

Socio-Cultural Animation in Spain and Latin America – a historical overview

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Abstract: This study deals with the phenomenon of socio-cultural animation in Spain, which began to develop in this part of the Romance-speaking world in the pedagogical and social context in the 1960s. Most Spanish experts speak of animation in the sense of socio-cultural animation, i.e., in the original and most widespread concept of animation. They understand it as a sort of community activity (*un tipo de acción comunitaria*), which has the primary goal of inducing in individuals and groups an active participation in the process of their own personal and social development. This text captures the most important phases of the development of socio-cultural animation in Spain, from the beginning up to the present with regard to its anchoring in the contemporary social context. It focuses on the three modalities of socio-cultural animation in Spain set forth by V. Ventoso Pérez in the 1990s and the current situation of the socio-cultural animation model in Spain. It also deals with the professionalization of animation and the animator and analyses the current educational and professional profiles of socio-cultural animation in Spain. The text also briefly presents socio-cultural animation in the Latin American world, in selected Hispanic countries (for example, in Argentina, Ecuador and Mexico) and determines the basic identical or different features of Spanish social-cultural animation.

Keywords: socio-cultural animation, animator, leisure time education, professional orientation, Spain, Latin-American animation

*Social-cultural animation is more than a recreational technique,
a way how to fulfil leisure time or an ideological instrument of power,
it participates in the project of society for the future.*

Pierre Besnard (1999)

1 Setting in the Spanish professional context

Socio-cultural animation is not merely a phenomenon confined to our present society, with its stress on the idea of well-being. Indeed, its roots lie deep in the past. Plato is considered to be one of the earliest socio-cultural animators, for example, and historians also mention ancient rhetoricians or medieval troubadours (Úcar Martínez, 2002, p. 1). In the terminological field, we are still struggling with fragmentation in terms of numerous aspects and concepts of this phenomenon, which brings confusion; on the other hand, it is proof of a broad grasp of the social phenomenon of socio-cultural animation. Let's start from one of the basic definitions of the European Foundation for Culture (1973) which defines socio-cultural animation as a "mental, physical and emotional stimulus of people's life, whose purpose is through participation to encourage gaining personal experience and to achieve a high degree of personal realization (cited in Petrus Rotger, 1997, p. 329).

Most professionals understand social-cultural animation as a process, activity, intervention, dynamic action; social practice, factor or phenomenon; method, way, technique or instrument; methodology or technology with multiple goals affecting not only the lives of individuals but society as a whole. Let us mention, for example: the concept of E. Ander-Egga (2000) emphasizing the development of the *individual's abilities in the group* and active participation in the *social environment and its transformation*; the UNESCO and Spanish Ministries of Education and Culture, incorporating a set of social practices and activities for stimulating communities and their development and participation in social and political development (Escarbajal de Haro & Martínez de Miguel López, 2009); the concept of socio-cultural animation as a set of efforts for its own active participation in the social and cultural life of society (Campuzano, 2013), an instrument for the development of cultural democracy (Miguel Badesa, 2011). It is one of the possible educational approaches to accompanying an individual in the context of informal education, approach to human personality and a lifestyle (in the Czech Republic, for example, Bendl, 2015). Under the influence of historical circumstances, socio-cultural animation in the Hispanic environment consolidated into a form of social methodology and educational intervention.

In recent decades, the Spanish professional environment has repeatedly referred to the definition of J. Trilla, which perceives socio-cultural

animation as a “set of activities within a given community (or part thereof) in a particular space with the main objective of awakening in their members the attitude of participation in the process of their own social and cultural development” (Trilla, 1997, p. 22).

Socio-cultural animation already indicates its close association with culture, with the central concept of cultural anthropology, and with the social sphere. Culture is perceived in Spain very broadly, encompassing the cultural heritage and tradition of society; it is also a “fruit” of social education. Animation is understood by Spanish experts as a social practice with a close relationship to social and pedagogical sciences.

