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Interdisciplinary Curricular Approach in the Planning and Teaching of Cultural Heritage – Project in a Higher Education Polytechnic Institution, Northern Portugal

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Abstract

The importance of cultural learning, in general, is increasingly being recognized in Portugal, not only for its cultural and human value but also for the contribution it makes to local, regional and national economies. This article reports the initial stage of the Project called "NMSCPAM: New Media Supporting Cultural Patrimony of Alto Minho" (2017 – 2019). Teachers of arts, history, tourism and technology of Higher Education and Basic Education Institutions of Northern Portugal, have been developing an interdisciplinary curricular approach in the planning and teaching of cultural heritage, as a way of (re) discover the local culture and create images and educational resources that can be used in diverse contexts. The article reflects on: (1) the use of heritage education as a tool for active citizenship; (2) the service learning model as the path to personal and social identification; and (3) art as a means for 're)discovering local culture in a context which is very affected by tourism.

Keywords: Heritage Education, Culture, Service - Learning Model, Active Citizenship, Higher Education.

1. Introduction

Several studies have been carried out in these areas emphasize the articulation between social, economic and environmental objectives as a path to sustainable development and the importance of cultural learning in general, which is increasingly recognized in Portugal, not only because of its cultural value (Moura et al, 2016, p.1), especially those whose economic prosperity depends heavily on tourism and cultural heritage (Marques, 2017), such as the case of Northwest Portugal and Alto Minho, in particular.

The awareness of the tensions between the economic and social aspects of development, and the realization that local communities are not always able to integrate the challenges that these two different aspects of development impose on them, has led a group of researchers to reflect on how heritage education, through a service learning model, could provide answers to the (re-)discovery of the local culture, using interdisciplinary approaches between the arts, history, literature, and technology.

One way to bring new ideas related to the articulation of economic and social development issues was through the promotion of active citizenship. One of the main target groups of this project are the students of the different courses of the Polytechnic Institute, future active citizens of these local communities of Alto Minho. The project was attended by several collaborators, with diversified tasks, but the first part involved the research professors of the School of Education, in the reflection on the concept of Patrimonial Education (crossing Artistic and Historical Education) and in its operationalization particularly through a holistic perspective that the natural, landscape and cultural artifacts and all the ethnographic representations of the historical past had, in this project, a natural place for dialogue and fruitful expression. In this way, some resources of our historical and cultural past, duly framed in the chronology and the long duration, have been mapped in the territory, and its pedagogical and didactic valorization is proposed, which will be explored in greater detail.

Patrimonial Education as a Tool for Active Citizenship

Patrimonial Education has been considered an important component of the curricula of the various courses taught at the School of Education of the Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo (ESEVC) and many of the projects developed by the researchers and students of this Institution of Polytechnic Higher Education are an evidence of this (2008-2011), "Creative Connections" (2012-2015) and the "Preliminary Study on the Feasts of Our Lady of the Agony: Sociocultural, Economic Implications" (2015-2016).

Many countries have reevaluated the concept of cultural heritage and its contribution to national identity. The Portuguese school system plays a leading role in the development of understanding and appreciation of heritage, and the Higher School of Education is an example of this. As teachers of Arts, History, Literature and all other knowledge related to different scientific areas, the teaching of the concept of cultural heritage (referring to the nuclear text of Almeida, 1993), has always been integrated in the different curricular activities, but here we will only emphasize the way we approach it in the scope of the project "NMSPCAM: New Media to the Service of the Cultural Heritage of Alto Minho" (Moura et al., 2015), based on the pedagogical exploration of legends and local architecture.

Service-Learning - Path to Personal and Social Identification

Service learning is a pedagogical methodology that combines in a single activity the learning of contents, competences, and values with tasks of service to the community, and learning acquires a civic sense (Opazo et al., 2014). Participating in this project was an opportunity to focus on teaching and learning in a series of curricular units of various courses in local history, with an interdisciplinary perspective, promoting social and cultural values. After all, what did they know about local history, story or stories of Viana do Castelo?

