



LEUPHANA

UNIVERSITÄT LÜNEBURG

Reflection of our Mosaïque Project

A house for everyone: Be a part of the mosaïque! by:

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Agenda

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1. Introduction

„Ich will das auf keinen Fall herunterspielen, aber es ist doch klar, dass ein Gutteil dieser angeblichen Brandanschläge von den Flüchtlingen selbst kommt, meist aus Unkenntnis der Technik. Mal ehrlich, viele von ihnen dürften es gewohnt sein, in ihren Heimatländern daheim Feuer zu machen.“ – A. P. Hampel, *Der Spiegel* 51/2015, S.25.

For years the so called „Flüchtlingskrise“ is splitting the country in those who see refugees as a threat and those who see it as their obligation to help people in need and a chance to make Germany more divers. The AFD is getting increasingly popular for the broad masses. Thus, it needs to get more and more important for us, the rest who live the “Willkommenskultur”, to engage in projects that try to oppose the hatred.

„We wanted to rebuild our lives, that was all.“ – H. Arendt, *We Refugees*, S.1.

As Hannah Arendt said, refugees don't come to Germany because they want to burn houses, but because they want to live safely without having to fear for their life or persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.

To overcome those prejudices people like Corinna Krome create spaces that allow different people from different places to get to know each other and even more, learn from one another.

In the *Mosaïque – Haus der Kulturen* right in the heart of Lüneburg everyone is welcome to share cultures. The seminar that was offered by this cultural institution allowed students from Leuphana University to develop their own projects which, due to the mosaïques support, was made possible.

As we are students our self, we wanted to communicate the advantages of the mosaïque to even younger people, because we think that you can conquer the hate by convincing the upcoming generation to accept foreign cultures and engage with them on a level of curiosity.

The mosaïque goes to school group consisted of Alexander Vorbeck, Charlotte Dane and myself. My role in the group was to handle the PR, which involved designing the Flyers and writing the Facebook information.

2. Goals and target group

Even though the vision of the mosaïque is to be a place for everyone, no matter which age, gender or cultural background they have, the reality showed that most

people who come to the mosaïque are male adult refugees. Women are commonly born German citizens or students from the university. Despite the mosaïque offering a lot of opportunities for young people, kids and teenagers are probably making up the smallest part. For this reason, we wanted to create an event where teens can see, how great the mosaïque is and that they could spend their time there, meet friends, learn and enjoy other cultures.

We know that many schools have “Deutschlernklassen” who may help students without German language skills but also divide the students, keep them from mingling and make it harder for the new ones to find German friends. This underlines the importance of our project.

We figured out that the best age span would be between 14 and 18 because these teenagers are able to understand the reasons of the project. Broadening the age gap by expanding the span could have led to a missing connection between the participants. The goal was to introduce the students to the concept of the mosaïque. By presenting them the existing projects of the institution, like “Bewegungsatelier” or options of music making, we wanted to make it desirable for them to spend their free time in the mosaïque. Growing up with this option, they might want to participate more actively once they get older and they could be the future of the projects in the mosaïque.

3. Our idea

To achieve the goals described above, we settled on a one-time event to combine a few of the existing projects within the mosaïque. On this specific day we wanted to have a vegetarian breakfast of about 1 ½ hours where we and the students could get to know each other and we wanted to tell them a bit about the mosaïque itself and possibly about refugees, in the way that we were told about routes of flight etc. during the seminar. After that we wanted to build something that would make a lasting impact on the mosaïque, that’s why we designed a give-and-take shelf. It was supposed to allow people to put in things that they don’t need any more so others who need them could take these objects. At the same time, working on something like this together, was intended to bring these different students closer together. Moreover, the plan was to offer a small music workshop and we asked the “Bewegungsatelier” to join us, so the students were supposed to rotate between these three projects. The ones who didn’t want to construct the shelf would have

been able to paint it after the first group would have built it. We planned to be finished by about 4 p.m.

We decided that the best time to realize this day, would be in the beginning of the school holidays, the 30th of June 2018. In our minds this would ensure that the students have a lot of free time, which they wouldn't know how to spend.

4. The preparation

In order to achieve this vision that we had, we designed flyers, using the cooperate colors and font of the mosaïque. It featured a short text with our project idea, the location, time and date. One draft was designed in black and white, one in color. The reason for that is that we send those flyers to local schools and asked them to spread the word about our project. We got a lot of nice responses. Most of the eight schools assured us that they would distribute the flyers and told us that they thought the project was a good idea. One teacher even asked if she could bring us some books for the give-and-take shelf, which she eventually did. Just a few schools didn't answer at all. We ourselves printed the flyer on a DIN A4 page and put it up in the mosaïque.

