

"Voci su Ebola" Project: a brick of the "Science Memories" Archive

Proyecto "Voci Do Ébola": una parte del archivo "Science Memories"

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Introduction

Science history and social impact of science does not pass only through written communication. Testimonies, memories, experiences of the multitude of people involved in any kind of scientific activities are a potential archive of the history of scientific processes.

Oral history has now regained the dignity it had in antiquity as a source to preserve and rebuild the memory. This is well exemplified by the huge collection of memories realized by the British Library, with the Oral History of British Science¹, a unique collection of biographical interviews in which scientists, engineers and technologists reflect on their early life and background, their career and their involvement in the course of UK science in the twentieth century. Over a thousand hours of unedited interviews are made available in full on this website, while the Voices of Science web resource offers curated access to audio and video highlights from the interviews organised by theme, discipline and interviewee.

Nowadays historiography "without writing" is considered fundamental, especially as regards the social history. Even in the history of science we are seeing a recovery of the centrality of oral history. Reasons for this are both the unique ability to rebuild what Albert Einstein called the "personal struggle", the tortuous personal journey that leads the researcher to the goal, and to rebuild the social history of science.

The goal of the "Science Memories" Project ("Memorie di Scienza")² is to give voice to these testimonies, and body to a searchable archive. The archive, dedicated to the Italian scientific journalist Romeo Bassoli, is based on the idea of collecting oral histories, stories and narratives of the different figures who live the world of science: researchers, technicians, journalists, decision-makers, people still involved in the design and conduct of scientific research and its applications. The collection will constitute an oral archive available via web in open access mode. The collection will include both original contributions, and the identification of existing but difficult to find or to use materials.

The "Voci su Ebola" (Rumors/Voices about Ebola) project means to collect oral testimonies about the Ebola outbreak that hit West Africa in 2014-2015.

This project was awarded with the Romeo Bassoli Prize 2015. The prize, instituted by the National Insti-

tute of Nuclear Physics (INFN) and the International School for Advanced Studies (SISSA), aims at giving voice to experiences about scientific research, collecting and organizing them in the "Science Memories" archive. The initiative reflects the awareness that oral evidence and narrations need to be collected and preserved since they are, similarly to writing, powerful tools of dissemination, communication and historical evidence.

The main objection to the oral sources by a methodologically conservative historiography has always been based on the issue of reliability: you can not give credence to the storytellers because memory and subjectivity "distort" the facts. Now, apart from the fact that this does not always happen or necessarily (nor indeed can we be sure that there are not as serious distortions, albeit for other reasons, in archive documents), all the more pressing oral historiography reasoned exactly the opposite: the oral sources are important and fascinating precisely because they are not limited to "witness" the facts but work on them and build their way through the work of memory and the speech filter³.

Reference context and objectives of the "Voci su Ebola" project

The scenario in which the project is developing is the Ebola outbreak that hit West Africa in 2014-2015, with particular emphasis on the media impact of the cases involving two Italian health workers.

The goal is to create a series of audio interviews with experts and medical and paramedical personnel directly involved in the event. These interviews, recorded and edited in the form of podcasts, will be published on the web in open access mode.

In November 2014 and in May 2015 there have been two cases of Ebola Virus Disease involving Italian patients^{4,5,6}. They were Fabrizio Pulvirenti and Stefano Marongiu, infected while serving voluntary service in Sierra Leone on behalf of the NGO Emergency, respectively, as a infectious disease physician and as a health-care assistant.

Both patients were transferred to conditions of biocontainment^{7,8} at the Lazzaro Spallanzani Institute in Rome, and assisted by a team of about 30 people (15 doctors and 15 volunteer nurses).

Emergency is an independent and neutral Italian organization, which since 1994 provides free and high quality medical and surgical care to the victims of war, landmines and poverty; it operates in Italy and all over the world, and is present since 2001 in Sierra Leone with a surgical center and a children's hospital. In response to Ebola outbreak, Emergency opened a First Aid Post and two Centers for the Treatment of the disease.

The Lazzaro Spallanzani National Institute for Infectious Diseases (INMI) - IRCCS is a public institution operating since 1936 in Italy, as the National Reference Center for highly infectious diseases. In October 2014, the INMI was commissioned by Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Technical and Scientific Coordination of Italian intervention of cooperation in Sierra Leone⁹.

Following the hospitalization of the two Italians and the news coming from Africa, the media went into fibrillation, creating a disproportion between the "real" epidemic and the "mediatic" one, and fueling outbreaks of racism already present in Italy^{10,11}. For better or for worse, the messages conveyed as by experts as by ordinary people through social networks were present over and above the traditional media¹².

As already happened in the '80s with AIDS¹³, amplification of individual anxieties and their social impact overlapped to the benefits of a widespread information. For the "mediatic" epidemic the intensification of the news has been not proportional to the number of clinical cases, but to that of global "sounding boards" in form of online newspapers, or "social" sites. So, Ebola has been defined as "the plague of the third millennium", pace of the plague itself, recounted in so many Italian and foreign literature, responsible for millions of deaths in history and still present in the world (3000 cases per year, according WHO)¹⁴.



Paola Vaccaro worked for many years as a researcher, giving her contribute in the fields of marine biology, neuroscience and biotechnology, especially in Phage Display. She has coauthored several papers that were published in peer-review journals, like PNAS, Marine Biology, JBC, among others

Recently her interests switched on science communication: her "Voci su Ebola" project was awarded with Romeo Bassoli's Prize; at the moment she's collecting different oral witnesses about the last Ebola outbreak.

About a year after the first Italian case of Ebola Virus Disease, it is possible to have from the experts a clearer picture of the state of art in the fight against this dreaded virus and in the management of communication in presence of an international health crisis. All the more so that in this case, in addition to providing valuable medical treatments, for the first time the conditions were also created for the advancement of knowledge in combating the virus, with a scientific research "on the field"^{10, 15, 16, 17}.

