to communicate, to be in communion”¹⁹ (Morin 2001, p. 77). In this way, an educational activity could be retained a “good practice” as it has been summarized by Roberta Garbo “a good organization that

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¹⁶ My translation.
¹⁷ In Italian is “apprendimento meccanico” and “apprendimento significativo”.
¹⁸ The approach to link school community to the surrounding areas departs from active learning strategies used in the Seventies and, in part, based on the outdoor learning methodologies. The main aims are social inclusion, enforce of identity and knowledge of proximity resources, in order to make didactics more active and effective. For a recent case-study see, for example, the contribution at this link https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042817300447
¹⁹ My translation.
allows life pathways and projects for and into differences” (Garbo 2009, p. 15). I argue that promoting inclusive didactics into the school is the starting point of a more general social inclusion for the future not only for students but for their families as well.

On the issues of the valorization of cultural heritage and of the discovery of territory, the National Plan for the Cultural Heritage Education affirms that “educating to the landscape means strengthening the identity and the sense of belonging of the community so that it recognizes the value of the extraordinary collective heritage of our country and actively works for its protection” (2018, p. 7). Besides, stressing on the terms of “awareness” and “involvement”, the Plan elucidates the “collective” dimension of the approach both in sense of belonging and responsibility.

In conclusion, in order to accomplish a satisfying teaching/learning process is desirable that the approach is multidisciplinary and organic. The high rate of dropouts and unsuccessful school courses imposes a wider attention to project more inclusive didactic activities which could offer a real and solid background for young citizens. In this regard, the depth knowledge of the surrounding areas can develop a sense of belonging that positively enforces identity.

I.4. THE MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION AND THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The research project is titled *Exploring Rai digital archives: a new didactic methodology for social inclusion and discovery of the environment* and its development tries to give responses to the main research question: can archive datasets be useful in promoting social inclusion and in discovering the environment through new methodologies of teaching/learning process?

The aim of the project consists in offering effective solutions as a remedy to problems such as inadequate behaviors in increasingly widespread school contexts (disinterest, bullying, frequent absences etc.) which make learning processes particularly complicated and often intended to unsuccessful school careers for both students (and their families) and teachers (Guerzoni 2015; Madrussan 2017).

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20 My translation.
The FIAT/IFTA member archive Rai Teche, where the research activity has been carried out, ensures the access to original and not manipulated documents and provides a wide medial and disciplinary range of materials which regard many school subjects such as literature, music, history, art, natural sciences or the other kind of expression (photography, radio, cinema, theatre etc.). In this manner, is basic to underline the importance of making know to young generations the difference between original and manipulated sources.

As the project should be relevant for the history of member archive institution, the main objective is promoting in young generations the awareness of the importance that the public television had, since from the beginning, in describing the Italian society under all its aspects, as wrote in § I.1.

If it is clear that school should not be replaced by television (Popper cit. in Bourdon 2000, p. 25), television and school should be integrated in education and in the growing up of the new citizens. In particular, public television archives, for the historical and social relevance of the materials that are collected inside, can offer digital contents, implemented by the online platforms for sharing contents and information (Google Suite, Microsoft 365, Instagram e.g.), and under the guidance of teachers in order to face the emerging educational needs (online activities). As mentioned in § I.1, Rai educational sector productions have always provided responses to the various educational emergency that the country has faced and, as it is now known, the Corona virus pandemic has enhanced social divide based on the access to technology. Consequently, TV channels such as Rai Scuola and the format La scuola non si ferma could temporarily help to contrast to educational poverty.

