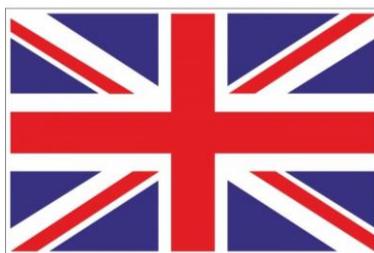


TfB

FONDAZIONE TANCREDI di BAROLO

MUSLI
MUSEO SCUOLA LIBRO INFANZIA

AN ENCHANTED JOURNEY



GUIDE IN ENGLISH

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FONDAZIONE TANCREDI DI BAROLO

MUSLI - MUSEUM OF SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S BOOKS

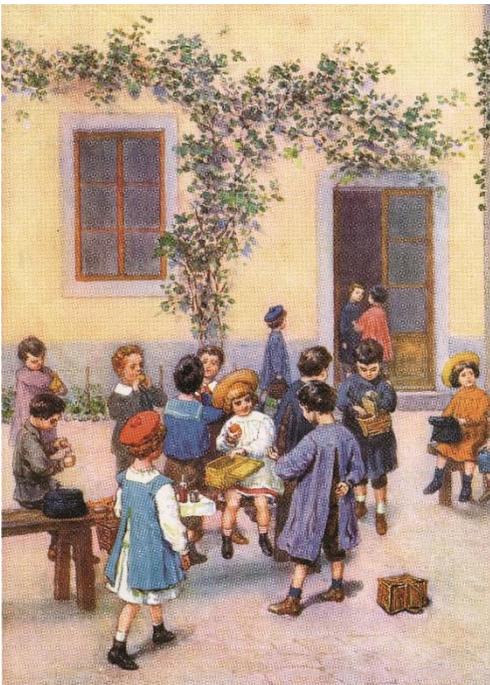
Fondazione Tancredi di Barolo was established in 2002 thanks to the rich collection of books, original drawings, games and educational materials donated by Marilena and Pompeo Vagliani and thanks to the generosity of Opera Pia Barolo which consented to host it in a wing of Palazzo Barolo, where, between 1825 and 1830, the Marquis Carlo Tancredi Falletti di Barolo and his wife Giulia Colbert founded the first Nursery School in Piedmont.

Through local funding and with the participation of the University of Torino in the Scientific Committee, it was possible to set up the MUSLI (Museum of School and Children's Books), the Research Centre, the Archive and the International Young Readers' Library.

The Museum is divided into two separate but complementary Areas: the Educational Area and the History of Children's Books Area.

THE EDUCATIONAL AREA

SCHOOL LIFE IN THE 19th AND 20th CENTURIES



The visit begins in a courtyard, which originally separated the Marchesi's apartments from the servants' lodgings and has now become a playground for young visitors. Two 19th century lithographs show children getting out of school and playing at break time. The visit continues through the four floors of the wing of Palazzo Barolo which used to host the servants' lodgings, with terracotta floors and very low ceilings.

On the wall of the staircase, a 1920s board shows the morning hygiene routine of a pupil before going to school.

The classroom of Edmondo De Amicis's novel *Cuore* (*The Heart of a Boy*)



This room evokes the atmosphere of a late 19th century schoolroom, notably in the school year 1881-1882 narrated in the novel *Cuore*, published in 1886. The desks originally belonged to a primary school of Opera Pia Barolo

and date back to the end of the 19th century. Each desk has four seats and drawers for the pupils' books; some of them have a hole for the inkwell. There are also a late 19th century cast iron stove and a blackboard manufactured by the Paravia Company. At the time, in country schools children used to bring wood from home to heat the classroom. The 1879 *Rules of Municipal Schools of Torino* prescribed the presence on the walls of all classrooms of the portraits of the reigning monarchs (at the time King Umberto I and Queen Margherita) and of the Nation's founder (Vittorio Emanuele II), a Crucifix, a map of Italy, and a School Calendar with the weekly timetable (there were no lessons on Thursdays), the festivities and school rules. The use of didactic boards was warmly recommended. The boards on the walls of the *Cuore* classroom date back to the late 19th century and the map of Italy in relief is dated 1884.

