

"A HUMAN BEING IS A HUMAN BEING"

Racism, Anti-Semitism and You Name It ...



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Text: Albert Lichtblau

Pedagogical concept: Maria Ecker

Editors: Werner Dreier, Maria Ecker, Albert Lichtblau

Project coordination: Maria Ecker

Layout and photo workshop: Sabine Sowieja

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RACISM, ANTI-SEMITISM AND YOU NAME IT . . .

This booklet looks at topics and questions that concern us all. You are probably familiar with the terms “racism” and “anti-Semitism”. These words have something to do with shutting people out socially. They involve belittling people and creating hostile images of them. There are lots of ways of sidelining and humiliating someone, as we all know from our own experience. Maybe you have witnessed or been indirectly or directly involved in such incidents. The topics in this booklet were developed from the opinions and experiences of young people in Austria. We talked to lots of young people from different backgrounds and religions at workshops all round the country. They discussed their experiences of anti-Semitism and racism and, more generally, they talked about social exclusion and denigration or disrespect. The most important workshop took place in Vienna on 10 April and 11 April 2010. Many of the statements and photos in this booklet came from the students at that workshop. Their thoughts and experiences are threaded through the text. However, your own are just as important. On the following pages, you will find lots of opportunities to express your opinions and share them with others.

Despite our best efforts, it was not possible to include everyone’s experiences of living in Austria. There was simply not enough space to let all the groups that are discriminated against express their views to the same extent; and some did not want to speak out publicly. So we are all the more grateful to those who took part in the project and allowed us to quote them.

Explanation of symbols:



Individual work



Pair work



Teamwork

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WHO AM I?



In April 2010, young people from different cultural and religious backgrounds across Austria met in Vienna on a two-day workshop. They exchanged points of view and talked about their own experiences of racism and anti-Semitism. Perhaps most importantly, however, they interacted with one another. Katia, one of the participants, describes it like this: "You get to have a proper talk with each other, a normal conversation, about your origins too. This experience was really unique."

I AM ...



Rafael

I grew up in a children's home and often screwed up. My parents are from Romania, but I was born here. I see myself as Romanian and Austrian, somehow both. Austria's also important to me; I like Austria, but when someone asks me what nationality I am I prefer to say: "Romanian".



Katia

Both my parents are from Austria, but my father's parents come from Germany. I like being Austrian. Am I actually proud of being Austrian? I can't be proud of something I didn't contribute anything towards. And anyway, I'm definitely not just Austrian; I'm lots of things all in one. My sense of home simply doesn't stop at a state or national border.



Doron

I feel a very strong attachment to Judaism because I was born a Jew. I live and practise my religion in accordance with Jewish traditions. This means I observe religious holidays, follow the Jewish commandments and therefore only eat kosher. People who are interested in Judaism should find out more about it. Apart from that, we all should know something about other religions, about Islam, Judaism and Christianity.



Temitope Favour

Favour means something like darling. Temitope is a word from my language, Yoruba, and means "I thank God". My father lives in Vienna and my mother in Lagos, Nigeria, where I grew up. I've lived in Austria for four years now and came here to study. Initially, I was really shocked when I suddenly found myself living among so many white people. At home, there were only people of my skin colour.

WE HAVE OUR IDENTITIES+++SOME ASPECTS I CAN CHOOSE. OTHER ASPECTS I CAN'T+++
AM I PROUD OF THESE?+++THERE ARE LOTS OF SIDES TO ME



Sami

My mother's from Vienna and my father's originally from Lebanon. My mother used to be a Catholic before she converted to Islam. When I was 16 I re-discovered Islam for myself. But when people first meet me they can't tell that I'm a Muslim; that's because of my Viennese accent and my looks. I personally consider myself to be an Austrian Muslim. However, I'm also a brother, a son, a sportsman and a student. There are many sides to me, which make me the person I am, and I don't want to be reduced to just one of these.



Dario

My name's Dario. My father fancied giving me a Persian name, although none of our family is from there. But I like my name. When I was 13 I realised that I'm gay. I wanted to talk myself out of it, which was extremely bad for me. My mother immediately went to HOSI (Homosexual Initiative) [an Austrian gay and lesbian organisation] and came home with a few leaflets. I now don't make a secret out of being gay, and I occasionally write a blog about gay issues. That's my latest project.

Everyone has their own identity. So, what does "identity" mean? It is related to "identifying with". You can identify with something because you like it or agree with it, whether it is a political opinion, a style of music or fashion, a philosophy of life or whatever. When other people share your views you can talk about what "we" think and what "we" like. You can choose which football club you like, what band you prefer and who to love. However, none of us gets to pick what sex we are born or aspects of ourselves that were fixed by our parents, such as our names, religion and nationality, or where we grew up. Some parts of our identity are characteristics ascribed to us – projected from outside, or stuck on us like labels. These can be flattering or not, sometimes they are offensive. The situation can then become very unpleasant.

An important aspect about identity is where you feel you belong. "I am Austrian" has lots of different meanings. Some people are proud of being Austrian, others are not quite sure what is actually meant by pride, and yet others again feel more connected with the place where they grew up than the state to which they belong. Sometimes it is interesting to think about who you are, what is important to you and how you would describe yourself, as well as about how others see you. One thing is certain: there are lots of sides to us all, and they are always changing.

WE HAVE OUR IDENTITIES+++SOME ASPECTS I CAN CHOOSE, OTHER ASPECTS I CAN'T+++
AM I PROUD OF THESE?+++THERE ARE LOTS OF SIDES TO ME



Please choose a partner.
Write a few sentences about yourself first. Who are you?

Now write a few sentences about your partner.
You can refer to the way people introduced themselves.

Exchange what you have written and discuss the following questions:

Do you think your partner's description of you is accurate?
What differences are there between you describing yourself and someone else describing you?

Which of the characteristics, activities, facts etc noted about you:
_ were determined by someone else (e.g. by your parents)?
_ did you choose yourself?
_ are ascribed to you?



Sami says about himself: "There are many sides to me, which make me the person I am, and I don't want to be reduced to just one of these."

Katia says about herself: "I can't be proud of something I didn't contribute anything towards."

What do they both mean?
What is your opinion about these statements?

Is there any other comment by these young people that you would like to discuss with the others?



Kosher: term for the food that Jews are allowed to eat according to their religious rules.

“OH WELL, IF EVERYONE WERE LIKE THAT...”

A prejudice is a judgment we make before we think about something, a pre-judgment. We don't examine our prejudices, we just believe them. Prejudices are persistent and difficult to change. They are often learned from our parents or other people, and are usually not based on personal experience. Can meeting people help us to overcome prejudices?

The thousands of Jews who lived in Austria before the National Socialist [Nazi] era were constantly faced with prejudice. Today there are only very few Jewish women and men still living in Austria. Even before 1938, when about ten percent of Vienna was Jewish and there was lots of contact between Jews and non-Jews, this social contact did not expose how absurd the prejudices were or make people abandon their prejudices.

Although many people with deeply anti-Semitic prejudices – and even some Nazis – often had Jewish acquaintances, they still continued to be anti-Semitic. They liked the few Jews they knew, but rejected all the others. “Oh well, if everyone were like that,” they would reply when their Jewish friends pointed this out. They probably thought: “Exceptions prove the rule.” Before the National Socialist era most of Austria's Jewish population lived in Vienna. People in rural areas rarely came into contact with any Jews. Even today, it is difficult to meet Jews, because there are only a few still living in Austria. However, the prejudice against them has not gone away. Experts agree that positive social contacts may be an important first step towards overcoming fears and prejudices.

OPINIONS FROM WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS ...



Rebecca

One of you told us that they had never personally met any Jews. Well, I hadn't either. It's a totally new experience for me and pretty exciting too. Otherwise, I only know those old people you see on documentaries who talk about National Socialism. In class, we hear a lot about the Jews, but we never get to meet any young Jews. We still think that Jews practise their religion more than, like, Christians do. This is the first time that I've ever spoken to any young Jews, and about personal things too.



Daniel

Meetings where young people can talk to each other should take place regularly. Once you see that you've got something in common with complete strangers, you definitely start to see them with different eyes. You know, that's great, I really like it. I've now also talked about food with young Muslims, and we figured out that it's actually quite similar to Jewish food. Talking to each other more often would be excellent and would really help things a lot.



Mohamed

You hardly ever get the opportunity to talk frankly with a Jewish teenager. That's probably because only a very few Jews live in Vienna, compared with Muslims, who you can definitely meet in certain districts. So nobody can say to me: “I don't know any Muslims” or “I can't get to know any”. Of course, you can if you want to. But meeting Jews is just more difficult.



This photo – taken during the “get to know each other” phase of the workshop – should illustrate the core idea of this chapter. Write a caption by choosing a sentence from the introduction or one of the quotes.



Based on your own opinion or experience, to what extent can personal contacts help break down prejudices?

- a lot
 - quite a lot
 - a little
 - not much
 - not at all
- Give your reasons.



Think of a group of people who face lots of prejudice. How are they talked about in your environment?

What personal contact do you have with people from this group?
What would you like to learn about them? Please write down your questions.

How can we break down prejudices? Discuss together.

PREJUDICES ARE PERSISTENT+++EXCEPTIONS PROVE THE RULE!?!+++
TALKING TO EACH OTHER CAN HELP

HOW DOES RACISM WORK?

We all constantly put people in categories and often emphasise how different we ourselves are. This becomes a problem, however, when the classifications become value judgments and the people who are seen as less valuable or less important are not treated equally as a result. The 19th century saw the rise of the idea that people belong biologically to certain groups (“races”) so they must have “typical” characteristics.

How does racism work precisely? It starts with negative opinions about a group becoming a prejudice against them. Racists judge other people by the group they belong to – that is to say, by what they are instead of what they do – and racists often avoid direct contact with the people they feel hostile towards. If acted on, this could lead to a proliferation of stereotyped views and potentially increase support for a racist party.