As indicated above, socio-cultural animation arises in postmodern society as a consequence of the political, social and economic changes of the 1960s. The development of socio-cultural animation was mainly influenced by the development of technologies, the mass development of communication and the media, the increase in leisure time and its new conception, changes in interpersonal relationships and models of people’s lives, the possibility of lifelong learning, etc.

Many authors believe that animation is a form of action rather than specific content, but this opinion is, in our view, partial. Under social and cultural animation, we understand the interdependence of content and form; one without the other cannot ensure the practical and fully-fledged functioning of socio-cultural animation in practice.

The taxonomy of animation offers three basic modalities which are well characterized by, for example, Sánchez Sánchez (1991). It is a cultural, social and educational modality. The cultural modality of animation focuses primarily on art in both passive and active forms; social modality seeks to participate, mobilize, and socially integrate, and the educational modality is focused on personal development and the ability of critical viewing and thinking (Sánchez Sánchez, 1991, p. 36).

In Czech pedagogy, the concept of animation was introduced for the first time by M. Vážanský (1995) in connection with activation focused on leisure time opportunities. It is based on the concept of H. Opaschowski, transferred from the French environment to Germany and extended here in the form of social pedagogy. B. Hofbauer, under the notion of animation, outlined a more inclusive definition of animation – it is not a means of education or a strategic

approach, but a general attitude towards humanity, life and society. In the Czech context, various models of animation are mentioned, for example, by M. Kapláneš (2012, pp. 120–121), who speaks mainly about the development of participation in the context of socio-cultural animation. Contrary to the environment of Spain, the systematic view on animation from the point of view of social work is still lacking in our environment.

From a diachronic perspective, it is clear that socio-cultural animation in Europe is related to the activities of the Council for Cultural Cooperation (CCC), part of the Council of Europe. During the 1970s it outlined the profile and strategy of the development of this animation in its member states, including the democratization of culture and the setting of conceptual boundaries of social and cultural animation within the so-called cultural participation of Europeans and the systematization and expansion of the socio-cultural animation policy. The main objective of the European efforts is to change and improve the social status and the situation of communities, which can be achieved by regulating economic growth and by planning the redistribution of resources to the social sphere. Socio-cultural animation thus becomes an instrument of cultural democracy and the democratization of culture (Grosjean & Ingberg, 1980, p. 81).

The origin of the concept of socio-cultural animation is French (*animation socioculturelle*); the terms *animator* and *animation* were used much earlier (Labourie, 1988a, p. 152). In the Spanish language, the phrase *animación sociocultural* is used, and in English *socio-cultural community development*. There are a number of similar or synonymous labels in professional literature (of Spanish provenance, too), for example, social-cultural dynamics (*dinamización*), education (*promoción*), activity (*acción*), development (*desarrollo*), cultural expansion (*difusión o extensión cultural*), and community development (*desarrollo comunitario*). Other terminology related to socio-cultural animation are: permanent (life-long) education (*educación permanente*), informal education (*educación informal*), people's education (*educación popular*), social pedagogy (*pedagogía social*), and leisure education (*educación del tiempo libre*), etc.

In the Spanish education system, socio-cultural animations are closer to social pedagogy; in the curriculum, it is one of the possible specialties in social studies. Socio-cultural education belongs primarily to the non-formal education sector, but experts agree that it is also partly represented in the

formal and informal education sector, i.e., it is projected into the contexts and activities of these sectors. In the current pedagogical context, socio-cultural animation is often associated with leisure time pedagogy. The target group of leisure time pedagogy (traditional pedagogical disciplines) were mainly children and youth (the target spectrum has diversified in recent years); in socio-cultural animation, we have – first of all – adults, young people and intergenerational groups that can no longer be educated, but rather animated and dynamized.

