



LEUPHANA
UNIVERSITÄT LÜNEBURG

Reflection report of the project „mosaique erzählt – MosMag“

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Seminar: A House for everyone: Be a Part of The mosaique!

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1 Introduction

This is the project report for the seminar “A House for everyone: Be a Part of The mosaïque!” led by Corinna Krome. The mosaïque is an open space where people can come to together and be together, no matter what religion or sexuality they have or what country they’re from. It’s located at the Katzenstraße 4 and opened in the end March 2018 after some weeks of communal construction work.

In this seminar we learned about the mosaïque and its goals; how they want to change the way we live together here in Lüneburg. To make it short you can say their most important values are tolerance, community and solidarity. Furthermore, we learned about the global refugee crisis, why people decide to flee from their country, which struggles cross their paths on the way to Europe and how the big refugee camps in the northern part of Africa look like and how life is organized there. We got in contact per Skype with someone who writes scientifically about one of these camps and with someone who rescues people in the Mediterranean Sea as volunteer at Sea-Watch. After the first seminar sessions, one fundamental realization for me was that one of the biggest problems in the global refugee crisis and especially in our perception of refugees is that we don’t know enough about them. People speaking of “Flüchtlingswelle” or “Flüchtlingsströme” forget that there are humans behind these words that words that sound like a threat.

This was the main reason for my decision to join the Magazine group. We were eight people who came together for the task of creating the second edition of the “Mosaïque erzählt” magazine involving the tasks of writing most of the articles, contacting people and interviewing them, designing the pages and layouting the magazine. The first edition was published less than half a year ago when the mosaïque was opened.

In our groupbuilding session I decided for the task of coordinating the group work. My expectation was to bring the individual ideas of our group members together in the context of the magazine as a whole and to hold our groups focus not letting us get off the topic. Furthermore, I was responsible for an article about another project group, for organizing an article about the Welcome and Learning Center wrote by themselves and for the initiative compass, collecting projects, initiatives and other groups that work interculturally in Lüneburg.

2 Necessity

I think one problem regarding the global refugee crisis is that there are many people who don't have any contact to refugees or people supporting an intercultural society. So, if they stay in their bubble of people thinking negative about this topic it's unlikely that they change their minds. Maybe our magazine reaches some of these people and changes their view on refugees and an intercultural society. With a big range of different topics and different perspectives we tried to inform the readers about migration and refugees but also about life and engagement in Lüneburg. Especially regarding refugees it's important to let them speak and express themselves. Hannah Arendt wrote about this topic: "Our identity is changed so frequently that nobody can find out who we actually are" (Arendt, 7).

While working at our articles we talked to a lot of people who have heard of the mosaïque but don't know exactly what happens there or what the project aims for and also have never been there. Some people thought that the mosaïque would be just for migrants and not for everyone. With our chapter "about mosaïque" we want to explain the readers what happens at the mosaïque and hope to lower some barriers that prevent people from visiting it. Maybe with better knowledge of the mosaïque more people attend the weekly or singular events and get in touch with the people there.

The mosaïque works as a community center for Lüneburg. Community centers are important for the society because they encourage communication, activity and identification with the town. Thereby, it improves the stabilization of the area (cf. Braun/Freitag/Treffkorn, 9f.) and should be supported and promoted. One way to do so is our magazine.

