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Post-migrant voices at times of hyper-visibility[1]

Vozes pós-migrantes em tempos de hipervisibilidade

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Abstract: At times of medialization, there is a low threshold for producing media content. A plethora of media productions have arisen where immigrants and their descendants create addressable spaces. The challenge for today's marginalized communities is not necessarily being denied a communication channel but rather an audience that listens. This article explores how post-migrant voices, consisting of an example from a German podcast, are made relevant in the public sphere by looking at connecting communications from corporate media. Considering the news media logic is a successful strategy to get attention from legacy media. The podcasts' treatment of the topic of racism offers connectivity possibilities in terms of novelty, proximity, conflict, and personalization. The podcast also functions as a rich source for corporate media.

Keywords: Migrant media, podcast, news media logic, racism

Before the Internet, we only had a few transmitters and many receivers, while today we have many transmitters and many receivers. "Everyone can send anything or almost everyone can send almost anything" (Nassehi 2020, 276).

In our project about post-migrant voices,[3] we have observed that a plethora of media productions have arisen where migrants create addressable spaces. These

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productions build on the idea that immigrants and their descendants should make their own content, that is, they have editorial control and tell their own stories purposefully and intentionally. In this way, the web can bring people together who would otherwise remain apart.

At times of mediatization, however, the challenge is not necessarily being denied a voice on the Internet but rather an audience that listens/follows. In the medial pursuit of "hyper-visibility" (Georgiou 2022), we can here speak of a "crisis of listening" (Macnamara 2016).

I argue that migrant voices only matter in society when they are listened to and get a response from, above all, corporate media and with that go beyond their discursive borders. Corporate media still play an important role because they expose their messages to a larger public. However, their "listening" is highly selective and based on their own mode of operations (Luhmann 1995/1984). Because post-migrant media operate in the periphery of the media landscape, they are hardly noticed by mainstream media in contrast to other corporate media or in contrast to the political and economic system, which is covered to a greater extent (Graf 2009). The question is then how it is possible for them to recognize and react to a media production from the periphery.

The article explores how post-migrant voices, using a podcast as an example, are made relevant in the public sphere by looking at connecting communications, where connecting communications refers to how corporate (mainstream) media react to this explored media production.

First, I explore the topics of my example of media productions by migrants because they represent what can be, according to the producers, of interest to the public. I moreover focus on the podcast medium because it has been growing in popularity due to its low technological and (financial) barrier to entry and the large number of

[3] This comprises a three-year research project called "Post-migrant voices in the Baltic Sea region (Sweden, Germany, Estonia)" financed by the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies in Sweden (2021-2023).

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opportunities it provides. Second, I look at the reactions from corporate media that in some way mention this production.

1. Podcasting

The year 2019 is seen as the beginning of "the era of Big Podcasting", when big companies such as Spotify and Apple began acquiring podcast studios and publishing platforms. Both are now leading global podcast publishers (Quah 2019). On the audience side, the wider adoption of smartphones makes it easier to listen to podcasts, even "on the go". That is why, when looking for migrant voices, it was not surprising to find many different podcasts produced by the group I am interested in.

However, as Vrikki and Malik (2019, 274) argue, it is not only the technology but also the urge to speak out, to address issues that usually are marginalized in mainstream media. With its do-it-yourself approach, the podcast medium is "as an open platform for communication" and more specifically "an extension of the everyday discussions between the hosts", where they "can explore issues that interest or concern them." (Vrikki & Malik, 2019, 285). By powerfully using the narrative forms of oral storytelling, the lines between entertainment, information, criticism, and activism are blurred. Usually, the conversations between two or more people are pre-recorded.

As Markman (2012) has shown, podcast producers are motivated primarily by voicing the self and their community. Here, the medium makes it possible to narrate complicated stories in a subjective and comprehensible way and therefore reach new target groups (Schütz 2020). By means of intimacy and authenticity as vital ingredients of podcasting (Fox et al. 2020), the hosts often give insight into their personal experiences and views. Llinares (2018), in his study about African American broadcasting, speaks of a "liminal praxis" (p. 125), which according to Fox et al. can be seen as an "in-between space that creates a new 'aural culture'" that critiques mainstream media through defining "the issue of 'Black Excellence' on their own terms" (Fox et. al 2020, 306).

