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# Digital participation in community life: how young people communicate heritage<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

The scientific debate highlights situations of educational poverty that are expressed in a growing difficulty in accessing cultural heritage. In this sense, the contexts that are particularly vulnerable are those in which economic, social and individual factors hinder the access of subjects to educational experiences. In this framework, it is necessary to combat educational poverty not only by family income support, but also by providing accessibility to the community's cultural heritage. In fact, educational poverty is configured as an obstacle to the development of the younger generations who live in multicultural contexts marked by fragility. With reference to this situation, the issues of social innovation, digital growth and cultural heritage, have received new impetus from the European political agenda. In particular, community technologies as citizenship devices that are capable of activating connections and transform users into multimedia content-builders take on importance. With respect to these reflections, the contribution presents the experiments carried out in digital environments by the students in Planning and managing of educational intervention in social distress at the University of Bologna. The students were involved in the preparation of virtual exhibition paths focused on the themes of social inclusion within which the heritage has become an instrument for the redevelopment of territory. Specifically, digital environments have become spaces of creative production in which young people have reimagined landscapes of everyday life and shared common principles of protection, care and humanity, underlying an idea of conscious citizenship and of participation in community life.

**Keywords:** Educational poverty, Heritage, Young People, Participation, Digital Environments

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<sup>1</sup> This contribution, developed and shared jointly by the two authors, was drawn up as follows: paragraphs 1 and 2 by Chiara Panciroli; paragraph 3 and 4 by Anita Macauda. The conclusions were developed together by two authors.

## 1. Educational poverty and cultural poverty: reference framework

The city's urban landscape is increasingly manifesting its value as a container of human, social, cultural assets, in which the stratified results of the industriousness of the people who inhabit it are recognized, constituting an identity continuum for the community. However, a reading of the existing situation leads us to recognize profoundly changed living spaces, the result of changes in the ways of living. Moving flows of people and things have led to a new use of urban centers [1]. The vision of a compactness of traditional places is transformed to the advantage of a different form of livability, which does not always favor the involvement of communities that are more heterogeneous, looking, not always easy to do, for ways of identifying with the world around them. In this context are placed the international reports which highlight an emergency situation in relation to the increase in poverty indices, also cultural and educational, which manifests itself specifically with a growing difficulty in accessing the cultural and natural heritage [2, 3, 4, 5]. Specifically, the available data highlight strong criticalities especially for those who come from family and social backgrounds characterized by greater vulnerability. In this general framework, it is necessary to combat poverty, not only in terms of family income support, but also through the identification of educational methods capable of accompanying those most in difficulty in regard to accessing knowledge [6, 7, 8]. The notion of educational poverty was introduced into the social science debate by some sociologists and economists in the late 1990s to stress that poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon [9] that cannot be reduced to its strictly economic component [10]. Specifically, with reference to the definition of Save the Children [11], educational poverty is understood today as "the deprivation of the possibility of learning, experimenting, developing and letting skills, talents and aspirations flourish freely". In this sense, the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* [12] also focuses on the child's right to have an education that develops personal capacities and respect for the rights, values, cultures of other peoples and the environment (art. 28/29). However, the concept of educational poverty suffers from the same semantic ambiguity that characterizes all situations in which the term "poverty" is associated with further conceptual categories, which determine a particular qualification [13]. Think of categories such as 'cultural poverty', 'food', 'educational', 'health' ...The risk of this approach is that we proceed with a categorization of different types of poverty, with uncertain conceptual boundaries and which spring from a common root: the lack or total absence of economic resources necessary for the satisfaction of