As for the topic of the project, the field of interest regards primarily the education system and then the history of architecture, cinema and visual arts linked to the valorization of cultural heritage, with a particular focus (in our case) on the city of Milan. As clearly defined in the title, research activity is addressed to detect methodologies and tools to enable teachers in designing an inclusive didactic activity. The relevance of the project in research or archive communities is enhancing the connection between archives, research practice and school. Is desirable to involve students in making documents live again under different forms and times through the habit of consulting both digital and paper catalogs and archives to deepen or personalize the learning of school subjects.
The research activity took place at Rai digital archives located at the Production Center of Milan through the Teca Aperta service. The analyzed material has concerned TV shows, documentaries, films, news reports, TV series, didactic programs, journalistic reports, television talk shows etc. My research activity has been carried out in the sections “TV and Radio” (consistent in about 1.350.000 documents) and “Photos” (consistent in about 40.000 documents) of the Multimedia Catalogue. At the beginning, the search key to formulate the general query has been “Milano” to, then, tighten more and more the field and arrive at the useful contents to be able to design the didactic model. The selected documents are cited in the research paper in § II.2.

Differently from what has been indicated in the first version of the workplan, due to Covid-19 emergency restrictions, the concrete research in Rai archive has been started only on June 24, 2020 and not at the beginning of May. Consequently, the project has been carried out only in approximately three months, namely until the end of September 2020 if the drafting and the editing of the paper are included. The timeline has been re-scheduled in three little periods:

Period 1. June: Definition of a selected list of places and topics of interest.
Period 2. July and the final week in August: consultation of the archive, selection of the suitable documents and design and realization of the didactic model.
Period 3. September: finalization of the didactic model, final analysis of media, preparation of the scholarly article.

The point of straights of this condensation in the research activity could consist in have better concentrated the attention and not have lost time in re-focalizing on the topic which led to a major efficiency. However, the limits regard the typical phases that research project should have to permit a greater in-depth in searching and analysis of the materials and in designing new proposals.

The results and products of this research project will be communicated through Rai and FIAT/IFTA institutional usual channels. Besides, the project will be presented at 51st IASA Conference and 44th FIAT/IFTA World Conference hosted by RTÉ, which will be based in Dublin but will take place in virtual mode due to Covid-19 sanitary emergency, from 26 to 29 October 2020. After this occasion, the dissemination of objectives and results can occur through academic courses, workshops and conferences thought by the author. Results and the explanation of the didactic model are treated in detail in the part II of this paper.
The approach to face the research, and to compose the didactic model, could be referred to the spatial turn, in order to investigate objects and themes from the wider and more organic point of view as possible. Is reminded here that the so-called spatial turn approach regards “the relationship between film studies, cultural geography and anthropological reflection on the concept of place” and consists in “a relocation of *space* as a decisive segment of contemporary humanistic research, transversal to individual disciplinary skills” (Minuz 2011, p. 9).

Whereas, the general methodology of the research carried out in the Rai CMM could be referred to the content analysis in order to make a fast selection with subsequent screening of a large corpus of items (Bourdon 2000, pp. 63-64).
Figure 2. Archive of films kept in the RAI headquarters in Milan. (Credits: Fototeca RAI).
II.1. THE RESULTS

The output of this study is a ready and replicable model that could be adopted in teaching/learning contexts on the base of the particular needs as they are identified by teachers, but, at the same time, it could work also as a hint for other multimedial archives interested in promoting their consistency.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, this research project has been partially changed the timeline and the outputs. The substantial reduction of the period of time for developing the project, together with the impossibility to realize a video internally to Rai, imposed to change the results of the research. In the phase of drafting the research project outlines, the video should have been consisted in a presentation pill of aims and methodology of using multimedial archives in didactics to establish a first contact with teachers and to create curiosity in them. Together with this audiovisual text should have been prepared a list of available topics/places/themes to investigate in the classroom as the written result.

The video and the list have been replaced with the designing of a didactic model consisting in a road map on the base of an “architectural walk” departing from the Rai building and with the arrival in the Sforza Castle in Milan. Should be clarified that the choice of this area is totally linked to the researcher’s experience as it has to considered just an example. Practical learning activities will be adapted on the base of the educational needs of the single classes.