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As Lundström & Lundström (2021) argue, podcasts are for participation with the audience because "connections are frequently made to the perceived audience, either in mentions or by inviting them as guests" (p. 291). The relation to the audience is crucial because podcast is a "pull"-medium (Berry 2016, 12), meaning that the audience actively selects the podcast content, in contrast to a program on a radio station. By stimulating a participation culture, where discussions are expanded or deepened on other platforms such as Instagram and Facebook, the relationship to the listeners is maintained.

A strong motivation to start podcasting is the urge to remain autonomous in production, that is, be independent of public service media and commercial forces as well as fixed broadcasting slots (Berg 2021). At first sight, it seems relatively easy to produce audio files, and it is also inexpensive to publish. Hence, independence can easily be achieved. However, it takes time to develop a qualitative product that attracts listeners. Furthermore, many unpaid hours are needed to keep a podcast serial running. Without funding, it will be difficult to continue (Berg 2021). As a result, independent podcasts often have relatively short lifespans.

2. The example of the German podcast "Kanackische Welle"

I have chosen a podcast that has proved to be influential in the public sphere insofar as it has gained mainstream media attention and some awards. The podcast, named "Kanackische Welle", started in 2018 and was recorded twice a month as produced independently. As of May 2021, the hosts have entered into a partnership with "Funk", a media content platform run by the German public-service broadcaster ARD and ZDF, which supports media productions that target a younger audience (aged between 14 and 29). Although an independent production in the beginning, the producers decided to accept the public-service broadcaster's offer in order to make continuous production affordable. Before the partnership, the episodes appeared more irregularly. Up until February 2021, 39 episodes were produced lasting about 1.5 hours

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each. Since then, together with "Funk", 21 new episodes have been published. The last episode is from December 30th, 2021. There is no goodbye episode, as before; rather, it is only mentioned that the episode in December is the last of the season. While it was indicated in this last episode that they would take a short break before continuing, no episode was published in 2022. Neither producers have agreed to be interviewed, so it is unclear why the production abruptly ended.

The name of this podcast is controversial. As the producers say: "The word 'Kanake' originally had a negative connotation, but we are trying to reinterpret it. Because there are a lot of positive properties that go hand in hand with it" (Abendzeitung München 14.1020). The made up word "Kanackische" is an adjective based on the substantive "Kanake", that is, wog, meaning "wog's broadcasting". To mark the reinterpretation, they have chosen to spell the negatively-connoted word "Kanake" as "Kanacke", which does not change the pronunciation. They advertise their product as follows:

> "Kanackische Welle is THE podcast for identity in Germany, a country of immigration. Twice a month the focus is on pop culture, racism, sexuality, sport, music, or gender from a post-migrant perspective. Easily understandable and yet valuable!" (https://kanackischewelle.podigee.io)

They themselves describe their podcast as

> "funny and entertaining, but still able to talk about identity in a smart way. And here especially racial identity, that is, your ethnic and cultural origin and also your phenotype, how you look and what it does to you." (https://kanackischewelle.podigee.io).

The overall topic of Kanackische Welle is about how to live in a post-migrant society from the perspective of being a German citizen with non-German ethnic background. It is about personal experiences, including those of the invited guests, as well as expert knowledge to deepen the discussed issues. The issue of racism in society is a recurring topic: Over half of the episodes deals with it as the main topic.

The target group is the younger generation, both with and without migrant backgrounds. About their listeners, the hosts say:

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> "Among our 'wellis', as we call our listeners, are the 23-year-old bank employee with Sicilian parents, the 35-year-old white mom who has a brown child with her Tamil husband, or the German-Turkish medical student from the working class, who can't cope with all snobbisms at his university" (Ohanwe & Aburakia 2020).