We were aware that knowing the place where we live, and its history is, as Pacheco (1997, p.11) stated two decades ago, a fundamental act for the beginning of citizenship that lasts for life outside. The purposes of this stage of the project consisted

- (I) in the creation of a multidisciplinary educational transversal program to the curriculum of some subjects of diverse courses (CTESP of Arts and Technology and of Basic Education) that promoted the construction of knowledge on visual arts, local history, and local culture;
- (II) developing skills in problem-solving, decision-making and artistic techniques;
- (III) Promotion of a systematic interaction among students, local communities, their cultural heritage and active involvement of ESEVC in community activities;
- (IV) in the promotion of active citizenship.

The democratization of education assumes that school promotes education for citizenship, where the progressive autonomy and critical capacity of students are built on respect for difference and the affirmation of humanism as a practical horizon of coexistence. Cultural and historical education, in this sense, covers fundamental principles of inter/multicultural education (Moura, 2002, Castro, 2009; Barca, 2017) and education for citizenship is one of the areas of this formation, anchored in a deeply interdisciplinary scope, 1986). In this sense, understanding the cultural and historical identity of a people is an aggregating and structuring element of personal and social formation (Marques, 2011). It is through knowledge of reality, namely near and local, that the construction of the

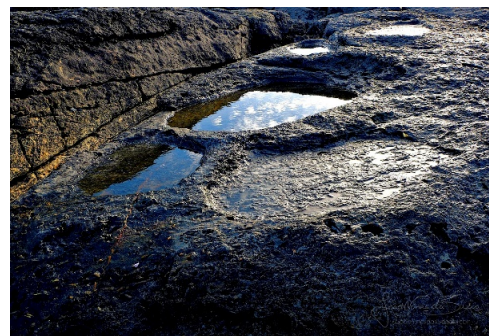
citizenship dimension is carried out, based on students' experiences and living in society, through linguistic exchanges and recognition of symbols, in a systematic process of intellectual and moral (Moura & Gonçalves, 2015).

2. Methodology and Plan of Action

The project coordinator created a structure that included working groups and strategic local cultural partnerships, which implied: (i) Regular communication; (ii) Learning sharing; (iii) Mechanisms to defend the effectiveness of Heritage Education; (iv) Selection of samples of Polytechnic students and children of Basic Education in local institutions.

Between September 2017 and December 2017 the city of Viana do Castelo, in the North of Portugal, was chosen as the place for the development of the project "NMSPCAM: New Media at the Service of Cultural Heritage of the Alto Minho", due to the strong involvement of the teachers/researchers of the Polytechnic Institute with the community, in the path of the principles and values most rooted in the identity of this sub-system of higher education. The first step of the project consisted of data collection in libraries, textbooks, and interviews; analysis of fieldwork and preparation of the first report.

At this stage, a theme related to local history was chosen. In this sense, the work team developed vast documentary research in primary and secondary sources that allowed the construction of a narrative fulcrum, whose special and temporal horizon was structured around the built cultural heritage of Viana do Castelo, from Prehistory to contemporary era. The team of the School of Education of Viana do Castelo, specializing in Arts, Heritage Education and Regional and Local History, investigated local legends, collecting images (Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8), book chapters related to the local, regional and national context. It also participated in discussions with the other members of the project, and members of the city council for the sectors of Culture and Education. This work resulted in the production of a working tool called "timeline" that will enable the remaining phases of the project - production of an educational game and work bases for projection in videomapping - can be thought and structured on the basis of this material.



Figs. 1 & 2, Prehistoric Vestiges and Salt Sinks in Praia do Canto Marinho, considered one of the 7 Wonders - Beaches of Portugal, in Viana do Castelo © Viana do Castelo Municipal Council and Ilustratur

The project was oriented to affect change and resorted to students from various courses and levels of schooling. The articulation with different scientific areas also facilitated and promoted the sharing of knowledge, ideas, in an environment of trust among its members.

Examples of Heritage Education Projects

The examples presented here were developed during the second semester of the academic year 2017/2018, in the Master's Courses in Pre-School and 1st Cycle of Basic Education, Degree in Basic Education and Arts and Technology (Superior and Professional Technical Course (CTeSP- of Light, Sound, and Image).