needs linked to leading a dignified life [10]. If it is true that educational poverty is connected to material poverty, it is nevertheless difficult to analyze as it is strongly connected to a deprivation in terms of value perspectives, necessary for a person to reach an ethical-moral development for its full fulfillment [14]. Therefore, educational poverty thus understood, does not solely pertain to people marked by material poverty, but to individuals, groups, communities, connected to different social classes. In this regard, we speak of “other poverties that require a rethinking of the sense of education, projected ... to the well-being to aspire to” [15, p. 449]. According to this perspective, well-being depends not only on the person’s external conditions but also on the enhancement of his/her internal capacities, relating to resistance, resilience, and creativity. The possibility of designing and building internal skills is strongly connected to the educability of each person. It is evident, then, that well-being does not necessarily coincide with well-having, that is, full material availability, precisely because the person is also personal and spiritual fulfillment. The asynchrony between well-being and poverty (material and spiritual) will find a possible solution in an education project for economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability [15] characterized by a sober lifestyle in which sobriety leads to responsible choices vis-à-vis the resources of the planet, human life and its development. In this regard, a specific study concerns the educational poverty also present among young people living in families, not particularly disadvantaged from a socio-economic point of view but rather lacking on a relational level, in a condition of educational neglect on the part of parents and other adults [10]. This problematic aspect leads to reflections on the need to respond to educational poverty not only in terms of the lack of opportunities but also of the different possibilities for designing intentional training courses to evaluate new life perspectives. This aspect questions the pedagogical-educational field, urging it to define training proposals centered on the values and meanings necessary for the construction of meaningful perspectives with respect to life and the world [15].

The 2030 Agenda also invites us to think that we cannot talk about sustainable development without working for the right to education and training [16]. The agenda specifically recognizes education as a strategy for a sustainable future to ensure the full realization of the individual personality, for social participation and to include potentially excluded or marginalized adults and young people in the communities. Sustainable development, education and global citizenship require the right to participation of local communities [17, 18] and of children and young people for an education for the future [15].

Global Education fits into this framework by proposing “an analysis paradigm to understand the world’s problems and how they can be interconnected” [19] through the promotion of transformative, participatory and emancipatory learning aimed to build empowerment among children and young people to become responsible for their own future by also changing their living conditions [15]. If education is the key to being able to understand, interpret and impact reality by actively participating in the processes of change, educational poverty is above all configured as the greatest obstacle to the formation of young generations, in particular those who live in multicultural contexts marked by fragility and hardship. In this sense, the issues of social innovation, access to socio-educational services, the use of cultural heritage by groups, which are traditionally excluded, as well as the development of digital education, become key aspects at an international level. These themes presuppose an openness and continuous collaboration between the formal and non-formal agencies of the territory, thus defining the necessary conditions for an integral formation of the person, in which everyone can experience the space as a single and total environment of expression and development. experimenting and looking for solutions and logical-emotional connections in a sort of educational ecosystem [20]. Thus, the proposal of an educational city is renewed, one which not only knows how to disseminate, according to the logic of the networks, the training proposals of different institutions / agencies but which is an expression of cohesion and sharing of training purposes aimed at the emancipation of everyone. In this sense, the cultural heritage can also play an important role.

## **2. Cultural heritage and young people**

An initial definition of cultural heritage refers to the set of “monumental architectural, plastic or pictorial works, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, caves and groups of elements of universal value, exceptional from a historical, artistic or scientific point of view” , which highlights above all the substance and materiality of the heritage itself as a closed system, of sedimented static assets, of universal value and therefore a heritage to be preserved and transmitted [21]. However, this meaning of cultural heritage is enriched by further reflection, especially as regards its immaterial dimension, to define itself as “the set of practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, know-how - as well as tools, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated with them - which communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, passed on from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in re-

sponse to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history” [22]. In this sense, heritage is understood as a process, that is, as a set of goods in progress, to be put back into circulation, rebuilt in their meanings, relocated in a social space of exchange; or a resource to reflect, question, (re) know, represent, relate, and grow. Also, according to this perspective, the objectives defined by the Faro Convention are interesting. This highlights the right of everyone to the cultural heritage, understood as the possibility to participate in cultural life, as also referred to in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This right is expressed in recognizing the individual and collective responsibility towards cultural heritage (Faro Convention, 2005). The value of heritage is not only linked to a conservation problem or a purely aesthetic-contemplative response but lies in the search for meanings that the past, physically represented in the cultural object, has in its contemporaneity. A position that is also taken up in the Faro Convention, in which the concept of cultural heritage is superseded as an asset that needs to be protected only for its intrinsic and scientific value, but rather for its contribution to human development and to the improvement of quality of life. In this way, attention shifts from the more external aspects of objects towards their inner meaning, developed over time, within the communities. In this sense, people or rather social groups actively participate in the process of reconstruction and recognition of cultural values. The tangible and intangible, mobile and immaterial heritage of museums and cultural landscapes represents an invaluable educational resource, the protection of which is not the aim but is part of the development process of a sustainable, peaceful, and democratic society, as recalled by the Convention itself. The Convention commits the social partners to “use all dimensions of the cultural heritage [...] to strengthen social cohesion by promoting a sense of shared responsibility towards the places where populations live [...] and to make the cultural heritage sustainable” by protecting its integrity through “the understanding of cultural values and the definition of principles for sustainable management” (Faro Convention, 2005).

