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Dominance & Resistance: Narratives & Re-Imaginations of Racialisation, Empowerment & Humanness in Germany

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Declaration

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).

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Abstract

This study explores how antiracism and empowerment practitioners narrate memories of their racialisation, as well as their own experience as participants of empowerment or antiracism training. In this thesis, I explore how racialisation can be understood as a form of dehumanisation, and examine how de-racialisation can also be understood as a form of re-humanisation, by investigating how racial subjectivation is re-written and humanness re-imagined.

Predicated on an analysis of qualitative interviews with anti-racism and empowerment practitioners, I firstly argue that racialisation processes constitute a type of suffering for the subject. This suffering, derived through the process of racialisation, is considered a process of dehumanisation for all, White, Black, Indigenous and People of Colour.

In analysing the personal training experiences that anti-racism and empowerment practitioners share, I probe, in a particularly condensed form, the development and reception of anti-racism and empowerment training in the UK and Germany. Thereafter, I examine the notion of (self-)empowerment and (self-)governmentality and argue that the cognitive *and* emotional understanding of individual racialisation processes partially liberate the subject. Central to this exploration, is a careful consideration of Nikolas Rose's (1996, 1999) examination of (self-)governmentality connected to psycho-therapeutical discourses that are related to concepts of individual betterment and liberation.

Thirdly, the notion of recognition as conceptualised by Charles Taylor (1994), and reflexivity, are analysed through the research participants' descriptions of how after their first training as participants they began to re-write their racial subjectivity.

Finally, I look into how anti-racism and empowerment practitioners re-imagine humanness. I delve into an existential reflection on Fanon's appeal for a new humanism, and delineate the concept of decoloniality. We hereby move away from Western epistemologies towards an epistemological pluriverse.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

> »I find myself one day in the world, and I acknowledge one right for myself: the right to demand human behavior from the other. And one duty: the duty never to let my decisions renounce my freedom. [...] I am not a prisoner of history. I must not look for the meaning of my destiny in that direction. I must constantly remind myself that the real leap consists of introducing invention into life. In the world I am heading for, I am endlessly creating myself« (Fanon 1952, p. 163).

Rapper, athlete, good singer, good dancer, criminal, drug dealer, warm-hearted, violent, at prayer, honour killer, terrorist, traditional, uncivilised, oppresses women, has something against gays and lesbians, unmodern, needs help, wears a headscarf, exotic, sexy, religious, does not want to integrate, passionate, spirited, fanatical, fundamentalist, hospitable, generous. This is just a small selection of images that Black/Indigenous/People of Colour (BIPOC[1]) in Germany and other European countries are associated with on a daily basis. The everyday lives of BIPOC have actually very little to do with these pictures – and yet so much. Similarly, these supposed realities seem to have even less to do with White people's everyday lives – yet they greatly inform White lives.

These images may appear to be harmless, banal prejudices to those unaffected by them, yet they have a long history, a tradition. They are manifested amongst people in Germany, but also other societies of the Global North and beyond, and not without reason – they have a function. Previously they functioned to justify, to excuse colonialism and the

[1] Black/Indigenous/People of Colour (singular: Person of Colour, abbreviated as BIPOC) is a term for people who are racialised as not White. It is a political self-designation, Black usually refers to people from Africa or the African diaspora. The term Black will be elaborated further in the introduction. Indigenous refers to people who lived in the Americas or Australia (and some other regions) before they were colonised by the Europeans. The term »Indigenous« is not uncontested though, since it does not reflect the heterogeneity of people who are referred to as indigenous. Person or People of Colour is usually adopted by those who are negatively affected by racism, who are not White (Ha et Al. 2007). The term »People of Colour« originates from the colonial expression »free people of color«, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, the first mentioning of the term dates to 1781 and was used to identify free BIPOC people, some of them simply born and living free, some formerly enslaved then freed, some slave owners themselves. In particular, the existence of Black slave owners among the free people of color questions the idea of an inescapable unity of the oppressed and shows that simple black and white dichotomies do not suffice to understand complex racial power relations (ibid.). In Germany the term has been established mostly in an academic context, and as a self-designation. In recent years, various initiatives of racially marginalised people have begun to call themselves BIPOC in order to create an alternative to terms such as »foreigner«, »migrant« or »person with migration background« used by dominant German discourse usually to ascribe BIPOC (ibid.). During the 1960s the term was politically influenced by the Black Power movement in the US to designate the similarities between communities with different cultural and historical backgrounds (ibid.). As a common platform for cross-border alliances, this term applies equally to all members of racialised and oppressed communities (ibid.). It connects those who are marginalised by the White dominant culture, so as to inspire anti-racist interventions and coalition work. Sometimes it does create confusion amongst Whites and BIPOCs alike because it is mistaken for the colonial, derogatory expression »coloured people« (Ha et Al. 2007). The term BIPOC is not uncontested and I will return to it later in the introduction.

enslavement of BIPOC (Banton 1977). The idea of a superior »Race«[2] and inferior »Races« was necessary for colonialism to function, and these ideas were implemented in the beginning of the 16th century by European colonial powers (Banton 1977; Allen 1994). The production of images of an inferior Other, who did not fit the Western project of modernity, lies at the heart of social/political systems that greatly impacted the lives of millions of people over hundreds of years.

Contemporary German society remains shaped by the idea of »Race« on a number of levels, including in the institutional fields of education, employment, and housing: Two school children, for example, one of them White German and the other Turkish German, may perform similarly at school, but be treated very differently (Bonefeld & Dickhäuser 2018). Schoolteachers have grown up with certain representations of Turkish Germans and White Germans, as has society at large, and these representations have a history and a function. While BIPOC students are perceived through the stencil of these images, White students are viewed through the mirror image of this stencil (BIPOC: lively and thoughtless/White: calm and rational; BIPOC: uncivilised and violent/White: civilised and peaceful; BIPOC: traditional and backward/White: modern and progressive etc.). These teachers' mostly unconscious perception of their pupils influences the assessment process (Bonefeld & Dickhäuser 2018, p. 7). Generally, BIPOC students are assumed to be more athletic, and technically or artistically gifted. Their academic talent is overlooked, leading to BIPOC being underrepresented in universities and disadvantaged in the labour market (Koopmans et Al. 2019; Rokitte 2012). Concurrently, White Germans are generally more privileged by this (un)conscious perception, and as such the path to higher education is easier for them to achieve. Even later, when looking for work in Germany, a White person with the same qualifications as a Black/Indigenous/Person of Colour will be privileged by the unconscious perceptions of employers, and has a greater chance of being invited to a job interview (Koopmans et Al. 2019, p. 241). Research has also found that BIPOC in Germany are significantly less successful in getting confirmation for a flat during house-hunting than their White counterparts (Müller 2015, p. 40). Again, BIPOC are at a disadvantage. This is,

[2] Throughout this thesis »Race« is written with a capital »r« and in inverted commas, to highlight its social constructedness and in order to distance it from a biological reading (Zerger 1997, p. 9).

in part, one of the functions of racism: structural discrimination. It is significant here that not only BIPOC are affected by racism. White people are affected too - they gain advantages solely through their appearance and their European-sounding names (Kaas & Manger 2010; OECD 2013; Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency 2015). What effect might such an dis/advantage have on the mental wellbeing of the disadvantaged and advantaged? This is a central question we will return to later.

The data seems to indicate that German society is structured racially, alongside other patterns. If society is shaped by this idea of »Race«, is our thinking and acting also shaped accordingly? In other words, are we all to a certain extent like these teachers, employers, and property owners perceiving each other through these racialised narratives? Or is racism something that only happens at the fringes of society? I grew up in the same German culture, read the same children's books, sang the same children's songs, watched the same movies, consumed the same media, newspapers and magazines and advertising as most Germans[3] (and also most of my research participants). These movies, books, songs contained narratives in which the racial representations illustrated at the beginning of this chapter are shown continuously and repeatedly (Jäger & Link 1993; Kempf & Schmidt-Regener 1998; Butterwege & Hentges 2006; Ciarlo 2011; Marmer & Sow 2015; Sow 2018, Wigger 2019; Retis & Tsagarousianou 2019). Is it possible that we relate to each other through these racialised narratives without even being aware of it? Research on implicit racial bias points clearly in that direction (Coutts 2020), though the results of Implicit Association Tests (IAT) are not unquestioned. As long as we do not become aware of these racialised lenses, they will hold great weight in directing our thoughts and actions (Kteily & Richeson 2016).

This has different disadvantages for BIPOC, *and,* for White people. BIPOC are not only structurally disadvantaged, but in Germany they grow up in a Eurocentric society that measures achievements and development everywhere in the world using a Western model

[3] I position myself as an Anatolian German Alevi (cis-)male, as a Person of Colour in Germany. The Alevis are a religious or ethnic minority in Turkey, account for 10-20% of the population (the numbers vary strongly) and most likely a higher percentage of the Turkish diaspora as they experienced and still experience oppression, pogroms and many structural disadvantages in Turkey. The Alevis are famously heterogenic and there are about 5 different understandings of Alevis: 1) Alevis are close to Sunni Islam 2) Alevis are an Islamic confession independent from Sunni Islam 3) Alevis are a religious group that has nothing to do with Islam or are only superficially influenced by Islam 4) Alevis are a pre-Islamic religious group (indigenous to the Dersim region) with elements from Zoroastrianism and Shamanism 5) A rather small groups believes that Alevis are part of the Twelver Shia (see also Özmen & Schmidinger 2013). I would position myself somewhere between 2) and 5).

of historical and civilisational progress (Conrad & Randeria 2002). This perceived lack of democratic, enlightened and modern values can then be used by White people to exclude BIPOC from societal resources. Although White people have structural advantages, their perception of others and of themselves is distorted (Vera et Al. 1995). Repeatedly, in my personal experience as an anti-racism practitioner, I have observed exactly what this means for White people. The moment in which they become aware of their Whiteness is often very painful. On one level, those White people, who suffer from their past racialisation during the training, see the world again through children's eyes, wherein they recognise the narratives, images and ideas introduced to them by adults, and their understanding of the danger and destructiveness of these representations begins to grow. Children are introduced very early to racial thinking, which is generally a thinking of White supremacy (Quintana & McKown 2008). Already, pre-schoolers have an idea of which »Race« they and others are meant to belong to (ibid.). In particular, White children (though not exclusively) hold notions of which »Race« is the supposedly the better one and which is not (Meulenbelt 1988; Tryna & Hatcher 1992; Zick 1997; Quintana & McKown 2008). Children, less in control of what they are exposed to, find it very difficult to protect themselves from racial material presented by racially structured societies (Van Ausdale & Feagin 2001). And so, as adults, there is the opportunity to sharpen their awareness of racist narratives and imagery, and their consequences. The question of how this process of gaining awareness of one's racialisation looks like, will follow us throughout this thesis.

White supremacist racial identity constructions have a long historical continuity in Germany[4] (Hund 2017). Concepts of racial, ethnic and cultural supremacy were also employed in the 20th century by the imperial project of *Kaiserreich* (Olusoga & Erichsen 2010) and later of the Third Reich (Lindqvist 2002). However, following the Shoah[5] and the violent

[4] As early as the 17th century dominant explanations of Europeans as culturally and racially superior, modern and civilised, became crucial in the justification of Germany's brief colonial project of expansion in South-West Africa, a historical chapter often forgotten in German history (Sow 2008; see also APuZ 40-42/2019). Unfortunately, the limited scope of this thesis does not allow to go much more in-depth about the subject of Germany's colonial past. However, historian Elisabeth Baer wrote in *The Genocidal Gaze* (2017) about the fascinating and horrifying continuities of German colonial history and the Shoah.

[5] The Shoah Memorial in Paris explains »Shoah« as »the Hebrew word for ›catastrophe‹. This term specifically means the killing of nearly six million Jews in Europe by Nazi Germany and its collaborators during the Second World War. The English-speaking countries more commonly use the word Holocaust, which is Greek for ›sacrifice by fire‹« (http://www.memorialdelashoah.org/en/archives-and-documentation/what-is-the-shoah.html#:~:text=Shoah%20is%20the%20Hebrew%20word,for%20%E2%80%9Csacrifice%20by%20fire%E2%80%9D).

excesses of racial persecution, along with Germany's growing democratisation and wealth, the Federal Republic was transformed into a country of immigration. Public German discourse on migration deemed overt racist expressions to be coming from the margins of society, thus displacing the idea that racism might come from the centre (Rommelspacher 1995). It has been argued, nonetheless, that culturalist, colonial notions, are still vibrant in the collective unconscious of German racial subjectivities (Kohn 1988; Linke 1999; Kilomba 2008, Volkan et Al. 2014). Primordial notions of racial and ethnic identity constructions still seem to inform discourses on the »integration« of minorities, most notably of Muslims in Germany. Racialised consciousness appears to be expressed in the continuities of (anti-Islamic) racism (Pinn et al. 1995; Kundnani 2007) and Diasporaphobia (Vertovec 2006).

Although some modern geneticists have refuted the idea of biological »Races« (Jacquard 1996), the idea of »Race« has historically, socially, and individually settled in our minds and thus determines our thoughts, actions and feelings on various levels of consciousness (Banton 2014; Dalal 2002). Addressing racism in Germany has often been associated with a culture of guilt or shame due to its national-socialist history and its history of colonisation (Messerschmidt 2008). The question of guilt is a complex matter, with children inheriting these images (and the ideas conveyed therein) unfiltered from adults (who themselves were introduced to a world of racial ideas as children) and their young peers (Elias 1994; Van Ausdale & Feagin 2001). There is, however, an alternative. There are modes of taking responsibility and feeling accountable without focussing on questions of innocence or guilt. There is a way to develop a critical consciousness as adults, in looking again at these narratives and representations through the eyes of those racialised children, and questioning them at the same time, asking what ideology is mediated therewith. As my research shows, there are indeed individuals who are critical of their positioning in society (structural advantages/disadvantages), and thus hold the potential to promote greater social justice[6]. How this critical consciousness operates in comparison to shame and guilt is central to explorations of racism and antiracism here.

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[6] Martin Albrow and Hakan Seçkinelgin argue that »*the capacity of human beings to manage their relations between each other in accord with a shared idea of justice varies independently of the advance of knowledge and technology. Perhaps*

The *Neue Rechte* (New Right) are highlighting symbolically historical continuities in general German mainstream culture. The New Right represented through right-wing populist parties such as the AfD (Alternative für Deutschland [Alternative for Germany]) and right-wing movements such as PEGIDA (Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes [Patriotic Europeans against the Islamisation of the Occident]), regurgitate *völkische* ideas from the Weimar Republic (which enabled the National Socialist revolution) about the Great Replacement, a White supremacist conspiracy theory (Weiß 2017)[7]. The rise of the New Right highlights growing insecurities amongst large portions of the White German population about migration, and increasingly precarious living standards. However, racism is still perceived mostly as a problem of the margins, and not so much as a phenomenon coming from the centre of society (Löffler 2016). Mainstream media discourses in Germany, for example, reflect a selective perception of Muslims that rarely moves beyond the oppression of (Muslim) women, the headscarf, femicide[8], religious fundamentalism, and terrorism (Geißler et al. 2006; Attia 2009; Shooman 2014). At the same time, modernity, secularism, women's emancipation, and liberal sexuality, are constructed as traditional Western values linked to the European Enlightenment project and are *not* identified with Muslims in Germany and elsewhere (Shooman 2014). As authors such as Talal Asad (2003) argue, Enlightenment values are subscribed to the »West«, in order to justify the structural disadvantage of Muslims in Europe and beyond (Asad 2003). Anti-Islamic racist discourses construct Muslims not only as an »ethnicity« that is in opposition to the »White/Western/European«, but also as a culture that is not capable of adapting to European norms and values[9]. All these narratives are transported through the racialisation of the »Muslim Other«, but also of the »White/Western« identity[10]. The New Right's idea about the German *Volk* heavily borrows from National Socialists ideas about racial and

the best we may hope for is that concepts of justice may develop that can persuade enough people to work together to arrest a headlong rush to collective self-destruction« (Albrow & Seçkinelgin 2011, p. 6).

[7] The fear of »White extinction« is actually one of the few narratives that unite White supremacist discourses all around the globe (Bhatt 2020).
[8] When Muslim men kill their women, German media refers to femicide as »honour killings«, but when White men kill their women, the same media refers to this as »relationship dramas« (Jiwani 2014).
[9] These anti-Islamic racist discourses also inform citizenship rights, migration and foreign policies (Asad 2003).
[10] I use »Western« or »Global North« and »Global South« not as a geographic or religious/cultural/ethnic marker but rather as a political identity in order to highlight its social constructedness and its historical continuities (see also Bonnett 2004; Jackson et Al. 2016).

cultural purity (Chin et Al. 2009), which, in their view, seems endangered by the presence of Muslim migrants. At the same time, main-stream media's attempts to sensationalise New Right positions, leads to populist right-wing parties such as the AfD gaining a large platform for their racist ideas (Hafez 2017). The dominant culture produces its own agents, those racialised subjects that uphold the paradigms of a racialised, culturalist[11] society. In those racist discourses, »Race«, ethnicity and culture often become conflated, which is highlighted in anti-Islamic racism. Being a Muslim is neither a »Race« nor an ethnicity, but a religion, but anti-Islamic racist discourses tend to construct Muslims as such, using the notion of cultural rather than biological inferiority (Attia & Keskinkılıç 2016). Extreme-right discourses that become more and more mainstreamed in German mass media highlight the notion of the racial or cultural Other, which threatens the purity of the German nature and nation (Forchtner 2019, Douglas 2002).

Academic research, such as the longitudinal study on group-focussed enmity (conducted in eight European countries with a thousand participants in each country from 2002 to 2012) or with supporters of (left- and) right-wing populist parties, suggests that a disillusionment with mainstream politics, fear of losing access to societal resources and democratic participation, is on the rise in the centre of German society (Demos 2015, 2017). At the same time, classism, (hetero)-sexism and racism (in particular anti-Islamic racism) is a growing phenomenon in Europe (Am Orde 2009), especially amongst Germany's White middle classes. The alarming results of these studies highlight a growing phenomenon in Germany (and other European countries): the brutalisation of the bourgeoisie (Heitmeyer 2012). The financial crisis and austerity policies have led to a continuous erosion of the middle classes in Germany (Bosch et al. 2016). The fear of social descent, loss of social status, and precarity, lead to a decline of liberal and humanist thinking replaced by authoritarian and fascist policy stances (ibid.). It seems that the racialisation of the »Other« does not work without the dehumanisation of the (White) self. But what are the socio-psychological implications of racialisation?

Many questions arise here. How can the emotionally charged discourse around multiculturalism be defused and led in a more constructive manner? How can taboos

[11] I use ›culturalist‹ as essentialising certain groups by using the concept of culture (see also Stolcke 1995).

around acknowledging and addressing racism be overcome in Germany? How can Germany's increasingly multicultural society confront the challenges that come with a changing demography brought about by migration and settlement? Far from being able to address all these questions in this thesis, I have turned my focus on anti-racism and empowerment training[12]. Within this changing social landscape and political climate, anti-racism work seems to be more important than ever in facilitating social justice and empowerment. What is the relationship between racialisation and empowerment? If we de-racialise our thinking, will it empower us to relate to each other through our humanity? Will it re-humanise us? What is the *human* in humanity? The academic field has long believed in the dichotomy of racialisation processes, that it privileges White people and de-privileges BIPOC, that it elevates White people and causes BIPOC to suffer; but what if all parties that are racialised suffer from it? These are just some of the few questions this study explores.

Those promoting multiculturalism in the fields of sociology and political theory believe that structural inclusion will positively affect conviviality and ultimately form a more humane society (Modood 2007; Gilroy 2004; Ha 2004; Steyerl et Al. 2003; Parekh 2002). Whilst there are many different forms and facets of multicultural activism, this study focuses on one particular branch of anti-racism: anti-racism and empowerment training. Why training and not other forms of racial and social justice activism, such as social movements? Coming from the educational sciences, I was always fascinated by the question of how anti-racism and empowerment could be taught, learned, mainstreamed and sustained in society. The role of anti-racism and empowerment training is thus to sensitise individuals to racial equality and multicultural policies, thereby creating the possibility for structural change (Knoth 2006, Brown 2004). Applied to the increasingly multiracial and multicultural society in Germany, the notion of racial awareness has the potential to promote changes that would positively affect the structural inclusion of those groups who are structurally disadvantaged. In this context, the role of anti-racism training is to ensure that people's attitudes towards one's own and other racial, cultural or religious groups

[12] In British English, which I consistently use in this thesis, the plural for training is *training* and not trainings as it is in American English https://www.lexico.com/definition/training.

uphold those liberal and democratic paradigms necessary to strengthen the multicultural project.

Anti-racism training was pioneered by Jane Elliott and Judith Katz in the late 1960s and early 1970s US (Vaughn 2007, Schlicher 1998). Originating in the American civil rights movement, these early training supported the claim for equal opportunities. While the early 1980s saw racism awareness training (RAT) becoming prominent in the UK, the late 1980s brought the anti-racism training (ART) to Germany, conducted by a variety of non-governmental organisations. As media and academic discourses in the UK and US criticised these training for being too confrontational (or not promoting structural change), public discourse shifted from a language of racism awareness to one of diversity. Most recently, the Unconscious Bias Training (UBT), based on Implicit Association Tests (IAT), have been introduced and mainstreamed by major US tech giants such as Google and Microsoft. These training attempt to highlight that racism does not always operate on a conscious level and may influence our behaviour and our choices in ways we are not aware of.

In Germany, a similar discursive shift from anti-racism to diversity came towards the end of the 1990s (Bendl 2006). By then, a number of anti-racism training were in operation, including the Betzavta-Training,[13] which promotes democratisation and inclusion; and the controversial Blue-Eyed-Brown-Eyed-Training developed by Jane Elliott (Schlicher 1998, Bommes et Al. 2002). A variety of other anti-racism organisations and individuals exist that offer training. This study focuses, as a case study, on anti-racism and empowerment training offered by the non-governmental organisation Phoenix.

Why a case study of Phoenix when a range of training already exist? Three reasons: access, training method and proximity. All the research participants are members of this particular NGO and so am I, therefore I had access to it. The NGO's biographical training method, which shall be revisited in the methodology chapter and in chapter 4, allows a very personal insight into the phenomenon of racialisation. Additionally, active members in Phoenix, White and BIPOC, are well practiced in the emotional labour of sharing; working through and sometimes also grieving their personal experiences of racialisation in a non-judgemental and appreciative setting. My proximity to the research subjects enabled them

[13] The Betzavta-Training originated in Israel and was adapted to a German setting (Bommes et Al 2002).

to share in depth their personal racialisation histories with me, as they would in the organisation, *in full knowledge* that their voices would be used for the creation of a PhD thesis at the LSE. The reasons, why I chose Phoenix as a case study, and my position as a *deep insider*, are further discussed in the methodology chapter.

Research questions and objectives

This PhD research project aims to create an illuminating sociology of racialisation in Germany through the voices of anti-racism and empowerment practitioners. Taking the organisation Phoenix as a case study, this study, informed by the voices of trainers and members of Phoenix, analyses how racialisation can be theorised in relation to anti-racism and empowerment as practice. The main argument of this study is that racialisation constitutes a form of dehumanisation of BIPOC as well as White people. I also argue that if anti-racism and empowerment wants to contribute to a valuable change of racialised social structures, de-racialisation needs to include a re-conceptualisation of humanness. The study is grounded in three main research questions:

> How do anti-racism and empowerment practitioners narrate their personal experiences of racial subjectivation?
>
> How do anti-racism and empowerment practitioners narrate their personal experiences of anti-racism and empowerment training?
>
> What are the new narratives of the self, created by anti-racism and empowerment training? How do anti-racism and empowerment practitioners re-write racial subjectivation and re-imagine humanness?

The main objectives of this research project are a) to develop an understanding of racialisation processes informed by the narratives of anti-racism and empowerment

practitioners as the case under study, b) to examine how White people and BIPOC narrate anti-racism and empowerment training experiences, and c) to produce ethnographic data that provides an account of the ways in which anti-racism and empowerment practitioners re-write racial subjectivation, and ask how colonial/racist concepts of who does and who does not count as human, can be re-imagined and replaced by a sense of Fanonian humanism.

Outline of the thesis

Following this outline of this dissertation, I will provide a very short description of some of the concepts used in this thesis; a brief history of Phoenix and its founder Austen Peter Fagbola Brandt; and some information on how Phoenix is structured.

After this, the second chapter, the literature review, is divided into four sections, applying Ken Plummer's model of how narratives constitute the self (Plummer 2019, p. 76). The first part is dedicated to narratives of collaboration or assimilation, analysing concepts of »Race«, racism, Whiteness, subjectivation and racialisation. It begins with a historical overview of racial theories and how they effected discourses in different parts of the world with a focus on Germany. I then move on to analyse racism as an ideology, and how these discourses take their effect on the individual and their racial subjectivity. Thereafter, I take a brief look at the concept of Whiteness, which is relevant, since I argue that racialisation is the initiation into a racial ideology, which has Whiteness at its centre. Next, I look into the concepts of subjectivation and racialisation. The second part addresses remembering narratives, which is a prerequisite of negotiating narratives, in which concepts of memory and remembering are also crucial, since this research is about how anti-racism and empowerment practitioners remember their racial subjectivation, how they remember becoming subjected to »Race« in their early years. Afterwards, in the third part about negotiating narratives I look briefly into the history of anti-racism training, mainly in the UK and Germany, into the concept of governmentality related to the training, and also the role of empowerment and emotions in political learning processes. Finally, in the fourth

section, I look into narratives of reformation and resistance, where the concept of humanness is relevant, since I argue that racialisation constitutes a form of dehumanisation, the role of recognition in the process of being regarded as human. From there, I briefly look into the concept of decoloniality, the delinking from Western epistemologies, which is related to my understanding of empowerment.

The third chapter is about the epistemological and methodological issues at stake in conducting and writing up this research project as a deep or intimate insider. Whilst Phoenix is only used as a case study in this research project, it is also a critical ethnography, describing the complex social, emotional, organisational, cultural and philosophical elements of Phoenix, of which the research participants are members of, including those things that often remain unspoken or are taken for granted (Barker 2002, p. 186).

I conducted research in Germany, mostly in the cities of Berlin and Duisburg, focusing on a selected group of Phoenix trainers and trainees with whom I share similar and collective experiences, and therefore a similar vision. In doing so, I had to consider carefully my engagement with the research participants during my fieldwork and how I would analyse the interviews and subsequently narrate the research as an insider. Since, as an active member of Phoenix, I share the same activist milieu in Germany, an epistemological and methodological approach was needed that could address these issues and would make the debates – mostly inaccessible to non-Phoenix members – comprehensible and transparent.

The following sections of the methodology chapter thus discuss the epistemological and methodological implications of conducting research as an outsider and insider, and illustrate the ways in which lived experiences and positions matter in the production of knowledge. Furthermore, I discuss my access to the field, my fieldwork and interview experiences, as well as the implications that my methodological approach bears, by discussing my own positionality as an insider conducting research in Phoenix. I attempt to radically contextualise my own perceptions during the research process. In addition, I discuss the epistemological implications of my choice to use (Black) Feminist Standpoint theory (Harding 2004). The second part of this chapter is concerned with the advantages of

using – besides interviews – multiple methods, such as participant observation, in an exploration of racialisation and empowerment in Germany.

In the fourth chapter I analyse how the individual becomes a racial subject. By looking into those sections of the interviews where interviewees talk about their first, either personal or discursive, encounters with the racial Other — who, in Germany, are mainly Turkish or Kurdish (recently also more Syrian) Germans - I highlight how, through the binary opposition of this Other, the self is constructed. Pivotal, here, are anecdotes of how some research subjects remember a kind of initiation into a racial culture with Whiteness at its centre. BIPOC Interviewees seem to be much more able to remember the moment they were initiated into their BIPOCness, mostly through experiences of exclusion and being treated differently in kindergarten or school. For the White interviewees, memories of their racial subjectivation appear less clear, and some struggle to remember any moments of initiation. Those who do remember, recount painful situations they experienced with their families, usually in relation to a BIPOC friend or playmate. Some describe how parents or siblings openly made racist comments about certain people. All of this had an effect on racial subjectivity development.

In this chapter, I argue, based on the analysis of interviews with anti-racism and empowerment practitioners, that racialisation processes constitute a form of suffering to the subject. This suffering is derived through the process of racialisation, which could also be considered a process of dehumanisation for BIPOC and White people. The examination of racialisation, which is understood as becoming a racial subject, is preceded by the exploration of the terms »Race«, racism and subjectivation. Since racialisation is also understood as being subjected to a racial culture which has Whiteness at its centre, I will also explore the notion of Whiteness. However, the racialisation processes the research participants narrate, are based on them remembering situations, moments or phases of becoming racialised. Consequently, I shall also examine the concepts of memory and remembering.

The fifth chapter takes a closer look into the training itself. When I started my research, the Phoenix trainers insisted that I should not describe the programme of the training in-depth, as that would make training for them in the future very difficult or

impossible. If the participants of a Phoenix training already knew in detail what was going to happen, it would take away the need to embark on the process. Therefore, this chapter is going to focus more on how the research participants experienced their first training. It analyses the feelings and thoughts that arouse from that training. In the fifth chapter, considering that the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners share their personal training experiences, I look in a very condensed form into the development of anti-racism and empowerment training in the UK and Germany, and into critiques of it. The following sections investigate what research participants refer to as »light bulb moments« - in particular when they became aware that they were racialised as White people.

Some of the research participants who had also been active in other anti-racist activist settings realised how White or Eurocentric these settings were. Some of the participants expressed how these White anti-racist activist spaces failed to make anti-racism work enjoyable and sustainable, as well as difficult and discomforting. Some of the interviewees described activist spaces as steeply hierarchical, judgemental, and soaked in a general tone of contempt. The members also referred to those White activist spaces as lacking care, love, or humanity. Through the training, the interviewees realised the possibility of an alternative form of anti-racism or empowerment training that does not reproduce a form of pseudo-righteous political violence. This violence can also be described as an indicator that being racialised into Whiteness is also a form of violence the White subject experiences. I will argue that the White subject tries to re-dramatise the violence of racialisation it undergoes in not confronting the emotions that accompany being racialised.

Another section of this chapter examines emotions such as irritation or disturbance that were triggered by the training. Here, the interviewees sometimes describe the resistance they felt at certain stages of the training. These moments of resistance could be evoked by particular training units or methods that participants found difficult to understand or grasp. Sometimes, these resistances were also caused by training situations or hand-outs that created moments of strong discomfort, despite the trainers' attempts to create a trusting atmosphere.

Throughout this section, I also examine the notion of (self-)empowerment and (self-)governmentality, since I argue that the cognitive and emotional understanding of

individual racialisation processes partially liberates the racialised subject from them. Therein, I carefully consider Nikolas Rose's (1996, 1999) examination of (self-)governmentality connected to psycho-therapeutical discourses related to concepts of individual betterment and liberation.

The sixth and final empirical chapter analyses the new narratives of the self, inspired by anti-racism and empowerment training. In the research participants' narratives, the training confronts the racialised subject with its racialisation. After the training, the participants narrate, they understand and feel how they were imprinted with a racial culture that has Whiteness at its centre. This imprinting also means they end up *functioning* as an individual in a racially structured society with Whiteness at its centre (meaning it generally disadvantages BIPOC and racially advantages White people, whether they intend this or not [Rothberg 2019]). The first section of this chapter asks how the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners re-write their racial subjectivation as White and BIPOC.

In the sixth chapter, the research participants describe how they began to re-write their racial subjectivity after their first training. In this process, the notion of recognition (as conceptualised by Taylor 1994) and reflexivity are analysed. Finally, I look into how the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners re-imagine humanness, delving into an existential reflection on Fanon's appeal for a new humanism. Therein, the concept of decoloniality – moving away from Western epistemologies towards an epistemological pluriverse – becomes relevant. Additionally, I discuss if racialisation can also be understood as a form of dehumanisation, and whether de-racialisation can also be understood as a form of re-humanisation.

The seventh chapter, called *Conclusion - Going Beyond »Race«,* further discusses the research findings. This research project examines how White, Black and People of Colour are affected by racialisation and internalised Whiteness, although its implications differ for different subjects. For BIPOC, it is not only a matter of rethinking unjustified privileged subject positions, but also a matter of survival and sanity. For White people, questions are raised around what the price they pay for being racialised as White is. Racism is a structural phenomenon that needs to be tackled structurally. A racially structured society is, however,

also a reflection of a racially structured psyche. Deconstructing racial structures in our psyche could then lead to the deconstruction of racial structures in society.

Racial subjectivation is painful, and very often traumatic for Black/Indigenous/People of Colour, and White people also suffer. The case study of this German anti-racist and empowerment NGO Phoenix and the theoretical framework of their training may offer some inspiration as to how we can constructively develop a society where racial subject identities become obsolete (in a most likely distant future).

Conceptual issues

In the following paragraph, I will discuss some of the terms relevant to understanding this thesis. It is important to emphasise that by attempting to define certain terms, we are *not* talking, in this initial phase, about how right or wrong they are. They are provisional working definitions that assist us as Critical »Race« thinkers, sociologists, and empowerment/anti-racism practitioners. It is also possible and indeed very likely that their meanings and significance will vary in future contexts. In other words, these terms are not essential, but they allow us a theoretical and conceptual foundation from and through which we can debate and explore. I will not only attempt to conceptualise specific terms here, but will also highlight how they stand in relation to each other and what their shortcomings are. This conceptual discussion of relevant terms of this thesis, will also be revisited and deepened in the literature review.

»Race«

The French sociologist and feminist Collette Guillaumin wrote about »Race«: »*Race does not exist. But it does kill people*«[14] (Guillaumin 2003 [1995], p. 107). In *The Racial Order* (2015) Mustafa Emirbayer and Matthew Desmond define »Race« as »*a symbolical category based on*

[14] Whenever I quote a sentence (or two) from a text in my text body, I use Italics in order to better distinguish it from my text. If Italics are used in the original text to emphasis a word or more, I reversed it by not using Italics.

phenotype or ancestry and constructed according to specific social and historical contexts, a category that is misrecognized as natural« (Emirbayer & Desmond 2015, p. 51). Though this thesis is very much related to the concept of »Race«, in the first instance simply because »Race« is implicit to »racialisation«, which is the main topic of this thesis, it will focus less on »Race« as such, exploring rather how the racial order is imprinted (as conceptualised by Norbert Elias 1994) and enacted in Germany, and is thus more about injustice and racialised power relations and ways to overcoming these. As already mentioned in a footnote, throughout this thesis »Race« is written with a capital »r« and in inverted commas, to highlight its social constructedness and in order to distance it from a biological reading (Zerger 1997, p. 9). Having said that, using the term »Race« presents a dilemma to me as an academic writer. The primordialist notion of »Race«, which understands the term as biological and essential, had about 500 years of a head-start to become part of our language and thereby of our thinking. Its continuous conflation with ethnicity and culture does not make its use easier. By using the term »Race«, how much of its primordialist meanings do I reproduce, even if my intention is to deconstruct this word? Or as Charles Gallagher puts it in *White* (2007)*:*

> »The fact that race (and hence whiteness) is now defined by the scientific community as a social construction does not, however, change the perception among most individuals that race is responsible for traits like intelligence, criminality, motivation, behavior, or athletic prowess. The power that white as an identity continues to hold is the fiction that race itself, rather than exploitation, poverty, or institutional racism, is responsible for social inequality between races« (Gallagher 2007, p. 13).

Ideally, I would like to get rid of the term, but then I find myself speechless in naming power structures related to the notion of »Race«. So far, only the term »racialisation« has given me some ease, since it highlights the process of being racialised rather than being of a »Race«.

Ethnicity

In *Ethnic Boundary Making (*2013) Andreas Wimmer defines ethnicity as *»a subjectively felt belonging to a group that is distinguished by shared culture and by a common ancestry*« (Wimmer 2013 p. 7). A similar definition by McGoldrick et Al. (1982) makes ethnicity sound a little like biological race: *»ethnic group[s] [are] … those who perceive themselves as alike by virtue of their common ancestry, real or fictitious, and who are so regarded by others*« (Dwivedi 1996, p. 8). The concept of ethnicity is not directly relevant to our explorations here. However, in the

rare case that I use the term, it leans on Anthony Giddens' description in cultural terms of ethnicity as *»members of ethnic groups who see themselves as culturally distinct from other groupings. […] Ethnic differences are* wholly learned« (Giddens 1989, pp. 243-244). In Germany, the term ethnicity is very often used as a euphemism for »Race« as the German word *Rasse* is heavily loaded with a direct link being made to by the Nazis' use in justifying and carrying out the Shoah. In view of Giddens' description of ethnicity, I am unsure what the term adds to the analysis of racialisation apart from being sometimes used synonymous to »Race«. A cultural understanding of ethnicity makes the term almost obsolete, as it can easily be replaced by the use of the term *culture*.

Culture

However, culture is even more difficult to define then »Race« and ethnicity. According to the Dictionary of Race, Ethnicity, and Culture *»a more recent definition by Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1944), culture is ›an abstraction from concrete behaviour but is not in itself behaviour‹«* (Bolaffi et Al. 2003, p. 61). After cross-examining the different definitions of »Race«, ethnicity, and culture, Dalal concluded that *»[t]he point to be underlined from this example is that despite the attempt to differentiate the terms, race, ethnicity and culture, we can observe how they collapse into each other«* (Dalal 2002, p. 30). Or, as Rita Chin et Al. put it in *After the Nazi Racial State* (2009), *»[i]n each case, neither the biological nor the cultural is fully absent from racialized conceptions of difference«* (Chin et Al. 2009, p. 23). It is obvious that the discursive conflation of the term culture with the terms »Race« and ethnicity does not make it easier to understand what culture actually is. Nevertheless, there is the question of how culture is conceptualised. As I already mentioned before, the New Right conceptualises (occidental) culture as a closed and essential entity, its purity threatened by migration, leading to a bastardisation and therefore weakening of occidental culture. In this New Right's world view, culture is based on essential notions of human nature, *»therefore notions of culture within this paradigm are characterized by being static, holistic, homogeneous, deterministic and bounded«* (Nathan 2015, p. 4). This thesis employs a rather open understanding of culture (and this also includes racial culture), meaning it is based on the human condition rather than human nature, it is understood as non-essential. So here, culture is conceptualised as *»dynamic with*

continuity and change, internally riven, heterogeneous, changeable and with blurred boundaries« (Nathan 2015, p. 4).

Whiteness

DiAngelo describes Whiteness as a »*term to capture all the dynamics that go into being defined and/or perceived as white in society. Whiteness grants material and psychological advantages (white privilege) that are often invisible and taken for granted by whites*« (DiAngelo 2012, p. 83). In other words, White people have easier access to societal resources due to their Whiteness. Similar to DiAngelo's understanding of racism, I find her conceptualisation of Whiteness equally reductionist. Emirbayer and Desmond also wrote »*it is incontrovertible that race today has certain global systemic features, with Anglo-European whiteness at its dominant pole and people of color in its dominated sector*« (Emirbayer and Desmond 2015, p. 57). However, this thesis attempts to understand privileges or power not so much as something that we possess but rather as a kind of relationship we have to each other and to commodities (Gilroy 2015), in varying contexts. A Fanonian understanding of Whiteness can be described in the following way:

> »According to Fanon, Western hegemonic ideologies have constructed whiteness as the symbol par excellence. Consequently, ›one is white as one is rich, as one is beautiful, as one is intelligent‹ (Sardar 2008 in Fanon 1967/2008: xiii—original emphasis). Whiteness is also synonymous with ›morality, humbleness, power, goodness, heroism and righteousness‹ (Lawrence 2011, p. 114)« (Ayling 2019, p. 33).

The concept of Whiteness might be confusing, because similarly to the concept of culture, it is not understood as essential in this thesis and those referred to as White are also not understood as an essential homogenous group. There can be hierarchies within Whiteness, people granted Whiteness, others excluded from it at some point in history (Ignatiev 1995). Gallagher concludes that Whiteness was and is created in a »*socio-historic process that created a hierarchical social system based on white supremacy*« (Gallagher 2007, p. 9) and it is also »*relational, socially situated, and inherently [a] political foundation that constructs all racial categories* (Gallagher 2007, p. 10). The German psychologist Ursula Wachendorfer also analyses the invisibility of Whiteness as dominant norm in Germany (Wachendorfer 2001).

This thesis attempts to explore the personal experience and sensation of being subjected to Whiteness by the research participants.

Black, People/Person of Colour

It is assumed that it was one of the founders of the Black Consciousness movement, Steve Biko (1978), who coined »Black« as a political term. The South African anti-Apartheid activist defined »Black« in the following way:

> »We have in our policy manifesto defined blacks as those who are by law or tradition politically, economically and socially discriminated against as a group in the South African society and identifying themselves as a unit in the struggle towards the realisation of their aspirations. This definition illustrates to us a number of things:
> 1. Being Black is not a matter of pigmentation – being black is a reflection of a mental attitude.
> 2. Secondly, merely by describing yourself as black you have started on a road towards emancipation, you have committed yourself to fight against all forces that seek to use your blackness as a stamp that marks you out as a subservient being« (Biko 1978, p. 48).

This definition of political Blackness then spread to other countries such as the US, UK, but also Germany just to name a few, where Black people fought against racial injustice (Chebu 2014). Therefore, in some political spaces »Black« was understood as a shared experience, for example in the UK being excluded from the housing market, due to skin colour, including Asian, African and Caribbean families under the umbrella term (Alemoru 2019). However, the Asian American legal scholar Janine Young Kim asks in an article *Are Asians Black* (1999) and concludes, »*situating Asian Americans as a buffer between black and white does not position Asian Americans outside of the black/white paradigm, but rather in a vulnerable place where they can be manipulated to serve the interests of the dominant group*« (Kim 1999, p. 2409). In an article from 2016 in the British newspaper Guardian, the writer Amrit Wilson, university professor Kehinde Andrews and actor and writer Vera Chok are asked *Is political blackness still relevant today?* The article refers to an incident at Kent University, where the student union used a picture of the singer Zayn Malik and current London Mayor Sadiq Khan during Black History Month, which caused a debate about who is meant with the term black in Black History Month. The reactions to this incident and the reflections of the authors of the article highlight that Black is mostly understood as being African or from the African diaspora. Additionally, the idea of political Blackness is described as outdated and in disregard about the differences that exist in the experience of racism in the varying

communities disadvantaged by it (Wilson, Andrews & Chok 2016). In this thesis I will mainly use the term Black/People of Colour, abbreviated as BIPOC[15]. As already touched upon (in footnote Nr. 1), Black/Indigenous/People or Person of Colour is used to refer collectively or individually to all of those racial groups who are not considered White or who do not have the same access to societal resources as those who are positioned as White. In other words, BIPOC are excluded or experience difficulties in accessing societal resources because of their assumed »Race« (DiAngelo 2012, p. 84). Sometimes a person may be perceived as White, but her belonging to a certain culture or religion, maybe signified in that person's name et cetera, can also lead to an exclusion from Whiteness. However, the past has shown, that this term is very fluid and has fluctuated throughout the course of history, therefore it is not always easy to define, who is designated or perceived as a Person of Colour and who not. Largely, it is understood as a political self-designation (Ha et Al. 2007). The term is still not very common in everyday language in Germany but is slowly creeping into use by public news broadcasters. Nevertheless, I would still state, that it is used mostly in activist or academic spaces in order to refer to the issues of racism or racialisation in Germany, as those other mainstreamed terms, such as *Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund* (Person/People with migration background) do not suffice in decoding racialised power relations. However, as the term BIPOC comes from an US American context, it is still in question whether they will be effective in addressing the issue of racialisation in Germany. What is considered BIPOC and therefore a Black/Person of Colour in Germany can differ very much from other parts of the world. And even within those communities considered BIPOC communities in this thesis, the term might be somewhat alien to them, as some Turkish, Kurdish or Arabic Germans prefer to see themselves as White rather than a Person of Colour[16]. Despite these potential objections, I will still use to the term BIPOC, as it highlights the structural disadvantage described at the beginning of this introduction caused by racism of aforementioned communities. This could

[15] My personal understanding of the term People of Colour as political concept, also includes Black people, however, there is an interesting discussion around the erasure of experience from Black and Indigenous people in this article from June 2020 in the New York Times by Sandra E. Garcia »Where did BIPOC come from?« https://www.nytimes.com/article/what-is-bipoc.html

[16] I find it interesting to note here that the derogatory term »Kanake« became replaced by the term »Muslim« (Kömürcü Nobrega 2011, p. 641)

also be one of the weak points of that concept: is a distinction into those that benefit from racism and those that are disadvantaged by it as clear cut, as the term suggests? And what about other factors that can contribute to a person's structural disadvantage such as Gender and Class, just to name a few? Nevertheless, I do understand language as dynamic. Indeed, when I grew up in 80s, 90s Germany, I was considered an *Ausländer*, a foreigner, when I started studying educational sciences around 2000, I was considered a *Migrant*, even though I had never migrated anywhere in my life at the time, shortly after the term *Mensch mit Migrationshintergrund* appeared, but it was quickly deemed useless in my world of anti-racism and empowerment activism. Since I discovered the term in the glossary of a German translation of bell hooks' book *Black Looks* (1992) around 2001, I stuck to POC or BIPOC, but I will happily let go of it, once I find another term that fits better into my particular experience of racialisation in Germany.

The terms »Race«, ethnicity and culture, but also Whiteness and BIPOC entail many more questions. For example, what is racism? What is racialisation? What is empowerment? What is memory? What is humanness? And how are these concepts connected to each other? These questions and the concepts related to these questions shall be further discussed in the literature review.

The history of Phoenix

Having situated my thesis in the discourses of racism and multiculturalism in Germany, and having explored briefly some of the relevant concepts of this thesis, I will now look into Phoenix's history. Beginning with the biography of Fagbola, who founded Phoenix in the 90s, it progresses from there to the history of the association itself. The third section is about Phoenix's philosophy, about the discourses that are led in the NGO and that explain its current structure. Before delving into Phoenix's history though, I want to explain why I chose Phoenix as my case study. In 2008, when I wrote my MA dissertation at Birkbeck College for the course Race & Ethnic Relations, I realised that a lot of the thoughts and ideas

I was examining, were owed to my work in Phoenix which I had started in 2001. When I embarked on the PhD at the Sociology Department of the London School of Economics and Political Science in 2009, I was not aware of any other anti-racism and empowerment NGO using a personal and biographical approach in its work, despite searching. Only one organisation in the UK, RewindUK (http://rewind.org.uk/), seemed to have similar approach, but when I tried to get in touch with them at the time, I did not receive a response. I did not follow up with my query as I wanted my research to be about Germany. The reason for this was that the phenomenon of racialisation seemed to me rather under-researched in the Federal Republic and as a result, I did not plan to make a comparison with the UK. Furthermore, there was the question of direct access to Phoenix I had/have to Phoenix. Through my own engagement at the NGO, I knew that most of the active members, trainees and trainers were/are well rehearsed in narrating their personal stories of racialisation. Additionally, in contrast to an external researcher, the research participants knew me. They knew too that I would listen to their accounts without judgement – as I had done many times before in the Phoenix setting (and as any good researcher should do). I knew that my unique position as an insider would allow me to hear their personal accounts in a far more in-depth way than if I had just been an outsider. Nevertheless, whilst recording the interviews, I always made it clear and transparent to the research participants that I was interviewing them in the role as a researcher for my PhD at the Sociology Department of the London School of Economics and Political Science. In the methodology chapter, I will revisit and expand on why I chose Phoenix for my research project.

The first Phoenix training was conducted by its British born Afrogerman founder, Austen Peter Fagbola Brandt in the late 80s. Inspired by British anti-racist activism Fagbola registered Phoenix as an association in 1996. Commissioned by a wide range of people and organisations such as local federal integration officers, governmental and non-governmental educational and social agencies, but also private individuals from various social backgrounds, Phoenix has now expanded its reputation as a non-governmental anti-racism organisation nationally. In 2020 with almost 700 members, Phoenix is one of the largest and oldest anti-racist NGOs in Germany. The NGO Phoenix anti-racism and empowerment training differs from others in the field of anti-racism because they centre on

biographical training methodology, its follow up procedures, as well as its anthropocentric ideology and BIPOC leadership. Unlike most other anti-racism and empowerment training programmes, Phoenix training invites participants to critically reflect on the processes of racialisation, and offering regular safe spaces to critically engage with the process of racial identity construction.

Fagbola's biography and the path to Phoenix

Phoenix's history is very tightly related to its founder and former chair's intellectual biography. But before I embark on the founder's biography, I want to radically contextualise who Fagbola is to me personally. After our fateful encounter in 2001 at my first Phoenix anti-racism training (in which I participated as an observer, in a small town outside of Berlin), Fagbola and I began to meet at regular intervals. We met either during training, where I was trainee, or in Phoenix settings (sometimes privately). In the 19 years in which I have come to know Fagbola, he became a second father figure, a mentor, and in some respects a role model. Admittedly, in the beginning I was suspicious about his profession as a protestant minister and also about the presence of White people in Phoenix. However, over the years, this curious and charismatic figure became a dear friend to me, who at times, guided me through personal crisis as well as professional hurdles. In one-to-one meetings, I experienced the former protestant minister often as a pastoral, sensitive, and wise shepherd. In social settings, this man, who was 26 years my senior would mainly bond with me but also with others through the male practice of banter. Depending on my emotional state, this would either leave me joyful, irritated, or confused. It would also lead to a row of Phoenix members who accumulated symbolical power in Phoenix simply by being close to the former chair. Unsurprisingly, given the male practice of banter as bonding, these were notably and almost all exclusively (and regrettably) men. Indeed, with his charismatic leadership style, his warm heart and his amusing sense of self-depreciation, Fagbola's attempt to project an image of a non-threatening, wise, and pastoral patriarch would either draw his followers closer to him or scare them away. This was indeed the dismaying case

with many BIPOC women. Indeed, Fagbola was not a saint, he had good character traits and flaws; this is his legacy of his leadership in Phoenix. In November 2020, during the completion of this thesis, Fagbola decided that it was time to step down from leadership and leave the position of the chair to Clementine Ewokolo Burnley. Ewokolo, a younger, Black woman, a writer and community builder who had migrated from Cameroon to the UK, lived in Italy and Germany for a long time, has initiated an exciting new chapter in the history of the anti-racism and empowerment NGO; one which has yet to be written.

Fagbola, the former chair and founder of Phoenix was born in the early fifties in London. His mother was a White German, a nurse who worked in the same hospital as his biological father who was a doctor from Nigeria. Fagbola's biological father did not accept paternity until much later when Fagbola was an adult. Fagbola grew up with his mother and a White stepfather in Essen, Germany. There were not many Afrogermans living in Essen at the time, or in Germany for that matter. Fagbola rarely talks about his childhood or his experience of growing up as the only Black person in a predominantly White society. In training, however, he sometimes tells the story of how, when he was a child, he once took a stone and tried to rub the blackness off his skin. He also mentions his experience of high school, which must have been in the late 60s, where his teachers assumed that his intellectual skills should be limited; but because of his blackness, that his skills in music and dance should be above average, which he often stated, were not so. Also, because of the afro hairstyle he was wearing at the time, they assumed that he was a drug dealer and was hiding drugs in his hair. Fagbola states in one of his interviews that he went through different stages of consciousness in his life, and that there was a period where he was in denial of racist experiences:

> »There are different phases. In the first phase, I experienced racism but I couldn't comprehend and express it. Then there was a phase in which I tried to run away from the perception of this reality and it was rather embarrassing for me, when someone was talking about it. I still remember the fiftieth birthday of the father of a friend with whom I was very close. That must have been just about 1970, in the ceremonial address on the occasion of his birthday he spoke about family and then he mentioned that he was glad that I was there, that I was celebrating with them and that I would suffer greatly in society because of my appearance. On the one side it hit me very deeply, on the other hand I was also embarrassed that somebody talked about it. My friend and I brushed it away at the time and did not confront the background of what the father said back then« (Austen Peter Fagbola Brandt, 19/05/2014-1 #00:02:12).

At some point, Fagbola decided to (unbeknown to him at the time) follow in his paternal grandfather's footsteps and become a protestant minister. So, he began to study theology. During his studies, he decided to do an internship in an Anglican church congregation (an all-White congregation at the time) and went to live in Beldon, near Bradford and Leeds, for a while. During his time there, he discovered some of the writings in Race relations in the UK of the late 70s, early 80s, whose equivalents were not yet in existence in Germany:

> » I discovered […] a book of Chris Mullard ›Black Britain‹ in a library in Bradford and the book totally fascinated me. I still have it today and it was as if he was talking about my own life and therefore to a certain extent it opened a more conscious door for me. Full of enthusiasm I showed Richard or someone else this book and I noticed that he absolutely couldn't do anything with it and then I realised how big the gap between my experience and also the White experience of England was« (Austen Peter Fagbola Brandt, 19/05/2014-1 #00:05:53).

Fagbola states that he also met Chris Mullard later in his life and describes him as having a crucial impact on the early development of Phoenix.

After his return to Germany, he met Ulla, a White German theology student, who became his wife later. She told him about a Christian missionary academy in Hamburg, which he visited and where he met Mushila Ngiamankank, then a theology PhD student, who, as Fagbola later explains, was one of the people who introduced him to theories of decolonisation and African spirituality that would play an important role in the discourse and language used in Phoenix.

> »There I met several Black theologians, one from South Africa, two from the Congo and in particular the one from Congo totally fascinated me: Mushila Ngiamankank, in the way in which he portrayed African theology. He brought in Fanon, Cabral and I said to myself, that's your life. At the time I had not yet been identifying myself as a Black German but as an African, as a descendant of Africa, who experiences Africa in the German context. […] At the time the book of John Beatty ›African religion and culture‹ was thus a very, very important book. John Beatty was one of the first who highlighted that there are not only singular religions in Africa but that actually religions in the so-called sub-Saharan Africa had a lot of common structural features and that was at the same time a protest against the white traditions that said that Africa had only animism available« (Austen Peter Fagbola Brandt, 19/05/2014-1 #00:08:55).

Between September 1977 and April 1978, Fagbola went to the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, Switzerland, where the World Council of Churches is based. Here, he met people from all over the world and became friends with some of them. Through them he also learned different theological notions and approaches, some of them very different to the orthodox White European Christian approach. Despite the very diverse participants that came from 36 different countries, many from the Global South, the whole experience and

the theology that was taught was very Eurocentric. Through that experience, seeing how little value White theology had for some, for example the people from the Pacific Islands, he concluded: abstraction is only relevant if we can apply it to our everyday lives. The other conclusion that Fagbola made at the Ecumenical Institute through encounters with people from very different context and theological traditions was: We can only feel and think in bigger contexts if we take the micro-level seriously. These conclusions formed some of the practices in Phoenix, which shall be examined later.

After his graduation, Fagbola met with Edicio dela Torre, a Filipino peace activist, who taught him some of the basics of the decolonisation struggle. Dela Torre explained to him that it was important to treat people right. The peace activist said that attacking people was counterproductive, and what helped in order to facilitate people to change was rather to invite them to choose whether or not they want to follow your thinking. Dela Torre stated that it was crucial to win over the silent majority, and that the silent majority would follow those who treated them nicely, and who had a good chance of winning or being successful in their struggle. Fagbola said that these notions of decolonial struggle he learned from dela Torre, had a very strong (often subconscious) impact on his thinking and his actions.

Another most important figure in Fagbola's biography (and the naming of Phoenix), was his encounter with Sybil Phoenix in early 80s London. Phoenix was a British community worker with roots in British Guiana, who built a home for homeless young women and later for foster children in Lewisham, London. She was also co-founder of MELRAW (Methodist and Ecumenical Leadership Racism Awareness Workshops), an organisation offering Racism Awareness Training programs at that time:

> »I called Sybil and said: ›Ma'am, excuse us, we wanted go to Poland but it is not possible anymore, we are a group of 10 people who want to come in one and a half weeks to you.‹ She responded: ›When, exactly, yes, I am pleased to meet you, come over.‹
>
> I thought that was so fascinating, really, we went there, Sybil made the seminar in her kitchen and for me that was really the day, in a way for the first time that various levels of thinking, experiences, possibilities were brought together. I was so, so fascinated, impressed by what she told us about racism, also because I felt it very, very deeply resonated with my own existence, so that was really an absolutely thrilling... sacred moment. I was… so I suddenly saw everything differently from before, my Black Consciousness was completely imprinted on me...
>
> […] So, Sybil was in any case a very, very important breakthrough for me. I then went in the next few years many times to England to Sybil, participated in training. Understood relatively little, but I felt somehow this was the call of my life. Joe made quite a lot of photocopies and I got books and essays from Sybil. And then the next crucial step was in 1986, when I was there for two weeks and Larry, an employee of Sybil, who was also well educationally trained, who explained the systematics of the training from beginning to end, quite exactly. For me this was again a very crucial step in understanding« (Austen Peter Fagbola Brandt, 19/05/2014-2 #00:09:34).

In parallel, in 1984-86 Fagbola began slowly to approach the Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland (ISD – Initiative of Black People in Germany), and the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) had asked Sibyl Phoenix and a group of Black women to train young Black Germans to become anti-racism coaches and trainers. The group was told that it seemed that the subject of racism might become relevant at some point in the Federal Republic of Germany. Phoenix mentioned that she had already been working with Fagbola for seven years and he was included in the team. Fagbola joined a group of Afrogerman women, and together, they were coached on different subjects; and there arose the idea to develop anti-racism training. The CCME had the idea that the group could start training three months later, but Fagbola refused. For two years they worked and studied together with the little literature on anti-racism that was available in Germany at the time (Austen Peter Fagbola Brandt, 19/05/2014-2 #00:11:25). However, Fagbola was unsatisfied with the training method and a long reflection process began:

> »In 1988 we did training that were relatively confrontational at the time and at some point I began to think about that there is really something wrong here. Why do we bark at the people in the training with whom I usually get on well in my everyday life? And I found this type of training to feel more and more artificial, but also emotionally unfinished, emotionally immature. […] Eventually I came to the conclusion that I did not want to continue this type of training, because you actually had to reproduce yourself in a way that does not fit to you« (Austen Peter Fagbola Brandt, 19/05/2014-2 #00:13:12).

In Germany, Fagbola remained active within the ISD, but started to feel more and more alienated there as well. Then he left the ISD and founded Phoenix.

> »For me, I then gradually realised that if we want to do something else, we need to actually take Fanon's vision of a new thinking seriously. As long as we think like everyone, as long as we are dependent on power, like all, of the cold power, we can actually create nothing new. And this was then the moments of setting the paradigms that Phoenix should be founded on and was founded on in 1993« (Austen Peter Fagbola Brandt, 19/05/2014-2 #00:21:53).

A brief history of Phoenix

In 1991 Fagbola started facilitating training without the three Black women he had started training with. Phoenix as such did not exist, but there was a group of »sympathisers«

according to Andreas Mann, Phoenix's secretary and one of the founding members[17]. This group consisted of people that had done training with Fagbola and were looking for the opportunity to continue their anti-racist engagement and support the work he was doing. This initial group would help organise training, collect money for books, materials, and cost of postage. In 1992 the group also started meeting regularly, not as a registered association but with plans to create a more official frame. In 1993 about 20 people met and discussed some of the main questions for the general structures of this anti-racist non-governmental organisation.

Some of the questions raised were about whether there should be a White and a Black group and who should be part of it. In this orientation phase people decided which group in the organisation they would join. (Some were unable to decide and left). Another key question was strategy and pace. Fagbola wanted an organisation that was characterised by slowness, by de-acceleration, assuming that a colonial system that had 500 years to implement itself would not be changed in a short period of time. This initial group quickly found a name in reference to the woman that had influenced and inspired Fagbola and the training he facilitated: Phoenix. The name is also a reference to the Egyptian mythological bird that would rise from its own ashes, symbolising the cycle of life and death, of birth and letting go. Fagbola was chair of this organisation and Tom Hurst became secretary. Andreas Mann and Rodin Mushila, son of Mushila Ngianmankank, were trainees.

In 1992 many requests for training arrived. Fagbola worked with different methods, including a less confrontational, less guilt-inducing approach. There was an attempt in Phoenix to not work with guilt and accusations. In fact, they became probably one of the first and only organisations that would assume that White people were socialised into a racial system that they actually did not necessarily want to be a part of. Other training mostly worked with the assumption of the White perpetrator and the Black victim. Phoenix became a space where Black, self-empowered, liberated trainers would tell White people what the racial culture had done to *them*, working towards turning un-reflected White people into to more reflected White people and allies. For some people, White and Black,

[17] This subchapter is mainly based on an interview with Andreas Mann, Phoenix secretary and founding member, conducted in July 2012 in Duisburg.

this approach was not fitting; for some, Phoenix seemed like a self-help group, promoting reconciliation and self-reflection. To assume that White people were somehow »victims« of a socialisation into an oppressive system was hard to acknowledge for some, especially Black people, but also White. In addition, the slow pace of Phoenix was testing the patience of some of its members, who wanted more action, and a few left.

Between 1993 and 1996 seven to eight White people and about 10 Black people met on a regular basis, sometimes together, sometimes separately, to reflect upon different questions. In autumn 1996 Phoenix became a registered association of about 30 active people, making donations possible, as they were - and still are - only funded through its members and not by government money.

All of these 30 members were either atheists or Christians, either White Germans/Europeans or people from the African diaspora. In 2002, two new members (my brother and I) joined Phoenix. We were the first to not fit into this Black/White dichotomy. We were/are (Muslim) Alevi Anatolian Germans. For the White group, this meant exploring their racialisation in regard to the »Muslim or Migrant Other« and not only the »Black or Native Other«. For the Black group, it was a completely different matter, as some started to share incidents of racial abuse and violence they experienced from Turkish Germans. It was a new, radical discussion about how to define Whiteness and Blackness and the term »People of Colour« (POC) was introduced to Phoenix. It was a significant break in the traditional Phoenix discourse, and some people, mostly Black members, left or became less active. Those members that left or retired felt that the presence of Turkish Germans was equal to the presence of White people, thereby the safe Black space became unsafe to them. However, a set of two new trainers joined and new facets of racism were explored, including racial discrimination within BIPOC Communities, shadeism and racialisation in non-European countries.

