

# Equal Times Magazine



## Women at the cooking pot and men into war?

German, Israeli and Palestinian young people  
work on gender equality in their cultures  
from the 1930s until today

## August - October 2012

Oberwesel and Kastellaun (Germany), Talitha Kumi (Palestine)  
Matnas Negev (Israel)

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What was man's role in the past,  
what is it in the present and future?



Are women still bound to cooking  
pots, children, household, religion?  
Are roles changing?



It is not usual to make a project with Germans, Israelis and Palestinians. Although young people might not be able to change the course of history, we tried to bring at least 12 from each culture together to work on a human right, which has significant importance for all participants. It took a long time until we had the partners and the program together, we had disappointments, cancellations and obstacles on our way to a meeting between human beings.

The main organizations didn't lose hope and dared the meeting. Despite warnings it worked: It became clear to the participants that young people are willing and able to work together, even if there are long-living enemy images, stereotypes, prejudice and fundamental conflicts between them. When the Palestinians and Israelis arrived in Germany, they wanted to talk about "the conflict", but soon they realized that this would have been a one-way-street. We first talked and worked about basic elements of our project and team building processes until we got to "the conflict". Soon after the end of the project another round of violence broke out in Gaza and everything we had learned was at stake. On Facebook Palestinians and Israelis posted messages with pictures and films, demonstrating their side of this outbreak without insulting each other personally. It was a kind of test. Many personal contacts between the project members are still working, but the Middle East conflict is still going on.

#### Reading instructions:

Blue boxes: Topics/Interviews etc. with direct reference to the project.

Green Boxes: Own commentary

Yellow Boxes: Information (historical, further information)

Grey Boxes: Subtitles for photos, sketches, cartoons, diagrams.

The photos and texts are taken from the participants, exceptions are indicated.

This publication does not represent an expression of opinion by the Foundation EVZ. The authors bear responsibility for the content.

A human rights project,  
in Germany mainly  
sponsored by the foundation

"Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft"  
(Remembrance, Responsibility and Future)  
within the program

EUROPEANS FOR PEACE

Oberwesel, Kastellaun (Aug. 5 -17, 2012)

Beit Jala (Talitha Kumi), Matnas Negev (Sept. 27- Oct. 11, 2012)

#### Organizations:

Germany: Förderkreis Synagoge Laufersweiler  
(Responsible for the project and the publications: Christof Pies), I Hope  
Israel: Matnas Ramat Negev, Palestine: Beit Al Liqua

#### Special thanks to further sponsors:

Evangelische Kirche im Rheinland (Ökumeneabteilung), Kirchenkreis  
Simmern-Trarbach, Evangelische Jugend im Rheinland (Amt für  
Jugendarbeit), Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst, Kinder- und Jugendplan  
des Bundes (über Arbeitsgemeinschaft Evangelische Jugend in Deutschland),  
Sczech-Stiftung, Hubertus Lierow, Rhein-Hunsrück-Kreis, Stadt und  
Verbandsgemeinde Kastellaun, Förderkreis Synagoge Laufersweiler,  
contributions of participants.

SUPPORTED BY:

**evz**  
FOUNDATION  
REMEMBRANCE  
RESPONSIBILITY  
FUTURE



## HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

January 2012	Application for the project at the EVZ by Förderkreis	After the meeting: cancellation of another partner in Palestine because of political reasons, approval of new partners by the foundation EVZ
March	Cancellation of one Israeli and one Palestinian partner	
April	New Partner Israel: Matnas Ramat Negev	June New partner: Beit Al Ligua, Beit Jala
April	Approval by EVZ	August 5-17 Meeting in Oberwesel and Kastellaun, Germany
May 20-24 Wannsee	Meeting in Berlin, Preparatory Seminar	Sept. 27- Oct. 11 Second meeting in Israel and Palestine



Under an old 250-year-old protected oak tree next to the Jewish cemetery in Laufersweiler (Hunsrück). Lots of smiling faces and nearly all are present.

Germans: Jakob Nehls, Felix Hill, Jonas Trzcensky, Till Bästlein, Elena Etges, Alexandra Bogdasarow, Theresa Volk, Marie Wagner, Carolin Manns, Melanie Karsten, Melanie Christ, Lukas Linder, Christof Pies, Ulli Suppus. Missing: Jan Schneider, Andrea Günster-Wagner, Christa Wendling

Israelis: Amit Harel, Eynat Goldmann, Ofri Lazier, Omer Meir, Hila Peleg, Tal Arbel, Amit Spector, Yam Seaon, Noam Vider, Tamar Novoplansky, Nis Rubin, Tal Pacht

Palestinians: Christine Amro, Marian Amro, Dina Alaraj, Adel Istefan, Hanna Khair, Isel Badra, Ameer Abu Mohor, Tamer Zreineh, John Bader, Nicola Shaer, Dima Al Mukarker, Amara Amar, Barbara Barham, Johnny Shawan



## Women at the cooking pot and men into war?

### Basic rules and useful tips for participants of the project



1. We treat each other with respect and tolerance. We stick to conversation rules, which are set up on the first day.
2. Rooms are mixed with Germans, Israelis, Palestinians. We have three-bedded and four-bedded rooms. The Germans also stay with the whole group in the second week. In the morning they are taken to their schools by our busses.
3. In Kastellaun: We have an own cook, who cooks vegetarian and can fulfill special wishes.  
Each room is on duty for the meals (laying and cleaning the table etc.) on one day. We stick to the meal times and eat together!!!
4. German laws apply for all the participants (e.g. smoking, alcohol, drugs etc.). There might be additional arrangements for each group by their leaders.
5. Cultural Evening: Each group should prepare an evening about its home culture: Facts, music, posters, dancing...  
Media are allowed (flipchart, transparencies, power point....). Songs and dances can be prepared for the welcome party and the cultural evenings.
6. Private notebooks, digital cameras, video cameras, mobile phones can be brought to Germany and used for the project purposes. Special regulations can be asked at the customs control.  
Mobile phones, notebooks, I-pads etc. stay in the rooms and will not be used for private chats, phone calls, games etc. during working sessions. Dictionaries or electronic devices for translations, however, can be used.
7. Gila Manevich (Israel) will prepare a facebook platform for the project, where all the participants can get into personal contact before the start of the project.
9. Bring suitable clothing (It's summer in Germany, but it might rain and be cold!!). Bring sports and swimming clothing, closed shoes for hiking, umbrella. Dictionaries (Arab-Hebrew-German) or similar electronic devices are very useful.
10. Useful tips: Time difference (-1 hour), passport, hairdrier, vaccination pass, tell your leader if you suffer from an illness, 1 Euro = 100 Eurocent, 1 € = about 5 NIS, Credit cards are accepted (ask your leaders about other money cards), Sunday = German holiday, Language: German, nearly all youngsters speak English.
11. Be careful: On your flight back home there are other rules concerning your hand luggage, as you fly from Europe!!
12. Check at home which is the best way to phone (mobile phone is extremely expensive). Ask your leaders.  
Germany: phone code: 0049/... Israel/Palestine: 00972...

## Sunday, Aug. 5

- 6:20 Arrival Palestinians Frankfurt  
Transfer to Kastellaun along the Rhine
- 17:00 Arrival Germans
- 18:25 Arrival Israelis Frankfurt  
Transfer to Kastellaun
- 21:00 Dinner Talk
- 21:30 Meeting group leaders
- 22:00 Welcoming Party



## The very first meeting!



## Tiring journeys

The Palestinians came first after a 24 hour journey, as they could use only certain roads in different areas of the Westbank and had to travel via a border crossing in the Jordan Valley and fly from Amman. The trip back was even more exhausting, as the end of Ramadan made them stay for another day in Amman.

Although it was raining and the German "Brötchen" (rolls) got wet, we had a picnic opposite the Loreley on "Mariah Ruh", one of the most beautiful spots in the World Heritage Region Mittelrheintal.

The Germans arrived in the afternoon after a short trip from home, the Israelis came later in the evening. Andrea (above, left) organized the room placement: "The room is too small, I want to be with all my friends, there is no air condition...." - It was not an easy job for Andrea, but nobody complained that he/she had to stay with Israelis/Germans/Palestinians in one room - a good start!



## Monday, August 6

8:00	Meal service
8:30	Breakfast
9:30-10:00	Introduction: Foundation EVZ, project, organisation
10:00-11:30	Warming up activities: names, language, name tags...
11:30-13:00	Name tree
13:00	Lunch
15:00-16:30	Project aims, rules, communication rules, expectations
17:00-18:30	Preparing the German cultural evening
19:00	Dinner, meal service
20:00	Reflexion within the individual groups
20:30	Reflexion altogether, leader: German
21:00	Meeting group leaders
21:30	German cultural evening



"Liebe geht durch den Magen" (A way to a man's heart is through his stomach) - an old German proverb came true. We had wonderful vegetarian meals. Everybody had to help preparing meals and washing the dishes. Some missed meat, some were vegans, some lettuce nibblers, some didn't want to eat anything.... But in the end they all got used to it, even the youngest participating guests, Justin and his brother Joschua.

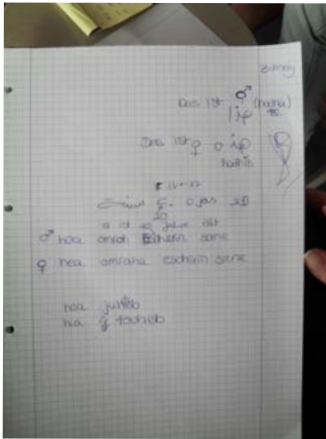


### The lost suitcase - nothing to wear!!

Hila's suitcase was not on the plane in Frankfurt. But ElAI found it somewhere in Europe. After 36 hours of terrible pains and tears, a trip to Koblenz to do the necessary shopping, the suitcase finally arrived by taxi in Kastellaun.

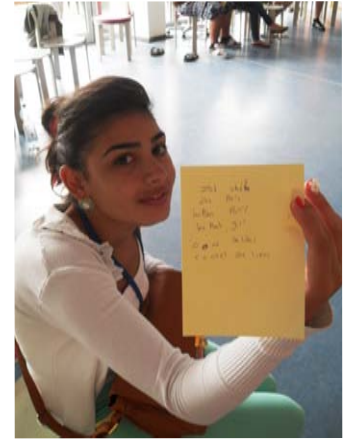






Getting to know each other and warming-up activities, e.g. learning names, other languages, cultures: The atmosphere, the weather, the hostel - everything was perfect for all that.

What is German culture?  
Brezel and Bratwurst and Funkenmariechen?



German culture? - Oktoberfest with beer?  
Beer drinking - typical of boys and men?



Theresa and Melanie - carnival dancers ("Funkenmariechen" - only for girls!)





## Tuesday Aug. 7

- 9:30 Team-Building activities in the forest (climbing parcours)
- 13:00 Lunch
- 15:00 -17:00 Stereotypes in mass media in the Middle East and Germany  
Exercises and Examples
- 17:30-18:00 Preparing the Cultural Evenings (Israelis/Palestinians)
- 19:00 Dinner
- 20:00 Reflexion in the individual groups
- 20:30 Reflexion altogether
- 21:00 Meeting group leaders
- 21:30 Palestinian Cultural Evening



Too many cooks spoil the broth - the English proverb is not true in this case. More male than female cooks!



## Teambuilding in the kitchen and German forests

Climbing experts and social workers were trying to put the group together

Crying together over onions, salting scrambled eggs

No mobiles, no long hair, no purse, no long earrings  
- only working in a team!





Models for reality? - Symbolic photos?  
 Palestinians, Germans, Israelis - helping each other, even with blindfolded eyes!



Israelis, Germans and Palestinians are  
 dependent on each other - so everyone has  
 to take care of the other one.







Hila (Israel) and Isel (Palestine): In the Middle East only 80 km from each other, but worlds apart. They can't meet there, in Germany they became close friends!





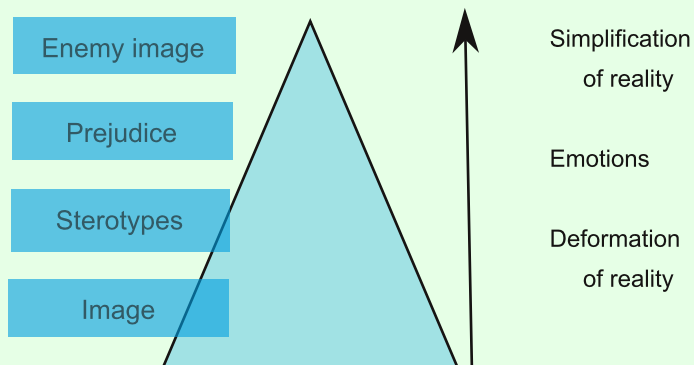


Again and again:

Lectures, team work, reflexion in groups about ourselves, gender equality, clichés, stereotypes, enemy images, mass media. Expert Judith Pies MA, Erich-Brost Institute Dortmund, teaching International Journalism, especially journalism in Arab countries



### Perception of the other



Judith Pies, MA, Kastellaun Aug.7, 2012

The internet is full of examples with stereotypes, prejudice and enemy images. The photo in the middle shows demonstrators in Athens against the German chancellor Angela Merkel during her visit in Greece ([www.stern.de](http://www.stern.de)).



"It's easier to preserve prejudice than to do something against it", Werner Busch in Büchenbeuren told us, when we talked to him about Russian-German immigrants. Examples of prejudice and enemy images:

**The** Nazi German,  
**the** violent Palestinian,  
**the** militaristic Israeli.

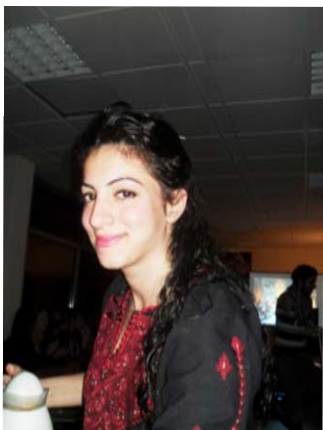
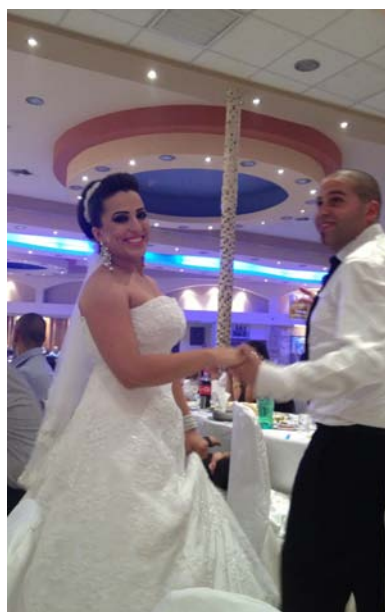
Why do media transport and perpetuate such prejudice and enemy images?

We found out how much we are all influenced by media.



### Palestinian cultural evening

We asked the Palestinians how they wanted to be addressed, as there is no Palestinian state up to now. They said they felt themselves as Palestinians, but made a difference between the early Christians in the Bethlehem area and the Arabs who came from the Arab peninsula. They chose a traditional wedding to present their culture. The photo in the middle shows an original wedding ceremony, that some of us visited in Beit Jala with about 400 other guests.





## Wednesday Aug. 8

8:00	Meal service
8:30	Breakfast
9:30-11:00	Human Rights in the past and present
11:30	Introducing the topics for the group work, forming groups, choosing topics
13:00	Lunch
15-18:00	Excursion: City Game in Kastellaun: Visiting churches, memorial for deported Jews, castle, stumbling stones, a medieval baroness welcomes us at the castle
18-19:00	Free time
19:00	Dinner
20:00	Reflexion: Individual groups
20:30	Reflexion altogether (leader Israeli)
21:00	Meeting group leaders
21:30	Israeli cultural evening



Every participant had to select one human right from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted and proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10, 1948. He/She had to draw a sketch/symbol and present one article to the others. They were allowed to use all kinds of electronic devices to search for more information and to do translations.



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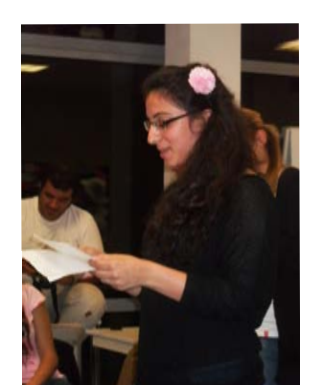


In the city game the mixed groups had to solve problems and answer questions about places in Kastellaun. The "original" Gräfin Elisabeth von Sponheim, owner of the castle in the 14th century, welcomed the groups and told her story as a woman in the Middle Ages. Isel was caught in the "Pranger" for "bad behaviour" and Eynat is sitting in the confessional in the Catholic Church "to confess her sins".



### Israeli cultural evening

The Israelis explained Kibbutz life and the Jewish traditions of eating mazzoth during Pessach and demonstrated a wedding ceremony. Jakob found the "Afikoman" and got a reward. All put on a kippa, some even tried to read Hebrew texts from the Thora. Pastor Ebersbach recalled his Hebrew knowledge.



Pessach, Thora, Mazzoth, Afikoman, Kippa, Chuppa, Kibbutz



## Thursday Aug 9

8:00	Meal service
8:30	Breakfast
9:30-11:00	Living democracy: men and women in local politics. Talk and interview with the mayor of Kastellaun, Dr. Marlon Bröhr
11:30	Keeping silence: A walk and activities in a labyrinth
13:00	Lunch
14:00-18:30	Excursion: Jewish past and Muslim present - Laufersweiler and Simmern Path of remembrance, poetry path, former synagogue
17:30-18:30	Meeting the Imam in the mosque Interview with a female member of the Muslim community Attending Ramadan Service
19:00	Dinner
20:00	Reflexion individual groups
20:30	Reflexion altogether
21:00	Meeting group leaders Free evening



### Evening activities

"Little Bit", a smoker's pub, 70 years ago owned by the Jewish family Forst, whose oldest daughter now lives in Zeelim (Negev).



"What can we do to get more women into local politics? What does the state do to encourage women? Is it only because of the children? Don't women want to get involved into politics? What are differences in Germany, Israel and Palestine? Many questions - many personal answers.



Dr. Bröhr (38) has got a wife and two children. He was a dentist before he was elected. His wife carries on with the dental practise, they employ a nanny to care for the children.  
Dr. Bröhr is a part-time mayor for Kastellaun and has a full-time job for the whole district (Verbandsgemeinde).





## Relaxation and reflexion in Christa's labyrinth - Lavender Garden



Texts, songs,  
silence.  
Writing personal  
wishes on stones:  
hope,  
understanding,  
tolerance, human  
rights, love, peace,  
good life

Hoping that they  
come true.





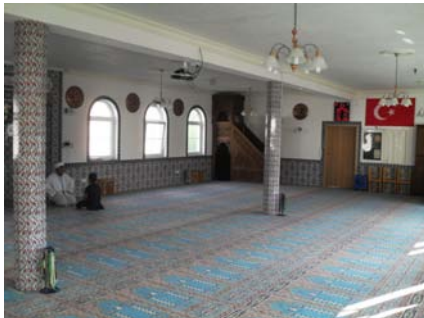
## Men and women are equal - according to the original belief



How does the Islam promote women's rights? A visit in the mosque in Simmern

The first sentence on the poster says, that - according to the Koran - men and women have the same rights in front of god.

In the interview later the Imam Recep Kaymakci, the chairman Ibrahim Adali and the Catholic priest Rainer Vogt fully agreed with that. The problem is that all three monotheistic religions in their orthodox directions have problems with the realization. The poster explains that different regions, countries and cultures have developed different roles of men and women.



The Imam, paid by the Turkish state, teaches a young boy how to recite the Koran. We were openly and warmly welcomed. Noam and Nis are practising a prayer's chain (Mishaba or Subha), in English rosary, which is used to repeat and count certain prayers. It can have 11,33,99 or 1.000 beads. We were impressed by Hülya Bayrakci, who showed us round and answered many questions about the role of men and women. For her religion is a private matter, she wears and does what she wants. She is studying to do the A-Level (The German "Abitur") and leads the dialogue with other religious communities. For many in our group it was the first visit in a mosque!





"You can only live together, if you know each other." (Hülya Bayrakci). Everyone in the group agreed: Hülya's sentence is true for the past, for the present and for the future. In Laufersweiler we could see what happens, when people ignore this sentence. We visited the synagogue, the cemetery and the path of remembrance for the Jewish community of this small village.



1933-1945

No human rights,  
neither for men  
nor for women



A short impressing ceremony with Germans, Israelis and Palestinians in memory of 25 persons, killed 70 years ago by Germans. The question of a participant "What do we have to do with all that?" soon got answered by the facts. "You can only understand Israelis if you know something about the Shoah and the history of the Jewish people". And: "You can only understand the Palestinians, if you know and accept their history". Nis recited the Kaddish, originally a praise of God, but prayed especially for the dead.



New ways how to remember the past: A piece of art with the title: "Lived Lives - Stolen Lives", created by the local artist Jutta Christ and young students, a Path of Remembrance and a Path of Jewish Poetry in the middle of beautiful Hunsrück landscape. Jewish poetry is seemingly a matter of women, as the poems demonstrate.



Laufersweiler, a small village in the Hunsrück with a great Jewish past before the Shoah - a suitable spot to take a photo of all the group. Omer and Ofri writing their impressions into the guest book.





## Friday Aug 10

8:00 Meal Service  
 8:30 Breakfast  
 9:30 -13:00 Workshops:  
 1. Mr Jaeger: Online newspaper, working with Scribus layout program  
 2. Marianne Gent: Working with texts, writing articles  
 3. Chr. Pies: Interviewing people  
 4. Elena Etges: Taking photos, making films  
 13:00 Lunch  
 15-17:30 In small groups: Preparing the work for the following week, practical exercises (workshop)  
 17:30 Shabbat Ceremony (prepared by Israelis)  
 19:00 Going to families  
 Dinner with German Families

### Scribus

Professional layout and publishing software supporting EPS and SVG import/export, and PDF support. [GNU GPL]



Writing - an extremely difficult job.



Interviewing people



Filming and Photography





## I. Technical information about camera

### Light

Light has different temperatures and so it defines the colour of the light we see

-additive colour: picture in presentation 1)

The human eye is built out of RGB receptors, they catch the light with its intensity and transfers this information

to the brain and defines what colours we see >Additive colour mixing

-subtractive colour: picture in presentation 2)

Light comes through the lense of the objective on the chip and transfers the light into electrical information. It depends on the intensity of the different light-stripes



### White balance

Picture in presentation 3)

To get the right colour impression in your picture of the reality you have to make a white balance  
Natural light for example: white light from the sun has a lot of red information and white in closed rooms from artificial light has a lot of blue information

You need to make a white balance in every different light situation, to have the same colour impression in every situation.

>practical part



## II. Rules in filming

Field sizes

Picture in presentation 4)

Close detail shot > meaning of special field sizes in Movies and Documentaries> practical part

Kadrage/Framing or Golden Cut> when you decide for a field size and how to position people or objects and the meaning of it in Movies/Documentary

Golden Cut in Art, Photography, Field Sizes and Biology

## III. Perspective

Frog and bird perspective- you can give the picture a special meaning

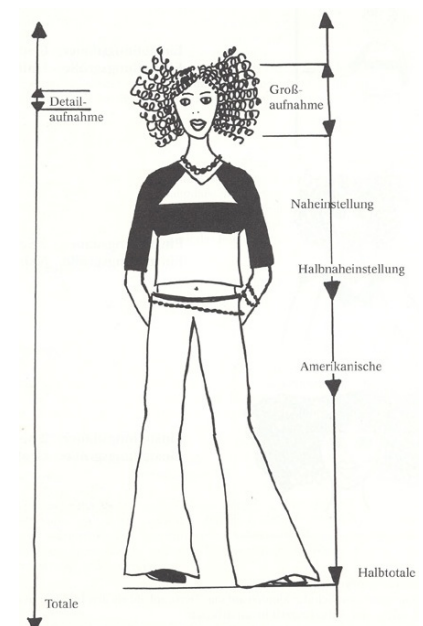
when you choose a special perspective. With the bird perspective the viewer is looking down on the person or object. It gets small. In the frog perspective you give the person in the picture power, it can also happen that the viewers themselves start to feel small or meaningless.

180°-Degree Rule

Picture in presentation 5)

>practice part

Interview in practice part





## IV. Technical Information in Photography

### Shutter and Aperture

Shutter time> how long the light comes on the chip

Aperture> How much light comes into the objective

eg. For sport pictures (fast movements) you need a short shutter time  
to catch the movement,  
doing pictures in the night

>practice part

Examples:

### Documentary

Documentaries need to be neutral and have to try to give information without influencing the viewers in their opinion. That's really difficult and almost impossible.

Directly after someone puts a camera in a room people will change their way to talk and act, even though the camera might not been turned on.

Photography journalists in war or conflict situations

Example: [www.Worldpress.org](http://www.Worldpress.org)

Almost all journalists are independent, they need to be, because they need to try to show both sides in a conflict area. They live in danger and try to make meaningful pictures and then try to sell them to magazines, newspapers etc. So their living expenses depends on the pictures they get.

PROBLEM: Everyone has a self-phone with a camera, all people are taking pictures and videos and put them into the internet, a lot of pictures are distorted with picture edit programs.

And everyone is trying to do the job of a journalist, who studied journalism.

So journalism and the way of reporting has changed in the whole world.

## V. Cultural differences

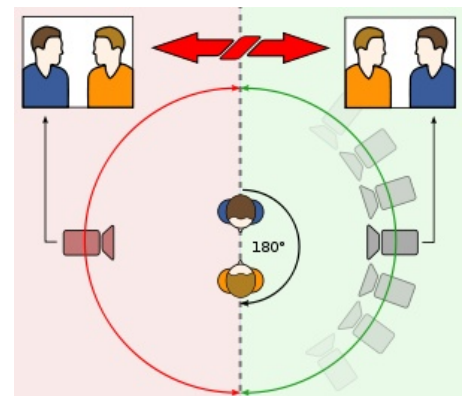
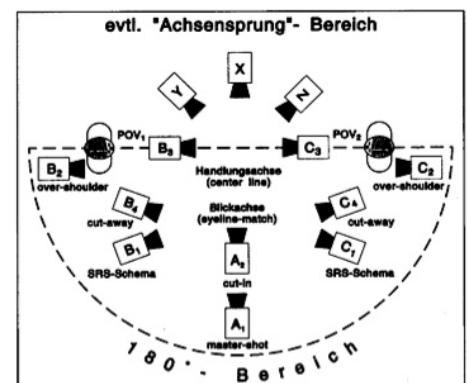
Some cultures read and write from right to left or left to right. Also the eyes follow these directions.

