POSTMODERN VALUES AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN SWITZERLAND

Bernhard ROTZER[1]
David HISCHIER[2]

Abstract

Cultural diversity is the norm and part of the social reality in Swiss classrooms. In this context, the authors are interested in how diversity is dealt with among young people in Switzerland and refer theoretically Zygmunt Bauman's concept of postomodernity. Previous youth studies concluded that postmodern values as social plurality, inclusion and individual fulfillment dominate among young people. Based on these data, this study explores the question of whether values in the sense of postmodernism are as firmly anchored among Swiss young people as they are among those in Germany. 36 high school students in a bilingual (German/French) school in Switzerland wrote about a person of their choice from the world of ethics and religion and their significance to the present day. Datum was analyzed inductively using Grounded Theory and categorically classified. The student texts exemplified postmodern values through categories such as the fight against racism and poverty, charity, and gender equality. The article concludes with a discussion of possible consequences for school and teaching.

Keywords: Postmodernity, Cultural Diversity, Youth Study, Educational Study, Values

1. From A Christian Switzerland To A Switzerland Of Diversity

After the *Sonderbund War*, which lasted for a short time, modern Switzerland was founded in 1848, when a federalist, democratic nation-state was established in a two-chamber system. Since confessional inadequacies played a considerable role in the *Sonderbund War*, the new federal constitution was to grant autonomy to the individual cantons in the matter of church sovereignty in order to preserve peace in the country. From time immemorial, the Swiss Confederation was Protestant and Catholic in its worldview (Maissen 200-204), which is why it was possible to speak of a Christian, differentiated culture. While many Swiss people were subjected to the peasant way of life until the middle of the 20th century and were not afraid of poverty, a change set in after the Second World War, which initially became noticeable with the economic upswing. From 1945 onwards, Switzerland experienced unprecedented economic prosperity, and in just four decades this small country developed from an agricultural country into a prosperous industrial nation. Due to the high demand for labor, by 1984 the proportion of foreigners had risen again to the level seen before the First World War, which had fallen in the meantime due to the two major wars (Reinhardt 451-454). With the economic upswing, social changes also came to the fore, which in the Western nations resulted in the 1968 movement and put the old "establishment" on the spot. The bourgeois

community of values and authoritarian paternalism were questioned by the younger generation, culminating in the introduction of women's suffrage in Switzerland in 1971 as a visible sign (Tanner 381-384).

At the beginning of the 21st century, social change led to a further heterogenization of the Swiss reality. While Swiss women stagnated in childbearing, the growth in the proportion of foreigners continued to increase, especially due to legal immigration. This resulted in 25 percent of the resident population without a Swiss passport residing in Switzerland in 2010. Among the working population, the share was even slightly above 30 percent. The total population increased by 1 million residents during the last 20 years, and thus Switzerland had 8.5 million residents in 2019. This increase led to a further heterogenization push due to ethnicity, language diversity and religious diversity. The Protestant denomination lost the most weight, while Catholics rose to become the largest religious group. The share of Muslims reached the 5 percent mark by 2019. The fastest-growing group, however, is among the religionless, whose share has risen from 11 percent to 29 percent over the past twenty years. These trends indicate that today in Switzerland, in addition to the pluralistic social reality, there are also secularization tendencies that go hand in hand with increasing individualization (Church, and Head 266-267). The secularization tendencies also lead to the breakup of middle-class family structures. In general, there are fewer marriages and "marriage for all" became socially acceptable, which was newly incorporated into the constitution. Out-of-wedlock births are becoming more common, and the number of patchwork families is on the rise. Although incomes have tended to grow, social equity has declined somewhat, with 7.5 percent, or about 650,000 people, of those living in Switzerland affected by relative poverty. The educational level of the population has risen steadily since the beginning of the 21st century. Presumably, in 20 years, half of the people living in Switzerland will have a university degree. This will lead to less well-qualified groups coming under further economic pressure. Digitalization has also led to increasing connectivity. Whereas only 10 percent of the population was online in 1997, today almost 100 percent of young people in Switzerland are anchored in the digital world (Church, and Head 268-269). This opens doors to the wider world and a further heterogenization of world views can be assumed.

