Lernen aus der Geschichte

LaG - Magazin

Discrimination in the past and present

- an international youth work topic

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Content

Recommended teaching methodology

Recommended website

Recommended teaching materials

Recommended reference book

Recommended teaching materials

Recommended website

Introduction

Dear readers,

Welcome to the first edition of the LfH Magazine in the new year. We're focusing on "discrimination in the past and the present" in international project work. This is a double issue published in German and in English.

The occasion is the EUROPEANS FOR PEACE program of the German Foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future" (EVZ), which is about to present its awards to outstanding projects under the rubric of "Discrimination: Watch out! Projects on exclusion then - and now."

We are grateful to the authors who contributed essays to this issue:

First, *Judith Blum and Corinna Jentzsch*, directors of the funding program, introduce the subject.

Prof. Dr. Michael Sauer clarifies the area of the project work and the related tasks and opportunities.

Anne Sophie Winkelmann introduces diversity-aware educational work.

Prof. Dr. Monique Eckmann opens a discussion on various pedagogical strategies to combat anti-Semitism.

A backlash of burdensome memories can be the social marginalization of others; *Prof. Dr. Björn Krondorfer* introduces two important components in international exchange work that can help educators deal with the dynamics of discrimination.

In their practical contribution, *Steffen Jost and Nina Rabuza* reflect on what it means to work with "marginalized" groups during international youth encounters at memorial sites related to Nazi crimes against humanity.

The notion of schools as places for activism is introduced by *Eberhard Seidel*, using the example of the "School without Racism – School with Courage" network.

Heike Fahrun considers the efficacy of urban quests in helping participants become aware of diversity through concrete spatial experiences.

Reports on various exemplary and exciting projects show what it means to address the topic of "discrimination" and to adopt an anti-discriminatory approach:

Gisela Paterkiewicz describes an emotionally affecting inclusion project that handled the topics of "euthanasia and forced sterilization in the Third Reich" and "human dignity in the post-war period, and in care centers".

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, religious identity is one of the most important issues, linked as it is to political power and personal career paths. *Johannes Smettan* provides methodologically reflective insights into an exciting project that grapples with self-determination in a marginalizing society.

Three additional projects that provide important insights into successful

implementation of international youth encounters using concrete examples will receive prizes from the Foundation EVZ in in the spring of 2015:

Ragna Vogel and Anne-Kathrin Topp share their experience of producing a TV program on discrimination, working with deaf and hearing youths from Germany and Russia.

Katrin Schnieders reports on a trans-boundary dance, theater and video project with young Roma and their friends.

Dr. Jens Aspelmeier sheds light on pedagogical methods used and challenges faced in guiding a German-Israeli school project on overcoming societally accepted discrimination through dance and other means.

Friends must sometimes express inconvenient truths and live with criticism: Participants in a German-Israeli youth exchange came to this insight, says *Karina Lajchter*.

The LfH editors tapped several important sources – surveys on discrimination against minorities in Europe, websites, teaching materials, pedagogical methods and specialist literature in English – that we would like to introduce to you for your work with international groups.

Among them is the well-known manual, "Compass," which features practical tips on human rights education and is to be published in a new edition in 2015; *Else Engel and Lea Fenner* reviewed it for us.

We wish you an interesting and rewarding reading experience, as you peruse this special edition.

Nadja Grintzewitsch and Constanze Jaiser

and the editorial staff of LfH

Discrimination and marginalization as topics of international project work – or: What do youth exchange projects accomplish?

By Judith Blum and Corinna Jentzsch

"Don't give discrimination a chance!" is printed in bright colors on a poster at a comprehensive school. Paul asks what discrimination means. "Marginalized and disadvantaged?! We don't have that here," the seventeen-year-old answers with confidence. Maria, two years his junior, is bored: "Why should I care?" The scenario is not unrealistic for a German schoolyard.

But, in fact, discrimination and exclusion are part of everyday life! A Muslim is not invited to a birthday party, or a woman is not invited to a job interview because her name sounds foreign. And it can happen to anyone. Everybody can be subjected to discrimination and treated unfairly, even if it's illegal. You don't have to belong to a religious or ethnic minority to know what it's like. Kids are still teased about being overweight, for example, and are shut out because of it.

Examples such as these reveal two important aspects of discrimination: First of all, it doesn't matter whether a neighbor really is a Muslim or the woman applying for a job is really a foreigner. Labeling is already a form of discrimination, especially if it leads to unfair treatment, consciously or unconsciously.

Secondly, discrimination is always a social phenomenon. It requires a group – even an entire society – that at least tolerates discrimination. A society, for example, that does not intervene when women are not promoted despite being exceptionally well-qualified. But the gender debate is not the only one where it's difficult to determine which discriminatory actions constitute an unlawful disadvantage. The difficult question to answer, put generally, is: Is every disadvantage to which we are subjected discrimination?

Introduction

It is, however, obvious that discrimination is not only a thing of the present but has a long history. Under National Socialism, the systematic discrimination against minority groups and deprivation of rights led to genocide: Marginalization was the first step, leading to abolishing of human rights, exploitation, forcing people to migrate or displacing them and ultimately leading to the barbaric extermination of human life.

Discrimination is illegal – human rights can be enforced

Acceptance of discrimination is also an expression of the spirit of the times. Thus discrimination sometimes seems normal: The fact that pupils in wheelchairs have no access to the assembly hall does not worry school communities, because this has always been the case. But it may well be discrimination! And it is not only morally untenable – it is against the law! Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed in 1948, states: "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set

forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, ..."

European and German laws make this requirement an enforceable right. Many measures are designed to help prevent discrimination. But we will only succeed in this goal when equal treatment becomes ingrained as a basic value; when we step out personally for human rights as a matter of course and when everybody has the opportunity to participate in society. When incorporation of this lesson is considered essential to becoming an adult. That is why the topic of marginalization should interest the youth of today. That is why adults should sensitize teenagers about discrimination.

Discrimination as a topic in international youth work

When done successfully, youth exchange and teenagers participating in mutual project work on the subject of discrimination achieve exceptional results. They increase awareness of social and individual integration rights and foster intercultural competence. They reduce the likelihood that youth will question the basic rights of individual groups. They help prevent prejudices and conflicts from becoming established within social structures and help imbue the spirit of the times with views that affirm the worth of freedom and diversity. At best, teenagers learn to question prejudices and stereotypes, to investigate the leeway for action and to develop an awareness of legal tools, organizations and people who can help them defend human rights and human dignity.

Through this project work, participants ask questions that concern them personally, are relevant within their circles and pertain to society: Whom do I know who suffers from discrimination? And why does this happen? With the answers to their questions, these teenagers can develop countermeasures, gain practice in adapting their own reactions and teach others.

No open society would wish such current issues on itself: racism, anti-Semitism, antiziganism and homophobia are only a few examples. International exchange projects encourage today's youth to recognize discrimination is in their immediate environment and to examine the excuses used for vilifying persons as "alien," be it their origins, the color of their skin, their ethnicity, religion, political beliefs, physical or mental abilities, gender or sexual orientation.

The points of departure and reference for the work in transnational projects may also be historical events. By scrutinizing the history of National Socialism and World War II in Europe, teenagers look into the causes, mechanisms and consequences of marginalization that led to systematic mass murder. Through projects involving youth

exchange, they adopt the perspectives of the participating countries. They can also investigate the possibility of helping people who are marginalized or persecuted, basing their projects on biographical material and real events. They can "learn from history" and choose their own best line of action.

The benefit of youth exchange for project work lies in the special learning space: Participants learn outside of a normal school environment. Adopting the role of a guest or a host, working with people who are initially strangers and dealing with language barriers shakes them out of the complacency of their normal lives. Often these teenagers question their own prejudices for the first time; they ask why privileges and disadvantages or handicaps should be simply accepted; and they reflect on how they see themselves and others. In this way, the journey becomes a social and an emotional experience.

After participating in such a youth-exchange program, Paul has grown more conscious of the fact that discrimination also impacts his world. His classmate Maria has become aware of the counter-strategies at her disposal and knows that everyone can shoulder a responsibility. And both of them know how to answer classmates who dismissively ask: "Discrimination – why should I care?"

The funding program EUROPEANS FOR PEACE

For the above reasons, the Foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future" (EVZ) wishes to encourage thematically focused international youth exchange with the funding program EUROPEANS FOR PEACE. Since 2005, it has funded such projects for teenagers from Germany and the countries of Central, Eastern and Southeast Europe as well as Israel. In an international partnership, schools or non-school educational organizations can annually apply for funding for a mutual project proposal. In our call for proposals – "Discrimination: Watch out! Projects on exclusion then - and now." – we are open to applications for international projects that address the problem either from a historical perspective or concentrate on current issues. Proposals should link education about history with learning about the current state of human rights.

The next call for proposals will be released in June 2015.

We wish to thank all the authors for their inspiring contributions to the latest issue of the journal Lernen aus der Geschichte (Learning from history).

The authors head the funding program EUROPEANS FOR PEACE of the "Stiftung Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft" (EVZ).

History project work and projects in the subject of history

By Michael Sauer

Characteristics of project work

A project is a working method in which the participants explore a topic as independently as possible — from formulating a research question to presenting the results. The idea of the project corresponds with the constructivist philosophy that predominates education and educational psychology today. In this philosophy, learning is seen not as a simple (passive) absorption of knowledge, but as an active, creative process, in which the learners individually "construct" what they learn based on previous knowledge and experiences.

While the exact details vary, there is essential agreement in the literature that the characteristics of project work can be described as follows:

- Projects respond to tasks and problems relevant to real life and the situation at hand.

- They are also oriented towards the interests and experiences of the participants.

- Project assignments should be socially relevant whenever possible. The goal is taking action and being effective in a real-life situation.

- Participants plan, organize, and take responsibility for their project work, independently and cooperatively. The project facilitator provides support as necessary.

- There is no externally defined timeframe; the timeline is created based on what is necessary for the project.

- The methodology depends on the nature of the assignment. As necessary, approaches from different fields or related disciplines can be used. However, the research question and methods can also come from a single field or related discipline.

- Project work should be action-based and involve as many of the senses as possible.

- The aim of project work is to yield a useful product that makes sense and is also presented externally.

- One part of project work is project participants' reflection on the work and communications processes.

- The value of project work lies not only in the result, but in the entire work process and the reflection on that process.

Work phases/steps

The following steps constitute, more or less, a simple project plan:

- Getting started: identify a topic, formulate a research question

- Planning: organize into groups, distribute assignments, and decide on sites, materials, methods, timeline, product/presentation, and audience

- Execution: research and obtain materials, investigate in a method-oriented manner, record and compile findings, summarize results within the group, document the working process (project journals, logs, reports).

- Preparing a product and presenting results: different product and presentation formats with varying reach and audiences, e.g. portfolio, brochure, bulletin board display, poster, exhibition, article for the school website, other web publication, stage performance, film, letter to the editor, newspaper article, initiative for a new street name or monument, panel discussion.

- Reflection: reflect on and conclude the project at the end; during the project, share information with each other, discuss and resolve organizational questions together, and clarify how group processes will work.

Schools and projects

Projects with children and young people can be carried out in schools, in association with schools, or in youth work outside of schools. The most widely known and well-established example in Germany is the President's History Competition, organized every two years by the Körber Foundation. It may seem at first glance that the goals, conditions, and requirements of project work are at cross purposes with those of the typical academic, course-based lesson. A lesson arises from an academic subject, its content, and its methods; it serves to teach knowledge that is considered socially relevant, and does so systematically, using a controlled methodology. A project is defined based on a problem; any methods that happen to be appropriate and helpful can be used to solve the problem — regardless of field; that is the idea of a project. Also, a project requires a longer-term and continual engagement with a problem, which the typical organizational structure of a school does not actually permit.

However, the history project and the modern history lesson also have a central aspect in common. Both are based on the outline of a historical investigation. The starting point is a historical question; it is investigated using appropriate material with methods specific to the field; at the end, there is an answer or an explanation. Peter Adamski rightly states, "Project work [...] is, for the subject of history, not an artificial, modernistic concept, but rather, it has a particular affinity with the goals and methods of the field." (p. 2) Therefore, history projects should not be seen as a fundamentally different alternative to institutional, course-based learning, but as supplementary and suitable for implementing within the institution of the school.

The potential of history projects

Projects require a considerable investment of time and work from all participants. This investment must pay off. The goal is not only the acquisition of historical knowledge, but also gaining skills in the subject and beyond it. There is also the motivation that such an endeavor can elicit from all the participants; however, it must be intense enough and lasting enough to help them overcome the many obstacles they may encounter.

Usually, people primarily focus on how project work builds general skills: independent planning, decision making, organizing, and problem solving. In fact, skills specific to history are just as important. These include formulating

questions and hypotheses, researching sources (How do I work in an archive?), working with different types of sources, interviewing with witnesses and critically evaluating these interviews. All of this should lead to an account, and an interpretation, of history that has plausible argumentation and sufficient evidence, and is presented appropriately. Thus, in a successful project, research-based historical learning can indeed take place. Of course, the participants cannot acquire all the necessary skills within the project itself. A foundation must already be in place, or the necessary skills must be practiced in preparation.

For history projects, topics in local and regional history are particularly suitable. They offer the most direct connection to real life and the participants' areas of experience. Often, the prominent issues are also timely and relevant in terms of the culture of history and in the culture of remembrance. Practical research problems are less of an issue than with other topics: it's easier to access objects (places, buildings, memorials), people (witnesses or experts), and institutions (libraries, archives, public authorities, companies). And finally, there is a better chance of capturing attention locally with the results of the project.

Suitable and manageable topics of this kind could include the history of a memorial, building, street, school, church or synagogue, club, or business. The project could then lead to a newspaper article which makes the results accessible for a wider audience; to a documentation that helps the institution investigated understand itself better; or to an initiative to add an information placard to the street or memorial, for which a proposed text was prepared as part of the project.

Project facilitation and support

The role of the project facilitators is to support and advise the participants. To do this, they must time their offers of help wisely: sometimes, when problems arise, it's best to stand back and let the participants find their own solution; at other times a nudge or a word of advice is appropriate.

Ideally, those carrying out the project should start by identifying their own topic. In reality, this surely is the exception, not the rule. In choosing a topic, one must also consider the possibilities for implementing it. Therefore, it requires discussion between the facilitator and the participants. And facilitators should have some suggestions of their own up their sleeves, which they can offer as options and which they can get the participants excited about.

An important point for facilitators to advise on and help clarify beforehand is whether the envisioned project can actually be carried out. Will it be possible to gather and process enough material, with a justifiable amount of work? Or is there, to the contrary, far more material than can be dealt with? What contacts and visits to institutions, experts, or witnesses will be necessary? Can these actually be carried out? Even though it is actually part of a project to accept that there will be wrong turns and mistakes, and to learn from these, a risk of total failure

should be avoided. It can also make sense for facilitators to make manageable materials available, which the participants can use to at least get started with the project.

As far as possible, the work process should be monitored as it progresses. Support can become necessary with problems involving the content and research methods, but also with communication problems. Self-reflection and internal evaluation of the project should be largely self-directed by the participants, but in this area, too, it may become necessary to offer help or suggestions.

To summarize it pragmatically: history projects offer many opportunities for learning and gaining experience, the effects of which can continue beyond the actual timeframe of the project. However, the complete independence on which the idea of project work, in principle, is based, can only be realized in the rarest of cases. Thus, the maxim should be: as much independence as possible, as much support as necessary.

Michael Sauer has been a professor of history education at the Georg-August-Universität in Göttingen since 2004. In addition, he is the co-editor of the journals Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht and Geschichte lernen. His main areas of focus are media and methodology issues, empirical research on learning and teaching, and the culture of history. He edited the book Spurensucher. Ein Praxisbuch für historische Projektarbeit, published in 2014.

Further Literature

Adamski, Peter: "Historisches Lernen in Projekten" (Basisartikel), in Geschichte lernen H. 110 (2006), 2–9.