2 Development of socio-cultural animation in Spain

The phenomenon of socio-cultural animation, originally from France, found fertile soil in Spain in the 1960s. The reasons for the later occurrence were the unfavorable time, and the social and cultural conditions of the first half of the last century in the Hispanic part of the Iberian Peninsula. Some authors (for example, Ander-Egg, 1987) relate the origin of socio-cultural animation in Europe with the movement of people's education. The term *animation* was first officially used in a document of the French Ministry of National Education in October 1945 (October 17, 1945) and also at the UNESCO conference in 1950 in Mondsee, Austria (Labourie, 1988b, p. 152); in Spain, the terms *animation* and *animator* date back to the late 1950s in connection with the activities of the Women of Catholic Action (Mujeres de Acción Católica). These were centers for family and social education aimed at elderly women from urban and rural areas (Salas, 1984, p. 35). The common use of the term socio-cultural animation dates back to the mid-1960s.

Most experts agree that socio-cultural animations have arisen as a result of social needs related to industrial and urban development in the early 20th century. It was a response to social transformational changes (changes in social values, increase in leisure time...) in which the individual has an opportunity to grasp and develop his/her social and cultural identity. It can be said that animation has stimulated personal and group development in the spirit of the concept of cultural democracy and community development.

Hernández Lucas (1989, p. 28) defines three phenomena involved in socio-cultural animation: the French revival after the Second World War, which serves as a tool for developing the dynamics of communities; the sociological standardization of Western Europe, which allows the use of socio-cultural animation as an instrument for public services and the fundamental human

right to culture; and, in this sense, socio-cultural animation is understood as a means of social development.

However, to determine the solid beginnings of socio-cultural animation in Spain is complicated with regards to conceptual ambiguity, wealth of inspirational resources, and terminological instability. In general, three basic stages are distinguished: the pre-1939 stage, the Francoist period, and the last 20 years.

Sarrate Capdevila (2002) mentions the People's Education Movement (Educación Popular) and the Adult Education Movement (Educación de Adultos), people's universities, and societies of Ateneos during the first third of the 20th century (workers' movement, social issue, the crisis of Restoration, the rise and fall of the Second Spanish Republic, and the civil war). Blanco (2010) refers to one of the movements, which involves a number of animation features, as the forerunner of social-cultural animation in Spain. It is the philosophical and cultural movement based on the ideas of K. C. F. Kraus, which is so-called Krausism. At his initiative, the Free Institution for Education (Institución Libre de Enseñanza) was founded in 1876. The founding members were Krausist philosopher and teacher Francisco Giner de los Ríos, who lived in England in 1884, and a number of teachers and professors of secondary schools and universities. The Free Institute of Education operated by a Royal Decree of August 16, 1876 as a Free University and Secondary School (Artera et al., 1995, p. 550).

Other educational centers of the era that applied some of the postulates of animation (respect for the individual's nature, creativity, social inclusion, self-development...) were, for example, the School Group Cervantes of A. Llorca (Grupo Escolar Cervantes) and the School Group Baixeras of M. Alpera (Grupo Escolar Baixeras) (Blanco, 2010). Before 1939, universities also began to show interest in animation, with the impulse coming from the above-mentioned Free Institute. They were intended to contribute to addressing the social issue according to the English model of culture propagation promoted by Giner de los Ríos himself. The universities were supposed to become social centers that would also improve the cultural and social conditions of workers. This expansion of university competence was first introduced at the University in Oviedo (1896). It was followed by the University of Salamanca, Seville, Valencia, Zaragoza, Santiago de Compostela, Barcelona, etc. People's universities were active organizers of specialized

lectures and monothematic courses that were also focused on professional preparation and development of literacy. Some Spanish writers of the time, such as V. Blasco Ibáñez and A. Machado, also appear among the active participants in the course.