Racism puts people at a disadvantage: at school, at work, in everyday life. Racist ideas can even form the basis of national law, as happened in South Africa, where for decades racial segregation or Apartheid was the law. Racist slogans are also used to justify assaults, which can range from bullying and taking away possessions or the right to live somewhere, right up to murder. Anti-Semitism is racism, but it functions in its own way. For centuries, hostility towards Jews involved religious anti-Semitism. In the 19th century, however, racial anti-Semitism evolved. Jews were defined by personal characteristics that were regarded as “biologically predetermined” or fixed by birth. Jews were denigrated and belittled, but paradoxically they were also seen as somehow superior and therefore threatening. These exaggerated fancies of power and influence did not – and still do not – stop short of hinting that Jews were/are plotting to rule the world.

“PEOPLE ACCEPT YOU AS A DRUMMER ...”

Jubril O. is a taxi driver and musician. In the 1990s, he moved from Nigeria to Austria. He was interviewed about his experiences with everyday racism, which includes both rejection and exaggerated admiration.

I wanted to meet a woman for a cup of coffee. She said: “I like you, but my mother and other people would never accept us going out with each other.” That’s when I slowly figured out how things work here. Nowadays, I avoid going to places like discos, where there might be trouble. When I’m driving my taxi situations like that only happen at night, when I go into a bar and people say they don’t want a “nigger” to drive them. You’ve talked about a lot of negative reactions from people. What’s it like when you’re making music, playing the drums? That’s totally different. They came to my first gigs and were standing in front of me with their video cameras. When I play the drums the reactions are completely different from what I get driving my taxi. People accept you as a drummer.



Jubril O.



Apartheid: means “separation”; an era of racial segregation in South Africa, which was legally enforced from 1948 until 1994.

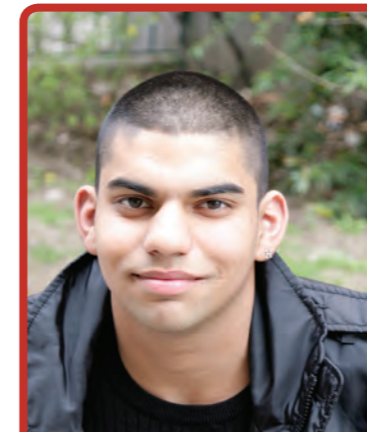
“I’M OUT TO GET YOUR CHILDREN ...”

“Black Austria” is a series of posters of Austrian men and women of African origin. It was produced in 2006/07 and humorously highlights various racial prejudices common in Austria, such as the belief that black people “have rhythm in their blood” or that all black people are bad and dangerous.



DON'T LISTEN

My parents are from Serbia. My family are Sinti. Are you confronted with racism in everyday life? Yes, quite often. At school, many pupils have called me “Gypsy” or even “nigger” several times, although I’m not. So what did you do when they called you “Gypsy”? I just didn’t listen. You can’t do anything if you’re on your own. It would be easier in a big group.



Chris

ARE THEY COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM US?+++ARE WE BETTER?+++
CONTACT WITH “THE OTHERS” IS AVOIDED+++ANTI-SEMITISM IS A FORM OF RACISM

“WE ALL HAVE PREJUDICES ...”



We were working with pupils at a vocational training school. One of them said: “I used to be like that. When I worked for the council and a woman came in wearing a headscarf I would think ‘shit!’ Today, I still think ‘shit!’ but I ask myself right away, why do I do that?” Now, that’s quite interesting and extremely honest, because it’s very difficult to overcome prejudices. We all have racial prejudices. There is no one without any racial prejudices at all. However, it’s always a matter of how we set about tackling them. To what extent am I aware of the fact that I have prejudices?

Susi Bali, an expert in civil courage issues

“THERE ARE ALL KINDS OF ...”



What should people who are not Jewish know about Judaism? I’d like people to know that there are all kinds of Jews. I mean, you can’t tell I’m Jewish at first sight either. I want them to know that there are Jews all over the world and that a Jew can be like any other person too, just as stupid or just as smart.

Daniel

ARE THEY COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM US?+++ARE WE BETTER?+++
CONTACT WITH “THE OTHERS” IS AVOIDED+++ANTI-SEMITISM IS A FORM OF RACISM



i What racial prejudices or acts are referred to in the texts?
How do you explain the two different reactions to Jubril O.?

i How does the poster fight racial prejudice?

How effective do you think the poster is? Why?

- very effective
- quite effective
- hardly effective
- not effective

Please give your reasons.

iii How else can we fight racial prejudice? Discuss this question in groups.

iii “Silent” discussion:

“There is no one without racial prejudices.”
Write down your gut reaction(s) to this statement.

(The statement is written up on several posters around the room. Without speaking, five or six people write their impressions, questions etc. on the posters. A “silent” discussion develops as each “replies” to someone else’s statement or question. The posters should be exchanged between the smaller groups after about five minutes and finally discussed in the large group.)

ii Choose one of the following situations:
_ You were put at a disadvantage because someone “projected” negative characteristics on to you without knowing you.
_ You were privileged because someone credited you with positive characteristics without knowing you.

How can you explain this behaviour?

Discuss your experiences with someone else. Decide together which situation you would like to describe or act out in front of the large group.

ANTI-SEMITISM IS ...

Anti-Semitism is hostility towards Jews, in any shape or form, and has a long history. Ever since Antiquity many Christians have blamed the Jews for the crucifixion of Jesus, even though Jesus was executed by the Romans and was himself a Jew. From the Middle Ages onwards, hatred towards Jews also had economic reasons. Because Jews were barred from most skilled professions they had to focus on trading and finance. Hostility towards the Jews was frequently expressed by throwing them out of a country, or refusing them the right to stay anywhere permanently. In 1420, Duke Albert V of Austria expelled all Jews from Vienna. He had the wealthy ones burned to death and took over their property. It was not until 1867 that Austria's Jewish population was granted equal rights with everyone else and, as a result, the opportunity to advance socially. However, many Austrians opposed it. That was when the term "anti-Semitism" emerged. It stood for hostility towards Jews founded on the racial beliefs fashionable at the time. According to this, Jews were a "race" and would always remain Jewish,

however well integrated they were in the countries where they lived. New parties were canvassing for votes on political platforms that were hostile towards Jews. Their inflammatory slogans and speeches attracted a lot of support and shocked the Jewish population. In 1895, Vienna became the first big city to be governed by an anti-Semitic party (Mayor Karl Lueger). This was the period when a young Adolf Hitler lived in Vienna and absorbed the city's anti-Semitism. After the First World War, anti-Semitism became more extreme and more violent. However, when the National Socialists came to power in Austria in 1938 a new dimension was added. From the first moment of their rule, the Nazis persecuted the Jewish population and tried to get rid of them, either by forcing them out of the country or by murdering them. About 65,000 Jews out of approximately 200,000 then living in Austria were murdered and almost all the others were expelled. However, despite the Nazis and the Shoah, anti-Semitism lives on.



ANTI-SEMITISM AT THE FOOTBALL MATCH BETWEEN RAPID WIEN AND HAPOEL TEL AVIV

During that match people were chanting, "Those who don't jump are Jews" and stuff like that. Afterwards, I heard that the driver of the bus with the Israeli players had said: "All aboard! We're going to Auschwitz." Rapid Wien versus Hapoel Tel Aviv (0-3), 5 Nov. 2009.

Bini



ANTI-SEMITISM ON THE DAILY TRIP TO SCHOOL

On their way to school, pupils from our school suffered anti-Semitic harassment by other youngsters: "Why are there still so many of you?", "Look at those Jews!", "I'll beat you up!", "Wow, look, that Jew there can read!" etc. Adults in the same train carriage with them just let it happen and did not intervene.

Hans Hofer, headmaster of the Jewish grammar school in Vienna



Shoah: Hebrew for "calamity" or "catastrophe"; it refers to the mass murder of the Jews during the National Socialist era for which the term "Holocaust" is also frequently used.

Karl Lueger: Austrian politician, mayor of Vienna from 1897 to 1910.



Choose three statements from the text/sources relating to the term "anti-Semitism" that you consider particularly important.



In small groups, arrange the sentences on a poster with the headline "What is anti-Semitism?"

Can you think of further statements or questions that match this headline? Please add them to the poster.

Make a small exhibition of the posters produced.



Choose a statement (by Bini or Hans Hofer) that you would like to examine in detail. How would you (re-)act from the perspective of one of the passengers on either the bus or the train?

Present your results and continue to think about the question: What else could you do in such a situation?

Have you experienced or witnessed similar incidents (perhaps also involving people from other groups that face discrimination)?

ANCIENT HATRED IN A NEW DISGUISE+++CANVASSING FOR VOTES WITH HOSTILITY TOWARDS JEWS+++ UNDER THE NAZIS HATRED BECAME DEADLY

DO WE NEED SCAPEGOATS?

A scapegoat is someone made to take the blame for something: scapegoats are held responsible for incidents other people are worried about or frightened of. The term originally comes from a Jewish religious ritual, when a priest symbolically transferred his people's sins to a goat, which was then chased out into the desert to die. Minority groups are particularly at risk of being used as scapegoats. But the accusations often ignore the real issues behind the fears. Nowadays, Roma and Sinti people are often made into scapegoats. They are an ethnic minority of 12 million people living in the European Union. For centuries, the Jewish population was also repeatedly made scapegoats and blamed for all kinds of things. In early Christianity, Jews were held responsible for the death of Jesus.

During the Middle Ages, they were accused of causing outbreaks of deadly diseases, such as the plague. As a result, people thought they would have a better life if they oppressed and expelled the Jewish population. Gradually, all those false accusations resulted in claims that the Jews were trying to rule the world. Even today, Jews are still suspected of secretly controlling entire countries or parts of the economy. This is one of many conspiracy theories. People are fascinated by conspiracy theories, but they form a kind of secret knowledge that is difficult to challenge. Conspiracy and scapegoat theories mislead people into believing simple explanations. This will certainly not help us solve the problems we face.

FIND A SCAPEGOAT!



Peanuts

? Scapegoat: a male goat symbolically made to bear the blame for sins and chased off into the desert. It paid the price for human wrong-doing even though it was itself blameless.

Conspiracy theories: are widespread and primarily appeal to our emotions. They usually seem true and simple. They provide a black and white view of things and are resistant to critical questioning. There are conspiracy theories about many historical events, even about the moon landing. Conspiracy theories often convey anti-Semitic ideas, such as the notion of a world Jewish conspiracy.

