

PERÚ: NEW STAGE

We have formalised a working alliance with the Peruan NGO CIESCU which has become more specific with the trip of the German student Estefanie Wildenberg to Peru

In the beginning of our small history as a NGO, South Africa turned out to be our "centre of interest" with regards to international cooperation: it was there where it took place a work camp in the summer of 2004 with eleven Catalan and Spanish volunteers. In December 2003, a small group travelled there to prepare a little bit the summer work camp and to settle down the basis of the "MaS" project (Madombidzha School). This project is still opened and we keep in touch with South Africa although the continuity that we had wished has not been established yet.

Apart from small incursions and punctual helps to different international cooperation projects, in a few days, our German friends and members of "Claim for Dignity e.V.", Annette and Andreas Simon will be back from Central Asia, where they have spent one year as cooperants in a country of that region. In this bulletin, it is published an article from Andreas which complements the one from Annette published in the last bulletin. We are excited about their arrival. For the moment, we do not know if it will be possible to give any kind of continuity to the work they have done there; the physical and cultural distance, as well as the language, are some difficulties to be well measured. Moreover, Annette and Andreas have worked with some other organisations, both German and local. What is clear is that the spirit of solidarity and disinterested work of this year should be spread around us and

editorial

should affect our daily life wherever we are. Thanks for your friendship and your work!

Without big pretensions, a lot of humility but also with a lot of joy and hope, from "Clam per la Dignitat" and "Claim for Dignity e.V.", we have formalised a working alliance with the Peruan NGO CIESCU which has become more specific with the trip of the German student Estefanie Wildenberg to Peru. During her six months of stage, from October 2007 to March 2008, she will collaborate and give support to a project of infant feeding based on re-educating people nutritional habits, especially children and youth as well as promoting the consumption of autochthonous food. This step implies a new stage within the limits of international cooperation. On the one side, we are going to work together with a non-confessional NGO, on the other side Estefanie is the first German student in College who as member of "Claim for Dignity e.V." is going to develop a stay based on solidarity tasks. We hope that this experience will be fruitful for Estefanie and for the inhabitants of Arequipa and that it will also give us the possibility to keep on working together in the future at an institutional level.

Apart from the international cooperation basis, the other two main mainstays of our NGO are the local volunteering and training and sensitizing, apart from the invisible but essential objective of letting our friendship grow. Let's keep on walking together in this new course that has just began, trying to live in the simplicity of our daily life a solidarity with those who live near and those who live further; a solidarity that, as Torralba says in his article, should be reflection of a real and not virtual experience.

The Council

THE ABDUCTED EXPERIENCE

thoughts

Real experience is what it forms us as human beings. Solidarity is also at risk of being abducted

Just like it is expressed by Anthony Giddens, modernity is progressively distancing from direct experiences and more and more often in a greater number of vital scopes this natural and desirably human experience is "abducted" and replaced by the so known virtual experience.

It is about a form of experience alienation, where the person's right, and the attributes of liking and feeling things directly are abducted, as in subtracted from the experience. In rigorous evaluation, the virtual experience is a contradiction of the terms, since to experience requires to go outwards, going out of oneself to become in contact with something different, something that its is not me.

The contact with the reality mediated and transferred though the screen in strict sense it is not a real or direct experience, but a mere substitute. It is becoming more and more common to find children and teenagers who have not had direct experience with things, nor with nature, nor with animals, nor with the marginal universes of our society. What they know, they have perceived through the computer screen, through of a set of images; icons; but without leaving their own room.

Having experience in something is, in fact, having gone through something, having lived a certain situation and having faced it. One has, for example, the experience of love, disease, disillusion, falling in love, anguish or death of a close person. Any experience requires of direct contact with reality. This contact can be pleasant, pain-

ful, or even disturbing, but the real experience is what it forms us as human beings. The extension of the so called virtual reality substrates the reality from reality itself, to the extent that what appears on the screen of the computer seems more real than nature itself. This construction of the real thing through virtual reality constitutes, at heart, a fraudulent trick, a simple simulation.