An important step was the adoption of the *Decree on Pedagogical Missions* (*Decreto de creación de las Misiones Pedagógicas*) from May 29, 1931. Their aim was to introduce into rural areas such changes that would improve the adaptation to the social and cultural changes brought about by industrialization. These pedagogical missions, in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Affairs and other educational centers spread through the intervention programs the knowledge of current issues, citizens' rights and obligations, organized local choirs and dance groups, and established local museums, libraries... Several renowned intellectuals participated in these activities, for example, the writers F. García Lorca and his theatre ensemble La Barraca, M. Zambrana, R. Alberti, A. Casona..., who at that time acted as "socio-cultural animators". Spanish anarchists also engaged in animation within the Escuela Moderna de Ferrer and Guàrdia Institute in Barcelona, as well as the workers' organizations Juventudes Libertarias and Mujeres Libres. The Church, in accordance with the *Encyclical Rerum Novarum* (1891), initiated intense "social catholicism", i.e., the socio-cultural activities of Catholic orientation. Various streams of social and cultural animation mingled in the Civil War. The change in its character takes place in the next period.

The Franco era

During General Franco's rule, many animation initiatives were under the control of the regime, which controlled communication means and created educational and cultural alternatives with political and social goals. In 1940, the Youth Front (Frente de Juventudes) was formed, focusing on work with the youth within summer camps and outdoor activities. The activities of pedagogical missions were given different goals in connection with political indoctrination. It was only during the liberation of the Francoist regime when social and cultural actions develop in Spain thanks to organizations such as the Christian Scouts (los Scout Católicos), Junior, Cofradías and Caritas Diocesana. The partial liberalization of the regime occurs in the 1960s in the context of political and economic liberalization, opening up new opportunities for development, and new challenges in the social and cultural spheres.

At that time, we also see the influence of the Pedagogy of Liberation coming from the Latin-American environment. After the Second World War, we witness a great development of animation activities from the side of political parties, social formations, the Church, lay people and scouts, which all contributed to revitalizing and reconstructing Europe both socially and culturally. However, since the mid-20th century, large associations and federations of national and international character also began to engage in the process, focusing on the objectives, methodologies and techniques of animation such as awareness, participation and dynamism of community, socio-cultural development of individuals and groups. The 1950s and 1960s are typical of the fact that the main interest of politics was focused on the concept of culture as a heritage and its preservation. M. L. Sarrate Capdevila (2002) refers to the 1960s in Spain as a period of birth and unification of the concept of socio-cultural animation. In the 1960s, European social and cultural changes came to Spain, influencing the practice of socio-cultural animation in Spain in the sense of emphasizing the social character. In 1965–1975, the movement for pedagogical renewal (also with the demand for political renewal) was set up, with the Catalan Summer School Movement (for example, Escuelas de Freinet).

J. Úcar Martínez refers to the 1960–70s as a period when social-cultural animation was perceived primarily as a social principle (Úcar Martínez, 2002, p. 5). This period of varied theoretical and practical influences on socio-cultural animation contributed primarily to the defining of the socio-cultural animation approach. The defining process encountered a number of problems. These included the lack of coordination and fragmentation of animation practice, the lack of a theoretical basis and the lack of professional animators' training. The stream of francophone animation was implemented in Spain in two lines – initially, socio-cultural and cultural animations developed mainly in Catalonia, but later they are strictly separated (the first focuses on social education activities, while the second one on cultural activities). We also should not omit the Anglo-Saxon tradition focused on community work (using a methodology similar to French animation). Socio-cultural animation is connected with leisure time education in Spain.

With the period of transition to democracy, the garniture in the representative bodies of the Spanish autonomous regions and provinces changes, too. The representatives speak more intensely about so-called cultural democracy (this concept was first used at the Conference of European Ministers for

Culture in Oslo in 1972). The 1970s brought the development of non-formal education in Spain – in 1976 the General Directorate for Cultural Animation (Subdirección General de Animación Cultural) was established and then two years later the General Directorate for Community Development (Dirección General de Desarrollo Comunitario).