IN SEARCH OF SCAPEGOATS



There have been attacks on the Roma in many European countries, ranging from assault and exclusion to murder. In the summer of 2010, the magazine *bedrohte völker* put the issue on its front page: Alarming Rabble-Rousing: The Roma as Scapegoats.

Susanne Scholl, journalist:

»In a small town in the Czech Republic protest demonstrations have recently been on the increase against the rising number of Roma . . . An enemy image is gradually being constructed here, and hand in hand with it clearly the idea that it is best to use force and violence to kill the "enemy". The background to this situation has, however, little to do with the situation of the Roma in the country as a whole. People who live in this small town are poor. They have been poor for a long time . . . As if history didn't teach us with such cruel clarity about what has always happened in times of crisis: a minority can easily be made into a scapegoat for a country's bad economic situation; such a minority is then in acute danger . . . We have to make people understand that their misery will not decrease if the violence continues and they direct their own helplessness and fears, their hate and their despair, at people who are even poorer and more helpless than they are.«

(Salzburger Nachrichten, 6.9.2011)



Peanuts cartoon:

Draw or write a sequel to the Peanuts cartoon in which Charlie Brown and Lucy are discussing, among other things: (Why) do we "need" scapegoats and conspiracy theories?



Present your results in a small group.

Together, think about how and where you could exhibit the cartoons/stories.



"In Search of Scapegoats":

Look at the front page of the magazine and describe it as accurately as possible.

What (further) information can you gather from the text about:

_ The situation of the Roma?

_ The situation of the majority population?



Which message/s does the section "In Search of Scapegoats" convey? What do you think?

I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE WORLD ANY LONGER+++IT MUST BE SOMEBODY'S FAULT!+++
ARE THEY TO BLAME FOR IT AGAIN?

WHAT WOULD AUSTRIA BE WITHOUT MINORITIES?

What does the word minority mean? Minor means fewer or smaller, so in social groups you could say minority means “outnumbered”. Nonetheless, minorities are part of us. There are Slovenian, Croatian, Hungarian, Czech and Slovakian minorities in Austria, as well as the Roma. They are recognised as minorities in the country’s constitution. Most of them live in Vienna, Burgenland and Carinthia. Without them and other minorities Austria would be culturally poorer. Just think of food, for example. A good Viennese Schnitzel or a pork roast is great, but many Austrians also like eating out in restaurants that offer dishes from all over the world or love simply being able to grab a kebab from the corner shop.

The Austrian language is also rich in words that actually come from other languages. This is partly because Austria used to be part of a multi-ethnic empire where many languages were spoken. Gattihosn (long underpants), Tschako (hat) and Patscherl (baby shoes or clumsy person) come from Hungary; barabern (to work hard) and Pfitschpfeil (toy bow) are originally Czech. Without the Jewish population, Austrians would not know the word Schmääh (snide humour) and would be rather schmäähstäd (speechless). Why? The word was borrowed from Hebrew. Many “typically” Austrian words, such as Beisl (inn), Haberer (friend; lover), Sandler (vagabond) and Schnorrer (scrounger), are of Hebrew or Yiddish origin.



Although the term minority is not clearly defined by international law, some characteristics are generally recognised. Minorities are outnumbered by the general population and do not have a dominant position socially; they are identified by ethnic, religious or linguistic similarities, but are citizens of the country they live in.

“MINORITIES HAVE THE RIGHT OF ...”

In December 1992, the UN General Assembly passed the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, which declares that states shall protect the existence of minorities and “encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity” (Article 1). The declaration further states: “(People belonging to minorities) have the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, and to use their own language, in private and in public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination” (Article 2).



DIVERSITY INSTEAD OF SIMPLICITY

The text on an election poster of the Viennese FPÖ (Freedom Party of Austria) read: “Mehr Mut für unser ‘Wiener Blut’” (Be bold! Be proud of our Viennese blood!). “Zu viel Fremdes tut niemandem gut” (Too many foreign things/people are no good for anyone). It was countered by a modified poster – using the same slogan – showing “that Vienna has always been and still is a melting pot of the most diverse cultures. This is what makes Vienna such a great city to live in. We encounter this diversity and richness at each and every corner and door”.

FOOD CONNECTS PEOPLE



To their great surprise, the young Muslims and Jews taking part in the workshops discovered that they had lots in common when they looked at the menu of a Jewish-kosher restaurant. Some dishes had similar names and the order of courses was also familiar. Photo: Michaela, Chris, Rebecca, Doron.



Write down three questions that occurred to you while reading this chapter.

What would you say is typically Austrian about you and what is from another culture?



Find out more about the meanings of the typically Austrian words mentioned in the introductory text.

Which other words from other languages do you know that have become part of our everyday speech?



The poster “Wiener Blut”: Behind each of the somewhat foreign looking names on the doorplates you will find an Austrian with his/her own story.

_ Research the stories of some of these people on the internet.

_ Research the origin and/or the meaning of your own name.

Present some of your research to the group.

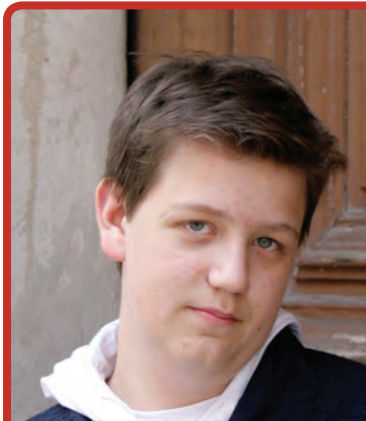
MINORITIES HAVE RIGHTS+++WE LIKE TO EAT FOOD FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD+++
WITHOUT THE JEWS THERE WOULD BE NO SCHMÄH IN AUSTRIA

WHO IS A JEW?

The Jewish community nowadays consists of many different groups: Orthodox Jews, liberal Jews and even non-religious Jews. People can still feel a sense of belonging to Judaism, and its history and traditions, even if they are not believers. Non-religious Jews often refer to this as being part of a “community of fate”. Their families’ fate during the National Socialist era, as well as their own continuing experience with anti-Semitism, connects them with one another. But how does someone become a Jew? According to Jewish religious law, the children of a Jewish mother are automatically Jewish. It is possible to convert to Judaism, but it isn’t easy and takes a long time. You have to learn a comprehensive set of commandments and be prepared to live by them. These rules include circumcision for men and ritual bathing for women.

Unlike in Christianity and Islam, there were historically hardly any Jewish missionaries. People in Austria only began to convert to Judaism towards the end of the 19th century, after the introduction of equal rights for Jews in 1867. Most of these early converts were Christians who had fallen in love with a Jew. However, the number of Jews who, for various reasons, turned their backs on their Jewish communities was much higher. Under National Socialism the question of who was or wasn’t a Jew became really important. The Nazis debated for a long time about how to define what they called “Aryan” and Jewish. The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 eventually defined in detail who was to be considered a Jew. They introduced the terms “Volljude” and first- or second degree “Mischling” to identify people with varying degrees of Jewish ancestry. These definitions would later affect life and death.

AS A YOUNG JEWISH MAN IN AUSTRIA



Bini

What does it mean for you to live in Vienna as a young Jew?
I don’t think the way I practise Judaism is so different from any other religion. It’s very important to me, but I don’t feel restricted by my religion.
And if you were asked what you were? Would you say Viennese, Austrian or Jewish? I’m a Jewish Viennese, that’s what I would say.
Are you proud of being Jewish? Yes, definitely.
What are you proud of? I just believe that it is a religion of togetherness and solidarity.



Jonathan

My maternal grandmother’s a Jew, but my grandfather’s not a Jew. How do these “mixed” relationships work?
No problem. My grandfather’s quite open-minded. You could say he’s pro-Jewish.
You attend the Jewish school. So I assume that you were brought up as a Jew.
No, not really. We’re not religious, I mean, we don’t follow all the religious laws, but my father sometimes tells me something about them. At our school, we don’t come into contact with any Christians. Sometimes it’s quite a pity not having Christian or Muslim friends or friends who aren’t Jewish.



Daniel

I was brought up Jewish but not religious. Tradition is important to me, though. And Judaism is more about tradition for me and not just about religion. And why is tradition so important to you? I don’t want Judaism to ever be forgotten. I want it to survive.
If you were asked whether you were proud of being Jewish, what would you say? Well, proud of what? I was born a Jew.
If you were asked what you were, what would you say?
Well, I’m someone who always likes to say that he’s a Jew.



Orthodox Judaism: a major movement in modern Judaism with a strong focus on religious laws and rituals in daily life.

Atheist: a person who is convinced that there is no God.

Agnostic: a person who is of the opinion that we cannot know whether there is or isn’t a God.



Please pick two of the quotes and describe the speaker’s attitude to Judaism in your own words. What is your opinion about the statements you have chosen?



Choose one (or more) of the following options.

I am:

- a Christian
- a Muslim
- a Jew
- an atheist
- an agnostic
- or choose a different term that applies to you.

Describe this aspect of your identity in a few words.



Discuss your views in small groups. What are the similarities and differences? Use your notes.

THE CHILD OF A JEWISH MOTHER+++SOMEONE CONVERTS TO JUDAISM+++
JEWISH WITHOUT BEING RELIGIOUS+++THE NAZIS HAD THEIR OWN INTERPRETATION

FIELD OF CONFLICT: RELIGIONS

Many wars have been fought in the name of religion. In Central Europe, conflict between Catholics and Protestants went on for centuries. In Austria, the Catholics won and the Protestants were even expelled from certain regions. Until well into the 19th century, Protestant churches and Jewish synagogues were not allowed to be built fronting on to the public street. And the very same arguments that were voiced against Protestant steeples then are now heard in the debate about mosques. The Austrian constitution of 1867 finally granted religious freedom to everyone, including people with no religious beliefs. But until 1867, Jews did not have the right to live in some parts of the Austrian empire.

