5. Racism and its intersection with class and gender

In German public discourse, the most persistent form of racialisation is the classification of People of Colour as 'migrants', regardless of whether they are primomigrants or belong to the second or third generation – and more precisely as migrant workers (*Gastarbeiter*) or refugees. This is why I, for instance, with my French mother and Polish surname, am not burdened by the label 'with migrant background'. But Aminata's children, born in Germany of German parents, will be confronted with racist and classist othering based on their physical appearance. As discussed in Chapter 1, the historian Fatima El-Tayeb refers to this process as 'migrantisation': Someone is constructed as migrant, an outsider to society, no matter how long their family has lived in a place and regardless of their citizenship status.

In this chapter I consider how Aminata deals with the racism and racialisation/migrantisation that she and her family have experienced and how her father Lamine Camara perceives the matter. These two examples show how the personal perception of racism is ameliorated in one's life by the acknowledgement of a good social and economic situation; or, in other words, how racism is perceived as less harmful because of a stronger socioeconomic position in comparison to others who are affected by racism differently because of a more vulnerable socioeconomic situation.

Learning to deal with it – racism and racialisation as part of the everyday

When I once asked Aminata about how she would describe her life in Germany she first described it through class terms:

> Well, actually it's good, in a global context very good, first class. '*Innergerman*' [in terms of Germany] [She laughs] I would say I am middle range; I mean we work day by day, we have to pull two kids through, we have a good living standard, but we also have to work hard for it, and most certainly we don't get anything for free […] But we have what we need to have a good life. And above all we have

> a lot of friends, family, a network, so our life is a good one. (Phone conversation 22 November 2018)

She describes her life in Germany in terms of belonging to a middle class which has to work hard to maintain what is has achieved and, in social terms, as having good family and friend networks. But experiences of racism or being racialised are part of life for Aminata too, and questions like *Where are you from?* or *Why is your German so good?* are only some of the things she has heard from an early age. They have contributed to a feeling of being othered in Germany. The first thing that helped Aminata cope with racialisation when she was younger was reading Afro-German authors who wrote about experiences of racism and about structural racism.

> At first I found myself in all of them. The books are all about, for example Manuela Ritz [*Die Farbe meiner Haut* (2009), *The Colour of My Skin*] and many other authors, it's a lot about pain, it is about simply talking about it, talking about the fact that you are discriminated against and on how many levels you are, and there I found myself in many things, in the everyday life in a train/metro, and something happened here and there was a strange look, it was about *naming* these microaggressions that I had experienced.
> Because in general, I am a privileged girl, it's all good. But of course I was happy to find that there were words that expressed how you feel: I have all the resources, I speak German, I know the system, I profit from the system, and still I receive such bullshit sometimes. And well, that was cool to find [these resources] on such an academic level. Of course, that was not new, and I have friends and we talked about such things, but this was like 'Wow, that is exactly what we are always experiencing', and that was especially the ISD, Noah Sow in particular.

Aminata explains above how important it was to see some of her experiences reflected in books by Afro-German authors, and she makes the link between class and race. She highlights a contradiction in her experience: Although she has a good and stable position in German society, she is still subject to racism – that creates an irritation. She believed that somehow class should erase race but found out that this was not the case. And in the books and people she mentioned, Aminata found answers to that felt disjunction between class privilege and racial discrimination – from people who write academically about structural racism in Germany and how they experience it too in their everyday, even those who are academics or have German nationality. It gave Aminata the confidence to feel she had the right to talk about her own experiences of racism despite speaking from a privileged class position. Reading these people that Aminata could identify with on many levels was important, and that they were recognised authors and scholars gave their words a validity that she did not get from the everyday conversations with friends.

