

THE “FUNDACIÓ SERVEIS DE CULTURA POPULAR”



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THE AIM OF THE FOUNDATION FOR SERVICES TO POPULAR CULTURE IS TO PROMOTE CULTURE AT THE BROADEST POSSIBLE SOCIAL LEVELS, AND TO PROMOTE AND SUPPORT CULTURAL OR CIVIC INITIATIVES.



MODEST REIXACH SOCIOLOGIST

Created in 1977, at the beginning of the recovery of democracy and autonomy for Catalonia, the "Fundació Serveis de Cultura Popular" has been given the job of promoting culture at the broadest possible social levels, especially among young people.

The political and social context of 1977 was characterised by two circumstances of great importance in the shaping of Catalan society: the presence of many hundreds of thousands of immigrants who had recently settled in Catalonia, to a large extent deprived of their social and cultural roots, and the prostration of the Catalan language and culture after 35 years of dictatorial repression and colonialism. These two factors, a handicap whose consequences are still making themselves felt today, have played an important part in the elaboration of the Foundation's programmes. Our services are aimed principally at young people, who are the first to benefit from our support. This noticeable bias in favour of young people does not however exclude activities and support on a more generalised level.

Let me try to sum up the Foundation's range of activities under three headings.

1. Workers for Culture and Social Promotion

An important part of our work and resources is directed at the promotion and support of cultural and civic initiatives. The Foundation gives moral, financial and technical support to a host of local or regional groups or organisations of popular extraction, often arising in the outlying city districts, who organise a wide variety of socio-cultural activities aimed at their membership or at a wider public. Evening classes, community work, socio-cultural and la-

bour promotion, environmental education, experiments in social education, crime prevention, social integration, literacy programmes, adult education, etc. are just some of the various disputable and disputed denominations which include a genuine, anonymous army of workers for culture, social progress and community spirit.

To acquaint itself with the latest initiatives and promote them if necessary, the Foundation regularly launches public campaigns which are widely publicised in the most suitable media. The themes of these campaigns so far have been community work, the transition from school to employment, environmental education, youth employment, teacher training and literacy promotion. The Foundation also collaborates with a number of widely distributed organisations, carrying out cultural campaigns and organising activities and services. The main areas in which we have been working recently are the promotion of human rights, international solidarity, educating for peace, defence and diffusion of Catalan culture, child protection, courses in history and traditions, improvements in educational methods and course material, and fourth world awareness.

2. The Media. Educational Video

From the very beginning, our Foundation has taken an active interest in the media and their cultural potential. This has led us to promote hundreds of radio programmes with a cultural content, to finance the production and Catalan dubbing of quality films for children, to encourage drama in schools and to support the publication or distribution

of local, regional or specialist publications.

Since 1983, the Fundació Serveis de Cultura Popular has been working on a large-scale programme to encourage the use of video in raising the quality of education and cultural diffusion. Videos which the Foundation has either produced or dubbed itself are available to schools and cultural centres. Its catalogue of educational videos is the most comprehensive in Spain. It contains 250 titles covering the exact sciences, physics, chemistry, anatomy, botany, ecology, geography, history, art, ethics, etc. Each tape is accompanied by a comprehensive teaching guide for the teacher.

The Foundation's activities in the field of educational video also include an annual competition for ideas for videographic scripts, research into video and teaching, the publication of booklets on the same subject, participation in various international forums, the constitution of an internal video library open to researchers and teachers, etc.

3. Research and Diffusion

Although research does not figure amongst our main objectives, the Foundation finances or carries out research connected with its work in general or with specific activities. Such themes as popular culture, immigration, the media, the use of video in schools, civic education, women's social status, the situation of the Catalan language, child abuse, etc. have all been the object of theoretical or empirical research.

Most of this work is either published by others or by the Foundation itself in one of the three collections it is working on at present: *Cultura Popular* (9 volumes), *Vídeo i Educació* (9 volumes) and *Tàleia-Experiències de Pedagogia Social* (5 volumes). ■