The 1881/82 school cabinet (Prizes and Punishments)

This cabinet takes us back again to the school year of the novel *Cuore*: books used by the pupils and by the teachers, children's classics, photographs and documents are on display and the most widespread 19th century school practices are evoked: prizes and punishments.



In the section “**Naughty Children**”, a number of mid-19th century engravings and Italian and European books show some scenes of punishment in which the rod, the whip (mainly in Great Britain) or the donkey’s ears are used. On the contrary, in the section “**Good Children**” certificates of good behaviour, prize books, and various types of medals are on display. Medals were awarded weekly or annually by the school or at the end of the school year during a ceremony attended by all schools at the Teatro Vittorio Emanuele. On Thursdays (a vacation day at that time) children who were awarded medals had free entrance at the Gianduia Puppet Theatre by simply showing their medals.

Edmondo De Amicis and the novel *Cuore*



Cuore can be considered an ideal bridge between what the school was like at the time and its fictional representation. It is about the school year of a class of the “Sezione Baretti”, the fictional primary school inspired by the Moncenisio School in Torino attended by De Amicis’ children.

The importance of *Cuore* and its immediate success in Italy and abroad are highlighted in this hall where historical editions of the novel, a volume signed by the author and the first illustrated edition (1891) can be admired, besides a great number of original drawings and some notable historical translations into various languages (French, English, Spanish, German, Japanese etc.), a box of De Amicis’ nibs, De Amicis’ pens and pencils, collectible cards and exercise books portraying

the novel's main characters and funny caricatures of the author. In this room there is also a little statue of one of *Cuore*’s schoolboys, Stardi, the first bibliophile boy in Italian children’s literature.

Making learning fun

A collection of games, drawings and animated books from the late 19th century presents the school in a humorous way: the “classe degli asini” (“the donkeys’ classroom”), dogs and cats sitting at the pupils' desks or at the teacher's desk etc. Some miniature schools on display in this room are fascinating, notably a late

19th century German toy school and a rare early 20th century French “École à Musique” with ten biscuit ware *mignonettes* and a teacher who automatically conducts the music coming from a carillon. The collection also includes original humorous drawings of pupils and teachers by great Italian illustrators, among whom Antonio Rubino and Attilio Mussino.



The *piano nobile*

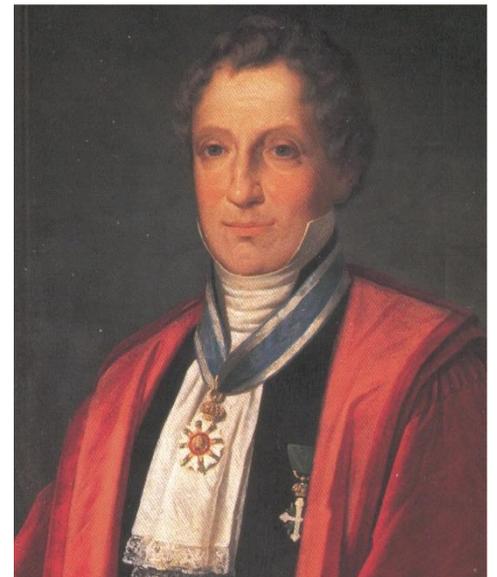
On this floor the visit leads to the historical apartments of Palazzo Barolo, the residence of the Marquis and Marchioness of Barolo, and includes the apartment of Silvio Pellico, the famous author of *Le mie prigioni*.

Giulia and Carlo Tancredi di Barolo and their role in Education



Juliette Colbert, a French noblewoman who had survived the Revolution (1789), married the Marquis of Barolo in 1806. They had no children and decided to use all their energies and riches to aid and educate the poor. In 1821 Giulia founded the Borgo Dora Charity School for girls, run by the nuns of St Joseph’s Congregation and supported the activity of the “Maddalene” for the rehabilitation of young penitent women. The importance of her philanthropic activities is highlighted in the *Pantheon of Illustrious Italian Women*, an 1879 lithograph. Between 1825 and 1830, the Marquis and his wife provided poor children with

shelter rooms in Palazzo Barolo. Carlo Tancredi’s publications and his commitment in the establishment of elementary and professional schools between 1826 and 1838, when he held important public offices in Torino, demonstrate that he played a pioneering role in the theory and practice of education. An 1837 lithograph, reproducing a painting by Amedeo Augero di Verolengo, shows him in a ceremony with the Archbishop of Torino during a cholera epidemic (1835-1836).



