

Standard human rights. Addressing the topics of flight, forced migration, asylum and racist discrimination in education practice

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German Institute
for Human Rights

Education

Standard Human Rights

Addressing the Topics of
Flight, Forced Migration, Asylum and
Racist Discrimination in Education Practice



The Institute

The **German Institute for Human Rights** is the independent National Human Rights Institution of Germany. It is accredited according to the Paris Principles of the United Nations (A-status). The Institute's activities include the provision of advice on policy issues, human rights education, information and documentation, applied research on human rights issues and cooperation with international organizations. It is financed by the German Federal Parliament (Deutscher Bundestag). In addition, the Institute is specifically mandated to monitor the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and has established Monitoring Bodies for these purposes.

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All the drawings are the work of Petja Dimitrova (except the one titled “Die Würde des Menschen ist (un)antastbar!”) and were created in 2017 for the “Yallah!? Über die Balkanroute” exhibition. A visual artist and activist, Petja Dimitrova lives in Vienna, where she teaches at the Academy of Fine Arts; political and participatory cultural work is one of her main focuses. <http://petjadimitrova.net/>

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1 Introduction



This manual distils the essence of the project “Maßstab Menschenrechte”. This two-year project, funded by the “Demokratie Leben!” programme, developed, organised and ran workshops on the topics of flight, forced migration, asylum and racism. The aim was to approach these topics on the basis of sound methodology, expert knowledge on the topics, and human rights expertise. To this end, the German Institute for Human Rights worked with education practitioners from organisations run by and for persons with experience of flight, forced migration and racism and with (refugee) activists.

These same partners have also contributed substantially to this publication. External workshop leaders, workshop participants and members of the project’s advisory board created some of the manual’s content. Their contributions take a variety of forms: texts of various lengths, transcribed conversations and interviews conducted in writing, as well as drawings.

In Part 2, we describe the project as it unfolded, from the idea that started it, through the planning of the workshops to the workshops themselves. We present the bodies that advised the project, explain the concept underlying the workshops and describe the work we did with the external trainers and the educational facilities.

Part 3 contains an in-depth examination of four topics: human rights, flight/forced migration/asylum, racism and education. Some of the texts and conversations collected in this part of the manual present the fundamentals of a topic, while others shine a light on one specific aspect. Some contributors share their own experiences, while others take a more academic approach. Read as a whole, Part 3 clearly conveys the close interlinkages connecting these four topics with one another.

The focus shifts to education practice in Part 4: What should teachers think about before addressing the topics of flight, forced migration, asylum and racist discrimination with their students? How can they create inclusive learning environments that encourage everyone in the learning group to feel at ease? Part 4 makes it clear that there is no one right answer to this question, but rather many different aspects that need to be considered, ranging from the language teachers should use to their own roles, to the choice of material.

Part 5 is devoted to the learning process that we, the project team, went through during these past two years. It begins with a contribution from Anoma Premachandra, who guided and supported us as a supervisor and coach and gives her perspective on the process here. The remainder of Part 5 is devoted to reflection on criticism expressed to us over the course of the project. One central question looms large here: how can cooperation flourish between a predominantly *white* institution – in this case, the German Institute for Human Rights – on the one side, and activists with lived experiences of racism and/or flight/forced migration and organisations run by and for persons with such experiences, on the other, given the social power imbalance involved?

Finally, Part 6 contains contributions from three organisations working on refugee issues involved in the project who have not contributed to the manual in other ways, in which they explain who they are and what they do. They describe their political activities, explain their concerns and aims and write about how persons who experience flight, forced migration or racism can organise themselves politically.

2 The Standard Human Rights Project – From the Idea, to the Workshops to the Manual



“Involving experts with lived experiences of flight/forced migration and/or racism is both important and necessary for many reasons, though also simply in justice to the demand ‘Nothing about us without us’.”¹

The project from which this manual takes its name “Maßstab Menschenrechte – Bildungspraxis zu den Themen Flucht, Asyl und rassistische Diskriminierung stärken”² sought to enable as many persons as possible to examine the topics of flight, forced migration, asylum and discrimination from a human rights perspective. The aim was to provide education practitioners with expertise on these topics and, at the same time, offer them a space in which to heighten their own awareness and to engage in reflection and mutual exchange. In other words: (i) transfer of knowledge on issues of flight, forced migration and asylum and (ii) raising awareness of the situations of persons with lived experiences of racism, forced or voluntary migration, and of the mechanisms of exclusion and discrimination associated with them, both within the scope of multiday workshops. Human rights are the element that binds the two processes, knowledge transfer and reflection together. Those who understand what human rights mean and know their individual rights are also aware of and respect the rights of others and are able to stand up in their defence. Those who understand how mechanisms of discrimination operate can take action to counter them. And: human rights support the process of self-reflection, awareness raising and empowerment because they foster inclusive teaching and learning environments in which everyone feels valued and respected. Human rights can also protect people from discrimination and contribute to the recognition and reduction of structural and institutional racism.

The project’s name, translated and shortened hereinafter to “Standard Human Rights” or simply referred to as the project, was intended to emphasise the fact human rights constitute a globally recognised ethical and legal standard. Those who adopt human rights as their standard and let themselves be guided by them prevent discrimination and strengthen social cohesion by making it possible for everyone to participate on an equal basis and ensuring respect for the dignity of all human beings.

The project, which was funded through the “Demokratie Leben!” programme of the German government by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ), began on 1 May 2017. As severe time constraints forced the German Institute for Human Rights to submit its proposal for the project before it had cooperation agreements in place with partners, the Institute intentionally left the concept fairly open-ended in its proposal.

The first phase of the project was therefore devoted to developing specific content and refining the concept for the workshop. This took place as a collective effort over the course of several meetings with individuals and organisations active in the fields of forced and “voluntary” migration and asylum and with experienced education practitioners. The aim was to combine the expertise of a national human rights institution with the, often marginalised, knowledge of a range of self-organised groups. The idea was to involve self-organised groups of persons with lived experiences of flight/forced migration and/or racism with different perspectives as active partners within the project, and thus taken seriously as holders of human rights, as the slogan “nothing about us without us” demands. Both this advisory group and the project’s advisory board supported and guided the project over the entire project term, up to its completion on 31 October 2019.

1 Excerpt from an interview with Beatrice Cobbinah and Mareike Niendorf in MiGAZIN (original in German): <http://www.migazin.de/2018/09/18/menschenrechtsinstitut-menschenrechte-sind-ein-massstab-fuer-das-gesellschaftliche-miteinander/> (retrieved: 10 Oct. 2019).

2 In English: Standard Human Rights – Strengthening practices in education on the topics of forced migration, asylum and discrimination.

Members of the advisory group:

- Josephine Apraku, Institut für diskriminierungsfreie Bildung (IDB: Institute for anti-discriminatory Education in Berlin)
- Magdalena Benavente, formerly of Migrationsrat Berlin-Brandenburg (Council on Migration)
- Dr Jule Bönkost, Institut für diskriminierungsfreie Bildung (IDB: Institute for anti-discriminatory Education in Berlin)
- Saraya Gomis, former Anti-discrimination Commissioner for Schools of the Berlin Senate Administration for Education, Youth and Family Affairs
- Maria Virginia Gonzalez Romero, Education Officer /Project Director, project Abriendo Puertas – Eröffne dir Wege, VIA Bayern (Verband für interkulturelle Arbeit e. V.: Association for intercultural work)
- Judy Gummich, baobab concept, process guidance, training and coaching with focuses on human rights, inclusion and diversity
- Jennifer Kamau, International Women* Space
- Hassan Khateeb, teacher of politics, formerly Jugendliche ohne Grenzen (Youth without borders)
- Aylin Kortel, Bildungsstätte Anne Frank (Anne Frank Educational Center)
- Zaklina Mamutovič, Bildungsteam Berlin-Brandenburg e. V.
- Roma Antidiscrimination Network of the Roma Center, Göttingen
- Amira Saeed, activist and coordinator at International Women* Space and MorgenLand Frauen
- Jana Scheuring, Education Officer, Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle der Juden in Deutschland (ZWST: Central Jewish Welfare Board in Germany)/ project “Perspektivwechsel Plus” (Change of Perspective) and Competence Center for Prevention and Empowerment

The workshops themselves were held in the second phase of the project. These were aimed at the broad group of education practitioners who would act as multipliers. This target group includes, for instance, teachers, early education/childcare specialists, youth social workers, education practitioners who teach as external practitioners in schools and school administrators – people in all these fields can both act as transmitters, by passing on knowledge and experience, and trigger change directly within their own areas of influence.

Several multiday workshops were held in various locations throughout Germany during the two-year project term, always in cooperation with and/or on the premises of an educational facility. The idea was to partner with local activists from self-organised groups to carry out each of these workshops; unfortunately, though, this was not always achieved.

The workshops:

- Pilot workshop at the German Institute for Human Rights (March 2018)
- Workshop at the Sozialpädagogisches Fortbildungsinstitut Berlin Brandenburg (May 2018)
- Workshop at the German Institute for Human Rights on inclusive methods; exchange of information and experience with representatives of various organisations (May 2018)
- Workshop at Anne Frank Educational Center in Frankfurt/Main in cooperation with (former) activists from Youth without Borders (JoG) and “Yallah!? Über die Balkanroute” (October 2018)
- Workshop at Osnabrück University in cooperation with activists from No Lager (November 2018)
- Workshop at the youth-education centre Lidice-Haus Bremen in cooperation with activists from Together we are Bremen (November/December 2018)

- Workshop at International Forum Burg Liebenzell in cooperation with activists from Wir sind da (February 2019)
- Workshop at the European Youth Education Centre of Weimar (EJBW) as part of its train-the-trainer programme, “Migration, Refuge & Asylum. Designing Workshops for Youth on the Topic of Human Rights” (March 2019)
- Trainer-training workshop at the German Institute for Human Rights with participants and trainers of previous workshops (May 2019)

The focus in the third phase of the project was on compiling the knowledge and experiences from the workshops and documenting them in a publication to make them accessible to a wider public. The result, the original German-language version of this manual (and this translation of it), combines the many different perspectives of the various people involved in the project with information on a variety of subjects. It also includes the

project team’s own critical reflections on the project and the learning processes associated with it.

“Maßstab Menschenrechte – Bildungspraxis stärken zu den Themen Flucht, Asyl und rassistische Diskriminierung” was a project of the German Institute for Human Rights funded through the “Demokratie Leben!” programme of the German government by the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs Senior Citizens Women.

The project team consisted of Paola Carega, Beatrice Cobbinah, Jana Kind, Mareike Niendorf and Sandra Reitz.

The project’s advisory board members included Dr Delal Atmaca, Ina Bielenberg, Saraya Gomis, Prof. Mechtilde Gomolla, Judy Gummich, Hassan Khateeb, Prof. Michael Krennerich, Prof. Nivedita Prasad, Nathalie Schlenzka and Dr Andrea Schwermer.



3 Positions and Perspectives on Human Rights, Flight/Forced Migration/Asylum, Racism and Education



The nexus of human rights, racist discrimination, flight/forced migration/asylum and education constituted the starting point for the project as a whole. Even considered in isolation, each of these topics is diverse and complex – all the more challenging then, is the task of dealing with them together and describing the connections between them in educational practice.

To help make sense of this complexity, a chart of the topics and their interconnections was developed at each of the workshops and seminars and posted as a visual aid. The table below shows the basic structure used. The knowledge and experiences of the participants at each workshop flowed

into the development of this thematic overview, making it possible to identify and combine the different perspectives and expertise present in each group; each workshop had a different focus, and individual fields in the table below were examined, critically assessed and discussed at each of the workshops in light of its specific focus.

This manual also presents several different authors' perspectives and knowledge in relation to individual aspects associated with these topics; thus, in this respect the manual reflects an approach similar to that of the workshops, one which is well suited to the diverse subject-matter.

| HUMAN RIGHTS | RACIST DISCRIMINATION | FORCED MIGRATION/ FLIGHT/ ASYLUM | EDUCATION |
|---|---|--|--|
| HRs are inherent to all human beings because they are human beings. | Protection against discrimination is a structural principle of HRs . | Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights sets forth the right to asylum. The UDHR is not a legally binding convention. | The right to education is a human right. |
| HRs claim universal validity . | Discrimination can manifest itself at different levels , often described as the individual, institutional and structural levels . | The Geneva Refugees Convention is the key legal instrument for the protection of refugees on the international level. | The HR to education encompasses both the general framework (accessibility and availability) and the content (acceptability and adaptability) of education. |
| Fundamental HR principles: universality, equality, inalienability and indivisibility | The UN convention against racism, the ICERD , constitutes a central point of reference for protection against racist discrimination | Various EU directives and provisions of national law govern the rights of refugees and matters relating to them. | The right to human rights education and the state's obligation to implement it are both included in the right to education. |
| HRs have different dimensions , including a legal, ethical and political dimension. | Racism as social power relations is characterised to great extent by continuities , e.g., in relation to the colonial period and National Socialism. | Under Article 16a of the Basic Law (Grundgesetz) persons subject to political persecution are entitled to asylum. | The right to education is considered an empowerment right : those who know about their own rights can actively demand and enforce them |

| HUMAN RIGHTS | RACIST DISCRIMINATION | FORCED MIGRATION/ FLIGHT/ ASYLUM | EDUCATION |
|---|---|---|-----------|
| HRs are codified rights guaranteed in different documents | Discrimination is always accompanied by privileged treatment | The Dublin procedure is intended to determine which European state is responsible for examining an asylum application | |
| This results in the state obligation to respect, protect and fulfil human rights | An intersectional perspective should always be taken when addressing issues of power relations and discrimination. | Multiple possible outcomes of an asylum procedure: e.g. recognition of refugee status , grant of asylum or subsidiary protection or temporary suspension of deportation (<i>Duldung</i>) | |
| HRs are established in the Basic Law , Germany's constitution | | Situation of persons who have been illegalised is particularly vulnerable | |
| There is one global and several regional human rights protections systems , each containing treaties and mechanisms. | | All HRs apply to all refugees. HRs can be harmed before, during and after persons flee their homes. | |
| Codified HRs are the result of political processes of negotiations and are continually developed. | | The rights of refugees are endangered in Germany, including e.g. the rights to a fair procedure, adequate accommodation and education | |
| HRs are also the subject of criticism , relating, for instance, to the historical process through which they came into being and their enforceability. | | | |

“Educational institutions are spaces of human rights”

A conversation with Prof. Beate Rudolf

Paola Carega: Justice and solidarity are two basic values of any democracy. What contribution can human rights make towards solidarity, i.e. to a caring, cohesive society?

Beate Rudolf: Democracy, the rule of law, and human rights are inextricably connected. Human rights are legally binding standards for state action and, as such, they limit the rule of the majority. They are also a source of ethical guidance for individuals, with respect both to their interactions with others and to their contributions to shaping the way people live together in their society. Human rights guarantee extensive freedom to live self-determined lives to everyone. This is why the prohibition of discrimination is also an inseparable part of every human right. Though human beings are all different, they are nonetheless all equal in dignity and rights. When the human rights of individuals or groups conflict, a balance must be struck, and that means finding the solution that enables everyone to live with the greatest possible freedom and greatest possible degree of self-determination. As an example, I have a right to express my opinion freely, but I must respect the rights of others when I do so. Thus, freedom of expression does not protect someone who issues insults or threats, calls for violence or incites hatred against segments of the population. The state must make sure that people's rights are respected, for example, by prosecuting speech of this kind, and also by preventing it through human rights education in and outside of schools. Specifically, it is important that individuals should be ready and able to actively promote respect for human rights, by calling on the state to uphold them but also by stepping forward to oppose human rights abuses. Challenging a racist remark is one way they can do so. This example illustrates that fact that those who stand up for human rights are also championing values like justice, equality and solidarity.

Who can invoke human rights?

Every human being can invoke human rights, from birth onwards. These rights are universal. Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

adopted by United Nations in 1948, clearly states that “[a]ll human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” Thus, everyone has human rights, whether they are citizens of a country or not, whether they have legal residence there or not. There are only two human rights (known as citizens' rights) whose exercise in relation to a state is limited to the citizens of that state: the right to vote and be elected and the right to access to public service. But of course, even people who do not have German citizenship have the right to exercise their freedom of expression, assembly and association in order to take part, individually or collectively, in public debate and to pursue their interests through collective action.

Which documents codify human rights?

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was the first human rights document to recognise the equal rights of all human beings worldwide. Though not legally binding, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights constitutes the foundation of the international system of human rights protection. It provided the impetus for a whole series of legally binding United Nations human rights treaties: the first was the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), which was followed by the International Convention on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and other instruments, like Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the UN Convention against Torture (CAT), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the UN's Migrant Workers Convention. Germany has recognised all but the last of these. In addition to that of the United Nations, there are also regional human rights protection systems, such as those of the Council of Europe, the African Union or the Organisation of American States. Of particular importance within the Council of Europe are the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) of 1950 and the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, which watches over it. Human and fundamental rights have been enshrined in the Europe-

an Union's own Charter of Fundamental Rights of 2009. Someone who believes that a state has violated their human rights can bring a complaint, called an individual communication, to a UN human rights body or submit a complaint to the ECHR. In all cases though, they must exhaust all domestic remedies before making such a complaint: the state must have had the opportunity to redress the human rights violation on its own.

Do the international human rights treaties have legal force in German courts and administrative proceedings?

Yes! Because by ratifying a human rights treaty, Germany consents to be bound by that treaty. This has two consequences. One is the creation of a binding international law obligation. This means that Germany has an obligation, both towards the other states parties and towards all persons within its sovereign territory, to respect, protect and fulfil the rights set out in the treaty. The UN human rights treaty bodies and the European Court of Human Rights watch over states' compliance with this international-law obligation.

The other consequence of ratification is that the human rights treaty becomes legally binding domestic law by way of the statute adopted to ratify it. Thus, all government entities must comply with the treaty. This means that state authorities and courts have to take human rights standards and priorities into account when applying federal or Länder statutes governing specific areas of law, such as immigration and residence law, police law, antidiscrimination law or the law governing schools.

Which human rights come into play when people who have been forced to flee their homes seek protection here in this country?

There is no separate set of human rights that apply especially to refugees; they have the same human rights that everybody has. This means, for example, that the state must ensure that persons seeking protection obtain a minimum standard of health care and protect them from violence and discrimination; it also means, for example, that refugee children have a right to education. In some respects, the state is indeed obligated to provide a higher standard of protection, for instance, if a state requires refugees to live in a

specific municipality or an initial reception centre. In such cases, the state must ensure that the refugees do not suffer violence there because of their descent, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, or their religion or world view.

Asylum seekers and other migrants can invoke the human right to leave any country, including their own (article 12(2) of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights). Thus, the simple fact of having left one country in order to get to another cannot be criminalised. However, the right to leave any country is not flanked by a concomitant right to enter any country. Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees all refugees the right to seek and enjoy asylum in another country, but there are no legally binding provisions of international law that provide for such a right in that form. However, the Geneva Refugee Convention does guarantee all refugees the right to a fair procedure assessing their needs for protection, and it prohibits states from turning people away at their border or expelling refugees to a country where their lives or freedom would be at risk.

One often hears the term "non-discrimination" in connection with human rights. Why is that?

As Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) makes clear, human rights are rooted in the idea that everyone has equal rights. Because all human beings are equal in dignity. Equality, then, is one of the fundamental principles of human rights. The right not to be discriminated against is therefore an example of a human rights that is integral to all the other fundamental and human rights. This means: every single right guaranteed in the human rights treaties, from freedom of expression to the right to housing, must be fulfilled for everybody in a manner free of discrimination – even though this is not always explicitly stated. So, those who challenge the principle of non-discrimination are challenging human rights themselves.

What forms of discrimination are prohibited?

The principle of non-discrimination has consequences for all three dimensions of human rights obligations: these being (i) respect for, (ii) protection of and (iii) fulfilment of rights. As a bearer of

human rights duties, the state must itself refrain from discriminatory action (i). An example for this obligation to respect is the prohibition of racist profiling by the police (ii). The state has an obligation to protect against discrimination by private parties. This protection duty includes the obligation to adopt effective antidiscrimination legislation. The state also must make available procedures and institutions enabling persons to enjoy their rights without discrimination and to defend themselves against discrimination (iii). For instance, it must provide complaints mechanisms and courts that are able to prevent and sanction discrimination effectively. The prohibition of discrimination relates both to unequal treatment that is directly tied to a discriminatory category and to indirectly discriminatory treatment, meaning treatment based on apparently neutral policies or measures that has a disproportionately prejudicial effect on a particular group. A job listing requesting applications from *white* applicants only would be an example of direct racist discrimination. If the job listing called for applications only from native speakers of German though, this would be a case of indirect racist discrimination. This is because such a listing would disproportionately disadvantage persons with migration backgrounds and could not be justified, since people can acquire equally good German language skills in other ways. What is more, whether there was an intent to discriminate does not matter: the discriminating effect is the decisive factor.

People often speak of “institutional racism” in the context of schools. What does that term mean?

Institutional discrimination exists when certain persons are put at a disadvantage by an institutions’ structures, procedures or other mechanisms in interaction with other factors. This form of discrimination is deeply rooted in institutions and often goes unrecognised and unchallenged. Schools, too, are institutions that have firmly established structures, policies and practices, and these have prejudicial effects on the participation in education and school performance of pupils who are harmed by racism. There are school textbooks that contain images and texts that replicate racist stereotypes, for instance. Another example is when grades assigned to pupils with migration backgrounds are lower than those

assigned to other pupils for the same level of performance. Studies looking at the grounds cited by teachers for their recommendations regarding the form of secondary school that pupils should attend have found that they don’t look only at the actual performance of the individual child, but refer to other criteria as well, and that these are sometimes influenced by racist stereotypes. For instance, teachers may have the impression that pupils with (family) backgrounds of migration are likely to receive less support from their parents, without being aware that they are being influenced by racist images.

Why is it important that human rights be explicitly discussed in schools and other education institutions?

There are two reasons. One has to do with individuals and one with society. As to the former, education and human rights are inextricably linked: Education is supposed to promote the full development of the human personality and human rights are supposed to ensure freedom and self-determination for everyone. However, you have to know what your rights are in order to exercise your rights. For this reason, education must also be aimed at strengthening respect for human rights. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights explicitly says this in article 13.

As for the other reason: human rights form part the foundation of a democratic state governed by the rule of law. This foundation can only exist when people know their rights and demand them, on their own behalf and on behalf of others, and “act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood”, as called for in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This works well when people learn to respect other people and to think about human rights and the values that underpin them, starting from a young age. For this reason, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination expressly requires that states provide for human rights education and other measures to combat racist prejudices, in the education sector. Thus, teachers must encourage learners to explore fundamental and human rights in depth, so that they can be guided by them in their actions, be aware of their own rights and respect the rights of others.

Returning to the basic values of a democracy: what can educators do to make schools, and other educational institutions be places of learning and of solidarity that afford learners educational opportunities based on the greatest possible equality?

It is important to see education institutions as places of human rights and educators as defenders of human rights. Human rights have to shape the learning environment, so that learners experience themselves as holders of human rights. If this is not the case, learners will not internalise human rights, even if these rights are taught in the abstract. A learning environment shaped by human rights is also one where learners are protected against discrimination, because any learning group will have members who are affected, either personally or by way of someone close to them, by various dimensions of discrimination. In order to meet their obligation to protect human rights, teachers must challenge actions or speech that is discriminatory and prohibit such actions and speech, and they must do this in a manner that clearly communicates human rights values. Dismantling barriers to participation and appreciating diversity, e.g. with respect to

religious affiliation, sexual orientation or a disability, are also important. Teachers should design their classes to be as participatory as possible and work with methods and materials that do not replicate stereotypes. The aim should be to address discrimination in a way that does not reinforce biases, in order to awaken and strengthen respect for others as persons of equal human dignity and equal human rights.

Professor Beate Rudolf is the director of the German Institute for Human Rights. Prior to taking up this office in 2010, she was as a junior professor for public law and equality law in the Department of Law of the Freie Universität Berlin. Her research focusses on fundamental and human rights and on principles governing state structures under public international law, European law and German constitutional law, and in a comparative-law perspective. From 2016 to 2019, she chaired the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI).

She was in conversation here with Paola Carega.



© Suzan Bayram-Coşkun

Human dignity is (in)violable!

Suzan Bayram-Coşkun

Is human dignity an illusion? An example taken from everyday life: It is a quiet and pleasant night, the first of June. I am standing with my husband on an escalator. To be more precise, we are facing each other. We are riding upwards, laughing, joking – *happy, content, safe*. At that moment, a middle-aged woman comes up behind me and violently jostles me, so that my shoulder hurts jostles me, hard enough that my shoulder begins to hurt – *shocked, confused, speechless*. When I speak to her, asking her why she had done that without so much as an “excuse me”, I am portrayed as the guilty one. Apparently, I hadn’t learned the rule “stand right; walk left” at home, where I came from, nor, naturally, the appropriate respect – *anxious, angry, powerless*.

I am a Muslima, a German citizen, I wear a headscarf and long, lovely garments, and this was a very brief description of something that happened to me on the first of June in 2019. With this story, I want to show that when people who are discriminated

against open their mouths to defend themselves – and just doing so takes a great deal of courage – they do not meet with acceptance. The person who has been discriminated against is portrayed as the wrongdoer. The constitution is held in great esteem here in Germany, but some of this country’s subject seem to have a hard time understanding even the first sentence of its first article: Human dignity shall be inviolable! My human dignity was violated that June night. Is it possible that that stuff about human dignity is nothing more than an illusion for me and many others?

Suzan Bayram-Coşkun is a sociologist and a student in a master’s programme in diversity and inclusion. Her work focuses on racism, particularly anti-Muslim racism and intersectionality. She is currently working on empowerment projects for Muslim girls and women.

“Yallah! – Now, all together!”

