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Living Heritage Educational Experiences in a Pandemic Scenario. The Case Study of the Ethnomedicine Museum A. Scarpa

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Abstract

Heritage is inherently communicative; it is designed to transmit and represent. As stated by UNESCO, living heritage is fundamental because it provides communities and individuals with a sense of identity and continuity. It can help promote social cohesion, respect for cultural diversity and human creativity, as well as help communities build resilient, peaceful and inclusive societies. Ensuring that cultural heritage fulfils the function for which it was conceived and generated, even in the case of closures forced by health emergencies, means enhancing it, giving it the possibility to continue transmitting culture. In the current COVID-19 global pandemic scenario, we are helped by the many educational strategies available today thanks to science and technology that enable people of all ages to learn continuously, anytime, anywhere and in a variety of situations combining formal, non-formal and informal learning. The current scenario has forced a redesign of the way citizens, and especially students, access their formal education. This contribution aims to highlight the importance of using the self-determined approach for training and proposes a blended learning model (formal in virtual classrooms and informal in a museum) for intercultural education of health professionals. A model which can be reproduced in continuing education and which represents an innovative way of experiencing heritage in any situation.

Keywords: anthropology of health, scientific and cultural heritage, heutagogy, education, healthcare students, intercultural dialogue

1. Introduction

The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the educational and cultural sector is being felt around the world. This impact is social, economic and political – it affects the fundamental right of access to education and to culture, the social rights, and the protection of the diversity of cultural expressions. The unfolding crisis risks deepening inequalities and rendering communities vulnerable.

The crisis has, on the other hand, accelerated the digitization and online consumption of educational and cultural content, creating new and unprecedented challenges for the diversity of cultural expressions. As decisions taken now are likely to shape our world for years to come, it is imperative to be strategic in creating

educational models able to encounter the demand for skills and knowledges of the emerging society.

In the 21st century, the model of education that assumes a curriculum with pre-determined outcomes, written by a subject matter expert or instructional designer, is working less and less well as traditional ways of learning evolve and technology facilitates access to and use of information. The next generation of workers will increasingly need an approach to learning that supports self-determined processes and outcomes. Formal education will always have a role to play in the development of knowledge and skills, but it will be increasingly complemented, and perhaps even pushed off centre stage, by the attractiveness of new media and the ever-lower costs of new technologies.

In this article I present two closely related concepts that can offer a pathway to effective learning and try to link them to our history and our cultural and scientific assets that cannot and should not be left behind in this knowledge revolution.

The first concept addressed is the transformation of learning from being structured by others and pre-packaged to becoming more and more self-determined (heutagogy learning strategy).

This involves an important reflection on the fact that everyone who has access to the Internet today has, in practice, already adopted heutagogy as a fundamental part of their personal learning strategy. Before the Internet, anyone who had access to a library or a newspaper, for example, did the same thing. Heutagogy is a word itself that is new, but it describes a very old learning strategy.

Heutagogy is a kind of complement to pedagogy and andragogy; the key difference is that heutagogy is self-determined strategy and teachers or educators are not necessarily involved, unless learners choose to engage them at some point.

In this context, the importance of exploring the concepts of personalised and individualised learning, as well as their differences becomes evident. The difference between the two concepts should be clear in our school environments because it is strategic for the success of each individual even after the experience of formal education within the school.

The second theme addressed is the importance of culture as a key factor for inclusive growth and sustainable development of our society. Hence the importance of conveying culture through the tangible and intangible assets we possess, and which must continue to be part of our education and our lives even in this technological age, providing for adaptation to new learning approaches.

2. Heutagogy (or self-determined learning) within education

Lifelong learning is the starting point from which to begin rethinking the model, starting precisely with those structural changes that affect both social and educational and training systems, globalisation that stimulates new and increasingly personalised opportunities, and the labour market that requires fewer and fewer low-skilled activities and more and more complex skills [1–4].

Training policies are called upon to enhance the possibilities, aspirations, motivations and situations in which people are in a position to learn in a continuum of all phases and situations of life. This perspective brings into play new actors, new ways of acting and new sources of resources to draw on for the design and qualification of lifelong learning.

It is not enough to qualify an education policy as a simple extension of traditional education into adulthood, but it becomes a priority to promote a new approach to address the need for solutions to many unprecedented challenges in the cultural, social and professional life of modern societies.

