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The Foundation of Peace Education by Jan Amos Comenius (1592-1670) and its Topicality

Summary: *The foundation of a peace education was an integral part of the pansophic work of J.A. Comenius (1592-1670), a consequence of his own life experiences as a refugee, displaced persons and asylum seeker during the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). As an educator, theologian, philosopher and linguist, Comenius significantly contributed to the reconciliation of peoples, cultures and religions. He can thus be seen as the founder of an intercultural, international and inter-religious peace education, whose growing importance in our times is obvious. Cultural and religious differences multiply in the wake of growing social problems. There is new relevance in acquiring the Comenian concept of intercultural and interreligious dialogue and peace education in the context of current general-xenophobic, racist and especially Islamophobic trends in parts of the German and European populations. Peace education must expose anti-humanist, xenophobic positions and educate on the benefits of cosmopolitan societies.*

Keywords: *Jan Amos Comenius, Peace Education, intercultural and interreligious dialogue, xenophobia, refugees*

Резюме (Рейнхард Гольц: Основание воспитания в духе мира Яном Амосом Коменским [1592-1670] и его актуальность в наши дни): *Основание воспитания в духе мира было неотъемлемой частью пансофического труда Я. А. Коменского (1592-1670), следствием его собственного жизненного опыта как беженца, вынужденного переселенца и просителя убежища во время Тридцатилетней войны (1618-1648). Как педагог, теолог, философ и лингвист, Коменский внес значительный вклад в примирение народов, культур и религий. Таким образом, его можно рассматривать как основателя межкультурного, международного и межрелигиозного воспитания в духе мира, растущее значение которого в наше время нельзя не признать. Культурные и религиозные различия увеличиваются в ходе роста социальных проблем. Концепция межкультурного и межрелигиозного диалога Коменского и воспитания в духе мира вновь является востребованной в рамках существования в наши дни ксенофобных, расистских и особенно враждебных по отношению к исламу тенденций среди населения Германии и Европы. Воспитание в духе мира выявляет антигуманистические, враждебные позиции и обнаруживает преимущества космополитических обществ.*

Ключевые слова: *Ян Амос Коменский; воспитание в духе мира, межкультурный, межрелигиозный диалог; ксенофобия; беженцы*

Zusammenfassung (Reinhard Golz: Die Begründung der Friedenserziehung durch Jan Amos Comenius [1592-1670] und ihre Aktualität): *Die Begründung einer Friedenserziehung war integraler Bestandteil des pansophischen Werkes von J.A. Comenius (1592-1670), eine Konsequenz seiner eigenen Lebenserfahrungen als Flüchtling, Vertriebener und Asylsuchender während des Dreißigjährigen Krieges (1618-1648). Als Pädagoge, Theologe, Philosoph und Linguist, leistete Comenius einen wesentlichen Beitrag zur Versöhnung der Völker, Kulturen und Religionen. Er kann damit als Begründer einer interkulturellen, internationalen und interreligiösen Friedenserziehung gesehen werden, deren wachsende Bedeutung in unserer Zeit klar zu erkennen ist. Kulturelle und religiöse Unterschiede vervielfachen sich im Zuge wachsender sozialer Probleme. Comenius' Konzept des interkulturellen und interreligiösen Dialogs und der Friedenserziehung erlangt eine neue Relevanz im Rahmen der derzeitigen allgemeinen-fremdenfeindlichen, rassistischen und speziell islamfeindlichen Tendenzen in Teilen der deutschen und europäischen Bevölkerung. Friedenserziehung muss anti-humanistische, fremdenfeindliche Positionen offenlegen und über die Vorteile kosmopolitischer Gesellschaften informieren.*

Schlüsselwörter: *Jan Amos Comenius; Friedenserziehung, interkultureller, interreligiöser Dialog; Fremdenfeindlichkeit; Flüchtlinge*