In our conversations, Aminata often tried to explain the complexity of her racialised subject position and how these experiences did not directly affect her middle-class status and life in Frankfurt. She tried to foreground the fact that her social, cultural and economic positions were protecting her against some of the negative effects of racism but that she was nonetheless experiencing it and was worried for her children who have already been exposed to racialisation, too. It weighs on her psychologically that her children are going to be exposed to racism in their home country:

> I'm also 35 now, I think it has a lot to do with age and maturity, maturity may be the wrong word, but I believe that the mechanisms that could limit me because of my skin colour, they don't matter anymore here [in Frankfurt], or they can even be an advantage, because sometimes I can get a job because I'm a PoC [Person of Colour].

This claim that her skin colour can even be an advantage at times is not set in stone, rather it is situated. A few months after our interview, Aminata had an experience where she really felt uncomfortable. It had to do with racist/sexist resentments she was exposed to at a political talk that she was moderating. She did not feel safe there, as she usually does in Frankfurt, and was confronted with people living in an area of town where she knew that many voted for the AFD (*Alternative für Deutschland* – a German far-right party that has gained a lot of followers since the so-called refugee crisis in 2015). On the phone one night she told me about the incident, and I could hear in her voice how thrown she was: 'They really crushed me there. One man called me arrogant,' she recounted, and another interrupted her on stage to tell her that the refugee topic they were discussing was very anti-democratic and that he wanted to talk about the problems they had in Riederwald (a neighbourhood in Frankfurt) and not about other things. The majority in the room was white and male – which is why for her these reactions she received also felt like racism mixed with sexism, although calling a person 'arrogant' or even 'anti-democratic' can be interpreted in terms of social class as well. But merely knowing that she was in a neighbourhood where many people had recently voted for the AFD gave these comments by white men a racist undertone. She did not feel safe there because of her skin colour and also because she was a woman in a room full of men. In Frankfurt she usually does not expose herself to this kind of crowd: 'After experiences like that I really feel I need to do a training, mediation, anti-racism, moderation, something like that. It wouldn't have happened if I was a man.' In general, Aminata believes she is privileged in economic and social terms, but experiences of racism are still painful when they happen to her or to family, friends or colleagues. Racist structures and people still exist and will go on existing; she has just learned how to live with them. But her kids still have to learn that.

> Silvia: Does it make a difference being in Frankfurt or being elsewhere when it comes to being vulnerable or facing racism?
> Aminata: Well at least I don't let it affect me – of course that doesn't mean that racism has become better but rather that, at the same time, that many people are suffering from it, but I rather see it from the outside. But of course there are a few situations in Frankfurt, for example, when I am on my bike with my kids pedalling around and a guy comes up and says 'You refugees only come for the child allowance' [laughs].
> Well, you could feel how the atmosphere was deteriorating [since 2015, when the German government accepted many Syrian refugees and extreme-right parties began to grow in popularity], and Mia [her daughter] is not yet able to deal with that, she is still exposed to child-like patterns of conditioning, she has no power over that; it is a totally different thing.
> Silvia: Because you see how she reacts?
> Aminata: Rather I see how the world reacts to her, or not. I mean it is not omnipresent, but I certainly see there was already a conflict because of it in kindergarten and, more importantly, I do not see that any of the people working there are able to deal with such complex themes, they are simply not educated for these things…

In the above quote, Aminata recounts an experience of racism which shows the intersection of race and class. When random man on the street shouted at her, in that moment she and her children were painted as 'poor asylum seekers who come only to profit from the system and do nothing', a prejudice against one often finds in right-wing populist discourses. As this is so far from Aminata's lived reality, the commentary even makes her laugh (sarcastically). The anecdote shows the ambivalence of her experiences and how she deals with it. On the one hand, she says that she doesn't let racism bother her, because neither her class nor nationality status is endangered by comments like these, but she still experiences all the stereotypes of racism linked to classism in such random encounters. They do not have a material or a practical effect on her life in Frankfurt, but they do have an emotional/psychological impact and they contribute to cultivating fear for the future, especially for the future of her children.