	Pedagogy	Andragogy	Heutagogy
Learner Dependence	Dependent	Independent	Interdependent
Learning Resources	Teacher-driven and controlled	Learner and teacher controlled	Teacher and learner provided
Learning Reasons	Gaining next level	Increasing performance	Learning potential unplanned, non-linear
Learning Focus	Subject-centred	Problem-centred	Problem-oriented
Motivation	External motivation	Internal motivation	Self-efficacy driven
Teaching Role	Process-designer director	Collaborator	Capability-builder

Figure 1.
The difference between pedagogy, andragogy and Heutagogy. Source: Adapted from Kenyon & Hase (2001).

The primary objective therefore becomes the creation of conditions that allow each individual to fully develop his or her potential, contributing in a conscious way to the development of society as a whole.

This learning process, linked to a new vision of human development, qualifies the pedagogical meaning of adult education as a “progression from pedagogy to andragogy to self-regulation, with learners likewise progressing in maturity and autonomy” (**Figure 1**) [5]. The shift from andragogy to heutagogy expands the self-directed learning practices of andragogy and requires learners to take an active role in developing their own learning skills to meet their needs [6].

Heutagogy or self-determined learning can be considered a natural progression or a readjustment of previous theories to better match the emerging needs of a global society and the digital age. Heutagogy is a term that originated in the 1990s with Stewart Hase and Chris Kenyon at Southern Cross University in Australia. According to Hase and Kenyon, “Heutagogy looks to the future in which knowing how to learn will be a fundamental skill given the pace of innovation and the changing structure of communities and workplaces.” [7].

Theories such as the humanistic focused on the growth potential of healthy individuals [8–9], the constructivism emphasised the collaborative nature of learning [10], the reflective practice placed at the core of professional knowledge and learning [11–13], the double-loop learning leading to more effective decision-making and better acceptance of failures and mistakes [14–15], the self-directed learning [16–17], transformative learning focused on adult education and adult learning [18], the capability approach [19–20] and self-efficacy [21] are some of the theories that have contributed to the development of heutagogy.

It is learner-centred as opposed to teacher-centred learning. Learner chooses the learning path by reflecting on his or her own strengths and weaknesses and exploring new strategies that suit his or her learning style. This process of self-reflection allows for double loop learning, where the learner is enabled to evaluate the effectiveness of his or her own problem-solving strategies, to assess the alternative learning resources to be activated and his or her actions together with the beliefs acted upon [22].

The possibilities offered by new technologies allow for the enhancement of the heutagogical perspective as they allow for student-generated content, promoting active engagement in the learning process through collaboration and self-reflection [23–24].

The need emerges for an education and training policy capable of enhancing social values as a means of stimulating knowledge, of harnessing personal and community intelligence as an engine for active participation in life’s challenges.

The right to learn becomes a resource, an opportunity within which to qualify that action which is a bearer of emotions, knowledge, resources and planning, which we call learning.

Educational strategies can no longer be generic but must specialise and differentiate on those dimensions that express the complexity of real life: multiplicity (functional, design and interpretation), reciprocity (bidirectional, interrelated, dependent), modifiability (in its enhancement of the processes of negotiation, transformation, codification), and intentionality (flexibility, openness to meaning, analogy, innovation).

The challenge for pedagogy is to think of new teaching and learning models capable of nurturing and supporting deep learning at all levels of the education system in order to generate lifelong opportunities for growth.

Learning opportunities are often unstructured within a multitude of networks and networks, where the learner decides the context and formulates autonomous and self-directed learning strategies. It is therefore crucial to enable the learner to direct his or her own choices, to enhance his or her competence to act and to be able to realise his or her own life project.

3. Culture as a driver of sustainable development

It has generally been acknowledged as a positive way of reaching communities and engaging them in inclusive growth. In other words, investment in cultural heritage can generate return in the form of social benefits and economic growth: as a matter of fact, the two notions of cultural heritage and inclusive growth are strongly interconnected and can contribute to social and economic development if investment is used in the right way. The Europe 2020 strategy and its flagship initiatives [25] recognise that:

“culture with its inherent elements of creativity and innovation is a value in itself. It has a significant public value and contributes to the achievement of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth as set out in Europe 2020 strategy and its flagship initiatives [...]; there is a need to turn the numerous challenges faced by cultural and creative sectors, including a rapidly changing environment driven by the digital shift and globalisation, into new growth and jobs opportunities, which requires action to be taken at different levels of governance”.