A conversation with Wesam Alfarawti

The exhibition “Yallah!? Über die Balkanroute” harks back to the summer of 2015, the “March of Hope” through South-eastern Europe and the culture of welcome in Germany. The exhibition, which has been touring Germany since 2017, focuses on the perspectives of the refugees. The audio and video recordings photographic documentation are the product of cooperation among several persons who supported refugees along the route and are active in political, critically aware academic contexts and artistic contexts. The exhibition also enables artists who have experienced flight and forced migration to have their voices heard, by showing their work. The exhibition’s creators are currently seeking a permanent home for “Yallah!?” – in English “Off we go” or “Come on”. Wesam Alfarawti is one of the exhibition’s curators.

Paola Carega: Wesam, how did the idea to create the exhibition come into being?

Wesam Alfarawti: Back in the summer of 2015, I was traveling with some friends along parts of the route by bus. We wanted to document this unbelievable migration with photos and videos, keeping the focus firmly on the people who were following this route. As we talked to people along the way, it became obvious that the voices of refugees needed to be heard more in Germany. The high level of support we got from refugees and from organisations, both on the route and in Germany, made us decide to show our material to a broader public and create an exhibition.

You spent some time travelling with people who were fleeing their homes. What was that like for you?

It made me speechless and also angry to see the terrible conditions and dangerous situations that people had to endure with on this route. These were sometimes much worse than what was reported in the media. At the same time, I met so many positive and motivated people. They told us how important our documentary work was and that they believed in this project. We really wanted to give these people a stage and enable them to

tell their own stories. The great thing is that we were able to keep in touch with many of the refugees after the summer of 2015, and some of them were actually able to come to the exhibition’s opening in 2017.

There was a lot of solidarity with the refugees in this country in 2015. How has the mood in society changed since then?

The mood was polarised back then, in the summer of 2015: there was a lot of solidarity in the population, volunteer support and calls of “Welcome!” at train stations, but there were also neoNazis setting fire to accommodation facilities.. Today, we are seeing a volatile atmosphere, simmering with racial tensions, and debates dominated by hate. The reporting also has changed in many of the media: isolated incidents are portrayed as general trends, which contributes to a bad atmosphere. All is not lost though, and we are still fighting. There are a lot of people fighting day in and day out for the rights of refugees in Germany and everywhere else.

How important is it for refugees to have contact with organisations run by and for refugees?

There is a great deal that asylum seekers in Germany must know about their obligations, and there are a lot of rules and regulations that they have to be aware of and comply with. They need to interact with authorities and government offices, they have to know how to fill out forms. In many cases, they do not even know what their rights are, for instance, that there is a human right to asylum. Or that there is a right to privacy that applies even in accommodation facilities. The refugee organisations help refugees to assert their rights. This empowerment is very important. Also, when you are part of a network, you no longer feel so isolated – a feeling that haunts many asylum seekers in Germany because, for instance, they live in an accommodation facility that is quite remote and have only limited contact with the people.

What needs to be done to strengthen the human rights of refugees?

I am deeply concerned about the fact that people are drowning in the Mediterranean because Europe cannot agree on who should take them in – and is actually preventing parties from engaging in sea rescue operations. At a time when the EU is closing off all routes into Europe, we are missing many people who could work with us to improve the world. So, we need to be especially loud, stand up and become active to stop the dying. For this to succeed, we need broader and stronger alliances. Organisations like Network for Concrete Solidarity (NKS) and Sea-Watch are trying, through their work, to combat the feeling of powerlessness that has arisen in parts of the refugee movement in the face of the indifference of the European states. It makes me sad, but also furious, to learn about all this and hear how governments are claiming that the protection of human rights is still important somehow. The anger gives me strength to keep working towards changing the way things are, towards a world where we live together in peace and to the benefit of all and where people who need protection get that protection. So: “Yallah!” – all together now!

Wesam Alfarawti is from Syria and has lived in Germany since late 2014. He is a member of the board of Network for Concrete Solidarity (NKS) and an activist with Sea-Watch. Since 2016, he has travelled to Greece, Italy and Malta to work with people there to draw attention to the situation of refugees at Europe’s external borders. The exhibition “Welcome to Europe?” and a film of the same name were created during these trips. Wesam Alfarawti also holds lectures on the topic of sea rescue operations.

He was in conversation here with Paola Carega.

Website of the exhibition “Yallah?!”:
<http://yallah-balkanroute.uni-goettingen.de/>

Website of the exhibition “Welcome to Europe?”:
<https://www.nksnet.org/ausstellung-welcome-to-europe/>

Film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgkl4yDV8yU&feature=youtu.be>

No safe place. Nowhere.

Kenan Emini and Sandra Goerend

“Although I was born here in Germany, there is still a risk that my family and I will be deported. I have almost completed the requirements for my school certificate, for the third time now. And I might have to disappear, again, which would mean that I won’t be able to get the certificate, again.” These words were written by a young resident of Göttingen, who has since become an adult. Shortly after she wrote them, her father was deported, and she and the rest of the family went underground. Again. And, again, she could not complete her schooling. Her parents fled the Kosovo War in 1999, and it is to Kosovo, a state that did not even exist back then, that the family is supposed to be deported. The daughter has never been there, speaks no Albanian, is stateless. Germany feels like home to her. There are many young Roma, whose parents or grandparents come from former Yugoslavia, in this same situation. Their presence here was “tolerated”³ for years, even decades, the temporary suspension of their deportation extended, over and over again. In recent years, the Federal Government in Germany has declared the countries known as the West Balkan states, one after another, to be “safe countries of origin”, despite the extreme forms of discrimination, social exclusion and violence that Roma face there. Systematic discrimination, racism and physical violence are not recognised as grounds for asylum. Especially not now. Children’s futures are being sacrificed in favour of tougher and tougher asylum law provisions.

Most Roma who have fled the region – once, twice, over and over again – are relatives or descendants of Holocaust victims, and they, or their parents were fleeing the wars in the disintegrating Yugoslavia. The last of these wars is the one we know as the Kosovo War. NATO waged this war, with the support of Germany and other countries. During this war, Roma were driven from their homes and lost their property, which, to this day,

has not been returned. One might like to think that there would be a special status affording them protection in Germany.

But there is not. In the last 70 years, these people have repeatedly experienced discrimination, racism and displacement. One generation was persecuted, annihilated by the Holocaust; their children and grandchildren were driven out of the Balkans. The most recent generation still cannot find a safe place to live; they are only “tolerated” in Germany, or deported.

For many, being tolerated means that they could be deported at any moment; it means not knowing whether they will still be here tomorrow or be picked up by the police tonight. The impacts of this constant uncertainty are particularly severe for children and adolescents: sleeplessness, nausea, anxiety, difficulties in concentrating and learning affect their daily lives and school performance. Only a very few manage to complete their schooling under these conditions. As for the rest: failure to perform well at school counts against them, indicating insufficient integration. Insufficient integration, in turn, has a negative effect on their chances of obtaining legal residency. A vicious circle. Deportation or a so-called voluntary departure often means the end of a person’s education and, with that, the end of any chance for a safe and self-determined future. Children and adolescents who were born in and grew up in Germany may have little, if any knowledge of the language of their supposed “country of origin”. This is particularly likely in the case of ethnic minorities that speak a language other than that of the majority population. Because deportation comes without warning, those being deported are unable to take their school certificates or records with them and are thus unable to prove what schooling they have had. It is not uncommon for them to continue to face persecution or discrimination in the country from which they, or their parents once fled. All too frequently, they are deported into misery, to lives with no housing, no access to health care, no school or vocational training. After being deported, many are unable to get by, some even fall ill. Many people lose the will to live. There is only one hope: to return.

³ Duldung, the German term for a temporary suspension of deportation status, literally means “toleration”, i.e. a presence of a person or family in the country is tolerated despite a decision to deny protection under asylum law. See also the glossary entry for Duldung.

RAN – a nation-wide network

The Roma Antidiscrimination Network (RAN) is a network active throughout Germany that runs an advising centre in Göttingen. We support Roma in connection with the exercise of their rights, report on discrimination in Europe, do public relations work and organise empowerment and antidiscrimination workshops, network meetings, film screenings and exhibitions. Important topics are always the consequences of the wars in Yugoslavia for Roma, the struggle for the right to remain and the situation of deported Roma, particularly those born in Germany. Racially motivated assaults take place here too, reporting on this is rare. In the spring of 2019, a Roma family was attacked by a woman wielding a knife in a Berlin subway. The perpetrator

directed racist abuse against the victims and stabbed a woman and a man, while other passengers watched and did nothing. Only after the Roma woman managed to overcome the attacker did another passenger come to her aid, holding on to the attacker until the police arrived.

Structural, institutional and everyday racism is part of everyday life in Germany, too. Roma are disadvantaged in all areas – in the search for work and for housing, at authorities, at the doctor's office or in the neighbourhood.

<http://www.roma-center.de/>

<http://ran.eu.com/>

Kenan Emini is co-founder and chair of the Roma Center. Sandra Goerend is an education officer at the Roma Center. Together, they organise the Roma Antidiscrimination Network and the campaign "Future for All – School without deportation".



“Whether in Iraq or Germany, I will not allow anyone to compromise my dignity”

International Women* Space

I come from Karbala and we were persecuted in Iraq by Saddam Hussein as he was attacking Muslims - especially the Shiites. We were prevented from reciting the Quran and forbidden to hold religious gatherings like classes for children to learn about the Quran and the religious rites, Sharia. (...) The fact is, anyone who fights, resists and stands up for their rights, for religious freedom and defends the religion's laws, who stands up for living as one chooses, runs the risk of being persecuted. And the reaction of Saddam was to forbid these things, to react with beatings, prison sentences, by arresting and executing people as an attempt to stop any practice, which would be in disagreement with his government. (...)

Thanks to God, I am a free woman and I don't accept any kind of oppression.

I don't accept threats and I don't accept anything, how should I say, I don't accept anything that I don't permit. I don't accept even what the most powerful person can expose me to and pressure me, this is why I was put in prison several times. In prison they tortured me in different ways. (...) The last time, they beat me so hard that I did not wake up again and they had to take me to hospital. While I was in hospital my parents went to see a lawyer who asked for a break. So during that time, I fled to Iran first and from there to Germany. The matter isn't related to the country, it is related to each person. So, when people have dignity and character they will not allow anyone to override their rights and their dignity, especially in regards to their religion and their beliefs. This is why, whether in Iraq or any other country, even Germany, I will not allow anyone to compromise my dignity and especially related to my religion, my convictions and what I believe in.

(...) The German system did support us in a way, they gave us housing to live in, of course we were put in a Heim and the situation there is difficult. I lived for almost 7 years in just one room (...).

Often my daughter could not sleep at night and she had school early in the morning, because of the screaming and crying of others in the same room with us. I had to take tranquillisers at that time to be able to sleep. They did do some things for us, you cannot deny that, I mean of course it was just a room, but thank God we did not have to be on the streets. We had clothing and food. But our position here, what is not nice in Germany is that they put us away in 'Heime', which are far away from everything. As if we have a contagious diseases, as if we are not humans, as if our children are not children who have the right to live like other children. It can be really unbearable.

In German you would say „Katastrophe“. (...) And I ask myself where the freedom and the human rights are. We are human like you and our children are children like your children, what is the difference?

(...) One day when my daughter was 8 years old, she wrote a letter to the boss of the ‚Ausländerbehörde‘, saying: „Would you let your son or daughter live here, where we are living, even just for one week? I am a child here and I have rights too. Why do I have to live and play next to the garbage, why don't I have a playground? Is it just because I am an ‚Ausländer‘? Because you are German, your daughter and your son can go to France during the holidays and other countries that I don't know, so that they can have fun during the holidays and me, after the holidays, the other kids at school ask me, where did you go? And I say nowhere. And they ask where do I play, and I say next to the garbage.“ (...) My daughter, although she is only 11 years old, she is the one who keeps this entire building running and has made an important contribution to this society. She translates, finds the bus schedules for everyone...etc. we are not doing anything wrong or criminal and still this child doesn't have a proper residence permit.

This text comes from the book “In our own words. Refugee women in Germany tell their stories”. This multiauthor book, published by The International Women* Space, documents the lives and stories of refugee women in Germany. The text has been abridged slightly for this manual.

<https://iwspace.de/in-our-own-words/?v=3a52f3c22ed6>

The International Women* Space (IWS) is a feminist political group organised by migrant and refugee women living in Germany. It came into being in Gerhart-Hauptmann-Schule in Berlin’s Kreuzberg district, during the occupation of the school by refugees. IWS challenges dominant knowledge structures and fights discriminatory policies and practices that stand in the way of the emancipation of refugee and migrant women and all women.

<https://iwspace.de/?v=3a52f3c22ed6>

What is it like at school, what is it like in the *Willkommensklasse*?

Youth without Borders Writers' Collective

There are only refugees in the *Willkommensklasse*,⁴ only people who have recently arrived in Germany. It's good, it's calm, better than the normal classes, we learn just like they do in the normal class, we are preparing to join the normal class. It is better than in the normal class, not worse, because there aren't as many of us there. We can learn at a slower pace, not so fast. In the first three months, there were only Syrians in the class. I started learning Arabic there before I learned German. Then, the teachers came a few times and spoke with one another, and then they forbade us to speak Arabic. They shouted: If you speak like that you will get a failing grade or be sent home. Then, we always had to speak in German. Then, eventually, we started speaking German to each other, and then the teacher said, "You're too loud" and then we weren't allowed to talk. It was also fun because we went on a lot of field trips and got to know each other quickly. Then, we did a lot together, we were like siblings, because we are all foreigners. You feel comfortable because the other person understands you. But when you enter the normal class, then you know life is moving on, you have to go back to learning. In the welcome class, you were lost somehow, it was fun, that's true, but it was like a hobby, and at some point, you have to get started somehow.

*"You feel comfortable,
because the other person
understands you."*

The teacher decides which class you enter on leaving the *Willkommensklasse*. You get a certificate. Two of us went to school even though it was the Sugar Feast holiday, just those two. Those were the two who got certificates recommending that

they attend Gymnasium;⁵ no one else did. I will be angry at the school until the day I die, because now here I am at the OSZ⁶ and not Gymnasium. The teacher ruined my life and destroyed my chances. A teacher can control your life, even later – he is not there anymore, and he is still controlling your life.

The perfect teachers shouldn't be a teacher, sometimes they should be a friend. But, being a teacher is ultimately a job in the school; if you do somehow become friends with a teacher, then that teacher is having problems. For example, I am not in school anymore, but I'm still in contact with one of the teachers. She is my friend; we do theatre together. But God has given her all that, I don't know why I got to meet a person like that. What did I do right, that I could meet a person like that in my life? There is an Arabic saying: "A teacher is like a prophet". Here in Germany, you also get teachers who come and shout at people. They'll write something on the board and then say, "Copy that down!", whether you understand it or not. Some people are unkind around me, laughing every time I say something wrong, the students. The teacher only calls them on it once in a while. I think we all lost our motivation in Germany. I switched schools, I'm at another school now, that's okay now. But I just don't feel like doing it anymore. Even though I know I have to, because that's what I'm here for. But when you've been through so much, seen so much, like me... I don't know. Only my math teacher was a good one. Of five teachers, only one was a good one.

That's great in Germany, there is one thing that is really good. You can go to school, even when you're 20, 30, 40, 50 years old. Some small comfort there, perhaps. It means that even if you did poorly in school as a child, you can still go back to school later, get your upper secondary qualification or go

4 In English: "welcome class", special classes set up in regular schools to prepare children whose German language skills are not yet considered adequate to enter a regular class. These classes are attended by refugee children and children from immigrant families.

5 Gymnasium: the type of general-education secondary school with the strongest academic emphasis. Successful attendance of a Gymnasium qualifies for entry to university.

6 OSZ: Oberstufenzentrum, upper-secondary school in Berlin or Brandenburg provides general education with vocational emphasis.

to university. You can do a training course first or start a family and then still do something else later. That is kind of the good thing about Germany. Yes, that is great, but I don't know how it is supposed to work. I find it strange, too, because sometimes there are too many options, but if you don't use the opportunity then it's your fault that you fail. Yes, it's true, if you have ten paths to choose from, then by taking one, you have automatically decided against other paths. Sometimes, having too many options is stressful as well. In my country, if you don't take an opportunity when it comes, you'll never have the chance again, so you do it then. Where I'm from, there is nothing you can do later. If you are 25 and you tell people you are going to school, they'll think you're crazy. There, you finish school at 16, 17. And then, in the best case, you start university right away. By your early twenties, you have to have a job already. Although, children start school earlier there too. In preschool, they are still allowed to play. And then in school they are not allowed to anymore, so they don't like school.

"I think we all lost our motivation in Germany."

In the beginning, I thought it was good that we were supposed to speak German at school, because the Arabs spoke Arabic the whole time. I was alone there with my sister, and the teacher spent the whole time with us. At the time, I thought: "Okay, but you have to teach them some, too, otherwise it'll just be us talking the whole time and they'll spend their whole lives here in this class." Then, in 2016, some other Albanians joined the class and we spoke Albanian and Arabic together, since the teacher did not understand anything, we spoke in German the whole time. We spoke German for two straight months after that, and then she said she'd had enough. She would send us out of the classroom, and we would say: "You wanted us to speak German all the time, now we are, what do you want?" It was good that we spoke only German then, otherwise I would not have learned any German.

In my case, it was like this: I was in school too, I was in a Willkommensklasse, but only for a short

time. Then I went to the *Hauptschule*,⁷ because my teacher sent me to the *Hauptschule*, because she thought I was stupid. She thought, I can't speak German, I can't do anything. Then, when I was going to the *Hauptschule* I had this teacher, I want to say his name here, Mr Gombert. He was like what you were just talking about, like sent from heaven. He really helped me a lot, gave me really a lot of support. Then later I was at *Realschule*⁸ and then *Gymnasium*, *Abitur*⁹ and so on. There was some luck involved too, but it was because there were teachers that helped me.

If you have a problem and you don't have anyone, then you can start by telling the teacher about it, there is always one teacher somewhere that you can trust.

This is a translation of a slightly abridged German-language text from the book "Zwischen Barrieren, Träumen und Selbstorganisation – Erfahrungen junger Geflüchteter". It was written by the writers' collective of Youth without Borders (JoB), which is coordinated by Mohammed Jouni.

<http://jogspace.net/2019/03/19/zwischen-barrieren-traumen-und-selbstorganisation/>

Founded in 2005, Youth without Borders (JoG) is a nation-wide initiative of young refugees in Germany. Our work is based on the principle that people have their own voices and that there is no need for a policy of having others advocate on their behalf. We make our own choices about what form our activities should take, and how we carry them out.

<http://jogspace.net/>

⁷ Hauptschule: general-education lower-secondary school, qualifies for certain types of vocational trainings, does not qualify for university entrance.

⁸ Realschule: general-education lower-secondary school, qualifies for most types of vocational trainings, greater emphasis on academics than a Hauptschule, does not qualify for university entrance.

⁹ Abitur: school-leaving certificate qualifying for entry to university.

“Through networking refugees can share knowledge”

A conversation with Yahya Sonko

Mareike Niendorf: When and why did you start your political activism in Germany?

Yahya Sonko: I started my political activism in 2016 in Heidelberg. In mid of 2016, the Minister of the Interior of Baden-Württemberg made a public statement against Gambian refugees in Baden-Württemberg. In this statement he called Gambia a safe country of origin. The minister said there was no problem in The Gambia that would enable Gambians to be accepted as legal refugees in Germany. In the same year I watched a TV-program in DW News; they were talking about Gambian asylum seekers as “not very responsible” and “committing crimes” in Baden-Württemberg. All this and many bad news or information against Gambians made me more active to start and stand for myself and my beloved brothers and sisters. I believe that we have to take a stand to prove to the EU and Germany that The Gambia wasn't a safe country under dictatorship and tyranny. I believe that we have to change the narratives of German politicians against The Gambia and Gambians. We should let them know about how dangerous the Government of The Gambia has been to its own people; they should know that the ex-president Yahya Jammeh¹⁰ made public statements that if any villages, cities or towns didn't support him and vote for him, the area would not be developed. Dictatorship was rolling, this became very clear to everyone, this was the year Gambians were arrested without any reason or without any trials at the justice or court.

This was the very time politicians and politics became forbidden in The Gambia, in a sense that if any individual got involved in politics or with politicians, they individually would be persecuted or harassed by the state or security apparatus. At this time no Gambian would go out and speak against

the Dictatorship and tyranny. No demonstrations were allowed even if it's our constitutional right. Media houses were condemned not to speak the truth but only to say what the President wanted to hear. At this time corruption became normal in the eyes of citizens, police brutality was very high. The main or top politicians in my country were all arrested and sentenced to prison in The Gambia. I can keep on stating facts about the reasons I stood up to raise awareness of how dictatorship and tyranny were destroying a small country with a population of less than two millions.

What are the main concerns of your political work?

I want everybody to know how serious dictatorship was and that it was the reason why most of the young men left The Gambia at that time. What can be done to prevent them from having to use illegalised back ways? How can Europe contain Gambians and offer possibilities of integration? These questions have to be answered. I want to inform the German authorities about the realities of young Gambians in terms of access to education, legal status of refugees, asylum laws etc.

What is necessary to make sure that all refugees have access to the information needed?

The authorities should use more and different mediums of communication. Refugees should know about their asylum procedures and of course about their rights as refugees in Germany. A lot of refugees are not well informed about their rights, they don't know the important offices and public authorities. They are unaware of how to enable themselves in terms of integration and legal stay in Germany. Refugees are not informed about Dublin regulations, which is a big obstacle against their integration.

Which role do networking and cooperation play and how does that work?

Networking is very important in the recent migration dilemma. It is one of the best methods to inform

¹⁰ Editor's note: Yahya Jammeh served from 1996 to mid-January 2017 as President of the West African Gambia. Among other things, he reintroduced the death penalty and had opposition members persecuted and imprisoned. African human rights organizations know of dozens of cases in which Gambians have disappeared without a trace.

refugees and help them to learn what they need to know about their asylum procedure and their rights as refugees. Through networking and cooperation refugees can share knowledge about their rights and about crucial migration laws; it also helps refugees to meet people who will enhance their lives in different ways and teach them how to obtain legal means to integration and stay in Germany. Networking is a great method of raising awareness.

What should institutions take into consideration and provide to foster cooperation with self-organizations?

Institutions should understand that refugees are neither “useless” nor criminals. When we are given chances we perform well. I think we should be

given more and better chances for integration. The more the institutions put refugees to task, the easier it will be for everyone. For example, if refugees get the opportunity to take German courses or are allowed to work, most of them will not feel useless. Refugees should be part of decision making. We should be supported to be able to organize and we should be able to participate in discussions, matters and decisions concerning us.

Yahya Sonko is a Gambia Civic and Human rights Activist. He is a well-known Refugees Activist in Baden-Württemberg, Public Relationship Officer (PRO) of Gambia Refugees Association Europe Branch and the C.E.O of Sound City Radio Station.

The conversation was held by Mareike Niendorf.

What is racism?

An exploration of the term¹¹

Chandra-Milena Danielzik

What the social world has produced, the social world can also abolish again, equipped with knowledge. One thing is certain: nothing is less innocent than simply letting things run their course.“

Pierre Bourdieu, 1997¹²

Racism is a social relation, one that shapes all our social relationships and the relation between subjects and social institutions by structuring them. The result of social struggles against discrimination, fundamental and human rights and prohibitions against discrimination based on race are a reaction to inequalities that came into being over the course of history and are deeply rooted in societies.

There is racism, but there are no races of humanity...

...because human genetic diversity does not manifest itself along the criteria normally used to classify human beings into different groups. From a genetic standpoint, there are no demarcation lines defined by skin colour, eye shape or hair structure. Although these characteristics of appearance are used as criteria on a daily basis and although people have referred to them as visible [racial] markers for centuries, these purported genetic

demarcation lines are nothing more than ideological fictions. Thus, the category “race” is purely an invention of racism, although it stubbornly continues to serve as an omnipresent reference point for the categorisation of human beings.

Many people even believe that they can distinguish a person’s nationality and make assumptions about their cultural identity based on what they perceive to be that person’s skin colour or other physical or cultural markers. The casual „Where are you from?“ or even „Where are you really from?“ is often asked ingenuously. But it carries within it the assumption that a person’s appearance reveals what (national) culture they are from, their social background and the values they represent. Asking someone about their „real origins“ is a way of assigning them to their „proper“ place, with no regard to where the person being asked the question might place themselves. In this way of thinking, migration and people with migration backgrounds are not seen as inherently part of “Germanness” or of German history. All their lives, People of Colour/Black people in Germany are given to understand that their bodies identify them as not “one of us” and as „Non-White“. ¹³ While White people grow up with the awareness of being “normal” and in the right place, society makes it clear to People of Colour/Black people that from childhood on they are not normal: they are “other” and obviously do not belong. People of Colour who grow up in Germany must deal with exclusion and external designations from a young age. It is not

11 This German-language text of which this is a translation is a slightly abridged version of a text that first appeared in: Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte (pub.) (2018): *Rassistische Straftaten erkennen und verhandeln. Ein Reader für die Strafjustiz*. The original version of the text explores the topics of structural, institutional and situational racism, racist violence, and language use in more depth.

12 Pierre Bourdieu et al. (eds) (1997): *Das Elend der Welt. Zeugnisse und Diagnosen alltäglichen Leidens an der Gesellschaft*, Konstanz: UVK, p. 826 [First published in France as *La misère du monde*. Quoted here is the English translation by Parkhurst Ferguson et al. (1999): *The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society*, Stanford University Press].

13 Cf. Kilomba, Grada (2006): „Wo kommst du her?“ <https://heimatkunde.boell.de/2006/05/01/wo-kommst-du-her> (retrieved: 08 Oct. 2019).

unusual for racialising external designations to be internalised, taken up into a distorted self-image and feeling of self-worth; it is not uncommon, for instance, for people to see their own skin colour as too dark and thus ugly, to undervalue their own skills, accept lack of representation and participation in social spheres and in higher-status occupational fields as normal. This has grave psychological consequences.¹⁴ The question, “where are you really from?”, asked over and over again, assigns them to country or a place they may never have even been or with which they have associations very different from those of the persons asking the question.

