

**Report on workshops being part of an international conference:**

**"How to talk about the Righteous?"**

**Representations in culture, importance in education?**

**POLIN, 25–26 October 2018**

**Workshops by Jakub Niewiński**

**Workshop title:**

**"What would you do if you found a Jew in your place?"**

**Antidiscrimination workshops based on stories of (not) rescuing and the onlooker effect.**

**\* title of a chapter of Anna Bikont's book, *Sendlerowa w ukryciu*, 2017.**

**Introduction to the workshops:**

**two-hour provocative therapy with the participation of Bikont (*Sendlerowa w ukryciu*), Engelking (*Dalej jest noc*), Gross (*Sąsiedzi / Neighbors*), Lanzmann (*Shoah*), Perechodnik (*Spowiedź*) ended with an experiment and an examination on empathy. Actively around (not) rescuing during the Holocaust. We will wonder together how it was/is to be an onlooker yesterday and today? Indonesia. Cambodia. Ruanda. Srebrenica... Different narratives and (in)consistent points of view.**

**Opinions of the participants about the workshops:**

*Thank you again for the opportunity to participate in your workshops. I took away a lot from them, and I will use the acquired knowledge in my everyday work. The exercises and good practices that you proposed will inspire me to introduce new elements during the course of my workshops. My friend Basia whom I, speaking colloquially, "forced in" the next day to your workshops, was also delighted.*

**Kasia Gołubiew**

*Thank you very much for moments of emotion - I cried a lot during the movies about empathy - Krosno. Thank you for the stories with which we worked in groups - JEHOZUA. I AM GRATEFUL for showing a great method at the start and for the energy!!! I envy the students for having such a teacher.*

**Barbara Szczepaniak**

*Last Saturday I took part in your workshop. I will say it straight from the beginning that I liked them a lot and they have straightened out quite a lot in my thinking about work with students.*

**Jakub Jaskółowski**

***Thank you for an interesting workshop and info on the Leaders School, I will remember about it and I will check on this year's edition.***

**Arkadiusz Zaborowski**

**Workshop plan:**

The workshops were conducted using activation methods. The participants worked in small groups with source texts - fragments of *Sendlerowa w ukryciu* by Anna Bikont, *Dalej jest noc (...)* by Barbara Engelking, *Neighbors* by Jan Tomasz Grass, *Spowiedź* by Catech Perechodnik. Throughout the workshops, each participant could make a "freeze-frame" and analyze a given fragment from the metalevel, how to use a given part of the classes in teacher's work.

1. At the beginning of the classes, the participants were asked for a short internal dialogue according to the following questions, ending with a loud answer to the last task:

- **How did you pass yesterday and today's forenoon?**
- **How are you feeling at this moment? Name at least two emotions**
- **What do you need now?**
- **What would you like to do for the next 2 hours?**
- **Please, choose one feeling/emotion or one need and briefly tell us about it according to the pattern: name + emotion or need (others with a similar emotion or need join in)**

2. The way of forming small groups was important: each participant in the workshop drew a card with the name of the rescuer(man)/rescuer(woman) or/and the person rescued. The names were repeated three times and those who drew the same name formed one group of three. Thanks to this simple activity, we called out Hebrew and Polish names from oblivion. For a moment we were thinking about the meaning of some of them: CHAIM is LIFE after all.

The texts of **Bikont**, **Engelking**, **Gross**, and **Perechodnik** were analyzed according to the following questions:

1. **OBSERVATION (facts): What is happening?**
2. **FEELINGS (emotions): What does each particular person feel?**
3. **ATTITUDES: What attitudes are represented by each person?**
4. **NEEDS: What do they need?**

After finishing working in groups the participants returned to the circle and the next part of the workshops began. The leader using A4-sized pages he showed different emotions, attitudes, needs, and values (e.g. COURAGE, FEAR, HATE, EMPATHY). Those groups that saw in their texts each emotion, attitude, value, or need, would comment their presence in the texts they read. During this fragment of the classes there was an interesting discussion on the possibility of using the theme with the values and needs during a homeroom class. Starting with student hierarchy of values it would be possible to discuss the values and attitudes present during World War II.

3. The next element of the workshops was a discussion about two fragments of **Lanzmann's Shoah**: an interview with a German woman- a resident of Chełmno nad Nerem who spoke about the difference between Poles and Jews and discussions with Polish women - inhabitants of the Polish countryside - about their Jewish neighbors. Both very strong texts encouraged to talk about how they can be included in education about the Righteous and the possibility of colliding them with sources analyzed previously. During the discussion, the lecturer recalled Michał Bilewicz's latest research published in the September "Krytyka Polityczna" entitled **Między idealizacją a hiperkrytycyzmem. Polska niepamięć historyczna i jej źródła**.

4. The key element of the workshops was the simulation exercises around the effect of the gawker/witness/onlooker/dispersment of responsibility (bystander effect) ended with a discussion on slacktivism and bullying. The exercise was the starting point to look at other crimes against humanity and different attitudes towards victims. The leader used materials collected by **CENTROPA** (project "Survival in Sarajevo - when friends help friends": Muslims help their Jewish neighbors), **SHOAH FOUNDATION** (accounts of Tutsi saved by Hutu). At the end, the participants listened to a conversation with a young Muslim from Paris - **Lassan Bathilly**, an employee of a kosher shop who in 2015 saved a group of Jewish clients from the assassin (he said he did what he had to do and praised France as a country that appreciates freedom of every citizen; Michael - a French volunteer at the POLIN Museum, (who had a different opinion on this subject, participated in the workshops). We discussed the opportunities and threats of recalling modern genocide cases and other dramatic contemporary events in the context of the Holocaust. The participants of the workshops concluded that in the education of young people, the past should be used to talk about the present, not equating other crimes with the Holocaust. The discussion ended with the presentation of a social experiment from Krosno, July 2018:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05etmeVv0i0>

5. The last important voice during the workshops was a fragment of a speech by Roman Kent who in 2015 during the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the liberation of

Auschwitz said that you can never remain an indifferent onlooker.

The workshops ended with a short evaluation of the entire meeting carried out according to the model:

**I have learned ...**

**I have understood ...**

**I was surprised ...**

**I have begun to wonder ...**