2.1 Who are the media producers?

The producers and primary speakers in the podcast are two trained journalists with backgrounds in Palestine and Nigeria. They were born in Germany, 2nd and 3rd generation immigrants, and both have a Palestinian parent. They describe themselves as "coming from disadvantaged areas" (Ohanwe in Krone 2020) and having many experiences of belonging to a marginalized group of people with migration backgrounds. However, this has not hindered them from entering higher education. Malcolm Ohanwe (born 1993) has studied language and literature and specialized in music journalism. Marcel Aburakia (born 1995) studied journalism and specialized in sports journalism. Both have worked for public-service and private media, Ohanwe, for example, as a political correspondent from Nigeria for the English-language program of Deutsche Welle. Aburakia has worked as a freelancer for several sport channels and public-service broadcaster covering sports events. Aburakia now has a full-time job at the public-service broadcaster Deutsche Welle and Ohanwe at the German public broadcaster ZDF, where he hosts another podcast "Sack Reis" focusing on race, religion, feminism as funded by the public service broadcaster, SWR. In October 2020, they started their own biweekly column in the "Jetzt-Magazin" of the daily Süddeutsche Zeitung.

The two met during an internship at Bayrischer Rundfunk, a public-service broadcaster. Regarding working within mainstream media, they both

> "quickly agreed that being marked as 'foreign' and working in German newsrooms can be a torture, that we can't get many topics accepted. We are underestimated or misjudged and can never really play along" (Ohanwe & Aburakia 2020).

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Because of the urge to be a voice that is listened to, and to gain recognition as competent journalists, they decided to start a podcast together.

Having experience of journalistic work and knowledge of how to treat issues in a professional way supplied the potential to gain recognition in the public sphere, which was of great advantage. Also, their social connections are not to be underestimated, as Ohanwe bluntly points out:

> "If I hadn't been a person with this Bavarian broadcasting background, then neither of us would be perceived as producing an intellectually valuable program. And because I had access to these worlds and to these people and an editor-in-chief of a respected journal follows me on Twitter, then it comes to her attention. But many other podcasters and products from people who, like us, come from socially disadvantaged areas, from the lower class or from migrant working-class parents, who may make just good content, but they do not have this access as I do due to my education and my connections…" (Ohanwe in: Krone 2020).

2.1.1 Relationship with the audience

A driving force for continuing to produce episodes is their relationship with the audience. They encourage their listeners to actively contribute to the production by commenting, telling their own stories, etc. They also organize life events with invited subscribers. To promote the podcast and themselves, they are active on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and frequently invite their listeners to donate and follow, highly rate and review the episodes as well as share them with friends in order to attract more reviews and subscribers. This finally resulted in an "overwhelming response", according to the hosts, which helped them keep going. As Aburakia explains in an interview: "Sometimes we get 30 to 40 messages a day, really long messages with voice memos and from the heart. That was partly overwhelming…. If it hadn't been for so much feedback, we might have stopped, I guess" (Eisenschink 2021). In 2020, they had ca. 10 000 listeners per episode (Abendzeitung 14.10.2020).

Nevertheless, responses do not only deal with approval, but also with disapproval. As Ohanwe notices: "We are always heavily criticized, but it actually shows that people have very high expectations of us. But it is also good to show our

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listeners: We are not doing justice to them! Nobody should think that we are perfect feminists or anti-racists" (Eisenschink 2021). As they argue, 'we are normal people, we belong to you, and do mistakes, too'. Ohanwe self-reflectively describes their own blind spot as follows:

> "In one episode about masculinity, we admittedly had very violent language. We have received a lot of response from women and gay people who were hurt. It's on a tightrope. You can't always be gentle; you have to discuss things honestly. But: We point a lot with the finger at others and say: They are so racist ... It happens too seldom that you admit yourself that you have misogynistic tendencies, racist prejudices or even self-hatred. We are not infallible, superior, morally better persons" (Eisenschrink 2021).

All forms of response are welcome, even disagreement. They take criticism as a sign to show that they are in the same boat, and open for new insights. There is no barrier between the hosts and their listeners, they speak the same language. They admit that all people, regardless of descent, have to learn how to communicate in a culturally-diverse society.