A theme, that of the management and collective protection of heritage, which lays the foundations for a direct involvement of communities towards the diffusion of a cultural ecology understood as a form of sensitivity towards a heritage that permeates the entire living environment towards a more balanced society aimed at natural development. According to this perspective, museums, cultural institutions, schools of all levels become places of cultural protection in which to protect the heritage of the territory they belong to. With reference to this, it is recognized how the educational system can contribute decisively to prepare young people for the different roles they are called to play in contemporary society [23]. In particular,

schools have the task of helping young people to develop self-confidence, as individuals and members of community groups, supporting them in the acquisition of a wide range of skills and interests by expanding their creative potential.

It is a certain acquisition that defines heritage education “as a formal and informal training activity, which while educating to knowledge and respect for goods, by adopting responsible behavior, makes heritage the concrete object of research and interpretation, adopting the perspective of recurrent and permanent training for active and responsible citizenship of all people” [24]. The different learning models, together with those of didactic mediation, certainly have a priority role in defining the concept of use of the heritage. This aspect underlines how the heritage experience cannot intersect only with one or more active knowledge methodologies, but it must be placed within a problematizing pedagogy capable of defining the cultural project by developing suitable methods and strategies, in which specific attention is addressed to the needs of people and society.

These aspects are in line with the *National Plan for Cultural Heritage Education* [25], which attributes a central role to heritage education for the education of citizens through an action that:

- *includes heritage as an objective and as a training tool* since it can be aimed at the knowledge of a specific segment of heritage, or at the development of knowledge in other disciplines (history, mathematics, science, etc.) and transversal skills or even at promoting an understanding wider than the role of cultural heritage in order to foster knowledge, protection and enhancement. Conscious use of the cultural heritage helps to develop a sense of belonging to one or more cultures, to acquire the awareness of a cultural identity and a sense of belonging to the community;
- *takes place in a formal as well as informal context*: the use of the cultural heritage in formal learning contexts is a fundamental tool to promote in learners skills that cannot be contemplated in the use of manuals and to support the acquisition of key competences from the perspective of education permanent as outlined in the European Reference Framework. Cultural heritage can prove to be an ideal context for promoting informal learning; you can come out of a visit to a collection, a monument, knowing something more and having acquired

understanding, insight or inspiration that can bring about a positive change in your life;

- *is aimed at all individuals throughout their lives*. It targets various audiences: adults, children, young people, the elderly, the disabled, citizens of other cultures, tourists, professionals, families. Therefore, it must take into account differing needs and promote different projects for objectives, strategies, methods and communication tools.

Although the designing of educational paths in schools is defined through and in connection with the cultural and social proposals of the territory, it cannot ignore the need to listen to mutual needs and the development of a shared strategy, capable of bringing forth, in a creative way and innovatively, a plurality of proposals connected and functional to everyone's training, with particular attention to the younger generations. It is only through an openness to society that the school is defined, thus becoming a house of culture in dialogue with all the agencies in the area, in the perspective of an integrated training system [26, 27] which, starting from an itinerary within a specific thematic-disciplinary path, accompany the citizen to other places of culture, which in turn are in connection with educational agencies. These reflections on the specific importance of the school to open up to the territory find significant reference in the proposal of the famous museologist Hooper-Greenhill [28]. The scholar's wish is that the social and cultural experience of the knowledge of the heritage (historical, geographic, literary, scientific, artistic, ...) not only takes place in specific places but that the whole territory of the city can become and represent an educational system, capable of sharing the aims and integrating the proposals, respecting the identity and diversification of the institutions, calling for an accentuation of the role of social responsibility with respect to knowledge, in which various figures with different roles are involved. The city is configured as an integrated space, inserted in the territorial training pact, made up of many places, capable of spreading a sense of attachment, responsibility, active protection by all citizens.

