

Société Culturelle  
Franco-Allemande (S.F.A.)  
Association 1901 N° W821000579  
14 Place de la Halle  
F-82340 Auxillat  
Tel: 0563 291423  
E-mail: asso@sfa-auxillat.com

Gerhard und Marie José Schneider Ballouhey (S.F.A.)

## **Open, tolerant and liberal communities for all – multiculturalism and social inclusion as a challenge for the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

### **Reflections after the OPLICO Kick-off-meeting in Telšiai from October 4 to October 7 2017**

Since 2004 we are connected through common EU projects with the “Telsiu svetimo centras”, an institution for adult education for women in Telšiai Lithuania: First in three Grundtvig projects and now since October 2017 in the Erasmus+ project OPL ICO. Erasmus+ with the focus KA 2 is the successor organization of Grundtvig. From the long-lasting cooperation in the three Grundtvig projects CMCE, JETE and GOUT a friendship has emerged. That makes objective reporting difficult: we are prejudiced and partisan for the country and people in Lithuania and for our cooperation partners from the Telsiu svetimo centras.

#### **1) About project OPLICO**

OPLICO is the abbreviation of our project title: “**O**pen, tolerant and *l*iberal community for everyone. Challenges and opportunities for adult education”.

In the brief description of the approved proposal we can read the following:

"Open, tolerant and liberal community for everyone irrespective of social status, educational background, race, gender or thinking way is one of challenges of 21st century giving opportunities for adult educators to bring positive and long-lasting effects transferring the experiences and best practices as well as improved models of 5 European countries into local activities."

The project „Open and Liberal Community: Challenges and Opportunities for Adult Education“ should be carried out transnationally because all partners have different backgrounds and large experiences of this issue, so the international communication and collaboration will take the opportunity to share experiences and improved practices as well as methods and develop, pilot and implement attractive education/training program for local communities' members including target group (social risk group, migrants). Project partners will attempt to facilitate social inclusion of social risk group and migrants into local communities through adult education and this way encourage local communities to be more open for everyone.

Main objective of the project – encourage the local communities' for openness and tolerance for people of social risk group (including migrants) and facilitate their social inclusion into local communities through educational activities based on project partners' experiences and best practices.

**Objectives:** Encourage the local communities' for openness, liberality and tolerance for people of social risk group as well as migrants and facilitate their social inclusion into local communities as well as increase awareness about this within local communities through educational activities based on project partner experiences, best practices and improved methods.

**Target groups :** Staff members, adult educators, local communities' members, people of social risk group and migrants.

Our strategic partnership is mainly focused on one horizontal priority "**Social inclusion**". Priority will be given to actions/educational activities that promote – in particular through integrated approaches based on partners experience and best practices – inclusion of people belonging to social risk group (including migrants) into local communities and increasing awareness of new arrived people's background within local communities.

Strategic Partnerships support **exchange of good practices**, so the primary goal of the project is to share and confront experiences, ideas, best practices and methods as well as to transfer and implement them in partner countries through adult education.

In **conclusion**, the project will foster:

1. The development of open, tolerant and liberal communities;
2. The development of communities' members (including social risk group and migrants) social, civic, intercultural competences and critical thinking, also combating discrimination, segregation and racism through educational activities;
3. Extending and developing adult educators' competences, particularly in the working with target groups (social risk group, migrants) through sharing and transferring experiences, best practices as well as approved methods into educational activities in partner institutions.

Our **project partners** in OPLICO are:

- Telsiu svetimo centras -Telšiai /Lithuania (Coordinator)
- Berufskolleg Tecklenburger Land - Ibbenbüren / Germany
- ContemplaTrilhos - Associação para o desenvolvimento, formação e inclusão social – Lisboa / Portugal
- Stord vidaregåandeskule – Stord / Norway
- Société Culturelle Franco-Allemande Auvillar – Auvillar / France

**Duration of the project**, October 1, 2017 - October 1, 2019

## 2) Our learning in the project

Erasmus+ projects with the emphasis KA 2 have the title “strategic partnerships for adult education/Corporation for innovation and exchange of proven practices”. The term ”proven practice” is often in pedagogic literature also called “good practice”, “best practice” and “successful practice”. These terms originate from quality management:

Quality management ensures that an organization, product or service is consistent. It has four main components: quality planning, quality assurance, quality control and quality improvement.[1]

Quality management is focused not only on product and service quality, but also on the means to achieve it. Quality management, therefore, uses quality assurance and control of processes as well as products to achieve more consistent quality.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quality\\_management](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quality_management) – [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Best\\_practice](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Best_practice)

This also applies to OPLICO. Without getting into methodological or scientific controversies one could say that this EU project is about improving the quality of learning and about practice: humanity has sustainably always learned from good examples in the practice – maybe even less through accumulation of theoretical knowledge. Theory and practice belong together and have different functions. This insight among others has led by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Europe to the critical departure from the rationalism of the age of Enlightenment and in most countries the transformation of learning in schools. Especially in projects like OPLICO that strive towards an innovation of values are turn to those foundations of education philosophy is appropriate (theory - practice, quality – quantity, inductive - deductive learning, holistic learning etc.).

EU projects are mostly part of informal, non-formal learning: they are purposeful but are not meant for certification. In the OPLICO project it already becomes clear in the topic that the project has to orient itself on a subject oriented system. Work dealing with relevant values cannot just remain in the everyday knowledge but has to conceptually remain rooted to the system of the subject philosophies or sociology. With that preliminary decisions regarding the method of learning are made. The participants in our adult education seminars do in most cases not have pre-existing philosophical knowledge. To be oriented towards our addressees means that we have to pick our learners up where they are in respect of their pre-existing knowledge.

When we talk about values such as "open, tolerant and liberal communities for all" or "multiculturalism and social inclusion" we are dealing with general abstract terms. Everybody thinks they are able to talk about it because they seem familiar with the general meaning of the term. Soon it becomes clear that talking about a general term without concrete examples is impossible for learners with average pre-existing knowledge. We need for that information that can be and has been experienced, we need for learning *clearness*. Part of clearness are not only depictions but also symbols, verbal pictures, descriptions, reports, all forms off "recordings" of experiences in accordance with our senses. When dealing with experiences persons, time, place and situation (history) play a big role. Sometimes we only understand when we are able to compare them, e.g. how something was before and what became of it.

To understand examples and accomplish progress in learning we have to be able to incorporate them into a system "Work on the Term" (Hegel). Without clarity of the terms learning is also not possible. The right interaction of conceptual knowledge and clearness determine the success of our learning. In order to learn and understand contents both ways are necessary: the way to the things themselves and through contemplation to the conceptual generality and the way from the term to sensory examples. Those two ways are also called the *inductive and deductive method*.