In 2002 the first Phoenix office opened in Duisburg, and in 2005, with the support of the Commissioner of Foreigners of Brandenburg, Phoenix was invited to do several anti-racism and empowerment training. As a result of these training, Phoenix expanded into the former GDR. In 2006 Phoenix had about 200 members.

In 2010 Phoenix received the Aix-La-Chapelle Peace Prize, and in 2011 Fagbola received the Federal Cross of Merit. By the end of 2020 Phoenix has almost 700 members, making it one of the oldest and largest anti-racism NGOs in Germany. Having summarised briefly Phoenix's history, I will now describe how Phoenix is structured.

The structure of Phoenix

Phoenix offers two types of training: The anti-racism training for White people and the empowerment training for BIPOC[18]. Most of the trainers have full-time jobs in a wide range of fields. Trainers include protestant ministers, psychologists, medical doctors, consultants for educational organisations, and freelance diversity trainers. Being a Phoenix trainer is a part-time endeavour. The number of training per year varies from 30-40 and more, depending on demand and availability of trainers. Training group sizes vary from 8-18 participants; the training itself is undertaken in 2 to 2 ½ or 3 days. If participants work in an educational context, they are asked not to copy or reproduce Phoenix methods in any other setting.

Phoenix does not receive any government funding and is solely funded through membership. The income that Phoenix trainers generate is independently from the organisation, and can have a variety of sources, including governmental funding. Even if training is organised by governmental organisations, the contracts are drawn with the individual trainer, not Phoenix. Membership is divided into three groups: active members, youth members, and sustaining members. Active membership is only granted to those who participated in Phoenix training. In November 2020 Phoenix has about 680 members. About 140 of those are sponsoring members, the other 540 would be considered active members, though a significant number of those might not have been active in Phoenix for years. About 182 of those active members are on the BIPOC mailing-list and 328 are on the White mailing-list (these leaves about 30 members out, that might be living abroad and are most likely

[18] The costs of an ART are currently (in 2020) in the range of four-figures per trainer, including hand-outs and learning materials. Travel and accommodation costs have to be covered by the organisers. The costs of empowerment training vary depending on the financial means of those hosting the training.

BIPOC). Of those active members approximately 180 are male (about 90 White and 90 BIPOC), and approximately 310 are female (about 210 White, 100 BIPOC), about 20 or more define themselves as non-binary or trans (10 White, 10 BIPOC)[19]. The youngest active member is about 18 the oldest about 80.

Active members also get the opportunity to become trainers if they wish to do so[20]. The process of becoming a trainer can take many years, depending on background and experience. However, the Phoenix trainer apprenticeship requires active participation in the yearly Phoenix meetings, in Train the Trainers Training, and shadowing fully trained trainers during anti-racism or empowerment trainings. The Phoenix trainer's manual is a vital resource in the training process. As no unit is stand alone, trainers are advised to use Phoenix training methods only for Phoenix anti-racism or empowerment training, as the arrangement of units leads participants towards the particular process of understanding racialisation. About 40 people are in the trainer and trainee pool.

Active members have the opportunity to annually meet twice nationally, and twice in regional groups. Regional groups have developed in Berlin-Brandenburg, Rhine-Ruhr (North Rhine Westphalia, Cologne, Duisburg), North (Hamburg), Munich, Tübingen, Halle (Saale), Rhine-Main, and other places. Additionally, depending on the size of the regional groups, Phoenix offers two occasions where White or BIPOC members meet separately, to discuss certain questions. Phoenix members in Berlin, for example, where separate meetings are also offered, have the opportunity to meet up to six times a year. The meetings are voluntary.

On the Phoenix website (www.phoenix-ev.org), under the subheading *Our Philosophy* the NGO states:

> »Firstly, our work is based on the analysis of the experience of PoC in Germany. Secondly, the perspective and commitment of White people is essential when it comes to creating well-reflected strategies against racism. We regard any type of White solidarity with caution unless it is rooted in an analysis of their own socialization« (https://www.phoenix-ev.org/en/our-philosophy.html).

[19] These are only estimates, some information about the number of people on the email-lists I received from the Phoenix office, others I had to piece together.

[20] Phoenix's work is not solely based on training and the facilitation of meetings and events to continue the process of critical reflexivity in relation to racialisation. The organisation is occasionally involved in consulting (for example in cases of racism against children in school), or very rarely protest (for example against at ›Africa week‹ in the Zoo of Augsburg in 2005, which was termed ›African Village‹ and evoked images of the human zoos found in Europe towards the end of the 19th century).

The idea behind this approach prevents White saviourism, the notion that White people (or culture) can save BIPOC from the oppression they experience, or as Teju Cole put it in his essay about *The White Savior Industrial Complex* (2016) »*a nobody from America or Europe can go to Africa and become a godlike savior or, at the very least, have his or her emotional needs satisfied*« (Cole 2016, p. 384). Further, Phoenix assumes that racialisation, which includes the subjection of White people to Whiteness, is a form of heteronomy. Therefore, in regard to the White Phoenix members, their liberation from their Whiteness is more central as it is tied to the liberation of BIPOCs from racial oppression.

Phoenix' mission statement further elaborates:

> »In the process of developing strategies to oppose racism it is paramount that White people understand that they themselves are victims of the racist system« (https://www.phoenix-ev.org/en/our-philosophy.html).

Here is where I disagree with the Phoenix philosophy. I find the victimisation of White people equally questionable as a reduced White perpetrator/BIPOC victim dichotomy. Notwithstanding, it is the aim of exploring of how White people and BIPOCs remember and view their racialisation processes and the psycho-emotional consequences of that racialisation. According to the Phoenix website, viewing themselves as racialised »*enables [White people] to discover new forms of acting in an anti-racist-discourse*« (https://www.phoenix-ev.org/en/our-philosophy.html). Additionally, the Phoenix website highlights that critical reflexivity is an important element in its work, and that White and BIPOC members alike are invited »*to become aware of their own role in the racist system*« (https://www.phoenix-ev.org/en/our-philosophy.html).

After having explored briefly how racism shapes discourses, society and subjectivities in Germany, looked at some of the relevant concepts of this thesis, and after a brief summary of Phoenix' history and mission statement, I will examine the literature related to exploring the research questions mentioned in this introductory chapter.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

> »I know perfectly well, just as well as all those tremendously clever intellectuals, that in the scientific sense there is no such thing as race […] I as a politician need a conception which enables the order which has hitherto existed on historic bases to be abolished and an entirely new and anti-historic order enforced and given an intellectual basis… With the concept of race, National Socialism will carry its revolution abroad and recast the world« Adolf Hitler (quoted in Rauschning 1940, p. 232).

The previous chapter shortly glanced at how racism in Germany discursively shapes society and subjectivities, briefly skimmed over some of the crucial concepts of this thesis, and looked into the history and structure of Phoenix, which I chose as case study for this research project. This study explores how anti-racism and empowerment practitioners narrate memories of their racialisation and their own experience as training participants, but also how they re-write their racial subjectivation and re-imagine humanness. Therefore, in the following chapter, I critically engage with the body of literature and the key concepts that are relevant to this study. Firstly, I argue, based on the analysis of the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners' narratives, that racialisation processes reflect a form of suffering to the subject. This suffering is derived through the process of racialisation, which could also be considered a process of dehumanisation for BIPOC *and* White people. The examination of racialisation, which is understood as becoming a racial subject, is preceded by the exploration of the terms »Race«, racism and subjectivation. Since racialisation is also understood as being subjected to a racial culture which has Whiteness at its centre, I will also explore the notion of Whiteness. However, the racialisation processes the research participants narrate are based on their recollection of situations, moments, or phases of becoming racialised. Consequently, though already touched upon in the introduction I shall also examine the concepts of memory and remembering more in-depth. Secondly, considering that the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners share their personal training experiences, I look in a very condensed form into the development of anti-racism and empowerment training and its criticisms in the UK and Germany. I also examine the notion of (self-)empowerment and (self-)governmentality, since I argue that the cognitive and emotional understanding of individual racialisation processes, partially liberates the racialised subject from them. Nonetheless, I also carefully consider Nikolas Rose's (1996,

1999) examination of (self-)governmentality connected to psycho-therapeutic discourses related to concepts of individual betterment and liberation. Thirdly, the research participants describe, how after their first training, they began to re-write their racial subjectivity. In this process the notion of recognition (as conceptualised by Taylor 1994) and reflexivity are analysed. Finally, I look into how the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners re-imagine humanness, delving into an existential reflection on Fanon's appeal for a new humanism, but also the concept of decoloniality, moving away from Western epistemologies towards an epistemological pluriverse. Additionally, I discuss in this thesis, if racialisation is also understood as a form of dehumanisation, can de-racialisation also be understood as a form of re-humanisation.

The dominant narratives of »Race« and the subject's confirmation of them

Before we look into the concepts relevant to this thesis, the following section delineates the concept of the narrative onto which the analysis of racialisation and empowerment in this thesis is based on. What is narrative and how does it differ from a story? Some sociologists state that narratives are about how we tell a story, whilst a story is about content, about what we tell in a story (Plummer 2019, pp. 4-5). One particular model of narratives developed by the sociologist Ken Plummer (2019) that describes how a person turns into the subject that they are is very useful in the analysis of the research participants' personal accounts. The model describes a first stage as »collaborative narratives«, in which the subject conforms and assimilates to dominant meta-narratives (Plummer 2019, p. 76). Within this first stage, there are two degrees. The first degree slavishly abides to the norms of the meta-narrative and the second degree respects the norms and remains colonised by them (ibid.). In »negotiated narratives«, the second stage, the subject begins to actively debate meta-narratives, still dominated by them but assuming forms of resistance which do not challenge meta-narratives (ibid.). These forms of resistance can also be described in varying degrees: first, through creativity and innovation; second, through attempts to disengage with these

meta-narratives; third, through creating distance via rituals and performance; and fourth, through amending either the self or attempting to amend the structures without challenging the meta-narratives (ibid.). In the third stage, »counter-narratives«, the subject refuses to abide to meta-narratives and attempts to change them, either through rebelling and challenging them or through overthrowing them (ibid.). Though I would question the linear, evolving character of this narrative model and argue for a contradictory simultaneity of degrees and stages, through which the subject moves in these meta-narratives, the model is still useful in the analysis of how the subject relates to the meta-narratives of »Race« and racism.

The concept of »racialisation« depends on the narrative of »Race«. At the beginning of the 17th century, numerous European scholars developed the concept of »Race« as a pseudo-scientific category in order to divide populations and groups by random physiognomic features[21]. Scholars such as the Swedish physician and natural scientist Carolus Linnaeus (1758), German doctor and physiologist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach[22] (1776), French aristocrat and novelist Joseph-Arthur de Gobineau (1853), and British German political philosopher Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1899), were influential theorists on »Race«. In simple terms, humankind was divided into three to four races, with the White race (European) on top, followed by the yellow race (Asian) and with the red (Native American) and black (African) at the bottom of the racial pyramid (Eigen & Larrimore 2006, pp. 103-112). With Charles Darwin (1859) and the idea of *natural selection*, the idea of *lower and higher races* was placed in a scientific context. Western civilisation became the measuring stick with which other cultures were perceived and valued. Simultaneously »*it was only with the sociogenesis of European modernity that blood, body, and race were created as biological entities*« (Linke 1999, p. 2).

However, after 1945 and the violent genocidal excesses of the Nazi racial state, hierarchical notions of »Race« were mostly deemed incorrect (for example by the UN), and »Race« shifted to be mostly understood as a social construction (Banton 1998, pp. 196-233).

[21] Notions of the »racial Other« already existed in the Middle Ages and during the Christian crusades. However, this »racial Other« was generally explained theologically and not scientifically (see also Pieterse 2002).
[22] I feel it is important to note here that Blumenbach is still uncritically considered one of the founding fathers of Anthropology.

Notwithstanding, a biological understanding of »Race« continued to exist in a variety of sciences and epistemologies of the Global North (Kohn 1988; Malik 2008)[23]. Primarily, »racial« theories such as those of scholars like Gobineau and Chamberlain propagate the superiority of the White »Race«, the inferiority of BIPOC »Races«, and deeply inform modern Enlightenment thought. Some of the most important and influential writings on »Race« that the European Enlightenment produced, came from very significant thinkers such as Friedrich Hegel (1837) and Immanuel Kant (1782). Both Enlightenment thinkers argued that White Western men were the pinnacle of humankind and were thereby burdened to civilise and humanise the world – since they were the only ones who were fully human (Eze 1997). Enlightenment thought employed »Race« theories as a justification for the enslavement of African people, imperial expansion, and genocide. As David Theo Goldberg states:

> »Racial thinking and racist articulation have become increasingly normalized and naturalized throughout modernity, but in ways not simply determined (as dependent variables) by social conditions at specified times. […] Liberalism plays a foundational part in this process of normalizing and naturalizing racial dynamics and racist exclusions. As modernity's definitive doctrine of self and society, of morality and politics, liberalism serves to legitimate ideologically and to rationalize politico-economically prevailing sets of racialized conditions and racist exclusions. […] Hence, also, we must acknowledge the role of philosophical discipline in establishing racialized discourse and the culture of racisms« (Goldberg 1993, pp. 1-2).

At the beginning of the 18th century, the European cultures and societies were subjected to racial ideologies that were imposed upon the world as pseudo-scientific »Race« theories (Banton 1977). Primarily, BIPOC's lower genetic and cultural status was discursively essentialised. Some social scholars assumed that racist ideas suggest that White people's alleged cultural supremacy, the myth of their socio-psychological advantage and mental superiority, transformed into tangible economic and political power (DuBois 1996 [1923]). Similarly, Edward Said (1978) and Stuart Hall (1997) analyse how cultural myths of the inferiority of constructed »Black« and »Oriental« subjects imply the thought of (White) Western supremacy. The White subject constructs itself through a psychological process of splitting, denying and projecting its own »badness« upon »Blackness« or the racial Other in order to construct its own moral superiority and supremacy (Dalal 2002). Furthermore, this

[23] Even though both scholars decidedly dismiss the biological notion of »Races«, Malik notes that genetic variation does exist amongst populations. However, Malik also highlights these genetic variations only as likeliness and not as essential genetic demarcations between »Races« (Malik 2008). Additionally, these demarcations could only be constructed arbitrarily as there is no »natural« characteristic that could differentiate people into »Races«. Dividing a population by skin colour and nose shape would create a different »Race« pattern than dividing a population by skin colour and height.

psychological process of split, denial and projection enables the White self to embark on the colonial project, which inevitably leads to a cultural and mental annihilation of the colonial Other (Memmi 1957). The binary concept of »White/good – Black/bad« was necessary as justification for White colonialisms' brutal terror and racial exploitation (Loomba 2005). With the end of the great colonial empires (even though their influence on their former colonies may not have ended yet), overt discourses of White supremacy have shifted and become less visible (Gilroy 1992). It is argued, nonetheless, that colonial ideology is still vibrant in the collective unconscious of the former colonisers and colonised. In *The Racial Order* (2015), Mustafa Emirbayer and Matthew Desmond conclude *»[o]ur thinking, especially our taken-for-granted, habitual orientation to the world, is a product of long centuries of (racialized) discourses and practices«* (Emirbayer & Desmond 2015, p. 22). Furthermore, the sociologists state that »Race« *»is real because it is socially real, not because it is biological. Indeed, race is historically real, in the sense of being a cultural structure historically sedimented in both our social institutions and our personal dispositions«* (Emirbayer & Desmond 2015, p. 10). Furthermore, it can be said that »Race« is relational and temporal (Emirbayer & Desmond 2015, p. 337), while I would also add that it is spatial, as well as classed, gendered et cetera. In order to demonstrate how society is permeated and shaped by racial cultures, I consider racialisation, racial discourses and power structures as a reflection of a racialised consciousness in chapter 4.

I have often encountered a reductionist definition of *»racism as (racial) prejudice plus power«* (Sow 2008, pp. 84ff.), amongst anti-racism practitioners in Germany as well as in other countries. Although this definition may be helpful for introducing people who are new to the subject of »Race« relations, it does, however, reduce the complexities of power relations. A new creed of writers who have discovered the subject of Critical Whiteness similarly simplify racism as *»a form of oppression in which one racial group dominates others«* (DiAngelo 2012, p. 87). Amongst Black feminists there is also the understanding of racism as White supremacist patriarchy from a US-American perspective on »Race« relations. How much can these US American discourse on Whiteness be transferred to a German context? The French feminist and sociologist Collette Guillaumin conceptualises racism in *Racism, Sexism, Power and Ideology* (1995) as an ideology:

> »The ideology of race (racism) is a universe of signs: it is what mediated the specific social practice of western society as it became industrialized, and as political activity was taken over by a class which had formerly been excluded from it. It is a universe of signs far more extensive than simply the ›theory‹ into which it crystallized in the course of the nineteenth century.
>
> Indeed, the theory stresses human ›differences‹ and inequalities, and affirms the superiority and inferiority of groups of people in line with criteria more or less explicitly defined, according to author, but that is all. The theory takes race as something irrefutably given, practically as an ›immediate datum of the senses‹; as a self-evident truth, rather than a scientific tool or concept« (Guillaumin 1995, pp. 35-36).

Educational scientists also examine how racism is spread through society and state that racism as an ideology »*is socially reproduced. It is communicated and transmitted through formal and informal channels. At the formal level racism is communicated through political discourse, the media, and education. The informal is engendered by socialization within the family, talk in the neighborhood, among friends, and in other spheres of interaction*« (Essed 1996, p. 9). Scientists from Social Psychology have also contributed to the conceptualisation of racism as »*anything – thought feeling or action – that uses the notion of race as an activating or organizing principle. Or to put it another way, racism is the manufacture and use of the notion of race. […] Racism is a form of organizing peoples, commodities and the relationships between them by making reference to a notion of race*« (Dalal 2002, p. 27). This definition of racism, as Dalal states himself, closely reflects what is also understood as racialisation in this thesis.

Another narrative of »Race« ideology, which is critically analysed through Fanonian philosophy, includes humanness in its conceptualisation:

> »Racism is a global hierarchy of superiority and inferiority along the line of the human that have been politically, culturally and economically produced and reproduced for centuries by the institutions of the ›capitalist/patriarchal western-centric/Christian-centric modern/colonial world- system‹ (Grosfoguel 2011). The people classified above the line of the human are recognized socially in their humanity as human beings and, thus, enjoy access to rights (human rights, civil rights, women rights and/or labor rights), material resources, and social recognition to their subjectivities, identities, epistemologies and spiritualities. The people below the line of the human are considered subhuman or non-human; that is, their humanity is questioned and, as such, negated (Fanon 1967). In the latter case, the extension of rights, material resources and the recognition of their subjectivities, identities, spiritualities and epistemologies are denied« (Grosfoguel 2016, p. 10).

This Fanonian conceptualisation of racism, which divides the racialised into human and non-human, is very relevant to my question about the effects racialisation has on those subjected to a racial culture which has Whiteness at its centre. Paul Gilroy also describes »*racism as a system assembling races in the world. […] It is not something that grows from racial difference. It creates racial difference*« (Gilroy 2018, p. 188). Ideologies, which could be described as a set of ideas or beliefs, and which are at the core of any political or economic system, are also held by a person or a group of persons. In *Ideology – A Multidisciplinary*

Approach (1998) Teun A. van Dijk examines ideology in its different facets and then uses a book by a conservative US-American author to show how racism functions as an ideology. This analysis of modern racism as a group ideology examines the central beliefs about Whiteness and the racial Other included in this ideology, which is employed to justify inequalities. I am heavily borrowing from van Dijk's analysis and transferring it to current dominant racial narratives in Germany:

1. Our German/Western culture is better
2. Racism is natural and sometimes cannot be avoided
3. Discriminating people may sometimes make sense
4. Germany is not a multicultural/multiracial society and it should not be/multiculturalism has failed
5. People from different cultures in Germany should assimilate to a *Leitkultur,* a leading German culture
6. Germany is a tolerant, democratic and modern country
7. Germans are not a racist/We are not racists/Germany is not a racist society (van Dijk 1998, pp. 287-288)

Within this self-representational ideology two adversaries can be identified. First those that stand for pluralism and liberal cultural values:

1. They think that all cultures have the same value
2. They promote multicultural ideas
3. They think that Western civilisation is bad
4. They are obsessed with a long-gone history of Nazism, colonialism and racism
5. They want equal opportunities and representation for ethnic minorities (ibid.)

The second main adversary is the racial Other that is not White and who stands in binary opposition to it. The dominant narratives about the racial Other are based on these ideological core beliefs:

1. They are uncivilised, barbaric, traditional and backward
2. Muslims/The racial Other acts different because of his inherent primitive culture
3. Their culture differs from the norm of modern Western enlightened culture
4. They do not have any regard for the law or societal rules
5. They are more criminal than we are, they are violent and dangerous
6. Their culture has not evolved and cannot evolve because it is stuck in its traditions
7. They take advantage of the welfare system and constantly expect hand-outs
8. They are passive and have never significantly contributed anything noteworthy to our society or human history
9. They are sexual predators
10. They are substandard, and they will bring us down; they cannot improve

11. They use racism as an apology for their own shortcomings (ibid.)

These narratives always seem to return to one of the first core beliefs, which is the superiority of modern Western culture and thereby of White people. Wolfgang Hund, who with *Wie die Deutschen weiß wurden [How the Germans became White]* (2017) contributed a compelling genealogy of Whiteness in Germany, wrote:

> »Colonial propaganda, colonial policy and a commodity racism independent of specific colonial property, contributed to the association with colonial exhibitions, colonial novels, Völkerschauen and ethnological museums for the propagation and generalization of whiteness. As a result, racist symbolic capital was generated and made available to all strata of the population. Even those who were poor and had no economic capital or had only a moderate level of education and therefore had little cultural capital or, because of their lower position, had hardly any career-relevant relationships and thus poor social capital, could at least ideologically benefit from the generalized property of whiteness« [my own translation] (Hund 2017, p.109).

What are the prevalent narratives of Whiteness? The analysis of Whiteness has a long tradition and has developed most extensively amongst BIPOC thinkers. Some social scientists examined how the first encounters between White Europeans and Black Africans were perceived by BIPOC people and looked at early images of White people in Black representation (Bay 2000). Some theorists of Critical Whiteness state that the development of scholarly Whiteness studies can be seen to have developed in three waves (Twine & Gallagher 2008). The »First Wave« was initiated by the writings of scholars such as DuBois (1996 [1936]) who examine the political and psychological wages of Whiteness. These early writers on Critical Whiteness consider racism a form of White supremacy, which economically over-empowers White people and gives them the allusion of a higher social status in comparison to BIPOC. The scholarship of the first wave also describes the invisibility of Whiteness, which is maintained in order to conceal White supremacy and nurture the illusion of meritocracy (DuBois 1996 [1970]). With colonialism and globalization, White supremacy has expanded beyond Europe and North America and has embraced the entire world (Shome 1999). This embrace has created, spread and maintained in many parts of the world a racial culture which has Whiteness at its centre, which becomes evident in the internalisation of »Western« culture and White beauty standards in many countries (Perry 2005; Fuller 2006). I consider Whiteness studies and the internalisation of Whiteness

more generally in chapter 4 and 5, where I look at how racial culture (centred around Whiteness) shapes identity constructions.

The »Second Wave« of Whiteness studies, also mainly based on DuBois' work (1996), is characterised by writers and researchers who investigate and reflect upon racism's root causes, particularly its structural dimensions (Frazier 1968; Baldwin 1955; Ellison 1964). While these writers were largely ignored by White mainstream academia, only a few scholars on Whiteness were recognized for their consideration of racism as an individual White problem (Myrdal 1944). Among them, Gunnar Myrdal argues that racism causes a cognitive dissonance in the individual White mind: the ethical dilemma between racial injustice and (American) values of liberty and equal opportunities (Myrdal 1944). Only through the works of Black feminists, culture and literary theorists and writers such as Toni Morrison (1992) and bell hooks (1992), who analyse the normativity of White subjectivities, does a critical examination of Whiteness shift from these psychological explanations to the discursive practices of White supremacy. Inspired by these writers, some US legal scholars began to critically explore the formations of Whiteness manifested in legal structures and laws, highlighting how racial culture was also reflected in racialised (legal) structures (Delgado & Stefancic 1996; Harris 1993). This also becomes apparent in how Whiteness informs notions of citizenship and shapes laws and policies of naturalisation in favour of White European or Euro-American people (López 1996). Also relevant to my research is, how some scholars of the second wave examine how Whiteness has changed, re-invented and re-constructed itself, so it is far from an essential, closed off entity (Allen 1994; Jacobsen 1998; Roediger 1991, 2005). These historians study how certain ethnic groups like the Irish in America were culturally and ideologically absorbed into Whiteness in order to imbalance demography to disadvantage BIPOC. I consider discursive practices of Whiteness in chapter 4 and 5, arguing that Whiteness is not an essential, monolithic identity, but is rather continuously socially constructed through discourses. Drawing on these, I consider how the construction of an essentially racial »Other«, which White identities depend on, limits the subject development process.

The »Third Wave« of Critical Whiteness studies can be distinguished from former waves by the scope of its »*innovative and renovative research methodologies*« (Twine &

Gallagher 2008, p. 12) and use of racial consciousness biographies (Twine 2004; McKinney 2005; Knowles 2006). Very fascinating is also the investigation into White biographies and racial subjectivation to uncover the invisibility of White power structures (Frankenberg 1993, 2001), which informs some of the writing of the »Third Wave«. Early racial subjectivation, which considers how children are initiated into society's perceptions of colour lines in the US, UK and Germany, is also relevant in regard to the (childhood) memories of racialisation the research participants share (Troyna & Hatcher 1992; Hirschfeld 1997; Hughes 1997; Van Ausdale & Feagin 2001; Eggers 2006; Quintana & McKown 2008). Only a small number of scholars, however, look at the socio-psychological dynamics between White power structures and individuals, and the toll of White supremacy on White people. Judith Katz (1978), for example, briefly mentions a »cognitive dissonance« created through White socialisation, not as a result of an ethical dilemma but as a consequence of psychical limitations. Likewise, Richard Dyer (1997) touches upon the feeling of alienation that accompanies White subjectivation. Thandeka (2000) also describes the strong emotions of guilt and shame that come with »learning to be White«. The most recent writing on Whiteness (I am unsure if I should consider it the »Fourth Wave«. Gallagher and Twine consider it a tsunami [2017]), some of it academic, some of it journalistic, some of it translated into German or even written in German, often deals with Whiteness in terms of privilege, entitlement or sometimes fragility (Sullivan 2014; Pinder 2015; Garner 2016; Ogette 2017; DiAngelo 2018; Eddo-Lodge 2018; Hasters 2019). I only found some of these more recent books helpful as they only seem to focus on the benefits of being White. Even the notion of White fragility, as promoted by anti-racism trainer and writer Robin DiAngelo, is based on the idea that White people are so pampered that they fall apart once confronted with an uncomfortable subject (DiAngelo 2018). My argument goes further since I understand racialisation, which includes becoming a White racial subject to be an event or process which causes suffering in that person. Only a few authors also deal with the negative assumptions of being White (Kowal 2011) and of a racial culture, which has Whiteness at its ideological centre. I consider the »Whiteness« of culture and the development of racial subjectivities in chapter 4 and 5, arguing that the racial conditioning leaves the racialised subject suffering and dehumanised.

How does the subject become exposed and subjected to dominant narratives of »Race«? In sociology, racism is frequently theorised around the polarity of (Black) victims and (White) culprits (Rothberg 2019, pp. 1-2). Outside of Critical »Race« theory, racism is considered to be an issue, executed by those on the edges of society, for example far right extremists and fascists (Tißberger 2017, p. 118). The late 1970s saw the emergence of Critical Whiteness studies in the social sciences and cultural studies (Twine & Gallagher 2008). Liberal social orders frequently attempt to downplay racism as an issue of the margins, yet racism is an underlying ideology, which pervades and shapes social orders in general (Emirbayer & Desmond 2015). »Race«, class, cis-gender, sexuality etc. become the dividing lines through which power floats unevenly (Crenshaw 2017). In spite of the fact that racism is a structural issue, the structures are collectively and personally upheld by individuals (Banton 1998, pp. 136-140). In this segment of this thesis, I examine racial subjectivation or racialisation. I look at what connects narratives of Whiteness, culture, the subject and the social to gather a more profound comprehension of how »Race« and power operates within subjects.

Subjectivation is a philosophical concept primarily developed by Foucault (1976). Subjectivation (or subjectification) refers to the social construction of the individual subject; to the way individuals turn themselves into subjects of health, sexuality (ibid.) and »Race«. So, what role does »Race« play in subjectivation? If society is racially structured, is our subjectivation racialized as well? The *Dictionary of Race, Ethnicity & Culture* (2003) defines the term »racialization« in the following way:

> »RACIALIZATION (It. razzializzazione; Fr. racialization; Ger. Rassialisierung) The recognition of the socially constructed nature of the term ›RACE‹ creates a problem for authors who wish to write about ›RACE RELATIONS‹ without legitimizing the idea of race. Racialization is used therefore to refer to social relations to which ›racial‹ meanings are attached. The use of the term emphasizes the process of creating racial definitions and underlines the constructed rather than the given nature of race. So if an actor defines a relationship as a ›race‹ relation, he or she is racializing the relationship and making it a race relationship« (Bolaffi et al. 2003, p. 273).

Similarly, it could be said that »*Racialization in this sense is the lens or the medium through which race-thinking operates*« (Murji and Solomos 2005, p. 3).

One of the first theorists who applied the term »racialisation« was Fanon (1965). The psychiatrist from Martinique analysed, during the French occupation of Algeria, how colonisation leads to a »*racialisation of thoughts*« (Fanon 1965, p. 171). The coloniser applies

the racialisation process in order to construct a homogenous, dehumanised, faceless Other without a distinct culture or history (Fanon 1965, pp. 171-173.). This process of Othering inferiorised the colonial subject, thereby allowing the coloniser to define its own »Self« as superior. The processes of »Othering« took place on a cultural level; the imperial project was acted through culture (Said 1978). It might be argued, therefore, that European culture during this phase transformed through racialisation into a racial culture. Racial ideologies were not a simple expression of opinions; they informed, rather, the way in which people related to each other, and how they were positioned nationally and internationally. Notions of »Race« manifested themselves in concrete social structures. Racial culture and racialisation, therefore, is also about the hierarchisation of (global) society. Michael Banton (1977), one of the first social scientists to use »racialisation« in sociology, characterised a phase of the imperial project as »*a process, which can be called racialization, whereby a mode of categorization was developed, applied tentatively in European historical writing and then, more confidently to the populations of the world*« (Banton 1977, pp. 18-19.). This phase could also be understood as the racialisation of the globe. A primordialist racial culture was globalised in conjunction with the global European imperial project. As *primordial* I understand a conceptualisation of racial culture, which assumes that essential biological »Races« have been with humans, since the dawn of humankind.

Colonial society is thus strictly divided into racialised socio-economic classes, with the coloniser on top of the power hierarchy (Memmi 1957). Because Whiteness stands in the centre of the racial culture imposed on the colonial »Other«, a »*culture of racialization*« can be understood more specifically as a »*culture of white supremacy*« (Martinot 2003, pp. 130-131). In other words, because »Race« is a construction employed to shape social relations, it is a reflection of cultural and political values and norms. While subjectivation constitutes the subject's general internalisation of power structures, racialisation (or racial subjectivation) constitutes the internalisation of society's values and norms related to »Race« in the process of racial subject development.

In this dissertation racialisation is conceptualised as racial subjectivation, as the subject's general internalisation but also negotiation of cultural values and norms. It is important to note that there are many other more specific conceptualisations of racialisation.

Some scholars, for example, analyse the racialisation of migration in media or political discourses (Carter et al. 1987; Solomos 2003); some examine racialisation in the field of crime, policing and the judicial system (Holdaway 1996; Rowe 1998; Chan & Mirchandani 2002). The conflation of »Race« and ethnicity becomes visible in the work of scholars who elaborate on how racialisation can also be understood as a form of ethnicisation: the construction of people or denominations as »Race« or ethnicity (for the construction of »Jews« as a »Race« see also Miles 1993; of »Muslims« see also Brah 1996). Some scholars argue that the difficulty in defining the term »racialisation« lies in the masked movements of the term »Race« (Lentin 2020). »Race« moves between biological/genetic, ethnic, national/cultural and religious meanings (ibid.).

Is it possible that someone does not believe in the existence of »Races« as such, and at the same time unconsciously thinks and acts according to the racial formations in society, as if looking through racialised glasses without necessarily knowing it? The racialised structures of society are reflected and re-affirmed in the racial structures of the psyche and vice versa (Dalal 2002, p. 7). In other words, a racialised psyche automatically constructs a racialised society with racialised bodies (to a certain extent without even being aware of it). So, a racialised society constructs racialised psyches, individually and collectively, which reproduce racial power structures. Most helpful and fascinating was also the work of Quinn Slobodian, who in *Comrades of Color* (2015) examines racialisation in the former GDR, which claimed to be an anti-racist, anti-fascist, and anti-capitalist state. Slobodian's work is particularly useful in the analysis of interviews with research participants who had grown up in the GDR, highlighting, how even in a state which defines itself as anti-racist, racialisation can take place. Having briefly looked at the dynamics between the emergence of racial ideology and processes of racial subjectivation, I now turn to examine how »Race« as a cultural discourse shapes racial subjectivity.

What is subjectivity? Subjectivity is related to our social identities and roles in society. In the book *Subjectivity* Donald E. Hall (2004) defines the term as follows:

> »**Subjectivity**: often used interchangeably with the term ›identity,‹ subjectivity more accurately denotes our social constructs and consciousness of identity. We commonly speak of identity as a flat, one-dimensional concept, but subjectivity is much broader and more multifaceted; it is social and personal being that exists in negotiation with broad cultural definitions and our own ideals. We may have numerous discrete identities, of race, class, gender,

> sexual orientation, etc., and a subjectivity that is comprised of all of those facets, as well as our own imperfect awareness of our selves« (Hall 2004, p. 134).

This thesis employs the non-dualistic concept of »subjectivity« as it deconstructs the notion of a dichotomous internal and external being (Mama 1995, pp. 1-2). It is preferable to essential notions of identity, which run the risk of reproducing primordialist »Race« concepts[24]. As Marx (1971), Freud (1991) and Ferdinand de Saussure (1960) have shown, these notions of stable and authentic identity and self, derived from late Renaissance and Enlightenment, are dependent on economic and social relations, on the unconscious and the psyche and on their positioning in the discursive web of social significations (Hall 2000, p. 145). So, a conscious, aware, essential and authentic »Race« identity does not exist and can therefore not be held responsible for the reproduction of racially structured societies. The pervasiveness of racial culture, therefore, is rooted in the dynamics of the social and the subject, in the way cultural narratives of »Race« or racial discourses shape the subject's psyche and operate at an unconscious level.

Racial subjectivity is inextricably bound with the social. Judith Butler in *The Psychic Life of Power* writes, in reference to Foucault, that *»[n]o individual becomes a subject without first becoming subjected or undergoing ›subjectivation‹«* (Butler 1997, p. 11) through cultural discourses. »Race« as a cultural discourse, therefore, shapes the lives of everybody in society, White and BIPOC. Hirschfeld's studies show that young children's conceptualisation of »Race« by the age of three is very similar to the way adults understand the concept (Hirschfeld 1997, p. 83). Racial subjectivation thus begins at a very early stage, a stage where we are unable to consciously decide whether or how we want to be subjected. However, children are far from simply being passive recipients of a racial culture which they internalise without any thought. Ethnographic research with children shows that children experiment, negotiate, create and re-create the racial culture they are presented with (Van Ausdale & Feagin 2001). Do people in Germany remember these moments of experimenting, negotiating, creating and recreating of a racialised world as children? And if not, why? How does not remembering contribute to the pervasiveness of a racial culture with Whiteness at its centre? In this way »Race«, Whiteness and the »Other« are socially

[24] Mama draws on the post-structuralist psychological definition of subjectivity as »individuality and self-awareness – the condition of being a subject« (Henriques et al. 1984, p. 3).

constructed; their reproduction is determined through a culture of unawareness, in which people's positions in society are taken as common (meaning dominant) sense. And even though White subjects today are not complicit in the violence of colonialism or the Shoah, the past shapes the present and thereby they are implicated in the past (Rothberg 2019, p. 14). Hence, it could be argued that White people's and BIPOC's lives are shaped through »Race«, in the same way the lives men and women are structured through Gender (Frankenberg 1993, p. 1). It is »Race«, but also cis-gender, sexuality, class amongst others that shape power structures in society.

Very often scholars in Critical Whiteness studies have emphasised the importance in recognizing the privileges that come with White subjectivity (Roediger 1991; McIntosh 1989; Rothenberg 2002). The damaging and alienating costs of White privileges for the White subject are, however, less explored. It is argued that the misinformation that goes along with racial subjectivation has a negative cognitive impact on the individual's psyche (Katz 1978, p. 13). If the development of a White racial subjectivity is highly dependent on the construction of an oppositional other, how can the construction process of this oppositional other – that in the empirical reality is simply a structurally, historically and individually oppressed human – be without any effects on the self? What do we lose along the way by being engaged in racialised power structures in society? How does this affect our perception of social realities and our emotional and behavioural conduct?

Considering the translation of racial ideology into practice within colonial societies, Said (1978) and Fanon (1967) stress the multifaceted identification process related to »Race«. Said (1993) also analyses colonialism, hidden behind the mask of an imperial project, a *mission civilisatrice,* to carry civilisation to the uncivilised »Other«. With Fanon's (1967, 1980) examination of the alienation or dehumanisation of coloniser and colonised caused by racialised violence and oppression, psychoanalytical concepts of alienation and trauma have been translated into a racialised context within colonialism.

Fanon is fully aware that there is no essential Whiteness or Blackness, he describes the borders between the two as rather fluid. However, in his phenomenology, which is strongly based on the thoughts of Husserl and Hegel, the psychiatrist gives a drastic (and poetic) in-depth analysis of his observations and experiences as a Black man within a

racialised society. Fanon's main argument is that within the colonial setting only the White subject is granted full humanness and the BIPOC subject is denied that status (Fanon 1952, pp. 9-10). This denial has two major implications: first, economically Black subjects are limited in their access to society's resources; second, socio-psychologically Black subjects suffer from the internalisation of a racial culture that has Whiteness at its centre (Fanon coins the term »*epidermalization*«) which constructs them as inferior (ibid.). As long as there is no awareness in BIPOC subjects about these processes and narratives, they will eventually assimilate to this culture and try to be White (ibid.). However, Fanon also points out that it is *both* the Black subject and the White subject that is alienated (Fanon 1952, p. 22). Whilst this process of alienation is described from a psycho-existential perspective in *Masks*, in *Racism and Culture* (1964) Fanon's explanation shifts to the incorporation of the notion of cultural alienation (McCulloch 1983, p. 133). However, I conceptualise the (cultural) alienation that Fanon mentions as a form of dehumanisation. The White subject may be granted the full status of humanness but as I argue in chapter 6, this status remains empty, since I understand humanness as relational and if denied to others, it is also denied to the self.

In *Racism and Culture* (1964) Fanon states that in some cultures, racism is intrinsic to its structures (Fanon 1964, p. 42), in other words they are racial cultures. Additionally, the writer describes racism as adapting to the economic structures in order to disguise itself within them (ibid.). Here, racism becomes the destruction of the cultural values of the colonised and the imposition of the cultural values of the coloniser (Fanon 1964, p. 43). In other words, Whiteness stands in the centre of this culture and racism ultimately seeks the cultural (and sometimes physical) destruction of the Other. Hence, this is also where the alienating moment within this racial culture crystallises: White subjectivities become self-alienated because their (human) relation is blocked through the construct of the Other; they have to construct the Other in order to define themselves. Also, the Other that they construct, is less human. It is dehumanised which is reflected in the dehumanised relations that (un-)reflected White subjectivities have to the racial Other. Within racial culture, the racialisation process is brought to perfection, it is almost invisible to the consciousness and

is mainly reflected in cultural codes and representations, which are absorbed from early childhood on.

In addition to this, Fanon describes this alienation process, particularly for the Black subject, as traumatic (Fanon 1952, p. 102) and employs Jung's term of the collective unconscious. In *Algeria Unveiled* (1959), which was written during the Algerian liberation war of 1954-1962, Fanon analyses the *obsession* of the coloniser with the veil worn by the majority of Muslim women in French-colonial Algeria at the time. French colonisers transformed the veil into a cultural symbol signifying the limitations of assimilation. Here, the process of unveiling the Algerian woman became a key tenet of successful cultural colonisation. Why though did the veil hold such significance? Fanon states that the veiled woman »*who sees without being seen frustrates the colonizer*« (Fanon 1959, p. 28). The colonial gaze is a strong tool of the coloniser in the psychological domination of the colonial subject (hooks 1992, pp. 115-116; Sturken & Cartwright 2017, pp. 113-120). In the coloniser's view the veil symbolises the ability of the colonised to withdraw herself (or himself) from the colonial gaze. This withdrawal evokes aggressiveness in the coloniser because they lose their privilege - the right to look in order to dominate and to control (Fanon 1959, p. 28). More importantly, the coloniser loses the racialised face of projection, the face so desperately needed to project the coloniser's dislocated and denied feelings/humanity.

Fanon has been criticised by feminists for fetishising Muslim women and *Algeria Unveiled* was used by certain Algerian circles after the Algerian liberation to justify and promote the practice of wearing the veil (Woodhull 2003). There is certainly a danger in romanticising the veil as a symbol of cultural resistance. However, it is also important to read this text within the revolutionary circumstances it was written. Fanon's phenomenology and his socio-psychological insights on racialisation and dehumanisation are at the very core of my work.

As a framework, racialisation is a way »*of engaging race that emphasizes what the sociologists identify as the process of ›making race‹ - racialization – to signify the extension of racial meaning to previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice or group*« (Lee 2015, p. 37). Racialisation could also be conceptualised as a process of production and application of the idea of »Race« in any scope (Dalal 2002, p. 27). In a limited sense, racialisation also came to

mean »*any process or situation wherein the idea of ›race‹ is introduced to define and give meaning to some particular population, its characteristics and actions*« (Miles 2004, p. 348). Whilst mostly applied to those that are structurally disadvantaged by racism, how racialisation emotionally and psychologically affects White people seems under-researched in Germany. Does the binary opposition in the process of creating the racial Other not bind the White subject to it? In this thesis, racialisation is understood as becoming a racial subject through these historical, discursive, collective and individual processes. Decolonial thinkers assume that racialisation has become a global process, that only very few parts or no part in the world has not been affected by it (Quijano 2000, p. 73). I heavily rely on an understanding of racialisation in terms of inner and outer. The outside racialised realm (social) produces an inner racialised realm (person), inversely an inner racialised realm re-produces an outer racialised realm. Notwithstanding, the inner realm of a subject is not only (in-)formed by »Race« but by many other social constructs, so it should not be perceived as the only subject identity relevant to suffering or empowerment. This critique is supported by the notion of intersectionality. Intersectionality »*emphasizes that identity development in one area (race[…]) cannot be viewed as occurring outside of, or separate from, the developmental processes of other social identities (such as gender, class, sexual orientation, and religious/faith tradition) within individuals*« (Wijeyesinghe & Jackson 2012, p. 3).

Nevertheless, a person develops into a subject and they also develop into a racial subject. How can this development into a racial subject be understood? Transferring the ideas from identity development theories designed by Psychology (Erikson 1959/1994; Piaget 1959, 1965) to how a person develops a racial identity, it could be assumed that when a child develops a sameness of the self, they also develop an individual but also a shared, collective racial identity (Renn 2012, p. 15). This racial identity development process would be achieved in the same way identity is achieved, through trial and error, through moments of racial identity crisis and performance of the racial self (Renn 2012, p. 16). It should also be noted that the majority of studies on identity development theories in Psychology were carried out mostly by White researchers, mostly with White children (ibid.).

Identity development theories have also been designed by Sociology. In the pioneering book *The Civilizing Process* (1994 [1939]) Norbert Elias, a German Jewish

sociologist, conceptualised the social habitus (Pierre Bourdieu based a lot of his work on habitus on Elias). As already briefly mentioned in the introduction, Elias conceptualised social habitus as habits of thinking, feeling and acting that is shared amongst people within the same plexus of interdependencies (figuration) (Elias 1994). The personal habitus the sociologist conceptualised as the subject developing its personality from the social habitus (ibid). The social habitus informs the personal habitus, but the personal habitus also informs the social habitus. Elias conceptualised them as reciprocal and not unilateral (Elias 2006, p. 322). Translating Elias' notion of identity development (or habitualisation) to the context of racial identity development, racialisation could then be conceptualised as the lifelong process of creating a racial psyche, as an underlying process in the long-term development of creating a racialised society and vice versa.

Social psychology also contributed to models of racial identity development. Some of these theories are based on the notion of a relation between want and knowing, meaning that the future a subject imagines for itself can be either informed by what the subject wants to become or what the subject wants to avoid turning into (Markus & Nurius 1986). Translating the concept of possible selves to racial identity development, highlights the knowledge of racial identity narratives the subject is aware of and which ones it is trying to emulate or trying to prevent itself from becoming (Renn 2012, p. 18). Another social psychological theory of identity development, such as the Human or Developmental Ecology theory (Bronfenbrenner 1979), centres the subject around varying processes and a range of different systems the subject interacts with or which influence its life, depending on their proximity or lack thereof (Kail & Cavanaugh 2010). These systems can be the family or school system, media or political systems, or culture and other meta-narratives (ibid.). Translating these social psychological models (for example the PPCT model, which stands for Process, Person, Context and Time) to racialisation can also help in examining how two similarly racialised people develop different narratives of the self (Renn 2012, p. 20).

In this thesis poststructuralist theories of subjectivity (for example from Derrida or Foucault) are key. Similar to social psychology, poststructuralists highlight process and believe that identity is not fixed or essential (Renn 2012, p. 22, Gergen 1991). Poststructuralism conceptualises identities as socially constructed, in constant flux,

deconstructed and reconstructed (ibid.). Theorists of poststructuralist thought reject the notion of an objective or universal truth and argue that many social constructs that are assumed to be natural can be genealogically traced back through history and culture, sometimes even to their origins (Sullivan 2003, p. 39). Feminists, but also Critical »Race« theorists, conceptualise Gender and »Race« as a »*complex matrix of discourses*« that naturalises and normalises the ways we relate and interact with each other through those social constructs (ibid.).

Though this thesis concentrates on the subject of racialisation, critical social scholars assume that racial subjectivation cannot be seen as independent from other forms of subjectivation (Holvino 2012). In particular, transnational feminists argue that a subject is simultaneously affected by being raced, gendered, classed, sexed, nationalised and positioned in society (Holvino 2012, p. 166). Furthermore, the transnational feminist conceptualisation of subjectivation highlights the relationality of socially constructed differences, wherein the subject is assembled relationally (Holvino 2012, p. 167). What White and BIPOC means is temporally and locally dependent (ibid.). Additionally, White and BIPOC are entangled in a mutual dependency, one cannot exist without the other and needs the other in order to distinguish itself from it (ibid.). The meaning these distinctions of culture, gender and »Race« are given, are shaped by language, paradigms and institutions of that society, and vary from the social contexts and norms the subject is imprinted with (Holvino 2012, pp. 167-168). Another aspect of feminist transnationalist and poststructuralist conceptualisation of the subject relevant to this thesis is the rejection of an essential human self that remains unaffected by racialisation or being gendered (Holvino 2012, p. 168). An immaculate state of the subject does not exist; the subject does not become polluted through racial, class, gender (etc.) bias in society (ibid.). Subjects actively engage with the social material they are given by society and weave this material into their subjectivity. Thereby, the structures that form a society entail racial and gender paradigms, become reflected in the subject, and therewith become racial and gender paradigms integral to its subjectivity (ibid.). The concept of power and racialisation used by poststructuralist and transnational feminist thought in this thesis is also strongly based on the works of transnational feminists.

This thesis argues, that the psyches of racial subjectivities store, mirror, retrieve but also shape racial material from and within racial structures in society, therefore, an Eliasian approach towards racial identity development seemed sensible. Elias conceptualises childhood as a phase in which a person is imprinted with the societal standards of conduct so deeply that they become »*second nature*« to that person (Elias 2000, p. 441). The social institutions and structures which keep this *second nature* alive can be genealogically traced through Western history, including the standards of conduct that developed in its process and the powers of integration, which changed and spread these standards (ibid.). In Western societies it is very common to assume that a person's behaviour is based on logic and rational decisions, but Elias contradicts these assumptions (ibid.). The sociologist states that a person's behaviour and psyche is multidimensional and that emotions, affects and ego functions are just as relevant in explaining a person's behaviour as logic and rationality (ibid.).

One of the objectives of this research project is to investigate how this second nature, this imprint of racial standards of conduct, is experienced and described by anti-racism and empowerment professionals. Elias' theories are pivotal in investigating where a racialised subject consequently builds and upholds racialised structures and embodies them. This embodiment and upholding of »Race« sometimes is a conscious, intentional and rational act, but mostly it is unconscious, unintentional and motivated by emotions and affects, as I contend in my research project (Dalal 2002). One of the main tools in investigating group processes is the concept of the group matrix (Foulkes 1973), which can be depicted as a field. The group exists and acts in this field, which is intersubjective and creates an interrelated and unconscious »*field effect*« (Foulkes and Anthony 2003, p. 26). Subjects connected to this *field effect*, meet, convey and cooperate in this matrix (Kinouani 2019, p. 64). Some psychologists have applied the concept of the Foulkesian group matrix to racialisation and Whiteness (Kinouani 2019). »Race« or Whiteness then become a variable in the analysis of a groups' dynamic and it can support social researchers in better grasping the reproduction of these variables in the group matrix (Kinouani 2019, p. 66). The matrix has many layers. Firstly, the personal layer; secondly the layer in which persons interact with each other;

thirdly, the layer in which culture, economics, biology and society convey; and fourthly, the layer of the social unconscious, in which symbols and their history meet (ibid.).

Many scholars in Germany outside of Critical Whiteness and Critical »Race« theory would probably reject the notion that racism is endemic to German culture (Schwarzbach-Apithy 2005; Arndt 2005). Nevertheless, how do we then explain that German society is indeed structured through racism and the persistence of these structures? Dalal uses in his book *Race, Colour and the Process of Racialization* (2002) theories from group analysis, psychoanalysis and sociology to explore his answer to this question in a British context. Dalal's main argument and conclusion is that the structures of society are reflected in the structures of the psyche (Dalal 2002, p. 7). If society is colour-coded, then so will the psyche be, and vice versa (ibid.). Influenced very much by Eliasian analysis, Dalal explores the history and semantics of the terms Black and White in the British context (Dalal 2002, pp. 135-136). Dalal shows how the use of such terms signify power relationships within society at large (ibid.). Fundamental to my thesis, Dalal's work forces us to address racism on two interrelated fronts: on the front of political structures and on the psychic front. In my study of how *racialisation* (or racial subjectivation) constitutes the internalisation of society's values and norms related to »Race« in the process of racial subject development, I explore precisely how in order for policies to make »common sense« and therefore see implementation, psychic change can occur on a social level. In this way the psyche becomes an internal social structure. The semantics and historical use of racialised terms show clearly how structures relate to psyches. Where a racialised psyche automatically constructs a racialised society with racialised bodies (to a certain extent without even being aware of it), as I argue in my thesis, Dalal's notion of the matrix (in reference to Foulkes 1973) describes and categorises the complex unconscious social and psychological processes and forces that organise these group psyches. Even if someone does not believe in the existence of »Races« as such, this person unconsciously thinks and acts according to racial formations in society, as if looking through racialised glasses without necessarily knowing it (Kteily & Richeson 2016).

Narratives of »Race« are told and then often forgotten but linger beneath the subject's cognitive and emotional surface. Narratives of »Race« affect how the subject understands its racial self and how it relates to the racial Other. Dalal's work is also crucial to my

understanding of empowerment as a process of the psyche gaining awareness of the racial power structures that shape it. Only through understanding the unconscious forces at work, can we begin to imagine how we might allow for or bring about change. Dalal uses the analogy of excavating the layers of racial subjectivation similar to an archaeologist (Dalal 2002, p. 221), an analogy that also describes the processes the research participants share about their racialisation and their training experiences. However, the process of excavating those memories, makes it also necessary to look into the concepts of memory and remembering.

Remembering Narratives of »Race«

In order for the subject to negotiate narratives (Plummer 2019, p. 76) of »Race«, the subject needs to remember or be aware of them in order to address these narratives. Some anthropologists highlight the relevance of power in conceptualising collective memories in Western civilisations as well as civilisations of the Global South (Trouillot 1995). In reference to these theorists, it could be argued that historicity finds itself in the predicament of either being understood as objective or as subjective, the first scientifically attempting to discover the truth (positivist), the second narratively assembling truths (constructivist) (Trouillot 1995, pp. 4-6). Most likely, the »truth«, whatever that might be, can be discovered somewhere in the middle (ibid.). This wrestling between objective and subjective truths makes the entire notion of recollecting memories, individual and especially collective ones, very difficult. In the event that collective recollections of racial subjectivation are exceptionally subjective, how might we assume they are true? The anti-racism and empowerment training of Phoenix, which I use as a case study in this research project, tries to create a safe space in which racial subjectivation can be explored and made more aware of (Engelmann 2019, pp. 102-112). This thesis addresses the question about historicity as part of a research project, which heavily relies on the research participants' subjective narratives, by giving as much historical context about the formations of these narratives as possible.

It is not only narratives that matter in the production of history, but silences matter just as much in historicity (Trouillot 1995, p. 26). The historiography of the Global North ignored the historicity of the Global South in order to construct itself as superior and the racial Other as subhuman (Trouillot 1995, pp. 95-107). Humanness was viewed (and is partially still viewed) along a linear process of evolution with White, Western European men exemplifying the epitome, Black Africans as the antithesis of it, and the rest in a random middle (Trouillot 1995, p. 76). This racialised random Other, which is neither White European nor Black African has often been complicit in silencing the histories of Black African figures (Trouillot 1995, p. 68) or of shadeism or colourism, a form of discrimination amongst BIPOC preferencing lighter skin tones to darker ones (Musafiri 2019, Tate 2007). Anti-racism and empowerment movements that attempt to construct an agreeable racial history for unity's sake could land in the pitfall of ignoring histories of shadeism. Unfortunately, researching this particular subject of attempted racial harmony by denying discriminatory practice amongst BIPOC goes beyond the scope of this PhD.

Nevertheless, some historians and anthropologists argue that remembering is not as straightforward as it is assumed, that it is not always about accurate memories of things that happened in the past (Trouillot 1995, p. 14). Remembering is not returning to the permanence of the past (ibid.). The past simply is a location interdependent to the present, it is not composed of anything that can be retrieved in a memory (ibid.). This conceptualisation of memory could be potentially challenging to the idea of returning to our past of racialisation and gaining awareness as a form of deconstruction as is attempted within the training used as a case study in this research project. How can we increase our awareness without memorising our personal racial subjectivation? Within this context it would be necessary to look further into concepts of memory and remembering.

Other anthropologists provide very helpful theories of memory that relate directly to my understanding of empowerment (Connerton 2004, 2009). Empowerment and memory, particularly social memory, are closely linked to each other. One of my main arguments is that racialisation or being subjected to racial (power) structures constitute painful memories of dehumanisation. Empowerment begins with confronting these painful memories, understanding and analysing them, and working through the pain and grief they caused,

in order to understand and change one's own behaviour. This behavioural understanding and change of painful racial memories in turn promotes the deconstruction of racial power structures. Psychologists conclude about manifestations of suffering and trauma that such »*phenomena can be traced back to incompletely suppressed psychic material, which, although pushed away by the consciousness, has nevertheless not been robbed of all capacity for expressing itself*« (Freud 1975, p. 344). The British anthropologist Paul Connerton relates the pervasiveness and persistence of master-narratives (such as racism) to the assumption that all great meta-narratives have ended as they move on to become unconscious collective memories (Connerton 2004, p. 1) that are still influencing our behaviour. Additionally, Connerton concludes that the more these racial memories are rejected, which is significantly the case in Germany (Volkan et Al. 2002), »*the greater the dependence on the past*« (Connerton 2004, p. 61). Thereby, forgetting becomes very much a part of racial subjectivation, in particular if they are memories connected to a shameful past (Connerton 2008). Those memories in Western cultures, in particular memories of *being* colonised themselves, become repressed and erased and make their re-enactment possible (Connerton 2008, p. 60). Applying this conceptualisation of (remembering and) forgetting to racialisation, it could be argued that White people have forgotten their own histories of dehumanisation and re-enact this shameful past by dehumanising the racial Other, turning forgetting into a silencing of a shameful past (Connerton 2008, pp. 68-69). Some White subjects in particular, so this thesis argues, experience their personal initiation during childhood into a racial culture with Whiteness at centre as shameful, an experience which has caused suffering in them.

Therewith, empowerment and memory, in particular social memory, are closely linked. One of the main arguments of this thesis is that racialisation or being subjected to racial (power) structures constitutes painful memories that act very similar to trauma. While the memories themselves are not trauma they are still a form of suffering. What is the difference between trauma and suffering? The two are not easily distinguished from each other, nevertheless, so I would argue, (clinical) trauma threatens a person's subjectivity (Caruth 1996, pp. 91-92)[25], suffering is simply a reaction to the certain memories of cultural imprinting that constitute the subject. Post-modernist theorists like to see post-modernity

[25] Though there is also the subject formation through trauma (Cash 2011, pp. 23-24).

as the end of all -isms: the end of communism, the end of religions, the end of sexism, colonialism, racism, and so on. They proclaim that all great master-narratives have come to an end (Connerton 2004, p. 1). In fact, Connerton relates the pervasiveness and persistence of these master-narratives to the assumption that all great meta-narratives have ended as they move on to become unconscious collective memories (ibid.) that are still influencing our behaviour. In other words, the majority of people who believe that there is no racism in Germany (or that it only exists at the margins of society), or that racism in Germany has ended are still acting in accordance with their unconscious collective (painful) memories of racialisation and are therefore unconsciously reproducing racial power structures. Connerton concludes *»that our experiences of the present largely depend upon our knowledge of the past, and that our images of the past commonly serve to legitimate a present social order«* (Connerton 2004, p. 3).

Connerton's book takes an interesting turn in asking where social memory is located. He relates social memory to commemorative ceremonies, to performativity, to habit and bodily automatisms (Connerton 2004, p. 5). Within this context, Connerton differentiates between *personal* memory (personal life history), cognitive memory (something cognitively appropriated in the past), and habit-memory (a lesson so thoroughly learned that we have often forgotten the moment of learning. Exercising it is less cognitive, i.e., reading which is a bodily automatism). He describes the latter as being often neglected in modern social theory and philosophy as less of a memory (Connerton 2004, pp. 21-23). Connerton's notion of habit-memory and its relation to bodily automatisms reflects Elias' conceptualisation of embodiment, the embodiment of mental and emotional structures in the subject (Elias 1994, p. 49), but also of racialised mental and emotional structures passed on and disseminated to the future generations. Racialisation is passed from generation to generation on an unconscious level, with children very receptive to registering and imitating non-verbal communication, such as facial expressions and body language (Meulenbelt 1988, pp. 175-176). In other words, racism is not dependent on the explicit verbal articulation of imagined White supremacy or Black inferiority. Children read the unconscious language of adults and learn to understand that such a thing as ›BIPOC‹ exists and that this is something negative while ›White‹ is something positive (Troyna & Hatcher 1992, p. 20). These racial memories

become inscribed into the racialised bodies that help to reproduce the racial social order of societies.

However, as Frigga Haug states in *Erinnerungsarbeit [Memory Work] (1990):*

> »Memory work is among other things based on the assumption that the personality has a memory. By this I mean that the individual people build their personalities in the course of their history in such a way that a kind of coherent identity is created for them. To do this, they select the single events from the abundance of what they have experienced, assess it as meaningful, suppress and forget other things. This process is not as voluntary and arbitrary as it sounds here. In the existing structures there are suggestions, obstacles, impossibilities that favour this selection« (Haug 1990, p. 42).

Negotiating Racial Narratives

In Michel Foucault's analysis of formative discourses and structures on the subject, subjectivity and subjection, the philosopher states that »*power is exercised through networks, and individuals do not simply circulate in those networks, and they are in a position to both submit to and exercise this power*« (Foucault 2003, p. 29). As Avtar Brah writes, however, Foucault »*does not acknowledge that submission to power or effects of its exercise cannot be reduced exclusively to conscious procedures. The discursive subject is »hailed« not only by the social but also by the psychic*« (Brah 2005, p. 83). Although Foucault rarely spoke about »Race« as such, his discourse analysis proved essential in Critical »Race« studies. With their examination of the dynamics of subjectivity and structure, these authors are essential to the analysis of agency within racially structured spaces in this thesis.

In Nikolas Rose's work *Governing the Soul* (1999), which is a contribution to the genealogies of subjectivity, the author argues that over the last century the psychologisation of the public sphere has been key in creating governable spaces and subjects. Even though social critics viewed psychological knowledge and techniques in favour of power relations, Rose argues that they also forged »*new alignments between the rationales and techniques of power and the values and ethics of democratic societies*« (Rose 1999, p. 4). Rose describes how through continuous socio-psychological research of workplaces in 1947 a training group was established that would analyse group dynamics, intersubjectivity and highlight the

importance of »*insight*« to train leaders tackling racial and religious prejudice[26] (Rose 1999, p. 101).