This view of the Council of the EU has been suggested in the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage, raising awareness of the social and economic importance of cultural heritage.

The European Parliament proposed in 2016 to approach holistically culture and creativity in the resolution intitled “*A coherent EU policy for cultural and creative industries*” [26]. The document states that the cultural and creative industries.

“have dual and intrinsic value since, through their direct links to artists and creators, they preserve and promote cultural and linguistic diversity, and strengthen European, national, regional and local identities, while sustaining social cohesion and contributing substantially, with various value creation models, to creativity, investment, innovation and employment and acting as a driver of sustainable economic growth in the EU and its Member States.”

As recognised by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights [27], culture is “indispensable for one’s dignity and the free development of one’s personality”.

Culture is the vehicle through which we communicate our identity, our values, our prospects for the future. Since otherness and identity are often defined in cultural terms, it is natural to move into the sphere of culture and the arts when the aim is to get to know others, to value their diversity and to create an inclusive society.

As a result, culture is the fundamental bond of communities, including the European community: without the clear recognition of the European project's cultural dimension, the future of the European Union as a common effort is hard to imagine. According to Rome Declaration, 25 March 1970, "We have built a unique Union with common institutions and strong values, a community of peace, freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law".

Due to its fundamental role in promoting shared values, democratic principles, quality of life and intercultural understanding among the peoples of Europe, the effects of ignoring the key role of culture to the sustainability of the European Union should not be undervalued.

UNESCO addresses this issue from the point of view of cultural diversity and cultural pluralism declaring in the Article 2 of the "UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity" [28] that.

"in our increasingly diverse societies, it is essential to ensure harmonious interaction among people and groups with plural, varied and dynamic cultural identities as well as their willingness to live together. Policies for the inclusion and participation of all citizens are guarantees of social cohesion, the vitality of civil society and peace. Thus defined, cultural pluralism gives policy expression to the reality of cultural diversity. Indissociable from a democratic framework, cultural pluralism is conducive to cultural exchange and to the flourishing of creative capacities that sustain public life."

In the same vein, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Development, recognising that respect for all cultures and civilisations is crucial as a key factor for sustainable development, points to the promotion of intercultural understanding, mutual respect and tolerance within the framework of an ethic of global citizenship and shared responsibility. This document represents the first step by the international community towards the recognition that sustainable development is only achievable through the development of a sense of global citizenship.

In 2015, the UN General Assembly [29] adopted the resolution on Culture and Sustainable Development, affirming culture's role to the three dimensions of sustainable development, recognising further the natural and cultural diversity of the world, and acknowledging that cultural rights, heritage, diversity and creativity are core components of human and sustainable development and play a pivotal role for the 2030 Agenda to be successful.

In line with the above, at the meeting of the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council held in Brussels on 27 November 2018, EU Culture Ministers emphasised in the Work Plan for Culture 2019–2022 [30] that thanks to the European Year of Cultural Heritage, public and political awareness of the importance of culture and the enhancement of European heritage has significantly increased and that further efforts are needed to harness the full potential of the social and economic value of culture for building a truly inclusive Europe.

The Council of the European Union has recognised the power of cultural participation to foster "cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, respect for differences and the ability to prevent and resolve intercultural challenges" through devitalising stereotypes and challenging prejudices and to promote social inclusion and integration of isolated and excluded groups. The Council has a similar position on cultural heritage, perceiving it as a strategic resource for its "capacity to help to reduce social disparities, facilitate social inclusion, and promote intergenerational dialogue and social cohesion" [31].

Heritage has generally been acknowledged as a positive way of reaching communities and engaging them in inclusive growth. In other words, investment in cultural heritage can generate return in the form of social benefits and economic growth: as a matter of fact, cultural heritage and inclusive growth are two strongly interlinked

concepts and appropriate, well-directed investments can contribute to the social and economic development of European countries.

In the course of life, each of us accumulates knowledge and skills that Bourdieu defines as cultural capital [32] and that can be employed in a way that resembles the use of economic capital. Hence the step towards cultural capital that refers to heritage through the connection with our past and the collective past of others through the development of culture as a constantly evolving competence in the form of stories and memory.

