

## **Exposition - documents from the archive of Scuola Normale Superiore**

*Presented by:*

*Alberto Lusiani* - Physics researcher at SNS

*Maddalena Taglioli* - Head archivist at SNS

*Chiara Visentin* - SNS Student, Virtual Immersion in Science

Scuola Normale Superiore of Pisa was formally founded in 1810, by a Napoleonic decree which dealt with “places of public instruction” in Tuscany, part of the French empire since 1807 and referred to as the departments of Arno, Ombrone and Mediterraneo in the terminology used in revolutionary France at that time. Scuola Normale was to be a subsidiary of École Normale Supérieure of Paris, granting 25 publicly funded places, for students in the humanities and sciences. Scuola Normale began operating in 1813 and only for one year, as in April 1814 Napoleon was forced to abdicate.

“*Normale*” refers to the mission of the school, which was to train middle and high school teachers able to convey “norms” in a context where training teachers was connected to “forming” citizens loyal to the laws and the emperor.

Scuola Normale and École Normale did not initially have the denomination “Superiore / Supérieure”. In France, after the institution of the “Écoles Normales primaires” in 1845, the School was denominated “École Normale Supérieure”.

In 1846, the grand duke of Tuscany, Leopold III, established the “Scuola Normale Toscana”, also called the “Scuola Normale of the Imperial Reign” - as it was then connected to the “Theoretical and Practical” Austro-Hungarian system - designed “to train teachers and masters for secondary schools”.

After the Italian unification, the “Scuola Normale of the Kingdom of Italy” was formally established in 1862. In 1967 the Italian Republic denominated the School “Scuola Normale Superiore of university and doctorate level studies”.

Scuola Normale keeps an archive of its documents. Some documentation on the admission process and the admitted students have been systematically archived since 1857. Since 1884, also the candidates’ written tests have been archived. In

the course of time, the Scuola Normale archive has acquired a considerable number of document collections through donations. One of them, the archive of the Salviati family, keeps the records of the various commercial activities of this important family from the 12th to the 20th century.

This photo exhibition contains reproductions of a selection of documents of the Scuola Normale archive. We present samples of the admission tests questions and answers from 1918 to 2002, to show how the admission tests changed over time. We take the opportunity to show samples of the answers of some notable students like Enrico Fermi, Carlo Rubbia, Gilberto Bernardini (Scuola Normale director from 1964 to 1977), Massimo D'Alema (53rd Italian Prime Minister from 1998 to 2000), Alessio Figalli (Fields medal in Mathematics in 2018). We present posters with additional pictures, information and a few anecdotes on Fermi, Rubbia and Figalli. Finally, we present a selection of old photographs of students, professors and some college structures. The oldest picture is dated about 1870.

All reproductions, all posters, and most of the digitizations of the original documents have been done specifically for this occasion.

VIS, "Virtual Immersions in Science" is the Scuola Normale program for outreach and scientific dissemination. VIS is headed by professor Andrea Ferrara and coordinated by Marcos Valdes. The VIS area on Particle Physics is coordinated by professor Luigi Rolandi. VIS includes several activities, and one of them is a series of thematic tours organized in cooperation with the Archive and the Library of the Scuola.