Racism in the teaching of 'development' in German secondary school textbooks

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Abstract

The paper analyzes German social science textbooks commonly used in secondary schools (ages twelve to eighteen). The analysis shows that the 'developing world' – and Africa in particular – is discursively constructed as inferior, as an antithesis to the 'West', and as devoid of history and progress. The construction is thus essentially based on the same premises as colonial racism. Critical discourse analysis of texts, images and contexts reveals how racist reproductions are embedded in the representations and explanations of global inequalities. Textbook authors need to critically engage with their underlying assumptions and the dominant perspectives of 'development' as well as to introduce racism and eurocentrism as topics of political education.

Introduction

The recent heated media discussion on racism in German children's literature once again vividly demonstrated how deeply racism is rooted in mainstream German society. In the context of a public debate about the removal of offensive colonial wording in some popular children's books, an internet survey by YouGov[1] found that 70% of its participants object to the intended changes. According to *Die Zeit*[2], a separate survey by the opinion research institute Emnid[3] showed that this objection is positively correlated with the educational status: more educated people are more likely to object the removal of colonial wording. This contradicts the view that education would eliminate whatever racist residues remained from the era of colonialism and Nazism. In fact, several academic studies analyzing German textbooks on e.g. the teaching of colonial history (Borries, 1986; Kerber, 2005), the African history (Poenicke, 2008; Marmer and Sow, 2013), migration (Kammertoens, 2001; Hoppe, Otto, Niehaus and Georgi, 2015), music education (Sollinger, 1994) and others, showed that racist representations seem to be integral parts of the German curricula. The postcolonial analysis of teaching of 'development' in German extracurricular materials by glokal (2013) concluded that overall representations of the Global South and North reproduce 'white superiority', (indirectly) legitimize global inequalities and thus perpetuate racist discourses. Critical analysis of textbooks has been carried out in other European countries such as Portugal (history textbooks, Araújo and Rodriguez Maeso, 2012), the Netherlands (history textbooks, Weiner, 2014) and the UK (geography textbooks, Hicks, 1981/2006). Clearly, the concern over the persistence of racist narratives in education is not just a German issue. As Andreotti summarizes in the forword of the study of the Irish CSPE[4] Curriculum (Bryan and Bracken, 2011), "if the connections between power relations, knowledge

production and inequalities are overlooked, the result is often educational practices that are ethnocentric (projecting one view as universal), ahistorical (forgetting historical/ colonial relations), depoliticised (foreclosing their own ideological location), paternalistic (seeking affirmation of superiority through the provision of help to other people) and hegemonic (using and benefiting from unequal relations of power)."

As in the studies mentioned above, our theoretical background is post-colonial theory and from this angle we analyzed racist representations in German textbooks. We understand racism as an ideology, a set of ideas, which serve to secure the (unequal) distribution of power and regulate the access to material and symbolic resources in society. Despite racist ideology as such being officially discredited and condemned, these ideas are deeply embedded in our western understanding of the world, and are therefore constantly reproduced within political, economic and other societal discourses - in our case in development discourse. These discourses often unintentionally harness racist ideology to explain reality and thus produce new racist knowledge, which then becomes 'both the organizing factor in a system of global power relations and the organizing concept or term in a whole way of thinking and speaking' (Hall, 1996, p. 187). Once we as (mostly white) subjects in the global North are socialized into these discourses, it needs a much greater effort to be able to see beyond it; as a result, we continuously reproduce racist knowledge without even being aware of it. Racism becomes 'a part of the *ideological* air that we all breathe' (Hall, 1983, p. 260, emphasis in original).

In order to analyze a discourse and to uncover its purposes and meanings, Foucault (1980) calls for going back to its beginnings and scrutinizing its genealogy. This exercise will take us to the early 18th century Europe, where racist ideology, actually conceived much earlier in human history, was evolving and assuming a form that was to remain nearly unchanged (although occasionally somewhat disguised) in the course of the centuries to follow. Racism is an ideology of supremacy and power, i.e. an ideology of inequality. This ideology determines who dominates over whom while legitimizing this domination and its corresponding subordination. The ideas of the European Enlightenment at first glance seem to contradict the ideas of racism but, with a closer look, it turns to be the opposite – the most prominent philosophers of the Enlightenment were at the same time the founders of the so-called 'scientific' racism, the modern European contribution to the millennia-old discourse. How did this take place? 'The idea of 'race' developed as a way of explaining the persistence of social divisions in a society that had a deep-set belief in equality' (Malik, 2003). The aggressive colonial expansion of Europe accompanied by the brutal exploitation of people, theft of resources, murderous 'discoverers' and 'adventurers' seeking the profits which made Europe's 'development' possible in the first place, strongly contradicted the ideology of 'Freedom, Equality and Brotherhood'. Thus, racist knowledge veiled as science had to be produced. The idea of 'race' as it was constructed dehumanized precisely those people who were so brutally abused by the European 'development' enterprise. In its basic form, 'scientific' racism of those days could be broken down to four main elements:

(i) Human 'races' are organized in a hierarchical manner, with the White[5] 'race' on top of the pyramid and the Black 'race' on the bottom (Kant, 1802/1968).

(ii) Constructing the *others* as an antithesis of *us*, for example Orient as opposite of Occident (Said, 1978), the Rest as opposite of the West (Hall, 1996) or the 'African' as opposite of the

'European' (Hegel, 1994/1837) in order to establish the supremacy of the Western European White by contrast.

(iii) The view on Africa as an ahistorical place 'with no movement or development to exhibit' (Hegel, 1994/1837).

(iv) The narrative of modernity, which believed in the historical evolution of all societies towards 'modernity' as defined by Western civilization, whereby people, societies and regions are positioned on a scale from 'un-developed' to 'developed' (Hall, 1996, p. 186).