As stated by the Council of European Union [33], cultural heritage plays a key role in creating and enhancing social capital due to its capacity “a) to inspire and foster citizens’ participation in public life; b) to enhance the quality of life and the well-being of individuals and their communities; c) to promote diversity and intercultural dialogue by contributing to a stronger sense of ‘belonging’ to a wider community and a better understanding and respect between peoples; d) to help to reduce social disparities, facilitate social inclusion, cultural and social participation and promote intergenerational dialogue and social cohesion; e) to offer possibilities to develop skills, knowledge, creativity and innovation; f) to be an effective educational tool for formal, non-formal and informal education, life-long learning and training.”

According to the Council of the EU [34], the education in culture “can play an important role in combating poverty and in promoting greater social inclusion” and cultural heritage can be considered as “an effective educational tool for formal, non-formal and informal education, life-long learning and training.”

In the Migration and Refugee Crisis Report, published in 2017, the European Commission and EU Member States emphasised the need to empower citizens and cultural workers to promote dialogue through arts and culture by supporting cross-sectoral cooperation and building strong partnerships and networks [35].

A strategic step-by-step approach to international cultural relations followed by concrete actions for its implementation is crucial. “Such an approach requires a bottom-up perspective, encourage people-to-people contacts and promote intercultural dialogue”, according to the Council of the European Union [36].

4. Integrating scientific and cultural heritage in education

Learning plays an important role in improving the quality of life of people, particularly the most disadvantaged. The ‘well-being’ dimension of learning is becoming crucial in today’s society [37]. Providing a cultural asset in the condition to perform the function for which it was conceived and generated means enhancing it, allowing it to transmit culture [38].

Cultural heritage is intrinsically communicative; it was created to transmit and represent. Since they are signs, communication only takes place in the encounter with the public and plays a primary role.

It is not easy to express and define the emotion we feel the instant we admire a work of art or visit a museum, or in general when we enjoy a cultural asset. This ‘something’ escapes our definitions, but it is what makes our experience unique, gratifying, unrepeatable, immemorial and understandable. These emotions and this ‘feeling’ qualify the experience and characterise it as its own.

However, it is only recently that we have begun to explore the relationship between emotions and experience through heritage [39–41], understanding emotion as the key to understanding engagement with the common heritage.

“Emotion is a predominant influence in our daily lives. [...] It constitutes our experiences and colours our realities. Emotion dominates decision-making, commands attention and enhances some memories while minimising others” [42].

Emotions are an integral part of how we understand the world and gain insight into it. The impact with the objects and narratives of an exhibition, the context and pre-existing feelings influence the way we respond emotionally [43].

Emotions help us decide what we should pay attention to. We can easily become overwhelmed by the stimuli coming at us, the number of objects and people, the amount of text and information. The process that leads our brain to decide what to pay attention to and what not to, seems conscious. But in most cases, it is driven by our emotions that push us to decide what to notice, how to react and what to learn, to evaluate interesting or insignificant objects, sounds, colours, smells, tastes and spaces [44].

Emotion plays an important role in the learning, experience and satisfaction of the viewer of a work of art [45, 46].

As Robinson has pointed out, “any engagement with the world and its peoples is an emotional engagement, in the sense that we do not read, experience or remember the world and our place in it, only as fact and without feeling, without judgement, without consideration of value and without evaluation processes” [47].

Enabling visitors to actively participate in museum practice, and thus freeing them from “isolation” as mere “passive” recipients, has become an increasingly common practice. The concept of participation, however, does not only include the idea of visitor engagement within the museum or the exhibition space, but also points at an ever-changing interaction between the institution and the public, whereby involvement is understood, intentionally or inevitably, as an intervention in existing structures and working processes [48]. In some museums, participation now seems to belong to everyday practice, especially where the focus is more on the public.

Differences in attitudes, expectations and responses mean that museums and its heritage sites must be able to cater for a wide range of visitors [49]. There are numerous strategies through which the museum can fulfil its social role [50].

The task of making people feel emotions was born together with the museum itself. The emotion that was focused on at the time was to amaze people, to arouse curiosity and to encourage an educational approach. The Wunderkammer are a great example of this.

Later the relationship between emotion and learning prevailed. In the nineteenth-century museum, people go to learn, but learning always remains subservient to emotion, to the emotion of entering the museum. An example of this are the anatomical museums.

More recent exhibition strategies aim instead at fostering emotions, which are the key to visitor engagement. Each visitor has very different needs and expectations and reacts to objects and places in a unique and sometimes unexpected way [51]. And it is precisely the increasing orientation towards satisfying the visitor that directs museums to choose a representation of the collections that is closest to the visitor [52].