### **3. Education technologies for a participatory citizenship of young people**

Digital technologies have progressively transformed the way heritage is known and made known [29]. In this regard, the research carried out in the last few years has highlighted how the experiences developed through technological tools are able to raise awareness among young people on the active

role of cultural heritage by supporting participatory and generative processes of citizenship [30]. Citizenship is understood not only in terms of belonging but also as a willingness to participate responsibly. Specifically, the term 'participation' recalls two dimensions, political and civic together. The first refers to participation as political action, with the second to the commitment of every citizen for the enhancement and defense of common goods; as such, participation requires active, practical and emotional involvement on issues relevant to the community. In particular, with reference to the educational and social sphere, participation is understood as the activation of an inclusive process and education for active citizenship. In this sense, every citizen must be equipped with the tools to build the knowledge necessary to fulfill their role and to enrich the community with ever new perspectives [31]. Participation can be understood in the light of Freire's concept of critical conscience [14], which recalls the need for a conscious and constructive attitude of those who make and remake the world. Engaging in education for active, democratic and inclusive citizenship, educating about human rights, children's rights, legality and constitutional culture means carrying out large-scale projects aimed at promoting cultural pluralism, participation in public, political and social life. In this sense, the concept of participation is correlated with that of co-responsibility which means educating for ethical commitment, respect for personal dignity and the personal rights and the implementation of democratic behavior [32]. The concept of "participatory citizenship" derives from this, which recalls the possibility of affecting the specificity of the historical and social context, applying the set of rights that each person holds as a member of the community [33]. Reflection on the practice of participatory citizenship leads us to rethink the universal principles that underpin human rights, and, from a pedagogical perspective, to activate adequate resources for the realization and management of the transformations taking place. Attention is focused on the recognition of individual differences and on the search for relational modalities suitable for encouraging a conversation between people with different lifestyles [34]. Technologies in this sense make it possible to rethink the three guiding categories of training and educational processes: difference [35], relationship [36] and dialogue [37]. In this regard, community / group technologies [38] take on particular importance for their ability to activate and maintain connections, actual social synapses, but also to transform users into active producers of multimedia content through a greater capacity for information processing. Technologies are transformed into citizenship devices, into catalysts of sociality and relational networks at different levels (family, school, territory) [39, 40]. An area of particular interest is that which experiences the potential of digital environments (virtual and / or augmented realities, digital albums / bulletin boards, apps, online resource sharing channels, ...) in which young people try to reinterpret cultural heritage. through pathways of reading, research, and

re-elaboration. These environments represent an evolution in the mediation processes of identity heritage, stimulating in young people the deepening and expansion of information, the development and sharing of content. At the same time, they enrich the activity of construction with new meanings capable of providing new perspectives, allowing young people to participate, in a collaborative and cooperative form, in a rich media environment that is characterized by the possibility of using and experimenting with a multiplicity of languages (multimedia) and different approaches (multimodality) [41]. It is in this renewed context that digital environments contribute to redefining the role of the new generations: from being passive users – oriented only to the use of contents – to active protagonists, oriented to an exploratory and creative doing (authorship). In fact, digital environments, if developed within a specific educational project, are able to offer concrete potential, reorienting the processes of transmission, communication and reworking of a heritage that is both tangible and intangible. The promotion of heritage education actions can foster and support dialogue between the past and the present and between different cultures. The result is the production of a remedied and recreated heritage that becomes the meeting point between the stories produced by the new generations and those conveyed by the reference museums and cultural institutions. This means that, for example, when the output of an activity is the production of a tangible work, this brings with it a series of visible and invisible connections with other elements of the experience that constitute the actual added value of that product. It is precisely this process that allows the cultural heritage both to transmit information, knowledge, emotions, and to transform itself over time and to re-semanticize itself. In this regard, it is highlighted how an impressive number of objects are being transformed, acquiring different meanings even long after their creation [42].

The possibility of producing, in digital environments, informative and expressive-creative artifacts that are linked to heritage experiences lived in formal, non-formal and informal contexts, constitutes the fundamental prerequisite for the construction of an active and responsible citizenship by the new generations, called to enjoy, participate and enrich with new meanings the historical-artistic assets existing in the area [43]. In particular, the ecosystem approach to heritage leads to an increasingly natural interweaving between physical-virtual spaces and different media, in which the context plays a decisive role in achieving the objectives. Many of the technologies today ensure that multiple subjects collaborate and build artifacts, in a shared system. With the evolution of the products conveyed by one or more media, even use and experience are transformed, becoming movement and transit between the various elements of the system itself [44].