Moreover, there was a facebook event designed to draw attention to our project. The only thing we asked from the potential participants was to write us a short mail, so we could plan how much food we needed to buy and if we really needed the "Bewegungsatelier" to join us.

After that we wrote a grocery list, planned the day and conceived a building plan for the shelf. We wanted to make it out of euro pallets, because they are a cheap material that is easy to handle. If that wasn't going to work we got the permission to paint an existing shelf from the mosaïque. Paint and brushes could also be used from the mosaïque because they had quite a lot left.

5. The event

Until the last day before the event we only got one response of a student who wanted to join us. In all fairness I wrote him an email to tell him that he was the only one that registered but that we were hoping for other students to spontaneously join us.

Nevertheless, I wanted to give him a warning about probably being the only one his age, while telling him that we were still looking forward to meeting him.

As planned the project group met on the 30th of June at 10 am in the mosaïque. All of us brought something for the breakfast like buns, avocados and jam. After about 45 minutes we gave up the hope of anyone showing up. Because even the one enrolled student, who had told me after my mail that he still wanted to join us, didn't come. That was when we decided to at least paint the existing shelf we had been told about so that we still had the feeling to leave something nice for the mosaïque, just as planned. Luckily it was a sunny day and we were able to paint the shelf outside in the sun. While we let it dry, we joined another workshop that was taking place in the mosaïque for a round of "Gordischer Knoten". Once the paint was dry we cleaned the brushes and our workspace and closed work.

6. Reflection

All in all, it was very difficult to make this project work. We started out as a group of four and after distributing the main project roles we lost one member.

Even though, we had a similar understanding of the projects goal it was hard to settle upon a project plan. Everyone had a different idea about where the project should take place, how many should be involved and what exactly we wanted to do.

We had a lot of issues with the time we had left to carry out the project.

Other problems were related to us only being a group of three, which seemed to make it impossible to reach quite the number of students. We really wanted to do something meaningful and maybe we set the stakes to high.

After we reached out for help, Corinna helped us to finally agree on an idea.

Having distributed the roles within our group, it was hard to be dependent on our group members because everyone needed to be active during a different part of the project phase. The contact person needed to clarify the general conditions with people outside of our group before the PR-person could design flyers and the contact person for the schools was only able to start working after the flyers were ready to be published. It was really frustrating because the person who worked at the time felt like they were the only one working at the moment which was true due to the separated roles. Moreover, the first phase took so much longer than we intended. We didn't plan enough time for everyone to answer our mails and were missing general information that basically every group needs, like what is our budget, where can I find the design requirement etc.

The whole process of contacting the different people within the mosaic was quite demotivating, because we were relying on answers we didn't get by the time we thought we would get them. Designing the flyers wasn't such a big problem but could have been easier with a simple mail about the login data information that one needed to see the cooperate design requirements.

Contacting the schools went even better than expected since they were really kind to us but we can't be sure that they honestly handed out our flyers. Still it was the cheaper way to go instead of printing the flyers ourselves.

7. Conclusion

The "A house for everyone"-seminar was hands down one of the best seminars I had so far. Because it was really interesting, well-structured, interactive and diversified. Hearing all those insider stories made flight to a very emotional theme that I genuinely wanted to learn more about. During the seminar I was able to take up quite a lot information about refugees, their routes of flight and the problems their facing. I especially appreciate the Skype interview with Brandon Woodhouse. Moreover, the discussions in smaller groups made it inevitable to think about the topic.

One Problem was that the seminar started rather late in the semester which made it hard to plan the project properly due to other University Responsibilities.

Instead of trying to reach hundreds of students we should have settled on a lower number and should have tried to reach them on a more personal level.

We shouldn't have relied on the schools to spread our flyers.

I think the biggest problem was that I wasn't motivated enough. At first, I had so many ideas and I wanted it to be big but then my motivation got crushed by our inability to start. The whole agreement and information gathering process took way to long. As time moved on I became more and more sure that this wouldn't be a success and I think I treated the project accordingly. Instead of printing a lot of flyers and distributing them in the city, my attitude changed to spending as little money on this as possible so it wouldn't be a waste. But I guess the little input justifies the little outcome.

This lets me conclude that a better communication inside our group as well as with the members of the mosaic and more time would have helped making this project a success because the day itself was well planned and a good idea.

Eidesstattliche Erklärung

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Lüneburg, 18.11.2018

T. Borheut

Ort, Datum

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