Sarrate Capdevila (2013) understands the 1980s as a stage of the implementation and expansion of social and cultural animation. Particular attention is paid to the animator, his/her professional profile and the practical use of socio-cultural animation. The last decade of the last century was a fruitful period for the development of animation. In 1982, the First Congress of Socio-cultural Animation and Municipalities (Primer Congreso de Animación Sociocultural y Municipio) took place and it indicated the prime objective of municipalities to actively cultivate cultural life in municipalities. Other lifelong learning courses (Universities of the Third Age) were introduced at People's Universities, so they became centers of socio-cultural animation. In addition, the Culture Houses (Casas de la Cultura) and the Homes for Children and Youth (Casas de la Juventud) were set up and organized many prevention programs. Since the late 1970s, the Centres for Education in Socio-Cultural Animation (Centros de Formación de Animación Sociocultural, CEFASC) were established, where almost half of the activities were funded by the Catholic Church and other cultural associations and public institutions.

In these organizations, there are work-leisure time coordinators, youth animators, street educators and socio-cultural animators. Socio-cultural animation is included in open education consisting of the democratization of the access to education, adult education, lifelong learning and public education. Its field of activity is expanding – leisure time animation, animation in communities, countryside, animation of children and youth, animation of marginal groups, animation of adults, animation in hospitals, ecological animation, etc. The 1980s can be considered a period of consolidation and strong development of socio-cultural animation in Spain as a social education tendency (Delgado, 1988, pp. 95–109).

From the 1990s to the present day, a new model has emerged in the context of socio-cultural animation, which understands culture as a major factor in social development. Culture has become an instrument for achieving a new goal, which is the physical, mental and social development of all people.

According to Úcar, postmodern culture is changing and must be more creative and constructive, so that human existence can be fully realized. Socio-cultural animation becomes a natural part of cultural development policy.

The 1990s introduced social-cultural animation to the Spanish university environment, where it established itself as a social educational profession. We can talk about the stage of professionalization and normalization of socio-cultural animation as a methodological strategy of the society's educational policy. There exists today a study program for social educators focusing on special pedagogy and adult education. The 1990s also witnessed the establishment of a study branch that was to prepare socio-cultural animators. At the end of the 1990s, the first Professional Colleges of Social Educators (CEESC) were established, which had a national range of activity. This move was initiated by the Professional Association of Specialized Educators in Catalonia (APESC).

X. Úcar Martínez explains that the socio-cultural animation in Spain was based on six main streams: a culturalistic/cultural stream (originating in French-speaking countries where culture is perceived as the bearer of the development of social and cultural activities), social work (of Latin American origin in relation to work in the community), the stream of public education and adult education (also of Latin American origin, the successful adoption of philosophical and anthropological ideas and the new way of educating by P. Freire), the stream of public education in Spain (see the text above), the stream of community development (originating from the Anglo-Saxon environment closely associated with social work and sociology; the Spanish representative is Marco Marchioni), and the stream of education and leisure time education. It is not possible to map the overall situation in Spain in detail because of the diverse animation tendencies of the autonomous regions, but the individual streams gave rise to general reflections on the main forms of animation in Spain in the second half of the 20th century. For example, in Catalonia, leisure time education was developed, which plays an important role, especially in the context of the education of children and youth. It was created in Barcelona in 1921, thanks to the activities of Exploradores Barceloneses (Barcelona researchers; Freixa, 1987, p. 127).

At the end of the last century, Úcar determined the taxonomy of various programs of socio-cultural animation regarding five target groups: children, youth, adults, the third age and intergenerational groups (Úcar, 1995, p. 37).

Development in the 21st century

At the beginning of the 21st century, socio-cultural animation was not discussed very much in the Spanish environment, with the earlier intense discussions fading away by the end of the millennium. V. Ventosa Pérez (1993) characterizes the current situation of socio-cultural animation in Spain as the coexistence of three modalities – cultural animation, social animation and educational animation. Cultural animation, based on creativity and an emphasis on art and expression, is a matter of specialized courses in cultural houses and special schools and centers. Social animation is based on participation, transformation, dynamism, social mobilization and integration, and it is implemented primarily in community groups and centers. Educational animation is focused on the search for personal development, the transformation of activities, the development of critical thinking, responsibility, the search for motivation, etc. Dual relations between volunteer and professional animation activities, the institutional and the associative, and between the state and the private sector continue.