This article is a short version of the following essay:

Sauer, Michael: "Projekte und Projektarbeit in Geschichte," in Sauer, Michael (Ed.), Spurensucher. Ein Praxisbuch für historische Projektarbeit, Hamburg 2014, S. 9–30.

Anti-discrimination efforts as an integral purpose of international youth work

By Anne Sophie Winkelmann

International youth meetings bring together young people who grew up in different countries. They are excited to meet other young people, to enjoy their time together, and to reflect about things relating to themselves and the world.

An international youth meeting is a special opportunity to experience that some of the things which the young people experience as normal in their daily lives (e.g. how people treat each other in their families, or how relationships work) can be very different for other people.

It‘s often assumed that at international youth meetings, young people should primarily be learning about different ways of life in different countries, so they can get along better with each other and in the world. The emphasis is then placed — often unintentionally and without realizing it — on "establishing" cultural and national difference. From a diversity-conscious perspective, that is an oversimplification and is indeed problematic.

Diversity-conscious means acknowledging multidimensional identities

From a diversity-conscious perspective, what young people at international meetings should really be learning is that people in one country are not all the same. People are not only influenced by what is considered "normal" in their societies, but also, for example, by what is expected of them as men or women, or by what it means for a person to come from a poor family or to live in a very small village. At this level, diversity means multidimensionality: each person is diverse and unique.

Diversity-conscious education aims to empower young people to navigate difference and complexity. This also means being able to sense and cope with feelings of uncertainty; to identify the mechanisms behind that; to be able to discuss different expectations and ways of understanding and then to find compromises.

Diversity conscious means anti-discrimination

Diversity-conscious educational work empowers young people to understand that it is problematic to put people in pigeonholes (e.g. all people from one country, or all women, or all rich people) and then judge and treat them in a certain way. It questions "normal" and "different" and creates space to reflect on the issue of discrimination in relation to the young people’s own experiences and issues.

Diversity-conscious education invites us to go on a research expedition, to examine how prejudices and discrimination function, and to recognize our own involvement. It encourages us to reflect on whether we might be benefiting from stereotyped thinking that is limiting and hurting other people. It allows us to realize how easily it is to

position oneself as being on the "right side", the "good side", by devaluing the "other", and how simply justifications are made for injustice, thus rendering it invisible. It also brings into focus the power structures and the privileges connected with identities and their positions in society. It also encourages us to look through a "structural lens" and to critically examine laws and discourse (media or otherwise) in the context of discrimination. However, diversity-conscious education doesn't stop at reflection. It creates space for collaboratively discussing what each of us can do in our daily lives, as well as in the big picture, against discrimination and for more equal opportunity and "freedom". Diversity-conscious means, in this case, critical self-reflection and taking action against all forms of discrimination.

Anti-discrimination as an integral purpose

Over the last two decades, the fundamental concept of diversity-conscious education described here has significantly changed the theory and practice of international youth work. Ongoing critical reflection on the aspects of "classic" intercultural learning has increased awareness of the opportunities, but also the potential pitfalls, in international youth work. Anti-discrimination has increasingly become an integral purpose of this field of work.

Diversity-conscious education is based on a broadly-defined, multidimensional understanding of discrimination, which involves myriad lines of difference (for example body size, sex, clothing, social or national background, or age...) and always considers their intersections with each other and their concurrent degrees of impact. In academic theory, this concept is discussed using the term intersectionality (see Leiprecht 2008), which assumes that while different forms of discrimination may have differ in their degree of impact and their social and historical dimensions, similarities may be found in their mechanisms and the ways they function. Accordingly, at youth meetings, each specific example can be a "doorway" to considering how discrimination functions in general, and then working together in solidarity to explore and oppose it. In the process, participants examine not only interpersonal dimensions but also institutional and structural discrimination.

A diversity-conscious attitude

One particular challenge for facilitators of diversity-conscious learning processes is to continually draw connections between the specific experiences and reflections of the group; social and structural situations and injustices; and the daily life and actions of the young people. This requires an empathetic, empowering attitude, which allows reflection beyond "right" and "wrong," and dispenses with one-dimensional ideas of "victim" and "perpetrator."

In fact, effective facilitation of diversity-conscious learning processes depends primarily on the educational facilitator's attitude towards the process of critically questioning stereotypes, power structures, and

discrimination, as well as appropriate self-reflection, which must continually evolve.

It helps to reflect on our own practice and role on a regular basis — ideally, while looking forward to a journey of discovery, with the assurance of knowing that children, young people and adults who, in their questions and actions, are also striving for change, will be our travelling companions.

- Can I recognize and reflect on my own "pigeonholes" and perceptions of norms/ normality?

- Am I able to open up about myself and my own learning processes and uncertainties?

- Are there situations in which my well-intended explanations or lack of reaction may be contributing to reinforcement of one-dimensional or discriminatory perspectives?

- Can I sense when a follow-up question could lead to a deeper and more interesting discussion? Do I have a feeling for when issues that are personally significant for the group are being touched upon?

- In terms of the concepts and how to implement them in practice, some possible questions include:

- Are we able to avoid generalizations, labels and stereotypes?

- Do we explicitly address the problematic nature of "culturalizing" and producing/reproducing cultural differences?

- Are we paying attention to racism and other forms of discrimination?

- Are we creating space for participants to share their experiences with stereotyping and discrimination?

- Are individuals, each with a different multidimensional, subjective identity, visible?

- Are examples of social and structural inequality identified and questioned?

- Are we strengthening constructive reactions to uncertainty and complexity?

Additional questions and more extensive explanations of the theory behind them and the myriad aspects of the diversity-conscious approach, as well as a series of educational methods, can be found in the practical guide "more than culture. Diversity-conscious education in international youth work," published in German and thereafter in English.

Anne Sophie Winkelmann is an intercultural educator, an anti-bias knowledge multiplier and a freelance speaker in youth and adult education. She holds a degree in pedagogy. Her current areas of focus include anti-discrimination work, diversity-conscious international youth work and addressing discrimination against younger people, mostly by adults against teenagers and children, termed adultism.

Educational strategies against anti-Semitism

By Monique Eckmann

Among educators engaged in educational work that critically addresses anti-Semitism, there is a relatively high level of agreement on the following observations:

- that exposure to history, in particular to Holocaust and Nazi history, is not effective against present-day anti-Semitism;

- that "anti-Semitism without Jews" exists;

- that anti-Semitism is a worldview which offers supposed explanations for many prevailing problems, feeds on projections, and has an identity-defining function, creating a feeling of group cohesiveness;

- that today, the issue is not so much extreme-right variants of anti-Semitism, but rather subtle, sometimes open anti-Semitism, "after or despite Auschwitz," marked by resentment and conspiracy theories;

- that anti-Semitism has many forms and versions and that anti-Semitism can be concealed in critiques of capitalism, critiques of the nation of Israel, and critiques of cosmopolitanism.

- that in connection with the conflict in the Middle East, anti-Semitism is being politicized, which can contribute to people framing themselves as victims of the "overly powerful Jews" and make educational work more difficult.

Four educational strategies against anti-Semitism

In the past few years, four educational strategies have been identified and will be discussed here. They consider different interconnected aspects in different ways and respond especially to the following aspects of anti-Semitism:

- Recognizing and deconstructing anti-Semitism as a constellations of discursive schema;

- anti-Semitism as experience in the whole realm of racism/discrimination — thus, an intervention in close social proximity

- anti-Semitism as intergroup conflict — thus, an exchange project on the basis of the contact hypothesis;

- anti-Semitism as global and local history — thus, work with history and memory.

So let's take a closer look at these four educational strategies, their possibilities, limitations and particular challenges:

Deconstructing anti-Semitic images and discursive schema

In this approach, the idea is to first recognize anti-Semitic schema and preconceived images as such, then to analyze and deconstruct these images and discourses, and critically question anti-Semitic thought patterns. Thus, it is a primarily cognitive way of approaching the subject. This is work with representations, practiced in the classroom as well as at youth meeting centers. The content of these preconceived images has to do with conspiracy theories and fan-

tasies of power, rumors about "the Jews," who are paradoxically alleged to be endowed with superiority while also being perpetual victims. In this context, one can observe "anti-Semitism without Jews," because these images exist in many contexts, even without Jewish people being present. This is not just about hateful images of the other, but also a worldview that can offer explanatory schema for everything.

The aim of this approach is to strengthen young people‘s cultural and cognitive skills such as media criticism, critical analysis of comics, consciously noticing anti-Semitism on the Internet, etc., so that they learn to see through stereotypes and their mechanisms.

With this approach, the challenge is that the preconceived images addressed are deeply anchored in culture and society and they only change very slowly, if at all. In working with these images and representations, there is also the risk of perpetuating them. The goal is to expose schema and, in deconstructing them, to strengthen argumentation skills.

Anti-Semitism as an experience in the close social environment

The second approach is quite different: anti-Semitism is approached as an experience in the close social environment, in the context of the increasing ethnicization of social conflicts. An experience which all participants have experienced in the realm of their daily lives, in its dimensions of inclusion and exclusion, is to be shared with awareness. This educational strategy aims, in groups or in workshops, to address and share personal experiences of violence and discrimination. The focus on the dimension of personal experience requires that the experiences of all participants be expressed, whether of anti-Semitism or one of the many forms of racism, including anti-Muslim or anti-Romani racism. In such workshops, other categories of discrimination such as homophobia or sexism are also considered.

This is an approach which is well-known in anti-discrimination education and which does not hierarchize or place value judgments on the incidents. It offers each person the opportunity to express personal experiences of being affected by prejudice, e.g. resentments, indignities and discrimination in daily life. Social and locational disadvantages, which, depending on the context, the young people may experience as perpetrators, as victims or as bystanders, are also discussed. Having acknowledged these experiences, the next step is to collaboratively find strategies to counteract discrimination and hate, and to act in solidarity. The goal of these educational programs is to encourage everyone to take responsibility.

For this approach, it makes a big difference whether Jewish young people are participating. When no Jewish participants are present, one danger is that the educators might take on a representational role. This assumption of the role of Jewish victims, however, can be seen by the other young people as moralizing, often eliciting defensive reactions or worsening existing

resistance.

This approach comes from social pedagogy and tends to be practiced in situations outside the framework of school.

Intercultural encounters: dialogue projects on anti-Semitism

In this educational approach, anti-Semitism is defined as an intergroup relationship; contact is encouraged between groups with negative feelings towards each other. These considerations have led to exchange projects between Jewish and non-Jewish young people, intended to counteract anti-Semitism.

However, intergroup contact and encounters can only have a positive effect if certain conditions are kept in mind. These conditions have led to different models for exchanges. Their common denominator is that the encounter requires very thorough preparation and follow-up; that groups brought together are as comparable as possible (in terms of number of participants, status or level of education), and that both groups need co-moderation by educators.

One of the goals of exchange education is to reduce prejudices and stereotypes through experiencing "the others" — often imagined without being known in reality — in their specifics but also their general human nature. However, insufficiently thought-out exchange projects can actually increase intergroup hostility, working against their educational intent.

Numerous exchange projects are also dialogue projects, in which questions are posed to "the others," but personal prejudices are also questioned. In the best case, dialogue leads to understanding of "the others," or also possibly, sparked by critique from "the others," to a critical perception of "the own," that is, to reflection or even self-critique.

But exchanged projects about anti-Semitism involve a risk, namely that of asymmetry. If anti-Semitism were to be the only topic addressed, the Jewish participants would automatically be reduced to the position of victims and the non-Jewish participants would be assigned the position of perpetrators. From the debate over anti-racism pedagogy, it is known that this kind of asymmetry can trigger defensive reactions and resentment and lead to deadlock. Without reciprocity, exchange education is not possible. That certainly does not mean we should fall into the trap of a well-known anti-Semitic topos: we should not, instead, collectively label the Jewish people as perpetrators, but rather, we must see them as individuals, who, like all other people, can be the cause of racist opinions, thoughts, images or prejudices, which are, after all, supposed to be analyzed in these exchanges.

However, can exchange and dialogue projects specifically aimed against anti-Semitism really be built on the principles of reciprocity? And what does that mean exactly — who would exchange with whom? If anti-Semitism is a construct or a rumor, which can exist without the real people affected, there is no partner for exchange. After all, one can hardly create dialogue projects

between "anti-Semites" and "Jews." And if the question of anti-Semitism is not made explicit, the question remains open: what is the justification and the topic of the proposed dialogue? An exception is projects in which the aim is solidarity with the people affected — whether it is against racism or anti-Semitism.

Working with history and memory

Anti-Semitism today is based neither exclusively nor directly on history. It is confirmed repeatedly again by educators that knowledge about the annihilation of the Jews is not effective against present-day anti-Semitism. Still, considering the past can bring important new insights. Above all, approaches based on history and remembrance work in the local context provide interesting perspectives on education work to counter anti-Semitism. These are not just concerned with history from the Nazi period, but also with history that encompasses the perspectives of majorities and as well as minorities.

Engaging with local context and investigating the traces of daily life events as well as exceptional ones requires an awareness of the connection between local and global history and of the diversity of society yesterday and today. On the one hand, the idea is to engage with memories from one's own family — finding biographical connections to migration, war, flight, exile, or to the history of the realm of daily life and work. On the other hand, how Jewish and non-Jewish neighbors live together should also be addressed. All of this can take place based on buildings, streets, archives and places.

In other words, it is a territorial approach, in which the focus is on citoyenneté in the sense of belonging to a place, and on the active participation of all those involved. Here, for example, the topic of how Sinti and Roma belong to local place could also offer interesting perspectives.

In this approach, anti-Semitism is not necessarily the primary topic, but rather, becomes relevant in the context of the history of the neighborhood, borough, or village. An inclusive consideration of the history of the relationships between majorities and minorities can also help us to question, in a concrete way, how stereotypes and the categorizing assumptions made between "us" and "the others" arise and develop.

Conclusion

These four educational strategies do not, in any way, stand in opposition to one another. It should always be considered how they might complement each other.

They have in common that education against anti-Semitism always demands a lot of educators, who are required again and again to position themselves between banalizing and overdramatizing the subject. Also, the deconstruction of stereotypes, that is, of collective preconceived notions, is sometimes met with resistance. This resistance is even stronger in the case of established representations of an abstract

category, to which great power is attributed, as is the case with Jewish people, who, for hundreds of years, have been accused of secret ambitions for power.

It is often useful to work with dissonances. Discovering contradictions in one's own ideas or in the narrative of one's own ingroup, whether they be socio-cognitive or normative, can be a valuable motive for changing minds. It is also worth observing specific situations: "critical incidents" that were experienced by the participants themselves. These force people to consider actual incidents, to avoid general statements about "the Jews," "the Turks," "the others," and thus to explore concrete experiences and possibilities for action.

In these four educational approaches, there are different ways of dealing with the question of whether different forms of anti-Semitism and racism should be addressed together or separately. In the first approach, anti-Semitism is often addressed separately, but there is no reason not to evaluate racist and anti-Semitic images at the same time. Approaches two and three work with collective experiences of hate and discrimination, and in the fourth approach all memories and stories are expressed. This is not about pedagogical opportunism, but rather, about treating all the members of a society equally, regardless of what group they belong to, and about their right to contribute their experiences in the educational framework without trivialization or hierarchization.

It's important to develop non-accusatory educational perspectives against anti-Semitism, perspectives which foster self-reflection and are based on an inclusive perspective — without an implicit or explicit categorization of "good" and "evil," anti-Semites and non-anti-Semites, racists and non-racists. Within the framework of education, this means we must walk a fine line, addressing the many forms of anti-Semitism — in close social environments in the context of different racisms — as well as personal phenomena with their specific situations and relationships.

The author is a sociologist and a lecturer at the Haute école de travail social (HETS) in Geneva. Her research and teaching subjects include group conflicts and the dialogic approach to identity and memory. She develops educational approaches to combatting racism, anti-Semitism, and right-wing extremism as well as in the area of human rights and peace education.