The theme explored was: Viana, Port of Departure, Arrival Point - trips through the History of Viana. When the various members of the project were assembled, it was decided to select the three following legends (Fig. 3) and different historical periods.

Era 1	Rio Lethes Legend, River of Obliviance
Era 2	Viana Legend
Era 3	Caramuru Diogo Álvares Correia

Fig. 3 – Selected historical periods to work with students

These themes presupposed the involvement of children of the 1st cycle of Basic Education of a partner institution in activities related to Heritage Education, as predicted in the Essential Learning of the 1st Cycle of Basic Education (2018).

The Visual Arts become an area of fundamental knowledge for the global and integrated development of students, in line with the different Areas of Competence of the Profile of Students Exiting Compulsory Schooling, more specifically, the processes of looking and seeing, in a critical and well-founded way, of the different visual contexts. Its main purpose is to widen and enrich the students' visual and plastic experiences, contributing to the development of aesthetic and artistic sensibility, awakening, throughout the learning process, the taste for the appreciation and enjoyment of the different cultural circumstances. (p.1)

Viana do Castelo and Rio Lethes Legends, and Caramuru

In a School of Basic Education (Colégio do Minho), in the city of Viana do Castelo, the Legends were all explored by children from the 1st to the 4th year of the first cycle, through illustrations and dramatizations. Such curricular approaches have emphasized the broadening of the world's perception, the education of the sensibility and forms of social participation through the construction of "world-consciousness," as Coelho (1982) points out in his work on children's literature. They allowed to associate Art, Literature, and Illustration and to reflect on the heroes, kings, princes, and princesses, and it was verified that although the children little or nothing they know of the history, they mentioned different characters of the media, as a consequence of the animation that they see systematically on the TV (Figs. 4, 5, 6 & 7).



Figs. 4 & 5, Legend of Viana for children of the 1st and 2nd years EB © Isabel Lima, Teacher 2018

The reflection on the heroes of local legends was an opportunity for children involved in this project to reflect on themselves, their identity, history and artistic illustrations appeared as interlocutors between culture and students and their development in terms of personal and social expression. In the course of previous studies with close age groups, we understand that the local identity begins to be perceived by children from a young age, using places and symbols with which, in its everyday life, especially in the home-school trips, contacts and understands in its specificity and uniqueness as a "memory" of people and community of which it is a part, constructing, collectively - and sharing with colleagues and educators/ teachers - a sense of belonging that values their personal and social identity (Marques and Barbosa, 2015).



Figs. 6 & 7 Lenda de Viana por crianças do 3º e 4º anos EB © Isabel Lima, professora 2018

The Caramuru sculpture that existed at the time, in the historical center of the city of Viana (later transferred to the North Beach, where it is now) facilitated the association of the legend with the history of the colonization of Brazil and “I saw Viana do Castelo” allowed to travel through the Middle Ages, the romantic world of the Cavalry, with western roots dating back to the twelfth century. It also allowed Viana to be associated with the Fortaleza de Santiago da Barra, a landmark building in the city's history, which gives it a very strong identity (Marques, 2014). Values such as Love, Respect, and Dedication are exalted here, as in the legend of Caramuru.

(Re) Discovering Local Heritage

The first year class of the Arts and Technology CTesP carried out several itineraries, having photographed, designed and investigated the places and buildings that were visited (Fig. 8)



Fig. 8 Study visit to the Santa Luzia citadel, by CTesP © Professora Raquel Moreira 2017

The study visits, bibliographic consultations, and graphic representations of the ESEVC students of Arts and Technology Courses allowed them to look and learn more about their cultural heritage (Pics. 8, 9 & 10) of the past and present, leading to a better understanding their social meaning, learning that culture will develop faster than ever in the future as a consequence of scientific and technological progress.

The different itineraries carried out by the students of the CTesP of Arts and Technology, within the curricular unit of History of Culture and Arts, helped them to realize that for centuries, a rich heritage accumulated in the landscape is a testimony of an intense human occupation, which left its marks and shaped its cultural identity (Figs 9 and 10).