For decades, various programs of professional preparation of socio-cultural animators have been implemented in Spain. At the beginning of the new millennium, Spaniards can talk about several career options related to socio-cultural animation, where the highest degree one can reach is the title of social educator. In Spain, a professional profile, animator's competences, or a unified training system were established a few years ago. This was based, to a certain extent, on sociological studies carried out in France by INEP (Institut National d'Éducation Populaire), which examined the professional situation of animators. In Spain, the animator works in the educational and social field, moving between social education and social pedagogy, so he/she is referred to as a social educator. There are typologies of the given profession, for example, by E. Delgado and J. Franch (1986), or M. Luisa Monera (1992), which agree on the three concepts of the profession of animator: cultural animator, social cultural animator and animator-assistant.

The professional anchoring of socio-cultural animation in Spain has been facilitated by the reform of the education system (*Ley General de Educación* in 1970) in the period of transition to democracy. This was followed by the 1990 act *Ley Orgánica General del Sistema Educativo* (LOGSE), which introduced the institutionalization of socio-cultural animation that enters the universities and is understood as a social education profession, i.e., together

with special pedagogy as one of the pillars within the university studies of social sciences. Since the 1990s, socio-cultural animation has become part of university education in the field of social education within the profession of socio-cultural animator (the official title is the superior technician in the field of socio-cultural animation – *técnico/a superior en animación sociocultural*). In 1991, the decree of the *Royal Decree Boletín Oficial del Estado – el Real Decreto 24669 (1420/1991) del B.O.E. No. 243* from October 10, 1991 confirmed the requirement of a university degree in social education.

In 2006, the act *Ley Orgánica de Educación (LOE)* of the Spanish Ministry for Education specified the possibilities of acquiring the relevant education, the job content of socio-cultural animator, cultural animator, community animator, animator for social and health facilities, and leisure time animator; target groups and organizations. The law also specifies specializations of animator that are related to target groups and organizations for which they work not only in the public sector but also in the private sphere. Animators attend a 1,700-hour course in the field of leisure time animation, group dynamics, community development, cultural animation, setting up and running small businesses focused on leisure time development and social and educational activities, social intervention methodology, and career development and career guidance.

In 2013, there was another update of professional training in the field of socio-cultural animation. According to *Orden ECD/82/2013* from January 23, 2013, the authorities set the curriculum for the highest degree of animation education – the title of superior technician in the socio-cultural and tourist area (*técnico superior en animación sociocultral y turística*). The last measure relating to the sector of leisure time education and socio-cultural animation in Spain is considered to be decision of the Ministry of Employment and Social Security of the year 2015 (BOE, No 168 from July 15, 2015, section 7946) on the establishment of a collective agreement regarding the above-mentioned sector. In addition to the regulation of labour relationships there is also a list of workplaces and posts related to the field of education.

The applicant can reach the recommended education of socio-cultural animator by achieving a university degree in social pedagogy or a diploma in social work. The prerequisite is a completed bachelor's degree, graduating from a university course in the field. In Spain, it is also possible to gain an expanding qualification for better employment in the labor market – this

is the position of a socio-cultural instructor/assistant of environmental development. This type of education is designed for unemployed people with the bachelor's degree. The second option is the position of an instructor of leisure time activities for children and youth, which is intended for unemployed individuals with a higher education in pedagogy. In addition to this training, there are a number of courses that focus on the development of animators' competences, for example, in the field of administration, the labor market, communication and customer care, prevention of work risks, conflict management, time management and so on, as well as higher specialization courses such as social research, developmental psychology, social anthropology, social work, etc. On a conceptual basis, the state of socio-cultural animation seems to be stabilized as it is based on synthesis of conceptions and methodology of existing animation models. These models have been implemented in work with children and youth. Animation approach has been aimed to prevention of negative aspects (e.g. in conjunction with using the internet) and to a target group of seniors. Local councils of autonomous regions, which support various education institutions (including project and publication activities of university departments providing animators and social workers training) and programmes on leisure time education, have adopted a key role in educational animation policy. Experts stay in contact with their colleagues from abroad, not only from Europe but in particular with experts from Latin America which is known for its special attention to animation. Various international specialist conferences are being held, e.g. *The first international congress on socio-cultural animation* took place in Salamanca, Spain, in 2006, following up on former expert meetings (so-called Jornadas) that have been in existence in Barcelona since eighties of the last century; or *The sixth Latin American congress of socio-cultural animation* which was held in Lima, Peru in 2016 with the participation of experts from all over the world.