“I was always aware that I was Black. People kept asking me where I was from [...] over and over again [...] ever since I was a child: ‘Where are you from?’, just like that! [...] They look at you, and their first thought is to check: ‘Where does she come from?’ It doesn’t matter where you are: on the bus, at a party, on the street, at dinner or in the supermarket. [...] I find this question very racist and very offensive, somehow ... because they know that there are Black people who are German.”¹⁵

Basic structures of racism and racist thinking

„All human beings have biases“ – this is something one hears a lot, often put forward as a relativising argument when someone has drawn attention to racism or other discriminatory situations. Biases, it is said, allow us to process the complexity of the social environment. Categorisations and stereotypes exist, the argument goes, to provide orientation, enabling people to assign themselves to a group and thus determine their own identity. The extent to which racism is something other than just a value-neutral form of categorisation but, rather, a relation of discrimination and violence is explained in the following. In order to understand and

reflect critically upon racism’s purpose and modes of operation, it is important to become familiar with its basic mechanisms: racism typically involves the categorisation and grouping of human beings on the basis of a physical and/or assumed cultural or religious characteristic (e.g. a hijab or a yarmulke) or on the basis of descent or nationality, with the result that the persons being categorised are no longer seen as individuals and are not treated as such. People become representatives of the group they have been assigned to, e.g. “the refugees” or “the Muslims”. Hence, conclusions drawn about an individual are transferred to the construct that is the group as a whole. As an example: when the media report that “a foreigner”, “a refugee” or “a Muslim” has committed a violent act, the White¹⁶-German public calls for other „foreigners“, other „refugees“ or other „Muslims“ to exhibit a sense of responsibility, to distance themselves from the act and, in some cases, even to apologise. Thus, being seen as an individual and a subject with agency becomes a structural privilege. No one expects White Germans in general or individual Christians in Germany to disassociate themselves from German Christian fundamentalism,¹⁷ quasi

¹⁴ Extensive discussion of the effects of racism on the mental and physical health of its victims and summaries of research findings in this area can be found in the documentation of the symposium “Alltagsrassismus und rassistische Diskriminierung Auswirkungen auf die psychische und körperliche Gesundheit“, 2010: https://www.elina-marmer.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/fachtagung_alltagsrassismus.pdf (retrieved: 08 Oct. 2019).

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ The word “White” is capitalised here to make it clear that it does not describe a colour or an objectively perceivable category or characteristic. The capitalised term denotes a dominant social position within a social relation. The case of “Black” is similar, except that the term “Black people” is an emancipatory self-designation. “Non-White” is in quotation marks in to emphasise that “non-White” does not represent a simple negative deviation from the White norm.

¹⁷ The science journalist Martin Urban has stated that fundamentalism is on the rise within the Protestant churches in Germany. Cf. <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/panorama/religion-fundamentalisten-gewinnen-in-der-evangelischen-kirche-immer-mehr-einfluss-1.2939174> (retrieved: 08 Oct. 2019). Sonja Strube, theologian and editor of the volume *Rechtsextremismus als Herausforderung für die Theologie*, refers to several studies to back up her statement that a group-focussed hostility and far-right attitudes are disproportionately represented among Christians. (see (in German) <https://www.katholisch.de/aktuelles/aktuelle-artikel/schockierende-beobachtungen> (retrieved: 08 Oct. 2019). Social psychologist Andreas Zick, who studies socialisation and conflict, also describes research findings showing “that persons with real ties to a Christian church who believe that Christianity is the only true religion and must be the dominant religion have stronger approval ratings in respect of all aspects of hostility against persons than do people who do not that they belong to a particular religion”. Original German: <https://www.br.de/nachricht/rechtsaussen/christen-rechtsaussen-fundamentalismus-100.html> (retrieved: 08 Oct. 2019), see also <https://www.nw.de/lokal/bielefelder/mitte/22136530-Bielefelder-Konfliktforscher-warnt-auch-vor-christlichem-Terror.html> (retrieved: 08 Oct. 2019).

invoking some authoritative guiding Christian culture by doing so, or to distance themselves from sexual abuse perpetrated by Christian priests or from individual passages or interpretations of the Bible that are, e.g., antisemitic, or from other Christians. Nor is there any sense that White people should publicly apologise for serious crimes, racist acts or other acts motivated by far-right wing views committed by other White people. There is a (tacit) assumption that racialised people identify with the identity of “looking different” projected onto them by others and thus that appearance and cultural symbols form an objective and real line of difference separating them from White (Germans). Another basic mechanism of racism is known as “othering”. Othering describes the process whereby people who deviate from the norm are classified „others“ through the construction of an “us” that forms the norm. Those “like us” and „the others“ are placed in a binary,¹⁸ hierarchised relation of opposition. The dominant Western gender model is, for instance, binary in structure, recognising only male and female. In this model, the category „male“ describes everything which a woman, supposedly, is not, and vice versa. The same mechanism operates in (everyday) racism, in which White or European embodies everything which “non-White” others are not.

How are the „others“ made „others“?

The mechanism of racism is very complex. In order to be able to recognise racism, one has to look at the ways that people are assigned to groups and assigned a lesser value. This is because there is no one-size-fits all racism template that can be used to detect its presence – in the sense that anything that does not fit into the template is certainly not racism. People are racialised in a variety of ways. Racialisation refers to the fact that human beings are not members of a race until they are made members of a race. Thus, the term emphasises that “race” is a construct, one derived from supposedly objective characteristics like skin colour, hair covering or eye shape.¹⁹ Racism is manifest quasi in the plural: one can speak of different racisms. For instance, it is not phenotypical bodily features that are used to make Muslim women “others”, but rather the wearing a headscarf or a certain style of clothing. On the basis of these traits, they are identified as not belonging to the Western world and are assumed to be unfamiliar with German values (anti-Muslim racism). Sinti and Roma persons are stigmatised as criminal, poorly educated, and having other negative traits, and suffer from exclusion and persecution to the point of impoverishment (anti-Romanyism/antiziganism); what is more, the persecution and annihilation of Sinti and Roma during the Nazi period in Germany has been and still is frequently ignored. African and Arab men are constructed as particularly sexually active and aggressive and as threatening and encroaching on the sexual self-determination of White women, whereas Asian maleness is perceived as feminised and submissive. White (German) women, on the other hand, are seen in this context as pure, innocent and threatened by the sexual assaults of “non-White”

¹⁸ In linguistics, binary means a whole divided into two, mutually exclusive opposing parts.

¹⁹ People also use the term “racialised persons”, meaning “non-White” persons, i.e. people who have been discriminated against on racist grounds. A phenomenon of Whiteness is that White people are not othered in a way that has a powerful effect. Instead, it represents the norm, to which the others, as deviating from the norm, are subordinate; Whiteness, in this context, goes unnamed.

men; they must be protected from defilement.²⁰ These attributes and images of racialised human beings form part of a repertoire that is widespread in society. Subliminally, they form part of people's socialisation and are not necessarily generated through intentional, conscious racism. Thus, racism encompasses far more than that which obviously violates the principle of non-discrimination. Racialised categories and attributions are internalised and result in unequal treatment and disadvantage. They seep into the thinking and identities of all members of society from childhood on, their effects penetrating deep into the capillary system of society – both at the structural level and in the social relationships and routine encounters between people in the daily life of our society. Even people who are aware that there are no races of human beings and who in no way want to think along racist lines are not immune: the mechanisms discussed above can still cause them to racialise others. An active and self-reflective process of unlearning is required to free oneself of patterns of perception like these. A first step is to become aware of one's own subliminal racialising resentment, thought structures and affects – for they play no small role in forming the basis for rationalising discriminatory action and economic exploitation.

20 On the night of New Year's Eve 2015/2016, groups of men committed a large number of sexual assaults and violent acts against women in the area of the central railway station in Cologne. For an examination of political debate which ignited in the media in the wake of these events through an analytical race lens, see, e.g.: Dietze, Gabriela (2016): Ethnosexismus. Sex-Mob-Narrative um die Kölner Silvesternacht. In: *Journal for Critical Migration and Border Regime Studies* 2 (1). <http://movements-journal.org/issues/03.rassismus/10.dietze-ethnosexismus.html> (retrieved: 08 Oct. 2019). See also MiGazin (2016): Ausländer in Köln angegriffen. Vergeltung. <http://www.migazin.de/2016/01/12/vergeltung-auslaender-in-koeln-angegriffen/> (retrieved: 08 Oct. 2019) and Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (2017): „Nach“ Köln ist wie „vor“ Köln. Die Silvesternacht und ihre Folgen: <http://www.bpb.de/apuz/239696/die-silvesternacht-und-ihre-folgen?p=all> (retrieved: 08 Oct. 2019). See also Amnesty International (2017): Massives Racial Profiling durch die Kölner Polizei in der Silvesternacht. Maßnahme muss kritisch aufgearbeitet werden: <http://amnesty-polizei.de/massives-racial-profiling-durch-die-koelner-polizei-in-der-silvesternacht-massnahme-muss-kritisch-aufgearbeitet-werden/> (retrieved: 08 Oct. 2019) and Deutschlandfunk (2017): Herrschaft durch Vorurteile. Vergifteter Feminismus: https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/herrschaft-durch-vorurteile-vergifteter-feminismus.1310.de.html?dram:article_id=400904 (retrieved: 08 Oct. 2019).

Racism and the mainstream of society

Thus, racism is not a fringe phenomenon, not something confined to isolated neo-Nazi organisations or individuals. Racism, antisemitism and the ideological construction of human “races” did not start in January of 1933 in Germany or in Europe, nor did it come to an end in 1945. German fascism was based on racist, colonial, antisemitic images and racist, colonial, antisemitic practices of exploitation and annihilation which existed both pre- and post-National Socialism. These traditions extend from antisemitic persecution that continued for centuries, over European imperialism and colonialism on into the present day. Despite this, racism is associated only with right-wing extremism in the dominant discourse in Germany and reduced, from a historical perspective, to the National Socialist era.

Inhuman or racist attitudes are not, in fact, limited to the so-called extreme right of German society. Rather, the views and sentiments articulated by right-wing populists can be understood as intensified or exaggerated versions of things that are thought and said by people elsewhere in society. Exclusion and hatred of persons with migrant backgrounds/“non-Whites” are not phenomena limited to a small minority of Germans, as a long-term study on right-wing extremist and antidemocratic attitudes conducted by researchers at the University of Leipzig has shown.²¹ As the limits of acceptable speech in society shift further and further to the right, more and more attention and sensitivity is called for to identify racist structures – and to understand what it is about society that makes them possible and what responsibility society must take on in this respect.

21 The University of Leipzig has been conducting representative surveys of political attitudes in the German population every two years since 2002. They are known as the “Mitte” studies. The 2016 study notes that most Pegida supporters (PEGIDA: Patriotic Europeans against the Islamisation of the West) have extreme right-wing and anti-Islamic attitudes, irrespective of level of education or household income. This contradicts the claim that racism/right-wing extremism is a phenomenon of the lower classes that is always in a causal relationship with financial hardship. Cf. Universität Leipzig (2016): https://www.uni-leipzig.de/service/kommunikation/medienredaktion/nachrichten.html?ifab_modus=detail&ifab_uid=2d5c4ea4c42017072112446&ifab_id=6655 (retrieved: 08 Oct. 2019).

The modernisation of racism

Powerful processes of change influence the ways that racism is articulated. The most prevalent forms vary from one period of time to the next in conjunction with social and historical developments. Thus, racism keeps appearing in different guises, though its basic mode of operation never really changes.²²

By taking on new forms and being rationalised and rendered plausible in different ways, racism has been able to survive for centuries. However, it is not true that one form of racism simply replaces another. Culture, evolutionist concepts of progress and development, religion, biology and lines of phenotypic difference have always operated in combination in European racism, which was globalised through colonialism and imperialism.²³ In Germany, the term “race” was largely discredited because of National Socialism. One effect of this is that racism is externalised: it may be projected outwards, as a phenomenon found in other societies,²⁴ or even onto renegade individuals within German society (such as adherents of neo-Nazi organisations). Reducing racism to the National Socialist period is another externalisation strategy, it can be relegated to a museum, as it were, a closed chapter in the past.

Neither the fact that the word “race” became taboo in Germany after the National Socialist period, nor the scientific debunking of the theory of “races” resulted in the disappearance of racism. On the contrary, it was this that made it possible for

some modified forms of racism to take effect, forms that thrive in environments where racism is not an issue of public discourse and there is widespread denial of its existence. Sometimes, the people who denounce racism and call it by its name draw more outrage than racism itself. This is part of structural racism. Thus, in order to deal with racism responsibly, it is imperative to look beyond National Socialism; one must also examine the (ideological) continuities of National Socialism and colonialism in the present day.

“Nothing is less innocent than non-interference”

Societal spheres and institutions – e.g. schools, families, the justice system, marriage, the police and kindergartens – are not per se free of discrimination. Rather, institutions and social spaces must be actively structured so as to be sensitive to discrimination. This recognition is what makes transformation and the dismantling of racism possible. To this end, people must become aware of the omnipresent and everyday possibility of racist discrimination and render it visible to themselves and others. “I am not a racist!”, “I am not a Nazi!”: these are strategies people use to defend themselves from criticism and efforts to put an end to racist discrimination. Assertions like these pave the way for the denial and simultaneous perpetuation of structural, institutional, and everyday racism. For racism to be overcome, it must first be recognised: a problem that goes unseen, goes unsolved.

Not having to deal with racism is one of the structural privileges enjoyed by some members of our society. There is no escaping racism for people who experience racist discrimination: they are constantly confronted with it in numerous everyday situations. In contrast, those who number among the structurally advantaged can deny or simply ignore the discrimination affecting others. In every society in which people are discriminated against, there are also people who benefit from

22 (Translation of original German): “[In colonialism] the Black population was declared to be ‘primitive’ and ‘uncivilised’ to justify its exploitation and enslavement. Some kind of legitimisation was necessary, above all because the period of colonial conquest was also the ‘age of revolutions’ and the Declaration of the Rights of Man. This means that Europeans had explain why they were denying the humanity of a large part of the world’s population at a time when they had just declared all men to be free and equal. Thus, racism can be understood as a legitimising myth that attempted to provide a ‘rational’ explanation for treating human being as unequal despite society’s adoption of the principle of the equality of all.” Rommelspacher, Birgit (2011): Was ist eigentlich Rassismus? In: Melter, Claus / Mecheril, Paul (eds.): Rassismuskritik. Band 1: Rassismustheorie und -forschung. Schwalbach/Ts.: Wochenschau-Verlag, pp. 25–38.

23 Cf. Hund, Wulf D. (2007): Rassismus, Bielefeld: transcript, pp. 6–8.

24 For instance, the former apartheid regime in South Africa or the eras of “racial segregation” in the USA, or even in the East of Germany: these are examples of “real” racism, nothing else was really racist.

the discrimination.²⁵ Those who do not tackle racism, who do not try to confront their own entanglements with it, who do not recognise and think about the way they benefit from unequal treatment, who do not actively try to reshape structures and material advantages,²⁶ who do not support persons who experience discrimination and help them assert their rights are supporting discrimination and helping to perpetuate it.

Germany is a democratic state governed by the rule of law. That does not mean, however, that institutional and structural discrimination cannot occur here. What it does mean, though, is that (unlike in countries ruled by authoritarian and fascist regimes) the law provides certain safeguards and instruments with which discrimination can be identified and eliminated.

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²⁵ Susan Arndt writes, e.g.: "Racism is [...] a European thought tradition and ideology that invented "races" to position the White "race", and Christianity along with it, as the supposedly "natural" norm and to lend legitimacy to and secure to its own claims to dominance, power and privileges. [...] [The] non-perception of racism [is] an active process of denial that is both rendered possible and, to the same degree, safeguarded by the white privilege of not having to deal with (one's own and/or collective) racism." For the original German, see: Arndt, Susan (2011): Rassismus. In: Arndt, Susan / Ofuatey-Alazard, Nadja (eds.): *Wie Rassismus aus Wörtern spricht: (K) Erben des Kolonialismus im Wissensarchiv deutsche Sprache. Ein kritisches Nachschlagewerk*. Münster: Unrast-Verlag, p. 43.

²⁶ In Germany, the "[l]ife prospects of migrants [...] are substantially influenced by the strong trend towards the emergence of an underclass made up of immigrants of the German social structure, i.e. higher percentages of migrants are positioned in the lower classes and lower percentages are positioned in the higher classes relative to persons resident since birth." For the original German, see Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (2014): *Sozialer Wandel in Deutschland. Migration und Integration*, <http://www.bpb.de/izpb/198020/migration-und-integration?p=all> (retrieved: 08 Oct. 2019). Among those who profit from this are the German middle and upper classes, as they have access to cheap labour and services.

Racism in Germany – not an issue at the UN?²⁷

Prof. Nivedita Prasad

The UN human rights protection system offers several different ways to protect persons affected by racial discrimination. Nearly every human rights treaty contains, towards the beginning, a passage saying that the rights enunciated in the convention extend to all persons without distinction on the basis of race, colour, origin, religion, language, etc. Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights clearly stated back in 1948 that everyone is entitled to human rights regardless of race, colour/descent, language, religion, national or social origin etc. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which were adopted in 1966, both contain considerably more references to racial discrimination; for instance, states are obliged to ensure that the rights recognised in the covenants to all individuals regardless of colour/origin. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), which came into being at nearly the same time, offers extensive protections and the first definition of racial discrimination at the UN level. The ICERD is thus the strongest universal human rights instrument combatting racial discrimination.

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)

ICERD entered into force in 1976 and was ratified by Germany that same year. Even the preamble of this convention is of substantive significance as it refers to the United Nations condemnation of colonialism and all the practices of racial segregation and discrimination associated with it. It also states in its preamble that “any doctrine of superiority based on racial differentiation is scientifically false”. ICERD is the first human rights instrument to define racial discrimination as:

“any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on [...] colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.” (article 1, ICERD).

ICERD prohibits racist actions and laws at all levels and lays an obligation on states to ensure that these are prohibited. It also lays a duty on states to provide effective protection of rights, i.e. to provide adequate judicial protection

and, as appropriate, reparation for victims of racial discrimination. States are also required to step up awareness-raising measures aimed at combatting racial discrimination. Finally, the ICERD advocates the use of positive measures, such as affirmative action, to achieve equality between racialized people and members of the majority society.

In addition to the text of the treaty itself, the General Recommendations of the treaty body are of relevance. These provide guidance on how the individual articles should be understood and thus constitute important interpretation aids. At the time of writing, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) has adopted 35 General Recommendations. The fact that they have formulated explicit recommendations regarding racial discrimination against persons of African descent (no. 34), Roma persons (no. 27) and migrants (no. 30) can be taken as an indication that the CERD committee considers these groups to be particularly vulnerable.

²⁷ The German-language text of which this is a translation is a slightly modified form of a paper that first appeared in: *Zeitschrift für internationale Bildungsforschung und Entwicklungspädagogik* 2013 (2), pp. 4-9.

Indirect discrimination

UN treaty bodies— including CERD — are concerned about indirect discrimination, as well as direct discrimination. The former describes cases where the application of apparently neutral criteria disproportionately affects one group of people, *de facto* discriminating against them. This can be the case when, for instance, membership in an association is tied to residence in a specific district and the majority of the population in the ineligible districts is not white. Another example of indirect racial discrimination would be a requirement that job applicants should be “native speakers” of a language. In a country like Germany, where one can assume that the state is not going to provide publicly for obviously discriminatory practices – e.g. in the form of laws or directives – forms of indirect discrimination are of particular relevance. Social work practitioners hear about indirectly discriminatory practices of this kind from their clients.

Complaint mechanisms

That the UN human rights protection system should be easily accessible to all is a noble objective, that is applicable to some complaint mechanisms. Basically, there are four ways to raise a complaint at the UN: through a parallel report,²⁸ through an individual complaint, called an individual communication,²⁹ by way of the inquiry procedure³⁰ or by appealing to a special rapporteur.

Parallel reports

Every state that ratifies a UN convention obliges itself to submit periodic reports on its implementation of that convention to the relevant treaty body. NGOs,³¹ national human rights institutions,

academic institutions, etc.³² have the opportunity to comment on the state’s report. These “parallel reports” or “shadow reports” take the form of a critical examination of the state’s report. A parallel report can comment on the state-party report, contradict it, supplement it, praise it or draw attentions to omissions in it; parallel reports can relate to the entire report or only to individual articles of the convention. The treaty body uses parallel reports to obtain a nuanced picture of the human rights situation in a country and take note of problematic aspects which can be raised with the Government of the state in question in the context of what is called a “constructive dialogue”. After the constructive dialogue, the committee draws up a document entitled “Concluding observations” on the state of implementation in the country under review. In it, the treaty body identifies deficits, but also praise and recommendations, but most importantly, it presents its view as to where action by the state in question is necessary.

A review of the concluding observations issued by the CERD committee makes it clear that this committee deals far more firmly with racisms than the other committees do. For instance, the CERD committee refers explicitly to racism affecting Muslim persons and/or persons of African descent in Germany – just as it refers in firm language to racism against Roma. Particularly noteworthy is the observation of CERD that an excessive focus on “xenophobia”, antisemitism and right-wing extremism has caused the Federal Government to overlook other forms of racism. This is a criticism that has been raised repeatedly by many NGOs as well.

Individual communications

Individuals can refer complaints on their case to a UN treaty body for clarification through the submission of an “individual communication”. People who believe that their human rights have been violated can complain to the relevant treaty body

²⁸ See Schäfer 2004, Cremer 2005, Hüfner/Siebers/Weiß 2012 and Prasad 2011, pp. 85ff.

²⁹ For more on this topic, see Prasad, 2011, 107ff. and Hübner/Weiß 2012, pp. 68, 14.

³⁰ For more on this topic, see Raue/Rudolph 2006 and Prasad 2011, pp. 127 ff.

³¹ Organisations known as “Quangos”, i.e. quasi autonomous NGOs, are count as NGOs in this respect. These are organisations that enjoy independence with respect to their substantive work despite being funded by the state. In Germany, this is true of many projects in the social work arena as well as other advice services.

³² In addition, lobbying associations and unions, but also individuals contributing to the enjoyment of human rights (e.g. medical personnel, lawyers or relatives of persons whose rights are affected, etc.) can submit parallel reports. For a detailed listing of all those who can be part of civil society see United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 2008, p. vii.

after exhausting domestic legal remedies. In the area of racial discrimination, the decisions of the CERD committee are of great relevance, but also some of the decisions made by the Human Rights Committee. The CERD committee has addressed more than 50 complaints so far, identifying a violation in circa 15 of those cases. So far the CERD committee has only ruled against Germany once, finding a violation of the ICERD: in a 2013 ruling, the committee determined that statements made by Thilo Sarrazin in an published interview were racist and that the authorities charged with protecting human rights had failed to ensure effective protection of human rights in connection with those statements. In the following, I describe three other racial discrimination cases of particular relevance for Germany.

Examples of decisions on individual cases relating to racism³³

Dress codes and discrimination

Two cases taken up by the Human Rights Committee are of relevance for discrimination against persons whose modes of dress are marked by the majority society as religiously motivated. One is the case *B. v. Canada* (208/1986, ICCPR, A/45/40): B., a Sikh who wore a turban, wished to be exempted from the requirement to wear protective headgear at the railway coach yard where he worked. The committee determined that no violation existed, i.e. the state had the right to insist that a Sikh wears a hard hat despite his turban. In the case of *H. v. Uzbekistan* (931/2000, ICCPR, A/60/40), a woman complained that she had been denied access to her programme of study because she wore a head scarf. In this case, the Committee made it clear that there had been a violation of article 18, section 2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (right to freedom of religion).

Racial profiling

The Human Rights Committee's decision on the case of *Williams Lecraft v. Spain* (ICCPR 1493/2006) is of relevance for all Western European countries. Ms Lecraft, a Spanish national of African American

origin, was subjected to an identity check at a railway station; her white companions were not. When asked, the police officer involved confirmed that the police had instructions to check the identity of "coloured" people in order to curb illegal migration. Ms Lecraft tried to challenge these instructions in Spain but none of her attempts to defend her rights and obtain compensation were successful. She therefore filed a complaint with the Human Rights Committee. The committee determined that identity checks carried out by a state to control illegal immigration or prevent crime serve a legitimate purpose. It went on to say, however, that skin colour or other physical or ethnic characteristics should not by themselves be deemed indicative of a person's possible illegal presence in the country. Moreover, in the view of the committee, if such controls are carried out, they should be done in a way that does not target only People of Colour. To act otherwise would violate the dignity of the persons concerned. The committee concluded that the identity check in question was neither reasonable nor objective. It called on Spain to provide the complainant with a public apology and compensation and to take steps to ensure that incidents of this kind were not repeated.

Outlook

In addition to providing clarity in some cases, the UN protection mechanisms can be used in a variety of ways in social work. Used to support arguments, they can be an effective tool and a resource contributing to empowerment. Although none of the rulings described here were issued against Germany, the circumstances involved are clearly of relevance for (social work in) Germany. People of Colour and/or migrants in Germany also experience racism, and all too often, social workers report that the state is failing to protect their rights effectively. Also access to public establishments – such as restaurants, discos and sport clubs – and the complex topic of racial profiling are issues that cannot be ignored in the field of youth social work. Thus, it makes sense to try to cite the outcomes of these complaint cases in support of one's arguments. One could, for instance, draw the public prosecutor's attention to similarities between a given case and one that has been reviewed by a UN treaty body. Just announcing that a complaint is being

³³ There is a compilation of more cases relating to (racial) discrimination in: Prasad/Muckenfuss/Foitzik 2019.

submitted to a UN treaty body might be enough to get authorities to rethink their position on certain matters; certainly, it would be worth trying this more often.