The model is inspired by the National Plan for the Cultural Heritage Education 2016 and 2018 statements21 but also by practice, such as the architectural walks22 stably promoted...
by the Order of the Architects of the Province of Milan\textsuperscript{23} and by the Urbana Conference, held in 2019 and organized by University of Milan-Bicocca, Politecnico of Milan and IULM\textsuperscript{24} e.g.

Since that the architectural walk is a discovering itinerary to be applied in the nearby of the school (or of the students’ houses), could be intended as a form of (urban) outdoor learning in which the research activity carried out with digital tools, such as the audiovisual documents of the dataset, could be combined with research and documentation on site. In this way, the use of didactic tools (digital and not) is balanced and the fruition of images is alternated with the vision of reality (see § I.4). Besides, the form of the pathway could be referred to the “field trip” technique, where pupils learn contents through a guided exploration/ construction of contents, experimenting an active methodology in the teaching/ learning process (Ferri 2011, p. 116).

In the portion of the city students can know and live outside the school, practical skills usable for learning are offered and, in this regard, public spaces prove to be an extension of the didactic ones and vice versa. A different meaning of the physical (surrounding area) and symbolic (identity) - but also virtual (multimedia documents and Internet connection) - space is thus acquired. For the learning process it exactly entails that to successfully respond to the new didactic model, based always more on competences and not on the assimilation of notions, need to give students the opportunity to have a wider range of tools and of spaces were extend the experience of learning and in this also resides the didactic value.

In new scenarios, such as the one has been determined for the Covid-19 pandemic (Fragonara, 2020) but, more in general, to face the different needs that prevent the presence in the classroom (illnesses, hospital stay, temporary journeys to the countries of origin, weather alerts e.g.), it is more important than ever to solicit a didactics that is not limited to the school spaces from which it emanates but that reaches, through technologies, the widespread places.

\textsuperscript{23} For more information visit https://fondazione.ordinearchitetti.mi.it/it/notizie/dettaglio/10469?utm_medium=email&_hsmi=95349488&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-8xmW9lfgw1kxeyxANEmN1J-90d47FiCALKXP4nyh-gAQZk2QkEApLso5oneXROGweW2w1KdUBs2OusVh9scFQqyJUyFciAlHbuujOgLmgAVh3k&utm_content=95349488&utm_source=hs_email.

\textsuperscript{24} For more information visit http://www.urbana.sociologia.unimib.it/.
The use of the term “exploration” in the title suggests the desire of knowledge together with making direct experience and both those expressions could be realized through the digital archive as in the urban space.

According to the point of view of the links must be identified in the most of the school subjects, as it is required by the current setting of Secondary School final State examination, the urban map defined by the architectural walk could represent a physical version of the conceptual map which is the basis of the multidisciplinary interview. Besides, the map could be an augmented reality object where every single stage is a threshold linkable to contents helpful to deepen them. I retain that putting objects and events on a map could be helpful to establish or clarify relations that pass in space. The focus is shifted on architecture even if objects of study can be various, as we may have seen, because architectures are signs in the city, which is configured as both representation and function instance. Rai archives documents will be useful to explain and deepen every single architectural sign, considered both as itself and through a wide range of disciplines (geography, cinema, history, natural sciences, literature, art, etc.).

In order to integrate information provided by archives documents has been consulted Comune di Milano (2015; 2019), Livraghi (2014), Moioli (2014), Rolando (2014) whereas the references used for the movies has been D’Avino et al. (2011) and the online portal imdb.com.