In fact, most of our experiences with the heritage in digital environments are configured as a process of inter-linked actions, facts and behaviors: from initial intentions to research and comparison, to construction and so on [45]. In particular, Jenkins [46] talks about “participatory cultures” that develop in the open space of the network thanks to the Web and social networking tools with the aim of fostering artistic expression and civic engagement by promoting a sense of belonging. In fact, there is no doubt that today digital media are the protagonists of a shift towards renewed communication models that aim at an extension, according to increasingly rapid and immediate forms, of the educational and cultural provision. The communicative actions and the new forms of representation aim at facilitating understanding, clarifying aspects of complexity, presenting concepts in a clearer and more concise way, making information more explicit and usable whilst guaranteeing a high scientific level of the proposed contents. In this sense, technologies make it possible to reach out to an increasing number of young people, especially those considered difficult to engage with due to different social, geographical or economic conditions, disabilities, physical constraints or cultural barriers. In fact, social inclusion arises as a complex and multidimensional concept [47]. In this regard, the European report that maps the obstacles to social inclusion of young people in vulnerable conditions, *Finding a place in modern Europe* [48], refers to five areas of possible inclusion or exclusion: education, the labor market, life, health and participation. The five areas of social inclusion can be termed “safety nets” as they provide basic resources and prerequisites for meeting daily needs by achieving a full understanding of inequality, marginalization and exclusion among different demographic subgroups of young people. In the same report, it is noted that culture and creativity have been identified in the EU Youth Strategy as a fundamental field of action for young people, since involvement in cultural activities contributes to their personal development and the feeling of community belonging. Access to culture strengthens awareness of sharing a common cultural heritage and promotes active citizenship open to the world. In contemporary youth practice, digital means of social inclusion can be understood as another dimension of such safety nets, but only if the potential risks and opportunities for young people of digitized social inclusion are carefully considered. Indeed, the rapid growth of Internet access, connectivity and dependence on technology has not only led to the rapid development of the digital world but has also led to a new landscape for inequality, characterized by different access to digital tools, as well as by exclusion or inclusion within online spaces and communities. Young people who have few opportunities due to their social, economic or geographical background or because they belong to minority groups still face obstacles in benefiting from the opportunities offered by the digital world. The analysis and conclusions of the study conducted by Serban et. al [47] indicate that State authorities and youth NGOs

are still lagging behind when it comes to offering an inclusive online participatory framework for all young people. Furthermore, technological change has had profound implications on the development of young people and on social integration, especially in terms of new skills acquisition. However, being digitally competent calls for a critical, collaborative and creative use of digital technologies [49]. In this sense, digital tools can help young people to find creative solutions to the challenges they are facing in the digital age.

#### **4 Case studies: digital paths carried out by young people**

In relation to the reflections developed so far and taken as orientation premises, focused on the concepts of educational / cultural poverty, heritage and technologies / participatory citizenship, four case studies are presented relating to the experiments carried out by university students of the master's degree course named Planning and Management of Educational Actions in Social Distress. The cases proposed that arise from specific project proposals are of particular interest to be able to develop a reflection that connects the theoretical / methodological aspects with the practices, with particular reference to three educational dimensions: knowledge, re-elaboration and participation.

##### **4.1. Context of reference**

In the academic year 2018-2019, the students of the laboratory of the second cycle degree programme in Planning and managing of educational intervention in social distress were involved in the preparation of specific exhibition paths of social inclusion in the digital rooms of the Museum of Education (MOdE) University of Bologna [50, 51, 52]. In fact, the MOdE, in addition to preserving and enhancing objects that are an expression of educational culture, proposes paths for the personal reworking of cultural heritage through the setting up of technological spaces called white rooms. These rooms are environments in which young people can re-semanticize heritage objects through the development of different multimedia artefacts (photographs, photomontages, video content, slideshows, ...). The set-up presupposes a design activity through which contents, languages are chosen and the media necessary for the production of mainly visual artefacts are organized, experimenting with approaches that are characterized by a continuous recursion between the real and the digital.

