

THE PROCESS; NOT THE RESULTS

**In processes, the path is more
important than the finishing line**

In the occidental world in which we live it seems that the only question that gives meaning to our daily work is „what is it for?": usefulness and practicality rule as the prime criteria of our thoughts and actions. Something (or someone) that is good for nothing, that has no immediate practical use, seems condemned for trash with no remedy (literal examples are the cases of active euthanasia or provoked abortions, --and that's not even talking about things but about people!--). Even in the most spiritual environment you run the risk of being invalid for the commercial logic, the logic of the results.

In the environment of cooperations and voluntarism you run the same or even a greater risk. Often we observe that many things are taken for granted and that my participation in a Non-Profit Organization (NGO), for example, often is tied to a specific function. There is no doubt that having a defined role and a task to fulfill is necessary to enable certain cohesiveness and continuity with the group, however, this fact is not only not sufficient but also it isn't always the best way to understand it. Let's go by parts. My presence and compromise in a NGO, on one side cannot be reduced to what I do, since it's understood that I share certain horizons and utopies that go further, way further than the correct things to do. On the other side, in the environments of cooperation and voluntarism the one who has got to have the initiative to figure out their role is the volunteer himself; it is no good to wait until someone comes to get

editorial

you and tell you what to do; it is of no worth either to go out on your own as a free spirit. In short, it is all about finding my role in a determined setting or context and not reduce it to a mere function since this would turn into a sterile short-term activism: ¿what good is it to do something that goes without meaning and a sense of continuity?

One of the marks of identity that we would like to be characterized by at „Clam per la Dignitat" is to give priority to the process and not the results. Processes feed off of personal involvement with continuity; in team work processes this is indispensable, reason why personal contact and meetings with all agents involved in the project are unrenounceable. In processes, the path is more important than the finishing line, reason why the systematic work and the good work is more important than rushing and meeting deadlines; processes involve working with a wide horizon and a long-term that doesn't forget the immediate but contextualizes it and gives it a deeper meaning.

It is not about renouncing to the results of a good work but about understanding that the best results of good work roots in its good execution, in its process. The result that needs to move us is total personal involvement, putting my full self in the game, not only my abilities, and doing it as a team, as a community. The „other results" will come along, but what needs to be important is not the when or how: we are not moved by the results but by the processes; we are not moved by the commercial logic but by the logic of solidarity, by the logic of gratuitousness.

The Council

ÉTHIC OF BENEVOLENCE*

thoughts

There is no ethic without metaphysic

The moral thinking of the German philosopher Robert Spaemann (Berlin, 1927) can be ascertained from his anthropologic and ethical vision.

The anthropologic vision of Spaemann is based on three concepts: the human nature, the person and the dignity. The human nature is characterised by an opening to the absolute without leaving a natural condition. The person would be that specific to each human being, that part that makes him unique, and the dignity would be something sacred, which inhabits each person. Spaemann considers as persons to all the individuals of the mankind, although there are some persons, who are not in conditions to show themselves as such.

Spaemann's ethic vision is characterised by the maxim there is no ethic without metaphysic, i.e., we can not know what we have to do if we do not ascertain what is good and evil. Understanding the reality as identity, the ethic and metaphysic are

interdependent: only through the means of discovering oneself's reality and that of the other -that is the benevolence- I can know who I am. For Spaemann the moral's paradigm is the responsibility towards the others. The benevolence would be the willingness of helping the others, which has to be fulfilled in order to have a real value.

Spaemann admits, nevertheless, that no single human being is able to fulfill everything what his own being/essence promises, and therefore we talk in this case about ontological forgiveness.

The ethic of benevolence presented by Spaemann is not a new type of ethic but an ethic that takes into consideration the situation of the contemporary being, based on a teleological conception of the Ethics, typical of an Ethic with aristotelic roots enriched by the Christian Philosophy.

*Summary elaborated by the editorial office of the final year dissertation bulletin of Humanities. Ethic of benevolence. Reflections about the moral thinking of Robert Spaemann, by Joaquim Montoliu Martinez, presented in the University Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) on 27th June 2005

	Topic	Definition	Key concept	Characteristics
Anthropological vision	Human nature	What is common to all human beings	Anticipation	Teleological constitution
	Person	What identifies each human being	Internal difference	Be someone
	Dignity	To have a value on its own	Autorelativisation	Be the image of the absolute
Ethical vision	Philosophical ethics	Speech on the good and upright life	Friendship with oneself	Reflection on good and evil
	Benevolence	To love oneself and the other	Wake up to reality	Precedes and maintains every single moral imperative
	<i>Ordo amoris</i>	Practical application of the benevolence	Justice	Establishment of an order of priorities
	Ontological forgiveness	Repairing the consequences of the limitation of the agent	Understanding	Reason of gratitude of the agent, but is not essential to act

AASARA, AN ANSWER TO THE PROBLEMS OF STREET-CHILDREN IN BOMBAY

More than 130.000 abandoned boys and girls live in the streets and train stations in Bombay

More than 130.000 abandoned boys and girls live in the streets and train stations in Bombay. Their living conditions are pathetic. They don't have a home, no parents or school, no medical attention, no bed, no food and, furthermore, they are exploited and sexually abused. They sleep under bridges, at train stations or in derelict or half-built houses. They live on charity, from picking up clothes, from rummaging through the rubbish or, if they can, by shining shoes, working as messengers, or as street sellers. Anything suits them. They are even victims of prostitution.

