

“ADULT LEARNING & COMMUNITIES IN A WORLD ON THE MOVE: BETWEEN NATIONAL TENSIONS AND TRANSNATIONAL CHALLENGES”

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The lost world. People, Crafts and communities

The main aim of this paper is to describe an ongoing research for recovering the memory of the people and the traditional crafts associated to the River Guadalquivir where it passes through a village called C, 12 km. from the city of S. in the south of Spain. One of the goals of this research is to investigate about the river and its influence on people's daily life related to the crafts and its community roots. As well, it addressed to become an instrument of learning and teaching to explain what the role of the River was historically, and perhaps still is, for the village.

In a society characterised by Globalisation tendencies, people are losing the sense of belonging to both a symbolic and geographical territory. A process for recovering this can be considered a generator of experiences and learning. These experiences are related to the identity as an element which enables people to understand how individuals establish relationships amongst themselves and with the environment. Plus, the identity is always linked to the way through which people understand the territory and, at the same time, it is a powerful element for transforming it. An important part of this identity regards the traditional production system and, for that, the notion of crafts and craftsmen. Authors such as Sennett or Gelpì, from different points of view, have studied how the loss of the notion of craft means the loss of cultural identities. This also directs us to the notion of popular culture opposed to dominant culture as defined by Gramsci or Raymond Williams.

In the paper, I will describe in detail the process of research based on interviewing people to regain their experiences. I think that this methodology is adequate for undertaking a project that tries to recover the creativity that is in the traditional crafts, and to recover the power of the individuals about their own production system.

This is a work in process. The first outcomes are related to some descriptive categories such as: the crafts associated with the River; the use of the river to transport goods and people; the family ties associated to the craft; the cosmopolitanism of the people and the changes derived from; the role of women, and the river as a magical and mysterious place.

Preliminary conclusions address us to consider the importance of recovering the creativity that resides in traditional crafts as a source to Popular Education, and for the maintenance of a cultural identity threatened by globalisation processes.