Memory work and unsettling empathy: Two essential components in intercultural Encounters

By Björn Krondorfer

In my work as facilitator of intercultural encounters in which the issue of reconciliation plays a key role, we often touch on traumatic memories. Traumatic memories always have the power of social exclusion, because they cement one's perception of the world by holding on to certain "truths" relevant to large group identities. Reconciliation – here generally understood as a regaining of broken trust – counters exclusionary mechanism, for it tries to build bridges where acts of discrimination, prejudice, hatred, or violence have pulled people apart.

I have found two components particularly helpful in reconciliatory processes that aim at neutralizing exclusionary dynamics. One is memory work (a concept familiar to people engaged in "learning from the past"), the other unsettling empathy (a concept I suggest we need to pay attention to). Both of these components work best when equal weight is given to cognitive as well as affective levels of recognition and learning.

Conflicts beyond the time-frame of one generation

The phrase "learning from the past" implies temporal duration, and in my work I mostly engage with groups where conflicts have endured beyond the time-frame of one generation. When conflicts stretch over generations, it is crucial to actively work with injurious and traumatic memories. Haunting memories motivate social groups in conflict to act in particular ways: fortifying communal borders, defending group identities, clinging to collective stories of suffering, or believing in tales of a heroic past. In contrast to simply having memories that get reiterated in families and communities, memory work is the attempt to actively engage troublesome memories. Indeed, I have found this element so important when interacting with young adults from different backgrounds that I have come to call my approach "intercultural memory work."

"Intercultural memory work"

Over the years, I have worked with third-generation American Jews and their non-Jewish German counterparts in one-month long summer programs on the effects of Holocaust and the war (while traveling together in the United States, Germany, and Poland). I also worked with American students from different racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds in five-day Racial Reconciliation retreats as well as with Palestinians, Israelis and Germans in intergenerational seminars on building bridges. Numerous shorter reconciliation projects have ranged from addressing apartheid in South Africa to student field trips that focused on migration and human rights issues on the Arizona-Mexican border. Though each of these encounters differed in a number of ways, the guiding paradigms re-

mained the same:

- engaging in alternative forms of communication that require risk-taking, vulnerability, and honesty

- practicing careful listening, straightforward responding, and empathic imagining

- attending to the impact of family biographies, communal memories, and national histories

Family biographies are interweaved with national histories

When groups who are (or have been) in conflict with each other meet in reconciliatory settings, they begin to realize how intimately their family biographies are connected to national histories. Part of the memory work, then, is to foster an awareness of larger societal frameworks that characterize each group's affective experiences vis-à-vis historical memory and current conflicts. It greatly matters, for example, whether one's own community endured wounding at the hands of others or whether one's own people were (or are) linked to culpable wrongdoing. Belonging to large-group identities leads not only to different cognitive understandings of one's place in the world, but also comes with particular emotional baggage: fear, defensiveness, denial, over-identification, anxiety, resilience, guilt, pride, shame – and all the subtleties in between. Hence, when working in intercultural settings marked by strife and enmity (past or present), we must pay attention to the eroding power of traumatic memory on social relations. The goal is to open pathways for improved communicative patterns and restorative visions.

"Unsettling empathy"

This brings me to my second point. As important as it is to be attentive to traumatic memories, it is equally important to engage "unsettling empathy." I understand unsettling empathy to refer to a posture that needs to be learned and practiced by people who have come to distrust each other based on historical and present antagonisms. I call it a posture because it is not just a pedagogical method or didactic tool. Instead, unsettling empathy is a kind of practiced awareness and a relational commitment to caring responsiveness. When it is operative, it unsettles one's own assumptions about the world and one's place in the world. It is usually not present in culturally homogenous settings, but gets triggered in intercultural encounters. When it occurs, it is a feeling of losing all ground under one's feet because one's values, perceptions, and base assumptions no longer hold true to the extent as before.

Although moments of unsettling empathy can occur in intellectual debates, their full impact is usually felt in sessions that engage people non-verbally. Of the many creative approaches I rely on in my intercultural memory work, I want to mention "Living Sculptures" as a particular effective way to connect people to their deeply-held assumptions, or, as often the case, to a realization of discrepancies between cognitive and affective levels of knowing.

"Living Sculptures" is a means of scenic improvisation, approaching individual and collective identity conflicts through theme-centered, embodied presentations of a "monument." In small groups, participants prepare a sculpture with their own bodies that represents the thematic task given to them. Those sculptures can neither move nor talk. I often instruct the groups to think of them as monuments displayed in a public square. The teams have little time for preparation (about 15-20 minutes) in order to preserve the improvisational spirit of this exercise. Central to the success of this exercise is to not "over-think" intellectually how to create a presentation of a given theme.

"Living Sculptures" – one method amongst various

Each sculpture is eventually shown to the whole group. Then the work of interpretation begins, which can include a number of things: outside observers circumambulate the sculpture and describe what they see; they can give the sculpture a title or name its emotional quality; a facilitator can isolate elements of the sculpture (like a hand gesture) and let the "hand" talk; outside observers can change place with one of the bodies in the sculpture; a facilitator can tap people in the sculpture and have them talk or change positions; etc.

In intercultural settings, separate groups may be asked to portray an aspect of their national history. For example, Germans might prepare a monument about how they think Germany deals with the Holocaust, while Jews are asked do to the same from their perspective. These national sculptures always differ; and they are never what the participants themselves expected them to be. The outcome is always astounding, since the sculptures bring to light aspects of large-group identities that are not consciously willed or known to the small teams that created them. The display and interpretive work with living sculptures have unsettling affects.

At first, unsettling empathy is simply a feeling of confusion and anxiety. As such, it can provoke counter-reactions of defensiveness and fear. But when dealt with deliberately, unsettling empathy develops into an ethical stance, which, ideally and over time, can become like a habitus that informs, guides, and structures one's attitude toward life.

Affective and cognitive levels of communication

For unsettling empathy to be experienced in a constructive way, a protective space must be provided that is conducive to personal and social exploration. In this space, participants are encouraged to challenge their perceptions of themselves and others through affective and cognitive levels of communication, including creative, body-centered, and nonverbal components. Such reconciliatory processes go

- beyond the surface of friendly conversation
- beyond the limitation of a culture's master narrative

- beyond the comfort zones of rehearsed opinions

- beyond the loyalties that communities impose on our large-group identities

Reconciliatory processes are open-ended processes

For reconciliatory processes to be effective, groups-in-conflict need to get implicated in each other's histories and traumas. These are open-ended processes: they are not measured by the attainment of a pre-determined end but by their transformative potential. To engage in such efforts participants must be fully present to each other. The intent is to go beyond merely describing how each social group perceives reality. Instead, the posture of unsettling empathy assists in adjusting and revising one's perception of being-in-the-world, with the goal to (re)establish a modicum of trust.

These few thoughts are, no doubt, visionary in quality. But those who have experienced such processes know how applicable and relevant they are in real-life settings dominated by exclusionary mechanisms. Social groups do not exclude because individual people are malicious and vindictive – they exclude because exclusionary mechanisms gain their strength when we underestimate how deeply haunting memories influence our (often unconscious and affective) identifications with large-group sentiments.

The author is Director of the Martin-Springer Institute and endowed Professor of Religious Studies at the Northern Arizona University, USA

Empowering or overwhelming? International youth work on exclusion and discrimination at memorials to the victims of the Nazis

By Steffen Jost and Nina Rabuza

International youth meetings or teacher trainings have long been part of educational work on Nazism, also at memorial sites. In contrast to shorter programs, in international projects, the objective has always been more than just learning how to teach history. The "encounter" should foster intercultural exchange, reconciliation, or the reduction of stereotypes and prejudices. With the new dominance of human rights education, there have also been more calls for making connections to present-day problems. Discrimination should not be seen as just a historical phenomenon; instead, connections should be drawn to the world of the participants' daily lives. Thus, in this text, we will discuss the following question: what does it mean to work, at memorials to the victims of the Nazis, with "marginalized" groups, or groups who have experienced individual or collective discrimination? The question will be discussed here by considering the example of two youth meetings that were different in many ways, which both included one-week seminars at the Max Mannheimer Study Center in Dachau and at which completely different group dynamics developed.

"Narratives of Injustice" — Sinti and Roma in Germany and Serbia in the 20th and 21st centuries (Project dates: 2012-2013)

The project addressed the discrimination against, and persecution of, Sinti and Roma in Germany and Serbia in history and in the present. Between two one-week seminars in Dachau and Belgrade, the participants conducted interviews, from which they produced four short films during the course of the second seminar. The films have since been posted on Youtube.

The group was extremely heterogeneous in many ways. The age and education level of the participants varied significantly, ranging from 14 to 23 years and from special-needs students to university students. From each country, there were Sinti and Roma participants as well as participants from the respective social majorities. As the meeting progressed, it became clear that there were very different interests and goals. It became apparent that the participants' experiences during the meeting was strongly affected by the collective group to which they belonged, but social status and education level also played a large role.

For the German Sinti, it was unusual to have to act as the group's experts on "their" culture and, at the former site of the concentration camp, on history, as well. However, after some time, they took on this role with a certain "pride." All of the Serbian Roma were already working in NGO contexts and were much more used to this role. They

spoke less from the perspective of individual experience, acting instead as experts on the situation of the Roma in Serbia in general. Meeting a German Sinti survivor led to a stronger sense of connectedness between the participating Sinti and Roma. After the official discussion, the German and Serbian Sinti and Roma again initiated a discussion (partially in Romani) outside the official program, i.e. without the participants from the social majorities. At the end of the one-week seminar in Dachau, the German Sinti visited the concentration camp memorial again and held their own memorial ceremony. All in all, it became clear that the historical site of the concentration camp memorial had a different meaning for them than for the other participants. Speaking about historical persecution offered a framework in which personal experiences with discrimination could also be expressed. Subsequently, the German Sinti organized interviews with their families, visited the memorial with their parents, and began asking their relatives questions about history. This created a stronger connection between the Nazi period and the present, which had indeed been formulated as a goal as the project was conceived, but not one that should be forced. The intention was to let the participants determine to what extent the meeting should become a space for addressing personal experiences with discrimination.

"Memory Lab Junior" — History and memory in Bosnia, France, Germany and Serbia (project dates: 2014-2016)

In the project "Memory Lab Junior," adolescents and young adults discussed how history, memory and identity are related to each other. In three seminars, the participants from Bosnia, Germany, France, and Serbia considered memories of the Nazi period, the way that the Yugoslav Wars are being dealt with in Bosnia and Serbia, and issues of colonial history. The aim of the project was to stimulate interest in questioning history and national/nationalist narratives, both from a historical and a contemporary perspective. The first segment in Dachau was concerned with the history of the concentration camp and the founding of the memorial site. During the first two days of the workshop, the participants got to know each other through different, playful activities. This created a pleasant group atmosphere. With the visit to the memorial site, the group dynamic changed. The Bosnian participants wanted to spend time together as a group without the other participants. They expressed their grief over the atrocities in Dachau and empathized strongly with the victims and their families. At the same time, they made a direct connection between the suffering of the victims of the Nazis with the war crimes experienced by them personally, by their families, and by what they saw as the Bosnians collectively. One participant said that she was already familiar with everything that she saw at Dachau. She felt that the camps in Bosnia during the Yugoslav Wars

were the same, and that she and the Bosnian participants were thus better able to empathize with the prisoners than the other participants were.

Speaking of personal suffering "among themselves"

Thus, the visit to the memorial site elicited different reactions from the Bosnian participants than from the other groups. For them, there was hardly any difference between the concentration camps and the camps during the Yugoslav Wars This equivalency made it difficult to critically analyze both topics, because the discussion was perceived by the Bosnian group as cynical or "cold-blooded," as a participant wrote later. In their eyes, regarding the atrocities, there was nothing to be discussed; their focus was on expressing grief. Their own experience with suffering was challenging, so a nuanced discussion of the Nazis' crimes was hardly possible for them. The other participants had not had any comparable collective experience of suffering themselves. Confronting and discussing Nazi crimes was, for the rest of the group, primarily an intellectual issue, and only secondarily an emotional one. Thus, a conflict developed: the Bosnian participants felt the need to talk about the Bosnians' painful experiences "amongst themselves," while the other groups were interested in a discursive exchange of ideas about the history of the Nazi era and the culture of remembrance and commemoration. At this point, the whole group was reaching their breaking points; communication within the group became problematic. Only after the topic was changed to the question of how to deal with sites of atrocities, and after the meeting moved on to a different place, did the tension diffuse.

Conclusion

Up to this point, there have been few studies on the effect of international youth meetings. In the two projects described here, it is also difficult to gauge whether participation had a lasting impact on the young people, and how the work at, and with, the memorial site affects the longer-term development process. However, we consider it a success that the young people from the project "Narratives of Injustice" engaged intensively with histories, including family histories, and that the Sinti participants were able to experience the memorial site as a place relevant to them. The example of the project "Memory Lab Junior" shows, however, that visiting a memorial site can also present an obstacle for a meeting. The Bosnian participants were overwhelmed by visiting the memorial, due to their personal experiences, and withdrew somewhat from the group. For the cultural contact aspect, a seminar on a different topic would have been easier. Moreover, with both groups, it was seen that during the course of the project, the identity as Sinti in Germany, or as Bosnians, respectively, became increasingly important. Thus, it would be desirable, in future research on international youth meetings, that investigating the connections between the

identity development processes and work at historical sites remains a relevant research question.

Steffen Jost is the acting director of the Max Mannheimer Study Center in Dachau. He earned his doctorate at LMU Munich; his dissertation topic was Seville's culture of memory. Nina Rabuza is an educator at the Max Mannheimer Study Center in Dachau, where she is responsible for international teacher trainings and youth meetings.

School without Racism – School with Courage

By Eberhard Seidel

"Schule ohne Rassismus – Schule mit Courage" [School without Racism – School with Courage] is a network of nearly 1,750 schools from across Germany (figure from 2015). It was founded by Aktion Courage e.V., its sponsoring organization, in 1995.

Barbara John, Germany's ombudsperson for families of victims of the neo-Nazi terror group National Socialist Underground, calls this Schools with Courage network one of the "chief instruments to prevent discrimination in Germany." More than one million students in these schools are asking themselves – through events and projects – how they can best live together with others in a diverse society. They are seeking answers that strengthen solidarity, and Germany's future identity hinges on their responses.

"School without Racism – School with Courage" is a bottom-up initiative, which means that there is no obligatory curriculum for participating schools. It's the students themselves who decide which activities to pursue at their respective schools. Thus the network offers them the chance to deal with specific local challenges, to actively shape conditions at their school and to develop civic involvement on their own terms.

What equality for all really means

"School without Racism – School with Courage" stands for belief in the equality of all human beings. Its overarching goal is to dismantle ideologies that attempt to legitimate inequality.

By taking the same critical approach to all such ideologies, students learn that – at first glance – phenomena such as racism, anti-Semitism, antiziganism, homophobia, right-wing extremism, sexism, Islamism, etc., which seem vastly different at first, have something in common: They distinguish between people based on attributes, organize them into a hierarchy and use this to justify discrimination. Ideologies promoting inequality also assume that divergent elements are not equally valuable. The basic formula is as follows: x is more valuable than y. That means that x has a legitimate reason to fight against y and deprive y of rights.

Bundling the analysis of such ideologies fits a horizontal approach to discrimination, by removing a hierarchy of statuses. In this model, sexism and anti-Semitism are no more important than racism; antiziganism is no more important than homophobia. Any act of discrimination can have similar consequences for victims. Naturally, this does not mean that every type of discrimination is equally explosive at any given time and in any given society. Types of discrimination can be subdivided into how they evolved, how they are manifested and how they are structured.

Ideologies of inequality can be found in all social groups

We have discovered in our 20 years of pedagogical experience that equality as

a learning objective is particularly well-suited toward addressing the many types of discrimination in a heterogeneous society with many immigrants. All people, regardless of origin or appearance, can be prejudiced. Ideologies of discrimination can be found in all social groups. Generally speaking, the dominant group in a society discriminates against the smaller and weaker one(s). But even if the discriminating group isn't the larger one, there's always a power struggle involved.