In our textbook analysis, we pay close attention to all these elements: (i) the hierarchization of people's living environments, economies, knowledges and beliefs, political and social systems, preferences and choices, (ii) the construction of dichotomies, (iii) the perception of history of different societies, regions and people. The modernity narrative (iv) evolved from the early colonial missionarism and became a strong precedent for contemporary modernization theory of 'development'. The teaching of 'development' is therefore of particular interest to us; in it, we see a great opportunity to deconstruct not only this narrative itself, but also the ways in which it is uncritically reproduced. Schoolbooks are particularly significant in this regard as they provide the basis on which teaching takes place in schools. The reproduction of racist ideas in the books thus manifests these ideas as "common knowledge" of students and teachers and impacts their world view as well as the interactions in the classroom. This research has been a part of the IMAFREDU (Image of Africa in Education) project, which was concerned with the representation of Africa and constructions of Blackness and Whiteness in German textbooks on racism in the classroom. In the context of the project, textbook analysis was accompanied by questionnaires, observations, interviews and focus groups with students and teachers (Marmer and Sow, 2015). One of the main outputs of this study are the recommendations for teaching materials on the topics of Blackness, Africa and African Diaspora (Autor*innenKollektiv, 2015).

Methods

The study looked at 12 German textbooks commonly used in secondary school, grades 7 to 13, corresponding ages twelve to eighteen (see Appendix). The first ten (1-10 in Appendix) represent all textbooks found at the main teachers library in the city of Hamburg[6] that were published as of 2000 and covered the issue of 'development', edited by the four major German textbook publishing houses. Two other teaching materials (11 and 12 in Appendix) are designed to form students' knowledge and opinion on 'Africa' and thereby inevitably play a role in understanding 'development'. These two explicitly claim to deconstruct the 'negative' image of Africa and to critically engage with issues of global inequality. As a result, they are used by teachers who wish to include an alternative view to the dominant discourses on 'Africa' and 'development'. Booklet 11 was handed to us by such a teacher while 12 is freely downloadable from several educational and charity sites. Both books are advertised by the State Institute for Teacher Education and School Development of Hamburg[7] within the 'progressive' curriculum 'Global Learning'[8]. Global Learning materials have been critically analyzed before (Spenner, 2008; glokal, 2013) so we found it important to include these books in our current analysis.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) of texts and imagery was our method of choice (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). CDA is a multidisciplinary approach to the study of discourse that is mainly

concerned with how the use of language and imagery is related to issues of power, its use and abuse. CDA challenges the way in which hegemonic discourses produce knowledge and establish it as universal and 'common-sense' by silencing any alternative knowledge and discourses. The main assumption of this approach is that social practices constitute as well as are constituted by the discourse, in other words, once produced, the discourse becomes 'productive in its turn' (Hall, 1996, p. 187). Hence this method analyzes not only the usage of language but also how this usage reflects and reinforces social practices (Haig, 2008, p. 52). Critical discourse analysts do not consider their work as value-neutral; their aim is to go beyond the mere description of the discursive practices by 'contributing to the contestation and even transformation of those practices' (ibid).

We further used the four elements of racism presented above as a conceptual baseline in order to analyse the discourse in the text. We broke the discourse down to eight prominent topics: 'Development' and explanations for global inequality, Population growth, Poverty and hunger, AIDS, Women, Colonialism, Racism, Development aid and Poverty reduction. We investigate the given explanations for global inequalities as well as the solutions introduced and recommended in the textbooks. We also pay attention to selective inclusions and exclusions made for specific audiences.

Findings

Development

The word 'development' is the key term for describing and explaining global inequality in our sample. Therefore we will start by analyzing these descriptions, definitions and explanations. The standard terminology to be found in all books differentiates between 'developing countries' (DCs) ('*Entwicklungsländer*') and 'industrialized countries' (ICs) ('*Industrieländer*').[9] One book occasionally used 'spaces marked by different levels of development' ('*Räume unterschiedlichen Entwicklungsstands*', 8: 8) and argues that the term 'underdeveloped' is value-laden, offensive and wrong (8: 10) which is why 'developing countries' is used instead. Both terms are implicitly juxtaposed with 'developed countries', and therefore clearly refer to a universal scale of 'development' with mostly European and North American countries on top while most countries in other parts of the world lagging behind. Hence the modernity narrative is implicitly used here to define 'development'. 'Developed countries' are also referred to as 'industrialized countries', indicating that 'development' and 'industrialization' are synonymous.

Explicitly, 'development' is usually equated with satisfying the basic needs of the population and this is deemed to be deficient in 'developing countries' (e.g. 2: 145, 4: 68, 3: 12, 9: 36). 'Development' is seen as an 'improvement in the collective quality of life' (4: 70). Common indicators of 'development', or lack thereof, are GNP or PCI, literacy rates, life expectancy, birth rates, infrastructure and industrialization (e.g. 3: 18). Africa is the worst performer on all given criteria of 'development'. Often there is a clear dichotomy between the affluent North (*us*) and the poor South (*them*). In some textbooks (1: 217, 2: 151, 3:13, 5: 239), there is a personification of this dichotomy in form of biographies of two girls (German and Ethiopian). We will come back to this comparison later.

Most textbooks emphasize that population growth is the dominant cause for inequality (1:216ff, 2:148ff, 4: 79ff, 5:238, 6: 262ff, 9: 10ff, 8: 7, 8A: 86, 7: 181, 3: 18, 28, 11: 66, 12:12f). Ethnic conflicts (3: 22, 12: 14), geographical factors (7: 181), corruption and bad governance (4: 88, 3: 30, 12: 14) or a lack of capital, productivity and industrialization (4: 73, 7: 181, 11: 66) are all said to be internal causes of inequality inherent to various societies. A few textbooks also mention external and global causes such as unfavourable terms of trade, neoliberalism, protectionism of the rich countries, indebtedness and other features of the existing global economy (3: 32, 9: 50, 10: 243, 252, 11: 66, 12) or colonialism (3: 32, 12) and internal power structures (4: 89, 3: 30). The explanations of inequality and poverty range from the EU fishing industry's 'piracy' (8: 112f) to an alleged 'considerable lack' of 'public morals, a sense of responsibility for the common good and work ethic in administration' in 'developing' countries (4: 88), reviving the colonial myth of the 'lazy native'.

The imagery also often reproduces stereotypes: People in 'developing' countries are mostly shown as living in the countryside, poor, wearing little clothing and not using any modern technology. A notable exception is the photograph of an indigenous man of Papua New Guinea wearing little but shells, feathers and facial paint but carrying a mobile phone and a laptop (4: 64f). However, what seems to be a contradiction of stereotypes at first sight actually may not be one at all. That a barely dressed indigenous person uses modern technology is funny or even remarkable only if a certain level of technology is naturally associated with Western cultural norms and the corresponding clothing. To put it bluntly: the imagery works to amuse only if we expect the 'savage' not to know how such devices work.

