

Schools Draw Borders - We Draw Banners! – Schule zieht grenzen – wir ziehen nicht mit!

We sat at a richly laid table and asked ourselves: What role do identity papers play in our lives in Germany? We, that is people who do research and who are involved with *Jugendliche ohne Grenzen*, *IniRromnja*, *International Women Space* and *Entangled Histories*.

We had a lot to tell each other. Others, too, can certainly contribute many stories: How do identity documents affect social participation? How is access to education, work, housing, freedom of movement and political participation made difficult or impossible for some people? How was it like in the past?

What a big topic! We decided to focus on schools. After all, we all had something to do with school at some point: some of us were not allowed to attend it for a while or were only allowed to attend a certain one; others were taught in separate classes from the rest of the student body. We shared our experiences of racism in school. What did we experience there? Which topics were dealt with and which were not? How were they talked about? Which type of knowledge was taught and which were left out? How was the contact between classmates and teachers? Were the teachers careful to be just to all the children? How did the teachers deal with the fact that we had different (or no) identity papers? What role did it play in school that we spoke several languages? How did the teachers deal with the fact that we practiced different religions - or none at all? What role did it play in school that we brought knowledge from other parts of the world? When and how did teachers suddenly categorize how we look, our hair, skin color, eye shape and color, even our noses? When did our headgear become an issue in relation to school rules and teaching? When were some of us addressed by an informal 'you' by teachers or asked 'where are you from'? When did we fall silent and when did we continue talking? How did we resist the injustices we faced?

So many questions! For this exhibition, we concentrated on the first step: access to school for children, young people and teachers who are perceived as 'others'. We asked: What effect does it have if they are treated as if they do not belong? How are they prevented from going to school like other people? How do students and their parents, teachers and entire communities deal with being treated unfairly?

We are delighted that the *Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences*, the *Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft* together with the *RomaniPhen Archive*, the *Jewish Museum* and the *FHXB Museum* were able to receive funds from the *Institute for Applied Research*, for the practical research project *Passport Control! Living without Papers in the Past and Present*. Together with *Jugendliche ohne Grenzen*, *IniRromnja*, *International Women Space* and *Entangled Histories*, we were able to research the above questions and make our findings available to the public in an exhibition.

Do not Thwart the System – Nicht die Ordnung vereiteln

The school system in the German colonies separates pupils according to 'skin colour' and 'gender'. What is taught there is what benefits the colonial administration and the *white* settlers. This meets with resistance.

Image 1

Mission school for black children in the former 'German South-West-Africa', today Namibia. Beginning of the 20th Century © Bildarchiv der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft, Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main

Image 2

The former mission student and freedom fighter Hendrik Witbooi is honoured in the *Parliament Gardens Windhoek*, Namibia, recording from 2016. © Pemba.mpimaji

Image 3

BU: The former missionary student and freedom fighter Samuel Maharero is honoured in Okahandja, Namibia, recording from 2006. © bries

In the so-called 'German colonies' on the African continent (1884-1918), the life of the Black population is marked by racial discrimination and oppression by the colonial system. The several African populations, their social system, their languages, their cultures and their knowledge are suppressed and replaced by systems which serve the colonial rule, the settlers and the trading companies. This is done through open violence, but also through fraud and other strategies. This is justified by racist arguments that African populations must be civilized, missionized and educated.

Missionary schools play an important role in the implementation of the colonial project. There are schools for *white* children, schools for Black children, schools for boys* and schools for girls*. In addition to basic skills in arithmetic, reading and writing, the boys* are instructed in crafts and agriculture and the girls* in home economics, so that they can carry out their work on the farms of the *white* settlers. → **Das Europäische nicht als Vorbild nehmen**

Black families, children and adults alike, reject the attendance of mission schools. It prevents the children from carrying out their activities. In *white* people's schools, they neither learn what they need and want to know, nor do they learn in a way that corresponds to the passing on of knowledge in the respective local societies. By attending mission schools, the children are isolated from their community. The children and their parents defend themselves against the violence that is used to enforce the increasing pressure to attend school, prevalent in some colonies.

Individual Black children and young people, mostly boys* from influential families, have the opportunity to attend secondary school. There, they are prepared to work as

intermediaries between the African population and the German colonial administration. A few go to school in Germany or complete an apprenticeship there.

Some of the graduates of higher mission schools use their insights into the colonial system and its racist order to resist it. Two former mission students lead the armed resistance struggle in the 'German-Southwest', today Namibia: Samuel Maharero, political leader of the OvaHerero, and Hendrik Witbooi, political and religious leader of the Nama. Boys* and girls* of the Bonamanga also visit German schools in Cameroon and the Empire and later use their knowledge as adults to fight against colonial exploitation and oppression. → [Rudolph Douala Manga Bell](#)

Who is a Danger for Whom?! – Wer ist für wen eine Gefahr?!

Jewish and Black schoolchildren as well as children from the Sinti*zze and Roma*nja minority are increasingly excluded from general schooling under National Socialism.