The increasingly new ‘interactive’ relational tools make the museum a place of continuous education [53]. People visiting a museum have the possibility to participate not only in meetings, conferences, leisure and recreational activities, but to generate contents with proposals that can in turn interact with the museum in a different way.

The public is not content to receive passively but wants to feel the link between itself and the environment it is experiencing [54].

By identifying a correlation between the museum and the emotional and cognitive approaches of the visitor, it is possible to develop personalised models [55, 56], which offer a unique experience that reduces the risks of indifference or overstimulation [57].

The connections between heritage education, active citizenship and identity education are now numerous [58, 59], but further reflection and experimentation is needed to make this connection usable at any age and through self-regulated methodologies that allow learners to be actors in their own education.

Existing studies investigated the implementation of heritage education in formal and non-formal settings with particular attention to the use of information and communication technologies [60–64]; other research has carried out qualitative evaluations [65, 66] and analysis of educational resources. Studies on accessibility and social inclusion through heritage have been added [67] with the aim of deepening learning with particular attention to people with functional diversity [68, 69].

All this research has certainly contributed to establish a systemic and participatory vision of cultural and scientific heritage and heritage education [70], and to provide a basis for the relationship between life skills, learning and heritage. Much still needs to be done to achieve personalised learning as “...having students go through their own paths to whatever endpoint they desire. How you take the path and where you end up is totally dependent upon the strengths and interests of the learner” [71].

A strong response to the question of what constitutes “21st century competences” has been an increased focus on the need for lifelong and lifewide learning.

5. From “didactics of differences” to a participatory and intercultural heritage education in healthcare. The educational model connected to the Museum of Ethnomedicine of the University of Genoa

Education for diversity became a central theme at European level in the mid-1980s, when the notion of interculturality was introduced in UNESCO policies. We moved from the didactics of differences, an expression coined in the wake of the first educational projects, to heritage education in a participatory and intercultural key. In fact, it is unthinkable to work in an ethnographic museum and not try to build up a participatory practice of heritage, at least starting from the community of students, school groups, and curious people who visit the museum.

If we think about health, a multi-ethnic society requires attention to traditional healing practices and highly qualified staff, able to understand the way different ethnic groups live disease, conceive health and implement prevention strategies is fundamental, to optimise the healing process. Biomedicine, used in the western world, has the limitation of not taking into account the uniqueness of the individual and the culture to which they belong.

This is why a different, broader, holistic and less academic training of future health personnel is necessary to overcome what can become an obstacle to treatment, namely non-compliance with health personnel. Indeed, let us not forget the importance of the latter and of the placebo/nocebo effect it can have on the patient. The therapist can be a catalyst in the healing process or, paradoxically, can also frustrate the results of effective treatment.

The knowledge of traditional care systems by future health professionals is essential today. Caring necessarily implies a holistic vision and combines scientific knowledge, technical expertise and interest in the sick person; it implies listening skills and affectivity.

Migration has caught European countries unprepared, as they have not yet developed policies that are truly inclusive in terms of health and well-being. Hospitals and the various social and health services are slowly equipping themselves with measures to deal with what is often seen as an intercultural emergency in the true sense.

Intercultural mediation is certainly a decisive component, although it is certainly not the exclusive component, of health care planning that addresses this emergency.

The educational experience that the Museum of Ethnomedicine of the University of Genoa [72] has been engaged in for years as a vehicle to sensitise future health professionals to other cultures is part of this framework. Antonio Scarpa (1903–2000) was the pioneer of these studies (**Figure 2**). A tireless traveller, he travelled the five continents for almost sixty years, collecting objects, remedies, instruments, texts, etc. relating to the traditional medicines he encountered, observing that the different therapies were based on a cosmological principle. The A. Scarpa Collections constitute a unique collection of objects from over 100 human groups related to the different medical traditions of the world.

Within the teaching of Health Anthropology at the degree courses of Health Professions (Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy, Health Care, Professional Education, etc.), held by Prof. A. Guerici [73], Emeritus Professor at the University of Genoa, and by the author of this contribution, an exclusive space has been dedicated for years to the visit to the Museum of Ethnomedicine of the University of Genoa and to the discussion on the treatment systems of cultures different from ours.

Since the academic year 2013–2014, every year, this teaching has raised awareness of caring in respect of cultures over 350 students of Health Professions.