II.2. THE DIDACTIC MODEL

II.2.1. The map

“The eye travels through the forms creating maps for himself, which, in turn, give life to models in perennial self-generation and morphological transformation” (Appiano 2008, p. XII). The pathway (Fig. 3), geographically, winds through the portion of corso Sempione included from the Rai building to the Sforza Castle passing by the Guardia di Finanza building, the Arco della Pace and the Arena. The Rai Production Centre of Milan is located in the city downtown, along corso Sempione, one of the major urban road axis and symbol of the Napoleonic redesign of the town. The overall distance from Rai to the Sforza Castle, crossing the Sempione Park, is 1,5 km and it could be covered in 19 minutes walking.
II.2.2. The Giò Ponti Building

The picture called *Il palazzo Rai di notte* (Fig. 4), realized by Nicola Vaglia, could be considered the icon of this didactic model which deals with the discovery of the area above described in detail. Historically, the first venue of the public Italian television, inaugurated by the radio broadcasting system, has been located here, as explained during the program *Trent’anni di TV: telemiracolo a Milano* (1984) aimed at celebrating the first thirty years of Rai productions. At this point, the function (content) of the RAI building located in corso Sempione in Milan from the structure itself (container) should be shared since that its project also assumed a significance in Giò Ponti’s architectural works.
As for the second element, in *Due per tutti* (2003) the talk show host Giovanna Milella highlights the relationship between the container and the content defining Giò Ponti the “great maker of our environments”\(^{25}\) during the television episode - aired on May 9, 2003 on Rai Due - focused on an examination of the architect’s production and on his versatility in designing. In order to notice the feature of multichannel perspective, *Nudo e crudo* is a Radio Uno broadcast in which the correspondent Alessandro Feroldi, during the episode on air on January 17, 2008, outlined the formal aspects of Giò Ponti project for the Italian radio building begun in 1939. It is formed by five overlying cubes, each of them is a studio exclusively

\(^{25}\) My translation.
dedicated to a productive genre (drama, news e.g.) and it is isolated from the foundations in order not to be damaged by bombings.

As is important to underline that signs are often inserted into a framework, should be detected that the traces left by Giò Ponti in Milan are many\textsuperscript{26}. One of them is the Trefoil Pavilion (1961) designed for the former Faculty of Engineering of the Politecnico of Milan where the exhibition “Living at the Ponti way”\textsuperscript{27} has been staged in 2014. As shown in the \textit{TGR Lombardia meridian edition} aired on October 15, the link between historical signs, learning spaces and contemporary events should be strong to maintain the sense of identity and the knowledge of the cultural heritage in the citizen’s experience around them.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure5.png}
\caption{\textit{Ponti notturno}. (Credits: Fototeca RAI).}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{27} My translation.
Turning back to the picture mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph, is possible to differentiate it from the one titled Ponti notturno (Fig. 5) because of the support (black and white vs color) but basically because of the Rai logo. In il palazzo Rai di notte, indeed, is easily recognizable the first graphics for the Rai logo, as shown on the stand staged for the Italian TV broadcast in occasion of the 43° Fiera di Milano (Fig. 6). Instead, in the case of Ponti notturno, on the bottom left, the graphic types used for the letters “RAI” inserted on the top of the entrance are the same of the ones copied down in the Rai pavilion staged at the 59° Fiera Campionaria di Milano (Fig. 7). It is important here to notice the pathway shared by Rai and Fiera di Milano in a few of decades of the XX Century such as both effective strategy systems of communication and promotion of the new industrial vocation of Italy.

![Figures 6-7. Rai stand at Fiera Campionaria di Milano. (Credits: Fototeca RAI).](image-url)
The documents which has been analysed in this section explore a particular historical moment of the Italian economy and identify broadcast and exhibition systems as privileged witnesses. The figure of an important contemporary architect is framed: Giò Ponti, underling connections between the story of architecture and daily life (the space where we live, study or work; the cultural events in town). As for the visual communication, the learning aspects may consist in the analysis of the use of black and white or of color in making photographs; in the useful hints to recognize different periods of time by noting some details present in the images (the Rai logo).

II.2.3. In between

Besides iconic buildings, all the cities are rich territories of signs of historical memories as, for example, the near venue of the Interregional Command of the Guardia di Finanza (Fig. 8) which was constructed in the fascist period by the architect Tito Bassanesi Varisco and became a symbolic place of the Liberation movement in the days close to April 25, 1945, as described in the report “The historical venue of the Guardia di Finanza”28 of TGR Lombardia meridian edition aired on March 26, 2011.