The topic of inequality and poverty is also covered by a great number of cartoons, which mostly contain stereotypical depictions of poor, starved Black people and affluent, well-fed (or fat) white people (e.g. 9: 48, 8: 67, 8: 104). A frequent motive is also that the misery of the 'poor' population in the South will invariably affect the living conditions of the 'rich' population in the North (9: 54), i.e. the rationale to help the 'poor' out of 'enlightened self-interest' (12: 22f). This motivation, however, remains stuck in the traditional dichotomy of *us* vs. *them*, merely claiming that it is in *our* interest to help *them* in order to prevent crises, terrorism and migration, which would affect *us* as well. In the practical teaching situation in school, such an approach inevitably divides the classroom into 'native' and 'migrated' Germans, exclusively addressing the former. Those with a history of migration are confronted with the implicit message that their or their ancestors migration to Germany is something negative, something that should have actually been prevented in the self-interest of the 'natives' (glokal, 2013: 42).

Population growth

Population growth is the number one explanation for global inequality in the textbooks. It is presented as a 'major cause' of 'underdevelopment' in 'developing countries' (8: 7) and a 'fundamental problem of humanity' (9: 12, 6: 282), as leading to poverty (8: 7), hunger (1: 218), desertification (8: 21) and destruction of the soil (7A: 90) – all in all, as a danger to the survival of human beings on this planet (1: 226). The danger is emphasized by talking about a 'population explosion' or a 'population bomb' – terms long since considered inappropriate in the academic literature because they dehumanize the people in question. This threat is explicitly geographically located in the 'developing countries', often in reference to Africa, and the texts on the topic are invariably accompanied by pictures of great masses of human beings: e.g. in

Beijing (9: 10f), Dhaka (1: 216), India (6: 262f) or somewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa (5: 238; 2: 148). Typical illustrations are contrasting images of large, mostly African families, with many children and visibly poor, on the one side, and white, wealthy two-child families on the other side (2: 149; 3: 8ff; 6: 266; 9: 14). It is made abundantly clear that the problem allegedly is that too many babies are born *in the Global South* and that we are not dealing with *White* babies in this context.

In the simpler variety of the argument, there is not enough food being produced to keep up with the growing population (e.g. 8: 16), so population growth causes hunger (an argument made already by Thomas Malthus in 1798, see Hewitt/Smith, 2000, p. 132). This causality has been rejected as a myth by social science at least since Amartya Sen's (1981) work on entitlements: not the general availability of food is the decisive factor for hunger and undernourishment, but whether individuals have access to it - often a question of property, income, world market prices and relations of power. The most drastic example is a cartoon in which a *White* person wearing an apron labeled 'world food aid' tries to feed a growing number of babies swarming out of a buggy, but there are simply too many. On a closer look, the babies take the shape of a nuclear mushroom cloud (2: 143). The message is that, despite the noble efforts of the *White* nations, the unbridled reproduction of the poor in the South poses a lethal threat to humanity. In similar vein pupils are encouraged to discuss the question of 'birth restrictions' in 'developing countries' (9: 15).

The more refined version of the argument (e.g. 1: 226) assumes that population growth in the Global South leads to growing demand for food, energy and natural resources, which in turn would lead to soil erosion, the pollution of water and air, global warming, resource depletion and more waste. What is not taken into account here, nor in any other of the textbooks, is that on all three accounts (food, energy, resources), each person in the 'rich' countries consumes many times as much as a person in the 'poorer' countries. Germans for example consume twenty times more energy than people in Bangladesh;[10] increasingly fertile soil in the Global South is used for meat consumption and biofuels for the North; in terms of 'ecological footprint', the biocapacity of 1.8 global hectares per person is exceeded most clearly in the rich countries (USA: 8.00, UK: 4.89, China: 2.21, India: 0.91)[11], and the affluent 20% of the world's population consume 80% if its resources (Sachs, 1999, p. 166). So from the perspective of resource scarcity and global environmental management, babies born in rich countries are far more problematic than those in less wealthy countries. This conclusion is in stark contrast to the representations in the textbooks. The racist dimensions of the 'blaming-the-victims' strategy, which wrongly attributes responsibility for poverty, hunger, resource depletion and environmental pollution to the poor of Color, are clearly visible.

Such dimensions are also present in some of the explanations of population growth. The role of culture and 'traditional, patriarchal values' is seen as an important factor (8: 16; 9: 13), as well as the liberalization of sexual norms (4: 85) and, most often, the lack of education among girls and women (5: 239; 6: 267; 1: 217; 2: 150). The use of generalizations and stereotypes is frequent, with the most blatant example being the following statement: 'The social rank of women in many developing countries is rather low. Women are primarily supposed to act as 'birthing machines' (6: 266). This impression is also created by the juxtaposition of two girls, Eden and Julia/Marie, representing biographies typical for 'developing' and 'developed' countries (1: 217; 2: 151; 3:13; 5: 239). Eden is characterized solely by ignorance and her activities are restricted to birthing

children (six, seven or eight). Julia, in contrast, knows how to use contraceptives and therefore has only two children. Thus this presentation suggests to the white students that all the problems related to population growth – poverty, hunger, desertification, soil erosion – could be solved if one benevolent white person from the North would teach the ignorant women in the South and empower them. Such presentations teach racist attitudes not only towards people in distant regions but also towards fellow students. German students of African descent described racist incidents against them in the classroom that were triggered by textbook imagery that victimizes Black (African) children in similar ways (Marmer, 2015).

Hunger and poverty

Poverty and malnourishment are referred to as essential features of the 'developing' countries. For example, (2: 144) the chapter 'Poor countries, rich countries' explains: 'Nearly one third of the world's population lives below the poverty line, which means that some two billion people do not lead a dignified life. They don't have money to buy enough food and suitable clothes. Most of these people live in **developing countries**' (emphasis in original). In all textbooks, 'Africa is the continent of poverty' (12: 4) and case studies of several African countries (Ethiopia (1: 217; 2: 151; 3: 13; 5: 239), Nigeria (3: 22ff; 4: 128ff), Burkina Faso (6: 232-235), Mali (7: 174ff; 8: 16ff) and Tanzania (9: 96ff; 10: 243)) serve to illustrate this assertion.