It could therefore be argued that the lack of insight (into racial subjectivation) could lead to a re-production of (violent) racialisation processes. In *Die Unfähigkeit zu trauern (The Inability to Mourn)* Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich (2015 [1967]) describe the socio-psychological environment that led to the NS atrocities. The psychologists further theorise that after World War II Germany was unable to collectively start the necessary mourning work, which would have helped to overcome its terrible past (Mitscherlich 2015, p. 24). The authors conclude that the Freudian maxim of »*remembering, repeating and working through*« is the essential step in this process (ibid.). Mitscherlich wrote: »*That is why the repetition of internal conflicts and critical thinking through are necessary, in order to overcome instinctive and unconscious operating powers of self-protection such as forgetting, denial and projection or similar defence mechanisms*« [my own translation] (Mitscherlich 2015, p. 24). The Mitscherlich's work gives compelling accounts of why present Germany may be revisiting aspects of a racial ideology, which was thought to be widely dismissed in Europe. The defence mechanisms Mitscherlich describes stand in the way of necessary insight needed to get in touch with ourselves (Mitscherlich 2015, p. 9). In *Der Fremde in uns (The Stranger Within Us)* (2000) psychologist Arno Gruen considers self-estrangement as a loss of a person's relation to themself and therefore also to others. In this spirit, I consider how »Othering« could be understood as a form of alienation or dehumanisation. In relation to the notion of empathy, I explore how the inner construction of the Other leads to a loss of communication with the self and in turn also with others. In relating Gruen's theories to racialisation, the psychologist's research becomes intrinsic to my theorisation on how empathy, the inner and outer communication, is blocked by primordial notions of racial identity construction, by dominant narratives of »Race«.

How can the racialised subject be supported in beginning to negotiate these dominant narratives of »Race«? Racism awareness training (RAT) and its practitioners claimed that their work aimed to make the participants more aware of the dominant narratives of »Race«. In the late 1980s RAT was heavily criticised in the UK and widely

[26] This ›training group‹ could possibly be considered the archetype of empowerment or racism awareness training.

abandoned by anti-racism activism in this process. The most outspoken critics of RAT were Ahmed Gurnah (1987) and A. Sivanandan (1987). The authors' main concerns about RAT were that, firstly, they were too confrontational and guilt inducing. Secondly, they were alarmed by the fact that RAT limited furthermore the scarce resources available to supporting BIPOC Communities. It was argued that RAT was being wrongly used as the most important panacea for discrimination in society. Thirdly, they strongly disapproved of abandoning the structural approach to tackling racism in society in favour of dealing with it on an individual level. Fourthly, they were greatly concerned about the commercialisation of anti-racism through RAT. Finally, they argued that its practitioners turned RAT into »psychospiritual mumbojumbo«, a liberal moral dilemma based on the notion of essential humanness (LSPU 1987).

More recent criticism of anti-racism training comes from the US by Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn. In her book *Race Experts* (2001), the author argues that the efforts and successes of the civil rights movement were hijacked and diminished by racial etiquette and sensitivity therapists (Lasch-Quinn 2001, p. XIV). The author further states that training methods that resembled Alcoholics Anonymous simply exposed White guilt and Black anger, which failed to address the root causes of racism (ibid.). With the emergence of a commercialised diversity industry, its pseudo-scientific »Race« experts and their ineffective methods undermined the attempts of the civil rights movement to create »*a democratic nation able to transcend racial and other cleavages; a revived civic culture; and a truly humane social order*« (Lasch-Quinn 2001, p. XII).

One of the most recent developments is the unconscious bias training in the UK. The unconscious bias training is based on IAT (implicit association tests), which were developed in the US. IAT indicate that people can be biased against certain groups even if they do not want to be prejudiced against that group or even if they are part of that group themselves (ECU 2013, p.15; Greenwald and Banaji 1995). The research also highlights that unconscious bias has consequences on, for example, recruitment processes and therefore on the structural composition of organisations and institutions, favouring mostly White males (ibid.). Some elements of this research emphasise that racism or racial discrimination are not necessarily a conscious or intentional phenomenon but that they can be reproduced even by

people who consider themselves liberal, enlightened, maybe even anti-racist (ibid.). However, there are some issues regarding the explanations of these unconscious biases. Within the wide literature on unconscious biases, mostly neurological causes are evoked for biased behaviour, as in »*we discriminate because that is how our brain functions*« (ECU 2013, p.18; Tajfel and Turner 1979). Thereby, discrimination becomes a biological, behaviouristic problem and not necessarily a social or cultural one (Kahn 2018). Some of the large US-tech companies, such as Google (2013) and Microsoft (2015) have developed Unconscious Bias Training (UBT), based on implicit bias tests. Some UBT seem to have no intention to look into the racialised, cultural imagery and children's early subjection to those racialised discourses that could be the root cause for racism and racial discrimination and mostly revolves around unconscious bias (Atewologun et Al. 2018, p. 6). Therefore, the responses given to these unconscious biases are mostly about conditioning the brain of the person harbouring them, similar to behavioural therapy (ECU 2013, pp. 44-49; Olson and Fazio 2001, 2002, 2006; Ito et al. 2006; Kawakami et al. 2007), which may have some short-term effects, however, long-term effectiveness of such implicit bias interventions still remain to be researched. More importantly however, such an intervention which is solely based on changing what a person associates with certain groups does not necessarily address the source of racism. There is no element of memory work in it, no critical searching and examining of our culture and its racial imagery which brings forth a racial power hierarchy internalised from the early stages of our life. Where is the critical reflection on dominant narratives of »Race« that have sedimented in the self? And how can subjects be empowered to negotiate or maybe even counter the dominant narratives of »Race« in the self and in society?

Similar to the term RAT, »empowerment« has become a somewhat contested term in the UK. The term empowerment has been widely mainstreamed in the UK through its appropriation by business language and neo-liberal discourse, which often misused it as a notion to evade government responsibility in resolving issues by placing it on individuals (Wilson 2007). In Germany the concept of empowerment is rather new and therefore does not have the same discursive implications as in the UK. In this thesis empowerment is understood as overcoming processes of racialisation, gaining awareness about racialisation

and the ability to act accordingly. Here empowerment means partially overcoming the suffering that comes with racial subjection.

This thesis considers the construction of the racialised self but also of the racial Other as a historically grounded, centuries long process experienced individually and collectively through racial subjectivation (starting from birth). In their essay *Some Components of the Western Dualist Tradition* (1975) John L. Hodge and Donald K. Struckmann create a historical genealogy of dualisms and binary oppositions within Western thinking, starting with the antic Greek philosophical tradition of Plato and highlighting the historical continuities of thinkers and theoreticians such as St. Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Descartes and Freud (Hodge et. al. 1975, pp. 123-195). Through analysing the Judeo-Christian colour mysticism of light/dark symbolising good/evil, and at a later stage signifying White/Black, civilised/uncivilised, the authors create a historical trace that highlights the significant dependency of White identities (particularly within the colonial setting) on defining and constructing the Other in order to define the White self (Trost 1975, pp. 81-82). The authors reject the notion of a natural development of racial hierarchies and see rather that the racial imperial project is motivated and acted through culture (ibid.). Additionally, the authors use examples from Native Americans and other cultures to highlight the many different types of cultures and to illustrate that Western culture is (socially) constructed like any other culture and not naturally evolved (Hodge 1975, pp. 20-43). Even though there is a slight danger of romanticising Native American cultures (a point partially acknowledged by the authors), these examples have the important function of showing that cultures (and the power structures therein) are not essential and that they have the potential to change.

Critics of empowerment explore the pervasiveness of power structures and critically examine the appropriation of the term ›agency‹ within neo-liberal settings (Wilson 2007). The »*internalising the external/externalising the internal*«-dichotomy of agency has been used by neo-liberal stakeholders to redefine empowerment as a means to bolster the effects of neo-liberal restructuring rather than promoting sustainable change, liberation or transformation of those who do not benefit from the power structures (Wilson 2007, pp. 136-140). This critique is relevant to this study, as it examines the research participants' narratives of their first training experience and explores whether these training contribute

to critical reflexivity that might result in structural change or whether they simply create the conditions for people to *survive* (but not necessarily change) the conditions they experience.

This critique highlights how the concept of empowerment is currently very much contested. There is a general understanding of empowerment as *»a way of increasing the political, social, economic and spiritual strength of communities or a person, generally of those people who are structurally disadvantaged through social constructs such as »Race«, (cis-)gender, sexuality, class, disability, age etc.«* (Hamaz & Ergün-Hamaz 2013, p. 7). What this strengthening looks like in detail is left open in this definition. As an idea, empowerment found its way into neoliberal discourses and in these contexts, it is mostly understood as a process that helps individuals to better exploit themselves within a capitalist society (Wilson 2007). To define empowerment as a means to cushion the ramifications of neo-liberal restructuring rather than actually changing or liberating those who are disadvantaged from the power structures (Wilson 2007 pp. 136-140), does not challenge dominant narratives. In her essay »Beyond ›Empowerment Lite‹: Women's Empowerment, Neoliberal Development and Global Justice« (2018) Andrea Cornwell also distinguishes between *»liberal empowerment«* and *»liberating empowerment«*, the former mainly aiming at improved neo-liberal self-exploitation, the latter at challenging societal power structures (Cornwall 2018, p. 7). I am contesting this neo-liberal understanding of empowerment in this thesis and attempting to conceptualise it closer to a process of regaining self-determination, which obviously implies that self-determination has been lost and can be regained. Empowerment seems to begin from a point of lack or loss. However, this thesis mainly touches upon the subject of »Race« or racialisation to be more precise. Empowerment will be understood as overcoming the processes of racialisation, as a form of de-racialisation. De-racialisation also strongly resonates with the term decolonisation. Although decolonisation is mainly understood as a historical and political project of attempting to liberate a country or a nation from Western domination, decoloniality describes the attempt at liberating regions, people or individuals from the dominant Western epistemology (Mignolo 2011). Therefore, the concept of empowerment is also closely linked to the concept of decoloniality, which shall be more closely examined in the final part of this chapter.

Walter Mignolo, in reference to Anibal Quijano (2007), argues that modernity is a crucial element in the colonial matrix of power (Mignolo 2011, p. xviii). In light of decoloniality, empowerment could be considered a process of liberation by questioning the rationales behind modernity such as progress, development and growth, which are fundamental features of the colonial matrix of power (Mignolo 2011, p. xviii). What does this empowerment, which would free us from the toxic elements of Western culture, look like? Maryam Mohseni argues in her comprehensive book *Empowerment Workshop für Menschen mit Rassismuserfahrungen [Empowerment workshops for people who experience racism]* (2020) »*I understand empowerment as an approach, that aims at expanding the access to power and thereby also the possibilities of oppressed groups – on the basis of self-definition and self-determination*« [my own translation], (Mohseni 2020, p. 132). The term »empowerment« will simply remain empty if it cannot contribute to re-negotiating or countering dominant racial narratives and to re-constructing a humanness denied in those narratives.

However, anti-racism and empowerment training are also part of a larger dominant narrative, the narrative of governmentality. Governmentality as a concept goes back to Foucault (2007), which he described it as the »*conduct of conducts*« (Foucault 2007), and which could also be described as the »*Western liberal advanced state subtle way of controlling its citizens through a set of empowering techniques like autonomy, self-actualization, self-realization, and self-esteem*« (Madsen 2014, p. 814). Foucault defined governmentality as:

> »First, by ›governmentality‹ I understand the ensemble formed by institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations, and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific, albeit very complex, power that has the population as its target, political economy as its major form of knowledge, and apparatuses of security as its essential technical instrument.
>
> Second, by ›governmentality‹ I understand the tendency, the line of force, that for a long time, and throughout the West, has constantly led towards the pre-eminence over all other types of power – sovereignty, discipline, and so on - of the type of power that we can call ›government‹ and which has led to the development of a series of specific governmental apparatuses on the one hand [and, on the other] to the development of a series of knowledges.
>
> Finally, by ›governmentality‹ I think we should understand the process, or rather, the result of the process by which the state of justice of the Middle Ages became the administrative state in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and was gradually ›governmentalized‹« (Foucault, 2007, pp. 108–109).

By critically examining the research participants' voices through the work of Rose (1996, 1999) the fifth chapter questions whether the training experience fits into a capitalistic understanding of governing and exploiting the subject, of liberal empowerment, to simply function within the given structures but not question them. Or is there the possibility for the

racialised subject, through training, to remember and grieve the painful racialisation process and thereby partially liberate themselves from their racial subjectivation and from dominant narratives of »Race«?

Between reformist and counter-narratives of »Race« and humanness

Learning is not only a rational or cognitive process (Besand 2014). Cognitively understanding Critical »Race« theory does not mean a person understands what it actually means to be a racial subject and to be part of racialised structures in society. *Politische Bildungsarbeit* or political education – particularly in Germany – is obligated to be debated in a solely rational manner (ibid.). In *Empowerment-Workshops für Menschen mit Rassismuserfahrungen* (2020) Mohseni states:

> »- Emotions structure points of access and exit of how the world is discovered and perceived
> - The complexity of political phenomena forces didactically, next to cognitive oriented knowledge transfer of facts, to also create emotional accesses to the subject
> - Taking emotions seriously in processes of learning, does not mean that reflection and assessment are relinquished. On the contrary, through the removal of taboo of the emotional dimension in political and societal discourses, emotions become systematically accessible through reflection
> - In particular for target audiences that experience discrimination, the examination of feelings of marginalisation and exclusion is necessary« [my own translation] (Mohseni 2020, p. 439)

What role does cognitive and emotional learning about personal racialisation processes play for the racialised subject? Rationality is part of the Western project of modernity (Federici 2004). In Enlightenment thought emotionality was forced upon the female or the racial Other (ibid.). I emphasise: I am not arguing that we should leave all thinking behind and just focus on our feelings. However, Mohseni makes a useful point for my argument. Examining how a person feels about political discourses and how that person is personally affected by these discourses is a way of *unmaking some of the taboos* that accompany these discourses (Rühlmann & McMonagle 2019). The individual psychogenesis of Whiteness can be accompanied by strong feelings of guilt and shame (Thandeka 1999). So how can a solely rational debate about Whiteness allow a White person to overcome these feelings, especially if they are not allowed to feel them? How can they fully grasp the concept of Whiteness in

its many facets if their personal experience of becoming White or internalising Whiteness and *the suffering it has caused them*, is not allowed to come to the surface? I argue that emotional learning is an important element of not only transforming within the system, but also challenging and arguing against dominant narratives of »Race«.

Dehumanisation is a fundamental part of prevalent racial narratives and racialisation processes visible in the practice of »Othering« and dehumanisation (Ahmed 2006, pp. 138-139; Weheliye 2014, pp. 5-6). Within a multicultural setting, mechanisms of »Othering« have implications for recognition and mis-recognition (Ahmed 2000, p. 97). The Anglo-Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor argues that recognition of the various ethnic, cultural and religious groups is crucial in the politics of multiculturalism as identities are partly shaped through recognition (Taylor 1994, pp. 25-26). Taylor has become an important figure in discourse on multiculturalism. With his essay *Multiculturalism: Politics of Recognition* (1994) and commentary on this essay by prominent figures such as Jürgen Habermas and K. Anthony Appiah, Taylor has made influential contributions to the multicultural debate in Canada and beyond. Taylor's essay raises important questions on the recognition of difference, identity and universal values in liberal and increasingly multicultural societies (ibid.). Taylor argues that recognition of the various ethnic, cultural and religious groups is crucial in the politics of multiculturalism as identities are partly shaped through recognition or mis-recognition (ibid.). The philosopher states that mis-recognition leads to oppression of those mis-recognised (ibid.). Additionally, Taylor argues that those mis-recognised also internalise this mis-recognition, thus if socio-political structures change the mis-recognised are unable to adapt to these changes (ibid.). Overcoming this self-mis-recognition – the internalised low self-esteem – is the first, most important, step for oppressed groups towards empowerment (Taylor 1994, pp. 25-26).

Taylor's argument resonates strongly with my argument that the denial of humanness within constructions of self leads to a denial of humanness of those constructed as the (racial) Other. However, Taylor's concept of recognition remains a passive concept as racialised »Others« seek the recognition which is then granted by the dominant culture. I would extend the notion of recognition further: in *Precarious Life* (2004) Judith Butler explores how those gaining the power of self-representation are most likely to be recognised

as humans (Butler 2004, p. 141). In this line of thought my thesis understands self-representation as an active form of empowerment for BIPOC. The power to represent themselves (in media, government, etc.), to tell their own story, could potentially ensure the revision of dominant narratives of the dehumanised racial Other and could also implicitly change modes of self-perception and self-definition. In other words, this could mean stepping out of the vicious dynamic of symbolic and experienced dehumanisation.

Taylor also examines modern identity constructions (in reference to Herder) in terms of »authenticity« or being in touch with the true self (Taylor 1994, pp. 30-31). To a certain extent this also resonates with my concept of humanness: only those who are in touch with their humanness within themselves are able to relate to others as humans. However, it is not only about defining the self solely from within (although Taylor's emphasis on communitarianism also highlights the social constructedness of subject identities), but it is also about the how the self is defined: whether subjectivity is created by negation and dependency (I am me because you are you and you are you because I am me) or through affirmation and interdependency (I am me because I am me and you are you because you are you).

In relation to this authenticity, Taylor looks into the implications of multiculturalism and recognition within liberal societies. One fundamental principle of human equality, so the author argues, is that all cultures are valued equally, and that the denial of this value is also the denial of human equality (Taylor 1994, p. 42). Nevertheless, the danger of equal dignity liberalism is that it turns into another form of imposing a dominant culture onto certain racial groups: *»The liberalism of equal dignity seems to have to assume that there are some universal, difference blind principles. Even though we may not have defined them yet, the project of defining them remains alive and essential«* (Taylor 1994, p. 43-44). My research project, which explores new forms of humanism, also highlights the process, the negotiation of universal humanist values. What Taylor does not emphasise, however, is the precise role power plays within this dialogue. Should those constructed as White people and those constructed as BIPOC not stand on equal footing in order to avoid a colonial monologue? How can this space be created, where White people and BIPOC can engage in *dialogical* negotiations? Within Phoenix, the anti-racism NGO I use as a case study in this research project, this

dialogical (multi-racial) space is shaped by the »BIPOC Paradigm«. The »BIPOC Paradigm« centres the experiences of BIPOC in reflections of how new subject identities can create paths of self-definition without compromising the human self. This is not a reversal of racism with BIPOC on top and White at the bottom. The painful racialisation experiences of those who are constructed as White are equally valid. By centring the reflections of BIPOC, the denial of humanness that has occurred in constructions of White selves comes to light, and those who are disadvantaged by racial power structures become guarantors of inclusive notions of humanness within new forms of humanism[27].

Certain gaps in Taylor's elaboration of multiculturalism and his politics of recognition could be elaborated upon. His criticism of post-structuralist theories seems to render issues of power rather marginal, whilst post-structuralists' analysis of (racial) power structures is rather crucial to my work as it exposes the discursive power that brings those structures into place. This seems to coincide with Taylor's missing oversight of the concept of Whiteness and the effects that mis-recognition has on dominant subject identities. Besides, while Taylor calls for a »*fusion of horizons*«, a resetting of defining cultural standards, within comparative cultural studies, the Canadian philosopher is also aware of the tension between liberalism and those groups who seem to reject secularism (Taylor 1994, pp. 62, 67). For Taylor, multiculturalism has to be essentially secular[28]. However, following my reading of Talal Asad's *Formations of the Secular* and his analysis of religious-ethnic violence in secular states, I have come to question the notion that secularism in practice is a total guarantor for protecting religious and ethnic groups within multi-confessional settings. Space must be allowed for the addressing of racialised subjectivation processes. How far this is possible within a purist secular setting is debatable.

In the very centre of my notion of empowerment stands the retrieving and addressing of mostly painful memories related to racial subjectivation. The importance of this retrieving lies in its capacity to allow for the deconstruction of socio-psychological structures

[27] This works mainly towards a dehumanisation caused by »Race«. An intersectional approach would widen an inclusive notion of humanness even more.

[28] Coming from an Anatolian Alevi family, secularism was generally highly esteemed. Historically, centuries of religious oppression in the Ottoman Empire have led Alevis to generally embrace the notion of secularism forcefully with the founding of the Turkish nation state (Borovalı & Boyraz 2014). However, with the reading of Asad (2003), I became more unsure about the advantages of secularism. This shall also be further discussed in chapter 6 and the conclusion.

(beginning from within) of mostly denied and repressed racialising memories. It is these memories, which, even if they may not be trauma themselves, manifest very similarly to trauma. Remembering and reflecting these dehumanising narratives of »Race« allows us to understand how they shape our actions in the present and therefore opens the possibility of adjusting our behaviour that reflects a more inclusive notion of humanness (Emirbayer & Desmond 2015, pp. 72-73).

In the world of epistemology, reflexivity enables a potentially deeper comprehension of racial narratives and racialised subjects and their movements in racialised structures (Emirbayer & Desmond 2015, pp. 72-73). Researchers of »Race« and racialisation who are revealing the concealed and often unconscious racial beliefs in their own epistemological thinking, are given the opportunity to engage with the effects of their own racialisation, thereby allowing themselves to look more closely into racialised structures and draw deeper conclusions (ibid.). At the same time, critical reflexivity should not be seen as the sole objective of epistemological development, instead it could be perceived as a method which cannot be detached from scholarly work about »Race« (ibid.). In the world of ethics (or the justice system and political ideology), critical reflexivity can help to develop more convincing approaches to consider and essentially, to work towards racial equity (ibid.). Feminist Standpoint theory highlights that we perceive the world from certain experiences related to our location in society, thus heavily influences our scholarly analysis of racialisation (ibid.). Embracing the troublesome work of reflecting upon our own racial subjectivation, so I argue, can only strengthen the knowledge we produce as critical »Race« scholars. Additionally, in the world of aesthetics and cultural explorations, critical reflexivity »*can lead to more thoughtful ways of appreciating racial differences in taste and distinction, as opposed to the false choices one so often encounters between universalism and particularism or between condescension and populist self-assertion, none of those conducing to a genuinely critical race scholarship or activism. Race scholars (and their efforts to address racial problems) are influenced far more by expressivist considerations than they may at first realize*« (Emirbayer & Desmond 2015, pp. 72-73).

In the counter-narrative of humanness, inner and outer reflection is understood as interdependent. In a way, I argue that the humanness that is withheld from those who are

disadvantaged through racial power structures is also withheld in those who benefit from racial power structures. This withholding of humanness is what constitutes suffering for White people and BIPOC alike. But what is this humanness? Is there an essential human core that can be violated and cause this socio-psychological suffering? What would this human core be? What would it look like? How might the concept of a human core or humanness help us understand what racism is and what it means to overcome it?

Political philosophy that explores the concept of humanness from the perspective of the neo-colony offers a deep analysis, particularly on the tension field of Frantz Fanon and late Enlightenment thought (Sekyi-Out 1996). The post-structuralist exegesis of Fanon's work has often discarded the Martinicans' politico-philosophical explorations of humanism as irrelevant (Sekyi-Otu 1996, p. 16). Nevertheless, a decolonial interpretation of Fanon's testimony of decolonial liberation battles highlights Fanon's appeal for new humanistic standards and values, for a new humanist ethics (ibid.). Whilst post-structuralists as well as many post-colonial theorists, point out Western humanism's failures, only very few offer alternatives to fill the ethical gaps that a dismissal of humanism has left (Alderson & Spencer 2017). Though I find myself often in agreement with post-structuralists' and post-colonialists' critique of humanism, I argue for revisiting and re-imagining the human condition and ethical questions raised by that condition rather than ignoring it.

Fanon states that in light of decolonial liberation struggles this »*new humanity cannot do otherwise than define a new humanism both for itself and for others. It is prefigured in the objectives and methods of the conflict*« (Fanon 1965, p. 246). Inside a twisted dialectic (or anti-dialectic) the colonial subject defines itself through demarcating its own subjectivity from the colonial Other (ibid.). Some historians see this mechanism as a form of trickery, creating a false sense of superiority within White subjects, which was translated though into the logic of the European racial empires (Fyfe 1992, p. 27). However, the racial histories of Western European nations are fraught with much fear and shame and are therefore often erased and silenced from Western thinking and history (Poliakov 1974, p. 212; p. 255). In addition to shame and fear, the mechanism of creating a sense of racial superiority has also led the human compass of relating to each other humanely astray (Sekyi-Otu 1996, p. 100).

Coloniality and modernity are inextricably linked to each other (Mignolo 2018), therefore the exclusion and exploitation of the racial Other was generally justified by their perceived incapability to adhere to life in a modern world. As I argue in my thesis, the price for a superior racial self was the abandonment of an authentic human self. The de-racialisation of thought can thereby be conceptualised as a re-humanisation of thought (Sekyi-Otu 1996, pp. 185-191), from which a new humanism can emerge.

What is this »authentic human self« that the racialised subject abandoned in the process of racialisation? Does the notion of an authentic humanity not contradict the post-structuralists' conceptualisation of humanness, which cannot be essential or pure and thereby corrupted? I argue that in itself the self cannot be authentic; its authenticity is simply reflected in the relationships it has to others. Fanon's work and a decolonial reading of his writings, play an important role when exploring these questions in the sixth chapter of this thesis.

Decoloniality is another counter-narrative that plays a role in the quest for a new humanism in my thesis. Argentinian semiotician Walter Mignolo, Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano and Bolivian sociologist Sylvia Rivera Cusicanqui were amongst the first scholars to employ the term decoloniality (Bacchetta et Al. 2019, p. 14). Decoloniality stands in opposition to colonial narratives and to coloniality. Coloniality refers to the notion that Western epistemologies are deeply informed and founded on the colonial project (Jackson 2018, p. 3). Therefore, knowledge production needs to be decolonised by recognising that Western epistemologies are heavily occupied by colonial modes of thinking (Bacchetta et Al. 2019, p. 15). Further, the decolonial project can be advanced by including those epistemologies from the Global South that have historically been excluded from the production of knowledge in the West (ibid.). The current growing call to »decolonise« reflects the notion to critically examine those institutions, within which knowledge is produced, kept and disseminated, such as schools, universities, museums as well as other institutions and more recently commodities (Mignolo 2018, pp. 105-134). Decolonisation does not mean the erasure of colonial history and the often painful collective memories attached to it. Rather, the »*decolonial option offers a particular frame and orientation for research, arguing, doing, and the praxis of living*« (Mignolo 2018, p. 127):

> »Decoloniality denotes ways of thinking, knowing, being, and doing that began with, but also precede, the colonial enterprise and invasion. It implies the recognition and undoing of the hierarchical structures of race, gender, heteropatriarchy, and class that continue to control life, knowledge, spirituality, and thought, structures that are clearly intertwined with and constitutive of global capitalism and Western modernity. Moreover, it is indicative of the ongoing nature of struggles, constructions, and creations that continue to work within coloniality's margins and fissures to affirm that which coloniality has attempted to negate« (Mignolo & Walsh 2018, p.17).

In summary, the limitation of this key literature is that these theories of racism, racial culture, dehumanisation, subjectivity and racial identity constructions are rarely synthesised or contextualised in psychosocial theories of racialisation. My research considers the contextualisation of these theories as paramount as they provide important motivations also for the dominant culture to re-assess racial identity constructions. Only if we understand the stories that make us, can we begin to tell a different story. Additionally, this literature rarely focuses on the *awareness* of racialisation and the empowering effect it can have on White and BIPOC communities. In the following section I will explore further the methodology used in this thesis to examine the aforementioned topics within the narratives of the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners from the NGO, Phoenix, as case in study.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology »The Believer«

This research project examines the subject of racialisation and its retrospective emotional perception by anti-racism and empowerment activists. Since racialisation, Critical Race theory, and Critical Whiteness, are under-researched in Germany, I have decided to put my focus onto this country. Further, I narrowed the field of interviewees down to anti-racism and empowerment practitioners because I assumed that they would have certain expertise on the subject of racialisation, that they would have reflected about it in a professional and also personal manner. Additionally, I assumed that their didactic or educational practice would enable the research participants to share their personal histories in a specifically illuminating fashion. Then, I focalised onto one particular anti-racism and empowerment NGO, Phoenix. Why did I choose Phoenix as my case study? Firstly, I had/have access to Phoenix. I have been an active member of Phoenix for almost 20 years. This gives me particular insight into the narratives of the research participants, especially about their personal training experience. Secondly, when I began this study in 2009, Phoenix was the only anti-racism and empowerment NGO that I was aware of at the time, which used a personal and biographical training method[29]. Thirdly, the active members in Phoenix, in particular trainers and trainees, are well practised in remembering and sharing their story, their personal narrative related to the subject of racialisation, their personal story of their first (Phoenix) training and their path thereafter. This is particularly useful for the research method of biographical narrative interviews. Fourthly, the research participants knew me and trusted me enough to share their very personal memories, sometimes funny, sometimes painful experiences of racialisation, their lives, their thoughts and their feelings of joy, shame *and* empowerment, to an extent and in-depth, which would rarely be possible with a stranger. I am in term of anthropological research methods what could be considered a *deep* or *intimate insider* (Taylor 2011). Their highly subjective recollections of being initiated into a racial culture raise questions about social justice being dependent on people's awareness of how society and subjects are formed and subjected through »Race« in order to

[29] This will be elaborated also in chapter 4.

bring about change. The scope of this study can brush the surface of this question and carry it with. With very little research and academic explorations of anti-racism and empowerment training in Germany, their impact on inter–racial relations remains to be further understood.

Undoubtedly, this proximity to the organisation and the research participants has its advantages, but also its pitfalls, its dead spots and unseen areas. I remember vividly, in 2009 stepping into the office of Paul Gilroy at the LSE (who supervised my PhD for the first half), with a very narrow assumption of what I wanted to research and probably also with some assumptions of what the outcome would be. However, I have attempted to make this research as little as possible about Phoenix as an organisation and much more about the research participants and the rich data they provided to me. I have come to perceive social research not as truth seeking but more like an attempt to develop an understanding of the social. At the same time, social research is in itself a social process (Khathwani & Panhwar 2020, p. 140). The subject of objectivity in social research remains ambitious and ambiguous, but there are techniques that can help to reduce subjectivity, such as being transparent about value preferences and field limitations, reflexivity can also be an important tool in this process (ibid.). Some of these issues shall be addressed in this chapter.

Whilst using qualitative methods that reflect the interdisciplinary character of the project, the methodology of this thesis, similar to its wide-ranging theoretical foundations, can be described as eclectic. My main methods of this thesis are archiving, discourse analysis, ethnography, narrative research and grounded theory, by conducting semi-structured biographic-narrative interviews with Phoenix trainers and members. Archiving allows the management and analysis of related or relevant qualitative data within the field of my research. This is particularly useful in interdisciplinary studies such as Critical »Race« Theory, where psychology, sociology and history are combined. Discourse analysis, which emerged through Foucault's ground-breaking work *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969) allows for a thorough investigation of social construction processes. It plays a significant role in the *»social constructivist view of the social world«* (Phillips & Hardy 2002, p. 6; Gergen 1999) and is important for the development of the psychosocial framework of racialisation processes. Although Foucault widely dismissed psychological theories, this work will *not*

attempt to reconcile the Foucauldian approach with psychosocial theory. There is simply not enough space to attempt this reconciliation in this thesis. Also, the endeavour to reconcile Foucault with Psychology shall be left to other, more capable authors.

My research also incorporates a few (auto-)ethnographic vignettes (Ahmed 2000, Siddique 2011). Drawing from my own experiences and reflections as an anti-racism trainer and my participant observations, these vignettes create transparency around self-reflexivity in the research process, thereby determining my own positioning in this work and giving personal insight into the emotional landscape of racialised subjectivities. Claire Alexander (2004) argues that ethnography *»carries with it the potential to explore the textured and contradictory space between ›structure‹ and ›agency‹ that is either occluded or rendered completely distinct in other methods of research and writing«* (Alexander 2004, p. 148).

I conducted biographic-narrative interviews with approximately 20 active members, trainees and trainers of the Phoenix association (including a focus group of seven trainees) in Germany, where the NGO is based. The first interview I conducted was in Hamburg in April 2012. The last interview I conducted with the focus group of 7 trainees was in Berlin, in my living room in January 2015. I had started my PhD in autumn 2009, and even though I lived in London at the time, I had maintained regular contact with Phoenix and would still attend mostly the bi-annual general meetings for the active members. Already at that time, I would openly talk about my PhD research project and make people aware that I was intending to write about Phoenix and interview some of its members. All the trainers and trainees in the Phoenix Train-the-Trainers/Trainees-meetings were very excited about my research but did ask that details of the training itself should be spared from being written about in too much detail, since it would take away some of the process for potential future participants if they read the book.

In Summer 2011, after two years of frequent traveling from London to Germany for work purposes, I decided that it was time to return to Berlin and focus more on my work there, and also because I felt that I wanted to be closer to my research field. From then on, I began to think more in detail about how and who I wanted to talk to. In late 2011/early 2012 I also narrowed my search down to a few members, some trainers and trainees, and spoke to them in person mostly during the Phoenix meetings that I began to attend more

frequently. During those conversations, I would ask potential interviewees if they were interested in participating in my research. All of them said that they felt positive about being part of my PhD project, since they believed it was an important subject, but they also felt happy to support me. In these conversations, I also attempted to make it as transparent as possible that I would be interviewing them in the role of a social researcher from the LSE and not as a long-standing member of Phoenix, even though I also reflected with them how difficult it was to divide the two. I also told them in advance that the interviews would probably be long, since I wanted to do partly biographic-narrative interviews, that they would be recorded but that they would also be anonymised.

In the next phase, via email or phone, I would agree for a time and a space for the interviews. I suggested that the participants could chose themselves, where and when they wanted to be interviewed. An interview situation is rather unnatural, and I wanted the participants to feel as comfortable as possible during the interview sessions. One interview was done in an empty seminar room at Hamburg University, one interview was conducted at the private practice of the research participant, three interviews were done in Fagbola's home in Duisburg, the other interviews took place at the research participants' home, one interview at my home in Berlin, same with the focus group. All research participants agreed that the subject was too personal to be discussed in a public space and decided on rooms where they would have enough privacy and felt comfortable. In the selection of my sample, I tried to be aware of »Race«, Gender and the social background of the participants', since I assumed that their differing social positions would also allow a broader perspective on the research topic. In the sample that I chose for my analysis, are 9 male and 7 female research participants. 12 of the research participants are White and 4 BIPOC. Amongst the White research participants 3 members, 8 trainees and one trainer, amongst the BIPOC research participants all four are trainers. Most of the names are pseudonyms, in some cases, *with the research participants consent,* I used their second names. All interviews were conducted in German, except the interview with Nana, who was a native English speaker. I translated only those excerpts from the German language transcripts that I used in my thesis and edited them only superficially to keep the authenticity of their narrative style.

Name	Gender	Occupation	Age	»Race« & social background
Ann	Female	Student, Phoenix Member	20-30	White German, FRG, middle class
Can	Male	Student, Phoenix trainer	20-30	Anatolian German, FRG, working class
Chi (focus group)	Male	Youth worker, Phoenix trainee	30-40	White German/Eastern European, FRG, middle class
C.L. (focus group)	Female	Project manager (development policy education), Phoenix trainee	30-40	White German, FRG, middle class
Dina	Female	Student, Phoenix member	20-30	White German FRG, working class
Dre	Male	Protestant Minister, executive secretary of Phoenix	40-50	White German, FRG, lower middle class
Eve	Female	RE (religious education) teacher, protestant minister, Phoenix Trainer	50-60	White German, former GDR, middle class
Fagbola	Male	Protestant minister, chair of Phoenix	50-60	Black German, FRG, upper middle class

Jean (focus group)	Male	Project manager (development policy education), Phoenix trainee	20-30	White German, former GDR, lower middle class
Kabera	Male	Psychologist, Phoenix Trainer	30-40	Black German, FRG, middle class
Lena	Female	Retired local government worker, Phoenix member, former vice chair of Phoenix	50-60	White Eastern European, migrated from Poland to former GDR, working class
Liz (focus group)	Female	Market worker, Phoenix trainee	30-40	White German, FRG, middle class
Matt	Male	Doctoral student, Phoenix trainee	30-40	White German, former GDR, upper middle class
Milan (focus group)	Male	Student, workshop instructor (political education) Phoenix trainee	20-30	White German/Eastern European, FRG, lower middle class
Nana	Female	Medical doctor, psychiatrist, Phoenix trainer	30-40	Black German, migrated from Ghana to FRG,

				upper middle class
Ryan (focus group)	Male	Student, workshop instructor (political education) Phoenix trainee	20-30	White German, former GDR, lower middle class

Martin Bauer (1996) writes that narrative interviews conceptually undermine the dualistic question-and-response-schema. The presence of the interviewer in the questions may influence the interviewee and therefore corrupt the data. Narrative interviews thus leave more space to the interviewee to develop their own voice and narrative. Everyday communicative interactions such as storytelling and listening become the main methods as they allow the participants to express *their* perspective, thereby minimising the influence of the researcher on the data (Bauer 1996). Interviewees - all research subjects are over 18 - only had to tell me what they want to tell me. The research subject received a written consent form prior to the interview, which was signed by them and by me. The method of Grounded Theory is then applied to extract a theoretical framework for racialisation processes.

My study is in compliance with the LSE Research Ethics Policy. I worked with informed consent, oral explanation of my research project, and participants were continuously informed about the study. Research subjects may refuse to participate without given reason. Some research participants are from ethnic minorities; however, they are also trainers and trained to deal with sensitive topics such as racialisation. My research did not induce any unacceptable psychological harm or more than mild discomfort. There were also no doubts about my own wellbeing during the research period.

Still, during this research project, not only during interviews but also whilst writing up this thesis, I had to reflect on my position as a deep insider of Phoenix continuously. Few of the research participants have grown to be close friends in the almost two decades that I have been in Phoenix. So how would I be able to portray, methodologically and epistemologically the discourses in Phoenix that might be difficult to grasp for non-

members? I had most formative years as an academic writer at Birkbeck College, University of London, during my M.Sc. in Race & Ethnic Relations. At Birkbeck College, under the supervision of Yasmeen Narayan and Tarek Qureshi I developed my voice as scholar and already began to reflect on some of the aspects of my work in Phoenix. Nevertheless, I have to admit that distancing myself from Phoenix in this research project – something that my supervisor for the second part of this thesis, Chetan Bhatt would constantly remind me of – remained a great challenge well into the final months of writing this thesis. How would I be able to position myself as a researcher, as a writer of an academic text in social sciences and as member, a trainer, a person, who believes in the work Phoenix is doing, who could be considered not only an insider, but a deep insider? Sandra Harding (2004), who developed feminist standpoint theory, helped very much in shaping the academic analysis and voice of this thesis. Very influential is also the writing of Black feminists, mostly bell hooks (1992) but also Patricia Hill Collins (1999). In particular hooks' writings empowered in many ways my thinking and my language. Feminist standpoint theory is a powerful tool of knowledge production in the social sciences and gives researchers the opportunity to develop an epistemology from the margins of society. Is my position as a deep insider of Phoenix, my proximity also to the research subjects defendable as a social researcher and an academic writer? Concentrating on Phoenix and its trainers, trainees and members, whilst applying an epistemological method of Feminist Standpoint theory, supports the reflexivity of my writing but also the voices of those who might have not been heard in various spaces.

The following paragraphs in which I further discuss the methods and epistemologies applied in this thesis, are divided into three parts. In the first section I reflect on objectivity, epistemologies and the application of Feminist Standpoint theory. In the second section, I examine the proximity to the field and how I experienced the interview-situations. Here I also analyse the significance but also the entanglements of as I refer: ›the researcher going native‹. In the third section I discuss the methodological eclecticism, which ranges from biographic-narrative interviews, to participant observation and Grounded Theory in relation to racialisation and empowerment in Germany.

Thoughts on Objectivity: Objective much?

My proximity to Phoenix, which I chose as a case study for this research project is admittedly very close and could raise concerns about the objectivity of my social research. The concept of objectivity has various meanings and is under much scrutiny recently (Myrdal 1969; Harding 1995; Hammersley 2013; Khatwani & Panhwar 2020), it could be said that objectivity is not uncontested in current social research. Some social researchers criticise the notion of a »*realist objectivity*«, another baby from late Enlightenment thought, namely Kant, in which knowledge production is almost equated with representing, reflecting or reproducing the truth (Hammersley 2013, p. 95; Khatwani & Panhwar 2020, p. 129). Objectivity necessitates neutrality, it can be considered a standard which marks something as scientific or if it lacks as unscientific, it could also be understood as the removal of subjectivity (Khatwani & Panhwar 2020, pp. 129-130). However, examining human behaviour is not about a universal verification of the truth (Bollnow 1974) and Karl Marx criticised objectivity as a tool to disguise power structures, since it is those in power who define what is objective or not (Marx 1970 [1846], pp. 65-66). And how is it even possible to remove our subjectivity from any type of research? Some might claim because I am a Person of Colour, because I experience racism, I cannot be objective about researching matters of »Race« and racialisation, but could a White person be more objective? That would contradict the argument of my thesis that states *everyone* is affected by racialisation. It would be similar absurd to claim that heterosexual men are more objective about Gender and Queer studies. Our subjectivity cannot be entirely removed from social research, I would not be the first social researcher to argue that total objectivity is a myth (Myrdal 1969). Nevertheless, objectivity is not about truth, it is more a set of procedures (Khatwani & Panhwar 2020, pp. 130-131; Hammersley 2012, p. 93), some of which I have used in this thesis and explore in this chapter. I treat the narratives of the research participants like a text that I analyse and interpret using a variety of methods. Additionally, some social researchers argue that objectivity can be (re-)modelled through applying reflexivity (Hammersley 2013, p. 97), which is another tool I use in this thesis. Using these instruments, I consider objectivity »*an epistemic virtue that is designed to counter one particular source of potential error: that deriving from*

preferences and preconceptions associated with commitments that are external to the task of knowledge production – in other words, those that relate to the various goals any researcher has as a person, citizen, etc.« (Hammersley 2013, p. 102).

Thoughts on epistemology: Can the real researcher please stand up?

Why do we believe that what we believe is true? It is the role of the science of knowledge, epistemology, to figure out the principles behind the knowledge that is produced. However, there is more to the production of knowledge, since *»[f]ar from being the apolitical study of truth, epistemology points to the ways in which power relations shape who is believed and why«* (Collins 1999, p. 252). Feminist Standpoint theory became a crucial tool in questioning the relationship between power and knowledge production. The theory began to question many taken-for-granted truths; it began to critically question who had produced that knowledge and how was that person, who produced it, positioned in society. Furthermore, Feminist Standpoint theory saw a correlation of where and how we are placed in the social web of power and the way we shape, understand and view social realities. Who decides what scientific objectivity is? Who decides which social researcher is neutral or not? Are not the rules of the currently dominant epistemologies subjacent to dominant ideologies, which form the principles of these rules? Feminist standpoint theory helps to *ask* these relevant questions. And it is not that these rules were never contested. The famous German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe »*contrasted the artificial empiricism of controlled experiments with what he called delicate empiricism (*zarte Empirie*), ›the effort to understand a thing's meaning through prolonged empathetic looking and seeing grounded in direct experience‹ (Seamon and Zajonc 1998: 2)*« (Santos 2018, p. 5). Similarly, Donna Haraway wrote in her ground-breaking text *Situated Knowledges* that her essay *»is an argument for situated and embodied knowledges and an argument against various forms of unlocatable, and so irresponsible, knowledge claims«* (Haraway 1988, p. 583) and irresponsible knowledge claims are those which cannot be held accountable. So, do they actually exist, the social researchers free of emotions, never touched by any ideology, which would channel their thoughts in a certain direction? This is simply an ideal,

which cannot exist (Harding 2004, p. 4). Furthermore, Sandra Harding (2004), who contributed significantly to Feminist Standpoint theory states:

> »Standpoint theories argue for ›starting off thought‹ from the lives of marginalized peoples; beginning in those determinate, objective locations in any social order will generate illuminating critical questions that do not arise in thought that begins from dominant group lives. […] The epistemologically advantaged starting points for research do not guarantee that researcher can maximize objectivity. It is useful to contrast standpoint grounds for knowledge with four other kinds: the ›God-trick‹, ethnocentrism, relativism, and the unique ability of the oppressed to produce knowledge« (Harding 2004, p. 128).

How does this apply to my research, when 12 of the research participants were White and not necessarily marginalised in terms of »Race«? Certainly, I am starting off from my own position as a Person of Colour, as an Anatolian German Alevi. But I am also starting off from the lived experiences of anti-racism and empowerment practitioners, White and BIPOC, who are part of an organisation, which centres the experiences of marginalised people in its work. I attempted to present the voices of the research participants not as victims of racialisation but as subjects, who were actively trying to negotiate their way through their racialisation processes. Following Haraway's proposition, I attempted to view the participants as »*actors*« (Haraway 1988, p. 591) in this thesis, and to not write *about* them but to develop a dialogue between them and social theory *with* their voices. Therefore, I do not see this thesis as a form of seeking the truth, but rather like a painting of a single moment in time and space. Or to use the words of Australian feminist scholar Elspeth Probyn in *Sexing the Self* (2004):

> »Conceived of as an element of an enunciative practice, experience may, ›under certain conditions‹, make ›a unity of two different elements‹. This is to emphasize, then, that the autobiographical, or the enunciation of experience, cannot be understood as a fixed condition; it may work as ›a linkage‹ which is not ›necessary, determined, absolute or essential for all time‹. Moreover, theorized within a theory of articulation, the experiential may be pried from its commonsensical location in ›belongingness‹. It then becomes possible to distance the autobiographical from a representational logic. Instead of representing a ›truth‹, a ›unity‹ or a ›belongingness‹, a critical use of the self may come to emphasize the ›historical conditions‹ involved in its speaking« (Probyn 1993, p. 24).

This means, by analysing the narratives of German anti-racism and empowerment practitioners with a standpoint epistemological approach, this research contributes to the writing of a contemporary German multiracial history.

As much as this thesis is about empowerment, I would also like it to be empowering to read. This text tries to explore empowerment from an angle, where bell hooks in *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (2014 [1990]) asks »*[h]ow do we create an oppositional*

worldview, a consciousness, an identity, a standpoint that exists not only as that struggle which also opposes dehumanization but as that movement which enables creative, expansive self-actualization?« (hooks 2014, p. 39). Far from being solely based on decolonial epistemologies, since many of the authors referenced are from the Global North, the voices in this thesis (and hopefully also my own) reflect a *»radical openness*« (hooks 2014, p. 223) about the lived experiences of racialisation, thereby pursuing the possibility of developing counter-hegemonic knowledge and narratives. Black feminist scholars have been an inspiration to me and many others, in developing groups and spaces that devote themselves to a *»politics of location*« (hooks 2014, p. 223) and the creation of new narratives rethinking and transforming lived encounters in a way that both name the connections of power structures and furthermore suggests processes by which to change racial subjection and exclusion.

In order to develop those counter-hegemonic narratives, I believe, it needs a kind of labour and process that is emotional and personal. And to bring these narratives to live, also needs an atmosphere, which allows this personal and emotional labour to take place, to make subjects comfortable enough to open up their lived experiences to others. Positioned as a social researcher, but also as an anti-racism and empowerment practitioner myself, I decided to anonymise the names of the research participants or use their second names as some research participants offered themselves. The proximity to the research subjects, the rapport and the working relationships that developed over the years, but also the transparency of what their contributions would be used for, the conversations prior and during the research project, made it possible to the participants to share their very personal stories with me as a researcher – and as a deep insider.

The Racialisation of German Subjects and the Insider-Outsider question

What is an insider? In social research an insider is considered a person, who shares similar demographic features, such as »Race«, gender or social background, just to name a few. An insider can also be a person that over a longer time period lived in the same location or has common values to the group they are researching. In social research, an outsider describes

more or less the opposite of the insider, as a researcher who, before they begin their research, is not familiar with the field or the people they are researching. Anthropology, a Western colonial science, established itself during the 19th century, and, for a long time consisted of predominantly Western White males travelling to the colonies and researching the colonial native, informing those in power, how to better manipulate and exploit this colonial Other (Lewis 1973, p. 590)[30]. The Western scientists were the outsiders capable of doing objective research about the »natives« (Lewis 1973, p. 586). However, the insider/outsider dichotomy is not unquestioned in anthropology, and some scholars ask how useful is this subjective insider/objective outsider divide (Back 1996; O'Reilly 2009). There is, for example, the phenomenon of the researcher »going native« (clearly indicating the colonial heritage of anthropology), referring »*to the danger for ethnographers to become too involved in the community under study, thus losing objectivity and distance*« (O'Reilly 2009, p. 88). In other words, here, the social researcher, the objective outsider becomes a subjective insider and thereby useless as a scientist. It seems that the ideal in anthropology is that the ethnographer, gets in the field, collects the data and gets out again (O'Reilly 2009, pp. 9-11), thereby leaving the social researcher not particularly accountable to people they have researched (Stacy 1991, p. 113). This raises many ethical concerns about the power the ethnographer has, in particular over vulnerable groups such as those who are disadvantaged by racial power structures. Kirin Narayan (2003), Indian American writer and anthropologist suggests that »*[i]nstead of the paradigm emphasizing a dichotomy between outsider/insider or observer/observed, I propose that at this historical moment we might more profitably view each anthropologist in terms of shifting identifications amid a field of interpenetrating communities and power relations* (Narayan 2003, p. 285).

In some ways, I experienced similar things to the BIPOC research participants, being born and raised in Germany as an Anatolian German Alevi male. There is a shared experience of sometimes not being seen as a full human being, but rather as a skin colour, a culture or a religion in Germany in all sorts of everyday settings. In addition, with some I shared memories of how Phoenix developed from a small NGO with barely 50 members to

[30] Though I should mention that anthropology came back to »bite« its founders back in a special section of the *American Anthropologist*, edited by Aisha M. Beliso-De Jesús and Jemima Pierre examining the anthropology of White supremacy (American Anthropologist Vol. 122, no. 1, March 2020).

one of Germany's largest and oldest anti-racism organisations. This also highlights that the research participants and I share a lot of common values, one of them racial justice, since many of us decided to not only be active members in Phoenix, but also become trainers teaching anti-racism and empowerment. On the subject of shared experience and locations Patricia Hill Collins concludes:

> »The cultural context formed by those experiences and ideas that are shared with other members of a group or community give meaning to individual biographies. Each individual biography is rooted in several overlapping cultural contexts—for example, groups defined by race, social class, age, gender, religion, and sexual orientation. The most cohesive cultural contexts are those with identifiable histories, geographic locations, and social institutions. Some can be so tightly interwoven that they appear to be one cultural context, the situation of traditional societies with customs that are carried on across generations, or that of protracted racial segregation in the United States where Blacks saw a unity of interests that necessarily suppressed internal differences within the category ›Black.‹ Moreover, cultural contexts contribute, among other things, the concepts used in thinking and acting« (Collins 1999, p. 286).

The complex entanglements in fields such as anti-racism and empowerment activism and my personal position in this entanglement, is very complex. The complexity starts with me being a second-generation Anatolian German Alevi, growing up in a Turkish German working class family. They continue with my own lived experiences in Germany, of being active in Phoenix for several years, but also working as an anti-racism and empowerment trainer. My doctoral research is thereby located in a field that raises many questions about what I am researching, who my research participants are and my personal biography. My status in this research field can only be described as a deep insider or as a believer. I still am an active member in Phoenix, and I am hoping to stay one for a very long time. Therefore, the investigation of this field does require radical transparency, as well as self-reflexivity (Maynard 1994, p. 16). Both, radical transparency and self-reflexivity inform many methodological inquiries, especially in critical »Race« and Gender theory.

The »Native« going researcher – researching as a »believer«

My first encounter with Phoenix took place during a Phoenix anti-racism training in 2001 in a small town in Brandenburg. This training was the starting point of my active membership in Phoenix. In the following years, with the progress of my personal development and studies, my interest in conducting research about some concepts related in the Phoenix

empowerment and anti-racism work evolved. In the first 5 years I looked for other training forms, organised by individuals or other groups in Germany but only discovered a few, who I thought made the subject of anti-racism and empowerment personally accessible. In summer 2006, when I moved from Berlin to London, I began to study Race & Ethnic Relations for a Master's degree at Birkbeck College. During my studies I realised how much I owed to Phoenix in understanding this wide and fascinating field of »Race« relations. And I began to conceptualise Phoenix work in academic terms, making use of the plethora of theories I encountered related to Cultural Studies, Critical »Race« Theory, Critical Whiteness, Postcolonialism and Gender studies. These theories became more and more crucial in my personal analysis and understanding about what it was that Phoenix was actually doing. After the completion of the MSc programme, I decided to take a closer look into the subject of racialisation and Whiteness. Finishing my degree in 2008, I decided to continue my research, this time including the subject of empowerment and intending to develop a theoretical framework of racialisation with the voices of Phoenix anti-racism and empowerment practitioners. Between 2008 and 2009 I took a break from studying but decided in Spring 2009 that I would apply only at one university, which employed the only supervisor that I could imagine myself working with at the time. Some of the theories that went into this PhD project were already engaged with between 2006 and 2008 for my Masters' thesis. The active fieldwork for this study began in 2012 and ended in 2015. The last interviews for this project were conducted in 2015.

I conducted 13 interviews, which included short conversations of about 45 minutes, and interviews up to five hours long. One of these interviews was with a focus group of seven Phoenix trainees in 2015. I recorded all of the interviews on my smart phone. The recordings of the interviews were transcribed completely. I told the research participants that my PhD work was about racialisation and empowerment. I asked the interviewees the following questions:

1. Tell me your story of racialisation, before your first training
2. Tell me about your first training experience

3. After the training, how did your story continue

Therefore, the interviews are coded according to the larger themes »racialisation«, »training«, »empowerment« and »humanness«. Further sub-themes emerged after more interviews were conducted and during the coding process of all interviews. All interviews were conducted with research participants who are either full trainers or trainees in Phoenix except three. I conducted semi-structured biographic-narrative interviews with the research participants (Wengraf 2001). I would begin the interviews with a short introduction about my research project and also about my interview method. I encouraged research participants to take their time in telling their story. Once the research participants began to share their accounts, I would talk as little as possible, with an open facial impression, keeping eye contact, sometimes nodding encouragingly to show that I was listening actively. I also had a notepad, where I would sometimes write down my personal impressions and feelings about the interview situation or noteworthy things the interviewees mentioned. If the flow of their sharing was interrupted or ended, I would ask if they wanted to tell me more, or sometimes ask follow-up questions.

With the Phoenix leadership team, I conducted three to four recorded interviews and had several informal conversations over the span of seven years (between 2008 and 2015). With regards to my access to interviews with these research participants, emails and phone calls led to swift responses, and research consent forms and a research information sheet were handed out prior to the interviews.

Some of the early encounters and conversations, I had them with the research participants, who were trainees at the time and would later work as Phoenix trainers. Other participants became members and trainees after I had already started my research. All the trainees from the focus group that joined my research project, were Berlin residents. Therefore, I had little difficulties accessing the field. The transparency regarding my PhD thesis at LSE, an elite university in London, encouraged Phoenix leadership occasionally to mention at meetings, that my research project was in progress. However, once I was finished with my fieldwork, these mentions of my PhD diminished over the final years.

Even though the interview situation was new and unusual to most research participants, sharing their stories of racialisation, their first training experience and how the training had affected their lives, was familiar to them. In particular the session with the focus group felt very much how a possible Phoenix meeting could progress. The one-to-one interviews felt slightly different though. The fact that I spoke as little as possible, sometimes gave the interviews an air of a therapy session. Some of the interviewees did also mention that participating in the interview felt therapeutic. In about half of the interviews, the interviewees would cry, expressing their suffering through feeling ashamed or sad. I would always carry tissues with me, handing them to the crying research participant, silently acknowledging their emotions and tears. Occasionally, when there were moments of silence, I would give the research participants some time to recollect their thoughts. Having witnessed many active members expressing their emotions through tears during Phoenix meetings, and on plenty of occasions, seeing participants cry did not trigger any discomfort in me, apart from my own empathetic response. As much as these common experiences generated the research participants' trust in me, there was also the risk that many things would be left unmentioned since Phoenix has its very own discourses and silences. If I felt that a narrative was too thin, I would ask different questions or change the subject for a few minutes before I returned to the research topic. I was not interested in assuming what the research participants meant, therefore I sometimes asked to provide me with more details, asking if they could elaborate on certain things they had mentioned. I attempted to be critically aware of my closeness to the research participants, but I also did not shy away from asking innovative questions (Innes 2009, p. 457). Of course, there is also the danger of turning into an »*enthusiastic radical*« that Gayatri Spivak warns of (Spivak 2010, p. 283), of idealising the field and remaining in denial of undesirable data. Undoubtedly, there have been pitfalls, said and unsaid things, which have been overlooked in this research due to my proximity. Through the methodological and theoretical eclecticism of this thesis, I have attempted to triangulate the data (Greene 2007). I will expand on this also in the section about Grounded Theory.

How does academic work differ from the work of activists? Academia is about science, about producing knowledge. The production of knowledge has to abide by certain

academic standards, to be actually considered knowledge. Some of the standards are that the work is autonomous, accountable and scrutinised. Activists fight for social justice and transforming oppressive structures. These differences between academia and activism create imbalances and gaps. There are activists, in particular non-academic ones, who find some discourses in social sciences simply inaccessible. Some activists might refer to concepts that cannot be transferred into an academic language. This was actually a huge test for me, since some of the discussions in Phoenix would probably raise some questions for an external researcher, especially those conversation that evolve around epistemologies from the Global South.

Being member and trainer in the anti-racism NGO Phoenix has challenges and advantages. The potential problem that comes with my membership could be that I am partial and feel that I have to prove what Phoenix does is good. The advantage of my membership is that it gives me access to an organisation that is quite wary of researchers wanting to do academic research on Phoenix. I tried to ensure that I am detached during my research from the work that Phoenix is doing. However, this study is not so much an evaluation of Phoenix anti-racism or empowerment training. In the centre of my research rather stands to find out what it is that the anti-racism and empowerment activists have to say about racialisation and empowerment – I simply chose Phoenix as my case study. This study was not commissioned by Phoenix nor do I receive any financial support for my research from the organisation. It was motivated and proposed by me. Initial conversation with trainers and members showed great interest and support in my work. Nonetheless, one of the conditions that trainers made on my research is that I do not reveal training methods in detail. The trainers asked for this because they believe that exposing detailed units would make their work very difficult for the future. I do understand that my position as trainer and active member in Phoenix allows me to have an in-depth look into the organisation and its work, as its members do put a lot of trust into me. However, I ensured that trainers, members and participants were aware of my position as a researcher during my fieldwork. I tried to achieve this through a maximum amount of transparency and a minimum amount of ambiguity. By preparing consent forms for interviewees, by using open research methods, I wanted to ensure that during my fieldwork trainers, members and

participants understood that I was present in the function of a researcher. Nevertheless, as researching »Race« is neither accidental nor apolitical, and not so much *the researcher going native* rather than *the native going researcher,* is one of my key concerns, I hope, through (auto-)ethnographic methods and *»radical contextualisation«* of the theories produced, to circumvent the dangers of *»claiming […] a specialist knowledge«* (Alexander 2004, p. 147; Keith 1995).

Other ethical concerns relate to my role in Phoenix. Fortunately, I do not have any line management responsibilities towards the participants. This provides some level of independence from each other. There is also variation in proximity to the research participants, but I generally would describe it as close. By most of the participants I would be perceived as a Phoenix »senior« due to my long and active commitment to the NGO. However, participants were aware that I was a part-time PhD student and with some experience as a social researcher. The research process was not continuous but rather on and off, often interrupted through either other work commitments or the birth of my child. Nevertheless, I was always close to my field and regular participant observation allowed me to stay in role as an active member, and, at the same time, distance myself conceptually through the process of taking notes, recording my observations (Simmons 2007). Membership is complex, neither being an insider nor being an outsider is an absolute perspective (Merton 1972, Naples 1996). As member and practitioner, I have insights into the role of a trainer/active member in Phoenix; however, I openly talked about my PhD, and my research methods, which also helped me to conceptually distance myself from the object and subject of study and get me into the mental mode of observing the structure of events with a researcher's practiced objectivity. Access to the field was very easy due to people's trust in me, I always had the feeling participants wanted to participate, and one participant actually invited herself to partake in this research. Many also stated the therapeutic character the interview sessions had and were very appreciative of their participation. The independence of my study was never questioned, it was clear from the beginning that the research arose from my personal interests in the field, and not as commissioned by Phoenix leadership or any other party. Phoenix leadership did not encourage me to begin this research, and as it proceeded, did not present me with any objections.

However, my research still experienced moments of loyalty conflicts, where a tension between my role as a semi-senior Phoenix member and in addition a researcher, did arise. One of the research participants in 2012 once mentioned that she observed a »healthy patriarchy« in Phoenix in relation to the mainly male Phoenix leadership. It had a double meaning; she was stating that the leadership was doing a good job, and there was also an implicit critique in the predominant maleness of the leadership. At some moments I also witnessed and was part of a rather unhealthy patriarchy. Those moments of mostly jovial sexism behind closed doors with no females present, made me feel very uncomfortable, and at some point, I experienced a personal crisis in relation to Gender in Phoenix, the organisation, but also the work itself. In these moments I noticed the challenge I was presented with in critically perceiving the dynamics of a group I was very much a part of. I was met with my own cis-male privileged role and function in this dynamic. To study the group in this regard was undoubtedly also a process of reflecting on myself in relation to the group and beyond, as regards to power, Gender, »Race« and other intersections of privilege, hierarchy and agency.

Grounded Theory

Ground Theory was developed by two US-American sociologists, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967). In their work, the social researchers »*addressed how the discovery of theory from data—systematically obtained and analyzed in social research—can be furthered*« (Glaser & Strauss 2017, p. 1). Grounded Theory became more relevant for my thesis as I moved away from writing about Phoenix and moved towards using the voices of the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners, to develop a theoretical framework of racialisation. Grounded Theory is also very advantageous from my point of view as an educational scientist, because it helps to develop theories that are not too abstract and can be useful in relation to teaching about anti-racism and empowerment also in non-academic settings (Oktay 2012). Furthermore, the methodology of Grounded Theory does assume an inherent

foreignness between the researcher and the research subject. German sociology professor Cornelia Helfferich (2004) states:

> »This ›assumption of foreignness‹ has been further developed, especially in ethnology and cultural anthropology, to an attitude of ›making the familiar foreign‹ and suspending the unquestioned validity of the obvious. As the assumption of foreignness promotes respect for the other person and refrains from adapting the foreign sense to the interviewees' own vision, it also helps to adopt an attitude of viewing one's own explanations and interpretations only as one possibility among others, one's own point of view or ›horizon of normality‹, to put it into perspective and thus also to postpone it with open expectations« [my own translation] (Helfferich 2004, p. 117).

