

Days of Experience

Dear friends¹, pilgrims and visitors to Parque Punta de Vacas. I would like to touch upon the principal nucleus of these Days which is Reconciliation as a deep spiritual experience. I know that you will forgive me if I delay our theme for a few minutes to make a short detour in order to set the context to this rather extraordinary situation that we are experiencing.

Only four times in the last forty years have we spoken publically from here, from this desolate mountain outpost. The first time was in 1969. Today we can see a few steles engraved in different languages which remind us of what was said at that moment. There we find the synthesis of a system of thought and action that has expressed itself in different ways, in different moments and in different parts of the world. In that time, the differences between physical pain and mental suffering was spoken of. Justice and Science, completely dedicated to societal progress, were considered to be the only paths to mitigate and subside the pain in our bodies. But mental suffering, different from physical pain, cannot be made to disappear simply by the exercise of Justice and Science. The continual effort to make Science and Justice advance in human societies has dignified the best causes. Equally, the effort to overcome mental suffering made as important an effort as that applied to the overcoming of pain. Since then we have preached that these efforts to overcome pain and suffering are the most dignified efforts of human endeavor.

Together with hundreds of thousands of close friends we applied ourselves to the work of humanizing the Earth. What has it meant for us to "Humanize the Earth"? It has been to place human liberty as the highest value and non-discrimination and non-violence as the highest social practice. In our efforts to humanize the Earth we did not exclude ourselves from the obligations that we demanded from others. In fact, as a code of conduct, we imposed upon ourselves the requirement to treat others as we want to be treated. And now we have proposed to make a brief pause in the path of humanization in order to reflect upon the meaning of our existence and our actions. We have made the pilgrimage to this desolated outpost searching for the Force that nurtures our lives, searching for the Joy in doing and searching for the mental Peace necessary to advance in this altered and violent world. In these Days we are reviewing our lives, our hopes and also our failures with the aim of cleaning the mind of all falsehood and contradiction. To have the opportunity to review our aspirations and frustrations, even if it is only once in our lives, is a practice that every person who searches to advance in their personal development and their action in the world should do. These are days of inspiration and reflection. These are days of Reconciliation, sincere reconciliation with ourselves and those who have harmed us. In these painful relationships that we have endured we are not trying to forgive nor be forgiven. To forgive means that one of the

¹ In the original spanish text the greeting says "Queridas amigas, queridos amigos" which Silo explicitly expressed in his intervention, first greeting all of the female friends present (queridas amigas) followed by his greeting to all male friends present (queridos amigos). The English language does not allow the translation of these important distinctions which were warmly expressed by Silo in his public presentation.

parties is placed in a superior moral position and the other party humbles themselves before the one who forgives. And while it is clear that to forgive is a more advanced step than that of vengeance, it is not so advanced as reconciliation.

Neither are we trying to forget the wrongs that have occurred. It is not the case of trying to falsify the memory. This is the case of trying to comprehend what happened in order to enter into the superior step of reconciliation. Nothing good is achieved, neither personally nor socially, by forgetting or forgiving. Don't forget or forgive! The mind should remain fresh and attentive, without concealments or falsehoods. We are now considering the most important point of Reconciliation which does not admit adulterations. If we are searching for sincere reconciliation with ourselves and with those who have hurt us intensely it is because we want a profound transformation of our lives. A transformation that takes us out of resentment where clearly no one reconciles with anyone and not even with themselves. When we are able to understand that an enemy does not live in our interior but rather a being full of hopes and failures, a being in whom we can see in a short succession of images, beautiful fulfilling moments and also moments of frustration and resentment. When we are able to understand that our enemy is a being who also has lived with hopes and failures, a being who has had beautiful fulfilling moments and also moments of frustration and resentment then we are placing a humanizing look over the skin of monstrosity.

This path towards reconciliation does not appear spontaneously, as in the same way the path towards non-violence does not appear spontaneously. Because both require great comprehension and the formation of a physical repugnance to violence.

It will not be us who judge errors, neither our own nor those of others. For that there is human retribution and justice and by the stature of the times in which their dominion is exercised. I don't want to judge myself nor judge others....I want to deeply understand in order to clean my mind of all resentment.

To reconcile is neither to forget nor forgive, it is to acknowledge all that has happened and to propose oneself to emerge from the circle of resentment. It is to look at the situation, acknowledging one's errors and those of others. To reconcile within oneself is to propose to not walk down the same road twice, but rather to dispose oneself to repair twice-over the wrongs we have done. But it is clear that we cannot ask those that have offended us to doubly repair the wrongs they have caused us. However, it is a good task to make them see the chain of harm that they are dragging through their lives. In doing this, we reconcile with whom we have previously felt as an enemy even though we don't achieve that the other reconciles with us. But this is now part of the destiny of their actions about which we cannot decide.

We are saying that reconciliation is not reciprocal between people and also the reconciliation with oneself does not bring about, as a consequence, that others leave their vicious circle even though it is possible to recognize the social benefits of such an individual posture.

The theme of reconciliation has been central in our Days but surely we have achieved many other advances by physically making this pilgrimage to an unknown landscape that will have awakened profound landscapes. And this will always be possible if the Purpose that has moved us to being a pilgrim is a disposition towards renovation, or better still, a disposition towards the transformation of one's own life.

In these days we have seen the situations that we consider to be the most important in our life. If we have located such moments and taken them through reconciliation, cleaning them of the resentments that have tied us to the past, then we will have made a good pilgrimage reaching the source of renovation and transformation.

Let us not forget the short phrases that have emerged from our interior, let us not forget the occurrences that have come to us suddenly, let's not leave aside making notes of those truths that we have been able to intimate as we have seen them briefly dance before us during our journey or because we have seen them in our nightly restorative dreams after our pilgrimage. These phrases, these occurrences and these dancing truths are inspirations that we are ready to be thankful for and are inspirations that invite us to go further on in our experiences, not only those of reconciliation but also overcoming contradictions, weaknesses and fears.

I make a vow so that the searches and encounters ignite us and motivate us very deeply.

Finishing up I should say that I recognize and want to share with all of you this situation that is similar to that which we have described in one of our Guided Experiences....." I return to the world with my forehead and hands luminous. And so, I accept my destiny. There is the path and I, as a humble pilgrim return to my people. Filled with light, I return to the hours, to the daily routine, to the pain of humanity and to its simple joys. I, who give with my hands what I can, who receive both insults and the warmest of greetings, sing to the heart, which from the darkest abyss is reborn in the light of the yearned for Meaning."

Silo Punta de Vacas 2007

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