Statistical data from UNDP, World Bank etc. are widely used to quantify poverty, hunger and malnutrition applying criteria commonly used by these international organizations. These criteria can however be ambiguous and collected data does not necessarily represent the reality (Reddy and Pogge, 2009). In order to arrive at a detailed picture, certain questions need to be addressed in this context, e.g.: Are subsistence agriculture and informal economies being considered? Are remittances from emigrants included in these statistics, since for example in some African regions they make out a substantial part of the average household's cash income (Findley & Sow, 1998; Ammarrasi, 2005)? Are social solidarity networks taken into account? Yet these questions are usually overlooked in the textbooks. We learn from the data (UN 1999, 8: 9), for example, that one in five people in 'developing' countries is homeless. A different textbook (6: 238) presents similar data (without even referring to the source), according to which every fourth person in the 'developing world' is homeless. It is not specified, however, whether these people live on the street in truly undignified conditions, or whether many of them live with relatives and friends. Western models of prosperity are usually applied here while conditions of the respective societies are not taken into account. An other example: surviving on less than 2$ a day in rural vs. urban areas is difficult to compare: those living in rural areas, owning land and housing (even in a poor condition) and growing their own food (subsistence agriculture) may have by far better quality of life compared to their urban counterparts with the same cash income, given that they have to pay for food, water, housing and transportation. It should not be denied that those surviving on less that two dollars a day anywhere in the world may be poor in terms of food security, healthcare, acquisition of assets and social mobility, but their lives cannot be devalued as undignified.

Only one book questions the dominant providers of data and picks up criticism of the World Bank data validity. Only here is the dominant concept of poverty contested and contextualized. The text calls on readers 'to revisit the concept of poverty' and to consider 'not only statistical calculations' but also 'qualitative dimensions' for the definition of poverty - for example social

solidarity networks, subsistence agriculture and informal economies and also 'the value of cash income for quality of life' (12: 4).

The data is spatially visualized as world maps with marked area around the tropics, the so-called 'hunger belt' (1: 218f; 2: 114; 6: 273; 9: 42). The terms '*hunger belt*' and '*the world of the hungry*' (1:220), just like the inability of one third of the world population to live a '*dignified life*' (2: 144; 4: 73; 7: 190; 9: 36), are very strong linguistic expressions which construct the 'developing world' and most of all Africa – the only continent completely covered by the 'hunger belt' - as a place of unprecedented misery. Life in Africa as 'the poorest continent' judging by the maps and data is hierarchically downgraded to 'undignified' compared to anywhere else in the world, and especially to the life in 'developed' countries.

Poverty in the 'rich' countries is absent in the books. For example, there is no mention of the 20% of children in the USA living in food-insecure households (Coleman-Jensen, Nord, Andrews and Carlson, 2012) or the 51,000[12] homeless people living in overt undignified conditions in Los Angeles, USA.

Similarly, there are no data about the wealthy, or even about 'normality' in 'poor' countries, for example, the 34% of Africans belonging to the middle class (African Development Bank, 2011, cited in Schewe, 2013). Wealth in the 'poor' countries is negatively connoted with the term 'strong disparities', which are partly made responsible for the poverty (3: 23, 30; 4: 72). For example (4: 72), 'the close vicinity of *unlimited* wealth and absolute poverty is typical for the developing countries' (emphasis added). Further on, estimates (without a source) are given, stating that if 20% of the richest people in the 'developing' world would pay 2% taxes it would amount to levels matching official developing aid (4: 73). Whether the message is that the 20% of the richest people are too rich or that the official development aid is too low, is left to the reader to conclude. However, the text suggests that the richest 20% of the 'poor' world do not comply with *their* responsibility to improve the situation in *their* world thus avoiding explaining the part played by the wealthy world in creating global inequalities and poverty through historical and contemporary exploitation.

Several textbooks relate the scenario of insufficient food production due to overpopulation in the 'poor' countries, contrasted with abundance and waste of food in the 'developed' world (1: 220f; 2: 144f; 3: 12; 6: 272; 9: 42f). The juxtaposition of starving (mostly African) people with obese Westerners is, however, dangerously misleading: Not lack of food, but poverty, lack of means to purchase it, causes malnourishment and not abundance of food, but poor food quality, hence again poverty, causes obesity. Indeed, rising obesity has been observed among poor populations all over the world (Tanumihardjo et al., 2007). Instead of regarding poverty and malnourishment as global problems, an antithesis of *us fat* and *them starving* is constructed. Texts, which elaborate on how desertification and climatic variability result in undernourishment, mostly in the Sahel (6: 278f; 7: 184f; 7A: 90ff; 8:20f), treat these issues as internally caused. None of these textbooks mentions global climate change as a main cause of desertification in the region and the responsibility of industrialized nations (IPCC, 2007).

External intervention appears to be the solution of preference to combat poverty. For example (5: 240), 'Many rich countries … try to assist those [developing] countries by offering them development aid' (emphasis added). The inability of the 'poor' countries and 'poor' subjects to elevate themselves from poverty without the help of the 'rich' countries is illustrated by the so-called 'vicious cycle' models (1: 220; 3: 12; 4: 72; 7: 191). Similar models are constructed for

either poverty or hunger; each portraying affected people as physically and mentally weak, less productive, lacking initiative and hence unable to break out of the cycle without external help. In one case (4: 72) the use of such model is justified despite the criticism: 'The vicious cycle model is contested by science, because such cycles suggest that there is no escape and that causes and consequences (implications) are clearly defined. Their strength though lies in the strong simplification and clarification of relations, which are of course much more complex in reality'. And further on, 'breaking out of the vicious cycle is in most cases only possible with help from outside' (4: 73). Elsewhere (7: 191), the authors suggest that the cycle of starvation, illness and poverty can be broken with the help of education. Uneducated women are also blamed for the malnourishment of their children (11: 39). Generally, education is often considered as a solution to 'underdevelopment'. Education here is understood only as formal western-style education hence devaluating education children receive from their families and communities. It is however not mentioned that 'the cuts in social spending via structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) imposed by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank upon the countries in question […] prevented children from going to school' (Bryan and Bracken, 2011). Finally, countries like Russia, or China, where high educational standards and poverty exist side by side, are totally disregarded in this view.