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28 My translation.
One of the features of contemporary art is going outside of the established places. During the Christmas holidays in 2011 two graduated students at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts painted one of the parking bollard installed in front of the Rai entrance, transforming it into a concrete “panettone”\(^{29}\) (TGR Lombardia meridian edition aired on December 10, 2011).

Factories are one of the most important institutions in the historical fabric of Milan and some of them are deeply rooted in its territory. Camera con vista has dedicated a monographic episode titled “Made in Italy” to the story of the Branca family of entrepreneurs which committed to Giò Ponti an iron tower (Fig. 9) in occasion of the international exposition occurred in Milan in 1933 to celebrate the early age of the Italian manufacturing system. The tower, nowadays set into the Sempione Park gate, has been defined as the “symbol of an arrow address towards the sky”\(^{30}\) by Ponti’s own words.

![Figure 9. The so-called Torre Branca. (Credits: photograph by Ornella Castiglione).](image)

The Sempione Park and, especially, the Civic Arena (Fig. 10), designed by Luigi Canonica at the beginning of the XIX Century based on the Roman Circus of Massenzio style, are usual venues for sport competitions such as the streets departing from them. Rai archives possess a huge number of sport programs such as insights, news, commentaries etc. La Domenica Sportiva first aired on October 11, 1953 from Rai Production Centre of Milan

\(^{29}\) Panettone is the Christmas traditional cake invented in Milan in 1606.

\(^{30}\) My translation.
proved through the decades to be one of the most authoritative voices in the sport national panorama. The focus of that historical episode was on cycling, running and football.

![Image](image.jpg)

**Figure 10. The main entrance of the Civic Arena currently under restoration.** (Credits: photograph by Ornella Castiglione).

The news report shot on October 26, 1952 shows the cyclists run across corso Sempione coming from the Arco della Pace during the 46° Tour of Lombardy, which has counted the presence of the champions Gino Bartali and Fausto Coppi.

In occasion of the commentary of the 85° Tour of Italy (aired on June 2, 2002) a few of amazing aerial shots show the Arco della Pace and corso Sempione with surroundings alternating with the coronation of the winner Mario Cipollini.

The world of journalism, and of media more in general, is rather present in this area. Just in 2002 the Civic Arena has been entitled to the sport reporter Gianni Brera dead in 1992 (*TG2 Insieme – Biografia di Gianni Brera* aired on December 12, 2012). The Arena has been a place open to all the Milan sport fans and in more recent times it maintained its importance for sport events organization as well. In 2008 the Media Running Challenge has born. It is a race in which media professionals participate to raise funds for aiding the associations that operate in the social sector, combining, in this way, two of the souls of Milan: the passion for running and the vocation for solidarity (*Uno Mattina Estate 2008* aired on July 11, 2008).

The fruition of the area for sport practice or spare time is not limited to its permanent setting but, in some occasions, a football camp for the “Calcio a 5: Trofeo Arco della Pace 1990” (*Sport
locale domenicale aired on September 30, 2002) or a beach and swimming pool (TGR Lombardia night edition aired on June 12, 2004) have been temporary staged.

Nevertheless, the Sempione Park (Fig. 11) lived controversial phases in its fortune, as well framed in the reportage titled “Quel parco di Milano” (1986) inserted in the Rai Due format Bella Italia. The wide green surface, in that downtown Milan currently so expansive, has been transformed in a park only at the end of the XIX Century. Indeed, in previous times, the area nowadays covered by the Sempione Park has been a suburban lot outside the Porta Giovia walls since from Gian Galeazzo Visconti made build his fortress. During the Eighties, when Italian big urban areas had to face social diseases, such as heroin addiction and youth unemployment, Sempione Park has been, for some aspects, a dangerous place due to its function of homeless recovery and drug dealing.