When you put this in a picture, pictures can have a special meaning in one culture and a total different meaning in another culture.

Example: a person is positioned right in a picture and looking to the left.

> In the North-East area it will have the meaning that someone is looking into his future.

> In Europe it will have the meaning of looking in the past.





Human Rights Project  
Germany/Israel/Palestine  
All men are equal: Women at the cooking pot and men into war?

Workshop: Writing Articles

Marianne Gent

You will find different types of articles in a newspaper. The following three might be the most important for your project.

## 1. Report – objective and informing article

The structure of a newspaper article is often compared to an inverted triangle with the most important details at the top of the article, with the least important information placed at the end of the article. This allows reader's treaders to skim over the start of the article to gain the essential facts before deciding to read on.

A newspaper article includes the following (in order):

- Headline: short, attention-getting statement  
Subtitle: Gives a short information about the topic
- Byline: reporter's name
- Lead/Opening paragraph (introduction): provides the most important and interesting news first while answering who, what, where, when (how and why are often reserved for later).
- Explanation: Further (short) paragraphs with more facts and details. They may also include quotes from people involved or experts.
- Additional information: least important information. This part contains more details of the issue or event, summarizes facts and opinions or includes information about a similar event.

Newspaper Articles combine the following language features to inform, entertain and persuade.

- Clear and concise (precise) writing.
- Are written in 3rd person and in the past tense.
- Can use an active or passive voice, depending on the focus and which is more engaging for the reader.
- Articles can include quotes, comments, opinions, statements and observations from people involved or experts on the topic, but they must be marked. Use direct or indirect speech.
- Give people labels so that the reader knows who they are straight away, for example:  
"US-President Barack Obama".
- Should avoid racist, sexist or religious slurs.
- Should be accurate and balanced (provide facts supporting both sides of the issue).

## 2. Commentary – subjective, persuasive article with personal opinion

The following tips may help to communicate your own opinion interesting and convincing:

- Choose a relevant topic: It should be something with a broad appeal to the readership.
- Find an interesting headline.
- Give your name.
- Explain the facts and background.
- Get your facts straight: be sure that all facts are correct and are attributed.
- Use personal opinion: This should be done in a rational manner. Convince with facts and arguments and thus interpret stories/events.
- Feel free to use emotion, but in a limited manner.
- Use persuasive language: for example rhetorical means (for example: repetitions, exaggerations), special terms, metaphors.



### 3. Feature – subjective illustrating report/article

News stories are typically an assemblage of facts. They all exist to fulfill a simple purpose - convey information.

Feature stories, on the other hand, aim to do much more. They convey facts, but they also tell the stories of people's lives. They are often associated with fiction writing.

Here are five components necessary for any feature story.

A great Lead: set a scene, describe a place or tell a story, but whatever approach is used the lead must grab the reader's attention and pull him/her into the story.

Description: Description sets the scene for the story and brings the people and places in it to life. Good description prompts a reader to create mental images in his or her mind. Any time you accomplish that, you're engaging the reader in your story.

Quotes: in feature stories this is absolutely imperative. Ideally, a feature story should include only the most colorful and interesting quotes. Everything else should be paraphrased.

Anecdotes: Anecdotes are nothing more than very short stories. But in features they can be incredibly effective in illustrating key points or in bringing people and incidents to life, and they're often used to construct feature leads.

Background Information: All the well-written description and colorful quotes in the world won't suffice if you don't have solid information to back up the point your feature is trying to make.



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Workshop: Interview  
Christof Pies, Friday Aug. 10, 2012

#### Interviews

1. Are used in any kind of media (Print, audio, video...) to focus on an individual person
2. An interview needs a good preparation
3. The location must be chosen carefully (quiet place, no time pressure, relaxed atmosphere, light, sound...)

#### Preparation

1. Try to find out as much as possible about your interview partner (interviewee) and the time he/she lived in: books, internet, other media...
2. Make an exact appointment: Introduce yourself, explain shortly what you're working on
3. On the day of interview: arrive 15 minutes before you want to start, organize s.th. to drink, have paper, pencils ready. Check batteries, camera, outside noise. Choose a quiet place for the interview
4. Know your questions, write them on a piece of paper

#### Introduction

1. Introduce yourself, tell about your project
2. Control or ask for the "hard facts": name, age, birth place, biographical dates, living/working place
3. If she/he agrees, take photos, ask for historical photos or documents, letters

#### The Interview

1. Prepare a list of questions, but be open for new ones during the interview
2. Start with a "soft question" (How do you feel?)
3. Ask open-ended questions, not closed ones

#### General advice

1. Be neutral, don't comment on an interviewee's statement (like mmh, yes..)
2. Ask if you haven't understood something
3. Watch how your interview partner speaks: Loud? Clear? Into the microphone?
4. Be a good listener, keep eye-contact, encourage your partner
5. Be flexible, try to find out more about an important point, don't stick too much to your prepared questions
6. Be attentive: Ask e.g. How long? Why exactly? With whom? When? What were your feelings?

#### After the interview

1. Do not rush out/home after the interview, take time to say good-bye, to say "thank you", maybe you can watch an important scene with him/her
2. Label the recordings carefully
3. Copy documents, maybe film them once more to insert them later
4. A transcription is very useful, it can be full length
5. Make sure that the interviewees gives you the permission to publish the photos/filmstexts (See topic forms!)

Source: Sophia Heyland, Berlin Seminar EVZ , May 20-24,2012/Own material



## Workshop Interview

### Preparing an interview

#### Example: Interview with Klemens Hauröder, Kastellaun, a retired teacher

### Parents/family

Father: born 1896, served four years as a soldier in World War II, 50% wounded.

Mother: born 1901, learned diet cooking, married 1933

Son 1934 (Mr. Hauröder),

daughter 1936 (died with three months), son 1937, son 1940

Two grandmothers (one had 8, the other one 12 children) were rewarded the "Mutterkreuz". His mother's uncle, mentally handicapped by an accident, was "selected" and killed in Hadamar by the Nazis.

### Nazi period

Parents founded an agricultural business (farm) in 1933, bought a farmhouse, leased fields, received very good loans (credits) by the state with 0% interests for families, father member of NSKOV (Nationalsozialistische Kriegsoferversorgung, organization caring for wounded soldiers from World War I), chairman of NS-farmers union (Ortsbauernverband), no party member (NSDAP).

Got loans: 1000 Reichsmark (RM) for each child. Children's allowance from the third child onwards, mother had to stay at home, was not allowed to work (KKK – Kinder, Küche, Kirche - Children, kitchen, church), member of NSV (Nationalsozialistische Volksfürsorge), chief cook for activities for poor people or soldiers, esp. during war times.

Children were in the NSV-Kindergarten, families with many children didn't have to pay fees.

Parents gave up all church memberships.

### Hitlerjugend

Mr. Hauröder joined the "Jungvolk" (organisation for boys before Hitlerjugend) at the age of 10, they made camping holidays, campfire, games, wore uniforms (parents were forced to buy one), short trousers, brown shirt, neckerchief around the neck, belt, shoulder strap.

NSDAP threatened to send father into war.

Mr. H. learned how to play fanfare (kind of trumpet), listening to the people's radio ("Volksempfänger") was a duty.

When in 1938 the Jewish citizen Robert Zibell shot himself, the so-called "Jewish question" (Judenfrage) was explained to the four-year-old boy.

### Prisoners of war/slave workers

After 1940 POW from France were brought into German families to work, were not allowed to fraternize with Germans and vice versa, were not allowed to eat at the same table with the German family. 22 POW were brought by a guard to the farmhouses and working places every day.

POWs replaced the men, who were serving in the Wehrmacht somewhere in Europe or Africa.

Later (after 1941 - beginning of the war against Soviet Union) slave workers from the "East (Russia, Ukraine, Belorussia...) were deported to Germany, had to work in factories (esp. stone industry near Miesenheim, Plaidt, Kruft).

His relatives had "Polish girls" (Polenmädchen) as slave workers

### Resistance

Gestapo was everywhere, active resistance not possible, just by passive means, pastors were imprisoned.

Source: Klemens Hauröder, written report, 2012



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Oral history:	Getting general knowledge about a certain event from interviews
Eye-Witness Interviews:	Focus on the individual person with his/her knowledge/experience/emotions about a certain event
Good sides:	it adds to/completes the general history (e.g. holocaust) on a very personal level, history from "below", can affect listeners emotionally and directly...
Problems:	Remembrance is influenced by time, other facts and knowledge, reports, other witnesses, own additions, anecdotes, films, legends, collective >< individual remembrance...

What is truth?

What is objective?

What is right or wrong?

What is subjective?

Note down what might change in the course of life for an eye-witness and discuss the questions above


Present: time of interview

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Past: event, long ago



Russian refugees, Stalingrad 1942

Source: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flüchtling>

One old man, women and children. What does the photo tell us about the roles of men and women in war times?

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Lecture: Human Rights in the past and present, Aug. 8, 2012

### Human Rights - Characteristics:

1. Human Rights are inherent to each individual  
They belong to people – simply because they are human
2. Human Rights are universal  
Human Rights are the same for all human beings, regardless of race, sex, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin. We are all born free.
3. Human Rights are inalienable  
Human Rights cannot be taken away, even when the laws of a country do not recognize them
4. Human Rights are indivisible  
All human beings are entitled to freedom, security or a certain standard of living

- Tasks: 1. Describe the situation  
2. Make up a dialogue between people in the photo  
3. Why is the 20th century often called the "Century of Refugees"?  
Can you find examples?



### Categories of human rights

1. "First generation rights"  
Civil and political rights: Life, liberty, security of the individual, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion, expression, thought, religion, conscience...
2. "Second generation rights"  
Economic and social rights, right to work, education, reasonable standard of living, food, health care...
3. "Third generation rights"  
Environmental, cultural and development rights: clean, protected environment, rights to cultural, political and economic development

Task: Discuss in groups: Imagine your group would live on an island and you would have to start a new state. Which rules/laws/human rights would you establish?  
Note them down.



## The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

After the catastrophe of World War II, caused by Nazi-Germany, the United Nations were founded in 1945. On December 10, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

Now, Therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims

THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

All articles follow.....

Task: Everyone in our group reads one human right and tries to explain it to the others in his/her own words. Draw a cartoon/sketch/painting for your human right and pin it at the wall. Write down the number of the human right on your scetch accoring to the UDHR.



## Human Rights Violations Amnesty International 2003-2012 Examples

In 101 out of 155 countries: torture and maltreatment

In 99 countries: no freedom of press and opinion

Aserbaidshan: political prisoners, no free press....

Ukraine: torture, political prisoners...

USA: death penalty...

Egypt: No right of demonstration, discrimination of women...

Syria: violence against protests, death of civilians...

Russia: control of press, no free opinion...

Germany: business with weapons (Saudi-Arabia > tanks were used to oppress protests in Bahrain, problems with people seeking asylum (Roma, Kosovo)

Israel: Illegal killings in occupied territories, demolition of houses, confiscation of land, imprisonment of conscientious objectors, settlers' violence...

Palestine: rockets on South Israel, discrimination of women, no freedom of press, terrorist attacks on civilians, suicide bombings...

### Tasks:

1. Discuss in groups: What are the reasons for human rights violations?

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2. Research in the internet: Find out information about human rights organisations
3. Research in the internet: Magna Carta (1215), US Declaration of Independence (1776), Declaration of the Rights of Man (1789), Declaration of Independence (Israel May 14, 1948): equal rights for men and women

Sources: <http://www.arte.tv/de/6689890,CmC=6688536.html>

<http://www.ag-friedensforschung.de/regionen/Israel/ai-2004.html>





*Task: Choose one of the photos. Think about where and when it was taken. Comment on it with the help of the UDHR*

All men are equal: Women at the cooking pot and men into war?  
Topics for interviews, articles, films  
Groups of at least three members: Germans/Israelis/Palestinians

1. Nazi period - No human rights

Sinti and Roma under Nazi terror and persecution - the Reinhardt Family (Musicians), Koblenz

2. Educated to hate

Mr Klemens Hauröder (born 1934), Kastellaun: rise of the Nazis, family life, the end of war, American/French occupation

Mrs Gertrud Kramb (92 years old), Johanna Schug (88 years old), Kastellaun: discrimination after 1933, living with Jewish friends, education of boys and girls, life after World War II

3. Men into war?

Mr Toni Schwarz, Oberwesel: Soldier in the German Wehrmacht

4. Women at the cooking pot?

Christel Fey, Bell: Youth during Nazi period

Elisabeth Bernhard, Dillendorf: Young girls during Nazi period (BDM), German Peace Movement in the 1980s

Gisela Spix, Maisborn: Raised during war as a girl

Ellen Kindling, Bubach: Family life during and after World War II

5. Nazi and Post-War Period

Helmut Wendling, Spesenroth: Protestant resistance in Gödenroth, school life, different education of boys and girls

6. The loss of "Heimat"

Jan Schneider, actor in the film "Die andere Heimat" (outcoming in October 2013) director: Edgar Reitz, filming in a village nearby

7. Expellees from East Germany after 1945

Hubertus Lierow, Emmelshausen: roles of men and women during their escape, loss of father, survived because of his mother and an American pilot

8. Migration into Germany after 1990s

Werner Busch, Ingo Noak, Young immigrants from the former Soviet Union, Centre for immigration Büchenbeuren: Problems of men and women in their new society

9. The loss of human rights

Heinz Hessdörfer, Frankfurt: deprived of all human rights, living in different concentration camps

10. Equality of men and women - Dream or reality?

Dr. Marlon Bröhr, Mayor Kastellaun: Men and women in local politics

Dr. Heike Jung (Interior Ministry, Mainz): Gender policy in Rheinland-Pfalz

Jutta and August von Dahl, Rothenberger Hof, Bell: Men and women in German society, being pastor and female pastor, German Peace Movement in the 1980s - a matter of women?

11. The role of religion on the equality of men and women

Rainer Vogt, Catholic priest, Kastellaun: Celibacy in Catholic Church

Recep Kaymakci, Imam Muslim Turkish community, Simmern: Men and women in Islam

Hulya Bayrakci, Simmern, Life as a Muslim woman in Germany

Sandra Menzel, Büchenbeuren: Pastor and mother



## Weekend Activities Aug. 10-12



## Cologne - Mörsdorf - Kastellaun

Life in families: Trips to big cities like Köln, Koblenz or Stuttgart, visiting relatives, hiking tours through the beautiful Hunsrück landscape, discos, parties, shopping... There was no boring minute.





## Weekend Activities



Celebrating the Shabbat in the Youth Hostel. Getting to know...



A Christian-Jewish mass in the Protestant Church of Kastellaun: Jew, Catholic, Lutheran, Charismatic, Orthodox, Atheist....



Later we talked about the following questions: Are men and women equal in different religions?  
 Do religions go together with human rights?  
 Celebrating religious services equally is only allowed in certain Christian religions and a few synagogues.  
 Why are there no female imams, catholic priests, not more female rabbis?  
 Tal (middle) would be a perfect pastor or rabbi.



Sunday, Aug. 12

19:00 Dinner, Meeting in Youth  
Hostel Oberwesel  
20:00 Planning 2nd week  
21:00 Meeting group leaders

Monday 13

8:30-13:00 Men and women in the  
Middle Ages:

Visiting Marksburg, Guided tour in  
English

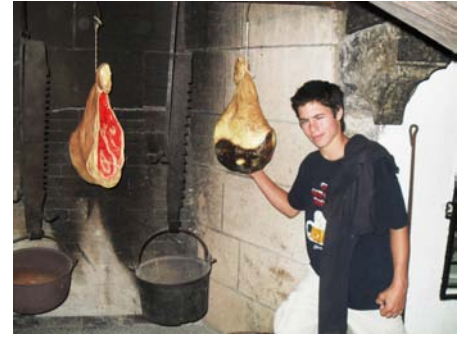
Visiting Medieval Oberwesel  
13:00 Lunch

15-18:00 Interviewing people,  
writing articles, filming,  
19:00 Dinner

20:00 Reflexion in groups

20:30 Reflexion alltogether

21:00 Meeting group leaders



Marksburg, the only castle which was not destroyed in its history.

Old and new role models? Boys at the cooking pot and women into war?

Bottom left: A device to prevent women from cheating her husband being  
away in war. Old leather helmets. Tal and Elena on the ferry over the Rhine.



The torture chamber in the castle.

Marie - Relaxing on the castle walls (Marksburg) and in cafés in Kastellaun (Tal, Johnny, Barbara, Dieter Wendling).





Tuesday Aug. 14

8:30-15:00 Men and women in politics: Visiting the Parliament of Rheinland-Pfalz, reception and talk to the President, Joachim Mertes  
Lecture and discussion:  
Dr. Heike Jung: Gender Policy in Rheinland-Pfalz  
15-18:00 Interviews, filming, writing articles  
19:00 Dinner  
20:00 Reflexion ind. groups  
20:30 Reflexion altogether  
21:00 Meeting group leaders



**Don't shut your mouth in the face of human rights violations!**



Reception by the Parliament President, Mr Mertes (1), practising democracy (3,4), panoramic view from the Parliament terrace (2), pieces of art in and around the building (5,6), discussion with Dr. Jung (8) about gender equality. John beside an official car (7).



## Wednesday, Aug. 15

9:00 Hiking along the Rhine from Oberwesel to Bacharach:  
Where antisemitism started,  
guided tour through Bacharach  
and to the Werner Chapel  
15-18:00 Interviews, films, writing  
articles  
19:00 Dinner  
20:00 Lecture Johnny Shahwan:  
The situation of Christians in  
Palestine (Kastellaun, Protestant  
Parish Hall)



A very symbolic place: Bacharach, Werner-Chapel ruins, in memory of Werner, a 16-year-old-Hunsrück boy, whose unexplained death was blamed on the Jews and was the cause for terrible Anti-Judaism Pogroms after 1287. He was worshipped for more than 700 years as a martyr and like a saint. Legends and prejudices have long lives.

We changed the group leaders to discuss this topic.

Meanwhile we know that Werner was not murdered by Jews.



## Thursday, Aug. 16

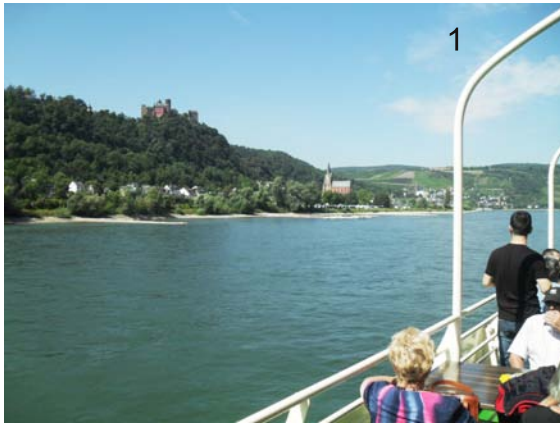
9-13:00 Finishing the topics  
13:00 Lunch  
15-16:30 Exchange of results of  
different groups, preparing the 2nd  
meeting in Israel/Palestine  
17-18:30 Preparing the evening  
event  
19:00 Dinner  
20:00 Farewell Party: Culture,  
results, fun with parents and  
guests



"Time to say good bye"!

The farewell-party with angel-like  
singing (The black Melanie), a  
Palestinian choir, traditional  
Klezmer Music and modern  
dancing with Melanie (blonde, first  
from right!).





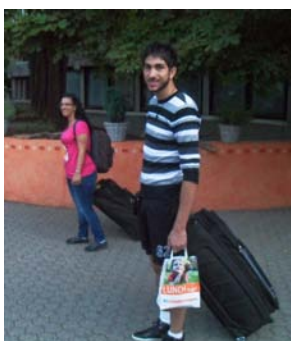
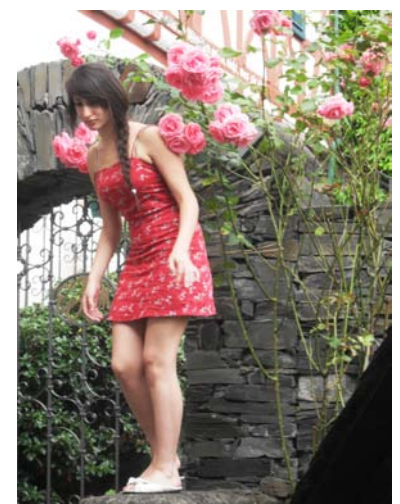
Work  
and  
travel!



Maybe the atmosphere of the World Heritage Region Romantic Rhine Valley (1,2,4) influenced the atmosphere of the group. In 1 you can see the hostel on the mountain. Intensive work (3,5,7), talking to Volker Boch (9, author, journalist, triathlete - Ironman Hawaii). Slapstick comedians Tamer and Amer (6), entertainer Tal (8) and wild dancers at the end of the farewell party (10).



## Wosing - Working and Posing



Friday Aug. 17

5:30 Breakfast

6:00 Transfer of Israelis and  
Palestinians to Frankfurt

11:00 Flight to Tel Aviv

Palestinians free time in Frankfurt

20:15 Flight to Amman

## Equality of men and women in politics: Dream or reality in Germany?

Interviews:

- a) Christa Wendling (Regional Network for Women)
- b) Dr. Heike Jung (Responsible for women politics, gender policy in Rheinland-Pfalz)
- c) Dr. Marlon Bröhr (Mayor of Kastellaun)
- d) Jutta & Karl-August Dahl (men and women in Germany's society, peace movement)

The human rights were proclaimed in 1948. Now more than 60 years later a group of young Germans, Israelis and Palestine people are sitting together, i.e. many opinions and emotions come together. One part of the declaration of human rights is that all men and women are equal. Is this still a dream or has it become reality?

**"I was expected to get married and to be a good wife"**

In the past it was difficult for women to work, because they often didn't have the chance to get education. Christa Wendling is a member of the „Frauenforum“ in the Rhein-Hunsrück Area, a council of women looking after gender equality. Growing up as a young woman in the 1960ths and 70ths she had to deal with the traditional understanding of the women's roles and what her environment was expecting of her. "My mother expected me to get married and to be a good wife... even my female friends asked me why I wasn't cooking in the kitchen...", Christa Wendling explained. That's one of the reasons why she is active in fighting for gender equality in our days and especially in a local area. She and her organisation are longing for a person in local politics who is responsible for gender equality.

Today in Germany 52% of the population are women.

Many of them, especially women in their 30s and 40s, are struggling how to balance their career and taking care of their children and family at the same time. Today most of the women are well educated, lots of the young ones even better than the men. Why do some of them still not have the chance to have a career?

Many people have the opinion that it is because of different conditions and circumstances. Women don't get a lot of possibilities for jobs in top position. Dr. Heike Jung from the ministry of Integration and Immigration in the state

**"On the average women have a better education, but earn 23% less than men"**

parliament in Mainz says that one reason is the tradition of masculine domain in these jobs. "In school most girls have better grades than the boys and more of them get the Abitur", Dr. Jung said. She works in the department of family, youth and women policy and explains that even if women get the chance to work in the same positions as men, they earn 23 % less than their male colleagues.

Different suggestions are made to improve the situation of women. Could it be a solution to set a quota for the percentage of women in high positions? Then a woman, who has the same qualifications for a job like the man, is preferred. It would definitely increase the chances of women to work in top jobs. On the other side there is a lot of criticism regarding this quota, because a lot of women don't want to get a job just because there is such a proportion, they don't want to feel narrowed down to a number. Women in top jobs can employ a nanny, but the majority has to struggle having a successful carrier and taking care of their children at the same time. To enable women to work in top positions, men have to take more responsibility in family life. Moreover there are not enough possibilities to put children into nurseries. So it is not by accident that German society is regarded to be a hostile society concerning children.

"We can't change the role of the women in our society if the men don't change too", Dr. Jung said.

In our days the attitude of many young and middle-aged men towards gender roles is converting.

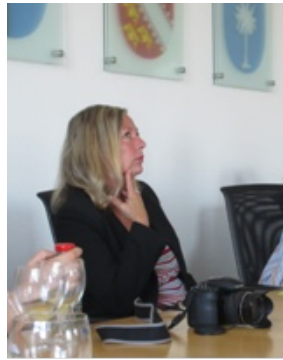
A lot of modern men want to take more responsibility in education and raising their children. "For me it's very important to play a big part in my children's life and to see them growing up", youth education worker Uli Suppus said.

Eventually the best way to deal with all this difficulties and dissonances would be if men

**"Equality is a matter of men and women"**

and women support each other and work together concerning their family life and also the individual goals they have in life.





Christa Wendling, Dr. Heike Jung and Dr. Bröhr with Eynat and Amit in front of the town hall Kastellaun.

Thursday, 9th of August, young people from Israel, Palestine and Germany are sitting in the Parliament of Kastellaun.

For some of them it's the first time they are visiting a parliament in their whole life. In front of them on the long table the mayor of Kastellaun is sitting, together with the responsables of our project, Christoph Pies, Johnny Shahwan and Nis Rubin. The young people want to discuss the situation of women in German society and especially in local politics.

Dr. Marlon Bröhr, the mayor of Kastellaun, explains that "most of the political protagonists in the Verbandsgemeinde (District of about 15.000 people) are men, only two out of 30 are women". What could be the reason for this low number?

One of the reason could be that some women would not like to get involved in politics more often, as they are concerned about their families and don't have a person who can take care for the children while the mother is sitting in a village or town parliament. Another explanation for the few female politicians may be the traditional opinion of men about women in politics: "Women have nothing to do in politics, they don't understand it, they should care about their family and children".

"We have more women than men living in our district, but we don't have a single female mayor"

Dr. Bröhr said that, in his opinion, it is very difficult to motivate anybody to get into a political party or to be a candidate for local parliaments, especially women. "There is not one single female mayor in our 32 villages".

"Some women possibly think, politics is a man's job. Maybe they are also afraid of the many men in political positions or the additional days they are off from home", one of the young participants from Germany tried to explain.