The texts on poverty in the 'developing' world are illustrated through photographs of emaciated African children (1: 220; 2: 144; 6: 220, 263, 273; 9: 68), probably taken during humanitarian disasters. The photographs do not indicate names and contexts, thus suggesting these children represent the African normality. It is not surprising that most of the 7th graders interviewed believed that 'most of African children are starving' (Marmer, 2015).

Only in one book poverty is recognized as a global 'drawback' and 'the elimination of poverty in the developed world and in the countries of the South' is seen as a global challenge (9: 6). Among others, topics such as the weaknesses in the global financial system and consequences of climate change caused by industrialized nations are acknowledged as causes of global poverty. This is also the only textbook presenting Africans, namely Nobel Laureate Wangari Maathai of Kenya and Paul Kagame of Rwanda, as key players in 'development'. Despite this promising introduction (9: 2-9), the very first chapter 'World population – enough or already too much?' (9: 10ff) strongly emphasizes population growth as *the* cause for poverty. Here, the use of language, data and images once again comply with the portrayal of the Global South and foremost Africa as a miserable, ignorant and incapable.

AIDS

Six textbooks broach the issue of AIDS in the context of development (2: 152f; 4: 75; 5: 239; 6: 223, 236, 267; 9: 108f; 12: 12, 15f). In most texts, AIDS is merely listed either as an obstacle to 'development' or as a feature of Africa in general or some African countries in particular. The absence of further explanation suggests that it is generally assumed to be common knowledge that AIDS is an *African problem*. For example (2: 152f), even the chapter entitled 'AIDS – not only in Africa!' is dedicated to the issue of AIDS in Africa *only* and is illustrated with a photograph of a now-deceased South-African child. The mentioned above Eden/Julia dichotomy does not miss out on AIDS either: in one version (5: 239), Ethiopian Eden lost her parents to AIDS. Selecting and visualizing African countries with an AIDS rate above 5% is used as an exercise to introduce the WebGIS software (6: 223).

The assumed rapid spread of AIDS in Africa is blamed on African men having several sexual partners, their 'cultural' non-acceptance of condoms, their sexual and general domination of women, as well as illiteracy and the resulting ignorance about the use of contraceptives (2:152f). Such texts are often illustrated by 'witness accounts' (e.g. 9: 109), like the 'no name Tanzanian' telling about her deceased sister who was impregnated and infected by a 'sugar daddy'. The terms of such relationships are explained in the author text below including the rare use of condoms due to financial reasons or poor ethics. Here we read that the prevalence of AIDS in Tanzania is 'supported by cultural practices such as polygamy and the immediate remarriage of widows' (9: 108). These 'unhealthy' sexual practices, whether due to 'tradition', 'culture' and 'religion' (2: 152; 6: 236; 9: 109), financial necessities (2: 152; 4: 175; 9: 109) or ignorance (2: 152; 5:239; 6: 267), are generally blamed for the prevalence of the disease on the continent. Some texts inform about the assumed causes implicitly, through recommendations, projects and actions. For example (6: 267), by introducing the program 'Youth to Youth' of the *Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung*, which offers young Africans sex education, something that 'young people in the developing world are missing' and something that is 'self-evident to *us*' (emphasis added).

This presentation draws on the racist idea of 'African hyper-sexuality', which can be historically traced back to the colonial era. The bodies of the colonized were captured, traded and exploited for economic benefit but also classified and evaluated for 'scientific' purposes. Therefore, 'the body rather than speech, law or history' became the 'essential defining characteristic' in the portrayal of colonized people (Spurr, 1993, p. 22). Constructed as an antithesis to the moral sexual code of the West, projecting the *White* man's repressed desire, the hyper-sexualized image of the African is 'fixated at the genital' (Fanon, 1952, p. 163). This animalistic image of African sexual behavior has been evoked by both the popular and scientific AIDS discourses: 'Practices such as polygamy, concubinage, widow-inheritance, widow-cleansing […] would be taken out of cultural context, held up for new scrutiny and used as a standard for confirming the world's worst fears about Africa' (Olujobi, 2008).

However, no empirical studies were able to confirm the various hypotheses concerning sexual behavior anywhere in Africa that would result in such enormous differences in the prevalence of AIDS (Geshekter, 2007). A comparative data on sexual behavior by Stillwaggon (2006) demonstrates that high rates of sexual activity statistically do not even correlate with high HIV prevalence. However, evidence exists on the relation between the spread of pandemics and the lack of affordable health care services (ibd.). Additionally, the issue remains very controversial because the astronomically high numbers of affected people in African countries reported by UNAIDS are contested by medical and social scientists (Cochrane, 2004). AIDS statistics for the African countries are produced by model extrapolations of scarce empirical data sets using 'simple back-calculation procedures […] based on the well-known natural course of HIV infection' (UNAIDS, 2000). Apparently there is a high degree of inconsistency between the negative scenarios envisioned by UNAIDS and the observed situation reported, for example, by Konotey-Ahulu (1987) and many others. One explanation for this inconsistency could lie in model assumptions based on the idea of 'African hypersexuality'.

The textbook discourse on AIDS in Africa does not in the least reflect the complexity and controversy of the issue; it presents only one version, which constructs a racist image of Africans as unhealthy, highly contagious and sexually hyperactive.

Women

'Development is female!' (9: 20) – this slogan describes quite well the emphasis most textbooks put on the gender equality issue as both a reason for 'underdevelopment' (in terms of 'overpopulation', prevalence of AIDS, poverty and hunger) and a path to 'development'. 'Gender equality' is understood here as equality of women only.

