

# NETWORKING EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

## Rethinking Citizenship Education in European Migration Societies Political Strategies - Social Changes - Educational Concepts

### Conference Paper

**Contribution to Workshop 1, Session 2:  
Remembrance, Responsibility and Future:  
Citizenship Education and European Public Memory**

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#### **1. Presentation Hondius/ Siegele:**

**a. Current and future international educational projects of the Anne Frank House, Amsterdam.** These include: international traveling exhibitions and additional local exhibitions; the new international debating project on Freedom of Speech and anti-discrimination, "Free to Choose"; the Webguides; teaching materials on anti-Semitism; international projects from the sister organizations in London, Berlin, Paris, Vienna, and New York.

**b. Connecting academic research and education: new insights from Holocaust and Genocide studies.** These include: research project on *Bystander Memories*: eyewitness testimonies of the 'non-involved'. The uses of oral history, interaction.

**c. New research on Race, Racism and Memory: Black European Studies.** An introduction to this new field of study. Inscribing 'race', colonial memories and diversity in national institutions; incorporating diversity in research and education. With a presentation of photographs and paintings.

Statements for discussion:

1. The threat of terrorism has had a sobering effect on the enthusiast forms of multiculturalism – embracing and celebrating difference – that were visible in Europe in the 1980s and 1990s. Fear and anger as well as irritation about 'difference' have become influential. At the same time, the continuity of racism, exclusion, and the persistence of 'spontaneous' forms of segregation can be noted in many countries. These phenomena have had the effect to undermine the anti-racist consensus that is needed in diverse societies. Consequently, there is now a need for a new anti-racist consensus, more minimal in character than before, based on both legal consensus (anti-racist legislation, acknowledging institutional forms of racism) and on basic moral decency (restraint in the public sphere with regard to

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negative stereotyping). This new minimal anti-racist consensus can develop in a meaningful way only if it is part and parcel of visible leadership, taught and lived by example by people at any level of authority.

2. In activities focussing on commemorating the Holocaust, other forms of genocide, as well as other controversial sides of national histories (complicity and collaboration, totalitarianism, colonial excesses, exploitation, etc.) care must be taken not to focus only on the cruel end phase of a racist or oppressive regime. The first steps, the subtle and ordinary forms of exclusion, the early warnings should be focused on as well as the general fragility of democracy and human values. With regard to anti-Semitism and racism, this includes teaching examples showing that not only explicit hatred is a factor here. Already very little prejudice can become very dangerous for minorities in a short time, particularly in circumstances of war or the fear of war.

## 2. Presentation Patrick Siegele, see also pdf.

1. The Anne Frank Zentrum is the German partner organisation of the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam. It is located in the heart of Berlin. The Anne Frank Zentrum is committed to working against right-wing extremism, discrimination and anti-Semitism, and to promoting a society that is varied and actively democratic.

Every year, the Anne Frank Zentrum presents traveling exhibitions in more than 20 locations in Germany. In line with the educational programme »Jugendliche begleiten Jugendliche« (»Youngsters Accompany Youngsters«), teenagers and young adults are trained as guides in each of these locations. In this way, they learn first-hand about the history of National Socialism.

With workshops and training sessions on history and politics, as well as in cross-cultural communication, the Anne Frank Zentrum operates nationwide. Another current topic is how to deal with history in a society largely defined by immigration. In this context, a new educational material called »Mehrheit, Macht, Geschichte« ( »Majority, Power, History« ) has been published recently. In seven examples it describes the history of minorities and their way dealing with discrimination, racism and anti-Semitism in 20<sup>th</sup> century-Germany.

2. Since November 2006, the Anne Frank Zentrum shows a new permanent exhibition in its visitors centre in Berlin. It is called »Anne Frank. here & now« and it connects history and the present, showing new ways of dealing with diversity in German society. Anne Frank's life story and her diary are at the heart of this exhibition.

Large collages of pictures and selected objects of interest reveal the world of Anne Frank in the first part of the exhibition. It shows her family and friends in the context of National Socialism, the persecution of the Jews and the Second World War.

In her diary, Anne Frank dealt with many issues and wrote down her thoughts about them. In the second part of the exhibition, visitors can see and hear young people from Berlin discussing the same questions which Anne Frank was asking herself 60 years ago. These are, on the one hand, very personal questions about identity, values and the future, and on the other hand, universal questions about war, discrimination and moral courage.

3. The youngsters shown in the exhibition are Maria, Jonel, Editha, Junior and Esther. They all live in Berlin. They are between 12 and 17 years old and their lifestyles and backgrounds are very varied. Whereas Junior is a black boy who fled from Cameroon, Maria was born in Berlin, her mother coming from Turkey, her father from Lebanon. Editha was born in East Berlin, Jonel grew up in a bourgeois environment in West Berlin. Esther is a Jewish girl and goes to a Jewish School, Editha got baptised at the age of 14 by her own choice. As different as their backgrounds are, they still share many views on modern society, but also see many things differently. Some of them faced discrimination themselves, others only heard about human rights violations in the media. Some of them know about war from the stories of their parents, others deal with war only by playing computer games.

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Here a few examples on various topics:

*"I know what I want, I have a goal, I have opinions, a religion and love." (Anne Frank, 11 April 1944)*

*»I am Junior, I am 16 years old and I am from Cameroon. My parents were not able to take care of me any more, so I came to Berlin. My sister and I are being looked after in a children's home. There, we live like a family and everybody takes very good care of me. It's quite okay.«*

*»If there was really somebody being beaten up, I'd step in. If there were more than one, I'd kick up a fuss! I'd say: 'Hey, stop it!' And if there were other passers-by, I'd draw their attention to it.« (Editha)*

*»Everybody is entitled to their own opinion, their own beliefs, their own god. Nobody should say, you believe in so-and-so and that's why you are not as good as we are.« (Esther)*

*»It makes me angry when boys think they are my brothers. They say: 'Go home, it is late now!' or 'Do this, do that!' Then I always say: 'Shut up, I won't have you telling me what to do!« (Maria)*

*»My greatest dream is to go on a trip round the world after my Abitur (German school leaving certificate).« (Jonel)*

4. The statements of these five youngsters, alongside those of Anne Frank, can be seen and listened to in the exhibition. They illustrate how relevant the questions still are that Anne asked herself in her diary. On a very individual basis they open the remembrance of the Holocaust to the historical experiences of members of minorities in Germany. The exhibition invites visitors to think about these questions and topics as well.

For school classes and youth groups the Anne Frank Zentrum provides guided tours of the exhibition as well as various educational programmes. Under the guidance of young people they deal with these topics and connect them to their own personal experiences. The statements build the initial point to discuss migration, racism, civic values etc. more further; but not in an abstract or normative way but connected to the students everyday life. Our experience is that all youngsters, whatever background they have, are concerned and start to translate the remembrance of the Holocaust to their present day life.

In future, the Anne Frank Zentrums is committed to the topic of anti-Semitism more strongly, with a special focus on anti-Semitism among young migrants.

The development of the new Anne Frank exhibition was supported by the German Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Young People in the context of the programme »Jugend für Toleranz und Demokratie – gegen Rechtsextremismus, Fremdenfeindlichkeit und Antisemitismus« (»Young people for tolerance and democracy – against right-wing extremism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism«).

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