Put another way, I attempted to perceive the research participants during the interview situation as foreigners. I tried to treat their interview transcripts like a foreign text during its analysis. The words of the research participants and my interpretation of their words became one of the cornerstones of my argument, that racialisation constitutes a form of suffering for the racialised subject. However, the interpretation of data is never really finished and in addition, data never tells a single story (Corbin & Strauss 2008, pp. 48-49). In other words, this research project is not about presenting reality, it is about interpreting it. Nevertheless, as one of the founders of Grounded Theory states »*knowledge arises through (note the verbs) acting and interacting of self-reflective beings*« (Corbin & Strauss 2008, p. 2). The inductive approach of Grounded Theory also allows to view the collected material openly, not necessarily to test a theory or hypothesis. Rather the empirical data is used to develop categories, breaking the material into content fragments and then systemising them in codes. Coding thereby helps to crystallise the content essence of the raw data (Saldaña 2016, p. 4). I decided to not use software for this coding process. I simply never felt that there was a need to download the software and get acquainted with it, since I wanted to focus on the narratives. This might also explain some of the longer quotes used in chapter 4, 5, and 6. I did the coding »old-school-style«, reading and re-reading the transcripts several times, highlighting the categories of »racialisation«, »training«, »empowerment« and »humanness« with different colours. Since I had almost 30 hours' interview material, I selected that material which I assumed would show the broadest range of experiences, thoughts, and emotions. The coding process and its categories are also reflected in the structure of this thesis and in the interpretation of the data using, amongst others, the method of Grounded Theory. I found this hybrid of deductive and inductive approaches

particularly useful, since I also aim at generating knowledge about racialisation and not simply to verify theories. Additionally, the phenomena of empowerment and the connection that I draw between this term and humanness are based on the subjective understanding of both concepts shared by the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners.

Participant Observations

The method of participant observation actually became less significant during the final phase of writing this thesis, since I moved further away from describing what is happening in Phoenix and moved towards the voices, the narratives of the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners. Nevertheless, I decided to keep a small paragraph on the subject of participant observation.

Ethnographies are heavily based on the method of participant observation, especially if the researcher is absorbed in the field for a prolonged time (Emerson et Al. 2001, p. 352). In order to examine certain social groups or settings, participant observation can be a necessary tool in gaining knowledge about this group or setting. In other words, participant observation »*is a way to collect data in naturalistic settings by ethnographers who observe and/or take part in the common and uncommon activities of the people being studied*« (Musante & DeWalt 2010, p. 2). In the previous paragraphs, I have already stated my proximity to the research participants and the field. However, participant observation also entails writing field notes, which during the process of writing not only helps in distancing myself as a researcher, but also creates data in support of writing this thesis. It is the written form of my reflections on particular situations and interview settings, thereby central in the understanding of my perspective in the field.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the research trajectory and the epistemological and methodological approach of this seven-year research project. As a researcher who conducted fieldwork at home with multiple methods (such as interviews, participant observation), I initially discussed methodological debates about Feminist Standpoint theory, insider and outsider research, and positioned myself as an insider/believer to the organisation I investigated. Furthermore, I argued that my approach to insider research, feminist standpoint epistemology and also Grounded Theory opens possibilities to knowledge production which contribute to a theoretical framework of racialisation in Germany, informed by anti-racism and empowerment practitioners.

Chapter 4: Racialisation – Narrating Memories of Childhoods & Race

> »For if colonization destroys the colonized, it also rots the colonizer.«
> Albert Memmi, (quoted from *The Colonizer and the Colonized* 2003 [1957], p. 13)

Having discussed the methodological implications of researching as a deep insider of the field, I will now move on to the phenomenon of racialisation. In the book *Racism* (2000 [1982]) Albert Memmi offers two definitions of the term, a short and a longer one. The short one defines racism as making »*reference to biological differences for the purposes of subjugation and the establishment of certain privileges and advantages for itself*« (Memmi 2000, p. 93)[31]. The biological differences Memmi refers to are usually coded as »Race« (but also sometimes as ethnicity or culture). The system of racism needs racial subjects, which can be either advantaged or disadvantaged. The system of racism needs racial subjects that maintain racialised power structures. The process of generating these racial subjects can be referred to as racial subjectivation or *racialisation* (Dalal 2002, p. 198). When does this process of racialisation take place? Social researchers, who have specialised on the question of how »Race« influences children and the development of the child, state that *»between birth and adulthood, children become racialized beings, some of whom endorse hostile racial attitudes, many of whom endorse egalitarian values, but all of whom are to some degree beholden to the psychology of intergroup cognitions and relations«* (Quintana & McKown 2008, p. 5). In other words, the process of racialisation begins during the childhood of a person, where they become racialised, where they become a racial subject. Becoming a racial subject should not be confused with becoming a person that is openly racist. In fact, in Germany about 13% agree to the statement that White people are superior to BIPOC people and about 20% tend toward right-wing populist attitudes (Zick et Al. 2019). How is it then possible that BIPOC are significantly and continuously discriminated against in the education system, the labour

[31] I am hesitant to call this definition outdated. Though, as already discussed in the introduction and in the literature review, »Race« is not understood in a biological sense in this thesis. However, I have also already discussed the conflation of the terms culture and ethnicity with the term »Race«, therefore Memmi's definition could be complimented as ›making reference to biological and/or cultural differences for the purposes of subjugation…‹.

market, and the housing market (Bonefeld & Dickhäuser 2018; Koopmans et Al. 2019; Müller 2015), if 80-90% of the people do not hold openly racist attitudes?

Some research suggests that racism or racial bias can also operate on an unconscious level, even in people who consider themselves open-minded and liberal (Agarwal 2020; Kahn 2018). Whilst some evolutionary scientists suggest that racism is inherent to the human brain (van den Berghe 1987), other social scholars assume if racism was genetic, then we would have chaos and not a racial order (Hirschfeld 1997, p. 78). Rather than inherited genetically, research suggests that racism and »Race« is learned (van Ausdale & Feagin 2001). How does this process of learning racism and »Race«, the process of racialisation take place? In order to explore this question, I chose a group of anti-racism and empowerment practitioners who are well rehearsed in remembering and narrating the process of how they learned about »Race« and racism. **Therefore, in the following chapter, I explore the question: *How do anti-racism and empowerment practitioners narrate their personal experiences of racial subjectivation?* In this chapter I argue that the narratives of the research participants highlight that racialisation constitutes a form suffering caused by the dehumanisation of the racialised subject.** In the first section, beginning with a short excursion on childhoods, identity and racialisation, I also look into the subject of memory, since the research participants talk about what they remember about their racialisation process. In the second section, I look at, first, how the white research participants talk about their racialisation and, afterwards explore the narratives of the BIPOC research participants.

Childhoods, identity & »Race«

Racial subjectivity and our racial identity are inextricably linked to the social. In *The Psychic Life of Power* (1997) Butler writes in reference to Foucault that no individual is a subject without being previously subjected to a »*subjectification*« through cultural discourses (Butler 1997, p 11). In the *Handbook of Race, Racism, and the Developing Child* (2008) the editors Stephen M. Quintana and Clark McKown understand that sometime between being born

and becoming an adult, children are racialised and express racial views in varying ways (Quintana & McKown 2008, pp. 6-7). Therefore, the following section, before continuing to examine memory and the narratives of racial subjectivation, looks into the subject of childhoods, identity and racialisation.

Similar to the notion of »Race«, childhood is a fairly modern concept, heavily influenced by early Enlightenment thought, namely English philosopher and physician John Locke (1693) and the Romantic period (Hendrick 1997, p. 35). Locke saw children as a *tabula rasa,* as a clean and empty slate awaiting its inscription with data from the adults (ibid.). The Genevan writer and philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who heavily influenced thoughts on childhood and education throughout Europe, disagreed with Locke and assumed that children had a natural, inherent goodness, that childhood was a phase of innocence which needed a particular protection and support (ibid.). Rousseau even drew parallels between children, guided by their nature, learning to negotiate the ways of the social and becoming an adult, and »noble savages«, similarly guided by their nature, who ultimately become civilized people (James & Prout 1997, p.10). In other words, Rousseau assumed that children were innocent and then became corrupted by either people in their vicinity or wider society, an assumption which resonates with the idea that children are also innocent in regard to racism and are only turned racist by openly racist parents. However, research indicates that this common belief that *»children are naturally naïve to race and that they are taught to be racist by parents turn out to be simply wrong«* (Quintana & McKown 2008, p. 1).

Analogous to »Race«, class, gender etc., most modern sociologist and educational scientists view childhood not as universal to all human societies, and therefore socially constructed. Simultaneously, childhood cannot be completely separated from social constructs such as aforementioned concepts in the analysis of social settings. Additionally, contrary to common notions of childhood, children are not solely recipients of subjectivation but also actively participate and construct their environment and social structures within their means (James & Prout 1997, p. 8). In *Constructing and Deconstructing Childhood* (1997) Allison James and Alan Prout conclude that *»[c]omparative and cross-cultural analysis reveals a variety of childhoods rather than a single universal phenomenon«* (James & Prout 1997, p. 8).

Therefore, I also use the concept of childhoods in plural, in order to highlight the different locations where the research participants grew up.

Nevertheless, Rousseau's romantic notion of childhood created the basis for developmental psychology, which initially focussed on the psychological development of the child but was later expanded to include adolescence and adulthood. Though it would exceed the limits of this dissertation to go in-depth into the different theories of developmental psychology, I summarise a few of the concepts of (racial) identity development.

The concept of racialisation relies somewhat on the idea of an external and internal (Wijeyesinghe & Jackson 2012, p. 3). An external racialised world creates an internal racialised subject identity, vice versa an internal racialised subject identity re-creates an external racialised world (ibid.). However, a subject has a plethora of identities, so simply looking at racial identity means a flattening of identity development, a criticism highlighted by the emergence of the concept of intersectionality (ibid.). Intersectionality »*emphasizes that identity development in one area (race[…]) cannot be viewed as occurring outside of, or separate from, the developmental processes of other social identities (such as gender, class, sexual orientation, and religious/faith tradition) within individuals*« (Wijeyesinghe & Jackson 2012, p. 3).

Be that as it may, how do subject identities develop and how do *racial* subject identity develop at that? Psychology generated some identity development theories, for example Jean Piaget (1963), Erik Erikson (1959/1994) and James Marcia (1966/1980). When engaging with child development, it is difficult to get past Jean Piaget's ground-breaking work on cognitive development. Piaget, a Swiss psychologist and theorist, argues that children adapt to environments through either assimilation, the passive acceptance of environmental circumstances or accommodation, the active modification of environmental circumstances. Piaget suggests four stages of cognitive development, building on each other: birth to age 2 sensorimotor stage, age 2 to age 7 preoperational, age 7 to age 11 concrete-operational, and age 11 to age 15 formal-operational stage (Flavell & Piaget 1963). Erikson and Marcia who focussed more on emotional development and crisis rather than cognitive development extended their model into adulthood. Transferring both developmental psychologists' notions of identity development onto racial identity development, educational scientist

Kristen A. Renn concludes that »*racialized beings, then, people develop both self-sameness in terms of racial identity and a shared racial identity with others of the same group*« (Renn 2012, p. 15) and »*[a]chieved racial identity results from exploration or crisis related to racial identity and commitments made to having and expressing racial identity in particular ways*« (Renn 2012, p. 16). Psychological identity development theories focus on the individual and less on the social. In addition, these development theories seem to lack the perspective and experience of BIPOC though.

Sociology also offers an alternative model of identity development differing from psychological ones. George Herbert Mead (1934), US-American sociologist and philosopher, believed that the mind-body dichotomy needed to be transcended and argued that the mind was born in the social interactions between human bodies. Mead did not see the mind as something that existed separately somewhere in the ether from the body, he saw the mind as part of the body and the body as part of the mind (Mead 1972 [1934], pp. 139-140). In other words, without our bodies, our brains etc. we would not be able to meaningfully interact with each other; at the same time, without meaningful interaction, we would be unable to internalise any significant symbols. Similarly, Jewish German sociologist Norbert Elias developed in his ground-breaking work *The Civilizing Process* (1939) the notion of the social habitus (which was later further developed by Pierre Bourdieu). The social habitus describes habits of thinking, feeling and acting that are common to members of a figuration (synonymous with social personality structure: the psychological characteristics common to the members of a group) and as personal habitus the individual that develops from it their personality structure (Elias 1994). Elias describes the concept of the habitus as reciprocal, as forming society and as being formed by society (Elias 2006, p. 322). Transferring Elias' notion of identity development (or habitualisation) onto the concept of racialisation, racial identity development could then be described as lifelong process of personal racial psychogenesis, as sub-processes in the long-term process context of racial psychogenesis and racial sociogenesis of a racialised society. I return to Elias later in this section.

Similarly, social psychology offers a useful model of racial identity development based on an article from social psychologists Hazel Markus and Paula Nurius *Possible Selves* (1986). In the article the authors argue that a person's imagined future self, whether ideal or

the one they are trying to avoid becoming, offers a conceptual link between motivation and cognition (Markus & Nurius 1986). Transferring the concept of the possible selves onto racial identity development, it could be concluded that »*a person's hoped for and feared possible selves may lead him or her into groups that encourage exploration and commitment to a particular racial identity*« (Renn 2012, p. 18). Correspondingly, the Human or Developmental Ecology, developed by psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979), places a person's development also into a social setting. By using the PPCT-Model[32], Bronfenbrenner developed a conceptual tool of analysing in particular the transitions and processes (not so much the outcomes) a person experiences while moving between and being influenced by different systems (Kail & Cavanaugh 2010). In regard to the Human or Developmental Ecology theory Renn concludes that the »*PPCT model provides a rich, multidimensional approach to examining how development occurs and how, for example, two mixed-race individuals of the same racial heritage might develop different racial identities*« (Renn 2012, p. 20).

The influence of poststructuralism on humanities and social sciences also focuses on processes and questions the idea of a fixed identity which could be the outcome of a finished identity. Poststructuralist theorists such as Derrida or Foucault assume that identities are socially constructed and therefore constantly deconstructed and reconstructed (Renn 2012, p. 22, Gergen 1991). In *A Critical Introduction to Queer Theory* (2003) Nikki Sullivan writes:

> »Poststructuralism is most often associated with a rejection, or at least a critique, of humanist logic and aspirations. It therefore involves a rethinking of concepts such as ›meaning‹, ›truth‹, ›subjectivity‹, ›freedom‹, ›power‹, and so on. Poststructuralist theorists such as Foucault argue that there are no objective and universal truths, but that particular forms of knowledge, and the ways of being that they engender, become ›naturalised‹, in culturally and historically specific ways. For example, Judith Butler, and Monique Wittig argue (in slightly different ways) that heterosexuality is a complex matrix of discourses, institutions, and so on, that has become normalised in our culture, thus making particular relationships, lifestyles, and identities, seem natural, ahistorical, and universal. In short, heterosexuality, as it is currently understood and experienced, is a (historically and culturally specific) truth-effect of systems of power/knowledge. Given this, its dominant position and current configuration are contestable and open to change« (Sullivan 2003, p. 39).

In her essay *The Simultaneity of Identities* Evangelina Holvino (2012) explores poststructuralist theory in view of racial identity development and assumes that transnational feminism »*conceptualizes gender, class, race, sexuality, and nationality as complex*

[32] (Process: interactions between a developing person and it's close surroundings such as people and cultural signifiers; Person: the person and it's individual characteristics, its social positioning [including »Race« and Gender] and personality traits; Context: the ecosystem the person lives in, divided into microsystem [i.e. family, school], mesosystem [i.e. interactions between caretakers and school], exosystem [i.e. mass media, local politics], and macrosystem [i.e. culture]) (Kail & Cavanaugh 2010).

and simultaneous social processes and discursive constructions that produce inequality« (Holvino 2012, p. 166). Holvino further theorises that social differences are viewed as relational (Holvino 2012, p. 167). In other words, there is no such thing as a BIPOC or a White »Race«, »Race« only exists in the »*relational arrangement*« (Holvino 2012, p. 167) and varies at different places (and different times) in the world. In Western societies BIPOC and White only exist in a discursive binary opposition, without the other, the other one cannot exist, they are bound up together in a dialectic, like the left and the right. Without the left, there is no right, without BIPOC, there is no White and vice versa. So BIPOC only exists in relation to White and the other way around, but also because it can be differentiated from it. Holvino continues to state:

> »Second, differences are *socially constructed*. They reflect the socially attributed meanings to specific dimensions of human differences that have been signaled as important in a given society. Thus, gender or race or ethnicities are not intrinsic or innate physical, psychological, or cultural attributes. Instead, race, gender, and ethnicity are the *meanings attributed to differences* of sex, phenotypes, or culture, *in specific social contexts*. These meanings are shaped by socialization practices, organizational and institutional arrangements, belief systems, and language itself« [original emphasis] (Holvino 2012, pp. 167-168).

Holvino then further writes:

> »Third, differences also construct who we are and are important elements of our subjective identity (…). There is not an essential (ungendered or unraced) ›self ‹ that humans possess, which is then ›tarnished‹ by gender stereotypes, socialization patterns, or the media. Subjectivity, how we think of ourselves as social beings, is always in the making and individuals actively participate in constructing their identities. But subjectivity is also shaped by gender beliefs and structures embedded in society, and these beliefs are inseparable from our self-identity« [original emphasis] (Holvino 2012, p. 168).

Transferred onto the subject of racial identity development, I would add that subjectivity is also shaped by racial beliefs and structures in society, and these beliefs also cannot be separated from our self-identity. Holvino then concludes that poststructuralist theory and transnational feminism help to understand that »*identity refers to how differences signify relations of power*« (Holvino 2012, p. 167).

Social researchers, who collected empirical data on young children and their learned perceptions of racial differences, also saw the value of a social and relational approach towards racial identity development (Van Ausdale & Feagin 2001, pp. 17-25). Children, so these social researchers argue, »*like adults, become* human *beings in interaction with other human beings*« [original emphasis] (Van Ausdale & Feagin 2001, p. 1). Furthermore, research suggests that children take racial cues from their social environment and then try to weave those cues into their everyday life, through interacting with adults and other children (Van

Ausdale & Feagin 2001, p. 20). Adults wrongly assume that children do not know what they are doing, in particular when they act racially explicit (Van Ausdale & Feagin 2001, pp. 2-3). Sometimes children even expose certain racial phenomena unaware of the taboos surrounding the subject of »Race« (Van Ausdale & Feagin 2001, p. 21). By the reactions of the adults, they also learn though, that »Race« matters should not be discussed too openly or they will cause discomfort or shame (ibid.). The social researchers also observed that in particular the White children were actively participating in the construction of the racial order, with the information they had gathered from their (adult) social environment (ibid.):

> »A key part of our argument is that children learn *by doing*, not just by parroting the views of adults. The cultural past of racialized language and thought is constantly pressed on children from the outside, but it is the active construction of racial concepts and ideas that is central to their lives. In everyday social interaction children utilize the surrounding culture's features and tools in their own ways to create individual and social realities. This use of culture in interaction reinforces the meanings of new ideas and concepts in their active minds. While most racial and ethnic concepts are initially conveyed from the outside, children internalize the concepts most completely when they use them in regular or recurring interactions where they can observe the effects that such usage has on other children and on adults. By using racialized language in social contexts, children develop their own individuality in relation to others, garner attention from other children and adults, and – at least in the case of the dominant group – develop a strong sense of power over others. The ›doing‹ of racial and ethnic matters is what embeds these things strongly in their minds« (Van Ausdale & Feagin 2001, p. 23).

As a sociologist (and educational scientist) a leaning towards an Eliasian approach of identity development allows to examine how a racially structured society is reflected and re-affirmed in the psyche of racial subjectivities and vice versa. In *The Civilizing Process* Elias writes:

> »The behaviour patterns of our society, imprinted on individuals from early childhood as kind of second nature and kept alert in them by a powerful and increasingly strictly organized social control, are to be explained, it has been shown, not in terms of general, ahistorical human purposes, but as something which has evolved from the totality of Western history, from the specific forms of behaviour that developed in its course and the forces of integration which transformed and propagated them. These patterns, like the whole control of our behaviour, like the structure of our psychological functions in general, are many-layered: in their formation and reproduction emotional impulses play their part no less than rational ones, drives and affects no less than ego functions. It has long been customary to explain the control to which individual behaviour is subject in our society as something essentially rational, founded solely on logical considerations. Here it has been seen differently« (Elias 2000, p. 441).

How is this *second nature,* this imprinting of racial behavioural patterns experienced and narrated by anti-racism and empowerment practitioners? Elias' work is crucial in exploring where a racialised psyche automatically constructs a racialised society with racialised bodies (to a certain extent without even being aware of it), as I argue (Dalal 2002). The group matrix, which is a central teaching of group analysis (Foulkes 1973) can be described as an *»intersubjective field within which the group operates, a ›field effect‹ which is primarily unconscious*

and, which interconnects all people in a network, in which they ›meet, communicate and interact‹. (Foulkes and Anthony, 2003: 26)« (Kinouani 2019, p. 64). Guilaine Kinouani applies in her essay *Difference, whiteness and the group analytic matrix: an integrated formulation* (2019) the Foulkesian group matrix concept onto whiteness and states:

> »A formulation of whiteness, as a significant group analytic variable may help analysts better understand how it may become reproduced within the key interlinked levels of the matrix including, 1) at micro or individual level: within the personal matrix; 2) at interactional level: within the dynamic matrix; 3) at macro level: within the foundation matrix and finally; 4) at the historico-symbolic level within the social unconscious« (Kinouani 2019, p. 66).

In other words, »Race« as a cultural discourse thus consciously and unconsciously shapes the lives of almost everyone in society, White and BIPOC. Lawrence Hirschfeld's studies with young children *»demonstrate that by three years of age, children have a much more adult-like understanding of race, and particularly racial essentialism, than previous scholars have credited them with«* (Hirschfeld 1997, p 83). Racialisation thus begins at a very early stage, at a stage of our development in which we are unable to make an informed choice as to whether or how we want to be subjected to this cultural/racial imprinting. In this way, »Race«, Whiteness and the racialised »Other« are socially constructed. Their reproduction is determined by a culture of non-perception, in which the positioning of people in society is recognised as common sense. Therefore, it could be argued that the lives of White people and BIPOC are formed by »Race«. This process of racial identity formation, how is it remembered? Before I delve into the memories of racialisation from the research participants, I explore the concepts of memory and remembering.

Forgetting, silencing and remembering

In a discussion that bell hooks had with Gloria Steinem at Eugene Lang College 2014 for the New School Event *bell hooks: Transgression* the Black feminist famously said: »Patriarchy has

no gender«[33]. There are numerous ways of understanding this statement, one could be that even in the absence of males* women* can uphold patriarchal structures or that men* can also be damaged by patriarchy, albeit differently from women* (or feminities). Similarly, the feminist Frigga Haug (1990) explored through memory work how women learn to be complicit in patriarchy, thereby questioning the perpetrator/victim dichotomy. Haug suggests that memory work is subjective that the process of remembering also relies on how the subject looks at the world they are imbedded into (Haug 1990, p. 7). Further Haug states that the subjects attempt to create a consistent and logical narrative about their self when they remember (Haug 1990, p. 42). This leaves into question how accurate our memories are, since the process of identity development is probably far from being coherent and logical. Most likely it is marred with contradictions, breaks and incomprehensible decisions. At the same time, the (racialised or gendered) structures surrounding the subject create a choice of memories which are favoured or unfavoured, a point that is underpinned in Connerton's work (2008). How then would the subject even be able to remember, if the pool of unfavourable memories is far more difficult to access? Haug asks a similar question and has a suggestion:

> »In fact, the constructedness of the social and within that of our selves plunges us into a dilemma if we want to research in and with our memories. The great unity of subject and object in research also means entanglement. We are not used to being socially aware; our prioritisation is already an ideological product. The very fact that we want to question valuations, re-evaluate, means that we somehow have to pull ourselves out of the swamp like Munchausen – by our own hair. Unlike him, however, we are many; the project can succeed with mutual support« [my own translation] (Haug 1990, p. 63).

How can entanglements of the subject in the net of cultural imprints and societal silences, be overcome by the subject that intends to liberate itself from it? To do this on its own seems rather difficult, as Haug describes it. Remembering and reflecting on the past can be supported by social spaces of shared experiences, where memories can be retrieved and reviewed from different angles.

In his essay *Seven Types of Forgetting* (2008) Paul Connerton explores various forms of failed memory retrieval. One type of forgetting that Connerton examines is »*Repressive*

[33] bell hooks mentions that patriarchy has no gender in this talk at about 10 minutes into the video: (https://blogs.newschool.edu/news/2014/10/bellhooksteachingtotransgress/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CPatriarchy%20has%20no%20gender%2C%20and,and%20end%20up%20in%20patriarchy.%E2%80%9D).

Erasure«: English people, who like to perceive themselves as conquerors of a vast (now lost) Empire, erased the fact that they were once colonised themselves by the Normans (Connerton 2008, p. 60). Similarly, this could be applied to racialised subject identities. In order to function in racial power structures, White people, who are constructed as most human in the racial hierarchy have erased the memory of being dehumanised themselves. It could also be perceived as a form of »*forgetting as humiliated silence*« (Connerton 2008, pp. 68-69) as the sometimes painful and shameful initiation into a racial culture with Whiteness at its centre (Thandeka 1999) could be understood as a process causing suffering that the subjectivated child, either White or BIPOC, prefers not to remember.

In his book *How Societies Remember* (1989) Connerton makes an interesting additional point on memory and bodies. Here Connerton argues that the cultivation of habits signifies the understanding of the body. In addition to this, Connerton argues that the body is not only discursively constructed, it is »*also socially constituted in the sense that it is culturally shaped in its actual practices and behaviour*« (Connerton 1989, p. 104). This may help to understand how the memory of racialisation is sedimented in the body. Racial power structures are therefore not only inscribed into our bodies, they are also embodied and transmitted with our body-language (Meulenbelt 1988, Weisbuch et Al. 2009). This could be relevant also in the non-verbal transmission of racial culture from generation to generation that makes the internalisation of racial power structures even less conscious and traceable (Volkan et Al. 2014).

In the very centre of my notion of empowerment stands the retrieving and addressing of mostly painful memories related to racial subjectivation. The importance of this retrieving lies in its capacity to allow the deconstruction of socio-psychological structures (beginning from within) of mostly denied and repressed racialising memories. It is these memories, which, *even if they may not be trauma themselves act very similar to trauma in their manifestations*. Remembering these memories allows us to understand how they shape our actions in the present and therefore opens the possibility of adjusting our behaviour to a more inclusive notion of humanness.

Michel-Rolph Trouillot's intriguing book *Silencing the Past* (1995) points out the importance of the notion of power within the perception of the Haitian Revolution amongst

Western historians, as well as the Haitian collective memory. According to Trouillot, historicity suffers from the dilemma of being conceptualised either positivist (meaning: scientific, discovering truths, factual, objective) or constructivist (meaning: narrative, constructing truths, fictitious, subjective), while the Haitian historian sees the »*truth*« somewhere in the middle (Trouillot 1995, pp. 4-6). This positivist/constructivist dilemma complicates the whole idea of remembering or memorising personal and particularly collective memories. If collective memories of racialisation processes are highly constructed, how can we claim them as true? The anti-racism or empowerment training experience, which I examine in the next chapter, attempts to create a safe space within which awareness of this racialisation process may be gained on a personal but also collective level. Without a clear concept of historicity, however, this personal examination might be futile as a mainly constructivist notion of history could fall into the trap of examining historical racial narratives without examining the contextual circumstances and the processes of production through which these narratives are formed.

As the moment where *silences* enter historical narratives, looking into the process of producing history is essential to understanding historicity (Trouillot 1995, p. 26). According to Trouillot these silences have different functions at certain historical stages. The silencing of the Haitian Revolution by Western historians was intended to deny Black people their humanness, as the acknowledgement of their revolution would have meant the acknowledgement of Black people as human beings with the capability, and therefore, also the right of self-determination (Trouillot 1995, pp. 95-107). During the Renaissance and Western colonial expansion, Europeans granted those perceived as Non-Europeans only a gradual humanness, beginning with White, Western European male, ending with Blacks and the rest in a confusing in-between (Trouillot 1995, p. 76). The strength, influence and agency of this narrative is also highlighted in the silence around the Haitian historical figure Sans Souci, who kept the spirit of the Haitian revolution with his eloquent guerrilla tactics alive, whilst many former Black revolutionaries had temporarily abandoned the project during the French counter invasion. The story of the Congolese Sans Souci is silenced because otherwise it would mean confronting unpleasant memories of racial hierarchies amongst Haitian revolutionaries (Trouillot 1995, p. 68). Anti-racism movements have the

potential danger of falling into the trap of constructing a harmonious racial history in order to promote unity. Is it not exactly for that reason that it is important to remember our personal racialisation processes, in order to become aware that we ourselves most likely did not live in racial harmony but rather reproduced a racial order as children (and also in other stages of our lives) and are thereby complicit in its pervasiveness?

There remains nonetheless a telling issue with Trouillot's work. The author writes that »*[r]emembering is not always a process of summoning representations of what happened*« (Trouillot 1995, p. 14). Memorising is not retrieving a fixed past, as past is just a position that stands in relation to the present. Past is not content and has no content (Trouillot 1995, p. 14) that can be retrieved via remembering. So, what do the research participants remember, when they share their personal stories of racialisation? Maybe that is exactly what the research participants narrate, a personal story, logical and coherent but not necessarily factual that explains to *them*, how they became racial subjects, who they were at some point in their life, which also explains who they are now? Having explored the concepts of racialisation, identity and memory, the following section examines these narratives of racial subjectivation and self.

Being racialised as White

The process of narrating a personal story is also very often a process of making meaning of those personal experiences (Phoenix 2008, p. 12). For example, the »small« or »big« story of racialisation becomes connected to the meta-narrative of the societal racial order (ibid.). This makes the context in which those personal narratives are developed even more important (ibid.). The narratives of the interviewees who participated in my research project were developed in the context of biographical anti-racism and empowerment work. *How do anti-racism and empowerment practitioners narrate their personal stories of racialisation?* Which meanings do they give to their own experiences?

Dre was one of the first people I interviewed for this thesis. He is a White male in his early 50s and works part-time as a Protestant minister. He is also acting secretary of Phoenix. He was with Phoenix from day one and was one of the first White trainees and later trainers in the early 90s. Later, around 2004 or 2005 he became less active as a trainer and got more and more into administrative tasks in Phoenix such as replying to emails, administering requests for training, planning and organising which trainers are available, and keeping a training schedule etcetera. Personally, Dre was the second person I met from the anti-racism and empowerment NGO Phoenix. He is a very tall, lean man, with a very open and friendly demeanour. The first time I met Dre, I was cold and distant towards him, simply because he is White. But I quickly grew fond of Dre, his critical reflexivity, his deep understanding of racism, his ability to express his thoughts in a very accessible manner. I was also impressed by his role as a family father, seeing – though from a distance of living in two separate parts of Germany – his shy children growing up into confident young adults.

When I asked him to tell me his story, about his personal racialisation process, he started with the following account:

> Dre: »Well, I know I ... I had picture books, where we have to colour them in. And I remember very well... um representations of people with grass skirts, which I loved to colour in. I remember... mud huts and so on, that was all in my colouring books. And I guess that was before primary school. So those are the oldest memories that I have, my colouring books. […] I remember quite a lot of cartoons. Classically, the cooking pot in which a white missionary sits, some with jokes like ›What's for lunch today‹ and that kind of thing. Those I think I saw those in my parents' TV-guide. Probably early, six, seven years old or so. Mickey Mouse, every day, […] Comics. [...] So the adventure stories of Donald Duck, Scrooge and his nephews Huey, Dewey and Louie in South America and Africa, which were always the highlights, which I always liked reading the most. And it was also very clear to me that I am located in South America or Africa, South America was very clear, as there were more representations of Native Americans, you know, feathered headdress and so on. The excursions for obtaining new raw materials or to steal raw materials that went to Africa, which I also recognised very clearly, by type of huts, through the grass skirts, arrows, animals, that was quite clear to me what this is« (Dre 11/07/2012-1 #00:14:04).

Dre then continues:

> »Of course, not at all critical, at this stage […]. You take it all in, you soak it all up. And that shapes your perception of the world. And clearly, I identified with the white ducks, [laughs] so rather White and duck then Black and human [laughs]. […] I was delighted when somehow the adventure was successful, against the poisonous arrows and the people at that time were not as politically correct than they are today, so they could not speak properly and were also more likely... to attack the White ducks, you know. And also defended actually what belonged to them, but... so that was absolutely formative, clearly. And what I also read uh, was Asterix and Obelix, all titles. My late brother and I, we have all the books there, due to this bond I guard them jealously, but of course the stupid pirates were only to be topped by the even more stupid Black lookout. With his giant lips and his mighty speech impediment he was again set apart. […] There was no one who had ever indicated that there was something wrong with these representations or something let's say very carefully, questionable. Nobody« (Dre 11/07/2012-1 #00:18:57).

Dre, who grew up in the late 60s and 70s in Germany remembers only very few personal encounters with BIPOC, in particular Black people. He does remember however how BIPOC were portrayed in his colouring books, TV-magazines, Mickey Mouse comics and in Asterix & Obelix. Many scholars of Cultural Studies such as Hall (1992) and Katharina Oguntoye, May Opitz & Dagmar Schultz (1992) have critically examined and analysed this imagery. The mostly Black Other is represented through grass skirts, mud huts, cannibalism, a wealth of untapped resources, poisonous arrows, broken language and stupidity. These representations become signifiers for primitivism, being uncivilised, violent, lack of proper speech and intelligence (Oguntoye et Al. 1992, p. 127). At the same time Whiteness is negotiated in the binary opposition to this imagery, personified either in the White missionary who is being prepared as food or the (White) ducks from the Disney comics, who the reader mostly identifies with (ibid.). In the mirror image of the racial »Other« Whiteness constructs itself as modern, civilised, peaceful, proper use of language and (cunning) intelligence (Oguntoye et. Al. 1992, p. 167). Moreover, the Mickey Mouse comics can be read as an introduction to imperialism, the White adventurous ducks overcome the resistance of the violent, primitive natives in order to rob them of their raw materials, their resources that they were not using anyway (Dorfmann & Mattalart 1971, Bolaffi 2003, p. 57). Dre describes how he, as a child, celebrated with the ducks, when they returned from their adventures successfully with riches stolen from the natives. He clearly states that he preferred being a White duck to being a BIPOC human. In addition, he describes, how he, as a child, soaked these images up like a sponge; there was no critical awareness, no adult who he could have talked to and who could have explained to him, how problematic this imagery was.

In other words, the White child is subjected to this racialised imagery from very early on. Children books and comics with racialised imagery are still very much prevalent and available for the children's and young people's cultural consumption (Mätschke 2016, Stock 2014). The racialised discourses of the primitive Other, but implicitly also of the civilised White people become inscribed at a very early age in the bodies and unconscious of the racialised subject (Rommelspacher 2009, p.30; Hirschfeld 1995; Holmes 1995; Boldaz-Hahn 2014). Can a child be able to protect itself from racialised imagery? Does not the child's

perspective on the world, on others but also on itself become racialised, like a racialised prism, that distorts how the child sees itself, White people and BIPOC? The Other only exists as a notion, only as a function, it does not act humanely, it does not speak a proper language (Ashcroft 2001, p. 319), the Other is less human and only needs to exist as an idea that helps the White subject in defining itself, particularly as superior, as more human as the racial Other.

At a different point in the interview, Dre describes the effects of this dehumanisation as follows:

> Dre: »I remember some forms where I perceived racialisation in the aftermath. That was ... so there is such a very unpleasant situation, which I remember well, because it recurred frequently. When I read newspaper in the morning, and I have begun very early to read newspaper, as a 10-year-old, and I read of an accident, and then went on reading and read that nobody, I'm gonna say now a little provocative, not one of us, so none of my group, with my current terminology, no White German was harmed or killed, then I felt a moment of relief. […] And at the same moment I felt a sense of bad conscience that you cannot think like that. And that happened to me for years like that. So I had this feeling of reassurance that none of us is, who is killed in this car accident, or whatever is written always in the newspaper, or bus accident, 40 dead, you will read in the heading and then you read, oh, it was in Turkey or, alas it was in Syria or wherever, […] and that has irritated me and that was long before the training, I perceived: well, it's not quite as bad, if it's not with us. If it's not in Germany, if no White German was harmed. But immediately, virtually a millisecond later, ups, what are you thinking, you must not think so. Um ... that was for me actually, if I so think about it, the first emotional access, without being able to reflect intellectually to the feeling you're somehow grown into this distinction, we and the others. And not just as a seemingly objective criterion, but certainly very subjective. You're attached a lot more to the »we« then to the »Other« […]. So, what happens in Africa, is not as bad as what happens in White Europe« (Dre 11/07/2012-1 #00:11:12).

Dre describes another very common phenomenon of the racialisation process. Through racialisation the empathy he feels with other human beings becomes selective. Dre describes how he feels more pain and loss, when the person or people in the news who suffered terrible accidents are White subjects. At the same time, Dre describes a feeling of relief, when the person or the people who died were BIPOC. Interestingly, perhaps through his Christian Protestant upbringing, the research participant also feels guilty and bad about this. Feeling guilty however, does not seem to change that Dre feels like this for a very long time. Butler also describes (2004) how the misrepresentation of the racial Other (in her books it is the Muslim Other) makes us mourn the death of BIPOC far less than the death of White people.

Dehumanisation is also the main topic in Judith Butler's essay *Precarious life* (2004). Using Levinas' philosophical concept of the face, Butler examines how the US American public was manipulated by the State through the media's selective representation of US military successes and a selective broadcasting before and during the Afghanistan war

(Butler 2004, p. 131). She summarises how images of young Afghan women dropping their veil were represented as a triumph, as a success in the colonial civilising mission (Butler 2004, p. 143). Butler discusses how the faces of Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein became iconographies of inhuman evil; and how images proving the disastrous impact on the civilians caused by this *mission civilisatrice* were withheld and censored in order to avoid public outrage and resistance to the war in Afghanistan (Butler 2004, p. 141). Butler explains the power of these mechanisms as follows:

> »These are two distinct forms of normative power: one operates through producing a symbolic identification of the face with the inhuman, foreclosing our apprehension of the human in the scene; the other works through radical effacement, so that there never was a human, there never was a life, and no murder has, therefore, ever taken place. In the first instance, something that has already emerged into the realm of appearances needs to be disputed as recognizably human; in the second instance, the public realm of appearance is itself constituted on the basis of the exclusion of that image« (Butler 2004, p. 147).

Butler further explores how those having or gaining the power of self-representation are most likely to be recognised as humans (Butler 2004, p. 141). This notion of recognition is also reflected in Dre's perception of the racial Other, whose deaths seem far less tragic, albeit not without feeling conflicted. What could this conflictedness mean? Why does Dre not just feel content about the way he perceives the racial Other? Could this be explained with his Christian values or could there be something else? Butler's use of Lévinasian theory paves the way for exploring those questions. Lévinas argued that a human subject can only understand their own humanity through the humanity of others (Lévinas 2003 [1972]). It could then also be argued that if the human subject dehumanises the other, they fail to understand their own humanness. Interestingly, Dre describes the moment, when he realises as a child, how he feels about the lives of the BIPOC humans, as shameful, as in his own words: »*you must not think so*« (Dre 11/07/2012-1 #00:11:12).

In a focus group I conducted, seven trainers and co-trainers,[34] also shared some of their memories related to racialisation. They mostly work in the political education sector with young people, one of them works as a social worker. Some, including Ryan, grew up in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR). I met Ryan for the first time when he was still facilitating workshops and training for young people who were planning to go abroad for a few months or a year. He joined Phoenix a short time before I moved back to

[34] 3 White women, 2 White men, two men who define themselves between White and BIPOC because of their roots in Eastern Europe.

Berlin and I got to know him more in the TTT (Train the Trainers/Trainees). He was in his 20s, usually with a very short beard on his face. There was a softness about him, his masculinity and his manners were very pleasant to be around. At some point Ryan crossed some boundaries, which caused tension in the TTT, but he redeemed himself over time.

When I asked the focus group to tell me their stories, Ryan recalls:

> Ryan: »I think in my case, it was an East-West thing, so I was socialised in the East and then in the West, that I in the East, when I think back, so it's of course from a current perspective, probably distorted but I had the feeling that I... I had little contact with POC people. I can remember none from my childhood in Dessau. The only people who were perceived as foreigners, were the Russian soldiers. I... I grew up right next to Russian barracks. And of course, it was somehow very martial. And there were just soldiers like that. And there were also many stereotypes against them, in everyday discourse. It was always clear as a child already, as a small child: ›Be careful!‹ […] But otherwise there were also these typical socialist racial images: ›There are different races and we are all brothers and sisters. But there are different races.‹ They were also in my children's books, Bummi for example. […] And always the three colours: yellow ... or? Yes: red, yellow, black and white« (Ryan, Focus Group, 11/01/2015-2 #00:21:12).

Ryan describes a perceived physical absence of BIPOC in the former East where he grew up. This is not unlikely, there were small numbers of BIPOC living in the GDR from other socialist countries such as Vietnam, Angola and Cuba (Slobodian 2015). The number of these mainly workers and BIPOC students was insignificant and many of them lived in accommodations isolated from the main White German population (ibid.). However, the presence of BIPOC is mostly irrelevant when it comes to racialisation, crucial is being in touch with the dominant discourses about racial Others, for example, through media representations (Graves 2007, pp. 299-301). Nevertheless, through the presence of the Russian soldiers who were stationed all over the former GDR, Ryan was already familiarised in his early childhood with an everyday discourse about a racial, strange and violent Other. Yes, they were soldiers, so their martialness seems intrinsic, but the everyday discourse about them seems to imply that even civilians, small children could be endangered by them, and therefore, it was paramount to be careful around them. Simultaneously, this discourse was in contradiction to a socialist ideal of a siblinghood of the »red, yellow, black and white« races, a »Race« theory which stands as a continuation of colonial racial theorists' thinking, such as that of Gobineau and Blumenbach. Gobineau's and Blumenbach's pseudoscientific »Race« theories were also adopted by Enlightenment thinkers such as Hegel and Kant, proclaiming the superiority of the White »Race« to the other »Races« (Eze 2007, pp. 38-40, pp. 109-112). As the former GDR understood itself as

antifascist, the colonial »Race« theories were seemingly stripped of their narrative of White supremacy and replaced by the idea of the »Races« living peacefully in social(ist) harmony (Slobodian 2015, p. 23). The colonial notion of the inferiority of BIPOC »Races« was succeeded by a racially, biologically, genetically different but equal thinking. Nevertheless, the notion of an essential racial other, that can be identified through whatever biological, racial or genetic features remains. It is only a small step from this essential difference to essential hierarchies (Slobodian 2015, pp. 26-27). After he fled with his family to the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in 1989, the remnants of these »Race« theories became less visible.

> Ryan: »And the exciting thing was that it was in ... in the West, it was different in the sense that there was not this discourse […] And there's been but then... all of a sudden then, I then grew up in Aix-La-Chapelle and there I had very little contact with POCs, Black people. It was the suburbs where I grew up, in my school, there were maybe three POCs or so. From 1600 people. […] Very little. And they were very visible. So, I do not know what they have experienced. But they're definitely..., it was clear that these are the POCs. And there the discourse was more like: ›Yes, in certain quarters of Aix-La-Chapelle you cannot go at certain times, because there are the Turks. The Turkish gangs are there.‹ I had never made any experience, never had any experience, but these were the discourses that in retrospect were different in the East, or in Dessau, at least, where I was. This indeed constructed a sense of otherness, thus: ›Somehow, these are strange, violent Others. With whom I've nothing to do. I do not want to have anything to do with them‹« (Ryan, Focus Group, 11/01/2015-2 #00:25:06).

The seemingly dangerous presence of the Russian soldiers, was replaced by the presence of the »Turkish gangs«, who made it unsafe to walk through certain areas of the town at night, a prejudice that was never verified or falsified by personal experience, as he complied with the dominant narrative of staying away from them.

Two different levels of racialisation become apparent here. The first one has to do with how to relate to human diversity. The socialist propaganda turned this relationship to people from other countries and cultures into a »Race« relationship (Bolaffi et al. 2003, p. 273). By employing race theories developed by Gobineau and many others, the difference between humans becomes naturalised and essentialised by grouping them into biological categories of »white, black, yellow and red races« (Banton 1998, p. 66). The socialist propaganda that attempts to evoke the notion of different but equal, nevertheless constructs the relationship between human beings into a racial relationship; it racialises the relationships and therefore all subjects within those relationships become racialised (Bolaffi et al. 2003, p. 273). The intention might be good, as in all people and cultures, no matter how different they are, should be respected, they are our siblings; but through racialising them,

the white subject becomes racialised as well. Between subject and other people stands the construct of »Race«. It is also fascinating how Ryan describes that when he fled to the West with the disintegration of the GDR, this type of racialising socialist propaganda was absent, but it was replaced by a different kind of »Other« with a seemingly different kind of concept of »Otherness«. Ryan describes how the discourse about the »racial« Other in West-Germany mainly evolved around the dangerous »Turks«. But »Turks« are not a »Race« as such, Turks are nationals of Turkey generally living in Turkey. So Turkishness is not so much seen as a nationality but rather as an ethnicity, which in the German context is often used as race because the cultural component is superseded by the biological or genetic element (Mandel 2008, pp. 311-325). If culture had a matter in the definition of those young people that were part of this gang, then they would have to be considered Turkish Germans, but they are not, they are »Turks«. And this racialised »Turk« is described in the dominant discourse amongst family and peers as dangerous, violent and strange that should better be avoided. In other words, as Fanon describes the People of Colour who came or originated from Turkey are othered and dehumanised (Fanon 1964, p. 42).

Which effects do these discourses have on the subject? In *Beyond the Masks: Race, Gender & Subjectivity* (1995) Amina Mama concludes:

> »This theorisation of subjectivity implies that the discursive movements […] are accompanied by psychodynamic processes within the individual and vice versa: psychodynamic processes have discursive (social and historical) content. In other words, there is a constant resonance between psychodynamics and social experience in the construction and reproduction of the individual's subjectivity. This means that both discourses (theorised as conveyors of history, culture and social meaning) and individual subjects are produced in a continuous dialectic, out of reverberations between historical-cultural and psychological conditions. Here we have a theory which transcends dualism because it conceptualises the individual and the social as being produced simultaneously. This is not to suggest that every individual change generates new discourses but that when individual changes are provoked by conditions that are widely experienced—such as those of race and gender—then these are more likely to become widespread, to gain social power and become discourses that convey culture and social meaning, or collective knowledges« (Mama 1995, p. 133).

Liz, was also part of the focus group. Liz is a White lesbian, who joined the TTT around the time I returned to Germany in 2011. Her racial literacy, cognitively and emotionally, was absolutely astounding to me. Her brain seemed in constant overdrive and sometimes she would struggle to express herself coherently when she felt nervous. This made her a bit socially awkward, but I really appreciated her perception on training process and internal processes in the organisation and became something like a mentor to her. Unfortunately,

due to subtle toxic masculinity in Phoenix, also in the TTT, and due to health reasons, Liz decided to take a break from Phoenix a few years ago and has not yet returned. She still remained friends with other members, including me.

Liz grew up in West Germany, and when I asked her to tell me her story, she described her first experience with racialisation as follows:

> Liz: »This topic: ›Do not play with the grubby children.‹ Because I'd like to start with that. So, my father is a pastor. My mother was trained as a teacher. […] She was, is depressed […] So, directly opposite our... on the corner of this community park, where our house was, just on the street opposite, was just a corner house, quite run down. And that was called the ›Turks' House‹. And what ... where the people actually came from, no idea, but that was always irrelevant. Everything was summarised under ›Turk‹. And that was just always like that. […]I was friends with a girl from this house. And she never wanted to, she'd totally felt inhibited to come to our plot. So, we always played on the road. And at some point I realised that. The white children of the neighbourhood, did not feel that way. […] And at some point I convinced her. […] [T]hen we just also played in our huge garden, this park that belonged to the church where we lived. Then at some point we had an encounter with their brothers or cousins or neighbourhood children. I don't know. In any case, they totally looked at her with huge eyes that she played with us. ›So, you are there on the other side?!‹ And then she said: ›Yes, you can also come here« Or asked me: »Can they also come here‹ And I: ›Yes, of course, they can also come here‹ And that was somehow a funny moment. […] And then we all played there. And we went back and forth. And then [laughs] sometime, so the mothers or aunts wanted to pick up their children. And those church grounds were too big… so that then they had to come on to the land, to take their children home. Or to look where they are, or something. […] That was, so to speak, the news that you can play there as well. And then they were just with us. There were then several women, the mothers, aunts or neighbours of the children. And they would just sit on our lawn. And it was summer and sit there and chat. […] My mother then, was totally confused, so (laughing): ›Huh? Why are so many people out there at once?‹ […] And then I said: ›Mom, they are really nice. Why don't you go there?‹ […] In any case, she went out of the house and they were totally kind to her, those other women. And then she totally relaxed. And my mother was never relaxed. And in fact she sat on the lawn, my mother... a gesture that she almost never does… cross-legged on the ground. And then they all laughed together. […] And that made me really happy« (Liz, Focus Group, 11/01/2015-3 #00:11:23).

As with Ryan, in Liz' narrative, the racial Other are the Turks. She is even aware, that it was unnecessary how the people defined themselves, potentially as Turkish, Kurdish, or Arab German. The rundown corner house they inhabited therefore was referred to as the »Turks' House«. The brown bodies of the racial Other thereby become all compounded under the term »Turk«. Fascinating in Liz' narrative is also that the White children seem to be able to move freely on the church premises that Liz and her family inhabit. The BIPOC children seem to be less able to do so, which Liz realised at some point, because one of her Turkish German friends does not want to come onto her land. How do the children learn, which (racial) spaces are available for them and which one's not? Recent critical social theorists argue that »*race and place are made in relation to one another*« (Murji & Picker 2019, p. 915). Liz' account highlights, how children are aware of the invisible borders of the racialised spaces and the spacialisation of »Race«. Liz convinces her Turkish German friend and her friends of Colour to join them on the church grounds, and in this moment, it seems that the invisible

racialised borders have been lifted and all children are allowed to play everywhere. This deracialisation of space even allows new encounters between the children's caretakers. Liz describes a beautiful and emotional encounter her White mother has with the mothers of the BIPOC children that are now playing on her grounds. Liz' mother who was very depressed was usually very withdrawn, quiet and unhappy. When the mother meets with the other parents, they treat her nicely, and it is almost as she becomes a different person, less inhibited, chatting and laughing. It seems like a very rare sight, which Liz talks about with a sense of happiness and sadness. For a few days, it seems like a curtain has been lifted, the quiet, silent house where nobody talks to each other is now a place full of life, with plenty of playmates ready at hand and even some other parents that her mother can socialise with. However, this deracialisation of space is only short lived, as Liz continues to narrate:

> Liz: »And then I remember that I went almost always running […] from elementary school, quickly home. Because I was hoping that when I get home, that it would be like this again. That the garden is full, and children playing and so forth... busy and stuff. Not like usual: ›I alone at home and no one says anything in the house‹ but playing outside and there are just a lot of people, etc. And then it actually was like that for a few days, I think, that I could come home and I then immediately go to play. And then, someday, I quickly ran home again and then there was no one. Nobody. So, the whole garden was empty. Ohh, and I had totally a funny feeling, because I immediately thought: ›Shit, […] something happened.‹ […] And then I asked my parents, because I wanted to know anyway: ›What happened? Why are they all gone?‹ And I immediately knew already, that they are not going to answer me. […] Actually, I knew immediately what had happened: My parents had told them that: ›This is not a public park. There have been complaints. You cannot just sit around‹ Something like that. So, I knew immediately that was exactly what had happened. Or someone else had said: ›What's going on in the church community garden? All these Turks hanging around there all the time. What's going on here?‹ And I never got an answer. But I'm sure that was exactly what happened. So that my father and my mother, although she was happy, obviously happy with chatting to them and spending time with them […], she supported that« (Liz, Focus Group, 11/01/2015-3 #00:12:22).

The moment of deracialisation *and of human encounter*, between the White and BIPOC children and parents is only fleeting. Liz returns to her house, realising that things have changed, have returned to the way they were before. The White German psychologist Ursula Wachendorfer also phrases this mechanism as *White people ensuring that White spaces remain White* (Wachendorfer 2005, pp. 530-539). When Liz demands answers to her question and wants to know what has happened exactly, the sole response from her parents is silence. The child is punished with this silence for daring to disturb and distort the colour lines that separate Whiteness from the others. This moment highlights how the taboo about racial issues are implemented at the same time with racial borders and turned into a humiliating silence (Connerton 2008, pp. 68-69). To assume, just because Liz was a child at that time,

that she is unaware of what racist processes enfold in front of her, is wrong. Liz knows or has a very clear idea of what has happened in that moment: somebody, presumably a White person came and complained to her father, the protestant minister, one of the leading figures of the (White) community, about the presence of the »Turkish« people on the church grounds. As long as White children play on the premises it is fine, as soon as BIPOC children play there, under the supervision of their parents, they are being told that it is not a »public space«, implying that they are not part of the (White) community which is allowed to move freely and make use of these grounds. They are not welcome in this community, they are disinvited from the premises, from the invitation given by the White child attempting to negotiate the racial boundaries. The previous racial and spatial order is maintained and reinforced. The racial Whiteness of the church grounds and garden is ensured by the White community and will not be undermined through the presence of BIPOC (Wachendorfer 2005, p. 534). The depressed mother, despite having enjoyed the human engagement with the BIPOC parents, falls in line and supports the father in clearing the grounds of the presence of the racial Others. She supports the exclusion of these people, although they had probably helped her in feeling less depressed and isolated. Racial integrity trumps the mental and emotional well-being of the White person. It also highlights how enforcing White spaces impedes White people to connect to BIPOC. Liz cried and had to take short breaks on a few occasions during this account even though this was not the first time she had shared it. Her tears and her pain were also an indicator, that being subjected to Whiteness even as a White child causes suffering and pain (Thandeka 2000, Miller 2015, p. 147).

Chi, also part of the focus group, remembered a similar racialised space in his hometown in southern Germany. Chi was of medium height, with dark long hair and usually bearded. He was skinny, but in a sporty way, and there was this non-threatening nervous energy about him. I got to know Chi, like Ryan and Milan in the context of political education, before he joined Phoenix. By the time of the interview in 2015, Chi and I had spent a lot of time together, since we both had children of similar age. When Chi expected his second child, he decided to leave the TTT, to focus more on his family.

Chi's parents were originally from Romania, his mother from a German speaking minority, the Transylvanian Saxons who lived for centuries in Transylvania. According to Chi Transylvanian Saxons are a very closed community, and marrying outside the community often resulted in being alienated or excluded from the family. In fact, Chi shared how one of his uncles, who got married to a Roma woman, got ostracised from the family and thereafter any sign of solidarity that Chi's mother may have shown with this brother meant possible withdrawal of love from the family. Chi's mother then moved to Germany, married, got divorced, re-married Chi's father. After the children were born, Chi's parents assured that the children would have German sounding names so that they would not suffer discrimination because of their Romanian roots, but also in order to re-gain the approval from the German Romanian family, since his mother had married an outsider:

> Chi: »I got a very German name which I think had a bit to do with this inner-familial pressure and withdrawal of love. It was somehow clear: ›We now came to Germany, the German children must have German names, everything must be washed white nicely‹. Yes, and then I also had to watch a bit somehow: ›What children I have in my class? What children I had a lot of contact with? In which groups of people was I hanging around? Which were out of the question?‹ And then again this separation after primary school that the entire POC kids who at the time for me were all somehow Turkish kids who naturally had all sorts of roots, from Lebanon or whatever that group was just called the ›Turks‹, just like that. So that was just always how we called them. And there was also a quarter, I'm talking about an 8,000-inhabitant village, in the end it was just a road crossing where just several families lived, which then somehow always was a little bit: ›Yes, that's kind of the ghetto‹ or whatever« (Chi, Focus Group 11/01/2015-2 #00:54:43).

Chi describes a very strong pressure to assimilate to a White Western culture, which he refers to as white-washing. The fear of love being withdrawn by the family as his mother had experienced in the Transylvanian Saxon community, is the same fear that guides him in kindergarten and primary school to ensure that he socialises with the »appropriate« children, meaning White. Gruen writes how the withdrawal of love becomes one of the first punishments a child experiences, which leads to further alienation and dehumanisation, in this case for overstepping racial boundaries by marrying a racial Outsider (the Roma woman married by Chi's uncle) and even showing solidarity with those who did (Chi's mother feeling empathetic with her brother who married the Roma woman) (Gruen 2001, p. 452). At a very early age, Chi learned to direct himself and the choice of playmates he makes to ensure that they fit into the »whitewashed« image his family is trying to project. Again, similar to Liz' narrative, all the BIPOC children are compounded under that term »Turks«.

It is a reoccurring theme in these accounts that the racial other is being made faceless, a non-human, and is given no agency in defining themselves (Melter 2006, pp. 62-63). After primary school, when Chi progressed to a grammar school, there were no more BIPOC children left for him to socialise with[35]. Nonetheless, Chi remembers the discourse about the »Turks« in the little village he grew up in. The area inhabited by BIPOC was referred to derogatorily as the »ghetto« making it sound shabby and dangerous. Here the discourse about a dangerous and violent racial Other returns in the image of the »Turk«. Chi describes the same dehumanisation of the racialised Turkish Other as Liz and Ryan did before (Fanon 1964, p. 42) and their narratives highlight how endemic racism is in the middle-classes, the centre of society (Zick 2019).

Milan shares a history similar to Chi's of migration from Eastern Europe. He is tall, muscular and sported a hipster beard for some time. Milan was a drama teacher and would make me laugh with his impression of a dialect from Swabia, where he had grown up. Like Chi, Milan recounts a similar feeling of conforming to a felt pressure of assimilation:

> Milan: »I went to kindergarten and it was definitely so that... there were kids from Turkey, from Italy, from Portugal. Those were the migrant families. I cannot remember now if there were Black children in kindergarten. I either can't remember or it is hidden somewhere. I do not know that. But what I know is... and I'm starting now more and more to analyse that again, even through a few hints of Chi. I have not played with them. Because they were the loud children. Those were the ones who made noise. These were those who were rude. That was... yes ... those who talked rough. Those who chatted to the girls in kindergarten, I remember that. And I would not play with those. On the one hand I wanted to play with them because somehow it was also cool. And from the outside it looked to me like: ›When they play with each other, then there is always fun.‹ And at the same time there was something that kept me away from them. A thought like: ›Ok, here... You will not be such a foreigner child but you want to be another foreigner child.‹ And I was mega-well behaved child already in kindergarten. Extremely well behaved. And all the chaos these other children made... I was rather one who, when they leave a mess, I was just the one who got to then somehow clean up all that stuff alone. (Laugh)
>
> Ryan: He still does that (all laughing)« (Milan, Focus Group 11/01/2015-2 #01:02:13).

When Milan arrived in southern Germany from Serbia at the age of three, he did not only perceive a difference in the cultural backgrounds of the children, he also perceived that some of them behaved differently from the White German children. He knew he was also a »foreigner child« as (German) BIPOC children were referred to in the 80s and early 90s. Very fascinating is the process that Milan describes of making a decision of what kind of a »foreigner child« he is going to be. Milan decides to become their opposite, not loud and

[35] The German school system maintains and amplifies social inequalities significantly (Schindler 2017). In particular Turkish German pupils are still disadvantaged by the German education system (Alba et Al. 2017).

rowdy, but quiet and well behaved. He assimilates to the expectation of a well-behaved child in order to not be associated with the »problematic« BIPOC children and confirms into a White norm of tameness and compliance, the dominant racial narrative. The social-psychological process of racialisation manifests itself here in face of the possible self that Milan is trying to avoid becoming (Nurius & Markus 1986; Renn 2012, p. 18), thereby limiting his choices of who he could be. Three or four-year-old Milan, when confronted with the choice of being perceived as White or a non-White foreigner, instinctively chooses Whiteness, highlighting how the assimilation to Whiteness functions through internalising its codes and core values (Kilomba 2008, p. 124).

> Milan: »And then we're out of Wangen, and moved to a small village, Emzell and wound up there with my Grandpa and his new wife or girlfriend, just to live for some time. In a house where above us was a Turkish family. And I could play with Mohammed and Emine out there, but I can only remember two or three times, in which where we were up in their flat. And we have lived there for several years. So that must have been because my parents obviously made sure of it. And my sister has now recently confirmed when I talked to her about it a few days ago, that my parents made sure that we did not have contact with these ... with the Turkish family. And that was ... that was kind of strange because I do not understand until now why, why, why« (Milan, Focus Group 11/01/2015-2 #01:07:41).

Even when they moved to a new neighbourhood and were neighbours to a Turkish German family who had children their age, the parents ensured that Milan and his sister do not become close friends with them. In Milan's narrative, we encounter clearly defined colour lines that the parents try to uphold and the children adapt to. Again, it is the dependency of the child to its parents, its fear of losing their love and care that is used here to uphold these racial barriers (Gruen 2000, p. 14). Milan's perception of the past also shows how distraught he feels about it, how painful this experience is to him. He asks himself many times »why« his parents did that to him, highlighting also the pain a person suffers, being subjected to Whiteness.

Another account of Dre highlights the violence that comes along with racialisation processes. As a teenager, Dre had a conversation with his father about the N-word[36]:

> Dre: »I grew up in a protestant congregation. There were, of course, critical thinkers. And we also knew so to speak, what is politically correct and not politically correct. We knew of course that word ›negro‹ is not correct. And I remember very well a quarrel with my father, who was born in 1937 and grew up in a very different situation, he would naturally still speak of ›Negroes‹. And I told him at the age of 16, well before the training: ›Listen, this is unacceptable but that is abusive language‹. And my father then responded to me with an immense vehemence

[36] The word »Neger_in« in Germany has the double meaning of »negro« and »nigger« (Arndt 2011, p. 653-657). I chose to translate it here as the former.