While Switzerland was still dominated by a differentiated Christian society at the beginning of the 20th century, further social differentiation emerged from the second half of the same century onward, and the path from modernity to postmodernity can be traced well here. In Swiss classrooms today, as a subsystem of society, students with different cultural and social backgrounds come together and form heterogeneous class compositions[3]. Such social transformation processes lead to changes in collective identity formation. This is noticeable in the dissolution of traditional norm complexes and collective belonging mechanisms and reflected in the relativistic approach to questions of

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[3] In Switzerland, the public school system is the predominant type of school, which is why the demographic composition is socio-economically and culturally diverse.

values. Freedoms are open to the individual in this environment, and yet he or she cannot close himself or herself off from multiple collectives (Kraml, Sejdini, et al. 61-62). The social environment of the individual has a decisive effect on his value attitudes. Within the individual, his or her attitude toward his or her environment is expressed, while sociocultural conditions act as objective benchmarks on the individual (Seel and Hanke 518-519).

In the context of historical developments and the thesis that Swiss society and thus also young people consider heterogeneity as normality and norm, the present study will explore the question of how Swiss youth deal with diversity in a heterogeneous social reality. As theoretical foundation, Chapter 2 presents Zygmunt Bauman's theories of modernity and postmodernity, expanded with other sources. Subsequently, findings of previous studies from German-speaking countries on adolescents' values are analyzed (Chapter 3) in order to link them to Bauman's theory and to develop the research questions whether the humanistic values in the earlier studies are also anchored among Swiss adolescents and whether these values are postmodern or modern. Chapter 4 describes the research design, followed by the analyses of the empirical material with the findings (Chapter 5), which are then situated in an overall theoretical context in the concluding thoughts (Chapter 6). Finally, the article concludes with insights for teaching (Chapter 7).

2. Characteristics Of Modernity And Postmodernity

Postmodernity is preceded by modernity. In order to understand postmodernism, it is necessary to explain what modernism was and how it paved the way for postmodernism[4]. The typical characteristics of modernity included order, rationality, providence, and relative stability. These features led people in societies to live in stable norm complexes. This does not mean that modernity did not allow transformations, but that they took place in a linear and orderly manner. People who lived in the spirit of modernity were endowed with a stable personality and world view (Bauman, *Lasst alle Hoffnung auf Totalität fahren – Ihr, die ihr eintretet in die Welt der flüchtigen Moderne* 138-140). In modernity, people thought in terms of truth constellations and bodies of knowledge that had to be reconciled with reason. Of course, the claim of an assertion of one's own truth was given, in a hegemonic way to show others their untruths as well as ignorance and to lead them to the "right" way. A peaceful coexistence of different knowledge complexes was not to be thought of. The claim to hegemonic domination of one's own body of knowledge was the hallmark of modernity. Diversity was regarded as a chaotic condition. One's own complex of norms provided for a truth of order, and this truth was to be disseminated in a universal manner if possible. Ambivalence was not tolerated. From the very beginning, modernity was afflicted with the hegemonic form of rule, namely to

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[4] It is worth mentioning that Zygmunt Bauman is one possible reference for the definition of modernism and postmodernism. For the empirical study, the authors refer to this widely cited author as a matter of priority - despite all the limitations that go along with this.

assimilate social otherness and to impose universal, "true" norm complexes. The people of the modern age had to fear contingency. The condition of contingency meant living in uncertainty and discomfort. The recipe to break out of an ambivalent world of uncertainties was to adhere to binding norms and the negation of difference (Bauman, *Moderne und Ambivalenz* 365-369). However, the past shows that categorizing people within a territorial or organizational construct and differentiating them into "the us" or "the others" is problematic. This is because such categorizations fail to recognize social complexity, since there are always groups of people to be placed outside the constituted categories, which then stand in the way of a desired uniqueness. Since these dichotomous productions hide human realities, modernity itself remains a product of ambivalence (Bauman, *Vom Nutzen der Soziologie* 253-254).