#### 4.1. Case study presentation

##### *First case study: R.A.A.M.I. - Artistic Redevelopment of Italian Marginal Areas*

The first case study focuses on the use of urban art as a tool for the redevelopment of the urban heritage. The reference is to five Italian suburbs where through the contribution of national and international artists, territorial redevelopment works were made through the creation of murals. The projects taken into consideration are: 1. *B.ART* aimed at the transformation of thirteen blind facades of public and private buildings in the Barriera area of Milan; 2. *Looperfest*, project / event started by the Zuart collective of Milan, with the aim of redeveloping the Alley of Fontanile area and relaunching the global image of the area; 3. *Stalingrado Bridge Project*, an initiative aimed at beautifying the anonymous “gray area” of the Stalingrado bridge; 4. *SanBa*, a public art project promoted by the Walls association in the San Basilio district of Rome, aimed at decorating the facades of some buildings in the neighborhood's public housing; 5. *Park of Murales*, urban redevelopment and artistic regeneration program started in the Ponticelli district of the eastern outskirts of Naples where the walls of some buildings have been enhanced with the creation of murals, creating a real open-air park; the realization of the project envisaged the participation of the local community.

The five initiatives selected and enhanced within the exhibition path follow a common line: to convey through art a strong message of social redemption, providing a specific identity to areas often considered degraded and decaying. Through the language of street art, the suburbs are transformed into open-air museums that are both meeting points and poles of attraction (fig. 1).



Fig. 1.: *R.A.A.M.I. - Artistic Redevelopment of Italian Marginal Areas*

*Second case study: a space for the invisible*

The second case study is represented by an exhibition focused on marginalized people, the so-called invisible, “ordinary people with a more or less happy history, a difficult present and an uncertain future” but all bearers of a wealth of knowledge and their own points of view on the city. Through the choice of a narrative approach, the life of a homeless person is told, highlighting the relationships between lack or lack of economic resources necessary for the satisfaction of needs linked to a dignified life and forms of educational / cultural poverty; on the other hand, the ambivalent behavior assumed by citizens witnessing these situations, characterized from time to time by gestures of kindness, indifference, detachment, contempt or even unprecedented violence. The exhibition is connected to a specific project proposal for social inclusion in a context of marginalization: “The city told by the invisible” with the aim of integrating different social classes, enhanc-

ing both the cultural heritage of the city and the personal heritage of the homeless giving them the role of tour guides (fig. 2).



Fig. 2.: *A space for the invisible*

### *Third case study: Montagnola 2.0*

The white room proposed as a third case study stems from a design work aimed at redeveloping Montagnola park in Bologna. After presenting the history of the park, the distribution of its spaces and places (main facade and relative staircase, avenue, fountain, the color room, the green space, the kiosk, ...), its soundscape in the living daily as well as the forms of urban art that populate it (in particular, the artistic works of Diego Sarti), the students focused their attention on the socio-relational dimension of the park through the proposal of new initiatives that stimulate and involve citizens. The park is proposed in participatory terms as a space for everyone, not so much in terms of use but as care and co-responsibility on the part of each individual citizen (fig. 3).