Aminata feels that although it is true that Frankfurt is a very international city in terms of inhabitants, most of the caregivers her children have had so far, most of whom were white, had not learnt how to deal with conflicts/issues related to racist discrimination.[1] Racism is not a topic that is much discussed in schools generally; it is spoken of when something happens in or outside school but only then. It is not a

1 In Germany, around 30 per cent of children have some sort of migration history (either they are migrants or descendants of migrants) but only an estimated 6–7 per cent of teachers do (Massumi 2014).

subject in education and not discussed as a structural phenomenon that exists in society. So, tools are lacking to teach anti-racism. The history of Nazism, antisemitism and the Shoah are discussed a lot in school, but the racism that exists today and how it works in our society is not a topic. Aminata feels that she often has to step up to educate the teachers about certain issues related to racial discrimination (especially anti-Black racism) and often the reactions from the teachers are very defensive. Since Mia was in Kindergarten it was important for Aminata and her husband to educate their daughter and now also their son in anti-racism, for example by giving her books with kids that look like her and to keep on telling her that it is the kids who have a problem not her if they say something about her hair or her looks. Now that her daughter is almost ten, Aminata seems quite reassured that this anti-racist education is already evincing some positive results: 'When kids ask Mia why she has such curly hair or funny hair structure, or when she sees characters with long straight hair, Mia already says that she is very happy to have her type of hair and that she doesn't envy straight blond hair.' This is something that feels like a victory for Aminata because it was not like that for her as a child. For a long time she envied long straight hair and had to go through years and years of using hair relaxer before getting to know her real curly hair structure as an adult. At least she can prevent this being the case for her children.

Aminata's strategies to counter racism are available to her due to her higher education and the kinds of intellectual resources to which she has access. These social and cultural resources help her understand how racism functions and create opportunities to work with other people against it – to create coalitions. But racism is still part of her everyday, through the experiences her children have at school, the fears she has for them, the experiences of friends, and her work in an anti-racism organisation, where she is confronted with incidences of racism and antisemitism in Germany almost on a daily basis. For Aminata it is particularly important to engage in anti-racism work because she feels she should make use of the knowledge and resources she has access to, something that many People of Colour in Germany do not have, particularly those who do not possess German citizenship or have access to higher education. She feels that as a Person of Colour who enjoys a better socioeconomic, it is her duty to be an example for others – first for her children – and to raise her voice against racism.

This idea of responsibility and leadership taken up by a marginalised/racialised educated middle class has been formulated by Bart Landry and Kris Marsh, two sociologists interested in studying the history of the Black middle class in the USA. They stress the responsibility of leadership among the Black middle class: 'In addition, a minority middle class serves the indispensable role of leadership in the struggle against discrimination and oppression that is often the experience of its members' (2011, p. 374). This position was already put forward by W.E.B. du Bois at the beginning of the twentieth century as a strategy to assure the advancement of African

American people. The idea of middle or upper class as a status that predestines one for a leadership role has travelled the world as part of pan-African movements, and for a politically active person such as Aminata it is also important. This leadership function of young Black people in Germany is reflected by the Black movements and by young popular figures such as Aminata Touré, a German-Malian Green Party politician who was born in 1992 and is one of few politicians of African descent in a state parliament in Germany. One of her many priorities is work related to anti-racism and diversity. This leadership role is also part of the mission statement of ADAN (Afro-German Academic Network, discussed in the Introduction) which has a programme that seeks to spread awareness of successful examples of people with a family history of migration to young people in Germany who come from under-privileged families.

This leadership strategy is seen, on the one hand, as a way to counter racism, but it is also a responsibility that weighs psychologically on people engaged in anti-racism campaigning. People who take on such a leadership role see their burden muiltiply, as many are engaged in activist work on a voluntary basis. It is also a very emotional topic as it affect activists at a very personal level. This makes it more exhausting than other forms of activist work, where the involvement might be a bit less personal. As Aminata explained: 'It is not work that I can just switch off when I am at home, it is part of my private and public life as a person of African descent in Germany.'