Decisions in individual cases make it clear that complaining to the UN about incidents involving racism can be beneficial when the state does not take action on its own. Knowledge (practical and methodological knowledge) about human rights protections can become an important source of power in this context: it can give social work practitioners leverage that they can use, with their clients or on their behalf, to find solutions at the individual or structural level. In addition, for a person affected by an injustice, it can be important to be able to identify it, or hear a social work practitioner identify it as a human rights violation. Seen in that light, it is clear that racial discrimination, though frequently experienced by individuals, also has strong structural components. Racial discrimination constitutes a recognised human rights violation if the state either commits the discriminatory act itself or is aware of the discrimination and fails to take effective action to prevent it. Knowing that this is so may make the persons affected and social workers more willing to take action to defend their rights.

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Whistles of Hope. Ickerweg Camp, Osnabrück

A story of Resistance and Solidarity

Hassan Numan

The story of the successful Deportation prevention in Osnabrück, Ickerweg, that happened in the second half of 2016 and lasted for one year when refugees at this camp met with activists of “No Lager” (an active political group working in Anti-Deportation for several years in Osnabrück) after refugees had organized themselves and formed a surveillance spot using whistles to alarm tenants of the camp when the authorities arrived to perform deportation orders, and upon the alarm all the tenants left their rooms and formed a blockade outside making it impossible to pick the wanted ones. This exercise performed successfully four times, it remains significant for many reasons:

- It is a story of the importance and capabilities of a “Self-Organisation” of refugees. In its success to prevent deportation and its latest stages that followed and growing to form “The executive Committee of refugees in Ickerweg” that widened its scope of work far beyond deportations.
- It is a virus: when we travelled around Germany visiting many camps and telling the story, we were spreading “resistance virus” and we were spreading hope. And giving others living in similar situations a “Best practice” that they can adopt, and gladly few they did.

- It is a sample of a different approach of collaboration between German activists (No Lager) and refugees. A collaboration that involves empowerment of refugees to stand for their rights of Movement and rights to stay rather than the classical form of “protecting” them.
- It challenges the dilemma of the legitimacy of Deportation Acts, by designing a form of legitimate act of demonstration to reach the goal of preventing Deportation.

In the era of Human displacement all around the globe, it is essential to highlight and bring the relevant discourses of Human rights of movement and rights to stay on spot, as awareness, practices as of this is the only way to effect policy making in favour of those movements and regardless how sad and complicated the situation, as of their is hope, sometimes it needs just to whistle.

Hassan Numan

*An Ex. Tenant of Ickerweg camp at its glory time.

Hassan Numan is a Co-Founder of the executive committee of Sudanese Refugees in Osnabrück, activist in No Lager Osnabrück, and Solidarity City Osnabrück.

4 Discrimination-conscious Human Rights Education in Practice



Privileges of *white* teachers in schools

Dr Jule Bönkost

Your privilege is not a reason
for guilt, it is part of your power,
to be used in support of those
things you say you believe.

Audre Lorde

In this contribution, I discuss *white*³⁴ privileges in the school context. I set out a list, not an exhaustive one, of some of the *white* privileges enjoyed by *white* teachers. The list is meant to be read by *white* teachers. The ability to engage in critical reflection on their own *white* positioning is one of the skills their profession demands. This list is intended to serve as a sensitisation tool to help *white* teachers become aware of the *white* privileges they enjoy. It is intended to help them become better able to recognise racist discrimination in the school, so that they can take action against it and be able to fulfil their own educational mission.

Racism: Two sides of a coin

Racism has two sides: the disadvantage of experiencing discrimination and the advantage of privilege. While racism creates disadvantages for Black people and People of Colour, it creates advantages for *white* people. The US sociologist, historian and civil rights advocate W.E.B. Du Bois described the benefits that *whites* get from racism back in 1935.³⁵ Up to today, most *white* people are not aware of these advantages, which they enjoy and which Black people and People of Colour are denied. Despite the great extent to which these privileges shape their lives, *whites* are

barely conscious of how racism affects them as *white* people. Because *white* privileges are considered normal and taken for granted despite being restricted only to *whites*, the systemic nature of racism is denied. This is why critical whiteness studies assume that *whites* must recognise their privileged position. Only having done so can they understand racism, a prerequisite for sustained effective action against racism on the part of *white* people.

Several authors have drawn up lists of *white* privileges in an attempt to get *whites* to become more aware of how *whites* benefit from racism. I have drawn on some of these to prepare my own list below. The list compiled by Peggy McIntosh, a scholar of education from the United States ([1988] 2001), is well-known. McIntosh came up with the metaphor of an “invisible knapsack” packed full of privileges that *white* people always have with them. *White* privileges have been addressed in Germany, too. Noah Sow (2008) and Eske Wollrad (2005: 193–194), for instance, have both drawn up lists of privileges. As their contributions make clear, one must bear *white* privileges in mind when discussing racism and trying to counteract it with enduring impact. It is essential that *white* persons make themselves aware of their *white* privileges (e.g. in their immediate professional environment, in their relationships, and when taking a stand against racism) if they wish to address racism and become an ally in the battle against it. The aim of talking about *white* privileges is not to make accusations or elicit feelings of guilt: the idea is to encourage *white* people to take up a self-reflective antiracist stance from which they can build antiracist practices. Having become aware of their position of *white* privilege and reflected critically upon it, *white* people can use that position, which comes with its specific challenges and opportunities, as the starting point for antiracist practices.

Facets of racism in schools

White privileges, which are expressions of racism, can be found in all areas of society. The institution of the school is no exception. That the school systems do not provide learning environments free of racism, that, on the contrary, schools are

34 Adopting the approach of Eggers et al. (2005: 13) I have put the term “*white*”, used as an analytical category, in italics to mark the construct-nature of this position. The term “Black” is capitalised to emphasise the “level of meaning of the potential of Black resistance, that has been written into this category by Blacks and People of Colour” (Eggers et al. 2005: 13 [translated from the original German]).

35 In his work *Black Reconstruction in America* (1935), Du Bois writes: “[T]he *white* group of laborers, while they received a low wage, were compensated in part by a sort of public and psychological wage. They were given public deference and titles of courtesy because they were *white*. They were admitted freely with all classes of *white* people to public functions, public parks, and the best schools.” (Du Bois [1935] 1965: 700).

institutions in which racism is commonplace, has been made clear repeatedly, including in the last two reports on the topic by Germany's Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (ADS 2013, 2017) and in a publication providing practical guidance on how schools can identify and avoid discrimination³⁶ that the ADS issued in 2018.

Several recent studies (e.g. Marmer/Sow 2015; Riegel 2016) along with publications of various civil society organisations (e.g. open society initiative 2013; Life e.V./ADAS 2018a, 2018b) have pointed out that there is inadequate protection against discrimination in schools and that racism and other forms of discrimination are part of everyday life at school. These reports, studies and papers give many examples of the realities of racism at schools and the areas in which unequal treatment results in disadvantages for Black people and People of Colour in schools every day. They form the frame of reference for the following list of privileges.

Whites also experience racism in the school context. But racism has a very different effect on them than it does on Blacks and People of Colour. Moreover, experiences of racism by Black people and People of Colour in schools and the influence that racism at school has on *whites* are closely interlinked. This applies equally to all groups of persons at schools, students, teachers, school administrators, other education personnel and parents. The same realities of racism that create a discriminatory learning environment for Black students and students of Colour create a privileged learning environment for *white* students.³⁷ By the same token, racism at school

results in a discriminatory working environment for teachers who experience racism, while for *white* teachers it equates to advantages, etc.

Whites enjoy advantages at schools due to their *whiteness* that Black people and People of Colour do not. This is because the institution of the school is a *white* space. It is, to borrow a metaphor from Sara Ahmed (2017: 163), an old piece of clothing that fits the *white* body just right. The school has taken on the shape that fits *white* bodies. Because it supports the shape of the *white* body, school is comfortable, and makes things easier for *white* actors. School is easier for them to "wear" because of its *whiteness* (see Ahmed 2017: 162 – 163). "A garment takes on the shape of those who normally wear it; you can wear it more easily, if your shape is the same as theirs. Thus, a privilege can also be understood in this way: being able to wear something more easily. A privilege saves energy. It takes less effort to do or be something" (Ahmed 2017: 163).³⁸ Accordingly, because the institution of the school is tailored for *white* persons, it is easier, in terms of the energy investment involved, for *whites* to get through it. But what exactly are the advantages that *white* people enjoy in the school context?

Privileges of *white* teachers

Below, I list several privileges enjoyed by *white* teachers in the school context.³⁹ The *white* privileges mentioned are examples of school structures that make it easier for *white* teachers to meet the requirements schools place on them and offer them more opportunities. These advantages allow them to avoid the extra effort and disadvantages that teachers who experience racism in schools are familiar with. All the *white* privileges listed derive from exclusions of Black people and People of Colour. The *white* privileges exist only because teachers who experience racism are disadvantaged in these contexts. Many of the *white* privileges exist in an identical or similar form outside of schools as well. Some are specific to schools.

³⁶ Title: "Diskriminierung an Schulen erkennen und vermeiden".

³⁷ The privileged position referred to relates to racism. Whereas this doesn't apply for racism *white* students can be negatively affected by other forms of discrimination. For instance, *white* students may be discriminated against on the grounds of their gender, their sexual identity, social background, a disability or their appearance in relation to weight and height (body shaming). In the context of racism, however, they are always advantaged. *White* students may be insulted in specific situations because they are *white* (e.g. "deutsche Kartoffel" ["German potato"]) or excluded (e.g. from *empowerment* offers aimed at persons who have experienced racism). However, this does not nullify their position of social power that racism constructs. For this reason, these insults and exclusions are not examples of racism, which is a form of structural discrimination that grew up over the course of history and is reflected in institutions as well as in interpersonal interactions. For a more in-depth treatment of this subject see Weran-derneinenbrunnengraebt (2012).

³⁸ Translated from original German.

³⁹ For a list of privileges of *white* students of relevance to racism see Bönkost, Jule (2018): „Weiße Privilegien in der Schule“: https://www.academia.edu/36983907/Wei%C3%9Fe_Privilegien_in_der_Schule (retrieved: 17 Jun. 2019).

Many overlap or are closely linked. As a basic rule, all the *white* privileges listed buttress one another.

1. Because I am *white*, I experience a certain feeling of unchallenged belonging, a kind of culture of welcome, familiarity and security. This has a positive effect on how well I identify with my workplace.
2. I am not automatically viewed as foreign by other teachers, education staff or students.
3. I can assume that the likelihood is very high that my colleagues and my supervisors in the school administration are *white*, like me.
4. On my first day on the job, I do not need to worry that other people in the school might mistake me for a member of the cleaning staff or that I might be told not to park my car in the teacher's parking lot because it is reserved for teachers.
5. Because I am *white*, I can feel confident that no one will ask me where I'm from and that I won't have to justify why I live in my own country.
6. I do not have to expect to hear racist labels when people speak to me or about me.
7. Because I am *white*, I can feel confident I will not be the object of any discriminatory stereotyping, prejudices, culturalising or exoticising by my colleagues, the school administration, students or their parents.
8. I never need to wonder whether I am being discriminated against at my workplace because of my *whiteness*.
9. I do not have to develop strategies for dealing with racism in the school.
10. I do not need to wonder whether racism is playing a role when I have trouble with my class or my work with colleagues or parents.
11. I do not have the feeling that I have to work harder than my Black colleagues or other teachers of Colour.
12. I can be sure that my role in the teacher community at my school will not be reduced to one specific task because I am *white*, such as translating at parent-teacher conferences.
13. I teach according to curricula that present an image of the world which depicts as the norm, centres around and attaches a high value to people who, like me, are *white*.
14. I can be sure that the teaching and learning materials for instructional use represent people who, like me, are *white*, framing and addressing them as self-determined actors and not in the role of victims or outsiders.
15. In my classes, I can disregard the experiences, perspectives, voices and resistance to racism of people who experience racism without having my suitability as a teacher and professionalism called into question in the *white* school environment for such neglect.
16. In my classes, I can categorise persons, define differences between "the cultures" and hierarchise cultures.
17. I can feel sure that there are people who, like me, are *white* portrayed in the pictures and posters on the walls.
18. When I go on a field trip, I can assume that I am very likely to encounter people who, like me, are *white* and that my presence will be seen as normal.
19. If I attend an external professional training event, I can assume that there will be people around me who, like me, are *white* and that my presence will be seen as normal.
20. I can feel sure that my *whiteness* will not detract from the acceptance or respect that students or their parents grant me.
21. My ability to teach and to make important decisions and my performance in general will not be called into question because I am *white*.
22. I can be late to class, to the schoolyard when it's my turn to supervise, to a meeting or to a

- conference without someone assuming that it is because I am *white*.
23. If I fail to perform my duties responsibly, no one will think it is because I am *white*.
24. I can feel confident that my colleagues do not believe that I was hired to raise the percentage of *white* teachers at the school, even if that might be true.
25. I can feel sure that my treatment as a *white* person in the school will not have a negative impact on my emotional state.
26. I can believe that the school is a “diverse” island free of racism and feel good about that.
27. I can believe that all students are equal in my eyes and that I do not see any differences and I can feel good about that.
28. I am not seen as representing all *whites*. My *whiteness* contributes to allowing me to be seen as an individual.
29. My colleagues will never call on me to speak for all *whites*, ask to tell them something about what *white* people are saying about a particular issue.
30. When I bring up a problem, I am never taken less seriously because I am *white*.
31. I do not have to react to racist incidents and can decide to ignore the everyday racism in the school. In my *white* school environment, my fitness as an educator and professionalism will never be called into question for such negligence on my part.
32. If I raise the subject of racism in school, it is unlikely that people there will think I am touchy, aggressive, angry, and emotional.
33. If I suggest that racism is a problem at the school, people will find me more credible than they would a teacher who experiences racism.
34. If I bring up the subject of racism in the school or report a case of racism, no one will assume that I am depicting myself as a victim as a ploy to distract people from improper conduct on my part.
35. I can take action against racism in the school without people assuming that I am pursuing a personal agenda for my own benefit.
36. If I get tired of challenging racism in the school or at my workplace, I can simply take a break, or stop completely.
37. My authority and credibility as a teacher will not be challenged because I am *white*.
38. When students or parents exhibit a lack of confidence in me, I can feel sure that it is not because I am *white*.
39. No one denies my neutrality or objectivity because I am *white*.
40. If I do not get a promotion, it is definitely not because I am *white*.
41. It is highly unlikely that I would run risk of discrimination by talking about racism during class.
42. It is highly unlikely that I would run risk of discrimination by doing a project day or a project week on the topic of racism.
43. I can address the topic of racism without having to consider the repercussions on persons who are *white*, like me.
44. I can address the topic of racism without considering the impact it will have on my teaching practice.
45. I can feel confident that I will not be persecuted or harassed in a racist manner because of my *whiteness* while on my way to work or back home.
46. I have the privilege of not being treated differently because I am *white*, of experiencing my *whiteness* and my *white* privileges as normal and the privilege of not having to subject them to scrutiny and of being able to behave and teach as though my *whiteness* was not an issue at all.

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“To understand racism, we must also look at colonialism”

A conversation with Josephine Apraku

Mareike Niendorf: Why is it important to examine colonialism and colonial racism in anti-racism education work?

Josephine Apraku: When examining racism, it is important to include a consideration of how it developed historically and specifically how it developed in Germany. Racism operates differently in different nation-state contexts and that has to do with the history of each particular country, among other things. We need this understanding of racism's history to account for it in the present day, to understand its complexity and be able to combat it. Thus, to understand racism in present-day Germany, we have to look at colonialism and specifically at colonial racism.

But antiracist education work does not necessarily have to address the topics of racism and colonialism per se. Antiracist education work can address completely different topics, such as music, art, or mathematics. In these areas, too, you can apply an antiracism standard, e.g. by asking yourself: am I using racist external designations, or am I using self-designations? What vision of the world is my education work based on? Do I have a Eurocentric image of the world, or perhaps also a post-colonial or de-colonial image of the world? All these aspects are of relevance. Thus, to ensure that antiracist education is effective, it is important to examine the effects of past ages on the present day while also devising practical strategies for education work that we can use to deconstruct common Eurocentric perspectives.

In your opinion, do schools address the topics of colonialism and colonial racism adequately?

Although the topic of colonialism does get addressed in schools, it is usually not through the lens of a critical examination of racism. For instance, teachers are still using class materials that omit all mention of the Namibia genocide. There are also instructional materials out there containing exercises in which students are asked to consider the allegedly positive and negative effects that German colonialism had on the population of the African continent. Not to put too fine a point

on it, but that would be like asking pupils to draw up a list of pros and cons of Nazism for Jewish people in Germany – something which would be unthinkable in this country, and rightly so. As I see it, this testifies to an enduring ignorance and denial of the violence associated with colonial oppression and exploitation, which in some respects continues to this day. What is more, people know very little about German colonialism, about the extent to which it is a history of violence and particularly about the forms of resistance associated with it. Thus, when colonialism is discussed in schools, this is usually from the perspective of the perpetrators, expressions of resistance do not come up at all. Finally, colonialism is associated exclusively with the past. There is no examination of the consequences of the past with respect to how they shape the present.

What changes are needed in programmes for the initial and continuing training of teachers?

It would be important to make sure that all training programmes cover all forms of discrimination and the critical analysis of discrimination, and not just with respect to addressing the topic of racism and covering colonialism in the classroom. This is needed because there are people sitting in the classrooms who are affected by these topics. After all, we live in a society that is growing increasingly diverse. Having said that, I would always apply a critical racial lens when addressing the topic of colonialism, even in a group made up of only *white* pupils.

Even now, there are in fact no required courses on discrimination and the critical examination thereof at universities. The offers that do exist tend to be put together by civil society organisations, often on a volunteer and/or a limited time basis, like our continuing-education series “Here and Now! Colonialism and Colonial Racism in School Classes!” The problem, of course, is that the situation of projects like these is extremely precarious. So, it is also very important that the critical analysis of discrimination be included in the university training of teachers.

What should educators bear in mind when planning education work on colonialism and colonial racism?

A great many aspects play a role there. For instance, a lot depends on the target group being addressed, or for whom the education material is being designed. In general, I have noticed that perspectives of resistance tend to be left out, even in the context of antiracism education work. Accordingly, there is often a lack of knowledge on the topic from the various African countries. When critiques of colonialism are discussed, they are often critiques put forward by whites. *White* critiques of racism and the critical examination of *whiteness* are important for achieving change, but it is still important to subject both to scrutiny from post-colonial perspectives. If we are addressing Namibia, for instance, we could talk about the seizure of land during the colonial period, a process that originated in Germany. But we could also – and I see this as equally important – look at the extent to which land ownership in Namibia still exhibits a colonial distribution pattern. Both topics can be addressed from perspectives of resistance!

What criteria should educators consider when selecting material?

In my view, the material is not the primary factor determining whether or not teachers can shape their instruction to be antiracist. Even when using problematic materials, they can still convey a critical perspective on racism. For instance, the exercise mentioned above, asking about the benefits and disadvantages of colonialism, could itself be assessed from a critical perspective. I would always want to make sure that the material is appropriate for different target groups, taking into account the varying degrees that people's lives are shaped by racism, and that it does not reproduce racism too strongly – that it does not contain the N-word, for instance. When I use the term target group here, I mean how learners in the group are positioned with respect to racism, i.e., whether everyone in the group is *white* or whether it is a group with *white* pupils, Black pupils and other pupils of Colour. There are materials that, with the intention of promoting empathy, depict a lot of brutality, thus replicating the racist and colonial perspectives. It would be helpful to work with materials that put

empowerment at the focus by telling the stories of resistance while still making critical treatment of the subject possible.

What advice would you give to education practitioners who can have a multiplier effect and are interested in doing more work on these topics?

It is important to develop a good knowledge base. Simply because this knowledge is marginal knowledge. It is not the kind of knowledge we come across in daily life, because our daily lives are shaped by racist structures. Accordingly, everything which smacks of a critical analysis of racism represents a sort of break with this norm. Acquiring knowledge can also help educators to lower their own stress levels, particularly with respect to their own involvement. *White* teachers, in particular, often feel powerless regarding their role: they think, but I am *white* and there is no way I can get out of that position. But that is not the point at all! The point is to understand the challenges and limitations that this position brings with it: specifically, that knowledge about racism can be a form of expert knowledge but never be experiential knowledge. It is also important to examine the challenges and opportunities associated with it. For instance, *white* teachers often get greater support in their efforts to strengthen the antiracist approach in schools than Black teachers do. I can only recommend getting informed and, at the same time, taking a relaxed approach to dealing with the fact that your position concerning racism comes with its own set of opportunities and limitations.

It is not a question of doing everything right. What matters is to keep deconstructing and engaging in critical reflection and to improve your practices on that basis.

Josephine Apraku is a scholar of African studies. She has been a lecturer at the Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences in Berlin since 2015 and at the Center for Transdisciplinary Gender Studies (ZtG) at the Humboldt-Universität in Berlin since 2016. Together with Jule Bönkost, she directs the IDB | Institute for anti-discriminatory Education in Berlin.

She was in conversation here with Mareike Niendorf.

Schools with racism and too little courage to admit it

Mutlu Coşkun

Since May of 2019, 3000 schools all over Germany have been part of the network “Schools without racism – Schools with courage”. This is good news. It is great to see schools taking a stance against racism and signalling their opposition to it. Nonetheless, I would like to share my experiences with schools, including schools “without racism”, here. There are no schools without racism, or at least, not that I have ever seen. I should explain what I mean by racism.

In a nutshell, anything that marginalises human beings because of their actual or assumed origin, religion or skin colour is racism. I can find this racism at school on three levels, namely, the structural, the institutional and the individual levels. For the structural level, one needs to look at the teachers and the pupils. We have had so much diversity in our schools for decades now, but only among the pupils. Here and there, one sees People of Colour working as teachers, but we are a long way from having our staff rooms reflect our society. This would have to be the case before we can even begin to talk about neutrality. Racism is also operating at the institutional level though. This means that there does not have to be a person acting in a racist manner – people can be marginalised by ordinary work processes. Researchers at the University of Mannheim studied this by examining the extent to which grading was influenced by whether the pupil had a Turkish name. The researchers asked 204 students to grade two different dictation papers. The papers were, in fact, identical. The only point on which they differed was the name of the pupil, which was either Max or Murat. The researchers found that

although the two dictation papers contained exactly the same mistakes, the average grade assigned to Murat was lower.⁴⁰ This also suggests that people who have “foreign” names are less well treated by schools, as an institution. Finally, racism also occurs at the individual level. This includes racisms that children reproduce themselves. However, it also includes racisms that teachers convey in their teaching and through their teaching. For instance, one teacher asked students to discuss/consider the question, “Should immigrants of Muslim origin be required to attend a parenting class?” The teacher emphasised that she, of course, did not believe that they should be. But simply by asking the class to think about this question, she implied that there was such a thing as a “Muslim origin”, that people of this origin are often immigrants and that these people are thought to have some kind of problem raising children. This actively reinforces stereotypes. Thus, deconstructing the racism at schools is not that simple after all. As I said at the beginning, it is great that schools are taking this initiative, but it might be necessary to do a little more than fastening a label to the school.

Mutlu Coşkun, who works at an integrated comprehensive school, is earning his teaching credentials in the subjects of German and Philosophy and is an activist for empowerment of Muslims and in the area of anti-Muslim racism. He did volunteer youth work and served on the board of a variety Muslim associations, later serving as the chair of the Muslim academic group at his university.

⁴⁰ cf. Bonefeld, Meike / Dickhäuser, Oliver (2018): (Biased) Grading of Students' Performance. Students' Names, Performance Level, and Implicit Attitudes. In: *Frontiers in Psychology*.

“The Global South is here in Germany”

A conversation with Maria Virginia Gonzalez Romero

Beatrice Cobbinah: The project you coordinate, “AbriendoPuertas – EröffneDirWege” [Engl. opening pathways] encompasses, among other things, empowerment training, competence- and biography-oriented intercultural (KomBI) career advising and liberation pedagogy, and it is aimed towards persons with experience of migration. Can you describe the vision behind it?

Maria Virginia Gonzalez Romero: For many years now, I have had a vision of opening my own advising centre. It is to be a café, with a library and a small stage. This café – *El Malecón*⁴¹ – is the centrepiece of the building, in which a wide range of advising services are offered. A café where people can go for low-threshold advice. The idea is, that the first time people come, they just stop by, have something to drink, perhaps just to be on their own. A lot of informational material is lying out, in several languages. The people working in the café can provide more information, answer questions and perhaps even offer a little advice.

The whole thing is rooted in the recognition that some people are hesitant to seek advice from a service. So, the idea is that people can just drop by the café and make an initial contact, without having to sign up for an appointment. Someone can decide to come in for an advising session or not, as they wish. The person might just sit there and read, have something to drink and get an idea of what it is like there. And then simply leave again if they like. The people who work there are trained advisors – I define them – us – as border crossers. Most of these trained persons are from the Global South and many of them are active as volunteers in their communities. Many of them enjoy a lot of recognition in those communities.

Another thing that was very important to me was that the training that people receive would open up a path to paid work as consultants, if only on a free-lance basis. Volunteer work is especially important, and I support it. But it is not acceptable for people

not to be paid for their work because their professionalism is not recognised.

Your training methods are based on a variety of educational approaches. Which concepts have you drawn together for this?

This concept combines several educational approaches: empowerment training, liberation pedagogy – *Educación popular*, social justice training with diversity approaches, KomBI career guidance, dialogue methods and others.