About 75% of them are addicted to substances such as drugs, tobacco or alcohol or they have a gambling addiction. They also have serious health problems such as tuberculosis, AIDS, leper, infections, skin diseases, Hepatitis B, and severe diarrhea. They have no rights or anyone who speaks up for them, no one that listens or takes care of them.

Most of these children are fugitives. They come from broken homes, extreme poverty or are orphans. Some escaped from ill treatment and violence from their alcoholic mother or father. They are badly influenced by their group of friends and wander for hours in the streets or work under exploitation conditions for four rupees a day in working days of twelve or thirteen hours.

In order to improve this dramatic situation, in 1993 a group of people led by Father Joe and Sister Sandhya formed the AASARA association at the Thane train station stop, in Bombay, dedicated to the sheltering and the

experiences

rehabilitation of these kids. There is a net of social workers that go to the street and to train stations and offer the children company, advice, non-formal education, food, medicines and medical or hospital care, when necessary. At the same time, they are invited to attend regularly day centers where they are provided with housing during some hours or, if they freely decide so, whether or not to stay in one of the AASARA residencies.

On January 2001, after the visit of a Catalan married couple to Bombay, another AASARA was founded in Barcelona, with the purpose of collecting and sending funds to their sister to collaborate to improve and widen the number of centers and the number of boys and girls sheltered. Slowly and with the help received from Barcelona, where there are already 70 families giving economic support, (with no institutional subsidy), our association has day centers at Kurla and Kalyan and residences in Digha, Thana and Neral (this one inaugurated last November and with capacity of shelter for 60 girls, and also thanks to the generous collaboration of Manos Unidas). At the same time, and with the collaboration of the government of Maharashtra, we have launched the program "Helpline". It consists on the maintenance of a telephone call center to which street-children of Kalyan going through difficulty can call for free (a population of more than 2 million people). The group,



consisting of 12 operators, attends telephone calls and gives the corresponding service, and shows up personally in a time-frame of half an hour at the most. This service is also operating in the center of Bombay. At present, there are more than 4500 monthly telephone calls being attended and some of these kids will finally stay at one of the AASARA centers or in other appropriate institutions.

Despite this fruitful and already long collaboration between Aasara Bombay and Aasara Barcelona, we cannot honestly ignore the difficulties in understanding and comprehension that endures the daily management, hand by hand, between two completely different cultures so remote in time and space. The agree-

ment is complete regarding the main targets, but there are sometimes differences in style, criteria, rhythm or priorities that may result in a barrier difficult to trespass if there were not an absolute unavoidable commitment that we both have accepted, attending the poorest and most vulnerable community one can ever imagine: the boys and girls who live abandoned in the street.

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communication

- Last Christmas we received news of our counterpart in South Africa: in spite of the difficulties, the school of Madombidzha keeps on having life.
- The association "Hedera" of Barcelona has made a donation of 600 euros for the school of Madombidzha to "Clam per la Dignitat". Thank you very much!
- We have received some photos from Colombia about the reconstruction of the residence of elders, for which "Clam per la Dignitat" made a small economical contribution. You can look at the photos in our web page.
- Last 22nd January, the annual Assembly of "Claim for Dignity e.V." corresponding to year 2005 was celebrated in Tübingen.
- Last 5th March an ordinary meeting of the Board of Advice was carried out in Barcelona.
- The next 31st March at 20:00 hr, and within the framework of Lent, we celebrate the already traditional "dinner of the Hunger" in the parish of the Josepets of Barcelona. You are all invited!
- Last Christmas a group of members and friends of "Clam per la Dignitat" shared prayer and dinner with a Christian community formed by three families and several persons more in the heart of the Barceloneta. This community is one of the instigators and promoters of the social project of reception of passers-by, "Sostre", which is working since more than 10 years ago in some premises of the parish of the Barceloneta. Some members of "Claim from the Dignity" participate as volunteers in the mentioned initiative.
- The last 6th of February Elena Peguera Auset, daughter of our friends and collaborators Pati and Oriol was born. Also, the 22nd of January, Clara Pla Pich was born, daughter of our friends Pilar and Xavi. Congratulations!

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