KNOW-HOW IN RURAL GEOGRAPHY AND LATIN AMERICA

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RESUMEN

The Interdisciplinary Group of Critical and Latin American Studies (GIECRYAL) is made up of professors from the University of Alicante, as well as other Spanish, European and Latin American researchers. They all share their extensive experience in the study of the rural world and Latin America from a social and critical perspective. The group is looking for companies or institutions interested in developing research projects.



DESCRIPCIÓN TÉCNICA

The group carries out its research and has deep experience and know-how in the following areas:

1. **Human geography**

- Rural geography

The rural environment it's being transformed for decades, has ceased to be exclusively agrarian to be a heterogeneous and complex space from the demographic, economic, social and cultural point of view. Furthermore, agriculture is no longer considered only from the exploitation and mere production of food point of view, but now includes the transport, distribution and consumption of the same, that is to say, the addition of interrelated activities and services known as "Agroindustry".

- Rural Multifunctionality and Local Development

The multifunctional approach aims to combine the food production function with other activities that ensure the maintenance of the social network, the preservation of the natural environment and the improvement of the living and working conditions of the rural population.

- Sustainable development and socio-environmental ecology

Sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations. To this end, it is necessary to interrelate ecological issues with the rest of the elements that make up the space, both from the natural point of view and from the social perspective, with a broad, systemic, holistic and dialectic vision of the territory.

- Geographic thinking

Without a solid theoretical framework behind it, it is difficult for Spanish geography to advance in its professionalization and practical application. This group is committed to the development of a critical and committed social geography, at the service of those who need it most: the most disadvantaged in society.

2. **Anthropology**

- Economic Anthropology

The economic, social and cultural dynamics of local groups in a global world are analyzed. Each town or social group adapts

itself with singularity to the possibilities that the environment provides and imprints its distinctive stamp to the different forms of work.

• Symbolic Anthropology

According to anthropological tradition, festivals have always been real and ideal settings for analysing different societies. They represent the different social identities, be they gender, age, class or status.

• Food, culture and development

One of the most important cultural references is that which refers to the eating patterns of each social group. Each society selects among its possibilities the foods that make up its diet, a fact that makes it possible to analyze the prevailing system of values.

• Anthropology of tourism

Tourist activity influences the lifestyles of different human groups, therefore, studies must take into account both local society and visitors, trying to minimize negative impacts, whether social, cultural, physical or economic.

• Cultural Heritage

It is necessary to interpret human beings in the environment in which they have developed and continue to do so, since only in this way will the capacity to plan a series of actions linked to the value and use of heritage be achieved.

• Museums

In museums, heritage can be assimilated according to the orientation given to the exhibition and didactic forms. This is one of the reasons why museums should not remain anchored either in the exhibition themes or in the way they are projected.

3. **Social Science Didactics**

• Environmental education

The aim is to promote the education of individuals in aspects such as the sustainable development of natural and social environments in order to try to halt the current worrying environmental degradation.

• Education and heritage

It is necessary to investigate how and in what way we should educate in everything that identifies us as persons belonging to a particular group and with a characteristic identity so that, in turn, helps us to understand who we are, respect our heritage and learn to be part of the common history of all the inhabitants of the planet.

4. **Demographics**

• Analysis of migratory processes

The current historical, demographic, social and political context has renewed interest in the study of migrations, such as, for example, the immigration of retired people or residential tourists on the Mediterranean coast.

• Analysis of demographic and social change

Study of the three components of demographic change: migration, birth rate and mortality. In a post-transitional demographic context, such as that of Spain, in which the birth rate and mortality are at the lowest levels, immigration takes on special importance.

• Methodology and techniques of demographic analysis

Application and improvement of different techniques for the understanding of demographic phenomena and processes. These techniques would range from life histories (in the most exploratory studies) to surveys of attitudes towards immigration (in more structured studies).

• Population Theory

The most important theoretical contributions on population that have been stated so far are analyzed, without ignoring the context of the author.

5. **Latin America**

Special attention is paid to the problems of the Latin American rural space, such as land use, the use of natural resources, rural poverty, agro-industry, uprooting of peasants, loss of rural identity, defence of cultural heritage, endogenous local development, transport infrastructure, energy sources or regional integration processes.

6. **International cooperation and development**

A large part of the members of the research group have been working for years on international cooperation and development in Latin American countries, therefore, they have a high knowledge of the region and maintain close academic and research links.