In *deductive learning* (learning of the specific from the general) a general term, a theory, a law, a rule, a definition or a context to be understood is given and processed from "top to bottom". The learner dissects and analyzes the learning object and is looking for examples which he then in turn incorporates into a system. For deductive learning the learner requires the means of language. For *inductive learning* (learning the general from the specific) a row of descriptive individual cases, examples and counterexamples are given for the abstraction to be learned. General sentences, rules and definitions are deducted by rising from "bottom to top", from the concretely special to the general, through observation, comparison and generalization; similarities are generalized in front of the background of differences. The learning of terms is indispensable for that. Inductive and deductive learning belong together. **"In search of clues – tracing" and "Work on the Term"!**

The inductive process promises better success especially with difficult facts and when group work is required. That is why we have good reasons to use the proven pair of methods on new (?) content in the OPLICO project.

With those keywords we have a guideline for our learning in the OPLICO project. It will always be successful and critical dialogue that will lead to learning success in the project during the encounters in Germany, Portugal, Norway and France.

### 3) In search of clues – Tracing in Telšiai

The goal in all the encounters among the countries of the project partners is to demonstrate a successful practice of open, tolerant and liberal communities. How is multicultural reality and social inclusion practiced there? Let's begin with Lithuania.

On a German website on the Internet (<http://www.litauen.info/geschichte/>) we found about Lithuania:

“The multiculturalism in the Lithuanian history, which was for long time ignored and misunderstood by the Lithuanian population during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, has just now at the end of this century been recognized as a great value. In the Lithuanian history there has been everything; the citizens of the three Lithuanian states played different roles: conquerors and the oppressed, trailblazers of cultural ideas and their followers, dissidents and rule followers.”

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We already arrived before the start of the meeting in Telšiai. A walk was of order. Where to go during the rainy weather without getting wet feet? – We will walk around the lake (“Mastis”) of the “City of the Seven Hills”.

We had not seen Telšiai since 2011. A lot has changed. The whole town is modernized, organized and clean. Even the ruins of the “old days” and the old wooden houses have become organized construction sites. The streets and paths leading to the lake are new and cleared of any fall foliage. Despite the rainy weather we enjoy the harmony with the beautiful nature.





We climb up the hill and see the lake and the landmark of the city, the Cathedral. The path is lined with numerous sculptures made from oak trunks: works of art inviting us to take a seat. Curious beings to make you chuckle.





We encounter the city landscapers which have spread out their lunch on one of these installations with a table. We cross people strolling in the drizzle while animatedly talking. We feel how this extraordinary park fascinates us. It is beautiful to walk about in such a park – we experience Telšiai as beautiful. Our search for clues for successful practice in regard of multiculturalism and social inclusion makes us pensive:

***The composition of a city through beautiful buildings has since antiquity been part of the ABCs of Urbanism. Artworks and beautiful nature (parks, flower decorations, memorials, artistic events, celebrations and parties, etc.) speak to people on an emotional level and affect the identity of the spectator. – Identity and inclusion are very closely related. – We will deal with that more in depth later.***

In the afternoon Aldona has organized a “special tour” for us: Nijolé and Janina (both history experts) made time and start with us at the Cathedral.



Lower Lithuania became over time a focal country for Catholicism. On the portal of the cathedral we find important church personalities who shaped the country during its fight for freedom. – The town center of Telšiai is arranged with numerous bronze sculptures and bronze reliefs which have made Telšiai a (modern) art city that hardly has any similes throughout Europe. A lot only becomes clear for us when we remember Lithuania's most recent history: on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 2016 Lithuania celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its recognition as sovereign state.

From a website on Lithuanian history: (<http://www.litauen.info/geschichte/die-wiederherstellung-der-republik-litauen/> )

“Despite gigantic efforts of the Soviet powers to Sovietize the Lithuanians and remove the national awareness they were unsuccessful. When Gorbachev's “Perestroika” removed the paralyzing atmosphere of fear which was a major basis of the USSR, the Sovietized masses became once more the Lithuanian people. Lithuania was the first of the former Soviet republics to declare the restoration of an independent state on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 1990. The failed putsch in the August of 1991 finished the job: The Lithuanian SSR became the republic Lithuania and in the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century history apparently repeated itself. After 1990 the Lithuanian citizens received the opportunity to create their own future from a voluntarily chosen model by society without repeating the mistakes of the past. The first decade of the new independence has obviously shown that democratic values have become the basis of a new society. “





Lithuania can look back more than other European countries on a multicultural history of more than 1000 years during which the country was formed by Lithuanians, Russians, Poles, Jews and Germans. Lithuania's multiculturalism was of course never without its problems and tensions. It is worth to develop the EU project OPLICO together on the history of Lithuania. We are after all centrally dealing with the question of "Multiculturalism and Social Inclusion as a Challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lithuania> )

With Nijolė and Janina we arrive at another place where (with the view on the lake) the historic identity of Lithuania is addressed: the Battle of Durbe on 13 July 1260. More in-depth: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Durbe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Durbe)



And right across the monument for the Battle of Durbe we find a reference about the Telšiai cheese brand DZIUDA:

The battle for Telšiai's famous DZIUDA cheese.



***Compared to other “nationalist” victory monuments in all of Europe people in Telšiai obviously deal more cautiously with an event in national history than in other places. It makes us thoughtful. - Here for instance it doesn't talk about “us invincible Lithuanians”, who in the Middle Ages extended their reign even up to the Black Sea. Here it very simply reminds of the “heroic fight for survival of the historic European country Samaiten (lat. Samogita) which determined the fate of Samaiten, Lithuania and the entire eastern Baltic***

region.” This monument does not evoke nationalism. Everyone living in Telšiai can identify with the historic country Samogita and its inhabitants. Nobody has to feel excluded. One can sense a certain patriotism and also understand that, especially considering Lithuania’s recent history. – And considering on top of that the “cheese Memorial” right next door defuses and robs the solemn seriousness of the “international battle Memorial” one could imagine that everybody can identify with the whole installation. One can chuckle about it with others. – The Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor says in regards to that: “My own identity crucially depends on my dialogical relations with others.”<sup>1</sup> – We are grateful that Nijolė and Janina brought us here. We again have found an example for “good practice”.

#### 4) The OPLICO Team gets to know each other and begins to work

Thursday, 5th of October 2017

After being greeted by Rita Vargalytė, Aldona Kleivienė and Ramute Ežrskitė of the Telsiu svietimo centras, Aldona presents the program for the meeting. Then the project partners introduce themselves.



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<sup>1</sup> Taylor, Charles: "The Politics of Recognition", in C. Taylor et al.: *Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition*, 1992. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Page 34. – Taylor’s publication has been a foundation for the discussion on intercultural pedagogic in recent times.



