

ATTENTION; ATTENTION: THE CURTAIN OPENS!
*The Charism of Claudine in the inclusive educational Project of the School
 Cristo de la Yedra, through the Theater*

Educational Community Cristo de la Yedra; Granada (Spain)
 (d.general.cristo@jesus-maria.net)



1. Introduction: the Educational Project of Cristo de la Yedra

Probably when Claudine left her family in 1818 and installed herself in a humble house, accompanied by another woman and an orphan girl, having in her mind a courageous and transforming dream, she could never imagine that in 2018 the large family of Jesus and Mary in the world, would be celebrating the Bicentenary of the foundation of the Congregation. Those first feelings that she expressed: *“It seemed to me that I had entered into a foolish Enterprise without any guarantee of success”*, served for her as an impulse and gave her strength to establish or set the foundations of a pedagogy in service of society with a commitment which has led Jesus and Mary to be present today in 28 countries and four continents.

In the inclusive Project of the School Cristo de la Yedra J-M of Granada, Claudine and her pedagogical values have been accompanying us in our growth and evolution.

It is 33 years ago, that the educational community of Cristo de la Yedra J-M emerged to respond to the need for a school in one of the most deprived neighborhoods of Granada,

the Neighborhood of Real de Cartuja. Like Claudine, we dreamt of giving response to the different realities and situations which were arriving to the Center. This became one of our identity signs, and so in 1986, after an exciting work of reflection and commitment of the whole educational community, we assumed the important challenge to opt for the Inclusion, with the explicit recognition of this project by the Board of Andalucia.

We all believed that it was worthwhile to work for a SCHOOL, with capital letters, which could be an agent of change and transformation. Throughout all this time, our doors, windows, senses, emotions, capacities and heart,, have wanted to remain open, as open were hers, to diversity and to inclusion living this educational commitment like a richness and an opportunity.

Our educational work has been adapting itself in order to give a response to what our pupils need, always based on the commitment of the staff or faculty, of the families of our pupils – boys and girls - themselves so as to make of the school a real opportunity of change by means of an enriching living together. Our educational maxim could be summarized as follows: “Every educational activity has to be adapted so that all our pupils –boys and girls – grow, learn and enjoy it”.

2. The theater, our educational strategy for inclusion

2.1 The educational Project

Claudine began in 1818 with a modest loom as an educational resource. From the beginning, it was always clear for her that the lack of means and the circumstances of her time, should be replaced by illusion, work and professionalism. With a very advanced view for her historical moment, in her classrooms there began to be illusion, human quality, shared responsibility, formation, team work, personalized attention, effort, dedication, justice and impulse for those who needed it the most, as if it was a question of a large family.

The educational community of Cristo de la Yedra opted, among other innovating practices for the theater. This opened its way among us as one of the educational strategies with which to give form to Inclusion. We no longer had looms but our drop scenes could forge our educational style.

The theater is a great tool for the classroom which allows working on active listening: the corporal and verbal or oral expression, the development of the social capacities; the awareness of the sentiments or feelings, team work, self-esteem, and trust... Definitively, the

theater reveals itself as a pedagogical, playful or amusing and motivating strategy, in which we are all protagonists.

Claudine promoted in the corridors of the Angelique, creativity, fortitude, courage, and responsibility, where the girls were beginning to forge their future. She insisted to get from each girl the best from her; she had total trust in the capacities which are sometimes hidden... Today we have no Providences or looms, nevertheless, the theater, no doubt, contains all those values that she promoted or encouraged in her pupils.

Our School has celebrated already XXXIII Weeks of theater and we have even received, the First National Award for centers that develop teaching practices that favor the integration of the pupils – boys and girls – who have special educational needs.

With the theater all and each one of our boys and girls get from the stage an education in values which they believe that the work in the classroom is compatible with the playful or amusing, creative, interdisciplinary and motivating work that this activity offers. The theater has helped and helps us to normalize the differences, strengthen the achievements and the effort of all the pupils – boys and girls – without distinction and to get near, in an esthetic and cooperative manner, to real inclusion.

2.2 The educational process

The theater contains with it the magic and takes it to every corner of the school, incorporating imagination for simple and bright, colorful costumes, original settings of scenes, lights, shadows, colors, music... The preparation of the work involves the whole educational community.

Our Project of the theater has its crucial or decisive moment during the “Week of the Theater”, which takes place every year at the end of the second quarter of the year. During that time the boys and girls from 1st to 4th grade of Primary School, full of illusion and desire, are transformed into personages

2.2.1 Selection of Works, adaptation of texts, distribution of personages or actors.

We begin with the work of selecting the Works, highlighting the values that the text may promote in the concrete group; the teachers adapt the texts so that all the pupils can participate, feeling that they are artists and protagonists of the educational Project. .

The pupils chose the personages, they think about the reason why they do it; in what do they identify with it, and they learn to negotiate with the companions when several chose the same role...

This first moment is not always easy but it allows to learn that all the personages are important; that if one is missing, we all fail, it is necessary to know how to complement one another in order to get good results...

Then is the time to memorize the texts, to give them expression; intonation... It is the time to listen to the companions; to learn to keep one's turn, to accept to be corrected, so that little by little one can get out the best from each one.

These are months of intense and enriching work from different areas: language, artistic, music, English, physical education... so as to be able to take the work to the stage. .

2.2.2 To stage the work

The second moment of the process is to stage the work; to learn to place oneself, be aware that each one has his/her place and moment; that all together we are composing the work, giving our opinion, promoting the imagination.

We choose the music, set up the choreography

Then it is the moment to work on the coordination; the movements have to be in rhythm and harmony has to be attained.

We think of the decoration and the costumes which characterize each personage.

And then we practice, practice, practice... It is the time to repeat and repeat to correct and to assimilate...

An authentic explosion of values is produced: overcoming, surmounting, self-esteem; work well done, team; creativity, art; equality; complementarity; improvisation. At that moment our families become agents of the educational process. They collaborate and enjoy in workshops in which together we prepare the plot or scheme and the costumes that we need for the whole series of works represented for all the classes that year.

It is wonderful to see those weeks around our places the families who collaborate and enjoy together with their sons and daughters, and teachers, who with their time and dedication convert education into life and experiences which make the pupils grow.

2.2.3 The premiere or first performance

This is the rhythm of the School until the day arrives for the premier or first performance; emotion overwhelms us, perhaps like Claudine on that dawn of 1818 in which

she prepared everything to install herself in her new house knowing about the risky adventure that she was undertaking, but with a trusting heart which made her dream high goals.

The curtain is about to be raised another year, the heart beats rapidly, lights, music... actors and actresses ready because once again in Cristo de la Yedra JM... The function is beginning!

All feel that they are protagonists; the personages come to life in our pupils, because the setting on the stage is wonderful, amazing and surprising.

All shine, even if there is always one who illuminates in a special manner: our pupils, - boys and girls – who because they are different, are unnoticed, have greater difficulty to play or lead educational learning; they have a serious difficulty to communicate and to integrate themselves in the physical space...

These pupils magnify themselves; they think, 'I obtained it!' Their families are full of pride and their teacher thinks, as Claudine, I trusted you...

In the midst of applauses, the curtain is closed, the lights are turned off and once again, our pupils have taught us: "In this life, there will be no role or function which will resist me".