Figs. 9 & 10 Medieval Viana - João Velho House and Old Hospital, Itinerary conducted by CTesP AT © Municipality of Viana do Castelo

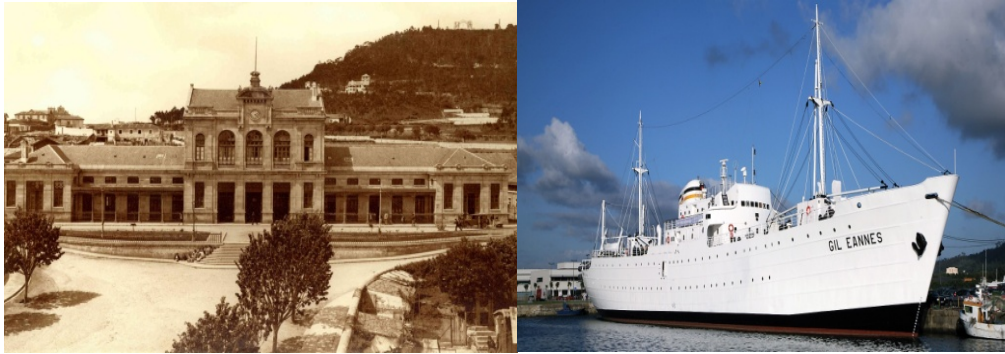
Several works were consulted (Duarte, 1994) and felt as essential for the elaboration of small monographs carried out by the students of the Higher Education Center (CETeSP), such as Viana do Castelo (Caldas & Gomes, 1990). (Botelho, 2001), Viana Monumental and Artística (Fernandes, 1990), Studies on Mannerism (Silva, 1983) and many others (Figs. 11, 12, 13 & 14).



Figs. 11 & 12 Largo de São Domingos & Igreja da Misericórdia © Município de Viana do Castelo, 2017

Simultaneously, two dissertations - one more focused on the Portuguese Language area and another on Mathematics - are being finalized in the scope of the Master's Degree in Pre-School and Secondary Education in Primary Education, which seek to report two research experiences in urban contexts and semi-urban, articulating dimensions of the cultural heritage of Viana do Castelo, with their own scientific-pedagogical areas of intervention: in one case an alternative georeference of the local cultural heritage, and in another the use of traditional literature as a source for the valorization of local identity (in both cases in intervention contexts in the 1st Basic Education Studies). The development of a significant heritage education implied:

- Align the learning of participants in the project, with the historical context of the community;
- Know the local history and the needs of your students in relation to their knowledge;
- Investigate and use local history, culture, and visual arts as inspiration for the creation of cultural products;
- Express Cultural heritage issues; and
- Reflect on the notion of democratic citizenship, from the conscious participation of the link between the school and the community.

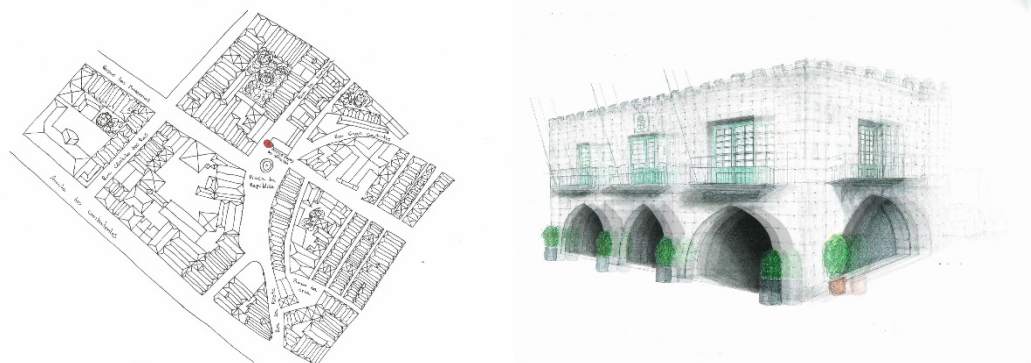


Figs. 13 & 14 Railway Station (1878) & Gil Eannes Hospital Ship (1955) © Municipal Archive of Viana do Castelo, 2017

According to Raquel Moreira, the 2nd year student group of Arts and Technology CTeSP developed a project dedicated to the property of the city of Viana do Castelo, from different times and typologies (Figs. 15, 16, 17 & 18).

