Re-Enactment of History: Flax Production

The Project „Landscape and You-th“

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„Tracing Flax“
History of Flax Production in the Lesachtal Valley
The Project

• Research Programme „Sparkling Science“/Austrian Federal Ministry for Science and Research: Funding transdisciplinary projects: Science co-operating with schools

• „Landscape and You-th“:
  – Interdisciplinary (Sociology, Landscape Planning, Botany, History, Media Science)
  – Transdisciplinary (Science, Schools, Municipality, Culture and Garden Associations)
„Tracing Flax“

• Oral History: schoolkids interview elderly locals

• En-actment of history: growing flax, oil press, „Brecheln“, „Hacheln“, spin and weave

• App / Blog:
  http://lesachtalerflachs.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/flachs_as_sommer05.jpg
History of Flax

Flax: *linum usitatissimum*
  – Seeds → Oil
  – Fibres → Textiles / Linnen

App. more than 6,000 years
Peak of production:
17th – mid 20th century
Landscapes

- Geomorphology of Alpine Valleys
- Land distribution of medieval colonisation: Flax was grown in small fields (half acre)
  http://www.st-lorenzen.at/www/cms/node/30

- Dynamic change: loss of alpine meadows and of biological and cultural diversity. Reduction of agricultural diversity of cattle breeding, fields turned into pastures and meadows (one – two cuts)
Architectures

„Brechelhütte“ - stone building
„Röstgrube“ - dug out
„Ölmühle“ - water mill

All out of use, abandoned since the 1950s
Co-operation

• Science
  – AAU / IKN
  – Medienwerkstatt

• Schools
  – HLW Hermagor
  – Bildungszentrum Lesachtal / Neue Mittelschule

• The Region
  – Gemeinde Lesachtal - Municipality
  – Kulturverein Lesachtal
  – Kräuterverein Lesachtal
Aspects of Co-operation

• One municipality, small and socially integrated
• A peripheral and marginalized region
• Rural economy, clearly structured, traditional culture conserved
• A vivid social live (associations, music bands, ...)
• Active culture organisations, school is active in many projects („cultural landscape, local knowledge and language“)
• Lasting and ongoing co-operation of AAU and the Lesach Valley
Eine Spurensuche zum Flachs im Lesachtal
Enactment

- Workshops
  - Oral History
  - Cloister Garden
  - Brecheln
  - Textiles
  - Films
  - Apps
Team

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