I was already politically active when I was eleven years old. There were working groups in the organisation I belonged to, it was civic education. So, from the time I was a child, I became familiar with and internalised the concept of solidarity and equal rights. It was *Educación popular* that captured my heart. It is widespread throughout Latin America. One *Educación popular* approach became famous around the world: Paulo Freire’s liberation pedagogy. It is civic education. You learn to sit down and analyse your daily life. I look for tools, ideas, arguments, how I can take power over my daily life and emancipate myself through the acquisition of knowledge. For empowerment training, we have adopted the concept of Pasquale Rotter, from her personally, **Empowerment in Motion**: this concept starts from the conviction that discrimination is always attached to the body. This means that “bodies” that “look different” or “sound different”, bodies that “come from somewhere else”, bodies that do not comply with the dominant norm are devalued, marginalised and sanctioned in the systems of inequality – or “adjusted”.

Can you describe the concept in more detail?

Pasquale Rotter’s concept of “Empowerment in Motion” assumes that experiences of discrimination and oppression inscribe themselves into people’s bodies. Experiences like flight and forced migration, repeated sexist and racist denigration and violence leave permanent traces on the body and shape the way we live, think, and feel. If they are not physically transformed, experiences of oppression lead to rigidity, debilitation and/or illness. One could almost say that, for every experience of violence that is not dealt

⁴¹ A *malecón* is an esplanade, a walkway. I can stand there and take a look around, perhaps linger, or just keep walking. Anything is possible on this *malecón*.

with or processed, there is a rigid muscle somewhere in the body, a muscle that cannot relax. So “Empowerment in Motion” works with an individual’s own body as a tool to “transform” one’s own “rigidities” and ultimately to change society by doing so. For this purpose, Pasquale developed several methods that facilitate empowerment and liberation by getting the body back “in motion” – including breathing, which Pasquale calls the basic motion of the body. Her methods are based on breathing and mindfulness techniques, bodywork and movement and contact improvisation techniques. We learned with her what racism and discrimination on other grounds means for our bodies. How do we react physically and emotionally to discrimination and how does that tie in with our thoughts and conclusions about reality? How do these experiences manifest themselves physically? As pain, for instance? In our training, Pasquale provided activities aimed at raising participants’ awareness of our own bodies, of other participants and of their surroundings, and she also kept this approach over the entire process, as a way to support us through it.

Social justice is a concept from the USA, which has been modified to fit the German context,⁴² that takes a critical perspective involving the assessment of (structural) power. It is inspired by the civil rights movement in the USA, and with proximity to *Educación popular*. I use the social justice approach and the Mahloquet Dialogue method in our training to enable both trainers and participants to examine their own attitudes.

What role does language play in your training concepts?

Discussion about various aspects of sensitivity to language arose frequently among the participants in the training. A specific example is colours and idioms: colours always have a meaning, but the meaning is not the same everywhere or for every person. For instance, several participants commented on the expression “*der rote Faden*”. The colour red was perceived as problematic and sometimes caused confusion because of the associations it evokes: for some people, red means danger, “caution, do not go this way, you will get lost” or something similar. This

makes the challenges associated with adages and idioms clear.

A failure to reflect on language is often intricately connected with a privileged way of thinking. Language has a potential to closely interconnect with meanings embedded in peoples social and cultural reality. So, we need to create new frameworks for reading and speaking. Frameworks that make the value of knowledge that is not Eurocentric visible rather than ignoring, erasing it. It is important to shine a light on institutional colonial thinking, to bring it into the open. Too often, people ignore the fact that human beings do not arrive in Germany with no language, but in fact often bring multiple languages with them. This fact should be recognised and respected as important and valuable *treasure chests of cultural knowledge*.

How can decolonial (further-) education concepts make a sustaining contribution to enabling people to make better use of their skills and resources?

Decolonial thinking is an ideological and sociocultural positioning. It requires an ethical stance of respect for human beings in all their cultural manifestations, of caring for the values that improve him* / her* / them*, as opposed to global social injustice. It aims at generating strategies to counter the denial and obliteration of knowledge of all people with experience of flight and/or migration, whom the society of dominance sees as “the others”.

There were many things that I did not understand when I first came to Germany. Why my university degree was not recognised, for instance. I had an exceptionally good degree. I asked myself where I would be able to find work, doing what, and what my options were. At the same time, my skills and abilities were not valued and my expertise was often discounted because I spoke very little German. Here in Germany, I earned a doctorate in the “university of life” as “the other”. All these experiences shaped me and strengthened my sense of the importance of equal rights. I began to gather as much knowledge as possible to better understand and change my situation. Due to my experiences with *Educación popular*, I was interested in gaining knowledge not just for myself but instead, to share and exchange knowledge with other people in similar situations. For people with experience of migration and racism, the path to the labour market or to training opportunities

⁴² Leah Czollek, Gudrun Perko = Potsdam University of Applied Sciences.

can involve a process that takes years. Structural violence is quite distinct, and many social limitations and institutional constraints determine the surrounding conditions. Despite the 2012 Recognition Act,⁴³ even (highly) qualified migrants from the Global South face institutional hurdles that prevent them from gaining appropriate access to the labour market. In addition, advisory services are very strongly or exclusively geared towards regulatory requirements by the people in office. They impose these restrictions on the person in need of support, rather than utilising their privileged position in this society to explore and explain where there is latitude, helping the person to look for, and hopefully find ways to move forward. When advisors are unwilling to leave their comfort zone, to reflect on and change privileges and what it means to be *white*, the exclusion of others is simply reproduced. There is an urgent need for trainers and advisors to adopt and impart a decolonial perspective.

Can you explain that in more detail?

A decolonial education concept should enable trainers and multipliers to recognise and name their own discrimination baggage. And to use their privileges productively. A decolonial perspective specifically entails an examination of the consequences of colonial rule. In this perspective, knowledge of the South would no longer be obscured and/or appropriated. Recurrently, Western Europe has appropriated a great deal of knowledge originating in the cultures that it obliterates and claiming it as its own. Through the lens of this analysis and from this perspective, people with experiences of flight/forced or “voluntary” migration are no longer cast in the role of “victims” but are seen as people whose experiences bear important knowledge. It is necessary to talk about racism as well. If we can do all this, we can actively intervene in social processes. If we acknowledge all this, a path forward opens. This also explains why there were debates about this in your Standard Human Rights project. Our knowledge, our experience is often used as a commodity,

a “cost-free” commodity that can be used and taken over – while the sources of this knowledge are obscured. As I described before: interacting with this knowledge requires responsibility, i.e. establishing and developing a decolonial way of thinking and stance. I can only repeat, with other words, what I have already explained: marginalised persons, like people with experiences of migration from the Global South, Black people, people with experiences of flight/forced migration and others, possess specific bodies of knowledge that, even today, are still not acknowledged as such. At the same time, access to formal education is difficult or impossible for these persons, e.g. due to language barriers, a refusal to recognise educational degrees, etc.

What should be done? Educational institutions can contribute towards making their spaces accessible for these persons and towards the recognition of their knowledge as knowledge. This is viable: by stepping out of one’s comfort zone, identifying, and questioning one’s own privileges, understanding that the world does not end at the European borders, and that the Global South is here in Germany, self-organised as migrants, as refugees, as political exiles with their own languages, their own knowledge, their own experiences and their own visions and utopias.

Maria Virginia Gonzalez Romero has been a political activist for many years. She studied sociology and education in Venezuela. For political reasons, she went into “voluntary” exile in Romania, where she studied business administration at the University of Cluj Napoca. She is a social-justice trainer with a diversity approach and organises her own projects (currently: *Abriendo Puertas*). Her thinking has been shaped by her biography: *Educación popular*, pedagogy of the oppressed, community work, Avia-Yala world view, decolonial and queer theories and feminist and antiracist thought.

She was in conversation here with Beatrice Cobbinah.

Project publication:

Maria Virginia Gonzalez Romero (2017): Am Anfang war eine Vision. Ein Prozess zu einer Beratung im Kontext von Kolonialität

https://www.via-bayern.de/misc/uploads/2018/12/AP_Broschure.pdf (retrieved: 12 Aug. 2020)

⁴³ German legislation: Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications Act (Gesetz zur Verbesserung der Feststellung und Anerkennung im Ausland erworbener Berufsqualifikationen).

Conception and realisation of offers for discrimination-conscious human rights education

Mareike Niendorf

The aim of human rights education and protection against discrimination is the realisation of equal rights for all human beings. However, many human beings – and particularly human beings who have been marginalised – are often de facto unable to exercise their rights. This is often the case for refugees. At the same time, racism, as a power relation, structures society and is reflected in social and institutional rules, practices and discourses. Considering this, how can education contribute towards shaping a society that recognises the dignity and rights of refugees? How can human rights strengthen a culture of debate that encourages the frank exchange of opinions while simultaneously protecting against discriminatory speech? How can educators approach and address the topics of structural and institutional racism? These were the thoughts and questions guiding the workshops and seminars of the “Standard Human Rights” project. The need for discrimination-conscious human rights education was the starting point for the design and execution of these events. The project sought to strengthen educator’s abilities to design and realise their own offers grounded in human rights and an awareness of discrimination.

This section describes thoughts, ideas, approaches, and experiences gathered during the project. The intent is to document the results and learning experiences from the workshops, while providing suggestions and ideas that other educators can use in their own practice. Although the project workshops focussed on topics of flight/forced migration, asylum and racism, many of the aspects presented here are of quite general relevance for discrimination-conscious human rights education work, thus this section can serve as a resource for planning and implementing offers on other topics in this area as well.

1 Fundamentals: Human rights education and protection against discrimination⁴⁴

Human rights are universal. They serve as a globally recognised ethical and legal standard, and they are a key instrument in the prevention and elimination of discrimination. As a legal framework, they make it possible for people to assert and enforce their rights and those of others. At the same time, human rights offer guidance that can help us shape the way we live together in society. Human rights education is necessary for human rights to fulfil their functions. Only people who know their rights are able to assert them and enforce them. Thus, human rights education contributes fundamentally to the democratic state governed by the rule of law. Formally, the right to human rights education is established in several human rights treaties,⁴⁵ and various international⁴⁶ and national⁴⁷ instruments reaffirm its significance and or elaborate its understanding. For instance, the 2011 UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training describes three dimensions of human rights education:

44 Parts of Section 1 are based on the following publication of the German Institute for Human Rights: Niendorf, Mareike / Reitz, Sandra (2019): Schweigen ist nicht neutral. Menschenrechtliche Anforderungen an Neutralität und Kontroversität in der Schule. https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Publikationen/Information/Information_25_Schweigen_ist-nicht-neutral.pdf and Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte (2016): Materialien für die Bildungsarbeit mit Jugendlichen und Erwachsenen: https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Publikationen/Unterrichtsmaterialien/Menschenrechte_Materialien_fuer_die_Bildungsarbeit_mit_Jugendlichen_und_Erwachsenen.pdf

45 For instance, aims of human rights education are laid down in article 13 of the ICESCR, article 29 of the CRC, article 7 of the ICERD, articles 8 and 24(1) of the CRPD, article 10(c) of the CEDAW and Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

46 UN General Assembly (2011): United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. A/RES/66/137.

47 E.g. Kultusministerkonferenz (2018): Menschenrechtsbildung in der Schule, Beschluss der Kultusministerkonferenz vom 04 Dec. 1980 in the version of 11 Oct. 2018. <https://www.kmk.org/presse/pressearchiv/mitteilung/demokratie-braucht-ueberzeugte-und-engagierte-demokraten-empfehlungen-zur-demokratie-und-menschenr.html> (retrieved: 24 Oct. 2019).

1. Education about human rights, which includes providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection;
2. Education through human rights, which includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners;
3. Education for human rights, which includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others.



In practice, it is not always possible to separate these three dimensions of human rights education. Learning about, for, and through human rights, in terms of both subject matter and methodology, is essential for equipping people to keep examining attitudes, to transmit knowledge and for continually developing ways to take action. Important in this respect is that the practice of human rights education itself enables everyone to feel respected and valued and is learner centred. It should clearly convey the concrete relevance of human rights for the living environment of the learning group. Human rights education lends itself to combination with several other, related disciplines of education. These include civic education, for instance, historical-political education, peace education or education for sustainable development. While it is possible to address human rights in these fields, this does not always take

place. An explicit incorporation of human rights is of crucial importance though: there is a difference between requesting something, – for instance, not to be discriminated against because you have a vague feeling of injustice, – and demanding something, because you are entitled to it. Injustice must be recognised and named. Human rights education's rights-based approach is very distinct from a purely moral appeal, because it considers the responsibilities at the state level and the structural conditions required to meet them.

Non-discrimination is a structural principle of human rights: every individual right, from the freedom of opinion to the right to housing to the right to education, must be guaranteed for all human beings without discrimination. Human rights prohibit unequal treatment that is linked to certain real or assumed characteristics and for which there is no valid justification. Human beings experience discrimination, for instance, as a result of racism and/or on the basis of a religious affiliation, gender identity, sexual orientation or a disability. The prohibition of discrimination is the human rights' response to structural inequalities that are deeply rooted in our society and history, which manifest themselves as unequal treatment, exclusion or even violence. The concept of intersectionality plays an important role in the critical analysis of discrimination. This concept, shaped to a large degree by the Black womens' movements, describes the intersection of power relations that have grown up over history, such as gender, disability, racism, or socio-economic origin. Intersectionality looks at how these dimensions are interwoven and considers them as interactive rather than only additive. An intersectional perspective incorporates not only multiple dimensions, but also their interactions, intersections and mutual amplification effects in the lived realities of human beings.⁴⁸ The non-discrimination principle, of course, is also fundamental for the planning and execution of education offers, i.e. courses, seminars, workshops etc. In this context too, everyone has the right not to be discriminated against, whether that discrimination

48 Cf. Crenshaw, Kimberlé (1989): Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics, University of Chicago Legal Forum: vol. 1989 (1), and Walgenbach, Katharina (2014): Heterogenität – Intersektionalität – Diversity in der Erziehungswissenschaft. Opladen: Budrich, pp. 54–55.

arises from existing structural conditions, barriers to access or interactions between people, through discriminatory statements or abusive language, for instance. Teachers and school administrators in public institutions, in particular, but also all other educators bear the (human rights) responsibility to protect all learners from discrimination and provide a discrimination-conscious learning environment in which everyone's rights are respected. These fundamental antidiscrimination principles apply irrespective of the concrete subject-matter of the education work.

Of course, the critical analysis of discrimination and protections against discrimination can also themselves be the subject-matter of educational events. Particularly in the case of human rights education. While addressing forms of discrimination and the mechanisms behind them in explicit terms is a very important task that educational institutions can and must perform, it is also one that requires the necessary teaching and reflective skills if the aim is the *de facto* reduction of discrimination. In particular, very great attention should be paid to the relationship between reproduction and deconstruction to ensure that "well meant" educational offers do not end up (inadvertently) reinforcing stereotypes.

2 Participant-centred approach

The aim of education offers should be to serve the interests and needs of the participants. It is therefore essential to design offers to be participative and inclusive. To do so, it is advisable to clearly communicate the focus and content of the offer in advance, as well as identify the intended target group, and, if possible, to ask participants about their needs and interests when they sign up. If perspective participants indicate needs that the seminar will not be able to meet, it is essential to make this clear early on and, if possible, to offer alternatives.

Overall, it is helpful for team members to incorporate a great deal of latitude for flexibility into seminar planning, as this allows additional needs to be addressed, even at short notice. However, planning and structure are essential for a successful offer and also necessary for many participants to prepare themselves. In this project, it proved worthwhile to note down the subjects of individual

blocks of the seminar on presentation cards and hang them up in rows, with one row for each day. This meant that the programme was always there for everyone to see but individual units could still be moved or swapped if necessary. Use of an arrow to indicate where the group is in the programme at any given time is also helpful. In addition, it should also be made clear at the start of the seminar that the participants should feel free to indicate that they need a break at any time, or simply decide for themselves to take a break (see also the contribution titled "Selecting and adapting methods for discrimination-conscious education offers").

It is helpful to have a "parking place" or "topic store" to keep track of questions that cannot be addressed when they arise or discussions that stray too far from the current programme. A poster-sized paper (e.g. on a flip chart) positioned in a well-visible place in the room can serve this purpose. This makes it possible to note down thoughts they arise and return to them at a later point in time.

A central aim of the project and in the design of the workshops was that all those involved in a workshop should benefit from it and learn something of interest and significance to them. Very different positions, life experiences and realities, in relation to the seminar topics, were represented at the workshops, whose participants included people with and without experiences of flight, forced migration or other migration backgrounds, Black people and People of Colour and *white* people. Activists, people with only a little knowledge or contact with the topics of racism and refugee experiences, people employed at a refugee accommodation facility and persons whom the latter were catering for. Considered from an intersectional perspective, there were a great many more positions and experiences (of discrimination) represented – some recognised, some not. In addition, quite different sets of knowledge and approaches, diversity of this kind always also brings with it very different objectives (e.g. empowerment or awareness raising). The basic principle of the project was to create a space in which everyone felt at ease and could learn from one another – and would not do so at the expense of other participants (see also the contribution "Selecting and adapting methods for discrimination-conscious education offers")!

It can also be advisable to break up the group occasionally, to work on certain topics or to afford opportunities to fulfil different objectives. It is important to establish a common knowledge base at the beginning of the workshop, e.g. through an input presenting the fundamentals of the topic in question: in this project, a chart showing the individual topics of human rights, forced migration/flight/asylum, racism and education and the links between them was drawn up and then hung on the wall to serve as the basis of the collective work.⁴⁹ This proved helpful, both because it made the ties between these very extensive topics visible and because the process of its development made visible the very different (and complementary) kinds of expertise and positions present in the room, with the result that the chart, although its basic structure remained from one workshop to the next, reflected different additions by participants at the individual workshops and continued to be developed over the course of the project.

3 Content and knowledge⁵⁰

A key component of the concept for the project was that it should bring together the marginalised knowledge of organisations run by and for refugees, migrants, and persons with experience of racism with the expertise of a national human rights institution. The meeting with the advisory body at the start of the project and the continuing exchange that followed, provided the foundation for the content shared in the workshops. In justice to the slogan “Nothing about us without us”,⁵¹ the aim was to integrate self-organised refugees and/or persons who experienced racism with a range of perspectives

as active agents within the project.⁵² Another aim was to create partnerships with local organisations, and arrange for persons who with experience of flight, forced or “voluntary” migration and/or racism in the role of external trainers at each of the workshops.⁵³ This was not achieved at all workshops, though. The project would not have been possible without the knowledge generated at the advisory meetings at the beginning of the project and shared in the workshops by the external speakers/trainers.

Developing the modular system⁵⁴ implemented in the workshop was a collective endeavour, and it was from this system that the programme for each workshop was built, with modules selected according to the individual workshop’s length, the target group defined for it, the educational institution involved and the focuses of the external trainers.

These collaborations brought with them the responsibility to ensure transparency with respect to whose knowledge was being shared at the workshop and to critically reflect on and agree on where the knowledge being made available would be taken (see also the contribution “The Global South is here in Germany” and Part 5). At a suggestion originating in the advisory body, a report was given at the start of each workshop, talking about the project and how the concept for the workshop came into being, and giving a brief overview explaining whose knowledge had flowed into the project and the workshops.

Naturally, it would not have been possible to work on all the named topics within the scope of a single workshop. Any one of the topics of human rights, flight/forced migration and asylum, racism and education could easily have been the subject of a multiday workshop, on its own. It was always necessary to select a limited number of aspects. In making this selection, we were guided by two principles: all three dimensions of human rights

49 The basic structure of this chart is shown at the beginning of Part 3.

50 The contributions entitled “Reflections on a method: ‘Power Step’” and “Selecting and adapting methods for discrimination-conscious education offers” contain information on the methodological preparation.

51 The slogan „Nothing about us without us!” was originally coined in the context of the disability rights movement, see e.g. NETZWERK ARTIKEL 3 – Verein für Gleichstellung und Menschenrechte e. V. (pub.) (2014): “Nichts über uns ohne uns!” Von der Alibi Beteiligung zur Mitentscheidung! Eine Handreichung zur Umsetzung des Gebotes der “Partizipation” der UN-Behindertenrechtskonvention, by H.-Günter Heiden. <http://www.nw3.de/attachments/article/115/Nichts%20%C3%BCber%20uns%20ohne%20uns%20-%20Von%20der%20Alibi-Beteiligung%20zur%20Mitentscheidung!.pdf> (retrieved: 24 Oct. 2019).

52 Contrary to the original plan, this body provided critical and constructive support to the project over the entire project term, making an essential contribution to the project and the institutional learning process associated with it (see also Part 5).

53 Part 1 contains a summary of the workshops and participating organisations. Some of the organisations present their political work in Part 6.

54 There is a table depicting the modular system at the end of this text.

education should always be addressed (see section 1), and the workshops should be geared towards the needs and interests of the target group in question. When space permitted, the group could be divided up to work on different aspects for individual stages of the workshop. A survey of participants' interests and a flexible concept are essential for this. The outcome may be that the workshop takes a broad view of many topics, or it may address a smaller number of aspects in greater detail. But it is always necessary to examine choices like this through the lens of discrimination critique. For instance, one should always make sure the selection does not inappropriately restrict the time devoted to certain perspectives or omit them completely. Thus, even when a group's interests were focussed mainly on the lived realities of refugees, the project did not want to limit the discussion of racism to its relevance with respect to this group alone, but to address historical and social continuities as well. The aim was that all participants would have the opportunity to learn something new that had significance for them (for more detail see section 2). This aim also guided decisions as to how to take up and adequately address unexpected developments in the learning process. A critical perspective involving the assessment of power relations and discrimination is important in this regard as well, i.e. when making decisions on how much space and time to devote to such developments, and who should address them. For instance, *white* defence mechanisms became visible during the workshops on multiple occasions. Obviously, it was necessary to address these. However, it was also necessary to find an appropriate balance in this regard with respect to the seminar as a whole and the makeup of the group. It is not necessary – and can, in fact, be problematic – to require all discussions to be held with the entire group: if only one part of the group will benefit from such a discussion, devoting the time of the entire group to it may, for instance, reproduce social power imbalances. At the same time however, it may well be appropriate to afford space explicitly for positions of marginalised groups of persons. This applies both for different perspectives represented among participants as well as for the collaboration with external speakers/trainers and is, indeed, of additional relevance when the power relations involved are the subject-matter of the seminar. For instance, the project sought not (only)

to speak about the situations of refugees,⁵⁵ but also to make the perspectives of refugees as active agents visible. This was achieved by inviting activists from organisations run by and for refugees to report about their political activities. Correspondingly varied, then, were the topics discussed and the demands associated with them (e.g. closure of certain accommodation facilities, end to the age-assessment processes carried out by authorities, access to education institutions). In addition, demands and desires on the part of the participating organisations vis-à-vis possible allies were discussed at all workshops. It is self-understood that the speakers/trainers were paid for the work they did in connection with the workshops. However, the organisations were never asked whether persons could report on their personal stories of flight/ forced migration.⁵⁶ The aim was not to enable “tangible insight” into the lived realities of individual marginalised persons, as is often the case in such contexts. The units with external trainers/speakers were introduced and framed by members of the workshop team. In this connection, reference was made to the “rules of cooperation” (see contribution titled “Selecting and adapting methods for discrimination-conscious education offers”) and in particular the STOP rule, which could be invoked, by participants or by trainers, when questions or statements crossed boundary lines.

4 Educational attitude and obligations

Those who provide human rights education are contributing to the implementation of the human right to education and to advancing the aim of human rights education (see section 1). This applies specifically to those who are acting on behalf of the state (e.g. in a public school). In addition, they are responsible for the educational space that they open in the context of their work. Their task is to design their practice in a way that fosters respect for everyone's human rights, such as the

⁵⁵ Naturally, there were persons with their own stories of forced migration among those taking part in this workshop, who made this explicit in that context and contributed their perspectives and experiences.

⁵⁶ Some speakers/trainers and activists did choose to do so nonetheless, reporting, for instance, about how their political activism grew out of their personal biographies.

right to education, the right to freedom of opinion and the right not to be discriminated against.

It should go without saying that team members must adopt a discrimination-conscious perspective towards the participants, as in general. They should recognise that all groups are different, and

no group is homogeneous – and they should bear this in mind considering the fact that traits upon which discrimination is based are not always visible. It is essential that team members should be fully aware that they do not know who is sharing the educational space with them.

Human rights requirements with respect to the principle of neutrality and the Beutelsbach consensus

In the context of antiracist human rights education in particular, teachers and non-school education practitioners wonder about implications for their work arising from the principle of state neutrality, or more precisely the right of political parties to equal opportunity in political competition (deriving from Article 21 of the Basic Law, Germany's constitution) and of the Beutelsbach consensus, an important source of guidance for political education, with its principles of not overwhelming learners, presenting issues controversially discussed in politics and science as controversial and learner-orientation. The Institute has published two papers on this topic:

Cremer, Hendrik (2019): Das Neutralitätsgebot in der Bildung. Neutral gegenüber rassistischen und rechtsextremen Positionen von Parteien? https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Publikationen/ANALYSE/Analyse_Das_Neutralitaetsgebot_in_der_Bildung.pdf

Niendorf, Mareike / Reitz, Sandra (2019): Schweigen ist nicht neutral. Menschenrechtliche Anforderungen an Neutralität und Kontroversität in der Schule. https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Publikationen/Information/Information_25_Schweigen_ist-nicht-neutral.pdf

One aim of educational practice in this context is to facilitate the respectful exchange of different perspectives. People can share information about their own lived realities if they choose to do so, but no one should feel pressured, let alone required to disclose personal information. Team members should be very aware that educational settings are not safe spaces – particularly not for people affected by forms of structural discrimination – and should reflect on positions with differing degrees of power represented among the speakers (see also the contribution entitled “Selecting and adapting methods for discrimination-conscious education offers”), for instance, and identify perspectives that are not represented in the space. At the same time, it is important to encourage participants to engage with new knowledge and perspectives and to make it possible for learning processes to take place by explicitly cultivating a positive attitude to making mistakes. This is of central importance for the success of the workshop or seminar. When teaching about topics relating to discrimination, the aim is not only to convey specific knowledge to but also to shape the

learning process in the most inclusive, participative and discrimination-conscious way, thus enabling learners to experience human rights directly. To realise this goal, team members need to acquire a human rights based and discrimination conscious stance. This involves continual reflection on and deconstruction of one's own images and stereotypes as well as the examination of one's own position, of the fact of being positioned and of the experiences of discrimination and privileges that result from this (see also the contributions entitled “Privileges of *white* teachers in schools” and “To understand racism, we must also look at colonialism”). Seminar leaders are also learners: before, during, and after the workshops. However, this brings with it a responsibility to ensure that this learning, the knowledge gained, does not come at the expense of others. One must use the many available ways (i.e. reading scholarly and non-scholarly texts, like blogs, taking part in reflection and exchange groups, visiting exhibitions, and attending events) to enable themselves to engage in responsible, professional educational practice.