Image 1

The photograph from 1905 shows Berlin children on their way to school. National Socialism is increasingly abolishing this composition of the student body. © Public domain

Image 2

Elementary school of the Jewish community Rykestraße 53, Berlin-Prenzlauer Berg, on the occasion of a sports festival, 1938 © Landesarchiv Berlin

Image 3

Forced camp Berlin-Marzahn with school barrack, 1936. © Landesarchiv Berlin

Under National Socialism, compulsory schooling applies only to children and adolescents of German nationality. Since citizenship can be revoked for racist or political reasons or is not even granted, compulsory schooling does not apply to the children of these families.

Berlin Sinti*zze and Roma*nja are deported to the Marzahn forced camp in 1936. The schoolchildren are 'taught' in a barrack until the teacher is drafted, after which they can no longer go to school at all. Children and young people aged 12 and over have to do forced labour. Employees of the 'Rassenhygienischen Forschungsstelle', the 'research institute for racial hygiene', carry out pseudoscientific 'investigations' on them and draw up so-called 'racial reports'. These contribute significantly to the decision as to which of the persons detained in the camp will be deported. → [Otto Rosenberg](#)

At first, Jewish children are still allowed to attend primary school. A law limits the proportion of Jewish high school and university students to the total number of students, so that they are increasingly only able to attend Jewish private schools. After the Reichspogromnacht 1938, Jewish children and adolescents are no longer allowed to attend public schools. → [Anna Boros](#)

In 1941, the national socialists decree that children and adolescents from the Sinti*zze and Rom*nja minorities as well as Black children should be expelled from schools, should they 'pose a threat to their German-blooded classmates'. The Berlin children from the Sinti*zze and Romn*nja minorities are no longer affected by this ruling: By this time, they have long since been interned in the forced camp in Marzahn. In 1942, the entire Jewish schooling system is abolished by the national socialists.

"Yesterday Integration – Today Deportation" - "Gestern Integration heute Abschiebung"

In the 1970s and 1980s, several regulations were enacted leading to school segregation and unequal treatment of many children and adolescents with a nationality other than German. Criticism and resistance are inevitable.

Images 1 and 2

Demonstration at the Kottbusser Damm for equal rights in education, 1975. © Jürgen Henschel

Images 3 and 4

Demonstration against a decree, that intends to make family reunification more difficult and to facilitate the deportation of adolescents and young people. As a reaction, a broad civil society alliance calls for protest, 1981. © Jürgen Henschel

Initially mainly children of migrant workers are particularly affected by school segregation and unequal treatment. The proportion of minority children in classrooms is not allowed to exceed 20%, and from 1982 onwards, the limit is set at 30%. Instead, they are taught in so-called 'foreigner classes'.

Students without German language skills attend preparation classes and are meant to switch to regular classes after two years at the latest. In fact, many students stay longer in these classes longer. → **Figen Izzin**

Students who are older than 14 at the time of entry and who, according to the responsible district office, will not be able to complete their general schooling (Hauptschulabschluss) within two years must attend 'integration courses' and do not receive a school leaving certificate. For children and young people who are still undergoing asylum proceedings, the right to schooling is only granted in 1984. School attendance is only possible at the request of a parent or guardian. Because parents are not sufficiently informed, thousands of children receive no school education for years.

Children and adolescents of migrant worker or those with a *Duldung* or in an asylum process are expelled from secondary schools and special schools or leave school without any qualifications at all at an above-average rate.

Parents, pupils and migrant self-organisations try to take action against the racist barriers to access to school education through demonstrations, court actions and protest letters. They criticise the poor educational and career opportunities, demand the expansion of multilingual teaching and for the content of curricula to reflect the diverse cultural and historical references of all schoolchildren. Link to Banner - "We want to learn" At the same time, they are campaigning against the uncertainty many children and young people face with regard to residence law and against deportations.

The regulations adopted in 1984 for children and young people known as 'Aussiedler*innen' (German emigrants from Eastern Europe) show that with the necessary political will, it is possible to deal with linguistic diversity in a different way. According to this, children and adolescents moving to Germany not only immediately have a secure status, but are also accepted into regular classes. According to these regulations, these pupils should in principle be admitted to regular classes. If they lack German language skills, they either receive supplementary instruction or are taught in remedial classes for a maximum of one year.

Equal Rights for All?! – Gleiche Rechte für alle?!

Again and again, school segregation is abolished - and reintroduced under protest. 'Tolerated' and illegalised children and young people continue to fight for their right to schooling.

Image 1

alle bleiben! (Everybody stays!) demonstrates in Wiesbaden in 2011 on the occasion of the conference of interior ministers. © *alle bleiben!*

Image 2

Jugendliche ohne Grenzen (Youth without Borders) demonstrate in Bonn in 2014 on the occasion of the conference of interior ministers*. © *Jugendliche ohne Grenzen* →

Image 3

The IniRromnja protest flyer on the adoption of the Berlin Action Plan for the Inclusion of Foreign Roma, which, among other things, justifies the introduction of 'Willkommensklassen' ('welcome classes'). © Nihad Nino Pušija

In Berlin, children and young people who are 'gedudet' ('tolerated') or undergoing asylum proceedings have been required to attend school since the beginning of the 1990s. But through campaigns, actions and demonstrations, initiatives such as *Jugendliche ohne Grenzen* and *alle bleiben!*, repeatedly point out that for such children, gaining access to schooling and vocational training involves many hurdles and is characterised by massive insecurity due to their insecure residence status. → *Jugendliche ohne Grenzen* → *alle bleiben!*

After decades of protests by parents, pupils and migrant self-organisations, the 'quota system' ('Quotenregelung') and the 'foreigner classes' ('Ausländer-Regelklassen') were abolished in 1995 and the privileged position of

'Aussiedler*innen' (German emigrants from Eastern Europe) was abolished. The 'integration courses' are discontinued from the beginning of the 1999/2000 school year onwards. Separate schooling on the basis of citizenship is no longer permitted but is still possible on the basis of a lack of knowledge of German. It is only from 2007 onwards that children without German language skills are enrolled in regular classes and learn German additionally in learning groups.