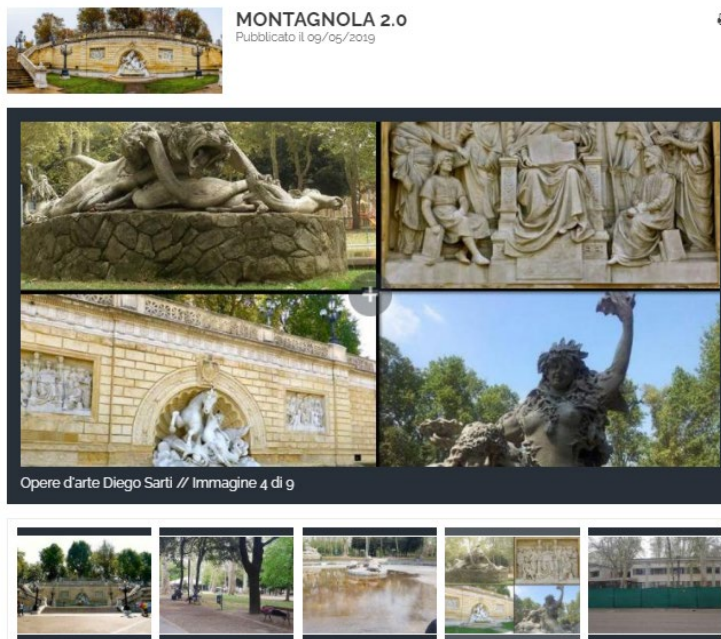


Fig. 3. *Montagnola 2.0*

#### *Fourth case study: Nurturing solidarity*

The exhibition itinerary was born as the final product of a design work with respect to educational interventions aimed at social inclusion, with particular reference to the prison context. The focus is centered on the enhancement of awareness-raising paths and the approach to the prison ambience by the citizens. The garden is proposed as a space that, located just outside the prison walls, allows students of agricultural institutes and prisoners to meet to give life to a common project. Different proposals activated in Italy with significant repercussions in an inclusive education perspective are presented and compared. Inmates are offered the opportunity to acquire professional skills and increase their relational heritage (fig. 4).



Fig. 4. *Nurturing solidarity*

## 4.2. Comparative analysis of the four case studies

The workshop experiences presented with a constant focus on cultural heritage influenced the knowledge, motivations, interests, behaviors and social relationships of the young participants. The social inclusion exhibition paths focus their attention on different contexts of marginalization within which heritage becomes a tool for the redevelopment of the territory. From the comparison of the four case studies presented, it emerges that digital environments can play a fundamental role in the proposal and enhancement of heritage as a catalyst for social inclusion initiatives, which can be declined according to three significant educational dimensions: knowledge, re-elaboration, participation.

### *Knowledge*

In the first case study proposed, *R.A.A.M.I. - Artistic Redevelopment of Italian Marginal Areas*, the students proposed an installation that focuses on the knowledge of the urban heritage redeveloped through the languages of street art, proposing a comparison between different visual projects. The visitor / user who moves within this path can proceed metacognitively due to continuous comparisons and comparisons between different realities.

### *Re-elaboration*

In *The space of the invisible* and in *Cultivating solidarity* the students propose two specific examples of marginalization in which well-being is superimposed on well-having, in which the lack of material availability is accompanied by a lack on the socio-relational level. In the first path, the knowledge of “invisible” people is enhanced, offering their own personal point of view on the urban heritage; in the second, the natural heritage (the garden) becomes a pretext for developing an equally significant relational heritage.

### *Participation*

In *Montagnola 2.0*, the importance of the participatory dimension of cultural heritage is highlighted, which strengthens social cohesion via an intercultural approach. Through the choice of specific visual and audiovisual contents, the sense of shared responsibility towards the places of daily life is promoted. In fact, attention is addressed to the inhabitants so that they can get to know this park, protect, and improve it.

## **5 Conclusions**

If educational poverty manifests itself as the deprivation of those fundamental cognitive skills to be able to grow and live in a contemporary society increasingly characterized by the rapidity of innovation and knowledge, it also manifests itself as a failure to develop of motivation, self-esteem, aspirations, communication, cooperation, fundamental for the cultural growth of the individual and his/her contribution to collective well-being. Starting from the above definition of Save The Children, it is possible to identify four operational dimensions of the concept of educational poverty: 1. *learning to understand*, that is, to acquire the skills necessary to live in today's world; 2. *to learn to be*, or to strengthen motivation and self-esteem, cultivating aspirations for the future and at the same time maturing the ability to control one's feelings even in difficult and stressful situations; 3. *learning to live together*, or the capacity for interpersonal and social relationships, cooperation, communication, empathy, negotiation; 4. *learn to lead an independent and active life*, strengthen the possibilities of life, health and integrity, safety, as “functional” conditions for education [10].

With respect to these dimensions, participatory citizenship creates social cohesion and educational action contributes to the search for “recognition niches” [10] suitable for representing subjectivities capable of belonging to and inhabiting the world, as active citizens, and processors of meaning. The perspective of participatory citizenship is thus configured as an essential step for the creation of a society open to diversity and the management of heterogeneity. In this perspective, cultural heritage and heritage education can play a fundamental role in the sustainability of communities and society. Education is the primary agent of change towards sustainability; it encourages a sense of responsibility and dialogue; it promotes people's ability to make their visions a reality; it stimulates the values, behaviors and lifestyles required for a sustainable future. According to this perspective, digital environments have become spaces of creative production in which young people have re-imagined [53] heritages and landscapes of everyday life and shared common principles of protection, care, respect and humanity, underlying an idea of active citizenship, i.e. citizens who are aware and take part in the life of the community [54].

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