The mayor added that "women do have a more indirect influence on politics" and described his wife's position as a mother of two and a dentist at the same time without having time for politics. But she has an own opinion and gives her husband advice.

But how could we motivate them to get more involved and to play a more active and direct role in politics? Could one solution be to create a quota that defines the number of women in public positions, i.e. 50% of parliament members must be female or a quota for supervisory boards of important industrial companies (VW, BMW) to fix the number of women? These problems have been discussed for many years now without a real fundamental change in the roles of men and women. Traditional role models, perpetuated by Christian religions or political parties are sometimes stronger than the real changes in society. Yet there are some hopes: 10% of fathers take a one-year-leave ("Parents' timeout") - paid by the state - to care for the baby. Despite of about 30 state measures to support families, Germany has the lowest fertility rate, 1/3 of the households are single ones, the average child(ren) per woman is/are only 1.24. "Couples often see children as risks and not as something joyful for their lives", the local newspaper "Rhein-Zeitung" reported on December 18, 2012.

The German constitution fixed clearly in 1949 (Grundgesetz, Article 3): "Men and women are equal".

Women have profited from the development in the last 40 years, but it is still a very long way to real emancipation and equality.

PS: In January 2013 the Rheinland-Pfalz Parliament elected the first female Prime Minister, Malu Dreyer. In her cabinet are now four men and seven women. She invited a small delegation of our project for her new year's welcome.

## "Women were even treated worse than men" Interviewing a Shoah Survivor



The fateful way of Heinz Hessdörfer.

Sources:

Map: By courtesy of Stepmap.de, Berlin

2 photos: Group 1/9

2 photos (bottom):

Ökumenisches Kinder- und Jugendhaus

Andreas Duhrmann, Bad Kreuznach

2 portraits: Group 1/9

3 photos: [www.fuer-vielfalt.de](http://www.fuer-vielfalt.de)







The now 89-year-old Heinz Hessedörfer, who was persecuted because of his Jewish faith, spent 3 years of his youth in various camps. Today the survivor works with young people on these experiences and published a book, in the hope that these cruel deeds must not be forgotten or repeated.

The day of the seizure of power by Adolf Hitler on January 30, 1933, was at the same time Heinz Hessedörfer's birthday. On this day the small Heinz celebrated his birthday with his Jewish and "Aryan" friends not foreseeing what would happen to him and his family soon afterwards.

The following times were filled with small teasings at school to massive discriminations and persecutions of an entire "race". The violence against Jews reached its first peak when the Nazis raged during the Pogrom Night around November 9, 1938.



Heinz Hessedörfer and his younger brother Ernst were taken to Holland. After spending a few months in a Dutch orphanage, the German army marched into Poland on September 1, 1939, it was the beginning of World War II. From January 1940 onward Mr Hessedörfer's task was to organize the survival of his brother and himself. A little later, the Dutch government established the Westerbork transit camp for German refugees, where Mr. Hessedörfer also was imprisoned. Every Tuesday a freight train from Westerbork started with a group of prisoners towards the East, mainly into the extermination camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau and Sobibor. On February 25, 1944 Heinz Hessedörfer was among the prisoners being transported. His journey ended for the time being in the Jewish ghetto-like settlement area Theresienstadt, where 73,000 people lived, almost under "good

conditions", as international visitors were told by Nazi propaganda.

On May 16, 1944 refugees were pushed in long rows "into cattle cars, driven like a flock of sheep, the number locks around their neck and registered on various lists". From Theresienstadt Heinz went with 70 other people to Auschwitz, where he was given his inmate number, "A-1598", tattooed on his arm, still to be seen today. For Hessedörfer Auschwitz was the worst of all the camps, he had been interned. Here not only the guardsmen (Capos) practised severe violence against the prisoners, but "even Jews became sadists" under these conditions. For example he was once beaten up by a fellow prisoners so hard, that he lost his teeth, only because he was not wearing his prisoner's number at the clothes.

On June 22, 1944, he was registered for a "mobilization" of all men between 18 and 45 years. After a two-day check, Heinz Hessedörfer was among the called. The gas chambers always in mind, Mr Hessedörfer felt now free in some way, when he was allowed to leave Auschwitz after six weeks. "I thanked the Almighty as our train had left the barbed wire fences behind, which separated Auschwitz from the outside world. I could see the enormous two massive watchtowers and the large iron gate with the beautiful words: "The Road to Freedom: Much work, little food and shut your mouth". All that had now disappeared.

The "new" freedom was short-lived: They arrived at camp Schwarzheide on July 3. They had to suffer from temperatures up to 35 ° C, the men from hard forced labor. It was dusty in the factory in which they worked and people collapsed daily. Having health problems, he heard the guards asking, "Are you not able to work or don't you just want to work? If you can not work, just say it, then you go back to Auschwitz into the fireplace. "

Heinz Hessedörfer's condition was so miserable that he went to the hospital and reported to be sick one evening. He stated, "The conditions had attacked my lungs and I couldn't stand the hard slave work any longer. I was so depressed, physically and mentally, that I didn't care about anything. At the daily roll call, I was shown to the SS and the company doctor. His message was: Back to Auschwitz and replacement by a healthy workforce! "

But the Auschwitz administration refused to actually receive this little transport of Schwarzheide. Therefore Hessedörfer now got a new job: potato peeler. By mid-August he had recovered a bit and was strong enough again to work.

The prisoners of the concentration camps suffered also from the Allied air strikes. On August 16, 1944 there was an air alarm. Then: "Everywhere in the camp pieces of wood and parts of walls and roofs were lying around, in-between crying, whining and mutilated people with terrible blood wounds. Limbs were torn off, human beings were no longer viable.

This meant the end of Hessdörfer's potato peeling. He had to help reconstruct the camp again. The production in the factories came to a standstill by September 1944.

From high summer heat, the temperatures in winter dropped down to -30 ° C. The workers were freezing, starving and suffering from different diseases. November was the month with the highest mortality rate. A supervisor said: "It's just a Jew, more or less, it is not the point." Mr Hessdörfer suffered from diarrhea, jaundice and fever. His permanent hunger made him steal bread wherever and whenever it was possible.

Because of the advance of the Russian offensive in February 1945, the prisoners had to build trenches and tank traps. While working outside it rained incessantly and despite of that the workers had to sleep in the wet stuff and continue working in the same condition the following day.

The hunger increased, "potato skins and beet waste were taken out of the garbage, boiled bones were put into the fire and nibbled."

By the end of February 1945 big streams of refugees from the East passed the camp. With great pain he worked on the tank traps and trenches until he went to the doctor on March 4 to have a puncture under his right arm to operate an abscess. "An operation in the camp was a medieval torture. The hospital was like a slaughterhouse. After this procedure I got a three weeks relief. Even after that I looked miserable."

On April 18, 1945 the "thunder of the guns could clearly be heard", the war front was coming nearer and nearer. The SS put together a group of inmates and took them by truck to Sachsenhausen near Berlin, while the other inmates went on their death march to Theresienstadt.

"Women were even treated worse than men"

On the trip to Sachsenhausen near Oranienburg Hessdörfer first saw the terrible devastation of the war: "The inner city of Berlin no longer existed and was like a rocky desert."

"We were treated like animals - worse than that!"

In the interview Mr. Hessdörfer wanted to show and explain us how terrible the Jews and the other captives were treated by the Nazis. Two persons of each nationality were interested in his life story and asked him about the conditions in the concentration camps in this period. He told the students that the Nazis treated them recklessly. They didn't allow them to have contact neither to their friends nor to their families. They imported the people in little waggons, no matter if they were ill or not. Unfortunately, they took everything away from them - their money, their hair and also their children. Unbelievable but true: The women in the concentration camps were treated worse than the men, although even the conditions of the men weren't human. Apparently thousands of people lived in a small stable. Women and men were working very hard for the Nazis, after all they were slaves who didn't get enough to eat nor to sleep. Only the women with their little children had to go to the gas chamber immediately, the others were used as slave labourers. "12 Years Of Nazi Terror", the name of his book, describes his feelings and bad experiences during this horrible time.

Theresa Volk, Amit Spector, Ofri Lazier, Adel Istefan, Dima Al Mukarker, Melanie Karsten

Heinz Hessdörfer is very active with his foundation "Against Oblivion". He works in schools, for youth groups, wrote a book "12 Years of Nazi Terror". A documentary film was made about his life in Sachsenhausen (photos). He organizes memorial days on November 9, January 27 or the Shoah Remembrance Day. Thanks for using the material and thanks that we could join the project for some hours.





## "Peace needs movement"

### Equality of men and women in the German Peace Movement in the 1980s.



Amerah (Palestine) and Eynat (Israel) with the Dahl couple.

Jutta Dahl, a retired Protestant pastor, an English and Theology teacher, and her husband Karl-August, also a former Protestant pastor, were leading members of the German Peace Movement in the Hunsrück in the 1980s.

Their main goal was it to demonstrate actively against weapons- especially nuclear weapons.

August's parents were survivors of the Second World War and he grew up asking himself "Why didn't people resist?", developing the determination "never again"!

So when in 1979, during the period of the "Cold War", the NATO passed the resolution for additional armament and proclaimed that one deployment would be in the Hunsrück, Jutta and August Dahl among with other like-minded people formed a peace movement called "Peace Initiative Rhein-Hunsrück", initiative for peace. The government planned

to install 96 cruise missiles with nuclear warheads on an American missile basis, one kilometre away from their parish. Due to its history Germany is not allowed to possess nuclear weaponry.

The members of the peace movement spread a lot of information and tried to enlighten the population of the region about the threatening danger.

Their philosophy was to fight without weapons and violence against these nuclear weapons. Many people joined them, especially from the church.

On Sunday afternoons they had a peace service next to the Pydna station, the place where the cruise missiles were positioned. "We were listening to the danger, standing still, just being together", Mrs. Dahl says, "and every time there were more people".

**"In matters of peace  
there was no difference  
between men and  
women"**

In their group they had no differences between gender, religion or nationality.

For them resistance was a matter of democracy and participation. On a field next to the military camp they put up 96 crosses as symbols for the 96 cruise missiles. In 1986 they organized a big demonstration with the slogan: "Peace needs movement".

Around 200.000 people from all over Germany, the USA and even a few from the Soviet Union came to the Hunsrück. It was a big success for such a small local peace group.

Eventually after a lot of resistance from peace movements all over Germany and many discussions between the NATO states, the leading politicians of the West and Eastern Block finally signed a disarmament agreement in 1987 - the INF-contract (Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces).

After the demilitarisation and the extraction of the cruise missiles, the majority of the supporters of the "Peace Initiative Rhein-Hunsrück" went back to their own subjects and interests.

But the Dahls didn't stop their commitment to make a chance and to fight for a more peaceful world.

Today they are campaigning for the termination of arms exports. "We have to stop sending weapons to other states... ", Jutta Dahl says. Right now Germany is the third biggest seller of weapons in the world. "Everybody should invest him- or herself, don't think too much about what your neighbours might say", August Dahl claims, "you'll find out you're never alone with your belief and you can gain a lot from it".

They are especially addressing the young generation to be critical and to reflect the things that are happening in the world.

As the first woman Jutta Dahl was awarded the famous Aachen Peace Prize. It is given to persons who try to overcome enemy images, prejudice and mistrust and help human beings to cooperate despite different opinions and cultures.

Eynat Goldmann, Amerah Amar, Marie Wagner, Elena Etges

## "Conflict between ethics and obligation" The young Wehrmacht soldier Toni Schwarz



If someone is talking about child soldiers, most people expect a story from Africa. But what if this is not about the continent of Africa, but simply to Europe itself. Looking at Germany in the time of World War II, you discover how many young people were involved, especially in the defence of the borders of Germany. Not every German was a fighter in the "Wehrmacht" and weakly followed the Nazi commands. Most of the men had to go to the many fronts, as Germany was conquering countries from Norway to North Africa and France to Russia. By the end of the war, even young and old men were used to defend the "Heimat", the different regions. Mr. Schwarz was one of these boys. At the age of 15, he and his former class were obliged "to defend their homeland against the enemies", as the propaganda told them.

In his interview he talks about his experiences and his impressions, some of them are very moving. Mr. Schwarz was born in 1928 in a small village near the Mosel, where he first had contacts with Jews. He was educated as a Catholic and grew up in a family which shared the aims of the Catholic political party "Zentrumspartei". That is one reason why he had not so much experiences with National Socialism in his age. But in school, young people had to learn everything about it. The classes were mixed with combat training and shooting practice. Every morning, there were three hours of instruction, four hours after target practice, and the afternoon was also filled with training as a soldier. In summer 1944, the attacks of the Americans were so massive that most teaching was down. No school education meant more time for weapons training. In December 1944, the school



class went to a small airfield which was located next to Hennen. The airport there cannot be compared with today, it was so small that only four to five aircraft were hidden in a forest clearing. The task was to secure the grid for the German planes.

Two days before Christmas, there was a dramatic event. On 23rd of December, the class shot one American plane down and it was assumed that the Americans would take revenge for the loss. A day later, they were attacked by an entire American flying unit. All students were killed, except three. Mr. Schwarz lost not only his classmates, but also his twin brother. It

was clear that he wanted to escape from war completely. Some time later he received a letter with instructions to report in Frankfurt in order to continue his service at the weapon. He escaped and fled from this obligation of responsibility. Desertion was punishable by death, so his parents hid him for three weeks in the house. In March 1945, the Americans came. In the house they found a photo of the 15-year-old Mr. Schwarz with a uniform from the air force unit. Because of the same symbols, which were also found on the SS uniform, they kept the boy for an SS soldier. He was arrested and taken away. A very long time he was interrogated and detained. When all Americans went out to dinner, Mr. Schwarz took the chance and jumped out of the window. He hid and ensured his survival. In the story of Mr. Schwarz, we cannot find an image of a young man who was a convinced soldier. He was in conflict between morality and obligation. Maybe his interest in art and culture was a good way to resist the Nazi Ideology. There was an enormous pressure on young people, especially on boys. Mr. Schwarz had to serve a criminal state, though he did not agree with the ideas.

Lukas, Omer, Yam



Above: Lukas Linder, Toni Schwarz  
Left: Yam Seaon, Toni Schwarz, Omer Meir  
Right: One of the many books written by Toni Schwarz. This one is about Oberwesel, where we lived for a week.





## People with long traditions, but discriminated Gypsies and human rights

One of the numerous Reinhardt family members, Franz "Schnuckenack" Reinhardt (1921-2006), born in Bad Kreuznach, was a Sinti Jazz musician playing the violin. After he - as one of the few Sinti and Roma - had survived the Holocaust, he made the "Gypsy-Music" popular in Germany and performed his music at the world-famous Waldeck Festivals in 1967/68 near Kastellaun. His descendants live in and around Koblenz and are very active against racism.

Sinti and Roma are people originally from India, because of the "Islamic holy war" they had been driven out towards and into Europe in the Middle Ages. It was formerly believed that they had originated in Egypt, so they were called Gypsies. They are an ethnic group in Germany and many other European countries. Most people in Germany don't know that between 500,000 and 600,000 Gypsies were killed in the holocaust. Gypsies are people with a lot of traditions. For example, the men make music and they are pretty good at playing the guitar. The women prepare the food and take care of the children.

The men are allowed to wear whatever they want and the women need to wear a skirt from the age of 15. We don't really know the truth about the Reinhardt family because Django Reinhardt, the father of the Reinhardt Family, didn't talk about his past. This was, because he wanted to protect his children. Moreover he wanted them to form their own view on German people. Django and his wife were in the concentration camp together. He didn't get hurt because he was a fast runner, so they needed him in the camp. The detainees had a bigger chance to survive if they had the ability to work or special talents, because they were needed and useful in the camps.

But the main question is: Did the Gypsies have human rights before and during the Nazi period?



Interview with Anne Günster, a friend of the Reinhardt family and co-author of a book about the Sinti and Roma. We couldn't visit the family, as there was a family death case during that time.

No, they didn't have human rights. They had a bad education, because they used to change school every three or four days. They used to sit in the back of the class, and the teachers didn't pay any attention on them. Also people used to look at them in a bad way and treated them differently, they had no houses, only tents because they travelled a lot. So they had neither equality, good education nor homes and during Nazi period they were even killed, captured and tortured in concentration camps. Like Jews they were regarded as different races, inferior to Aryans, that is to say as second or third class human beings.

But we have to say that after the Nazi period things got better for them. Now they have homes, they go to school, but still with the rise of nationalism in many of the eastern European nations and unemployment throughout Europe, Sinti and Roma continue to face widespread public prejudices and official discrimination.

In our world there are many violations against the human rights and also in our society. This article is about violations of human rights against gypsies from Germans during Nazi period, but there are also violations of human rights from the gypsy men against their women. For example the girls can't play football or play the guitar. When they get 15 years old, the tradition is that they have to wear long skirts and dresses and if they don't accept this, they normally leave the group and live on their own, because women who don't want to live according to the traditions are no longer part of the community.

Felix Hill, Dina Alaraj, Hila Peleg, Christine Amro

## "My mother and a hostile pilot saved my life"

### Interview with Hubertus Lierow, an expellee from East Germany



Hubertus Lierow was born and raised in Breslau (Silesia, Germany until 1945, now Wroclaw, Poland) in 1931.

He could initially lead a normal life for the prevailing conditions. But also in East Germany, Hitler's propaganda was palpable. Hubertus Lierow was a member of the Young People, an organization of the Nazis for children and adolescents between 10 and 14 years, whose aim was to spend time together and have fun. Of course this was also part of the hidden Nazi incitement against certain groups. The boy was not only part of this group, but also an ardent altar boy of the Catholic Church.

In January 1945 everything changed for the 13-year-old boy.

#### "Two worlds were colliding - Christianity and Nazi Ideology"

Here he realized for the first time the Nazi unconditional dislike against the church.

A follower of the Nazis delivered a speech in which he damned the institution of the church and all the people who followed it. At this time, it became clear to him that two worlds were colliding.

Human rights played no role for the Nazis. After the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights", which was declared only in 1948, every person has the right to decide which religion he practises.

This was completely ignored under Hitler's dictatorship and the victims were of course those who did not follow his ideology.

This disregard for human rights had a climax in January 1945, when during the war the Nazis declared Breslau as a "military fortress", although it had only been slightly destroyed. All the boys and men over 14 had to defend the German Empire as soldiers while the women and children had to leave the city.

Fortunately the 13-year-old Hubert did not have to serve in the army and could leave with his mother. This might have saved his life. The situation of the Germans was hopeless.

Nevertheless, he had to say goodbye to his father, who had to remain as a soldier in Breslau, and fled with his mother, his sister and an aunt towards the West.

This time was hard, there were many obstacles on this way. He had to experience that many Germans did not want to accept the refugees any longer. There was a disregard of the dignity of men and of human rights. All that was a result of Hitler's unconditional policy.

The example Hubertus Lierow shows, that the ideology of the Nazis left no much space for the individual or for opponents.

As a refugee himself, Hubertus Lierow felt as a nobody. But then, in a village in Franconia, Bavaria, the situation changed.

This village, like so many others, was first only one stop on the long road to the West. But a teacher was searched for, and coincidentally, the aunt the family was travelling with, was a trained teacher. They were asked whether they wanted to stay. The aunt agreed, but only on condition that the whole family could stay in the village. So she got the job, found a small apartment available, while Hubertus Lierow had to live with his mother and sister in a stable.

But soon it became boring. During this time he actually missed the Hitler Youth, which had indeed brought much harm on German youth, but for him as a young boy the youth movement meant adventure and joy. So he went to the nearest major town and asked about the "Hitler Jugend". He was given the task to spend his time from now on with interested young people.

Together they sang songs and had fun. His leadership changed his prestige and his role in the society of the village. He was again "someone", as he says today. It shows, how much a person depends on the reputation and the position.

Nobody should be judged only according to his or her position. Is it possible to judge somebody independently and objectively? Is it not exactly what we define as human rights?

What can the case of Hubertus Lierow teach us?

Of course, he shows us on the one hand, how the Nazis put aside all human rights gradually out of the way. Mr. Lierow warns us and tries to tell us that everybody should always be vigilant and we must question everything what we are told. Otherwise it can become dangerous. During the Nazi era, there were winners and losers. Hubertus Lierow could initially lead a more quiet life. Rarely there were attacks on his home town of Breslau. But very quickly the war came nearer. The forced escape, arranged by the Nazis, changed his whole life completely. Human rights played no role for the Nazis. They had only their own ideology and power. Nobody was interested in the suffering of millions of people.

"Nazis put all human rights out of way"



## "I had to say goodbye to my father"

Everyone should have the same rights, regardless of race, gender, religion and setting.

If Hubertus Lierow had only been a year older, he would have had to remain in Breslau like the father, separated from his mother and sister. So it was the difficult task of his mother to provide the children alone. Finding something to eat was the most important task.

Only with luck and with the help of a valuable Leica camera, which he gave to a Czech official, the father could find his way back to the family.

But on the other hand, was there any hope?

Yes, even in these difficult times, there were acts of humanity. Today, the now retired teacher Mr. Lierow likes to tell the story of an American pilot who showed strength, courage and in this difficult time even humanity. It was on a day during the run. Hubertus Lierow walked some feet away from his mother in a way when a plane flew very low over him. He thought it was a German, and he waved and smiled kindly at the pilot. But as the plane roared away just over their heads he saw that it was not German, but American. Was the command of this aircraft to kill the Germans enemies?, suspected Hubertus Lierow. Why else did the aircraft precisely target such a small amount of people?

But no shot was fired. Was the pilot not able to fire at the sight of friendly saluting and waving children? Mr. Lierow does not know and he will never do that. But the fact is that Hubertus Lierow was alive and until today very thankful.

It shows us that, in principle, everyone could relate to human rights. The only problem is that this morality can sometimes be switched off by several factors, for example by an extreme, fascist government or by the influence of other people. It is unfortunate that it takes such a picture of a waving child to reactivate human behaviour.

So what is our task, the task of the new German society?



We are responsible for ensuring that stories like that will not be forgotten. They are part of our history and can teach us much. Moreover, it is our duty to ensure more "waving children." Strictly speaking, we must attempt to reactivate the knowledge of human rights, which lie dormant in every human being.

Today, long after this difficult and terrible time, Mr. Lierow lives satisfied with his wife in Emmelshausen, a small city in the

Hunsrück. A lot has changed since his childhood, but one thing he has always remained. As before, he is a convinced Christian. The faith has accompanied him throughout his life, from his days as an altar boy in Breslau until today.

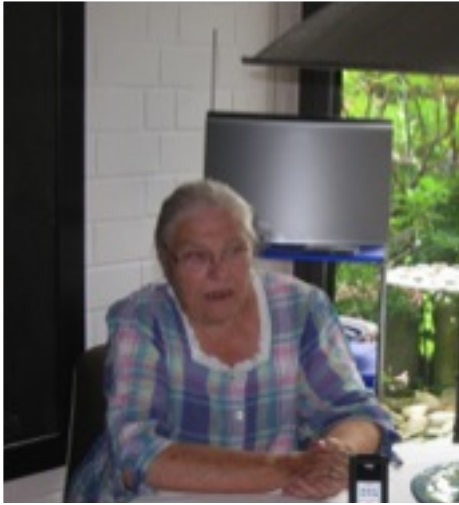
And what has he learned from it personally?

Hubertus Lierow has understood that power is very dangerous. It can easily happen that it will be abused and all human rights are in danger.

Melanie Christ, John Bader, Noam Vider, Jakob Nehls

## Women at the cooking pot!

### Educated according to traditional Nazi-roles. Interview with Gisela Spix



The now 81-year-old Gisela Spix grew up in the time of National Socialism. She developed through all the experiences into a strong, confident woman who goes her own path. She tells us about her experiences in the war and the strong women in her family. Today, Mrs Spix is involved in a peace movement

Gisela Spix was born in 1931 and was 8 years old when the war began. First she didn't perceive much from the war. It was a matter of course that girls went to the young girl group. When Mrs Spix was ten years old she also went there. The young girl group was the predecessor of the BDM, "League of German Girls."

In times of war, there were no news from abroad, only one radio station, "only the voice of the German government." And who received the foreign radio stations and was betrayed, came to the concentration camp which meant death.

Gisela Spix adored the BDM, it was beautiful, they took walks, sang songs, did handicrafts and danced. "Simple things teenagers liked to do." But due to the selected information they got from the radio, they didn't notice the "bad aims" which were hidden behind all these activities and the songs they sang.

At the age of 12, Mrs Spix went to confirmation classes. A member of the party found out about that, he came to the family and said that it was not allowed to be at the young girl group or BDM while being a committed Christian. But her mother told him that it didn't matter to her. That was a very dangerous statement.

#### "Concentration Camp meant death"

At the time the war became worse, Gisela Spix was sitting with her family in the cellar every night. They heard how the planes flew low and loud, full packed with bombs over their house and they didn't know where the bombs would fall down next, either over them or elsewhere. They all lived in fear, went to bed dressed and had already packed their suitcase with the names written on it. For hours they sat in the basement and heard the news. They heard the

bombs falling nearby. The youngest brother of her grandmother had to go into the city after the attacks to recover the dead bodies and bury them. He came always pale back home without saying a word. It was a hard time for the whole family.

Gisela Spix learned later how easy it is to become manipulated if you don't get any information from abroad. She says if she had a gun she would have shot on the Americans when they came with tanks and drove along the road at the end of the war. They were so affected by the crazy ideas of their "so-called leader."

But many Germans were afraid, also the people who knew maybe more. They were afraid to rebel against Hitler because they were concerned about their family. It was a vicious circle.

After the war was over Gisela Spix often visited an institution called "the bridge", an information centre with many newspapers from different countries, it was founded by the Americans. These newspapers could be read, as well as literature from the U.S. and from everywhere else, for everyone, for free. Mrs Spix was completely shocked when she heard what had happened in the concentration camps and is shocked until today. She heard stories like that they removed the skin from the killed people and produced lampshades out of it.

In this "bridge" she often had lunch with friends and they read the literature and newspapers like addicts. They said, "that will never come again, never again!"

She married a man who went to war at the age of 16 and had been in captivity. Today it is unbelievable that a 16-year-old boy was "taken" to kill people.