Since the 1997/98 school year, the 'non-German language of origin' ('ndH') of a child is documented upon school entry. There are no clear rules as to how this is determined and the classification says nothing about the actual need for German remedial classes. Many parents avoid schools with a high percentage of 'ndH'. Some try to persuade school administrators to keep the proportion of 'ndH' children in the class of their own children low. There are even school principals who set up separate classes from the outset. This is illegal, and when reported, the schools are forced to cease this practice. **Saraya Gomis**

With the introduction of so-called 'Willkommensklassen' ('welcome classes') in 2011/12, separate schooling is once again perfectly legal. This applies above all to Rom*nja without German citizenship. This provokes opposition and protest from groups such as the *Romano-Bündnis* (Romano Alliance). → **Romano-Bündnis** In the following years, more and more children without German language skills attend 'Willkommensklassen', mainly refugee children and adolescents and children from (South-)Eastern European countries. These classes and their lesson plans are not governed by a specific concept, only on non-binding recommendations for action, so that the teachers decide at their own discretion on the subject matter and the transfer to a regular class. Classes often take place in separate rooms or buildings. → **Sabina Salimovska**

And What was it Like in the GDR? – Und wie war es in der DDR?

The GDR government cooperates with foreign parties and governments to educate schoolchildren in the socialist spirit in boarding schools in the GDR.

Image 1

Flag roll call at the *Käthe-Kollwitz-Heim* in Moritzburg. © SLUB/Deutsche Fotothek, Erich Pohl

Image 2

Andreas Shiyoo (middle row, 3rd from left) was one of the 400 Namibian children who grew up in the GDR. © Andreas Shiyoo.

As a state with an anti-fascist stance, the GDR opposes National Socialism and colonialism. The educational system is first designed as antifascist and democratic and later as socialist. Cooperating on education with foreign parties and governments which emerged from anti-colonial liberation movements and opted for a non-capitalist development path contribute to the reconstruction of these countries. Special curricula are developed for the pupils and boarding schools are built.

After North Vietnam freed itself from the French colonial regime, it signs an agreement with the GDR in 1955: 350 children of former anti-colonial fighters live and study in the *Käthe-Kollwitz-Heim* in Moritzburg. To this day, they call themselves *Moritzburger*.

The People's Republic of Mozambique also concludes an agreement with the GDR. In 1982, 899 Mozambican children travel to the GDR and attend the *Schule der Freundschaft* (School of Friendship) in Staßfurt. Until 1988, the students live at the school and the adjoining dormitories during the week. The pupils spend the weekends and holidays with host families in the city and the surrounding area. However, the plan of preparing the children for Mozambique's socialist reconstruction is a waste of time:

After a change in the political leadership of the country, Mozambique no longer recognises the GDR degrees.

Young people from Namibia also temporarily live in the *Schule der Freundschaft* and attend the *Willy Wallstab* Polytechnic High School in Löderburg, in their own classes. As for the Mozambican pupils, the curriculum and teaching materials are adapted for them in terms of language, culture and regional studies. → »DDR-Kinder« aus Namibia

Separate education in the GDR is based on the respective agreements between the contracting parties. All other pupils who live permanently in the GDR attend the regular lessons of the uniform school system. However, the structural equality of all pupils as well as the educational cooperation based on solidarity do not mean that the curriculum, communication and everyday life are free of racism. Even the GDR's self-representation as a state which has nothing to do with German colonialism and National Socialism, neither in school nor in any other sphere of life, has consequences - not only for pupils and teachers of Color.

Anna Boros

"My Desired Education was Forbidden by Force."

Image 1

Anna with her mother Julie and her husband Georg in their Berlin living room in 1936.
© Yad Vashem, The Righteous Among Nations Department

Image 2

Almost ten years after the end of National Socialism, Anna Gutman(n), née Boros, is still fighting for compensation because the restrictions have caused her "damage in her professional advancement". 1954. © LABO, BEG-Akte Reg.-Nr. 025535

Image 3

After his death, Dr. Mohamed Helmy is honoured as a "righteous among the nations" because, among other things, he saves Anna's life. The picture shows Helmy's nephew Dr. Nasser Kotby (Egypt) and Anna's daughter Carla Greenspan (USA) during the ceremony in *Yad Vashem*, West Jerusalem, 2013. © Yad Vashem, The Righteous Among Nations Department

Anna Boros was born in 1925 in Arad, Romania. When her parents separate, she moves with her mother to live with her grandmother in Berlin. When the National Socialists take power in 1933, the family's life changes: Anna, her uncle Martin and her grandmother Cecilie Rudnik are stripped of their citizenship. Anna's mother Julie is initially protected by her marriage to Georg Wehr, a *white* German who converted from Christianity to Judaism. Due to the racist logic he remains 'Aryan' despite the conversion. According to patriarchal family law, his Jewish wife Julie becomes German. Later they are also persecuted.