In a society such as Germany's, where more than one-third of children and youths have an immigrant background, it is only possible to have a credible commitment to diversity and tolerance if we equally denounce all supporters of ideologies of inequality, regardless of their background. If this does not occur, youth – who tend to have a pronounced sense of justice – will quickly lose their commitment to tolerance, diversity and human rights.

The horizontal approach to ideologies of inequality enables us to benefit from the socially and culturally diverse student body, in our work at Schools with Courage.

In the winter of 2014/15, dozens of these Courage Schools are creating a welcoming environment for refugees. They offer German language courses for refugee children, invite these children to visit their schools and spend their free time with them. And in Großröhrsdorf in the Bautzen administrative district, students from a participating school have spent weeks standing up to village residents who have been demonstrating at the town hall against the settlement of refugees in the area.

Everyone can join in and make a personal commitment

The network is open to all schools that fulfill certain criteria. At least 70 per cent of all people studying and working at the school have to sign a document committing themselves to three goals: actively opposing all forms of discrimination at their school; interceding if a conflict arises; and regularly conducting projects and campaigns related to the issue.

National and state coordinators, cooperation partners, local teachers and educators support and accompany the participants in their activities.

What happens if the personal commitment is not upheld? Will the "Courage" title be removed? Many have asked this question, and we can say:

The "School without Racism – School with Courage" title is not an award or ribbon granted for exceptional performance. Likewise, the title cannot be removed if conditions have changed in the meantime.

Further, the title does not mean that there is no bullying, racism, or discrimination at the school. We understand that these things may happen, in spite of all good efforts. But Courage Schools have committed themselves to assuming an active role in combatting discrimination. If an act of discrimination takes place at a school and

neither students nor staff respond, we would recommend that critical students join together and remind the entire school of their shared commitment.

In many cases, this is all that is necessary to turn things around. Sometimes it also helps to contact the respective state coordinator for the school and to discuss how to raise awareness for the general climate in the school.

We have never removed the title from a school, even if we are aware that activities countering racism have lost momentum. We believe in positive sanctions, i.e., measures to encourage schools to renew their activism as participants in the Schule ohne Rassismus – Schule mit Courage network. We have learned that the best results come from having high expectations.

The author is a sociologist and journalist. He has published books, educational materials and documentaries on immigration, right-wing extremism, youth subcultures, Islamism and Islamophobia for more than 30 years. And since 2002 he has been chairman of the School without Racism – School with Courage network.

Contact:

Schule ohne Rassismus – Schule mit Courage

Ahornstraße 5

10787 Berlin

Phone: (+49-30) 214-5860

Fax: (+49-30) 2145-8620

www.schule-ohne-rassismus.org

www.facebook.com/SchuleohneRassismus

"Approaching the unfamiliar..." Urban quests as a participatory method in historical-political education

by Heike Fahrun

A successful urban quest uses and hones the ability to approach the unfamiliar (according to Gerhard Knecht: Rallyes. Eine Einführung, gruppe & spiel No. 3/08). Here's how it works: Participants form groups, go out to discover an urban space, solve various assignments together and reach a predefined goal. They're usually in an unfamiliar city, they use unaccustomed means of travel, they're working with people they may not know – in other words, a lot of "unknowns." How do I use these methodological tools in my pedagogical work and how do I combine the urban quest format with elements of historical/ political education?

Three examples from my own work:

- In a one-day workshop, participants in a Voluntary Year of Social Service plan a urban quest for the entire group. Following a brainstorming session on important urban quest principles, clarifying the organizational framework, the volunteers explore opportunities in the city, work out routes and assignments, design the materials required and in the end supervise the urban quest itself on their own.

- Ten young people from Belarus and Germany who have worked on human rights issues in their exchange project gather in Berlin for a final meeting. On two different routes through the city, they discover sites linked to individual human rights or their violation. Not only do they expand their knowledge of history, but they also analyze and document the current state of human rights in in the city.

- Participants of different ages explore their city in terms of young and old living together or in parallel. In a kind of "grass-roots biography" project, they exchange views about how they themselves use certain urban spaces or about their connection to concrete events ("Are you familiar with this neighborhood; do you like it? How has it changed you?"; "Where were you when the Berlin Wall came down?"; or "How and where did you learn something about the fall of the Berlin Wall?").

A versatile method

For one thing, the three examples show the possible content range of urban quests. Basically, it can be adapted to any topic that is visible in the urban space. Historical events are visible in monuments, in certain styles of architecture or in the urban structure itself. Since a city works differently (or not at all) for different societal groups, urban space can also be examined in terms of participation and discrimination.

Then, the examples also employ different levels of participation in decision-making. In the first case, the youths themselves set up the urban quest; only the general idea came from the trainers. This divided responsibility is highly suitable for youth exchanges. In the two other examples, the route and

assignments were determined in advance. However, participants designed their own documentation and many assignments were about the participants themselves and not only about collecting facts. In general, the groups are always equipped with a city map so that they can find their way around.

The numerous possibilities of the urban quest method, briefly sketched out here, also support important pedagogical goals of non-formal education; the participants:

- grapple interactively with the urban space, analyze their surroundings, test and possibly revise their own habits, ideas and stereotypes;

- exchange views about their observations, in the process learning about the realities of the other participants' lives ("There are fewer police on the streets here," or "Where I live, there are a lot more free Wi-Fi hotspots...");

- work as a team, have to organize themselves and make decisions jointly (even if only about the speed at which they walk...);

- work creatively, use various media and multiple learning channels.

- learn to "read" the urban space, and so practice non-verbal communication as an important skill for intercultural understanding;

- communicate also verbally in challenging situations (or have you ever tried to exchange an egg without comprehensive language skills?), and learn to deal with rejection and appreciation.

Frontal or self-determined learning?

The pedagogical benefit of the urban quest is obvious: It helps develop so-called soft skills or methodological competence. But as an educator, I want to impart content and knowledge – isn't the method too open for that? Isn't it true that I cannot sufficiently control whether and what my participants learn? And am I not expecting too much of some participants, who would prefer a clear framework (and not too much that's totally new)?

First, some challenging questions: How much do people remember from a normal guided tour – after all, that's the closest comparison to an urban quest, right? After all, isn't it too much to expect of some participants that they pay attention for a whole hour amidst the hustle and bustle of the city? One way to counter these legitimate criticisms is to take them into account during the planning and follow-up phases: Prepare suitable materials and use combined formats for the program (half-tour, half urban quest).

But above all, I would like to sing the praises of more participation – urban quests open up more opportunities overall than do classic city tours. They enable self-determined, open learning and can thus also make it easier to experience more directly the diversity of urban life. Assignments that take this into account can even help participants identify, analyze and discuss mechanisms of marginalization and (in)accessibility in urban spaces.

At the end of an urban quest, participants may not know when a palace was built or when a monument was erected. But they have jointly chosen a route or overcome inhibitions about approaching and talking to people they don't know. They have examined traces of history in and current uses of urban space – and thus may have grown somewhat closer to the unfamiliar.

Checklist, urban quest

First, define your goal – in terms of method and planning, it makes a difference whether the participants get to know each other first, or tackle the topics at hand.

Begin to plan in the street – that is the only way to really adapt a urban quest to the group and topic. Many assignments and activities will be generated on the spot.

Use different types of assignments, go beyond merely collecting information. Assignments based on experience, in which participants share their knowledge and opinions and exchange views in their groups, should balance assigments based on discovery (interviews and contact with people, collecting items, game-based elements, etc.).

Consider which materials and information your participants will need – whether these materials are to be prepared or encountered during the urban quest – in order for them to understand a given site or simply to feel safe.

Use various media to design or document urban quests. In the era of smartphones, photos, films, audio and text can be collected without much effort and are probably more comfortable for your participants to use than a sheet of paper.

Evaluate your urban quest – the experiences and insights of your participants can influence your further work, both in substance and method.

The author is a trainer in youth and adult education as well as a tour guide in Berlin. You can read her blog: http://diespaziergaengerin.blogspot.de/

"It is normal to be different" - Young Europeans with and without Down syndrome facing Human Rights

By Gisela Paterkiewicz

Jan-Tore from Syke, Germany: quiet and modest, full of charm

Jan from Varna, Bulgaria: always serious, but when he laughs, the sun is shining

Michael from Torun, Poland: very self-confident, wants to become a police officer

Samira from Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina: helpful, competent assistant to teachers

Sebastian from Syke, Germany: computer-nerd, takes good photos

Lia from Saragossa, Spain: loves parties, surprises with constantly new hair-stylings

Kristina from Varna, Bulgaria: dances like the devil, speaks very good English

Peter from Warsaw, Poland: is a TV star, plays the piano

Carmen from Saragossa, Spain: has a great sense of humor, experts in handicraft work

Nikolina from Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina: gives professional media interviews, can do karate

These are only few of the participants from five countries taking part in "It is normal to be different," half of them with Down syndrome. The difference I can determine after various European school projects since 1996 is that in this project the symbiosis of young people with and without Down syndrome has been a perfect mixture. When I look at the numerous videos and pictures now after two years, the young people are smiling and laughing in every picture, no matter if in Sarajevo, Syke or Torun. Everything seems colorful and happy!

This is what will stay in our memories, although there have been many serious situations due to the fact that a considerable part of the academic tasks given to the participants dealt with research about the sad past: euthanasia and forced sterilization in the Third Reich, social isolation of entire families with handicapped children until late into the 1980s, the inhumane conditions in institutions for the disabled, but also modern concepts of integration and inclusion – until today very different in our countries! And still horrifying for all of us was the visit to Auschwitz...

How did we get the idea? Since the 1990s when young Bosnian refugees passed their high school exams at our school, there has been a close friendship between High Economic School Sarajevo (just as to Economic High School Torun). But as Bosnia-Herzegovina is not a EU-member state, we could not apply for EU-funding and had to try to "scrape money together" from other organizations like the German-Polish Youth Office. Our applications to the Europeans for Peace program had been turned down several times.

Finally "It is normal to be different" made it to the shortlist and we were invited to a preparatory EFP-seminar in Berlin-Wannsee

in May 2011. Due to their professional advice, it began to dawn on us what lay ahead of us – most of all – how could we possibly manage to bridge the gap between EFP's expectations, i.e. serious research about the past, and the Down-Syndrome parents' organizations, i.e. serious study of concepts of integration and inclusion? How could we give the participants with Down syndrome a fair chance in such a project? All communication had to be in the English language, and, on top of it, rather theoretically lopsided. Where could there be any fun?

However, we decided to divide the project into six phases – three preparatory phases and three one-week encounters in Sarajevo, in Syke and in Torun.

Three preparatory phases

Together with our high school students we carried out research, which was documented as videos and PowerPoint presentations:

- What is Down syndrome?

- What is everyday life of young people with Down syndrome like?

- What are their dreams, hopes and fears?

- How were disabled people treated in the past?

- Which are unusual achievements of people with Down syndrome?

So we visited various therapy centers, sheltered workshops, theatre groups etc. in our countries, interviewed young people/parents/educators and older time witnesses. Furthermore internet research about medical, historical and social dimensions. All progress was planned and discussed on our website www.eu-friends.eu in regular one-hour chats. Please open the link "Old Projects" and you will find countless documents from the preparatory phases and encounters.

Three project encounters

There was a group of each country travelling, usually consisting of about 5 high school students, 2 teachers, 1 or 2 young people with Down syndrome and assistants.

Each encounter had the same basic structure:

- Introduction of participants and little language course

- Presentation of the results of the preparatory phase

- Creative activities in multinational workshops

- Visiting the town guided by host students

- One-day bus excursion

- Public performance in the presence of politicians, prominent artists, the media etc.

- Big farewell-party

All encounters have been joyful, lively and impressive, but here I would like to mention three occasions which impressed me personally.

In Sarajevo, where still a lot of remains of the War were present, we were welcomed like VIPs. Famous actors, fashion designers and football stars came into the school to guide through the various

multinational workshops. It was moving when the directors of the very new parents‘ organization DOWNSY told us that it was the first time people from outside asked them to do a project together, until then it had always been the other way round. We learned quickly that in countries with more severe economic difficulties than in Germany the people with special needs really do come last as.

In Syke we got creative support by the well-known Blaumeier-Group from Bremen preparing our public performance. Some girls were trained to be moderators in the show in acting workshops. Completely opposite to her – till then "cool" temperament - one girl with Down syndrome got extremely nervous speaking to such a big crowd of about 400 people. I was really upset sitting in the audience and asked myself what harm we were causing. Thank God, the girl asked only shortly afterwards if she could work as moderator again and said that she really had a great time.

It is normal to be different

In Torun, where Copernicus discovered the solar system in 1543, the drama group "Teatr 21" from Warsaw helped us creating a spectacular happening in front of the statue of Copernicus on Torun market square. In white painters‘ suits, participants presented the solar system and spoke their own texts in all languages of the projects countries:

Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune,

Each planet is different,

in shape, color and size.

That is the universe.

Every human being is different.

Every human being is like a planet.

It is normal to be different.

It is normal to be different.

It is normal to be different.

Conclusion

I believe that all of us have really learned from history although seemingly the historical aspects have taken up less room than the creative and musical activities. All participants were sensitized and had experienced firsthand what life with Down syndrome is like, and the deeper was the impact of the presentations about the terrible treatment people with disabilities had to suffer in the past. Many barriers had been overcome due to travelling, working, celebrating, singing, dancing, laughing and crying together.

It may sound naive, but after 30 years of teaching, I am sure that motivating young people for European projects and serious "academic" topics like history or sensitive "social" topics can only have a chance if they can be creative and simply have "fun" and, most of all, are "left alone." The logistics – teachers‘ work - behind this project was huge, but life, joy and fun were created by the young people with and without Down syndrome themselves.

I would like to thank my wonderful son Jan with trisomy 21 who gave me the courage to start this project.

The author is an English teacher at the vocational school centre BBS Syke Europaschule since 1994. In November 2012 she was awarded for the project "It is normal to be different" the European Citizens Prize. Of course, she travelled to the award ceremony in Berlin with a big group of young people with and without Down syndrome.

Ostali – giving a voice to others. A radio project by youths from Sarajevo and Erfurt, on the topic of discrimination in the 20th century

by Johannes Smettan

The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was a caesura in Europe's post-war history. Almost 20 years after the Dayton Agreement, which regulates how people live together in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the battle between three entities can still be felt today in Sarajevo, Mostar and of course in Srebrenica. The three religions – Islam, Serbian-Orthodoxy and Catholicism – are the defining characteristics of the three entities that rule the country. But this overlooks a significant number of non-believers and adherents to other faiths, who are systematically disadvantaged.

Civil-society has only begun dealing with this problem. The census in the autumn of 2013 was supposed to be a first step in revealing unhealed wounds of war, at least statistically. Even though the population is not particularly large, the evaluation still has not been completed, much less published. Since the unstable structure of the Dayton Agreement is based on figures from the previous census in 1991, the new figures could make visible for the first time what the war cost and how many Muslims, Serbian Orthodox and Catholics (still) live in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The new census results could shake up the allocation of political power, which is based on the old statistical

breakdown; this could result in a new, serious test for the crisis-ridden country.

Ostali, the protest against political corruption

Yet "Ostali" may pose an even greater threat for the country's political elites. Ostali means "others," and this category includes those who do not (want to) belong to any entity. Especially for youths and young adults who experienced the war as children, this category almost became a battle cry in the run-up to the 2013 census. It represents an antithesis to the unwieldy, clannish structures of the political castes that would still prefer to represent only the interests of "their" entities. Ostali also means disagreeing with the populist debates that emphasize differences and remain silent about shared interests.

For us, this unusual "Ostali" protest was the motivation to address the project "Ostali – giving others a voice." Together with youths from Germany and Bosnia and Herzegovina, we wanted to get to the bottom of discrimination in its numerous forms.

Together with the Bosnian youth media organization OnauBiH (Omladinska novinska asocijacija u Bosni i Hercegovini, in English roughly Youth News Association in Bosnia and Herzegovina), the Obala high school in Sarajevo and Radio F.R.E.I. in Erfurt, "Arbeit und Leben" ("Work and Live") Thuringia developed a seminar concept that provided participants with the opportunity to help determine the seminar's focal areas before and during the exchange.