> that I did not know from him. So, I actually never had stress with my father, really never, we've actually always had a good relationship. But in this a situation, it completely escalated, when I said: ›Hey Dad, that's wrong what you're saying‹. And so, at the age of 16 you dare indeed some things and he has really defending it aggressively. And I remember very well, also as a form of violence, which escalated means, we actually had a physical altercation. The only time in my whole life that we actually had a physically altercation. And it was only about, can you say that word or not. And he, with all his authority, and he did not hurt me, but he actually raised his hand against the 16-year-old son, because I said that what he was ... that word that he uses must not be said. And he defended it. And that impressed me, really still, when I think about it. These are so ... so highlights I would not say rather low points in life, that remain somewhere, even with a bad memory. I mean, there I experienced the violence of racism through cultural imprinting in my family situation and I experienced a situation that I never had before with my father. No other argument ever really escalated. [...] No other situation was comparable with that one and we never talked about it again afterwards« (Dre 11/07/2012-1 #00:08:04).

Dre touches upon a public debate here that had its peak in German media around 2012-13: whether it is correct to refer to Black people using the N-word. Dre has this conversation with his father when he was 16, around the late '70s, and the debate escalates quickly. Dre tries to convince his father that the use of the N-word is wrong. His father, who was born in 1937, meaning in his early years he must have been subjected to drastically hyper-racialising Nazi-propaganda, defends the use of this derogatory term. However, at some point the discussion becomes even more heated and Dre and his father have their first and only physical fight over the expression. On some level there is the dynamic of the teenager questioning the parent's authority, to which the father responds with raising the pressure, in the end physically. It is still interesting, that the discussion about this racialising expression seems to be the only physical fight the White teenaged son has with his White parent. Symbolically, the teenager questions the defining power of Whiteness. The N-word has been used in Germany as a derogatory term for centuries in the colonial language to locate Black people in a certain position within society (Kilomba 2008, pp. 94-97). The teenager exclaims that this practice is wrong, the father disagrees and starts to physically defend the defining power of Whiteness. Symbolically the father turns into a guardian of a racialising language saying through his violent action that Whiteness should under no circumstances let go of the power of defining the racialised Other. Could the violence that the White father subjects his White child to be the same symbolical violence the White father experienced as a child when he was initiated into racialised (Nazi/White supremacist) discourses? Maybe the father never reflected upon his own racialisation process and was therefore more likely to subject his own children to the same violence unconsciously. In regard to (racial) subjectivation and the unconscious Amina Mama (1995) writes:

> »At the intrapsychic level, however, the need for constant reaffirmation can be attributed to the fact that the individual never entirely jettisons earlier positions. Rather it would seem that the individual is in some sense the sum of all the positions (discursive and psychodynamic) that he or she has ever been in. Even if nothing is ever absolutely forgotten—and we are made up of all the former selves we have been in our personal history—clearly not all these positions continuously coexist at the same level of our subjective experience. This is where we need a theory of the unconscious. Subjectivity can then be conceptualised as being multilayered, with deeper levels that are less accessible to the conscious mind containing material that has been repressed, either with the passage of time and the constant laying down of new material, or because the material is anxiety-provoking, a sense of unease having been the initial cause of its being split off and repressed« (Mama 1995, p. 134).

Mama further states:

> »This observation concurs with psychodynamic theory, since according to this, splitting and repression does not eliminate the rejected aspects of one's past object relations. Even the projective processes provide no final solution. Instead, repressed material, particularly when associated with high levels of emotion or anxiety, continues to affect individuals, and this can be observed in the course of their relationships with other people« (Mama 1995, p. 134).

The situation, which Dre describes sadly as one of the lowest points of his relationship to his father, remains a taboo. It never reoccurred and they never spoke about that situation again. It was pushed into the realm of the unspeakable, probably similar to the father's own racial subjectivation. Mama concurs that the subject's repressed past is not gone, but it has an impact on the subject's affects, in the way, how the subject relates to others. In the case of Dre's father, the emotions that came to front in the discussion of the use of a derogatory racialising word, were expressed in physical violence.

The fight could also have been about the moral authority the teenaged son claims in that moment. Dre even said it himself at some point in the interview:

> Dre: »This discussion about the N-word, it is not a lot, just the question can you use a word or not. Not more. It is just a moral lead, a kind of moral finger pointing, it is not about questioning a system of thinking« (Dre 11/07/2012-1 #00:18:57).

Dre in retrospect questions his own motivation as a teenager in starting this discussion. He says that moral reasons or simply political correctness were not sufficient to explain why it would be necessary to stop using the term. More so, Dre sees the use of the word as related to a system of thinking. Elias viewed language as »*intimately bound up with experience: that language forms and constrains one's experience – not only of the internal but also of the psychological world*« and »*by examining the structures of* language *and* society*, we discover something about the structures of the emotions and psyche*« (Dalal 2002, p. 135). In other words, if the language of the society we live in is racialised then so will be our thinking and vice versa. The racialised language is signified in Dre's example with the use of the N-word. Can moral

reasons or political correctness suffice in changing this? How can a de-racialisation of our thoughts look like that could result in de-racialising our language? The de-racialisation of our language will most likely help and accelerate the process of de-racialising our thinking. How is it possible for the racialised subject to understand what the personal racialisation processes did to them mentally, emotionally, and physically? What almost all the narratives of the White research participants have in common is the suffering they express. To the White subject, racial subjectivation does not seem to appear like a pleasant experience. On the contrary, it is in most narratives of the research subjects experienced as something wounding, painful, scarring. Some of the research participants even cried, whilst they were sharing their narratives, expressing sadness, and shame. Why do the research participants remember their personal racial subjectivation in such a painful way? Is it possible that in a Lévinasian sense, the humanity denied to the other, reflects the painful dehumanisation of the (White) self? In regard to the narratives shared by the White anti-racism practitioners, I argue that racialisation constitutes suffering, inflicted through racialisation processes that could also be viewed a form of de-humanisation to the White subject**.** Having explored the narratives of the White research participants, the following section looks into the narratives of the BIPOC research participants.

Being racialised as Black/Person of Colour

> »The torturer is the black man, Satan is black, one talks of shadows, when one is dirty one is black – whether one is thinking of physical dirtiness or of moral dirtiness. It would be astonishing, if the trouble were taken to bring them all together, to see the vast number of expressions that make the black man the equivalent of sin. In Europe, whether concretely or symbolically, the black man stands for the bad side of the character. As long as one cannot understand this, one is doomed to talk in circles about the ›black problem‹. Blackness, darkness, shadow, shades, blacken someone's reputation« (Fanon 1967, p. 189).
>
> »The man who adores the Negro is as ›sick‹ as the man who abominates him« (Fanon 1967, p. 8).

Having looked into the formation of White racialised subjects, I will know continue to examine the racialisation processes of BIPOC. Kabera is a Black psychologist in his early thirties who lives in Hamburg. He joined Phoenix a little after my brother and I in 2004 and has been a co-trainer for a long time. I felt that I really saw Kabera mature over the years from a sometimes a bit cocky psychology student to a settled family father and psychologist. Despite his maturity, Kabera has a great sense of humour, which I always appreciated about him, and also the willingness to continuously develop himself. I have also come to know Kabera's White mother, whom Kabera talks about in the following section. I occasionally worked closely with Kabera's mother and came to respect her as a very honest and reflected person. When I asked Kabera about his story, he began an account related to his conception:

> Kabera: My mother, I think that's my explanation, grew up in the Africa Estate in Kassel. Togo Street, Wissmann[37] Road, and I think she grew up as an only child so to speak, has this big loneliness theme in her life. I believe that Africa was for her the Promised Land, this holy land. [...] She grew up in the Africa Estate and therefore let all her projections on Africa loose. Without checking actually what Africa means, what are the different countries in Africa, which cultures prevail there […]. Exactly, she completely neglected to do this. My nasty presumption would be, my mother has even initiated it that my father was gone before I was born. Because my mother was satisfied that she had me as living proof […] that she accomplished not to be white anymore. So, she put a black baby into the world, and thus then ex-positioned herself, she had an exceptional position and was able to live her otherness through me. The desire to be different and with a black baby, she achieved that. Because she is indeed reflected in the symbiosis with the baby. Exactly, that's I think this story, so to speak, where I realize I've already been abused very early or my skin colour was abused. (Kabera 14/04/2012-2 #00:05:15)

Kabera feels that, already, his conception symbolizes a kind of abuse. His mother, who got obsessed with Africa at an early age, sought a Black man to have a (mixed-raced) child with him. In Kabera's perspective, his biological father soon became irrelevant to the White mother, as she was now (for some time even physically) unified through her Black child with her fantasy or fetish of Africa. In other words, Kabera's biological father is reduced to a form of personification of Africa, »donating« his essence, his Blackness, his Africanness,

[37] Wissmann was a brutal colonial officer and later governor of German East Africa during Germany's colonial project before World War I (Bechhaus-Gerst 2019).

to the White mother, who attempts to step out of Whiteness. In a way, she also does become ex-positioned of being White, because her being a White mother of a Black child could be considered as »Race« treason (Ware & Back 2002, p. 167). Vron Ware and Les Back describe, how »*the visual image of the race traitor is invariably the white woman clutching a dark skinned baby. Race in this context, can be understood as embodiment and containment*« (Ware & Back 2002, p. 167). However, Kabera's mother still remains White, her Whiteness is highlighted in the way she uses Kabera and his biological father. Kabera as Black child and his Black biological father cease to be people, they both become tools for the White Mother to exalt herself out of the commonality of Whiteness. After the conception of the Black child the Black biological father even becomes replaceable, the Black child suffices as a way of being exceptional. This functionalisation of Blackness is, where Kabera sees the abusive moment in the relationship to his mother.

Kabera assumes that his exposing response to the question of »Where are you from« is related to the way his skin colour was functionalised as a child. His reaction to this question highlights for him his own suffering caused by the mother's early behaviour:

> Kabera: »And I can remember when people asked me where I'm from, I told them my whole life story, with different fathers, with Nigeria, exactly this way, as sure as death and taxes. And I completely emptied myself. I was colonially overexploited so to say. My story was not with me, but my story was available for everyone. And I realised that was just hurtful. Like an animal in the zoo with three ears« (Kabera 14/04/2012-3 #00:06:15).

The perception of Kabera's Blackness in Germany makes him prone to being asked about his roots (Sow 2008, p. 252). The basic paradigm that Germanness equals Whiteness is still very prevalent in Germany (ibid.). Asking BIPOC where they are from and feeling unsatisfied with the answer of a city or town in Germany often leads to the second question »*but where are you* really *from*« [my own emphasis] (Sow 2008, pp. 252-253) implying that BIPOC cannot *really* be from Germany. This has also been considered a form of symbolic de-naturalisation (Kilomba 2006, pp. 64-68). As a child, this question becomes like a kind of ritual to Kabera. He always shares his life story, sometimes to complete strangers that ask him that question. At the same time, Kabera feels that this story was not his, as he made this intimate part of himself so readily available for everyone. In reference to Fanon Kilomba describes it as the BIPOC subject being »*forced to develop a relationship to the self and give a*

performance of the self that has been scripted by the colonizer, producing in oneself the internally divided condition of depersonalization« (Kilomba 2006, p. 68). The racialisation of the BIPOC subjects, in Kabera's case on one side through the circumstances of his conception on the other through the colonial exploitation of his life story, puts them into a dehumanised state of consciousness in which racialised subjects feel like non-persons, non-human and detached from themselves and from reality. The dehumanising experience is also emphasised in Kabera's description of his hurtful experience: »*like an animal in the zoo with three ears*« (Kabera 14/04/2012-3 #00:06:15), a combination of being a displayed, bizarre, trapped animal made available for an audience to be looked at. The human, which is not fully human, but a weird inhuman/human hybrid, turns in the process of racialisation into a *grotesque* racial Other (Cassuto 1997, pp. 22-24).

How early this racialisation process starts is highlighted in Nana's account of her first memory of racial subjection. Nana and I joined Phoenix about the same time around 2001/2002. We became friends very quickly and had some epic train rides from Berlin to Duisburg and back before I moved to the UK. Even after my return from London, we just picked up where we left off. We also became parents around the same time. In the last couple of years Nana felt increasingly alienated on the board of Phoenix. An initial effort of extending the board in 2015 was an attempt to heal the growing rift in the board, by creating a greater gender balance, but the extended board was never sanctioned and had little effect. Although this was recently changed and a new more intersectional extended board became part of a new structure in Phoenix, Nana decided to leave the board but still remain in Phoenix. Nana is a psychiatrist, who grew up in Ghana, Botswana and Namibia. In her late teenage years, she moved by herself to Germany to study Medicine. She became the first (Black) female Phoenix trainer around 2004. Nana remembers the early days in her kindergarten in Ghana, when she was age three:

> Nana: »Looking back to Ghana, when… I think, my first sense of being a race goes back as far as the age of three. […] I remember in my preschool, like, you know, kindergarten, I had this teacher, Mrs. Crimson, she was from England and she had married a Ghanaian. So, she was teaching in preschool, I was three, three and a half years old. And when I was introduced into this preschool, I came to her class. And I remember that she sat me at the back. She was a white woman. […] Because she was white, and because she was English, like, most of the white kids in the school were in her class. So, all the white kids were sitting in front, and the black kids were sitting in the back. […] I remember that, because it was the first, first day that my parents took me to school. […] And I had the feeling, that being at this school, like, for my whole life. It was so terrible. I just wanted to go away. And I remember that all the kids had to draw something. […] And then, first the white kids would get the chance to pick up the kind of crayons they wanna have. And the rest, like the broken ones, the white kids don't want… that's

> when we were, like, the black kids were allowed to. So, I remember that. And at that time, I didn't understand. I just had the feeling: ›I shouldn't be like the black kids‹. But I understood at the age of three, I understood, that it had something to do with being black. Because it was only the black kids, who were not allowed to choose the crayons, like, as first choice. So, it was like: ›We got the rest‹ (Nana 04/08/2012-2 #00:05:19).

Even though Nana's account is located in Ghana and not in Germany, it highlights how early children get a sense of racialisation processes. At the age of three, Nana is already aware that her White teacher treats the children differently, and that it is related to skin colour. This early awareness of racialised situations is not unusual and confirms research showing that children start getting a sense of skin colour at the age of two, and a sense of hierarchy amongst the skin colours at the age of four (Quintana 1998). The differences in how the White English teacher treats the children are very blatant. The White children have first choice and get to choose the crayons of their liking, the Black children have to make do with the mostly broken crayons left by the White children. Nana also expresses less a sense of injustice but more a sense of not wanting to be Black. This changed for a brief period, when Nana got a different teacher, a Black teacher:

> Nana: »And also, when she was sick, and I was very happy, when she was sick, or when she went on holiday in England, then we had another teacher. It was a black Ghanaian teacher. And then, I remember, I drew my first apple. It was an apple. It was a red one. And I was allowed to choose […] a red crayon. And I drew a big apple. It was so beautiful. And it was so perfect, because I was a bit like, you know, (laughs) doing everything like perfect. And there was… I was four, and she was like: ›Wow!‹, like, the fine motor skills were so good. And then she pasted my apple on the wall. And I got a star. So, I loved her, you know. And I told my mom, I want to be in her class« (Nana 04/08/2012-2 #00:06:27).

Once the White teacher is gone and replaced by a Black teacher, who does not seem to discriminate the children on the basis of skin colour, the Black child blossoms, excelling in its performance and receiving high praise for it. Unfortunately, the time with the Black teacher is only limited:

> Nana: »But, Mrs. Crimson came back from holiday and I had to go back to her class. And so, I hated, I hated preschool. […] And also in her class, we had a piano. And the black kids were not allowed to play on the piano. But the white kids, they could jump around. You know, that was one thing, which I recognized immediately the white kids were allowed to move. Like, they had the freedom to move. Also, when she was teaching, like, she was telling us something, a story or reading to us, I don´t know, Snow-White or whatever, she would read to us poems. And she would read to us these fairy-tale stories. And while she was reading, we had to sit still. And not make any noise. But the white kids will move around. They'd move around, they will go to the piano and maybe press some note or something like that. So, this was something, that I would not say at that time I understood it was racism. I did not know, what it was, white or black. But I understood at that time, that it has something to do with my colour. Because it was only the kids, who had my skin colour who had to sit at the back and sit still, the whole, whole, whole time and wait for their parents to come and pick them up. And the white kids were allowed to move around. And they were allowed to go on the swings and play on the piano. And choose the colour of crayons. So, this is for me a very vivid picture. I will never forget that. I remember exactly where I sat in that room. […] I remember her face. I remember the pictures I drew. My preschool time is very vivid in my mind. And I hated it« (Nana 04/08/2012-2 #00:09:31).

The White children are allowed to play the piano, the Black children are not allowed to play the piano. The White children are allowed to move freely, when a story is being told or when they wait for their parents, the Black children have to sit on their seats and remain quiet. The scenario Nana describes resembles a lot Discrimination Day, an experimental day where 3rd grade teacher Jane Elliott divided her class (which consisted of White children solely) into a group of brown-eyed pupils and blue-eyed pupils after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968 (Peters 1987). In *A Class Divided* (1987) the author describes how she came into the class and announced the superiority of the brown-eyed children, then the brown-eyed children were given certain privileges such as second helpings at lunch, drink water from the fountain as usual, five minutes extra recess et cetera, all things that were denied to the blue-eyed children (Peters 1987, pp. 22-23). The experiment had an immediate impact on the children, their body language, moods and their academic performances changed (ibid.). Those favoured by the experiment experienced a boost in their mood and performance, their postures straightened up, their body language signalling pride and a sense of security (ibid). The performance and the mood of the children that were discriminated immediately deteriorated, their postures slumped, their body language signalled defeat and a sense of insecurity (Peters 1987 pp 23-25). The next day she would change the privileged and discriminated group with similar results (ibid). Elliott's experiment only lasted for a few days and she later reflected with the class about the effects the experiment had on them (ibid.). Her experience and the results of the experimental discrimination day inspired her to later develop her Blue-Eyed-Brown-Eyed-training, widely known in the diversity industry (ibid.).

Elliott's experiment raises a couple of interesting questions, in particular when related to Nana's account. Nana's preschool teacher never openly exclaimed the superiority of the White children and the inferiority of the Black children, but her actions did. Nana repeats very often that she remembers it vividly and that, even as a child, she could sense a kind of injustice and she also sensed that it was somehow related to skin colour. What would be the effects for children subjected to this kind of treatment not for several days but for years? Elliott spoke with her class about the different experiences and how they were related to other experiences of discrimination such as racism. What if the differential treatment of

the children would never be spoken about and reflected upon, what if it remained a taboo? In *Silencing the Past* (1995) Trouillot argues:

> »I also want to reject both the naive proposition that we are prisoners of our past and the pernicious suggestion that history is whatever we make of it. History is the fruit of power, but power itself is never so transparent that its analysis becomes superfluous. The ultimate mark of power is its invisibility; the ultimate challenge, the exposition of its roots« (Trouillot 1995, p. XIX).

Several studies have highlighted how racial micro aggressions or even mentioning to BIPOC students their stereotypical underachievement in education leads to a deterioration of their academic performance (Steele & Aronson 1995). Next to the differential treatment of BIPOC students of Colour by White teachers (Bonefeld & Dickhäuser 2018), this could also be a potential indicator why BIPOC students underperform in the German education system. What about the White students though? How much do they start to depend on the security given to them through racialisation that they are superior in their (academic) performance to BIPOC? And what happens when they are made aware of their dependency on those over-empowering elements of their racialisation, when their sense of security in relation to the racial order is challenged? As James Baldwin writes in *Notes of a Native Son* (1955) »*[i[t must be remembered that the oppressed and the oppressor are bound together within the same society; they accept the same criteria, they share the same beliefs, they both alike depend on the same reality*« (Baldwin 1955, p. 15). However, Nana's account of her first memory of racialisation highlights how early the differential racial treatment of children begins, how early they are being initiated into a racial culture that has Whiteness at its centre. It highlights how early the children begin to view each other through a racialised lens, a lens that superimposes a potential human relationship they could have to each other. Instead, their relationship becomes a racial relationship (Banton 2014, p. 26).

In the following passage, Kabera describes how the racial relationship changes when it progresses from childhood to puberty:

> Kabera: »And then […] I went to a boarding school. I then met someone at boarding school, who came from Liberia […]. And through him I experienced, so to speak, what it means to be a Black man. He showed me racism. So, I can still remember exactly, he was like a personal coach. He showed me situations, where White people were bumping into one to establish contact. […] And I've always thought that they are stupid, or they stagger, right. And then he showed me one time and he walked along somewhere and then someone bumped into him and ›Hi‹, ›Hello‹ and they were talking at once. And then people wanted something from him. And then I also noticed that he told different stories to different people. Right, so he played with it so to speak. He borrowed money from them, he got paid for the stories, and he didn't return the money to them. And people also knew that they would not get their money back, but he did it with such ease. He knew what it was about, they knew what it was about. The tragic thing is that is, he became psychotic. He did not experience racism simply, but he smelled, breathed, perceived it, so... was highly sensitive for that. And I think, as a theory, he did not want to be part of this

> society, knew that if he became part of it, he is vulnerable. And as long as he moves outside of it, he is untouchable, he is not vulnerable. With him, so to speak, I went this way for some time. And then it developed from this, I'll call it prepubertal racism experience where I was just exoticised that then at puberty, the experience of violence became a part. That I was as it were no longer seen as Black sweet baby, but as a Black dangerous man, where people were freaking out and wanted to beat me up, for no apparent reason« (Kabera 14/04/2012-3 #00:08:57).

In secondary school Kabera meets a young Black man, who is older than him. This person becomes like Kabera's mentor, showing him a way of how to navigate through a racialised German society. The mentor shows Kabera how he can manipulate the racial encounter between him and White people to his favour. The mentor demonstrates to Kabera, that White people bumping into a Black man may not be accidental but are sometimes an attempt to establish contact with the Black person. The mentor than responds to this approach and begins a degage conversation with the White person. Kabera describes, how he observes the different stories his mentor uses with different people, mostly with the aim of »borrowing« money, which he never returns and also does not intend to return. In other words, the mentor utilises the projections that are being put on him as a Black man by the White person and feeds the White person's desire of being literally *in touch* with an imagined Blackness. Additionally, the mentor charges the White person for their »service« so to speak; he knows, that they know that he is a crook, a swindler, and that they will never get their money back, but admitting that would be admitting their own racism and admitting that they only initialised contact with him because he is Black in the first place. So knowingly the White person lets the racial stereotype of the fraudulent encounter with a Black person play out, so that the projection, the prejudice of the dishonest Black man becomes an experienced reality. Another reading of the situation could also be that the White person is so aware of their racial stereotype that they counteract it by trusting a complete stranger, only because he is Black. Either way, »*[t]here are two ways to dehumanize: the first is to strip people of all virtue; the second is to cleanse them of all sins*« (Emirbayer & Desmond 2015, p. 46). Kabera's mentor is aware of all this and uses the negative or positive notions that are put on him as a Black man in order to financially benefit from them. However, the mentor's manipulation of the White system may leave him economically empowered for a short time, but mentally, his actions do not challenge the dehumanising projections that he is constantly confronted with in those situations. On the contrary, he constantly feeds the disempowering capacity of those projections in him and in his White counterpart, which, not surprisingly,

leads to his mental deterioration, the psychosis. This also highlights the issue in racialised societies that BIPOC and Migrants in Germany are overrepresented in mental homes or psychiatric care (Künzler et Al. 2004; Lay et Al. 2005; Morgan et Al. 2004). As Kabera analyses the tragic situation, his mentor's attempts to navigate the racialised society as a constant intangible and invulnerable outsider manipulating the system to his assumed benefit, end in the disintegration of the self. Kabera's account finishes with him talking about the shift of how he is perceived as a Black child by the White society, as cute and cuddly, and how this perception ends, the moment he becomes a teenager, where he is perceived as a violent and dangerous (sexual) threat (Dillard 2016; Dietze 2013, p. 122). The White German anthropologist Walter Kirchner, who published a study of mixed-raced children in Germany in 1952 wrote, »*[a]s far as racial factors are concerned, we can assume that the advance in development demonstrated by mulatto children will probably stop at puberty. Intellectual ability in particular should remain moderate, according to available studies of American Negro half-breeds. By the same token, that the strong tendency to be ruled by physical urges, as shown in the mulatto children, will remain present as a negroid racial trait*« [my own translation] (Kirchner 1952, p. 62). This study, which was published *after* 1945, not only highlights the continuities of racial thinking in post-Nazi-Germany (Chin et Al. 2009), but also how »Race« and sexuality are bound to each other. With sexual maturity the Black child now becomes a Black man incapable of controlling his physical urges. The binary opposition of the controlled, moderate White Westerner is implicit in this racialising stereotype (Ashcroft 2000, pp. 19-20).

Can, the only Turkish German research participant, shared a similar shift in the way he was experienced in childhood and early teenage years. Can was in his mid-twenties during the interview and lived in the same city as Fagbola. He was close friends with Fagbola's sons and kind of grew into Phoenix. I immediately took a liking to Can, the first time I met him. He was a bit of a Johnny Depp lookalike and he was also an Anatolian German Alevi, like my brother and me. When I asked Can to tell me his story, he first shared:

> Can: »My primary school teacher used to call me Pasha: ›You are a little pasha, at home you are always allowed to do anything‹« (Can 10/07/2012, #00:18:41).

Can describes how he was perceived by his primary school teacher, who saw him as a person who was given unlimited freedom at home. The perception and the naming as a pasha, a person who was a high official in the Ottoman empire, is very common (and very wrong) amongst teachers in Germany, who assume that in particular Turkish German boys (or Muslim boys in general) are tremendously spoilt by their parents (Rühle 2015, p. 320). However, this perception of the cute little prince in primary school shifts once the Turkish German boy gets older. Can narrates his experience as follows:

> Can: »I completely disregarded an experiences that I only became aware of later, my judo teacher, who said to me at age eleven: ›Listen, you're Turkish, you have to knock your opponent off the mat properly, you have to be aggressive, don't you remember, the soldiers outside Vienna, how they were?‹ I had no clue what he was talking about, I had to ask my mother: What kind of soldiers outside Vienna? What did they do?« (Can 10/07/2012, #00:11:14).

Stereotypes of Turkish German men reduce them to aggressive and authoritarian beings, oppressing their women, killing in the name of honour and utterly rejecting Western modern liberal values (Spohn 2002, p. 442). In Can's story, his judo teacher tries to encourage him to be more aggressive (since Can does not seem to fit into the stereotype), by reminding him of the Ottoman soldiers who got as far as Vienna in their quest to conquer Europe, assuming that their history was still alive in him. In both encounters, the encounter with his primary teacher and his judo teacher, Can is not perceived as an individual but through the lens of racial stereotypes, as either a spoiled Turkish macho in the making or as someone who has to unleash the Ottoman beast within him. That Can as an Anatolian Alevi probably has very little connection to the Ottomans is irrelevant. His perceived Turkishness suffices for both teachers to draw the connections to his assumed cultural heritage.

There is one more story though, which sets Can aside from the two other Black research participants:

> Can: »Or my primary school teacher, for whom I had a lot of respect, that was Mr. Bracke and the director of the school and he thought a lot of me, so he liked me and always said that I reminded him of a Umut he once had and who is now studying too, and that he sees that in me now too. And that was such an encouragement, very early on, on the one hand, but also someone who shaped me in a very specific topic, because when we looked at the world map, he said: ›Here, Africa, the people there are poor, they are all poor, because God has punished them‹. It was something biblical too, I can no longer reconstruct it. ›But God punished them, that's why they are poor and black and still have to suffer and have diseases and all these things, God did that to them‹« (Can 10/07/2012, #00:12:13).

Can's narrative highlights the simultaneity of empowerment and disempowerment. On one side his teacher empowers Can, by expressing that he believes in him and that he as the ability to progress to university. On the other side reproduces racism in a very ugly form and presents it to the students: a religious explanation for the poverty that exists in some parts of the African continent. The biblical derivation that Can cannot fully remember could potentially be the religious justification that was used to enslave African people and colonise Africa. Some Christian slaveholders used the story of Noah and his son Ham, who mocked his father's drunken- and nakedness and was therefore cursed by his father, that his progeny shall be slaves for eternity. The slaveholders argued that African people were the descendants of Ham and thereby it was God's will that they shall be enslaved (Rae 2018, pp. 442-444). In other words, the enslavement of African people and the colonisation of Africa was divinely sanctioned and almost a good Christian's duty. Can's narrative leaves him in a fascinating intermediate position, where he – as Anatolian German – is on one side the racialised other but also has another racial Other beneath him. In relation to Gender, Haug reflects on social positioning and silences:

> »Story writing and editing is also a way to gain self-awareness. For reasons of emotional survival, we usually perceive ourselves from the place in society that is possible for us and in which we are positioned. This is not very much for women. Compared to our experiences, wishes and plans in early childhood, it is certainly an impoverishment. By excavating the motifs from early childhood and attempting to confront them with today's life, expands our claims and skills. Of course, this is not as easy as it sounds. The stories are expressed in our language today. The buried and left behind does not speak with loud words. Conversely, we are much more likely to face stubborn silence. In memories it appears as a blank and as fractions« [my own translation] (Haug 1990, p. 76).

Conclusion

Some educational and social scientists believe that White people tend to take a passive role in racial matters, simply because they do not think of themselves as racialised (McKinney 2003, p. 53). Some White people even go so far as to assume that they have no »Race« or ethnicity in contrast to BIPOC (McKinney 2003, p. 52). This ignorance leaves the White subject unaware that Whiteness is actually the »*master signifier (without a signified) that establishes a structure of relations, a signifying chain that through a process of inclusions and exclusions constitutes a pattern for organizing human difference*« (Seshadri 2000, p. 3-4).

However, a child is not born into the position of the White master signifier, it has to learn what it actually means to be in that position (Troyna & Hatcher 1992). It was Karl Marx (1971), who highlighted that societies do not consist of solitary individuals but are the »sum of connections and relationships *in which individuals find themselves*« (Van Ausdale & Feagin 2001, p. 21). Human children learn about the world and themselves through the relationships that they have to other human beings or as Elias puts it: »*It is only in and through dialogues with others that a child develops into an individual person*« (Elias 1991, p. 47). This very Eliasian notion only highlights that »*[n]o human agent, or any social phenomenon for that matter, subsists by itself; it exists on the intersection of various networks that inform its social identities and imagination continuously evolving across time and place*« (Shalin 2020, p. 4). The research participants are not only digging through their own personal memories, but also through their social memory, which, according to Connerton »*we are likely to find it in commemorative ceremonies; but commemorative ceremonies prove to be commemorative only in so far as they are performative; performativity cannot be thought without a concept of habit; and habit cannot be thought without a notion of bodily automatisms*« (Connerton 1989, pp 3-4). I argue that racial memories and racialisation exist in the nexus of mind, body and society, and imprint or inscribe themselves as a racial culture with Whiteness at its centre onto the human body. Through memory work, the research participants attempt to recollect this process of inscription of racialised content and practices, be it through media consumption, socialist propaganda, silences, things they were told in families or in schools. However, there was an apparent discomfort during this recollection process, not so much because the research participants felt unsafe or judged by my presence, but rather the processes of racialisation were remembered as painful, generating strong emotions of sadness and shame. The narratives of the BIPOC research participants highlighted how they were not seen as individuals or as persons, but perceived or treated as something lesser then human, a grotesque human-nonhuman hybrid, as incapable of adhering to the modern Western ideal of a human being (Cassuto 1997); they were dehumanised. Simultaneously, the research participants who supposedly benefit from being White, experienced their initiation into Whiteness not as a pleasant process, but rather as a memory, which caused suffering in them. Almost like being caught in a Levinasian trap, the dehumanisation of the other, the

denial of the human face to the other, so I argue, affected the White subject in a way that in reflection of this inhuman face, it became inhuman itself, it became dehumanised. Therefore, based on my analysis of the narratives of anti-racism and empowerment practitioners, I conclude that racialisation processes constitute a type of suffering for the racialised subject. This suffering is derived through the process of racialisation, which can be considered a process of dehumanisation for both BIPOC and White people.

Chapter 5: The Training – Empowering Racial Subjectivities

»Stand on your toes and you won't stand strong,
Rush ahead and you won't get far,
Try to shine and you'll extinguish your light,
Try to define yourself, you won't know who you are,
Hold power over others, you can't empower yourself,
Cling to your work and you'll create nothing that endures.
If you want to accord with the Tao[38],
Just do your job, then let go« (Lao Tzu in *Tao Te Ching*, 400 BC)

Having analysed how the research participants remembered their racialisation and having concluded that the racialisation processes constitute a sort of dehumanising suffering for the racialised subject, the following chapter takes a closer look into the research participants' first training experience. A training is generally an educational setting, in which a group of participants learn and practice a (new) set of skills, usually supported and guided by a trainer or two (or more) trainers. Historically, the idea of most anti-racism training was to make participants aware of their racial attitudes. Most anti-racism practitioners have the hypothesis that once a (White) person became aware of their racism that they would then be less or even stop being racist (Egan Brad et Al. 2018). Similarly, the idea behind empowerment training is that the participants are disempowered by the discrimination or racism that they experience and that the training would help them to develop a mental and political attitude, which makes them feel more empowered (Can 2013, p. 8). What both anti-racism and empowerment training have in common, is probably the basic assumption that those who participate become empowered, not only to cope with racism but also to address and if necessary, challenge, fight and change it. However, evaluating anti-racism or empowerment training is another completely subject matter. What would be the factors of measuring an anti-racism or empowerment training's success or effectivity – or lack thereof? Additionally, the term empowerment is not uncontested: in a neo-liberal understanding empowerment is about giving employees more autonomy and responsibilities in order for businesses to maximise profits (Blanchard et Al. 2001), not to critically engage with capitalism and the exclusions it produces. In a BIPOC-activist setting, empowerment is more readily understood as a form of resistance against racism, as a form of anti-racist liberation

[38] Tao is understood here as »*the process of nature by which all things change and which is to be followed for a life of harmony«* https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Tao

(Mohseni 2020, p. 101). In the previous chapter, the research participants remember their personal racialisation processes. **In the following chapter, I explore the question: *How do anti-racism and empowerment practitioners narrate their personal experience of anti-racism and empowerment training*. In this chapter I argue that the narratives of the research participants highlight that the emotional and cognitive understanding of personal racial subjectivation processes partially liberates the racialised subject.** I have decided to focus on the first training, because here it is more likely that the research participants experienced their first major shift in their personal core beliefs, which in many cases triggered a strong emotional response. Beginning with a very condensed summary of the development and reception of anti-racism and empowerment training in the UK and Germany, I then progress to examine the narratives of the research participants about their personal training experiences. Therein, I explore the notion of (self-)empowerment and (self-)governmentality, applying Nikolas Rose's (1996, 1999) critical analysis of (self-)governmentality connected to psycho-therapeutical discourses in relation to concepts of individual improvement and liberation.

Governmentality and very brief history of anti-racism and empowerment training

Liberal Western governments have developed a set of subtle forms of ruling over its citizens. This set of subtle forms of governing includes methods of empowerment such as »*autonomy, self-actualization, self-realization, and self-esteem*« (Madsen 2014, p. 814) and has been coined by French philosopher Michel Foucault as governmentality (Foucault 2007). Governmentality, which is composed of the two words »governing« and »mentality«, reflects forms, techniques and arts of governance that are found in a network of power and knowledge not only in the management of a state, but also to find guidance in the diverse power relationships, for example, between doctors and clients, students and teachers, and within families, but also within one's own subjectivity (Lemke et Al. 2000, p. 8). The term

governmentality makes it possible to describe the relationship between power and domination and to link techniques of domination with »*techniques of the self*« (ibid.). Amongst those techniques of the self also belong different forms of training, which are about conduct, which also include anti-racism and empowerment training.

Training generally has an educational approach, it is about teaching and learning, sometimes also spreading knowledge and ideas around anti-racism and empowerment in wider society. The idea is that individuals, usually in a group, gather and guided by a trainer become more sensitive about questions of racial equality and multiculturalism (Knoth 2006, Brown 2004). Jane Elliot and Judith Katz were amongst the pioneers in 1960s US to facilitate anti-racism training (Vaughn 2007, Schlicher 1998). These early training were developed in support of the US-American civil rights movement and promoted the idea of equal opportunities. Around 1980 racial awareness training (RAT) began to spread in the UK. In Germany this process began almost 10 years later around 1990 with anti-racism training (ART). However, as soon as racial awareness training was increasing in the UK, so was its critique in politics and in the media. The conservative discourse about the »loony left« (Curran et Al. 2019) finally led to an anti-anti-racist movement (Petley 2019, pp. 189-193), branding the subject of racial equality in the press as a pet project of the militant-left and as »*political correctness gone mad*« (Petley 2019, p. 196).

There was, however, also critique from anti-racism activists themselves, who argued that the RAT was too confrontational and only led to participants feeling guilty, but not necessarily more empowered (Gurnah 1987; Sivanandan 1987). There was also the question of resources for anti-racist commitment, which was already scarce and now seemed to pour solely into RAT (LSPU 1987). It seemed as if RAT, that were dealing with attitudes of individuals, were seen as the sole response to racial inequalities, thereby losing sight of tackling those on a structural level. Furthermore, for some anti-racism activists the commercialisation of anti-racist practice was very problematic, additionally some training forms turned into a kind of New Age therapy, thereby losing credibility and seriousness (LSPU 1987). Similarly, Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn's (2001) critique of anti-racism training in the US, resonates with some anti-racism activists' criticism in the UK. Lasch-Quinn argues that the »*premium on individual identity, emotional satisfaction and expression, and an immediate,*

superficial sense of well-being were the staples of the therapeutic sensibility that increasingly held Americans in thrall« (Lasch-Quinn 2001, p. 40). Ultimately, by the early 1990s the racism awareness approach was more or less abandoned in the UK and replaced by the language of diversity. This switch from a language of anti-racism to diversity also happened in Germany just a few years later, towards the end of the 1990s (Bendl 2006). The 1990s also saw the Betzavta-Training from Israel, which could be described as democracy-oriented education and the Blue-Eyed-Brown-Eyed-Training, which was developed by Jane Elliott and attempts to make White people experience discrimination for a few days, translated and adapted to a German setting (Schlicher 1998; Bommes 2002).

The latest trend was triggered towards the end of the 1990s through the emergence of the study of implicit associations beginning in the US. Social researchers of implicit or unconscious bias assume that a person holds deep seated beliefs, biases against certain groups, sometimes even against their own group, without being aware of them (ECU 2013, p. 15; Greenwald & Nanaji 1995; Agarwal 2020). Through Implicit Association tests (IAT), so some social researchers believe, it is possible for a person to find out if and to what extent they have unconscious biases (Greenwald et Al. 2009). Out of the research of study of implicit biases a new training emerged, the Unconscious Bias Training (UBT). In 2018 the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) authorised a report *Unconscious bias training: An assessment of the evidence of effectiveness* and described the recently emerged training form:

> »UBT is often designed, developed and modified on the basis of the large body of research on unconscious bias. During everyday interactions, our brains receive an influx of information. Unconscious biases arise because we rely on ›short-cuts‹ to filter this information rapidly. The function of these short-cuts, or heuristics, is to categorise and make decisions about people and tasks efficiently.
>
> One of the negative consequences of this automatic processing is the influence of social stereotypes on our decision making. There is ample research documenting the influence of stereotypes on workplace evaluations and decision making (for example Eagly and Karau, 2002; Correll, 2017; Kossek et al., 2017), leading to detrimental outcomes for women, ethnic minorities, disabled people and others with a protected characteristic« (Atewologun et Al. 2018, p. 11).

The aim of the UBT, which are often facilitated online, is to raise awareness of unconscious biases and thereby improve the situation for those who are disadvantaged by them (Atewologun et Al. 2018, p. 6). Some major US tech companies, for example Google and Microsoft, have developed their own UBT training formats. A UBT usually begins with the participants taking the IAT and then they are guided through the results (ibid.). Afterwards

the participants receive some information about the current research on unconscious bias and then usually receive some strategies on how to counter their own biases (ibid.). The key findings of the report on the effectiveness of UBT can be summarised as:

> »● UBT is effective for awareness raising by using an IAT (followed by a debrief) or more advanced training designs such as interactive workshops.
> ● UBT can be effective for reducing implicit bias, but it is unlikely to eliminate it.
> ● UBT interventions are not generally designed to reduce explicit bias and those that do aim to do so have yielded mixed results.
> ● Using the IAT and educating participants on unconscious bias theory is likely to increase awareness of and reduce implicit bias.
> ● The evidence for UBT's ability effectively to change behaviour is limited. Most of the evidence reviewed did not use valid measures of behaviour change.
> ● There is potential for back-firing effects when UBT participants are exposed to information that suggests stereotypes and biases are unchangeable.
> ● Evidence from the perspective of the subjects of bias, such as those with protected characteristics, is limited. This evidence could provide additional information on potential back-firing effects« (Atewologun et Al. 2018, pp. 6-7).

In addition to essentialising the notion that biases cannot be changed, UBT could also be criticised for not exploring when and how each and every individual has learned those biases, and how remembering this process of learning these biases makes them feel.

The development of empowerment training for BIPOC is difficult to trace. Most likely did empowerment training for BIPOC originate in the Black Consciousness Movement, which had its beginnings in the South African Anti-Apartheid movement. About Black Consciousness Training (BCT), a prominent figure in the Anti-Apartheid movement Steve Biko wrote:

> »All in all the black man has become a shell, a shadow of man, completely defeated, drowning in his own misery, a slave, an ox bearing the yoke of oppression with sheepish timidity.
> This is the first truth, bitter as it may seem, that we have to acknowledge before we can start on any programme designed to change the status quo. It becomes more necessary to see the truth as it is if you realise that the only vehicle for change are these people who have lost their personality. The first step therefore is to make the black man come to himself; to pump back life into his empty shell; to infuse him with pride and dignity, to remind him of his complicity in the crime of allowing himself to be misused and therefore letting evil reign supreme in the country of his birth. This is what we mean by an inward-looking process. This is the definition of ›Black Consciousness‹« (Biko 1987 [1978], p. 29).

The Black Consciousness Movement and therefore also the Black Consciousness training was based on the premise that Black people are disempowered and need to first be empowered in order to start resisting racial injustices. Biko's notion of Black Consciousness,

as empowering as it might appear, also creates a victimology of BIPOC[39]. Are BIPOC victims of racism and therefore need empowerment? And if they think they do not need empowerment, are they missing out on the opportunity to liberate themselves? These questions shall be further explored in the third section of this chapter, which explores the BIPOC research participants' first training experiences.

There seems to be not enough research on the history of empowerment training for BIPOC in the UK and Germany to pinpoint, where and when the first training was facilitated. Some research suggests the first Black empowerment training must have been organised latest by the beginning of the 1990s in the UK (Christian 1998) and probably also in Germany. Most empowerment training in Germany aims at making BIPOC, people who experience racism the subject of their educational work (Mohseni 2020, p. 113). Generally, the trainers attempt at emphasising the skills and resources that the participants already bring with them (Yiğit & Can 2009, p. 162, Nguyen 2013). Most BIPOC felt that anti-racism training catered for the needs of White people and that the perspectives, experiences, and needs of those structurally disadvantaged by racism were left out (Yiğit & Can 2009, p. 162). Therefore, BIPOC developed their own safer spaces to address the issue of racism but also of empowerment. Empowerment training became spaces, where BIPOC could share their common experiences (and also the differences), where they could discover different languages for their perceptions and the things that were happening in their lives (Mohseni 2020, p. 113). Empowerment training for BIPOC carries the notion that the difficult and painful experiences of racism, which can sometimes make the BIPOC subject feel powerless or disempowered, into a source of strength and resilience (Can 2013). Instead of perceiving BIPOCness and the experiences that come with it as a deficit, empowerment trainers attempt to shift it into a strong point, from which personal (and sometimes communal) strategies of resistance are developed (ibid.).

There are several individuals but also a range of organisations that offer empowerment training in Germany: Antidiskriminierungsnetzwerk Berlin (ADNB – Counselling Center for Equal Treatment – Against Discrimination Berlin) of the Türkischer Bund Berlin-Brandenburg (TBB – Turkish Union in Berlin-Brandenburg), the Migrationsrat

[39] Though I believe that Biko's quote should be read in the context of 1960s South African Apartheid system.

Berlin-Brandenburg (Migration Council Berlin-Brandenburg), the Bildungswerkstatt Migration & Gesellschaft (loosely translated as Education Workshop Migration & Society – a network of trainers active in the field of anti-racism, empowerment but also development), GLADT and LesMigras (both BIPOC LGBTIQ+ organisations based in Berlin) and Phoenix (Mohseni 2020, p. 114).

Phoenix anti-racism and empowerment training is strongly based on systems psychology. Systems psychology is based not only on a theoretical but also an applicable science of systems theory, in which not only human conduct, but also the experiences of a person are viewed as complex frameworks. Clinical psychologist Shelly Smith-Acuña defines in her book *Systems Theory in Action* (2011) systems theory as »*a set of unifying principles about the organization and functioning of systems. Systems are defined as meaningful wholes that are maintained by the interaction of their parts (Laszlo, 1972)*« (Smith-Acuña 2011, p. 6). Applying systems theory into systems psychology, Smith-Acuña narrows the use of systems theory down to set of questions:

> »1. What are the various contexts in which the problem is embedded? How would I describe the problem or issues in terms of biological, individual, couple, family, or community levels of involvement? How do these systems and subsystems work together, and how do they compete?
> 2. How does each member of the system describe the cause of the problem, and how can this causality be reframed? What is the circular pattern that maintains the problem, and what are the multiple factors that reinforce this pattern?
> 3. What is being communicated about the issues at hand? What are the conflicts between the explicit and implicit communication about the problem? How could the communication work better and be more effective?
> 4. What are the forces that encourage the issue to change, and what are the forces that resist change?
> 5. What are the rules, roles, and boundaries that establish the structure of the most relevant system? How is the structure functioning well, and how does the structure contribute to the problem?
> 6. What are the historical and developmental patterns that are being repeated in the system? How do these patterns cause resistance to change, and how do these patterns provide identity?
> 7. What are the cultural stories that influence the problem? How do these invisible stories reinforce oppression and inhibit empowerment? How can these stories be used for greater self-acceptance or to promote change?« (Smith-Acuña 2011, pp. 145-146).

Through the biography of the training participants some of these questions are explored, sometimes in the group, by receiving inputs from the trainers or in personal reflection. In some stages of the training, the participants are also introduced to epistemologies of the Global South, for example Ubuntu or the decolonial critique of Western knowledge production. Far from being a complete description of the training, the closest to describe the aim of the training is for participants to personally examine how they stand in relation to the phenomena of racism and racialisation. Thereby the training could be understood as a

form of critical, reflexive socio-analysis of a person's racialisation (Emirbayer & Desmond 2015, p. 47)

Following this brief look into the history and development of anti-racism and empowerment training, the next section explores the narratives of the research participants' personal first training experience.

The Anti-Racism or White-Awareness-Training

In *Governing the Soul* (1999) Nikolas Rose argues *»that over the last century, ›veridical discourses‹ - positive knowledges and expertise of truth - have played a key role in rationalities of government, notably in the making up of governable spaces - ›irreal spaces‹ such as economy, factory, population etc. - and in the making up of governable subjects - members of a flock, children, subjects, citizens, self-realizing actors«* (Rose 1999, p. xxii). These »veridical discourses« that Rose refers to play a significant role in how the research participants speak about their first training experience. When I asked the White research participants about their first training, the reaction to the question and their memories were very different, but also had a lot of commonalities. Many described a general feeling rather than single details of the training experience. Two participants had actually very strong emotional reactions when they spoke about the training. One of them was Dina. Dina was one of the first ones to become a research participant in April 2012. I met Dina probably around early 2009 in Duisburg at a Phoenix gathering. She lived in Hamburg at the time as a university student. She came from a working-class background and was mostly working in retail before she came in touch with Phoenix. Her working-class background made Dina stand out in Phoenix, since most members come from a middle-class background. We connected on that level, since my parents also came as workers to Germany. Dina was also part of new younger generation in Phoenix that was growing. She was very likable and had a contagious laughter. I interviewed her in an empty seminar room at the University at Hamburg. That did not stop her from sharing her personal story candidly with me. Her stepfather was in the military

and was very strict, at times physically abusive. He would very openly express his racist and homophobic thoughts in the family. She also found herself very often in a circle of friends where racist or right-wing attitudes were not uncommon. Later, through second-chance education she embarked on her BA in Social Economy. When I asked her about her first training, she had the following response:

> Dina: »I know how it felt. But, it's difficult to describe. It was definitely very, very painful. Well, it starts from the belly, from down here and it comes up. Nah, I know how it feels, I can put myself right there into that situation, but I do not know how I... in what constellation or when I did it« (Dina 13/04/2012-1 #00:40:14).

Dina does not remember many details from her first Phoenix training, but she does remember that it was *»very, very painful«*. Rather than describing the training as an academic experience or an experience of cognitive learning, Dina mostly remembers the (almost physical) emotions that the training triggered in her. The mentioning of the painful feelings indicates a sort of therapeutical terminology, or in the language of Rose, self-governing. In reference to Foucault's notion of »governmentality«, Rose locates the language of painful experiences in the realm of »*therapeutic culture of the self*« and concludes that the »*guidance of selves is no longer dependent on the authority of religion or traditional morality; it has been allocated to ›experts of subjectivity‹ who transfigure existential questions about the purpose of life and the meaning of suffering into technical questions of the most effective ways of managing malfunction and improving ›quality of life‹«* (Rose 1996, p. 152).

The confessional character of the responses to the training becomes also more apparent in the next quote. Similarly, Lena, who I interviewed briefly after Dina in a small town near Berlin, described her first anti-racism training as a very strong emotional experience. Lena was actually from Lithuania, but her parents were of Polish descent. She remembered very often the feeling of being an outsider in her childhood. When she moved to Poland in her early teenage years, Lena was considered there also a kind of outsider, having grown up in Lithuania. Later, Lena had migrated from Poland to East Germany in the 70s and had remained there with her East German husband and her children. During the GDR, maybe also due to her migration experience, Lena worked as a liaison officer between Polish and German workers, and after the unification, she became the Integration Officer for a small town in Brandenburg. Through her work Lena met Fagbola and

participated in a training. Lena and I joined Phoenix about the same time. There was a warmth and an ease about Lena, which made it easy to connect to her. Later, she was also active as Vice Chair of Phoenix from 2002 till about 2010 and had a crucial role in developing the regional Phoenix White group in Berlin-Brandenburg. She had just started her retirement, when I interviewed her in May 2012 and asked her about her first Phoenix training experience:

> Lena: »So my first training, I will never forget it. I know when the world breaks down (crying) the tears come. […] So until the first training I always thought, I'm open-minded, I'm tolerant, towards other people, no matter who they are. I had this opinion of myself that I really see people as human beings […]. I do not classify them. That was my life too; my house was always open, for many.
>
> But what shook me was that... especially children's poems, children's songs my mother has taught me (crying) are also racist. I've always thought that Polish literature, that it has indeed played a very important role for my mother, for me too. But that it also actually transported racist images and we Poles and I, for example, Sienkiewicz who is wonderful, writer, he has written wonderful, patriotic books that helped many Poles to survive, even during the time of the partition of Poland, to not forget their mother tongue and their country.
>
> I think that hurts me most of all, that I did not see it myself before. Yes, yes. Looking at it from a logical standpoint, I know, it's not my fault, anyway it still hurts. Let's take a short break« (Lena 16/05/2012-2 #00:40:50).

Lena's emotional response, when she started talking about her first training, was very strong. She began to cry as she described the training as a turning point, a moment when her *»world breaks down«* (Lena 16/05/2012 # 00: 40: 26-2 #). What Lena describes is the breaking down of her self-image. Whiteness constructs itself as liberal and open-minded identity (Fanon 1952, p. 150), whilst at the same time creating an ignorance of its racialising, divisive and oppressive underbelly. In the analysis of her childhood books and stories, Lena realises that the narratives, that her mother shared with her from early childhood, which meant a lot to her and also to the Polish people, carry racialised subtexts of a primitive, racial Other, which was imprinted on her as a child.

The confessional character of Lena's statement is also highlighted by the self-reproach of not seeing herself before as the *»injunction to know oneself, which Foucault traces back to the Christian confession and forward to contemporary techniques of psychotherapeutics: here the codes of knowledge are inevitably supplied not by pure introspection but by rendering one's introspection in a particular vocabulary of feelings, beliefs, passions, desires, values, or whatever and according to a particular explanatory code derived from some source of authority.«* (Rose 1996, p. 33)

In the training Lena realised, that even though she was working as an integration officer in local government and considered herself a person that sees another person as a human being, she was far more racially biased than she had imagined herself to be. That realisation was very painful to her, the awareness of having been pulled into an ignorance which allows Whiteness to maintain itself, but which also divides humans from each other, not only structurally but even in small everyday interactions (Banton 2018, p. 8).

Lena's response is also fascinating in light of her being aware that she is not responsible for how she was subjected to these racialised narratives and subtexts as a child. Rationally, Lena understands that these images were passed on to her by her mother (which were passed on to her by her parents etc.), through society and the culture that she was living in. Nevertheless, Lena seems pained by the realisation of her (White) ignorance, she seems pained by the realisation that she was unable to see this ignorance despite the notion of herself as encountering everybody unbiased and as human beings. The research participant felt she was far more surrounded very early on by a racial culture then she could have ever imagined herself to be. Lena also became painfully aware that this could not have left her unaffected and that there was a strong possibility that she related to others through the social construct of »Race« even if she was not aware of it, even if she did not want to.

Eve, a middle-aged primary school religious studies teacher and protestant minister, who together with Lena played an important role in the development of the regional Phoenix White group in Berlin-Brandenburg, had a comparable experience during her first training. I met Eve around the same time that I met Lena. Initially, I kept Eve at a distance, maybe it was her protestant religious studies, primary school teacher vibe, but she was consistently engaged in the organisation. I got to appreciate Eve as a co-trainer, and the interview session with her was one of the most intense interview experiences I had during this research project. It was the first time that I heard Eve's life story to the extent she shared with me in the course of two days. It certainly changed the way I viewed Eve profoundly. Eve, who had grown up in the GDR, was from a family where the Christian belief played a great importance. The communist regime in East Germany sought to abolish religion, as religions were considered in the Marxist tradition *the opium of the people*. Although the socialist regime in the GDR took a rather pragmatic approach towards the Church, there

was a persistent discrimination of Christian individuals in the educational and career sector (Goeckel 1988, p. 211). Eve studied to become a physiotherapist in East Berlin but decided later to become a Protestant Minister in a small town outside of the capitol. During the late 1980s, with the beginning collapse of the GDR regime, Eve was convinced that the Church should be an integral part of the process, and took a hands-on approach organising and participating in public political debates. After the collapse of the GDR government, people from all walks of life, such as former policemen, but also families with children, came to the protestant minister for her guidance. The dissolving of the GDR government meant also the dissolving of government run institutions such as orphanages and Eve was asked to foster two Black children, which she agreed to. Later, after the reunification of West and East Germany, the Church also became active in the facilitation of refugee accommodation, where Eve was asked to be part of. Through her work, the protestant minister met with Fagbola and decided to participate in one of his training. Similar to Lena, Eve described a painful moment in her first training:

> Eve: »And then, the first point, where the biography work started, was the crux: Stop, what did you actually hear about Black? How is Black? What was taught to me how Black is? Yes, I do not remember which part, but at one phase I fell into a deep sadness and cried a lot. In my helplessness or in my awareness, in my self being shown to me, as White, how are you socialised as White, what does it mean to be White, a White woman? To exercise racism as you exercise it every day. […] But to feel my pain deeply, my pain, that too, yes, that was the point I think, in the training, in basic training I got to this point, where I felt the pain, that you are doing wrong and how miseducated or deformed you are. […] And you have these and these pictures inside and you see Black like that, needy and so on. […] And I believe only if you are emotional, only if you feel something, then you can also change something, if you go through the pain, only then you are really ready [...]« (Eve 30/05/2012-2 #01:11:15).

Eve, similar to Lena and Dina, describes a painful moment of gaining awareness. First there is the realisation that the misrepresentation of Black people in current German culture created a false imagery of Blackness. At the same time there is a dialectic between the imagination of Blackness, which is related to the self-construction of Whiteness (Yancy 2004, p. 68). Secondly, there is the realisation that Whiteness is related to forms of everyday racism, in other words not necessarily racist excesses such as physical violence or outspoken forms of xenophobia but rather small everyday interactions which when analysed more in-depth show a racial culture that has Whiteness, usually disguised as the invisible norm, at its centre (Yancy 2004, p. 39; Wachendorfer 2001). Thirdly, there is the sense of having been miseducated or rather deformed by this racial culture, which aims to create racial

subjectivities that will function within the racialised power structures even if they are not aware of it.

However, Eve also mentions the possibility of change, that White subjectivities do not have to remain in their Whiteness forever. This is a very important point as it highlights that Whiteness is not essential, it is not a rigid, never-changing identity. Just as much as White subjectivities are socially and psychologically constructed, Eve points out here the prospect of deconstructing Whiteness. Interestingly enough, Eve does not describe a call to action leading to an aimless process where people act for the sake of doing something rather than working towards a sustainable change. Nor does Eve describe a rational/intellectual effort, where people just need to educate or enlighten themselves in order to overcome racism. Neither does the religious studies teacher talk about an often superficial and often misguided (as in patronising) multicultural education, reproducing cultural clichés such as the three »Bs« as in belly-dance, böreks, and baklava, the German equivalent to the British the *»Ss – saris, samosas and steel drums«* (Cole 2014, p. 689). Eve clearly states that change is only possible through an emotional process. If a person is ready to work through the pain of being subjectivated to Whiteness, so I argue in this thesis this person can also be ready to change the racial structures they have internalised. This does not only imply that being subjected to Whiteness is a painful experience, it also implies in order for a racialised person to change their behaviour, which is informed and guided by racial power structures inscribed into their body, they need to emotionally work through the experience of that subjectivation.

What are the dangers of feeding into the primacy of feelings of the White subject? Is this simply not a new form of White self-centredness and White narcissism? In *Feeling White: Whiteness, Emotionality and Education* (2016) Cheryl E. Matias states:

> »Needless to say, emotions are forever present in the work of race. To not deny or further repress those emotions, and the state of discomfort they create, makes us nothing more than somnambuliacs, walking through life asleep. Imagine, if you will, the hypocrisy in how one is living a life, proclaiming life, protecting life yet refusing to *feel* life itself. Is that truly life?« [original emphasis] (Matias 2016, p.2).

Whilst Matias argues that feeling is part of living a human life, the author also critically examines the toxic emotionality that comes with Whiteness. White people tend to centre

their emotions over those of BIPOC (Matias 2016, p. 5). Additionally, the educational scientist also critically examines this form of White people's self-centredness as White Narcissism (Matias 2016, pp. 69-80). Nevertheless, as the subject of emotionality related to racialisation processes remain, how can White people explore their feelings without centring themselves? Research suggests that there is an interesting distinction between narcissism and self-esteem, »*that narcissism is strongly related to extraversion and dominance, but in contrast to self-esteem little with agreeableness and warmth, also narcissism is less communal and more related to other mental health issues than self-esteem*« (Hyatt et Al. 2018, pp. 23-25). Matias argues that White people need to »*learn to re-learn their emotions*« (Matias 2016, p. 135). This could mean that White people learn to see their feelings central to their humanity and not as central towards a racial culture that has Whiteness as its centre. Eve states that it takes working through the pain in order to change. This highlights an emotional trajectory, which is similar to other models of emotional stages, such as the Kübler-Ross model for the process of dying (Kübler-Ross 1973). As fascinating as these models are, they usually follow the logic of evolvement, (that is also why I mostly avoided them in this thesis) and leave little room for regress or the simultaneity of contradictory positions within the subject. Notwithstanding, I do see the value of emotionality in the transformation process of racial subjectivation.

Concurrently, in *Inventing our Selves: Psychology, Power and Personhood* (1996) in which Nikolas Rose explores how disciplines such as psychology, psychiatry, psychotherapy etc. constitute the modern self, the author criticises that notion of transformation and writes »*[a]lthough our subjectivity might appear our most intimate sphere of experience, its contemporary intensification as a political and ethical value is intrinsically correlated with the growth of expert languages, which enable us to render our relations with our selves and others into words and into thought, and with expert techniques, which promise to allow us to transform our selves in the direction of happiness and fulfilment*« (Rose 1996, p. 229). In other words, the training makes this promise by offering the possibility of transformation through rendering the relation to the racial self and racial others into words, thoughts and feelings.

Ann describes a different emotional process during her first training experience. Ann was at the time of the research a young Psychology student, almost at the end of her studies.

Ann and her friend joined Phoenix about the same time I did. I remember her as tall, a bit lanky, and with very distinct facial features. She was young and fun to be around. Ann had grown up in South Hesse but studied in Jena in a former East German university. Ann said in the interview that she was from a dynasty of protestant ministers, so her parents were protestant ministers as well. With another friend from university, Ann participated in her first anti-racism training somewhere in Saxony, where she describes a similar racialised imagery of Black people as Eve:

> Ann: »Yeah... and yes, man, what did we do there again? Yeah, you should somehow talk about what kind of contact you had in your childhood, youth or in your life with POC, and then I somehow talked about my mother, I come from a parish family, and, then in the village an asylum seekers' home was built, my mother went there and made contact with the people. Then somehow [name of Phoenix trainer] picked it up, and […] said: yes, Blacks are somehow perceived in terms of neediness, and you have to help them and so, and I thought whoa... what's that now? That's just the first thing I can think of. These are perhaps more emotional moments that I still remember. I cannot remember the exercises in the training. […]
>
> And that was just like a hunch, and [...] I had the feeling that many somehow many thought it's kind of interesting, but maybe it's more irritating or something. And to me there's the question, if you get to a point where you somehow catch on, and the feeling is: ok, yes, somehow I get, that there is something, that I hadn't had before... which was somehow not in my experience of the world, or not in my consciousness... and it was like that... it was a very exciting moment...« (Ann 28/05/2012-2 #00:07:13).