Solidarity is also at risk of being reduced from direct experience if the cognitive movement continues to predominate over the participative movement, and if spontaneous action continues to prevail over the conscious act. Through the screen we can present and portray hunger and poverty that so many peoples of the Earth live, but that presentation does not provoke, still, the experience of solidarity, although, in fact, it can prepare for it.

It is essential that we recover the direct experience plane in the education system. To Ignacio de Loyola experience means "internal liking of things". This means that affective dimensions of the human being have to be as involved in the experience as cognitive dimensions, because if internal feeling is not tied with intellectual knowledge, the learning process will not move a person to take action.

We must not forget that to educate is to prepare the student to live his future in an honest and responsible way. We must not avoid him the pain of certain experiences (such as failure, frustration, disease, impotence, neglect, struggle, or death), but that we can and we must offer the tools, values and skills so they can assume and overcome these experiences successfully.

Francesc Torralba Roselló

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FROM CENTRAL ASIA (2/2)*

All the village inhabitants talk about "the yellow house"

The living conditions in rural areas are similar in all countries of Central Asia: most of the houses are made out of clay bricks and therefore they are not well insulated and there are few possibilities to keep them warm. In addition, the constructions are not prepared for possible earthquakes and in general they do not have a large life span. The use of energy for heating leads to extremely high expenses. As a consequence, about half of the annual wages are devoted to keep at least one of the rooms more or less warm during winter time. On the other hand, the energy either in the form of electricity or coal is not always available, and the prices for the energy increase rapidly due to the market liberalization. The lack of heating and the rural community habits like seating and sleeping on the floor, cause many inhabitants to become sick.

In our project we work to develop and implement low-cost technologies to improve significantly the quality of life of the inhabitants of those rural areas. The technologies can be implemented easily by the natives themselves, who on the other hand have to pay for them. The project focuses on ceilings and floors, which are isolated by means of salt-treated straw. The mentioned technique has been successfully used for a long time. Additionally, the ovens run by coal are improved by using bricks, in terms of heating efficiency.

At the beginning of this year we were given the opportunity (in collaboration with a local family), of building a pilot house with a different planning and construction way. In an extremely short period of time we managed to convince the family to construct a two floor house with wooden frames. The building has two rooms per floor, a two floor greenhouse, a small shower, and a living room where guests are received in different festivities.



experiences

Outside there is also a kitchen and a toilet. The south part is completely covered with glass, which during the cold winter months serves as a solar thermal source. All the rooms are heated with a two store brick oven with allocated places for cooking. Considering three meals being cooked each day it should be enough for heating the whole house. The walls are made out of wooden frames (5/15cm) filled with salt-treated straw. All the wall parts were previously assembled on the floor and were subsequently placed on the previously prepared foundations. Floors and ceilings are also isolated with straw and sawdust.

We would like to thank all the carpenters who with willingness and an open attitude have worked completely new aspects for them, like windows fixed from the outside of the house, and other aspects/techniques completely new for them. The construction period included dialogues about constructing techniques, cultural and traditional habits, spontaneous solutions, as well as daily surprises.

The working schedule and its regulations are very different to ours. They work 7 days a week from 8 am until nightfall, if in the meantime no power cuts that force to paralyse all the work, take place. The workers' families cooked for them on-site each day. In the case that someone came to visit the construction site, before talking about work they had to drink a cup of tea. Since the walls were prefabricated, we were able to construct and put into place the building frame/structure including the ceiling, in approximately one week. The total construction period amounts to approximately six months, though that time could be drastically reduced in future constructions. It was difficult for the construction contractor to admit that the millionaires need at least two years to construct their houses, whereas this family was able to move into the new home in half a year.

The village inhabitants were very sceptic towards the whole new concept. They called the house structure "the yellow house" because the straw insulation could be seen everywhere. The construction family was relieved when they realized that the yellow colour looked "normal" once the walls were plastered. They were also afraid of someone setting fire to the house. On the other hand, everybody was very curious and was contemplating the house with admiration. Many of them have shown interest in visiting the house during winter time in order to confirm that the house is really warm. If the neighbours are happy with the house, the carpenters and other workers who built the house will have plenty of work to construct similar houses in the future. That would be the beginning to introduce and disseminate a new way of constructing as well of improving the quality of life of the natives in the region.