Since the turn of the millennium, several local associations of socio-cultural animators (TASOC) and social workers (TSIS) which are managed by a centrally controlled network (Red Nacional de TASOS and TISC). This network offers various educational courses, a list of educational centres (public and private ones) and its own radio broadcasting focused on socio-cultural animation on its web pages. Just as in Spain, the international database of socio-cultural animation (*Red Iberoamericana de la Animación Sociocultural*) has been created. *Dialnet*, a scientific database for specialist

studies established at Universidad de La Rioja, currently offers information contained in 674 documents (86 books, 42 theses, 356 chapters in books and 190 specialist studies) in the field of socio-cultural animation. Specialist studies have been published in the following magazines – *Quaderns d'Animació i Educació Social*, *Revista socioeducativa y animación sociocultural*, *Revista Iberoamericana* or *Animador sociocultural*. Active centres of socio-cultural animator education in Spain are represented by e.g. Universidad de Educación a Distancia (UNED) in Madrid which provides qualification such as a degree qualified academic in socio-cultural animation (Experto Universitario de Animación Sociocultural). Academic studies programmes are offered by e.g. Universidad Católica de Valencia, Universidad de Salamanca, Centro Superior de Estudios Universitarios La Salle de Madrid. In recent decades, frequent publishing activities focused on various spheres of socio-cultural animation have become clearly evident, e.g. conceptual theoretical works written by Ventosa (2006), Ander-Egg (2010), Sarrate Capdevila (2013) or Ruiz and Ortega (2017), and methodological and didactic books concerning work with a wide spectrum of target groups (aimed primarily for tourism animation and the spheres of sports, theaters, museums, libraries, shopping centres, enterprises, hospitals, prisons...). There is a database of private companies and public institutions providing various animation services (it includes about 600 contact places in 51 provinces; most of the centres can be found in Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, on the Balearic Islands and in Malaga) in Spain which is continuously updated. With respect to the future orientation of socio-cultural animation, it will be necessary to take into account the analysis of contemporary theoretical conception and practical knowledge considering the current development of society and the current population demands. Despite a great number of socio-cultural animation programmes being carried out in Spain, the prestige of the profession of a socio-cultural animator remains low. In our view, the situation could be changed through societal discussions about the professional status of socio-cultural animators and social workers.

3 The Latin American concept of socio-cultural animation

The concept and practice of socio-cultural animation came to the Latin-American environment from Europe. Many authors agree that Latin America offers a suitable environment for the development of socio-cultural or

cultural animation (for example, Argentina, Cuba, Ecuador, Chile, Venezuela or Mexico). In Mexico, they use the term *sociocultural promoción*, and in the rest of Latin America both terms coexist. They use methodological and practical postulates of socio-cultural animation, as well as the postulates of philosophy and theology of liberation, the ideas of the Brazilian pedagogue and philosopher Paulo Freire (1921–1997), the representative of the so-called critical pedagogy.

Socio-cultural animation in Europe was based on a situation where conditions for its birth and development already existed; in Latin America, these conditions become the target of socio-cultural animation. The Hispanic world continues developing cultural animation (also referred to as cultural education). If we talk about social work in Europe, in the Latin American context it is discussed primarily in terms of the development of communities; while socio-cultural animation in Europe tends to be aimed at specific target groups, in Latin America it is a broad-based people's education. The Hispanic-American concept includes more utilitarianism in the sense that animation serves as an instrument or tool that is de facto applicable to any social, educational or cultural activity. The focus of European animation is perceived more as educational and cultural, while Latin American animation is more engaged or politically oriented.