For many years, tales of imagined secret rites fuelled the conflict between Jews and Christians in Europe. The Medieval belief that Judaism demanded cruel ritual murders survived until quite recently. There were pilgrimages to the shrine of a supposed victim of ritual murder at Rinn (in Tyrol) until the 1990s. When there are tensions between different faiths, how people look may become an issue. Reports about Jews tend to show pictures of people who – because of their Orthodoxy – dress in a particular way. You cannot tell from the appearance of most Jewish men and women that they are Jews. Quite frequently, however, Jewish men who wear a kippah in Austria, as well as Islamic women who wear headscarves, are verbally abused in public.



“YOU POOR GIRL...”

Both my mother and my sister wear a headscarf and have had really bad experiences in public. My sister was once spoken to in typical “Turkish German” by a ticket inspector on the tram: “Have you ticket?” To which she replied: “Here’s my ticket. I hope your German improves.” When she was younger, some people even said to her: “You poor girl, with your headscarf.” And yet, both my sister and my mother are self-confident women.

Sami

“I AM FREE!”

A. is a young woman who lives in Vienna. She chooses to wear a headscarf as a visible sign of her Muslim faith. Many others feel pressured by religious dress codes.

I was about 13 or 14 years old when I decided to wear a headscarf. Unfortunately, when I wore it to school people didn’t react positively at all. I had to listen to comments like, “Why are you doing this?” or “This looks strange”. One girl, a classmate, even tried to tear my headscarf off.

I also had problems with teachers. I had been, you could say, our German teacher’s pet. However, she avoided me whenever she saw me wearing my headscarf. But, when we did once run into each other she said: “Oh, look at you! So have they brainwashed you into wearing it too?” And then she added: “We’re in Austria, we’re free people.” And then I said: “I’m still the same person. I’m just wearing one more little piece of cloth. And precisely because it’s Austria and because it’s a free country I thought – I am free to wear it.”

A., a young woman living in Vienna



Doron

BETTER NOT ATTRACT ATTENTION

Doron attends the Zwi Perez Chajes Jewish grammar school in Vienna.

Friends of mine have been verbally abused while wearing kippahs in public. Do you wear a kippah in everyday life? At our school, we have to wear a kippah. Those are the school rules. And in the street? I’d rather not wear it outside school because I don’t particularly like having people walk up to me and say, “You bloody Jew!”



Kippah: religious cap worn by Jewish men.

Mosque: Islamic place of worship.

Austrian constitution of 1867: provided among other things freedom of religion and conscience and the right of religious practice in public for religious communities recognised by the law.



How do people react to Doron, to A. and to Sami’s mother and sister? Try to guess why they react like that. What reactions to people wearing religious dress have you experienced or witnessed? Think of a situation that you would like to present to the whole group.



A. says about wearing a headscarf, “I am free to wear it.” What (other) comments and opinions concerning the wearing of religious dress have you heard?

Please write each comment/opinion on a card. Show the cards to one another.



Which of these statements do you agree with, and why?



What does religion mean to you personally? Exchange your views with someone in the group.



How is religion made visible in your personal environment? Take pictures of the religious “symbols” you see in your neighbourhood. In a small group, make a collage with the photos you have brought with you.

CONFLICT IN THE NAME OF RELIGION+++HOW IS RELIGION MADE VISIBLE?+++
FREEDOM OR PRESSURE

WHEN LANGUAGE HURTS . . .

People often make fun of other people. Many think teasing is just part and parcel of life. The Austrian saying “A Hetz muß sein” means “we all need to have some fun”. However, the word Hetz alone says a lot as it is related to Hetze, which means “baiting”. Associating “baiting” with “fun” goes back many centuries. Animal baiting for entertainment is one example. The animals were chased through the streets and then killed in front of the crowd.

Even before National Socialism, Jewish children used to be taunted at school. One such mocking rhyme went: “Jud, Jud, spuck in Hut, sag der Mama, das ist gut” (Yid, Yid, spit into the hat, tell your mum it is good.) Those who were brave enough defended themselves and answered back. Today, Jews are no longer the main target for belittling remarks. Other groups are now being picked on.

Although remarks like “hey, you fag” or “you spastic” are not always meant to be hurtful, they are still disparaging. If someone is spoken to like this, how can he then admit one of his friends is gay or he’s gay himself, or that he has a sister with disabilities? It takes a lot of courage to tackle this issue. It doesn’t take any courage, however, to join in making glib comments, verbally abusing others or even taking the attacks a step further. Hurtful words are not just aimed at people with disabilities or homosexuals and other minorities. Boys or girls who seem to be less strong also often become victims of such verbal attacks. The German word “Opfer” or “victim” is used for people who suffered during the Nazi years. But nowadays “Opfer” also has a totally different meaning. A pupil in the school yard who is jeered at as “You victim!” (“Du Opfer!”) is regarded as a loser and a weakling. But things are not as bad as all that, or are they?



Temitope Favour

“I CAN’T BAD-MOUTH OTHER PEOPLE!”

I was going somewhere and this man appears. And as we’re passing, he says: “Nigger.” I look at him and think: “If I talk to him, it won’t help.” I thought: “He’s probably confused, and that’s why he said ‘nigger.’” Most likely, he’s got more such words at the ready and is just waiting for me to react so that he can start a row. But I’m just not able to bad-mouth others. I’ve never learnt to do that.

“I’M A JEW . . . BUT NOT A PIG!”

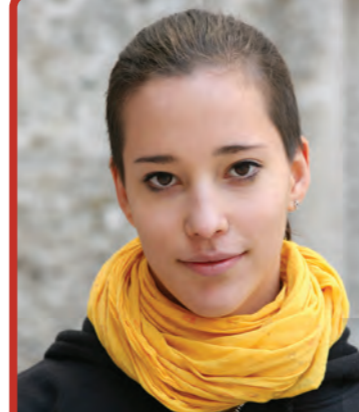
Sophie Haber was born in Cracow/Poland in 1922. Her parents moved to northern Vienna in 1930.



Sophie Haber with her parents and brothers in Vienna before 1938.

“Let me tell you about an incident at secondary school, if I may: a girl called me a ‘Jewish pig’. So I smacked her. Well, and then, of course, she went to her mother and complained about me. Her mother went to the headmistress and I was summoned to the headmistress’s office. She asked me: ‘What got into you? How could you hit another girl?’ And I must say that I’m actually proud of my answer. I said: ‘She called me a Jewish pig, you know. I am a Jew, and I am not ashamed of it, but I’m not a pig. And that’s why I smacked her. Because of the word pig.’ The matter was settled there and then.”

If you would like to hear and see more of Sophie Haber, please go to: www.erinnern.at: Das Vermächtnis (The Legacy).



Sophie

“LEAVE ME ALONE!”

Do people confront you about being a lesbian? Yes. They say things like: “Hey, look, the lezzer!” Then I think: “Leave me alone!” Or in the changing rooms before gym I heard someone say: “No, I won’t go in there; the lezzer’s there.” Or: “I’m not talking to her because she might have a crush on me.” And what happens then? I usually ignore it. Does anybody help you? I once went to our form teacher and told her what was going on and that I had had enough. She said: “You should talk to them.” But our form teacher is far too nice for this world.



How do Mrs Haber, Sophie and Temitope react to people who verbally abuse them? Choose one of the three situations and consider further possible reactions.



Think of three offensive words that are frequently used in your environment.

Which groups or individuals are these words aimed at?
_ Why are they used?
_ Do the words also have other meanings? If yes, what?
_ What possibilities do we have of reacting to them?



Remember a situation in which you were either:
_ the target of verbal abuse or
_ a witness to such an incident.

First, tell your story to someone else (pair work) and then decide together which story you would like to tell the others.



After that, get together in small groups and tell each other the stories you have chosen. In your team, pick the story you want to continue working with. Discuss how you might show this scene as a freeze-frame.

Each group presents its freeze-frame to the whole group. If you have an idea you want to share, you can step into the freeze-frame, take someone else’s place and suggest how people might react to the abuse.

TEASING IS OFTEN MEAN+++ JOINING IN WITH VERBAL ABUSE IS A CHEAP SHOT+++
NOT JOINING IN TAKES COURAGE

13
Im Werd

The participants of the workshop in Vienna.
From left to right: Jonathan, Daniel, Doron, Anna, Katia, Bettina, Rebecca, Jeremy, Mohamed, Bini, Sami with Rafael, Chris, Michaela, Bekhan.



OBEDIENCE CAN BE LETHAL

Jews in Europe had been treated with hostility for centuries, until it was considered quite “normal”. The anti-Semites had successfully belittled the whole Jewish population. When the Nazis took power, the hostility reached new levels. The Nazi leadership used anti-Semitic propaganda to encourage people to commit acts of violence against Jewish men and women. Overnight, the Jewish population was outlawed. Many people enriched themselves with the confiscated possessions of the persecuted. However, hardly anyone suspected that the persecution would end in mass murder. Only a few people in Germany or Austria showed either sympathy for those who were being threatened and harassed, or were prepared to help them.

Even children stopped being friends and socialising with Jewish boys and girls at school. People who did not agree with the Nazis also felt threatened by this terrorising of the Jewish population. They were scared that they too might be humiliated and harassed if they protected the persecuted and turned against the Nazis. Their fears were justified. The mass murder of the Jewish population was not only committed by convinced Nazis. It was also carried out by people who presumably had nothing against the Jewish population, but were “simply” following orders. That was how they had been brought up. Obedience was highly valued. It was important to many, even if those orders meant the murder of women, children and old people.

“THEN THEY JUST TURNED THEIR BACKS ON ME . . .”



Amnon Berthold Klein was born in Vienna in 1928. His father was murdered by the Nazis and his mother died while fleeing to Palestine.

“I had a friend, my best friend, I’d say. And whenever I visited him, he was always practising the trumpet. I didn’t think much of it. But it turned out that he and the others were already illegal Nazis. Then he joined the Hitler Youth as a trumpeter. What could I say?!”

And only two days later he said to me: ‘Listen, you. Don’t come to my home, ‘cause you’re a Yid.’ That was it. All the children just turned their backs on me then, just as people do when someone has the plague or something.”

If you would like to hear or see more of Amnon Berthold Klein, please go to: www.neue-heimat-israel.at

OBEDIENCE CAN BE LETHAL

The National Socialists did not only commit mass murder in the concentration camps. When the Soviet Union was attacked, local Jewish populations there were searched out and shot.