The Nuns of St. Anna and Education

The Congregation of the Nuns of St. Anna was founded in 1834-1835 by the Marquis and Marchioness of Barolo who trusted them with the Nursery School in Palazzo Barolo and with other schools. The nuns devoted themselves to education and extended their educational activities worldwide; nowadays they are present, for instance, in India and Mexico. In this section a collection of artifacts by the nuns themselves and by their pupils and other important documents witness their precious activity. A great plastic model of Istituto Sant'Anna of Moncalieri by Annibale and Giorgio Rigotti (1950) is also on display.



Silvio Pellico

A door at the back of the hall leads to the rooms where Silvio Pellico was hosted from 1834 (the year of his return from the Spielberg, the famous prison where the Austrian Empire detained the Italian patriots) until his death in 1854. He worked in Palazzo Barolo for the Marchesi's educational institutions and as their librarian. Some rare editions of his works, notably *Le mie prigioni* and *Il Sacro Monte di Varallo* are on display.

The Laundry room

This room was originally a laundry whose early 20th century sinks have been transformed into display units. The original use of the room is evoked by the Paravia didactic board *La lavandaia e la stiratora* (*The laundress and the ironer*). In the showcase on the right there are some educational objects and games, such as *The little laundress* (with her washtub and brushes) and some original drawings of “the doll's washing”.

A mid-19th century table, used in the children's canteen, shows how the children's bowls were put in



holes in order for them not to spill their content.

All the other items on display regard the teaching of scientific subjects such as arithmetics and geometry. Near the window there is a *Diorama* from the 1920s, which recreates various environments (such as the savannah) and was once used to explain the different habitats to children who had no other way to see them (usually books had no pictures and illustrated books were very expensive).

The Industrial School Museum by Mondadori (1920), inspired by the “objective” method of teaching, contains twelve explanatory panels about the different materials that a child could find in his everyday life (textile fibres, wood, paper, metals).

The Playroom

This room, with its original terracotta tiles floor, its 18th century coffered ceiling and 19th century furniture, evokes the children’s coming back home from school and the everlasting conflict between playing and doing homework, between pleasure and duty. The toys were gender-stereotypical: boys were supposed to play with tin soldiers, spinning tops, hobbyhorses, skittles, while toys intended for girls (dolls, sewing kits, kitchen sets etc) foreshadowed their future role as mothers and housewives.

Il Gioco del Giornale delle Fanciulle (1884) is a variant of *Chutes and ladders* in which the images show good or bad behaviours of girls: the bad girl annoys a cat or is caught with her fingers in the jam pot, while the good one plays the piano or reads a book. The last image shows the good girl receiving a prize from her mother’s hands.



The Nursery School

On the top floor a room is dedicated to the Bell-Lancaster method of elementary education, the “mutual system” which had fascinated the Marquis of Barolo during his visit to England, and to the use of the “sand desk” by which poor children learned to write without wasting paper.

In an early 20th century nursery school classroom the exhibits recall the didactic methods of Froebel (with



his famous “gifts”), of the Agazzi sisters and of Maria Montessori. On the little desks some examples of handiwork - sewing, embroidery, paper folding - and some educational games are on display.

The early 20th century Classroom

This room is now used for workshops, where today’s children are invited to become pupils of the past and to write with nibs and ink, wearing oversleeves and the traditional white collars with a blue ribbon. A Crucifix and a portrait of King Vittorio Emanuele III are on the wall. The blackboard is an easeled model decorated with pinecones. All the different types of



desks have a hole for the inkwell, which might be in ceramics or glass. At the time, ink was sold in bottles but it was possible to prepare it by diluting some powdered ink. In this room, the items related to handwriting are of special interest: slates, ink pourers, blotting paper, nib cleaners and a great number of various dip pen nibs, among which nibs for left-handed children (though in schools writing with the left hand was forbidden unless the right one had been amputated).

More information on Fondazione Tancredi di Barolo and MUSLI is available online.