First the German partners from the **Berufskolleg Tecklenburger Land** in Ibbenbüren introduce themselves (Christian Schneider and Sylvia Bröker). – The mining town Ibbenbüren (51000 inhabitants within unemployment rate of 3.9 %) is close to the border with Holland in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (approx. 18 million inhabitants). The professional college has 2300 students, 120 teachers, one social worker, two janitors and four secretaries. It had 25 project partners from 18 countries inside of the EU-projects Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius and Erasmus+. Germany (82 million) has 22.5% migrant inhabitants (9 million without German citizenship) and since 2015 1.2 million refugees. The professional college offers in this context international support courses: for migrants and refugees under 18, special German language courses, test preparation courses, and with support of the Employment Office training on-the-job and “fit for more” for refugees of age 18 to 25. (<https://www.bk-ibb.de/>)

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Our Norwegian partners Øystein Djuve and Neeta Sankholar come from the **Stord videregående skule** in Stord, a town with 18,000 inhabitants on the island of Stord in the province Hordaland. Stord is known for its shipyard Aker Kværner Stord in Leirvik, the largest shipyard in Norway. In this shipyard the biggest oil rigs of the world were built. – The island is connected to the mainland by a system of tunnels and bridges. Across the island runs European Road E39, the main connection between Bergen and Stavanger. – The Stord videregående skule (<https://www.hordaland.no/stordvgs/>) is a school of the secondary level II in Hordaland County on

the southwest coast of Norway with 850 students and 170 employees. It has three departments: General Knowledge for students aiming towards an academic career, Vocational and the department for adult education and training courses. Additionally there are prep courses: sport and physical education – for music, dance and acting – for future university studies with four areas: natural sciences, social sciences, economy and languages. – These programs take three years and enable formal qualification for academic studies. On top of that they offer introductory courses for young migrants.

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Mário João Ley Garcia and João Carlos Silveira represent **Contempla Trilhos. Contempla Trilhos – Associação para o desenvolvimento, formação e inclusão social** – Lisboa / Portugal [See the tracks! Society for education, continued formation and social inclusion Lisbon/Portugal] (<https://racius.com/contempla-trilhos-associacao-para-o-desenvolvimento-educacao-formacao-e-inclusao-social/>)

Contempla Trilhos is a registered association with the goal of acquiring financing, promoting and conducting studies and projects for the personal, social and organizational perspective of lifelong learning. The Association materializes activities through following goals:



1. development and promotion of research, consulting, training and organizational support in cooperation with national and international associations, centers or other natural or legal entities;
2. development and conducting of training and further education for teachers;
3. conducting and promoting projects for education through arts, for personal and social development in the context of community and local development;
4. supporting setting up databases for different regions of the Association;
5. organization of seminars, colloquiums and conferences;
6. supporting research, publications and speeches;
7. supporting training and quality improvement of the workforce and its connected staff.

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Gerhard & Marie José Schneider Ballouhey represent the **Société Culturelle Franco-Allemande Auvillar (S.F.A.)** ([www.sfa-auvillar.com](http://www.sfa-auvillar.com)). The S.F.A. It is a registered association with the statutory goal to “support and defend cultural exchange and hospitality in Auvillar as well as the entire region.” ... “The European culture existed already before the political foundation of Europe in 1957 thanks to the exchange in connection of the European nations among each other. These old bridges the way they manifest themselves in arts and science, in manners, convictions and in the religions more than ever need to develop themselves in the modern Europe in order to bring forth a humane world.” – Since 1985 exchange program of the S.F.A. has been focusing on the organization of concerts with German orchestras, choirs and soloists. During the “Semaine Musicale” for example or the “Rencontres Musicales Européenes” groups of up to 50 musicians each are lodged and fed. In 2017 for instance the 22<sup>nd</sup> Semaine Musicale and the 6<sup>th</sup> Festival Piano Duo took place. – S.F.A. also conducts pottery workshops and workshops for young people in German language. – The S.F.A. feels committed in its activities to the concept of multiculturalism and social inclusion.

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An important start to the topic of the project was brought forth in the lecture of **Reda Raginskienė** from the social support and welfare department in Telšiai: “On the social situation and the social system in Lithuania and Telšiai. Local communities and integration experience with social risk groups.”

## Social risk person



- are alcoholics (drug addicts);
- are victims of violence or violators;
- don't have a permanent residence;
- the unemployed, suffering from poverty;
- Aren't motivated to help themselves;
- are infected with infectious diseases.

130 registered social risk persons

About 40 homeless in Telsiai region



Social Support department

Crisis center

Non-governmental organizations

Hostel for homeless in Telsiai town

Free charge canteen

**Problems:**

- noone works with social risk persons “on the street”
- social support money shortage;
- the community's negative attitude.

Social Support and Welfare Department in Telsiai 



### Target groups by the local development strategy



Refugees

Migration and parents absence

Social risk families

About 160 social risk families registered in Telšiai district

Social Support and Welfare Department in Telsiai

Target groups by the local development strategy

- Refugees
- Migration and parents absence
- Social risk families
- Single parent raising children
- Young people over 16 years from social risk families
- Social risk persons
- Persons returning from imprisonment institutions

Refugees

Migration and parents absence

Social risk families

Single parent raising children

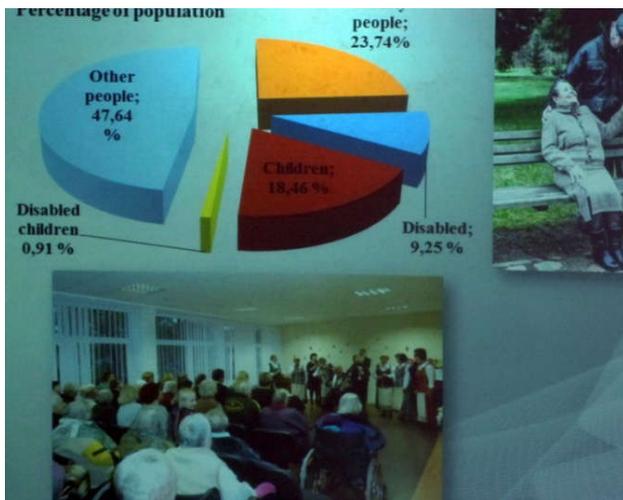
Young people over 16 years from social risk families

Social risk persons

Persons returning from imprisonment institutions

There is no organization or persons in Telšiai town who will provide assistance to people who have returned from prisons.

Social Support and Welfare Department in Telšiai



Migration and father absence

As a result of migration, the population of Telšiai decreased by 1325 people during 2011-2014, or by 5.2% of the total population. Migration has affected the decrease in the population more than the national average (the change in the number of Lithuanians in the population from 2011 to 2014 was 2.9%). The largest number of young people aged 20-34 emigrated (about 40% of all those who left) in the city of Telšiai: 2011 462 years, 2012 457, 2013 434, 2014 400. In Telšiai, a tendency is observed when one of the parents, and sometimes both members of the family, travels abroad for an indefinite period of time, children are left to take care of the elderly (grandparents) or working-age relatives who are confronted with various problems in raising and supervising informally.

Target groups by the local development strategy

- Refugees
- Migration and parents absence
- Social risk families
- Single parent raising children

The number of marriages and divorces in the Telšiai district is increasing. 2016 registered 308 marriages and 126 divorces.

Target groups by the local development strategy

Refugees

There are no refugees in Telšiai district, but we have strategies and plans for helping them.