Mrs Spix became a teacher and she had to take an oath of office to "faithfully practicing their profession according to the Constitution". But she refused to swear, because "who knows how the Constitution looks like in ten years." But the principal begged her not to make problems. He said that he just recovered from a heart attack and in a year he would be retired. Mrs Spix finally agreed but today she repents it, because the Constitution has changed very much until today, as she thinks.

"We were so much influenced by the crazy ideas of the so-called leader".



"I cannot hear a plane flying low without getting a racing heart."

In the family of Gisela Spix, there were not the traditional gender roles, "Women at the cooking pot. Men into war". No, her family had strong women, she says. Each woman exercised a self-determined profession.

But in other families there were the classic roles.

Also Gisela Spix doesn't give up, her life goes on. She made her graduation and became a teacher.

1974 she became a principal, the only woman among 23 male teachers. In the 1990's about half of the female teachers were in primary schools, but not at "higher" forms of school and it is very unfortunate, says Mrs Spix, that even today, the majority of women get about 1/3 less money than men in the same profession. Even today Gisela Spix often hears older women saying the standard phrase: "First I have to ask my husband." Many women are not able to decide on their own, even the smallest decisions.



Time passed, and the aspiration came up that Germany established an army again in 1955. Then the NATO double-track decision was decided in 1978 and everyone, who was against war, got big problems, especially those who worked in state institutions such as schools, agencies or ministries.

Rearmament began, but because of the experiences how quickly you can be manipulated and how life is shaped by it, and what a trauma you suffer, Gisela Spix

was more alert and critical. She got deeply involved in any resistance against weapons.

Until this day, she cannot hear a plane flying low without getting a racing heart.

For Gisela Spix the "trinity" "peace, justice, integrity of creation" is the main motivation for her commitment.

Alexandra Bogdasarow, Tamar Novoplansky, Isel Badra, Marian Amro

## "Hatred is a bad teacher"

### Education and school during the Third Reich



#### Educated to hate

The aim of education is to prepare the young ones for their roles in society and to become a full member of it. It is also about getting responsible and to be able to think for themselves. But what if this society's norms and values are based on hatred? Education during the Third Reich exemplifies how humans were taught to obey and educated to hate. With the intention to build a new race, an extensive system of youth organizations and institutions were developed to impart the new generation with the correct models from the very beginning. Autonomous thinking was suppressed for the benefit of obedience and loyalty to the "Führer".

To learn more about childhood and education during the Nazi-period, we met three eye-witnesses, who agreed to share their early memories and experiences with us. It was about finding out how society could be infected with and led by the cruel ideology of the National Socialists. We were especially interested in how the cruel ideals were conveyed and how our interviewees got in touch with these.

Therefore we met Mr. Hauröder, who was born in 1934 and grew up in Andernach on the Rhine. He describes how he was part of the whole net of NS-organizations, which pushed aside other kinds of institutions, like at that time and place the catholic church, to extend their own area of influence. Mr. Hauröder remembers how hatred against Jews and other disliked persons was spread through texts and tasks in school books, which made subtly clear whom to dislike.

Since they never reflected those prejudices together, he only understood long time after the war what had been happening then. Only in his academic years after World War II he started to ask questions about the past and was looking for the answers in books. He is convinced that our topic "Educated to hate" still plays a role in every society and that indoctrination on behalf of a certain set of values can be seen in several places on e



#### The frog, a fable and Tal's own opinion

Try to imagine that since the day you were born you were taught to hate frogs. In kindergarten you would have been shown pictures of "dirty" frogs and that is why you must keep distance from them. After that the teacher would tell you stories and legends about the horrible crimes the frogs committed and you would start hating them for that. In elementary school you would be taught about the bad genes of the frogs and you and your friends would join clubs against the frogs. Soon you are taking part in demonstrations and marches against the frogs in your city and demanding to throw them out. Your kids are swiped in this hatred quicker than you, because of the talking against frogs that become normal conversation in your home. Is this kind of thing possible? Could our school today teach us to hate so much?

In 1933 Adolf Hitler took the power in Germany and with him the Nazi Party. He changed the way of living in Germany. Schools were transformed by the National Socialist party, new books were written, a new education system was made. Kids were solving questions in math where they needed to figure out how much a handicap would cost the state, and how many houses could have been built for "normal" people with this money. Kids at the age of four and six were taught to sing by heart songs praising the state and the Führer. At the age of ten they would join the Hitler Youth (HJ) and had to take part in marches for the Nazi party. We asked ourselves why? Why kids would join such activities? Where are their parents?





## Humorlos

Die Jungen  
werfen  
zum Spaß  
mit Steinen  
nach  
Fröschen

Die Frösche  
sterben  
im Ernst

Ernst Fried  
(1921-1988)

Hannah Litzenburger, a 14-year-old girl from Büchenbeuren, drew this painting, inspired by Erich Fried's poem "Humorless": Boys are throwing stones at the frog just for fun, the frog is dying deadly serious.

Mr. Hauröder was born in 1934 and was educated in the Nazi's education system. At the age of four he said, he sang songs by heart, that were worshipping Hitler and at the age of seven he was joining the marches of the Hitler Youth. He told us, "We were kids, we can't be blamed, kids who are taught to hate from as young as we were, don't know any better." He continued and said, "We were taught that Hitler - the Führer, was above everything, he should come even before the family. We had to listen to him and only him, even if it was against our family's thoughts". Mr Hauröder shared with us one of the big events he remembers as a kid - their teacher told them that tomorrow they all had to go to the sport stadium and swear to Hitler and the state. We asked Mr Hauröder, "Could it be that once again kids will be taught to hate like that?", he answered that he thinks that it would never happen again, however he can see similarities with the time of the Apartheid in South Africa, and the hatred towards the blacks.

After we thought for long time about the subject we understood that Mr Hauröder was wrong, hatred like that is been taught now in our time to kids in my country. Yes, it is not very pleasant to hear, but this is the truth. Kids in kindergarten are taught about Israeli's wars and they understand in the most extreme way that "we" are the good ones and "they" are the bad ones. In elementary school jokes against Arabs are a normal stage in the growing of the child. And at last in the final exam in history they will be asked "What were the successes of the Israelis in the Six Days War?", but all that will forget that there was another side to the gun, they will forget that behind the words on the paper are real people and real villages and real events. But not only on our side seven-year-old kids are taught to hate in this way. Also on the Palestinian side kids learn to hate the Israelis - the terrorists: To hate without even knowing why.

We believe that every kid has the right to know; to know that there are no good and bad people, to know that the world is complicated, there is no right truth - there are many truths. In a democratic state there are many other opinions that need to be respected and heard. There is a sentence that says, "Democratic government is - even though I don't agree with your opinion - I will do whatever I can to make it be heard by others." The kids deserve to know the other side's opinions. We think it is good that the kids will be taught to be open-minded from young age on and find their own truth.

Maybe the frogs are not as bad as you think?

## "We had many Jewish friends" - Interview with two ladies

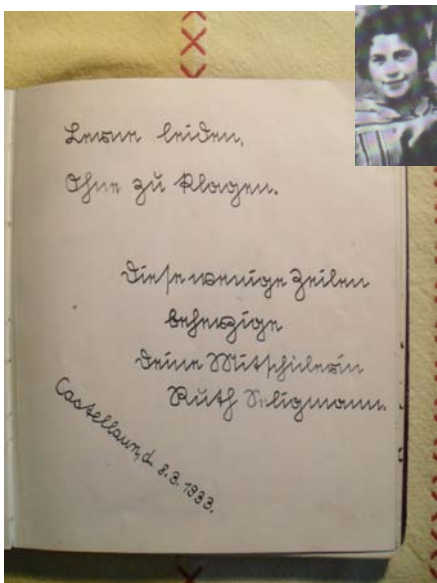


While working on the topic "Education", we also met the two sisters J. Schug and G. Kramb, who were born in 1920 and 1924 in Kastellaun. Both grew up and still live there and experienced a lot of changes. During the Nazi-period they were working in an NSV-kindergarten following the official state ideology. So they could see how the institutions changed slowly and were influenced more and more by the ideology and new rules.

Besides they tell about their close contacts with their Jewish neighbours, who offered them insights into the Jewish religion and way of life, till they rather surprisingly and rapidly left town.

We were most interested in how education and indoctrination in the Nazi-Period was constructed and how this was perceived by the German citizens. We expected these changes to be radical and irritating, but realized that our interviewees did not really experience it as a huge break. The memories of the time after Hitler seized into power, rather seem to be fragments. In the sisters' history appear little peaks that stick out of the everyday life in Kastellaun. Those little peaks they tell us as their story: The sisters remember very well how the 'Hitlergruß' (salute) appeared in their school and that they found the gesture kind of amusing. That the children then all went to a kindergarden, a school and the BDM or the Hitlerjugend, where they took part in a variety of leisure time activities, they kept in good memories. Whenever help was needed in the house or on the fields there was someone of the Reichsarbeitsdienst to support them, an obligatory service for boys and girls from the age of 18.

As very prosperous they describe the relationship with their Jewish neighbours: One minded each others children or younger siblings. Getting together with them is remembered extraordinarily joyful like celebrating Sukkot together, a Jewish tradition which is a kind of harvest festivity. The sisters tell us how they built little huts together and got to eat rare citrus fruits. Very surprising they found them leaving rapidly without saying goodbye. They didn't know anything about their plans of going to the United States. When in the same year the nearby synagogue was devastated, for the first time they could sense the danger their Jewish friends had to bear. Their understanding for the political activities was very basic, explaining that hardly any information made its way to their little and safe hometown, considered far away from all the more important political centres. Now knowing about the ideology and crimes of the National Socialists a little book they present us, becomes a real treasure: Mrs. Schug



puts her little 'Poesiealbum', a reminder of her school days, in front of us on the table. Inside there's hardly five sentences by a Jewish school mate, that nevertheless, is so moving and causing us goose bumps: Written in 'Sütterlin', the old German letters, we can hardly decode, Mrs. Schug reads out to us the little greeting: "Learn how to suffer without moaning." Written in 1933, the year when Hitler seized power, this little sentence already seems to point into the cruel future. Long time after the war the two sisters met some of their old friends again, that managed to flee. They came to visit their former hometown but none of them ever returned to stay in Kastellaun.

Carolin Manns, Tal Arbel, Amit Harel, Nicola Shaer

"Learn how to suffer without moaning" - Ruth Seligmann (born 1920, small photo) was taken on a children's transport to England, later married a Pole and emigrated to New York. Her father Heinrich, her sister Herta with her small child Ruth and husband Otto Loeb were deported and killed.



## Looking at both sides, a commentary by Nicola Shaer

To start things up, I realized that every nation educates its people the way it wants to, in order to make them stand on their side and support them. For example, Hitler turned the education system into teaching German students to hate Jews, even though most of those never harmed them in any way.

Throughout our interviews, we even noted that some Germans had Jewish friends. That brought up questions in German people's minds about why they were taught to hate people that never harmed them. Hitler's excuse - among others - was always, "They killed our Redeemer". That excuse is very confusing, because Christianity is based on love, not hatred. As Jesus said, "Love your enemies". Even if Jews were their enemies, the Bible teaches us to love our enemies, no matter what happens, and also killing others is strictly forbidden for us as believers. The truth behind that was, that Hitler was mentally ill and wanted nothing but his own benefits.

The sad thing now is, that all what Hitler did and all the hatred he taught his people, is nowadays reflecting on us Palestinians in our Palestinian case. You see, we are the victims now. History is repeating itself. Most of the Jews are now teaching their children that Palestinian land is rightfully theirs, because they are the chosen people based on what the Bible says. They are also taught to automatically hate Palestinians because they are supposed to be their enemies. They are interpreting this nowadays by taking Palestinian land by force and killing anyone that gets in their way.

But when I say this I don't include all Jews. I saw this while meeting the Israelis in Germany and I realized that they also look at our side, too. They also tried to feel with us. But then, we used to live peacefully in our land without harming anyone and now Jews are invading our land and taking it by force, claiming that it is theirs. I'm trying to say that in the end everyone should look at both sides of the story before judging or hating anyone just as our group of 'Germans, Israelis and Palestinians' tried to do during our project in Germany. We should never be taught to take sides. Hatred really is a bad teacher.



Barbara, Amara, Eynat and Tamar are sharing a good time on the cultural evening in Kastellaun. 'Taking sides' isn't an issue. It seems that prejudices can be forgotten when having the chance to meet and talk to each other.

## Education for tolerance, a commentary by Carolin Manns

We're meeting them everywhere. Anytime. Each day we are asking and answering probably hundreds of them: Questions. Can't be that hard then. Interrogative plus question mark, done! Sometimes even a plain "Eh?" is enough. So some of them are quite easy. For example "How are you?", that doesn't even need to be answered (seriously). Or a decent "We're going for a coffee sometime?" Some questions are annoying, some make us sweat, some make us think and some just stay unanswered... However, to choose the right questions for our interview

turned out not to be that simple. Especially because it was supposed to be about a very sensitive topic: National Socialism and the individual past of our interviewees.

The more time passes by, less witnesses to that history remain to whom we can pose our questions. Fear grows, that some important aspects stay untouched. But haven't all these questions been asked often enough? Is there really anything new we can learn about education and childhood during the Third Reich?

The frame is well known and though they are very personal stories, eyewitnesses' reports often resemble each other. A 'commendable national socialist vita' is without gaps: NSV-Kindergarten, Pimpfe, Jungvolk, Hitlerjugend, Reichsarbeitsdienst, Wehrmacht, war... During the Nazi-period boys as well as girls got integrated into a whole system of organizations, which was easy to join and hard to miss. This system of organizations was a system of control, control of thoughts on behalf of the state.

Our interviews showed clearly how the children, who grew up in the Third Reich, were educated to hate. From very early on they came under rule of the ideology and were influenced systematically.

This made me aware, that education and indoctrination during the Nazi-period played a major role for building up the state's power and leads us to suspect that also today power comes from the institutions that train us. Because they teach us how to think and behave correctly.

„Now I am almost 80, when I was four, I learned this song I still remember completely. Back then I did not know what we were singing,“ resumes Mr. Hauröder his kindergarten time. And still he did it time and time again, every morning. So until today and probably even longer he will be able to recall the lyrics.

Now, if education is such a powerful instrument that could inculcate the young with racial ideology and fidelity to the Fuehrer, can it then be employed as a tool against hatred just as well?

If one can be educated to hate, can you be guided to tolerate? (How) Can we 'learn' to behave with respect? Yet those questions arise quite easily. That doesn't mean that the answers are simple...

Not having known, what was actually happening under control of National Socialism, is what a lot of eyewitnesses indicate. Not having known, what kind of songs one was singing day after day or where all the Jewish families had gone. Our interviewees confirm that a lot of important questions remained without reply, were asked way too late or even not at all.

That's reality! The only way to see Tamer's home is from the fence around Talitha Kumi. Israelis are not allowed to go there.



No, finding answers is probably as hard as to find the right questions. But that should not keep people away from searching for them. Maybe we should add another ten to those hundreds of daily questions, that deal with what really happens around us. Especially our immediate surroundings should be reflected on or they might turn into lost chances.

To really learn about the past and present, one cannot ask enough questions. Maybe we're not always meeting answers, maybe we're not getting them at all. But new questions can help us to see the issue from a new perspective.

So if you can be guided to tolerance? Possibly. First step is probably to be interested in what is going on around you. Maybe the easy questions can be a starting point for more tolerance: Like "How are you?" or "We're going for a coffee some time...?"



## Fighting for justice and peace

### Interview with Elisabeth Bernhard

Elisabeth Bernhard is now 93 years old. "I don't remember everything", she says at the beginning, but in the course of the interview we get another impression. She was 18 years old when World War II began. She was selected from the girl's institutions to study art and science. When on Sept. 1, 1939 the war began, she was afraid of what might come. She lived in "Mühlheim an der Ruhr", a big city. But her family had a farm and agriculture.



Q: What was the youth girl institution exactly?

A: I studied in Munich and I was 16 years old, had no A-Level. We were young girls living together and learning about household and history. I wanted to travel to Italy before I started with art. I continued like that till the bombs fell over Germany and I ran through the burning city. I had to stop the college and after three semesters I was back home. But love was also a reason. Approximately 1942 we moved to the region "Hunsrück". It was a totally different world, no air raid shelter, no air raid warning and enough food. In the city it was the opposite. I tried to apply at an art college - I passed the exam. I can't believe it till today.



96 crosses on field near Bell (see page 60), symbols of 96 nuclear cruise missiles bringing death to mankind.

Q: Who organised the youth girl institution?

A: It was organised by the state.

My mom also went to the youth girl institution. We learned dancing and went dancing. It was a great adolescence. My parents loved us. Those who had a great youth could stand better what was coming later.

Q: Did you also learn to cook? And what else did you learn?

A: Yes, we also learned cooking. And we learned history and we made preparations for our journey to Italy. We were specialized in arts.

Q: Is it hard to make art as a woman?

A: When the war was over I didn't continue art because there was inflation in Germany and everyone just got 30 DM. The people couldn't afford art.

When I met my husband we had to start from nothing to build up a future and I couldn't do two things at the same time. I had to make a decision.

Q: So family was your priority?

A: YES!

Q: What was the worst experience you had in the war?

A: We moved to the "Hunsrück", where the war didn't rage like in the big cities like Mülheim oder Köln. But the first two years of the war there were bomb attacks and our house was damaged, we were not able to live there anymore. So we were "evacuated" to the "Hunsrück" and stayed there. During the last two years of the war I was mobilized to work in a small factory, as nearly all men were at war. I had to make iron sheet drilling but it wasn't too difficult.



Q: How was the situation after the war? What about marriage and children?

A: I opened a clothes shop with my husband. We had to start from scratch. It was really hard.

Q: Did you get help from your parents to make art?

A: Yes, before and during the war. But later the daily routine and the rebuilding was more important.

Q: Did you lose friends or family members in the war?

A: The biggest loss and the worst thing we had, was that my brother was killed 1944 near Leningrad. But that happened less than a year before the war stopped.

His child was just born and he got holidays, but then he died. My parents' household was changed. My mother was in mourning the rest of her life.

Q: Was your family affiliated to the Nazi-party or were they neutral?

A: The war influenced also the next generation. Many fathers came home from captivity, some 10 years after the war. Many children grew up as orphans, others didn't see their father for years.

I spent time in the youth girl institution. We had a farm and I was every time aloof and I had just one brother, so a girl's unit sounded interesting.

The head teacher in school always wore the uniform and the teachers had to be ideals.

Q: Did you know the aims of the party? Do you think there was something good?

A: We were not aware like today. We just had a radio with extra news that showed only the good sides. Important for the workless people was the NS-organisation "Power by pleasure", which organized holiday events and trips. Everything had to seem lovely. We hadn't this sense of forward-looking, but we had family members seeing that everything was going to end in a catastrophe.

Q: Could you tell more about your brother?

A: He was a veterinarian in the war with a state examination. He was five years older than me. I can't tell you more about him.

Q: What was your role in the family?

A: Later I was the only child so I stayed close together with my family in the "Hunsrück". And I took care about my parents.

Q: Was there anything you were not allowed to do because you were a woman?

A: No, not in my situation.

Q: And other women?

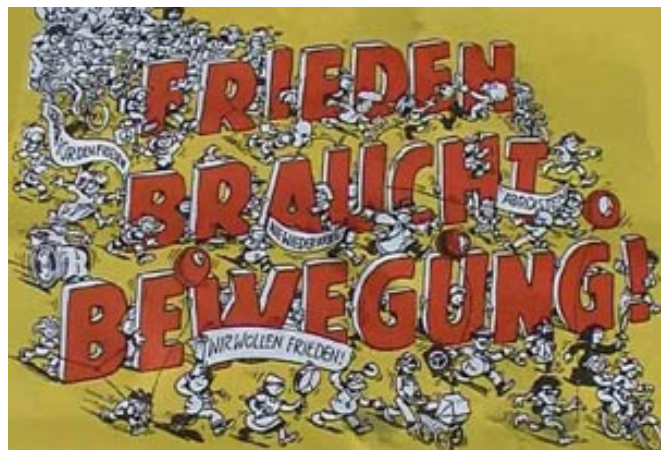
A: Yes, as an employer you weren't allowed to do anything you wanted to.

The women, who had to clear up the cities from the ruins, the so-called "Trümmerfrauen" (debris women) showed what women were able to do. Their husbands and fathers were at war during that time.

Q: What did you personally do after the war?

A: I helped my husband selling in the shop we had.

"Peace needs movement" - a poster for a demonstration





Q: You're very active in a peace movement, could you tell us more?

A: During the "Cold War", around 1980, there was the danger of another nuclear war, the NATO decided to deploy nuclear bombs in our area. The Russians put pressure on Berlin, which was entirely surrounded by the German Democratic Republic.

I'm religious and I read in a newspaper: "Who wants to work for peace?" I witnessed the beginning of the peace movement and I have stayed active there until now. It is the most important thing for me, as I am one of the few persons, who can tell what a war is.

Q: What did you do to make peace possible?

A: I was active with solemn vigil, I talked with people or made and shared flyers. We had a regular round table once a week, later less frequent. In 1986 there was a big demonstration near Bell. We made peace prayers in front of missile areas and placed crosses on churches or streets. We were brought before court and sentenced, but in the end we were satisfied: The Cold War ended, the Eastern Block collapsed, many Warsaw Pact countries now belong to the European Union. Nowadays we are not enough people, but we still protest against American nuclear bombs, stationed not far away from here.

Q: What kind of prayers do you pray?

A: We pray really simple human peace prayers with texts from the bible and we sing songs from songbooks. There came people from far away, many Russians for example. At some days we were standing there with just two or three people, but each time there were more and more.

Three years ago I got the peace award from Rhineland-Palatinate.

Alexandra, Tamar, Isel, Marian

Demonstrators from Düsseldorf painted a cow with a cruise missile on its horns on a barn near the missile station "Pydna". Their wish has come true - Europe has had a period of peace like it had never had before. Young people always paint the cow new.

Source: Photos taken from the Peace Movement Archive, Kastellaun. Thank you!



## "I had to take my father's responsibility"

### Interview with Christel Fey



On August 13 we went to Christel Fey's house in a small village that is called Bell. We talked together about her life in general, about her childhood during the Nazis time and about growing up at that time and becoming a leader in a peace movement in the 1980s.

Today Christel Fey is 71 years old and is living a good and busy life with her sister, sister's children and grandchildren. She was the oldest sister and she had to take care of her younger sisters and to be responsible. When her father went to the „Volkssturm“ (all men between 16 and 60 were forced to defend Germany during the last months of World War II from October 1944 until May 1945), she had to be even more responsible and had to work even harder. She was born a year before Hitler came into power, her father was against Hitler's ideology.

The referendum in their village was not true, it was faked by the Nazis. Her uncle told her that the counting result was one vote against Hitler, but actually her parents and her uncle had voted against him. She didn't know much about the Nazis, because she was young and she only followed her father's opinion without understanding the reasons behind it and she doesn't know how her life would have been if her father had been a member of the Nazi party.

Christel Fey became a teacher. When she started to apply for a job it was easy to get one, because there was a big need for teachers, and actually there were more woman teachers.

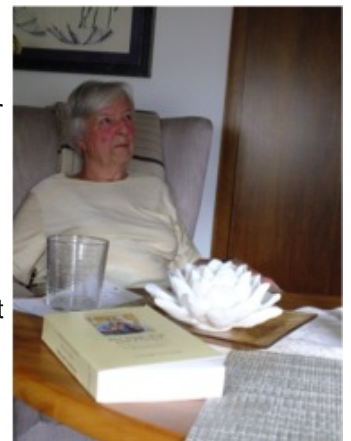
In the 1980s she became a member in the peace movement because a priest made her realise that this is the only way to achieve justice. It was great for her to see how all together worked in a community for a common aim, also children and families.

In our opinion we think women in the past were strong enough to overcome difficulties and to be dependent on their own work and helping their family members. There wasn't equality between women and men like today, but it was fine, they got the chance to do things they wanted and they were important in their society.

She told us how her childhood during the Nazis time was and how she grew up at that time.

It was an interesting interview with Christel Fey, we enjoyed it because she told us a lot of stories about that time and how she worked hard to protect her sisters. So in our opinion she was a strong girl and woman, she grew up having much responsibility for herself and others.

We had never talked to a woman that made the experience of growing up in wartimes. It was really awesome to learn about how women and girls had to become strong in their childhood already in order to survive and be strong during the war. You can't think just about what you want to do or what is the best for you only. The priority at this time was to protect the family, especially the younger brothers or sisters, and that is was Christel Fey did.



Alexandra, Tamar, Isel, Marian



## The Fall of the Wall: Migration into Germany - a problem for women or/and men? A visit in a migration help centre in Büchenbeuren

A talk with the staff of the "Begegnungshaus Büchenbeuren", from left: Ingo Noak, Nis, Hanna, Jonas, Oksana, Werner Busch.



On Thursday, August 13, we visited the "Begegnungshaus" in Büchenbeuren to experience something about the past and the history of this place, but also about the history of migration in general. We met the chairman Mr. Busch, Mr. Noack and the Russian-German Oxana. The topic was about the migration of Russians after the fall of the wall, especially in Büchenbeuren.

As the wall fell down in 1989, the borders were now open and everyone could travel through Europe. The Cold War was over and millions of Russians saw better chances here in Germany to live, so they came here and wanted to settle. Many Russians came especially to Büchenbeuren and the villages around it, because there were many flats vacant now, because the Americans with their army had left Germany. The "Russian Germans" could only come, when they could prove that they had German ancestors in the past. According to German law they got a German passport when they wanted to come. In Büchenbeuren alone there were 50% of the population of Russian-German origin.

As everywhere in the world with immigrants, there were now many language and other problems with the locals and the "Russian" people. Mr Busch realized that very early. He had been 20 years in the local city council. He wanted to help and opened the "Begegnungshaus": "They needed assistance with many everyday problems, e.g. with shopping or visiting a doctor". They could contact the house with all their questions and problems. That changed the way of thinking and supported the understanding between locals and immigrants. Of course there were clichés, prejudices and even hatred at first. Many immigrants had a different lifestyle, a different culture or religion. Times went by and people understood each other better and solutions could be found for nearly each problem.