How was it possible for “ordinary men” to become instruments of murder? The historian Annette Wieviorka wrote a book answering her 13-year-old daughter’s questions.

»Mum, I just can’t believe it. How could people do such a thing to children?

This question has been asked so often. I still don’t have an answer. Especially as in some cases the commanders allowed their soldiers to transfer to other units if they did not want to be involved in such massacres. Only a very few soldiers took up the offer. Some historians believe this behaviour can only be explained in the context of war, where violence is ever-present and death becomes banal. Others explain this ability to commit mass murder by the fact that people do not want to abandon their group and be seen as cowardly, for example. A further possible explanation focuses on people’s submission to authority.«



One of the Nazis’ strategies was to cut off contact with the Jewish population by telling people not to use Jewish shops. Manfred Deix’s cartoon turns the historical facts around: “Subversion everywhere you look! Austrians, defend yourselves! Don’t buy from Nazis!” Unfortunately, the reality was not like that. At that time, the order of the day was rather: “Don’t buy from Jews!” (profil 18/1986)



Outlawed: during the Middle Ages, the German word “vogelfrei” originally had a positive meaning, “free as a bird”. Subsequently it has come to mean social outcasts who no longer have any rights.



How did the people mentioned in the source texts (re)act? (Amnon Klein’s friend; members of the Einsatzgruppen (killing units)?)

Can you find any explanations for this behaviour in the texts?



What other reactions might have been likely?



The cartoon by Deix: Manfred Deix reversed the message of a well-known Nazi photograph and wrote words of resistance on the placard. Which words, matching this reverse message, would you like to put into the mouths of the two people on the right of the photograph?

HOSTILITY TOWARDS JEWS WAS “NORMAL”+++MOST PEOPLE WERE ACTIVE SUPPORTERS OR BYSTANDERS+++ONLY A FEW HELPED+++ORDERS WERE REASON ENOUGH TO MURDER

NOT LEARNED ANYTHING? ANTI-SEMITISM DESPITE THE SHOAH

After the end of the war, Austria managed to present itself as the first victim of Hitler's Germany. The survivors of the National Socialist terror, however, told a different story: in 1938, German troops marching into Austria had not met any resistance but in fact received a very warm welcome, and many Austrians had been among the most brutal abusers and concentration camp commanders. For a long time, the victims' experiences were ignored. One of the reasons for this was that many Austrians had profited from the looting of Jewish property ("Aryanisation"), and it took several decades until Austria officially accepted its responsibility. Not until 1993, during a journey through Israel, did the then federal chancellor Franz Vranitzky offer his apologies to Jewish victims of

National Socialism and others, such as the Roma, homosexuals and people with disabilities. Anti-Semitism survived after 1945, even though approximately 65,000 Austrian Jews had been murdered (a third of the entire Austrian Jewish population), two thirds had had to flee and only very few had returned after the Holocaust. According to post-war opinion polls, many Austrians thought the people who had been expelled should not come back because Austrians would not want to have Jewish neighbours. Others thought that there were still too many Jews. By 2010, there were scarcely 8,000 Jews in Austria – a vanishingly small group.

TOLL OF VICTIMS IN AUSTRIA

The number of Jewish victims in Austria is estimated at 65,000 to 70,000; the number of victims of the Nazi euthanasia programme at around 25,000 to 30,000. Approximately 9,000 to 10,000 Roma were persecuted and murdered in Austria. The number of (non-Jewish) resistance fighters who were murdered or killed amounts to 4,000 to 5,000.

The total number of Austrians who were imprisoned for political reasons is about 100,000. It is estimated that of the 1.3 million Austrians who served in the Wehrmacht some 114,000 were court-martialled; 2,500 of them were sentenced to death.

"I CAN'T LIVE WITH HATE ..."



Kurt Rosenkranz was born in Vienna on 2 August 1927. In 1938, he and his family fled to the former Soviet Union. They returned to Vienna after the war.

Asked how he was welcomed back, Rosenkranz said: "People were distant. But I didn't care at all. I was free. One can't describe this feeling of freedom, you know. One has to experience it. We were in Austria, at last; in my home country! This is where I grew up. And we still hoped to perhaps find someone from our big family. It wasn't exactly easy, but I'm a

cheerful person and full of zest for life. I think very positively, have always done so. I can't live with hate, although in the beginning I was, indeed, full of hate. I believe in humanity, I believe in people's inherent goodness, otherwise I wouldn't be able to live in Austria."

If you would like to hear and see more of Kurt Rosenkranz, please go to www.erinnern.at: "Das Vermächtnis" (The Legacy).



Doron (one of Kurt Rosenkranz's grandchildren)

How important is the history of the Holocaust for your Jewish identity? Well, it's definitely important to me, because members of my family were gassed or shot dead during the National Socialist era. What happened at that time was a catastrophe. We must never ever forget that. This history should be passed on from generation to generation.
Are you ever confronted with anti-Semitism? I play basketball in a park and I have often heard others playing football there shout at someone who wasn't good at football: "You bloody Jew!" They simply use the word Jew as a swear word. They're either not aware of what they're saying or saying it because they're under peer pressure or really out of hatred. Yes, out of hatred or some other reason.



Shoah: Hebrew for "calamity" or "catastrophe"; it refers to the mass murder of the Jews during National Socialism, for which the term "Holocaust" is also frequently used.

Franz Vranitzky: former politician of the Social Democratic Party of Austria (SPÖ), Austrian federal chancellor from 1986 to 1997.

National Socialist euthanasia programme: term for the Nazis' mass murder of people with physical or mental disabilities.



Referring to the chapter headed "Not learned anything? Anti-Semitism despite the Holocaust": Choose a statement from the text or the quotes that you think illustrates the chapter heading particularly well.



Collect your results in small groups and present them to the whole group.



Choose one of the two quotes:
Kurt Rosenkranz: "I believe in people's inherent goodness, otherwise I wouldn't be able to live in Austria."
Doron: "We must never ever forget that. This history should be passed on from generation to generation."

What do you think?

AUSTRIA'S BIGGEST LIE: THE FIRST VICTIM OF HITLER'S GERMANY+++
IT WASN'T EASY FOR THE SURVIVORS TO RETURN+++
"WE MUST NEVER EVER FORGET THAT"

WHAT HAS ISRAEL GOT TO DO WITH AUSTRIA?

At first sight, Israel does not seem to have much to do with Austria. However, this is not true. Not only was and is Israel of particular importance to many Austrian Jews, the concept of a Jewish state was also born in Austria. At the end of the 19th century, the journalist Theodor Herzl, who lived in Vienna, had the visionary idea of creating a separate state for the Jewish population. "If you will it, it is no dream" he wrote. He considered a separate state to be the only possibility for Jews to live their lives free and without fear of persecution. There was still a long way to go before the state of Israel was founded. Until 1948, Palestine (part of Palestine later became Israel) was under British administration. During the National Socialist era, the British only permitted a very few Jewish refugees to enter Palestine. Many more desperately tried to enter the country illegally.

Some refugees later played an important role in Israel, including Teddy Kollek, who was mayor of Jerusalem from 1965 to 1993, and Jehudith Hübner, who was his vice mayor and ambassador to Norway. They had both grown up in Vienna. For several years after the end of the World War II, Austria became a hub for thousands of Jewish survivors from all over Europe. They were mainly trying to get to Palestine to start new lives there. When Israel was eventually founded in 1948, the neighbouring Arab countries opposed it and war broke out. To the resident Palestinian-Arab population, the foundation of the state of Israel was coupled with great suffering. Many people had to flee from their homelands or were ordered out. The Middle East conflict has frequently featured in the news ever since and is closely watched by many Austrians.



Jeremy

HOMELAND

I'm very proud to live in Vienna. The atmosphere's nice. I grew up in Vienna and I like it. It's a quiet city, where it's easy to relax, and not as hectic as other cities. Austria's generally a quiet country; it's not hectic. What do you associate with Israel? Israel means home to me. I also associate Israel with Hebrew, the Wailing Wall, prayers, rabbis, Jews.



Jonathan

PEOPLE ARE NOT ALL THE SAME

I love living in Vienna. It's a beautiful city with a long history. When you get to know other people you quickly realise that they think all Jews are in Israel and are fighting there and that they're all very religious. That's the general idea. But that's just crap. You can't generalise! And what would you wish for? People should learn to understand that people are not all the same. How important is Israel for you personally? To me, it's the country where people can find sanctuary.

NEW HOMELAND ISRAEL



Jehudith Hübner (left) with her sister Edith, Vienna 1932.

Jehudith Hübner was born in Vienna in 1921. She was the only one of her family who managed to escape the Nazis and reach Palestine.

Asked about her relationship with Austria, she says: "Do you know what a love-hate relationship is? Well, that's what I have. I like going to Vienna. I like Vienna a lot. I've just got back from there. Nobody forced me to go there. I went to Café Demel for a coffee and felt really good.

However, I feel out of place there for two reasons. First, I will never forget what the Austrians did, not only to me and my family, but also to Jews generally. And second, the second reason why I feel uncomfortable there is I sense that Jews shouldn't stay there any longer. They should know that their haven is here."

If you would like to hear or see more of Jehudith Hübner, please go to: www.neue-heimat-israel.at



Theodor Herzl: 1860-1904, Austrian-Hungarian Jewish writer; considered the founder of Zionism, a movement to set up and preserve a Jewish state in Palestine.



Jeremy: "Israel means home to me."
Jonathan: "For me, it's the country where people can find sanctuary."
Jehudith Hübner: "They should know that their haven is here."

Please choose one of these quotes.
How would you explain it?
What do you think about it?



What does homeland mean to you?
Which countries are you especially attached to (and why)?



A friend who lives in Austria says to you: "I get the impression that Israel is a topic that really interests people in this country. But why?"

What is your answer?