3. Method

Departing from this example, I focus on connecting communication, especially corporate media's response. Through content analysis, I first mark the topics and contributions of the podcasts because they represent what, according to the producers, can be of interest to the public. Topics have a factual aspect, on the one hand, and a temporal one on the other. Here, Luhmann (1995/1984) distinguishes between topics and contributions. Contributions refer to topics, whereas topics live longer than the individual contributions do, and they combine the different contributions into a long-term or short-time nexus of meaning. Some topics provoke new contributions over and over again; however, others are exhausted quickly. In this article, I focus on the topic of racism in Germany (both within institutions and in everyday life) because it is a recurring issue of featuring social metacritique. In an outspoken way, issues of hostility, discrimination, supremacist practices are discussed aimed at challenging pre-existing

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views on the treatment of people with different ethnic backgrounds. Contributions to this topic make up more than half of the episodes.

In order to explore the corporate media response, I looked for articles, tv, radio and podcast productions mentioning the podcast or the producers together with the podcast. With help from the database Retriever, I found 20 articles between December, 2018 and January, 2022. With the help of Google search, I found three radio and tv shows that referred to the podcast and not only the hosts.

4. The topic of racism in the podcast

Racism is here understood, in a broader sense, as a way of thinking and practice of marking ethnic differences in a normative way, that is, of claiming the ethnic superiority of certain people over others. It is a kind of hierarchal thinking that determines which ethnic group of people is more civilized than others, and with that more privileged. Different behavior or even appearance, such as people of color, is then judged in terms of having less competence or being less civilized.

To introduce this way of thinking to a broader public, the producers depart from their own experiences of racism with German persons and among migrants, such as racism by Black people towards Asian people. They also invite guests who have expertise and open up for more general conclusions.

4.1 Contributions

In the following section, I want to give some examples from contributions addressing racism both in everyday life and within institutions such as media, sports, and public authorities. The contributions include not only criticism against the majority society but also one's own community, dealing with issues of identity/belonging, stereotyping, inequality, awareness, and bullying culture.

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4.1.1 Identity/belonging: “Why can't I be called Hassan and be a German?” (9.7.2019)

The hosts claim that disadvantages on the labor market originate from having the wrong name. Therefore, the official change of first and last names is an effective strategy for many migrants to decrease disadvantages, as the award-winning journalist Vanessa Vu reveals by revealing her original name as Hồng Vân Vũ. In this episode, you learn about her decision to change her first name and what it has meant for her. You also learn about the strict German law for changing first and last names, which can only be done in exceptional cases. However, in the case of naturalization, foreign names can be changed more easily, that is, in a less bureaucratic way. The hosts ask for more stories from the listeners on how to deal with their foreign names in everyday life. Stories are told about giving oneself more European sounding names in everyday life encounters with Germans in order to melt in and/or increase one’s status. For example, a Spanish sounding first name is sexier than an Arabic one as guests reveal. By questioning the strict German rules for changing first and last names, the hosts accuse the inherent nature of the law as being “one-sided … and therefore racist”. At the end of this episode, they raise broader questions such as “why is it not possible for all inhabitants to change their names, easily?” There are also larger identity issues addressed beyond the bureaucratic fact of changing one’s name, such as “Why can't I be called Hassan and be a German?” and what it means in the long run when you want to adapt, that is, “When you give up your name, you give away something of your identity”. With that, the listeners gain new perspectives to reflect upon, which sparks further communication on other online platforms such as Facebook and Instagram.

4.1.2 Stereotyping: “Racism in soccer is deeply rooted” (4.12.20)

A currant event gives the occasion to treat the issue of racism in sports, especially in soccer, including sports journalism. This episode departs from a sports

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show on mainstream TV that has discussed the performances of soccer players. When a connection was drawn between aggressive behavior and ethnic origin, in this case concerning players of Algerian and Moroccan origin, all participants of the talk show seem to agree that the hosts of the podcast should engage in deeper conversations about racist attitudes in sports and also about racism in sports journalism. As guests, they have invited two journalists who have addressed this issue on several occasions and contribute with deeper insights from journalistic and scholarly studies in this field, but also with personal experiences.

In order to make it more hands-on for the audience, they show what racist attributions in sports journalism look like such as “white players are level-headed and intelligent” and “black players are good runners but hotheaded”. According to the hosts, black players are often reduced to physical virtues, which has a colonial history. The hosts also dig deeper into the history of biological racism, which had the aim to justify so-called racial superiority, and make clear that the myth of “races” has caused much suffering and created social damage over the centuries.