**"It is easier to preserve prejudices than to do something against them"**

The most difficult problem was that of prejudices on both sides: "It is easier to preserve prejudices than to give them up and to do something against them", Mr Busch says today. The locals were afraid of Vodka-drinking youngsters and gangs, the immigrants thought the petty bourgeois locals didn't accept them at

all in their new homes in Germany. Basically this was not true, but prejudices were still present. Without communication this problem could not be solved.

With the house many problems disappeared. But there was only this kind of meeting place in Büchenbeuren, not in all the villages around the former military airport Hahn. But despite all these measures many Russian-German immigrants had the problem of finding a suitable job. Women normally had better qualifications, but their certificates were not accepted by German companies or the state. They had to start from the beginning, to attend language courses or further education colleges. The women accepted lower-paid jobs, such as cleaning staff or in kitchens of hotels. They got on better with their new surrounding than men. Today we have many girls getting higher grades than boys, going into well-paid jobs. But at the beginning it was not often, that immigrants fell in love or got married with local Germans, this still seems to be a problem. But most of the locals accept the new citizens, as they are also an economic factor.

Airport Hahn used to be the biggest city in the Hunsrück with more than 15.000 American military staff and families. They left an economic gap, which was filled up with the immigrants. Soon they built new homes and got integrated into German society.

Nis, Hanna, Jonas

## Educated to resist

### A family against the Nazis. Interview with Ellen Kindling



On the left: Ellen Kindling, born 1934 as Ellen Morjan, lived with her grandparents. She couldn't make an interview with us, but wrote her short biography just for us. Thank you!

I spent my childhood in the so-called Third Reich in Erkelenz (near Köln) which back then was a central village with schools, a Protestant Church and a Synagogue. I lived with my grandparents, Anna und Hinrich Morjan, who were really high respected business people.

Many Jewish families lived in my neighbourhood and in the whole town. Next to our house was a synagogue. We kids always liked to go to the synagogue, because we didn't have to be as quiet as in a church. My parents lived with my sister Christel in Neukirchen in the Ruhrgebiet. As often as they could they visited us in Erkelenz. My parents and grandparents lived consciously as reformed Protestant Christians. We read the bible regularly and my grandfather searched for answers to the problems of that time in the New Testament. Jews bought in our shop, although they weren't allowed to do so. My grandfather carried the dead to the Jewish cemetery, despite the ban and his asthma. I played with Jewish kids.

When the synagogue was vandalized during the Pogromnacht, my grandfather called me to the window and said: "Look there, you have to tell it to others, when you grow up". In school I had to say "Heil Hitler", but grandfather didn't allow me to say that. When I said "Good Morning" in school, I had to go into a corner. At home, I said "Heil Hitler" to my grandfather, like the teacher wanted it, and I got the first and only slap in my face. He explained that you only find "Heil", that means salvation, with God and that I had to salute everybody with "Good Morning".

On Sundays we went to church. On the schoolyard, near the church, the "Jungschar" and the BDM-girls (state youth organizations) all in the same dresses, danced around. I really wanted a dress like theirs, like ALL the children. The next day my grandfather cycled with me and my grandmother to Wasserberg to the silk factory and bought there silk material, two different ones for me and my little sister and said, "The Dirndl-dresses are all the same, like uniforms! You get an individual dress only for you! You should never do and want the same things that everyone else does and wants."

For this lesson I'm still thankful today.

**"Never do what others force you to do!"**

One day a picture of Hitler should be fixed in our shop. Grandfather refused to do that for a long time. When "the Browns" came with the pictures, he fixed it reversely above the door and said, "Now you (i.e. Hitler) can look out!" The shops had to hang a flag outside, but my grandmother sewed us aprons out of the cloth, colourfully embroidered.



Her parents' house in Erkelenz





Ellen's grandmother in front of the synagogue with her dog "Stropp"

There were families in our town and relatives in the neighbouring village of Grambusch, who thought and felt the same like my parents and grandparents. I was keen on secrets and heard quite a few of them, but I didn't get what they meant. For example I heard them talk about the "Bekennende Kirche" (Confessing Church) and "Barmer Theologische Erklärung" (A declaration about theology at that time), I couldn't understand that. My grandfather explained, "It's a secret writing from Christians, who don't want to be part of the state church, like the "German Christians" and Hitler imagine it. The "Confessing Christians" believed in the bible and questioned the Third Reich. My grandfather let me bring those letters of the "Confessing Church" to relatives and like-minded people. I put them under my T-shirt and brought them, delivering greetings from my

grandfather, to certain persons and just gave it to them when we were alone in the room. The "Barmen theses" were devoured by the "Confessing Christians". The "Barmer Theological Declaration" is a writing, which also calls the wrong confession, namely the German, the Nazi-Church as wrong. Christians, who took their belief seriously, were very thankful about the writings.

I often heard the bible sentence from the Acts of the Apostles 5, 29: "We ought to obey God, rather than men" and 1. Joh. 4.1: "Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God". According to these words my family lead their life. From this point of view we had a clear opinion on the persecution of the Jews: "It couldn't be God's will". More and more Jews left our village, and within one night all Jews in Schwanenberg had disappeared. Nobody in the village noticed in this night, that all of them were taken away. We never knew how this could happen. In the village everyone was appalled by this, but "the Browns" kept silent.

During World War II we had to share our house with soldiers, two of them were from the Gestapo, the secret police. They told us, that the Jews were either deported to Concentration Camps or killed. They also talked to others about what happened to the Jews. That was forbidden, so they were sent back to fighting fields at the border to the Netherlands. Both died in a burning tank.

"Hitler behaves like God, but he is only a monkey"

I usually didn't want to go to bed, so I slept on the sofa, where I just pretended to sleep, because I wanted to hear what the others were talking about.

My grandfather died in autumn 1942. To comfort us, our neighbours said, "Better he is dead now before they could bring him to one of the concentration

camps. My Grandmother's life was that of a religious, fair and critical woman. She cooked for the soldiers. In our house were a major and five plain soldiers as they said. Everything was shared. Also the major had to contribute a great part. Everything came into one pot. When we sat at the table we prayed together, also for all persecuted ones. Some soldiers cried during the prayer. In the evening they all sat together in the living room and talked freely. They often said, "Hitler is the Anti-Christ". Grandfather called him "God's monkey" and explained to us, "He acts as if he is God on earth, but he is only a monkey, who tries to imitate everything."

Our living room turned into a military office, unfortunately. We had a wooden floor and all the time soldiers came in, hitting their heels together and greeted with "Heil Hitler". Grandmother, a small, 65-old woman, looked at them for a while and then said, "This is not working. I'm a widow, who should rebuild and clean this floor after the war? Come in, say "Good afternoon", and don't clap your heels!" I was afraid what would happen next, but the soldiers did as they were told to do and didn't complain.

Our town was situated near the Dutch border, it was on the way of the Allied aircraft to central towns in Germany. The nights, we heard the bombs falling, were the worst. We were sitting in the cellar then. Also school lessons took place in the basements of the neighbouring school houses. Till now I don't like to go to basements. We often held services in the basement with water and dry bread. Only the services at religious conferences with South Africans and Latinos were comparably impressive to me.

One day a 17-year-old soldier was shot in our village and buried at the cemetery wall. He had deserted from the Wehrmacht, the German army. This event haunts me till now. My grandmother allowed me to take care of his grave. Later my husband Wolfgang and I advised youths not to become soldiers and go into war. We also told them about the dead soldier and also about my husband's brother, who died during the war when he wasn't only 16.

For our family the "Sermon on the Mount of Beatitudes" was very important. When my grandmother was asked at a court in Monchengladbach in 1946/47, who had vandalized the synagogue, she told the truth, but didn't swear. She cited from the Sermon on the Mount, "And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let, what you say, be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than that is evil". The judge believed her without taking an oath.

After the war my parents and my grandmother kept being attentive. When most of the former Nazis voted for the CDU, we chose another party. Our role models were the Protestant pastor Martin Niemöller, the martyrs in the Third Reich and the brave people from the "Confessing Church".



Ellen (left) and her sister Christel with their new and unique dresses.

Talking and telling stories is very important to me. I call it "Trolley Policy in the Warehouse". I don't want to say to my children and grandchildren, "We didn't know anything about this". I never had to be ashamed of my parents and grandparents and their behaviour during the Third Reich.

We knew a lot about what was happening in the Third Reich and also today we can learn a lot about the reasons if we want to know.

Today we must be more aware of what is going on around us. And all of us can follow Jesus' path. All human beings belong under his "hat", and we have no right to discriminate people, or even whole nations.

I'm endlessly thankful for my grandparents and their living example of faith, bravery and justice. Even though they experienced very hard times during the Third Reich, they became really happy people. I hope that I can pass a lot on to others what I learned from them.

Until today we have to be vigilant towards injustice. A firm belief helps you. I have actively been involved in many topics: The Antiapartheid Movement in South Africa and Namibia, the Anti-Nuclear Power Movement, the worldwide Peace Movement, the struggle of Palestinians for an own independent state, the support to fight against the worldwide injustice of slave labour, the global speculation with food in the third world and underdeveloped countries, the global speculation of international big banks.

That's my lesson from my childhood and the past.

Alexandra, Tamar, Isel, Marian



## "Real Christians were treated as second class citizens" Interview with Helmut Wendling, Spesenroth



Helmut Wendling, now 86, was born and raised in the small village Gödenroth near Kastellaun. Only Protestants lived there before World War II. The reason for that is, that after 1555 the territory owners decided which religion their subjects had to take. Those who didn't want to be Catholic or Protestant, could emigrate to another territory. As a small boy he learned how the Nazis came into power and changed village life. We met him in his study - full of old documents we were not able to read, as they were written in writing style, abolished by the Nazis.

Till: When and how did the Nazi period start?

Mr Wendling: We had a protestant pastor, Mr Langensiepen. He belonged to a group of pastors, who opposed the Nazis. They claimed that the Nazis acted against the Christian belief. He cared for the young people, e.g. he built a swimming pool with and for them even before 1933. Jobless people helped him. The Nazis didn't want that any other organization except their Hitlerjugend had any influence on young people. So they attacked him and even painted the Hakenkreuz on his house wall. The town got splitted in two factions: the people that went into church and took their religion seriously. The other faction belonged to the German Christians, the "Deutsche Christen". They were fanatic supporters of Hitler and his party.

Till: What did your family do?

We kept on going to church like nearly half of the village people. Once there were big machines working on the farmers' fields. They wanted to cultivate the land to use every square meter, even in infertile meadows. The people protested against the machines, there were real fights between the two factions. The day after the fight the church faction was brought to court, but only they got punished and no Nazi.

Till: Why did the Nazis not like the Christians?

Mr Wendling: They didn't like them because the Nazis belonged to another kind of Christianity, they worked together with the new "movement". They practiced secular substitutes for religious ceremonies like the "Konfirmation".

"Boys were trained as soldiers and girls educated as mothers and housewives"

Till: How was school at that time?

Mr Wendling: I had a teacher and he was a Nazi and not every student was equal in his class. The Nazi children, who went to the "Hitlerjugend" and whose parents were convinced Nazis were treated better than the Christians. Later the teacher changed and this new teacher was very fair. With my new teacher I was more popular in my class and we had a project to collect potatoes and the teacher put me the first time as a leader in the class in this project

Till: How was the relation to the Nazis in the village?

Mr Wendling: It was very bad, because the Nazis were always better treated than the Christians. My neighbours got a free travel to Scandinavia, but they were only small farmers. After this travel they got a good job in the station of Kastellaun. The station was very important for the Nazis because it was used for trading with wood. The girls of Goedenroth also got travels to Austria and the Alps which was very unusual because most girls and boys at this time only lived in their region and could never leave the Hunsrueck. But the Nazis made it possible, so only the girls, who belonged to the BDM (Bund Deutscher Mädel, Union of German Girls), could make these trips. The others didn't have the chance to do such interesting things. Boys had to be members of the HJ (Hitlerjugend), an organization for boys, where they also could do many exciting things. Only a few saw already that they were trained to serve as soldiers in a war.

Till, Tamer, Ameer



The German "Arbeitsbuch" was a document for nearly everybody. This one was for a maid (Hausmädchen). The state completely controlled the distribution of workers. "Man is material which we have to save", Göring said in 1938. The "Arbeitsbuch" was the basis to register everybody between 14 and 70 to use him/her for war purposes after 1939.



The German "Mutterkreuz" (Mother's Cross) was introduced in 1938 for women with more than four or five children. This golden one was for mothers with more than eight children, it says: "To the German mother". Jewish and other non-aryan mothers were not awarded the mother's cross.



The "Ritterkreuz" was re-introduced on Sept. 1, 1939, the day World War II began. It was awarded to soldiers with outstanding military decisions, personal bravery and success within the German army ("Wehrmacht").

Human rights were not valid for homosexuals, foreigners, Jehovahs Witnesses, handicapped, political and religious opponents, communists ... and for non-aryan "races" like Jews or Sinti and Roma.



Julius Hirsch (1911-1952) from Kastellaun was arrested before the Pogromnight (Nov. 9/10, 1938) and sent to the concentration camp Dachau near Munich. After terrible tortures he was released on February 28, 1939. He wanted to emigrate, but the USA rejected him, so he had to flee via Panama to Bolivia, where he opened a bakery. His two brothers Erich and Richard survived many camps, Richard even Auschwitz. His mother Rosa and his sisters Betty and Irma perished in the Shoah. We found his passport and all the other objects on this page in Kastellaun.





## "The Loss of Heimat"

### The century of refugees. An unusual interview with Jan Schneider

The 20th century is often called the century of refugees. Two world wars and globalisation have increased the migration movements all over the world. It is always a matter of definition between migration and flight, but around 200-300 million refugees can be counted. In the 19th century most emigrants left their country by their own will, but in the following one most people left it because they had to flee from danger. Today about 85 mio people live outside their original home country, 13 mio refugees and about 20 mio illegal immigrants are additionally estimated. As Germany, Israel and Palestine are extremely affected by this humanitarian catastrophe, we wanted to know more about this problem in our interviews. Jews were forced to leave Germany and the German occupied European and African territories under the Nazi-regime. After the establishment of the state of Israel, Jews had to leave many Arab countries (about 800.000), about the same number of Arabs from the British mandate Palestine fled or were forced to leave their land, which is today Israel. After 1945 in the communist occupied Eastern parts of Germany more than 12 mio Germans fled to the West.

In most of these cases women had to suffer most from the forced flight. Husbands were still in war, children were sent away, as parents still stayed behind and hoped the situation would get better. We must not forget that behind every flight we have to see that there are individual human beings, who suffer from leaving the home country until the rest of their lives. The different narratives within these countries have made the refugee problem a major issue until today, in Middle East politics it is one of the obstacles to find a permanent peace solution.

Jan Schneider, a project member, was playing a major role in the new Edgar Reitz film "Die andere Heimat", a film about emigrants in the 19th century. There is no word for "Heimat" in English, so the English took over the term "Heimat". It means the feeling of warmth when you feel comfortable in your house or area. Jan was film shooting during our project in Germany. He plays the role of a young man (Jakob), who is also thinking about emigration from his village to Brazil. We thought that he was also a person to interview, as he had been thinking about this decision for months and might understand people who had or have to flee from home.



Q: If we had a time machine, we would be now in 1842. Can you introduce yourself.

Jan: I really have to pay attention, that I don't reveal too much of the film. I play the role of Jakob Simon, a 19 year-old boy of a smith in the Hunsrück village Schabbach. I have two older sisters and we live in a small house.

Q: How are the living conditions?

Jan: As a modern human being it's unbelievable to understand the situation of 1842.

The director Edgar Reitz intentionally has chosen the middle of the 19th century.

By the way, I will answer your questions out of the historical context, I leave out the film plot. A German Reich didn't exist, it was split up into 39 territories, the borders were real obstacles if you wanted to travel. The world stopped existing behind the village borders at the rim of the forest, travelling was not common at that time. The Hunsrück

had suffered under French occupation, the south under Palatinate or Bavaria and from 1815 under Prussian rule. A permanent change of conquerors! Famines were a permanent danger, Jews had to suffer as well as the Christians. Crops were devastated, a potato disease made the famine even bigger, many people died of hunger.

Q: What is your daily life?

Jakob: Working, working, working: In the fields, the forge, stable, water, horses, hay, ploughing, sowing, harvesting etc. It's always a matter of surviving!

Q: Are you educated differently from your sister?

Jakob: Religion, work, military service are in the focus of our education. There is no equality between men and women, the work is clearly split up: women have to do the household, in the stable and in the field, the men have to care for agriculture and the manual work.



Jan (Jakob) in front of his forge, where he worked during the film shootings. Now he has gained weight again, he had to loose some kilograms for the film!



Schabbach - the film village. Thousands of tourists came to see the setting every day.  
The pub, a manure heap in front of the house, the "Backes" for the community.  
The real villagers had to live for months with the camouflage.

Q: How is life in Schabbach?

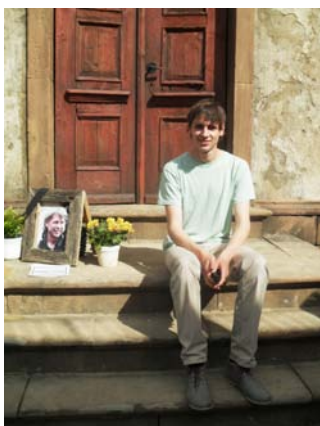
Jakob: The village has some centres: the church, the well, the pub. If there is enough flour, the village community bakes bread together in the baking house ("Backes"), they share the "Backes" to save firewood.

Q: Why do so many inhabitants emigrate?

Jakob: I think occupation is one reason, the Prussians are not really accepted. The French established a net of state services before 1815, people still have to go there, young children have to go to school now. But the feeling of oppression and exploitation is omnipresent.

The people are promised huge pieces of land in Brazil. Emigration is a phenomenon all over Europe: Irish get away from their famine, caused by the potato beetle. The majority of German emigrants move to North America, many people from our area, The Rhineland, prefer Brazil.

Q: What does "Heimat" mean to Jan?



Jan: Heimat is for me the place where I want to be, when I am away, and where I want to let loose, when I am there. So you see, my relation to "Heimat" is double-sided. Maybe it is the magic of the landscape: wild, lonesome, rough, which you have been used to love. My place where I study is completely different, it is the "Other Heimat". Unfortunately my Heimat is being destroyed at the moment by hundreds of wind power plants. That makes me angry in a way, that I don't want to live there any longer. But all that is completely different from Jakob's situation in the 19th century.

Jan in front of a house next to a photo of the scenery builder Toni Gerg, who died during the shooting.



Q: Does Jakob want to emigrate?

Jakob: Yes, as Jakob I can imagine to go away from home, the living conditions are miserable. But I have to leave it open for Jakob, you have to watch the film!! The first night will be on October 3, 2013.

Q: Have you already seen drawings or reports of your new Heimat?

Jakob: Interesting question! Of course there are some paradise-like reports of emigration and ship agents, but you really don't know what is expecting you. In my time emigration is saying good-bye forever! There is no Morse-like communication method via the Atlantic Ocean.

Q: Would you like to emigrate, as Jan now?

Jan: Today it is easier, if you want to leave home by your own will. You can watch TV-reports, read newspapers, go to your destination for some weeks or months and come back and then think about it. Most refugees of our times don't have a choice, they must leave because of political, economic or religious pressure. They want a better life and a new start. I think Edgar Reitz wants to focus on an eternal problem: 150 years ago 300.000 people left the Hunsrück towards Brazil. Even in the 21st century people are forced to flee: e.g. Syria, Somalia, Mexiko. Israel took up millions of immigrants since 1948, but on the other side Palestinians told me that alone in Bethlehem 50.000 have left to Chile, they don't see any progress, no improvement. That makes me thoughtful. But you have to make a clear difference between emigration, flight or expulsion. You have to know the reasons why people leave their home.

Q: What are the feelings of these people?

Jan: Emigration means tearing out roots and taking seeds with you. It takes a long time until you are really ready to leave. But then it is a decision for the rest of your life.

Q: What are the roles of men and women in this process?

Jan: In the past women thought about their children's future. For them the motivation often was to offer a better life at least for the children. Men had to find better jobs to feed the family. I think that is also the motivation of many emigrants today - if they are not forced to leave.

Today equal rights must be seen as something natural, as a matter of course, not only as a problem of industrialized countries. Our society has developed into a modern and open democracy, which has its weak points, but the problems can be discussed. In the Arab world equal opportunities for men and women are the crucial points for a change in society. Without gender equality there will be no change. The "Arab Spring" has not led to what many people hoped.

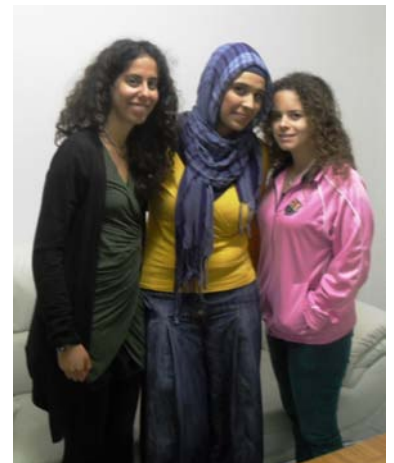
That's what the Hunsrück looked like only 50 to 70 years ago, when many people left for America or Jews fled to different parts of the world.

In front of the scenes it looked different than behind them!



## "In front of God all men are equal"

### Interviews with different religious persons



A rare meeting in the mosque in Simmern: Tal Pacht, an Israeli Jew, Barbara Barham, a Catholic baptized Palestinian, Imam Recep Kaymakci, the Catholic priest Rainer Vogt, Hülya Bayrakci, responsible for the Muslim-Christian dialogue in her community, Ibrahim Adali, the chairman of the Turkish-Moslem community Simmern, listeners, interpreters. The topic: Equality of men and women in different religions.  
Photo in the middle: Hülya and Barbara exchanging their addresses (?) on I-Phone, right: Tal, Hülya and Barbara after their interview.

### Two women - two new role models?

Hülya Bayrakci is attending a German college to do her A-Level. She is a convinced Muslim woman and showing that to her Christian surrounding world by wearing a traditional head scarf. For her, religion is a private matter and she even has some struggles with her family, but they accept what she is doing. She is very active in a Christian-Muslim dialogue, presenting her Islam to others, trying to make prejudice and clichés disappear.



Sandra Menzel (left) is expecting us in the library of her Büchenbeuren community of about 2.000 Protestant Christians, where after the fall of the Berlin Wall many immigrants settled with all the problems on their shoulders. She is 39 years old, has got 4 little children (3,5,7,10) and has a full-time pastor's job, whereas her husband works part-time. She is the first female pastor in Büchenbeuren and has had this job for six years now. When she was 14 she felt the vocation to study theology and become a pastor. It was a long way to study in different places, even in Edinburgh. 50% of their fellow students were women. Most colleagues in neighboring communities are men, she didn't have to fight for her job. After World War II the situation changed and more and more parish pastors were women, but most top jobs in church are still done by men. Mrs Menzel points out, that the Catholic Church has had more problems with women doing service at the altar than the Protestant one. She agrees with us that religions had and still have much influence on the roles of men and women. In her private life and with her friends

she doesn't feel any kind of discrimination that she does this job. But of course she feels the pressure of doing housework together with her spiritual work. She doesn't feel uncomfortable in her situation, the problems are in society, i.e. that there are not enough opportunities for women to combine housework and job. As a rule, women still have to struggle more to get all that under one hat. In her situation she sometimes has a feeling of guilt, that she can't spend so much time with her children, but she knows that her husband is a good father and does the housework perfectly, and at least as well as she would have done it. Teamwork between men and women is the keyword for her. She thinks in German society it is still "a long way" to reach equal rights and duties for women. After the interview Barbara told us that she would also like to study theology and be a Protestant pastor. She maybe would be the first female one in Palestine. Good luck!

Tal, Barbara, Christof





### Politics and Religion, a commentary by Christof Pies

It is a very relaxed atmosphere, men and women are sitting together and talking about theological problems. Mr Vogt and Mr Kaymakci point out, that according to the bible and the Koran men and women are equal in the face of God, but have different rights and duties in reality, as they are differently created by God. Barbara and Tal wonder why the present situation in both civilizations is not like God meant it to be. Both interviewees explain that in the course of history the situation, the cultural background and consequently the role of men and women have changed.

In all the three monotheistic religions God is seen as a man, feminists sometimes speak of a Goddess. In the holy books the creation of the first woman happened after the man's, therefore women are often seen as an imitation of men. If the religious leaders are right, why not turn back to the original belief and let men and women be equal? The problem is that in all three denominations we have different interpretations by human beings and they can be wrong! Why not decide each individual how to deal with God? Different traditions and interpretations led to inequality. There is e.g. no hint that Jesus was against the same rights of men and women, just the opposite!

You can find arguments supporting your own point of view in all the three holy books (Tora, Old and New Testament, Koran), but many passages contradict each other. So for me a general statement is not really possible. Members of each religion pick out terrible examples of inequality in the other beliefs and blame the corresponding religion for it. We have female rabbis in reform judaism, female pastors in many Christian Churches, but not such movements in Islam. Throughout history you can find many examples of oppression of women and inequality at all times and in all civilizations. It is often argued that women are "weaker" or different from their body and have to be protected against men and their surrounding (e.g. head scarf, burka), as they get the children and therefore guarantee the existence of mankind. That is why many states do not let women serve as soldiers. If you see the problem from a mere secular point of view, the women have to serve in every unit as well as men, e.g. the European High Court forced Germany to allow women serve in the army. Women can join the army now on a voluntary basis, German law quickly added. Thank God we live in peace in Europe and are not dependent on a compulsory military service. Religion is not suitable to solve political, territorial or economic problems. It is meant for individuals, who are searching for help in their spiritual life or need a guideline for their whole life. It is not created to form a whole state with millions of individuals and to force them under a common religious rule. It is not acceptable to justify inequality, oppression, occupation or terrorism with biblical or Koran arguments. Religion always arouses emotions and these are not suitable when rational thinking is needed. One Israeli participant of our group is frustrated, "Israelis and Palestinians only look into the past instead of the future". Religion does not solve every day problems, only if you believe in paradise or hell after death. Religion doesn't create peace, jobs, education and chances. The mainstream of all three religions has told women to stay at home and care for children. The patriarchal system developed in the late classical antiquity, hostility towards body and sexuality became widespread in most religious streams and has influenced the relation between men and women until today. This model from times where wars were omnipresent, is no longer valid for the 21st century.