Women are generally seen as oppressed, underprivileged and mistreated everywhere in the 'developing' world and particularly in Africa (1: 217; 2: 151; 3: 13; 4: 75, 77, 79; 5: 239; 6: 218, 136f, 267; 7: 186, 191; 8: 16f; 9: 20f; 11: 39, 58f, 12: 5). Western standards are applied to judge various legal, economic, religious and familial structures (Mohanty, 1987). Following the modernity narrative, the situation of women in the 'developing' countries is assumed to reflect that of Western women centuries or at least decades ago, which was oppressive in most regions and at various levels. Africa is simplified and unified. That the vast diversity of gender relations in Africa, including polyandry, matrilineal, matrilocal or avunculocal[13] societies, evolved hybrid systems with complex distributions of rights and duties among genders, is simply ignored. Oppression of African women is described as rooted in 'tradition and culture, supported by religion' (6: 236). Cultural practices are treated as 'feudal residues' or labeled 'traditional'; women are portrayed 'as politically immature [...] who need to be versed and schooled in the ethos of Western Feminism' (Amos and Parmar, 1984). This construct of African gender relations serves to establish the superiority of Western tradition, culture and religion as egalitarian, which in turn disregards issues of gender inequality in the 'developed' world (glokal, 2013). In the text entitled 'Women – disadvantaged' (4: 75), we read that 'Gender discrimination also exists in industrialized countries but it is by far not as severe as in the developing countries'. The best example of how such antithesis is constructed is the frequently repeated Eden-Julia/Marie dichotomy taken up by several textbooks (1: 217; 2: 151; 3: 13; 5: 239) (see *Development* and *AIDS*): Eden's life is heteronomous, Julia's is autonomous; Eden is deprived, Julia on the contrary, appears privileged; Eden is an oppressed woman, Julia's life suggests female ambition, fulfilment and happiness. In other texts the superiority of Western gender relations is expressed more implicitly: if 'development is female' (9: 20), one can deduce that in the 'developed' world women must be in a much better position.

With the exception of Wangari Maathai, a Kenyan Nobel Laureate (9: 5), women are portrayed as primarily rural, exploited, oppressed and mostly nameless, 'characterized by their victim status' (Mohanty, 1987). This is reinforced in various texts and images (3: 23, 45; 4: 77, 87; 5: 249; 6: 218, 234, 236, 237, 239, 279; 7: 184ff; 8: 7; 9: 101; 10; 243, 252; 12: 5, 20), most of which originate from charity organizations. The use of charity organization material in educational contexts is already questionable as it serves as surreptitious advertisement for their own commercial purposes (glokal, 2013 and Marmer, 2013).

Men, in contrast, are portrayed as oppressive and lazy. '[In Africa,] the prevalence of low societal status of women mostly leads to oppression and defenselessness against sexual practices, which is embodied in male power' (2: 153), and 'Women in Mali are hard working […]. Traditionally, men hardly contribute at all' (7: 186).

As a consequence, women are seen as the main potential for 'development'. For example, 'Women play an important role in combating poverty. Educating women can prevent the threats of overpopulation and diminish epidemics such as AIDS' (6: 236). Several examples of Western organizations and initiatives oriented towards empowerment of women for 'development' are presented, such as one educational project teaching rural Congolese mothers how to feed their children: 'How long did it take *us* to learn about healthy nutrition? … This knowledge has to be communicated to the Ikongeleke mothers as well' (11: 39, emphasis added). Once again, a western charity organisation is used as a source here. The gender discourse is typically built on the modernity narrative. The narrow focus on women in gender equality discourse in the 'developing world' has been criticized for the marginalization of men in the respective societies (Chant, 2000). Often such empowerment initiatives are carried out by the West and in a hegemonic way, which is reminiscent of a colonial domination strategy described by Spivak (1988) as 'White men saving brown women from brown men'.

Colonialism

European colonialism was a bloody endeavour. The racist ideology of White supremacy – couched in more pleasant terms like 'mission civilisatrice' or 'white man's burden' – took a toll among colonized peoples unparalleled in human history. Hardly a trace of this can be found in the textbooks examined. Many of the passages covering the era of colonialism do not mention any physical violence at all. We learn that the cotton plantations (not their owners) in European colonies in the 17th and 18th centuries were in need of cheap labor which was fulfilled by African slaves, that Africa was divided into different spheres of influence in 1884 (8: 23), that the Maasai were forced to give up their traditional way of life during colonialism (9: 101), that the Upper Volta was relentlessly exploited by France and its land seized (6: 235), that European powers established their rule over other peoples by military means (5: 126), and that conquerors, missionaries and merchants followed the European mariners who had discovered (the word is used without quotation marks) 'ever new regions of the earth' (2: 8). Yet the violent and often murderous aspect of these historical events mostly remains unexposed.

If colonial violence is mentioned, it is usually either relativized, trivialized or described from the perspective of the colonizers. It is relativized when, for example, the colonial exploitation of silver mines in Bolivia (in which 8 million indigenous people are estimated to have died) is compared with an 'equally relentless exploitation of the mines' some 200 years later by 'indigenous families' (8: 125) (it can be assumed that the current mine owners were somewhat less indigenous than the workers but also that the casualties were minuscule in comparison). It is trivialized when, for example, the German rule over what today is Namibia is described as a 'protectorate' and the genocide of the Herero is represented as putting down an 'insurrection' (5: 128). And it is furthermore depicted from the perspective of the colonizers if this episode is introduced with the sentence 'However, the ownership of colonies did bring some problems as well.' (ibid.). Mentioning colonial violence without these features is the exception to the rule (e.g.: '… in Namibia in 1911, German troops killed almost the entire Herero people', 4: 100, see also 2: 13). We found no pictures of colonizers violating or killing colonized people. We did, however, find a picture of white doctors healing Black patients in 1920 (2: 13).