They also explain to the audience that this attitude is harmful to soccer itself when failing to take advantage of all the players’ competencies. They broaden the discussion by referring to the absence of political criticism within sports journalism at all. The only political statements made are with respect to hooliganism and right-wing extremism, but everyday racism is rarely addressed. They conclude that knowledge about racist attitudes and attributions are lacking among the sports officials and sports journalists. The participants agree that “racism in soccer is deeply rooted”. Here, the participants refer to the homogenous groups of journalists as well as sport officials lacking cultural diversity. “Black bodies play for white ones but are not allowed to be involved in decisions” as one of the guests claims. By consciously or unconsciously excluding other ethnic groups from certain professional roles, different perspectives do not come to light. This is, as they see it, the reason for the lack of understanding of racist attributions as well as an unawareness of history. The lack of diversity among journalists is further debated in a later episode (9.2.21, diversity in media). At the end of

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the podcast, they offer ideas on how to fight racism. One important measure is to increase knowledge in society. Therefore, as a form of self-promotion, they offer courses in favor of becoming aware of racist thinking. This episode is also provided with a range of related links to other podcasts, books, and media articles about this issue.

4.1.3 Inequality: "Reflect your whiteness!" (10.7.2020)

This is an episode addressing their white listeners. The hosts discuss the topic together with three guests, a white writer, a white actress and a black scholar, who are engaged with discrimination issues, such as the "white privilege" of not having "to deal with racism". To provoke, they turn the tables by pointing the spotlight at the "offenders", the "white people", who have difficulties detecting and discussing racism. They depart from the assumption, with reference to the book by DiAngelo "White Fragility" (2018), that every day racism is mostly invisible for white people because of their "white supremacy" and "negation of structural racism". Even well-meaning white people who demand that skin color should not matter do not realize how it really does matters by avoiding this topic. Thus, the hosts want to challenge their guests and their white listeners and urge them to reflect on privileges due to a white skin color. Questions guiding the conversation are directly connected to one's own experiences: "When have you realized for the first time that you are white? How do you deal with your privileges? How can you develop critical thinking about your privileges?" The listeners are invited to comment and tell their stories on Twitter and Instagram.

All participants agree that it is necessary to acknowledge the advantages white people have from birth in this country. In order to avoid more generalization, one of the hosts, Aburakia, includes the issue of nationality. For him, "to be a German is much more than just being white. I am not entirely white because I am Arabic, too. I'm in the middle". Racism is not only related to appearance and skin color but also to language proficiency, to the sound of the first and last names, and the level of education. As they

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conclude: "white is relative, and it is not an absolute color". Starting with provocative claims by attributing views to skin color, the hosts open finally up for more nuances, and claim that racism is not only an issue of skin color.

4.1.4 Awareness: "The most blatant sayings are from Turkish kids" 26.6.2020

Together with two black female guests, one of them a Muslim of Turkish and African descent, the hosts discuss the topic of anti-black racism among immigrants, and especially within the Turkish and Arabic community, which is according to the hosts an under-discussed issue and needs, therefore, further scrutiny. Despite denial from the non-black Muslim side, the participants show that anti-black racism by Muslims with Middle East backgrounds is relatively widespread and not reflected upon.

The hosts ask where this kind of racism comes from and conclude that it is imported from the Near and Middle East, which has a long tradition of anti-black racism. They give insights into the history of the slave trade, especially the Arab-Muslim slave trade, and the audience is informed that it lasted for over 1300 years and was much greater than the transatlantic slave trade. They also give examples of deeply rooted anti-black racism in the Middle East of today. Together with the guests, they share their shocking experiences when visiting Ghana's Cape Coast Castle, where slaves were imprisoned before they were loaded onto ships.

In their criticism, the participants also include the black community, which is not free from prejudice and stereotypes directed towards their "own" people based on different shades of black skin color, called "colorism". The audience learns about this form of prejudice in which people are treated differently based on meanings attached to different shades of skin color. Lighter skin tones are considered more beautiful and valuable and, therefore, those people are treated more favorably than those with a darker tone.