*If we have correctly interpreted Reda Raginskienė's lecture we can come to the conclusion that in Telšiai normal people live with normal problems the solutions of which are tackled with normal social pedagogical means. Telšiai currently does not have refugees because Lithuania probably is not very attractive to refugees due to its lack of employment possibilities. Our partners stated that almost regretfully. We were impressed by the statement in the lecture: "There are no refugees in the district of Telšiai. But we do*

*have strategies and plans to help them.” Such unconditional willingness belongs to the area of “good practice”!*

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### Meeting Results: Dates for the OPLICO Project

14 <sup>th</sup> to 18 <sup>th</sup> of March 2018 (3 people)	Ibbenbüren / Germany
19 <sup>th</sup> to 22 <sup>nd</sup> of September 2018	Stord / Norway
13 <sup>th</sup> to 16 of March 2019	Lisbon / Portugal
5 <sup>th</sup> to 8 <sup>th</sup> of June 2019	Auvillar / France

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At 5 PM we then met on the town square of Telšiai with a representative of the Samogitia Tourism Information Center for a city tour. - We follow our leader on the traces of the bear, symbol figure of Samogitia<sup>2</sup>. We encountered bronze sculptures everywhere which among other things remind historic events of lower Lithuania. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samogitia>



<sup>2</sup> Samogitia – Žemogitėjė in the Samogitian Dialect, Žemaitija in Lithuanian, Latinized Samogitia or Yiddish Zámēt is a historic countryside in the western part of what is Lithuanian today. Part of lower Lithuania are the district Tauragė and the district Telšiai. Added to this are the former South Curonian country sides Megowe (Palanga) and Ceclis (Plunge-Mažeikiai). The unofficial capital of lower Lithuania is Telšiai. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samogitia>



The climax of our city tour certainly is the Cathedral. But before that our path leads us past the Samogitian Bear with the inscription SAMOGITIA PATRIA UNA.

***SAMOGITIA PATRIA UNA. – “Patria una” the one home, the one motherland, does not have a narrowing, maybe even excluding meaning compared to “patria nostra” or “patria mea”. If you interpret this Latin phrase on the monument correctly one can exclude nationalist and patriotic meanings. “Patria Una” means “homeland for all”. “Patria Una” means social inclusion. Again we have found an example of “good practice”: the people in charge of the Telšiai community had not only beautiful but also programmatic art displayed.***

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View into the Cathedral of Telšiai

## Bowling follows sightseeing: relaxation for OPL ICO



### 4) A nature preserve, Guinness world records, artworks and the planting of a tree

**6th of October 2017.** Excursion to Degaičiai (approx. 10 km west of Telšiai). Meeting and discussion with inhabitants of the village and tour of the park.

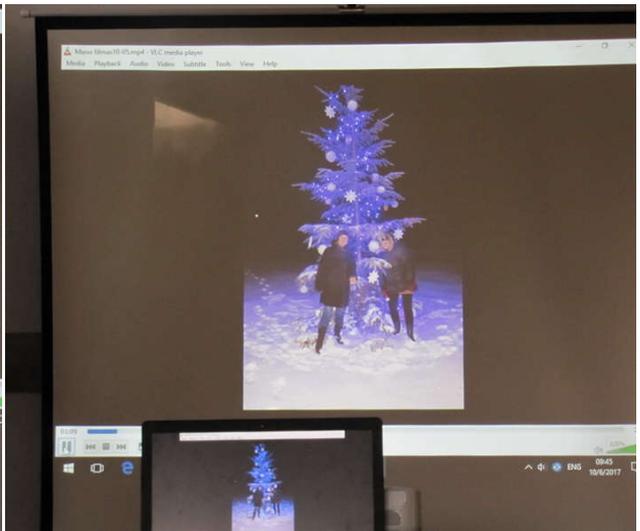
A little secluded from the road to Telšiai there is in Degaičiai, a nature preserve (Arboretum), which has been designed with a high degree of botanic skill. Creator and caretaker is Antanas Kontrimas, a person with extraordinary competence and charisma. It was him who arranged and inventoried the trees. It is also him holding the village community together “spiritually”. And it is for him that “social inclusion” even for trees is a current topic. While greeting us he shows not only the locations of the trees but also the reverently cared for “grave” off a Sidabrinis Klevas (sugar maple), because trees are living beings too after all.





But the park also has as an attraction for young and old people, a home built “tread wheel” weighing tons. For Antanas Kontrimas nature and culture are not opposites. Visitors of the park are also supposed to enjoy themselves. That includes us from the project OPLICO: as a festive ending of our visit a Common Hornbeam tree (Skroblas Paprastasis) is planted for OPLICO.

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A meeting with the inhabitants of Degaičiai takes place before the planting. They do a PowerPoint presentation about their activities during the year. During the conversation get the impression that this small community is an example for what we're looking for in our project: the open, tolerant and liberal community for all, regardless of social status, educational background, race, sex or worldview.

Antanas Kontrimas is the 10 time Guinness world record holder for carrying people up to 63.5 kg with his beard.

**ANTANAS KONTRIMAS**  
 daugartinis pasaulio GINNESO  
 knygos rekordininkas

**Multiplex Guinness world  
 record-holder**

Kepyklos g. 33 A, LT-87107  
 Telšiai, LITHUANIA  
 Phone: +370 600 25255  
 E-mail: antko@andernetas.lt

**Kontrėms Untuons**  
 tautybė – žemaitis  
 samogitian  
 Ubladės g. 33 A, Telšė

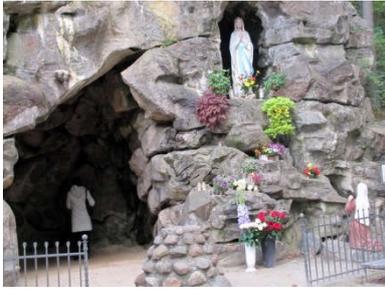
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*We become pensive. Are such demonstrations readily compatible with our (middle-class, central European?) cultural understanding? – Charles Taylor again comes to our rescue. He combines the idea of multiculturalism and the politics of recognition with the idea of identity and authenticity. (We will deal with this more in depth in section “7 Work on the Term”)*

*Antanas Kontrimas and his villagers are people who completely live in their identity and authenticity. They live in their culture and nature, with joy of life and practicing hospitality – again our search for “good practice” was successful!*

## 6) Excursion to Palanga, the Baltic Sea and Farewell







## Finale



## 7) Work on the Term

Our search for a successful practice of open, tolerant and liberal communities and how multiculturalism and social inclusion are practiced in those, has brought us up to now a few small pointers for reflection and discussion. We found in the beautiful artistic arrangement of Telšiai positive influences on *identity and inclusion* (see pg. 4ff) – we found in the general willingness for the taking care of risk groups and refugees signs for successful practice of inclusion (see pg. 12ff). – In the historic monuments of the city we found an *avowal of multiculturalism* (pg. 15ff). And finally in the example of a village community we found indications of the possibility to realize open, tolerant and liberal community for all *through identity and authenticity* (see pg. 17ff). For fruitful dialogic continuation inside the project a “Work on the Term” is now required. Let’s first begin with the concept of culture.

