

APHELEIA 2023

Adaptation and Transformation: community-based practices

22-31 March, Auditório Elvino Pereira, Mação

27 March – 14:30h – 16:00h

Building the “public space of education”: Memory, heritage and educational dynamics in low-density Portuguese rural schools

Ana Isabel Madeira

In the middle of the 19th century, a social contract of education was established based on an agreement that created the conditions for the emergence and consolidation of educational systems and schools. In post-pandemic times, education systems and schools are forced to rethink their organization and relationship with society, in a new cycle that, in the history of school and education, requires a new *social contract* (ICFE/UNESCO, 2021).

Thinking about education as *common good* links us to the arguments developed by historian A. Nóvoa around the concept of “public space of education” (Nóvoa, 2014, 2019, 2020, 2021). This notion expands the space of school learning, involving society in a co-responsibility for a set of missions (education for citizenship, education for heritage, environmental education, media education, education for consumption, etc.), until now exclusively centered in the hands of the school institution and its teachers. Commitment to transform the present (and future) reality demands new questions, based on an understanding of the regime of historicity in which we are immersed (Sahlins, 1989; Hartog, 2013). It is from a history of problems - i.e., from how a particular reality historically became a problem - that we can build an alternative history, by approaching what Hayden White called the “practical past”, capable of organizing the reading of that past according to new intelligibility, overcoming nihilist presentism and connecting the daily experiences of subjects to an horizon of expectations (White, 2010; Certeau et al., 1997; Koselleck, 2006).

This is what the project *Rescued Memories, (Re)constructed Identities* has sought to achieve over the last four years, setting up a unique research experience by bringing together a network of actors, integrating higher education establishments, museums, schools, school association training centers, teachers, local researchers, municipalities and senior universities. We aimed at contributing to the construction of the *public space of education* through the public sharing of historical knowledge

(Public history) and the intergenerational participation of the community (schools, teachers, municipalities, associations, and citizens) in the construction of a new meaning for educational practices, inside and outside the school. At the same time, the establishment of *communities of practice*, collaborative dynamics between teachers and schools, and the active participation of local communities in the construction of local educational projects became an essential step to allow *place-based projects* and the overflowing of curricula into new educational spaces.

Our presentation at APHELEIA 2023 aims to clarify the conceptual assumptions, and the development of the project in its theoretical and methodological underpinnings, and its choreography (*Memory – Heritage – Education*). We also want to make clear the contribution of the research, particularly through the products generated and shared with the community, aiming at changing practices inside and outside educational organizations. MRIR project was developed in an interior region of Portugal involving five municipalities classified as low-density territories. In these territories, where all indicators seem to precipitate a negative representation of community existence, signs of a paradigm change in the functioning of schools at the local level emerge in counter-cycle. We have shown that ideas can translate into meaningful actions, transforming “predestined” outcomes and the sense of inevitability of global pressures upon small rural populations and school clusters.

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Ana Isabel Madeira, 1963, University of Lisbon, Portugal.

Professor at the Institute of Education, University of Lisbon, Portugal. PhD in Comparative Education at the Institute of Education, University of Lisbon (2007); MSc. in Sociology, London School of Economics, University of London, United Kingdom (1991). Graduated in Sociology, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal (1989). Worked as Invited Professor at Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro, PUC-Rio, Brasil (2009-2011). Research interests: Comparative Education; History of Colonial Education; Development Education; International Education.

Institutional page: <http://www.ie.ulisboa.pt/docente/ana-isabel-camara-madeira>

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6107-5370>

Contacts:

Institution: Instituto de Educação - Universidade de Lisboa

madeira.anaisabel@gmail.com

Tm: + 351 969517435

Latest publications:

Madeira, A. I., Cabeleira, H., e Magalhães, J. (2022). *Memórias Resgatadas, Identidades (Re)construídas: Experiências de escolarização, património e dinâmicas educativas locais*. Edições Colibri / Instituto de Educação da Universidade de Lisboa.

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