With this episode the hosts challenge the view of racism as a problem only for white people in the US and advocate for anti-black racism as a global problem. By

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paraphrasing the "Black Lives Matter" movement, they claim that the lives of, e.g., Black Turkish people also matter as well as the lives of people with different skin tones. At the end, the hosts invite the audience to further discuss the issue and provide links for more information about slavery, and racism among the black community and Muslim community.

4.1.5 Bullying culture: "White people, stay out of this conversation!" (20.10.2020)

This episode, with the title "Can black people be racists against Asian people", continues above mentioned contribution and departs from a video circulating on social media where black kids make fun of East Asians. As usual, guests are invited: Two of them have Asian roots and one African, and they work as journalists and writers, as well as run their own podcasts. The discussion centers around the roots of anti-Asian racism among black people, forms of expressions and the boundary between racist and funny jokes.

It starts with a moral assumption, that Black people should know better because they are exposed to racism and know what it means to be hurt. "We should all be on one side. But there is no solidarity-based thinking". Instead, they notice, white racism is appropriated and brutally practiced by black people. The simple understanding of victims and perpetrators does not work in this case, they highlight.

There are several examples given from pop culture of, e.g., the fetishization of Asian women, who are treated in a stereotypical and sexist way which is also associated with sex tourism and brothels. Especially during coronavirus pandemic, everyday racism against Asian people increased, and as one of the guests has witnessed: "The harm is different if it comes from someone who should actually know better" regarding what it means to be attacked. The participants agree that there is, on the one hand, no structural racism in this case, but, on the other hand, a practice where "Black people act as white people". Here, all agree that "the white majority society is to blame" because it "is the engine that makes everything work". Or, in other words, the racism of black

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people against Asians is the "extended arm of Western society" is argued. The black people are not better than their society, and with that, they question their initial assumption of whether marginalized people should have a different moral standard. However, all participants agree, they do not "have a free pass" and racist attitudes cannot be tolerated at all.

At the end, the participants give advice to the audience regarding how to behave and avoid racism, even if it is not meant like that. The motto for fighting racism is as follows: "It does not matter how it is meant, it does matter if someone is hurt or not". The hosts wrap-up and ask, pedagogically: "what have you learned from it?" They advocate for raising awareness and paying attention to feelings because you can hurt people by using stereotypes. "Reflect more about what you say and do!" is the outcome of this episode. Also, this episode is provided with links for further exploration, including news articles on this issue.

4.2 The "how" of treating the topic

The topic of racism is not new, but the angle of everyday stereotyping and the hierarchization of cultures and shades of skin color, as well as the privileges of white people, are hardly discussed in the mainstream media. In order to also be heard outside of one's own community and take part in the wider medialized public sphere, one has to adapt to media logics such as sticking out in some way as well as relating to established media narratives (e.g., Galtung & Ruge 1965). Interestingly, in this podcast, the well-established and criticized mainstream media distinction, that is, the binary of "we" (the natives) and "them" (the others) is reversed by making "we" the others and "them" the natives. The addressed differences between the immigrants and the natives are both dealt with in humor and/or seriousness, which attracts mostly young listeners.

Contributions to this topic are from the human-interest angle, where personal experiences and feelings are told and inscribed with importance and recognition. The personal experiences are almost connected to what is perceived as the real problem,

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which is seen as structural racism within the institutions of German society. Thereby, the legacy media are often blamed for failing to address this issue in a fair way. However, individual prejudices, especially within one's own community and group of people of color, are likewise self-critically scrutinized in the following sense: we are not only victims but have to be prepared to put our own house in order.

Guests are usually invited in order to deepen the conversation and give a broader view. It is not done in a pro and contra manner but rather in an informal way of common understanding concerning the relevance of the issue. The hosts do not waste time inviting racists, for example, but rather spend time on sharing expert knowledge in order to understand the roots and causes of widespread racist thinking. Already from the beginning, the hosts and guests agree upon the importance of the issue and want to clarify the problem.

The oral nature of the medium enables linguistic freedom in order to build-up a sense of community. Aiming at a younger generation, the language is informal, playful and full of emotions. Anglicisms and sometimes entire sentences or quotes in English from pop culture are normal. Abbreviations are common, and sentences can be incomplete and full of filler words. This style of informal language changes only a bit when the content is serious and references to scholarly work are given, e.g., in relation to the slave trade.