This dictatorship of order led to the malaise of modernity. To limit the freedom of the individual in favor of an encapsulation from "the other" had its price. Giving up individual freedom for a supposed security finally led to the aversion of a constricting order[5]. Today, Western civilization is undergoing a process of deregulation. Submitting to the dictates of giving up personal freedom for a desired categorization is no longer accepted, even perceived as an attack on freedom (Bauman, *Unbehagen in der Postmoderne* 9-10). These days, in the Western world, "individual freedom occupies the highest rank, it is nowadays the value by which all other values are judged, and the yardstick by which the deeper meaning of all supra-individual rules and decisions can be discerned" (Bauman, *Unbehagen in der Postmoderne* 10)[6]. The value of freedom has become important. However, where freedom grows, uncertainties also grow. The value of security yielded to the value of freedom (Bauman, *Unbehagen in der Postmoderne* 11). In postmodernity, the values are reversed. If a universalism of uniformity belonged to the central value in modernity, it is now clearly rejected. Any tendency towards universalization with a cultural hierarchization to that effect is rejected. In postmodernism, the age of social plurality is now dawning (Zima 55-56). The main characteristic of postmodernism is the acceptance of diversity, in which not only pluralism is recognized as a social reality, but also great space is given to individualism (Zima 69). Functional differentiation over the decades contributed its share to the loosening of uniform social beliefs about how individuals should behave and how they should live. This differentiation has fostered the emergence of a heterogeneous worldview. Whereas in the modern era societies were held together by homogeneous values, now unifying norms are reduced to the relevant sub-areas. To assume that this weakens social cohesion is to be denied (Abels 174). From the ephemeral modernity, the people of today inherited the challenges of global scope. Especially the meta-problems cannot be addressed locally. Solutions can only be

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[5] In Europe, it was not until after the Second World War and the Cold War that an open society was established in which people could freely decide on their own religious and ideological convictions (Rutishauser 95-96).

[6] Quotations in the article have been translated from German into English by the authors. The original citations in German are given in the footnote in each case (but not for contributions from students). Original quotation: «die individuelle Freiheit den höchsten Rang ein, sie ist heutzutage der Wert, anhand dessen alle anderen Werte beurteilt werden, und das Richtmaβ, an dem der tiefere Sinn aller überindividuellen Regeln und Entscheidungen auszumachen ist»

found across countries, even across continents. Even the freedom to diversity can only prevail in the long run if it becomes a global political issue. As long as freedom is not a part of the social parquet in all parts of the world, it is not set in stone for all eternity in Europe either (Bauman, *Flüchtige Zeiten. Leben in der Ungewissheit* 42-43).

3. Prior Studies And Research Questions

The "SINUS Youth Study 2020" surveyed the values of German[7] young people between the ages of 14 and 17. In doing so, this study borrowed its definition of values from Schwartz and Bilsky, in which desirable ideas that are of lasting importance are expressed. Among the younger generation, binding social values such as family, altruism and tolerance are highly valued. The SINUS study refers to such values as anchor values, which are to be distinguished from peripheral, i.e. less important, values. In the study's universe of values, it is evident that a life in harmony is important for most young people in the universal values. Among these are the humanistic values, in which altruistic ideas such as tolerance and justice are at the top of the list. Young people from poorer backgrounds in particular show an interest in equal opportunities. But young people from better-off homes also express their solidarity and want to work for social justice in adult life (Calmbach, Flaig, et al. 30-35), as illustrated by a quote. "The first priority is equal rights for people and poverty of course (male, 15 years [...]"[8] (Calmbach, Flaig, et al. 34). The "Shell Youth Study 2019" also confirms the importance of tolerance among young people. It found that a large majority of young people support the acceptance of social diversity. In contrast to the SINUS study, the Shell study differentiates between young people with and without a migration background. It is evident that cultural diversity is accepted by most young people (*Shell Youth Study* 24).

The two studies mentioned above showed that, contrary to modernity, in which a universal truth claimed hegemony and did not allow for ambivalences, youth, in the spirit of postmodernity, opposes any homogeneous universalizing tendencies and instead focuses on social plurality and individual self-realization. Based on these facts, the authors hypothesize that young people in Switzerland have also embraced postmodern thought. The following questions can be derived from this:

- Are humanistic values in the sense of postmodernism as firmly anchored among Swiss young people as shown in the SINUS Youth Study?
- And are young people interested in the postmodern values of social plurality, or are there constructs of modernity among young people in which social homogeneity is advocated and certain groups are excluded?