## Part II: Palestine and Israel

### Talitha Kumi - a place to meet

As the political situation is as it is, we had to organize the meeting with many obstacles. Israelis are not allowed to enter A-Area, Palestinians cannot go to Israel without a visa. So we met in Talitha Kumi, which can be entered by both sides and which is a German-Palestinian school run by the Berliner Missionswerk. It is open for Muslims and Christians, offers a boarding school and the Palestinian (Tawjihi) and German International Abitur (DIAP). Besides it has a college for future hotel staff. The Israelis checked the security before and came without a security guard. That was already a good symbolic gesture. The Palestinians could sleep in the guesthouse of Talitha Kumi or in their own cosy beds, as most of the Palestinians participants live just some hundred meters away. The school is surrounded by a fence, where the participants sometimes met and were shown the homes of their Beit Jala group members. The Germans were invited to a traditional Palestinian wedding ceremony, could stay overnight in families, if they wanted, and could experience Palestinian family life. So they got a direct impression of equality in Arab households. The Israelis were not allowed to leave the school premises.

So we had to improvise a lot in order to stay together as long as possible.

As there was an important Jewish holiday (Sukkoth) in-between, the Germans and Israelis went to the Negev or different parts of Israel for one day (Kfar Saba, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv) to celebrate this day with Jewish families, then came back and took up their work at Talitha Kumi again. The last days they travelled by hired cars to the Negev and stayed with Israeli families, before they made a bit of sightseeing the last days alone in Jerusalem, the holy city, but at the same time the focus point for many troubles. The other participants had to go to school or university again. Everything was very complicated, but that's the strange reality in that part of the world.



Tamer (2nd from left): "I live down there, 200 metres from here". Tamar (left): "We are not allowed to go there".



### Friday Sept. 28

- 3:00 Arrival from Airport
- 11:00 Introduction: Beit Jala information, Visiting town and families
- 12:00 Where Christianity started: Bethlehem
- 18:00 Evening Meal at Beit Al Liqa

### Saturday Sept. 29

- 9:00 Transfer to Talitha Kumi
- 10:00 Information, Round trip school and surrounding area - Tent of Nations
- 13:00 Arrival of Israelis
- 15:00 Organization of next days
- 16:00 The Israeli-Palestinian conflict: Facts, opinions and narratives
- 18:00 Dinner alltogether
- 19:00 Lecture and discussion: Mrs Shereen Hlal, The role of women and men in Palestinian society

### Sunday Sept. 30

- 10:00 Reflexion within groups.  
Writing articles, preparing interviews for our newspaper
- 13:00 Israelis and Germans leave for Sukkoth

### Monday Oct. 1

- 18:00 Dinner alltogether
- 19:00 Lecture and discussion: Mr. AbuDayyeh (Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung): The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict from the Palestinian point of view.



Before the takeoff in Frankfurt - here at the latest you can see and feel that the trip is not a normal one.



Beit Al Liqa - a Christian meeting place in the centre of Beit Jala, founded in 1996, new building 2001, consisting out of a park, hotel, kiosk, conference room, "Peace Arch" (Indoor playground), activities for young and old (women's club, sports, playground, kindergarten...).

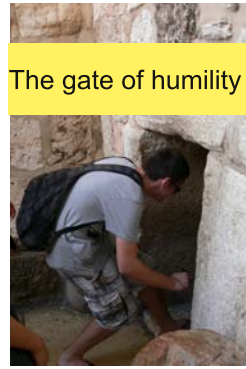


Johnny Shahwan - born in Beit Jala, founder of the centre together with his German wife Marlene: cook, waiter, preacher, hotel manager, psychologist, father, husband.. everything in the same person.  
A Christian centre in the middle of Muslim culture.





Christian Church towers, Muslim minarets, radio transmitters over Bethlehem and Jerusalem - symbolizing some different aspects of the Middle-East conflict.



The gate of humility



Outside and inside the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem, different Christian religions are fighting for their part of the church. Long queues everywhere show the importance of this place. St. Hieronymus translated the bible into Latin, Kamal Mukarker showed us round in Bethlehem. We interviewed his mother, author of "Living between borders". Tourist shops all along Milk Grotto Street. George's shop and The Olive Wood Factory are well-known for their hospitality and the breathtaking panoramic view over the region.



## "Palestine needs people with belief and hope" (Axel Awad, Bethlehem Bible College)



Living in a difficult surrounding: Children of Beit Al Lika nursery - the hope is education.  
Settlements around Jerusalem and Bethlehem are growing, limiting Palestinian life.

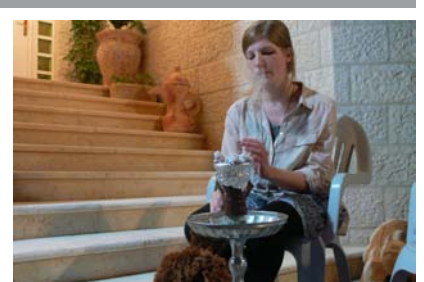


The first information about Beit Jala was given by Johnny Shahwan, the founder and leader of Beit Al Lika, a centre that wants to give hope for people in a seemingly hopeless situation.

The town in the district of Bethlehem has about 17.000 inhabitants, 65% are Christians. In the whole district the Moslems count 87% and the Christians 13%. In whole Palestine the Christians form a minority of less than 2%. Johnny says, that they are part of the Arab culture, but don't feel like Arabs, as they had been here from the beginning of Christianity, before the Arabs came in the 7th century. So Christians have lived here for nearly 2.000 years. There are Greek and Russian Orthodox Christians, Catholics, Protestants and Free Evangelical Churches in this district. Many Christian organizations (schools, kindergartens, hospitals, colleges, universities) are supported from all over the world. Many families live on tourism. There is no important industry, some building companies, some olive wood factories, not much agriculture: textiles are produced now by China. In former times Beit Jala was the town of grapes and apricots. Before Intifada II many had jobs in Jerusalem, now you must get an electronic chip to find work in Israel. So people mainly live on services, some figures say, that more than 50% are unemployed.

Christians are more influenced by European culture. Due to the political situation, the segregation wall or security fence or apartheid wall (it is a matter of perspective), families have lost hope and emigration has increased in the last decade. The so-called peace process has come to a standstill, there is no progress in sight, so alone in Chile 50.000 Christian Palestinians have settled. You must have a strong belief together with hope for the future in order to resist this surrounding. Christians feel discriminated by Muslims in many aspects. It is not common, that Muslim and Christian children play together or that there are inter-religious friendships or even marriages. Head scarves are worn by nearly all Muslim women, liberal Christians are blamed for their behaviour, e.g. dancing, casual dresses, drinking alcohol, other role models of men and women. Christians feel neglected by the world public, not many want to realize the bad situation of Christians, politicians don't tell the truth about that. The pressure between Muslim majority, Israeli occupation and limited chances make life very hard. This is especially the case for Christian women, who are expected to follow Muslim traditions.

The clash of role models in Palestine? Arab-Muslim traditions - Christian European assimilation





## Building bridges? The Tent of Nations

We are in the Westbank and pass a former checkpoint on the road 60 to Hebron, turn right into a narrow road full of holes and stones, until we reach an impassable rock barrier. After a 500-metre-walk along fences, wild garbage dumps and fields, we come to the gate of the Nassar Farm. Now we can see the problem: All around on top of other hills there are Jewish settlements. Mr Nassar welcomes us and leads us to the piece of land, provided for the international project "Tent of Nations". His son, Daoud Nassar, born 1970 in Bad Kissingen, Germany, became the project leader in 2000. The aim of this institution is "to build bridges of understanding, reconciliation, and peace on a broad basis". Volunteers from all over the world help the family on the fields with grapes, wheat and olives. Water is stored in cisterns and electricity is produced with solar panels, as both are not accessible for them.

The Arab Christian Nassar family came from the Lebanon and bought the 100 acres in 1916. They can prove that it is their land with Ottoman, British, Jordanian and Israeli documents. Despite these documents, they have been fighting for their land for more than two decades now. Volunteers show us round, we use the compost toilet, test the homemade honey and jam, see the cisterns and get a feeling of the hard life. Mrs Nassar tells us of some signs of hope. A woman from the nearby settlement visited them and was surprised to find people living under these conditions. Unfortunately the contact was stopped by fellow settlers.





## Tent of Nations - A camp of hope or frustration?

### A commentary by Jakob Nehls



Imagine: Your home is on top of a hill, the area around you is very beautiful, you can see far, there are green valleys and behind the horizon it is possible to discover the golden color of some mountains. One day, people bring rocks and put them on the street to your hill, it is impossible to come by car or any other vehicle: the road is blocked. New villages are founded around you, on the land, that actually does not belong to them: the Jewish settlements.

Or does it belong to them?

Welcome in „Tent of Nations“, an island of hope in the Westbank, around only unknown neighbors, called „settlements“. In UN law they are illegal, but

the settlers claim the land for themselves: You are in the centre of a conflict of land, space, water, religion and more.

The Palestinian family has lived there for around 100 years, they've got documents which prove that they are the owners. However the family has to go to an Israeli court: people want to occupy their hill and want them to disappear. It's a great project: between Bethlehem and Hebron there is this little oasis of hope and peace: Tent of Nations. People from all over the world support the family, they are dependent on the international community. One motto of the Tent of Nations: „Peace, Justice and Conservation of the Creation.“ To reach this, they want to educate people for these aims.

In addition to that there are volunteers helping them on the farm, feeding animals, doing workshops etc., they can stay between 3 weeks or one year and they are really important for the surviving of the farm.

Another option to help the family is to donate money for cultivating olive trees. "For each tree which is cut we plant three new ones", Mrs Nassar tells us. The German group owns now five trees, to support this great project for peace and freedom in Israel and Palestine. Maybe the trees will have fruits within the next years.

They want to break the circle of violence and act in a positive way to change the atmosphere. One tool for that are the meetings about peace and freedom and to get into a dialogue, another principle is: "Peace comes through dialogue". They educate e.g. women in the towns to use computers.

The first motto we saw at the entrance gate: „With heart and hand, we change the land.“ May it become reality!



The Middle East Conflict  
Different narratives about the same facts  
Chr. Pies, Talitha Kumi, Sept. 29, 2012, 16-18:00

Work in groups with Israelis/Germans/Palestinians

- a. Try to find out what happened in the years mentioned or what will happen in 2020
- b. Write down the meanings/definitions for the words/terms under No 2
- c. Present the results to the group

1. Years

- |                |               |                      |
|----------------|---------------|----------------------|
| a. ca. 1000 BC | b. 70 CE/AD   | c. 7th century CE/AD |
| d. 1897 CE/AD  | e. 1917 CE/AD | f. 1933-1945 CE/AD   |
| g. 1947 CE/AD  | h. 1948 CE/AD | i. 1949 CE/AD        |
| j. 1967 CE/AD  | k. 1987/2000  | l. 2020 CE/AD        |

2. Important Terms and Facts – different interpretations

- |                           |                               |                    |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| a. Diaspora               | b. Ottoman Rule/Empire        | c. Imperialism     |
| d. Zionism                | e. Balfour Declaration        | f. British Mandate |
| g. Palestine/Palestinians | h. Arabs                      | i. David's Star    |
| j. Muslim, Christian, Jew | k. Independence War (1948/49) | l. Nakba           |
| m. Orthodox               | n. Refugee Camp               | o. UNRWA           |
| p. Holocaust/Shoah        | q. United Nations (UNO)       | r. Human Rights    |
| s. Security Fence         | t. Segregation Wall           | u. Die Mauer       |
| v. Intifada               | w. Oslo Process               | x. Road Map        |



## Shereen Abdullah Awad Hlal

### Lecture and discussion: Women in Palestinian society



Mrs. Hlal is a young woman who teaches at Bethlehem Bible College. She studied in the USA and Tel Aviv, has achieved a BA in English literature, an MA in Education Administration in Texas and an MBA degree at Tel Aviv. She is married and has got two children.

She spoke about the abilities and possibilities of Palestine women being dependent on three different things: Religion, family and community. The traditional expectations are to be a mother, to care for the children, to do the household and to educate the children. The main role of a man is to work and to provide enough money for his family.

"Women in Palestine are on a good way towards equal rights, but it is a very long way", Shereen starts her lecture. They are getting involved in politics and better professions, in Ramallah there was the first female mayor, in the Bethlehem area there were the first women candidates for local elections. More and more women become interested in politics; 60% of the population are female. The fact that women become more aware of their position has also an economic reason: normally one money earner is not enough, prices have gone up and many jobs need more educated and qualified workers.

There are two different streams in society: Many women, especially Christian ones, adopt the Western lifestyle, on the other hand the extreme Muslim attitude is against equal rights for women and men. Moreover the traditional law is against women, e.g. a husband can "discipline" his wife. And there are great differences between Christian and Muslim Palestinians. For example the real fundamental Muslims don't accept women as equal human beings. The men are allowed to have more than one wife.

Usually Palestinian women get married very young, but more and more are going to get married later. They like to go to university and to get a good profession. The Palestinian women are much closer related to their families. The family is the most important value in Palestinian society. More often than in Europe they cannot choose to study what they want or to marry who they want. The family (the parents) will decide the profession and also the marriage. A good example for this is Muslima R., who was our first partner in the project: She wanted to study in Germany, but her greater family didn't allow that. But at least she convinced her family to move from home and study engineering in Hebron. Mrs. Hlal tells that it is not usual and not allowed to stay closely together for Palestinian men and women before being married. You are not allowed to touch each other in public. Before you get married you have to be engaged and the family has to agree with your partner.

Mrs Hlal thinks that it is a very long way to equal rights between men and women. The change must happen in the minds of men and women, it is a question of mentality and awareness. The best method to reach this aim is education, as it influences male and female lives. The difficulty is to preserve at the same time the culture, which still is dominated by man's attitude that women cannot do the same like men. Many questions from our group followed and could be answered: Abortion is not allowed; if a couple is divorced, the former husband is the owner of all the property, but has to pay for his wife and children; the new generation is giving up arranged marriage; cheating the husband is severely punished, family law is regulating this case; any kind of body contact between the sexes is not allowed, intimacy messes up with cultural traditions, but many see it as a kind of respect towards women; love is O.K., but there are strict borders; mixed marriages (Christian - Muslim - Jew) are opposed by most of the population.

The dark shadow of limited possibilities under the political conditions is hovering above everything. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict together with inner-Palestinian ones make everything difficult. On one hand women want to move towards Western civilization together with the awareness of human rights. They start to talk about them and demand equal rights. On the other hand they have never talked and been aware of equal rights, because the strong Arab traditions can be real obstacles. Both trends have to be combined. Asked why she came back to Palestine after her many degrees from abroad, she said, "I felt like in a cage, when I was back here, but I also returned because I wanted to fight for human rights and especially the rights for women".



Clothes often can tell you a lot about the situation of equal rights. In Mea Shearim some of us tried to change identity, it was a strange experience. Men also wear special clothes according to their religious belief.



### Clothes - religious pressure or a matter of identity?

It is very difficult to give an overall statement about women's rights in Israel and Palestine. In both civilizations there is a wide range of attitudes. Religious groups try to influence daily life and want to restrict women's right to be individuals. It is striking to watch that in the streets in Mea Shearim, the ultra-orthodox quarter in Jerusalem, or even in the Souks in Bethlehem. Israel was supposed to be a country where women have the same rights, but meanwhile much has changed.

(<http://www.dradio.de/dkultur/sendung/en/weltzeit/1684077/>). In Jerusalem you can see miniskirts all over Yehuda Street, just 500 metres away you would be attacked, if you crossed the streets like that in Mea Shearim. 50 busses alone in Jerusalem run as "extra kosher", where women sit in the back wearing head scarves, wigs and long dresses and where they are ordered to leave the seat when they are sitting at the wrong place. The trend in Palestine for Muslim women is to wear black dresses, which - according to many women - is like losing one's own identity. The traditional Palestinian dress (Malak) is very colorful and worn at different occasions during lifetime. It was a symbol of individualism, it has nearly disappeared

(<http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/mode-islamismus-in-palaestina-frauen-warum-so-trist-a-817378.html>)





## Lecture and discussion: Suleiman Abu-Dayyeh The Israeli-Palestinian conflict from the Palestinian point of view

### What is a foundation?

In Germany many political parties, industrial companies and private persons have established foundations. They give money into it and sponsor various activities according to their political attitude, belief or interest. Many foundations are very active in Israel and Palestine, some have branches in both countries, some prefer only one. Only a few try to bring people from both regions together.

Mr Suleiman Abu-Dayyeh is the Palestinian representative of the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung for Freedom, founded in 1958. It is named after Friedrich Naumann, a liberal politician (1860-1919). It is dedicated to the liberal ideas of the Liberal Democratic Party (FDP) in Germany, to the spreading of freedom for the individual together with responsibility for the community or state. They support political education in many countries of the world. Mr Abu-Dayyeh was born in Beit Jala, studied social studies in Germany and also works as a lecturer for sociology at Bethlehem University.



Mr Suleimann gives an overview of the history of Palestine until 1948. He emphasizes that for him Palestine is the whole area, as it was already called 2000 years ago. He points out that both sides always refer to the past to legitimize the own political attitude and actions, although the landscape Palestine has never been a country for Jews, Christians or Muslims alone. The establishment of the Jewish state Israel in 1948 changed everything. Under the international feeling of guilt after the Shoah, Western countries and the UN thought to solve the problem by founding a new Jewish state on Arab land and separate the land into an Arab and Jewish state without asking the people living there. Not really knowing what had happened in Europe under Nazi rule, many Arabs opposed the existence of the new state, a war started, misunderstandings and ignorance grew very fast on both sides, the Middle-East-Conflict began.



The following discussion shows how difficult a real dialogue is: Israelis point out that there were systematical persecutions of Jews before and after World War II in Arab states, Mr Suleimann denies that. Misunderstandings reach the climax, when Israeli youths understand that Israel doesn't have the right of existence. From that point onwards there is a fierce exchange of well-known arguments, the voices get louder, Noam angrily leaves the room, Germans are in a kind of shock, Palestinian youths are silent. It is a typical example how all the discussions end, if you are not willing to listen to the narratives of others, if you don't accept other arguments, if you don't even think about that the other might also be right, if history and the past play the dominant role, if rational thinking stops and rules for a discussion are not followed.



Cooling down: Each group met after Mr Abu-Dayyeh's lecture and his disputed theses. It turned out to be the most critical point in the project. Everyone could realize how difficult any solution is and how much the problem affects everybody. But should it remain like this?



What is the role of Germany in the whole conflict?  
Carolin Manns tries to calm down the emotions after a lecture and discussion about the Palestinian point of view.

Mr Abu-Dayyeh's opinion is, that only a few still think that there will be two separate states. A small Westbank and Gaza state would be like a "Mickey-Mouse-State". His idea is that the chances for two states are decreasing, the best would be if Jews and Arabs could live in a confederate state without any separation, yet different perspectives for a peaceful solution are too far apart. Mr Abu-Dayyeh has a very pessimistic look into the future: Many Palestinians are

losing hope, emigrate, suffer from occupation, corruption in the PNA territories, mismanagement, water shortage, lack of freedom etc. etc. There are so many obstacles for a peaceful solution, that there is no chance for a compromise. Both sides are not ready and not able to get out of all the internal and international troubles by themselves. Fundamentalists on both sides "will lead us into another war and the moderate and willing people will lose the battle". His only hope is that there will be support from abroad, e.g. the European Union, United Nations or the USA. They all together must put pressure on both sides to find an agreement.

It is a very sad evening, as the young participants could realize how adults see everything from a different perspective and how their experiences and socialization have influenced their political points of view. The young project members were willing to meet, they have learned from each other, have talked about indivisible human rights, are more optimistic than adults and want to live in a more peaceful region.

After a short break to relax and Carolin's endeavour to settle down the emotions and the dispute, we play, dance and sing again together, the end of the evening is a big party!

### Commentary

....Suleiman's prospects for the future are very negative.

He speaks of a great war that will come. This setting frightens us. But not only in this respect, this lecture was something special.

For the first time we Germans were able to see in an impressive, but above all frightening form how emotionally deep this conflict actually goes. During the lecture, it was hard for some people from Israel to remain seated in their chairs because their opinion does not coincide with the Palestinian one.

Some left the room temporarily, it was a strange atmosphere. In the discussion neither side really listened, the different views got stuck on both sides. Many talked at cross-purposes, so this conflict can not be solved. It has become clear that only a productive discussion is helpful, that is, that the other opinion must be respected and honored! What is most important at that point - and that has taught us this week - is the simple but quite clever wisdom:

The one and only truth does not exist!

Jakob



**"Always at your command"**  
**The fight for the independence of Israel**  
**Interview with Yehuda Ziv, a "Palmach Warrior"**

**Tuesday Oct. 2**

Israelis/Germans doing interviews in Jerusalem

18:00 Dinner

Working in groups on the topics

**Wednesday Oct. 3**

Visiting the Schechter Institute for Conservative Judaism

Israelis/Germans doing interviews in Jerusalem

18:00 Dinner

**Thursday Oct. 4**

Interviewing each other: Roles of women and men, future

16:30 Interview with Yoel Freudenberg (84)

20:00 Farewell Party in Talitha Kumi

**Palmach**

The Palmach ("strike force") was the elite fighting force of the Haganah, one of the underground armies of the Jewish community during the British mandate time for Palestine (1920 to 1948). It was established in 1941 and had about 2.000 male and female members when the war broke out on May 14, 1948. After the war the Palmach was dissolved and integrated into the Israeli Army, the IDF (Israeli Defence Forces). The Palmach is part of many myths which came into existence during the foundation of the state of Israel. Famous commanders were Yitzak Rabin or Moshe Dayan.

Yehudah's family came from Russia, was deported to Siberia before they could escape to Palestine. The former teacher is now 87 years old, was drafted into the army in 1943 when he was just 17. Under the impression of German fighting in North Africa and the Jewish struggle for survival in Europe, his aim was to defend the Jews living in Palestine at that time.



We are sitting in a wonderful garden in Jerusalem and listening to the story of Yehuda Ziv. He speaks in a clear voice about the time, when Jews were struggling for their independence. Yehudah started a teacher's career in 1945, but was re-drafted when the war began.

At first the Palmach was even sponsored by the British, as they had to assist the British army against the Germans in North Africa, as many feared the Germans could invade Palestine from Egypt. For the German project members it is hard to believe that at the end of the British Mandate Jews, Beduins, Druze and Arabs were fighting



together against British rule. Young girls and women were fighting as well, hiding guns under their dresses,

**"In the Palmach  
men and women  
were equal"**

committing sabotage and guerilla attacks on the British army. Yehudah guesses that about 1/3 of the Palmach were female fighters. He describes the female soldiers as extremely brave, today units of the IDF are called after female heroes of that time.

Men and women were totally equal in the combat units. He recalls the well-known Palmach song, which - to our surprise - Yam sang along with him.

Until today there are meetings and ceremonies of veterans of the Palmach, remembering their struggle more than 60 years ago. Yehudah feels proud of his actions, although he doesn't feel "like a man of war". He says, he was driven into fighting, into defending the Jews living in Palestine. He regrets that there hasn't been peace until now and that many politicians start their own history in 1967, when Israel occupied much Arab land and thought they could occupy and rule other people. His dream of a Jewish state has come true, nevertheless he feels uncomfortable about the present situation, when many Palestinian suicide bombers are regarded as martyrs.



**"The Palmach spirit is still alive"**



## Palmach - Men and women into war



The seven "Azalzalot" (in Arabic it means "female deer, beauty ibex") of the second company (military unit), which was the first group of girls who served in the Palmach (Israeli Guerilla), in the big journey (10 days) to the Judean Desert.

Pictures and grey texts designed by Tamar Novoplansky



Hadasa Avidgor - from the "Phormans" girls (The convoy's escorts). She is the narrator of the book "Bderekh Shalachno", meaning "The way we went". In the picture you can see her practising in retrieving a "Stan" submachine gun from the silk dress.

One aim of the project was to listen to other perspectives and narratives and to think about the own attitude. That's the first step for a mutual understanding. The foundation of the state of Israel is the best example for that.

Left: Yehudah Ziv doing a "show off" by cleaning his teeth with a commando knife. He was only 22 years old at that time - but already an "old timer", who was released from the Palmach, but called back to fight in the "War of Independence".  
Right: Shosh Malmud (16) from the "Phormans" girls. On the side there's a convoy of Sandwich-armed automobiles. In the picture she is ready to go to the place the convoy is going to be prepared at.



### "Nakba"

Jewish Israelis call the fight for their own state "War of Independence", Palestinians and other Arabs call this war and its results "Nakba", the catastrophe. Arabs remember this event on May 15, a day after Jewish Israelis celebrate the declaration of the state of Israel on May 14, 1948. As a consequence of the war about 700.000 Palestinians fled or were driven away from their homeland and tried to find a new home in the surrounding countries. Until now the cause for the refugee problem is very much disputed, also if Arab Israelis should commemorate the "Nakba". Until now the refugee problem has been one of the main obstacles for a permanent peace.



## "I never stop learning" Interview with Sarah Novoplansky (85)



Sarah's family lived in Russia. After the Communist Revolution in 1917 they fled away from the pogroms to Palestine. As they had lived in Odessa on the Black Sea beaches, the new home had to be near a beach too. So they ended up in Karmiel. The parents were very much aware of equality, they were "very socialist and very Zionist". Sarah was born in 1927 in Haifa and joined a Haganah movement group already with 14 and stayed there for six years. Later she became a teacher at Junior High Schools. Her husband escaped from Eastern Europe, he is 89 now. The couple is an example of the tragic history of Jews from East Europe under Communist and later German rule.



We are sitting in a "museum", full of objects - all having personal historical meanings. Sarah is like an open history book, yet much more interesting and vivid. The most striking is her open-mindedness and her mental fitness. She is an example for many immigrants in Israel - representing individual fates and hopes at the same time.

Her parents' education showed her the way to equality. Her father did the washing, cooking and cleaning as well as his wife. So Sarah had a perfect example and therefore always kept on fighting for equal rights. Her mother influenced her most, she felt being "only" a housewife would be like slavery. Although her parents were convinced socialists, they didn't agree with what was going on in Russia after 1917. Her mother worked, reached academic education and taught her daughter: "Studying is a holy thing". So she became addicted to music. Her family couldn't afford a piano, so she had to practise in a neighbour's home. But some day her mother surprised her with a new piano, she had saved money to buy it and to give her

"Studying is a holy thing"



daughter the opportunity to study music - her dream had come true.