The eternal guest?

Aminata's father takes a different position on racism. He says that in comparison to the dictatorship he knew in Guinea, he is happy in Germany. His position is that he came to Germany as a guest and was well received. Aminata often told me about discussions she had with her father on the matter of racism, which we can also find in the interview I had with him. Talking about how he arrived in Germany, Lamine Camara explained:

> Well and I have to say I always felt good in Germany, so far! Maybe I am an exception. Many foreigners only complain in Germany, I was never like that [laughs]. Maybe because of my history, I came from a country with no freedom, with terror; for me Germany was like a haven of freedom. I always accepted my life in Germany. I was never the type to complain a lot. I thought my life in Germany was okay, rather good. And Aminata keeps on telling me that, Dad, for us it is different, we were born here. Hostility towards foreigners, she feels differently! And that is normal! For me, I was received in Germany. So I am just grateful.

> Silvia: I find it interesting how you hold such a discussion in your family, because yes, Aminata and her brother, they were born here.
> Lamine Camara: They were born here, so they see it differently; then my generation, we came as strangers, we were received here.
> Silvia: Yes, but why not, you also did something here, you achieved something.
> Lamine Camara: Sure, sure. My children don't agree with me, they say no. [laughs] I can understand them well. They are at home here. I actually am the stranger. I mean I have the German passport, but I came as a stranger. I was received. My children think differently, and that is normal. Aminata tells me that often.

Here, Lamine Camara explains the difference between him and his children and the discussions they have within their family – 'They are at home here. I am actually the stranger.' His experiences of being received in Germany have been positive: He got a scholarship, a host family that was nice and of whom he has fond memories. And although he might also have had experiences of racism or been asked some of the same questions as his daughter, like 'Where are you from?' and 'Why is your German so good?' they do not seem to affect or offend him in the same way as Aminata. While it may be annoying to answer to the same questions again and again after living in Germany for more than forty years, it is also true that he learnt German as a foreign language and was not socialised in Germany like his children. He looks at Germany from an outsider perspective, although his home is Frankfurt, he also has another home in Guinea.

Although, on the one hand, Lamine Camara said that for him Germany was a 'haven of freedom' compared to Guinea, he also mentions right after that that 'he always accepted his life in Germany' and never complained much. This is an interesting way of answering the question of what it was like to come to Germany (I did not ask if he had any negative experiences); there is an underlying feeling that everything was not as easy and smooth as he made it sound in his explanation – to employ the term 'accept' could possibly also refer to negative experiences that a migrant has to cope with in a foreign country. Nevertheless, what Lamine Camara repeats to me is that he did not suffer from racism. For his children it is different. Raised in Germany, feeling it is their home before anywhere else, Aminata is more emotionally involved when she or her kids are made to feel like outsiders in Germany, despite not being that. However, it also has to be taken into account that Lamine Camara took his particular narrative position in a formal interview situation, where the recorder was on the coffee table, and the interview was with me – a white German-French friend of his daughter. Maybe his position and the experiences he would talk about with someone else would have been very different? Lamine Camara also cultivates a hope that his grandchildren will not have to deal with racism anymore, and until then his strategy is to educate his children to 'be strong' and 'fight'. I read Lamine

Camara's answer as a statement that racism does indeed exist, but that you should not let yourself be crushed by it and use your potential to confront it, a position that is not necessarily attached to a class status but more to the experience of being read as an outsider in German society. As he continued:

> Yes, it's coming, it's coming. That will be standard in Germany, that all Germans are not blond. Not blue eyed, and when that happens Aminata's children or grandchildren will not be asked that anymore [asked *Where are you from?*]. I always tell Aminata, you have to educate your children to be strong. Not grumbling. Life is a fight, you have to fight, you don't get anything for free. You never know maybe the blond Germans also have problems?