4. Research Design

36 school assignments of 16- and 17-year-old adolescents from the years 2020 and

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7 The authors are not aware of any similar studies from Switzerland, so they rely on studies from Germany.
8 Original quotation: «An erster Stelle steht die Gleichberechtigung der Menschen und die Armut natürlich (männlich, 15 Jahre [⋯]»

2021 were analyzed in a bilingual school (German/French) in Switzerland[9]. The students were given the task of writing a text about a person of their choice from the world of ethics and religions in history or the present. They had to place special focus on the thought and action and at the end justify what influence the chosen person can have in the 21st century. The question was formulated as openly as possible to allow the participants to think broadly for exploratory research. The data were analyzed inductively using grounded theory according to Anselm Strauss and categorized through an iterative process (Hildenbrand 32-42) in order to bundle findings on postmodern values. In the coming chapters, the empirical data will be written up and evaluated with the help of the categories that have emerged. Due to the quantity of texts evaluated, the final research results of this research paper would have to be verified with further data.

Table 1: Demographic data of the sample[10]:

Characteristics	School assignments
Total	*36*
Gender	
Male	8
Female	28
Language	
German	14
French	22

5. Important Personalities And Categories As Seen By The Adolescents

In this chapter, the data will be presented and interpreted. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the students were asked to describe, in addition to the curriculum vitae of a well-known personality in religion or ethics, the motivations for their choice as well as what they considered to be the important messages of the chosen person. From a research methodological point of view, the motivations and partly the messages were of primary relevance, since the personal opinions and interpretations of the learners were evident in these text passages.

After an overview of the sample and the chosen topics (Chapter 5.1), the inductively developed categories are presented and discussed (Chapter 5.2). The chapter concludes with a review of the research question and its relation to postmodern theory (Chapter 5.3).

5.1 Selection of persons and topics

Due to the task setting, with 21 texts, well-known personalities from religion were chosen as the majority. Religious figures are diverse with the exception of Mother Teresa

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9 The school is basically bilingual and enables a research setting of a cultural diversity.

10 The existing student lists only indicate gender and mother language.

(4 texts), the Dalai-Lama (3 texts), and Pope Francis and Moses (2 texts each). Christian protagonists predominate the sample. In addition to individual documents that can be assigned to mythology and philosophy, persons from politics are in second place, whereby the majority of them can be described as activists. In the area of politics and related political activism, individuals from the civil rights movements in the United States predominate. With four texts each, Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks were described the most. Another person portrayed in more than one text was Nelson Mandela (2 texts).

Contrary to the possible expectation that religious teachings and messages predominate, the data showed that political deeds and messages not only predominated among activists such as Martin Luther King or Rosa Parks, but also among figures from religion, philosophy, or mythology. The topic most mentioned by the young people was racism or the fight against it (12 texts). In second place came 11 texts that focus on helping people in need (category charity). This refers to various forms of aid, such as support for the poor, victims of war or the environment, the sick or the elderly. In five texts, the young people described feminism or women's rights as a motivation for the choice. 12 texts were assigned to the "other" category because they were either single-issue responses or, from the youth's perspective, no obvious reasons for the choice or important messages could be discerned. Some personalities were associated with several core topics.

Figure 1: Mentioned categories
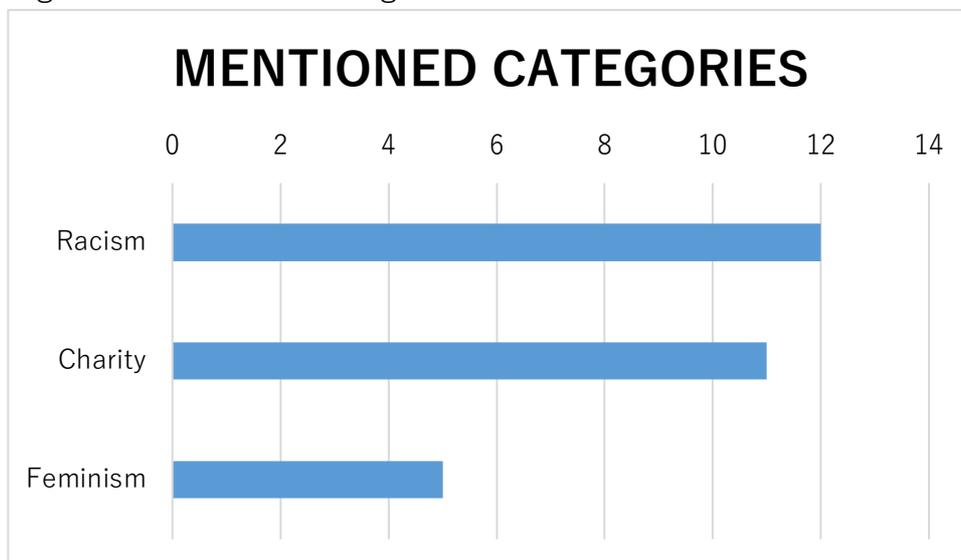
5.2 Diversity, Justice And Altruism As Core Topics For Adolescents In Ethics Lessons.