### Culture

The term culture is used in Cicero’s Tusculan Disputations: as “cultura agri” (agriculture) and also as “cultura animi” (“culture of the mind” in the sense of education and philosophy). See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/culture> , <https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/cicero>

Through the philosophic anthropology of *Arnold Gehlen* the term culture gets a new meaning:

“Contrary to the animal man is not a purely natural being. Environment and surroundings are not just a second biotope in which he rises and which you cannot alter. Rather is man that being which still has to give his world and himself the form - and exactly that do we call culture. Man is in his nature a cultural being and determined by world openness.”<sup>3</sup>

Man thus can only survive by transforming nature into a replacement nature and furthermore is capable to live under most diverse conditions since he is a nonspecialized being. That replacement nature created by him as “Prometheus” is what Gehlen calls culture”<sup>4</sup>

Gehlen’s concept of culture is based on the definition of man as defective being.

That man is a defective being shows itself immediately after birth. He is not “precocial” and thus completely dependent on his parents help and his surroundings. Education has to take the place of the poverty of instinct. The philosopher Immanuel Kant says in his lecture “on pedagogy” (1776/77; 1803): “Man is the only being that has to be raised” “Man can only become man through education”.

Man can only live his life in community. He is a social being. In the thought tradition of the Greek philosopher Aristotle is he a *zoon politikon*, an *animal sociale*.

“In this perspective is culture then the way in which humans in their life together fulfill the task of being the designers of their own environment and surroundings. Culture is therefore not just an anthropological but also a social ethics category.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See Arnold Gehlen. Man, His Nature and Place in the World. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/work/13089261>

<sup>4</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/arnold\\_gehlen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/arnold_gehlen)

<sup>5</sup> Franz-Josef Overbeck: Kultur als Leitbegriff Christlicher Sozialethik. In: Stimmen der Zeit 12/2017 pg. 816.

But apart from the delimitation to the animal (nature – culture) in this usage of the concept of culture there is no difference of human ways of life or culture among each other is addressed like for example in the term “civilization” or the adjective “intercultural” or “multicultural”. Concepts such as intercultural education and formation are indeed very young and only emerged in the context of the global work migration in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6</sup>

## **Interculturality – Multiculturalism, Intercultural Education and Formation**

The OPLICO project wants to react to the problems in Europe’s most recent past and show possibilities for a multi ethnical civilization structure. For that good examples shall direct us. We deliberately are not looking for them in the large immigration countries like for example the USA and are also not talking about theories of multiculturalism. – Canada for example would be a well-functioning multiculturalism.

“Canada sees itself since 1971 out of conviction and with pride as a multicultural society. It responds now for three decades to the challenge to its multiethnic population structure with the philosophy and politics of multiculturalism”<sup>7</sup>

We use the terms ”Interculturality” and “Multiculturalism” as nearly the same. While “Interculturality” with the prefix “inter” (Latin for between) touches more on the communication, the exchange between cultures, the term “Multiculturalism” emphasizes more the diversity of cultures.<sup>8</sup> – But both terms presuppose an identity and plurality of various cultures. They are thus for us the center of theoretical debates which range from the peaceful coexistence of the cultures with equal rights to the concepts of a “leader culture” and cultural racism. We use both terms for a diversity of cultures with equal rights with the goal of enabling intercultural understanding and intercultural dialogue.

The leitmotif is the

“idea of a multicultural society based on two principles: the principle of recognition, especially also of linguistic or religious diversity with equality of opportunities or inclusion into the subsystems of society. [...]

The recognition applies to cultural forms and contents which are deemed precious by individuals for being relevant to the identity as well as each social self-assignment. [...]

Goals of intercultural education and formation are thus on one hand attitudes and on the other hand knowledge and capabilities, for example the knowledge of structural disadvantage, sensibility regarding possible differences, the capability to change perspective. To get engaged for equal rights and social opportunities regardless of the provenance has priority as well as having an attitude of acceptance, of respect for being different. Those attitudes are indispensable in order to enable intercultural dialogue which requires enabling of intercultural understanding. Understanding and capability of dialogue are the other overarching goals of intercultural education. The understanding is distinct from the dialogue because meaning and significance first have to be included here while dealing there with disputed claims of validity

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<sup>6</sup> A helpful overview can be found in chapter 1. Interkulturelle Bildung und Erziehung – eine junge Idee “. In: Georg Auernheimer, Einführung in die interkulturelle Pädagogik. WBG (Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft) Darmstadt <sup>8</sup>2016.

<sup>7</sup> Reiner Geißler: Multikulturalismus in Kanada – ein Modell für Deutschland? In: Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung Juni 2003. (Introduction)

<sup>8</sup> “A confident French-speaking minority early on caused concern and the recognition of a cultural pluralism. Today multiculturalism is there a government program and essential in the national self-image”. In: Georg Auernheimer, Einführung in die interkulturelle Pädagogik pg. 24

(e.g. what is moral?) In the process of communication the two admittedly can't be separated because for example different role expectations can impair the understanding and deeper differences of norms and values can lie at the bottom of such discrepancies (e.g. the order of sexes).<sup>9</sup>

## **Cultural Racism**

In recent times culture concept has been misused in order to create a pseudo-theoretical concept of "racism without races". That racism is not about the biological supremacy of a race, but it warns of an "intermingling" "in the name of preserving cultural identity as well as the plurality of different ethnicities" and agitates "against the immigration from foreign cultures". "In that the 'preservation of the Christian Europe' becomes a topic that gets presented into the political domain<sup>10</sup> inside of the environment of these concepts and for which recently unfortunately also Christians have shown to be susceptible."<sup>11</sup>

## **Xenophobia - The Hatred of Foreigners**

For further study we recommend the whole article "Xenophobia" in the Internet encyclopedia Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xenophobia> :

"**Xenophobia** is the irrational fear and distrust of that which is perceived to be foreign or strange. Xenophobia can manifest itself in many ways involving the relations and perceptions of an ingroup towards an outgroup, including a fear of losing identity, suspicion of its activities, aggression, and desire to eliminate its presence to secure a presumed purity. Xenophobia is a political term and not a recognized medical phobia.

Xenophobia can also be exhibited in the form of an "uncritical exaltation of another culture" in which a culture is ascribed "an unreal, stereotyped and exotic quality". The terms xenophobia and racism are sometimes confused and used interchangeably because people who share a national origin may also belong to the same race. Due to this, xenophobia is usually distinguished by opposition to foreign culture."

## **Recognition – Identity – Authenticity**

Recognition can be defined as the permission of a person or group for another person, group or institution to participate with their current specific abilities in communication, decision-making or other societal processes. The term recognition is also used as a synonym for acceptance, praise or respect. Mutual recognition is considered necessary for any kind of communal life for example in a marriage, a school class or at work. If a member of the group is not recognized it risks becoming an outsider.

Charles Taylor writes in the introduction to his famous essay "the Politics of Recognition"

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<sup>9</sup> Georg Auernheimer, Introduction into Intercultural Pedagogy.

<sup>10</sup> the publicist Alain de Benoist in France, supporters of the AfD and Pegida in Germany among others

<sup>11</sup> Franz-Josef Overbeck: Kultur als Leitbegriff Christlicher Sozialethik. In: "Stimmen der Zeit 12/2017, pg. 821 "Die Sozialethische Herausforderung durch Kulturrassismus". – Franz-Josef Overbeck is the Catholic Bishop in the city of Essen and a member of the papal Culture Council.