In the quote above he explains how he educated his children about certain problems in society. Maybe racism exists, but people also face other problems, as the last question he poses suggests: *Maybe the blond Germans also have problems?* His stance towards racism is 'Don't take it too seriously and concentrate on getting further with your life.'

Lamine Camara was able to come to Germany and get a scholarship, yet assuring his status had not been without obstacles. Once he graduated as one of the best of his class and wanted to continue education at a doctoral level, things got more complicated. He reached a glass ceiling. His scholarship programme declined to continue his funding as it had been assumed that Lamine Camara was going to go back to Guinea after studying. The scholarship programme was not meant to bring African students to Germany forever (neither were the guest worker contracts): The idea of the scholarship programs was to offer an education so that the students could go back to their countries of origin and spread a positive picture of Germany as a generous friend. Fortunately, Germany was not able to control the destinies of all of the students, and Lamine Camara decided to stay, even if it meant he had to stop studying. He knows what it means to fight for his rights and to make concessions. Towards the very end of our interview – I had actually already switched the recording device off and had to put it on again – we talked again about politics, racism and taking a stand against racism, and here Lamine spoke a bit more about the differences between himself and his generation and that of his daughter:

> Lamine Camara: I have to think, when was I a victim of racism? I wouldn't know where? I read about it, 'foreigners attacked here', it never happened to me.
> Silvia: Yes but in the 1990s, for example, there was also a wave of attacks.
> Lamine Camara: In Frankfurt it never happened to me. I read about it in eastern Germany ok, but not here. I was never part of it.
> Silvia: You don't have to be attacked physically for it to be racism – Aminata, for instance, although she was born here like me, my mother is from France, so I

> am as much a child of immigration as she is, but random people ask her where she is from. That is a subtle form of racism.
> Lamine Camara: Yes, Aminata always tells me 'Dad, I understand you but we don't have the same problems.' That's normal. […] My generation, we have almost been programmed – we are guests in Germany. But Aminata is not a guest, that is the difference.

What is interesting to note is also my personal stance and reaction to his comments. I step out of the role of 'objective interviewer' and instead challenge him with a different position, the one that I also know from his daughter, which is that racism exists and is a problem everywhere. Our conversation becomes a brief political debate. One of Lamine Camara's strategies seems to be to acknowledge racism in Germany but to situate it in eastern Germany, a strategy used not only by Lamine Camara but by most people in the country – an assumption that relies on the history of rising neo-Nazism in eastern German states after the unification of the 1990s and associated neo-Nazi violence. The assumption is often that, yes, racism exists but only in the former GDR and only by neo-Nazis and not as part of a larger everyday phenomenon. Lamine Camara envisions Frankfurt as a safe space for him. This is the place he can be and feel at home. His daughter does the same. She often said that she was always happy to come back to Frankfurt where she was able to create her 'bubble' where she could feel at ease. This is problematic considering that it means that in other places in Germany, with the exception of big cities, she does not feel at ease. There is always a lingering danger of being affected by experiences of racialisation or racism. This fear has a considerable impact on travel decisions within Germany: former GDR states are consciously avoided. When Aminata had to travel to Leipzig for work, a city in the state of Saxony, she was not looking forward to the trip like she usually does. She was afraid of how people would treat her and look at her, thinking whether she would be one of the few Black people around. Nothing bad happened to her there, but she also did not feel she could move in public space in the way she is used to in Frankfurt. Lamine Camara acknowledges and understands the different position his daughter holds towards racism, and explains the differences by saying that he belongs to another generation. By saying 'we have almost been programmed' he is explaining how he learned to deal with an outsider position in Germany.