CHILDREN BOOKS' ROUTE

AN ENCHANTED JOURNEY THROUGH THE CHILDREN'S LITERATURE (1850 – 1950)



The MUSLI' s Children Books' Route is located on the ground floor and in the historic cellars of Palace Barolo and enhances the rich international historical background of about 20,000 books, original drawings and games

from the 18th to the 20th century, kept in the library and the archive of the Foundation Tancredi of Barolo. The Book's Route offers an itinerary to discover children's literature, including pop-up books, precious historical editions and interactive multimedia stations: an "enchanted journey" in the past but with a look to the future, through a constant link between the historical heritage and the potential of new multimedia solutions. The visit of this section allows you to discover more closely the object-book in its many components and completes the historical story of the School's Route by integrating with the books of pleasant reading.

An integral part of the route consists in temporary exhibitions, a privileged channel for further dissemination of the historical background and an opportunity to deepen Italian and foreign subjects and personalities of yesterday and today.

In this itinerary of the course, there are rooms dedicated to multiple themes, such as that of illustration as a work of art with the dual objective of enhancing its artistic and educational value. Pinocchio's timeless puppet covers an area of particular significance in the first room. In the space dedicated to him, we offer some of the most important historical editions in Italy,



including the one illustrated by Attilio Mussino and the original plates by the Symbolist painter Giovanni Battista Galizzi from 1942.



Another room is called «Il cantuccio dei bambini» (*The children's corner*) and takes its name from a radio broadcast conducted in Turin from 1929 by GECH (Giuseppe Eugenio Chiorino). The purpose of this room is to highlight, historically, the central role of the book in the process of interaction with other media: records, radio, cinema, television.

«Le Bibliotechine di Zia Mariù» (*The little library of Aunt Mariù*) is one of the most

interesting examples of initiatives to involve children in reading and to create the possibility of providing small reading libraries pleasing to poorer schools, especially in rural and mountain areas.

You can also see illustrated books from the end of the 19th century, the first schoolbooks entitled *Abbecedari* and part of the school fund of educational games.

Descending from a golden staircase representing the editorial series of the same name («La Scala d'oro»), printed from 1932 to 1945 by UTET, a publishing house based in Turin, you can access the cellars of Palazzo Barolo.

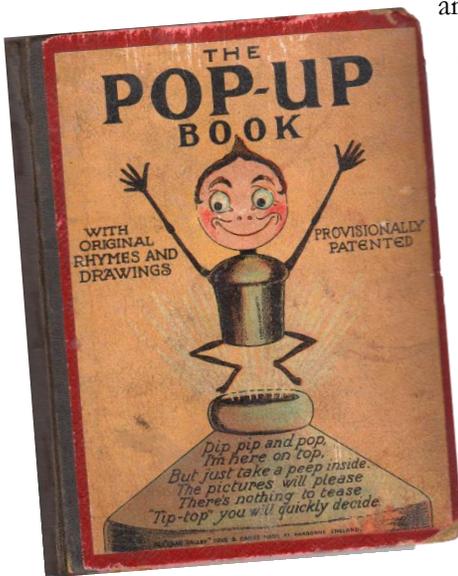
Here, a room presents a reconstruction of a typography from the end of the 19th century and houses the machines entrusted to the museum by Giovanni Roberto, typographer from Pont Canavese (near Turin) to commemorate the old Eredi Botta typography, located in Palazzo Barolo from 1869 to 1903. Typography was founded in 1812 and published mainly devotional and religious texts, but also pedagogical and educational



texts. Its presence highlights the link between the palace and culture.

Interactive Books

The last rooms are dedicated to animated books: here we have a wide collection of books from the 1850s to the 1950s. The books use different methods to educate children, based on interactivity (through sight and movement), illusion (the ability to imitate movements and depth) and surprise (the ability to astound and amaze). These three key-results are obtained through paper engineering and pop-up books, theatre books, carousel books, flap books, scenic books, fading books, panoramic books, etc.



Overall, animated books, paper theatres and paper dolls had a worldwide success and are the main link between children's books, paper games and actual toys.

In 2017 the Fondazione Tancredi di Barolo started the POP-APP project with the purpose of highlighting the cultural heritage of animation books, focusing on their artistic, creative, educational potential and on their links with multimedia technologies and applications. This project includes several temporary exhibitions, national and international conferences and a Study Center dedicated to pop-up books.



More information on the “POP-APP” project and the International Center on Interactive Book is available online.

