

■ ANTHROPOSOPHY IN THE WORLD

Ecuador: Curative Education Conference on Human Dignity

Freedom and independence

The seventh Ibero-American Curative Education and Social Therapy conference on “The Dignity of the Human Being” was held in Quito from 22 to 28 July (Anthroposophy Worldwide No. 4/2012). Around 260 mostly young conference members found new impulses and made many new friends.

Michaela Glöckler gave the key lecture every day, speaking about “Dignity, its message and the needs of people with disabilities” and elaborating on themes such as individuality, autonomy, freedom, as well as on help and love for each other. Mrs Glöckler addressed many theoretical aspects while also giving practical indications on how we can work together with people and authorities: What do we understand of others when we speak with them? What qualities live in an encounter? How is it with truthfulness, with the genuine interest in others? What about the necessary respect and the autonomy the other person strives for? What are disabilities? What are abilities? It became apparent how important true recognition, praise and appreciation are in order to improve the communication (not only) with disabled people.

Core issues and general parameters

The programme included a series of lectures on the core issues and general parameters in curative education. Rüdiger Grimm gave an overview of the “history and methodology of anthroposophical curative education,” Carina Vaca Zeller addressed the “health and care of the therapist” and Andreas Fischer spoke about “forms and methods of cooperation.” Further themes included “reliable funding and economic administration in curative education and social work” (Manfred Trautwein) and the “challenges of curative education in Latin America” (Myriam Orriño and Doris Unger). There were also spontaneous talks by Patricia Ordoñez, Hanni Seebass and Maria Elena González. Questions and ideas arising from these contributions could often only be addressed on the following days. But the lectures were so inspiring that people kept talking about them. Theoretical and artistic work groups rounded off the programme. Together with the lectures, they qualified as a further training course.

The conference also brought many “breaths of fresh air.” On the very first day

a group from the Escuela Especial de Puyo delighted everybody with a performance of “The Little Prince,” directed by Annamaria Studer. Music by the band from Tumbaco (Carlos Simbaña) wove around the reading of a poem by Jorge Carrera Andrade about the “Planetary Human Being” (Christiane Moreno and Sara Palacios). The evening ended with a lively spontaneous dance party in the auditorium. On another evening the Ballet Folklorico of Salisiana University gave a performance. At the Noche Latina many groups showed their work and the representatives of the various countries gave vivid presentations of their cultural characteristics.

The conference ended with a wonderful ritual initiated and led by Basil Williams, with everyone joining in: various precious substances were mixed with water, accompanied by the speaking of Rudolf Steiner’s Foundation Stone Meditation, songs and the eurythmy sun gesture. The ritual ended with the Quechua verse “Ay Jahuay Jahuay / Jahuaylla Jahuay” (joy, joy, joy) sung by Klever Rios and all participants. Group after group then went outside to sprinkle the essence they had prepared together lovingly over meadows and trees.

Official highlights

Vice President Lenin Moreno who had been invited but had to cancel was represented by his daughter who passed on his message. Unesco, which supported the congress and had included links to the conference homepage (designed and donated by Variosity Basel) and programme on their website, was represented by Ismenia Ñiguez who gave a lecture about peace work in Latin America.

At the end of the congress the education minister attended a closed meeting with the representatives of the Goetheanum: Michaela Glöckler, Rüdiger Grimm of the Curative Education Council, Andreas Fischer of the Höhere Fachschule für anthroposophische Heilpädagogik, Sozialpädagogik and Sozialtherapie and



Individual and group

Manfred Trautwein of the German association for anthroposophical curative education, social therapy and social work. In a subsequent conversation the members of the Ecuadorean government stated that, in their search for new pedagogical concepts, they found Waldorf education truly interesting, and expressed their willingness to support the initiatives.

Focusing forces

The programme, intensive encounters and conversations formed the basis of a network that will support the projects that are establishing themselves. The conference was marked by great openness and enthusiasm and the large remote venue where we lived and worked together and where we kept meeting each other made it possible to get to know many people and share experiences. The programme was full and left neither time nor energy for private activities or excursions. This meant that we could focus our forces so that, like seeds, they can bear fruit in the future, on the Ibero-American continent and beyond. | *Christiane and Anibal Moreno, Basel (CH)*

Info: The conference was sponsored by the newly founded Ecuadorean Association Cement that supports Anthroposophic medicine, curative education and biodynamic agriculture. For the Conference **photo gallery** visit: www.cp-quito-2012.com.