This activity involved the creation of a collective course, the selection, and mapping of a set of real estate, the design of observation abroad, the research and collection of images and also the digital drawing, resulting in the elaboration of individual portfolios dedicated to different monuments.

Through the use of different media, the aim was not only to promote the diversity of cultural heritage and to raise awareness of its value but also to stimulate students' creativity by inviting them to present proposals for artistic intervention on monuments, from the different records obtained. These works gave rise to a collective video and were also presented at a show that took place in the ESE-IPVC hall.



Figs. 15 & 16 Old Town Hall (map); Old Town Hall © Tiago Arantes, 2017

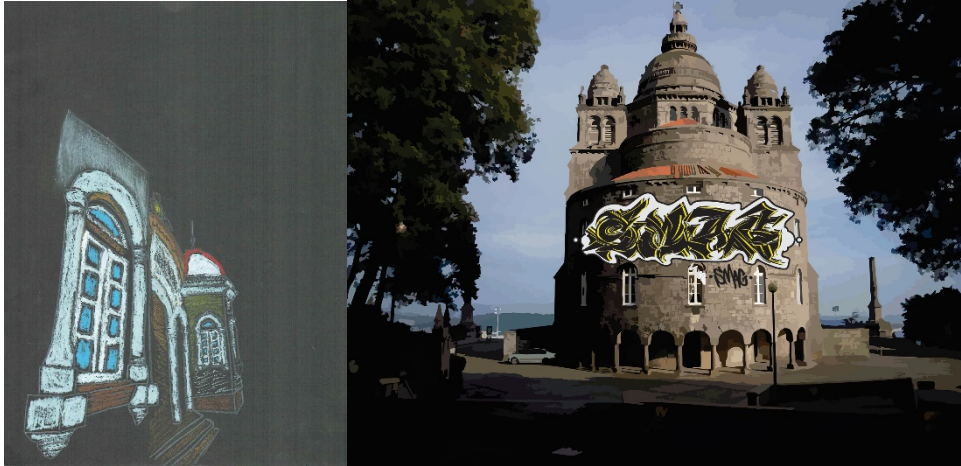


Fig. 17 Santa Luzia Lift © João Carqueijó, 2017 Fig. 18 Basilica of Santa Luzia © António Caleiro, 2017

Thus we conclude that there were:

1. Positive Impacts of Cultural Heritage and Cultural Studies in addressing technological and educational issues and contributing to the social and cultural capital of the students involved;
2. Emphasis on contacts with local authorities and in the scientific areas of Higher Education Institutions and Institutions of Basic Education that had not previously worked on culture as a key concept;
3. Imaginatively combining local culture with social issues and education;
4. Strengthening of partnerships, sharing of learning and contribution to new perspectives of services to the community and articulation of knowledge between diverse scientific and disciplinary areas.

4. Recommendations

The analysis of the data was made through the collection of information about legends and selection of concepts from History, Visual and Performative Arts (Music and Theater) centered on Heritage Education and Art which helped to (re)discover the local culture and also to:

- Explore inclusive cultural, strategic partnerships to support the dissemination of learning and partnership development.
- Develop and implement a national strategy for the use of culture in the achievement of a variety of objectives through various case studies;
- Carry out and disseminate research developed at regional, national and international level, sharing best practices that illustrate the effectiveness of good evaluation practices.

Cultural planning approaches encouraged, in the first stage, an understanding of culture not as an "addition" but as an integral part of local development. The research team developed an interdisciplinary work and an interinstitutional collaboration, as the project promoted the creation of new partnerships, which allowed innovative ways of thinking about heritage education and service learning, through the conciliation of arts, tourism, and technologies. Was it worth it?

The project worked out as a catalyst for greater joint work in the scope of the articulation of Patrimonial Education with the Technologies. On the other hand, cultural studies have learned more about the needs of partners and their clients, and these partners have a much better understanding of the value Cultural Heritage can bring to their work.

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