Besides she had many interests: education, languages (Jiddish), arts, history, archaeology, literature.

In the Haganah they trained together, practised shooting together, fought together for their common aim. She learned the Morse Code and "swore to do everything for her country". Although she had to defend the Jewish settlements, she was never educated to hate Arabs. When in 1941 Palestine was in danger to be occupied by the Nazis, her father hid a revolver to kill his family in case of a German invasion. She met her later husband in 1949 at a birthday party and fell in love at first sight. His history is another example of the "melting pot" Israel: He was

"I was educated to be equal - at home and in the Haganah"



raised in a "stetl" in the Polish-Lithuanian-White Russian corner and spoke Jiddish. Only he and his older sister could escape by joining a partisan group in the forests, the rest of his family perished in the Shoah. Until 1944 he lived undercover, was recruited for the Haganah and escaped illegally by ship to Palestine. He was caught near Beirut and imprisoned in the detainee camp of Atlit near Haifa. This camp was used by the British authorities to detain Jewish immigrants to Palestine.

One Religion - different views on the equality of men and women  
Lecture and discussion with Prof. David Golinkin  
Schechter Institute, Jerusalem



Rabbi David Golinkin welcomed us at the Schechter Institute. He explained nine different approaches to the status of women in Jewish law. It was a highly academic lecture, but it could open the eyes of the Jewish and Christian project members how Jewish theology argues and how different interpretations of holy writings have developed. He illustrated his topic with various texts reaching from typical haredim or ultra-orthodox authors unto the feminist approach. The topics in question are if women are allowed to recite the Tora or prayers, to witness in front of a Jewish court, to be obliged to use a Mikwe, to get married, to have different roles in family life, to have the Bar or Bat Mitzwa for boys or/and girls, to go the synagogue and where to sit there, to be ordained as a rabbi etc.



The Schechter Institute, Jerusalem

The Institute was founded in 1984 and is affiliated with Conservative Judaism. It is dedicated to the advancement of pluralistic Jewish education in Israel and Europe, it is a non-profit organization and supports four educational institutions for Jewish Studies, especially a school for Israeli educators (636 students), a Rabbinical Seminar (44 students), The TAL Education Fund (40.000 students) and the Midreshet Yerushalayim (2.500 students), which supports in particular immigrants from the former Soviet Union.



After a hard time thinking about religion: relaxing in the sun.

Ultra-orthodox - orthodox - conservative - liberal - reform - progressive - egalitarian - feminism.  
All words describing different attitudes within Judaism.

Examples of different Jewish approaches:

Source: D. Golinkin, nine different approaches to the status of women in Jewish law.

Men and women have to be separated in a synagogue.

Men and women should do different things in life.  
Nature has changed, so men and women have to change too.

Women may not serve as witnesses in Jewish law.  
The position of men and women can change, if there is no talmudic proof against it.

It is un-ethical if you push women out of society.  
Men and women are equal, so it's allowed to ordain female rabbis

Men and women should read the Tora.  
Boys and girls should do the Bar Mitzwa/Bat Mitzwa.  
Each law is human, so it can be changed.  
The Tora is not holy



## "I have no problem living with Arabs" Interview with Yoel Freudenberg (84)



Yoel Freudenberg, Amit's grandfather, was born in Berlin in 1927. He went to school in Germany for two years. At the age of eight, the family emigrated to Palestine. In Berlin they had owned the fashion store Hermann Gerson together with relatives producing "Berliner und deutsche Mode". The first boycott of Jewish shops was already on April 1, 1933, when SA-men were standing in front of the shop with posters: "Hier kaufen keine Deutschen" (No Germans buy in this shop). Those who did it despite of the warning, were photographed and put under pressure. Consequently the business went down and finally they fled from Germany in 1935. After World War II the German government decided to pay reparations to those who had lived in Germany, had survived or had lost relatives in the Shoah. It was a very complicated matter, but the Freudenberg family received 5.000 Deutschmark in 1956. The family used the sum to travel through Europe.



For young Germans it's strange listening to Israelis who still speak their mother tongue. Although Yoel speaks Ivrit and English, he often switched over to German to explain something to the German project members, "I can't escape my Jeckes home country". His father had fought in World War I for Germany, felt more as a German than a Jew, but the growing and violent antisemitism in Germany made them emigrate to Palestine. The situation there was a shock. The family wanted to lead a productive life, the parents were idealists and Zionists. They joined the first moshav in Israel, Nahalal, founded in 1921, not far away from Nazareth.

They were not used to farming and physical work, but there was no other choice. He compares the hard manual work with the milking robots nowadays, which is "nearly no work". Malaria made life extremely dangerous, but after some time they got over it and could buy swamp land, which they cultivated and where Yoel has been living until now. "I had good and bad times with Arabs", he tells us. Times changed from friendly meetings and cooperation with Arab neighbours to clashes with attackers, who shelled a Moshav near the Egyptian border, where he lived for some time. Yoel still makes differences between people, he warns us, "Generalizations are dangerous at any time". He was happy when the dangers were nearly over after 1948, but he says, "Nothing good has come out of all the wars".

**"Generalizations  
are dangerous  
at any time"**

He personally believes in Jewish religion, but he doesn't like the extreme way of worshipping. In Germany he just knew that he was Jewish, but it didn't really mean anything. When the Nazis came into power, the situation changed, "Aryans" recognized that he was circumcised.

Yoel has got five daughters, he tells a joke, "Don't be unhappy with five daughters, it's much better to have five daughters than five daughters-in-law".



He is convinced that women and men must have equal rights, but because nature has decided that women have the babies, women have a different attitude towards education and household. He has translated all the documents for his descendants from German into Ivrit. His wife comes from a Polish family, that emigrated into the Ottoman Empire around 1900. He explains us, "She was a Palestinian Jew".

## The Middle East on the Couch? Interview with the psychologist Ruben Vider



Ruben is a Jewish psychologist who was born and raised in the United States, but now lives in Jerusalem. He studied social work in Edinburgh and then he came to Israel, met his wife and stayed there. He worked in the army with traumatised Israel soldiers. Nowadays he works together with a Palestine woman (Susan). They work with young people (mostly women) from Israel and Palestine to get to know each other and to see each other as persons not as enemies.

Ruben says, "It is possible to hate and to like a person at the same time. You can say: I like you as a person, but you belong to people that are terrorizing me".

He works together with Susan with young women from both sides. They try to find similarities within the groups. They deal with art and art projects to communicate about their problems.

Ruben, "Israeli women are expected to work, Palestinians are supposed to be a mother and housewife. But it is necessary to be well educated. You can be whatever you want to be. It is an obligation to go and fight for equality between men and women. Why should men tell women what to do and not to do?"

You can hate and like a person at the same time

"There are young women on both sides that struggle with the same problems. Young women want to work and to be free. They want to have a free choice of profession and a

free choice of lifestyle."

"In Palestine the families say what women should think and do and in Israel the army says what women should think and do."

"There is a lot of pressure for men and women in my country (Israel) to go to the army. I'm part of a country that occupies others. We want to survive, but that's no excuse for occupation. I want to live here, but I also want Susan to live here as a Palestinian citizen."

Ruben's wife works in a public organisation of human rights that fight against tortures against Palestinians and Israelis. "We have a constant struggle between the organisation and the society. It is extremely important that the public sees what is happening. To live here means to live with dissonances and conflicts."

Young women want to be free

Ruben says, "This whole conflict is like an onion. There are so many layers to peel off until you reach the core - the individual with his/her human rights. We train our patients to be human. But if we reach the core of the onion, human rights are at risk at the same time, as all the protective skins have gone."





## "The honour of a girl is like glass" Interview with Faten Mukarker



Faten's parents emigrated together with her and two brothers from Beit Jala to Bonn, Germany. She was born in 1956, attended a German kindergarten, a German school, had German friends, spoke only German. Until she was 12, she felt like a German, but with her beginning puberty a lot changed. Her father, grown up in an Arab civilization, forbade her going out of the house alone. She finished her secondary education with 16 and became a doctor's assistant. In 1975, when she was nearly 20, her parents took her back to their family's hometown. Her future husband was already waiting for her: Faten wanted to talk to him first. She did it even three times, completely unusual for a woman at that time. Her mother explained her the sentence "The honour of a girl is like glass, nobody can fix broken glass together, no family member will be able to walk through Bei Jala with his/her head raised". At last she agreed to get married. "Many of my German friends are divorced, I still live with my husband", she says. We met Faten in Germany. Today she lives in Beit Jala, has two daughters and two sons and wrote a book about her life: "Life between borders".

In our interview we concentrate on the role of women in Arab civilization. Faten points out that women in Palestine have to fight against two fronts: Against the patriarchal system, dominated by men and religion, and against the restrictions of her personal freedom by occupation within the Middle-East Conflict. She misses the clear distinction between state and religion. Even though she is a Christian Palestinian, she has to fight for her rights in a traditional Arab society. Many Muslim and Christian women don't want to be restricted to kitchen, children, church, as this way of life is called in Germany. She feels that the society sometimes steps forward, but then again backwards. It also makes a difference where you live, whether in Ramallah, Bethlehem or Beit Ummar. Most of the students who study abroad, do not return home. At universities nearly 60% of the students are female, but only about 10% find a job.

### Equality through education?



The chance to work in Israel has nearly come to a standstill.

So what can a woman do when she has got excellent diploma?

Arab traditions, that sons care for their parents and that daughters move into the husband's household, is still valid. Faten's two sons: One has emigrated and didn't come back, the other one, Kamal, studied in Germany and is now a tourist guide. In excellent German and playing flute he guided us through Bethlehem and read out of his mother's book. At that time we didn't know the family ties between the two.

"They are like us", Faten tells us about Israelis: Both peoples went through various traumata, on one side the Shoah, the fight for the state of Israel, the other side the Nakba, the loss of their Palestinian homeland. Neither side knows enough about the neighbour's history and emotions. Faten watches a new generation growing up without sufficient knowledge about the other side, many Palestinian children only experience Israelis as

soldiers or aggressive settlers. Additionally the wall prevents personal contacts.

We ask again about the "broken glass" metaphor, as it seems to be one of the crucial points in the relation between men and women: Her brother or her sons do not risk to lose reputation, they are allowed to do nearly anything, but the daughter's honour must be "white", this is at the same time the family's honour. Now we understood the great pressure of our female project participants, who admit similar aspects in many private talks late in the evenings. One girl - she doesn't want to be mentioned - says it clearly: "Everything circles around our virginity".

So what to do?

Faten sees a solution in education. If you educate a woman, then you educate a boy and a nation at the same time. If mothers educate a boy not to feel like a boss or prince then there might be chances on a long-term basis.

We were impressed by Faten's optimism and her ability to express her emotions in a calm and never aggressive way. She is always able to see the other side as well and never loses her dignity as a Palestinian woman.



## Neve Shalom - Stopping the philosophy of hatred

In the 1970s the Dominican monk Bruno had the idea of Israelis and Palestinians living in peaceful coexistence. The

Trappist Monastery nearby gave the founders land to build up this model village. Today 60 families with different religions live there. The whole conflict is always hovering above the village: Palestinians feel that they do not belong to the state of Israel, although both groups are indigenous and both believe that they have the right to live in this part of the world. Israel is a Jewish state, Palestinians are not a nation until now, they are dominated by Jewish law, the state symbols are Jewish, the main language is Hebrew. "Equality is only on paper", Howard explains us, "Jews are a minority in the Middle East, Palestinians are a minority in Israel".

The institutions within the village are based on the principles of peace and understanding. The result of many years is that each group has to learn as much as possible about the other group to overcome mistrust, stereotypes and prejudice.

They teach the members that they have the power to change something - even as individuals. They make role plays about symbols, army service, the national anthem. The community wants a change on a grassroots level, on an individual basis. They demonstrate together against attacks from settlers, who paint racist slogans on the gates of the school. "Respect requires knowledge about the other culture, prejudice result from a lack of familiarity, the phobia against Jews or Arabs is widespread".

The members are mostly secular, there is no church, mosque or synagogue, but a spiritual "House of Silence". No holy book rules over the members, decisions are taken democratically and on the principles of human rights. There are problems of course, e.g. how to celebrate "The Nakba" or the "Independence Day", how to mourn over a killed Jewish soldier. But after long discussions "we agree not to agree".

That makes this village unique.





## Picture Gallery - Neve Shalom



Commentary (author's name missing)

...Allegedly, Neve Shalom looks like a utopian town where Jews and Arabas have found the right way to live a life of peace and cooperation, but throughout the conversation we have clarified things. Neve Shalom can take place only with a certain type of people, people with similar political opinions. Neve Shalom is pretending to be representative or a role model. In my view this is not correct.

During our conversation we encountered one significant story which represents all life in Neve Shalom. On Independence Day celebrations and parties are not like in the rest of Israel and on Memorial Day there is no ceremony. The reason is, that they didn't find a proper way to address these important days: "Each family can perpetuate its nationality privately at home", Howard and Esther tell us.

During our tour through the village we didn't see any Israeli or Palestinian flag. Residents have found a solution for living together, only if you give up your patriotism and your love for your country. By denying your identity and nationality one can live in partnership and be involved in other issues, such as which shape will take the main building - a triangle or a circle?

Neve Shalom is a very brave and unique community, but pretending to be a role model is absurd for me.

## "In war I need to turn my opponent into a monster"

Half way from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem is a little bubble hovering over the conflict in the Middle East: There lies a little village, where Palestinian and Israeli families live together in peace. It's the community 'Neve Shalom', meaning „oasis of peace“. About 60 families of both cultures live in this place and they want to become even more. All united by the dream of peace, they want to work for changes in their country. They committed themselves to a bilingual, binational peace-school and interreligious encounters. A glimmer of hope? A microcosm as a promising model for a whole country?

So the ideal of living together in peace does not stay an exceptional phenomena, the citizens therefore try to spread their principles far and beyond their small community by peace-lessons. At this moment the schools in Neve Shalom are visited by ca. 150 children, about 90% of them do not live inside the little community but come from the surrounding area. Lessons are given in Hebrew as well as in Arabic. Also the exchange about culture and traditions, as constituent elements of each identity, play an important role for the co-existence. Also further education for pedagogues, encounters for women, courses for intermediators etc. are organized to make meetings possible, where the conflicting parties can learn together, from each other and about each other. The citizens not only want to be a role model, but also try to influence a broader part of society by education and information.

Growing up together shall enable the pupils to see the other as an individual and not getting to know him as an enemy in the first place. But what happens, when they leave the peaceful microcosm and daily experiences with the other culture become dominated by the conflict and less by peaceful and friendly encounters? Palestinian youths usually continue their educational efforts, go to university, maybe get married and build up a family. Whereas almost every Israelis starts the military service in the IDF, a 2-3 year break instructed by the state of Israel. So after school both sides make very different experiences and start to depart from each other.



So we meet Mr. Q, who served the army as a psychologic consultant for several years and now works together with a muslim colleague for a social project. 'As much as I like you on a personal level, but you occupy my land!' says his partner when it comes down to their position in the conflict. So as soon it is about territory, politics, history and room for living, all personal appreciation is moving into the background. Fear and tendency to defend the own claims start to dominate every form of communication. In the lasting history of the conflict, hatred was passed on from generation to generation; prejudices rather increased than negative experiences faded. 'In war I can't see the opponent as an individual. I need to turn him into a monster in order to protect myself.' This kind of

depersonalization is in large parts also spread by educational means. In case of a battle or uncontrolled situations, this principle is there to be a constant point and to give orientation, so one does not have to make decisions about who's good and bad every time anew. Unfortunately Israel and Palestine have been in such a state of insecurity for its time being.

Doesn't this act against the education for peace?

In the bubble of Neve Shalom we find tranquility and balance. Sitting together with tea and cookies the community members explain us that their kind of pluralism implies that they sometimes have to agree, that they're sometimes not sharing the same opinion. So this example seems not to be so easy to transfer to the conflict between Palestinians and Israeli in a whole. But does that mean that peace education shall only stay in the hands of idealists living a dream far away from reality?

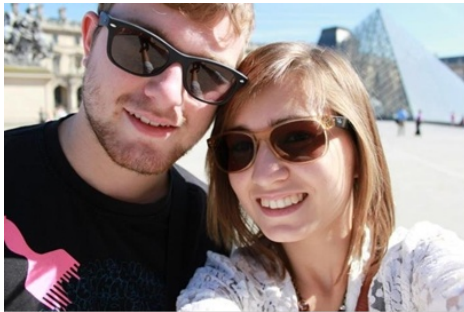
Even though this village does not reflect and represent the variety of the Israeli-Palestinian society, because in Neve Shalom only those meet, who really want to live together, it is all about those kind of people, who do want to live in peace.

If Neve Shalom can be transferred into a bigger project, is not really important. But they show that living together is possible even if there are differences and conflicts, if you are willing to invest into a common project, hang on to ideals and spread the idea of peace. So peace education is not in vain. On the contrary: It's even more important to reach more people to stop the increasing philosophies of hate.



## "Love is in the air"

Three young people from Israel, Palestine and Germany talk about the differences in love and relationship in their culture

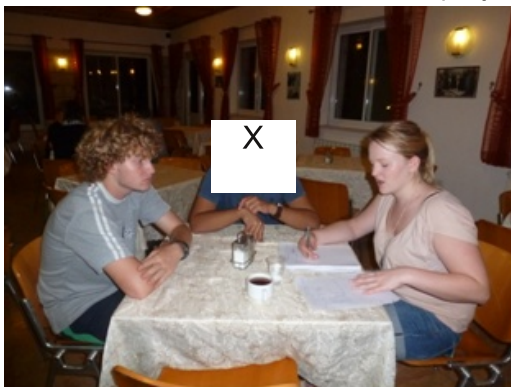


Amit (Israel), Theresa (Germany) and X. (Palestine, he doesn't want to be mentioned) are sitting in the dining room of Talitha Kumi, young people from different nations and civilizations. This is one of the few places in the Middle East where they can meet. They are discussing the personal situation and opportunities. They have a lot in common, but

there are some differences resulting from their different cultural and/or religious backgrounds.

Amit (17) from the Negev desert, says, "There is no problem being in a relationship with a girl as long as she is from the same religious group and has the same opinions as I have". That reflects the situation of young people in Israel and Palestine: People from different religious and cultural background don't have contact with each other.

Amit adds, "Some people don't take relationships serious, they are having a relationship because of different reasons which are not love, for example just for posing or just having sex".



The situation in Palestine is completely different: Having sex or several relationships before marriage means a social disgrace for the person and the whole family. X. says, "For me it's hard to have a relationship, because even if I am Christian, my society has Islamic traditions. That means neither sex before marriage nor acting like a couple in public. It's extremely important, especially if you are a girl, to be a virgin before you get married. There are medical examinations to check your health and your virginity before marriage. The examination can change your ability to get married."

"In Germany", Theresa says, "however, it is not a problem to have relationships and sex at teenage age, also not for me as a young woman. As long as we properly protect ourselves against diseases or pregnancy, it is also not a problem for most parents. Of course 50 years ago it was different. Sexual education is taught in Germany at the age of 10, even if some religious people are against this. I think it is important to know facts about sex and partnership. Most of my friends can openly talk with their parents about sex.

Theresa (17), "Love, sexuality and partnership play a big role in the lives of adolescents. Our society has changed a lot in the last 50 years. Media, parents and my environment exemplify permissiveness. Nowadays it is easy to have a relationship in public without being forced to hide it."

Amit (16), "Today in the state of Israel there is freedom for the secular people to have a relationship. Every couple can do whatever they want, like expressing love in public and hanging around. But it is different in orthodox communities".

X, (22): "For me it is very hard to have a relationship, because even if I am Christian, my society has Islamic traditions and I have to follow them."

Friendship/Relationship/Sex/Marriage  
Interviewing each other: Very personal answers, without names and not representative!

Question	German	Palestinian	Israeli
1. Is a boy and girl-friendship (without any romantic interest) common in your country?	It's a common thing, I have more boy- than girl-friendships	It's very common	It's very common
2. When do you start having a relationship?	About at the age of 14, but people with good education may start earlier	At about 17	Something like between 14 and 15, when high school starts
3. How does the community influence your relationship?	I live in a small village, where there is a lot of gossip. You must be careful who you are going to a party with, the people will talk about it later. If s.b. gets pregnant or gets married at an early age (before 18), many people say it's weird and he/she should have done it after getting a job, experience life etc.	If you are in a relationship for a long time, people start talking about you. In a small community people and especially the parents of the girl care about the gossip, so they get married earlier than they want to.	I don't feel that community puts me under pressure. I am also not interested in this kind of gossip. I don't care about what others think about my relationships
4. What do you think about gay relationship?	Gay marriage is accepted in Germany, also by law. I accept it as well.	No one accepts this here, gay marriage is illegal, we don't like gays. I agree with this opinion, because in culture a man needs to be a man. We know some gays, we talk about them only bad things and don't like them	Gay marriage is not accepted in Israel because of religious reasons. I personally think that it is O.K. and that gay people should have the same rights as the others. Some of my friends are gay and they are great people.
5. Do you talk at school about pregnancy?	We talked about it in biology for three weeks and how to prevent it. They showed us all kinds of contraceptives, we got condoms as a present. My mum also talked with me about abortion.	We had just a short lecture about it and how to prevent it. My parents don't talk with me about it, I learned about it by myself	We don't talk about it very much at school. I feel free to talk about it with my parents



Question	German	Palestinian	Israeli
6. What is your opinion about getting divorced?	It's common to get divorced. I don't think it is good that in my country more than 30% get divorced. You should make sure about your love and partner before getting married. .	It takes about three years to get divorced and it's really hard. You have to do it in church and you must have a good reason, like cheating or not being able to have a baby. My parents also got divorced.	You have to get divorced by a rabbi, even if you didn't get married by an orthodox rabbi. A lot of my friends have divorced parents.
7. Do you think it's O.K. to have sex before getting married?	I feel it's O.K., most people have sex before marriage. Most people have sex in a relationship. It's weird if you are already 20 and you haven't had sex yet.	We don't have sex before getting married, even if a couple has been together for a long time, e.g. four years.	I think it's O.K., it feels good. Of course religious people don't do it before marriage. Most people I know don't have a problem with it.
8. What do you think about abortion?	I think it's not easy to make such a decision.	It's not legal in Palestine. I think it should not be legalized. In my opinion it is murder.	I think it should be allowed only in rare situations, e.g. after a rape. But I don't know what I would do in such a difficult situation.
9. At what age do people get married in your country?	In Germany I think the average marriage age is about 29.	It used to be 17-18, but now it's 20-25. Muslims get married earlier than Christians.	It depends on the person. If you are religious, you get married after high school, but if you serve in the army and you want to see the world after the service and go to university, like my sisters, then you get married later.

## Different identities and different opinions Interviewing each other about special topics in mini-groups

### 1.) Are men and women in the police of your countries equal?

Christine (Pal.):

No, they aren't equal. They do different jobs and the women aren't allowed to carry guns or investigate/joining serious stuff.

Noam (Isr.):

I think in Israel men and women are equal in the police. They both carry weapons and do the same jobs.

Melanie (Ger.):

In Germany men and women are equal in the police because we are living in a democracy. It is not allowed to discriminate women in police.



### 2.) Do women and men have the same feeling of national identity?

Christine:

"Yes, they do. Mostly women believe more in their country than men, maybe they have a stronger feeling of national identity than men".

Noam:

Yes, they are proud to live in this country. One of the reasons is that women also go in the army not because they have to, they want it.

Melanie:

Yes, but there are some people who don't want to be called Germans, because of the Nazi-period in Germany.



### 3.) What do you think about the project?

Christine:

"I think that this is a very good project, because it lets us know the opinion of the other side about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and maybe it works out some solutions."

Noam:

"It's a really good opportunity to meet Palestinian people and make friends with them"

Melanie:

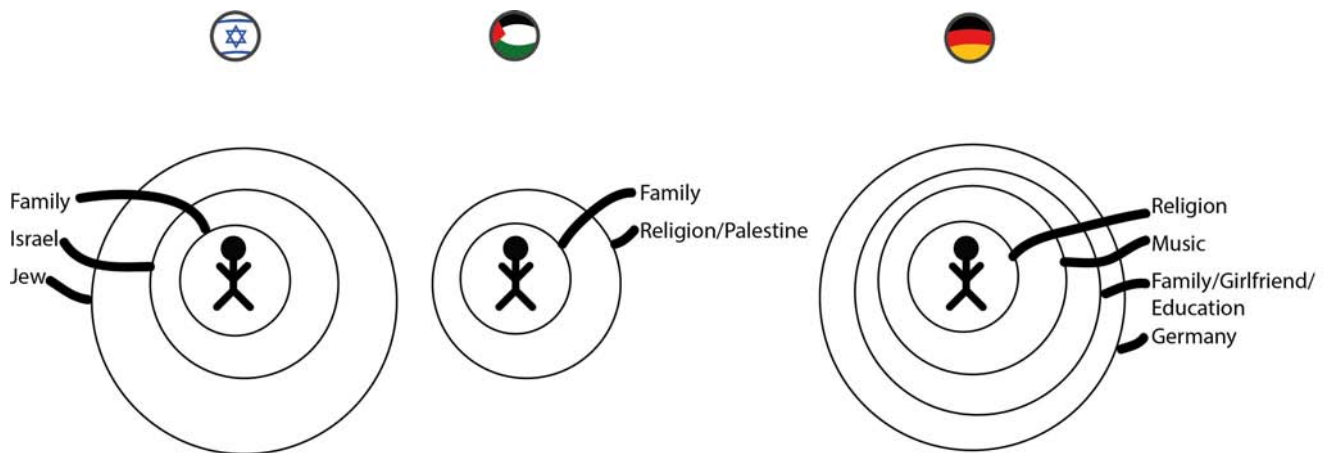
"The project helps us more to know about the countries. We can make friends with them and maybe I'll meet them again, because of the project."