The quantitative analysis clearly showed that the topics "racism" and "charity" predominate. Followed by "feminism". The generated categories indicate that the personalities mentioned were for the most part mentioned in connection with supporting other people. More precisely, and drawing on postmodern theory, diversity and

individuality, as well as advocacy for minorities, seem to be a major concern for young people. The categories are described below.

> Racism: The personalities described in connection with racism were each placed in their historical context. It should be emphasized that the young people appreciate and admire the courage, tireless struggle and commitment to the disadvantaged: "I think it is courageous that Martin Luther King fought strongly against racial hostility. I admire him for wanting to show people that all people are equal" (T_19). In addition to the historical facts and the admiration for them, personalities such as Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks and Nelson Mandela were mostly referred to in terms of actuality. It is important to the young people that they stand up for equality today and that inequalities, for example between People of Color (PoC) and whites, still exist. Accordingly, concrete examples such as the death of George Floyd and the "Black Lives Matter" movement can be found in the texts. However, the young people not only refer to the problems that are still evident, but also show how the situation has improved since the movements in the U.S. or South Africa and that the personalities described have had and continue to have a great influence on today's more hopeful situation: "She [Rosa Parks] would think that there is still a long way to go, but it is positive, and Rosa Parks would be proud of the fact that she literally changed the way things are seen, especially in relation to black people" (T_05). In addition to Barack Obama as a contemporary person, Aristotle was mentioned in relation to this category. This is interesting because this exemplifies that racism causes significant consternation for individual youth, that it is also associated with figures who primarily spread other ideas and teachings. In the case of Aristotle, his influence on other individuals such as Nelson Mandela is described "Among the people who were inspired by him, there was Nelson Mandela, among others, who used some quotes from Aristotle in some speeches, but he is not the only one. There were also physicists, mathematicians, natural scientists, people who fought against racism or homophobia, and of course ethicists and philosophers" (T_07).

Among the most important protagonists on the racism debate were Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, and Nelson Mandela. But who were these personalities? Rosa Parks (1913 - 2005) campaigned for equal rights for African-Americans in the USA and played a major role in the anti-discrimination protests. Public space in the U.S. was permeated with racial segregation. When Parks refused to give up her seat to a white man on a bus, she was arrested by the police. Together with Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks spearheaded the boycott movement in Montgomery, where public spaces were used to protest segregation. The protest movement was peaceful. The activist achieved her goal when racial discrimination was outlawed by law in 1964 (Woodward 66). Her fellow activist

Martin Luther King Junior (1929 - 1968) gained notoriety beyond the United States as a pastor and civil rights activist as he advocated for equal rights for African Americans. King participated as an activist in peaceful protest marches and was shot in Memphis in 1968 (Thörner, and Hellmeier 158-159). People in South Africa also had to deal with the race issue. Nelson Mandela (1918 - 2013) was one of the founders of the ANC Youth League, which opposed apartheid. In South Africa, apartheid laws ensured that people were segregated by skin color in public life. To oppose these laws and secure equal laws for dark-skinned South Africans, Mandela led peaceful protests, but police violence erupted in 1960. Mandela was arrested several times and served 27 years in prison. He was only freed when apartheid was abolished. Nelson Mandela went down in history as the first black president of South Africa and received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993 (Woodward 58-59). In the samples, among other things, Mandela's ideas were related to the thought processes of Aristotle. Aristotle (384 BC - 322 BC) is one of the most important Greek philosophers, along with Socrates and Plato, and went down in history as an empiricist and polymath (Spierling 71-72).