Andreas Simon

* This is a report about the experience from Andreas (member of „Claim for Dignity e.V.“) in central Asia, working as an international cooperant. In the last bulleting a report from Annette, his wife, was issued. She works also as a cooperant but in another field.

communication

Thanks to a letter that Mashudu wrote to Aleix we found out that he still works in the same workshop and that he has a new child. Congratulations!

Last Sunday August 26th took place the 18th reunion of the Counsel of "Clam per la Dignitat" in Sant Just Desvern (Barcelona). Afterwards we had our traditional summer dinner party with friends and members of "Clam per la Dignitat". Regarding activities we talked about the possibility of collecting second hand clothe for Moroccan communities that live in the dessert. We also reviewed the actual situation of our project in Peru.

Next Sunday October 21st at 10:00 A.M. will take place the IV General Assembly of "Clam per la Dignitat". The place is yet to be confirmed. Please confirm your attendance with our Secretary. Thank you.

We inform you that the next council meeting will be held on December 28th and it will be open to all associates and friends. Dinner will be served afterwards. The location is yet to be confirmed.

Last August our friend and member of the Managing Board Laura Garcia-Faria has visited Addis Abeba, capital of Ethiopia working with the Sisters of the Charity a religious congregation founded by the Blessed Mother Theresa of Calcutta.

A members' reunion took place in the city of Tübingen on July 28th. The main subject discussed was the joint project that "Claim for Dignity e.V." and the NGO CIESCU will be sharing in the area of La Mansión in Arequipa, Peru.

Last Saturday August 25th from 12:00 to 18:00 P.M. Michael Schliep, Estefanie Wildenberg and four friends of Estefanie's (Wilmer, Anne, Laura and Marita) set up a stand in the centre area of Tübingen in order to inform about Peru's project and to collect some funds for this enterprise. Even though they only obtained 39 euros from the public we are very happy about their activity because lots of people were interested in the stand. Besides this has been the first public action carried out in Tübingen. Thank you very much to Michael, Stefanie, Wilmer, Anne, Laura and Marita!

Our friends Annette and Andreas Simon will come back to Stuttgart next September 14th from their one-year cooperation stay: welcome back to Germany!

A new meeting of "Claim for Dignity e.V." will be held next September 15th at 3:00 P.M. in Tübingen (Gemeindehaus St. Michael – Hechinger Str. 45). The reunion will be open to all the friends and members of "Claim for Dignity e.V." and will consist of three main parts: (1) introduction to the social reality in Peru in charge of Wilmer, a Peruvian citizen; (2) presentation of the project to be developed in Peru in charge of Estefanie and (3) dialogue open to the audience. Estefanie Wildenberg will be from October 1st, 2007 until March 31st, 2008 in Arequipa (Peru) working with the local NGO CIESCU on a project aimed to lessen children's malnutrition in the marginal neighbourhood called La Mansión. We will say goodbye to Estefanie then so we hope the maximum number of members will attend.

Anyone interested in volunteering at Sostre in Barcelona, please contact Javi Laguno (jlaguno@yahoo.es) or with the Secretary's Office.

Regarding the Secretary's Office, we inform you that we have decided not to create our Internet data base for the moment. In the end we will have a joint database ("Clam per la Dignitat" and "Claim for Dignity e.V.") with the software name "Access" that will be managed from our Secretary's Office in Barcelona. In case you want to update your contact details such as your email address, we kindly ask you to forward it to us. Also, if you have friends or acquaintances who may want to receive our electronic mail newsletter, please let us know.

We need translators-collaborators for the translation of our newsletter, especially from Spanish to Catalan or vice versa. Moreover, anyone interested in preparing translations from Spanish/Catalan to English or German, will be welcome to our translators-collaborators group. The following website may be helpful for preparing these translations: <http://translendum.com>. Translations will not be in any event longer than four pages per year. Thank you.

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