Discrimination-conscious education work can only succeed if educators continually examine their own role as speakers and take responsibility for their own privileges and their own entanglements in power relations. Taking these aspects into account and continually reflecting on their implications is particularly important for collaboration within the team. All the workshops held during the project were led by a team of two people (supplemented by team members from educational facilities and external trainers) made up of one person positioned as Black and one person positioned as *white*, with professional expertise in different areas. Thus, right from the start, different knowledge and evidently different positionings were visible in the room. During a reflection session, one Person of Colour participating talked about the relief she felt upon entering the seminar room for the first time, arising from the knowledge that she would not be the only non-*white* person there.

In addition to continuing reflection and attention, the work in a team with this composition required confidence in the knowledge and responsible practice of the other team member. This kind of trust is essential if all seminar leaders in the workshops and seminars are to feel secure, although the privileged person will always (unintentionally) represent a potential “source of danger” when discrimination and identity are being discussed in teams made up of persons positioned differently.⁵⁷ A responsible way of dealing with this must be found. In educational settings in particular, it is often difficult to plan one’s actions in advance, and sometimes one can elicit defensive responses, anger, or a feeling of being overwhelmed in participants, especially when addressing discrimination and privilege. It is easy for such feelings to be unconsciously projected onto team members. Even in situations in which detailed planning in advance is not possible within the team, it should still be possible to react appropriately to the specific situation, taking into account one’s own

positioning and knowledge of processes involved.⁵⁸ Participants tend to be able to sense immediately if there are problems between team members or if individuals feel uncomfortable within the team. In this context, teamwork shaped by reliability and respect can send an important signal to participants and act as a powerful model to be reproduced, as well as make the work much more pleasant for team members.

From an antidiscrimination perspective, it is vital to avoid creating the impression in the context of knowledge transfer that the *white* person’s role is that of the expert on the subject-matter, while the Black person is presenting knowledge in the role of an expert “only” in experiential knowledge. To give this impression would be to replicate power imbalances (which are frequently at work in professional contexts and elsewhere) and would constitute the appropriation and exploitation of marginalised knowledge by privileged persons to enhance their own position (for more on this see section 2).

It need hardly be said that even well-informed educators who practice critical reflection can make mistakes from time to time. Educators must recognise and address such mistakes in a responsible manner to be able to continue to work effectively. Active reporting about mistakes made, how they were dealt with, and what was learned from them has proven a helpful approach – especially when working with education practitioners who can have a multiplier effect.

5 Language

Language plays a central role in educational settings and in knowledge transfer. It can facilitate access or produce exclusion. Language is also an expression of power: it can determine who can take part in discourse, and whose voices will be heard. This is reflected in the importance of the role played by translation. The language in which educational offers are made available and in which knowledge about them is communicated ahead of time can be a key factor in determining the accessibility

⁵⁷ For instance, there is the risk that the team member holding *white* privilege could inadvertently cause a conflict of loyalties in the other person (of colour) on the team – between loyalties towards either participants of a similar positioning or towards said privileged team member.

⁵⁸ Taking an anti-discrimination perspective, for instance, team members can agree on a certain allocation of responsibilities, e.g., that the *white* team member will be one primarily responsible for dealing with *white* defence mechanisms in the seminars, for instance.

of educational offers. Ideally, the services of professional interpreters can be arranged; alternatively (and far more economically) the team can work with “language mediators”, persons with the necessary language skills who do not have formal training as interpreters. This can have the added benefit of financially supporting persons and organised groups which usually provide their services on a volunteer basis. Translation of this kind offered in workshops, which often takes the form of whispering interpreting, needs to be taken into account when planning and preparing teaching methods and materials, particularly if workshop content is going to be communicated in written form, or if methods involving a lot of written text are going to be used. In addition, acoustics should be considered when choosing the rooms to use and the presence of language mediators be considered in seating arrangements. Obviously, translating also involves extra time, which planning must reflect.

The aim should be to ensure that everyone can take part on a basis of self-determination and that all working groups are open to everyone, for instance through the option of translation. Obviously, this also applies in the case of persons with hearing disabilities and/or who need sign language interpretation. Another aspect to be considered is that academic language can prevent some people from following or actively participating in discussions. Similarly, the assumption that all persons can read written language (well) or will be able/want to produce such language themselves may place some participants in unpleasant situations. It is certainly advisable to make a point of reading all written material out loud and to offer alternatives involving different methods, i.e. either keeping a learning journal or coming together in a small group to reflect on the day together (see also the contribution entitled “Selecting and adapting methods for discrimination-conscious education offers”). Obviously, this can also be necessary if persons who have a visual disability are taking part in the offer.⁵⁹

Language simultaneously reflects and constructs reality. Language and the authority to interpret the meaning of terms, and over language usage are manifestations of social power relations and

privileges. This makes it essential for those engaging in discrimination-conscious education work to critically examine the language used in that context. The idea is not to specify which terms can be used, in the sense of “censorship”, but rather to appeal to everyone involved to choose their language responsibly. In this project, the team members always explained why they preferred to use certain terms or designations – self-designations, for instance, rather than external designations. The intent was to draw attention to the discriminatory – in the context of the project, often racist – knowledge that lies hidden within some language and that is (unintentionally) reproduced through the use of such language.⁶⁰ This can be a challenging undertaking, one that can never receive the level of attention it deserves within the scope of a workshop. Nonetheless, in this respect, too, we all, and this applies to educators in particular, of course, have a responsibility to educate ourselves, to follow current discourses and acquire the relevant knowledge. In addition, one should reflect critically on the ideas of normality that are transported along with language – sometimes unconsciously – when, for instance, the group deviating from the norm is always marked linguistically, while the majority is left unmarked, e.g. specifying trans* but not cis persons (see contribution “Selecting and adapting methods for discrimination-conscious education offers”). This also involves considering whether the specific situation does, in fact, necessitate a verbal classification of human beings, and if so, which specific designation is appropriate for the specific context. The same applies with respect to the use of certain designations. For instance, the German language term for refugee “*Flüchtling*“, has come under a lot of criticism in recent years, with other designations

⁵⁹ In this case, of course, images, depictions or film sequences must also be described.

⁶⁰ For more information on this and on the aspects discussed in the next paragraph: Arndt, Susan, Ofuatey-Alazard, Nadja (eds.) (2011): *Wie Rassismus aus Wörtern spricht. (K)Erben des Kolonialismus im Wissensarchiv deutsche Sprache. Ein kritisches Nachschlagewerk*. Münster: UNRAST-Verlag and Autor*innenKollektiv Rassismuskritischer Leitfaden (2015): *Rassismuskritischer Leitfaden zur Reflexion bestehender und Erstellung neuer didaktischer Lehr- und Lernmaterialien für die schulische und außerschulische Bildungsarbeit zu Schwarzsein, Afrika und afrikanischer Diaspora* LEO Berlin and Elina Marmer (eds.). Hamburg–Berlin. Abrufbar unter: https://www.elina-marmer.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/IMAFREDU-Rassismuskritischer-Leitfaden_Web_barrierefrei-NEU.pdf

proposed to take its place.⁶¹ However, specifically in legal contexts, whether people are recognised “refugees” in the meaning of the Geneva Refugee Convention or are, e.g., asylum seekers living with *Duldung*-status (temporary suspension of deportation) or subsidiary-protection status, makes an enormous difference.

Team members should clearly communicate that there are, obviously, designations that are unambiguously racist, (hetero-) sexist, ableist or discriminatory in some other way and which are therefore neither desired nor worthy of discussion in the workshop. However, participants often bring different (prior) knowledge with them and can sometimes use problematic terms (without necessarily being aware that they are doing so). In such cases, it is necessary to make people aware of this and propose alternative terms without making participants feel exposed or shamed.

From an antidiscrimination perspective, it is also important to keep in mind at all times that other words can also hurt people, without their users being aware of this potential, because each person weighs words according to standards of their own. One rule of thumb that everyone can adopt in this context is that one should only express oneself in a way that one would feel comfortable with in any situation and group.

6 General framework

The general conditions of an educational offer play a key role in its success because they often determine who becomes aware that an offer exists, and who has the opportunity to attend. In the cause of a discrimination-conscious and inclusive perspective, I will point to some aspects here that can serve as a starting point for consideration. It is worth thinking in advance how one might make an offer as accessible as possible and, perhaps, take those considerations into account when drawing up the budget.

Obviously, one should try to avoid conditions that may result in exclusions when choosing the venue and possible cooperation partnerships (for instance,

difficulty of access via public transport or lack of ramps). Accessibility in a broader sense should also be considered, e.g. with respect to the acoustics of rooms, the possibility to separate groups or to create spaces for retreat. In addition to aspects relating to the physical conditions at the venue, the organisation running the venue, and its surroundings also play a role. Sometimes these may discourage persons who are often affected by structural discrimination from taking part in an offer: they may assume that they will not be represented at such a place, feel uncomfortable or insecure there, or have had bad experiences there in the past.

When looking at the availability of expertise in the subject matter and resources like space, facilities, invitee lists or contacts, it can be helpful to cooperate with partners to offer workshops and seminars in partnerships. Of course, the choice of cooperation partner(s) calls for critical scrutiny from a discrimination-conscious perspective. For instance, the project received critical and justified feedback on the issue of whether the venues to which the knowledge of Black persons or Persons of Colour serving on the advisory board was being taken were de facto accessible to them at all (see also Part 5). Moreover, it is important to ascertain in advance whether cooperation partners have similar standards, with regarding the reduction of barriers, for instance, and equally important to determine whether the substantive content of their work really interconnects with one’s own. Combining different (educational) perspectives can be very interesting and constructive, but it can also result in conflicts, or even in the realisation that a joint offer does not make sense: for instance, there can be striking and unresolvable differences between offers in the areas of intercultural education and antiracist/race critical education.

To avoid restricting access for participants to an education offer, costs associated with the seminar should be kept as low as possible. Ideally, expenses for travel to and from the venue as well as overnight accommodation and meals should be covered. If this is not possible, one can at least attempt to structure the participation fees such that those who can, pay more, so as to reduce the burden on others. In addition, an offer to put interested participants in touch with one another, to arrange ridesharing or group tickets can be useful.

⁶¹ See, for instance: Hübner, Katharina (2011) Flüchtling. In.: Arndt, Susan, Ofuatey-Alazard, Nadja (eds.). 2011. Wie Rassismus aus Wörtern spricht. (K)Erben des Kolonialismus im Wissensarchiv deutsche Sprache. Ein kritisches Nachschlagewerk. Münster: UNRAST-Verlag, p. 314.

This can also be helpful when lodging and seminar facilities are not in the same location and/or when there are people attending who are unfamiliar with the area or do not feel safe travelling alone.

Decisions concerning the timing and length of the offer should be carefully weighed. While many people welcome weekend or evening events, others find it more convenient to be able to attend during regular working hours. Providing childcare can sometimes be a way of reducing the burden on participants. Individual resources should also be taken into account when deciding on the length of inputs and offers during breaks. Ideally, a variety of formats can be offered right from the start.

Before the actual offer is conducted communication plays a very important role when reaching out to a target group. Here, again, the aim should be to be as inclusive and discrimination-conscious as possible, e.g. by using a variety of channels to promote the offer. The use of local mailing lists and topic-specific networks proved to be particularly helpful in this project. Putting out flyers and promoting the offer via one's own website or those of cooperation partners can also be helpful. In this context, one should carefully consider the effects

of language and the exclusions that can result from it (see also section 5). It is helpful to describe the general framework as precisely as possible (e.g. information regarding provision of meals, possibilities for funding, seminar schedule, trainers/team, directions to the venue) and identify a contact person who can answer questions, so that people can make well-informed decisions as to whether they wish to and can attend the offer.

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Workshop Modules

Learning about human rights

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Topic: forced migration and asylum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – various dimensions, e.g. historical, po – rights of persons with varying status – provisions of national/EU law – discussion of omission and unrepresented perspectives | <p>Definitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – human rights and human rights violations – discrimination (incl. institutional and structural forms of discrimination) – racism (incl. culturalisation) – flight, forced and “voluntary” migration – asylum – integration – forms of discrimination and privileges | <p>Persons who have experienced forced migration and racism as active agents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – as active, political actors – heterogeneity of these groups/ intersectional perspective – practices of resistance – resource-orientation – empowerment |
| <p>Topic: human rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – various dimensions, e.g. legal, political, ethical, historical – human rights treaties – concrete human rights violations – decisions of human rights bodies and their effects, Focus: racist discrimination – 4A framework (access, availability, acceptability and adaptability) – aspiration/reality – critiques of human rights | <p>Mechanisms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – privileges and forms of discrimination – power relations (at a minimum: racism, social origin and status, sex/ gender, disability) – continuities – othering | <p>Reflecting the complex lived realities of persons who have experienced racism and/or forced migration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – forms of everyday discrimination – comparing citizen’s rights vs. rights of persons who have fled their home countries with varying status – lived realities of people who came to Germany in the 1960s, ’70s, ’80s, etc. – challenges faced by all (e.g. gentrification) |
| <p>Knowledge relating to methods and approaches to teaching human rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training – 3 dimensions of human rights education (learning about, through and for human rights) – Exercises/methodology toolbox | | |

Workshop Modules

Learning through human rights

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – language policy in the workshop – use of terms and the reproduction of stereotypes through language – working with translations | Reflecting on the role of the education practitioner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – as a human rights duty bearer – addressing (racist) discrimination as an obligation to raise one's professional standard – differences between educational approaches: intercultural education ≠ anti-bias, etc. | Human rights as orientation framework in and outside education settings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – participation – freedom of opinion vs. hate speech |
|---|--|--|

Learning for human rights

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Identifying and using one's scope for action and discretion amidst existing structures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – prevention of discrimination – dealing with discrimination – empowerment | Addressing resistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – addressing defensive strategies – networks – addressing the risk of becoming isolated | Learning with heterogenic and diverse learning groups |
| Reflecting on one's own materials and methods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – checklist with questions for reflection | Planning block for participant's own projects and teaching units, incl. advising by other participants | Material for further work, e.g. glossary, list of recommended reading, reader, illustrations, audiobooks, videos |

Selecting and adapting methods for discrimination-conscious education offers

Beatrice Cobbinah

Workshop team members and participants are all making their way within a society in which the lived realities of every individual are influenced by a variety of power structures. Some persons are routinely exposed to various forms of discrimination, including structural discrimination, while others benefit from these same structures. Hence individuals can differ enormously in their experiences and positioning, without these differences necessarily being visible on the surface (see the contribution entitled “Conception and realisation of offers of discrimination-conscious human rights education”). For participants who experience daily forms of discrimination, being in a workshop situation, like being in many other situations means that they must operate outside of their comfort zones. Experience has shown that workshops, above all those that start awareness-raising and reflective processes, can lead to situations in which people reproduce stereotypes and express themselves in ways that are hurtful to others. Therefore, the content and methods of learning at a workshop should address the various power relations to ensure that it can open a protected space for learning and experience for all participants. For instance, (inadvertent) exclusions can be avoided by ensuring that the workshop is participative, through the use of appropriate methods and by having participants draw up an agreement collectively. The subsequent assessment of the workshop offers a good opportunity to review the workshop and adjust its content and or framework.

Introductions round

Many different formats and variations are possible for the introductions round. When choosing a format, one should always consider what one intends to achieve. The introductions round should always be appropriate to the workshop aim, the timeframe and the group of participants, as should all methods used. Thus, methods should be selected and adapted to suit the contents, particularly at workshops conveying critical perspectives on power and discrimination. With a view to social participation, which is rendered more difficult or denied to certain persons and

groups, a verbal introduction round is mandatory in antidiscrimination spaces. This round allows participants an equal opportunity to speak and, by doing so, to create a space for themselves. Hearing their own voices in this space also makes it easier to participate actively right from the start, particularly for those who are not very comfortable speaking to groups. To prevent further exclusion, participants can be requested to indicate a preferred pronoun as well as their name. By this participants not only get to hear the correct pronunciation of one another’s names, but also learn how other participants prefer to be addressed and referred to. Name tags written by their bearers provide another way of ensuring that everyone is addressed in the manner they prefer. However, it is essential to make sure that no one feels compelled to provide a pronoun in this context, and perhaps to “out” themselves before the group.

A well-structured introduction into the subject matter and the workshop helps participants to get started, facilitates finding out about participants’ expectations and setting out one’s own objectives for the workshop. It can be helpful to get an impression of what kinds of knowledge the participants bring with them, what areas they work in or the “target groups” with which they work. Possible questions can be written on a flipchart or mobile presentation panel to assist with this, so that everyone can see which aspects they are being asked to cover. In the case of multiday workshops, it can be useful to ask about expectations relating to the team members and the workshop, as well as motivation. This allows the team members to learn more about the participants from the start, and if required respond by shifting the focus of the workshop accordingly. Depending on time resources and the situation, questions can be answered by individuals or in partner or small group work. Participants can also be asked to note down their answers on cards and post these on a bulletin board. This visual aid can then remain in the room during the entire workshop and be used at the end to assess whether participants’ expectations were met. In the context of multiday events it is also possible for the group to review these expectations together

at the end of a day, and so, to identify needs for adjusting the content in the day(s) to come. If necessary, alternative methods can be offered to avoid excluding individuals who cannot or would rather not write.

Group agreements

Agreements drawn up collectively by the group can be a useful tool: drawing them up gives participants a chance to create a shared space together that reflects their ideas and needs, and facilitates the establishment of a learning environment based on consensus and productive work by everyone in a protected setting. Particularly in the context of discrimination-sensitive education work, it can be helpful to define standards for interaction within the group and reach (oral) agreements to ensure that exclusions and harms do not go unaddressed.

Principles adopted collectively can address the style and intensity of communication among participants and facilitate a participative, consensus-based learning environment that is sensitive to discrimination for everyone. Agreements can also cover other aspects of a workshop (voluntary nature of activities, break times, etc.) and/or how people deal with one another (respectful treatment, confidentiality). Moreover, everyone involved can benefit from knowing from the start how the work in the seminar will take place, what is expected and what is valued. In this context, it is important not to frame the elements of agreements as inviolable rules but rather as principles that all participants are expected to be guided by.

Ideally, final decisions about the content of the group agreement should be left up to the group. Team members should not dictate any rules, but they can (to save time) offer suggestions that they have prepared in advance. The group should be encouraged to add new principles to the agreement at any time during the workshop. To facilitate this, the agreement should be posted in the room in an easily visible place, so that it can be consulted or supplemented at any time. This also makes it easy to refer to the agreement at any time, which can be useful in connection with conflicts or debates.

The agreement below, presented at the start of the workshop on a flipchart, collectively modified and supplemented, proved useful in the context of the project:

Voluntary participation: The principle of voluntary participation should be respected in any workshop setting. Participants should not feel obliged to take part in exercises or discussions that might be unpleasant/harmful/retraumatising for them, nor should they feel compelled to disclose personal experiences of discrimination.

Confidentiality: In principle, anything of a personal nature shared at the workshop should stay in the workshop. Experience has shown that confidentiality creates an atmosphere that makes it easier for participants to talk about personal experiences that they wouldn't necessarily want to share with all individuals. A reference to confidentiality is particularly crucial in workshops in which participants already know one another, i.e. as colleagues or cooperation partners.

Responsibility: All participants are encouraged to be mindful of their own well-being, whether in relation to a need to take additional time for breaks or to express needs. Participants should treat the boundaries and well-being of other persons with the same consideration. Also, participants are asked to monitor their own language and the amount of time they use when talking.

Appreciation: In a protected space, it is essential that the lived realities of other persons should be treated in a manner that expresses respect and appreciation. This means, for instance, that other people's experiences of discrimination should not be challenged, cast into doubt or assessed.

STOP rule: The introduction of a STOP rule, in addition, gives participants the ability to "stop" or intervene in discussions that are problematic for them. Once this rule has been invoked, the team member takes responsibility for the situation. This allows discriminatory designations to be recognised and named without placing the person who named them in the centre of the discussion and without forcing such persons to justify themselves or feel exposed. In addition, this can open up space for the group to deconstruct discriminatory or hurtful terms collectively while also allowing individuals to reflect on their own social positioning. The STOP rule should be visibly depicted on the flipchart to encourage participants to invoke it.

On methods

Exercises and methods constitute an important foundation for antidiscrimination education work underpinned by human rights. A wide range of exercises and methods are available. Some of these are aimed at raising awareness for various dimensions of discrimination, some at knowledge transfer, others seek to promote critical reflection on one's own images and biases and teach reflexive skills, still others focus more on developing individual strategies for action. Methods are not rigid teaching units, but rather ways of working that are intended to facilitate the mutual exchange of experiences among participants, awaken interest in the topic and promote processes of self-reflection. Having said that, many methods used in education work themselves (re) produce social power structures, psychological barriers and discriminatory language without ensuring that these are reflected, discussed and deconstructed within the exercise. Moreover, there is a shortage of educational concepts addressing topics like flight, forced migration and asylum in a sensitive way that adequately reflect intersectional perspectives and a critical examination of power relations.

Another challenge when using human rights education methods is that they can be difficult to find and, in some cases, have not been adequately prepared for application in practice. Thus, the selection of appropriate methods is not the only factor determining whether the learning aim in question can be achieved. During preparations for a workshop, methods should be subjected to critical scrutiny that takes into account the make-up of the group, the learning aim and the needs of individual participants and should be adapted to suit the participants' context (for more on this issue see the contribution "Reflection on methods: "Power Walk").

The make-up of the group is always a key factor in defining the aims of a workshop and ultimately determines what type of methods can be used: the positioning and experiences of participants will indicate whether the workshop should aim at supporting participants become more aware of their own advantages and privileges or supporting them to become empowered, i.e. by strengthening already existing skills and resources. The choice of methods and the demands placed on the team members will vary depending on the aims defined for the workshop. The fact that methods have previously been used or are

well established in other contexts is no guarantee that they will promote learning in new learning contexts. Ideally, a survey of participants should be conducted in advance and this, as well as specific wishes voiced by them, should inform the definition of aims.

When choosing appropriate methods, it is vital to ensure that no participants are excluded from participation and thus from the learning process. For instance, interactive body or movement exercises require certain abilities relating to behaviour, mobility and actions. Such requirements can constitute a physical obstacle for participants. The language used in a method and the group's languages skills also play a decisive role in determining how successful a method can be. It is therefore wise to identify alternative methods in advance to ensure that everyone can feel comfortable and learn something.

Two interrelated questions were the focus of intense consideration and discussion during the work on the conceptual design and structuring of the project workshops: how should one go about adapting existing methods and materials available for education work in the area of flight, forced migration, racism and human rights to suit the target group and when – i.e. in which learning settings – is it actually necessary and reasonable to modify methods? The differing funds of experience and knowledge levels of the participants were at the focus in this process, as these determined what the methods were to be geared towards. During the workshops, too, participants engaged in an in-depth examination of exercises that they had already used in education work and/or had already subjected to critical examination. Working in small groups, they developed, compiled and discussed various questions for reflection. These then served as the basis for and as an aid in the adaptation of methods. This also facilitated a critical look at teaching and educational materials. Subsequently, individual exercises were adapted – for instance with respect to the target group and the aim defined for the exercise. In this context there were no right or wrong results, rather, the aim was to open a space for educators to share views and ideas as colleagues, discuss, heighten their awareness and learn to examine their own methods from a critical perspective.⁶²

⁶² An overview of the questions for reflection is included at the end of this text.

Evaluation of the workshops

Creating space for reflection and assessment in the workshop schedule offers an important way to assess one's own education offers and structure learning processes. Such units are important for the learning process of participants and, at the same time, they can serve team members to assess their methods, the subject matter and its preparation, group size and composition and the time allotted for units within the workshop. A variety of tools lend themselves to this purpose, such as learning journals, exchange sessions, buzz groups, oral feedback circles or a written questionnaire completed at the end of the event. If at all possible, it is useful to interview participants after a period of time has elapsed since the actual workshop and thereby to find out, for instance, whether they had been able to put the content conveyed in the workshops to practical use in that time.

The learning-journal method and oral feedback circles, both described below, were the primary methods used in the Standard Human Rights project. On the whole, it is advisable to offer different methods for evaluation and feedback to better reflect the different preferences and needs of the participants.

Learning journals: Learning journals use questions formulated in advance to facilitate more comprehensive reflection on the learning process. The focus lies on self-examination and assessment on the part of participants. For instance, participants are encouraged to critically assess the learning content, choice of topics and whether they will be able to integrate content into their own work, as well as to examine their own feelings and state of mind. It is also possible to put forth relevant questions for reflection at the end of the workshop day and plan time for participants to respond to the questions in writing. As a rule, individual participants take their learning journals with them at the end of the workshop so that they can return to consider their learning and reflection processes again later. Participants can be asked to provide, always on a voluntary basis and in anonymous form, their learning journals to the team members; this can provide helpful information about the thought-provoking impulses resulting from individual workshop units or about questions that were left unanswered. Filling these journals out can be

challenging for participants; here, again, alternatives should be offered for those who cannot or prefer not to fill out a learning journal.

