



ALBATROSS CULTURE

In the Albatross Culture, the ground is considered holy.

In the social hierarchy the women rank above men, therefore only women are allowed to touch the holy ground barefoot. The women are considered holy, too. The men must not touch what comes from the ground, therefore the men are fed by the women, whereas the women may touch the food and the water.

The woman kneels beside the leader because she is the only one allowed to be in contact with the holy ground

The bending of the heads was a sign of gratitude - in this way men can be closer to the holy ground by touching the women.

ESTIMATED TIME FOR THE ACTIVITY: 1 – 1,5 hours

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Chairs for the participants
 - Water
 - Glass
 - Bread
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SETTING:

- A circle of chairs is formed in an empty room except for the facilitator. The male facilitator is sat on a chair in the center of the circle and the female facilitator kneels barefoot on the floor beside him. Her face is hidden with a scarf.
- The participants enter in the room. They only information they know beforehand is that they are now guests experiencing a different culture.
- There are 3 forms of communication (unknown to the participants)
 - Shhhh!! = negative signal for incorrect behavior
 - Mmmm!! = positive signal for correct behavior
 - Clicking one's tongue = signal to order to do something

- Activity will proceed as follows (there's room for creativity, though)
 - Taking position: The female facilitator signals that the male participants must sit on the chairs whereas the female participants must sit on the floor.
 - Drinking water: The female facilitator offers water to the participants. She holds the glass to the mouths of male participants, whereas she hands the glass to the female participants so they drink by themselves.
 - Eating bread: The female facilitator feeds the male participants with the bread, whereas she hands the bread to the female participants so they eat by themselves.
 - Choosing a woman: Both facilitators walk around and choose the female participant with the biggest feet. They signal her to kneel on the other side of the chair the male facilitator is sitting on.
 - Hand on heads: The male facilitator place his hands on the heads of both women beside him and tilts their heads towards the floor.
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AFTER THE ACTIVITY:

- Facilitators ask participants to resume their seats and evaluate the activity with the following questions:
 - What did you observe?
 - Did you notice anything in particular?
 - What happened?
 - How did the male participants feel during the activity? And women?
- Now it's time for the facilitators to explain the Albatross culture
- Final questions/ideas for further debate. What have we learnt?
 - Did you assume women were being discriminated? Why?
 - Hierarchies: In Europe, up = good / In Albatross, down = good
 - Is it possible for you to find this situation in a foreign country/culture?
 - How can we find out the reasons for a behavior if we are not sure what a correct behavior entails?