Lamine Camara learned to accept his condition as an 'eternal guest', much like the so-called guest-worker generation – labour migrants from Turkey, Morocco, and other countries from the 1970s – with the major difference being his educational achievements and the middle-class job he was able to get as a result. In class terms, he achieved a good standard of living, did not face deskilling and secured German citizenship. In 2018, the journalist Can Merey, son of a Turkish migrant, published a book called *The Eternal Guest: How My Turkish Father Tried to Become German* (*Der ewige Gast. Wie mein türkischer Vater versuchte, Deutscher zu werden*). The book is based on in-

terviews Merey held with his father, sixty years after the latter immigrated to Germany.

And the conclusion it draws is not promising. Although his father came as a highly educated man willing to learn everything about Germany, quickly acquiring the language, marrying a woman from Bavaria, working as a manager in a big company, taking German citizenship and speaking only German in the family, Merey's father Tosun feels he was not accepted as a 'real' German. He compares this to the case of his sister, who migrated to the USA and was soon to feel like an American (no matter how many languages they spoke at home). On the other hand, looking at his story from the perspective of class mobility, his migration to Germany did not harm his upper-class status, and his today son uses his resources and position as a journalist to write about Germany's flaws when it comes to the normalisation of racialised othering. Like Aminata, Can Merey, the son of a Turkish immigrant and German mother, assumes a leadership function as a marginalised and ethnicised member of the middle-class who wants to contribute to debates about integration and difference. The idea of Germany and Germans as a 'community of descent' (Brubaker 1994, p. 14) is a very enduring one and still engrained in the ethnonational myth of the country; it is linked to an ideal of whiteness, an ideology that makes it impossible for People of Colour to claim Germanness. People of Colour who are active in politics and especially the media try to counter the stereotypical picture of 'the German' as white, blond and blue eyed by including a new vocabulary in their discourse. Many new terms were created by People of Colour in Germany, such as 'New Germans', as in the *Neue deutschen Medienmacher* (New German Media-Makers),[2] an organisation of journalists who are all also People of Colour. The aim is to point out that Germany is changing and that over time people with origins all over the world have come to live in Germany, and have often been here already for more than one generation. They should be accepted as Germans without the need for the suffix 'with migration background'.

When talking about the recent rise of the extreme right in Germany, unlike myself or Aminata, Lamine Camara is not so worried. After I informed him that I was concerned about what could happen if the AFD kept growing in strength, Lamine Camara explained his own position. When he arrived in Germany in the 1970s, they were afraid of the CDU – the centre-right party – which espoused the same anti-immigration discourse as the AFD today:

> As a young student we were afraid in Germany of the CDU [the centre right Christian Democratic Union]. Like the AFD, it was racist and xenophobic. People were afraid that if the CDU got into power, all the foreigners would have

2 The organisation's website is: https://www.neuemedienmacher.de/ (accessed 5 October 2020).

> to go. When Kohl came (after 13 years of social-democratic governments, Helmut Kohl became chancellor in 1982, remaining until 1998), the CDU couldn't hold an event in Frankfurt without police protection. People were afraid, if they came to power, it would be over. Really? Yes! But once in power its different, like for the Green Party. When the Green Party was able to govern, at first they came to parliament in trainers. The capital doesn't accept that. The political and state institutions are very strong in Germany. A country with strong institutions is difficult to govern by extremists. Justice is independent. The extremists have to adapt. Civil society is strong. If they want all foreigners out they first have to define what a foreigner is! […] I think in Germany, extremists can come into power, but they can't govern with extremism. These times are over, not only in Germany, but France, Austria. You can forbid the veil, but you can't forbid religion, how would you? Sometime there is a red line, and then it stops.

Lamine Camara has already lived through many political changes since he has been in Germany and it seems his confidence in the constitutional state is strong. Hearing him talk about his political opinions, I wished I had his trust in the political system. As he has lived in Germany for more than forty years, he has seen how the country has changed politically, how immigration discourses that used to be typical of the centre right now belong to the far right, which for him is a positive development. It means that mainstream politics has developed a more liberal position towards migration and abandoned racist underpinnings to the far right. Talking about his daughter, I could feel he was proud of her political engagement and her engagement in the African diaspora.