For example, we had asked civil-society organizations to get involved ahead of our first encounter in Sarajevo in October 2013. On the ground and after two days of getting to know each other and exploring the topic, the 20 participants themselves decided how and with whom they wanted to talk in greater depth about discrimination.

Not talking ABOUT the people affected, but WITH them

Using this approach, interviews were conducted with such partners as the president of the Jewish Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, an LGBT organization (LGBT stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans), a member of the press council of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired. All interviews included questions about how society deals with so-called minorities; about individual experiences with discrimination; and about specific kinds of support that those affected desire. The interviews were prepared, conducted and evaluated by the youths in bilingual tandem teams.

During the second encounter in Germany in the spring of 2014, participants grappled intensely with the situation of the "others" during the Nazi period. The youths visited the former concentration camp Buchenwald. But it was the visit to the memorial site Topf & Söhne and the ensuing discussion that left the biggest mark on the exchange. Topf & Söhne in Erfurt produced the ovens for the crematoria in the Nazi death camps, and it

was here that the Bosnian participants in particular asked probing questions about individual responsibility, also with a view toward dealing with their own more recent history and individual responsibility.

Another focal area during the encounter in Germany was reporting on so-called marginalized groups and minorities. Here, participants spoke with journalists who try to give a voice to those who are not heard in "classical" media. Interviews were conducted with, among others, staff of the free radio station in Erfurt, but also with activists in a leftist film collective and the editor of a newspaper for homeless people.

Radio journalism as a methodological approach

The exchange was designed to be a radio project resulting in a joint, bilingual radio show. It was broadcast both in Germany and in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Radio projects are one way to discuss even delicate questions with young people. Often, difficult or very emotional topics are easier to discuss if the affected participants can take on the more neutral role of a journalist. In this way, a protected space emerges in which youths can ask questions without having to take a position themselves. Also, there are no "stupid" questions in journalism.

In addition, a radio show reaches many more interested ears. In other words, the learning experience goes beyond the participants themselves, reaching interested listeners.

An exchange with Bosnia and Herzegovina involves some exciting challenges for participants as well as for members of the team. The German youths do not remember anything personally from the time of the Bosnian War. This conflict does not really play a role at school and in everyday life. Yet for the youths from Bosnia and Herzegovina, the war is the most recent historical past and thus remains ever-present. Little is known about how the perpetrators are treated today in terms of criminal law and how victims are compensated. And above all hangs the brittle peace of the international community.

For German youths, in contrast, the Nazi era, World War II and its consequences by now tend to be more abstract historical events that are discussed morally and emotionally in the context of commemoration. In the exchange with Bosnia and Herzegovina, they experience youths who were born during or just after a war and whose parents and relatives are direct witnesses. So they can begin conversations with people who still feel the effects today of the combat operations and massacres of those years. This opens a broad arena for working on the topic of anti-discrimination. Though working directly with eyewitnesses of the Nazi period will become impossible, it is possible to enter into conversation with people today who have suffered or still suffer from the consequences of group-related hostility.

For members of the team, the situation of the three entities in Bosnia and Herzegovina proves challenging. They must

respond with empathy to participants' religious sentiments. At the same time, the German participants are confused by how unemotional some Bosnian youths seem when atrocities are described. Even though these crimes were certainly discussed in sessions where they could reflect, the team members must understand that a two-week exchange cannot replace possibly needed trauma therapy. If required, individual solutions should be sought out after the exchange is over, and in consultation with the Bosnian team members.

Conclusion

Educational work with a focus on anti-discrimination will continue to be very important in political youth work in coming years. Exchange across national and religious boundaries of countries and religions is still a preferred tool for sustainable success of the seminar.

Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular prove to be an interesting focus in this regard. Besides dealing with the past, exchange projects can also find many fruitful opportunities through dealing with the present. Examples include the Sejdic-Finci ruling of the European Court of Human Rights and the resulting consequences for Bosnian society, or the growing involvement of Arab states in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is plenty to talk about for years. And of course there is also the question of how many "Ostali" there really are in Bosnia and Herzegovina and what role they will play in the future. Our next encounter is planned for April 2015.

The author is responsible for political youth education with "Arbeit und Leben" ("Work and Life") in Thuringia. The organization has been carrying out bi- and trilingual exchange projects with a focus on the Balkans for many years, working jointly with various organizations. Smettan, a literary scholar, also works as an editor for Radio F.R.E.I.

4 languages + 2 countries = 1 program

by Ragna Vogel and Anne-Kathrin Topp

"Discrimination: Watch out!" That was the call sent out by the Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future (EVZ) that prompted our project; we dealt with marginalization yesterday and today. The fact that we would learn a lot about ourselves and our own ways of seeing and acting became evident to us all – project leaders and participants – even in the preparatory phase.

20 youths aged 13 to 17 from Volgograd/ Russia and Berlin came together in the exchange project "4 languages + 2 countries = 1 program" with the goal of getting to know one another and dealing, as a group, with questions such as: What is discrimination? How do we experience discrimination in our everyday lives? How can everyone participle in society? What did marginalization mean during the Nazi period? And what does that have to do with the situation today? The project was organized by Sinneswandel – Förderung gehörloser und hörgeschädigter Menschen in Berlin GmbH (an organization supporting deaf and hearing-impaired people in Berlin) in cooperation with three partner associations in Volgograd: School of General Education No. 92, Boarding School for Deaf and Hearing-impaired Children No. 7 and the nonprofit charity "Club UNESCO-Dignity of the child."

Project

Volgograd and Berlin

During two encounters, youths explored the two cities, took thematic field trips, discussed various aspects of discrimination and practiced using cameras so they could immediately start their practical work. The result was to be a TV program produced together, in which the youth's engagement with the topic of discrimination would manifest itself creatively in the form of interviews, reports, feature films and a talk show.

In this sense, it was a well-known youth exchange format that could easily be put into practice, based on our experience. Yet the special feature and thus also the special challenge of the project was that some participants and project leaders were deaf or seriously hearing-impaired, while others were hearing. This meant a new experience, not only in that participants were meeting people from different countries, but also because the youths and project staff came from four very different worlds – worlds to be discovered and especially to be linked. In Germany as in Russia, deaf and hearing people often live separate, parallel lives; thus, this constellation presented an unusual situation that opened up new perspectives for everyone involved.

Four languages at a time

The greatest challenge for everyday work was communication. For example, during group conversations, the often spontaneous and important contributions by participants as well as their expressions of thoughts had

to be translated at lightning speed into four languages, as in a ping pong game: German, Russian, plus German and Russian sign language. This required a lot of patience and concentration on everyone's part and when carrying out the project, we did so with as few words as possible, working with a strong visual focus instead. But the inclusion of signs as well as gestures and mimicry helped people communicate with each other. The hearing youths discovered very rapidly that this kind of communication offers a rapid means to connect people across language barriers; within a few days, they had already mastered numerous signs.

The program in Berlin

Sightseeing tours through Berlin-Mitte offered the first points for connecting to the topic of the project: Who offers tours in sign language? Are the contents of a video guide for the deaf just as extensive as those of an audio guide? Dealing with biographies of people who were persecuted during the Nazi period for the most varied reasons was the most suitable way to convey the impact and danger of discriminatory behavior. In addition to the workshop experience, visits to the exhibition "Diversity Destroyed – Berlin 1933–1938" and to the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe triggered a lively exchange about history. Another step in this learning process was a workshop in the exhibition "7x young – Your training ground for solidarity and respect" in Berlin. There, we made cartoons dealing with concrete forms of discrimination in participants' everyday lives, such as when deciding on an occupation, going dancing, taking a bus or going shopping. We found that each and every one of us has experienced and can experience discrimination. Conversely, it was just as important for us to discover that we, too, are capable of acting in a discriminatory manner.

The program in Volgograd

It was equally important for the project to avoid focusing on the marginalization of the deaf or other physically challenged people, in order to prevent the social fabric within the group from weakening. In this context, it quickly became apparent that the deaf youths from Berlin considered themselves less members of a discriminated minority than of a subculture and wanted to be perceived as such. The visit to Volgograd provided numerous supportive points. For example, a talk show was organized with deaf Russian people as guests, allowing eye-opening insights into their societal life. We met Andrei, the hearing-impaired professional soccer player and teacher, who encouraged the youths to pursue their dreams; Grisha, the deaf pantomime artist who chose a form of performance equally accessible to hearing and to deaf people and Andrei Bykow, longstanding chair of the Association of the Deaf in Volgograd, who has been advocating for the rights and inclusion of hearing-impaired and deaf people for more than 30 years. He reported that there are now plans in Russia to establish more inclusive schools for deaf students.

Different self-understanding

The different self-understanding on the part of deaf people in Russia and in Germany held potential for both conflict and intercultural learning: The former consider themselves to be no different from the majority except for being unable to speak as clearly. In Russia, schools for deaf or severely hearing-impaired youths focus on teaching spoken language. This is intended to enable them to integrate in the majority society with few complications, but of course this can never be fully successful. In contrast, the German youth, with their self-understanding as a subculture, cultivate a self-confident approach to sign language and everything else that differentiates them from the dominant society. This difference surfaced in our project, for example, during a disco dancing evening organized by the participants themselves. Full of enthusiasm, the Russian youths turned off the lights; this made the atmosphere all the more exciting and people could concentrate more on the bass vibrations. The German group did not appreciate this approach, feeling robbed of the opportunity to communicate, since they rely on sign language.

A positive conclusion

Was all the work, the effort and the staff worth it? When participants were asked to assess the project, the answer heard far and wide was "I'd do it again!" And the team leaders took home numerous positive insights as well.

Ragna Vogel is a historian, Anne-Kathrin Topp is a cultural manager. The authors developed the concept and headed the project, a prizewinner in the funding program EUROPEANS FOR PEACE in the program year 2013/2014.

Stars – beyond borders!

by Katrin Schnieders

In 2013 and 2014, 50 youths and 12 adult Roma and friends from three countries took part in the transboundary project "Stars – Going Beyond Borders." The tri-national project was conceived, organized and carried out by the associations Balkanbiro e.V. (Münster), L'artichaut (Marseille) and Vakti – it's time! (Belgrade). Participants grappled with marginalization, escape, deportation and the fears associated with these conditions. The project included two encounters between young Roma and friends from Germany, Serbia and France. The youth talked about experiences of discrimination related to their (cultural) backgrounds and probed their memories, coached by a trainer.

The project included artistic, social and cultural elements, using video, dance and theater. By talking with contemporary witnesses, seeking out traces of the past and grappling with the culture of commemoration, participants also considered underlying historical conditions. The results, documented in photos, videos and audios, were used in educational workshops on discrimination.

The preparation of the project concept tapped into knowledge about (media-) pedagogy, sociology and social-policy as well as intercultural pedagogy and partnership-based neighborhood projects. The topic "being Roma" was a guiding theme throughout the 12-day program and addressed the group. Here, the team relied on substantial work on concepts of "cultural diversity" and anti-racist educational work.

Project

The elaboration on the topic was almost exclusively in the hands of the adult Roma participants, whose life experiences had an empowering effect on others. The manual "Antiziganismus" provided helpful support on approach and methodology. In order to support group dynamics and enable participants to get to know one another, the organizers designed a balanced program that included recreational activities (swimming, barbecue, canoeing ...) along with content-related workshops.

Workshops

In addition to workshops on discrimination, there were elective workshops (dance, theater and video/media). These options were introduced to the young participants at the beginning of the week. Content-related topics that arose during the program were taken up, explored further and dealt with using artistic means.

Method: Theater

Among those running the Münster workshops were a theater teacher, a media trainer and a dancer. Lisa Kemme relied on Augusto Boal's forum theater method: The youths reenacted their experiences on stage and the public could intervene and change situations or suggest possible solutions to a problem. This method strengthens self-esteem and demonstrates opportunities for intervention against discrimination.

Method: Dance

The dance group worked similarly: Participants chose a particular situation of discrimination, expressed it forcefully using body language, and then choreographed a dance. The second encounter in Belgrade enabled participants to collaborate with the city's performance group "Roma Sijam," which won fame in part through the Serbian version of the X-Factor casting show. The entire workshop team in Serbia was staffed with young Roma, whose lifestyle and biographies made them role models for all the participants. In Belgrade, performers from "Roma Sijam" really put themselves and their experiences as deportees from Germany into the workshops: They worked with the youths to develop a professional choreography on the topic "Svi smo isti!" (We are alike!) and turned their varied experiences of discrimination into a performance.

Method: Video

During the first encounter, the video team developed a film script and storyboard that would help them present the project work. The result was the documentary "Grenzenlos werden" ("Becoming boundless") by Thomas Hackholz. In Belgrade, the video team – which I guided together with director Sami Mustafa – developed interview questions and a concept for filmic portraits. In addition, filming was conducted during workshops and the encounter was documented in photos.

Conversations with eyewitnesses

Two youths and one staff member took part in a continuing education program on interviewing eyewitnesses in spring 2013. On the basis of their insights and their integration of media-pedagogical methods, all the conversations and interviews conducted were developed together with the youths. In Münster, the young participants met with Horst Lübke, a local Sinto who is advocating for the rights of Roma and Sinti and their recognition as victims of persecution under the Nazis. A large part of Lübke's family was murdered in the camps and he himself experienced discrimination as a child in the 1960s in Münster: Some of these experiences had striking similarities with those of Roma youths in Serbia today. The youths also met Leslie (Lazlo) Schwarz, a Hungarian Jew and Auschwitz survivor. With both these eyewitnesses, the youths had intensive and rewarding discussions.

In Serbia, Borka Vasic accompanied the entire group to the former concentration camp Sajmište in Belgrade. Eleven members of her family perished during World War II, some in this camp. Borka Vasic also recalled the post-war period, the Yugoslavian conflict and the living conditions of Romni today in the slums of Belgrade.

The youths also interviewed Stanka Sinani (72) and Sofia Kaplani (75) from the Roma neighborhood of Zemun, asking about the post-war period and various periods of Roma migration, as well as about the establishment and development of the Roma

settlement Vojni Put.

Looking back

The fact that youth from three countries and entirely different realities came together for one week, communicated in four languages, lived in close quarters and expressed their enthusiasm for the encounter despite a packed program can be considered a resounding success. Many friendships were formed and many participants recognized – or rediscovered – the Romanes language as something special, a very useful cultural asset. Some Roma youths were astonished at how well they could communicate with Roma from other countries; others learned how important their language is and expressed the desire to become more proficient in it.

In fact, the project's future orientation functioned not only at the personal level, but also on the content level: Participants took their lessons home. One reported how she intervened in a history class when her teacher failed to mention the extermination of Sinti and Roma during World War II. Another said her self-esteem as a Roma in German society had greatly improved. Two participants wanted to include the experience of this week in their upcoming studies of sociology and anthropology and planned to stay longer in the Roma settlement in Belgrade. Many are keenly interested in continuing the project. The young Roma from Germany and Serbia would also like to visit France for a longer period and learn more about their friends' ways of life. Since the youths have been exchanging a information and greetings on Facebook for a year already, in a mix of languages, one can deduce that they are interested in long-term contact. Some are apparently even putting a greater effort into learning English, French or German. They have exchanged addresses and arranged visits for the coming year.

Media skills

Some participants discovered new modes of self-expression through the project. By approaching interview techniques step by step, preparing journalistic interviews and making audio field recordings, the youths learned to address the public through media and to present the project's contents. The films, radio programs and articles help spread the word about the project and anti-discrimination work and offer support to other discriminated minorities. Some youths from Germany are now even showing the films and running workshops at schools. Students receive methodological tips and support from a trained media educator.

Publication of the project results

In June 2014, "Stars – beyond borders" won third prize (worth 500 euros) in the KICK competition sponsored by Münster Public Utilities. The youths received the prize during a major award event. KICK magazine will include a contribution by the youths on the topic of "Roma discrimination." The film about the project – "Grenzenlos werden," or "Becoming boundless" – has been shown to the French and German public

several times; since July, the film has been available with Serbian subtitles. Further screenings and submission to film festivals are planned.