The approach to Traditional Medicines involves a highly topical reading of health, anthropological, social and ecological problems related to health, well-being and the environment. In order to cure himself, man has always drawn remedies from his habitat, adopting different therapeutic strategies according to climatic, phytogeographic and faunal characteristics, as well as to peculiar cultural and socio-structural typologies.



Figure 2.
Ethnomedicine museum a. Scarpa, University of Genoa, Italy. Source: Ethnomedicine museum, University of Genoa (scientific director: Prof. A. Guerici).

Every human population, in every age, through its own culture, builds a particular representation of the world, from which result particular constructions of the body and therefore of health and disease.

Starting from a particular perception of the body, anatomy, physiology, biology, the position of the human being in the animal world, the notion of normal and pathological, each culture elaborates constituted knowledge, transmits it, and declines it in the everyday world and on institutional occasions (**Figure 3**).

The aim of the course is to enable students to master the main theoretical-methodological reference frameworks aimed at investigating the socio-cultural processes that revolve around the relationship between health/disease and medicine and to possess the conceptual and communicative tools to engage in the formation and application of anthropological knowledge in healthcare contexts (**Figure 4**).

Human experience is essentially characterised by a bodily and relational dimension: the body ‘emerges’ as the material and form of existence through its relationships with the physical and human environment. The anthropology of health studies the relationship between body and society in many of its declinations, attempting to explore the ways in which the body is at once experienced, expressed and affirmed, but also constantly constructed and socially reconstructed. As such, the body falls ill and is treated ‘socially’, illness being the ‘embedded’ result of specific social relations and treatment the mobilisation of collective resources to explain and treat suffering (and the collective risk it entails). The course covers the main theories developed in anthropology on health, the body, suffering and illness, and explores issues related to traditional knowledge of care, migration and health inequalities.

The strategy of self-determined learning (eutagogy), a student-centred educational tool that promotes the development of autonomy, skills and abilities, has

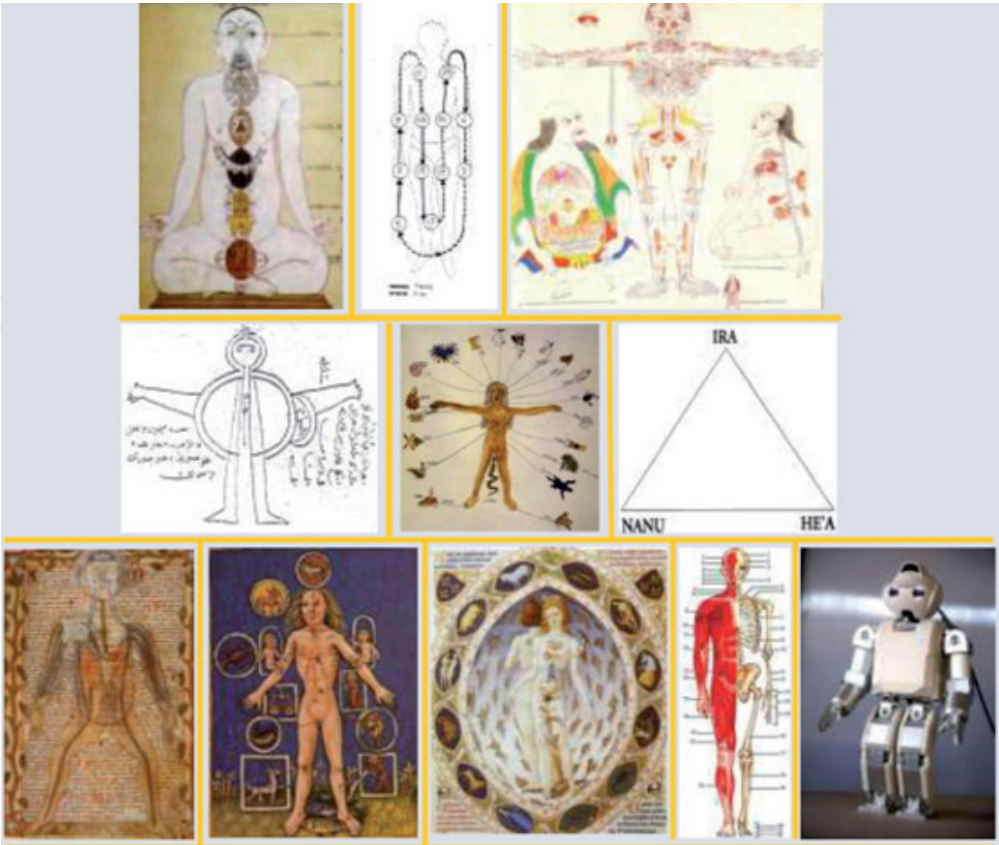


Figure 3.
Different representations of the body. Source: Ethnomedicine museum, University of Genoa (scientific director: Prof. A. Guerici).