Anna's grandmother Cecilie Rudnik runs a family business at Neue Friedrichstraße 77. When she is expropriated and loses the business, the family is not only stateless but also destitute.

Due to National Socialist legislation, Anna is no longer able to attend school or complete an apprenticeship. → **Wer ist für wen eine Gefahr?!** Her wish to become a children's nurse, which initially seems possible in a Jewish children's home, is thwarted by the closure of all Jewish institutions. Due to the expropriation of the family business, Anna cannot take up any training there either. When the deportation of Jewish people begins, the persecution of the family continues to increase: Anna, her uncle and her grandmother go underground in 1942. Their doctor, the Egyptian Dr. Mohamed Helmy, who lives in Berlin, helps the family go underground and also supplies them with food. Anna initially lives in his practice. The teenager was unable to complete her desired training as a children's nurse. But in hiding she can at least work in a practice.

Dr. Helmy uses his contacts with other Egyptian immigrants to help Anna Boros escape from Germany. He arranges Anna's conversion to Islam with the help of his friend Dr. Kamal El-Din Galal, General Secretary of the *Islamischen Zentral-Instituts zu Berlin* (Islamic Central Institute in Berlin). Another friend, the jazz musician Abdel Aziz Helmy Hammad, agrees to marry Anna, now called by her Muslim name 'Nadja', according to Islamic law (Sharia). After recognition of her marriage by the German authorities, she would acquire her husband's Egyptian citizenship and could leave Germany - at least that's the plan. But the authorities do not recognize the marriage. Dr. Helmy's attempt to adopt Anna also fails. After it becomes too dangerous to continue hiding in the Moabit practice, Dr. Helmy hides Anna in his garden shed in Berlin-Buch.

Anna survives, but even after the formal end of National Socialism, she is unable to complete any professional training in Germany due to its after-effects and emigrates to the USA.

Otto Rosenberg

"And I Fought Back Too."

Image 1 and Image 2

The forced labour camp Berlin-Marzahn – a place of remembrance and information, Landesverband Deutscher Sinti und Roma Berlin-Brandenburg e.V. 2019 © Jolan Attia Cantzen

Otto Rosenberg was born in 1927 in Draugupönen, East Prussia, and grew up in Berlin. In the summer of 1936, the Gestapo deports the nine-year-old and his family to the Berlin-Marzahn forced labor camp. There, he has to live under inhumane conditions, is no longer allowed to attend a regular school and is subjected to racist 'investigations' and 'inquiries'. → **Wer ist für wen eine Gefahr?!** At the age of 13, Otto is forced to work in an armament factory. He is denounced in 1942 and transferred to Moabit prison for alleged sabotage, where he has to spend four months in solitary confinement. From there he is deported to Auschwitz in the spring of 1943. He is the only one of eleven siblings to survive.

Soon after the end of the war, Otto Rosenberg begins to work politically. He fights for the social equality of Sinti*zzze and Rom*nja and becomes an important voice of the civil rights movement. In 1978 he becomes one of the co-founders of the *Cinti Union Berlin*, known today as the *Landesverband Deutscher Sinti und Roma Berlin-Brandenburg* (Association of German Sinti and Roma Berlin-Brandenburg), and becomes its long-standing chairman. He is also active as a board member of the *Zentralrates Deutscher Sinti und Roma* (Central Council of German Sinti and Roma). He dies in Berlin in 2001.

"Next to the police barrack came a school barrack, because we were no longer allowed to attend elementary school. That was the end for us. We were not allowed to attend the big school in Berlin-Marzahn, right next to the village church. We had only one teacher. There were several classes, but only two rooms. One was for the little ones. We got some of the books for free, but we also had to pay a little extra. We had a book of arithmetic, a notebook, a writing book a reading primer and a math book. That's all we had, that's all. We didn't learn much."

Source: Otto Rosenberg (2012): *Das Brennglas* (The Magnifying Glass), p. 21

"The teacher, he was always under pressure. Yes? And he came in and took his pointing stick and showed us where the German troops were now. But we were not interested in knowing where our German troops are. And then he went over to the farmer's wife and talked to her and said: 'Otto, make sure that they copy what I write on the blackboard. That was it, actually. (...) And you can't learn anything from that either.'"

Source: Interview with Otto Rosenberg, FU Berlin

"I was discriminated against when I was a child, but as a child, you take it differently. And I fought back too. Against the children who discriminated against me. I always wore wooden slippers, I suppose, because there was no money for shoes. And with these wooden blocks I earned myself respect. They were quite suitable for that. The children strapped the schoolbag to the front of their chest. That's how they played airplane, and at the same time they bumped into me and insulted me, calling me a dirty gypsy, and much more. That's why I once beat a police officer's son with my slippers."

Source: Otto Rosenberg (2012): *Das Brennglas* (The Magnifying Glass), pp. 15-16

Rudolph Douala Manga Bell:

"...that this ground shall never again be trodden upon by Germans."