3 Goals & target group

3.1 Goals

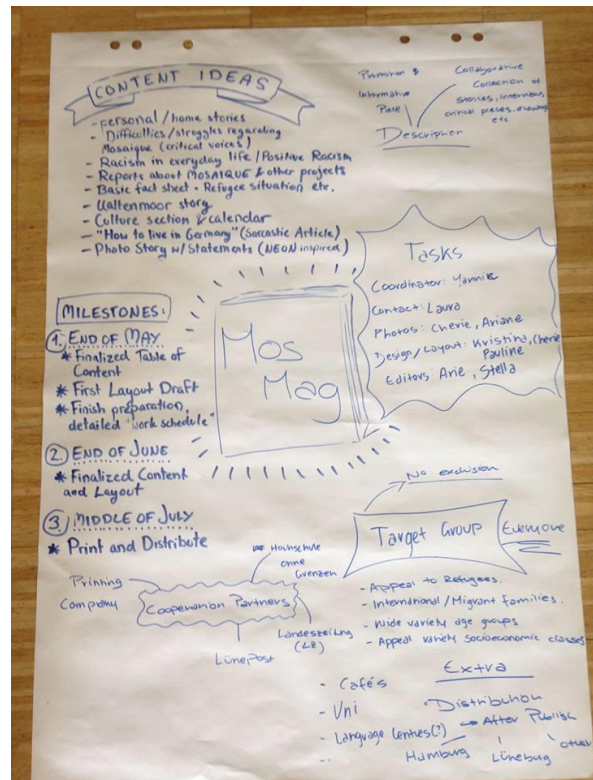
The main goal was to bring out an interesting but also informative “magazine for everyone” that informs about migration, flight, life in Lüneburg, building an intercultural society in this town and the role of the mosaïque in this progress. To reach this goal we arranged duties, determined some three milestones for a first time schedule and collected first content ideas, from which the majority landed in the final magazine.

One personal goal for me was to increase the level of interconnection and communication between the initiatives, groups and projects that work interculturally in Lüneburg. This goal should be reached through the initiative compass. This collection of interculturally active elements in Lüneburg should bring forward the networking progress, endorse the building of collaborations and give people who want to get engaged a list of opportunities to do so. The initiative compass as a guideline for refugees and migrants seeking help, consulting or activities is of equal importance.

In the session in which we designed the poster we defined some milestones for our project. Because of enthusiasm and weekly meetings, we reached almost every milestone in time. In the end, where we finished all the content and designed the layout of the magazine we got a little delay. The reason for this is that we underestimated the amount of work needed for these tasks. Another point is that the number of pages increased during the progress and so did the amount of work for the layout team.

3.2 Target group

Although it sounds almost too simple we wanted to make a magazine for everyone or more precisely everyone in and around Lüneburg. One inspiration for this decision was that even the title of the seminar says “A House for everyone” so we thought this determination of our target group matches the philosophy of the mosaïque. Because the mosaïque doesn’t exclude anybody we neither wanted to do so. To reach our target group we tried to include a big range of diverse topics in our magazine. The articles cover basic information about the global refugee crisis, individual stories about humans of Lüneburg, explanations what the mosaïque is all about, recommendations about events, books or songs, poems written by people living here, and even more. So maybe the potential reader of the magazine isn’t interested in all the articles but that’s



not our goal. The goal is that almost everybody, ideally really everybody, finds something interesting or entertaining in our magazine.

To ensure the content in magazine is comprehensible for as much people as possible we decided to create the magazine in two languages; English and German. We made the decision to write in English, because knowledge of this language is spread widely across the nations, and in German, because we didn't want to exclude Germans who aren't able to speak and read English. Also, German includes migrants who came to Germany, don't have any English skills but started learning German when they came here. Surely these two languages don't make it possible for everyone to read our magazine, but it enlarges the amount of potential readers and helps us to reach our goal to create a "magazine for everyone".

We wouldn't reach a big and diverse readership if the magazine would just lay out in the mosaïque. To reach more readers than the people who visit the mosaïque we plan on putting the magazine on display at different cafes and the Volkshochschule.

4 Results

The result of weeks of planning, meeting, organizing, contacting people, writing articles and designing the layout is a beautiful magazine called "MosMag". It contains 82 pages, structured in five chapters: about mosaïque, points of discussion, life in Lüneburg, project groups and events. There are 39 pages per language and 4 pages for poems which are written in four different languages and weren't put in our structure of two languages.