AN AUSTRIAN CALLED FOR THE FOUNDATION OF A JEWISH STATE+++
PEOPLE FROM AUSTRIA FOUND REFUGE THERE+++ISRAEL IS OFTEN IN THE NEWS

CRITICISM OF ISRAEL AND ANTI-SEMITISM

Ever since it was founded in 1948, the state of Israel has been in on-going conflict with neighbouring Arab states and its Palestinian-Arab population. Two of the reasons for the several wars, such as the Six-Day War of 1967, were the struggle for land and the right to exist. The Israelis have occupied and colonised land inhabited by Palestinian-Arabs. Radical Palestinian-Arab forces, on the other hand, have committed acts of terror against the Israeli population and continue to make them feel threatened and fearful. This has resulted in a vicious circle of violence and revenge, which often results in more armed conflict. This is a very simplified and shortened introduction to a very complex topic. The complicated background of the Middle East conflict is difficult to understand, and most people are not very familiar with its long history.

In spite of this, many in Austria have an opinion and criticise Israel. The reason is often what they see as Israel's unjust policy of occupation. Israel is, of course, open to criticism like Austria or any other country. Sometimes, however, the criticism of Israel goes too far, to the point of being anti-Semitic. It is one-sided, for example, if acts by the Israeli government are judged by harsher standards than those set for other states. It is definitely going too far, though, to dispute Israel's right to exist. And in any case, it is wrong to hold Austrian Jews responsible for Israeli politics or to compare the Israeli occupation policy with the Holocaust.



Sami

Well, I honestly don't have any problem with this. The Jewish lads are Austrians too, and they're also living here in accordance with their religion and traditions. The conflicts between Palestine and Israel are all about politics. On the one hand, as an Austrian I am interested in what's going on because my fellow believers are caught up in it all; on the other hand, I'm just no different from the Jewish lads here. They're really cool and upbeat, and I would feel very bad if I saw any conflict here. It's not their fault anyway if something goes wrong in Israel, just as it's not my fault if there's a problem among Muslims.



Jewish, Muslim and other young people talked to one another in our workshop. The Middle East conflict is a political issue that divides them. In the foreground: Anna, Sami and Daniel in conversation; in the background: Doron and Mohamed.

**RATHER COMPLICATED HISTORICAL BACKGROUND+++
OF COURSE, YOU CAN CRITICISE THAT!+++WHEN CRITICISM BECOMES ANTI-SEMITISM**

STAR OF DAVID AND SWASTIKA



An anti-Israel demonstration in Valencia, in 2009. In Austria, Nazi symbols are banned in public. Why? You will find further information in the chapter “What is prohibited?”

CRITICISM OF ISRAEL . . . from different points of view:

Michael Brenner (German historian):

“There’s no doubt that Israel and its current policies are open to criticism. Criticism is justified if it is expressed according to the same standards applied to other states. Anti-Semitism starts when we revive historical prejudices. This may include cartoons or characterisations of Israelis that have their origin in the anti-Semitic tradition. However, it doesn’t mean, of course, that every criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic.”

Moshe Zuckermann (Israeli historian):

“Israel has been oppressing the Palestinians for decades and preventing their national self-determination by building settlements in the occupied territories. This may be historically unjust and a result of the monstrosity of what happened in Europe, or a result of a very long, centuries-old Jewish history of suffering. As an injustice, its existence can, however, not simply be explained away.”

Andreas Peham (Austrian anti-Semitism researcher):

“In Austria, there is an almost manic obsession with the Middle East conflict. We have nearly as many Middle East experts running around as football coaches. In a country that had an above-average number of perpetrators, bystanders and people who looked the other way during the National Socialist era, this interest in the Middle East may also be motivated by anti-Semitism. In this case, the Middle East conflict serves the function of relieving people of the burden of their own guilt. Yesterday’s victims are regarded as today’s perpetrators. This can be extremely liberating for people with a guilt complex. And there are many of those in Austria.”

**RATHER COMPLICATED HISTORICAL BACKGROUND+++
OF COURSE, YOU CAN CRITICISE THAT!+++WHEN CRITICISM BECOMES ANTI-SEMITISM**



Israel’s right to exist: Israel’s right to exist and to protect itself against attacks that threaten its existence is anchored in international law. To this day, many anti-Israel groups or groups with anti-Jewish views reject the state of Israel.

Shoah: Hebrew for “calamity” or “catastrophe”; it refers to the murder of the Jewish population during National Socialism, for which the term Holocaust is also frequently used.

Star of David, also called Magen David (Hebrew): is considered the symbol of Judaism and the people of Israel. It’s also part of Israel’s national flag.

Monstrosity: something that is monstrous – hideous, unnatural or shocking.



The photo “Star of David and swastika”:
What message does this banner convey? Give some arguments against this message.

Choose one statement from the texts that questions this message.

We will collect them and discuss the following question in the whole group: in what cases can criticism of Israel be said to be anti-Semitic?



Concerning “Criticism of Israel . . .”:
Who or what are the respective speakers criticising? Do you think their criticism is justified?
Please give your reasons.

In small groups, agree on one statement by one of the speakers that you would like to discuss in the whole group.



In my opinion, reading and discussing this chapter was:

- important, because . . .
- unimportant, because . . .
- informative, because . . .
- not informative, because . . .
- ein anderer Begriff, der für dich zutrifft:

I think that the presentation of information in this chapter is:

- balanced, because . . .
- one-sided, because . . .
- interesting, because . . .
- not interesting, because . . .
- Or pick your own word or phrase, and explain . . .

PERSECUTION CANNOT SIMPLY BE FORGOTTEN

When the Nazis took control in Austria in 1938 many Austrians had to flee, because they were Jewish or from some other group discriminated against or persecuted. In the countries where they found asylum, these refugees had differing experiences. One thing, however, was the same almost everywhere they went: people were not interested in their fate - or in what was happening in the German Reich and therefore in Austria either. The refugees' relief at their escape was mixed with sorrow. Many of them despaired for family and friends who were still in the clutches of the Nazis. Language difficulties, poorly paid work and xenophobia made the situation worse. When the war broke out, German and Austrian refugees were even arrested in some countries and imprisoned as "enemy aliens" because they had come from the "German Reich".

"I CANNOT FORGET ..."



Oskar Schiller was born in Eisenstadt in 1918. His family fled to Bratislava in 1938. Almost all of his relatives were murdered by the Nazis. Schiller returned to Eisenstadt in 1946.

"I have nightmares. There are times when I think about everything that happened, and at other times I don't. What's interesting is that my nightmares keep coming back, out of the blue. If my parents had survived, and my brothers and sisters too,

we might have been able to say that we had gone through really bad times. But how can you ever forget? That's impossible. I can't forget; it's impossible to forget. Let's hope that something like that will never happen again."

If you would like to hear or see more of **Oskar Schiller**, please go to: www.erinnern.at: Das Vermächtnis (The Legacy).

"I FEAR FOR MY CHILDREN ..."



Ceija Stojka the child of a Lovara-Roma family, was born in Styria in south-eastern Austria in 1933. She survived several concentration camps.

"After 1945, the non-Gypsies used to say: 'Well? Who knows what you did to end up in there. Who knows what you were up to? You were bone idle, jobless and travelling around like circus people, with your horses and Gypsy caravans.' I fear for my children, I really do. That's all I have to say. I've said enough."

Her daughter Silvia adds: "I'm very scared. I'm often scared of people in the street. It's like a fungus that's been growing again over the past ten years, invisibly, covering Austria like a shroud of slime. And people are becoming meaner and more brutal."

You can watch the interview with **Ceija Stojka** on the DVD *Lungo Drom. Langer Weg*.

Most of those who had fled or had been persecuted never forgot this sense of loss and threat for the rest of their lives. The survivors often had to cope with painful memories and nightmares. Even after the National Socialist era, many of the persecuted still suffered discrimination; these included homosexuals as well as the Roma and the Jews. Austria's post-war politicians, for instance, never told the Jews who had been forced to leave that they would be welcome to return to Austria, their homeland. Many of those who did return, though, lived in constant fear that something similar could happen to them again. But this time they wanted to be prepared. That is why so many of them talked about "living among packed suitcases".



To discriminate against someone: to put someone at a disadvantage, humiliate them or treat them unjustly because of who or what they are.

Country of asylum: state that accepts refugees.

Lovara: a branch of the Roma. The term is taken from Hungarian and means "horse dealers".

"With your horses and Gypsy caravans": Ceija Stojka's family were horse traders.



Use the texts to discuss the following questions:

- _ Why can people simply not forget that they were persecuted?
- _ Which statement from the interviews supports your explanation(s) best?



"It's like a fungus that's been growing again over the past ten years, invisibly, covering Austria like a shroud of slime. And people are becoming meaner and more brutal."

Do you agree with this statement? Explain why or why not.



Put together a brief portrait of someone who was persecuted because of his or her origin or attitudes. It should contain a short biography, a photograph, and quotes from an interview. You can use the portraits of Oskar Schiller and Ceija Stojka as a model.

The following websites will provide you with the necessary material:

www.neue-heimat-israel.at

www.erinnern.at: Das Vermächtnis

www.mauthausen-memorial.at > ZeitzeugInnen

Alternatively, you can ask someone you know who was a victim of persecution.

PAIN OF PERSECUTION AND EXPULSION+++NO LONGER WELCOME IN
YOUR HOMELAND+++LIVING AMONG PACKED SUITCASES

HAVING FLED, AND THEN WHAT?

Asylum seekers are currently a hot topic in politics, in the media and in society generally – often linked with negative headlines. In Austria, many reports refer to alleged “asylum fraud” or “asylum abuse”, creating the impression that refugees might be criminals. We don’t hear so much about how hard and frightening life on the run is. These refugees have lost their homes and many have witnessed atrocities. They have had to leave loved ones behind and now they feel uprooted. People seeking asylum in Austria have to wait a long time for a decision, often several years. While they are waiting, they are condemned to a life of idleness and the constant fear of being deported. Austria used to be proud of its generous support for refugees from its former Communist neighbours. The mass exodus from Hungary in 1956 and from Czechoslovakia in 1968 triggered a wave of sympathy among Austrians. In the 1990s, Austria again became an important refuge for people from war-torn former Yugoslavia.