Aspects of the present dealing with cultural and religious difference

Our time is characterized by processes of globalization, internationalization, migration and social transformations. Coupled with this are progressive socio-economic and political developments on the one hand, and serious social undesirable developments, challenges and problems on the other. The latter includes ongoing conflicts and wars in which peoples and nations, cultures and religions, suffer; eg in Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, Nigeria, Syria, or in Ukraine. A result of these conflicts is migration and refugee movements away from social, economic and cultural pressures, political, ethnic and religious persecution. More and more people are looking for help and protection in other countries where they hope for asylum, cultural and religious tolerance, and improved living prospects. In the societies of the host countries, in turn, they are faced with sections of the population who have joined populist right-wing movements, often for diffuse and irrational reasons. This leads to intercultural and inter-religious intolerance and ignorance, xenophobic demonstrations and aggressive actions in particular against refugees.

All sectors of society in almost all democratic host countries in Europe, but especially in Germany and France, are currently facing major challenges in dealing with xenophobic, right-wing populist movements. In France the "Front National" is known and in Germany there are known right-wing populist parties, such as the "National Democratic Party of Germany," and since 2013 a new right-wing conservative that is also Europe- and Euro-critical party called "Alternative for Germany". Moreover, since 2014 there is a right-wing populist, nationalist and xenophobic movement in Germany under the name of "Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the West" (PEGIDA), with branches in other countries.

The positions of the propagandists of these parties and movements are diffuse, populist, anti-democratic, nationalist and clearly xenophobic. They stir up sentiments mainly against an alleged Islamization of German and European societies, show a frightening lack of information (or ignorance) about the real cultural and ethnic composition of the population and especially about the actual size of the Muslim population which has not been recognized fully by politicians. Frustration over social problems, the alleged threat to national (German) identity through cultural and extremist religious alienation, etc. is being exploited for blind hatred of anything foreign as well as refugees, asylum seekers and other marginalized people in society.

At the same time we see a broad alliance of social organizations, churches, religious communities, entrepreneurs, students, politicians, people from all walks of life. The supporters of this movement, among them eg „NO-PEGIDA“, oppose the racist, Islamophobic, xenophobic, populist-nationalist ideology; they represent a cosmopolitan multicultural society in which diversity of people is realized not as a burden but as an asset. For them the reception of refugees and asylum seekers is a humanitarian duty; immigration can be an enrichment for an aging society and the commercial future in Germany.

The numerical participation in the xenophob demonstrations and movements has tended to decrease in recent months, and it seems to be but a split of some of these movements in a part which could be more moderate, more open to dialogue and another part which has taken a more aggressive direction with a blind hatred of everything foreign. It is beyond the scope of this article to list all current available publications on the subject here. One will find lots of related information eg in: Geiges, Marg & Walter, 2015; Klose & Patzelt, 2015; Kluge, 2015; Reuband, 2015; see also constantly updated Internet information under "Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes" (Patriotische Europäer ..., 2015). Meanwhile, there are also numerous English-language sites on the Internet (search for: "Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the West" or "Patriotic Europeans

against the Islamization of the Occident".

The societies in Germany and other countries are characterized by cultural, ethnic, religious and linguistic differences, and they have specific experience in dealing with minorities. Humanistic, cosmopolitan attitudes of the majority are faced with growing xenophobic attitudes of certain sections of the population. Frightening trends of increasing intolerance not only to refugees, but also generally to cultural and religious differences are paradoxically particularly noted in areas with a comparatively small number of immigrants or people from other cultures.

How can the peaceful, democratic, cosmopolitan atmosphere be promoted in these societies? How can a Peace Education be developed, justified and designed as a complex of different fields of work with far reaching tasks that affect the whole society, not only the school, but people of all ages? Peace Education includes humanistic-democratic handling of intercultural and inter-religious conflicts; anti-militarism, human rights education, intercultural education, anti-racism, globalearning, gender equality, environmental education and other related values. In short – it is about contemporary peaceful dealing with cultural and religious differences, inconsistencies and conflicts (see eg Wulf, 1989; Kössler & Schwitanski, 2014). One thing seems to be clear: pragmatic short-lived political appeals are not far reaching enough. What needs to be developed is a peaceful solution to the differences between actual and alleged intercultural and inter-religious conflicts and to shape and consolidate a democratic and cosmopolitan society. Peace education should not just focus only on schools, but see itself as a social challenge. That means to uncover also the current social causes of xenophobia and nationalism and not to ignore the relevant causes. Xenophobic attitudes and actions are not primarily about social orientation problems of socially neglected youth. Those trends are even more to be located in the middle and older generations. Apart from people of socially disadvantaged backgrounds there are more and more unsettled members of the middle classes involved in xenophobic demonstrations.

The point is to understand better in depth the causes in their historical dimension. The history of the idea of peace and peace education and the work of their historic founders must be consulted to what extent their lessons and experiences may be worthy of discussion and helpful for our efforts to build a peaceful world. There have always been efforts to empower people through education to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and violence. All cultures and religions have more or less contributed in their own way in doing so. Many historically significant personalities have dealt with this question since ancient times.

In this article, however, it is necessary to focus on a historical figure whose life and work in the thematic context is particularly relevant: Jan Amos Comenius (1592-1670).

The countless publications updating historic insights and experiences of the peace educator Comenius are too numerous to mention here, a German-language bibliography lists over 2,400 published titles up to the year 1999 (Michel & Beer, 2000). Since then the number of works on Comenius in German, Czech, English and other languages has continued to rise. The intensive research and publication activities of the German Comenius Society (<http://www.deutsche-comenius-gesellschaft.de/coj.html>), the editors and authors of the "Comenius Yearbook" (<https://www.google.de/#q=comenius+Jahrbuch>) and also some German universities which have compiled substantial literature lists on Comenius (see eg Müllner, 2013).

In terms of the biography of Comenius it is essential that his life in the Europe of the 30-year war (1618-1648) and its aftermath was a continuous restless work in the service of people and their im-

provement through education, work in the service of cultural, ethnic and religious tolerance and humanity. His own life was marked by poverty, great tragedy and unimaginable misery, but also for his participation in major social transformations. It was the decisive point of reference for the work of the educator, philosopher, theologian and linguist Jan Amos Comenius, to make a fundamental, systematic contribution to the idea of peace and place it in a basic educational context. Comenius developed peace education as a fundamental principle in all teaching, learning and information processes - from early childhood to death (Röhrs, 2005). Insofar it meets some general criteria for an educational innovation (Ellis, 2005, p. 13 f.).

One of Comenius' creeds was, according to his own lifelong experience:

"We are all citizens of one world (...). To hate a man because he was born in another country, because he speaks a different language, or because he takes a different view on this subject or that, is a great folly. (...) Let us put aside all selfishness in considerations of language, nationality, or religion." (Comenius, Panegersia; quoted eg in Golz, Korthaase & Schäfer, 1996, p. 126).

Many countries in Europe were refuges for him from the religious clashes and the chaos of war. However, some of his visits were initiated by royal families and high-ranking civil personalities. They sought his advice as a reformer of the school and the educational thinking. Despite his dramatic and often discouraging life, which was marked by repression, wars and cultural, ethnic and religious intolerance, he left behind a life's work that is astonishingly relevant. Comenius was and is internationally recognized as the "Teacher of Nations", the first great theorist of a systematic and comprehensive education (eg Panek, 1991; Hofmann, 1975; Röhrs, 2005; Schaller, 1992; Scheuerl, 1979; Korthaase, 2005). Among his pedagogical-didactic major works, only the following are highlighted here: "De rerum humanarum emendatione consultatio catholica" (differently translated into English, eg as "A general consultation concerning the improvement of human affairs", in German as "Allgemeine Beratung zur Verbesserung der menschlichen Dinge") [Komenský (= Comenius), 1970], with its parts "Pampaedia" (ibid., pp. 231 ff. and "Panglottia", pp. 295 ff.); the "Great Didactic" (Comenius, 1961; Keatinge, 2012), and "Orbis Sensualium Pictus" (Comenius, 1658; Alt, 1987; Nezel, 1996).

Comenius never gave up his main goal - to improve the human condition through peace education. In an essay for the UNESCO Bureau of Education, Jean Piaget (1896-1980) put it:

"Nothing is more moving, in following Comenius' career, than the fact that this eternal exile, eternally a member of a minority group never tired of drawing up plans for international collaboration: general schemes for universal peace." (Piaget, 1993, 10) And elsewhere Piaget expressed his belief that Comenius' works "do not need to be corrected or, in reality, contradicted in order to bring them up to date, but merely to be translated and elaborated" (ibid. p. 13).

In cooperation with UNESCO, Comeniologists from all over the world urge translations of works of Comenius, at least into the most important global languages to critically and constructively utilize them for the development of peace education (Golz, 2000).

A common question is whether any of the historical developments of science, for example the educational Comeniology, can be a benefit for contemporary or current problem-solving strategies. Here we should refer to the German pedagogue Friedrich A. Diesterweg (1790-1866) and the American philosopher George Santayana (1863-1952). Diesterweg was convinced that anyone who does not know the history of his subject will never understand the connection of the whole, the moving force behind the work of the moment (Diesterweg, 1956, 205). And Santayana's warning reads: "Those

who can not remember the past are condemned to repeat it." (Santayana, 1905, 284). That is: addressing current problems begins "with reflection on the contributions of those who have laid the groundwork for present theory and practice" and thus, to think beyond the moment, both historically, currently and into the future (Ellis, Golz & Mayrhofer, 2014, 10).

The thoughts and demands of Comenius are just as stimulating as they were bold and far reaching into the future even in his time: education for all (boys and girls, urban and rural children, regardless of social status and material wealth); a good school climate, instead of fear-generating drill; relating school learning to life, the world of children; clarity, etc. (J. Thonhauser - in: Golz 2000).

Future orientation is especially true for his idea of a lasting peace. Today it seems that - despite enlightenment and education - too many people learned nothing or not enough of the history of violent conflicts. The question is whether people still have to go through all the negative experiences of their ancestors to reach their own knowledge and insights. Can time-independent values be found under such conditions? Time has already shown that the legacy of Comenius, particularly at times of serious upheavals and related pedagogical orientation, problems become a new challenge and stimulation (Daum & Golz 1996, 215). But the mere contemplation of the best human values and virtues has not brought about much change up to the present time. One needs to be wary of being too enthusiastic about the historical implications of the usefulness of the findings of historical education in the context of educational Comeniology. However, the following statement is likely to be uncontroversial: If people from history (eg the history of education in general and peace education in particular) have learned nothing, that does not mean that they could not have learned something, and it does not mean that one today can not learn anything from history. But if you can learn from history, then you must do it for ethical, moral and rational reasons, then, it is a categorical imperative.

The aim is to better our understanding and evaluation of current theory discourses and controversies in their historical and theoretical genesis (Harney & Krüger, 1997, 9). This applies in a special way for the development of peacefulness within societies and for individuals. People and nations need to remember history, to avoid the repetition of mistakes and failures in order to "escape the compulsion to repeat the evil" and also in order to empathize with people with different cultural and religious identities (Nipkow, 2005, 739). Ultimately, this also leads to the realization and overcoming of one's own, often unconscious ethnocentrism, an essential component of intercultural and inter-religious communication skills (Nieke, 2000; Krüger-Potratz, 2005; Lohmann & Weiße, 1994; Maletzke, 1996). Already Comenius had admonished his contemporaries that we should not hope that we will reach to veritable unity, universality and reformation, as long as we are dominated by the conviction of our own perfection (see: Comenius und der Weltfriede).

Aspects of the idea of peace between universalism, relativism and global ethic

What is needed is a peace education discussion of national and international educational traditions and values as well as their preservation and development, a discussion that is conducted on the basis of a tolerant, enlightened and moderate cultural relativism, which is aware of the dangers of absolutism (Golz, 1999). This applies in particular to the discussion on values in times of serious social transformations. The difficulty of questions regarding the "correct" values across national and cultural borders, and many generations is to be recognized. Values are not abstract and finally not fixed in their hierarchy for all time. From an enlightened relativistic point of view it is - according to the Protestant theologian F. Schorlemmer - about values that characterize and bind the peoples and cultures and enables intercultural and inter-religious understanding (Schorlemmer 1995, pp. 15-21).

Comenius' enlightened universalist way aims to achieve the worldwide unity of all people ("We are all citizens of one world ..."). The life and works of Comenius were deeply religious. Yet his idea of peace is just affecting and also inspiring to non-religious people. Today's world, at least the European, is characterized by an increasing secularization of life. In terms of religion, there are major differences between eastern Germany (about 20% of the population are religious) and western Germany (about 72%). In eastern Germany there was always more attention to Comenius than in western Germany. Religious people in the Czech Republic are less than 20%, and yet Comenius is a Czech national hero and his memory is omnipresent in that country. Comenius' work for world peace not only appeals to Christians but also followers of other religions and people without any religious convictions, for example, secular humanists of all types and humanist atheists etc. (Edwards, 2008; Kahl, 2011; Flynn, 2015).

A similar claim has also been put forward by the Catholic theologian Hans Küng and his project of a "World Ethos" (Küng, 1993; Küng & Kuschel, 1998). On the initiative of Küng a "World Parliament of Religions", and a "Declaration of Global Ethic" was established in 1993 in Chicago (USA). This was and still is an attempt to summarize the core values of all world religions and to draw attention to peacemaking, consensual commandments, which are available in different formulations and commandments in all major world religions and also in non-religious schools of thought. One of the mottoes of the project "Global Ethic" is the so called "Golden Rule" of peaceful coexistence which can be found in different formulations in almost all world religions and, if you will, eventually in the (rather non-religious) Kantian "categorical imperative". The "Global Ethic" should be the basic consensus for all people over values, norms and attitudes: peace, justice, charity, pluralism, solidarity, responsibility for ones contemporaries, the environment and future generations. Religions can contribute to world peace only through this basic consensus. Global ethics is based on the coexistence and directed against particularistic economic interests and power politics in the context of globalization.

Critics of the "Global Ethic" see this as an attempt towards a mixing and the questionable co-ordination of religions; peaceful co-existence of religions could better promote world peace as an objectively-theological project. "A minimum consensus can not come 'from above', but must always be re-worked 'from below'. Only a minimal open and revisable consensus can prevent the formation of a 'closed' society. A consensus according to the "Global Ethic Project" stands in danger of not promoting diversity and acceptance of difference, but to hinder it (Heinrichs, 1999; Vogels, 2008). In both cases (universalist and relativistic) only enlightened, moderate positions which take into account the dangers of being too absolute should be seriously considered. Comenius, Küng, Schorlemmer and others represent respective moderate, enlightened positions, suitable for discussions and dialogues.

Excursus: The idea of a universal language

In this context, Comenius' thoughts on a universal language as a humanist, peacemaking, global project are worth mentioning. Comenius saw a significant cause of wars between nations, cultures and religions in the "punishment" of disturbing linguistic diversity (Comenius, 1970). The founders of a new (universal) language should have precise knowledge of the major languages of the world. Something unique should be found and preserved in any language for the design of the universal language. A universal transfer between peoples through the confusion of tongues should not be hindered any longer (ibid.). Some Comeniologues see both the idea of peace and the idea of a universal language as the most important reference points for the life's work of J.A. Comenius. They hold that, the development and spread of a universal language (approximately along the lines of Esperanto) is still a meaningful task for the present and in the future (Formizzi, 2005; Beer, 2005; see also Geissler, 1959). Comenius did not want any of the leading national languages prevalent and thus make the world

language; no vernacular is suitable for universal language, not even the language of scholars - Latin. The harshest critics of a world language, which arises from a single nation, pointed out that such language would linguistically, culturally, politically and economically dominate the world in an ultimately imperialistic manner. One such critic was the scientist and philosopher and Nobel laureate Wilhelm Ostwald (1853-1932), whose position is repeatedly quoted by representatives of artificial languages (Ido, Esperanto and others). He believed that the people whose language would be levied for world language would have by that fact alone a large advantage over all other peoples and imperialistically dominate their technical, economic, cultural, medial etc. spheres of life. Ostwald was a consistent opponent of a world language, which arises from a particular people and ultimately dominates the world (Ostwald, 1910, 443; Blanke, 1996, 21-22).

At first glance this position seems to be quite humanistic and in some ways understandable; it is not difficult to have some associations to current developments. However, it certainly needs no further justification, that these universalist-linguistic ideas of Comenius and the attempts of his followers to create and realize a universal (artificial) language which displaces one or more world languages will remain just a utopian ideal.

Peace education as current societal challenge

The pedagogy of Comenius as a whole and especially his peace education was aimed to teach all people everything in a comprehensive manner ("omnes omnia omnino"). Everyone can learn or get taught, and not only at school. Education should benefit "all" people: young and old, rich and poor, noble and commoner, men and women, all ages, all classes, societies, cultures and peoples. To teach or learn "everything" refers to everything that makes human nature really perfect. "All-embracing" means the pertinence and thoroughness of teaching and learning. These aspects of his training concept, including his idea of peace building, were not limited to the school. His "Pampaedia" is also regarded as the foundation of lifelong learning and the discipline of adult education (Schaller, 1992; Schäfer, 1996). Peace education concerns the whole life, which is an educational institution in itself, starting with the "school of prenatal becoming", through the "school of early childhood", the "school of boyhood", the "school of maturity", the "school of young manhood", the "school of manhood", the "school of old age", to the "school of death" [Komenský (= Comenius) 1970 (Pampaedia); Schaller, 1958; Röhrs, 1971, 15].

Comenius wants people to strive anew to understand objectives, means and forms of one's own and others' actions, to separate the essential from the unessential, to recognize a digression of own and others' thoughts, words and deeds, and to correct them. At all times, and especially in our time, there was and still is his credo of eternal relevance: to make war and violence unnecessary, to develop a pedagogy oriented towards non-violence and dialogue, a peace education, to deeply understand intercultural, inter-religious and heretical aspects and problems and thus contribute to a human life in this world. The related tasks refer to educators, theologians, historians, philosophers, language and cultural scientists, natural scientists, political scientists, writers, music teachers, theater scholars etc. They can all benefit from the work of Comenius and his valuable suggestions for their disciplines (see, for example, the positions of Araújo Kuhlmann, Scarbath, Scheuerl among others - in: Golz, 2000).

Peace education appears at first sight and certainly not without reason as one of the main tasks of schools. But for schools alone, this job is too big; it is a complex societal challenge. Among the subsequent classics of pedagogy, who have spoken on this issue, reference is made here only to Maria Montessori. Although Montessori was scarcely quoting Comenius, a surprising number of similarities between the two may yet be found. The first concerns some didactic aspects. Montessori is to encourage

the child's initiative and self-activity, compensate for learning difficulties, develop monitoring and coordination services through sensory training and maximum vividness. It is essential to remark here, Montessori's request of a child which became programmatic for her educational concept: "Help me to do it myself!" Comenius had already written on the title page of his book "Great Didactic":

"Let the main object of our Didactic, be as follows: to seek and to find a method of instruction, by which teachers may teach less, but learners may learn more; by which schools may be the scene of less noise, aversion, and useless labor, but of more leisure, enjoyment, and solid progress; and through which the Christian community may have less darkness, perplexity, and dissention, but on the other hand more light, orderliness, peace, and rest." (Comenius, 1961; therefore see the reprint in: Keatinge, 1907/2012.).

And in terms of sensory perception it is important to name his "Orbis Pictus Sensualium", the first illustrated textbook for children. There we can read not only see his universal creed "Omnia sponte fluent, absit violentia rebus" (Let all things spontaneously flow; let there be no violence to things.). In his preface he also describes the "Golden Rule of Didactics":

"Everything is presented to all the sensations as much as possible: the visual phenomena to the sight, the sounds to ear, the smells to nose, the tastes to tongue, the tangible phenomena to the touch. If something can be perceived by more senses, let it be that way. Nothing is in the mind that hasn't been sensed before." (Comenius, 1658).