The author works in many-faceted projects with several institutions. She expresses her opposition to the deportation of Roma through active political work as a filmmaker and media trainer.

"Eyes open – mit anderem Blick" – A report on Ahava-love beyond ideology: a transnational project

By Jens Aspelmeier

In the summer of 2013, twenty-eight German and Israeli students began to see their own and foreign social environments from a different perspective during the course of two school exchange projects. Who is in? Who is out? Why is this so and why does it have to be like this? After two encounters of two weeks each, it became apparent that "love" is fundamental to resistance against discrimination.

"... I think that during the three and a half weeks that we spent together, I became aware of how many different people live in this world and that each one of us are simply human beings. As clichéd as this might sound, I think it describes best what I was able to take from the project." (Marie, 16 years old)

Such basic insights may sound trite, as the student herself observes. But they indicate the potentially reflective influence of intercultural exchange. Students rarely ponder past and current social challenges in daily (history) classes. Forms of general discrimination also have virtually no effect on their everyday life. In the artificial classroom environment, they generally take their cultural and historical givens for granted. They do not ask themselves, for instance, how a certain image of Israel has entered their minds or why Holocaust remembrance in Germany differs from that

of other nations. It is simply much easier for them to consider such questions in an experiential exchange with peers and eyewitnesses from other cultural contexts. How they experience and grasp the issue of discrimination and its historical dimension and make it their common history, a shared history, can be outlined in the following transnational project, "Ahava-love beyond ideology:"

Project launch on neutral territory – we are all strangers here

For most participants, the project starts with a 14-day encounter in Israel. They eagerly look forward to the first meeting, balancing expectation against reality. The factual, thematic preparatory phase fades into the background. A neutral location helps this sensitive phase for both groups in two ways. Firstly, the notion of German youths as foreigners and the Israeli youths as the in group (or vice versa) doesn't work here. That kind of imbalance would hamper an unbiased encounter. Secondly, each group (and the project supervision) experiences being foreign and "other" in an elementary, everyday sense. Everyone has to orient themselves within the new environment in the same way. A subtle introduction to the issue, such as asking a simple question, offers numerous formal and informal opportunities to converse. It also affects group bonding, which is advantageous for the joint project. For our project, the desert was the ideal point of departure for research. No-frills accommodation, unaccustomed climate and unfamiliar food enabled memorable shared experiences only possible at that location.

In this way, for 28 youths and their project guides, this became a good foundation on which to build towards the central question facing them: What empowers people to resist socially accepted discrimination against certain groups? For this question, oriented towards resources and action, the aspect of "Love" formed a central point of contact. It is clear that love of humankind – especially directed toward a foreign counterpart – is a force that allows people to become aware of exclusion and discrimination, especially in times of social and political crisis. It strengthens one's ability to resist the urge to discriminate and reveals alternatives. Young women and men of both countries, in search of their own identity, can introduce their own personal experiences beyond all ideological issues.

What empowers us to resist socially accepted discrimination against certain groups?

Participants probed this question as it applied to the Nazi period by conversing with eyewitnesses and conducting research at memorial sites (Yad Vashem, House of the Ghetto Fighters). And as regards current discrimination, they discovered which sectors of society were being marginalized in both countries and became aware of those who are combating this discrimination: Those most likely to speak out for peace and reconciliation in Germany were students of color and asylum seekers, and in Israel it

was parents who had lost their children to the Israeli-Palestine conflict. The unusual story of Yehudit Arnon, a Holocaust survivor and founder of the Kibbutz Dance Company, was another striking example of the power of love.

The (historical) personalities, with their possibilities, their activities, restrictions and interrupted lives provided orientation and opportunities to reflect on life choices. The youths came to the realization that people and to "love thine enemy" then as now is not about keeping a commandment, but rather about understanding emotional bonds that people need to maintain the ability to resist. Participants either identified with, or rejected, past forms and strategies for coping with everyday life and managing conflict. Through the change of perspective, they created important prerequisites for the emergence of a deliberate and justifiable identity.

Creating an experiential space for young people

The young participants are getting excited about the premiere of their performance. They have been rehearsing their piece for two days and keep changing the choreography on their own and taking over. They don‘t like the original title of their dance project, "AHAVA – Liebe beyond ideology," anymore and without further ado they change it: "Eyes open – mit anderem blick" is the new name. They strive to achieve a balance between project goals and their own interests. Time and again they demand to have the "last word" – "After all, we‘re the ones who have to be on the stage." And they take initiative when it comes to research. They ask the eyewitnesses unexpected questions. These are critical questions, but they sometimes go beyond the subject at hand. Still, the youth always show genuine interest in each person‘s destiny. For the large team of teachers, choreographers and documentary filmmakers it is a challenge to limit their role to that of project participant and source of inspiration. It was the dominant concern expressed during the nightly team meetings: How to create the proper experimental space in which the young people could move freely.

A team is a team is a team*

In addition to meeting the day-to-day challenges of engaging a lively group of young people in project work, a key to the success of the school exchange project was in the formation of an international team of educators, artists and organizers. Without an understanding of the learning process and continual compromising on its content and methodological design, the experience outlined above could not have succeeded. For the team to entrust particular professionals – and occasionally others – with a satisfactory task was both an enriching experience and continual challenge. Familiarity and trust were quickly established through each colleague having a turn at being a guest and a host.

Authenticity of the discrimination experience – biographical accesses

Encounters with people and their different situations and lifestyles cause a change in perspective among the youthful participants, bringing them closer to their counterparts. Being able to empathize with the other requires emotional support. A classroom situation often falls short, with its purely cognitive approach to the topic of discrimination through literature, statistics and life stories. What really opens up the opportunity for further steps in objective/cognitive work is an encounter with a living, authentic subject (especially in the eyes of the young person). It is important to mitigate the risk of over-identification with the witnesses and always to counteract generalization of their experience.

Don‘t talk: dance!

"What exactly are we doing here?" The skepticism expressed during the first dance classes vanished as the groups became familiar with each other and started developing dance sequences. They find out how to experience each other by expressing themselves in movement without words. Eventually, they understood that even research results were "danceable." Language barriers in a project with German and Israeli participants were a central concern from the start. Promising "cultural dialogue" requires a form of expression beyond the lingual. On one hand, cultures don’t speak. It’s people who speak from different cultural contexts. On the other hand, most people lack the linguistic proficiency to engage in differentiated discussion using a common third language. And a public performance should not only contain speech. All partners involved in the project agreed that a (modern) dance performance satisfied their quest for an unspoken form of exchange and reflection. Professionals with the required skill and experience helped with the choreography. With their help, the young participants presented their results on stage as a dance theater performance. The first provisional performance took place in Israel, the second, extended version in Germany. The youths were thrilled with the idea of our filmmakers combining the performance with the day-to-day project work to create a visual collage that could be shown time and again in neighboring schools. Their aim is to convince more classmates and other pupils to take a different perspective, to be convinced through the power of love. It gives them a chance to proudly present their creation as a reminder of shared experiences and gives them a reason to stay in contact as a German-Israeli group.

* Note: The following persons are jointly responsible for the development, implementation and success of the project beyond its main focus:

Dr. Jens Aspelmeier; Dr. Astrid Greve, Oberstudienrätin (German/ Evangelical Religion) at Ev. Gymnasium Siegen-Weidenau, research focus: commemoration; Torsten Heupel, Studienrat (Geography/ Sport) at Ev. Gymnasium Siegen-Weidenau; Michelle Mitz and Enad Tachnai from

Ramot Hefer High School, Maabarot. Choreography: Sharon Assa, Israel and Ulrike Flämig, Berlin. Film: Felipe Frozza, Berlin.

Further literature:

Astrid Greve: Zachor – Erinnern lernen. Aktuelle Entdeckungen in der jüdischen Kultur des Erinnerns. Berlin 2013.

Günter J. Friesenhahn (publisher): Praxishandbuch Internationale Jugendarbeit. Lern- und Handlungsfelder, rechtliche Grundlagen, Geschichte, Praxisbeispiele und Checklisten, 3rd print run, Schwalbach/ Ts. 2007.

Vadim Oswalt/ Jens Aspelmeier/ Suzelle Boguth: Ich dachte, jetzt brennt gleich die Luft. Transnationale historische Projektarbeit zwischen interkultureller Begegnung und Web 2.0. Wochenschau-Verlag, Schwalbach i.T. 2014 (=Forum Historisches Lernen).

Dr. Jens Aspelmeier is Educator with Special Responsibilities at the Department of Didactics of History at the University of Siegen and teaches German and history at the Evangelical Gymnasium Siegen-Weidenau. His research focuses on extracurricular places of learning, archival education, history / new media and caring for the poor in the early modern period.

Bereshit – "In the beginning..." A German-Israeli project about forming images of each other

by Karina Lajchter

The First Book of Moses describes "the beginning" both simply and poetically: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the Earth." (In the beginning – bereshit in Hebrew.) At the end of world's first workweek, Adam saw the newly created light and everything seemed clear and unambiguous. Yet the world's three major monotheistic religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – follow their own interpretations of what happened after Abraham became a patriarch. A trigger of misunderstandings, and also irreconcilability.

5770 years later – in the year 2010 of the Gregorian calendar – 15 high school students from the Hermann-Böse-Gymnasium in Bremen made their way to the Holy Land, and 15 Israeli students from the Reali-School in Haifa came to Bremen. All were 15 to 18 years old. Their main task for the yearlong project was to examine each other's perspectives on Israel and Germany. Based on newspaper articles and man-on-the-street interviews, the students elaborated the common images of Germany and Israel, whether in media or in the minds of the public. The work focused above all on grappling with one's own attitudes and prejudices. The idea was to raise one's own awareness. In the beginning – bereshit ...

Three project phases

In the first phase (research in the form of interviews, photo documentations), the young people gathered information in their home countries about popular images of the other country. The Bremen students looked into the media images of Israel (e.g., in newspaper articles and cartoons). Then they asked what people of different ages think about Israel. The survey was recorded on camera and was intended to provide the basis for a theater performance. All results were evaluated during the regular meetings and compared with each student's own image of Israel. Since contradictory information and a lack of knowledge often led to more questions, the students met with experts such as Dr. Hartmut Pophanken, a historian who had traveled to Israel several times and could draw upon a rich repertoire of experiences. In this way, a "dress rehearsal" of the theater performance emerged, with focal areas including settlement policy, water management and security wall. These issues reflected the images gleaned from media and interviews. During the rehearsal phase, the youths made initial contacts with their partner students in Haifa via Facebook.

Meanwhile, the Israeli students developed three ideas for screenplays aimed at depicting Israeli images of Germany today. The rough drafts were to be completed during the first meeting in Germany, with sequences filmed in Germany (Bremen, Berlin, Bergen-Belsen). In addition, the German youths sought interview partners and scheduled appointments with them.

The second phase (examining and evaluating the results, turning them into a performance and conducting research for a film) took place in Bremen, together with the students from Israel. The 15 youths from Haifa arrived for their week in Bremen on November 18, 2009. The groups soon headed out for their filming and interview locations. Whether with the president of Bremen's parliament or a former kibbutz resident – the interviews were extremely open and honest. The third day of the trip was emotional – a joint ceremony in the former concentration camp Bergen-Belsen. It was a tough test for the tender bonds of new friendship. Now, the groups seemed to be working on their projects with even greater dedication. The Israeli students shot film and conducted interviews. The German youths continued to develop their theater piece. On the next-to-last day of the exchange, the German group presented their first ideas to the Israelis. There were tears, incomprehension, anger on the part of the Israeli youths. Did the image of Israel that had emerged from the research – settlement policy, the building of the wall, water management, discrimination of the Palestinian population – not correspond to the facts? In spite of strong emotions and initial speechlessness, something wonderful happened. After ten minutes, the students sat down in a circle: two groups that suddenly saw each other with new eyes. The first words came out with difficulty. The Israeli CHARGE: "That isn't what our

country is like!" The German ARGUMENT: "But those are the answers we found here." Israeli REQUEST: "Come visit us, see for yourselves!" By grappling critically with the presented views and exchanging ideas about them, the youths were right in the middle of the project and the Middle East conflict itself. What is true, what is falsified? Where is criticism legitimate, where is it not? The first German-Israeli meeting in November 2009 ended with this recognition: This performance concept won't work as is.

What now?

Thank God, the contact between the youths intensified and the German students were eager to experience Israel and its people. But they had to find a new concept for their theater performance.

A modified research question was now to be at the center of the German part of the project – more personal, closer, more emotional: What comes to mind, to you personally, when you think of Israel? That was the starting point. The students began to look for people who could tell their own stories about Israel and its people. One story stood out because it started before World War II and still continues: the story of a woman seeking her father: the story of the German woman Lea.

An exciting investigation began: Conversations with eyewitnesses, research on the Internet and on the ground shed light on the gruesome events between 1933 and 1945 and brought a story of guilt and atonement to light, a story that the students traced to the Haifa of today. With every new piece of information, the youths delved deeper into the personal history of Lea and her mother, Emma, piecing together a new image of Israel. Ideas for scenes developed, gradually forming a whole. At the same time, the students developed their own perspective on Israel, its history and the related sensitivities. The initial disappointment after the failed performance idea led to many new insights but especially this one: In order to live in peace, we have to talk – not wait in silence. That is why the title of the new play was "Emma's silence."

Back in Haifa, the Israeli youths were poring over their film material, trying to implement their screenplay in the editing room. Three ideas for films were born: TRAVEL LOG – a documentary about their trip; THIRD GENERATION – about an Israeli student and her grandparents compared with a German student and his grandmother; and CHANGES – the lives of two German kibbutz residents.

Joint presentation

In the third and final phase (presentation of the video-theater performance) in mid-May 2010, the results were presented in Haifa. The 15 German youths flew to Haifa to visit their friends on May 11, with high expectations and a new play. The idea of the one-year project had been to get students to liberate themselves from the imposed perspectives of media and society and to develop their own positions using film and theater. In the final joint workweek

in Israel, the German youths used every opportunity to get to know the country and its history. This intensified their friendships and opened new perspectives. And everyone was very curious to see the results of their research: the play and the documentaries.

May 16, 2010 was the big presentation day in Haifa's theater. Christian Weber, president of Bremen's parliament, had traveled to Haifa for the occasion. The evening began with the documentary THIRD GENERATION. The experiences of the first generation filled the documentary with anger and sorrow. Caught up in these emotions, the grandchildren tried to find the words to enter into dialogue. TRAVEL LOG – is a filmic diary about the trip to Germany that looked unflinchingly at the first conflict; and CHANGES hinted at the altered image of the other. The play "Emma's silence" explored this image through a true story and ended with a surprising twist: Lea actually finds her father, her mother's husband, the Jewish man who once loved a Christian woman – almost 50 years on, in the cemetery of Haifa.

Conclusion

To return to the introductory words: Sometimes, the first impression of an issue can turn out to be much more complex than anyone had thought in the beginning. A second and third look are often essential in order to avoid misunderstandings and irreconcilability. Clarity requires a sympathetic light. In any case, the encounters in Bremen and Haifa and the joint work gave the youths from Germany and Israel the opportunity to break with outdated stereotypes, to develop their own ideas, their own image of the other country and to express this creatively. In this way they realized their very own vision of tolerance, friendship and peace on stage and in film, framed by a mutual agreement: Friends have to speak the truth – even if it is sometimes painful.

The author worked at the Hermann-Böse-Gymnasium [high school] in Bremen at the time of the project and is now a teacher at the European School in Luxembourg.

More than culture – Diversity awareness in international youth work

By Anne Lepper

For organizers of and participants in international youth encounters, cultural exchange and meeting people from other countries are often their main interest. In the process, the nationality of participants may unintentionally take center stage and obscure individual characteristics. Modern concepts of intercultural youth work therefore attempt to achieve so-called diversity-aware education. The educational processes thus initiated are supposed to show that not all people in one country are the same or embrace the same norms and ideas. Rather, diversity-aware educational concepts aim to clarify how people benefit from or are disadvantaged by a "national culture." The mechanisms behind static understandings of culture that are reproduced daily – whether consciously or not – are to be reflected upon in conversations, in practice and simply in spending time together.

