

press release

reclaim society involvement in and the appropriation attempts of the No Border Berlin 2013 Camp preparation for group identity purposes

The NBB reloaded blog (<http://nobordercampberlinreloaded.blogspot.de>) is the new blog for the preparation meeting network to continue the initial work of the NBC Berlin without group identity. The NBB preparation has been going on for several months now. Unfortunately, activists of reclaim society (in the following rs) have temporarily managed to project the No Border Berlin group as part of rs organization; mainly to promote their own egoistic group identity purposes while strategically hiding behind No Border Berlin preparation structures.

Part of their strategy has been to make use of their control over the former NBB Blog-Website (<http://noborderberlin.wordpress.com>), as well as the former official email contact (noborderberlin@riseup.net, nobordercampberlin2013@riseup.net) and the former official mailing list (nobordercampberlin2013andbeyond@lists.riseup.net). At the same time the participation of other groups and individuals in the preparation was blocked by making the preparation seem to be inseparably linked to rs. This, for instance, happened through withholding of information and the masking of facts relevant to the No Border preparation which eventually even led to other No Border activists being perceived as part of rs when they were actually not.

In the same way rs took over the NBB network, it also took on the critical whiteness discourse to strengthen not just its group identity as rs, but also to project itself as a critical whiteness group entitled to enforce their interpretation of this discourse as if it was the only politically correct conception of it. This has been a strategical instrumentalization of the critical whiteness discourse in a dogmatic manner which required people to renounce their ability to autonomously reflect but instead to follow a so-called politically correct dogma. That way people were psychologically trapped to an extent where a fear of not meeting so-called critical whiteness standards, which in fact were rs identity and power standards, led to alienation. These effects have been dangerous both emotionally and politically.

Thus the NBB preparation group served as a tool in order to maintain power in an activist context, which has rather to do with creating an image of a "radical activist" for one's ego than with the cause itself. A rs Person of Color who also identifies as "survived refugee and PoC in a femalized body" was forced to identify as non-*white* to work with Black people while another so-called PoC of rs did not want to see himself as a non-*white* but only as PoC, while passing for *white*. She used *white* strategies, even instrumentalizing the other so-called PoC/"*white*" position, in order to maintain a power position and was hiding behind a PoC identity to avoid and deny all critiques of the usage of *white* strategies. The above-mentioned essentialist view of the critical whiteness discourse made this possible as it did not allow any critique from *white* people, and People of Color who criticized this instrumentalization were excluded from the group immediately. As a result of this, NBB was another tool for the "survived refugee and PoC in a femalized body" to build up its own ego, while harming the whole movement. This happened not only on an activist, but also on an academic level, ruining the hard work of academics of Color who try and tried to establish the PoC-term and awareness of racist structures in Germany.

Therefore the problem is not the critical whiteness / white awareness discourse but rather the group rs itself, trying to reclaim and monopolize critical whiteness / white awareness discourse rather than the society.

However, this should not be an excuse to not deal with and reflect about critical whiteness or white awareness since racism is re-produced and treated insufficiently within *white*, so-called left structures. The NBB network considers critical whiteness, as a concept, important and essential in order to explain racism and its mode of functioning. But critical whiteness should not serve for moralization, essentializing, instrumentalization and as an ideology, as has happened in the case of the group reclaim society.

Additionally, rs was hiding behind the Black positioned political subjects of the NBB preparation group, by using the PoC semantics interchangeably with the non-*white* adjective. They could take shelter under the

Black political subjects by expecting them at the same time to be mobilizing supposedly for the NBB preparation context while not knowing they were rather mobilizing for the rs identity and power. Through various similar experiences, for example at the Bethanien, it was realized that rs had expected the Black political subjects of the NBB preparation as Black people to speak for rs. This makes the rs's instrumentalization of the critical whiteness discourse to be neglecting Black people in the preparation meetings and in general. Thus rs used Blackness or /and Black tools to strengthen and advance their political position, their group identity agenda as well as personal power positions while using the critical whiteness discourse to frighten and block any critique and political discussion that would challenge rs.

The rs met in the NewYorck im Bethanien (NYiB) as NBB without the non rs members being aware of it, for instance on the 1st of June 2012 when the 2nd incident with the "siempre antifa" happened regarding the controversial racist exhibition.

It is in the meeting of the GPP (Plenary from all groups who are working in the NewYorck im Bethanien) last month that a few other things started getting clear for the NBB preparation meetings even though further information was still to be unveiled - eg the incident between rs and the "siempre antifa" group on a Sunday (1st July 2012). The presence of the rs in NYiB on this day was not known to the NBB preparation even though a NBB networking meeting took place a day before in the very same NYiB (New York im Bethanien) in which rs activists took part as well.

Because the GPP was torn up itself between not voting out NBB and not being able to tolerate rs in any way in the NYiB, this resulted in the NBB having to leave the GPP. Once out those of NBB who are not part of rs asked of those who were rs what was actually going on but could not receive any answer.

Ever since the GPP, rs members did not attend the NBB meetings for explanation. The NBB preparation had to result in preparing another preparation mobilization email and mailing list, likewise web presence.

The NBB reloaded website is hosted to organize and prepare the NBB 2013 Camp in Berlin. The organisation is to do with new heim initiatives and not to do with old refugee initiatives and networks of Berlin and Brandenburg since they have not realized and maintained socio-political infrastructures for newly independent autonomous refugee initiative groups of the different heims. The organizers therefore are new refugee heim initiatives of Berlin, groups and activists. The camp preparation has as main interest the mobilizing of asylum heim activists for them to be part of the preparation of the No Border Camp Berlin 2013, in the form of autonomous heim initiatives of Berlin.

The NBB preparation group has asked that a list of things needed by members of the different heim-groups/initiatives to attend the meeting of the preparation of NoBorder Camp reloaded in Berlin to be collected by heim initiative activists. It can also be forwarded to our email:

nobordercampberlin_reloaded [at] riseup.net

We need interested supporters to come to the regular meetings on thursdays, 3-6pm, to organize logistics and more.

A call and monthly program are being prepared in connection with regular meetings.

Contact:

NoBorderCampBerlin reloaded-VorbereitungsGruppe
Oranienstr 14a
10999 Berlin.

We are also pleased that some of you are really into it.