Today, the general tone is set by xenophobic groups frightened of anything foreign, and lacking any sympathy for people in need and in distress. We seem to have forgotten that many Austrians survived National Socialism only because they too fled to other countries, often illegally. It would have been like a death sentence if they had waited for legal permission to go. For many people seeking asylum in Austria today, the situation is no different. Currently, asylum seekers mainly come from the East (including Chechnya) and Africa. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq resulted in record numbers of asylum applications in 2002, when 39,400 people applied to Austria alone. In 2011, Austria received about 14,400 applications for asylum.

ESCAPE FROM CHECHNYA

When Chechnya declared its independence in 1991, Russia refused to acknowledge it. Since then, there have been two wars, which were officially declared over in 2009. Bekhan grew up in Chechnya and fled to Austria with his family. He describes his childhood in war-torn Grozny as follows:



Bekhan

It wasn’t easy for me. I saw dead bodies almost every day. The most terrible thing I saw was a small child in the street whose whole face had been blown off. Then you think: where am I? When I saw that, I passed out. I was seven or eight years old at the time. Did you flee together with your parents? Yes. My father had a hard time too. The Russians took him away and beat him. He came home with bruises and other injuries. The worst thing was when they poured hot water over him, shook him up, then used cold water and then hot water again. How would you like the Austrians to see the Chechens? Austrians don’t know much about the Chechens. They all think we are terrorists. Even if we have a different religion and a different culture, a human being is a human being. Respecting everyone is what counts. That’s the wisest thing to do. Respect everyone, no matter where they come from. That would be good.



Asylum: from Greek (via Latin) *asylum*, meaning “may not be seized”, “secure”.

Chechnya: independent republic in Russia.

Grozny: capital of the Chechen Republic.

“PERSON OF THE YEAR . . .”



(profil 1/2010)

The Zogaj family came to Austria from Kosovo in 2001/2002. Although they were considered to have settled and integrated well, their asylum applications kept being rejected. When the police came to deport them in 2007, 16-year-old Arigona went into hiding for two weeks. This triggered years of public debate, which swung between sympathy for her and outright rejection of refugees in general. In January 2010, the Austrian news magazine *profil* named Arigona its “Person of the Year”. The reaction of the readers was split.

»NEWS: What do you expect from Austria?

Zogaj: I certainly don’t want pity. All I want is to be treated humanely.

NEWS: What does being treated humanely mean for you?

Zogaj: Being allowed to simply be a normal human being like everybody else.

People always say that the law is the law. But it’s people who make the laws. If there were a war in Austria, the Austrians would have to flee too and would also hope to be treated humanely somewhere else, in a different country.

We would certainly never have fled from Kosovo if we had had a good life there and a house, and if there had not been a war.”« (News, Juli 2010)



Please study either Bekhan’s story or Arigona’s. Choose a statement from the interviews that you find particularly important.

Explain why you picked this statement.



Search the internet to find out what happened to Arigona and her family after 2007.

- I can understand why Arigona was named Person of the Year, because . . .
- I can partly understand it, because . . .
- I cannot understand it, because . . .



Discuss your opinion about the case with one another.

Why was Arigona made Person of the Year?



Do you know any people who have had to flee their country? Please ask them how they have coped. Prepare for this conversation:

- _ Draw up a list of questions together. What would you like to find out about this person?
- _ Agree a time when you can meet, and ask if you are allowed to record the conversation and take photographs.

HEATED DEBATE ABOUT REFUGEES+++XENOPHOBIA INSTEAD OF SYMPATHY+++
AUSTRIANS ONLY SURVIVED BECAUSE THEY FLED

DANGEROUS FRIENDSHIPS: NEO-NAZIS

After the end of the war in 1945, Austrian politicians realised they had to prevent any revival of National Socialist activities – in view of the crimes the Nazis had committed against various sections of the population. It was all the more necessary because so many Austrians had been members of the National Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP).

History had shown that the Nazi language of hate was followed by actions that cost millions of people their lives. Laws were passed banning any glorification of the National Socialist regime, its ideology or symbols, or Adolf Hitler himself; it was a deliberate restriction of freedom of expression, but a necessary step. Extreme right-wing groups whose members are themselves intolerant towards particular people (such as foreigners, and people with different political opinions) say this was intolerant.

Neo-Nazi activity has kept cropping up in Austria ever since the NSDAP was banned, mostly as political rallies and propaganda.

In the 1990s, a series of letter bombs injured a lot of people, including Helmut Zilk, the then mayor of Vienna. In 1995, the bomber also attacked a Roma settlement in Burgenland, killing four Roma. He was caught two years later and committed suicide in prison.

In Germany and Austria, neo-Nazis are closely watched by the Verfassungsschutz or intelligence agencies. This is why neo-Nazis are always trying to find loopholes in the tight legal framework. For example, they make use of “codes” that other neo-Nazis can understand. Some of these codes have also been banned, such as “88”, which refers to the eighth letter of the alphabet and stands for the “Heil Hitler” salute. Nowadays, neo-Nazi ideas mainly creep into youth culture through music and fashion, with the internet playing a decisive role.



Demonstration in Vienna, January 2012.

“ADVENTURE WORLD NEO-NAZISM”

Andreas Peham, an expert on anti-Semitism and right-wing extremism, says about the Austrian neo-Nazi scene:

“Neo-Nazism has increasingly become a youth movement. The ‘scene’ offers young people a wide range of things and activities: from travel to demonstrations, clothes and music to martial arts and the works. There is even a special perfume for Nazis. We call this ‘adventure world neo-Nazism’. It is also becoming harder to recognise right-wing extremists by their looks.”



NSDAP: National Socialist German Workers Party.

Verfassungsschutz / Austrian Federal Agency for State Protection and Counter Terrorism (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz and Terrorismusbekämpfung / BVT): protects constitutional institutions of the Republic of Austria and their capacity to act. The BVT is part of the Austrian Ministry of Internal Affairs (Bundesministerium für Inneres / BMI).

Helmut Zilk: former Austrian politician; mayor of Vienna from 1984 to 1994.



There are lots of internet websites with neo-Nazi, racist or anti-Semitic content. However, there are also lots of online initiatives targeting and counteracting these messages; for example:

www.comicsgegenrechts.at
www.gegennazis.at
www.stopptdierechten.at
www.dasbuendnis.twoday.net
www.braunau-gegen-rechts.at
(Maybe you know other websites.)

Study one of the websites:

- _ How does it counteract neo-Nazi/racist/anti-Semitic content?
- _ Pick an excerpt (a campaign, a slogan etc.) from this website that you particularly like and explain why to the whole group.

REVIVAL OF NATIONAL SOCIALIST ACTIVITIES IS BANNED+++
HATE SPEECHES HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION+++
NEO-NAZIS LOOK FOR LOOPHOLES IN THE LAW

WHAT IS FORBIDDEN?

The law banning National Socialist activity has been repeatedly amended since 1945. The last time was in 1992, when the range of prison sentences was greatly reduced. Key to this law is the paragraph forbidding “re-engagement” with National Socialism, such as attempting to re-form the NSDAP again (or subsidiaries like the SS or SA), or publicly denying that the Nazis committed any crimes (including the Holocaust). Banned activity includes using Nazi slogans. It is also an offence to play down or justify the crimes of the Nazis. People who claim publicly that there were no gas chambers and nobody was murdered in them are breaking the law. Offenders can face prison sentences of up to twenty years. Extreme cases may be jailed for life.

NAZI SLOGANS

»Ms. D. is a Jew. In April, she talked about her neighbour’s anti-Semitic 16-year-old son. The young man sings radical right-wing songs with the windows open, repeatedly shouting out ‘Heil Hitler’ or ‘Jewish pigs’ with visiting girlfriends. On one occasion, Ms. D. saw his mother rush into his room and shout at him that he should at least shut the window. Ms. D. contacted ZARA (Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus Arbeit, an anti-racist lobby group), told them about the case and asked about legal options. ZARA wrote back that saying ‘Heil Hitler’ was legally a punishable re-engagement in National Socialist activities. This meant that the teenager could be reported to the police. However, the ZARA adviser also pointed out that Ms. D. would have to appear as a witness if she pressed charges, and that the offender was her neighbour.« (Zara, Rassismus Report 2006, p. 44)

It is, for that matter, also compulsory to report anyone breaking the law. But it is not just re-engagement with National Socialism that is legally regulated, there are also laws covering the treatment of minorities, racism and xenophobia. These are laid down in the Austrian criminal code. The criminal offence of incitement to hatred is particularly important. It tackles people who publicly stir up feeling against members of a particular group (for example, a religious community) and humiliate or mock them. The offences of slander and libel, which we often hear about, are regulated by law too. In Austria, it is against the law to publicly insult, ridicule or abuse people, or threaten to abuse them.

ANTI-MUSLIM GAME

»During a federal state election campaign in Styria, in south-east Austria, the Styrian Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) went online with a ‘game’ entitled Moschee Baba (Baba mosque). It was designed like a fairground rifle range. Players used a traffic stop sign to click on minarets, mosques and muezzins that kept popping up, to make them disappear. Politicians from other parties and members of the Islamic religious community, among others, condemned this game as anti-Muslim propaganda. Eventually, multiple charges were filed on the grounds of suspected incitement to hatred (§ 283, Austrian Criminal Code) and the offence of disparaging or disrespecting religious teachings (§ 188, Austrian Criminal Code).« (Zara, Rassismus Report 2010, p. 32). In October 2011, a first lawsuit ended in acquittal.

XENOPHOBIA

»Ms. K., who was born in Iran, wanted to go to a cinema in Vienna with her daughter one November evening. Outside the cinema, a Christmas market stall holder accused her of theft. The accusation was proved to be unfounded, but Ms. K. was furious that she had been accused of a criminal offence for no reason. An elderly man approached her and said that she, the ‘dirty foreigner’, should just shut up. Ms. K. was so outraged by this insult that she called the police, who took the man’s details. Ms. K. is considering suing him. ZARA has offered to support her case.« (Zara, Rassismus Report 2007, p. 15)

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

If you witness racist abuse or are assaulted yourself, please contact ZARA (Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus Arbeit / Civil Courage and Anti-Racism Work) for support.
Website: www.zara.or.at
Mail: office@zara.or.at



I think Ms. D.’s / Ms. K.’s reaction was:
 understandable, because ...
 not understandable, because ...