Image 1

The extended family Bonamanga, in the middle, the married couple Emily and Rudolph Douala Manga Bell. © Basler Mission

Image 2

Three generations of Bonamanga visiting a priest friend on the occasion of their trip to Berlin to stand up for their rights, 1902. © Public domain

Image 3

In the Berlin district of Wedding, the Nachtigalplatz will be renamed Manga Bell Square after prolonged battles by diasporic communities and their supporters. © Tahir Della

Rudolph Douala Manga Bell is born into a wealthy trading family in 1873. He is the grandson of one of the important heads of families who signed a contract with German trading companies, which later became their undoing. The family lives in Douala, a coastal district in today's Cameroon, and sees the contract as one between equal partners. Some of the Bonamanga family either attend mission schools in Cameroon or are sent to Germany or Europe for education. → **Nicht die Ordnung vereiteln**. At first, they also profits from the trade with the Germans.

Rudolph attends the first state school for Black children in Douala, which was founded in 1887 by the German colonial administration. From 1891 onwards, he attends schools in Germany, first the elementary school, later the Latin school in Aalen, Württemberg, then the Gymnasium in Ulm. After five years he returns to Cameroon and works as a mediator between the German colonial administration and the Douala.

Due to the increasing repression and expropriation of the Douala, forced labour and arbitrary arrests by the German colonial administration as well as the racist arguments that accompany them, Rudolph Douala Manga Bell distances himself

more and more from the German colonial powers and later uses various means to defend himself. In 1905 and 1910, together with others, he addresses letters and petitions to the German Reichstag in Berlin in the hope that they will reason with their representatives in the 'colonies'. When this is unsuccessful, he calls in a Berlin lawyer. Instead of getting justice, he is sentenced to "death by hanging" in 1914 for "treason" and executed. His last words are:

"You are hanging innocent blood [...] damn the Germans. God! I beseech Thee; hear my last will and testament, that this ground shall never again be trodden upon by Germans."

Rudolph Douala Manga Bell and his fellow combatants are still celebrated in Cameroon today as national heroes.

"Education Made in Germany"? - "Bildung made in Germany?"

German international schools are a central component of international cultural policy. German and local children are educated worldwide according to the German curriculum.

Image 1

German school in Tsumeb, 'German-Southwest, today Namibia, early 20th century.
© Bildarchiv der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft

Image 2

German International School Johannesburg, South Africa, record from 2018. © Savo Ceprnich.

The first German school abroad opens in Copenhagen in 1557. Further schools follow, initially in other European countries, and towards the end of the 19th century also worldwide. Since they are increasingly financially supported by the state, their existence is influenced by colonialism and National Socialism, wars, ups and downs and other political events. Today there are 140 German schools abroad worldwide.

Germans who stay abroad for professional or private reasons send their children there to be educated according to the German school system and curriculum. Since the 1970s, most schools have been called *Begegnungsschulen* (encounter schools). They can now also be attended by local children if no German child abroad claims the place. One precondition is that one parent of the local child speaks German well and that the family can afford the high school fees. Whether the lessons for German or local pupils are held together or separately depends, among other things, on the respective intergovernmental agreement.

The *Deutsche Schule Kuala Lumpur* (German School in Kuala Lumpur - DSKL) only offers German and English as language options to its pupils, the national language Bahasa Malaysia is not part of the curriculum.

Although the *Deutsche Internationale Schule Johannesburg* (German International School Johannesburg) intends for the pupils to "[...] value other cultures and nationalities in their daily interaction" and strives to "promote the multilingualism of the pupils, act as a centre of intercultural encounter", none of the indigenous national languages are offered; the curriculum includes German, English, Afrikaans and French.

At the *Deutsche Evangelische Oberschule Kairo* (German Protestant High School in Cairo), the Egyptian children learn according to both the German and Egyptian curricula and graduate from both school systems. For the German children, only the German curriculum applies; Arabic is offered as a third foreign language after English and French and does not count towards the final grade.

The curriculum of the *Deutschen Schule Toulouse* (German School Toulouse) states: "A major goal of DS Toulouse is to introduce its pupils to the understanding and use of the French language in order to facilitate their access to the host country and its culture".

How the encounter between German and local children is structured varies from school to school. While in Germany, learning the German language is considered to be of central importance for 'integration', German foreign cultural policy considers learning national languages at 'encounter schools' dispensable.

Some pupils of German schools abroad work as staff in German institutions and international companies in these countries. Others, on the other hand, take a critical stance: white pupils regret missed opportunities, while Black pupils and pupils of Color report experiences of racism and various forms of discrimination. → **Tatjana, Iskar, Iris**

"GDR-Children" from Namibia - "DDR-Kinder aus Namibia"

In the 1980s, about 400 Namibian children were brought up in a socialist manner in the GDR. As the future elite of the free nation of Namibia, they were to rebuild the country after liberation.

Image 1

In front of the *Schule der Freundschaft* (School of Friendship), Staßfurt 1986 © Archiv Heinz Berg

Image 2

In front of the *Kinderheim Bellin* (Childrens Home Bellin), Jahreszahl? © Archiv Heinz Berg

From 1979 to 1989, children between the ages of three and seven travel to the GDR. They come from camps in Angola and Zambia, located on the border to today's Namibia and mainly accept SWAPO refugees.