The concept of socio-cultural animation is different in Latin America because it is based primarily on the socio-educational focus of people's education, promoting freedom of expression, participation, development of critical thinking, autonomy, compromise, etc.

One of the attempts to create a typology of up-to-date possibilities of animation in a wide Latin American territory is represented by a comparative monograph written by V. J. Ventosa and published in 2008. It is focused on most significant tendencies of educational animation (Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Cuba), cultural animation (Portugal, Spanish Extremadura, Cuba) and social animation (Peru, Cuba, Spain, Brazil) including various subtypes focused on Latin American urban and rural environment (it analyses concrete programmes, e.g. *Factoría Joven y Extremadura* and *Plan Turquino in Cuba*). It also includes projects run by ministries (mainly in Brazil, Portugal and Cuba) and on local and regional levels (Extremadura, Peru, Cuba and Uruguay).

Most Latin American countries are aware of current lifestyle changes (e.g. information glut, consumerism, lack of interest in public affairs,

a departure from original traditions) and views socio-cultural animation as a useful tool to restructure society and restore a social life. A specific characteristic of Latin American environment reflects massive migration from rural to urban areas which transforms cities into multiethnic and multicultural centres. They become appropriate places for projects oriented on animation and its various targets.

4 Conclusion

We can conclude that socio-cultural animation is already anchored in Spain, but it remains open. Thanks to its openness, it is able to contribute to the development of the educational and social dynamics of contemporary society, as it can flexibly respond to the new social and cultural context. It can “give impulses and revive”. However, socio-cultural animation (not only) in Spain of the 21st century must be set in the context of the living reality.

At one of the latest UNESCO international conferences focused on education in the 21st century, it was mentioned that the current education system should build on four pillars. Delorse’s concept can be applied at all levels of formal education as well as in informal education. Two of these educational objectives for the 21st century – learning to learn and learning to act – are fully in the purview of school facilities, while the remaining competences – learning to live together and learning to be – open up, in our opinion, a space for professions, among which the socio-cultural animator clearly belongs, because his/her work is not only work in society, for society, but also with society.

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Sociálně kulturní animace ve Španělsku a Latinské Americe – historický náhled

Abstrakt: Studie se zabývá fenoménem sociálně-kulturní animace ve Španělsku, která se v této části románského světa začala rozvíjet v pedagogickém a sociálním kontextu v 60. letech 20. století. Většina španělských odborníků hovoří o animaci ve smyslu sociálně kulturní animace, tj. v původním a nejrozšířenějším pojetí animace vůbec. Chápu ji jako druh komunitní činnosti (*un tipo de acción comunitaria*), jejímž hlavním cílem je vyvolat v jednotlivcích i skupinách aktivní participační postoj k procesu vlastního osobnostního a sociálního rozvoje. Text zachycuje nejvýznamnější vývojové momenty rozvoje sociálně-kulturní animace ve Španělsku od prvopočátků do doby současné s ohledem na její ukotvení v dobovém a společenském kontextu. Zaměřuje se na tři modalities sociálně-kulturní animace ve Španělsku, které stanovil v 90. letech 20. století V. Ventoso Pérez a na aktuální situaci sociálně-kulturního animačního modelu ve Španělsku. Dále se zabývá otázkou profesionalizace animace a animátora, analyzuje aktuálně existující vzdělávací a profesionální profily sociálně-kulturní animace ve Španělsku. Součástí textu je stručné přiblížení sociálně-kulturní animace v latinskoamerickém světě, resp. ve vybraných zemích hispánského světa (např. v Argentině, Ekvádoru a Mexiku) a určení základních shodných či rozdílných rysů se sociálně-kulturní animací španělskou.

Klíčová slova: sociálně kulturní animace, animátor, pedagogika volného času, profesní orientace, Španělsko, latinskoamerická animace