Even though the Dalai Lama was not mentioned in the above-mentioned code, he is still one of the formative personalities among the students who stand up against social oppression in Tibet. Tenzin Gyatso (1935*) (Dalai Lama 9) is recognized by Tibetan Buddhists as the 14th Dalai Lama. After the takeover of China, the Dalai Lama left his native Tibet and has lived in Dharamsala, India since 1959. Today, the Dalai Lama is one of the most internationally respected personalities, as he is committed to a peaceful solution of the Tibet conflict and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for this in 1989 (Bowker 220-221). Moses can also be assigned to a similar category. Moses belongs to the outstanding figures of the Pentateuch, or the Old Testament. According to biblical tradition, Moses was brought up in the Egyptian traditions, but originally belonged to the Hebrews. Moses led the Hebrews out of Egyptian captivity and received the Decalogue from Yahweh (Flowers, Miller, and Robinson 298-308).

- Charity: In this category, the name Mother Teresa stands out. The young people describe her work in the fight against poverty and her influence mostly in detail. In addition to this descriptive aspect, it is of particular interest that they explain Mother Teresa's role model function and relate their own values and concerns to her: "I also recognize myself in her values, and I think the life and deeds she accomplished are wonderful" (T_17) or "Finally, I would like to say that in my opinion Mother Teresa was a very good person and is a role model to follow" (T_09). In addition to Mother Teresa, the descriptions, attributions and the own consternation are also of a similar kind with other Christian personalities, for example in texts about Pope Francis, Pierre Abbé, Elizabeth of Hungary or Zacchaeus. The importance of solidarity and altruism is exemplified by a quote about Elizabeth of Hungary:

"This touched me very much, because I would like to help the poor when I grow up. I would like to go to another country to help people who really need it. I think it is very important, and we need more people like Elisabeth" (T_03). This putting oneself aside for the benefit of others was also mentioned in relation to Buddha. Two young people chose Michelle and Barack Obama, more current persons who exemplify humanistic values through their political influence and act accordingly. Common to all texts is that equality between people is strived for and disadvantaged people should be helped. In the view of the young people, these humanistic values should be pursued globally. Accordingly, students chose quotes from the well-known personalities to show the message of equality and equity, as in Barack Obama "We are all equal!" (T_28) or Pierre Abbé "We must fight against injustice in our society!" (T_32).

In addition to Mother Teresa, Pope Francis and Abbé Pierre were also mentioned in particular. With Mother Teresa (1910 - 1997), the young people were interested in a nun who went down in history as the angel of the poor. Mother Teresa became known through her work in Calcutta, India. There she dedicated herself to the poorest of the poor and cared for the dying. Over time, more and more nuns joined her until finally the order of the "Missionaries of Charity" could be founded. Mother Teresa founded schools and orphanages all over the world. Today her order is active in over 100 countries. Mother Teresa received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 (Halligan 58-59). With Pope Francis, the young people identified with another person whose focus is on poverty alleviation. Jorge Mario Bergoglio saw the light of day in Buenos Aires in 1936 and was the first Latin American and Jesuit to be elected pope. He took the name Francis and (Biallowons 72-73) is particularly committed to the poor and the environment in his pontificate (ibid., p. 99). The French-speaking young people kept mentioning Abbé Pierre. Henri Antoine Grouès (1912 - 2007) gained fame in France as a monk named Abbé Pierre. In 1949, he founded the Emmaus charity, which helped the homeless. Especially in the cold winter of 1954, Abbé Pierre stood up for the poor in France by protecting them from freezing to death through political aid ("fondation-abbe-pierre").

- <u>Feminism</u>: Feminism was addressed in five texts and is an interesting category for two reasons. First, it was associated with figures not necessarily associated with women's rights. Second, there is a strong personal connection to the topic in several texts and passages.