In a number of textbooks, the perceived need for a balanced account of colonialism leads to a weighing of the various positive and negative aspects of it. In this context, it is mentioned that

colonialism 'tore down barriers of parochialism', as Marx argued (4: 100), that it 'built up infrastructure' (3: 32) such as 'roads, ports, railways and hospitals' and introduced 'medicine with which many diseases could be fought' (2: 13). Hence, that the colonies' 'development' was 'decided from Europe' during the colonial era 'had positive consequences in some cases' (3: 32). The implications of such representations become clearer if we imagine a consideration of the pros and cons of National Socialism, which mentioned economic growth, job creation and road building as positive consequences. Such a consideration would be without a doubt entirely unthinkable in German schoolbooks. Apart from Nazi circles, a statement like this would be regarded as beyond the discursive limits of decency in the German public because it would be seen as an offence towards the countless victims, as a suggestion that there might be a rational debate about whether the positive or the negative aspects carried more weight. Such discursive limits do not exist regarding the victims of colonialism, at least not in the textbooks in question. 'Until the lion has his own storyteller, the hunter will always have the best part of the story', as a proverb of the Ewe-mina says.[14]

Racism

Racism is only explicitly mentioned in one textbook. The chapter on imperialism included a quote from Cecil Rhodes: 'I contend that we are the first race in the world, and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race' (2: 9). Readers are directed to find 'more information on the term race' in the chapter on the German Nazi-Era (2: 68). This would be a great opportunity to demonstrate the continuum of the racist ideology from early colonial times to Germany under National Socialism (Césaire, 1955/1972, p. 3), putting racism in a historical context, allowing students to analyze its genealogy and evolution, and learn its impact on the system of global inequality. Unfortunately, the authors miss this opportunity; instead, the given information is minimal, confined to a box titled 'Race, Racism' and leaves no room for further exploration: 'Racism is an attitude, where one's own group is seen as socially and culturally superior and other groups are seen as inferior' (2: 68). Defining racism as an attitude strips the ideology of any historical context and in a way trivializes the purpose and power of racism. It also reduces racism to those who 'have this attitude', which does not allow for structural racism to be accounted for. In another book, the same Rhodes' quote is cited (5: 127) but here the concept of 'race' and racism is not discussed at all.

Elsewhere, the issue of racism is broached implicitly (9: 64f), for example, in a chapter on migration. A caricature and an interview with Xavier Naidoo both raise the topic of discrimination of Black Germans. However, also here we find a missed opportunity to conceptualize racism. In fact, the word 'racism' is not even mentioned.

As illustrated above, the discourse on development in the presented textbooks exposes clear features of racism on several levels. In order to further illustrate, we provide here some additional examples. 'Tuareg … are light skinned … and do not feel close to Arabs nor the black tribes' (8: 22, case study Mali). Mentioning the skin color of the Tuareg without any further explanation, thus assuming that the light skin just by itself indicates an obvious and natural difference is a racialization, whereas referring to the non-Tuareg inhabitants of Mali as 'black tribes' is derogatory. An other example is a quote from the Spiegel[15] periodical in textbook 4 (83): 'Today like every other day, 40,000 children will die – one every two seconds. They will starve to death. … Horrible? There's worse. If these children did not die, if they hadn't starved to

death in their mothers' arms, […] if they survived and grew up to have children, it would be a much greater catastrophe.' (Dithfurth, H. in Der Spiegel 11/1989). This quote stands uncommented next to three charts showing the difference in population growth and fertility rates between the 'LDCs[16], DCs and ICs'. This text devalues, dehumanizes the lives of Children Of Color, their deaths becoming only statistics and worthy of pity but this is apparently not the 'greatest catastrophe', as long as *White* children are not threatened by 'overpopulation'. Would a text talking as cynically about dying *White* children (e.g. of cancer) be ever published in a textbook?

Since teaching about racism is not a part of political education in the books, students are not taught to expose, analyze and resist racist contents like those exemplified above. In contrast, subtle racist views are stabilized through such teaching contents.

Development aid and poverty reduction

In practically all of the schoolbooks (1: 229ff; 2: 168; 3: 40; 4: 113; 5: 240f; 6: 238; 7: 191; 8: 105; 9: 51; 12: 16) development aid of the North is characterized as an attempt to help the 'poor' in the South. Whereas other foreign economic policies are sometimes portrayed in a rather critical light, development aid is only once explicitly linked to non-benevolent motives, such as economic and foreign policy interests (9: 51). The treatment of the topic overall is inconsistent in its message. On the one hand, we find serious interest in reinventing development policy as a means to influence global economic structures for the benefit of poorer countries (8: 104ff). On the other hand, we find reiterations of the traditional slogan 'Give a hungry person a fish and he will be fed for one day. Teach him how to fish and he will never go hungry again' (3: 40) in the context of development aid. Upon closer inspection, this slogan is embedded with insults of several forms. It reduces hunger to a question of ignorance, discounting relations of power and in particular the means and access to secure one's livelihood (which is usually at the root of the problem of hunger). And it assumes that people in the South need to be taught how to fish while in reality they are driven into misery by fishing fleets from the very countries who generously offer to teach fishing. While the victims of exclusions are cast as being responsible for their own misery, those responsible for their exclusions construct their own identity as both wise and benevolent teachers. This paternalistic view does not leave room to question the conditions attached to the so-called aid, which "have long been part of influence games of ex-colonizers and industrialized superpowers" (Sow, 2015, n.p.), which serve to stabilize the existing global inequalities by hugely benefitting the donor countries economically and politically.

Conclusions/Recommendations

Colonial racism has been officially discredited since the aftermath of the Shoah (Holocaust) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[17] Yet although the discourse of 'development' that is prevalent in all schoolbooks on the topic superficially adheres to this standard and recognizes the right of all peoples to govern themselves, we find a more subtle form of racism – and not merely in isolated instances, but as a recurring feature.

We find an implicit racial hierarchy in the hypersexual, patriarchal and backward culture attributed to Africans, as well as in the portrayal of Babies of Color as threatening the survival of the planet. We find the antithetical juxtaposition of educated, enlightened whites and ignorant

People of Color, for example in the Eden-Julia/Marie dichotomy or in pictures of colonial doctors treating Black patients. We find the myth of the 'peoples without history' in the absence of any reference to pre-colonial history outside Europe and in the idea that progress was introduced by colonialism. And we find the narrative of 'development' and modernity, according to which global inequality is explained through individual countries' backwardness and internal factors such as lack of education and productivity.

These examples illustrate all four elements of the pseudoscientific racism developed in the past three centuries in order to justify colonial crimes. These elements are continuously reproduced throughout the textbook narratives on 'development'.

We understand racism as an ideology that legitimates the system of global inequality (Hall, 1989). In our view it is problematic that a discussion of this ideology is absent in the books. In some of the books critical facts and discussions are included: in texts which expose the role of the West in maintaining inequalities in its own interest and thus inhibiting 'development', or in texts portraying African people as active agents who shape their own lives and contribute to their improvement. These progressive elements are certainly laudable. However, these contributions seem random, are not conceptualized and fall short of discussing racism in the dominant worldview.