What is "diversity-aware educational work"?

In her newly published manual "more than culture – Diversity-aware education in international youth work," author Anne Sophie Winkelmann provides insights into the theory and practice of diversity-aware education. The approach she sets forth has multiple perspectives. For one thing, it enables people to start dealing with the topic in a way that is adapted to their own

Recommended teaching methodology

experience and their personal questions; for another, it enables them to experience the substance of the work in a multi-faceted way. The manual thus offers opinion leaders the opportunity to reflect on their own work, to shape it anew and to place it within a theoretical context, independent of their own pedagogical knowledge.

Learning about differentiation, power, prejudice and discrimination are always key. Youths should learn to perceive and accept experiences of complexity and difference. After all, the perception of diversity confronts many youths with their own insecurities. Reflecting on this should help them understand and dissect their own prejudices. In this way, youths can come to perceive themselves and their counterparts as complex individuals and avoid one-dimensional oversimplifications during international youth encounters.

Making anti-discrimination a topic of discussion

It is not enough to merely accept diversity: This alone does not solve problems confronting the "others" in a homogeneous society. If one conveys the ideal of a colorful world without confronting the marginalization and disadvantage faced by some, then existing structural problems are pushed to the side and ignored. For this reason, the author points out that diversity-aware educational work must always be coupled with anti-discrimination work. In this way, youths learn about the advantages of a heterogeneous society and

also gain an awareness of the significance of positioning within a society and how this may affect how a person is perceived.

Avoiding pigeonholing

A person's positioning and his or her alleged membership in one or more groups creates the image of a society divided into clear categories. The goal of diversity-aware education is to reflect on this "pigeonholing" and to show that the dominant categories are artificial – created by people in the more powerful position. In this societal order, a person must often choose one position over another. Such differentiations often involve value judgment and classification as "normal" and "not normal." Diversity-aware education involves recognizing mechanisms of dissemination and helping people escape the pigeonholes in their own minds.

"Classically" intercultural and/or diversity-aware?!

Pigeonholing and discrimination are often based on the notion of a "national culture," according to which individuals are seen as representatives of their culture without consideration of intra-societal power relationships. People are thus defined solely via their supposed belonging to a culture, and their behaviors are interpreted accordingly. Therefore, the goal of "classical" intercultural approaches is often to impart understanding for what is "foreign," to create encounters between various cultures and to strengthen intercultural competence. In contrast, critical intercultural concepts as well as diversity-aware

Recommended teaching methodology

approaches attempt to present "national culture" as a "culture of dominance" with all its contradictions, and to sharpen awareness of commonalities. The culture of a particular country thus does not appear to be a fixed, unchangeable entity but rather a dynamic and participatory platform. In other words, diversity-aware education can make clear to youths that a uniform understanding of "culture" does not exist in any country but that many different perspectives and notions coexist. Focusing on the subject and its individual experiences and belongings also counteracts the danger of culturalizing one's counterpart. In this context, international youth encounters provide a good opportunity for jointly recognizing the complexity of societies and cultures and for asking critical questions.

Through this or that lens

In other words, the goal of the diversity-aware approach is to enable youths to look through different "lenses." The point is not to deconstruct differences between people from different countries but to place the differences and commonalities in different contexts, thus developing starting points for reflection, exchange and joint learning. According to the author, this makes clear that the causes for challenging situations and conflicts must often be seen in the context of structural aspects rather than through the cultural "lens."

Theory and practice

Besides an extensive theoretical introduction to the topic, concepts and

various scientific discourses, the manual also provides a multi-perspective approach to a diversity-aware stance in practice. The author makes clear how important the three pillars of the diversity-aware approach – self-reflection, process orientation and self-organization – are, especially for seminar leaders. That includes not only reflecting on one's own actions but also constant and open debate between the various team members. In the manual, questions at the end of each paragraph enable readers to confront their own emotions and attitudes. The chapter "The role and self-understanding of seminar leaders" also enables readers to grapple with their own roles in relation to colleagues and participants. In this way, inherent power structures can be reflected that arise from the sometimes-discriminatory relationship between adults and youths, also called adultism. In order to counteract power structures within an international youth encounter, the author recommends unconditional appreciation of everyone involved as well as strengthening the position of young participants by promoting participation and self-organization. In addition, if seminar leaders consider themselves "learners," this reduces power imbalances within the group. Intentionally permitting conflicts to play out and actively slowing down processes of learning and working can also have a positive effect on group dynamics.

Methods

In addition to the various theoretical and practical approaches to the topic, the manual describes numerous methods suitable for diversity-aware education. The exercises, which are described in detail, can be adapted individually to the needs and interests of the group in question. Various factors such as age, group size, language competence and individual ability to concentrate are taken into account. The methods provide a good opportunity for supporting process-oriented work within a seminar; however, they do not replace it. For this reason, methods should be selected and used deliberately.

Recommended teaching methodology

Conclusion

The manual is an up-to-date, critical and multifaceted approach to modern, diversity-aware educational work in the context of international youth encounters. The combination of theoretical deliberations and understandable "translations" into practice enables readers to work through the manual with practical applications in mind. The interactive structure permits readers to take on the contents according to their own level of knowledge and their individual interests without having to follow the chronological sequence of the chapters. The manual, which Anne Sophie Winkelmann developed in collaboration with a four-person editorial team, makes a clear case for combining theory and practice in pedagogical work.

The handbook Anne Sophie Winkelmann (2014). More than Culture - Diversitätsbewusste Bildung in der internationalen Jugendarbeit. Bonn, is published online in German and thereafter in English.

Current surveys on protection of minorities in Europe

By Nadja Grintzewitsch

Approximately every second LGBT person in the European Union was a victim of discrimination in both 2011 and 2012. LGBT persons identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender / transsexual. Very few of those affected by discrimination reported these incidents to the police, believing this would have no effect and even fearing homophobic or transphobic assaults by police.

This is the result of an EU-wide online survey carried out from April 2 to July 15, 2012, by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, also known as the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA). In total, 93,079 LGBT persons took part in the study, which was prompted by a query from the European Commission.

Depending on the country of origin, 30% (Netherlands) to 61% (Lithuania) of the LGBT persons surveyed were victims of discrimination in the 12 months preceding the study. With 46%, Germany scored only slightly below the EU average of 47%. The study also found that the number of trans persons who fell victim to physical assault was above average.

Online publications of the Fundamental Rights Agency

The Fundamental Rights Agency was founded in 2007 and has conducted several surveys in recent years that cast a spotlight on the situation of so-called minorities in the European Union. They included studies on the situation of Roma, violence against women and hate crimes against Jews. The FRA also offers educational materials concerning human rights, for example on the legal situation of refugees at Europe's southern sea borders and on the legal capacity of persons with intellectual disabilities.

Recommended website

Resources for drafting laws at the EU level

While the statistical surveys do not always include all endonyms (e.g. intersexuals and Yenish people are missing) or sometimes contain debatable terms, they do provide relatively reliable sources to policy makers, e.g. for rethinking anti-discrimination legislation. Though the FRA itself cannot draft laws, it can provide concrete recommendations based on studies it conducts. These are included in its publications. There are no independent studies on the influence that FRA surveys and recommendations actually have on EU policy makers. However, it stands to reason that the influence is considerable.

The FRA's studies are available in many languages, always including English. In addition, the so-called factsheet provides a two- to four-page summary of the results in the most commonly spoken European languages. The FRA's publications can be sorted by language, publication year, theme (e.g. rights of the child), type (e.g. factsheet, handbook) or the fundamental rights covered (equality, freedoms, dignity).

The publications are also interlinked, so that further relevant search results are displayed when a certain study is retrieved.

Areas of application

Knowing about the publications of the Fundamental Rights Agency may be important for knowledge multipliers in the field of education with respect to various working methods. The publications provide sound background information in diverse areas that lend themselves to discussions in youth groups. Terms and abbreviations that are not immediately obvious to everyone are clarified and defined in the publications. Another advantage lies in the statistics and study results on the situation and legal status of certain so-called minorities within the EU, which are usually up to date. In some cases there is even a short (English-language) video that provides information on the initiation and implementation of the study or summarizes the most important results using diagrams. Young people inside or outside school who want to or are supposed to conduct research on the subject areas mentioned above will certainly find answers on the FRA's site. Teachers and others who take an interest are also well advised to browse the most recent publications on a regular basis.

All different – all equal

By Nadja Grintzewitsch

Knowledge multipliers in the field of education who organize an international youth encounter for the first time are faced with a multitude of tasks. Besides the organizational details, such as travel, accommodation or meals for the participants, which of course have to be arranged way in advance, at some point the organizers confront the question of how the concrete implementation of the project should look. What content should the participants develop, what group sizes are to be expected? How can one in fact work with young people who speak many different languages in a best-case scenario? Which common language does one agree upon? Which pedagogical methods can and should be applied?

Different yet equal

My link recommendation concerns the English-language educational tool "all different – all equal," which was created by the European Youth Center in Budapest and was made possible by funding from the European Union. People who already work with intercultural groups or want to do so in the future find a range of suggestions for implementing their projects here. Three chapters deal with different approaches to the overarching themes of diversity, anti-discrimination work and human rights education and present concrete methods for working with young people that can also be put to use in adult education.

Recommended teaching materials

A major advantage of the site is that it tries, mainly in the second chapter, to define and delimit terms relevant to human rights education (intolerance, discrimination, xenophobia, racism...). This is done in an accessible manner, without sounding too scientific, and is thus particularly suited for young people. One might ask, however, why only anti-Semitism is mentioned as a separate field, but not antiziganism, anti-Africanism or homophobia.

In the first two chapters, explanations are regularly punctuated by reflective questions ("What forms of discrimination exist? What is the difference between a refugee and an asylum seeker?"). The text often does not contain answers to these interposed questions; rather, the readers are encouraged to think about them or to do their own research. Some examples of questions are: "If a child is born to a foreign couple in your country, what citizenship does it have?" or "How many people actually make up a minority?" Thus, the questions are not merely factual, nor are they loaded; they are phrased to be open.

The third chapter also deserves special mention. Here, knowledge multipliers may find new suggestions for icebreakers, introduction games, role-plays etc. They will be grateful to find a comprehensive introduction to the methods presented and general tips for the organizers on implementing an intercultural educational program.

GIMA – group atmosphere, image, mechanism, act

The methods are classified according to the letters G (group atmosphere = improving group dynamics), I (image = working on the image the participants have of other cultures and countries), M (mechanisms = investigating the causes and mechanisms that lead to discrimination) and A (act = possible actions for social change based on equality and acceptance). There are also four different learning levels, where Level 1 corresponds to a short activity and serves as a warm-up, whereas Level 4 requires the ability to concentrate, prior knowledge, more effort to prepare and usually more time to complete. This classification makes it easier to determine the most appropriate method for the group at hand.

Two methods

The method "Personal Heroes" (Level I&A 2) asks each participant to think of a personal role model and to talk about their choice with the other participants. The names, nationalities and lines of work (sports, music, politics) of the personal heroes are to be collected on a flip chart. Then the participants are asked to analyze in plenary whether certain trends can be observed (gender, nationality, age) and what the reasons for this might be. The aim of this method is for participants in intercultural groups to get to know each other better, talk about national role models and historical discourses and in a final step also discuss the role of the media in the (lack of) popularity of the respective persons.

In the "Eurojoke Contest" (Level I&M 4), which takes 45 minutes, preselected "normal" jokes as well as jokes about minorities (including vegetarians, pop stars, politicians) are to be rated individually and analyzed together. This requires a warm-up and preceding discussions among the participants, so that stereotypes in the jokes are not merely reproduced but critically reflected. A goal of this method is that participants raise their voices against discriminatory "jokes" in the future, whenever they hear one.

These and other pedagogical methods are presented in detail on the website, including a description of how to proceed, recommended group size and expected duration. An annotated link list contains additional information on international youth organizations in the fields of sports, media, education and many other subjects. The only downside is that the toolkit is available only in English and French. On the other hand, knowledge multipliers in international youth encounters will tend to rely on English anyway. Nevertheless, a translation into Spanish and German would be desirable for the future.

Compass: A manual on human rights education for young people

By Else Engel and Lea Fenner

Anyone trying to orient themselves in the area of practical human rights education consults Compass, the best-known international educational manual for young people in or outside the school setting. The manual doesn't just provide lots of exercises; it contains an introduction to human rights education, tips for practical human rights training and suggestions as to applying what has been learnt and background information on key human rights themes.

Compass was first published by the Council of Europe in 2002 and thereafter translated into more than 30 languages, including German. In 2012, a revised and updated edition was released, but until now this has only been available in English; a German version is expected this year (2015).

Useful in all contexts

It's certainly worth taking a look at the new edition. It provides about 60 exercises and methods, more tips, especially for schoolteachers, and an improved overview, which at more than 600 pages is a welcome feature. Alongside rights for people with disabilities, freedom of religion and belief, other subject areas such as remembrance have been included for the first time.

Compass is aimed at an international community of educators in a variety of teaching contexts. Whether it be extra-curricular education, school, university or vocational training, the manual has been useful in all contexts. For work with the 7–13 age group, Compasito, the "younger sibling" of Compass, has been developed. The German edition of Compasito appeared in 2009.

Although, or rather because many of the exercises have very detailed descriptions, it is necessary to tailor them to the context and the needs of the students. This is a challenge for the educational facilitator, particularly as Compass claims to be suitable for educators regardless of experience or prior knowledge. While the manual does provide information on many aspects of practical education, in practice, however, what's often required is detailed knowledge of, for example, human rights.

Examples

Take the exercise entitled Dosta! It addresses the subject of memory in connection with discrimination. The idea behind the exercise is to heighten public awareness of the persecution of the Roma and Sinti during World War II. It aims to create an awareness of all victims of National Socialism, of human dignity and justice, while developing skills that can be used in human rights work. The complexities inherent in issues of discrimination, genocide and historical background assume a significant level of prior knowledge on the part of the educator. What's more, unlike political and intercultural education, for instance, historical learning is not treated as

a related discipline, however convincing the connections to it may be. Work on another international manual is being carried out at present, under the direction of Didaktik der Geschichte at the Freie Universität Berlin. This manual is explicitly dedicated to human rights education and historical learning and could supplement Compass on this subject in the future.

Another example is the exercise "Let's talk about sex": the choice of terminology – admittedly not always easy – is inconsistent and often inappropriate. The exercise has participants reflect on attitudes toward sexuality and homophobia, using an anonymized version of the fishbowl method. However successful the exercise might appear as a whole, the concrete choice of terminology in the description of the goals is questionable. Paula Gerber (2013) points out the inappropriate use of the term "sexual preferences," as it is now universally recognized that sexual orientation is not a matter of choice. On the other hand, in the chapter entitled Discrimination and Intolerance, the term "sexual orientation" is used. Even use of the expression tolerance is not unproblematic from a human rights point of view; in this context it is much more a matter of respect and recognition.

The manual's action-oriented focus fortunately ensures that it never loses sight of the main goal of human rights education: to foster a culture of human rights. There is even an entire chapter dedicated to possible activities and the practical application of lessons learned by way of initiating changes beyond the actual learning situation.

Conclusion

As the Compass authors state, the manual sets out to provide orientation only, and cannot map out the path educational work should take, nor does it wish to do so. That task remains – despite all the practical tips and information gathered in one publication – a formidable challenge for educators and practitioners.

The first Compass has grown into an international family of publications on human rights education, with many offshoots and generations. Though this might be confusing, it is a positive sign of a growing interest in human rights education and of the many ways the content in Compass can be implemented.

Literature and links

Compasito: Manual on Human Rights Education for Children. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung. Europarat, Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte, 2009.

Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. Europarat, 2nd revised and updated edition, Strasbourg 2012.