Imagine you witnessed either the incident involving Ms. D. (the Nazi slogans) or Ms. K. (racist verbal abuse).

What could you do?

Please discuss your views and ideas with each other, and present your thoughts to the whole group.



“Editorial meeting”

a) You are members of the editorial team. You need to illustrate the chapter “What is prohibited?” Choose one of the following illustrations (or a different one that you find more suitable). Explain why you chose it.



Translation: “Please get involved”

b) Look at the kind of short sentences found in the lower right-hand margins of the other chapters and write some for this chapter as well. Present the results of your editorial meeting to the whole group.

LET'S DO SOMETHING!

Racism, anti-Semitism and homophobia are all types of hostility towards particular groups of people. They concern us all. Nobody wants to be treated with contempt just because he or she is allegedly different. But what can we do about it?

There are no fixed formats for how to react appropriately in situations where people are being pushed out. Still, there are many things we can do.

It can be helpful to know what our options are. The most important thing is to intervene. Intervention can be learned and practised. First of all, however, it is crucial to recognise the situation for what it is and not to look or walk away.

What kind of state you live in – a totalitarian one, such as Austria during National Socialism, or a democracy – makes a big difference to how you can react. Under National Socialism, it took a lot of what is called civil courage to help the persecuted, because it meant putting yourself or your family at risk. Nowadays, there are laws to protect human dignity in democratic countries such as Austria. Racial or sexual verbal abuse or discrimination are forbidden by law and can be reported to the police. But someone has to step in, to be proactive. If we look away, we are partially at fault too.

CIVIL COURAGE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH HEROISM



The media only report spectacular cases of civil courage. In everyday life, there are far fewer sensational cases - but many opportunities for being proactive.

Susi Bali, an expert on civil courage:

I always say: civil courage is all about not burying your head in the sand or looking away. You are also showing civil courage if you go up to someone afterwards and say: "Look, you know, I didn't dare to intervene, but I'm extremely sorry about what happened. Maybe we can do something about it together in future." Or you might ask: "Do you want to go for a coffee?"

I can also intervene directly if someone says, for example: "You sodding queer!" Then I can say: "That's a load of bollocks!" I can intervene in different ways. I can be aggressive and say:

Susi Bali

"Have it out with me then." I can certainly only do that if I think I'm stronger, although I might be mistaken. And the other possibility is to just spoil the fun and say: "It's really lame picking on people who are weaker than you."

I can challenge the abusers' motivation and ask them: "Why do you think you have to pick on people like that?" Or I can ignore them and look after the victim instead, by simply going up to him or her and saying: "Take it easy. There are loads of idiots out there." By doing that, I may attract a lot less aggressive behaviour towards myself.

I can also deflect the situation by changing topics: "Have you heard that the maths test is going to be repeated?" There is always something stupid you can mention, like: "Have you heard that our teacher's pregnant?" Distracting people brings in a different energy; it's always an option. I personally think that distracting stories are particularly good.

You can watch an example of a "distracting story" made into a film at: <http://www.filmproduktion.org/zaraspots/> You will also find other film clips with further suggestions.



Chris

STAYING CALM

I once let myself be provoked by someone and then beat him up. I hadn't wanted to. After that, I started taking boxing lessons. Since then I've become a lot calmer, because now I'm the strong one. Not much can happen to me now and I won't let anybody provoke me anymore. I know that I can defend myself if anyone ever insults me. It's a good feeling and gives me self-confidence.

BEATING UP HITLER

The Austrian cartoonist Manfred Deix mocked Austrians' image of themselves as anti-Nazis and innocent lambs. In his version of history, people showed solidarity with and civil courage for the persecuted Jewish population. (profil 18/1986)

Translation Vienna 1919: Gänsehäufel public bathing beach in Vienna, where Hitler has been making derogatory remarks about Jews. A furious man gives him short shrift (left, Hitler on the ground wearing swimming trunks): "Hey, old chap, if I ever hear you bashing Jews again, you can go and emigrate!"



Homophobia: this term (from Greek homos: same; phobos: fear of) means hostility towards lesbians and gays.

Civil or social courage: from Latin civilis – of ordinary life, not military; the courage of citizens.

Sexism: an attitude that makes people treat someone less well because of their gender.

THIS CONCERNS US ALL!+++WHAT CAN WE DO?+++
RACISM IS A PUNISHABLE OFFENCE!+++LOOK AND ACT!

WE ARE PROACTIVE: A CONVERSATION WITH ROMY GRASGRUBER AND MARIA SOFALY

Two female students from Vienna became fed up when inflammatory slogans were used to stir up public opinion during the 2009 European parliamentary elections. They set up a Facebook group and within a short time the idea was born to create a chain of light around the Austrian parliament building. On 18 June 2009, several thousand people got together there, to protest against discrimination and disrespect for humanity and to support human dignity.

Every year, for about the past five or six years, we would get upset about the same things. And nothing happened. We would talk about it all until we were blue in the face. We would complain about how bad things were, how irresponsible people were. It was all a lot of hot air. Well, and then we thought, we keep moaning all the time, but we don't actually do anything either. That's when we decided to do something. An hour later, we went over to the new department building next to the university, and sent out an email: "We want something to happen and don't want things to continue as they are. Civil society should rise up and act." Then we set up a Facebook group. Within a very short time, all our friends had joined it and then others joined too. It just snowballed.



Romy and Maria

Romy:
I feel that quite a lot of things are happening. Well, if I think that people of different religions will never be able to understand each other, and if that's what most other people believe too, they will definitely never be able to understand each other. That's why we want to demonstrate that it is, in fact, possible. By simply showing civil courage we thought that we might also serve as some sort of role models. We can all live together and respect each other if diversity is appreciated as something enriching. Migration should be grasped as an opportunity and not just seen as a problem. It's a challenge, and it's not always easy; and people need to be aware of this too. We wanted to communicate some of that and show people that they needn't just automatically be scared. We wanted to make people think and overcome their prejudices. And we wanted to present them with a positive vision, because that's what's needed. That's the only way forward.



i What options for action are open to us, according to Susi Bali, Chris, Romy and Maria?

i What does civil courage mean for you personally? How would you explain it to someone else?

iii Discussion:
Maria Sofaly and Romy Grasgruber decided not to keep on "moaning" but to do something.
_ What do you think makes people do something about injustice and become proactive?

iii Intervening can be practised. Think about the various options you have to react by brainstorming together.

In small groups, think of situations that you have either experienced or witnessed in which people were mean to someone else.

- _ Describe these situations as precisely as possible.
- _ How might any of the people directly involved or witnessing the incident have reacted differently?
- _ Present one example to the large group (either by performing it or by describing the incident).
- _ Perhaps the other members of the group have other ideas about how you might react / might have reacted.

Collect up all the answers and compile a list of ideas. Discuss how you might edit this catalogue of ideas and publish it.

iii Project work: a short film about civil courage
You have already focused on an incident that requires or required civil courage. Now discuss making a short film about this or a similar situation. Write a script and answer the following questions:
_ Who and what will be in the clip and what will you need to film it?
_ How will you cast the roles?
_ Where do you want to film it?

Once you have finished filming, there will be a performance at which you can present your work to the other groups and discuss it.

- The following questions may help you:
- _ What was the director's intention?
 - _ What was it like working on the film?
 - _ How happy are you with the result?

Where might the films be shown or published?

THIS CONCERNS US ALL!+++WHAT CAN WE DO?+++
RACISM IS A PUNISHABLE OFFENCE!+++LOOK AND ACT!

“A human being is a human being,” said Bekhan, earlier in this booklet. We chose this statement as the title for these teaching materials because we think it is a very important message.

The young people whose experiences are described here reveal a lot about themselves. Even though people being isolated and sidelined concerns us all, it is not easy to talk about it. The fact, however, that many young people did talk about it makes it easier for us all to start a dialogue about “Racism, Anti-Semitism and You Name It . . .” Perhaps when dealing with these topics you had questions that you were able to discuss with other people. Maybe these questions and thoughts will stay with you and remind you how important it is to be aware of what is happening – and how important it is to (re-)act.

Albert Lichtblau is a professor of history at the University of Salzburg. He interviewed the young people in this booklet and wrote many of the texts.



Albert Lichtblau

When I was growing up some people thought I was Jewish because my family name sounded Jewish to them and they acted strangely towards me because of it. It doesn't take much to pigeonhole a person. Just one generation before me, this type of labelling could have meant my death sentence if my family really had been Jewish.

Even as a schoolboy I found it disconcerting how easy it is to attack other people. In my class, there was a boy who couldn't defend himself. I watched and didn't say anything. I still regard this as a personal failure. Where did all the rage and hate come from? I didn't hate him, but what's worse I didn't stand by him. Nobody said anything. However, there are now curbs to racism and anti-Semitism in our society. We can do something to create a positive social environment. To do this, we don't need heroes or heroines but people with backbone. It left a great impression on me to find them among the young individuals we got to know in the course of putting together this booklet.

Maria Ecker works for _erinnern.at. She organised and conducted many of the meetings with the young people. She wrote the questions for the tasks and worked on the texts.



Maria Ecker

In my childhood, I only really knew about “others” by hearsay: Jews, Gypsies, people from abroad. They didn't live in my small world. Fortunately, my environment didn't make me frightened but instead curious to get to know the “other”. That's why I'm always looking for voices, experiences and stories from people of different origins and backgrounds. They enrich me. The meetings with the young people during our work on this booklet have also left a lasting impression on me.

Experiences like these constantly make my own world a bit bigger, although it's still very limited. I regularly reach those limits when I, for example, witness verbal insults and assaults but don't do anything. Look very closely at what's going on – that's what I definitely intend to do. I hope that these teaching materials will support me and us all in doing so.

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All other photos: Sabine Sowieja (Lindau, Germany)

All other excerpts from interviews: Albert Lichtblau, Maria Ecker

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anne frank house

The Anne Frank House is an independent organization which manages the building in whose rear part Anne hid and wrote her diary during the Second World War. The Anne Frank House has brought the story of Anne Frank's life to the attention of a worldwide audience. Its mission is to get people to reflect on the dangers of anti-Semitism, racism and discrimination and on the importance of freedom, equality and democracy.

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