What are the implications of this for education? If racist stereotypes and arguments, open or disguised, continue to be taught in schools, they will effectively legitimate and reproduce the existing inequalities on both the national and the international scale – as well as create new ones – despite the implicit or explicit intention of the authors to raise students' awareness of the global inequalities. Although in some books we find a budding awareness of stereotypes in the discourse of 'development' (9: 38; 11: 18, 48) and the overt, biological racism of earlier decades was absent in the textbooks we analyzed, we nonetheless conclude that a serious engagement with the 'disguised' racism we encountered is an urgent and pressing requirement for German schoolbooks. Our recommendation to textbook authors would be to critically engage with the hegemonic perspectives in the discourse on 'development' and the representation of the South and the North. At the first step, the existing content needs to be critically inquired by authors, teachers and students alike, by asking the following questions (Autor*innenKollektiv, 2015):

- Who speaks about whom? Whose perspectives are represented, whose are not?
- Who has the power to decide and contribute on what levels?
- Are people from the Global South and the Diasporas visibly and regularly cited as sources of information?
- Do people from the Global South appear as autonomous agents?
- Who defines aims for whom?
- Who occupies which space?
- Who is acting where with whom?
- Which knowledge is presented as relevant?
- What is missing?

At the same time, histories, knowledges and discourses from the Global South and the Diasporas have to become an integral part of the curricula. The decolonization of German curricula is needed in order to enhance students' and teachers' reflexivity, fostering critical

discussion on eurocentrism and racism, leading to a less parochial knowledge of global inequalities. All too often, students learn to place the blame for global inequality at the door of the poor themselves. It is crucial to introduce eurocentrism and racism as topics of political education if we want our children to become aware of privilege and power and to think beyond colonial stereotypes.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix: List of the analyzed textbooks

N	Publisher	Title	Grade	Year	School Type[18]
1	Westermann	Heimat und Welt [Home and World]	7/8	2005	Haupt- und Realschule
2	Westermann	Gesellschaft bewusst [Society aware]	9/10	2011	Gesamtschule
3	Westermann	Dierke Geographie [Dierke Geography]	9/10	2012	Gymnasium
4	Westermann	Dierke Erdkunde [Dierke Geography]	12/13	2002	Gymnasium
5	Schroedel	Stark in Gesellschaftslehre [Strong in Sociology]	7-9	2008	Förderschule
6	Schroedel	TRIO – Geschichte, Erdkunde, Politik [TRIO – History, Geography, Politics]	9/10	2010	Gesamtschule
7	Cornelsen	Entdecken und Verstehen 2 [Exploring and Understanding 2]	7/8	2009	Gesamtschule
7A	Cornelsen	Entdecken und Verstehen 2 [Exploring and Understanding 2, Additional Material]	7/8	2009	Gesamtschule

8	Cornelsen	Mensch und Raum, Geographie [Human and Space, Geography]	12/13	2002	Gymnasium
8A	Cornelsen	Mensch und Raum, Geographie, [Human and Space, Geography, Additional Material]	12/13	2002	Gymnasium
9	Klett	Terra Geographie [Terra Geography]	9/10	2011	Gymnasium
10	C.C.Buchner	Politik & Co. [Politics & Co.]	9/10	2005	Gymnasium
11	Buchverlag Kempen	Lernzirkel Afrika [Learning Circle Africa]	7-13	2000	All

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1   YouGov http://yougov.de/

2   http://www.zeit.de/kultur/literatur/2013-01/umfrage-neger-kinderbuecher

3   http://www.tns-emnid.com/index.asp

4   Civic, Social and Political Education

5   The terms ‚Black', ‚People of Color (POC)' and ‚White' define historically, politically and socially constructed groups, distinguished by their participation in political power and access to resources. Black and People of Color are at the same time political emancipatory concepts and are therefore capitalized.

6   Education in Germany is in the hands of the *Bundesländer* (federal states). This study was carried out at the University of Hamburg, which is a *Bundesland* on its own. Textbook publishers adapt their content to the respective federal curricula and issue parallel versions. Several textbooks from other *Bundesländer* have also been consulted; the representation of the discourses does not significantly differ from the books analysed here.

7   State Institute for Teacher Education and School Development (*Landesinstitut* für *Lehrerbildung und Schulentwicklung*) www.li.hamburg.de (May 16, 2015)

8   http://www.globales-lernen.de/Infozentrum/pdf/Lernkofferbroschuere.pdf (May 16, 2015)

9   All translations are from the authors.

10   http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EG.USE.PCAP.KG.OE (May 16, 2013)

11   http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_ecological_footprint (May 16, 2013)

12   2011 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count Report

13   Matrilineal society is based on „a principle of descent from an ancestress down through a series of female links (through daughter, daughter's daughter, etc.)
      Matrilocal society is one in which a married couple lives with or near the wife's matrilineal kinsmen.
      Avunculocal society is one in which a married couple lives with the mother's brother or other male matrilineal kinsmen of the husband. (M. D. Murphy, A Kinship Glossary: Symbols, Terms and Concepts,
      University of Alabama, http://anthropology.ua.edu/Faculty/murphy/436/kinship.htm (Nov 6, 2013))

14   http://www.afriprov.org/index.php/african-proverb-of-the-month/32-2006proverbs/224-april-2006-proverb-quntil-the-lion-has-his-or-her-own-storyteller-the-hunter-will-always-have-the-best-part-of-the-storyq-ewe-mina-benin-ghana-and-togo-.html

15   www.spiegel.de

16   Least Developed Countries, UN-jargon, 34 out of 48 are African countries http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Least_developed_country

17   However, Césaire (1972: 174) has already then pointed out that it took a genocide in which the victims were *White* to (gradually) convince Europeans and North Americans of the equality of all peoples. Earlier genocides committed against non-*White*s were clearly not sufficient.

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[18] German secondary education includes five parallel types of school – Gymnasium (highly selective, prepares students for higher academic education), Realschule (intermediate students, preparation for a vocational training), Hauptschule ("weak" students, prepares for blue collar jobs), Gesamtschule (combining all three school types, differentiated teaching) and Förderschule (students with disabilities).