  1): With Gisèle Halimi and Emmeline Pankhurst, two well-known representatives of feminism were chosen. Names like Rosa Parks, Eva and Aphrodite are also mentioned. A closer look at the three personalities shows the many reasons for choosing these women in connection with feminism. In the text of Rosa Parks, as expected, racism is central to the description and argument. In addition,

however, her role as a woman in a patriarchal society and her influence on posterity is described: "I chose this person because, first of all, she was a woman and women were not very respected in her time. Also, she was of color and eventually contributed to the struggle for gender equality" (T_20). In the case of Eve from the biblical narrative, a critique of the interpretation of religious scriptures and misogynistic tendencies of religious background (cf. on this, for example, de Beauvoir, 1968; Holland, 2007) is implicitly recognizable, since, according to the author, "at no point in the text, in the Bible [is it written] that the man may or must dominate the woman", but "on the contrary, in this story God says that women and men are equal and partners" (T_21). Accordingly, Genesis is understood as feminist scripture and contemporary. The argumentation in the text of Aphrodite includes emancipatory and self-empowering thoughts: "Aphrodite's message is that women are important and do what they want. [...] I think she is an incredible woman with character who dares to assert herself" (T_29).

2): Emmeline Pankhurst and Gisèle Halimi are described as figures of identification and are meant to inspire and motivate women alive today to act and show solidarity with one another. In both texts, this is evident through the description of the well-known women as trailblazers for a movement that young people personally should and want to pursue despite opposition in society: "Gisèle Halimi's final message to women: 'Organize, mobilize, be in solidarity,' by saying this, she makes us understand that we women need to support each other. We are not doing it enough" (T_16). In Emmeline Pankhurst's case, the influence on the student's biography is even more evident: "Emmeline Pankhurst inspired me to stand up against injustice, and thanks to her and the other women who were brave enough not to let it happen, I feel strong enough to fight against sexism, which unfortunately is still present today" (T_08).

Emmeline Pankhurst and Gisèle Halimi were two women with names that have achieved a particular level of recognition among young people. But who were these individuals? Emmeline Pankhurst (1858 - 1928) campaigned for women's suffrage in England. Pankhurst worked with the Women's Franchise League for women's rights. However, because the Women's Franchise League wanted to deny rights to married women, Pankhurst separated from this organization. After her husband's death, Pankhurst continued the fight for equal rights on her own, founding the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in 1904. This women's movement drew attention to itself through public protests and behavior contrary to the law. Pankhurst also did not shy away from violent actions. In 1918, the British Parliament granted wealthy women the right to vote, which was finally granted to all in 1928 (Woodward 45). Further, a second woman, Gisèle Halimi, gained beach suffrage. Gisèle Halimi (1927 - 2020) was a French lawyer who advocated for women's rights. Halimi was a member of the Russel Tribunal, which investigated war crimes during the Vietnam War. Along with Simone de Beauvoir, she founded "Choisir," a group interested in women's rights. Halimi was a proponent of

abortion ("de-academic").

5.3 Postmodern Values

The hypothesis guiding the research led us to the question of whether the young people correspond to the values of a postmodern society in their selection and description of personalities. On the one hand, there are concerns of diversity and equality with racism, and feminism. The youth relate minority protections and activism to the 21st century and their own lives, repeatedly describing the importance of equality and equity. Diversity is upheld as a global and personal value and should be pursued according to the prominent trailblazers present and future. While homogeneous universalization tendencies were discourse-determining in modernity, according to Bauman social plurality is one, if not the core of postmodernity. The second largest category, "charity," follows these postmodern tendencies, because with plurality, ambivalences are also possible and desirable, and those who are "other" from a modern perspective are now no longer merely tolerated, but integrated into society in solidarity (Bauman, *Vom Nutzen der Soziologie)*. Accordingly, the admiration for altruistic and solidary deeds seamlessly connects to the global values of equality and equity described in the section at the beginning. The hypothesis can thus be confirmed - with all research methodological limitations.

The explorative approach to the data with grounded theory as the methodological basis revealed, in addition to the actual interest in the study on the part of the young people, a strong interest in altruistic action, be it with regard to the fight against racism, feminism or charity. Therefore, in the final chapter, this notion will be discussed with the data.