The first version of Compass (2002) is available in English, German, French, Russian and Arabic.

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Gerber, Paula. Review of ‚Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People' by Patricia Brander et al, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2012, 19(1) Australian Journal of Human Rights 199, 2013.

Kompass: Handbuch zur Menschenrechtsbildung für die schulische und außerschulische Bildungsarbeit. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, Europarat, Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte, 2005.

The authors work for the project "Historical Learning Meets Human Rights Education," based at the Friedrich-Meineke-Institut (Didaktik der Geschichte), Freie Universität Berlin. The two women have already worked for several human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, UNESCO and the Deutsche Institut für Menschenrechte. Their joint initiative is called "right now."

Difficult questions in Polish-Jewish dialogue

By David Zolldan

Of rifts and bridges

The rediscovery of century-old Jewish traditions in present-day Poland is proceeding in small steps, against the backdrop of the National Socialist annihilation of Jewish life; the leveling of culture by state socialism; and the deep rifts of suspicion due to pogroms after 1945, collaboration and sheer indifference of Christian Poles toward Jews. To be sure, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw was opened in October 2014 after many years of planning. But what about current religious and cultural Jewish life in Poland and the perspectives of Polish Jews today? The NGO "Forum on Dialogue Among Nations" is dedicated to building bridges through dialogue to overcome stereotypes and prejudice. It uses seminars and exhibitions to confront anti-Semitism and to further its pedagogical work for tolerance and open Polish-Jewish dialogue. It also regularly organizes exchange programs between Polish and mostly US-American Jews and youth exchange programs between Polish and (Polish-) Jewish adolescents. Recurring questions that were evidently of particular concern to the young people, the "difficult questions," were culled from these exchange experiences. Experts in the field of Polish-Jewish relations provide answers to these 50 questions about the experience and perception of the supposed others in the book

Recommended reference book

"Difficult Questions in Polish-Jewish Dialogue. How Poles and Jews See Each Other: A Dialogue on Key Issues in Polish-Jewish Relations." The book was created in cooperation with the American Jewish Committee and was funded by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, among others. The project aims to support cooperation between Jews and Poles. It is intended to enable understanding of unfamiliar perspectives on history, politics and everyday life.

Difficult questions? Helpful answers!

The 50 questions are organized into seven categories. The one containing the most questions by far deals with the time of the National Socialist occupation and persecution in Poland. The remaining categories are "Memory and knowledge about the Holocaust," "Present-day Poland and the Jews," "Jewish presence in contemporary Poland," "Present-day Israel," "Judaism and Jewish culture" and "Future." In the categories "Present-day Poland and the Jews" and "Jewish presence in contemporary Poland" the book, on the face of it, deals with Polish-Jewish history and relations. However, it is of value also for young people and influential educators coming from other contexts. Besides providing answers to questions about such problems as collaboration, questions that can readily be integrated into the respective experiential and national context, it also provides general answers about religious, historical and political aspects. This includes questions about the origins and triggers of anti-Semitism, about the role

of women in Judaism, about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, about the Israeli curriculum on the Holocaust and whether the Holocaust could have been prevented. As the answers to some of the questions touch on the content of other answers but were provided by different authors, there are sometimes slightly different nuances. An example is afforded by Israel Gutman's answer to question 6 ("Why did Poles collaborate with the Germans in persecuting Jews?") and Wladyslaw Bartoszewski's answer to question 7 ("How did Poles behave during the Holocaust?") with their respective positions on the assessment of Polish collaboration with the German crimes against Jews. However, these ostensible contradictions can be put to productive use for discussions, by emphasizing multiperspectivity.

Application

Appropriate in both language and content for advanced students and educators who are both interested and influential, "Difficult Questions" fills a dialogic void as a resource and serves as an introduction to different perspectives on Polish-Jewish history, politics and everyday life – even beyond Poland. In a school context, "Difficult Questions" could be employed not only in history classes but, thanks to the English edition, also in English classes. In 2006 the book was published in Polish, and Hebrew followed. Thus, the book undoubtedly also serves as a good preparation for all participants in international youth encounters with the partner country Poland. A free sample is online at http://www.difficultquestions.org; it contains all 50 questions as well as eight sample answers. The book has about 260 pages and can be ordered in print at a very low price from various established vendors. The NGO "Forum in Dialogue Among Nations" also offers workshops for students based on the book "Difficult Questions." These include "Criticism of Israel or Anti-Semitism" and "Anti-Semitic Graffiti."

Recommended reference book

Contact:

http://www.difficultquestions.org

forum@dialog.org.pl

The printed English edition can be ordered e.g. by email from Michael@friendsoftheforum.org.

Anti-discrimination work on Roma and Sinti in Europe

By Constanze Jaiser

One key area in international youth work about discrimination concerns ways to address the subject of minority groups. The largest minority in Europe is made up of the many different communities of Roma and Sinti, which are grouped together (not uncontroversially) under the general heading "Roma." Their history and culture is now the subject of numerous political campaigns and educational resources, along with their experience of exclusion culminating in the murder of their families by the National Socialists in a brutal genocide, which many Roma and Sinti refer to as "Porajmos." Their exclusion in many European countries continues to this day. Several resources that are suitable for international youth work [meetings] and available online are recommended here:

An online module about human dignity and images of Roma and Sinti

First up is an online module in English concerning historical learning and human rights, commissioned by the "European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights", developed by the "Agency for Historical, Civic and Media Education" in cooperation with the "House of the Wannsee Conference". Two chapters are of particular relevance for work on discrimination then and now:

Recommended teaching materials

Chapter 1: Reflections on human dignity

and

Case Study 6: Images of Roma – continuities of discrimination

The first resource offers an opportunity to come to grips with the concept of human dignity and, as a group, to arrive at a positive definition and focus on European efforts and measures aimed at protecting human dignity. A timeline showing the most significant human rights developments since 1945 helps users form a concise picture of historical milestones in defense of minorities and key information on European institutions.

By contrast, the case study is concerned explicitly with the exclusion of European Roma and Sinti: Starting with the contrast between self-images and frequently (re)produced as stereotypes, the voices of Roma and Sinti themselves are heard. They report on their experiences of discrimination (past and present) and on their too often unsuccessful efforts at obtaining compensation for the injustices they suffered under National Socialism.

The entire online module is available in English. Information on its production and objectives can be found in the introduction.

A Video – "We call ourselves Roma"

Another good, concise introduction to the subject of Roma and antidiscrimination work is the video, in English, entitled "We call ourselves Roma," in which the Romanian Roma woman and human rights

activist, Margareta Matache of Harvard University, provides an introduction to Europe's largest minority.

The video is on the "Facing History Forum."

Accompanied by music, maps and well-chosen historical and contemporary photos, the video highlights various European countries, explains the origins of the Roma and Sinti peoples and provides a brief historical overview.

The "Dosta" toolkit

One useful, English language resource is the "Dosta" toolkit, published by the Council of Europe, Roma and Travellers Division.

"Dosta" is a Romani word meaning "enough," and the toolkit is intended to familiarize non-Roma people with Roma culture.

The second chapter in particular, "Is this a stereotype? A tool for fighting stereotypes towards Roma" (pp. 19-33), clearly explains 16 common stereotypes that could form the basis of discussions when working with young adults. Another section deals with ways to prepare and carry out an antidiscrimination campaign; numerous useful tips are listed, from a planning checklist to producing a video, to public relations work.

A case study on Roma migrants: A simulation game for use in youth and adult education

This game provides insight into the issues of Roma migrants. The scenario is set in a fictitious German town. In the absence of proper accommodation, a group of Roma (EU citizens) chooses a public park as their temporary residence during the summer. This situation leads to controversy among the local residents, shopkeepers, the police, the city administration and other stakeholders. The game simulates a roundtable discussion with seven different interest groups.

Objective

The aim of the game is to reach a consensus among all the parties involved. The agreement should include concrete steps and measures.

The material consists of prepared role cards and possible action cards; the latter can be used to impact the course of the discussion. Also included is background information on freedom of movement for EU citizens and the situation for Roma, as well as information on human and fundamental rights relevant to the situation.

Lastly, there are educational guidelines and a timeline to help facilitate the roundtable. The suggested game duration is four hours maximum.

The simulation game was developed by Humanity in Action in cooperation with planpolitik and funded by the foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future" [EVZ] and the [German] Foreign Office. It was inspired by a real-life event and is available in English.

From personal experience I can certainly say that this method is an entirely worthwhile enterprise. In spite of the

seriousness of the subject, a simulation game such as this always contains an element of fun and the opportunity to get to know other players and discover hidden talents. Last but not least, the change of perspective and options for action afforded by the role cards lead to a critical reflection of one's own position and to personal empowerment, which could even encourage someone to start up their own campaign.

Biographical narration on discrimination and genocide of Roma and Sinti

by Constanze Jaiser

Giving memory a future

The website Giving Memory a Future: The Holocaust and the rights of Roma in contemporary Europe was produced in 2012 with support from the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. It was developed in English and Italian by the USC Shoah Foundation and the Centro di Ricerca sulle Relazioni Interculturali in Milan.

The multimedia platform has three headings on different subjects:

- History and memory

- About the Sinti and Roma

- Today ...ongoing issues

What is outstanding throughout is the variety of multilingual interviews with members of this minority group. The sequences have English subtitles and can be shared and even downloaded via Facebook, Linkedln, Twitter and Wordpress. Biographical information on the interviewees can also be downloaded. This is all accompanied by chronological information, historical documents and an image gallery, as well as suggestions for further reading.

The unmistakable advantage of this website is the variety of European voices that can be heard. The disadvantage, one that has been hotly debated for years by scientists, is that the continuity of an interview, the choreography of a narration, is lost where the excerpts are very short.

Many key themes are addressed, among them Roma and Sinti life at the beginning of the 20th century, the antiziganistic measures of the National Socialists, deportation and mass shootings, life in the concentration camps and the culture of denial of the genocide by the majority society. The Roma and Sinti origins, their self-image, their culture, language and music are also dealt with. Finally, contemporary issues are addressed under the heading of "Today... Ongoing Issues." They include the human right to work, education and health, and European measures taken to promote social integration and protect minorities in Europe. In each case the situation in Italy is covered in greater depth.

The site is easy to navigate and one can imagine using it when working in tandems at international youth meetings.

The fate of European Roma und Sinti during the Holocaust

This portal is in English, German and French and provides historical information about the Roma and Sinti for teachers and students.

The responsible author is Dr Gerhard Baumgartner, the renowned scientific director of the Documentation Center of Austrian Resistance (DCAR), who compiled this documentation with a team of international experts. It receives support from the Austrian Bundesministerium für Bildung und Frauen, the Fondation pour la Mémoire

de la Shoah, Paris and the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.

The material comprises five chapters, which are ready for use as worksheets and research tools for historical-political education work:

- The situation of European Roma and Sinti at the beginning of the 20th century

- The fundamental elements of the persecution and exclusion of Roma and Sinti long before the National Socialists came to power

- The radicalization and systematic persecution by the National Socialists

- The most important examples of targeted genocide carried out by the National Socialists and those fascist organizations associated with them

- The situation of the survivors of the genocide, their fight for recognition and financial compensation, and the culture of remembrance.

To supplement the eyewitness reports, details on background literature (catalogued by country) and glossary, information is given about the 35 locations where Roma and Sinti were murdered.

The teaching manual adds to the available educational material with suggestions for individual work (using the website, photos and biographies) and tips on working methods. A German discussion of the website, written by our colleague Birgit Marzinka, can be found at "Lernen aus der Geschichte".

Recommended website

Six biographies of Sinti and Roma

The exhibition Romasinti.eu, which has been online in English since 2012 with subtitles in German, Dutch, Czech or Polish, narrates the stories of six children: Zoni Weisz, Kristina Gil, Elina Machálkova, Settela Steinbach, Amalie Schaich Reinhardt and Karl Stojka. The choice of languages corresponds with the background of these Roma and Sinti children (Holland, Poland, Czech Republic, Germany and Austria).

The story is partly narrated, additional material such as photos and documents is available and a glossary provides explanations on the text.

The online exhibition was developed by various partner organizations working with the history of World War II. Once again, the sponsor was the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and the foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future."

Conclusion

The site is quite appealing. The black background and melancholy music are a matter of taste. But the flash programming could quickly become problematic for many browsers, and above all is not suited to all monitor formats. On the whole, the focus on just a few impressive stories works well – and with such elegant navigation and clear design, there is no rush to leave the site. The site can certainly be recommended as a good introduction to the subject, reaching the user at the emotional and cognitive levels.

"You're different?" – Historical learning on discrimination and persecution employing web 2.0 methods

By Constanze Jaiser

"You're different?" – an online exhibition about young people during the Nazi period – is a website project of the Foundation Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. It attempts to link historical learning about National Socialism with current questions of human rights education interactively, using web 2.0 methods.

It portrays 33 youths and children from across Europe who were marginalized and persecuted during the Nazi period because they were "different."

"You're different!" is a damning indictment of National Socialism. It was a verdict passed arbitrarily against millions of people, with fatal consequences. Those persecuted as "different" were suddenly faced with prejudice, betrayal, prohibitions and hateful behavior, war and concentration camps. They were forced to deal with this marginalization: "You're different," "You don't belong!"

The children and youths introduced on this website were at the mercy of this changed situation. It wasn't long before they were barred from school, or were bullied by classmates. Their own neighbors or friends suddenly marginalized them, or even reported them to the authorities. Some were not permitted to speak in their mother tongue or to date outside their minority.

And all this because they came from a different religious group than the majority, or had a handicap, or because their family was simply not considered "German."

Recommended website

"Are you different?"

But what were they really like? What kinds of people were Sima, Gert, Sophie, Ursula and Vitka? What was important to them? How did they live? They, too, had dreams, fears, desires and convictions. What happened to them when the Nazis took power, or later, when the war broke out? And above all: Were they able to fight back? Did survive the terror and violence?

This online exhibition "You're different?" provides answers to these questions and allows visitors to pose questions of their own. Five spotlights illuminate the lives of these youths.

Marginalization and discrimination today

"Being different" or "considered different" are themes that accompany all the life stories included on the website. But does the question "are you different?" play a role today, too, in the lives of youths? Who else feels different? Are you different from your friend? Different from the way you wish you were? Different from how other people want you to be?

In the section "showing what I think" ("participating"), there is space not only for comments on the life stories of the youths presented, but also for commenting on one's

own experiences and on the topic of "being different." Creating a personal profile is simple (also possible on Facebook); it provides access to the "presentation" function and offers the possibility of collecting images and documents that are then available for the presentation. Users can work on their presentations and share them, or print them as PDFs.

Diversity on display

Most important, users can leave personal statements on the site, such as examples of how people can stick up for others; examples that may fit the biography of one of the people portrayed, but also those that project results from international youth encounters. They can take the form of collages of images, audio and video clips, digital storytelling, graffiti, etc. All comments and contributions appear as an accompanying gallery on the biography pages, but especially on the home page: The "galaxy of stars," composed of colorful pixels, appears to drift into our world from outer space.

Finally, a second, contemporary level emerges, or, to use the same metaphor: a second galaxy with "satellites" arranged around the five symbolic images and catch phrases related to the historical biographies, reflecting the thoughts, opinions and feelings of today's youth.

Conclusion

Some of the biographies already exist in an English-language version. As yet, they are unpublished. It would be important for this website to be made accessible in other languages as well, as it is a very useful tool for the topics mentions above, has an appealing design and is well-suited for tandem-style historical-political education.

Recommended website

Contact:

Dr. Barbara Köster

Tel. +49(0)30 – 26 39 43 – 36

Fax +49(0)30 – 26 39 43 – 21

E-Mail: besucherservice[at]stiftung-denkmal.de

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Credits

The Agency for Historical, Civic and Media Education
Dieffenbachstr.76
10967 Berlin
http://www.lernen-aus-der-geschichte.de
http://www.agentur-bildung.de

Coordination: Ingolf Seidel
Editorial Staff: Nadja Grintzewitsch, Dr. Constanze Jaiser, Anne Lepper und David Zolldan

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