Ann describes two phases during her training process. The first emotion that Ann remembers is a spark of inner resistance she felt, when the trainer mentioned in the interview, shared his interpretation of how some of the racial imagery and also memories contributed to the notion of Black people being inferior and in need of help – a notion that has been discussed in plenty of research of how Blackness is constructed in the White racial imagination (Della & Kiesel 2014; Kiesel & Bendix 2009, Hutnyk 1996). Ann's initial reaction shows how she at first struggles with a possible reading offered by the trainer. It is not uncommon in the early training process, where in particular BIPOC trainers offer a critical reading of racialised imagery that their perspective is dismissed as subjective and therefore unscientific. Kathy Hytten and John Warren did an interesting collection of resistance that form within White subjects once they are confronted with the subject of Whiteness in educational settings (Hytten & Warren 2003). One of the resistances the researchers mention in their work is the »*appeal to authenticity*«, where the participants »*focus on the fact that while they understand the whiteness literature cognitively, it does not match how they experience the world*« (Hytten & Warren 2003, p. 71).

In the second phase, Ann describes a »*hunch*«, a feeling that she has, which allows her to dive deeper into the training process. Whilst, as it seems, the majority of participants in Ann's first training, despite their interest, felt rather irritated by the experience, she finally caught on: she realised that the trainer helped her in perceiving a part of reality, which she had been unable (or unwilling) to perceive beforehand. Part of the White racial experience is to ignore the BIPOC racial experiences, epistemologies and perceptions (Sullivan & Tuana 2007). Whiteness creates and sustains ignorance in order to leave the racial power status quo related to Whiteness unquestioned (ibid.). However, once Ann allows this knowledge, this perspective into her world, her consciousness, she becomes aware of racial realities that she had not seen before and which also had a lot to do with who she was and how she perceived and experienced the world. She became aware of her own racialisation. In contrast to the other participants Ann describes it as a *»very exciting moment«* (Ann 28/05/2012-2 #00:07:13), a fascinating moment that allowed her world to expand. In other words, once she was able to work through her irritation, once able to overcome the inner resistance she felt at the first stage of the training, she was capable of immersing herself into a compelling change of perspective. This perspective change broadens her horizon, a horizon which is otherwise limited through Whiteness, an identity that needs to shut out the voices of BIPOC identities in order to maintain itself. Nevertheless, should the subject of inner resistance not be ignored in the sense of »*[w]hen we begin, however, with the split subject of psychoanalytic theory, we discover new forms of conflict and contraction […] that require us to consider the complicated ways in which learning must take a detour through psychic resistance*« (Pitt 1998, p. 551).

Growth, progress and self-improvement seem also prevalent in Ann's depiction of her first training experience. Rose suggests: » *there is no way of living as an ethical subject except through certain modes of subjectification, involving the monitoring, testing, and improving of the self*« (Rose 1999, p. 245). The question would be here, what kind of ethics do the research participants follow? It is also unclear, how Phoenix influenced the way Ann feels about her training, since as an active member, she is also subjected to the discourses of the organisation.

Similar to Ann, a few other research participants mentioned the subject of inner resistance and self-examination during the training. Dre describes his most significant

memory from his first anti-racism training, the resistance from one of the participants but also his own inner struggle. In this particular training situation, the existence of biological human races is discussed. The trainer explained to the group that biological human races do not exist, that most of modern geneticist, reject the idea of biological human races as unscientific. However, one participant resists this statement of the trainer:

> Dre: »What I remember most is the following story, when we came to the question, are there biological human races, came a participant, my age or a year younger and thought that could not be possible [that races don't exist] because he had been taught something different at school. Well, he's clearly covered racial theory as in the existence of biological human races at school, learned that, and I remember my feeling well back then, which I'd best describe as torn, and that, I did not learn that at school, I think either I was not paying attention in the biology class, but I cannot remember being told by a biology teacher […]. But this young man, who was now younger than me, and claimed so vehemently that he had learned this here at the Copernicus Grammar School, he made me feel very unsure. […] And I know for a fact that at that moment I was leaning more towards the school, to this institution. I had the feeling, if they say that at school, well, they must know it. […] And then what I just learned in the training, at least, it's doubtful. And (laughing) so it was really a strong inner conflict, between […] a trainer, and the one […] who said... who stood there with his, with all the weight of the German school system, saying that in school they teach it differently. And what I, what I just noticed at the time, is how strongly this authority of the school is anchored in me. […] So, no critical consciousness at all or the possibility of things that are taught in school to be considered potentially wrong, biased or out-dated, but what is taught in school is right. […] Although I […] knew very well, probably, most likely this trainer is right. (laughing) Well, that was a very unpleasant feeling in this training, which is already over 20 years ago« (Dre 11/07/2012-1 #00:04:56).

Participants, in particular of the anti-racism training, very often feel a latent doubt or disbelief towards the realities and analysis the trainers, in particular BIPOC trainers, share. Dre very openly speaks about these feelings he had during the first training experience. It may be that the absurdity of everyday racism, which is not located at the fringes of society but rather at its centre, is difficult to grasp for White subjects. Also, in this phase of the training, one participant struggles with the information and analysis he is given by the trainer. The participant had learned in school about the existence of the white, black, yellow and red races and that there were distinct physical (or genetic) markers, which allow dividing humans into those separate racial groups. For that reason, the information that he was given by the trainer had to be wrong. The participant was not able to question whether the information he had received in school was right.

Dre admits that as a White participant, it comes more naturally to follow the logic of the other White participants rather than the knowledge, logic, or authority, of the BIPOC trainer. Despite feeling torn, Dre leans more into the direction of the White participant regarding the question of which racial theory to believe in. In particular as the White participant evokes the institutional authority of the German school system.

In addition to showing different forms of resistance during the training, this particular situation reveals another important factor in the racialisation process. Racialised thinking and racial culture that has Whiteness at its centre leads to a racialised knowledge production (Sullivan & Tuana 2007, p. 154). The racialised knowledge comes here in the form of early racial theory, as a pseudo-science which despite being scientifically disproved by most of modern geneticists, maintained the notion of biological racial markers that allow the division into four to five different races (white, black, yellow and red). This knowledge of essentially different human races was in turn fed into the German school curriculum till about 2004 (Quentin 2019)[40]. Within the school system the students become subjected to this racialised knowledge production and leave the school system with this knowledge, whether they remember it consciously or not. In turn, if these racialised subjects never gain awareness of their racialisation, they will contribute to a racialised production of knowledge. The circle or the system of racialisation therefore maintains itself.

Dre describes how the resistance related to the discussion about the existence of essential races made it very difficult to immerse himself into the training process and the perspective that the BIPOC trainer was sharing. Even after 20 years, Dre feels the emotions that the inner conflict triggered in him very vividly. Questioning Whiteness, in particular when it comes in the form of authority, an institution such as the school system, is very difficult for the White subject. Dre describes being in the tension field of maintaining Whiteness and questioning it (embodied by the BIPOC trainer), as very disconcerting and discomforting, almost like he was questioning who he himself really was.

In relation to the subject of self-inspection and self-problematisation Rose writes:

> »Through self-inspection, self-problematization, self-monitoring, and confession, we evaluate ourselves according to the criteria provided for us by others. Through self-reformation, therapy, techniques of body alteration, and the calculated reshaping of speech and emotion, we adjust ourselves by means of the techniques propounded by the experts of the soul. The government of the soul depends upon our recognition of ourselves as ideally and potentially certain sorts of person, the unease generated by a normative judgement of what we are and could become, and the incitement offered to overcome this discrepancy by following the advice of experts in the management of the self.
>
> The irony is that we believe, in making our subjectivity the principle of our personal lives, our ethical systems, and our political evaluations, that we are freely, choosing our freedom« (Rose 1999, p. 11).

[40] In a school in Saxony *Rassenlehre* was taught as recently as January 2019 (Quentin 2019)

Is the anti-racism training such a management of the self? Some of the terminology used in Rose's quote certainly fits the description. There is the element of »self-monitoring«, the confessional character of the statement itself, including the »unease« that even 20 years later is vivid in Dre's memory. In this case the anti-racism trainers would be the »experts« of the racialised soul, helping the subject to overcome their own racialisation. Is it really an illusion to assume that there potentially lies more self-determination and liberty in gaining awareness of our subjectivation? Does the illusion lie in the scope of freedom we assume we can win through self-examination and social-psychological growth? Or is the irony simply related to the fact that we assume we make a self-determined decision if we choose to put our racial subjectivation into the centre of our inner thought processes, but are actually following the pathways of modern (self-)governmentality?

»Process« was also a central theme in Jean's narration of his first training experience. Jean's looks are almost nondescript. He has a rather calm and steady personality, I never got the impression that Jean was keen to hear himself talk. Jean, one of the participants in the focus group, who had grown up in the GDR, was a social worker and a computer scientist. He came from a working-class background, and shared about his sometimes crippling angst of coming from a working-class family that was upwardly mobile but still scared of losing that precarious newly achieved middle-class position. He was pivotal in collecting comics and children books from the former GDR with racialising content. The material Jean had collected became important in training with participants who had predominantly grown up in the GDR and would find it sometimes difficult to remember any racialising imagery in their childhoods. Jean also spoke about his inner resistance during the first training. At some point during the training, the participants are given a short text that summarises the drastic effects of the transatlantic slave trade on the African continent.

> Jean: »There is a new theory or a new perspective that we get to know and then realise in the training: It's not about theory at all. It's not about definitions. It's not about: what are the right steps, but it's only about me. In the training I also remember that there were few moments where I felt very troubled. In particular during the reading of the text […] I had feelings such as: ›That's too heavy now. I'm being indoctrinated here.‹ (Laughs) So, some nice inner resistance, but I managed to somehow hold that. And I believe that a process set in like: ›I am going to look more into myself.‹ I do not know..., after the first training, I first ordered for a lot of money, like ten books that lay on the […] book table (all laugh), so I could learn the knowledge at home. And till today I don't think I read all (all laugh), but looks good on the shelf when visitors come (everyone laughs)« (Jean 11/01/2015-2 #00:13:22).

Jean remembers a moment of inner resistance very vividly during the reading of the text on the enslavement of African people and its disastrous aftermath on the African continent. Confronted with the history of physical (but also cultural) genocide of African people, Jean finds the feeling of pain and shame almost unbearable. The feeling of discomfort seems to be so intense that it transforms into an impression of being indoctrinated, of being taught an ideology, which is partial and not neutral or objective. Whiteness in Germany usually functions as an invisible norm (Wachendorfer 2001), but it entails also an ideology, which is not impartial, neutral, or objective either. Nevertheless, once Whiteness is questioned as also a position that produces history and knowledge, feelings of indoctrination and manipulation are often transferred onto the position questioning it (ibid.).

However, Jean states that he was able to somehow hold the tension and resistance the training was creating in him. In other words, he allowed himself to feel his internal blockades that came up during the training, without disrupting the process, simultaneously keeping an open mind to what was happening in front of him. This persevering in the training allows Jean to enter a new phase of his internal process. It dawns on Jean what the training is about, that it is not about theory, not about cognitive knowledge, but that it is about his subjectivity, about who he is, and about who he learnt to be in relation to »Race« and »racism«. Jean narrates that his next steps in order to tackle the subject of »Race« is introspection, critical reflection, beginning a de-racialisation of his thoughts. He orders numerous books, and, even though he has not read them all during the time of the interview, the books assist and guide him through this critical introspection of himself.

As with the research subjects before Jean, his language neatly fits into discourses around psychology, process and development. Rose concurs, psychology has been critiqued in a variety of ways (Rose 1999, p. xxvii). It was mainly argued that theories of psychology and psychotherapeutic methods, treat a person like a detached entity and is mainly concerned with making that person a functioning member of society (ibid.). Rose disagrees with that perception as he assumes that contemporary psychology does not handle a person in order to dominate or control that individual (ibid.). Rose further states »*the contrary, the subject is a free citizen, endowed with personal desires and enmeshed in a network of dynamic*

relations with others. The very psychological theories and practices promoted by ›progressive‹ critics of ›adaptationist‹ psychology - dynamic and social psychologies, psychotherapies, family therapies - in stressing the significance of subjectivity as the key to our humanity, in elaborating techniques that enhance subjectivity through self-inspection and self-rectification, have underpinned the ways in which subjectivity has become connected to networks of power (Rose 1999, pp. xxvii-xxviii). Is Jean's narrative of the anti-racism training in this case also underpinning the knowledge of how racial subjectivities have been connected in the network of racial power structures?

Matt, a Biochemistry PhD student at the time, similar to Jean, was a very soft-spoken and gentle character, a little on the chubby side. Matt had also grown up in the former GDR and similarly to Eve came from a Christian family, which gave him a sort of outsider status before the unification. After the unification his family did well with a local business in Southern Mecklenburg-Pomerania. During his Biochemistry postgraduate course he met with Nana, one of the first Black female Phoenix trainers, and they started dating. After some time of dating Nana, Matt realised that his literacy on the subject of racialisation and Whiteness was rather limited. Confronted with the possibility of losing the relationship with Nana, he decided to participate in an anti-racism training. Resembling Ryan's account of his early childhood in the GDR, Matt also remembered the socialist propaganda of racial siblinghood. Nevertheless, when Matt remembered his first anti-racism training experience, he described the realisation of his own Whiteness in different words:

> Matt: »I heard about Whiteness during the training for the first time. Um […] so I found that very exciting that […] I've been socialised as White, I wasn't aware of it before. It was important to me; it did not have to be important to me. I became aware of it, yes. And then, so it was not a pleasant feeling, because I associated it with manipulation and heteronomy, so I'm basically programmed by my environment, well, I think everyone is programmed by their environment, but that I've just been programmed and that it makes sense in a certain system that I benefit from, the White System. For me then, that was extremely unpleasant, I must say. But I understood it at the moment« (Matt 04/08/2012-2 #00:47:07).

Similar to Eve, Dina and Lena, Matt describes the realisation of his Whiteness as »extremely unpleasant«. Matt describes his subjection to Whiteness as a kind of programming, of being manipulated, or with the term »heteronomy«, as in being under the influence or domination of an outside authority – as opposed to being self-determined. This is particularly interesting, as Matt is clearly aware also of the structural advantages he has as a White

person, and despite that, the realisation of being subjectivated as White is not a pleasant one.

What Matt is saying is that he did not choose to be White. If subjects could choose, which discourses and ideas would be deeply inscribed into their bodies and psyches, would they consciously choose racist notions? Probably not – unless they want to be consciously and openly racist, a choice that seems to be more and more popular in Germany and other European countries (Zick et al. 2019, p. 66). But by simply growing up in a racial culture that has Whiteness at its centre, in Matt's narrative he had absorbed all the norms and values he had to adhere to in order to fit into the system and to maintain it. Matt refers to this racialisation process as programming and states that everybody is programmed, which is a rather deterministic understanding of becoming a subject. I disagree here with Matt's assessment of a racial programming, since it suggests a very passive racial subjectivation of the subject and does not reflect how children actively shape also the racial material that they have been given by society (Van Ausdale & Feagin 2001).

Though subjectivities and power not necessarily always have to be confined to relations of domination and subjection, Matt narrates here, how understanding racial subjectivation affected him. In relation to power and subjectivities Rose also states that *»the distinctive features of the modern knowledge and expertise of the psyche have to do with their role in the stimulation of subjectivity, promoting self-inspection and self-consciousness, shaping desires, seeking to maximize intellectual capacities. They are fundamental to the production of individuals ›free to choose‹, whose lives become worthwhile to the extent that they are imbued with subjective feelings of meaningful pleasure* (Rose 1999, p. 4). Matt's narrative highlights that after the training, he perceived Whiteness as a source of displeasure, since, in his understanding being racialised also meant losing the freedom to choose. The subject of free-will choices shall be revisited later in this chapter.

Ryan, who described a similarly intense reaction to the realisation of his Whiteness, also dwells on the question of freedom and domination:

> Ryan: »And there are some elements that I remember from the training. So, I believe what I have in mind now, two things that moved me the most were, on the one hand, the […] text, because it was so condensed that it opened up a different historical perspective than the one I'm used to. And for me at that moment just explained a lot of things. But this short section by Judy Katz has moved me even more - what's the name? White identity? -

> Where she describes how White people through racism and socialisation into being white, are hindered in their development, have experienced a psychological deformation. And are complicit. And that really blew me away the moment I read that. I still know that feeling to this day. I do not really know how to express that. That kind of opened a whole new door. A whole new perspective: to look outside of you and to realise, so this beautiful building in which I live, that I've built myself, which is very much shaped by my white identity, is quite a ruin, a broken house« (Ryan 11/01/2015-1 #00:24:34).

Jessica Ringrose's article *Rethinking white resistance: exploring the discursive practices and psychical negotiations of ›whiteness‹ in feminist, anti-racist education* (2007) states how Whiteness is still widely under-theorised in educational literature. The sociologist concludes »*that the treatment of white students as unambiguous ›carriers of privilege‹ in educational research makes them read like ›stock characters in a social play‹ because social biographies, issues of class, gender and sexuality, and difficulties of contradiction and anxiety among white students grappling with race are largely suppressed in recent debates over whiteness in education*« (Ringrose 2007, p. 324). Ryan describes how he is almost shocked once he is confronted with a side of Whiteness which he has not experienced in his political engagement before. In the training the research participant is confronted with a perspective on Whiteness, which describes the White subject apart from being structurally advantaged, also as hindered in their personal development or as having experienced a psychological deformation.

Many scholars in the field of Critical Race Theory, but also most anti-racism activists and practitioners, are familiar with the advantages and privileges that come with being racialised as White. Only very few theories on Critical Whiteness (and therefore I am also assuming other antiracism training or workshop [Fernández García 2018]) address the disadvantages that come from being racialised as White. As a workshop facilitator, Ryan had touched upon notions of the overdevelopment of the Global North, the wealth of Western societies based on histories of colonial exploitation, and the over-empowerment of White people through texts such as Peggy McIntosh's »White Privilege and Male Privilege«, where the author collected about 46 conditions, which she describes as White privilege (McIntosh 1988). In other words, Whiteness is described, as rich, powerful and favoured, as preferential within these discourses. Nevertheless, once Ryan can move past the guilt and shame of being part of a chosen elite, in being complicit and benefitting from a system,

which is stratified in his favour, he begins to realise that this »*beautiful building*« (Ryan 11/01/2015-1 #00:24:34) in which he lives, comes at a cost.

McIntosh's text on privileges, and therefore also plenty of other critical »Race« theorists that followed, treated privileges as something that can be accumulated. But what if privileges were conceptualised as something that is rather relational (Yancy & Gilroy 2015)? Would that render privileges a relative term? Very often, if a White person is asked if they remember the first time they realised that they were White, they do not remember, or it takes a long time for them to remember (Ogette 2017). It also needs a lot of trust for a White person to share those often very uncomfortable moments or situations where they understood that they were related to as a White person (Thandeka 1999; Frankenberg 1993). In contrast, BIPOC generally find it much easier remembering early moments in childhood, where they realised that they were related to as BIPOC, albeit those experiences often being unpleasant, painful and/or traumatic (Kilomba 2008). Is this *head start* then a privilege that BIPOC have, because they realise much earlier what racialisation does to them, and have therefore much earlier also the opportunity to address these issues?

Ryan would even go so far as to call that illusion of a beautiful house (in this case Whiteness or his White identity) a »*ruin, a broken house*« (Ryan 11/01/2015-1 #00:24:34). Is it possible that Whiteness constitutes itself through a certain brokenness, which Ryan describes here? The process of Othering the own, as Gruen describes it, »*hinders humans from relating to each other humanly – with sympathy, empathy and mutual understanding*« (Gruen 2000, p. 20). In the previous chapter, I highlighted the process of Othering the own in order to construct the White subject, and also the emotional, psychological and epistemic (sometimes even physical) violence, which is at the core of this process. Once made aware of the violent process of Othering, the damage it causes in the White subject, the dehumanisation of the White subject that comes with being racialised, that realisation made Ryan aware and opened new doors of thinking and feeling about himself. However, in *Governing the Soul* (1999) Rose has some thoughts on the notion of humanness developed in the Western tradition of psychology, and shows »*that, in producing positive knowledges, plausible truth claims, and apparently dispassionate expertise, psy makes it possible to govern subjects within these practices and apparatuses in ways that appear to be based, not upon arbitrary authority, but upon*

the real nature of humans as psychological subjects. The human sciences have actually made it possible to exercise political, moral, organizational, even personal authority in ways compatible with liberal notions of freedom and autonomy of individuals and ideas about liberal limits on the scope of legitimate political intervention« (Rose 1999, viii).

Rose further states:

> »It is easy to misunderstand this argument, and to think that I am proposing a critique that is based on the inappropriate technologization of some ineffable humanity. My argument, however, is quite the reverse. These new forms of regulation do not crush subjectivity. They actually fabricate subjects - human men, women and children - capable of bearing the burdens of liberty. From the mid-nineteenth century, psy expertise has developed in symbiosis with a culture of liberal freedom. But I argue that psy acquires a particular significance within contemporary western forms of life, which have come to celebrate values of autonomy and self-realization that are essentially psychological in form and structure. These values establish and delimit our sense of what it is to be a human being, and what it is to live a life of liberty: indeed contemporary human subjects, at least when they are accorded the status of adults, are ›obliged to be free‹ in this psychological sense. That is to say, however apparently external and implacable may be the constraints, obstacles and limitations that are encountered, each individual must render his or her life meaningful as if it were the outcome of individual choices made in furtherance of a biographical project of self-realization« (Rose 1999, pp viii-ix).

Is the notion of humanness according to Rose, reflected in the training process bound to these current Western lifestyles? Admittedly, as I have already examined in the first section of this chapter, Phoenix training has been heavily influenced by systems psychology, Fanonian theory and epistemologies of the Global South. However, the research participants' narratives on their notion of humanness shall be further examined in chapter 6. Notwithstanding, the idea of liberation and oppression is still a crucial element in Ryan's narrative and shall be explored later in this chapter.

Similarly, C.L., one of the participants of the focus group, talked about her experiences in predominantly White, leftist political spaces and the oppressive experiences she made there. C.L. was employed at a government programme facilitating school exchanges between Germany and the Global South. I met C.L. around 2011 at a training, where she was a participant. She is very tall, skinny and I perceived her as very cerebral. Her intellectual understanding of Critical Race Theory was very impressive, but it took C.L. some time to relate to the emotional side of the training. She grew up in rural southern Germany, in a very traditional Catholic, value-conservative, non-academic family on a farm. Her older brother was also active in the local Neo-Nazi scene for some time. Despite growing up in a conservative, far-right environment, C.L. developed rather liberal, leftist views and was always supported by her mother in discussions with her openly racist

brother. Shaped by the predominantly White political, anti-racist/anti-fascist spaces in Berlin, she was very much surprised to encounter a political space created and led by BIPOC:

> C.L.: »[I] remember quite a bit about my first ART and it became very clear to me that I came from such a very typical Berlin postcolonial radical left-wing political hard-core discussion culture, and I... and I also had participated in workshops with many people before, they've already done a lot with me. And I think it was a bit like: Yes, there is now a Black trainer - the training was with [name of trainer] - and of course I want to do everything right. And in contrast to the others: ›I already know the right words‹, etc. and I am already here - yes, I would say almost a bit like catholic guilt (all laugh), and I think that's such a nice topic, that [name of trainer] and I still have till today, he started to poke in this left-radical born-again-Christian supercritical narrative (a few laughs). I also remember that I had talked with a friend before I participated in the […] training, who just said: ›Well, that's one of the few NGOs where POC people do the antiracism training‹« (C.L. focus group, 11/01/2015-1 #00:16:34).

C.L.'s narrative highlights that until she participated in the Phoenix training, she had mostly learned about Whiteness in White settings. Encountering BIPOC trainers for the first time, she had no idea what to expect:

> C.L.: »I waltzed in there relatively undiscerning. And then it was just that I totally came from such a very orthodox direction (laughs) in this training and my presentation, and what I'd like to happen and so on, and then I had a huge discussion with [name of trainer]... he really sat down with me at lunch... and I was like: ›Yes, but this soft. And this easy. Are you not stabbing the others in the back?‹ etc. So we had a proper political discussion. And then [name of trainer] talked about his story and just said that his experience was that when he does anti-racism work like that, people are changing the street until today when they see him, because he used to be that way too. […] That gave me reason to think. And at the same time, I know that I had great difficulties to trust, because I really was... that was changing into another political culture. […] And I know after that, I said to this person who said, Phoenix is the only one in which POC do the training. That I went to her and was like ›Oh, well, that happy people thing, that's actually not really political‹. And then I had with her an exchange, where she then said: ›Well, but […] that's very substantiated, what they are doing‹ (some laugh). And a lot of what probably seems to have happened in the unconscious of vibes, then made me decide to take part in the next training. And stay on it« (C.L. focus group, 11/01/2015-1 #00:20:43).

C.L. uses the term »catholic guilt«, describing the phenomenon of White politicised anti-racists that seem to live in constant self-flagellation due to their Whiteness and their assumed White privileges. Though anti-racism pioneer Judith Katz had already criticised the phenomenon of White guilt as counterproductive (Katz 1978, p. 22), it seems to have crept into anti-racism movements in the USA and some European countries (Steele 2006; Tißberger 2017, p. 250). Some social researchers highlight the resemblance of third wave anti-racism, though considering itself widely secular, to a religious movement and state that the »*idea that whites are permanently stained by their white privilege, gaining moral absolution only by eternally attesting to it, is the third wave's version of original sin*« (McWorther 2018). This also seems to resonate with C.L.'s description of conventional Critical Whiteness discourses in Berlin as »*left-radical born-again-Christian supercritical narrative*« (C.L. focus group, 11/01/2015-1 #00:16:34), meaning the discourse has taken on a religious zealotry that seems

to hinder personal development and puts many who are not part of those political spheres off to even join. Leaving these political spheres behind, which includes also letting go of White guilt, White self-flagellation (but also the flagellation of other not so »conscious« White people) is then described as changing political culture by C.L. In Ringrose's research on anti-racism education, the author also comes across the phenomenon of zealotry and writes:

> »These researchers seem to point to an important dynamic of ›omnipotence‹ in education, whereby the knower holds power to transform the ignorant (Pitt, 1998). However, they resort back to this same dynamic in their research, interpreting their students' concerns that critical whiteness theories did not seem to account for capacity for personal or social change, as evidence of the students' hopeless ›idealism,‹ simplicity, ›naiveté‹ and ultimately ›resistance‹ to knowledge of their own whiteness. These authors go so far as to cite the dangers of students' ›zealotry‹—those who ›think they »get it« (that is, they understand their own whiteness and know how to arrest white privilege) and know they must pass »it« on‹ (Hytten & Warren, 2003, p. 76). We have, therefore, a kind of false consciousness thesis that is not tolerated in other avenues of educational research where complex poststructural debates on contradiction, fluidity, agency and subjective shift thrive« (Ringrose 2007, p. 326).

Ringrose's research highlights, how the issue of White guilt and its violent off-shoots hinder the awareness of complexities within anti-racist education that are necessary in order for the White subject to develop and progress. How can anti-racism practitioners ensure that »*contradiction, fluidity, agency and subjective shifts*« (Ringrose 2007, p. 326) remain part of their practice?

In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (2005 [1930]) Max Weber concluded:

> »For sure, even with the best will, the modern person seems generally unable to imagine how large a significance those components of our consciousness rooted in religious beliefs have actually had upon culture, national character, and the organization of life. Nevertheless, it can not be, of course, the intention here to set a one-sided spiritualistic analysis of the causes of culture and history in place of an equally one-sided ›materialistic‹ analysis. Both are equally possible. Historical truth, however, is served equally little if either of these analyses claims to be the conclusion of an investigation rather than its preparatory stage« (Weber 2005, p. 125).

The religious undertones in the research participants' narratives of their first training experience is evident. The confessional character of their narratives is highlighted by almost all White research participants' sense of emotional realisation that they have been racialised as White and the consequences this racialisation process has on their subjectivity. The research participants express that they felt conflicted (C.L., Dre) or insecure, troubled and irritated (Ann, Dre, Jean) in the training. Some research participants also expressed that they experienced extreme discomfort, emotional tenseness or unpleasantness during the training (Dre, Jean, Matt). Half of the research participants stated that they felt hurt, pain and sadness during the training (Dina, Eve, Lena, Ryan). One participant experienced the training also

as exciting (Ann). Either way, in their search for ethics, most of the research participants seek to give meaning to their suffering:

> »Finally, and of central importance, the special life of the saint—fully separate from the ›natural‹ life of wants and desires—could no longer play itself out in monastic communities set apart from the world. Rather, the devoutly religious must now live saintly lives in the world and amid its mundane affairs. This rationalization of the conduct of life—now in the world yet still oriented to the supernatural—was the effect of ascetic Protestantism's concept of the calling« (Weber 2005, p. 100).

Through critically examining the White participants memories of their first anti-racism training through the lens of Nikolas Rose's *Governing the Soul* (1999), I have highlighted the confessional character of their statements. Similar to the subjects of psychological disciplines as examined by Rose, participants of the training are invited to examine their racial subjectivity. To some participants, this examination is a painful process, but at the same time, their suffering is given the meaning of transforming or liberating them slowly and partly from their subjectivation as racial subjects.

In the second part of this chapter, I will further examine how the BIPOC participants remembered their first experiences of empowerment training.

The Empowerment or BIPOC-Consciousness-Training

Having examined the White research participants narratives of their first anti-racism training (with Phoenix), it highlighted a number of feelings such as conflictions, discomfort and sadness, which were triggered by the realisation of their racialisation. I will now explore how the BIPOC research participants narrate their first empowerment training.

Despite her early memories of racialisation, Nana had difficulties on identifying herself as »Black«, when she arrived in Germany in her late teens in order to study medicine. A few years into her studies, through a scholarship from a green and left-leaning foundation in Berlin, she got in touch with other more politicised BIPOC students. These students had decided to organise an empowerment training for themselves and had invited two trainers from Phoenix to facilitate it. Nana describes how she arrived very late at the training and was initially dissatisfied, the majority of the participants were Black women but there were two male trainers and one of them wasn't even Black but *»this Turkish guy«* as Nana recollects (Nana 04/08/2012-2 #00:43:12). Nevertheless, she allowed herself to be immersed into the training process:

> »But I understood something. I understood something like the way [name of trainer] and [name of trainer] were speaking, and the way they would interact with the people. I was, at that moment, I was just watching, you know. I did not say anything. And then I realised: ›No, something is different about this kind of lecture‹. There was something different about this atmosphere. There was something different, like very… em, something very welcoming, something very warm, you know. It is difficult to describe it« (Nana 04/08/2012-2 #00:44:00).

Similar to Dina in the first part of this chapter, Nana describes the empowerment training less in terms of content, but in terms of atmosphere and emotion. However, whilst Dina described a rather painful anti-racism training experience, Nana describes her impression of the empowerment training with the words »warm« and »welcoming«. The concept of empowerment currently is (not unjustifiably) critiqued of being part of the neoliberal project of (self-)governance, self-optimisation and self-improvement[41] (Cornwall 2018, p. 8). In her essay *Beyond ›Empowerment Lite‹: Women's Empowerment, Neoliberal Development and Global*

[41] Even though Aradhana Sharma in her book *Logics of Empowerment* (2008) also states that »While the neoliberal governmentalization of empowerment can connote depoliticization, I argue that it also makes possible political activism and transformation« (Sharma 2008, p. xx).

Justice (2018) Andrea Cornwell distinguishes between »*liberal empowerment*« and »*liberating empowerment*«, the first mainly aiming at improved neo-liberal self-exploitation, the latter at challenging societal power structures (Cornwall 2018, p. 7). Rose further states that whilst »*[n]ot all political subjects are embraced in the new regime of the self*«, in particular marginalised groups fall under the regime of »*community care*« with empowerment strategies that use the identical psychological wording (Rose 1996, pp. 166-167). Through creating an atmosphere of unconditional positive regard, the trainers and the empowerment training fit almost into Rose's description of »*special educational programs set up by leaders of disadvantaged groups and communities, one sees the operation of a very similar image of the subject we could and should be, and the use of the same psychological and therapeutic devices for reconstructing the will on the model of enterprise, self-esteem, and self-actualization*« (Rose 1996, p. 167). Nevertheless, the language of self-actualisation is also highlighted in Nana's following statement:

> »And these guys were talking about something else. They were talking about, how to be strong, how to follow your dreams […]«. (Nana 04/08/2012-2 #00:44:18)

Nana then continues:

> Nana: »So, I just sat back, and I saw this [name of trainer] guy going on his knee and saying that: ›You don't have to be empowered. You can choose also not to be empowered. But give yourself time.‹ Just to relax. And just to communicate with each other and have fun. And I said: ›Wow! We are gonna have fun. That's great‹. And I felt kind of good« (Nana 04/08/2012-2 #00:44:53).

This passage highlights the value of self-determination the trainers put into the training. According to Nana's narrative, training participants are ensured by the trainers that no-one is forced to be empowered. »Being empowered« becomes a choice, it also defines empowerment in this instance as self-determination, and being obliged to be empowered would, in any case, undermine the logic of self-determination. What is self-determination? What is the *self* in self-determination? There is an international legal dimension to self-determination, for example in the UN-Charter. The UN-Charter states in chapter 1, article 1, section 2 that the purpose of the UN is to »*develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace*« (UN Charter 1945). Through the UN-Charter (and other historical events) the term self-determination became an important concept in

decolonisation movements all around the world (Simpson 2018, pp. 417-435). The origins of the concept of self-determination can be traced back to the French Revolution, the US Declaration of Independence, German Enlightenment thinkers, such as Kant and late 19th century Marxism (Simpson 2018, p. 418). Kant coined the word *Mündigkeit* (which loosely translates as maturity) and meant with it the inner and outer capacity of a person to self-determination and accountability (Kant 1784). In Nana's narrative self-determination resonates with a similar understanding of the concept as a subject's autonomy, free will and the freedom of choice. It suggests that being a free subject is related to the idea of having the possibility to choose. In the context of the empowerment training for BIPOC that would mean that the participants are reminded that they have choices. But why? It assumes that racism limits choices of BIPOC possibly in a structural sense, but also on an interpersonal level. On one level the discourse on choice might highlight, that structural racism could possibly mean a limitation of access to housing, work, education, life possibilities etc. On the other level, it could put a focus on how everyday interaction with White people might be limited through racism. In a racialised setting a person might feel reduced to their perceived »Race« whilst their complex subjectivity is ignored. In addition, it could also put an emphasis on how we respond to racist incidences and question if there is a choice on how BIPOC respond to racism and/or racialised settings. Rose also underlines the importance of the question of choice in the chapter *Obliged to be Free* (1999) and concludes:

> »It is here that the techniques of psychotherapeutics come into accordance with new political rationales for the government of conduct. They are intrinsically bound to this injunction to selfhood and the space of choices that it operates within. They are themselves predominantly distributed to individuals through free choice in a market of expertise, rather than imposed by legal or religious obligation. They are characteristically sought when individuals feel unable to bear the obligations of selfhood, or when they are anguished by them. And the rationale of psychotherapies - and this applies equally to contemporary psychiatry - is to restore to individuals the capacity to function as autonomous beings in the contractual society of the self. Selves unable to operate the imperative of choice are to be restored through therapy to the status of a choosing individual. Selves who find choice meaningless and their identity constantly fading under inner and outer fragmentation are to be restored, through therapy, to unity and personal purpose. Selves dissatisfied with who they are can engage in therapeutic projects to refurbish and reshape themselves in the directions they desire. The psychotherapies provide technologies of individuality for the production and regulation of the individual who is ›free to choose‹« (Rose 1999, p. 231-232).

Similar to psychotherapies, the empowerment training suggests that individuals have the freedom to choose, whether or not they want to be empowered. Already imbued in its name, the empowerment training implies that the individual, a Black/Indigenous/Person of Colour is kind of disempowered, in this case by racial power structures. This is very reminiscent of

Steve Biko's idea of Black Consciousness programmes, which also assumed that Black people were victims of racism and the Apartheid system. So, if a Black/Indigenous/Person of Colour does not feel disempowered and (therefore sees no need to participate in an empowerment training), are they deluded? Of course, it is impossible to answer if each and every individual that has been racialised feels disempowered or not, there might be some who do and some who do not. There might be some people in denial of feeling disempowered, there might be some people who felt empowered by certain circumstances in their lives. Why a person chooses to participate in an empowerment training can be manifold. Whatever their personal reasons might be, training participants can receive support and strategies in order to cope with or respond to the racialised social settings they have to navigate through (Can 2013). Similar to psychotherapy, empowerment training aims at enabling the participants to act – so Rose states – as *»autonomous beings in the contractual society of the self«* (Rose 1999, p. 232). Here, I find it necessary to question Rose's reference to social contract theory made popular by the likes of Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Kant. Does the contractual society of the self also include the subject which is marginalised and disadvantaged by racialisation? In *The Racial Contract* (1997) by political philosopher Charles W. Mills, the author concludes that *»[b]y its crucial silence on race and the corresponding opacities of its conventional conceptual array, the raceless social contract and the raceless world of contemporary moral and political theory render mysterious the actual political issues and concerns that have historically preoccupied a large section of the world's population«* (Mills 1997, p. 124). In other words, so Mills suggests, the social contract has been mainly made applicable to White men, and could also be described as White supremacy, therefore a racial contract, as it usually excludes BIPOC. Nevertheless, the notion of autonomy in empowerment could also be complimented by the notion of decoloniality (Torres & Can 2013). The decolonised self acts freely of internalised Whiteness and internalised racism.

The concept of decoloniality highlights that the *»coloniality of power is based upon ›racial‹ social classification of the world population under Eurocentered world power«* (Quijano 2007, p. 171). The methods in both, anti-racism and empowerment training, though they have some resemblance to Western psychotherapeutic concepts, claim to have their

methodological roots in Non-Western culture and epistemology[42]. One of the heavily used methods in the empowerment training (but also in the follow up training of the anti-racism training) is the *Theatre of the Oppressed* (2000) founded and developed by Brazilian theatre practitioner, drama theorist and political activist Augusto Boal. Boal developed the Theatre of the Oppressed in Brazil in the late 1960s during the military junta (Cohen-Cruz & Schutzman 2006, p. 3). One of the branches of this theatre method that Boal developed was the Forum Theatre, which was based on simultaneous dramaturgy (Amkpa 2006, p. 170). The participants of the Forum Theatre would mostly depict everyday situations of oppression such as domestic violence or misuse of authority in mainly public spaces such as markets or universities. Together with the audience, the participants would seek solutions for these oppressive situations and the spectators also had the opportunity to replace one of the actors turning them into »spect-actors«, a mix of spectator and actor (ibid.). This particular method had also been used in Nana's first empowerment training. Drama studies researchers also compare this method to the Berthold Brecht's *Lehrstück*:

> »Theatre of the Oppressed can be compared to some extent to Brechtian didactic works (Lehrstücke) for several reasons. First, because the main interest lies in the acting experience and not the spectating one. At the core of these two theatrical practices is the actor. The essential is to act, not to sit and watch other people acting. Also and for the same reason, both don't necessarily implement public performance, because the biggest part is the process, not the finished work. Besides, none have been conceived for professional actors – *Lehrstücke* were intended for political activists as training in dialectical materialism. Even if Theatre of the Oppressed's Marxist background is less obvious, yet it asserts itself as a rehearsal for concrete political actions« (Coudray 2017, p.7).

In her interview, Nana had reported a situation on her arrival in Germany when she tried to register as a medical student at a Berlin university. In a hunt of Kafkaesque proportions, she was sent from one office to another, asked to provide documents constantly, which she did, only to be told to go to another office, where she would be asked to produce new or different documents, until it was the last day to register. Finally, she ended up in the office of a senior staff member who was flabbergasted at the gruelling and unsuccessful process Nana had already gone through, empathised with her, and took the time to register the

[42] It should also be noted here, that Freud was very much influenced by the ideas of religions and philosophies of Non-Western people such as Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism, amongst others (Kaplin et al. 2017).

young Black woman as a medical student. In the training, the story of her trying to register as a medical student was used in the Forum Theatre:

> Nana: »I do not remember like every detail, but I know, that it was such a comfort, you know. It was such a comfort, these themes, the way, we had some exercises. And then we had some drama. Oh, I remember that drama. I was in this drama play with Maria. And then I played out. I played out the experience I had, when I tried to register for medicine. And in this drama, so many aspects of that experience just came into my mind. It was the first time, that I understood, that I had gone through racism. I did not know at that time, that I had gone through racism, you know. So, on that Saturday I learned so much. Like, I learned, what it means to be Black, what it means to be White. And these constructions. The theory stuff also was very good. All of a sudden, I had a language. I had a language to speak. And I had people, who understood, what I was talking about. And that was just amazing. It was so amazing. I remember, I just did not want this day to end« (Nana 04/08/2012-2 #00:47:22).

It could be said that at this stage, the empowerment training (but also the basic anti-racism training and the follow up training) brings in here the question of »agency«. The idea is that the participants are made aware that they have agency, that they have the capacity to act in any way necessary to stir situations towards the best potential outcome/change they can achieve. However, Rose states that the question of agency might be a dead-end. In accordance with Butler (1995), he states that *»such capacities for action emerge out of the specific regimes and technologies that machinate humans in diverse ways«* (Rose 1999, p. 187). Rose also states that the invocation of a universal notion of human agency is unnecessary, as the linkages, associations and struggles the postmodern human has to go through, generate also reactions such as transformation and resistance as an outcome (ibid.). In other words, agency is simply a consequence, *»a distributed outcome of particular technologies of subjectification that invoke human beings as subjects of a certain type of freedom and supply the norms and techniques by which that freedom is to be recognized, assembled, and played out in specific domains«* (Rose 1999, p. 187).

The Theatre of the Oppressed highlights though also the embodiment of racialisation and resistance at the same time.

> Can: »After the training, the training was something very special for me, because the atmosphere that was created, uh, made it much easier to talk about difficult, yes, facts, to share it with others and not to have to explain for hours, but directly to be understood straight away. But uh, a very physical reaction at the end of the training, which for me has been very, very… yes, it was a paradigm shift in terms of body and mind. I got an extreme rash. I have no problems with rashes, but at the end of the training, so for the last third of the training, I felt my skin extremely all over, everywhere. It was super-hot, I had the feeling that I got some fumes coming out of my pores, as if hot air wanted out of all my pores. And the topic also has something to do with skin and skin colour and with the perception of it. And I think it was a reaction that had something to do with the training« (Can 10/07/2012 #00:05:39).

Can describes his first empowerment training as special, as distinct experience that stands out from his everyday life. The research subject describes a feeling of safety, of being able to share experiences of racialisation without them being questioned or denied that they are racist experiences. The denial of racism and its meanings for BIPOC is »*[t]o insist on being seen, that is, to contest the dominant group's perception is - for an oppressed person - to be smashed in the process by a wall of denial that makes of one's existence an illusion, an imagined story of unfairness and injustice* (Razack 1998, p. 24). In other words, the denial of racism evokes fears within BIPOC that they are not seen as subjects, their life experiences become invalidated and their voices silenced. This makes talking about racialisation within a mixed White/BIPOC setting very difficult. The absence of White people in the room creates an imagined safe space; I say imagined safe space because there are no safe spaces as epistemic and symbolical violence can be performed on many different levels[43].

Nevertheless, Can does describe his experience within the training as a paradigm shift, once he was able to share his experiences of racialisation without them being questioned or invalidated, he responded, not only mentally but also physically. There is some research on the effects of racism on a person's mental and physical health in long-term studies (Prasad 2012; Bhopal 2007). What does it do to our racialised bodies that we navigate through a racialised world? The research subject's response to the empowerment training and the confrontation of suffering caused by racialisation are described as deep emotions exuded by his body in aethereal form. The empowerment trainer and social scholar Pasqual Virginie Rotter, who developed the Empowerment-In-Motion training form, which works with mainly non-verbal and physical means of expressing and overcoming suffering caused by racialisation, argues that *»we have to understand racism experiences as a whole-body experience, which also causes whole-body reactions and coping mechanisms«* (Rotter 2013, p. 124)[44].

[43] The most recent development in anti-racism and empowerment movements is the concept of »safer spaces«, which are not 100% safe but still safer than other spaces.

[44] Rotter continues to write: »So of course, it is important to know what I have experienced, how I have responded to it so far and what I can say in the future. But it is just as important to realize that I hold my breath every time I face racism. And to break the connection to the basic movement of my life. Or that my body has learned to make itself imperceptibly smaller in order to avoid racist attacks. Or my vocal cords slightly constrict every time because a thin voice makes me less threatening for my racist counterpart. Or that I retreat gradually when my limit is exceeded, thereby giving up my need for my space. Or that I lower my eyes in the public space, so as not to be hit by the many potentially violent energies in the form of looks or racist images. Or that I tense my jaw every time I don't say anything.« (Rotter 2013, p.124)

Rotter also describes how many participants want rational methods to counter racialised situations (ibid.). Yet, as much as the aspect of acting liberated in the empowerment training has its relevance, another much basic facet is important in the training. Kabera, who, with a few exceptions had grown up in a very White environment, shared his most important emotion, he experienced during his first empowerment training:

> Kabera: »When I think back to when I went through my first own BCT, I think in 2005 that was where I think it was the realisation that there is racism, it is everywhere, I have had this experience and others have also had this experience. And I think that was such a magical moment when I noticed that I wasn't really alone with it and it actually exists, even if there are people who say, no, it doesn't exist, or candle-lit demonstrations would be enough to tackle it« (Kabera 14/04/2012-1 #00:45:51).

Kabera's statement here suggests, that the experience of racism can be an isolating experience for the racialised individual in Germany. Further, racial discrimination is also described as a life experience, which is very often denied or not acknowledged. Understandingly, a person that felt isolated from people with shared life experiences, could feel a magic moment, once they enter a room in which biographies of people who have been racialised as BIPOC assemble are recognised. However, Kabera also describes how difficult it can be to enter those spaces, where people with in particular painful shared experiences of racialisation converge:

> Kabera: »And I also believe this goal, it is so that I realise that it is actually about doing it and having this experience again and writing this experience anew. […] But I realise that it actually still costs me strength, I realise that before every training session, I somehow get a little sick, have a cold, have a stomach-ache, have an ear-ache or something. And then, yes, almost force myself to go there, to do that and then come back out of it with a bit of relief and a bit of recovery, so to speak. To say wow, I kind of faced it« (Kabera 14/04/2012-2 #00:05:44).

Even though Kabera seems unsure what the aim of the empowerment training is, he does mention facing the pain or discomfort he senses before the training, in order to write the experience anew. Kabera's statement also implies that the process of rewriting the meaning of experiences is a long process that should improve and feel much easier over the course of time. The quote, but also most of the other statements from BIPOC research participants and White research participants also imply that this is an internal process, going inward instead of outward. Rose concludes:

> »The codes and vocabularies of psychotherapeutics thus can bring into alignment the techniques for the regulation of subjectivity and the technologies of government elaborated within contemporary political rationales. It promises to make it possible for us all to make a project of our biography, create a style for our lives, shape our everyday existence in terms of an ethic of autonomy. Yet the norm of autonomy secretes, as its inevitable accompaniment, a constant and intense self-scrutiny, a continual evaluation of our personal experiences, emotions, and feelings in relation to images of satisfaction, the necessity to narrativize our lives in a vocabulary of interiority. The self that is liberated is obliged to live its life tied to the project of its own identity« (Rose 1999, p. 259).

The BIPOC research participants expressed different emotions than the White ones in their narratives of their first training. There certainly was a feeling of warmth, being welcomed, of feeling good or amazing and in awe, a sense of something magical happening but also the feeling of being understood (Can, Kabera, Nana). Some research participants also shared a kind of negative physical experience triggered by the training (Can, Kabera). What relevance do these emotions have? What role do they play also in the new narratives of self that the participants develop after the training?

Conclusion

The fifth chapter highlights how the language of self-governmentality as examined by Rose (1996, 1999) is heavily used in the statements made by the research participants. This resonates also with Lasch-Quinn's critique of *Race Experts* (2001), some of which have turned the efforts of the US Civil Rights movement into a form of Californian-style racial self-discovery, with the aim of transcending racial differences:

> »Initially this trend brought highly credible examinations on the part of Kenneth Clark and others of the real psychological dimensions of racial discrimination, but increasingly the terms and mode of the new therapies including the twelve-step programs and the larger recovery ethos, the movement to free the ›inner child,‹ and the like-became mixed in with the racial struggle indiscriminately. The idea that therapy could and should help bring about political change, at the very least by helping one individual at a time confront his or her own psychological inheritance – the legacy of racism and oppression – spawned a number of initiatives that fused race and therapy. A rough consensus over what came to be known as a perspective dedicated to ›empowerment‹ united the disparate approaches: therapy could help blacks and whites take charge of their own lives, ridding themselves respectively of the scars of oppression or their racism« (Lasch-Quinn 2001, p. 110).

Whilst some of the narratives of the research participants' experience of the anti-racism and empowerment training echo in Lasch-Quinn's criticism, the narratives of the training do not fit into other training forms that put a focus on racial etiquette or shaming in particular

White participants about their White privileges, or unleashing the rage of BIPOC participants on White people. However, participants describe a process that goes inward, examining, scrutinizing their racial subjectivation with the aim of understanding themselves and the racialised relations around them better. Furthermore, it is not solely about a cognitive understanding of racial matters, but also grasping emotionally what the racialisation process has done to the human subject. There is of course, the danger, especially for the White participants to fall into the trap of an emotional self-centredness, of an unintentional reproduction of White narcissism (Matias 2016). (It could also be argued that the BIPOC participants' feelings could make them fall into the trap of an ethical pedestal from where they could reproduce symbolical violence). There might be ways for the White self to learn to re-learn how White people feel about themselves (Yancy & McRae 2019), but it certainly would not mean a breakout from the realm of self-governmentality. Some scholars argue that feelings play a crucial role in political learning processes (Besand 2014). I would argue that emotions play a role in how we perceive ourselves and the world, and that they can also play an important role of how we relate to theories of racialisation not only in the abstract but in the personal. Being in denial of emotions would only lead to denying part of our humanness, and taking emotions seriously is not an argument to let go of reason, evaluation and critical reflexivity (Mohseni 2020, p. 439). Some practitioners of political education might even argue that once the restrictions of expressing emotions is lifted, critical reflexivity can thrive (Mohseni 2020, p. 439). The research participants' narratives of better understanding *and* feeling of their own racialisation is understood as giving more autonomy to the racialised subject, empowering and enabling to regain initially embryonic forms of freedom that the subject can build on.

Though in some instances Rose's critique does not account for those marginalised subjects that are not always included in the social contract, the discourses in the accounts of the research participants of their first training experience highlight the significance psychotherapeutic concepts are given to them. They fit smoothly into the notion of Western lifestyles that focus on beliefs of psychological independence and self-realisation. The consequence of that is a restriction of what it means to be a human being, of what it means to be free or liberated. And they are thrust into the involuntary contradiction of being forced

to be free. In the context of the anti-racism and empowerment training it could mean that racialised subjects are forced into giving their lives meaning such as deconstructing the racialised structures and ideas that limit them, their interpersonal relations and their relations to societal resources.

Can these choices only be relegated to the realm of self-governmentality (is it even possible to see them outside this realm?) or is it possible to reconcile them with a vision of decolonised structures and deracialised being? I have probed, in a particularly condensed form, the development and reception of anti-racism and empowerment training in the UK and Germany. In reflection upon the personal training experiences that anti-racism and empowerment practitioners share, I examined the notion of (self-)empowerment and (self-)governmentality. In the analysis of the narratives of the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners' first training experience, I conclude that the cognitive *and* emotional understanding of individual racialisation processes partially transforms and liberates the racialised subject.

Having analysed the research participants' narratives of their first training experience, the following chapter examines the new narratives of the self that have been developed from the training experience.

Chapter 6: After the Training – Re-Writing Racialised Subjectivity, Re-Imagining Humanness

> »For whatever reasons, good or bad, I have been unwilling to open in myself what I have known all along to be a wound - a historical wound, prepared centuries ago to come alive in me at my birth like a hereditary disease, and to be augmented and deepened by my life. If I had thought it was only the black people who have suffered from the years of slavery and racism, then I could have dealt fully with the matter long ago; I could have filled myself with pity for them, and would no doubt have enjoyed it a great deal and thought highly of myself. I am sure it is not so simple as that. If white people have suffered less obviously from racism than black people, they have nevertheless suffered greatly; the cost has been greater perhaps than we can yet know. If the white man inflicted the wound of racism upon black men, the cost has been that he would receive the mirror image of that wound upon himself. […]
>
> This wound is in me, as complex and deep in my flesh as blood and nerves. I have borne it all my life, with varying degrees of consciousness, but always carefully, always with the most delicate consideration for the pain I would feel if I were somehow forced to acknowledge it. […] Yet I know that if I fail to make at last the attempt I forfeit any right to hope that the world will become better than it is now (Berry 2010 [1970], pp. 3-4).

After having examined the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners' narratives of their first training experience, the following chapter looks into the new narratives of the self emerging after the training. What is the difference between a story and a narrative? The sociologist Ken Plummer wrote in his book *Narrative Power: The Struggle for Human Value* (2019) a story is about what we tell, and a narrative is about how we tell it (Plummer 2019, pp. 4-5). Narratives can be powerful, especially if one narrative is used to represent an all (Plummer 2019, p. 7), such as narratives in Western media about a Black/Indigenous/Person of Colour or a small group of BIPOC that do not adhere to the Western notion of modernity and thereby almost *all* BIPOC become incapable of adapting to the Western notion of modernity (Foroutan 2020, pp. 12-18). Narratives of dominance sustain a system of control, exploitation and suffering (Plummer 2019, p. 22). However, narratives also have the capacity to empower: »*they can foster imagination, emancipate and give us hope*« (Plummer 2019, p. 22). In any case, »*stories only work when people act in* relation *to them; stories have absolutely no life on their own. Through narrative actions, they become social events*« [my own emphasis] (Plummer 2019, p. 22). The research participants' realisation in the training of having been racialised was accompanied by strong emotional responses in their narratives (Chapter 5). The narratives of realisation enabled not only the research participants' narratives of remembering personal processes of racialisation in-depth, but also working through the suffering caused by these processes (Chapter 4). **The following chapter explores: *What are the new narratives of the self created by anti-racism and empowerment training? How do***

anti-racism and empowerment practitioners re-write racial subjectivation and re-imagine humanness? In the first two sections, the new narratives of the self that have been developed from the training experience are explored. In the final section of this thesis, I look into how anti-racism and empowerment practitioners re-imagine humanness. Thereby, I delve into an existential reflection on Fanon's appeal for a new humanism and delineate the concept of decoloniality.

Narratives of the self

I assume that, in the nexus of subjectivity, self and narratives, new possibilities of life are located. Why has there been in the recent years, a growing interest in narratives and subjectivity? Some scholars argue that the »*interest signifies a move away from the search for essential, universal or even rational identities and instead stresses more uncertain and creative processes of construction and fabrication*« (Byrne 2002, p. 1). Narratives can be powerful, and narratives can be both, empowering and disempowering (Plummer 2019, p. 22). Plummer suggest nine theses of narrative power:

> »1 Narratives make us human
> 2 Narratives live through human actions
> 3 We dwell in narrative realities
> 4 Narrative actions of power are produced ubiquitously in everyday living
> 5 Deep infrastructures shape narrative power
> 6 Narratives encode the struggle for human value
> 7 Narrative power is animated through drama
> 8 Narrative power is dialogic, contentious and fragile
> 9 Narratives have limits« (Plummer 2019, p.22).

Similarly, in his essay »What is Enlightenment« Michel Foucault assumed that narratives give us access to the »practices« and »techniques« of the self (Foucault 1991, p. 41). Progressing from his earlier work, in which the subject appeared to be much more determined and caged by discourses, the philosopher began to see subjectivity more as the result of processes of being constructed and constructing the self through the interaction of discourse and applying the self (Byrne 2002, p. 2). Foucault contended that modernity does

not free a person in their own existence; it forces them to confront the project of creating and applying themselves (Foucault 1991, p. 41). In another essay »On the genealogy of ethics« (1991), Foucault explored the development of practices of the self, of living an ethical life from Ancient Greece to the Greco-Roman period, and then from Christianity to modernity. According to Foucault, ethics was about aesthetic choices, the »*reason for making this choice was the will to live a beautiful life, and to leave to others memories of a beautiful existence*« (Foucault 1991, p. 341):

> »Foucault uses this genealogy to argue that the task for individuals in modernity should be to produce themselves as a work of art. ›Art is something which is specialised or which is done by experts who are artists. But couldn't everyone's life become a work of art? Why should the lamp or the house be an art object but not our life?‹ (Foucault 1991, p350). This is art considered not as an elite practice, but at the level of the everyday. An ethics of the self, for Foucault, involves the reflexive examination of the process of subjection – the processes through which individuals come to understand themselves as subjects. As Lois McNay argues, ›A Foucauldian ethics of the self is not based on an adherence to externally imposed moral obligations, but rather on an ethics of who we are said to be, and what, therefore, it is possible for us to become‹ (McNay 1994, p145). Nor is this ethics about discovering a true essence – there is no self waiting to be discovered, but it is a process of creation and re-invention out of available resources« (Byrne 2002, pp. 2-3).

Narrative subjectivity reproduces a self-portraying history, and envisions what is about to come in a form to cater the subject's existence with some level of coherence or cohesion, with an aim, with a sense. Accordingly, a subject's biography blends remembering with an imagined meaning, »*creating a coherent account of identity in time*« (McAdams & McLean 2013, p. 233). In order to generate new narratives of the self, the subject needs to find a way to share their personal stories according to specific social locations, within the family or with peers, in formal and casual social settings (McAdams & McLean 2013, p. 235). One of the themes that develops in narrative subjectivity is the subject of redemption. The racialised subject cannot really be held accountable for having been racialised as a child, since they did not actively choose what type of racial material they were confronted with in society (even though, once presented with it, children make active use of that racial material) (Van Ausdale & Feagin 2001, p. 22). However, a great majority of children also learn at some point that confronting adults with racialised realities causes a lot of shame and silences in society, so the racial material is repressed (Riepe 1992, pp. 175-176). Once racialised subjectivities become aware of their racial subjectivation, how can they ethically, »live a beautiful life«, one that is not poisoned by toxic racial inequalities, which they came to realise, they are more part of than they would like to be (Rothberg 2019)? In this thesis, one of the themes

that arises through narrative subjectivities, who are aware of their racial subjectivation, is redemption. The anti-racism and empowerment practitioners re-write their narratives as stories of redemption, in order to empower themselves for potential momentary challenges, but also for the responsibility to improve the lives of others in a way that can be sustained:

> »The theme of redemption points to the broader adaptational issue of how human beings make narrative sense of suffering in their lives. In general, research on narrative identity suggests that adults who emerge strengthened or enhanced from negative life experiences often engage in a two-step process (Pals, 2006). In the first step, the person explores the negative experience in depth, thinking long and hard about what the experience felt like, how it came to be, what it may lead to, and what role the negative event may play in the person's overall life story. In the second step, the person articulates and commits the self to a positive resolution of the event. Research suggests that the first step is associated with personal growth—the second, with happiness« (McAdams & McLean 2013, p. 234).

Within the research participants' narratives of racial subjectivation, suffering was one of the other major common themes. How do anti-racism and empowerment practitioners transform this suffering from racialisation into new narratives of an empowered self?

Jean-Paul Sartre wrote in the foreword of Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth: »We only become what we are by the radical deep-seated refusal of that which others have made of us*« (Fanon 1965, p. 15). The sixth chapter explores the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners' narratives of the self that emerged after their first training experience. In *Narrative Power* Ken Plummer (2019) developed a model of narratives that describe how we become what we are:

> »I Collaborative Narratives: staying with dominant stories
> 1 Hyper-conformist narratives: exaggerates acceptance; often self-loathing; the HyperNormal.
> 2 Conformist narratives: deferential, colonized.
> II Negotiated Narratives: living under dominance but developing weapons to resist while not challenging the existing order
> 3 Innovation narratives: develops new creative story, but not threatening of dominant stories (e.g., crime, corruption).
> 4 Retreatist narratives: withdraws from the dominant narrative into own world (e.g., isolation, illness, mental illness, religion, drug use, denial, 'dropping out', indifference, despair, etc.).
> 5 Ritualist narratives: resists dominant stories through repertoires of rituals (e.g. humour, mockery, games, distancing, posing. etc.).
> 6 Reformist/rehabilitation narratives: Looking for ways of changing within the system (e.g. campaigning, therapy).
> III Counter-Narratives: not accepting dominant stories, seeking change
> 7 Resistance and rebellious narratives: challenging, arguing against, finding ways to reject the dominant story.
> 8 Radical and revolutionary narratives: rejecting and seeking change. Possible violence« (Plummer 2019, p.76).

Plummer's model of narratives by listing three stages with a total of eight levels implies a linear evolution from the first level of the first stage to the eighth level of the third stage. I assert that modelling the self as a narrative evolving in a straight line would be a gross

oversimplification. It would flatten the multi-dimensionality of the self into one dimension, it would render its complexity, the simultaneity of contradictions, the evolvements and regresses, the between and betwixt, invisible. However, Plummer's model is still a very useful tool to assess some of the narratives described in this chapter.