## The Politics of Recognition<sup>12</sup>

### I

A number of strands in contemporary politics turn on the need, sometimes the demand, for *recognition*. The need, it can be argued, is one of the driving forces behind nationalist movements in politics. And the demand comes to the fore in a number of ways in today's politics, on behalf of minority or "subaltern" groups, in some forms of feminism and in what is today called the politics of "multiculturalism."

The demand for recognition in these latter cases is given urgency by the supposed links between recognition and identity, where this latter term designates something like a person's understanding of who they are, of their fundamental defining characteristics as a human being. The thesis is that our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the *misrecognition* of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being.

Thus some feminists have argued that women in patriarchal societies have been induced to adopt a depreciatory image of themselves. They have internalized a picture of their own inferiority, so that even when some of the objective obstacles to their advancement fall away, they may be incapable of taking advantage of the new opportunities. And [26] beyond this, they are condemned to suffer the pain of low self-esteem. An analogous point has been made in relation to blacks: that white society has for generations projected a demeaning image of them, which some of them have been unable to resist adopting. Their own self-depreciation, on this view, becomes one of the most potent instruments of their own oppression. Their first task ought to be to purge themselves of this imposed and destructive identity. Recently, a similar point has been made in relation to indigenous and colonized people in general. It is held that since 1492 Europeans have projected an image of such people as somehow inferior, "uncivilized," and through the force of conquest have often been able to impose this image on the conquered. The figure of Caliban has been held to epitomize this crushing portrait of contempt of New World aboriginals.

Within these perspectives, misrecognition shows not just a lack of due respect. It can inflict a grievous wound, saddling its victims with a crippling self-hatred. Due recognition is not just a courtesy we owe people. It is a vital human need.

In order to examine some of the issues that have arisen here, I'd like to take a step back, achieve a little distance, and look first at how this discourse of recognition and identity came to seem familiar, or at least readily understandable, to us. For it was not always so, and our ancestors of more than a couple of centuries ago would have stared at us uncomprehendingly if we had used these terms in their current sense. How did we get started on this?

Hegel comes to mind right off, with his famous dialectic of the master and the slave. This is an important stage, but we need to go a little farther back to see how this passage came to have the sense it did. What changed to make this kind of talk have sense for us?

We can distinguish two changes that together have made the modern preoccupation with identity and recognition inevitable. The first is the collapse of social hierarchies, which [27] used to be the basis for honor. I am using *honor* in the ancien régime sense in which it is intrinsically linked to inequalities. For some to have honor in this sense, it is essential that not everyone have it. This is the sense in which Montesquieu uses it in his description of monarchy. Honor is intrinsically a matter of "préférences."<sup>13</sup> It is also the sense in which we use the term when we speak of honoring someone by giving her some public award, for example,

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<sup>12</sup> Charles Taylor (et al.) *Multiculturalism: Examining the politics of recognition*. Princeton University Press. Princeton, New Jersey 1994. (pp 25-37)

<sup>13</sup> "La nature de l'honneur est de demander des préférences et des distinctions.. .." Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois*, Bk. 3, chap. 7.

the Order of Canada. Clearly, this award would be without worth if tomorrow we decided to give it to every adult Canadian.

As against this notion of honor, we have the modern notion of dignity, now used in a universalist and egalitarian sense, where we talk of the inherent "dignity of human beings," or of citizen dignity. The underlying premise here is that everyone shares in it.<sup>14</sup> It is obvious that this concept of dignity is the only one compatible with a democratic society, and that it was inevitable that the old concept of honor was superseded. But this has also meant that the forms of equal recognition have been essential to democratic culture. For instance, that everyone be called "Mr.," "Mrs.," or "Miss," rather than some people being called "Lord" or "Lady" and others simply by their surnames – or, even more demeaning, by their first names – has been thought essential in some democratic societies, such as the United States. More recently, for similar reasons, "Mrs." and "Miss" have been collapsed into "Ms." Democracy has ushered in a politics of equal recognition, which has taken various forms over the years, and has now returned in the form of demands for the equal status of cultures and of genders. [28]

But the importance of recognition has been modified and intensified by the new understanding of individual identity that emerges at the end of the eighteenth century. We might speak of an *individualized* identity, one that is particular to me, and that I discover in myself. This notion arises along with an ideal, that of being true to myself and my own particular way of being. Following Lionel Trilling's usage in his brilliant study, I will speak of this as the ideal of "authenticity."<sup>15</sup> It will help to describe in what it consists and how it came about.

One way of describing its development is to see its starting point in the eighteenth-century notion that human beings are endowed with a moral sense, an intuitive feeling for what is right and wrong. The original point of this doctrine was to combat a rival view, that knowing right and wrong was a matter of calculating consequences, in particular, those concerned with divine reward and punishment. The idea was that understanding right and wrong was not a matter of dry calculation, but was anchored in our feelings.<sup>16</sup> Morality has, in a sense, a voice within.

The notion of authenticity develops out of a displacement of the moral accent in this idea. On the original view, the inner voice was important because it tells us what the right thing to do is. Being in touch with our moral feelings matters here, as a means to the end of acting rightly. What I'm calling the displacement of the moral accent comes about when being in touch with our feelings takes on independent and crucial moral significance. It comes to be something we have to attain if we are to be true and full human beings.

To see what is new here, we have to see the analogy to earlier moral views, where being in touch with some source – for example, God, or the Idea of the Good – was [29] considered essential to full being. But now the source we have to connect with is deep within us. This fact is part of the massive subjective turn of modern culture, a new form of inwardness, in which we come to think of ourselves as beings with inner depths. At first, this idea that the source is within doesn't exclude our being related to God or the Ideas; it can be considered our proper way of relating to them. In a sense, it can be seen as just a continuation and intensification of the development inaugurated by Saint Augustine, who saw the road to God as passing through our own self-awareness. The first variants of this new view were theistic, or at least pantheistic.

The most important philosophical writer who helped to bring about this change was Jean-Jacques Rousseau. I think Rousseau is important not because he inaugurated the change; rather, I would argue that his great popularity comes in part from his articulating something that was in a sense already occurring in the

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<sup>14</sup> The significance of this move from "honor" to "dignity" is interestingly discussed by Peter Berger in his "On the Obsolescence of the Concept of Honour," in *Revisions: Changing Perspectives in Moral Philosophy*, ed. Stanley Hauerwas and Alasdair MacIntyre (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), pp. 172-81.

<sup>15</sup> Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (New York: Norton, 1969).