Figure 11. The Sempione Park. (Credits: photograph by Ornella Castiglione).

Less of ten years later, the point of view has been changed and the government of the city started to plan a new development hypothesis through the redesign of the urban spaces. According to this vision, the episode titled “Il quadrilatero del Castello” (aired on December 6, 1995) of Viaggio in Italia proposed an interview to the professor of Politecnico Vittoriano Viganò and to other scholars on the project of valorization and requalification of the whole area. Need to be reminded that the Sempione area is a real topical point for the history of Milan and of Italy more in general for the high concentration of monuments and spaces where important events took place.
The Sforza Castel has been the symbolic center of Milan Renaissance under Ludovico II Moro and in the place where Luigi Cagnola built the Arch (Fig. 11) on May 15, 1796, as a triumph entrance from France, Napoleon entered in the city with the French troops. The Arco della Pace become in time an iconic and significative sign of the city and when in 2002 has had a total restoration, its cladding panels hosted street art interventions and demonstrative writings (TG3 Lombardia meridian edition aired on November 2, 2002).

Figure 11. The Arco della Pace currently under restoration. (Credits: photograph by Ornella Castiglione).

In the TgR Petrarca (aired on March 14, 2020) the writer Daniel Pennac speaks about his final novel La legge del sognatore in which a wide part of the dreams, in memory of the film director Federico Fellini, is located in the nearby of the Sempione Park: “Remains the theatrical project on the resurrection of Fellini. [...] Then the final party at the Sempione Park in Milan”31 (Pennac 2020, p. 123).

Only to mention a film of the history of cinema, the sequence of Gli uomini, che mascalzoni... (Mario Camerini, 1932), in which Mariuccia is travelling on the tram across the city and Bruno is following her on his bicycle along corso Sempione, which can give back the atmosphere when the Rai building there was not yet.

In the recent TV series La compagnia del cigno (Ivan Cotroneo, 2018), targeted for young people, the house of professor Marioni is located on a street departing from the Arco

31 My translation.
della Pace and he goes running at Sempione Park, whereas Antonia and Rosario walk into the Sforza Castle site. Also in the Rai Cinema co-production *Nome di donna* (Marco Tullio Giordana, 2018) the Arco della Pace is one of the film locations.

As for the didactic instances, many are the subjects – if we want to stay into the traditional fields of knowledge - involved by the mentioned spaces: sport, history, sociology, urban planning, architecture, art, natural sciences, literature, cinema, television. There is a statement that is particularly indicated here: “architecture lives in time”. On this sentence, I retain that a wide reflection on all the described objects and signs could be constructed.

### II.2.4. The Sforza Castle

*Terzo Programma* was a quarterly cultural review published by Rai from 1961 to 1975 which dealt with many interesting issues in its pages, such as the Filarete’s *Trattato di Architettura* edited in 1464 in which he outlined the ideal town. Filarete is a protagonist of the Milan Renaissance for his signature on the distinctive turret realized in the Castle for Francesco Sforza between 1451 and 1453.

![The Sforza Castle](figure.png)


Nowadays the Castle site (Fig. 12-13) is a multifunctional space that hosts, among other institutions, civic museums, various collections and art exhibitions as the one dedicated to
Michelangelo’s Pietà Rondanini (1552-1564). The popular telecast of scientific disclosure Superquark (aired on September 5, 2005) investigated the restoration of this emotional Pietà. Philippe Daverio, a prominent character in the Rai cultural offer, in the episode of Il mestiere del costruire aired on November 27, 2013 remarked the role of Leonardo and Michelangelo in determining the Renaissance thought and showing the draws of the cannon with which Leonardo offered himself to Ludovico Sforza, the duke of Milan. La vita di Leonardo da Vinci (Renato Castellani, 1971) is a Rai/Istituto Luce co-production TV series, composed by five episodes. At the beginning of the second one, the reconstruction of the scene when Il Moro reads Leonardo’s letter is represented.