The *South West African People's Organization* (SWAPO) fights for Namibia's independence and liberation from the apartheid regime of South Africa, which then occupied Namibia. The SWAPO agrees with the GDR government that orphaned and

needy children from the camps as well as children of SWAPO fighters are brought to safety in the GDR and educated there. → Und wie war es in der DDR?

The "GDR children" grow up in a children's home in Bellin and attend a general school (POS for polytechnic secondary school) in Zehna, where they are taught in classes specially set up for them. This school later runs two classes for Namibian and two for GDR pupils. The Namibian children are looked after and educated by Namibian and German educators. As more and more small children arrive, from the school year 1985/86 onwards, the older ones live in the *Schule der Freundschaft* (School of Friendship) in Staßfurt and visit the POS in Löderburg.

The everyday life of the children is tightly organised, they have many obligations and have to follow strict rules. The children, however, stick together and develop their own language: *Oshideutsch* combines German with Oshivambo, one of the many languages spoken in Namibia. In this way they can communicate with each other without being understood by the teachers, who speak only German or Oshivambo.

After the dissolution of the GDR and Namibia's independence, the "GDR children", as they are still called today, are 'transferred' to Namibia.

The European not as a role model - Das Europäische nicht als Vorbild nehmen

Black girls in 'German colonies' are educated in mission schools to serve in the households of the white settlers. Their resistance is reinterpreted by the white teachers.

Image 1

Reports from teachers show that the girls* defend themselves against the injustice and oppression in the colonial school system. © Jolan Attia Cantzen

In 'German colonies', schools are organised separately according to 'skin colour' and 'gender'. Black girls* are taught skills in 'girl classes' and 'girl institutions' which they later have to perform as servants in the households of *white* settlers: Sewing, crocheting, knitting, embroidery, darning, patching and laundry. In mission schools, they are supposed to learn how to become "Christian wives, housewives and mothers". Local notions of family and social orders are shaken and replaced by the bourgeois, European housewife* model, and the racist order of the colonial system is integrated into the households of the settlers: African girls* are taken out of their families and social structures to work as housemaids or nannies* in *white* families. Only very few Black girls* are given access to colonial higher education with the aim of educating them for the interests of colonial administration. → Nicht die Ordnung vereiteln

I. Course.

Reading: Reading of all sound connections in the mother tongue.

Writing down what was read.

Calculation from 1 to 20 in the mother tongue.

Manual work: Sewing basics, such as pre-stitch, backstitch, lockstitch, Hem stitch, overthrow stitch.

In accordance with the boys' schools, six courses were also planned for the girls' education

The material was distributed so that girls, who leave school after completing the first three courses, are still able to acquire the most necessary skills for a woman, namely the repairing and production of clothes, of simple dresses, etc.

When learning German from the fourth course onwards, it is mainly speaking which will be practiced.

The manual for writing German letters and records may be completely omitted, since knowing how to do this in the mother tongue is completely sufficient for a woman. Invoices should also only be practised in the mother tongue.

signed Prefect Schönig. Excerpt from the curriculum of the Catholic Steyler Mission in Togo for Girls' Schools, 1910. Staatsarchiv Bremen - 7,1025-39/1

Education and empowerment - Bildung und Empowerment

Exemplified by *Each One Teach One* and the *Initiative intersektionale Pädagogik*: EOTO is founded in 2012 by the Black Community, I-Päd by Pedagogues of Color. Both projects promote the empowerment of school children in the context of education.

Image 1: In the library, young black people find books on topics that tie in with their knowledge and quench their thirst for knowledge. © EOTO 2018

Image 2: One method that i-Päd uses to give an overview of different categories, explain terms and visualize intersectionality is the mannequin Deniz. © i-Päd

The name *Each One Teach One* (EOTO) was coined in connection with black resistance movements critical of racism. Enslaved people had no access to schools, in colonialism access to school and education for black children and young people was restricted. Since then, knowledge has been passed on within Black families and communities. The EOTO concept follows on from this.

The library is at the centre of the numerous activities of the Berlin project EOTO. It contains novels by Afrodiasporic authors*, works on colonialism and resistance, books analysing racism and children's books. As a neighbourhood library, it is a place of learning and encounter.

An important goal of EOTO is to strengthen and empower black youth. In the *Black Diaspora School* (BDS) they can meet each other and learn together for the school. Above all, here they can learn what they cannot (yet) learn in school. → **Saraya Gomis**

With its concept for complaint offices against racism and discrimination in schools the Black Diaspora School wins the first prize of the project *Racism - not with me!* (*Rassismus – nicht mit mir!*) of the federal anti-discrimination office in 2015.

The Initiative Intersektionale Pädagogik (i-PÄD) is a project of the Berlin-Brandenburg Migration Council. i-PÄD is committed to ensuring that different realities of life are also represented in educational work, so that children and young people can find themselves in the teaching materials and perceive their lives and the lives of others as normal.

Every human being has a gender identity that is based on social expectations. We are all subject to constraints - some people conform and therefore do not notice them.

Every human being has a world view. Perhaps at this time it corresponds to a dominant conviction in this place and is therefore perceived as 'neutral'.

Every human body is different and special in its individuality. Many experience the social ideal and norm conceptions of appearance and sex as restriction and not as enrichment.

Everyone has an age and will experience discrimination as 'too young' or 'too old'.