Oral feedback round: An oral feedback round can take the form of a “flash round” or be structured along certain questions or aspects. The latter option facilitates a differentiated evaluation of individual aspects of the workshop. Aspects discussed might include conduct within the group, how the team members dealt with conflict, or the collaboration agreement. Personal feedback also makes it possible for team members to ascertain whether participants are able to actively apply the learning content. It is also particularly helpful in that it enables team members to respond swiftly to problems by making concrete changes in the workshop, for instance, changing the seating arrangement or the length of breaks. Moreover, it makes it easier for participants to formulate needs and team members to arrange for the provision of further material relating to the topic to participants following the workshop. However, team members should bear in mind that not everyone is equally comfortable speaking in a group context, particularly when it comes to expressing personal desires or needs. For this reason, participation in a feedback circle should always be voluntary.

When assessing an educational offer, one should bear in mind that majority society's normativity can cause people, even those who have little knowledge of the subject matter, to challenge knowledge and research about social power structures and discrimination. It is not uncommon for participants to react defensively, particularly when first starting to grapple with the idea of their own privileges, and this can be reflected in the assessment of the workshop. At the same time, anger, and defensive responses on the part of participants can be an indication that they were overwhelmed by the quantity of the learning content or by the way it was presented to them.

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Questions for reflection

Several questions for reflection were collectively discussed with participants and a list of them compiled⁶³ over the course of the seven workshops (“Reflection on a method: ‘Take a Step Forward’” contains additional questions for reflection on methods).

Target group and objectives of method:

- Who is the method supposed to address?
- What prior knowledge do the participants bring with them?
- What knowledge should participants take with them from the exercise?
- What is the aim of the exercise: Should the participants become more aware or be empowered?
- How can both aspects (raising awareness and empowerment) be realised with the method?

Perspective on the topic:

- What perspective is taken on discrimination and disadvantage?
- What perspectives are not identified?

- Does the method facilitate a critical analysis of majority society’s ideas about what is normal?
- Does the exercise permit an intersectional perspective to be taken? (interactions and interconnections between different dimensions of discrimination to be made apparent?)

Reproduction and power structures:

- How are lived realities that deviate from those of the majority society portrayed (e.g. with respect to sexual and gender identity, origin, appearance)?
- Does the exercise/method use stereotypes portraying social minorities (disabled, Muslim, Black persons, etc.) in terms of deficiencies? Who is depicted/represented?
- Does the exercise/method reproduce discriminatory discourses (e.g. racist and/or sexist), e.g. through images, texts, questions, without deconstructing them?
- What unchallenged social norms might be transported through the exercise/method?

⁶³ The questions for reflection are modelled on the questions in Autor*innenKollektiv Rassismuskritischer Leitfaden (2015): Rassismuskritischer Leitfaden zur Reflexion bestehender und Erstellung neuer didaktischer Lehr- und Lernmaterialien für die schulische und außerschulische Bildungsarbeit zu Schwarzsein, Afrika und afrikanischer Diaspora, pp. 20–21. https://www.elina-marmer.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/IMAFREDU-Rassismuskritischer-Leitfaden_Web_barrierefrei-NEU.pdf (retrieved: 10 Oct. 2019).

Reflections on a method: “Power Walk”

Aylin Kortel

A role-play version of the “Privilege Walk” or “Power Walk” is a method often used in civic education on discrimination. There are different versions and names of this method, e.g. it is sometimes referred to as “Take a Step Forward” or “Like in Real Life”. It is particularly well suited to helping people become aware of and reflect on their own privileges as well as for raising awareness of the fact that discrimination has institutional and structural dimensions as well as an interpersonal dimension: people who do not belong to the “dominance society” experience social inequality and exclusion both in everyday situations and within institutions and before the law. This renders social participation based on equality more difficult. There are many different versions of this method, each with a different emphasis and, in many cases, emerging out of criticism of earlier versions. Criticisms of this method and the question of alternatives were discussed in detail at the seminar we held in November 2018.⁶⁴ I would like to outline these discussions below, because they both illustrate some of the problems and challenges encountered in educational work on discrimination, and in the hope of informing critical reflection on the method and perhaps its adaption by practitioners before use.

Tensions of various kinds are always in play in education work on the topic of discrimination, and contradictions arise in it continually. Without claiming to be able to resolve these, one must nonetheless be aware of them when carrying out activities. I wish to put forth a few general questions for reflection on methods here, before turning to take a closer look at the “Power Walk” activity.

- Does the method reproduce biases and attributions without naming and deconstructing them afterwards?
- Does the focus on disadvantage and exclusion create the impression that persons affected by them are “helpless victims” of circumstances

in society, i.e. cannot display agency in relation to them?

- Is the method unmasking, i.e. is there a “hidden agenda” that prevents the participants from drawing conclusions and engaging in learning processes on a self-determined basis?
- Does the method create the impression that experiences of discrimination can be simulated and thus experienced vicariously?

Learning spaces are usually heterogeneous – there may be participants present who have experienced various forms of discrimination. Often these experiences of discrimination and positionings of participants are not apparent. This creates additional challenges and pitfalls for civic education methods addressing this topic:

- Does the activity have the potential to overwhelm people? I.e., might it, without warning, put people in a trigger situation that might be harmful?
- Is it “paralysing”, i.e. does it fail to open opportunities for persons affected by discrimination to have self-empowering and empowering experiences?
- Are persons affected by discrimination placed in the position of representing a group and pressured to share personal experiences and viewpoints?

With these questions and problems in mind, I would now like to take a closer look at the “Power Walk” method.

The method is proposed in various training manuals for human rights education or antidiscrimination and antiracist education work as a way to give participants an active experience creating insight into social inequality and structural discrimination. During the exercise, participants are asked to take on specified roles. The facilitator then asks a series

⁶⁴ Editors’ note: This seminar took place as part of the project and in partnership with the Anne Frank Educational Centre in Frankfurt/Main.

of yes or no questions, which the participants are supposed to answer from the perspective of their role. Before the questioning begins, participants line up in a row. Then, participants whose answer to a question is yes are supposed to take one step forward. If the answer is no, participants stay where they are. At the end of the activity, the distribution of participants in the room speaks to the distribution of chances and opportunities in society – and limitations in these for the various roles: some people are far in front, and others are still quite close to the starting line.

The exercise is problematic in several respects that relate to the questions for reflection above. This becomes obvious when one examines the methodological approach and when it is put into practice.

The first difficulty emerges in connection with the preparation of the cards defining the roles. The descriptions of roles vary from one version of the method to the next, but they usually contain problematic combinations of characteristics that activate and reproduce stereotypes about the groups being invoked. For instance, the characteristic “Turkish” or “Arabic” is associated with a “very devout and traditional family of origin”,⁶⁵ the characteristic “Roma” is associated with poverty, low level of education and extended family⁶⁶ and the characteristic “Chinese” with “takeaway restaurant”.⁶⁷ This problematic representation of individuals (and thus of constructed groups) reinforces biases rather than dismantling them and has the potential of harming or acting as a trigger for people in the room who have experienced discrimination. Breaking up these biases in the evaluation part of the activity is rendered more difficult by

the fact that the participants have been told to imagine that the roles defined on the cards are “true in real life” – as the alternative name of the activity “Like in real life” suggests.

Biases are also activated when participants, playing the roles assigned to them, consider whether or not to take a step forward. This can reinforce a view of the persons they are embodying (or of an entire “group”) as victims. Moreover, such assessments are always subjective and if this point is not raised in the evaluation, the impression may arise that there is “real knowledge” about the living conditions of the individual which then become representative for the entire “group”.

Portraying social inequality spatially by having people stand still equates experiences of discrimination with an inability to act. This casts those who experience discrimination into the role of victim – individual ways of coping and scope for opportunity are rendered invisible.

The exercise, having been thus structured, may expose people with experiences of discrimination – who could be present in any group of participants – to experiences of helplessness in addition to being stereotyped in the role descriptions. Moreover, having all participants begin the exercise from one starting line suggests that all people in society enjoy the same “starting conditions”, which is one of the very things that discrimination prevents.

Although the method used here is not that of a typical role-play activity, its structure and goals nonetheless suggest that it is possible to “slip into the shoes” of people personally affected by discrimination and, indeed, that this is desirable in the context of the exercise. However, persons who have not been affected by a specific form of discrimination cannot know what this experience is like or feels like – thus simulating experiences of structural discrimination should not be a goal of the exercise. Rather, the purpose should be to raise awareness and broaden perspectives – this is an objective that can be reached without an “authentic vicarious experience”.

The problems in the exercise highlighted above were discussed in great depth, particularly in relation to use in antiracist education addressing topics of flight, forced migration and asylum. This is an area in which one finds several methods which define the aim of conveying “what discrimination feels

65 “You are an Arab Muslim girl living with your parents who are devoutly religious people.” (Compass Manual for Human Rights Education); “Girl of Turkish origin, 17 years old, family lives according to strict and traditional rules, only Turkish is spoken in the home.” [Translated from original German] (Project: Schau mich an – Gesicht einer Flucht).

66 “You are a Roma child of twelve. You live at the edge of a small village in a small house where there is no bathroom. You have six brothers and sisters.” (Compassito); “You are a 17-year-old Roma (Gypsy) girl who never finished primary school.” (Compass Manual for Human Rights Education).

67 “Boy, 17 years old, born in Germany, parents come from China and run a Chinese takeaway.” [Translated from original German] (Project: Schau mich an – Gesicht einer Flucht). “You are the son of a Chinese immigrant who runs a successful fast food business.” (Compass Manual for Human Rights Education).

like” and place the experiences of refugees in a very deficit-oriented light. This reinforces the problematic image of refugees as “victims” with no agency who are helpless in the face of societal conditions and in need of help and support.

Addressing these problems in the context of the exercise “Power Walk”, someone in the seminar suggested coming up with questions that relate to resources and strengths. For instance, multilingualism could be a topic: everyone who speaks more than one language fluently could take a step forward, thus breaking the equation of “standing still = disadvantage = lack of agency”. Here is a list of other possibilities for adjusting and modifying the exercise:

- The role cards could be written making less use of stereotypes, and to challenge widely held ideas about combinations of traits and characteristics.
- Multiple participants could receive, without their knowledge, the same role card – if they then end up at different positions at the end of the exercise this could encourage reflection on subjective assessments of what people are capable of and of the biases that are associated with them.
- Rather than working with role cards, the participants could act as themselves and thus reflect their own experiences of privilege and disadvantage. However, this should only be attempted in a safe setting when all members of the group know one another well.
- Handing out the role cards to small groups, which then decide collectively whether the person should take a step forward or not.

The Anne Frank Educational Centre has developed a modified method called “Reality Show” which avoids some of the traps and problems associated with the “Power Walk” method and includes a consideration of bias and concepts of normality in addition to structural discrimination. The manual “(K)eine Glaubensfrage” contains a description of the method and is available online at the centre’s website.

Antidiscrimination education always takes place amidst contradiction and tension – this is inevitable due to the complexity of the topic and the fact that discrimination, as a phenomenon affecting the whole of society, concerns everyone, though in different ways. Rather than attempting to avoid all these problems, a critical approach to education should be aware of the contradictions and continually reflect on them. The self-critical attitude of the civic education practitioners plays a key role here. To develop and train this attitude, spaces for deliberation and collective learning are necessary, such as those enabled by the Standard Human Rights project.

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Reality Show. Reflexion von Selbst- und Fremdzuschreibung: <https://politischbilden.de/material/reality-show>

Editors' note: The wording of the role cards cited in the footnotes is taken from the 2012 English language edition of Compass, which contains the exercise mentioned in the text. The 2005 German-language edition, “Kompass”, contains similar wording. In May 2020 the German Institute for Human Rights has published a completely revised edition of the German-language version of KOMPASS.

5 Institutional Embeddedness of the Project: (Self)Reflection and the Learning Process



Coaching in the “Standard Human Rights” project – a process of multilayered reflection

Anoma Premachandra

In the summer of 2018, the staff of the third-party-funded project “Maßstab Menschenrechte – Bildungspraxis zu den Themen Flucht, Asyl und rassistische Diskriminierung stärken” hired me to support and guide the continuing education project in the capacity of supervisor and coach. Considering their objectives and the planned cooperation with self-organised groups and other partners, they sought

- to clarify and possibly to change their own stance
- to heighten their sensitivity for potentially hurtful statements and language
- to reflect on their positions and roles within and outside of the Institute
- to reflect on their strategic approach, both internal and external
- guidance in connection with the changes arising in the project

As (predominantly white) representatives of their organisation, they wanted to subject possibly discriminatory aspects of their own work to critical scrutiny. This was particularly important to them, because the desired cooperation with and participation of education practitioners from self-organised groups in the area of flight, forced and voluntary migration and asylum as well as other education contexts was a major element in the project.

Organisations like the German Institute for Human Rights, whose mandate includes advising a wide array of organisations,⁶⁸ should consider themselves

as learning organisations⁶⁹ and seek guidance by professionals in their own processes of development and change. The Institute’s human rights education department, whose specific duties include advising education policymakers, political actors and education institutions, tasked itself with doing just that, as it offers to make the human rights dimension of education clear and understandable, accessible and perceptible through direct experience in model education offers. This entails making educational processes as inclusive and free of discrimination as possible. Consequently, this aims at enabling education institutions, and the people working there to provide various formats of education, to learn on their part, how to implement educational content and processes geared towards human rights.⁷⁰ One key purpose of the project is formulated on the website of the German Institute for Human Rights as follows: “*To reflect on our own thought patterns and increase our ability to recognise mechanisms of discrimination*”.⁷¹ The project staff wished to realize this, not only for the outside world, but also for themselves. Thus, by applying institution-internal criteria for more inclusive education and human rights education⁷², with supervisory support, they strived to implement those criteria internally within the framework of the project.

Supervision and coaching are field-based *consulting processes*⁷³, which, like formats of human rights

68 See German Institute for Human Rights: <https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/das-institut/auftrag/> (retrieved: 16 Jun. 2019).

69 See Hanappi-Egger, Edeltraud/Hofmann, Roswitha 2012: Diversitätsmanagement unter der Perspektive organisationalen Lernens: Wissens- und Kompetenzentwicklung für inklusive Organisationen. in: Bendl/Hanappi-Egger/Hofmann (eds.): Diversität und Diversitätsmanagement. Facultas-wuv. Wien. (pp. 327-349).

70 See German Institute for Human Rights: <https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/menschenrechtsbildung/massstab-menschenrechte/> (retrieved: 16 Jun. 2019).

71 See German Institute for Human Rights: op. cit. (retrieved: 16 Jun. 2019).

72 See German Institute for Human Rights: op. cit. (retrieved: 16 Jun. 2019).

73 Cf. Kühl, Wolfgang (2000). In: Zeitschrift Sozialmagazin; 06/2000. <http://supervision-kuehl.de/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Selbstevaluation-durch-Supervision-1.pdf> (retrieved: 16 Jun. 2019).

education, require an awareness for mechanisms of discrimination. Like (human rights) education, they demand attention to discriminatory statements, language, and behaviours, preconceptions and exclusion – and a conscious approach to dealing with them. However, there can be no awareness without reflection. Therefore, supervision and coaching are also field-based *reflection processes*.⁷⁴ They support thinking about one's own work and professionalism and may promote an understanding of the connections between political and social structures and individual action, if they encompass the four levels specified below.⁷⁵ These levels are always interconnected and influence one another.⁷⁶

Firstly, it is helpful to think about the world of ideas, ideologies and images⁷⁷ that shape – without our knowledge – our thoughts, emotions and actions and affect social norms, values and constructions of meaning,⁷⁸ stereotypes and opinions, beliefs, both conscious and unconscious, and prejudices. Secondly, each of us must reflect on how these ideologies at the individual level affect our own perceptions and **convictions, attitudes, and opinions**. At this level, both discrimination and privileges act in an internalising manner, within persons (intrapersonal), e.g. in the form of internalised, unquestioned beliefs. In this way, they can contribute to determining our attitude and our actions.

Thirdly, reflecting on the interpersonal level is important. With professional guidance, persons can rethink the interaction within teams or organi-

sations, the style of communication, the language, the behaviour, and the rules of conduct. Ideally, a shared (human-rights) culture would be cultivated in the department/organisation in question. This organisational culture may then make a substantial contribution towards anchoring respect for all persons and for human dignity within the interactions of its members and with persons in other fields of work.

Fourthly, consideration of institutionalisation⁷⁹ is a necessary part of professional reflection. How do habits, practices, language, guidelines, and rules come into being? What about education curricula and education standards? How do processes and routines – i.e. structures (chronological, social, spatial, substantive) take shape within and outside of one's own organisation and in government agencies and institutions?

What statutes, regulations, forms of access or exclusion contribute to the problems, or to the success of efforts made in one's own field or work/in one's own organisation? What ideas or ideologies contributed to their formation? How do these ideas or ideologies effect interpersonal interactions? What do they mean for the person engaged in reflection and what social dynamics might they help to shape?

Most importantly, in connection with these all questions, we need to ask: What can I do, what can we do, to effect change? The four levels of reflection were significant in the process of advising the Standard Human Rights project because they include the levels and the operating mechanisms of discrimination. Education theorists and practitioners must be familiar with them and be able to reflect upon them to initiate personal learning and education processes and, in that context, question and change ideas, concepts and structures. They must be ready and willing to subject their own thinking and emotions to scrutiny as well as their roles and the way they deal with power and responsibility.

This will sometimes be painful and sobering, because the integration within organisations – even an organisation like the German Institute for Human Rights – makes resistance to change, both by individuals and on a structural level visible, and shines a light on social and political arrangements

74 See Gröning, Katharina (2013): Supervision. Traditionslinien und Praxis einer reflexiven Institution. Psychosozial-Verlag. Gießen. pp. 11ff., pp. 59-75.

75 This approach goes far beyond the classic supervision models, which tend to stay at the individual and inner-organisational level. In this regard, see Schreyögg, Astrid (2019): Supervision. Ein integratives Modell. VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften. Wiesbaden.

76 Foitzik, Andreas (2019): Einführung in theoretische Grundlagen. In: Foitzik, Andreas / Hezel, Lukas (2019) (eds.): Diskriminierungskritische Schule. Einführung in theoretische Grundlagen. Beltz. Weinheim Basel. (pp. 12-32); Czollek, Lea Carola/Perko / Gudrun/Weinbach, Heike 2012: Praxishandbuch Social Justice und Diversity. Theorien, Training, Methoden, Übungen. Beltz Juventa. Weinheim/Basel.

77 See Baig, Samira (2009): Diversity sozialpsychologisch betrachtet. In: Abdul-Hussain, Surur/Baig, Samira (eds.) (2009): Diversity in Supervision, Coaching und Beratung. Facultas. wuv. Wien.

78 See Miles, Robert (1991): Rassismus. Einführung in die Geschichte und Theorie eines Begriffs. Argument. Hamburg.

79 See Foitzik (2019) (op. cit.).

that are taken for granted and seen as normal by the majority. However, the potential of a human rights-oriented project lies in the aspiration to make use of these possibilities of multi-layered reflection for change processes.

It remains to hope that the work of the project team and the human rights education department will draw widespread attention at the German Institute for Human Rights, thus furthering the development of this important organisation towards greater diversity and inclusion – in the cause of fully realised human rights.

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Self-reflection – responsibility as a team and a *white* institution⁸⁰

Beatrice Cobbinah and Mareike Niendorf

It is not unusual for continuing education offers and other offers focussing on the lived realities of marginalised groups, which include persons with experience of racism and/or flight/forced migration in Germany, to be arranged and held without the presence, advice or participation of persons who have had those experiences, as though this were the most natural thing in the world. Convinced that the opposite is true, the initiators of the Standard Human Rights project defined the concrete aim of participative and inclusive cooperation between the German Institute for Human Rights (often referred to simply as the Institute below), the national human rights institution of Germany, and self-organised groups of persons with experience of racism and/or flight/forced migration. Thus, the project, drawing on a variety of knowledge resources and sources, developed workshop and education concepts and teaching materials that link up the topics of forced migration/asylum and racism from an intersectional perspective while placing them on a firm human rights basis. For this purpose, civil society organisations, individuals active in these areas, and representatives of self-organised initiatives and organisations were invited to cooperate within the project as expert consultants for the development of the workshop concepts, as authors of this manual and as trainers/speakers at the workshops.

Situation at the start of the project

It became clear from the beginning of the project that there were key factors which had gone unconsidered or whose implications had not been adequately addressed in the project, as proposed. These include in particular, factors reflecting social power relations and exclusions within the institution:

- **Establishment of contacts:** The first question to arise was how the project could make contacts with self-organised groups and activists in the first place. Clearly, whether, and in what manner potential cooperation partners would be able and willing to take part plays a crucial role for the realisation of a project involving collaboration with persons with experiences of flight/forced migration and racism. While the German Institute for Human Rights cooperates with civil society actors, in accordance with its mandate as a national human rights institution,⁸¹ it had no prior experience with this form of institutionalised participative cooperation with self-organised groups of refugees.
- **Limited capacities:** It became clear during the project that there are always limits on the capacities of self-organised groups to cooperate in a project while continuing their own (political) activities, more specifically they can only afford to invest a limited amount of time in a project from which they will reap no direct benefit and which will not constitute a regular source of income.
- **Insufficient transparency:** As the project continued, criticism regarding a lack of transparency with respect to the underlying conditions was voiced by consultants with experience of racism, particularly concerning how the knowledge they were providing was going to be used, and to whom it would be offered. There was also criticism of a lack of transparency regarding the topics and focuses of the institution's work.
- **Insufficient trust:** Scepticism about cooperating with an institution is not uncommon, as opportunities to participate in decision-making processes have been rare and/or when they did arise, the processes turned out not to be genuinely transparent, or participative. Requests from

⁸⁰ *White* institutions are characterised by the fact that the majority of the people who work there are *white* and that a large portion of the administrative processes, informal practices and interpretational and decision-making authorities are substantially shaped by *white* perspectives.

⁸¹ The Paris Principles (A/RES/48/134) of the United Nations lay out requirements regarding the mandate and methods of operation of national human rights institutions: <https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/PRINCI~5.PDF> (retrieved: 20 Jan. 2019).

institutions asking for consultation at short notice are problematic, especially when they are addressed to people who have repeatedly had bad experiences with structural and institutional exclusion.

- **Administrative structures resulting in disadvantage:** Rigid and tedious administrative procedures, e.g. for processing of travel reimbursements and fee agreements, seemed to result in exclusion and disadvantage of some persons.
- **Insufficient reflection:** there had been insufficient examination of, and taking responsibility for structures within the institution as a place of the reproduction of social power imbalances. While work had been done on relevant topics in the context of a diversity process in the past, no systematic implementation had occurred.

Genuine participation in the process and products

How do you design a project to ensure that not only its end product (in this case the workshop concept and manual), but also the project itself is inclusive and participative? We, the project team, saw the necessity to subject our own structures to in-depth examination: How could we, as a team within the human rights education department and as a *white* institution with structural power, take responsibility, and what specifically could and should we do to guarantee “genuine” participation? Since the answers to these questions and the development of strategic measures required an honest, self-critical and processual analysis of and reflection on structural power within our own institution, and since it is difficult to complete a reflexive process of this kind without outside input, the team decided to arrange for supervision to support and guide the project (more information on the reflection process in the contribution titled “Coaching in the Standard Human Rights Project – a process of multi-layered reflection”). There were two major focuses for the coaching activity: (i) the clarification of and reflection on our own stance, position(ing) and responsibility for, and (ii) the analysis of institutionalised rules, practices and policies of the Institute, and opportunities for

the staff to use their area of activity to influence institutional processes.

Participative cooperation and opening the institution

Research on social power relations and the lived realities of marginalised people is conducted in many different academic contexts. However, there tend to be very few persons personally affected by racist discrimination who hold high positions at these academic institutions. The actual sources of the knowledge collected in such research rarely receive recognition; instead, privileged people benefit from these structures, in the form of academic degrees, for instance, or of prestige and qualitatively better research results.

In its function as a national human rights institution, the German Institute for Human Rights has also been addressing various social power relations and protection against discrimination, for many years, including topics like racist violence, flight, forced migration and asylum. It must be said, though, that the percentage of persons with experience of flight, forced migration and racism employed at the Institute is considerably lower than it is in the German population as a whole. As a result, research, and communication about the situations in which marginalised persons live is produced primarily from a privileged perspective: structural integration of the most important perspectives is lacking within the institution. In relation to racism, the Institute, like German institutions in general, unintentionally avails itself of structures that were shaped by colonialism, with the consequence that persons with experience of racism have only limited opportunities to benefit from their own knowledge.

It is important and necessary for privileged staff to deal with their position responsibly within their field of work and also important that they explicitly refer to self-organised groups, e.g., in the context of publications, interview requests or when putting together panels. However, as long as there is no genuine institutional integration of marginalised perspectives, the power of knowledge production and the power of knowledge distribution will basically remain in the hands of *white* organisations, individuals, and institutions.

This is exemplified by the German Institute for Human Rights with its respective mandate as a national human rights institution – when the selection

of topics it decides to work on, receive political and societal attention, and therefore significance for human rights.

In this context, it is not surprising that marginalised groups have only limited confidence that institutions like the Institute will address topics in a way that reflects their own lived realities and interests. What is more, there is less and less willingness to keep offering up one's knowledge to *white* institutions without obtaining any recognisable benefit or appropriate compensation in exchange, and without gaining influence over projects and research.

This leads directly to the questions of what, in light of all this, a project and the institution running it should do to ensure fair, inclusive and participative cooperation, and how lost trust in an institution can be (re)established.

The first step towards answering those questions is to create an awareness for structural injustice and for power structures that give rise to exclusion, starting with oneself and one's own institution. A heightened sensitivity for such structures on the part of individual members of staff is not enough, however. It is necessary for the institution to subject its understanding of itself and its basic structures to careful scrutiny, looking for mechanisms of exclusion and asking itself what role these play in stabilising existing power relations. Creating trust in an institution requires the implementation of a productive and responsible approach to power and privileges at all levels, one that is reflected in the Institution's structures, processes, and personnel development.