Leonardo deeply connotated the Sforza Castle space, which has been chosen as location for three episodes of the Rai TV show Giochi senza frontiere (Fig. 14) presented by Ettore Andenna in 1995, among others, where gigantic drakes illustrate the games inspired by the artist’s projects.

![Figure 14. Giochi senza frontiere.](image) (Credits: Fototeca RAI).

Should be noted that CMM contains footage not cut or edited, such as some videos on Umberto Boccioni’s drawings and engravings exhibited in the Castle rooms in January, 2005.
As can be easily guessed, many TV and cinematographic productions has located their
set in the Castle since from Palle di neve al Castello\textsuperscript{32} (1896) shot at the end of the XIX Century
by the Lumière brothers Italian film operator Italo Pacchioni - and now in the consistency of
the Cineteca Italiana -. The short movie describes a snow battle into the Sforza Castle, before
of Luca Beltrami's intervention, played by a group of kids and a dog with the aim to
immortalize some daytime moments in the city.

As for a couple of examples, Lo svitato (Carlo Lizzani, 1956) displays a catwalk during
the dog exhibition and in Durante l'estate (Ermanno Olmi, 1971) the library has been set into
the castle.

Cities are active laboratories where planning a continuous mutation. According to this
side, the engineer in charged by Metropolitana Milanese Augusto Clerici in the episode of
Habitat aired on November 3, 1971 spoke on the featuring issues of the big metropolis areas
such as public transportation solutions to be found and the underground service
development. The Sforza Castle is served by red line of the underground (M1) with the stop
Cairoli, inaugurated on November 1, 1964 and part of the first trance of the route.

Finally, TgR Lombardia meridian edition (aired on August 31, 2018) proposed a
reportage on the High School of Applied Arts at Sforza Castle where a teacher presents
educational offer of academic year 2018/2019.

As most of the documents analyzed here are expressively focused on the history of art
and architecture, could be relevant reflecting on how archives can reveal themselves as proper
didactic tools. I would add the importance of movie (and of TV series, obviously) to fix a
moment on the support that will never be the same in reality, as time goes by, as an element
to convey to the students. The final two topics (High School and MM) could be referred to the
orientation, in the first case, and to policies applied to metropolis areas, in the second one.

Since that this architectural walk took place in the city center, historical buildings and
cultural services are widely present. As main nearby signs, Triennale, Cadorna square with the
Gae Aulenti's Ago e filo public installation and the railway station, Palazzina Appiani, the public
Library Sempione, the Civic Aquarium could be cited which have been not included into the
itinerary due to the choice of establishing a range of the search for the didactic model.

\textsuperscript{32} Also known as Battaglia di neve (imdb).
CONCLUSIONS AND HYPOTHESIS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Conclusions of this research project coincide with its (desirable) beginning because those phases of archives consultation and didactic designing are prodromes to the practice, in order to respond to the main research question through measurable evidences.

In the main critics and theories framework, a wide range of positions has been presented and discussed related to the use of digital multimedia archives, to the need of adopting new methodologies in didactics, to the valorizations of cultural heritage, to the concept of identity and of territory in an inclusive point of view. All those elements are connected together in the didactic model, which proposes the exploration of urban space - which is mutually reinforcing with the exploration of multimedia archive - addressed to promote an inclusive didactic seen as a scaled, future, social inclusion. Indeed, the project is particularly addressed to High Schools, where adolescents and young citizen live a delicate moment of their life, widely exposed to drop-out risk and, consequently, to the incapacity of focusing on future successful professional careers.

Summing up, the research project proposes the experimentation of the connections between digital sources (archives) and live relief (urban spaces) finalized in valorizing multimediial original documents and surroundings areas in order to design a more effective and inclusive didactics. Joining archives document with the architectural signs means the fruition of the real object combined or augmented by its image – already present in the archive and/or produced -, which could have a different state of preservation, light, sign of time, measures, sensations, point of view.
REFERENCE LIST


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