



Presentation

Intercultural challenges and contributions of research-action

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The editorial board of the international *Journal Sociocultural community development and practices* (SCDP) is proud to present you the first issue of this new journal so expected which testifies of the vigour of the research and of the experiments in sociocultural community development all around the globe. The Journal will also contribute to strengthen the network of actors engaged in this field of studies and practices through international exchanges.

As inaugural text, I paint a portrait of the sociocultural community development system such as it builds itself since thirty years from the philosophical and institutional foundations of popular education and its anchoring in specific territorial problems. The text describes the main challenges with which research and practice are at present confronted before ending on the importance to pursue the work of consolidation of continental and international networks.

The following five texts help us understand the themes on which lies this first issue. Intercultural challenges are in the core of Isabelle Derungs's article, "Transcultural leadership competence in organizational or community management." On the basis of interviews with international consultants, the author depicts the leaders as the most active producers in the processes of meaning and the decision-making which have a strong impact on the environment in terms of cultural and organizational development. According to her, the current challenge of the leaders consists in balancing the economy and the ethics beyond the cultural differences to set up the appropriate processes of management and promote the sustainable development of the organization or the community.

Maria Jose Aguilar is interested in the process of animation, based on empowerment and advocacy action, which led to the Africans' first auto-organized demonstration in Spain on the right for dignity in her article "Ciudadanía intercultural y animación: una experiencia de empoderamiento con inmigrantes subsaharianos en España." She presents how sociocultural community development contributed to strengthen the autonomous capacity of organization of actions, activities and services of this collective of immigrants and to integrate them into the local cultural life. Intercultural challenges are approached by the author through a discussion about the theoretical approach that underlies this kind of intervention and around the most innovative methodological aspects of the experience.

Basing her reports of the results of an intercultural research, Claudia Della Croce questions the posture of the researcher in her article “Créativité des pratiques et formation en animation socioculturelle” and pays attention to the co-construction of the problems with which are confronted the professionals in their fields of practice from their expertise. For the author, university cursus has to bring a creative approach of the job by strengthening the skills of future community developpers for allowing the publics to appropriate certain number of cultural contents. In her eyes, sociocultural community development define itself essentially as an activity of mediation between the public and artworks, but also between actors who do not share the same cultural references.

The contributions of research-action in analyses and in practices of sociocultural community development are at the center of Maria Teresa Sirvent’s article, “La investigacion accion participativa y la animacion socio-cultural: su papel en la participacion ciudadana.” This mode of intervention, which makes of sociocultural community development an instrument facilitating the expression of social demands, allows to heighten the skills and the participation of the discriminated urban populations. The experience developed with groups of leaders and members of popular organizations and schools in southern districts of Buenos Aires (Argentina) illustrates the case. The text gives the opportunity to the author to discuss criterias of validation of the results reached in this experience.

The theater forum is analysed by Tânia Baraúna in her article “Teatro del oprimido - la práctica del teatro forum: el caso de Marias del Brasil” in a theater of intervention’s tradition. Realized with a group of women, many of them working as servants, in the region of Río de Janeiro (Brazil), this type of intervention develops awareness and capacity to face situations of oppression. The author shows how fast, through activities combining a critical vision of the world and the increase of self-confidence, of which the assurance to be able to resolve daily problems, participants observed improvements in their family, social and professional life.

We put an end to this issue with a report of the workshops held during the 4th international conference on sociocultural community development (Montreal, October 28th to 30th, 2009). Written by students of UQAM, under the supervision of Nathalie Lafranchise, this text presents an original synthesis of about forty conferences and draws up a portrait of what is the stakes in the use of creativity in practices according to contexts.

The next issue of the review, which will appear in spring 2011, will point out the social and virtual realities of sociocultural community development. You have up to December 17th, 2010 to submit an article or a report (see the guidelines: www.atps.uqam.ca/auteurs_en.php). You can also submit any time texts to appear in the open section.

Enjoy the reading!