Just because we do not perceive discrimination does not mean that it does not exist. There are no neutral people! Discrimination is an issue for all people!

i-PÄD works according to the principle that all identities are valuable and deserve to be represented positively. We want to give children and young people a stable self-esteem. We conduct workshops for (prospective) educators and social workers in order to offer them tools with which they can support their counterparts in their development and contribute to more acceptance of diversity. → **Tuğba Tanyılmaz**

Protest against 'Willkommensklassen' ('Welcome Classes') – Protest gegen die 'Willkommensklassen'

Exemplified through the *Romano Bündnis* (Romano Alliance): It is founded in 2013 by Berlin-based Roma self-organised groups, initiatives and individual activists to protest against the reintroduction of segregated schooling by the Berlin Senate.

Images 1 and 2

Discussion between representatives of *IniRromnja* and the *Roma Informations Centrum* and Monika Lüke, the Integration Commissioner of the State of Berlin at the time, on the occasion of the adoption of the *Aktionsplan zur Einbeziehung ausländischer Roma* (Berlin Action Plan for the Inclusion of Foreign Roma). © Nihad Nino Pušija

Our goal is to bundle our own resources and competencies and to act from the communities for the communities. When we protest against the reintroduction of segregated schooling by the Berlin Senate, the *IniRromnja*, the *Roma Information Centre* and the *Roma Aether Club Theatre* belong to the alliance.

As an alliance, we criticise the so-called 'Welcome Classes', → **Gleiche Rechte für alle?** which are also called 'Roma classes' in Berlin-Neukölln. In the Berlin Action Plan for the Inclusion of Foreign Roma of the Berlin Senate the separation of school

children is justified. That is why we call it the *Berliner Aktionsplan gegen die Einbeziehung von Roma* (The Berlin Action Plan against the Inclusion of Roma). In our statement, which we accompany with protest actions, we call for the inclusion of all children. Instead of setting up separate classes, schools should be better equipped in terms of personnel and regular funding in order to meet the requirements of a diverse school in the regular classes. Newly immigrated children can be supported by additional language courses on an hourly basis according to their needs.

Image 3

Logo: *IniRromnja*

The *IniRromnja* is a union of Rom*nja and Sinti*zze. We no longer want to accept that the rejection, hostilities, and violence against us are concealed, trivialised or even justified. We stand up for the naming and combating of any form of racism. Our actions focus on mutual empowerment, solidarity and support. We adopt positions from Rom*nja and Sinti*zze perspectives, however, we are not represented by deputies but speak with several voices.

Image 4

Logo: *Rroma Informations Centrum e.V.*

The *Rroma Informations Centrum e.V.* is founded in August 2011. We criticise that the concerns of Roma are still mostly dealt with from the perspective of non-Roma, and we oppose this with self-determined work. We want to tell and shape our story ourselves. The *Centrum* offers a platform for Roma activists to make our voices heard. The aim of the association is to show the diversity of Roma perspectives on topics such as politics, education, art and culture.

Image 5

Logo: *Rroma Aether Klub Theater*

The *Rroma Aether Klub Theater* is founded in 2006. Our work focuses on the artistic tradition of Rom*nja and Sinti*zze. We are also interested in works of world literature in which Sinti*zze or Rom*nja appear - or could appear - as main characters. The need to create one's own real space is based on the experience of being constantly perceived and treated as the 'Other' in society. The theatre moves into its own space in 2011, but is driven out due to gentrification. Nevertheless, the theater continues to produce its own content.

Actions for Equality in Education – Aktionen zu gleichberechtigter Bildung

Exemplified through: *Jugendliche ohne Grenzen* (Youth without Borders): The self-organisation is founded in 2005 as a nationwide association of refugee youths in order to represent their own interests.

Image 1

Poster campaign on the occasion of the conference of interior ministers in Koblenz, Rheinland-Pfalz, 2015. © *Jugendliche ohne Grenzen*

Image 2

Group photo after the gala on the occasion of the conference of interior ministers in Halle, Saxony-Anhalt, 2018 © *Jugendliche ohne Grenzen*

Our work follows the principle that those affected have their own voice and do not need a 'proxy policy'. We decide for ourselves what we do and how we do it.

Our goals are:

- a generous right to residence for all
- the unconditional implementation of UN children's rights
- for refugees to have equal rights as local citizens, especially in terms of education and the labour market
- the legalisation of undocumented migrants
- the right of return for deported friends!

Campaign: BILDUNG(S)LOS! – Grenzenlos Bedingungslos auch für Flüchtlinge (Unconditionally Barriere-Free, for Refugees as Well)

Image 3

Protest rally and *Bildungslotterie* (education lottery) action at the start of the *BILDUNG(S)LOS* campaign, in front of the secretariat of the Standing Conference of Education Ministers in Berlin, 2012. © *Jugendliche ohne Grenzen*

There are legal barriers to education for about 170,000 refugees, including 47,000 children and adolescents, due to their residence status. → **Gleiche Rechte für alle?** These barriers range from indirect discrimination to complete bans on education and study.

Jugendliche ohne Grenzen therefore launches the *BILDUNG(S)LOS! – Grenzenlos Bedingungslos* campaign in 2012 on the occasion of the Conference of Ministers of Education.

