

ENCUENTRO 2013

Written by: Textile Field Coordinator Leah Hughes

On April 8th, 2013, Q'ente hosted its third annual Encuentro. The aim of the Encuentro is to provide a space for members from all our geographically distant weaving communities to interact, exchange ideas, and learn from each other to better their craft. Representatives from each of Q'ente's six partner communities gathered in the town of Calca to participate in the day-long event. The 2013 Encuentro was an open-air event hosted at the home of Antonieta Gamarra Mesa, a long-time Q'ente supporter. Four Mosqoy students cooked a tasty meal and provided invaluable assistance to ensure the event ran smoothly. This year we also had two special guests from the Centro Bartolomé de las Casas (CBC): the CBC's director, Sr. Valerio Paucarmayta and Ms. Eva Becker. They facilitated pricing workshop in the afternoon, which marks the first such workshop at a Q'ente Encuentro. Overall, our third Encuentro was a great success. It was a day of sharing and collaboration, and a time to celebrate Q'ente's successes over the past year!

Highlights

The Encuentro began at 9:00 am. A breakfast of habas (a popular Peruvian breakfast drink) and bread was served to guests as they arrived. Weavers mingled and chatted as they ate.

When all the guests had arrived, we officially kicked off the 2013 Encuentro. We welcomed all in attendance, and reiterated the goal of the Encuentro as an



Raul translates as Leah welcomes all attendees to the Encuentro

opportunity for weavers from Q'ente communities to meet and share ideas. It is a great way for the weavers to hear about projects, challenges and successes in other communities, and use this information in their own villages in the future. All presentations were translated from Spanish to Quechua, or vice versa, by Mosqoy student Raul Mamani Melo. He did an excellent job and spoke confidently and fluently.

Community presentations

Weavers from each community then came forward to introduce themselves and speak about their village. Representatives from Amaru, Huaran, Cancha Cancha, Parobamba, Bombon and Pitukiska presented events or projects in their community from the past year. It was quite moving to hear everybody speak about how much Q'ente has helped them, and thank all those who work with Q'ente for our time and commitment.



Weavers from Amaru present their community

Q'ente News

Next, Textile Field Coordinator Leah Hughes spoke about “Q’ente News” from the past year. This provided an overview of the challenges and successes we’ve had in our various partner communities. Some highlights included:

Textiles for sale in the Calca municipality

We now have some textiles from Amaru, Bombon and Pitukiska for sale in the display case at the Calca municipality. This is our first attempt at setting up a sales location in Peru, and generated a lot of excitement in the audience.

Dye workshops

In March 2013, dye workshops were undertaken to obtain a sample palette from each community. The results were compiled in a book with swatches of each colour. This book was presented and passed through the audience. A weaver from Bombón stood up to say that he was proud of the variety of colours from all the communities. Everybody was in agreement, and an open dialogue about certain shades and the plants used for them began!

Amaru marketing project

This year, the community of Amaru chose to use their profits from textile sales for a marketing project. With the collaboration of Mosqoy students, Amaru developed materials to promote their products and communities. The resulting textile tags, brochures and banner can be used at fairs or markets. The project was outlined for the other community members, and we displayed the finished product. The promotional materials were then presented to Amaru’s weavers, who spoke briefly about the steps involved in completing this project.



Egidio from Bombón admires the dye book

Textile Presentations

Next, representatives from each community presented the textiles they had brought and displayed. This was one of the highlights of the Encuentro. Weavers came forward and described the dye plants used, the hours of work, and the significance of the designs. Guests from the other communities were very interested and asked questions about the patterns and colours. A fascinating conversation between

weavers from different communities ensued.



Moisés from Pitukiska describes the dye plants used in a *pasadizo* (table runner)



Brigida from Parobamba explains the animal symbols in a *pasadizo*

CBC Presentation

The afternoon presentation and workshop by Eva Becker and Valerio Paucarmayta was very successful. Sr. Paucarmayta was an engaging Quechua speaker and had the weavers laughing and attentive. After he spoke, the audience was divided into three groups

who worked at round-tables to decide on a fair price for a chalina (scarf). Each group used a chalina they had brought as a reference, and discussed factors such as materials, hours of labour, and marketability. At the end, each group presented a chart they had made with the factors that determined the sale price. There was a group discussion and a closing talk by Sr. Paucarmayta.



Weavers from Cancha Cancha, Parobamba and Huaran brainstorm with Sr. Paucarmayta

Closing remarks and goodbyes

Overall the third Encuentro was a great success. The open-dialogue style that emerged during the “Q’ente News” and “Textile show-and-tell” was very constructive. From the level of enthusiasm and engagement among the weavers, it was clear that they enjoyed and benefitted from these discussions. The workshop was a big hit, as all weavers seemed interested and participated in the round-tables. We closed the day with a big round of thanks for all who made the third Encuentro possible.