This podcast is especially adept at generating discussion among the audience, as well as between the main speakers and the audience. As the hosts say, the podcast is "interactive", meaning that topics that are introduced in the podcast are expanded and deepened on social media such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. To spark additional conversation, each episode is accompanied with several links to further information, such as media articles, scholarly work, other podcasts, etc. To link to other podcasts is an effective way to build-up a network of subscribers.

5. Connecting communication in corporate media

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To explore the media response, there are three different main fields that connect to the podcast. It is a reaction that depends on the reference system of these media and deals firstly with the reason for which the content is produced. It focuses mainly on the producers and what the podcast is about. Secondly, it deals with the information value of the content of the media production, which includes the fact that the producers are invited as guests and experts to legacy media shows and receive support for the podcast from public service media, such as those mentioned above like the "Funk" platform. The hosts also published articles on the most frequently quoted news website *Der Spiegel* in the *Panorama* section, where topics from the episodes are further discussed, e.g., the advantages of white people (Ohanwe 2020). Thirdly, the podcast has been nominated for awards and has won some (e.g., Smart Hero Award for Democracy, Isarnetz Creator Award for best Lifestyle-Content from Munich, and a media award for best program about men's health). It was also nominated for the German Podcast Award (category: best independent podcast) in 2021. These nominations and award-winning events give reason to report about and make the podcast and their hosts known to a broader public.

5.1 Media coverage

Regarding media coverage, we can here distinguish between reporting about the podcast and their hosts and treating the issues taken up in the podcast by referring to the podcast. Much of the coverage concerns announcements and information about a new podcast, who the hosts are and what the podcast is about, e.g., "pop-culture, racism, sport, and music" for "people with and without migrant backgrounds" where the hosts are "half-Palestinian", "half-German" (Cosenza 2018). The public-service broadcaster "Deutschlandfunk" dedicated a five-minute program to the podcast, presenting the hosts, and the content, thereby highlighting the timeliness of the topic of racism:

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> "Especially in these weeks, when the topic 'Black Lives Matter' also dominates the German media, Malcolm Ohanwe is changing from journalist to expert. After our interview, he has to go straight to the next one with the RBB media magazine. Precisely because he is black and is doing a podcast about it, his perspective is extremely popular" (Krone 2020).

Because the hosts treat burning social issues with expertise, which is in demand by other media, the broadcaster highlights the importance of the podcast and their hosts. The responses to the podcast from legacy media are positive.

A usual format is to interview the hosts. Departing from the content of the podcast, the interviewer asks them about their experiences in childhood as people of color and/or coming from different cultural backgrounds. The producers explain their plural identities and tell stories from school, where they experienced racist attitudes. With that, media coverage highlights the relevance of the podcast, that is, to address racism in everyday life (Abendzeitung München, 14.10.2020). One of the hosts is described as a "relevant voice" for the topic of anti-racism and even an "authentic" voice in the German media landscape (Eisenschink 2021). It is striking that the topic of racism is taken up, and one of the hosts, who is black, gets more attention because he can relate to his own experiences and is therefore authentic, which is what the media find most worthy to report about. The media coverage is often personalized by focusing on the producer, their aim, and their biography. The more striking the experiences, the better. However, other podcast topics such as gender issues, music, and sports, which do not deliver any direct link to the producers, are left unaddressed by the corporate media.

Media coverage that does not primarily focus on the hosts and the podcast, but treats topical issues with reference to the podcast, is rarer. There is the issue of changing first and last names in order to fit in (and other reasons) that are covered by a newspaper and radio program. As the episode explains, this is not only an issue for immigrants but also for locals, because the process of changing names is more restricted for locals, which the hosts label as discrimination. The newspaper article follows this argumentation and demands an easier process for all people with reference to the relevant episode of Kanackische Welle: "In the podcast Kanackische Welle, Malcolm

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Ohanwe and Marcel Aburakia spoke to young men who change their names in everyday life to avoid awkward situations" (Koohestani 2019). Then examples are given from the podcast to explain the situation for these men. The radio program also uses personal stories from the episode and retells, e.g., one guest's story:

> "She suffered a lot from her name, especially at school, says Vanessa in the 'Kanackische Welle' podcast. Classmates and teachers would not have been able to pronounce it and would have made fun of it. She didn't want to do that anymore" (Döbbelt 2020).

