Words for the wordless

Giving victims a voice – putting our language skills to a different use. We can do more.

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Published: November 16, 2005 Last updated: December 28, 2015

In June 2003 Michel Lesseigne wrote an article on this site called "La Voix de Madame" in which he recounted an experience that had moved him deeply. Through him the voice of a person was heard that would otherwise have gone unheard.

Not only disabled people (the subject of Michel’s article) go unheard in a world where communication is the prerogative of the powerful, the successful and accomplished. Amongst the vulnerable who urgently need an effective lobby are a staggeringly high number of victims of rightwing violence.

In Germany, where barely a day passes without the far right assaulting someone, the Amadeu-Antonio-Foundation is actively supporting local projects against right-wing extremism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism. The CURA Victim Support Fund has close links to the Foundation, and it provides support and advice to victims who would otherwise be left alone to deal with the aftermath of the violence.

CURA has recently gone online as a virtual drop-in centre for people seeking advice and help and as a portal for donations. Many of the victims are not German so they often lack the language skills needed to take up all the help on offer. For that reason there is now an English version of the most important information on the CURA webpage – the translation was done on a pro bono basis by John Read (Brussels) and Phil Smith (Birmingham). The CURA website has an acknowledgements page where it not only thanks the volunteers by name but also refers to their membership of AIIC; there is a link to the AIIC home page.

Giving victims a voice – putting our language skills to a different use. Feel free to emulate.

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is a Supporting Member of the Amadeu-Antonio-Foundation

Recommended citation format:
