

Workshop series "Recontextualising Bismarck"

Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg - Ministry of Culture and Media, Department for Museums

Workshop 2/2021 (12.08.2021)

„What makes the monument so difficult? Examples for dealing with colonial heritage and ideas for the Bismarck monument in the Alte Elbpark“

Dr. Noa Ha

„Race and Racism in Public Space“

- her Focus in her contribution is on an educational intervention
- Starting point: Racism is not only a matter of individual prejudice and education

Introducing the definition in racism orientated at Susan Arndt and Nadja Ofuatey-Alazard (2011), that racism can be defined at how it speaks out of words and how legacies of colonialism are still structuring german language and institutions. In a historical perspective: whole ideology was to invent a „white race“ as a norm, for example through christianity, power and privileges, this can be seen in ideologies, ways of thinking, believing and speaking nowadays. Racism and colonialisms do have „heavy legacies“ that societies nowadays have to deal with in various ways

- Therefore, Race as a category in Europe and colonialism still matters, but we have to differentiate between settler colonialism (e.g. Australia or the US) and metropolitan colonialism in Europe
- The Bismarck monument in the Alte Elbpark in Hamburg is not just a specific monument in the city, rather Noa Ha sees this discussion as part of a larger discussion about racism and colonialism in the urban society and public space
- Introducing a teaching project at TU Berlin: mapping Berlin as a postcolonial space: educating about racism and colonialism in urban space within the university system: What knowledge is needed? What do migrant diasporic civil rights organizations need to support their struggles to equal rights and recognition of their history? What could be of help to educate civil society?
- Colonialism is not just about changing street names and toppling monuments, rather it is a larger legacy in urban society and public space
- The project categorized and approached colonialism through different layers, because the legacies of colonialism are affecting knowledge production and societies in various ways: questions of enslavement, knowledge production, politics and wars, economics and trade, religion and ways of thinking – important: not making the perspective of the perpetrators visible, look at anti-colonialists, resistance and individual perspectives which are often absent and silenced from the discourse
- Questions for the students if you look at archives: What information and knowledge can you found? Who is seen and who is not visible? What kind of information do you get

about the victims of colonialism, are there any information who they were, their origin, etc.?

- Outlook: How can we initiate educational didactic processes to bring students in a discomforting situation: What knowledge do they have? What knowledge do we need in society, and what do they need? what questions can be raised? What answers do we need to look for?
- Within this discussion moral implicitons are debated as well: What do we consider as „right“ and „wrong“, individually and as a larger society?
- For example if we look at the over 250 Bismarck monuments and towers in Germany – The discussion about the recontextualization of the Bismarck monument is not just a local discussion in Hamburg, but a larger discussion of national relevance, concerning questions of remembrance, how to deal with the colonial legacy and how do we educate about it, and, how do we want to live together in cities.

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