Figure 4.
Tools of diagnosis and tools of prognosis. Source: Ethnomedicine museum, University of Genoa (scientific director: Prof. A. Guerici).

been used for many years. The aim is to train students who are well prepared for the complexities of the world of care and to teach them to learn on a lifelong basis.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, we were faced with the impossibility of implementing an important part of the course, as museums and art venues were closed.

The course was therefore restructured in blended mode so as to allow students to enjoy, albeit in a different way, the opportunity and benefits of self-determined teaching through the use of ICT tools. **Figure 5** below illustrates the model of a fully online course.

The lectures, the visit to the Museum of Ethnomedicine, the material for discussion, the in-depth meetings and the final presentation by the students were realised thanks to the use of the e-learning platform and videoconferencing products chosen by the University (access via single sign on).

Stand-alone videos were prepared with the theoretical framework and insights. The videos and bibliographical reference materials (books, scientific articles, photographs, film material) were published on the Moodle platform dedicated to distance learning (Aulaweb) according to an architecture capable of allowing students to proceed with their studies autonomously and self-determined.

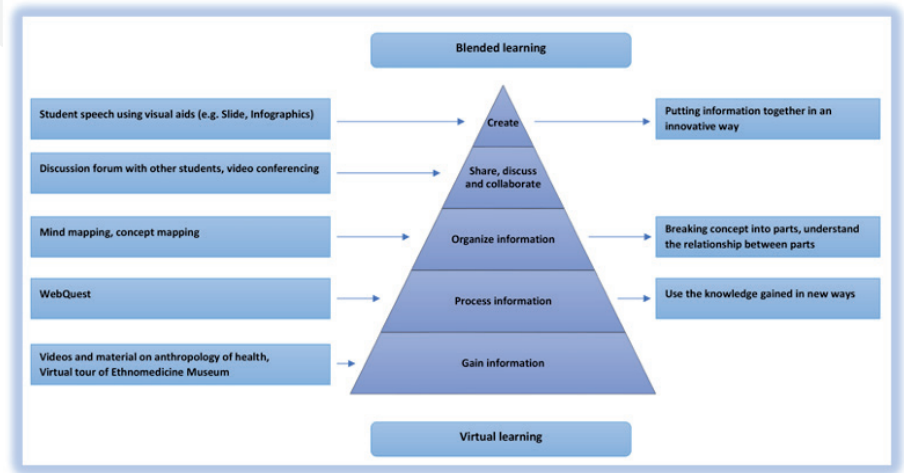


Figure 5.
Blended course model of health anthropology with museum training in a pandemic scenario. Source: Own elaboration.

In place of the visit to the Ethnomedicine Museum and the face-to-face group work, which has been carried out for years as part of the teaching programme, students were asked to work in groups using WebQuest (<http://webquest.org/>), a teaching model geared towards research and investigation that allows students to work critically and coherently on the web, without exposing them to an endless supply of materials whose authority is often unverifiable.

Students were asked to choose a task (case study) from various assignments related to healing practices and to link it to one or more objects in the Ethnomedicine Museum, motivating their choice and reflecting on its use.

The central element of the WebQuest is the “authentic” task, which is considered necessary for acquiring situated and deeper conceptual understanding.

In order to acquire this kind of knowledge it is not enough to transmit knowledge of facts and procedures to the students, but to engage them in activities similar to the real ones performed by professionals, i.e., authentic practices. Students must be able to transfer knowledge of facts and procedures to the real world and be able to modulate procedural knowledge according to the situation.

In times of pandemic, students were invited to virtually visit the museum through the dedicated website (www.etnomedicina.unige.it), to consult the exhibition catalogue and dedicated videos; then to carry out research on the web based only on the materials provided and screened by the teacher.

To tackle the task, students used the sources provided by the teacher, so that they could concentrate on analysing and interpreting them instead of identifying them.

In addition to the task, resources and instructions for carrying out the task, the teacher also identified and communicated clear criteria on the basis of which he or she would judge what had been done.

During the whole WebQuest process, the teacher accompanied the students in his or her scaffolding function, providing them with guidance for analysis, material and tools for the development of the final assignment.