6. Final Thoughts About Postmodern Values

Isabel Wilkerson in her book "Caste" talks about the existence of inequalities established by artificially constructed caste systems in which one group is considered superior to another or more groups. These groups had immutable characteristics such as ancestry and also other markers through which the superior group could and can be hierarchically favored. Such systems make use of immutable and arbitrary demarcations to separate the privileged group from the others. Such hierarchical systems can be justified by sacred writings of divine provenance or also by the natural law in cultural transmission through generations and can endure. Thus, Wilkerson also mentioned the Nazi regime, which efficiently superimposed one group over the others (Wilkerson 17) and from which Bauman's thinking on modernity vs. postmodernity was significantly influenced. Even though postmodern thinking about diversity has made its way through occidental societies in the 21st century, the appeal of social uniformity is not a thing of the past (Bauman, *Moderne und Ambivalenz* 402).

However, this study showed that Swiss young people accept social heterogeneity and, where it is not tolerated, even demand it. For example, the young people referred to

Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks or Nelson Mandela, among others, who fought racism in their lives and stood up for equal rights regardless of skin color. Further, the students were interested in the fight against poverty. Social justice was an important component and through Mother Theresa or Pope Francis, the young people showed their appreciation to support the socially disadvantaged. In addition, feminism highlighted women's equality as an important issue, using Emmeline Pankhurst or Gisèle Halimi, among others, as important figures who advanced women's interests. These representations reveal a postmodern mindset among young people that embraces universal diversity and does not stop at nations or cultures. "Postmodernism is incapable of exclusion. Having excluded borders, it must necessarily include and incorporate modernity into the very diversity that is its distinguishing characteristic. It cannot refuse admission lest it lose its identity"[11] (Bauman, *Moderne und Ambivalenz* 403). According to Bauman, postmodernism, with its diversity, must even include uniformity in order not to degenerate into a product of ambivalence. Horn's train of thought on the principle of justice can also be included in postmodernism, in that individual persons and groups of persons, behaviors, attitudes, opinions, political conditions and economic as well as social forms must be taken into account (Horn 30). Young people advocate a freedom that allows the individual to break free from social constraints. However, this freedom does not represent static boundaries. On the contrary. It is not subject to change, but should not be subject to arbitrariness by restricting the freedom of others. Postmodernism places the responsibility on man to take life into his own hands with freedom and to deal with it constructively (Rutishauser 95).

Returning to the question of this research paper, whether Swiss young people are interested in postmodern values can be answered positively after analysing the data. However, it must be pointed out here (Table 1) that the majority of the test persons were young women and therefore interests such as women's rights were decisive. With all indications of the results, further studies would have to follow to confirm the theses. The small sample in this paper and the socio-demographic composition of the participants allow for tendencies regarding the values of Swiss young people, but these would still have to be ascertained in a large-scale, nationwide quantitative study. Another desideratum would be to compare this study, conducted in a westernised cultural area, with data from other geographical parts of the world.

7. Conclusions For Teaching

A majority of young people are in favor of accepting societal diversity. That societies are heterogeneous is nothing new. However, globalization and migration movements lead to an obvious show of cultural and linguistic heterogeneity in geographical spaces.

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[11] «Die Postmoderne ist zur Ausschliessung unfähig. Nachdem sie Grenzen ausgegrenzt hat, muss sie zwangsläufig die Moderne in genau die Diversität einschliessen und einverleiben, die ihr unterscheidendes Merkmal ist. Sie kann die Zulassung nicht verweigern, damit sie ihre Identität nicht verliert»

Pedagogy, too, cannot close its eyes to these developments and must see social diversity as an opportunity and allow students with their different cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in the school system on an equal footing. In this context, the school must focus on inclusion, in which social diversity is recognized without separating the different groups. All students, regardless of their cultural background, must be included in the school system in the same way. This process of inclusion, by involving here the school as a social subsystem, carries an iterative character and will finally never be completed (Georgi, and Keküllüoğlu 43-44).

In this social reality, the authors consider the approach of intercultural learning as a way to face diversity in the classroom. In doing so, culture is understood as a set of human-created norm complexes that are changeable. These complexes of norms include, among other things, the ways of life of a society. They also include religions, which can be categorized as a subset of the respective society. Intercultural learning emphasizes concrete lessons on cultural comparison. Intercultural competence is demonstrated by the individual's ability to navigate different cultures with ease. In an intercultural education, teachers perceive a social diversity and succeed in involving individual children and adolescents in everyday school life, regardless of their cultural background. However, the starting point for intercultural education lies in the self-reflection of one's own norms and cultural characteristics (Leimgruber 19-20).

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