<sup>16</sup> I have discussed the development of this doctrine at greater length, at first in the work of Francis Hutcheson, drawing on the writings of the Earl of Shaftesbury, and its adversarial relation to Locke's theory in *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), chap. 15.

culture. Rousseau frequently presents the issue of morality as that of our following a voice of nature within us. This voice is often drowned out by the passions that are induced by our dependence on others, the main one being *amour propre*, or pride. Our moral salvation comes from recovering authentic moral contact with ourselves. Rousseau even gives a name to the intimate contact with oneself, more fundamental than any moral view, that is a source of such joy and contentment: "le sentiment de l'existence."<sup>17</sup> [30]

The ideal of authenticity becomes crucial owing to a development that occurs after Rousseau, which I associate with the name of Herder – once again, as its major early articulator, rather than its originator. Herder put forward the idea that each of us has an original way of being human: each person has his or her own "measure."<sup>18</sup> This idea has burrowed very deep into modern consciousness. It is a new idea. Before the late eighteenth century, no one thought that the differences between human beings had this kind of moral significance. There is a certain way of being human that is my way. I am called upon to live my life in this way, and not in imitation of anyone else's life. But this notion gives a new importance to being true to myself. If I am not, I miss the point of my life; I miss what being human is for me.

This is the powerful moral ideal that has come down to us. It accords moral importance to a kind of contact with myself, with my own inner nature, which it sees as in danger of being lost, partly through the pressures toward outward conformity, but also because in taking an instrumental stance toward myself, I may have lost the capacity to listen to this inner voice. It greatly increases the importance of this self-contact by introducing the principle of originality: each of our voices has something unique to say. Not only should I not mold my life to the demands of external conformity; I can't even find the model by which to live outside myself. I can only find it within.<sup>19</sup> [31]

Being true to myself means being true to my own originality, which is something only I can articulate and discover. In articulating it, I am also defining myself. I am realizing a potentiality that is properly my own. This is the background understanding to the modern ideal of authenticity, and to the goals of self-fulfillment and self-realization in which the ideal is usually couched. I should note here that Herder applied his conception of originality at two levels, not only to the individual person among other persons, but also to the culture-bearing people among other peoples. Just like individuals, a *Volk* should be true to itself, that is, its own culture. Germans shouldn't try to be derivative and (inevitably) second-rate Frenchmen, as Frederick the Great's patronage seemed to be encouraging them to do. The Slavic peoples had to find their own path. And European colonialism ought to be rolled back to give the peoples of what we now call the Third World their chance to be themselves unimpeded. We can recognize here the seminal idea of modern nationalism, in both benign and malignant forms.

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<sup>17</sup> "Le sentiment de l'existence dépouillé de toute autre affection est par lui-même un sentiment précieux de contentement et de paix qui suffiroit seul pour rendre cette existence chère et douce à qui sauroit écarter de soi toutes les impressions sensuelles et terrestres qui viennent sans cesse nous en distraire et en troubler ici bas la douceur. Mais la plupart des hommes agités de passions continuelles connoissent peu cet état et ne l'ayant goûté qu'imparfaitement durant peu d'instans n'en conservent qu'une idée obscure et confuse qui ne leur en fait pas sentir le charme." Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les Reveries du promeneur solitaire*, "Cinquième Promenade," in *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1959), 1:1047.

<sup>18</sup> "Jeder Mensch hat ein eigenes Maass, gleichsam eine eigne Stimmung aller seiner sinnlichen Gefühle zu einander." Johann Gottlob Herder, *Ideen*, chap. 7, sec. 1, in *Herders Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Bernard Suphan (Berlin: Weidmann, 1877-1913), 13:291.

<sup>19</sup> John Stuart Mill was influenced by this Romantic current of thought when he made something like the ideal of authenticity the basis for one of his most powerful arguments in *On Liberty*. See especially chapter 3, where he argues that we need something more than a capacity for "ape-like imitation": "A person whose desires and impulses are his own – are the expression of his own nature, as it has been developed and modified by his own culture – is said to have a character." "If a person possesses any tolerable amount of common sense and experience, his own mode of laying out his existence is the best, not because it is the best in itself, but because it is his own mode." John Stuart Mill, *Three Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 73, 74, 83.

This new ideal of authenticity was, like the idea of dignity, also in part an offshoot of the decline of hierarchical society. In those earlier societies, what we would now call identity was largely fixed by one's social position. That is, the background that explained what people recognized as important to themselves was to a great extent determined by their place in society, and whatever roles or activities attached to this position. The birth of a democratic society doesn't by itself do away with this phenomenon, because people can still define themselves by their social roles. What does decisively undermine this socially derived identification, however, is the ideal of authenticity itself. As this emerges, for instance, [32] with Herder, it calls on me to discover my own original way of being. By definition, this way of being cannot be socially derived, but must be inwardly generated.

But in the nature of the case, there is no such thing as in-ward generation, monologically understood. In order to understand the close connection between identity and recognition, we have to take into account a crucial feature of the human condition that has been rendered almost invisible by the overwhelmingly monological bent of mainstream modern philosophy.

This crucial feature of human life is its fundamentally *dialogical* character. We become full human agents, capable of understanding ourselves, and hence of defining our identity, through our acquisition of rich human languages of expression. For my purposes here, I want to take *language* in a broad sense, covering not only the words we speak, but also other modes of expression whereby we define ourselves, including the "languages" of art, of gesture, of love, and the like. But we learn these modes of expression through exchanges with others. People do not acquire the languages needed for self-definition on their own. Rather, we are introduced to them through interaction with others who matter to us – what George Herbert Mead called "significant others."<sup>20</sup> The genesis of the human mind is in this sense not monological, not something each person accomplishes on his or her own, but dialogical.

Moreover, this is not just a fact about *genesis*, which can be ignored later on. We don't just learn the languages in dialogue and then go on to use them for our own purposes. We are of course expected to develop our own opinions, outlook, stances toward things, and to a considerable degree through solitary reflection. But this is not how things work with important issues, like the definition of our identity. We [33] define our identity always in dialogue with, sometimes in struggle against, the things our significant others want to see in us. Even after we outgrow some of these others – our parents, for instance – and they disappear from our lives, the conversation with them continues within us as long as we live.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, the contribution of significant others, even when it is provided at the beginning of our lives, continues indefinitely. Some people may still want to hold on to some form of the monological ideal. It is true that we can never liberate ourselves completely from those whose' love and care shaped us early in life, but we should strive to define ourselves on our own to the fullest extent possible, coming as best we can to understand and thus get some control over the influence of our parents, and avoiding falling into any more such dependent relationships. We need relationships to fulfill, but not to define, ourselves.

The monological ideal seriously underestimates the place of the dialogical in human life. It wants to confine it as much as possible to the genesis. It forgets how our understanding of the good things in life can be transformed by our enjoying them in common with people we love; how some goods become accessible to us only through such common enjoyment. Because of this, it would take a great deal of effort, and probably many wrenching break-ups, to *prevent* our identity's being formed by the people we love. Consider what we mean by *identity*. It is who we are, "where we're coming from." As such it is the background against which

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<sup>20</sup> George Herbert Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934).

<sup>21</sup> This inner dialogicality has been explored by M. M. Bakhtin and those who have drawn on his work. See, of Bakhtin, especially *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, trans. Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984). See also Michael Holquist and Katerina Clark, *Mikhail Bakhtin* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984); and James Wertsch, *Voices of the Mind* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991).

our tastes and desires and opinions and aspirations make [34] sense. If some of the things I value most are accessible to me only in relation to the person I love, then she becomes part of my identity.