Two generations, two experiences of Germany

In an interview with left-wing daily newspaper *Taz*, the political scientist Ozan Zakariya Keskinkılıç talks about the experience of everyday racism for a Person of Colour – himself being of Turkish descent, born and raised in Germany but always also perceived as different and never belonging because of his family's migration history:

> My parents love nature. They have sheep, chickens, a little vegetable garden. That was nice. My childhood was not a horror movie. But racism exists exactly in this ambiguity, and you live in the middle of it. On the one hand you have a totally normal life and on the other hand you don't! You have to learn to live with this discrepancy that most people will never be confronted with. […] It took a long time for me to understand that the problem was not me but how other people think and talk about me. (Memarnia 2020)[3]

3 *'Meine Eltern lieben die Natur. Sie haben Schafe, Hühner, einen kleinen Gemüsegarten. Das war auch schön. Meine Kindheit auf dem Land war kein Horrormovie. Aber Rassismus existiert genau in dieser*

As a child and teenager, Aminata did not know how to address many of her experiences of racism/racialisation or being migrantised. She underlines the importance of representation. Reading about her feelings and experiences of racism/racialisation in a society like Germany as a person of African descent was powerful. By reading Afro-German authors on issues such as racism in Germany and their personal experiences and analyses, Aminata was able to generalise from her own experiences and understand them as part of a history of structural racism against people of African descent. Her own encounters with racism were no longer just personal: They became embedded in a system where she was not alone. Furthermore, reading other people who write about it on an intellectual level was an 'empowering experience'. Her subjective experiences were objectified to a certain extent; they began to make sense as a structural relation within society, because they were confirmed by others – they were intersubjective.

Ethnographic works engaging with the analysis of race and class have tended to focus on migration and the development of ethnicised and racialised proletarisation. For example, the sociologist W.E.B. du Bois, who wrote on the racialised Black proletariat in the American South (1903), Abdelmalek Sayad, who worked on Algerian migration and the experience of racism and classism in France (1979), or Loïc Wacquant and John Howe's study on the production of the urban poor and ghettoisation in Paris and Chicago (2008). These are all works that have shown the intersection of class with ethnicity/race. My own work focuses on the formation of racialised middle classes in Germany. Growing up in Germany, Aminata often felt like she stood out with her darker skin tone and curly hair. But socially, culturally and intellectually, she had the means to deal with racialisation – the tools to confront her own experiences analytically. That influenced the development of a particular political African diaspora consciousness that was influenced by the idea of a shared condition of being racialised as person of African descent.

Aminata's work in anti-racism networks is part of the responsibility she feels she has towards all People of Colour in Germany. She believes that her middle-class economic and social position in comparison to other Black people and People of Colour make it her duty to engage politically. Her father, Lamine Camara, grew up in very different surroundings, and did not have to deal with othering and being racialised in his home country of Guinea. Othering does not have the same effect on him, as he has recourse to another socialisation. But both feel, albeit to different extents, that

Doppeldeutigkeit, du selbst lebst darin. Einerseits hast du ein stinknormales Leben und andererseits eben nicht! Du musst lernen, mit dieser Diskrepanz umzugehen, mit der andere niemals konfrontiert sind. […] Es hat lange gedauert, bis ich verstanden habe, dass nicht ich das Problem bin, sondern, wie andere über mich denken und sprechen'. https://taz.de/Ueber-alltaeglichen-Rassismus/!5676807/ (accessed 30. April 2024).

their educated middle-class status grants them some freedom from racism in Germany – their access to German nationality, their knowledge of the educational and social systems is more important for their ability to navigate their everyday lives. Nonetheless, Aminata cannot deny that, at the same time, racism and especially the fear of having to deal with it again in the third generation, as grandchildren of a migrant, weighs on her psychologically and animates her to be active in political work.