

broadness is indeed the strength of ATTAC, not only in Germany but everywhere. It is no longer lots of different individual organisations working on their own and parallel to each other but organisations and people have joined together to fight for those aims they agree upon. I think the worldwide Jubilee 2000 movement has already worked in this way, ATTAC, however, seems to be even more capable of mobilising and uniting people.

#### NON-VIOLENT PROTEST

One last aspect I would like to mention concerns the protest forms ATTAC stands for: during the congress in Germany there have been several statements clearly condemning violent means for protesting. If people are demonstrating violently at, say, a G7/8 summit, it cannot be done in the name of ATTAC. I think this is a crucial aspect for us as WSCF and for those student Christian movements thinking about joining ATTAC.

Personally, I hope that this movement will continue to grow and I also hope that it will do so with the support and involvement of SCMerS. In my view WSCF shares the demands of ATTAC and with our tradition of working on economic justice issues we could form a valuable part of this movement. So let us be part of it!

#### ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE

To conclude this introduction to ATTAC I would like to quote Susan GEORGE (an excellent scientist, fervent activist and highly admired person by me): "People with knowledge, confidence, numbers and organisation can unmake what some have made, they can undo what some have done. This movement has made a momentous discovery and revealed a dangerous truth: the corporate *coup d'état*, the triumph of rich over poor, market over society, rapacity over nature is not inevitable. And we will be heard."

Another world is possible.



Claudia Patricia Restrepo MEJÍA

## *Some Days at the Agape Political Camp*



*We can sense the richness and harmony of the globe in a small microcosm as well. A woman from Latin America tells us about her memories of Agape, a kind of holy place. What does it mean to be a victim in dignity?*

#### AGAPE POLITICAL CAMP

In August 2001 I attended the Agape International Political Camp on the negative effects of globalisation and the collective construction of an alternative proposal.

Medellín (Colombia), two million inhabitants, capital of Antioquia in the Aburrà valley, surrounded by mountains, is my city. My people are kind and welcoming even if we live a daily social and political violence (one of the most violent cities of the world), unemployment, hunger, poverty and armed conflict. These problems are our "daily bread" and affect mostly women.

#### THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAINS

Before going to Italy, I thought of a tale from my childhood, where a little bear asks its father: "Dad, what's on the other side of the mountains?" This question was in my mind while travelling over the mountains of Antioquia.

In Agape, I met women and men from all over the world (Haiti, India, Indonesia, Czech Republic, UK, Holland, France, USA, Colombia and Cuba and, of course, Italy).

#### RICHNESS AND HARMONY

Humankind, in its history, fought for power and domination, which have their origin in patriarchy and is nurtured by xenophobia, homophobia, misogyny, racism, class discrimination, etc. But in Agape, there were relationships among "Northerners" and "Southerners", heterosexuals and homosexuals, white, black and "mestizos", young and mature people. How was it possible?

It was a collective experience and research where the encounter is the most important thing and human deepness is considered before any kind of political, religious, sexual orientation, race, ethnic and cultural difference. Diversity becomes richness, not a justification of domination.

#### WORLD DISORDER

The preciousness of this was the experimental practical democracy, with each one of us express-



ing own ideas and feelings and explaining own political beliefs and ways of resistance. Each one of us could critically analyse this world “order” (meaning “disorder”), tragically antihuman and fool, where the only values are the capital, the interests of multinational companies and the financial system: this logic destroys humanity, solidarity, respect of the other, love, help or cooperation.

### IDEAS TRAVELLING

We need to defeat this logic that reduces human relationships to the market; it is necessary that new and alternative ideas, not only goods, may travel around the world. These ideas should be founded on freedom, respect, utopia and multiculturalism. It is necessary that every human, every people, can build one's own dream supported by one's desires and by other people. This is why we need to be able to criticise: to distinguish between the differences, imposed by the capitalistic culture, and our diversities, founded on the research of peace, solidarity, common welfare and the respect of human dignity.

Agape and those living there sow this seed in the people attending the camps and the other activities, discovering new values to be carried out; for instance, living together, sharing the work for the common welfare, with simple rules (e.g. the time for lunch) organised not to overload the work of others (e.g. the cooks).



### FUN INVITES US TO DIALOGUE

Shared voluntary work and human relationships develop a political view that is an alternative to globalisation, and this homogeneity erases the hierarchy of ethical diversities, in meeting universal languages, overcoming different languages: laugh, human contact, affection, gestures, dance, music, singing, talking, the Haitian “cric-crac” calling for attention and preparing us to communication. In brief, the fun that invites us to dialogue.

We meet the primal elements, our relationship to mother earth, the respect to the elders, the acknowledgement of a story, where past, present and future become one; where we understand that the sorrow of the other is also ours; where stories and experiences

of oppression, pain and poverty of anyone, no matter where one belongs to, become my story, my life; where we listen carefully the voice of our ancestors and of our descendants to proceed to search a new possible political way: building the world we desire, finding in the others faith, friendship, solidarity, communication and planning together an alternative, even global, way out to the present global situation.

### A HOLY PLACE

Agape is a holy place because it is an alternative project to violence and domination in the world. Every stone has been laid with efforts, but also with happiness, thinking a common project of freedom, responsibility and spirituality, based on the principles of humanity.

Now, back in Colombia, I continue to live as a mother and as a social assistance helping women. There is uncertainty from the new human tragedy and the threatening wind coming from these events and a possible third world war. All these facts demonstrate that on the other side of the mountain there are different people, different ways of living, different cultures, but with a common story.

### VICTIMS WITH DIGNITY

In one way or another, we have been victims of a capitalistic system, we have suffered the severity of one war after the other, imposed on us by interests that are the opposite of seeking the common good; so, with different strategies they want to divide us and manipulate us through a false information on our lives and on the social processes.

In this panorama, the sowed seed remains: Agape becomes a light of hope for people and organisations who continue to

believe and work for their utopia without being discouraged, wishing that, step by step, we may unite our efforts towards a better, equal, right, respectful world, where men and women may exist and live with dignity.

(Courtesy of “*Agape Imaginaria*”, translated by Peter CIACCIO)

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