Taking responsibility

What, in concrete terms, does this mean for the implementation of projects on the topics of racism and forced migration?

One important aspect would be the early integration of cooperation partners, with appropriate financial compensation, during the proposal phase of projects. This is an opportunity for institutions that have financial resources to redress the balance by remunerating cooperating self-organised groups and individuals in the proposal phases for work, which they often perform on an unpaid basis in other contexts. It also makes it possible for different interests to be reflected in the proposed

project while ensuring that the knowledge and expertise of persons who have experienced flight/forced migration and racism is channelled into the project in an appropriate fashion right from the start, through their participation in all decision-making processes. In this context, transparency in all processes and decision-making involved in carrying out the project is important, and criteria for the cooperation should be developed collectively through inclusive participation processes. Basic organisational arrangements, such as the provision of translation services through language mediators, work materials, and spaces for networking, should be made.

With respect to power sharing, work on the joint project can thus also result in a benefit for the self-organised group/organisation that reaches beyond the benefits of the project itself. Long-term cooperation benefiting all parties involved should be an aim. Among other things, this involves rethinking highly formalised participation formats, such as advisory board meetings, and modifying them to meet actual needs. Planning should provide adequate time and financial resources for this form of cooperation, and these requirements should be communicated to third-party funders as appropriate.

There must be consequences: institutionalised structures that result in disadvantage must be substantially and systematically changed, rather than reproduced with tacit consent. This relates, for instance, to common hiring practices that contribute to the continuation of the status quo. For instance, hiring decisions are often made based on criteria, like formal qualifications and professional experience. In many cases such criteria act as a barrier to the hiring of structurally disadvantaged persons. Hiring practices of this kind clearly illustrate the way that persons who have already been affected by structural discrimination are placed at a disadvantage. An alternative approach would be to adjust the rigid hiring criteria to allow the knowledge of persons who have experienced racism to be recognised as a qualification.

In addition, common administrative policies or practices can result in further exclusions for persons who do not have a bank account, or a training qualification recognised in Germany. Also, the institution should offer to make the necessary travel arrangements upon request, when inviting people to events, for instance, so that individuals

do not have to pay out of their own pocket; further, the financial risk associated with someone being unable to attend due to an illness or for some other reason, should lie with the institution. However, hiring more staff who have experienced racism and/or flight/ forced migration is not, on its own, “the solution” that will counterbalance structural inequality. Progress in this direction requires that the hiring of marginalised persons results in changes in the way the institution defines the issues on which it works. For this to be the case, members of staff must be able to influence subject matter and make decisions. It is equally important that responsibility for processes of opening and awareness raising should lie with those who profit from racist structures, rather than having these processes be carried out at the cost of disadvantaged employees. For instance, pointing out instances of the reproduction of racist stereotypes and practices is not a responsibility (only) of those who are affected by them, but one that all staff members bear. At the institutional level, necessary and effective measures to protect against discrimination at the workplace and to guarantee a protected working environment include the implementation and establishment of grievance management, protection mechanisms and “protected spaces”,⁸² as well as contact persons and supervision for staff members affected by racism.

These processes of opening and inclusion demand considerable investment of time and sometimes funding and require additional personnel and financial resources. Therefore, a genuine commitment to change and reflection is required, as is a real willingness to take responsibility on the part of those who (re)produce the institutional structures.

The documentation of this process makes experiences and outcomes usable over the long term for the entire institution. By disclosing this process, stimulated by critical feedback from outside - and to be continued, and the reflection upon it, the Institute also wishes to make information and suggestions available to other *white* institutions wishing to reflect on, and change their structures. We wish to express our gratitude for the lucidity with which the critical feedback was conveyed to the project and the Institute.

⁸² In this context, the term “protected space” for persons with experiences of racism should be understood as an exclusive place where persons can feel safe from further racial discrimination. Protected spaces are used, for instance, to discuss personal experiences, share and discuss strategies, for self-reflection and for mutual empowerment.

6 Other Speakers/Trainers, Associations and Self-organised Groups Introduce Themselves



No Lager Osnabrück

No Lager Osnabrück has existed as a group since 2001. In its early days, the group's activities centred on the camp in Bramsche-Hesepe. Initially a reception centre,⁸³ the facility had become a deportation camp. Networking with camp residents made it possible for us to join forces to fight the deportation practices of the Land of Lower Saxony, a fight that is documented in the film "Der Lagerkomplex", and elsewhere. In 2011, the focus of the group's work broadened to include the city of Osnabrück. The decentralised accommodation policy had resulted in the transfer of some people to Osnabrück, where they were to live while waiting for the decision on their asylum application. This made deportation a topic of everyday conversation for civil society in Osnabrück as well, or rather, No Lager Osnabrück made it one. Between 2013 and 2015, the group managed to prevent 37 Dublin deportations. Civil disobedience was used as a legitimate means to effectively counter the German culture of deportation. People joined forces in solidarity 37 times, resolutely combatting the state's racist practices through non-violent protest.

With the toughening of the (unjust) legal provisions on asylum in October 2015, the groups practices changed: preventing deportations had been made more difficult and the standard practices, like the AlarmPhone hotline and blockades, were rendered ineffective, since the authorities, in Lower Saxony and elsewhere, were no longer announcing imminent deportations. As a result, advance mobilisation of solidarity was no longer possible; support could only be mobilised only once a deportation was actually underway, which made it difficult for activists to thoroughly prepare a response. Nonetheless, these structural repression tactics did not deter the will of activists, either within or outside of the camp. Another way of tackling the problem of deportations would have to be developed. It was apparent that since support from outside could no longer be guaranteed, readiness to resist inside the camps would have to be strengthened. The group worked with residents of the Ickerweg camp to develop tactics that shifted the focus even more onto self-organised protests by refugees and made self-defence the central and principal

purpose. Inspired and encouraged by activists involved in the refugee movement for decades, like those from KARAWANE or THE VOICE, for instance, and by the activism surrounding and on Oplatz⁸⁴ in Berlin, a self-administered structure took shape, one that not only protected more than 25 people from deportation to another EU country in 2017, but also ultimately resulted in the fact no one has been deported from the Ickerweg camp to this day (see the text "Whistles of Hope" by Hassan Numan). Unfortunately, this was not the end of the ordeal of the courageous people who, for a variety of reasons, left their homes and traversed deadly routes to exercise the right to life. Over the past four years, new provisions toughening the (unjust) rules in asylum law have been enacted on what feels like a daily basis, and these have been attacking the structures founded in solidarity, though they have not broken them. People are still uniting in solidarity, joining forces to continue the fight against the German culture of suffering⁸⁵ known as deportation. For the fact remains: being a refugee is not a crime, and solidarity is the most beautiful thing in the world. For a world without deportation and a right to remain for everyone!

<http://nolageros.blogspot.eu/>

⁸³ Accommodation facility for asylum seekers arriving in Germany.

⁸⁴ For two years, Berlin's Oranienplatz was the site of an encampment protesting the treatment of immigrants and asylum seekers.

⁸⁵ The original German uses a play on words here, switching one letter to transform the (controversial) notion of a "leading culture" to a "culture of suffering" (*Leitkultur* to *Leidkultur*).

From „Gottlieb-Daimler-Straße...Shut It Down!!!” to „Together We Are Bremen”

The Effect of Refugee Empowerment

Sunny Omwenyeke and Omar Janneh

The transformation of “Gottlieb-Daimler-Straße... Shut it Down!!!” both as a nascent campaign and a rallying slogan to “Together We Are Bremen” (TWAB) is a manifestation of the effect of refugee empowerment in Bremen. In April 2018, the inhabitants of the GDS camp⁸⁶ met with a long time activist in Bremen and decided to resist the horrible conditions in the camp and demand its closure. Other demands included good medical care, education, recognition of our true age and the abolition of age determination, and no transfers out of Bremen. It should be recalled that the camp and its inhuman conditions were punishment for our refusal to accept the arbitrary and fictitious age that the authorities assigned to us on arrival in Bremen.

The group mobilised public support and solidarity and in the summer of 2018, a number of demonstrations and rallies ensured that the need to close the camp became a strong public issue as evidenced by the press reports. Six months after

this resistance started, the camp was closed. After achieving the main aim of closing the camp, we transformed to “Together We Are Bremen” - signifying our claim as bona fide members of this City.

Meanwhile, many of us now have school places and others have “Duldung”. But those who refused the transfers are cut off from the system and denied any state support. Therefore the group is mobilising private individuals to house some of us and at the same time raise funds for the daily upkeep. So, we appeal for some kind donations. One-off or long-term donations are deeply appreciated. Please send to:

Bremen Solidarity Centre (BreSoC) e.V., GLS Bank.

IBAN: DE 92430609672074048700

BIC: GENODEM1GLS (KEYWORD: TWAB)

⁸⁶ Editor’s note: The accommodation on Gottlieb-Daimler-Straße in the Bremen district of Oslebshausen consisted of metal tents, in which unaccompanied minor refugees were placed.

Wir sind da e.V.

The registered association Wir sind da e.V. (We Are Here, WSD), which took shape in 2015 as a youth initiative of Freundeskreis Flüchtlingshilfe Böblingen (FFH) (Böblingen society for refugee aid), has always worked with institutions and associations from the district of Böblinge – like SJR Herrenberg, Jugendhaus Herrenberg, Mutpol, Evangelisches Jugendwerk Böblingen, Caritas, Demokratiezentrum Baden-Württemberg, Inter Kultur e.V. Sindelfingen and International Forum Burg Liebenzell – to foster refugee integration and democracy promotion. The association's activities include organising youth conferences in Böblingen or Sindelfingen and civic education seminars at

International Forum Burg Liebenzell, at which the topics of integration and flight, forced migration play a central role. In addition, more than 50 refugees have found positions as trainees or employees via the WSD association. The January Theses, below, form the foundation for the work of the association Wir sind da.

Contact: Facebook group: Wir sind da. Responsible persons: Isaac Gonzalez (gonzalezisaac@gmx.de / 015123026652), Muhammad Fahim Zazai, Tarkan Söhret, Karin Rapp-Bulat, Damayanthi Wieseckara Dissayanayakalage Dona, Chia Hejri, Yahya Sonko, Ghebreyesus Ghebregiabiher

January Theses of “Wir sind da”

1. We are eager to learn the German language quickly, because this is the first step towards successful integration.
2. We do not want to forget our native language though, because multilingual societies are strong societies.
3. We want to keep studying, because our specialised knowledge will benefit our new home.
4. We want to work and achieve financial independence through internships and training.
5. We want to fully realise Article 3 “Equality before the Law” of the Basic Law, because men and women are equal in rights.
6. We want to fully realise Article 9 “Freedom of Association” because self-organisation in unions, employer associations and other associations represents one of the most important features of our democracy.
7. We want to engage in volunteer work, because volunteerism is a very positive characteristic of our new home.
8. We want to keep developing our potential by remaining in constant dialogue with people born here and by realising the motto “From consumer to co-creators”.
9. We want to take action in the cause of the existing fundamental right to political asylum (Basic Law, Article 16a).
10. We want to found youth groups in every community of Baden-Württemberg because the future belongs to the young.
11. For all those reasons, we want to take action to combat xenophobia and intolerance.

January 2016

Glossary



Ableism

Devaluation of or discrimination against disabled persons.⁸⁷ Ableism (*able+ism*) also includes the structural and institutional levels of discrimination.

Source: **Köbsell, Swantje (2015)**: Ableism. Neue Qualität oder “alter Wein” in neuen Schläuchen? In: Attia, Iman et al. (eds.): Dominanzkultur reloaded. Bielefeld: transcript, p. 21

Asylum

The right to asylum is laid down in Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Once asylum has been requested, the state must hold asylum proceedings to determine whether and what form of protection it will grant. Article 16a of the Basic Law, Germany’s constitution, guarantees asylum for persons who have been persecuted on political grounds. Recognition as a refugee under the Geneva Refugee Convention (Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees) constitutes a further category of – relatively extensive – protection.

Black / Schwarz⁸⁸

The adjective “Schwarz” (Engl. Black) written with a capital S, is a political self-designation used by persons who experience racism and does not refer to “skin colour” in the biological sense. The capitalisation is intended to emphasise that “Black”-ness is a construct.

Source: <https://www.derbraunemob.de/faq/#f03>

Critical whiteness

Critical *whiteness* analyses the socially constructed category white. Since *whiteness* is construed as the social norm, *white* persons are often unaware of the privileges they enjoy. Critical *whiteness* calls for reflection on *white* social positioning and self-reflection on one’s involvement in racist structures. See also: *white*.

Source: **Autor*innenKollektiv (2015)**: Rassismuskritischer Leitfaden. Hamburg–Berlin, p. 66

Culture of human rights

The culture of human rights is mentioned in the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. This declaration’s aim is to promote a universal culture of human rights in which everyone is aware of their own rights and of their responsibility in respect of the rights of others and the development of the individual as a responsible member of a free, peaceful, pluralist and inclusive society.

Designations, self vs. external

Commonly used terms that refer to (groups of) persons often are labels invented by persons other than those they refer to. These terms are often historically charged and/or are degrading of the person or group. Considering this, one should subject all designations to critical scrutiny and use the term preferred by the person or group being designated (self-designations).

Discrimination

In legal contexts, discrimination refers to the unequal treatment of persons on the grounds of certain characteristics, such as sex, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability, for which there is no objective justification. The effect, not the intention, is decisive in determining whether discrimination has occurred.

In the social sciences, discrimination exists when persons in a position of lesser social power (e.g. Persons of Colour) have less access to resources and fewer opportunities to participate in the society than do persons in more powerful social positions (e.g. *white persons*).

Thus, discrimination legitimises and/or stabilises inequities in the distribution of power, privileges, or resources. The various forms of discrimination make it more difficult for individuals or groups to realise their full potentials and to exercise their human rights. Discrimination can operate at different levels (individual, institutional, structural). The principle of non-discrimination is a fundamental human rights principle. See also: othering, racism.

Sources: **UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (2009)**: General Comment no. 20. non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural E/C.12/GC/20

Rommelspacher, Birgit (1995): Dominanzkultur. Texte zu Fremdheit und Macht. Berlin: Orlanda Frauenverlag

Niendorf, Mareike / Reitz, Sandra (2016): Das Menschenrecht auf Bildung im deutschen Schulsystem. Berlin: Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte

⁸⁷ We use this term to make it clear that persons are disabled by societal barriers.

⁸⁸ Perhaps unexpectedly for those who do not read German but are aware that German nouns are always capitalised, the capitalisation of the adjective Schwarz carries a substantial visual punch. This is due to the fact that adjectives, with a few exceptions, are not capitalised in German. Thus the disturbance of the normal “rhythm” of capitalised and non-capitalised words is quite striking visually.

Dublin procedure

A procedure undertaken prior to the actual examination of the asylum application. The purpose of the procedure is to determine which European state is responsible for examining an asylum application. It is intended to ensure that an asylum application is only processed once within the Dublin area. The Dublin area includes the member states of the European Union, Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

Duldung

A *Duldung*, sometimes translated as “toleration of stay” status, is the temporary suspension of the deportation of persons who have a legal obligation to leave Germany. Thus, persons who are required to leave Germany but cannot be deported for legal reasons or due to objective circumstances and who do not receive a residence permit granted on humanitarian grounds receive *Duldung* status. A *Duldung* is not a residence permit. *Duldung* status always expires after a very short period and must be regularly extended. Therefore, persons with *Duldung* status can never be certain how long they will be allowed to stay in Germany.

Empowerment

Empowerment is a concept operationalised through measures aimed at putting persons in a position to lead their own lives based on self-determination and self-representation and to articulate and advocate their interests both personally and politically. The focus is on strengthening individuals’ existing potentials.

Source: **Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte. (n.d.)** Glossar. http://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/service/glossar/?tx_contagged%5Bindex%5D=E&cHash=c3133ae65b86bbe036d9a004bd7dc03c

Hate speech

Hate speech is a concept describing the expression of hatred against individuals or groups through language. Hate speech is used, particularly in internet and social media contexts, to communicate disparagement of and attack human beings or to incite hatred of or violent acts against them. Hate speech often uses racist, antisemitic or sexist attributions.

Source: **Meibauer, Jörg (2013):** Hassrede – von der Sprache zur Politik. In: Meibauer, Jörg (ed.): Hassrede/ Hate Speech, 1. <https://no-hate-speech.de/de/wissen/>

Human dignity

Human dignity is the worth that is inherent in every human being because of their humanity. This means that no person should ever be regarded as just a means to something else. Human dignity is the starting point and core of all human rights. Article 1 of the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*), Germany’s constitution reads: “Human dignity shall be inviolable. To respect and protect it shall be the duty of all state authority.”

Source: **Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte (2016):** Menschenrechte. Material für die Bildungsarbeit mit Jugendlichen und Erwachsenen. Berlin, p. 112.

Human rights

Human rights are regarded inherent to every human being everywhere in the world, and claim universality. All human rights are of equal importance, and they are indivisible. This means that we cannot select and choose which human rights we want to recognise and respect. They are all interconnected and interdependent: without freedom of expression, people could not insist on their right to food, for instance. Only in their entirety can human rights protect human dignity. Human rights are codified in several documents, e.g. at the level of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and in the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*), Germany’s constitution.

See also: human dignity.

Source: **Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte (2016):** Menschenrechte. Material für die Bildungsarbeit mit Jugendlichen und Erwachsenen. Berlin, p. 11

Inclusion

The concept of inclusion is rooted in the recognition that everyone, right from the start, has the right to be part of society on an equal basis with others and based on self-determination. Integrating persons who have already been excluded is not enough: everyone must be able to participate right from the start. Accordingly, inclusion efforts are aimed at dismantling barriers to participation, i.e. the mechanisms that exclude people from society, and redesign procedures, institutions and policy so that all human beings, just as they are can take part right from the beginning. The term was first used in connection with disabled persons, reference is made here to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It is now often used in a broader sense, encompassing many dimensions of diversity in addition to disability.

Source: **Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte (2016)**: Menschenrechte. Material für die Bildungsarbeit mit Jugendlichen und Erwachsenen. Berlin, p. 110

Integration

The concept of integration differs from that of inclusion in the sense that the former is based on the notion of at least two different groups, whereby the aim is to integrate one group into the other. This notion is usually coupled with a call for efforts on the part of or on behalf of the group being integrated to facilitate its integration into the other group, though sometimes also for actions aimed at adaptation on both sides. The concept of integration is often criticised through the lens of a critical assessment of power relations because of this linkage of rights to participate in society with adaptation and because the demand for unilateral efforts to integrate on the part of persons affected by racism ignores societal power relations and discrimination mechanisms.

Source: **Böcker, Anna (2011)**: Integration. In: Arndt, Susan / Ofuatey-Alazard, Nadja (eds.): Wie Rassismus aus Wörtern spricht. (K) Erben des Kolonialismus im Wissensarchiv deutsche Sprache. Ein kritisches Nachschlagewerk. Münster: UNRAST-Verlag, p. 347

Intersectionality

Intersectionality describes the intersections of power relations along dimensions of gender, disability, racism, or socio-economic background, for instance. Intersectionality looks at the way these dimensions are interwoven and considers them as more than only additive. In addition to encompassing multiple dimensions, an intersectional perspective considers their interactions, intersections and mutually amplifying effects in the lived realities of human beings.

The term was coined by the lawyer and legal scholar Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw.

Sources: **Crenshaw, Kimberlé (1989)**: Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics, University of Chicago Legal Forum: Vol. 1989: Iss. 1, Article 8. <http://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1052&context=uclf>
An English-language talk on intersectionality given by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 2016 is available for viewing here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DW4HLgYPIA>

Othering

Othering is a basic mechanism and precondition which enables discrimination. The term refers to the construct of two groups in binary opposition, where-

by one's own group is identified as normal and the other group as deviating from the norm.

Source: **Ogette, Tupoka (2018)**: Exit RACISM: rassismuskritisch denken lernen. Münster: Unrast, p. 59

PoC – People of Colour, Person of Colour

PoC is a self-designation used by persons with experiences of racism. The term, which originated in the civil rights movement in the US, is aimed at unifying the different groups that experience racism and ally to act together to combat racism.

Source: **Initiative intersektionale Pädagogik (i-päd). (n.d.)** Glossar. <http://www.i-paed-berlin.de/de/Glossar/#poc>

Postcolonialism

Postcolonial theory is the critical inquiry into historical and present-day power relations in relation to European colonialism and its continuities in the present day. The term postcolonial criticism, sometimes used synonymously, places a greater emphasis on political engagement.

Sources: **Castro Varela, María do Mar / Dhawan, Nikita (2015)**: Postkoloniale Theorie. Eine kritische Einführung, transcript
Heinze, Franziska (2015): Postkoloniale Theorie. In: Gender Glossar / Gender Glossary. <https://gender-glossar.de/>

Racism

Racism is a way of thinking, a structure and practice which divides human beings into groups on the basis of supposed physical and cultural characteristics or based on their decent/nationality. These groups are constructed differently with respect to intellectual, moral, and social characteristics and ranked in a racial hierarchy. The following characteristics are among those constitutive of racism: racism is a (global) social power relation that benefits *whiteness* and Western-ness and disadvantages Blackness and “non-*whiteness*”; it grew over the course of history and is closely linked to colonialism, enslavement and economic exploitation; it is intricately linked with the origins and spread of capitalism. The reference to the (attributed) characteristics does not necessarily require belief in a biological construction of race, but rather it is frequently associated with other concepts instead, such as “culture”, “ethnicity” or “religion”. The groups of “others” construed in this way are then directly or indirectly assigned a lesser value.

In Germany, racism is usually discussed in connection with National Socialism, rendering a critical and self-reflective examination of racism more

difficult. Like other forms of discrimination, racism can manifest at different levels: individual racism consists in attitudes and behaviours that enact and sustain the power relation of racism. Institutional/structural racism relates to racism in processes, principles and organisational structures and their institutionalised embeddedness in social structures, for instance, through policies and government agencies, in the education system, in the media and on the labour market. See also: discrimination, othering.

Sources: **Autor*innenkollektiv Rassismuskritischer Leitfaden (2015)**: Rassismuskritischer Leitfaden zur Reflexion bestehender und Erstellung neuer didaktischer Lehr- und Lernmaterialien für die schulische und außerschulische Bildungsarbeit zu Schwarzsein, Afrika und afrikanische Diaspora, p. 7

Ogette, Tupoka (2018): exit RACISM: rassismuskritisch denken lernen. Münster: Unrast. p. 65

Rommelspacher, Birgit (1995): Dominanzkultur. Texte zu Fremdheit und Macht. Berlin: Orlanda Frauenverlag. pp. 39-54

Refugee

In legal contexts, the term “refugee” refers to persons entitled to protection under the Geneva Refugee Convention. An entitlement of this kind may arise from the “well-founded fear of persecution” for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion (art. 1(A)(2) of the Geneva Refugee Convention). German terms for refugee – “Flüchtling”, “Geflüchtete”, “Geflohene” or “Mensch mit Fluchtgeschichte” – all emphasise the aspect of fleeing/flight. For this reason, refugees themselves and many civil society organisations often prefer to use the English word “refugee”, which, while also deriving from the Latin word *fugere* (to flee) conveys a stronger emphasis on refuge, i.e. shelter or protection from danger.

Sources: **Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte (2016)**: Menschenrechte – Materialien für die Bildungsarbeit. Modul 6 Flucht und Asyl. Berlin, p. 94. https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Publikationen/Unterrichtsmaterialien/Menschenrechte_Materialien_fuer_die_Bildungsarbeit_mit_Jugendlichen_und_Erwachsenen.pdf

Hübner, Katharina (2011): Flüchtling. In: Arndt, Susan/Ofuatey-Alazard, Nadja (eds.): Wie Rassismus aus Wörtern spricht. (K)Erben des Kolonialismus im Wissensarchiv deutsche Sprache. Ein kritisches Nachschlagewerk. Münster: UNRAST-Verlag, p. 314

Subsidiary protection

Persons would face a real risk of suffering torture, the death penalty or a serious threat to life, or persons, as a result of an armed conflict in their country of origins are eligible for subsidiary protection. Subsidiary protection is a form of protection afforded to safeguard the rights guaranteed in the European Convention on Human Rights that exists alongside the form the protection afforded by the Geneva Refugee Convention. Persons are entitled to subsidiary protection if they are at risk of suffering torture or inhumane or degrading treatment, the death penalty or serious threat to life or person in situations of armed conflict in their country of origin. They can claim subsidiary protection if their asylum applications have been denied by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). In such cases, protection is granted for the period of one year, with the possibility of extension to three years. See also: asylum, refugee, *Duldung*.

Sources: **Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte. (n.d.)**:

FAQ Familiennachzug für subsidiär Schutzberechtigte.

<http://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/themen/asylflucht/faq-familiennachzug/>

Neue Deutsche Medienmacher (2019): Glossar.

<http://glossar.neuemedienmacher.de/glossar/subsidiärer-schutz/>

white

In this context, *white* refers to a social positioning of persons that exists in counterpart to the exclusion of persons affected by racist discrimination. This positioning is rarely discussed or recognised in the *white* majority society. Similarly, *whiteness* is validated if it is not challenged and, due to its alleged neutrality, not named – as a position, as a perspective or as an identity. The term *white* is left italic here to emphasise that whiteness is a social construct. See also critical whiteness.

Source: **Sow, Noah (2011)**: *weiß*. In: Arndt, Susan/Ofuatey-Alazard, Nadja (eds.): “Wie Rassismus aus Wörtern spricht. (K)Erben des Kolonialismus im Wissensarchiv deutsche Sprache. Ein kritisches Nachschlagewerk. Münster: UNRAST-Verlag, p. 190

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Further material

Here you will find a list of sources of background information and materials relating to the topics addressed in the workshops. We wish to emphasise that rather than issuing recommendations, our intent here is to stimulate a critical treatment of materials (for more detail, see the contribution “Selecting and adapting methods for discrimination-conscious education offers”).

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