In this regard the similarities with several contemporary and later classics of philosophy and pedagogy (eg Hobbes, Spinoza, Locke, Berkeley, Rousseau, Montessori, etc.) are obvious. Besides these didactic and methodological positions, there is another similarity in terms of a peace education as a part of a societal peace movement including all people of all ages. Montessori emphasizes the important role of the school to enable children to critical, independent thinking and action, children who do not automatically and unconditionally follow neither authoritarian teachers nor war propaganda (Montessori, 1946). For both, Comenius and Montessori, the means to achieve an effective societal peace movement are twofold: first, immediate efforts to resolve conflicts without recourse to violence - in other words, to prevent war - and second, long-term efforts to establish a lasting peace among men "(Montessori, 1949, 27).

For some time, there has been debate about whether peace education should be implemented as a separate subject in schools. Given the new threats posed by international terrorism these recommendations are at last being taken seriously. Harris & Morrison (2003), write that a unit of educators should be created with the task to develop not only locally, territorially and nationally, but also internationally effective curricula for peace education. This form of education should take into account the experience and lessons from history. On this point there are partly controversial discussions as well as different successful developments in individual countries (Salomon & Nevo, 2002). The question is, for example, if all teachers can be 'forced' to hold peace education issues in their teaching. Peace education is a voluntary, self-determined and personal matter; the conviction of its accuracy and effectiveness is important when it comes to both teachers and students. Relevant issues can be integrated into any good lessons and in self-organized and self-directed learning processes. Peace education includes nonviolence, empathy, trust, participation, self-fulfillment, respect, autonomy, freedom from prejudice, human rights, etc. However, a solid school subject has always the problem that it has to be taught and learned and can quickly become just a "learning for school". The school must contribute to factual knowledge about causes of conflict patterns, wars, violence, etc., but peace

education is a challenge for society as a whole (Stober, 2014, 5,6). Thus peace education is, as Rodrigues put it,

"a broad field, which empowers people from all ages and backgrounds, with the knowledge, skills, formation of attitudes in accordance with the values and principles necessary to promote and create a Culture of Peace. Peace Education takes responsibility for transferring the ideal of peace to the conscience and to the actions of people in order to achieve harmonious co-existence based on tolerance, justice, freedom, full respect for difference and to make better conditions for the development of future generations." (Rodriguez, 2014)

The German Trade Union Federation called upon to make peace education throughout the core aim of education: "In day care centers, schools, colleges, vocational training and the development of the value of a peaceful coexistence of all people must be clearly conveyed" (DGB, 2014). In this connection individual, national, international and global societal levels are addressed. Given the aforementioned current social development issues in the context of the processes of globalization, internationalization and migration, the challenge is specifically in the development of communication skills for a human and competent handling of cultural and religious difference. The teaching of empathy and expertise (knowledge) is of particular importance for the elimination of inter-cultural tensions and xenophobia. The training of teaching staff has not only to consider the challenge from a pragmatic-current perspective, but to pay more attention to its historical dimension. And given the initially discussed current developments it is also clear that there are also new (gerontagogic) intercultural challenges, to enable older generations to a contemporary use of cultural and religious differences (Marschke, 2005). No matter how the purely numerical participation in demonstrations and actions of PEGIDA and similar movements develop, xenophobic, racist and right-wing ideologies remain in the minds of too many people. Both the true social, socio-psychological, economic, media and other reasons for ideological aberrations need to be explained comprehensively as well as the benefits and alternatives of a human cosmopolitan society.

At the end of his life Comenius wrote texts that can be seen as part of his spiritual testament. In it, he turns again forcefully against any violent and military persecution of other faiths; not against "erring" (heretics), but against aberrations; against ignorance, cruelty, greed, lust for power, colonialism, hatred of denominations - as causes of war. After the unification of the world there should be "no more difference between the Greeks and the Scythians, between the free and the slaves, between the Europeans and the Americans" (Comenius, 1996, p. 27).

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