We demand:

- free language classes for all from the outset
- the right to catch up on school-leaving qualifications
- a right to financial assistance for vocational training from the outset
- the abolition of study, work and training prohibitions
- equal access to education and training even for undocumented migrants
- a school without segregation
- the abolition of the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act. People living in refugee camps below the subsistence level live in confinement and isolation - studying or making contacts is hardly possible.
- the end of obstacles to education which ensue through restricting freedom of movement - an end to residence restrictions (*Residenzpflicht, Wohnsitzauflage*)

Campaign: *Mein Zeugnis für Merkel* (My Report Card for Merkel)

Image 4

Logo of the campaign *Mein Zeugnis für Merkel*, 2014 © *Jugendliche ohne Grenzen*

As part of the *BILDUNG(S)LOS* campaign, we run the *Mein Zeugnis für Merkel* campaign in 2014. Despite successful school attendance, many adolescents are deported. With this campaign, we want to ensure that they receive a permanent right of residence. Nationwide, we collect 130 school report cards from young people with an uncertain residence status and send them to Chancellor Angela Merkel along with a letter: "Here is my report card, please send me a residence permit back".

Actions against the deportation of schoolchildren - Aktion gegen die Abschiebung von Schüler*innen

Exemplified through: The *Roma Center*: The self-organisation is founded in 2006 as a self-organised group in Göttingen in order to achieve an unrestricted right of residence for 'gedultete' (lit. 'tolerated') Rom*nja, their social participation, and the right for all children to education.

Image 1

Demonstration against deportations of Rom*nja families in Göttingen 2015. © *alle bleiben!*

Image 2

Solidarity4all - Against exclusion and deportation camps! Protest camp in Bamberg 2016. © *alle bleiben*

Image 3

World Children's Day in Bad Dürkheim 2017. © *alle bleiben!*

Anti-discrimination, political education, empowerment and active participation are our central fields of action. For political education against discrimination, we make our own films, carry out theatre projects and publish texts on various topics. We are connected to the *Roma Antidiscrimination Network* (RAN) and through digital and social media. As *Roma Center*, we work together with other organisations and initiatives at local, national and international level.

In 2009, we launch the campaign *alle bleiben!* With this campaign, we support the unrestricted right of tolerated Rom*nja to stay and want to inform the public through nationwide campaigns and events. We want to mobilise as many people as possible, because only together can we achieve our goals. We must become active Germany-wide! Join in!

The campaign *Zukunft für Alle – Schule ohne Abschiebung* (Future for everyone - schools without deportation) of the *Roma Center* and the initiative *alle bleiben!* demand that the right to education for all children and young people living in Germany is implemented. → **Gleiche Rechte für alle?** For this, we develop concepts to turn schools into places of solidarity where young people can learn without fear.

Schoolchildren should be empowered to support schoolmates threatened with deportation, the public awareness should be harnessed and deportations from schools outlawed, because: All children have a right to education!

The Right of Free Choice of Profession - Recht auf freie Berufswahl

Exemplified through the teacher Fereshta Ludin: She experiences discrimination because of her origin, her religion and her gender. When she is not accepted into the state school service, she goes to court.

Image 1

Fereshta Ludin in Berlin, 2015 © Daniel Gerlach

Images 2 and 3

© Soufeina Hamed

After successfully completing her teacher training, the teacher Fereshta Ludin receives a message from the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Education: Despite her very good professional performance, she is not allowed to work at state schools because she lacks 'personal aptitude'. Her headscarf is the point of contention: if she takes it off, she may teach, if she insists on wearing it, she may not. Christian symbols and nun habitus, however, are allowed in schools.

Even before and during her practical training as a teacher, she is asked several times about her headscarf. She explains why she chooses to wear it and that she would be disguising herself if she took it off. For her, not wearing a headscarf is out of the question anyway. Some people are satisfied with this explanation. They are only interested in her professional and pedagogical abilities. Others think that she is differentiating herself, that she is not a suitable role model and that the headscarf is a political symbol that has no place in school.

Fereshta Ludin is not content with not being allowed to practise her profession. She opposes the fact that other people claim the right to decide what the headscarf means to her and that they think they can judge and condemn her for this. In 2000 she goes to court and loses the trial. She files an appeal and goes through all instances until she is finally proven right by the Federal Constitutional Court in 2003: the decision not to accept her into the teaching profession is considered not legally justifiable. However, the Supreme Court does not say that teachers are allowed to wear headscarves, only that there is no law that forbids them to do so. → **Fereshta Ludin**

Following this ruling, some federal states issue regulations on the headscarf issue. Muslims who are refused from certain workplaces sue and demand their basic rights to a free choice of occupation and free practice of religion. In 2015, a Federal Constitutional Court ruling is issued by the highest court, its decision is binding for all federal states: a fundamental ban on headscarves for female* teachers at state schools is not permitted. The Federal Republic is, after all, a secular (and not a laical)

state: freedom of religion is protected by the constitutional law. The Federal Constitutional Court issues a statement:

"The ideological-religious neutrality required of the state is not to be understood as a strict separation of state and church, but as an open and comprehensive attitude that promotes freedom of faith equally for all confessions. This also applies to the area of the school, which falls under state jurisdiction. The mere visibility of the religious or ideological affiliation of individual teachers is not easily excluded by the ideological-religious neutrality of the state".