Re-writing Whiteness

In *Machinery of Whiteness* (2010), Martinot concludes his book, by proposing a way that could potentially lead to an »*alternate decolonized consciousness*« (Martinot 2010, p. 185). The author's suggestion on how to proceed on this way to decolonising Whiteness, is based on the DuBoisian concept of the double consciousness. In *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) DuBois describes the double consciousness of Black people as »*a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity*« (DuBois 1903, p. 2), »*the others*« meaning here White. Martinot invites his White readers into a reverse double-consciousness, where White people let go of their normative perception of the world and begin to assume a position, from where they begin to see themselves through the eyes of those who are disadvantaged by racialised structures in society (Martinot 2010, p. 185). Martinot hypothises that three things will arise, once White people see themselves through the reverse double consciousness:

> »First, for a person to see himself as he or she is seen by another would be to grant that other person a subjectivity, an autonomy of consciousness that is denied to that other by racism and white supremacy. One would have to see oneself as judged by that other, not as an individual but as a part of a social machine. Part of the purpose of the vilification of the victims of racist violence is to de-authorize the racialized from rendering such judgments. Second, since white identity is based on the ability of whiteness to objectify those it racializes for itself, to see oneself as seen by those racialized would dispel both the other's objectification by one's white identity and one's own ability to use them for white identity construction. One's white identity, which depends on that objectification, would unravel. And third, one would become an object (in one's own mind) because one had become an object for those others. But one would become an object whose nature, in its capacity or potentiality to dominate, would be seen as other, as objectified, by oneself. One could see the dehumanization one had imposed on others in oneself. One could then see the modes by which one dominates or oppresses simply by being white, because seen as such by those whom whites have racialized« (Martinot 2010, pp. 185-186).

How can this reverse double consciousness for White people be initialised? The White research participants shared how the anti-racism training was a change of perspective in their narratives, of perceiving themselves and the social world they exist in from the point of view from BIPOC. The training has been partially developed from epistemologies of the Global South (some of which shall be explored in the final part of this chapter) and it aims at making perceptions from this BIPOC realm accessible for White people. From the narratives of the White research participants, it was evident that the training does not attempt to create awareness by trying to reverse the BIPOC experience for White people like the Blue-Eyed-Brown-Eyed-Training. In the Blue-Eyed-Brown-Eyed-Training, participants with blue eyes are subjected to the experiences of BIPOC for the duration of the training. The narratives rather highlight how, from the perspective of BIPOC, White people are very early subjected to racialised discourses in which a racial Other is constructed, which inversely constitutes the White subject. In this process it *»is not a question of guilt, but rather of seeing who one is, and who one is made to be, by one's position, one's role, and one's complicity in the machinery of whiteness«* (Martinot 2010, p. 185).

Which methods of anti-racism and Critical Whiteness training or seminars, help White participants to move beyond guilt and irritation? Henry A. Giroux concludes that *»[t]here is a curious absence in the work on Whiteness regarding how students might examine critically the construction of their own identities in order to rethink Whiteness as a discourse of both critique* and *possibility«* [my own emphasis] (Giroux 1997, p. 285). Is it possible to relate Whiteness with a new language of racialisation, allowing participants to analyse the discursive, personal and structural dimensions of being White? Theorising the relationship between racialisation and subjectivity empowers participants to locate themselves within those structures, and enables them to construct transitional locations of belonging and a sense of direction (ibid.). In the centre of this political and personal transformation process, stands also the re-imagination of relating to oneself differently and thereby relating to others also differently. When I asked the participants to tell how their stories continued after their first anti-racism training, C.L. was one of the first to reply:

> C.L .: »[…] [T]his has a total impact in all areas of my life, from before to after. And it opened a whole, on many levels worlds and doors and gates and emotions and knowledge and everything, i.e., on all levels, what I thought

was closed off before and which somehow accompanies me much more in the way of humanity, to become the human being I want to be somehow or so, or where I want to go« (C.L., focus group 11/01/2015-4 #00:20:43).

C.L. describes how the training changed her life drastically. The research participant describes a fundamental change of perception, which is evident in the use of time as a category, a »*before*« and an »*after*« the training. Whilst the life before the training is described as »*closed off*«, the after, the encounter with her own racial subjectivation and the suffering it caused in her, is described in terms of »*open gates*« and »*doors*« but also »*emotions*« and »*knowledge*« (C.L., focus group 11/01/2015-4 #00:20:43). C.L. portrays two modes of existence for White people, the first one being a closed-off (or maybe toxic) form of Whiteness, unable to move through certain passages, unable to feel certain emotions, unable to grasp certain knowledges. This closed-off, fixed Whiteness stands in contrast to a form of liberated or transcended Whiteness, which is capable of moving, feeling and understanding. C.L. assumes that toxic Whiteness can only relate to the racialised Other as a function, the mirror image of the White self but not actually as a being that exists for the sake of being. According to C.L. transcended Whiteness departs from the reference of the racialised Other as its mirror image, and moves towards itself, feels itself and understands itself, thereby relating to a counterpart aware of its own perceptions. This transcended Whiteness is also capable of self-determination, which C.L. sees as an integral part of humanness, as something that accompanies her on the way of becoming *»the human being«* she wants to be (C.L., focus group 11/01/2015-4 #00:20:43). Though the notion of humanness will be examined further in the final part of this chapter, Ryan had a similar response:

Ryan: »And what you just said, […] also resonated with me, because […] for me also has changed a lot in my way of life and the way I move in spaces, in which spaces I move, who I am on the move with, has changed. Two elements come to mind: that I pay much more attention today, so to speak, how relationships are lived, and that I want to live many more relationships that are good for me. Somehow going deep, with a kind of authenticity, where people really meet, instead of exchanging roles. And that it is becoming increasingly difficult for me to be moving in spaces where this is not the case. So, for example, in radical left-wing White spaces, where a lot works with certain codes, certain language, certain behaviours and it is not a question of people meeting each other and exchanging beyond these whole schematics. […] And that I really appreciate spaces and I am always looking for where it is possible to meet people. […] And the other thing is the desire to build things up. […] So, what I also know from radical left-wing perspectives: somehow against, deconstruct, destroy, break the system. Which is good and justified, but only very limited if that's somehow the only way. And what shaped me […] is the desire or the idea of building something together. To create something. And that's what humans are actually there for. So, from our basic capacity we are beings who can create things. And before […] I unlearned over the course of a years-long process to create things, building things. And that's only now that I'm gradually coming back into contexts, where I set off together with other people to really build something that I believe in« (Ryan, focus group 11/01/2015-4 #00:28:57).

Ryan describes, similarly to C.L. a before and an after the training. Ryan's statement also resembles C.L.'s in regard to using a language of movement that seems to be initialised through the training or process. The research participant narrates that his ability to move in places has changed and that he is now seeking more genuine or in his words »authentic« relationships within those spaces. So, following Ryan's narration of certain political spaces in Berlin, toxic Whiteness is not capable of having relationships that are true. Ryan further states that the relationships he encounters in those spaces are neither good nor nurturing; this seems to be also the case in »*radical left-wing White spaces*« (Ryan, focus group 11/01/2015-4 #00:28:57), where people relate in very coded and ritualised ways to each other's roles, rather than to the actual person. The genuine »meeting« of people is considered important by Ryan, and he does also mention places where people are more willing to meet each other in an interchange. The notion of »interchange« that Ryan evokes seems to relate to the idea of recognising each other's subjectivity and not simply the role a person holds. According to Charles Taylor, recognition is crucial in politics of multiculturalism, where some identities are partly shaped through misrecognition, which leads to oppression of those mis-recognised (Taylor 1994, pp. 25-26). Taylor further examined a shift from monarchical honour to modern dignity, which is also used in human rights discourse (ibid.). Here, according to the philosopher, recognition becomes more important through the modern emphasis on individuality and implicit »authenticity«, which also came with a shift from religious morality to an intrinsic human morality (ibid). By analysing the question of the »true and full human being«, which in a pre-modern view meant being in touch with God, Taylor argues that a modern view of humanness is much more related to being in touch with oneself (via God, ideas etc.) (Taylor 1994, pp. 27-29). This being in touch with oneself was coined by 18th century Genevan philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau also as »*le sentiment de l'existence*«, a feeling of existence (ibid.). The 18th century German philosopher and theologian Johann Gottfried Herder stated that every person, but also a *Volk,* has their own measure of what it means to be true to themselves, which places moral importance on individuality. It can also place a moral importance on respect for other cultures (but also nationalism) (Taylor 1994, pp. 30-31), which is generated from the inside. However, modern philosophy tends to forget that we are social beings, and

that identity and recognition are closely linked to each other, and that this inward dialogue is also shaped by an outwards dialogue (Taylor 1994, p. 32). Taylor concludes that *»[w]e need relationships to fulfil, but not to define, ourselves*« (Taylor 1994, p. 33). One of the main problems of modernity is the failing of recognition: *»Not only contemporary feminism but also race relations and discussions of multiculturalism are undergirded by the premise that the withholding of recognition can be a form of oppression«* (Taylor 1994, p. 36). Ryan seems to be familiar with this form of withholding recognition in different political spaces, even those that claim to be working toward some kind of equality or social justice.

Another term that Ryan uses in his narrative is »building something up«, »creating« something, which stands in contrast to other conventional White political spaces. The research subject uses words such as being »against« things, deconstructing, destroying, breaking structures, but not necessarily being *for* something, constructing, building, fixing something. I find this a rather reductionist perception of a variety of political spaces. Interestingly, Ryan attributes the ability to build and create something as one of the reasons for the existence of human beings. This also seems to omit the destructive potential human beings hold. However, the destructiveness of a non-liberated Whiteness or of the *Machinery of Whiteness* is also highlighted in the following statement of C.L.

C.L., who at the time of the interview was working at a governmental organisation for international exchange programmes, had made very difficult experiences at her workplace. The research participant had tried to critique the way the organisation from the Global North was handling instances of racial discrimination, and the complex of problems that arise in developmental work with organisations from and in the Global South:

> C.L.: »[W]hat I actually want to say is that I had an experience with Whiteness in there that was incredibly horrible. […] And that was an experience with Whiteness and dominance and power relations, which felt like being between a rock and a hard place, which caused me to blow open at some point and just not be there anymore. Or like many sharp knives that it can somehow knock a soul out. And I would say that the orthodox radical-left struggle structure has that too. […] And, somehow, I found it very interesting because I think I came from structures in which simply… the incredibly painful violence of Whiteness just somehow showed itself like this. And I felt like I sailed in somewhere and was somehow hexed there. And with this whole […] process [after the training] I also learned a little bit, like tools, […] to take away their punch from them, or maybe even endure them in part or deal with them and look at them somehow differently. […] I think that is something very important to explore: How do White structures affect White actors in there? And what does that do to people in there who try to change something in White cemented structures. […] I just wanted to say that I really have the feeling: ›This machinery, it can really kill you somehow‹«. (C.L., focus group 11/01/2015-4 #00:16:38)

I would object to the notion that racial structures and the White people that move within those become inhuman automatons. However, why would people who consider themselves probably anti-racist, who work in developmental places, who probably consider themselves to be »good«, through forms of symbolic violence, maintain or as C.L. phrases it »cement« racialised structures centring Whiteness? Notwithstanding, C.L. does refer to a form of conditioning of the White subject that contributes to a cementing of White power structures, which would mean that these structures become or are very rigid, and therefore difficult to break or change. In other words, racialised power structures would become a normality which could simply remain unquestioned. C.L.'s language of mechanisation resonates also with Martinot's description of Whiteness as a brutal or inhuman machine. Martinot concludes that: »*[i]t is the familiarity of the many racist actions, both the atrocities and the small harassments, that tells us that the machinery of racialization has conditioned our consciousness and our intentions to attribute a certain normalcy to racism*« (Martinot 2010, p. 171).

Simultaneously, C.L. narrates that the training »saved« her, that it gave her tools to handle the difficult situation she felt she was in at her workplace. The handling of the situation is described by C.L. in different ways, of either being more resilient in accepting the situation or in being able to absorb, or withstand the racialised (symbolic) violence in some kind of manner. Either way, the research subject characterises her training experience as a change of perspective, which helped her to cope with the situation at her workplace. This change of perspective could also be considered a form of paradigm shift. Can the awareness of how racialisation has conditioned our subjectivity in order to accept the normality of racial power structures, allow racialised subjects to question its normalisation? Very often racism is perceived by White people as a problem, which is located in the past (McKinney 2003, p. 53). The belief is that younger generations grow up in a much more multi-racial setting, and therefore, racism will slowly dissuade as a societal challenge (ibid.). These beliefs and attitudes amongst White people only lead to making anti-racist and anti-discrimination actions and policies irrelevant (ibid.). White subject identities will, at best take, a passive role, or at worst, resist matters of racism or racial equality because they do not realise that they themselves are also racialised (ibid.). Dominant White discourses on racism only see racial oppression as a problem in its excessive form, in the vocalisation of

racist epithets, or in racist violence. The normalcy of racialisation mainly then leads to a prevalence of colour-blind discourses, as in »we are all the same« or »we do not see race/difference here« (Perry 2001, p. 67). Another possibility is also that the conversation about racism will be diverted towards White Germans being the victim of multiculturalism (Shooman 2018). McKinney concludes that it »*will take a shift in these everyday White people' views before the racial status quo can be changed to a more equitable system*« (McKinney 2003, p. 53). Can this questioning of normalisation of racialised power structures within White subject identities, be the beginning of changing and shifting those structures? The following passage also highlights the question of change within the family:

> C.L. »And maybe on a positive note […]. I'm very touched at the moment right now, because I was at home with my family at Christmas, and I come from southern Germany from a farm, from a Catholic, traditional, non-academic home. [...] And what I find very exciting, is that my brother has a neo-Nazi past, so it's an incredibly right-wing environment in which I grew up. [...] And what is really cool is that my mother has really followed me over the years. Well, that's when we had arguments and I started to discuss with my brother, my mother very often... I mean, she's a farmer, secondary school, finished school at 14, no further formal education, no... absolute sexist, blatant sexist discrimination [...]. But who was always on my side somehow, as far as racism is concerned. […] And now at Christmas, suddenly, my brother also started to utter different tones. And somehow a lot of refugees were admitted in Baden-Württemberg and the Catholic Church is somehow very active. [...] And my mother is involved too. My brother now somehow asks me and is interested and stuff. [...] And somehow my heart opened. And I thought like: ›Crazy Shit! It really radiates […]‹. And I think right now, my brother, yes, well, in his mid-40s, White, a little bit lonely out there in southern Germany and in regard to that subject... he's beginning to turn around. […] Austen also said: ›Hey, if you can talk to your relatives about racism, that's a bit advanced‹ (Laughter). And I can totally talk to my family about it. […] And I really think that these things are being decided in the heart. And that they are not decided by the fact that I somehow read three books more […]«. (C.L., focus group 11/01/2015-4 #00:20:57)

C.L. shares how the debate around »Race« in her parents' home, shifted over the years. Living in a non-academic, Catholic, rural household, did not stop the family from discussing the subject of racism. Her mother, despite little formal education, would support C.L. during discussions with her older brother, who was part of the local Neo-Nazi scene and who had strong right-extremist attitudes. With C.L.'s constant anti-racist position in the family, the increase of refugees in the area, and the Catholic churches stance to welcome and support these people, her mother now also became active in supporting the church's stance, and getting involved with helping the new arrivals. More surprisingly, even C.L.'s openly racist brother seems more empathetic towards refugees and is also interested in his younger sister's political views.

C.L. also assumes that the shift in her family was facilitated through a few other factors. Firstly, the research subject exclaims: »*It really radiates*« (C.L., focus group

11/01/2015# 00: 20: 57-0 #), meaning that the inner change, the inner attitude becomes reflected in creating more openness towards addressing difficult subjects, such as racism. Secondly, C.L. assumes that the change in her family had very little to do with cognitive processes, with reading the right number of books, but with emotional processes, of how to relate to each other, and also to oneself. C.L. concludes the matter of anti-racism and Critical Whiteness, is not decided in the mind but in the heart. In *Why Love Hurts* (2012) Eva Illouz points out a flaw in the dominant feminist discourse in critiquing love. Illouz writes that in the subjectivity of women and men, love played a far less relevant role, whilst patriarchy was much stronger (Illouz 2012, p. 5). The sociologist further states, that the importance of love in modern culture is related to the decrease of men's power within family structures (ibid.). Illouz further concludes that *»much of feminist theory is premised on the assumption that in love (and other) relationships, power is the primary building block of social relationships. It thus must disregard the vast amount of empirical evidence suggesting that love is no less primary than power, and that it is also a powerful and invisible mover of social relationships«* (Illouz 2012, pp. 5-6). In other words, love can play a significant role in changing people's attitudes and self-understanding. Could it be possible that Critical Race Theory suffers from a similar underestimation of the power of love in facilitating social change?

Ryan, shortly after his training, gave his mother an anti-racism training as a birthday present, with very mixed results:

> Ryan: »[I]t went totally wrong. So, she was the person who derailed the training a bit. [Name of trainer] and [name of co-trainer] were the trainers. And, yes, I can't tell what happened there, but it definitely went wrong. She totally blocked. Couldn't do anything with the socialisation images. Said: ›Here, my GDR socialisation was very different. I saw completely different pictures.‹ And somehow [Name of trainer] triggered something with her, I think some father thing. Well, I don't want to go too deeply into the psychological depth because I can't, but it was clear, it got out of hand somehow. And I gave it to my mom because she... because I perceive her like, she has a lot... there are so very exoticizing images. So, she has such a great romanticising idea of Africa. Was there often. Had two black boyfriends. […] I don't have to say everything, but the love of nature and the warmth and happiness and things like that. And so, I felt like I had to shake her up somehow. […] I tried for a long time to explain it to myself: ›How is it that my mother has these images?‹ […] I perceive her as impervious to see her own Whiteness. And also, about where the images she has, come from. And how much they clash with reality. […] [O]ne of the explanations for me today is that socialisation in the GDR is a little bit like: ›We are all siblings‹, she can't really get away from it. So, this: ›No, there's no such division. […] We're all the same.‹ It is an element« (Ryan, focus group 11/01/2015-3 #00:29:34).

Ryan's statement is very interesting on many levels. Firstly, it shows what can happen if a participant is forced, or coerced to participate in an anti-racism training[45]. Ryan's mother

[45] Usually, the participation in a Phoenix training has to be facultative, Phoenix does not allow employers or organisers to force people into participating in the training.

participates in the training potentially more for her son's sake rather than her own. Secondly, the plan backfires also as Ryan implies because one of the middle-aged male trainers triggers a psychological response in his mother, presumably related to patriarchy, which manifested itself in distrust and disregard towards the father figure's/trainer's statements but also the information which he provided. Thirdly, Ryan's mother simply goes into denial mode and assumes that, because she grew up in the GDR, she was not racist.

Ryan's mother leans on the anti-racist discourses in the GDR, which could also be described as racial egalitarianism (Slobidian 2015). The first part in Quinn Slobodian's book *Comrades of Color* (2015) in reference to the GDR's racial egalitarianism is titled »Race Without Racism?« (Slobodian 2015, p. 23). Slobodian examines how the UNESCO in the 1950s, promoted the notion of racial egalitarianism, and how this notion found its way into the GDR's self-understanding of an anti-fascist state (Slobodian 2015, p. 27). However, what also remained in the GDR was a cultural racism, which though it was coded racially, was not so heavily relying on distinct physical differences, but rather perceived cultural characteristics (Slobodian 2015, p. 26). In reference to colonial imagery, representation of the three great races, as in yellow, black, and white were evoked in the former socialist country (Slobodian 2015, p. 31). This racial triad became an iconography of internationalism in GDR and other countries of the former Eastern Bloc (ibid.). In 1950, officials decreed that there was no more racism in the GDR, in other words, it only existed in other places, for example in the imperialist Western states (ibid.). The GDR's anti-racist strategy was to create an uncritical cult, a state-sanctioned pity for the racially oppressed behind which racist attitudes were hidden (Slobodian 2015, p. 32). Personal contacts between (White) GDR citizens and BIPOC from other socialist states such as Vietnam, Cuba, or Angola were highly regulated and restricted by the SED regime (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands = Socialist Unity Party of Germany) (ibid.). Simultaneously, there were racially motivated attacks against BIPOC and Jews by a rising right-extremist Neo-Nazi scene, in particular in the 80s, which were rarely reported about in the media and were mostly covered up, because these attacks did not fit the anti-fascist and anti-racist self-image of the GDR (Waibel 1996, 2017). Nevertheless, it is not to say that there were genuine moments of empathy and solidarity with the struggles of BIPOC in the world (Schwenkel 2015, p. 269). This was the

contradictory face of racialisation in the GDR until its demise in 1989, thereafter racist attacks flared up in the »new federal states«, as they were referred to now in a united Germany (Lewicki 2018). These racist attacks after the unification of the German states indicate that racism was not really gone from the GDR, presumably people in the former GDR felt freer to exercise it after the unification. Slobodian concludes:

> »Socialist chromatism in East Germany was an ambivalent mode of anti-racism. It broke definitively with the Third Reich's hierarchical associations between phenotype and ability. Yet the visual repertoire of race and racism in the GDR reproduced many of the exaggerated and even offensive stereotypical depictions of people of color. The right of representation also remained in the hands of white Germans, producing the effect, arguably subconsciously, of either the prioritizing of the white leadership role or the presentation of the nonwhite person as icon rather than individual« (Slobodian 2015, p. 33).

Ryan continues to narrate about his personal motives of giving the anti-racism training as a birthday present to his mother:

> Ryan: »And another element of the story that is very important to me is that I wanted to missionise her so badly in the beginning. And that for me it is also a bit of a symbol of an anti-racist Whiteness, which I'd describe as such, the violence […], which I learned before […] in dealing with racism and being White. And I also took it in and reproduced it. Especially towards my mother. And since a lot of the conversations ended up somehow in such a way that she felt condemned or judged […]. And we couldn't establish a connection at all for a long time. And there was also a moment when I really had a break with my family, with my mom and with my brother. […] So that I didn't celebrate Christmas with them for a year. And so, it really was a cut, no contact for several months, because I simply did not see myself in it and could not establish contact beyond the confrontation with racism. And that's definitely something that changed through the […] processes […]. So, it should always be pointed out that every person has and needs his or her own way to deal with themselves, if at all, with the topic of racism. And that the worst or the least constructive thing that I can do, […], is to somehow push people and force them. And that it will definitely backfire. And that's how it was with my mom. And I've gained a lot of relaxedness« (Ryan, focus group 11/01/2015-3 #00:30:18).

Ryan then continues:

> Ryan: »And I was able to establish a completely different contact with my mother and I am much more in touch and can go into depth with her in conversations. And the issue of racism doesn't really play such a big role right now, but because I keep letting them know that […] I do training and take part in things and have questions or something. So, I just keep bringing it in, but I'm just talking about myself. And that of course, it also does something with her. Because I am her son, she is interested in what I do. And that somehow, so... a constructive underlying sentiment about racism builds up. So, in the past two years. And that's kind of very relaxed and feels very good« (Ryan, focus group 11/01/2015-3 #00:31:10).

Another aspect in Ryan's comment that is very fascinating, is his acknowledgement of wanting to »*missionise*« his mother badly. In other words, after his first anti-racism training, Ryan felt the urge to convince his mother to have a similar training experience, and adopt similar views in regard to racism as he did. In another Weberian twist, the Christian connotations of Ryan's language are obvious. In the research participant's narrative, the missionary approach to anti-racism is an attitude that assumes a kind of moral superiority

and absolute claim of truth. Ryan also relates this attitude to a non-liberated Whiteness. The anti-racism practitioner implies that White subjects have been subjected to a form of racialised discursive violence in order to come into existence as Whites. If White subject identities are not aware of their violent racial subjectivation, they will reproduce this violence in a political zealotry even if they are trying to deconstruct Whiteness and White supremacy (Pontoretto 1988). Ryan reproduced the discursive violence in a way that his mother felt attacked, judged and condemned, which made it difficult for her to acknowledge her son's differing anti-racist views. Further, this attack led to an emotional disconnect between the two family members, to the extent that Ryan would discontinue meeting and talking to his family for a few months, and even miss the familial Christmas celebrations. The cultural anthropologist Emma Kowal writes in »The Stigma of White Privilege« (2011) that *»within liberal and radical discourses, Whiteness is also associated with a host of negative characteristics, such as exploitation, colonisation and imperialism, and general dominance over non-White people«* (Kowal 2011, p. 317). Ryan's mother's denial of those associations of Whiteness, makes it, at some point, very difficult to remain in touch with his parent. However, at the same time, Ryan creates a stigma about being White, which makes it difficult for his mother to relate to her son and his views on Whiteness. Kowal concludes *»White stigma acts as a barrier to the broader goal of constructing ethical White subjectivities fit for the post-colony«* (Kowal 2011, pp. 315-316).

Once Ryan lets go of stigmatising Whiteness around him but also within himself, he understands that a critical reflexivity, which is needed to deconstruct racialised subjectivities (Emirbayer & Desmond 2015, pp. 72-76) cannot be forced upon people. Is it possible that a de-racialising form of critical reflexivity is an individual process which cannot be turned into an obligation? Is it possible that racialised subjects have to decide for themselves where, when and if they are going to embark on the process of critical reflexivity? Dina made a similar experience to Ryan after her first training:

> Dina: »Or and then of course it was exciting, after I came from the first training session, I went outside first, so typical. First, I told all the White people how shitty they all are (laughs). I hadn't yet understood that and really hurt people, which in retrospect I'm really sorry about. Although these people don't really mean a lot to me, but simply that it hasn't been so good now. And maybe produced more defences (laughs). I notice that I'm still not free from these emotions. So, there are still moments when I, uhm typical, so I don't know how to describe it, react typically White, on the subject of racism, but I'm just trying to be more loving and more loving with myself, that's more accurate« (Dina 13/04/2012-2 #00:10:49).

Similar to Ryan, Dina was overzealous at criticising other Whites for not sharing her views on Whiteness after her first anti-racism training. However, Dina also realises just like Ryan, that judging people does not make them more open and interested towards the subject of Critical Whiteness, on the contrary, it seems to build more resistance within racialised subjectivities. Interestingly, Dina describes the behaviour of trying to evangelise other Whites to also become believers of Critical Whiteness as »typically White« (Dina 13/04/2012-2 #00:10:49). However, there also seems to be a shift that Dina, but also C.L. and Ryan describe, a transcended Whiteness that is more loving towards itself and also towards others, which makes the racialised subjectivities in the vicinity of C.L., Ryan and Dina more open towards the subject of racism. »*It really radiates*« C.L. had at some point exclaimed (C.L., focus group 11/01/2015-4 #00:20:57). Is it really possible that simply by changing our inner position towards racialisation, this will also change the people and structures surrounding us? The Austrian-Jewish philosopher Martin Buber wrote in *The Way of Man – According to the Teaching of Hasidism* (1960) on love and social change:

> »[T]his perspective, in which a man sees himself only as an individual contrasted with other individuals, and not as a genuine person whose transformation helps towards the transformation of the world, contains a fundamental error. The essential thing is to begin with oneself, and at this moment a man has nothing in the world to care about than this beginning. Any other attitude would distract him from what he is about to begin, weaken his initiative, and thus frustrate the entire bold undertaking« (Buber 1960, p. 21).

Buber reminds his readers that once a person embarks on the process of critical reflexivity and begins to change their inner belief system, it will also inspire some change in the people surrounding that person. How to enter the process of critical reflexivity is an individual choice. Eve describes how, after her first training, she began more to reflect critically on her Whiteness and how that affected the relationship to her Black children:

> Eve: »And so I really need literature, literature and reading, reading. I am for education, this being miseducated or deformed, this is a beautiful word, that Austen used very much in training at the time, this helped me. Also, to say, ok, you are not to blame, so this guilt question, guilt is not good, guilt paralyses, does not lead you further. If you have the word ›miseducation‹, you did not have the right education, you got a one-sided education, I could do something with that, because this one-sided education was clear in the GDR anyway. So, and with that, and then I said that I am responsible for myself and you can continue your education. […] Today, I stand in front of these two children, in front of Jonah and Molly, and say to myself, yes, I can listen to them, I can listen to them differently, no longer have to cover that up, don't have to say, oh Molly it's not so bad, if everyone looks at you on the bus, it's because you're just a pretty girl! (laughing)« (Eve 30/05/2012-2 #00:40:31).

Eve's process of critical reflection begins with reading the plethora of literature that exists on the subject of Critical Whiteness. Reading literature seems to be of importance to Eve as she wants to counteract, as she describes it, »*miseducation*«, »*one-sided education*« or »*deformation*« that comes with being subjected to Whiteness (Eve 30/05/2012 #00:40:31-2#). Eve even compares this racialisation process, the subjection to Whiteness, to the education during the authoritarian communist SED regime and its socialist propaganda, a unilateral form of education aiming at indoctrinating children and young people to become uncritical and functioning citizens of the GDR.

Interesting is also how Eve juxtaposes blame and guilt against responsibility. Resonating with a variety of anti-racist activist discourses, Eve describes guilt and blame as counterproductive, as debilitating emotions that mainly turn racialised subjects into powerless and incapacitated subjects unable to act (Katz 1978, p. 22). Hence the racialised subject becomes useless to initiate a de-racialisation process and thereby social change. In Eve's narrative the de-racialisation process begins with taking responsibility, not necessarily with her being subjected to dominant narratives of »Race« as a child. Being racialised as a child is something that Eve would not have been able to resist or change, but she can take responsibility for the structures and realities Whiteness creates in her current everyday life. In other words, Eve understands not being in denial of racialised experiences that BIPOC make in Germany, as one way of taking responsibility. When Eve's Black daughter talks about her everyday experience of riding the bus in rural Brandenburg as the only Black person and, as her daughter perceives the stares she is subjected to as racist, Eve could easily dismiss her daughter's perception. Eve could create a different interpretation of why her Black daughter is being stared at in the bus; for example, she could relate the stares to her daughter's beauty, thereby rejecting her daughter's perception of a racialised experience. However, Eve's rejection of her Black daughter's perception and feeling would also mean that she rejects the Blackness or racialised-ness of her daughter, and inadvertently her own Whiteness, her own racialisation as a White subject. In other words, Eve would also be in denial, that she, as a White person in Brandenburg, can generally have the experience of riding the bus without being stared at because of her skin colour. In Eve's new narrative of

the self, she decides to listen to her daughter and allows herself thereby to look at *her self*, at her Whiteness, through her daughter's eyes.

Though the use of »responsibility« within activist discourses has been inflationary, Eve's statement highlights the values of critical reflexivity and the practice of listening empathetically to the experiences and perceptions of BIPOC, and the possibilities of maintaining close relationships as a White person to BIPOC friends and family members.

Lena, who at the time of the interview had just recently retired from her job in local government in Brandenburg, shares what changes she made after her first anti-racism training:

> Lena: »Either '99 or 2000. But I think we had the lecture first and then the training afterwards. Because I know, I organised training myself in 2001 and must have been in 1999 or 2000. So, there were several training in a row for the foreigners' representative of the state of Brandenburg. And there we were in groups, afterwards we talked about the training sessions, in the national conference, because we said that the training sessions were intensive. They were really great, so it would not be a bad thing if all social workers in the area of migration did training as well. Then we started organising training in the state of Brandenburg with the support of the RAA [RAA Berlin – Regional Centre for Education, Integration & Democracy]. In different places« (Lena 16/05/2012-4 #00:01:40).

Lena's first impulse, in contrast to Eve's, was not to read as many books as possible, but to step into action. Lena's approach of coping with her training experience was to organise as many training as possible, at first for the integration officers or foreigners' representatives, and later for the social workers in the area. It is interesting to see, how this personal change of Lena translated into structural change in the local government of Brandenburg, offering White integration officers the chance to critically reflect on their Whiteness, and therefore also on their practice. Unfortunately, it would exceed the limits of this dissertation to evaluate the scope, depth and sustained yield of this change initiated through the anti-racism training offered to people who work in local government.

However, it is also very interesting to see how Lena's narrative of personal change initiated by the training impacted also BIPOC she was closely working with. As an integration officer Lena had close contact to a group of young asylum seekers and refugees predominantly from Muslim countries, such as Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Most of these young people had fled from war in their countries, some of them without their families. The young people, mostly but not exclusively boys, were living in a small town in Brandenburg, where they were hyper-visible in the area. Brandenburg, which at the time

and also today has a very active Neo-Nazi scene, is known to most BIPOC in Berlin as an area to avoid because many fear of being racially harassed or attacked (Feldmann et Al. 2016). However, these young people were settled there by the government and did not have the opportunity and means to move somewhere else. As BIPOC youth they were frequently harassed and attacked, sometimes getting into fights, which caught the attention of the authorities, adding to their precarious situation that was now also threatened by potential deportation. Lena then organised for these young BIPOC an empowerment training in which they participated:

> Lena: »What was also very important, the teenagers […], we had previous incidents here that when the teenagers were mobbed, the fists flew right away. The empowerment training have led to the fact that the young people managed to develop alternatives for themselves to counteract the vulgar remarks and racist insults without using violence« (Lena 16/05/2012-4 #00:21:56).

Lena's understanding of empowerment is very telling: it centres around developing alternative reactions to racist harassment, ideally non-violent ones. In reacting non-violently to racial harassment, they reduce the precariousness of their residency status, putting the responsibility to navigate the racialised immigration system onto the teenagers. Lena understands empowerment as finding a way out of the spiral of violence, having your emotions such as fear and anger under control, leaning again on the notion of the subject that has to self-correct its behaviour. The idea that empowerment means to learn how to act differently, more self-determined shall also be explored in the following sub-chapter.

Re-writing Resistance

After having looked into the White research subjects and their re-writing of Whiteness following their first anti-racism training, the following subchapter examines of how the BIPOC research participants narrate their empowerment experience, what they understand as empowerment, and what they consider to be a person that is empowered. Effected by racism, many BIPOC in Germany but also elsewhere have wondered how to resist a racialised system of oppression (Taylor 2017). There has always been a plethora of methods

of resisting racism and colonisation, some of them violent, some of them non-violent, some creative and subversive. This subchapter will not so much explore which one is the »right« or the »best« one, it will explore how the research participants understand their actions or their views as part of that notion of resistance against a system that by racialising, reduces, essentialises, isolates, oppresses and marginalises them.

In the White imagination Blackness is often equated with rage, therefore if a Black person addresses racism, it is assumed Blacks act according to the trope of the »Angry Black Woman/Man/Person« (Doharty 2019). It also follows the understanding that BIPOC should act rationally and not irrationally, if they encounter racism (ibid.). But how can BIPOC respond rationally to an arbitrary system of racialisation whose only rationale is to create a racial order within a society that legitimises domination, exploitation, and at its logical end, annihilation? Kabera describes his response at a job interview at a mental health institution. Though it is illegal to ask a person's nationality or cultural origin during a job interview, the psychologists who work at the facility and interview him, have a reaction to the interviewee's black skin colour:

> Kabera: »And yet, I even know that the last time, it was also funny, there was a job interview, a situation, so to speak, where I am clearly in a subordinate role, a supplicant, […], where there is a power gap. And it's in a clinic […], where I'm going to start working, later this year. And there was the senior doctor, who's running the department, and two male senior doctors and another senior doctor. Middle-aged people […], who have a lot of experience with psychotherapy, analysts, […] and then we talked […]. And at some point, the bravest of the group asked where I came from. And then I thought, funny, uh what was going on now and then I thought, we are […] among psychologists here and then I said: I'll be happy to answer that, but please tell me your fantasies first (laughing). And then he was puzzled and then somehow said something about adoption, the senior doctor immediately got in: Yes, exactly adoption. And I noticed that all hell was getting loose (laughing) and had to grin like a Cheshire cat and then she caught herself boring me with her projections, in a situation where it was completely inappropriate. And then she said: ›That doesn't matter‹. And then I asked: ›Would anyone like to continue guessing?‹ (laughing) And then they noticed that I had turned the game around. And I think they thought it was very smart, but they were also a bit offended and then I said that my father came from Rwanda, my mother was born here in Germany. And, then the conversation was over. […] And then they gave me the job. And I felt like it was just right not to be a victim, and just to say people come here, no, not like this, right? […] I am supposed to be employed here as a psychologist and not as an adopted child (laughing). […] And exactly, that was somehow very, very powerful and so it worked. […] And exactly to use this space, I think in the training it is this pro-active, stimulus-reaction, Frankl, Viktor Frankl, because it is easy to get in between and to not repeat old, grinded-in, sick behaviours, so to speak, but something to create something new, in this space, yes« (Kabera 14/04/2012-3 # 00:28:46).

Kabera refers here to the notion of stimulus or trigger and response, concepts that relate to the discourse of behavioural theory. The Russian physicist Ivan Pavlov (1927) experimented on dogs and their response to a bell, which was rung at the same time as the dogs were given food. Pavlov, who is considered one of the founding fathers of behavioural therapy,

found out that the dogs would respond to the bell, even if they were not given food (ibid.). Kabera relates this idea of stimulus and response to racism: once a person is confronted with a racist experience, that person tends to respond to it by either being hurt, getting angry, or unable to respond at all. The racialised person becomes trapped in a mental cage of pre-programmed responses within racist situations, causing a debilitating inability to act or to act only in limited fashion. In other words, in Kabera's narration of empowerment, an unempowered person, is a person which is stuck in that mental cage of limited, pre-programmed responses. An empowered subject is a subject which learns to overcome the typical response to racialised settings and develops its own actions and answers to counter racist situations. The highly inappropriate question during Kabera's job interview leads to him deciding on his own how to respond it. The subject counters the inappropriate question, with a question of his own. Being amongst colleagues, the psychologist asks the job interviewers in psycho-analytical fashion about their fantasies about his origin. The answers to Kabera's question expose the job interviewers' projections onto him and Black people in general. The psychologists at the facility assumed that Kabera might be adopted, maybe due to his middle-class habitus and formal education. Nevertheless, the job interviewers do realise at some point that their question and the fantasies related to it, had racialised Kabera, simply because where he was from, was probably asked due to his assumed »Race«, his skin colour. Kabera's counter question however, exposed, though he might be racialised, so is the world of ideas, the mental and conceptual world of the psychologists who asked him that question. From being the object of the inappropriate question about his origin, Kabera had turned himself into a subject, which exposed the racialising character of that question and the complicity of those involved in racialisation processes. In Kabera's own words, he had decided to leave the status of being a victim to racism and becoming a subject, regaining his sovereignty of acting in his own behalf. This notion of breaking the stimulus and response mechanism, is related to the discourse on Viktor Frankl's work on logotherapy (2000). Frankl was a determinist, believing that a subject's behaviour is utterly determined by its environment (ibid.). The behavioural psychologist was also an Austrian Jew and was deported to a concentration camp by the Nazis, where Frankl continued to develop his logotherapy, a form of behavioural therapy, by which a subject can overcome most forms

of (long-lasting) suffering predominantly by giving life meaning (Frankl 2000, pp. 9-10). Imprisoned in the concentration camp, Frankl observed his surroundings, his fellow inmates and began to ask himself, if the effect of the environment – even a brutal and dehumanising environment like the death camps – on the subject is as certain and total than he had previously assumed (ibid.). Frankl began to ask himself questions regarding humanness and free will (ibid.). The psychiatrist began to wonder if there was a – to be human – inherent form of spiritual liberty, despite the determining factors of a subject's environment (ibid). Frankl began to question, if a subject's biological, psychological and social location were the only factors that determined a person's choices (Frankl 2000, pp. 74). The logotherapist began to question whilst being incarcerated in the concentration camp, if it was possible to liberate oneself to a certain extent from the deterministic structures of one's environment:

> »The experiences of camp life show that man does have a choice of action. There were enough examples, often of a heroic nature, which proved that apathy could be overcome, irritability suppressed. Man can preserve a vestige of spiritual freedom, of independence of mind, even in such terrible conditions of psychic and physical stress. We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way. And there were always choices to make. Every day, every hour, offered the opportunity to make a decision, a decision which determined whether you would or would not submit to those powers which threatened to rob you of your very self, your inner freedom; which determined whether or not you would become the plaything of circumstance, renouncing freedom and dignity to become molded into the form of the typical inmate« (Frankl 2000, pp. 74-75).

The notion of being free and the ability to choose how a situation can or cannot affect subjectivities, is also reflected in Can's narrative following his empowerment training:

> Can: »I said to myself, I choose what I let myself stress about, I choose what really hurts me in my substance, and the training has contributed a huge part to developing this freedom of choice myself, what I let into my life and what not« (Can 10/07/2012 #00:05:58).

Similar to Kabera, Can's narrative reflects the notion that he might not have the freedom to choose the (racialised) situation that he lives in, but he has the freedom to choose how he is going to be affected by this situation. In contrast to the anti-racism training, the empowerment training appears to be less about awareness of being racialised per se, since as we saw in chapter 4, the BIPOC research participants were, very early, aware of their racialisation processes. However, there is a commonality in both groups of anti-racism and

empowerment practitioners' training narratives: working through the racialised discourses, which have inscribed themselves deeply into the subject, cognitively and emotionally, allows racialised subjectivities to take ownership of their own narratives of racialisation, thereby imbuing the subject with a sense of liberation.

Questions of freedom and choice are also relevant to Nana's narration of empowerment. Nana, a doctor and psychiatrist, explores her process of empowerment in the following words:

> Nana: »Because, anyway, through the training […], I had learned some aspect of myself, that, like: Doing everything in your head. […] And trying not to feel anything, like, you know, there were parts of me that were like paralysed. Like anaesthesia. Like, no feeling. And I think this was not only passive. I had actively done that. So, you don't feel pain. Ok. You don't feel happiness. […] So, I decided… I had decided, over the years, while experiencing racism, that I would rather paralyse this part of me and give up feeling joy, then having to feel joy and pain. […] And then I decided: ›Ok, let me look at this part of me as well.‹ This was not easy, you know. So, when I finished studying, I did not wanna work as a doctor. […] So, when I finished studying, I really intensively decided to go into […] training activity. And reading a lot. And also […] going into workshops. Doing a lot of Augusto Boal. Doing a lot of theatre. I went into dancing. I was doing ballet. Learning new languages. […] And so, through all these activities, I think, somehow, I calmed down« (Nana 04/08/2012-2 #01:22:09).

In Nana's narration of empowerment, it is counterproductive to turn racism and racialisation into solely cognitive or rational experiences. The denial of feelings caused by racialisation, such as suffering and pain that come from everyday experiences of racism, lead also to the loss of feeling joy and happiness. Nana's decision to de-accelerate her life, is understood by her as choice to mentally and emotionally prepare herself for working in a predominantly White, racialised work environment. Nana describes taking a break, looking at herself and racism from a distance, making the realisation of how racialisation is also linked intersectionally. Nana then continues:

> Nana: »So, I think, this made me realise that racism is one part of the enslavement of peoples. So, there are different types of systems, which can enslave people. And so, I can actually choose. And this is very important. The freedom of choice. I can choose what racism does to me as a person. I cannot choose to be a race, because I have already been racialized. I knew that at three years old. (laughs) […] I cannot choose to be made a woman by society. I cannot choose to be made Black by society. But I can choose what I do with that. Or what it does to me. And that gave me that kind of freedom, that at one point I thought, I make the choice, you know. Like to lead a life, which is legitimate to me. And to me alone. And to nobody else.
>
> And I think, that has something to do with that first empowerment training, where I would say, basically I learned not to be classified. And then, I can choose to put some tags on myself. […] I can choose what to do with that. So, for me, that is freedom. It is not very big. If you look on a scale of like 100, it is maybe only three. Like three percent. But this three percent is so important for me to breathe, that I can choose what I am gonna do with this kind of classifications. Even if I can't change it now, through that understanding, I can start a process in me, which can bring about change. Maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but maybe in 500 years. Or maybe in a thousand years. So, I believe in that kind of spirituality« (Nana 04/08/2012-2 #01:25:01).

Nana's narration of empowerment underlies also a very deterministic world view. Nana's determinism is reflected in her description of the environment as shaping a passive subject, which has no choice in its subjection. In other words, children do not choose how they are subjectivated, who they want to be or become. In Nana's narrative the question of freedom of choice as an adult, is therefore rather small. The percentage of 3% that Nana awards to choices that are made from free will, is rather minimal and could be almost considered embryonic. As small as that percentage of free-will choices might be though, to Nana it delegates a certain feeling of agency and self-determination. It does feel problematic to me though, that the individual is thrown back on itself. Where is the change of structures there? The subject just appears to be passive? The subject in Nana's narrative does not interact or even shape the social. Notwithstanding, the focus in Nana's narrative of the self remains on what can be changed rather than only suffering from the things that cannot be changed or that take a long time to change. In this process Nana further states that dealing with your biography, your own childhood experiences and traumas separately from racialisation is just as important to personal empowerment processes (Nana 04/08/2012 #01:25:31-7#). How much of our suffering comes actually from racism alone? Which sections about our personal biographies that are independently from racism, can cause a lot of suffering within us? How much is the fact of having neglectful, overbearing or abusive parents related to realities of racism? And how much of that suffering is also triggered in racialised settings?

Moving away from the question of free will, Nana's narrative then moves on to the subject of being an inspiration or a role model to other BIPOC:

> Nana: »But one experience, I make with People of Colour, with biography in Turkey […]. Maybe she was 12 or 13. And she came with her mother in the emergency room. I was on duty. And then she said: ›My mother has very bad headache.‹ […] And then I said: ›Oh! That is pretty bad. But maybe your mother should tell me what she has. Because you are speaking for your mother. And that is a bit rude.‹ […]. And then she was like: ›Well, you know, my mother can tell you everything, but I do not think you are gonna understand. Because she is gonna say everything in Turkish.‹ ›Oh‹, I said, ›my Turkish is not that good. Maybe you are right. Maybe you can just translate for me, if you may.‹ (laughs). We were talking like that. […] She was just looking at me, and being shy, and like smiling, you know. […] The mother asked her in Turkish. ›What did she say? Why are you smiling with the doctor like that?‹ […] The child told the mother: ›She is very nice. We are just discussing, who is gonna speak, you know.‹ So, the mother looked at me and smiled. And then I said: ›Ok, you take your seat‹« (Nana 04/08/2012-2 #02:09:37).

Nana then instructs the young person to translate each of her mother's sentences, so that she can get an impression of the possible symptoms. Nana then decides to thoroughly examine the mother:

»And then she is like: ›You are really nice.‹ And I said: ›Oh, thank you.‹ And then she said: ›You know, we have been here for two or three times. And then we were here for maybe ten minutes. And then they said: »Everything is fine.« And then we went home again.‹ ›Oh, is that true?‹ ›Yeah. Nobody took time to speak to us.‹ And then I said: ›Why? Why? Maybe it was very busy? And my colleagues did not have time?‹ And then she said: ›Well, I think, you are just saying that, to protect your colleagues. But me, if you ask me personally, I think, that they just did not want to speak to my mother, because she does not speak German.‹ I said: ›Well, I think, you are right.‹ And then she said: ›I know, I am right.‹ I was so impressed by this girl. She was just like 12« (Nana 04/08/2012-2 #02:11:35).

Impressed with the young person's perception of racism, Nana begins a conversation about the girl's aspirations:

Nana: »And then I asked her: ›Are you going to school?‹ ›Yeah, I am going to school.‹ ›Do you like school?‹ And then she said: ›Well, you know, right now I am at the secondary modern school, and actually I wanted to go to grammar school. But my grades were not that good.‹ And I said: ›What do you wanna be, when you grow up?‹ And then she thought about it. And then she said: ›You know, actually, at first, I was thinking, that I was going to be a shop assistant. But today, after spending some time with you, I wanna be a doctor.‹ And she said: ›You know, in secondary school I am going to work hard. And I am gonna get… I am gonna change to grammar school. And I am going to do A-Levels. And I am going to be a doctor.‹ And I said: ›Yeah, more power to you, girl.‹ And then the mother asked her: ›What are you saying? What are you saying to the doctor?‹ And then she said: ›I just told the doctor, I am gonna be a doctor.‹ The mother started crying, you know. And this kind of experience for me, it is more than a thousand diamonds […]. It was so precious for me« (Nana 04/08/2012-2 #02:13:57).

Nana's narrative of her encounter with that young person and her mother at the hospital raises a few questions: does being empowered mean, it also empowers our surroundings? As an empowered person, do we automatically become role models for others, in particular younger people? It would exceed the means of this research project, to find out what happened to that young person, if she actually did not become a shop assistant and succeeded in studying medicine. Nevertheless, for a moment that person was inspired to change the narrative that was given to her as a Turkish German girl by society. Through experiencing a Black doctor, who took her and her mother seriously, the young person came to think that if she gave it a good try, she might put herself into a similar position as the BIPOC doctor she had just encountered. The young person of Colour seemed to be aware of racism but most of the White doctors she had encountered, did not seem to be aware of their racialisation and how that effects the way they treat their patients, in particular their BIPOC patients (Hoffman et Al. 2016).

Finally, Nana states that:

Nana: »So, for me, empowerment basically is not only something about race. And being Black. And learning to overcome that. But it is also about being human and knowing that you can make choices. […] And this area of choice for me is just so little. It is so narrow. And so… I make it a point to put it into my consciousness and to use it. This three percent of choice. And this three percent, I use it to the maximum. (laughs) Then I say: ›Ok. I do that. Or I do not do that‹« (Nana 04/08/2012-2 #02:00:59).

In other words, empowerment is understood as self-determination, which for Nana is something intrinsically human.

The new narratives of the self that the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners have developed, highlight different aspects of empowerment. The first aspect is that racism is not solely a cognitive experience, but also affects the physical and the emotional. The second aspect is the acknowledgement of racism experiences, the understanding that racism is a system in which BIPOC make shared experiences (Mohseni 2020, pp. 517-518). The third aspect is a healthy, non-narcissistic re-centring of the self, which attempts to acknowledge a personal well-being but also the well-being of others. The fourth aspect is the development of a political community, in which people attempt to interact with each other more humanely. And the fifth aspect is the recognition of certain freedoms in regard to techniques and practices of the self.

Having analysed how the White research participants are re-writing Whiteness into a form of human connection and how the BIPOC research participants understand self-determination as choosing how to overcome dehumanising realities of racialisation, I will now look further into how, the research participants re-imagine humanness in their narrative of de-racialisation.

Re-Imagining Humanness

The term »Humanität« (humanity) was spread predominantly by theologian and philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder in the German-speaking countries (Vöhler 2009). Herder's seemingly liberal position on humanity was probably mostly owed to the Protestant influences he was surrounded by (Dover 1952, p. 127). The German philosopher and theologian openly criticised the enslavement and exploitation of African people, and also openly opposed colonialism and racism (Vöhler 2009, p. 129). In his *Letters for the Advancement of Humanity*, which he wrote between 1793-1797, Herder addressed the so called civilised nations of Europe and accused them of crimes against humanity: »*Let the land be named to which Europeans have come without having sinned against defenseless, trusting*

humanity, perhaps for all aeons to come, through injurious acts, through unjust wars, greed, deceit, oppression, through diseases and harmful gifts! Our part of the world must be called, not the wise, but the presumptuous, pushing, tricking part of the earth; it has not cultivated but has destroyed the shoots of peoples' own cultures wherever and however it could« (Herder & Forster 2002, pp. 381-382). Thereby Herder unified very early the contradiction of Western humanism, since he had only published between 1784 and 1791 *The Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind* in which the philosopher and theologian promoted very Eurocentric notions of humanness and historicity (Dover 1952, p. 132). Since Herder held only very thinly veiled assumptions about the superiority of Europeans and in particular the Germanic people, and the inferiority of Jews, Africans, Asians and other races, some scholars see Herder also as a predecessor to Gobineau and National Socialism (Dover 1952, p. 132).

When I asked the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners, if they thought that there was a concept of humanness, which their work was based on, I received a variety of answers. In order to showcase the contradictory narratives of the research participants, I chose the following two answers:

> Kabera: »So in psychology it's called, um, who'd said that again, Winnicott, the true self. The true self is, so to speak, the core that one has. The true self can never be known, but that it is, uh, the power that everyone has in themselves. And the closer you get to it, the closer you are to yourself, the happier you are, the more satisfied you are. And then there is this reactive self, which is built around it, uh, like protection, you react to something and then, so to speak, reaction patterns form, which then somehow solidify […]. I am like that because the racism or the racist experience has shaped me. And that again, so to speak, a tumour, like an ulcer, to cut off, separate and say, no, this is me and that's how I want to be and the other, uh, just to say, that was a behaviour, these were strategies that I needed to survive, to get through, but I need these strategies now, I don't need the old ones anymore« (Kabera 14/04/2012-2 #00:35:36).

It is not surprising that as a psychologist, Kabera employs D. W. Winnicott's notion of the true and false self (Winnicott [1989] 2018, p. 43). Probably inspired by Kabera's previous statement on Frankl, who believed in an indestructible human core, the research participant refers to a similar notion in Winnicott's work: »*the imprisoned true self is unable to function, and by being protected its opportunity for living experience is limited. Life is lived through the compliant false self, and the result clinically is a sense of unreality*« (ibid.). There are many elements in Kabera's narrative that surprise me and that I disagree with. Firstly, Winnicott worked with the assumption of a person being born good and then made bad (Dalal 2002, p. 55), that their true self becomes corrupted, but I would argue that a person is born neither good nor bad, but with the potentiality of both, goodness and badness. Secondly, Kabera

describes painful racialisation processes as a disease, which needs to be eradicated. The erasure of the suffering caused by racialisation would simply mean living in denial of it, while it still affects the way we interact with each other. I would argue that denial of suffering caused by racialisation does not help in transforming it. Nevertheless, I am still intrigued by Kabera's choice of Winnicott, since the psychologist had a profound »*awareness that concept-formation and ›thinking‹ come not from individual but from interpersonal activities*« (Klein [1987] 2004, p. 291).

The interpersonal is much more prevalent in Milan's re-imagination of humanness:

> Milan: »Ubuntu. […] It was for me and is still inconceivable how a human can think themselves independently of another human. […] And I would say that was at academia […] cultivated very well. So, this idea of an independent individual. Both on a theoretical as well as on a practical level. But, that's... well, humanity is Ubuntu. Knowing that your actions, the way you behave, will have an impact. No matter what you do, it will be at some point... it will have a feedback to another person. And to always have this consciously in your life. Every action you do will make a difference to other people... or if you see the ecosystem as a whole, it will change something somewhere. And to handle it responsibly. Pachamama. For me this is clearly a huge point of humanity« (Milan, focus group 11/01/2015-3 #00:47:12).

Milan's mentioning of Ubuntu, a belief system predominantly prevalent in southern Africa, highlights a notion of humanness, which differs from the Renaissance/Enlightenment concept of being human. The concept of Ubuntu, which has not only informed the work of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission, which aimed at working through the horrors of the apartheid regime but has also found its way into the South African constitution, is not easily translated into Western contexts and languages (Tutu 1999). According to Desmond Tutu, former Archbishop of Cape Town and Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Ubuntu conveys what is elemental for human being-ness (Tutu 1999). In Zulu, to praise someone with *Yu, u nobuntu (Hey, so-and-so has ubuntu*), means that a person is considered giving and big-hearted, cordial and companionable, cares for and feels with other people (Tutu 1999, p. 29). A person that is understood to have Ubuntu acts as if their humanity is inextricably interlinked with the humanity of others, that they are bundled up in the interbeing of human lives (ibid.). Tutu describes that humanness and personhood in Ubuntu could also be surmised in the following sentence: »*A person is a person through other persons*«, which stands in contrast to the Cartesian »*I think therefore I am*«, a maxim on which Western philosophy, thought and culture is based (Tutu 1999, p. 29). Though I would not necessarily describe

Ubuntu philosophy in binary opposition to Western ideologies, Tutu describes the maxim in this southern African belief system more as »›*I am human because I belong. I participate, I share.‹ A person with ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed, or treated as if they were less than who they are*« (Tutu 1999, p. 29)[46].

The way Milan imagines humanness is very much related to these values of co-being, co-existing and conviviality. Milan even extends it to the environment, drawing on the notion of *Pachamama. Pachamama,* known to the indigenous people of the Andes also as earth/time mother, conceptualizes nature not in a Cartesian or Baconian sense of natural resources, but rather ascribes nature rights, similar to human rights, which is reflected in the Ecuadorian constitution (Constitution of Ecuador 2008, Chapter 7, Article 71). So, here, nature is understood as a living being, the source of life; without nature, life would be very difficult or impossible on earth (Santos 2018, p. 10).

The question of how we relate to each other, which already appeared in the first two sections of this chapter, also appeared in the question about humanness:

> Can: »Looking at shared experiences. [...] Without giving advise or being moralising, or being a professor or being a psychiatrist, but simply being a fellow human being. […] We are a community, and we can only *be* in community« (Can 10/07/2012 #00:46:41).

Can's narrative emphasises the relationality of humanness, similar to Ryan's, relating to each other not in our roles or professions but humanely. The inter-relational aspect of humanness is also highlighted on Liz's comments about dehumanisation:

> Liz: »[...] I say now sufficient or fully developed ability to be able to outline this degree of dehumanization again and again. To be able to name that. […] I can just have confidence in it that the reality of interpersonal destruction, that is between us and within us, is also named. Realistically. […] And because of the specifics of humanity, I remember for a moment that Fagbola somehow had the same thing when he talked about abuse, that [it] is really about nothing other than learning to not abuse each other. And that also hit me like a bomb, when I thought: ›Oh, yes, that's how you can say it‹. So, yes, because that's dehumanising« (Liz, focus group 11/01/2015-4 # 00:56:00).

[46] Michael Onyebuchi Eze (2012) wrote a very interesting critique of Ubuntu as an ideology in view of past genocides in Ruanda and Burundi or ongoing political corruption in some contemporary African nation states but still sees many useful elements in the belief system for creating an intercultural humanism (Eze 2012, pp. 247-260).

To Liz, de-humanisation is mostly related to the term »abuse«, which in the logic of the research participant's narrative makes not being abusive part of re-humanisation. The narratives of the anti-racism and empowerment participants (as analysed in chapter 4) render racialisation into a form of abusing children to function within racialised settings. Generally, abuse is understood as a cruel and violent treatment of a person, so where is the cruelty and violence in racialisation, in being racialised as BIPOC or a White person? Modern psychology also believes that abuse causes damage to a person's self-esteem and subjectivity (Chen & Qin 2019); I would therefore argue that the systematic use of a mostly unintended imprinting (I assume here that only a few parents want their children to actually grow up to be racist) through mostly non-physical acts against a subject (which in the case of a child often means it is depending on the abuser), constitutes a form of dehumanisation. Which, in turn, would establish re-humanisation as *»learning to not abuse each other«* (Liz, focus group 11/01/2015 # 00: 56: 00-2 #). But what does that mean? Do all power relations and all encounters where these power relations become relevant turn us into abusers and abused? Can it simply mean that when we encounter each other within those power relations, respecting each other's boundaries, helps us in reducing the abusiveness and dehumanisation of our social positioning and the way they interact with each other?

In *The Politics of Friendship* (2005) Jacques Derrida explores the ethical implications of social positioning and three different types of responsibility interacting with each other. The French philosopher and deconstructivist, described *»answering for oneself«*, *»answering to the other«*, and *»answering before the other«* (Derrida 2005, pp. 250-252). According to Derrida *»answering for oneself«*, highlights the responsibility a subject has to itself: »*The ›self‹ or the ›I‹ thus supposes the unity – in other words, memory that answers. This is often called the unity of the subject […] ›I‹ am assumed to be responsible for ›myself,‹ - that is, for everything imputable to that which bears my name*« (Derrida 2005, p. 250). Though our memories and recollections can never fully re-assemble the past, the subject also has a responsibility towards its historicity and its structural positioning (Rothberg 2019). Depending on the structural positioning, the subject can also be dehumaniser and dehumanised at the same time. The relational character of Derrida's notion of responsibility is highlighted in the *»answering to the other«*. In a very

simplified way, if *»answering to the other«* is a much more foundational responsibility as the subject does not exist in a social vacuum, and its subjectivity is related to the subjectivities surrounding it, could it resonate with the notion of Ubuntu, that a person is a person through other persons? Whilst Derrida's *»answering before the other«* suggests that the subject *»answers* before the law, *a court, a jury, an agency authorized to represent the other legitimately, in the institutional form of a moral, juridical, political community«* (Derrida 2005, p. 252). In other words, the human subject also carries an ethical responsibility towards others.

The historian and political theorist Achille Mbembe states in *On the Postcolony* (2001) that Western philosophical and political traditions generally had an issue with the Other. Mbeme writes that *»theoretical and practical recognition of the body and flesh of ›the stranger‹ as flesh and body just like mine,* the idea of a common human nature, a humanity shared with others*, long posed, and still poses, a problem for Western consciousness*« [original emphasis] (Mbembe 2001, p. 2). The global legal scholar Boaventura De Sousa Santos rallies in his book *The End of Cognitive Empire* (2018) towards an epistemological shift, away from Eurocentric thought towards epistemologies of the South as a project of decoloniality. Santos criticizes the Western conception of humanity and the underlying dichotomies constituting it:

> »Modern social sciences have conceived of humanity as a homogeneous whole inhabiting this side of the line and hence as wholly subjected to the tension between regulation and emancipation. Of course, modern science did acknowledge the existence of historical colonialism based on foreign territorial occupation, but it did not recognize colonialism as a form of sociability that is an integral part of capitalist and patriarchal domination, and which, therefore, did not end when historical colonialism ended. Modern critical theory (which expresses the maximum possible consciousness of Western modernity) imagined humanity as a given, rather than as an aspiration. It believed that all humanity could be emancipated through the same mechanisms and according to the same principles, by claiming rights before credible institutions grounded on the idea of formal equality before the law. At the very heart of this modernist imagination is the idea of humanity as a totality built upon a common project: universal human rights. Such humanistic imagination, an heir to Renaissance humanism, was unable to fathom that, once combined with colonialism, capitalism would be inherently unable to relinquish the concept of the subhuman as an integral part of humanity, that is to say, the idea that there are some social groups whose existence cannot be ruled by the tension between regulation and emancipation, simply because they are not fully human. In Western modernity there is no humanity without subhumanities. At the root of the epistemological difference there is an ontological difference« (Santos 2018, pp. 19-20).