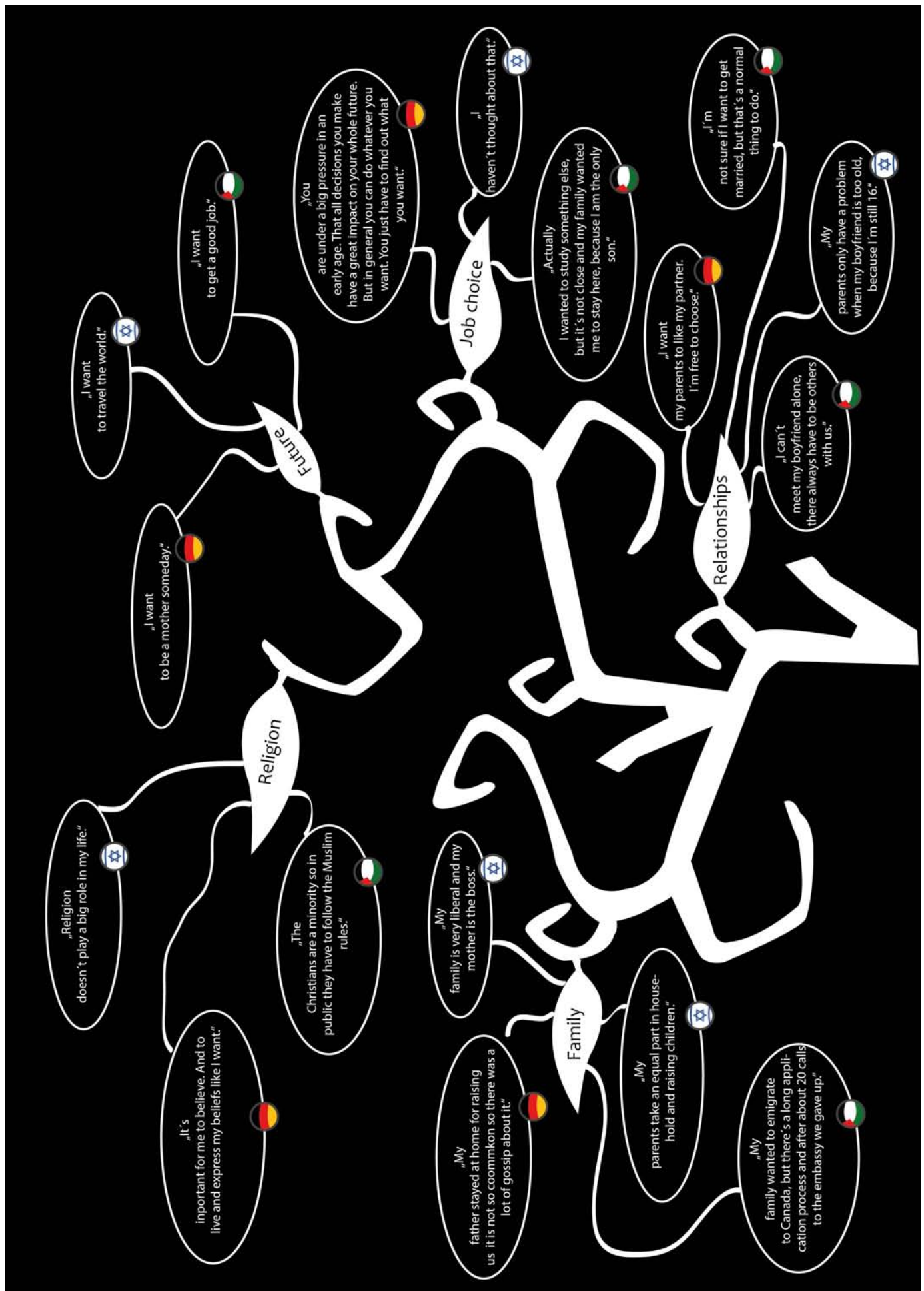
### Different cultures - different identities.

Elena asked three boys, what they mostly identify with: Hanna, Lukas, Yam. The answers are not representative. Hanna only mentioned two aspects.



The editorial staff would like to thank the different groups for their open answers. They are very personal and subjective, but they can give us an insight into the different attitudes within the three cultures. We do not want to judge the answers, yet they show us the attitudes concerning men and women in different civilizations. The talk in mini-groups about personal problems was the most effective one in the project.

"A Future Life Tree", designed by Elena Etges. Do the statements fit to your stereotypes and prejudice?







## Women living under religious pressure Interview with Palestinian and Israeli girls

### Living under religious pressure

Everybody is equal, everybody has the right to practise the religion he/she wants. That is the meaning of human rights. But the reality is different throughout many civilizations in the world. We talked to a Christian Palestinian and a secular Jewish girl. A (Palestinian), B (Israeli)

A: "In Palestine you are confronted from early childhood with the belief in God. You cannot choose your belief, as it depends on the family you are born into. That influences your later life, no matter if you are Christian or Muslim".

A. makes a difference in the way you practise yur religion:

1. If you live a religious life you follow traditions and rituals, you live according to the religious laws, you have a personal distance to God.

2. You live your religion, but traditions and rituals are not so important, you have a personal and close relationship with God and you cultivate this relationship.

As Christians are a minority in Palestine, they have to orientate according to the rules and social demands of Muslims. This is especially true for your behaviour in public: no short clothes, covering shoulders and knees. Christians have to listen to the regular Muezzin call for prayer, they hear it from the towers all over Palestine. Christians have to tolerate it.

She sums up, that Christians feel under pressure in public to follow the Islamic rules. If you don't follow them, you have to suffer from bad looks, unpleasant remarks and even contempt.

B: In Israel people live their Jewish religion very differently. There are orthodox or ultra-orthodox Jews, who orientate their lives completely according to the Tora and the fulfillment of religious laws. On the other hand there are Jews, who know the Tora, but do not live according to religious laws. Others are liberal or don't believe in any God.

B. explains a very interesting aspect. As a kibbuznik she has a relationship with an orthodox boy. Her kibbuz is normally just the opposite of this very religious lifestyle. She experiences limits:

On Shabbath there are no busses to meet her boyfriend, shops are closed. When she first met her boyfriend's family, she felt very uncomfortable, as she was exposed to the looks of her boyfriend's siblings. When she dressed herself immodest, she was examined thoroughly from top to bottom. That disturbed her very much and it was embarrassing. She had the feeling that her boyfriend's parents didn't accept this relationship.

In case of a future marriage she thinks that she doesn't have to follow all orthodox norms, but she certainly has to obey many rules, e.g. to go to the synagoge regularly.

Basically everybody can decide how intensively he/she practises religion. But it is extremely difficult for those, who are born into an orthodox family.

Lukas



Boys and girls  
practising at Talitha  
Kumi Hotel College



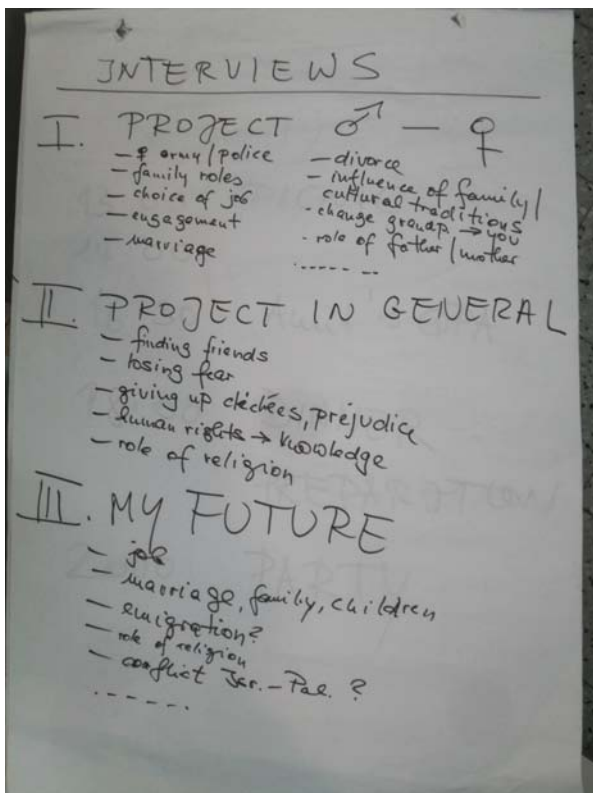
## A process to peace? A Commentary by Tal Arbel (16)

It all started in Germany. Since then we have heard much about the hard lives of Palestinians. We heard about the bad economy, corruption, the underdeveloped media system, the unemployment, lack of freedom. This life is extremely difficult and I hope no one in the world would have to live a life like that. However after some discussions I had the feeling that Palestinians are innocent, poor, humble people and the Israelis are terrorists and emotionless monsters. After that I started to understand that this conflict cannot be handled until the basic living conditions will be solved. First the economy, corruption and political leadership have to be fixed - only then we can start talking about agreements and peace.

The Israeli government is not responsible to fix the Palestinian Authority problems. It is not in our responsibility to take 3-4 million Palestinians, Muslims and Christians, and support their economy and fix their lack of leadership, we have our own problems. I think that as a member in the Arab League, the Palestinian Authority can ask for money and experts to fix the hard conditions with 21 countries. The Israeli government would be more than happy to give promotions to those kinds of experts to go into the Westbank and Gaza Strip to fix the problems. The living conditions in the PA area have to improve, only then we will be able to sit together, speak as equals and reach some agreements. Not through operation and not through occupation. Not through meaningless speeches and not through bitterness. But only through actions we can get somewhere, only through real meaningful actions we can fix the conditions in Palestine.



Interviewing eye-witnesses, interviewing each other. Christof's T-Shirt. The project members could choose the partners and the topics.



	ISRAELI	PALESTINIAN
JAN	Amit ( <del>boy</del> )	Amira
JAKOB	Omer	Dina
FELIX Carolin	<del>Einat</del> Einat	Tamer
JONAS, TILL MELANIE (CH)	Noam	Christine
LUKAS	Hila	Jane
ELENA	Yam	hanna
ALEXANDRA	Tamar	Samer
THERESA	Amit (boy)	Adele
MARIE	Tal Einat	Adham
MELANIE (K) CAROLIN	Ofri	John

## "We agree that we sometimes disagree" - Similarities and differences Eynat Goldman



A sculpture in Kibbutz Zeelim, a symbol for the mutual dependence?



The human rights project allowed us to have meetings between three nations: German, Palestinian and Israeli. Using a common language, we found out that there are many things which - from the past until the present - the different nations have in common. Somehow many things are combined with each other. Though many political conflicts exist between these countries, we all came together, teenagers representing our nations, talking together and having fun, disregarding the differences of religion, race and sex.

### Relationships in the Past

We started to talk about our families and about our societies as they were in the past. The Germans' parents met each other and after their wedding their first child was born. After her son's birth, his mother quit her job saying she wants to be with him and to concentrate with raising the family. The Palestinians told us that their parents weren't allowed to meet each other in public or have a closer relationship before marriage. The Israelis' parents were allowed to meet and to get to know each other, and after their wedding they built their home, and raised their children while both staying at their jobs.

### Friendships

During the years we met new friends in different places in different time periods. The Germans have a few friends from their childhood. Now they learn in different areas in their country and know different people. Still, they stay in good contact with their childhood friends, even though they live a few hours away from each other. The Palestinians grew up together, learnt together and they still hang out together. The Israelis grew up together and they have known each other since they were born. They have good contact which keeps them together. Besides their childhood friends, they meet new friends at the elementary school and at high school.

### The Future

Our future includes army, university, a job, a family. The Germans consider the option of going out of their country and meeting other people and different cultures and societies. After high school they start learning at the university without knowing yet what they will do with the degree they will get. The Palestinians find it hard to imagine themselves succeeding ... in Beit Jala.



## An insoluble conflict? Freedom and human rights - the past (Hila, Ofri, Amit)

The Holocaust is a subject with many different aspects. People usually concentrate on concentration camps and the hardship of the prisoners. One unusual story that we encountered is that of the Jews who belonged to the underground "Partisans" group - those who had the courage and managed to flee into forests, often went alone without their family. They joined a group of strangers who all shared the same aim, religion and culture. They escaped to the woods for freedom and the right to fight.

Zvi Novoplansky, born in 1923, chose to flee to the forests of White Russia when he was only 18, where he joined the Partisans. He was born in the town Dooinsok in border corner of Poland, Lithuania and White Russia, where he studied at a Hebrew school, spoke and wrote in Hebrew. He and his family - his father, mother and two sisters, were part of a movement called "Culture", whose purpose was to preserve the culture of the Jewish people among the Jews of Europe. Zvi also joined the youth organization "Hashomer Hatzair". Zvi's and his friends' dream was to come to Palestine and cultivate the land.

In 1941 the Nazi regime came and went through the town, took Jews to concentration camps or shot people. At that time Zvi fled to the woods, only to return a short while after to save his family. First, he took his mother and sister, and only after he came back to take his father and other sister. Unfortunately by then his sister was captured by the Nazis, and he continued to flee to the woods.

The life of Zvi in the woods was not simple - it was hard to keep the faith, to get food and warm during the cold winter, but still he had the group morale which he used to flame the fire in his spirit for the war for freedom.

According to our opinion, one of the biggest rights taken in the concentration camps and labor was freedom. The Partisans fled and fought for this right. Although they had many limitations in the woods, this right was significant and this ultimately led to the possibility of their fight to save Jews and others in order to come to Israel.

So what is freedom? This is a natural right given to a person being an individual, with intelligence and the ability to manage his/her life. This right ensures the freedom of every person and to protect any person from the tyranny of the government - it is not dependent of any rule, nobody gives it to you, and it cannot be revoked by any authority.

According to this definition we can see how the Nazis stole this right, and prevented millions of people not only the right for freedom but all other natural rights, which actually prevented humans from being humans. The Nazi government took from the people their humanity.

We think - the Partisans' fight was even greater than fighting for the right of freedom, but fighting the fight for the right to be human and not an object with no feelings and rights.



## An insoluble conflict? Freedom and human rights - the present (Hila, Ofri, Amit)



The fence/wall separating Jerusalem from Bethlehem. Dima's permission to get into Israel. Road sign at the entrance of Beit Jala.

These days we are part of a multinational delegation - Palestinians, Germans and Israelis. During the expedition we raised many questions: Are there any rights that are prior to right of freedom? Is it possible in certain circumstances to limit or to breach the rights of others for your own rights?

After we met with the people and we have formulated opinions, we tried to think of cases where the rights of one party are broken for the rights of another party. Today in Israel there is a fence or wall, called by some people the security fence, by others the barrier fence or segregation wall. The fence/wall was built by Israel to prevent the infiltration of terrorists into Israel's borders after the second intifada. Nowadays there is a fence around most parts of the West Bank, and the IDF controls and keeps the security in some areas, elements which also keep the area somewhat quiet. This fence restricts and prevents thousands of people who live in the West Bank to enter easily to the State of Israel. Citizens of the Palestinian Authority cannot enter the territories of the state of Israel without permission and even after they are approved, they encounter many difficulties entering Israel, thus many innocents' right for freedom is being harmed, such as available and appropriate hospital in extreme emergencies, flying through the Israeli Airport Ben Gurion Airport and more ...

Equally affected are rights of Israelis, as the rights for free movement and expression of many citizens of the Palestinian Authority. For example, for security reasons in Israel there is a violation of right for privacy, so children grow up in Israel not always with a sense of security as one should. Today in Israel at the entrance to every shopping mall, a public building, and usually at the entrance of each building there is a security guard who checks the bags for bombs or other weapons. The sense of security in Israel is not high among the citizens, but the percentages of terrorism in the country decreased since the fence was built. Having said that, rockets are still being fired at Israel and people need to stop their day off and run into shelters and stay there until the danger passes. And here is the difficult question - is it possible to take away the right of another person in order to prevent him from taking your right? And whether you can take someone else's rights on behalf of your own principles?



A final meeting on October 10, 19:30 Talitha Kumi  
A talk with Dr Salm, chairman of the Foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility, Future"

As Dr Martin Salm was in Israel at the time of our project, we agreed to meet him before the Germans flew back home the following day. Some Israelis came from the Negev, Palestinians walked the way up to the hill, the Germans passed the Tunnel Checkpoint to the main spot of the project. All three partners had a delegation present to summarize the project.

Dr Salm first gave a short history of his foundation: Following the fall of the Iron Curtain after 1989, the German Parliament together with many industrial companies had decided to grant money for former forced labourers under National Socialism, who had had to work like slaves for the industry, for the state or private firms from 1933 to 1945.

It took a long time until the money was collected and distributed among 1.66 mio former forced labourers in 98 countries. € 5.5 billion were provided by the German government and industry. The foundation was founded in 2000 primarily to make payments to former forced labourers. The payments were completed in 2007. It was a big task to find out these people, to organize the transfers of money and to help the people to apply for the recompensation. After the first aim had nearly been finished, the foundation wanted to continue, to inform and educate young people all over Europe about what had happened and to build a bridge between the past and the present. The Foundation established a program "EUROPEANS FOR PEACE", that put the human rights into the focus and to support international projects dealing with human rights. In 2012 more than 30 project applications were accepted, among them the project "Women at the cooking pot and men into war?", the only one with a trilateral approach with Germans, Israelis and Palestinians.

We have put together some statements of the delegation members during our evaluation talk in Talitha Kumi. They need no commentary.

#### Opinions about the project

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Jakob (Germany):    | I liked the trilateral meeting on the basis of human rights. Although sometimes emotions arose, we are friends now and not enemies. The project brought young people together and only young people can solve the whole conflict.  |
| Dima (Palestine):   | There are differences and conflicts between us, but we are all human beings. Until now I have seen Israelis only as soldiers, I never accepted them. Vice versa the Israelis see Palestinians only as terrorists. We all know the differences now, but we respect each other, understand each other and regard many as friends. The project helped a lot with that. We should rely on teenagers, because in the future the young people are the leaders. |
| Ameera (Palestine): | The subject about men and women was nice, it is relevant for everybody. It was the first time I met Israeli young people and I realized that there are also people who want peace. Politicians have only talked about it, but nothing has happened. We should continue with this or other projects to end the conflict. I can tell now Palestinian friends that I know people who like friendships with us.  |
| Ameer (Palestine):  | Sometimes we were bored about speeches of politicians. It was important that our topic was not a political one, furthermore it can help us at university.  |
| Carolyn (Germany):  | It was important to tell our lives to each other. I hope that human problems are more important than politics in the future. The Nazi time is always a topic in every German family.   |
| Eynat (Israel):     | During our project I also thought about myself. I have learned a lot.  |

- Marie (Germany): The project has changed our family life at home, my family members shared the feelings of Palestinians and Israelis. In the course of the project the feeling of being a real good group developed.  
I would like to continue with another project, maybe with the same people. Of course one project is not enough to change attitudes and to see clear results. It was sad, that only Germans could visit and stay in Palestinian or Israeli families and homes.  
Our interviews with all kinds of people were very helpful, we could get an insight into the thinking and emotions of Israelis and Palestinians. Especially interviewing each other showed that as young people we have many things in common and that we are nearer as many think.
- Jakob (Germany): I see the direct connection between German, Israeli and Palestinian history. Without World War II, the Holocaust and all the terrible consequences, it would hardly have been possible to create a Jewish state.
- Elena (Germany): Although Germany is directly involved in the conflict because of its special history and the relationship with Israel and the Jewish past, we were kind of "neutral", when conflicts and discussions between Israelis and Palestinians started.
- Carolin (Germany): By commemorating the past we have to shape the present and the future. Projects between the three cultures must continue. The foundation could establish an own program for the three participating groups.
- Nis (Israel): Without the project I would never have talked to Palestinians.



Chairman Dr Martin Salm (EVZ) listening to the results of the project





The key to gender equality is education, getting to know other cultures, friendship, peace.  
 Traditional roles are only changing gradually.  
 Our demands: Men and women at the cooking pot - neither men nor women into war!  
 Human rights for men and women - life is so colorful and joy!





## Project Members Gallery



Amera Amar



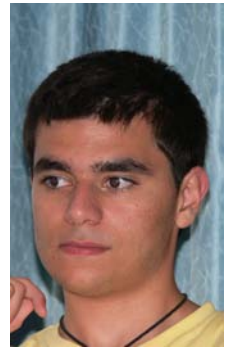
Marie Wagner



Melanie Christ



Melanie Karsten



Nicola Shaer



Jan Schneider



Tal Arbel



Johnny Shawan



Amit Spector



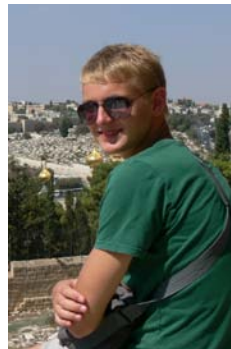
Elena Etges



Tamar Novoplansky



Carolin Manns



Jakob Nehls



Noam Vider



Yam Seaon



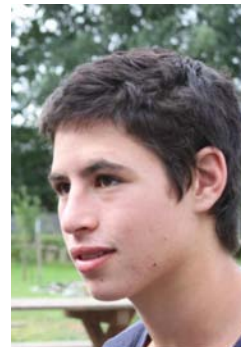
Bernd Mauerhof



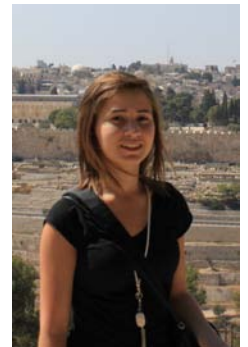
Marian Amro



Isel Badra



Omer Meir



Alexandra  
Bogdasarow





Hila Peleg



Christine Amro



Barbara Barham



John Bader



Felix Hill



Ulli Suppus



Till Bästlein



Eynat Goldmann



Ameer Abu Mohor



Dina Alaraj



Adel Istefan



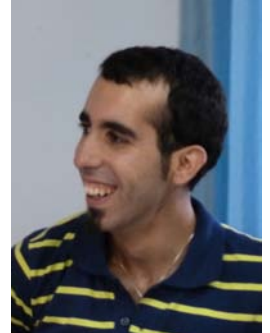
Christof Pies



Tal Pacht



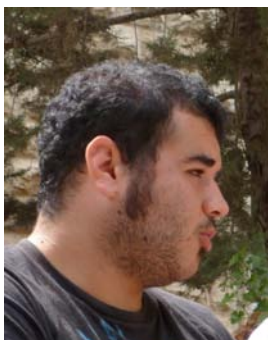
Lukas Linder



Tamer Zreineh



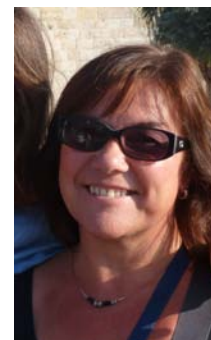
Dima Al Mukarker



Nis Rubin



Ofri Lazier

Andrea  
Günster-Wagner

Hanna Khair



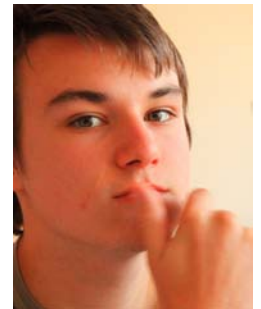
Theresa Volk



Amit Harel



Christa Wendling



Jonas Trzcensky





## Making media products

After another outbreak of violence in Israel and Gaza in November 2012 we were sitting in Kastellaun (photo 1), discussing if it would make sense to create an online newspaper, a print version and a film about a region, where seemingly nothing is or will be normal, neither in the present nor in the future. We watched Facebook-entries, exchanged mails with the participants, got answers or no response at all. The strange word "normalisation" was not a reason to stop our work. Many people in Israel and Palestine don't want any contacts with human beings living just some miles away to avoid any impression that everything is "normal". Nothing is "normal" and everything is political in this part of the world and affects everybody.

We decided to finish our job. A committee (typical German!) was established (photos 2, 3), that collected all the material we got from the project members. It was quite clear that some contributed more than others, some had given us about 10.000 photos, which we had to look through and select them for the newspaper. Fortunately Elena was working in a studio in Stuttgart (photo 4) at that time and was allowed to make a movie about our project. Thank you so much!

In the prevailing situation we tried to give our best and to keep the balance between all participants. As Germans we were very touched by many discussions, meetings, interviews and reports. We felt that we could contribute a bit to a real normalisation between human beings.

Our guideline was clear: Gender Equality according to the declaration of human rights.

We would like to thank all those who sent us their reports, commentaries, photos.

As we had to translate everything into English, there might be some distortions in the text. This was not our intention and we would like to apologize for that.

Without the generous donations of the foundations or organizations and the willingness of many persons to be interviewed, the project including the media would not have been possible.

Thank you all!

Carolyn Manns, Theresa Volk, Alexandra Bogdasarow, Christof Pies

The online version can be found under  
[www.equaltimes-magazine.com](http://www.equaltimes-magazine.com)



## Resolution

We are a group of German, Israeli and Palestinian young people. In Germany we met with the support of the German foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future" within the program "EUROPEANS FOR PEACE". We continued our work in Israel and Palestine on our chosen human rights topic

"All men are equal: Women at the cooking pot and men into war"?

We were supported by many additional foundations, churches and private persons.

In our own responsibility and on our own budget we are creating an online newspaper in English and a print one in Hebrew, Arabic and German about the results of our meetings. Despite political, cultural and religious differences we managed to work on this topic for nearly four weeks with tolerance and respect. We learned a lot about our own backgrounds, but also about the points of view of the other participants. Unfortunately it took a long time to make this project become reality, as there are many people in all countries that do not want that young people meet.

How can the situation in the Middle East change, if contacts between human beings are prevented or made impossible?

We are convinced that personal contacts can reduce clichés, prejudice and even hatred. The atmosphere of mistrust, hostility and fear must be overcome by mutual meetings and understanding.

We therefore appeal to you to promote these projects and encounters in order to create a better future for all of us.

Talitha Kumi, October 10, 2012

SIGNATURES

Felicitia	Andrea Büschel Wagner
Carolin Manns	Helene Kanten
Tamar Novopolsky	Christine Amis
Einat Goldmann	Hennig Kait
Amit Spector	Abraham
Omer Meyer	Christen Bar
Tal Peck	Marie Theres Wagner
Amit Erel	Helene Kait
Yam Seaton	John Bader
Amira Amir	Glen Elys
Idit	Tom Traub
Samir Bahman	T. Bastien
Julius Funder	Amir AbOo
Jan D. Schneider	ADHAN





Photo: Maximilian Eckhardt