The chapter "about mosaïque" starts with an article in which we asked people on the street if they know the mosaïque and what they associate with it. After this, we tried to give an overview about the house of the mosaïque and which people work and live there. In the next articles we created a calendar containing the weekly events offered in the mosaïque and an initiative compass containing almost every initiative, project or group that engages for an intercultural society here in Lüneburg. We wanted to show the big range of possibilities to get engaged or attend in some of the weekly events. The mosaïque should be portrayed not as some place where there's the one true way of living together dictated but as some place with lots of possibilities to experiment in living together, working together, dancing together, cooking together, etc.

As one first result of the initiative compass one of the initiatives got interested in cooperating with another project group and also in cooperating with the mosaïque in general more often in the future.

The chapter “points of discussion” aims to inform about migration, refugees and racism. In this part we tried to give background knowledge about these topics but didn’t want to use complex or long scientific texts for that. Because of that, we created a double paged fact sheet that contains mostly graphics and numbers that are easy to understand. This way the pieces information hopefully reach more people than in form of a long and detailed text. Besides there is a comment about daily racism. In this case we decided for a text because it’s more about experiences, mindsets and subjectivity and less about facts and numbers.

The poems in the middle of the magazine addresses the readers who just want to read something beautiful. So, if people are not in the mood to get information about migration or read about personal stories of people of Lüneburg our magazine can afford something for them, too.

We decided upon this structure of chapters to create a preferably diverse magazine. Besides our task to inform about the work of the other project groups, we wanted to inform about migration and refugees in general and globally, inform the readers about a project striving for an intercultural society here in Lüneburg – the mosaïque – and give an insight into various personal stories of people living in Lüneburg. By doing so, we managed to get a lot of different perspectives and not just writing articles ourselves with nothing but our own thoughts. The chapter “life in Lüneburg” also extends the range of the topics further than just writing about migration and refugees. This was important for us because one effect of the magazine should be getting to know more about each other regardless of whether the reader has migration background or has his or her roots here in Germany.

5 Reflection

I wanted to engage in a project that allows people to tell their individual stories, that tries to explain the refugee crisis to people and that shows in which ways many people and initiatives already bring people together and engage for an intercultural and tolerant society. All this and more can be shown in the form of a magazine. This form also allows one to combine a big range of topics instead of focusing on one specific topic for an event.

For my position in the group as a coordinator I tried to hold our group’s focus and not letting us follow every little idea that got in our mind. But our group work was very democratic, so I wouldn’t say that I was the coordinator in our group. I just tried to let us stay efficient every now and then.

At our first meetings we read a lot of other magazines and the magazine of the project group in the last semester to get inspired. We collected a lot of ideas what we want to put in the magazine, thought about the design of the magazine and what we want to achieve with it. Already in these first meetings we got the idea of a magazine in two languages when we thought about our target group and how to reach it. In the next meetings we had to decide which ideas about articles are the best because we got more than would fit in the magazine. After this, we structured the articles in chapters, so we have a pattern to work in and not just writing random articles. This point was important because it set the base for our future work. The thinking about interesting article ideas was fun but luckily, we managed to stay in our schedule and start with the next phase of preparing and writing the articles. This next phase required more work and time than I expected because most of the articles involved other people. The tricky part was that we didn't just write the articles ourselves but got to coordinate the communication with involved people and communication with the project group, too. In my work at the initiative compass I wrote a lot of emails and frequently waited for answers. I underestimated the next phase of putting the articles together and creating the layout even more than the previous phase. There wasn't much work to do because the articles were all finished but there were a lot of things to talk about in group meetings like details of the design, names of the chapters, little mistakes that needed to be corrected and even more. At this point I was very happy about our time schedule. If we didn't follow it in the previous months every phase, especially the last one, would have been much more chaotic and would have required even more time.

On the one hand we stayed with most of the structure set at the seminar, on the other hand there were so many things to think about. But all these questions that appeared in the progress couldn't be prevented with a better planning because they emerged not before us getting to certain points in the process.

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