Here, the podcast serves as a rich source to give examples and mark the relevance of the issue of changing bureaucratic and legal procedures. Therefore, the media urge to personalize complex issues can be easily met. Listening to the podcast can give you the stories. Likely, there are more articles and programs using the richness of the told stories in the podcast without referring to it. However, this is difficult to detect.

Since the producers have shown, not at least in their podcast, that they are experts in the field of xenophobia and racism in society, they have been interviewed about these issues in newspapers and been invited to talk shows. For example, Ohanwe gives an interview regarding the murder of a child. Although little was known about the perpetrator, immigrants were immediately blamed by right-wing politicians, and Ohanwe was asked to comment on that. Explaining the existence of racism in society, he concludes: "We need to think about what it means to live in a multicultural society" (Fiedler 2019), which is a driving force to continue producing new episodes. In another example, Ohanwe is, together with another woman of color, interviewed about the advantages of white people and he stresses: "As a black journalist, you are constantly being asked to expose your blackness. You are dissected and become an object. I think it's healthy to let white people do this work for once" (Gennies 2020). A month later, it became the topic of an episode.

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To sum up, after the existence of a podcast has been recognized by the corporate media, which is partly due to the profession and network of the hosts, the podcast makes it easy to connect. The content of the podcast functions as a source for new topics and contributions in corporate media because it corresponds to the news media logic. It delivers novel angles of different topics in a professional way. It delivers many stories that can be used, and are used, in further media contributions in order to personalize complex issues. These stories include drama in an authentic way that can be useful for new and follow-up contributions. The topics addressed are about life in today's Germany, not elsewhere in the world, and, therefore, they are something that concerns everyone in German society. Furthermore, almost every episode deals with a conflict that needs further exploration, which can be of interest to corporate media in the pursue of new topics and contributions. The corporate media make use of the hosts by engaging them as experts, as subjects for new contributions about, e.g., a new podcast, and personalizing problems of racism and life in a multi-cultural society.

6. Conclusions

The success of the podcast depends on making sure that topics are followed up regardless of whether there is a positive or a negative response to them. In this case, the response to the podcast is positive. This podcast shows how it is possible to add new voices to the wider public sphere by addressing issues from perspectives that are usually not, or only marginally, noticed. This in the beginning independently produced podcast has emerged as an "in-between space" (Llinares 2018) that enables subjectivity in defining issues on one's own terms by surpassing traditional journalistic gatekeeping. Benefitting from the status of being trained journalists and having a journalistic network behind them, both producers had good starting opportunities for gaining attention and recognition from corporate media and, therefore, a path into the wider public sphere and outside their own community. The combination of status and the thoughtful treatment of

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complex topics, which follows media logic, had opened the door for further communication.

It becomes clear that especially the problem of racism has reached high connectivity today. In other words, the podcast appeared at the right time. Supported by the worldwide "Black Lives Matter" movement, the producers claim that racism is not only an issue for the US, but also for Germany. However, the public discourse is/was different in Germany. Even when issues of unequal treatment are discussed, the term "racism" is/was not necessarily used, but rather terms of inequality, discrimination, and marginalization. Here, the producers saw a need to catch up.

The topic of racism is now discussed not only within the migrant community and their media but also in corporate media, which has affected the political system in Germany. A journalist with Turkish background, who has discussed issues of racism very intensively, was elected as the Independent Federal Anti-Discrimination Commissioner in July 2022. In 2023, for the first time, the Federal Government presented a report about racism in Germany as a

> "comprehensive description of racism and its manifestations in Germany. One thing is clear: racism is a great danger to our democracy, because it attacks people and their human dignity, which the Basic Law guarantees to all of us. Racism is not an abstract danger, but painful everyday life for far too many in our country" (Minister of State 2023).

It is thanks to the many initiatives from "below", of which the explored podcast is only one example, that racism is currently widely addressed.

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