The lived experiences of navigating within power structures, for example as BIPOC, means moving between these constitutive borders of humanity and subhumanity, slipping through the cracks, crossing and changing at the intersections (Sealey 2013, p. 228). The human subject's ability to navigate through these boundaries highlights that they are not essential (ibid.). It is not their non-essentiality which causes suffering, it is rather the

constant essentialising of rather open and permeable concepts such as culture, nation or »Race« (ibid.). The notion of cultural, national or racial purity, which imply natural or God-given closed-off boundaries, are then misused in order to implement racialised power structures (ibid.). Santos' concept of epistemologies of the South, which I would expand to the epistemologies of those racialised and dehumanised gives new ways of conceptualising humanness as »*[o]ne's raced body may give rise to certain ways of knowing, thinking, and feeling, but […] one does not know ›what race will (or must) come to mean in the future‹ (Cusick 2007, p. 3). In this sense, humanness must be approached as one's living of an ethical relation, where it is ›both impossible to cross the border/limit/condition and necessary to transcend it‹ (Wang 2005, p. 46)*« (Sinha 2015, pp. 131-132).

Crucial in de-essentialising the Global North's notion of humanness, is also to perceive it not as given, but as an aspiration. Within the discursive world of the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners' spirituality certainly is a theme that emanates from their narratives. I feel unsure, if this could be related to a form of de-secularisation, since spirituality is a very secular form of addressing the supernatural (Flanagan & Jupp 2007). Interestingly, it is an outspoken atheist, Nana, who brings up the term spirituality. Nevertheless, amongst the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners, there does not seem to be an apparent contradiction to believe in a superhuman order or realities that are invisible and very difficult to prove *and* to be an atheist. In *The Invention of World Religions* Tomoko Masuzawa (2005) argues that from the 19th century onwards, Western discourse on world religion(s) disguised its universalist understanding of religion in the veil of pluralist language. This discursive shift also led to a redefinition of religion *»as a distinct sphere of human experience and practice, and the study of religion evolved gradually as an academic discipline independent of theology, philosophy, and philology*« (Dressler 2013, p. 57). The secular removal from religion or spirituality from sciences and epistemologies of the Global North, was accompanied by a European self-understanding as modern, rational and free from the dictates of beliefs in the divine (Masuzawa 2005, p. 16). The construction of a modern European identity became apparent in the manufacturing of the racial »Other« as pre-modern, irrational and trapped in primitive, ancient and antiquated religious belief systems (ibid.). Masuzawa concluded that with the emergence of sciences such as Oriental studies

and anthropology *»every region of the non-modern non-West was presumed to be thoroughly in the grip of religion, as all aspects of life were supposedly determined and dictated by an archaic metaphysics of the magical and the supernatural...[T]he supposed predominance [...] of religious and supernatural elements was believed to mark tribal society as decisively different from modern European society«* (Masuzawa 2005, pp. 16–17). If, as educational philosopher Shilpi Sinha argues, humanness should be *»approached as one's living of an ethical relation«* (Sinha 2015, p. 132) how does Western modern liberal humanism fit in there? Modern Western humanism, which has its roots in the Renaissance, obsessed around the *»self-affirmation of the free personality«* (Dawson 1931, p. 13), but ultimately failed to humanise sciences and epistemologies of the Global North (Dawson 1931, p. 25). In *Discourse on Colonialism,* which was first published in 1950 Aimé Césaire wrote *»the West has never been further from being able to live a true humanism – a humanism made to the measure of the world«* (Césaire 2000, p. 73), a statement that even 70 years later has lost little of its accuracy.

Ato Sekyi-Otu's book *Fanon's Dialectic of Experience* (1996) re-reads and analyses the works of Frantz Fanon in the context of Enlightenment theory, namely Hegel. Sekyi-Out's book has proven to be a rich source for the exploration of the human condition in the colonial and neo-colonial setting. Sekyi-Otu's re-reading of Fanon's works concludes that the psychiatrist from Martinique, who became witness to and testifier particularly of the Algerian liberation struggle, argued in fact for a new form of humanism (Sekyi-Otu 1996, p. 16). Whilst post-structuralist readings of Fanon (such as Homi Bhabha's for example) often simply dismiss his humanistic ideas and ideals, Sekyi-Otu argues that particularly in the light of the neo-colonial liberation struggle, Fanon's notion of the new humanism, could fill the void that post-modernists are unable to fill with their anti-humanism. Jürgen Habermas' critique of post-modernist anti-humanism, is that it claims that the emancipatory and liberating humanistic project has failed without offering an alternative emancipatory and liberating project of its own (Fraser 1985). To a certain extent, similarly to Habermas, I agree with the post-modernist's criticism of traditional humanism, however, I also agree with Habermas', Fanon's and Sekyi-Otu's conclusions that humanism must be re-thought and revised rather than totally dismissed and superseded by an ethical void.

How would this revision and rethinking of humanism progress? Fanon argued that this new humanism would evolve through the post-colonial struggle for liberation (Fanon 1965, p. 246). Sekyi-Otu analyses how Fanon describes the historical colonial setting as a form of anti-dialectic, as a colonialist monologue that leaves no space for dialogue or negotiation. Within the colonial setting, the colonisers define themselves through defining what the colonised Others are and are not. The historian Christopher Fyfe describes this process as a »*gigantic confidence trick*« of the West aimed at shifting social power structures in their favour (Fyfe 1992, p. 27). Nevertheless, this »confidence trick« (ibid.) came at a price that resonates with my notion of suffering caused by racialisation. As Sekyi-Otu notes, the colonial confidence trick was *»severely constricting the compass of human self-knowledge«* (Sekyi-Otu 1996, p. 100). The West defines Western culture as modernity, and I argue that the perceived cultural inability or unwillingness of the racial Other, (i.e., Muslims) to sign on to the project of Western style modernity is used as justification for enforcing racial power structures. This form of self-definition, of self-construction has, however, a severely alienating and dehumanising moment. This moment occurs when the human self is abandoned in favour of a powerful racialised self, which has lost its human empathy in order to assimilate the benefits of its Whiteness. Sekyi-Otu, therefore, in reference to Fanon, concludes that disalienation equals the deracialisation of thought (Sekyi-Otu 1996, pp. 185-191). In this way, a new humanism is seen to begin to emerge through the re-humanisation of the racialised subject.

How do we measure this re-humanisation? How might we measure the success of the new humanist project of liberation? In answering this question, Sekyi-Otu's re-reading and analysis of Fanon takes an interesting twist: Sekyi-Otu argues that old humanism is flawed through it being bound to words, lacking implementation and enacting. In an exploration of the position of women within the Algerian independence struggle and how their role served to deconstruct both Whiteness and patriarchy, Seyki-Otu argues that new humanism should be measured along the strongest dividing structures of society: the gender division line (Sekyi-Otu 1996, pp. 211-215). In a way, I read this as masculinity studies, and their analysis of the alienation that men experience being constructed as those benefiting from gendered power structures, should be complementing Whiteness studies

and vice versa. Racial (and gender) subjugation limits the »*independence of a person*« and Fanon saw the dawn of a new humanism in the post-colonial struggle for self-determination (Sekyi-Otu 1996, p. 231). The yardstick against which new humanism's success might be measured, therefore, is the deconstruction of gendered power structures.

So, what is this humanness in this new humanism? What does it look like and how does it manifest itself? In rare moments, Fanon spoke of »*authentic love*« (Sekyi-Otu 1996, p. 68) or the »*compassion for the excluded*« (Sekyi-Otu 1996, p. 166) that would enable the overcoming of a racialised self. How can we, as Gilroy mentions, develop a planetary humanism, *»a sense of the human that is derived from an explicit moral and political opposition to racism in order to project a different humanity, capable of interrupting the liberal, Cold War, and exclusionary humanisms that characterize most human-rights talk*« (Gilroy 2004, p. xii)? Gilroy continues to argue for a culture of conviviality in which »*local and specific interventions can contribute to a counterhistory of cultural relations and influences from which a new understanding of multicultural Europe will doubtless eventually emerge. This negative work can discover and explore some of the emancipatory possibilities that are implicitly at stake in convivial culture but do not announce themselves, preferring to remain hidden and unpredictable*« (Gilroy 2004, p. 161). Similarly, Dre argues for a culture of understanding:

> Dre: »Basically, we want a culture of understanding, we want to experience it as often as possible now, but we also want to work to ensure that people who are aware that they are different, um, still meet at eye level. So, without suppressing the one, as is often done in the anti-racist scene: ›Oh, I don't see that you're Black. I didn't notice it at all.‹ Of course I see that, I see it every day, and yet we make every effort to ensure that the influence that racism has on our lives, affects us as little as possible in the way we interact with each other.« (Dre 11/07/2012-3 # 00:34:59)

For Dre, the basis to a culture of understanding or conviviality, is being aware of our differences and more. In Dre's narrative, conviviality can only function if there is an awareness about how those differences are hierarchised in society, therefore being colour-blind makes us ignorant towards what Fanon coined epidermalization, the link between skin colour and racial subjugation (Fanon 1952, pp. 9-10). Nevertheless, is it possible to interact with each other as racialised subjects, without our racialisation getting in the way of how we interact with each other? Or, as Gilroy states, how can we *»find new courage to reflect on the history of political nationalism that has been entangled with the ideas of race, culture,*

and civilization and to understand how Europe's imperial and colonial dominance brought racisms and nationalisms together in ways that still affect present conditions« (Gilroy 2004, p. 162) and in addition, present racialised subjects? Colour-blind discourses tend to reproduce epistemological violence, as they often reflect demands of assimilation from the racialised BIPOC subject to a repressive form of humanness which is only granted to White subjects (Sinha 2015, p. 131). Sinha writes that *»[i]n contrast, Fanon's exhortation to be committed to the experiences of living in the world can be seen to reconfigure humanness as inextricably linked to materiality, a riveting to and suffering of one's body«* (Sinha 2015, p. 131). Fanon further believed that the suffering caused by the embodiment of »Race« in the racialised subject had to be acknowledged, albeit the suffering also inevitably had to be transcended (ibid.). Sinha concludes *»[h]ence, Fanon's thought could be seen to be resonant in many ways to Derridean and Levinasian thought, where the subject is positioned through the ethical relation, which is understood as the very opening of one's vulnerability to the other, and the interplay of the singular and universal* (Sinha 2015, p. 131). The acknowledgement of suffering and vulnerability also relates to C.L.'s statement:

> C.L .: »But one thing, which I find […] related to Liz, what you said, to understand yourself and the other person or the others, Ubuntu, very deeply. And to feel. And to make each other vulnerable. And to show yourself in pain. And Austen said that at some point. That was also a sentence that has been on my mind for a long time: ›It's actually the best thing in the world to make yourself vulnerable to other people.‹ And I think, […] I mean it's about racism. And Black and White and POC and etc., talking from different perspectives about crazy hurtful things, i.e. injuries that they had or have experienced. And also, in combination with really growing with love. Well, first of all to allow a loving connection, because I think White spaces are also very strongly marked, just to completely chop off such connections or to try to pack them in Excel sheets. (C.L., focus group 11/01/2015-4 #01:07:42)

The concept of vulnerability crept into neo-liberal discourses mainly in regard to vulnerable communities, endangered by ecological disasters and human right violations. With the book *Vulnerability in Resistance* (2016) Judith Butler, Zeynep Gambetti and Leticia Sabsay (eds.) attempt a reformulation of both terms, vulnerability and resistance. The authors question, from a feminist standpoint, that in mainstream discourses in which *»vulnerability is the opposite of resistance and cannot be conceived as part of that practice; … [it] supposes that vulnerability requires and implies the need for protection and the strengthening of paternalistic forms of power at the expense of collective forms of resistance and social transformation«* (Butler et Al. 2016, p. 1). The authors even go a step further and ask if vulnerability might be a prerequisite

for resistance. What if vulnerability actually became a source for resistive actions? How would it change the way we perceive the political agency of subjects, in particular where the binary of victimisation and perpetration is in question (Butler et Al. 2016, p. 1)? Similar to masculinities, Whiteness achieves its position of power through the assertion that it is invulnerable (Butler et Al. 2016, p. 4). Simultaneously, Whiteness will claim vulnerability in moments, when it constructs BIPOC as a threat, particularly within discourses of migration from pre-dominantly BIPOC countries to pre-dominantly White countries (ibid.). The vulnerability of Whiteness may also invoke the discourse of White fragility, a term made popular by US-American author and lecturer Robin DiAngelo (DiAngelo 2018). In DiAngelo's writings, White fragility refers to a lack of resilience of the White subject, which was too pampered by White privilege (DiAngelo 2018, pp. 114-119). It also refers to the emotional defensiveness of White people, when the subject of racism appears in discussions, how the White subject derails discussions on »Race« in order to de-centre perspectives from BIPOC and re-centre it around discourses palatable to toxic Whiteness (DiAngelo 2018, pp. 120-126). DiAngelo's work has been criticised for oversimplifying complex social matters (Burke 2020), and I find myself agreeing more and more with this criticism. DiAngelo's work caters for a questionable development in anti-racism, which has turned the struggle for social justice into a show of performativity and display (McWhorter 2018), where feelings are always right and reflection unnecessary. Furthermore, the literature which furthers these questionable discourses on Whiteness and »Race« such as »White Fragility *has succeeded because we are in a unique historical moment in which our discourse of race-related issues has become so irrational that people can no longer tell the difference between scholarship and nonsense, or between antiracism and religion*« (Burke 2018). How can anti-racism and empowerment return to become a genuine form of resistance against social injustices?

Returning to Butler et. Al. argument that vulnerability precedes resistance, to what kind of vulnerability does C.L. refer to in her statement? In C.L.'s account, sharing personal narratives of racialisation within a semi-structured setting, without being judged, allows White subjects to recognise their own (authentic) vulnerability and thereby also their interdependency with other human beings. Toxic Whiteness, racialisation signifies also a suspension of connections in particular but not exclusively to BIPOC (Lewis & Hemmings

2019, pp. 418-419). Could one part of de-racialisation and re-humanisation be also to seek that human connection?

> Dre: »As a person who has been trying to deconstruct his White socialisation for over 20 years, as a person who is trying to develop a new White identity at the same time, I am aware of this, and I can, so to speak, counteract this reflex that I have. So, I can consciously oppose the inhuman or the reflex, which has to do with the removal of humanity, with something humane, and can say, just because I know this reflex, I stand by it and open myself. And I would say that opening up that people approach each other who are not 99.99 percent enemies, I would already see that as part of my definition of humanity, especially since I see it as a gain for me because the moment, I set up this fence, restrict my own, I limit my own opportunities for encounter. That's what I perceive in my circle of friends, in my relatives, who are not in the anti-racist […] context. That means that they live in their little White world, and I feel this, viewed from the outside, i.e. from my White perspective, I also see it as a loss of life opportunities. It seems to me a little like in a zoo or something, but you mustn't put it in my cage, but those who sit there in the cage, the cage, that would be the centre of the world« (Dre 11/07/2012-3 #00:18:29).

Though Dre mentions the notion of the inhuman only fleetingly in his narrative, I believe it is worth taking a deeper look at it. In mainstream Western discourses, the inhuman is often understood as a concept in binary opposition to the human (Curtis 2006, p. 434). Being treated humanely is understood as being treated justly, ethically and with compassion, whilst being treated inhumanely is presumed to be treated unjustly, unethically and brutalised (ibid.). In this binary opposition, the human is dialectically constituted by the inhuman (ibid.), without the inhuman there can be no human and vice versa, a dialectic resembling Whiteness and BIPOCness. In *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time* (1993) the French philosopher and sociologist Jean-François Lyotard questioned this binary opposition and developed an alternative concept of the inhuman, one that whilst *»the inhuman understood as evil reinforces our sense of self and secures our autonomy, this other inhuman, understood as that which escapes and yet animates us, is the moment of both radical disruption and radical dependence«* (Curtis 2006, p. 434). In other words, the inhuman does not constitute the human, but rather disrupts and questions it. The binary of human/inhuman is very present in racialised and (neo-)colonialist discourses on migration, culture and the war on terror (Castro Varela & Mecheril 2016). Mechanisms of racism follow a certain script: through discursive practice the Other becomes racialised, stereotyped for example as firstly the Muslim, incapable of adapting to Western modernity, its democratic and Gender-equal society, therefore wanting to destroy it violently (Zerger 1997, pp. 130-134). Or secondly, the stereotype of the Jews, conspiring on taking down the Aryans with the power of the press and whole financial sector (ibid.). Or thirdly, the stereotype of the Black African, closer to its animalistic rather

than its human nature, threatening the racial purity and health with its disease-ridden wildness (ibid.). Or fourthly, more recently the stereotype of the yellow peril, the cunning Asian, driven by zealous nationalistic interests that they could even design a virus in the laboratory ready to disrupt flourishing Western economies (ibid.)[47]. This racialised Other becomes in the process of dehumanisation the inhuman, threatening (White) humanness and therefore is an evil that needs to be dominated or eradicated (ibid.). But I would, agree with Lyotard, who argues that the *»inhumanity of the system which is currently being consolidated under the name of development (among others) must not be confused with the infinitely secret one of which the soul is hostage«* (Lyotard 1991, p. 2). If according to Lyotard the soul is held hostage by the inhuman, an inhuman which is *»the temporality of events, the happening of which we can never fully grasp, as well as our openness to them, an openness that first animates the soul«* (Curtis 2006, p. 435), what is the human? Similarly, Lyotard asks *»[w]hat shall we call human in humans, the initial misery of their childhood, or their capacity to acquire a ›second‹ nature which, thanks to language, makes them fit to share in communal life, adult consciousness and reason«* (Lyotard 1993, p. 3)? In other words, is a child born as human or does the child signify the possibility of becoming a human? Is being a grown-up, being human or does being a grown-up, also – just like the child – signify the possibility of becoming a human? If humanness is only a possibility, who is a human being then (and what relevance would this have on human rights issues)? Is humanness something that just remains a possibility or is it something that can actually be achieved? What if we understood the inhuman as an integral part of the human, not as constitutive but as *an element of the human*? Could it be that as much as we carry the possibility to be human within us, we just as much carry the possibility to be inhuman? In other words, the inhuman is in the human and the human is in the inhuman. Dre describes dehumanisation of BIPOC, the process of becoming an inhuman as an inhumane reflex he has been conditioned to act upon as a child. I would argue that the inhumane reflex *in the context of a racialised setting* is perceiving the other as *only* the racialised Other and not as human, which is a very limited way of relating to a person which has many more subject identities than their racial one. This could also be

[47] The fact that White European colonial settlers killed Indigenous populations in the Global South on a genocidal scale with all the diseases the brought with them (see also Watts 1997), in this case falls under White amnesia (see also Bröcke 1999) and could also explain the fears of diseases originating from the Global south as potential payback.

transferred to other contexts of subjugation, discrimination and oppression. In Dre's narrative, opening up, approaching the other as a human other, assists Whiteness also to leave its *own* cage of racialisation where it will otherwise simply remain stuck as long as it understands the (racial) inhuman as a constitutive mirror image rather than a part of itself. So maybe it is not about *being* human but rather *choosing* if we want to nurture the possibility of being human or nurture the possibility of being inhuman? Again, I would argue that the inhuman choice limits us to simple, essentialising and oppressive racial narratives we internalise from early childhood onwards, the human choice resists these narratives and grants complexity, non-essentialism and (self-)empowerment. Humanness is choosing to gain a variety of life opportunities rather than limiting the human self. Even Lyotard who could be in way described as anti-humanist, thought that the essence of the human was »*like a dissonance; it is a floating, aleatory anti-essence that is found at work in particular humans, undermining the nihilating-transcendent claims or agendas of the human, whether the latter is a robust, filled in concept or an idea conceived as a project to be fulfilled*« (McLennan 2013, p. 47). Lyotard's early writings heavily leaned on Marxist phenomenology, in this period the author understood the human being as a place of constant exploration and challenge of definitions and the past (ibid.). In the end the sociologist and philosopher concluded »*the human is neither a fixed essence, nor a project achievable/to be achieved once and for all*« (McLennan 2013, p. 47). Lyotard's thoughts resonate very much with Nana's final words on the subject of humanness:

> Nana: »I would say, it is… I don't think it has anything to do with acceptance. I nearly said: ›accepting how you are‹. But I would actually say the opportunity to be. To be so that the human being is simply what he is. And how he is. Without being forced to be anything other than what it is. And this being […], as I understand it, of course, as such a wide variation that there is no definition. Phoenix doesn't say who you are. The starting point is: we know who we are. We know that or we are simply. We don't need to know that. We are simply« (Nana 04/08/2012-4 #00:05:52).

The new narratives of the self created by the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners after their training experience, highlight a complexity of stories. Some narrated a new openness, a new openness towards emotions, knowledge but also humanity (C.L., Nana, Ryan). The majority, however, spoke of a more conscious relationality, where the research participants asked themselves how do I relate to others. The term authenticity was also

mentioned with the meaning to relate to each other as human beings and not as roles, positions or social constructs (Can, C.L., Eve, Milan, Nana, Ryan). Another common theme in the new narratives of the self was what I would coin as the impact through being (instead of missionising) or creating possibilities of empowerment for others, which meant (in particular to the White research participants) letting go of stigmatising and shaming Whiteness (C.L., Lena, Nana, Ryan). Some of the research participants also referred to this in their narratives as becoming more loving (Dina, C.L.). A much more common theme amongst the BIPOC research participants' new narratives of the self, was the notion of self-determination, a widened sense of freedom of choice, being more independent from emotional triggers of racialisation (Can, Kabera, Nana).

The re-imagination of humanness was similarly complex and ranged from seeing humanness relationally, spiritually and reflexively (Milan, Can, Dre, Nana). Other elements of that re-imagination of humanness were narrated as seeing and acknowledging a person's boundaries and each other's vulnerability (C.L., Liz). Finally, there was mention of an inhuman reflex, which denies the other humanness, but which also, once it was overcome, opened new possibilities of being (Dre, Nana).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that racialisation is a form of mis-recognition and that recognition (as conceptualised by Taylor 1994) plays a significant role in the process of de-racialisation. The narratives of the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners highlight that Whiteness, seeing itself through the eyes of the racialised other, would not only grant subject status to the objectified racial other, but it would also re-establish a humanness, in which Whites are reflected in (Martinot 2010). The ways in which this recognition can evolve have been described and re-written by the research participants in a plethora of ways: either by describing love as a driver of personal and social change (Illouz 2012), by overcoming the stigma and shame that are very often related to Whiteness (Kowal 2011), or by re-

discovering a form of self-recognition, which gives the subject an (albeit limited) sense of self-determination and freedom of choice (Frankl 2006).

Furthermore, the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners understand and re-imagine humanness as relational (Derrida 2005; Sinha 2015), thereby vulnerability (Butler et Al. 2016) and critical reflexivity become crucial in the examination of how we relate to each other (Emirbayer & Desmond 2015). A planetary humanism, as conceptualised by Fanon (Sekyi-Out 1996) and Gilroy (2004), which openly resists all form of racialisation, is also a crucial element in the development of a culture of understanding and pluralism or a convivial culture. This planetary humanism could be informed by the concept of decoloniality, which questions the primacy of Western epistemologies and attempts to include epistemologies of the Global South in its explorations of what it means to be a human being (Santos 2018). Therewith, different aspects of the human pluriverse could be examined and negotiated, such as Ubuntu in which a person is understood to become a person through other persons (Tutu 1999), but also other forms of spirituality, which have been excluded from the project of modernity and the place of the human within it (Masuzawa 2005). And finally, in reference to Lyotard (1991), I have argued that if we understand humanness as a possibility of being everything that we can be, the inhuman should not be denied but rather perceived as a choice, just as much as the choice of being human.

In the previous two chapters, I argued that the research participants experience their personal racialisation processes as a dehumanising form of suffering in their narratives. I also argued the research participants' narratives of their first training experience highlight how subjectivities, through the cognitive and emotional confrontation of their personal racialisation processes, gain a sense of partial liberation. This chapter concludes that through new narratives of the self, inspired by anti-racism and empowerment training, the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners re-write their personal racial subjectivation in redemptive terms of (self-)recognition, relationality and critical reflexivity. If racialisation is understood as a dehumanising form of suffering, de-racialisation becomes a form of re-humanisation. Thereby, one crucial element in this re-writing process is the question of what it means to be a human being, the re-imagination of humanness. Therein, I delved into an

existential reflection on Fanon's appeal for a new humanism, and delineated the concept of decoloniality. We hereby move away from Western epistemologies towards an epistemological pluriverse.

The following and final chapter discusses further the findings of this research project and concludes this dissertation.

Chapter 7: Conclusion – Moving Beyond »Race«

> »Some say that suffering is only an illusion or that to live wisely we have to ›transcend‹ both suffering and joy. I say the opposite. The way to suffer well and be happy is to stay in touch with what is actually going on; in doing so, you will gain liberating insights into the true nature of suffering and of joy. [...]
>
> Both suffering and happiness are of an organic nature, which means they are both transitory; they are always changing. The flower, when it wilts, becomes the compost. The compost can help grow a flower again. Happiness is also organic and impermanent by nature. It can become suffering and suffering can become happiness again. [...]
>
> Everyone knows we need to have mud for lotuses to grow. The mud doesn't smell so good, but the lotus flower smells very good. If you don't have mud, the lotus won't manifest. You can't grow lotus flowers on marble. Without mud, there can be no lotus.
>
> It is possible of course to get stuck in the ›mud‹ of life. It's easy enough to notice mud all over you at times. The hardest thing to practice is not allowing yourself to be overwhelmed by despair. When you're overwhelmed by despair, all you can see is suffering everywhere you look. You feel as if the worst thing is happening to you. But we must remember that suffering is a kind of mud that we need in order to generate joy and happiness. Without suffering, there's no happiness. So we shouldn't discriminate against the mud. We have to learn how to embrace and cradle our own suffering and the suffering of the world, with a lot of tenderness« (Nhát Hanh 2014, pp. 12-13).

Beginning this conclusion with a quote from the Vietnamese Buddhist Zen-Master Thích Nhát Hanh, might appear like a slippery slope in view of Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn's (2001) criticism of the psychologisation and therapeutisation of anti-racism (and empowerment) as simply a Californian style way of *finding your bliss* or your *true* self; or of freeing the inner child through transcending racial subjectivation. Such tones are at times hauntingly close to the narratives of anti-racism and empowerment practitioners explored in this thesis. Nevertheless, a resemblance in discourses must not be equated with a telling of the same tale.

This thesis tells the story of racial identity development, dehumanisation and subjectivity. It galvanises these key processes in social, social psychological and psychological theories of racial subjectivation. This galvanisation of racialisation and psychosocial theories highlights in particular how White people might in general be posited as structurally, socially, economically and politically over-empowered, while being emotionally and psychologically scathed. In short, it highlights how restricted and limited in humaneness Whiteness becomes through the colonial construction of an essentially different racial Other. However, as the research participants' narratives show: remembering, reflecting and feeling through personal histories of racial subjectivation is essential in giving the subject a sense of regaining some autonomy from the heteronomy of racial subjectivation.

In Chapter 1 I began with drawing a picture of how "Race", racism and racialisation are manifested, operationalised and negotiated in contemporary German society. By addressing the tension between (hierarchical) racialised structures and individuals operating within those structures, I briefly discuss the attempts (and failures) of anti-racism and empowerment training to illuminate this tension. I elaborate hereby the setting for the psycho-biographies (and thereby also psycho-histories) of racialisation in Germany, studied in this research project. After looking into the research questions and objectives, the thesis outlines some of the conceptual issues around generating a psycho-biography of racialisation (and as such contributes in a wider sense to the field of Critical Race theory). I also included an outline of Phoenix' (and some of its founding figures') history, which was at the heart of my case study. As this thesis highlighted, learning anti-racism as a White person or being empowered as a Black/Person of Colour is related to the very slow work of confronting one's own racialisation.

In chapter 2 I built the theoretical framework of this study and located it in the interdisciplinary field of Critical Race Theory. In the literature review I arranged various ideas and existing studies on Relational Sociology, (Child) Development Theory, Memory Theory, Critical Whiteness, Post- & Decoloniality, around concepts of Narratology. This theoretical amalgam, though encompassing studies, research and theories within and beyond Germany, highlights how the global and the local, the structural and the individual engage with each other in regard to lived experiences of racialisation, anti-racism and empowerment activism mainly in the cities of Duisburg and Berlin. In chapter 2, I also highlighted the limits of this key literature: theories of racism, racialisation, dehumanisation and subjectivity are rarely amalgamated in psychosocial theories of racial identity construction processes. This study considers the contextualisation of these hypotheses to be vital as they can provide an imperative inspiration in particularly for the dominant culture to re-assess racial identity developments. Learning and acknowledging the single stories that shape the racialised subject paves the way for new narratives of diversity. Furthermore, literature on racialisation seldom centres on the impact mindfulness of racialisation processes can have on White and BIPOC individuals.

In chapter 3 I outlined the research trajectory and the epistemological and methodological issues relevant to this seven-year research project. As a researcher who conducted fieldwork at home with multiple methods (such as interviews, participant observation), I initially discussed methodological debates about Feminist Standpoint theory, insider and outsider research, and positioned myself as an insider/believer of Phoenix, the organisation I investigated as a case study. Additionally, I concluded that accessing the voices of anti-racism and empowerment practitioners through insider research, Feminist Standpoint epistemology and Grounded Theory allows new opportunities of knowledge production which expand contemporary theories of racialisation in Germany.

In chapter 4 I explored key narratives, moments and elements in the psycho-biography of anti-racism and empowerment practitioners in their personal racialisation processes. Drawing heavily on Elisian relational sociology and the notion of the second nature, I conclude that racial memories and racialisation are located in the nexus of mind, body and society, and imprint or inscribe themselves as a racial culture with Whiteness at its centre onto the human body. Through retrieving memories of racialisation processes and examining the feelings involved in this inscription process, the research participants work through the suffering they experienced as racialised subjects. In chapter 4, I conclude that the suffering of the racialised subject is caused by the process of racialisation, which can be considered a process of becoming dehumanised as BIPOC *and* White individuals.

In chapter 5 I explored briefly how anti-racism and empowerment training in the UK and Germany were developed and received. Reflecting the lived experiences of anti-racism and empowerment practitioners and their first personal training experiences, I explored the notion of (self-)empowerment and (self-)governmentality utilising the work of Nikolas Rose. In chapter 5 I concluded, by analysing the narratives of the anti-racism and empowerment practitioners' first training experience, that understanding of individual racialisation processes cognitively *and* emotionally partially transforms and frees the racialised subject. This transformation or liberation allows the racialised subject to re-write and re-imagine their own story of racialisation and humanness and is further studied in the final empirical chapter.

In chapters 4 and 5, I argued that narratives reveal that the research participants experience their personal racialisation as dehumanisation, which causes suffering in them. Through cognitively and emotionally working through their personal racialisation processes, they feel a sense of partial freedom. In chapter 6, I conclude that through new narratives of the self, anti-racism and empowerment practitioners re-write their personal racial subjectivation in redemptive terms of (self-)recognition, relationality and critical reflexivity, as inspired by anti-racism and empowerment training. If racialisation is conceptualised as dehumanisation, which causes suffering in the research participants, de-racialisation can be understood as a process that re-humanises. I therefore explored in chapter 6 the research participants' narratives or understanding of humanness.

Having 16 research participants mainly based in Berlin and Duisburg, and trainers, trainees and members of the same German anti-racism and empowerment non-governmental organisation may raise certain questions about the scope and representativeness of this study. However, there were reasons for choosing a small sample, and for not doing an in-depth comparison with other organisations in Germany or elsewhere: I wanted to go in-depth, as deep as possible. I was interested in the details, crevasses and nuances of research participants' narratives; I wanted to hear their stories of racialisation, of empowerment, of humanness in an unfiltered, raw and extensive fashion.

In addition, as already discussed in the methodology chapter, this thesis is not about making generic, universal truth claims, but rather about opening a small window onto discourses and narratives of a small group of people (in Germany), who address their own psycho-biography of racialisation (and thereby also the psycho-history of their society) in a particular way. As such, analysing a group of anti-racism and empowerment practitioners who not only continuously critically reflect their own racialisation, but who also *live* their practice, may offer us an opportunity to expand our understanding of the topics at hand. In their narratives of their lived experiences, the research participants show how they sometimes fail and sometimes succeed; that although painfully slow and with homeopathic dosages the impact their partially de-racialised subjectivities have on their work, friends and family environments is maybe comparable to those small needles used in acupuncture.

Herein lies the offering; the chance to take away significant elements from the narratives participants shared with us.

The direction of future research following this thesis consists of different possible routes. Following the conclusions from chapter 4, it would be fascinating to follow the narratives of the research participants' personal racialisation experiences and (following the example of Troyna & Hatcher 1992 or Van Ausdale & Feagin 2001) through ethnographic research in Germany with children and young people, study how they experience, negotiate, and develop the racial material they are presented with by society. Following chapter 5, the bare minimum that we can take away from the narratives of the research participants' training experience, is the question: How can anti-racism and empowerment training, but also other forms of racial teaching literacy become more personal and thereby more applicable to participants who actually want to be more anti-racist or empowered? This could be relevant for example within public bodies (but also many other areas of society) in Germany where there remains a need for more awareness of unconscious racial bias and thereby more inclusiveness. Following chapter 6, and as delineated in this conclusion, urgent questions around racism and racialisation remain and require further philosophical and sociological investigation: what does it mean to be a human being? What is humanness and how much of our humanity do we lose by being subjected to racial but also other forms of power relations - as those disadvantaged but also advantaged by these power dynamics? How can we develop a global, decolonial, pluriversal (not universal) humanism that allows us to tackle all of the growing global injustices and inequalities? This thesis provides further groundwork for continued research in this field.

A resumé

This research project began with an examination of how anti-racism and empowerment practitioners narrated memories of racialisation. White people generally assume that they are mostly unaffected by racial matters (McKinney 2003), or they assume that they solely benefit from racism and from White privilege (McIntosh 1989; Bhopal 2018; Sullivan 2019).

The assumption that White people are not raced hides Whiteness as a *master signifier* – an invisible norm from which the cultural or racial Other is constituted (Seshadri 2000; Wachendorfer 2001; Levin-Rasky 2012). In *A contribution to the critique of political economy* (1978) Karl Marx argues that »*society does not consist of individuals, but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relations within which these individuals stand*« (Marx 1978, p. 247). Norbert Elias similarly argued for a relational sociology, arguing that a child becomes an individual through going into dialogue with others (Elias 1991, p. 47). The concept of relationality has been picked up on by many other sociologists and has also been adapted towards a sociology of »Race« and racialisation (Emirbayer & Desmond 2015). Racism as an ideology that divides people into inferior and superior races or cultures, functions as a justification for privileging or de-privileging racialised groups in German society (van Dijk 1998; Attia 2009). The fact that racial thinking often operates on an unconscious level (Emirbayer & Desmond 2015; Volkan et Al. 2014) disrupts the notion that racism and racial thinking works solely consciously and with intention. In fact, many social researchers argue that while a great many adults consciously and with intention hold liberal, sometimes even anti-racist values, because everyone becomes at some point in childhood racialised, this process of racialisation (being predicated on the basis of »Race«) affects the ways in which people relate to each other (Van Ausdale & Feagin 2001; Quintana & McKown 2008, Kahn 2018). In some cases, it is even possible for the subject to remember the very first moment of racial imprinting or initiation into a racial culture that has Whiteness at its centre (Frankenberg 1993; Thandeka 1999).

One of the tasks I gave research participants in my role as a social researcher was to tell me their story, their personal memories of racialisation. Herewith ensued a painfully narrated journey into discovering how their racial habitus, their racial subjectivation, came into being. Memories and remembering are nonetheless not as straightforward as they may appear:

> »Making ›the past available for the self's future‹ is the process we have seen at work – in very different ways […]. […] [M]emory does not lie dormant in the past, awaiting resurrection, but holds the ›potential for creative collaboration‹ (Boyarin 1994: 22) between past and present. The work of ›memory‹ also involves a complex process of negotiation between remembering and forgetting, between the destruction and creation of the self. Individual memories of personal histories are constantly reworked and retranslated in the present; so traumatic historical events seem to demand re-representation and re-reading, to resist the memorialisation which is also a kind of forgetting, the forgetting that assumes that remembering is finished« (King 2000, p. 180).

Whilst studying the research participants' narratives of their racialisation, it became clear that »›*remembering the self*‹ *is not a case of restoring an original identity, but a continuous process of* ›re-*membering*‹*, of putting together moment by moment, of provisional and partial reconstruction*« [original emphasis] (King 2000, p. 175). This negotiation between the past self and the present self, I felt, was particularly present in »Racialisation – Narrating Memories of Childhoods and ›Race‹«, the fourth chapter of this thesis in which the research participants embark on an emotional journey to their past. The research participants remembered – sometimes with an uncanny precision – very personal moments of racialisation or being presented with societal racial material in the form of media or communist propaganda. For the BIPOC research participants, the personal racialising moments in their childhoods range from being treated unfairly due to the way their skin colour was perceived, to having to negotiate cultural stereotypes and projections, or exposing to everyone the story of how their Black body came to exist in Germany. The White research participants shared narratives of primarily discursively encountering a dangerous, less human, cultural or racial Other; or situations in the family where they were met with shameful silences, or even violence, if they dared to question the racial status quo. It was also very fascinating to discover in the research participants' narratives how »Race« and place were related to each other (Murji & Picker 2019), and how early children learned to perceive and negotiate racialised spaces. Very often, the research participants would cry during the interview whilst sharing those painful memories of racialisation. It remains unclear where exactly this suffering is located. Is it the past self, the child that expresses their suffering through racialisation with those tears; or is it the present self that empathises with the child for having been racialised and therefore suffers for or with them; or does the present self, in view of its current understanding of racialisation, assume that the past self must have suffered? Whatever the answer may be, BIPOC research participants suffered from not being seen as a subject, they suffered because they felt dehumanised; while White research participants suffered because in reflection, they saw their own inhumanity reflected in the other, and as such felt dehumanised. I argue that the suffering caused by racialisation and dehumanisation is a form of symbolic violence (Weber 2019 [1921-1922],

Bourdieu 2001) often reproduced and re-dramatised at home, in the family or in other political spaces mentioned in research participants' narratives. The memories of imprinting of Whiteness or BIPOCness accordingly were often accompanied by feelings of shame and shameful silences of the people present (Connerton 2004, 2008; Trouillot 1995).

Sometimes these memories are akin to trauma but do not constitute trauma themselves, they are a form of suffering caused by racialisation. Whiteness and BIPOCness are nonetheless not essential, monolithic identities, like other identities such as cis-/gender, class, sexuality, age, ability etc.; they are rather constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed in myriad ways (Renn 2012, Gergen 1991). The psyche of the racialised subject stores, mirrors, retrieves and shapes racial material from and within social racial structures and within a racial matrix in which complex unconscious, social and psychological processes and forces organise a racial (group) psyche (Dalal 2002). In view of my analysis of research participants' narratives of their racial subjectivation, the main argument in chapter 4 is moreover that racialisation constitutes a form of dehumanising suffering for the racialised subject.

The subject of memories was also relevant in the fifth chapter- »The Training – Empowering Racial Subjectivities«. This chapter saw research participants being given the task of telling me the story of their first anti-racism or empowerment training experience (with Phoenix). It is very likely that anti-racism and empowerment practitioners' memories contain inaccuracies, gaps and conflations with other training memories. Here, research participants expressed strong feelings of shame and irritation, but also the realisation of being mis-informed by the German education system about the histories, roles and contributions of BIPOC and White people. This miseducation was understood as a negative side-effect of racialisation, as an adverse by-product which hinders the cognitive and emotional development of White people (Katz 1978). There was also the realisation that denying the suffering of racialisation hinders the transformation of the narratives of the self. Racial power structures inscribed, imprinted and embodied by the racial subject need emotional work in order to be addressed and, if so wished, also changed.

Most striking, however, was the research findings showing how close the research participants' narratives of the training experience is to a language of self-governmentality,

as analysed by Nikolas Rose (1996, 1999). The language of self-governmentality is strongly related to psycho-therapeutical discourses associated with self-improvement and liberation. It was evident from the narratives that the anti-racism and empowerment training was not founded in being about racial etiquette or guilt tripping White participants through confronting them with BIPOC's anger, something which has been strongly criticised in Lasch-Quinn's work (2001). Research participants' narratives of the training explore the very personal question of how participants relate to the phenomenon of racism individually. The practitioners share how they journeyed inside, analysing and examining how they became the racial being that they are and how they, as racialised subjects, relate to their environment. This analysis and examination of the participants' racial subjectivation is not an exclusively cognitive approach but is rather described in the narratives of anti-racism and empowerment practitioners as a very emotional and sometimes even physical experience. Bringing an emotional dimension into the engagement with the phenomenon of racism bears the risk of triggering a variety of feelings in racialised subjects, such as White narcissism, which is counterproductive in the process of de-racialisation since it centres the White subject solely on itself (Matias 2016). Cheryl Matias suggests in order to counter the toxicity of White emotionality, White racialised subjects can learn to re-learn their emotions (Matias 2016, p. 5, p. 135), though the author leaves no suggestions what this re-learning process could look like. It would also mean that the subject of de-racialisation and critical reflexivity remains in the cosmos of self-governmentality.

Nevertheless, the emotional dimensions of political learning should not be dismissed too quickly, since feelings can play a significant role in (political) educational processes (Besand 2014). Emotions act as a frame through which we perceive the world and ourselves, since we relate to our environment not solely through cognition, but also through emotions (Mohseni 2020, p. 439). I therefore argue that *knowing* about racialisation is one matter while, personally *feeling* one's racialisation is a very different position. Emotions constitute an essential part of who we are as human beings and being in denial of this flattens our human existence. Giving emotions weight does not mean that reason, evaluation and critical

reflexivity are displaced[48] (ibid.). On the contrary, critical reflection benefits from including the multiple dimensions of how we relate to the world and to ourselves (ibid.). Emotions play a significant role in how we relate to theories of racialisation, not only through abstraction but also as persons. The narratives of anti-racism and empowerment practitioners reveal that working emotionally in the training through one's own memories of racialisation processes made them feel more empowered. It instigated feelings of taking more ownership of their personal racial narrative and of wrestling back some freedom and autonomy from the racial subjectivation which they had not chosen to undergo as children.

The notion of the autonomous subject is anchored in modern Social Contract theory developed by early Enlightenment thinkers such as Hobbes, Rousseau, Locke, and Kant (Lessnoff 1990). The social contract was understood as a theory »*which grounds the legitimacy of political authority, and the obligations of rulers and subjects (and the limits thereof), on a premised contract or contracts relating to these matters*« (Lessnoff 1990, p. 3). Social Contract theory has been, however, heavily criticised by feminist (Pateman 1988) and critical »Race« scholars (Mills 1997) for having been mostly developed by and applied to White men, often excluding BPOC and further genders in this Western project of modernity. Nevertheless, the Phoenix training used as a case study in this research project is strongly based on systems psychology; and the discourses drawn upon in the research participants' narratives posit psychotherapeutic concepts as of great significance in the participants' first training experience. The discourses applied in the narratives confirm the idea of a Western way of life that privileges convictions of mental freedom and self-acknowledgment. The outcome of this privileging is a limitation on being an individual, of being free or freed. This results in the subject being pushed into the compulsory contradiction of being compelled to be free. With regards to both, the anti-racism and empowerment training, this implies that racialised subjects are constrained in giving their lives some sense by, for example, deconstructing the racialised structures and thoughts that restrict them, their social relations and their access to cultural assets. Be that as it may, as delineated in the fifth chapter in which the narratives of anti-racism and empowerment practitioners' first training experiences are analysed -

[48] It is important to note that the very idea that emotions are a lesser form of intelligence is a key component of White (and masculine) formations of self (Federici 2004)

cognitive and emotional understanding of personal racial subjectivation processes partially liberate the racialised subject. The subject can only be partially liberated since it exists within a contradictory simultaneity of identities. Racialisation is not something the subject can free themselves from in totality, they can, however, reconstruct certain elements of their racial subject identity and are thereby partially racialised *and* partially liberated. Nevertheless, the subject apart from being raced is also cis-/gendered, classed etc.; the project of liberation seems rather complex and impossible to complete, which does not mean that the subject should not attempt to liberate themselves.

Chapter 6, titled »After the training – re-writing racialised subjectivities, re-imagining humanness« explores the new narratives of the self inspired by anti-racism and empowerment training. Here research participants share how the lack of insight into racialisation often leads to a violent re-production of racialisation processes. Participants also shared how they sometimes failed and sometimes succeeded in inspiring their surroundings to address or reflect on the phenomenon of racism.

In addition to the examination of how anti-racism and empowerment practitioners re-write their racial subjectivation, I also explored how the research participants re-imagined humanness. During the Enlightenment era and the period in which Western imperial powers racialised the globe (Banton 1977), White people were granted a status of full humanness. However, so I argue, this status during the European colonial expansion was based on systemic intentional subjection of its White and BPOC subjects through both violent and also non-physical acts against them, which dehumanised them both. The price that the White subject paid for positing itself as a superior racial self was the abandonment of an authentic human self; for humans that dehumanise others fail to understand or nurture their own humanness. Thereby, the humanness granted to White people is an empty status, a form of pseudo-humanness. After the end of the European colonial Empires, the systemic intentional subjection through physically violent but also non-physical acts against White and BIPOC subjects has turned into second nature (Elias 1994) in modern Western societies and has become a systemic mostly unintended subjection through mainly non-physical acts against White and BIPOC subjects.

If racial subjectivation can be seen as mis-recognition, then recognition (as conceptualised by Taylor 1994) could therefore be considered a form of de-racialisation. Anti-racism and empowerment professionals' accounts show that Whiteness, seeing itself through the eyes of the racialised other, would not just award subject status to the externalised racial other, it would likewise restore a humanness wherein White people can see themselves in (Martinot 2010). The manner by which this recognition can advance has been portrayed and re-composed by our research participants in plethora of ways: either by depicting love as a driver of individual and social change (Illouz 2012), by transcending the shame and stigmatisations that are regularly identified with Whiteness (Kowal 2011), or by finding a type of self-acknowledgment that gives the subject a (yet restricted) sense of liberty and self-determination (Frankl 2006).

Besides, anti-racism and empowerment experts comprehend and rethink humanness in terms of relationality (Derrida 2005; Sinha 2015). Within this relationality, vulnerability (Butler et Al. 2016) and critical reflexivity (Emirbayer & Desmond 2015) become relevant in assessing of how we identify and relate humanely with one another. Modern Western humanism rooted in Renaissance thought mainly revolved around the free subject and how it can affirm itself, yet it failed at humanising epistemologies of the Global North (Dawson 1931). A planetary humanism, as conceptualised by Fanon (Sekyi-Out 1996) and Gilroy (2004), which explicitly opposes all types of racialisation but also other forms of dehumanisation, is an additional pivotal component in nurturing a culture of understanding, pluralism and conviviality. This planetary humanism could be educated by decoloniality, a concept that critically addresses the supremacy of Western epistemologies and endeavours to remember and build on epistemologies of the Global South in its search for ideas of what the human might be (Santos 2018). Various elements of the human pluriverse can thus be analysed and arranged. For example: Ubuntu. Ubuntu is a notion and a system in which an individual is perceived to become an individual through other individuals (Tutu 1999). This cultural practice of being is present in various forms of spiritualities and has been much avoided by the Western undertaking of modernity and the place of the human in it (Masuzawa 2005). Lastly, concerning Lyotard (1991), I have contended that if we comprehend humanness as a chance to be all that we can be, the

inhuman ought not to be denied, but is instead seen as a decision similar to the decision to be human. The inhuman reflex in the context of racialisation is to relate to the other as racial Other and little else. The inhuman choice limits us to simple, essentialising and oppressive narratives of the self, which become imprinted on us in early childhood (Elias 1994). The human choice is to resist simple, essentialising and oppressive narratives; thereby granting complexity, non-essentialisms, and self-empowerment in the form of *Lebensmöglichkeiten* (life chances or life opportunities).

Chapter 6 argues that through new narratives of the self, inspired by anti-racism and empowerment training, anti-racism and empowerment practitioners re-compose their own racial subjectivation in redemptive terms of recognition, relationality and critical reflexivity. In the event that racialisation is perceived as a dehumanising type of suffering, de-racialisation turns into a type of re-humanisation. Subsequently, one critical component in the cycle of re-writing subjectivities is the question of what humanness and the re-imagination of humanness means. In that, I dove into an existential reflection on Fanon's call for a new humanism and touched upon the idea of decoloniality. We herewith move away from Western epistemologies towards an epistemological pluriverse.

Slow and weak…

However, far from being a work of decolonial epistemology, since I still rely heavily on the methods and the writings of so many scholars from Europe and North America (some of them White, some of them BIPOC) my Anatolian Alevi upbringing still significantly informs some of the key questions of this thesis. Though I strongly hesitate to call this work a piece of Anatolian German Alevi epistemology, my spiritual ancestry is foundational in this thesis:

> »The Bektashi notions of the Spiritual Man and Perfect Man, the highest levels of the chain of emanation (after God/Truth and God/Universe), will be described here. The former refers to the fact that ›every human being on

> earth is an emanation of an astral, shining, or spiritual self‹ (Cornell 2006: 16). The belief that God is already present within all human beings (Wakamatsu 2015: 784) is connected to the idea that the individual is a ›perfect embodiment‹ of the human whole (Rapport 2012: 5). The Perfect Man (Insan-ı kamil) is the ideal person, a mature human being who has managed to acquire spiritual access to the hidden and universal Truth – the higher degree of knowledge, the Hakikat (Cornell 2006: 19).
>
> The concept of ›Four Doors, Forty Levels‹ (dört kapı, kırk makam) is central to Alevi mysticism. This is the process through which an individual goes through all the necessary stages – şeriat (religious law), tarikat (spiritual path), marifet (spiritual knowledge) and hakikat (spiritual truth) – that characterize the path of inner, deeper spiritual insight (Gokalp 1980: 755). In the practical terms of everyday life, Alevis believe that a Perfect Human directs his or her heart towards humanity (Yaman and Erdemir 2006: 69): this requires the full moral control of one's desires and treating everyone equally, with kindness, honesty and sincerity (Shindeldecker 1998). Salvation is reached through the emulation of perfect models such as Ali, Hacı Bektaş Veli and other saints« (Cusenza 2017, p. 301).

While this paints a picture of Anatolian Alevis as akin to saints, they of course are not (I for one am certainly not a saint); Alevis (like saints) are humans with good and bad characteristics, who are bound to fail in their emulation of these perfect humans. This description of the Alevi is not about being perfect, but rather about attempting perfection. This centuries old belief system assumes that humanness is a direction, a compass that guides us through our relationships. The research participants' narratives also reflected in ways that connected with and complemented the Anatolian Alevi belief system: the ways (in chapter 6) in which the anti-racism and empowerment trainers directed their hearts (or their perceptions) towards humanity, their own humanity, but also the humanity of the other. This became evident in the research participants' narratives of claiming to attempt to relate to each other as human beings and not through the roles a person embodies.

At the same time, and I want to emphasise that this is not a story about triumph. This is not a story about how anti-racism and empowerment practitioners heroically and fully overcome their racialisation, free themselves or became absolute free subjects, freeing their surroundings and taking full control over racial narratives in society. If at all, the research participants' narratives highlight how unspectacular, how *slow and weak,* the process of de-racialisation and re-humanisation is. It is therefore important to understand that the narratives of anti-racism and empowerment practitioners cannot be narratives of a triumphant mastery over racial subjectivation, for the very notion of the subject becoming master over itself is informed by Western Romanticism and Enlightenment thinking (Singh 2017, p. 11). The modern political subject and the idea of humanness therein, cannot be conceptualised without the notion of mastery:

»For Locke, then, Man as the masterful modern subject is a privatization and appropriation of something else, something that precedes and perhaps always escapes or exceeds mastery— something within and around Man that, in fact, Man has to ›master‹ in order to become himself, which is to say, in order to become free. While mastery here becomes totalizing and inescapable (one is either mastered by another or is master of oneself), its very emergence presupposes that there is something outside of mastery, something that mastery feeds on but disavows. To unthink mastery therefore requires either a radically different understanding of what it could mean to be human or perhaps a thinking of the human that would not be human at all. Foucault reminds us, ›Man is an invention of recent date‹ (1994, 387), and as such I am keen to imagine a subject or person who would not be human in this way, in this style of masterful Man articulated through political philosophy« (Singh 2017, pp. 13-14).

This critique of mastery in Western notions of humanness, remind us of the words of Alevi poet Kaygusuz Abdal, who challenging god wrote: »*You've built a bridge from hair, so that Your servant comes and walks across it. We want to stay where we are, and if You're a hero, God, then walk across it Yourself!*« (cited from Ritter 2003, p. 186). This line in Kaygusuz Abdal's poem highlights two important factors: firstly, it questions the nature of god as a superior divine being, positing God as in fact similar to humans and as such placing the divine spirit as an essence of the inner self of the human being (Shankland 2003, p. 167); secondly, the bridge made from a single hair symbolises the bridge humans will cross on judgment day, the day on which their deeds as human beings will be judged (Ritter 2003, p. 186). Implied here is that living an ethical life in Alevi traditions is as easy as crossing an abyss on a string of hair. In other words: an ethical life is in fact impossible to master (even for a divine being). As Singh suggests, the human subject should not be about mastering humanness; neither is the aim that humanness should master all the subjectivations the human is subjected to. Rather, it is about familiarising ourselves with our racial subjectivation, at least in a way that it is less master over us. Perhaps if we cannot master living an ethical life, which in a racialised (but also gendered, classed etc.) world is as difficult as passing over an abyss on a piece of hair, it is time to befriend the suffering of dehumanisation, the deformations of power and the brokenness of oppression. Maybe it is simply not about crossing the abyss from above but falling into it:

»As we stare at the abyss and as the abyss stares back at us, we lose ourselves for a creolized self yet to be created on the ever-unfolding horizon of the groundless middle. In the colonial abyss, passage implies plunging not only into the abyss of the self and the other but also in the abyss of becoming - sinking into the unknown mystery and thus the generosity of becoming, and of the other, that solicits a future; generosity that fosters the original (ex)change - an exchange that takes place at the very outset of being - which therefore exceeds the capitalist economy of exchange. A gift: the gift of becoming and creolization, the exchange before being; the sacred. Being Malabou teaches us, is a site of change and exchange. It points to nothing but its mutability: ›Being is from the outset changeable and changed. It substitutes for itself and is exchanged - in exchange for nothing; it loses its name.‹ It is perhaps here that the boundary between the human and the divine or between the spiritual and political dissolves, at this juncture of exile in the groundless middle, between absolute solitude and the inexhaustible ties of our solidarity with suffering others.« (Yountae 2016, pp. 142-143).

Coloniality cannot exist without modernity, in the same way it does not make any sense to think about modernity without coloniality (Mignolo 2011, p. 3). In Western modernity, the human is constantly subjected to developing and growing the self, their life, their capital (which can only lead to an implosion). An alternative human narrative might therefore be about prosperity and dignity (Mignolo 2011, p. 304). Instead of a humanness that is master over the world and nature[49], a humanness that begins to nurture the world and nature is called for (Mignolo 2011, p. 313). If we attempt to master our suffering caused by racial subjectivation, it will only master us. However, if we begin to befriend our suffering, it might lose some of the terror racialisation exerts on us and onto the world.

In applying the concept of imagination as used in the capability approach of Martha Nussbaum & Amartya Sen (1993) and by exploring a sociology of spirituality as done by Georg Simmel (1997) and Kieran Flanagan & Peter C. Jupp (2007), I argue that to become enchanted by the world again halts the attempts to master everything. Asad (2003) links modernity and romanticism to secularisation and disenchantment:

> »It is right to say that ›modernity‹ is neither a totally coherent object nor a clearly bounded one, and that many of its elements originate in relations with the histories of peoples outside Europe. Modernity is a project – or rather, a series of interlinked projects – that certain people in power seek to achieve. The project aims at institutionalizing a number of (sometimes conflicting, often evolving) principles: constitutionalism, moral autonomy, democracy, human rights, civil equality, industry, consumerism, freedom of the market – and secularism. It employs proliferating technologies (of production, warfare, travel, entertainment, medicine) that generate new experiences of space and time, of cruelty and health, of consumption and knowledge. The notion that these experiences constitute ›disenchantment‹ - implying a direct access to reality, a stripping away of myth, magic, and the sacred – is a salient feature of the modern epoch. It is, arguably, a product of nineteenth-century romanticism, partly linked to the growing habit of reading imaginative literature – being enclosed within and by it – so that images of a ›pre-modern‹ past acquire in retrospect a quality of enchantment« (Asad 2003, pp. 13-14).

What is required for the present to become re-enchanted again? Spirituality could possibly be part of that process. Many religious minorities, such as Alevis have suffered centuries of religious persecution by movements that have used religions to justify genocide and many other forms of oppression and cruelty. As Asad (2003) describes in his book, secularism has also been used to create oppressive structures and processes. Spirituality might be assessed as belonging to the humans in much as the same way as emotions do (Flanagan 2007, p. 1).

[49] Probably a trait that modernity has inherited from the three major monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam (Toynbee 1972; Gottlieb 2006)

The spirituality of atheists are included here in this thesis understanding of what spirituality[50] is. Spirituality in this model, like emotionality, does not equate dismissing reason, evaluation and critical reflexivity. Far from positioning this thinking within ethical relativism, it suggests rather a form of spirituality that confers with the ethics of a new humanism. Ayi Kwei Armah wrote in his book *The Healers* (1979) that the healer has the spiritual power to either inspire or to manipulate others, echoing the choice of the human or the inhuman. The power of inspiration heals brokenness, the power of manipulation divides only further and nurtures dehumanising suffering further. And yet, this thinking may be prone to what Lauren Berlant (2011) coined *cruel optimism:*

> »I love the idea of reparative reading insofar as it is a practice of meticulous curiosity. But I also resist idealizing, even implicitly, any program of better thought or reading. How would we know when the ›repair‹ we intend is not another form of narcissism or smothering will? Just because we sense it to be so? Those of us who think for a living are too well-positioned to characterize certain virtuous acts of thought as dramatically powerful and right, whether effective or futile; we are set up to overestimate the proper clarity and destiny of an idea's effects and appropriate affects. […] [S]uch dramas can produce strange distortions in the ways we stage agency as a mode of heroic authorship, and vice versa: such dramas of inflation distract attention from the hesitancy and recessiveness in ordinary being. The distinction I'm making here is about an attitude toward what thinking (as écriture, as potentiality) can do. I'm suggesting that the overvaluation of reparative thought is both an occupational hazard and part of a larger overvaluation of a certain mode of virtuously intentional, self-reflective personhood« (Berlant 2011, p. 124).

Similarly, Michael Rothberg argues in *The Implicated subject* (2019) »*Self-reflexivity alone will not lead directly to a political movement that can dismantle the conditions of implication. The burden of history will not simply evaporate once we see our place in its long- and short-term legacies*« (Rothberg 2019, p. 19). Further, Rothberg states that »*the insights derived from the lens of implication outweigh the risks of narcissistic forms of self-reflexivity and that it is worth training our analytic powers on a terrain that too often remains invisible yet is central to the production of injustice*« (ibid.).

On many occasions I find myself agreeing with Lasch-Quinn's criticism of racial awareness training in the US (2001). In view of the fact that there are good training and bad

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[50] What is spirituality? The »notion of spirituality is profoundly indefinite« Flanagan concludes (Flanagan 2007, p. 1). Is spirituality individual or does it solely belong to organised religions? Flanagan suggests: »*Spirituality signifies an indispensable dimension of what it is to be human. In the spirit, the social actor finds ambition, animation and exultation that all move and mobilise the self to reach beyond itself, to find powers that make humans small divinities pursuing destinies that transcend the mundane necessities of the immediate and the temporal. In reaching to surpass, the limits of self-endeavour become horribly plain. The actor sees what to grasp but the reaching eludes. Spirituality is not only about what is beyond human limits; it is the sensibility of incompleteness in the journeying*« (Flanagan 2007, p. 1).

training, it is not helpful in our evaluation to vilify all training, as has often been done (Lasch-Quinn 2001; Petley 2019; Gurnah 1987; Sivanandan 1987). It would indeed be problematic if anti-racism and empowerment training were perceived as a panacea to all racial problems. The notion that training individuals to become less racist and more empowered would suffice in changing the racial order is erroneous. Anti-racism and empowerment training belongs to a set of social processes that include politics of self-representation for BIPOC (in mass media for example) and a redistribution of wealth (in particular since the gap between the rich and poor is growing in Germany and globally). As Nancy Fraser argues, we need both: recognition and redistribution (Fraser & Honneth 2003, p. 8). Historical social change requires that both individuals *and* structures change. At a time when mass colonialism was seeing its end in many regions of the world, Fanon wrote almost 60 years ago:

> »What counts today, the question which is looming on the horizon, is the need for a redistribution of wealth. Humanity must reply to this question, or be shaken to pieces by it« (Fanon 1965, p. 98).

To Fanon's call I would add another, more recent plight:

> »This is a moment in which human-induced ecological catastrophe is both in effect and imminent, in which human population displacement and species extinctions have become normative expectations. It is a moment, in other words, when human practices of mastery fold over onto themselves and collapse. Mastery as the logic of a certain form of human being needs urgently therefore to be unthought and replaced by new performances of humanity« (Singh 2017, p. 19).

While I empathise with those, who feel despair in these difficult times; despair can also lead to our most inhuman reflexes to take over, the master. Nevertheless, nothing lasts forever, and everything is going to change eventually. The suffering caused by the inhumanness of racialisation rages through our internal and external worlds, it exists in us and the structures that we move in. I hope the participant narratives in this thesis with the *slowness and weaknesses* they reveal, highlight that suffering can be transformed into something else, into something more humane.

The humble suggestion here is that being human is the sum of our *Lebensmöglichkeiten,* our life chances or life possibilities - the more possibilities of living, of being, we have, the more human we can become. *Lebensmöglichkeiten* are however *not*

boundless - they are bound by the humanity of others and by nature, the global or cosmic ecosystem, which we are a part of. *Lebensmöglichkeiten* or notions of humanity that limit or destroy life possibilities of others and destroy nature are inhumane, because they are also a part of ourselves. Being human or inhuman is thus a choice, not a given. While this thesis explores some of the inhuman and human choices research participants made in relation to racialisation, it invites other scholars of humanness to continue negotiating and exploring, slowly and carefully what human choices we have, want and need.

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