VENTAJAS Y ASPECTOS INNOVADORES

The members of the GIECRYAL, both individually and collectively in the past, maintain fruitful teaching and research relations with several Spanish, European and Latin American university centres specialised in the study of the rural world, the global territory in which it is inserted and the human communities that inhabit it. And all this from a social and critical perspective. Therefore, this extensive experience and knowledge on the subject is reflected in the quality and thoroughness of the research carried out.

INNOVATIVE ASPECTS OF TECHNOLOGY

The theoretical-conceptual frame of reference is nourished by the ideas and reflections of the eminent Brazilian geographer Milton Santos. This researcher defends that the unreal fragmentation of space that takes place in many social studies is completely absurd and, therefore, the convenience of considering the territory as a complex, interrelated and interdependent whole must be emphasized, that is, where a web of complementary, conflicting, mutually dependent and continuously moving relationships is woven.

Therefore, an interdisciplinary group such as GIECRYAL, made up of researchers specialised in different fields of Social Sciences, will be needed to analyse and study such a complex territory.

ESTADO ACTUAL

GIECRYAL is composed of seven professors from the University of Alicante, belonging to the areas of knowledge of Human Geography, Social Anthropology, Sociology and Didactics of Social Sciences, and a large group of Spanish, European and Latin American social researchers, whose common link is the interest in the study of the rural world and Latin America from a social and critical perspective, and with a systemic, holistic, dynamic and dialectical approach, since we start from a certain vision of the world, of human societies and of the contradictory nature of reality, applying a series of fundamental reasonings aimed at highlighting the essential and at discovering the internal structure, evolution and interrelations of human and social phenomena and processes.

GIECRYAL
GRUPO INTERDISCIPLINARIO DE ESTUDIOS CRÍTICOS Y DE AMÉRICA LATINA

Figure 1: GIECRYAL logo

APLICACIONES DE LA OFERTA

Any sector that needs to know in depth some aspect of the Spanish rural space or especially Latin American.

It is worth mentioning some of the research projects carried out in recent years due to their repercussions, such as for example:

- "Los intercambios agroalimentarios entre el MERCOSUR y España ante la liberalización del comercio mundial. Posibilidades inversoras de las empresas españolas y valencianas del sector en el Cono Sur Latinoamericano", 2001, sponsored by the Department of Culture, Education and Science of the Generalitat Valenciana.
- "Multifuncionalidad rural y desarrollo local: realidades y mitos. La experiencia europea y la potencialidad de Colombia", 2009, sponsored by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation-AECID.

- "Análisis territorial del capital social en espacios naturales protegidos: indicadores de desarrollo socioeconómico", 2011, sponsored financed by the Ministry of Science and Innovation.

One of the research fields where GIECRYAL could be most necessary would be in the depopulation issue. Currently, a large number of municipalities in the interior of Spain are in danger of disappearing with the serious economic, social and environmental consequences that this would entail, for this reason, has become a very popular issue among the media and the fight against this problem is already one of the main political promises.

COLABORACIÓN BUSCADA

- Type of client sought: companies, universities and public-private institutions.
- The research group is interested in the application of its know-how in specific projects.

DERECHOS DE PROPIEDAD INTELECTUAL

The technology is protected under the know-how of the research group accumulated over the years and with the result of more than three hundred publications: books, book chapters, articles in specialized Spanish, European and Latin American journals, conference proceedings, among others, which study various geographical, anthropological, sociological and didactic aspects. Many of these works serve as teaching material in various departments of Social Sciences of Latin American university centers.

Likewise, the intense activity carried out in the field of international cooperation and development, mainly in the countries of Latin America, stands out through the pronunciation of conferences, collaborations and diverse exchanges, and the giving of courses and seminars of different nature, where those of doctorate, postgraduate and university expert stand out.

In the same way, it is constant the accomplishment of scientific courses in diverse public and private centers of the world and its participation in national and international events (Europe, United States and Latin America), contributing its experience by means of magisterial conferences, invited presentations, communications or panels.

This same experience is what guarantees their presence in doctoral thesis tribunals, editorial and evaluation committees of specialized journals, groups of research evaluators in national and foreign public bodies, among others.

SECTORES DE APLICACIÓN (2)

Biodiversity and Landscape
Regional Planning