To some people this might seem a limitation, from which one might aspire to free oneself. This is one way of understanding the impulse behind the life of the hermit or, to take a case more familiar to our culture, the solitary artist. But from another perspective, we might see even these lives as aspiring to a certain kind of dialogicality. In the case of the hermit, the interlocutor is God. In the case of the solitary artist, the work itself is addressed to a future audience, perhaps still to be created by the work. The very form of a work of art shows its character as *addressed*.<sup>22</sup> But however one feels about it, the making and sustaining of our identity, in the absence of a heroic effort to break out of ordinary existence, remains dialogical throughout our lives.

Thus my discovering my own identity doesn't mean that I work it out in isolation, but that I negotiate it through dialogue, partly overt, partly internal, with others. That is why the development of an ideal of inwardly generated identity gives a new importance to recognition. My own identity crucially depends on my dialogical relations with others.

Of course, the point is not that this dependence on others arose with the age of authenticity. A form of dependence was always there. The socially derived identity was by its very nature dependent on society. But in the earlier age recognition never arose as a problem. General recognition was built into the socially derived identity by virtue of the very fact that it was based on social categories that everyone took for granted. Yet inwardly derived, personal; original identity doesn't enjoy this recognition *a priori*. It has to win it through [35] exchange, and the attempt can fail. What has some about with the modern age is not the need for recognition but the conditions in which the attempt to be recognized can fail. That is why the need is now acknowledged for the first time. In premodern times, people didn't speak of "identity" and "recognition" – not because people didn't have (what we call) identities, or because these didn't depend on recognition, but rather because these were then too unproblematic to be thematized as such.

It's not surprising that we can find some of the seminal ideas about citizen dignity and universal recognition, even if not in these specific terms, in Rousseau, whom I have wanted to identify as one of the points of origin of the modern discourse of authenticity. Rousseau is a sharp critic of hierarchical honor, of "préférences." In a significant passage of the *Discourse on Inequality*, he pinpoints a fateful moment when society takes a turn toward corruption and injustice, when people begin to desire preferential esteem.<sup>23</sup> By contrast, in republican society, where all can share equally in the light of public attention, he sees the source of health.<sup>24</sup> But [36] the topic of recognition is given its most influential early treatment in Hegel.<sup>25</sup>

The importance of recognition is now universally acknowledged in one form or another; on an intimate plane, we are all aware of how identity can be formed or malformed through the course of our contact with

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<sup>22</sup> See Bakhtin, "The Problem of the Text in Linguistics, Philology and the Human Sciences," in *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), p. 126, for this notion of a "super-addressee," beyond our existing interlocutors.

<sup>23</sup> Rousseau is describing the first assemblies: "Chacun commença à regarder les autres et à vouloir être regardé soi-même, et l'estime publique eut un prix. Celui qui chantait ou dansait le mieux; le plus beau, le plus fort, le plus adroit ou le plus éloquent devint le plus considéré, et ce fut là le premier pas vers l'inégalité, et vers le vice en même temps." *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* (Paris: Graniér-Flammarion, 1971), p. 210.

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, the passage in the *Considerations sur le gouvernement de Pologne* where he describes the ancient public festival, in which all the people took part, in *Du contrat social* (Paris: Garnier, 1962), p. 345; and also the parallel passage in *Lettre à D'Alembert sur les spectacles*, in *Du contrat social*, pp. 224-25. The crucial principle was that there should be no division between performers and spectators, but that all should be seen by all. "Mais quels seront enfin les objets de ces spectacles? Qu'y montrera-t-on? Rien, si l'on veut. ... Donnez les spectateurs en spectacles; rendez-les acteurs eux-mêmes; faites que chacun se voie et s'aime dans les autres, que tous en soient mieux unis."

<sup>25</sup> See Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), chap. 4.

significant others. On the social plane, we have a continuing politics of equal recognition. Both planes have been shaped by the growing ideal of authenticity, and recognition plays an essential role in the culture that has arisen around this ideal.

On the intimate level, we can see how much an original identity needs and is vulnerable to the recognition given or withheld by significant others. It is not surprising that in the culture of authenticity, relationships are seen as the key loci of self-discovery and self-affirmation. Love relationships are not just important because of the general emphasis in modern culture on the fulfillments of ordinary needs. They are also crucial because they are the crucibles of inwardly generated identity.

On the social plane, the understanding that identities are formed in open dialogue, unshaped by a predefined social script, has made the politics of equal recognition more central and stressful. It has, in fact, considerably raised the stakes. Equal recognition is not just the appropriate mode for a healthy democratic society. Its refusal can inflict damage on those who are denied it, according to a widespread modern view, as I indicated at the outset. The projection of an inferior or demeaning image on another can actually distort and oppress, to the extent that the image is internalized. 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. We may debate whether this factor has been exaggerated[37], but it is clear that the understanding of identity and authenticity has introduced a new dimension into the politics of equal recognition, which now operates with something like its own notion of authenticity, at least so far as the denunciation of other-induced distortions is concerned.

## Community

The Erasmus+ project OPLICO gets its name as mentioned above from the title of the request “**O**pen, tolerant and **l**iberal **c**ommunity for everyone. Challenges and opportunities for adult education.” It is generally known that our strength as well as weakness in Europe are our languages and especially this project can hardly be worked on together the central term in English “community” finds a common understanding. Translating it into the German term “Gemeinschaft” and the French “communauté” includes each time different connotations.

If we look at a common Internet dictionary such as “Linguee” we find for “community” four different possible translations.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community> :

A **community** is a small or large social unit (a group of living things) who have something in common, such as norms, religion, values, or identity. Communities often share a sense of place that is situated in a given geographical area (e.g. a country, village, town, or neighborhood) or in virtual space through communication platforms. Durable relations that extend beyond immediate genealogical ties also define a sense of community. People tend to define those social ties as important to their identity, practice, and roles in social institutions like family, home, work, government, society, or humanity, at large. Although communities are usually small relative to personal social ties (micro-level), "community" may also refer to large group affiliations (or macro-level), such as national communities, international communities, and virtual communities.

The word "community" derives from the Old French *comunité*, which comes from the Latin *communitas* "community", "public spirit" (from Latin *communis*, "shared in common").

Human communities may share intent, belief, resources, preferences, needs, and risks in common, affecting the identity of the participants and their degree of cohesiveness.

## Social Inclusion

The demand for social inclusion is realized when a person is accepted by society in their own individuality and has the opportunity to take part or participate to the full extent. Differences and deviations are deliberately noted in the context of social inclusion but limited in their significance or even canceled out. Their existence is neither questioned by society nor seen as anything special. The right to take part is justified socio-ethically and refers to all domains of life in which everyone should be able to navigate without barriers.

Inclusion there describes the equivalence of an individual without presupposing normality. Normal is rather the diversity, the existence of differences. The individual person is not any longer forced to attain unreachable norms but it is rather society that creates structures inside which people can get involved with their particularities and in their very own way render precious services. An example for the freedom from barriers is to make any building wheelchair accessible. But even figurative barriers can be dismantled.

(cf. .:[https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soziale\\_Inklusion](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soziale_Inklusion))