For this project, a testimony is being required to the protagonists of those days, and in particular to the Lazzaro Spallanzani National Institute for Infectious Diseases' team: the Scientific Director, the Head of UOC Viral Immunodeficiencies and Infectious Neuro-oncology, the Head of UOC Infectious and Tropical Diseases, the Head of UOC of Laboratory of Virology, the Head of Microbiology Unit and Biological Bank. To get a complete picture, it will be heard also the live voice of nurses and technicians who have dealt directly of the two patients.

As for the Emergency NGO, we mean to collect testimonies by the President of the Association, the Manager Director of the Association's quarterly magazine, the co-founder of the Association and Executive Director, the medical coordinator of the center of Lakka, Sierra Leone, and any other medical and/or volunteers who have served in Sierra Leone service; the two Italian patients of Ebola Virus Disease; the Press Officer.

Testimonies of ordinary people, Italians and foreigners living in Italy, there will also be collected, to give an idea of what was the extent of the perceived danger in the days of the epidemic.

The interviews will focus on different levels: to the medical staff and researchers will be asked about both clinical and technical-scientific point of view, trying to frame the situation from a historical perspective; in general, we will also seek a personal reflection on the matter.

Methodology and timing of the project

The interviews will be made with a Zoom H4 microphone to record both indoors and outdoors. When it will not be possible to reach the scene in person, if the doctors are serving overseas, an internet connection will be used. It will still be privileged the interview "face to face", avoiding as much as possible telephone connections or remote that worsen dramatically the audio quality.

The main interviews (doctors, employees of Emergency and the "insiders") will be individually edited, for the sake of clarity and transmissibility of "expert voices". The interviews to the common people will be grouped so as to provide a lively and dynamic testimony, which reflects the actual media impact on society.

For the assembly and manufacture of the podcast a MacBook Pro computer will be used, equipped with the Logic Pro audio software.

It is planned to complete the collection of testimonies by the end of April 2016, and to make the creation and delivery of materials by September 2016.

Project communication strategies

The entire collection of oral interviews will be archived on a sound sharing platform (world leader in the field is Soundcloud - <https://soundcloud.com/pages/contact>), with creative commons license, available for listening and non-profit sharing.

A dedicated profile on major social networks will be created, to share the interviews in a widespread manner. Essential, in addition to the usual Facebook and Twitter, will be the opening of a YouTube channel: any website that operates in science cannot be separated today from including a number of video content¹³.

At the publication of online interviews, press releases will be sent to the major newspapers and news agencies. The collected material could be presented during a dedicated day, and diffused by radio broadcasts of scientific communication (as Rai Radio3Scienza), or via web radios.

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Apertura de la Carrera de Medicina en la Universidad Técnica del Norte. Un sueño hecho realidad para el norte del Ecuador

Opening of the Career of Medicine at the Technical University of the North. A dream come true for northern Ecuador

Salomé Gordillo Alarcón

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Antecedentes

En el año 2013, la autoridad máxima de la Universidad Técnica del Norte Dr. Miguel Naranjo y la Sra. Subdecana de la Facultad Ciencias de la Salud Mgs. Rocío Castillo, realizan el encargo a la Dra. Magister Salomé Gordillo, de elaborar el proyecto de creación de la carrera de Medicina, entregando un documento de trabajo anterior sobre el tema elaborado por el Dr. Miguel Naranjo, Dr. Carlos Ramírez, Dr. Galo Posso y Mgs. Rocío Castillo.

La Dra. Salomé Gordillo inicia el trabajo considerando varios aspectos:

1. La base legal vigente, desde la constitución de la república (2008), Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir (2013-2017).
2. La normativa de Educación Superior específicamente el Reglamento de Régimen Académico.
3. La normativa del sector salud especialmente el modelo de gestión del Ministerio de Salud Pública y el Modelo de atención Integral en Salud (MAIS).

En el mes de Julio del 2013 el proyecto de creación de la carrera de Medicina se aprueba en el Honorable Consejo Universitario de la Universidad Técnica del Norte, iniciándose de esta forma el proceso de aprobación en el Consejo de Educación Superior.

Este proceso ha resultado ser muy complejo sin embargo de un elevado aprendizaje, el proyecto fue repetidamente

evaluado por profesionales nacionales y extranjeros con altos conocimientos pedagógicos y curriculares. Se han realizado las correcciones a las recomendaciones sugeridas por ellos, se presentó el proyecto a representantes del Consejo de Educación Superior (CES), Consejo de Evaluación, Acreditación y Aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educación Superior (CEA-ACES), Ministerio de Salud Pública entre otros.

Las modificaciones en el Reglamento de Régimen Académico hacen que el proyecto se modifique por varias ocasiones, concluyéndose el mismo en octubre del 2015, enviándolo al Consejo de Educación Superior a través de su plataforma virtual.

En enero del 2016, se emiten dos informes de evaluación en los que se indica:

- a) Por parte de SEMPLADES, se da un informe favorable luego de evaluar la pertinencia del proyecto.
- b) Por parte del evaluador externo que emite un informe favorable con cambios mínimos.

Se realizan los cambios correspondientes, sin embargo, en marzo del 2016 se realiza una nueva modificación del Reglamento de Régimen Académico específicamente para las carreras de Medicina, por lo que se realizan las modificaciones correspondientes y se envía para su revisión final.

En el mes de Julio se realiza la presentación del proyecto de creación de la carrera de Medicina y el 3 de agosto del 2016 el pleno del Consejo de Educación Superior lo aprueba con resolución N° RPC-SO-30-No.538-2016