At the end of the process of the assignment, the students produced a synthesis work in a variety of forms: report, video, text and images, etc.

The students were asked to present their work, to motivate the choice of assignment in relation to their future profession and life experiences. The sessions were very well attended, especially since many students commented on the work of their fellow classmates, enriching the discussion with further narratives and personal experiences.

A number of issues emerged that will be explored in further specific seminars to be proposed in the years ahead.

This was followed first by a well-reasoned peer review and finally by the lecturers' evaluation.

Finally, the students were asked to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the whole educational process. This aims at identifying areas for improvement in a bottom-up way.

Among the strengths was the fact that the students were able to appreciate a cultural asset that they did not know, even though it is owned by the university where they study.

In addition, the students were able to see health and illness through other eyes and find scientific relevance in any of the courses they attended.

They also appreciated the material provided and the stimuli for further study, as well as the integrated teaching method between theory and practice, between medicine and the humanities, between science and culture.

There were also some weak points, represented by the teachers' need to integrate the interdisciplinary team with other professionals who could have further

enriched the discussions, for example epidemiologists, nutritionists, international cooperators.

ICT tools were fundamental, even though the students' skills are unfortunately still scarce.

In terms of the disciplinary competences acquired, the students demonstrated an understanding of the role of cultural values in defining health and that these values are transmissible through the material and non-material heritage that we all too often neglect.

In the discussion of their work, students noted that in the biomedical view, the biological dimension is seen as the only measure of well-being and the potential of culture as a key element in maintaining and improving health is neglected. The students seem to have realised that the provision of health care needs to be made much more sensitive to cultural aspects and that this sensitivity is acquired continuously, throughout life.

In terms of communication skills, the method of prevailing self-directed study and case discussion has achieved excellent results, fostering the organisational, team and communication skills crucial for a future health professional and allowing adequate and stimulating flexibility of study and investigation.

In short, this participative, intercultural methodology, built on a unique heritage, has shown over time a high educational value and an incredible interest from the students. It has proved to be an effective tool for raising awareness of the material and immaterial cultures that populate the world. The added value is determined by the interconnection of the objects, artefacts and testimonies of the museum with the programme proposed in the lessons. The discussion space in front of the testimonies encourages questions, doubts, sharing and discussion.

6. Conclusion

Cultural heritage holds the resources inherited from the past, in all forms and aspects – material, immaterial and digital (originally produced in digital and digitised form), monuments, sites, landscapes, skills, knowledge, practices and expressions of human creativity, as well as the collections preserved and managed by museums, libraries and archives.

Our heritage originates from the interaction over time between people and places and is constantly evolving.

Being of great value to society in cultural, environmental, social, educational and economic terms, cultural and scientific heritage, its valorisation and promotion became therefore a strategic choice for the 21st century in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development's target 4 of Quality Education for all.

Today, in particular, globalisation and migration require educational institutions to pay special attention to teaching young people and adults to deal with cultural difference and to value diversity in lifestyles, worldviews and beliefs. This is particularly important in the context of health, where diversity can generate misunderstandings and even hinder healthcare.

It is not easy, however, in some contexts such as that of the health professions, to propose ways of humanising care and thus succeed in enhancing the educational experience by transmitting the idea of diversity as a resource and value for everyone.

New forms of knowledge transmission can come to the aid of teachers and make it easier for them to sensitise learners and stimulate in them a way of thinking critically. This can be useful in the profession and in life.

Designing or producing something to meet individual requirements become a need because enables learners to enjoy choice in the learning process and to define the end results of their learning. The personalization of processes is very important in today's education, because the current educational paradigm has a predefined outcome for all persons: no matter how each one gets there, everyone must get to the same point.

According with Gesche-Koning [74], “synergies between the cultural heritage and education sectors are the best way to achieve inclusive, integrated heritage-based education towards a sustainable development [...] and to “poetically inhabit the world.”

With the help of ICT, distances can be reduced, and difficulties erased.

It becomes crucial to train educators to work in an interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral way (academies and non-academies) in order to develop interactive forms of education capable of attracting lifelong attention and not only transferring knowledge, but tools for a critical reading of the reality around us.

The experience proposed represents a model of integration between the promotion of lifelong education, the enhancement of lesser-known cultural heritage and social inclusion and spreads a well-rounded culture of “taking care” of people, cultures, rights, and identity in history and contemporaneity.


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