

With Wittgenstein Against the 'Political Correctness' Mania

By SALIM E. SPOHR

Many suffer from the 'political correctness' mania of those who carry lists of supposedly forbidden words such as 'Negro' or 'Negro kisses' or 'Holocaust' or 'pogrom atmosphere' in order to protest against their use at every opportunity. If we follow Wittgenstein's insight that the meaning of a word can be recognised by its 'use in language', it seems nonsensical to want to regulate its use in language by means of predetermined lists of word meanings.

Those who run around with a political correctness list of supposedly forbidden words in order to demand their replacement by others must be told: 'You are beyond measure unholy idiots (the German word for the Greek "idiot") and language terrorists. You could learn how stupid your behaviour really is from the philosopher of language Ludwig Wittgenstein, who declared: 'If you want to know the meaning of a word, look at its use in language!'. No deranged lists of forbidden words will help! - And the enthusiasm with which Pipi dances to 'My father was a nigger king, nigger king, nigger king ...' proves that a loving and respectful sense determines her use of this word and thus its meaning. Unfortunately, Astrud Lindgren's family did not have enough energy to simply show those language wankers the door, which I very much regret. Among friends, words that are considered offensive are often used to express friendship.

The fact that the manager of a large company was summarily dismissed because he had ordered 'Negro kisses' in his company canteen is another example of the spreading madness of political correctness. While the dismissal was declared invalid by a higher court, the whole process remains a terrible example of a rampant lack of judgement.

The fact that the Central Council of Jews in Germany claims sovereignty of interpretation for certain terms - just think of the circus surrounding the word Holocaust - and believes it can decide on their use is presumptuous and also stupid. For it is stupid to want to restrict the use of a term to an empirical or historical case, because it contradicts the inner meaning of what the function of a term is, namely to be a 'conceptus communis', an idea of the general, under which different things can and must be able to fall. Funnily enough, this property of concepts, as general ideas

that can include other things, was the linguistic reason why certain events in the Third Reich could be subsumed under such terms as 'pogrom' or 'holocaust' in the first place.

The political will to prevent the use of certain words such as 'Mohrenkopf', 'Mohrenstraße' or 'Negerkönig' is probably essentially based on a misunderstanding of the meaning of words. One imagines that there are certain words whose use should be banned, and that one could go around with lists of 'forbidden words' and intervene in a use of words that has so far gone unchallenged.

If you want to know the meaning of a word, ask about its use in language, recommends Ludwig Wittgenstein in his 'Philosophical Investigations', § 43, among others, and he does this out of the realisation that language has a living character and is much more than the use of vocabulary with a fixed meaning. If Pipi Longstocking sings and dances her 'Negro King' song with great enthusiasm and full respect for her father, it is destructive to life and literature and at the same time a frightening sign of a new totalitarianism of idiots if a few pale conceptual albinos succeed in blackmailing Astrid Lindgren's family into changing this text.

Words are not limited to their lexical meaning, but only unfold their liveliness, their humour, their meaning when used in different ways. Thus the popular 'Mohrenstraße' had also retained and preserved its special meaning for residents and visitors, which had grown over the course of history. Its renaming could prove to be a big mistake and a destruction of lived history, as well as an act of stupidity and arrogance, especially as the residents had not even been asked, but 1,134 citizens had spoken out against the renaming - the name was part of the city's history - but their official objection to the renaming was blocked by the announcement of an extortionately high administrative fee of up to 700 euros.

What Laura Neugebauer from the Greens says when she justifies the renaming in a ZDF feature on 27 July by saying 'we are doing what the law demands of us, what our neighbours and fellow citizens have demanded of us' is therefore nothing more and nothing less than an outright lie. Not only did the neighbouring residents not demand the renaming, they are still trying to prevent the destruction of established culture associated with the renaming. The publicist and historian Götz Ali also criticised the district authority for operating in a 'liberal Stalinist manner under red/red/green leadership, without talking to the people and without reasonable arguments'. (see heute journal from 26.07.2021) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mp9NtmxPv0I>

The case of a municipality in Schleswig-Holstein is also noteworthy. The Green Youth Segeberg is calling for the village of 'Negerbötel' to be renamed: 'The place name N***rbötel' contains 'the very offensive and racist N-word', according to their comment on Instagram, which concludes with the demand: 'Rename N***rbötel!'

The historical background is important here: the Low German word 'Bötel' in the village of Negerbötel, founded in the 12th century, means settlement, 'Neger' stands for closer, which meant that the settlement

of Negernbötel was closer to Segeberg Abbey than the more distant settlement of Fehrenbötel, whose part of the word 'Fehren' means 'further away' in Low German.

The fact that the spokespersons for the Green Youth of Segeberg, Marlene Jakob and Lennart Stahl, are calling for the name to be changed despite knowing the history because, in their opinion, Low German is 'no longer a very common language' and 'today the name would be associated 'with the racist N-word used for centuries to oppress black people', shows with beautiful clarity what a brainchild these Greens are: The fact that they are incapable of showing consideration for the historical meaning of the Low German word can only be because they are completely under the influence of the mindless bad word list of the political correctness mania. Their behaviour and thinking seem to be characterised by a machine-like abstractness that lacks any sense of vitality in the use of words.

Negernbötel's mayor Marco Timme, on the other hand, considered the 'discussion about the naming of 1306 to be of secondary importance'. He told the Lübecker Nachrichten newspaper on the subject: 'It pops up every year. Not one racist lives here.' He had expressed his anger by saying that they were so popular and that anyone who was bothered by this could live somewhere else.

Cf. the article in 'Junge Freiheit'.

<https://jungefreiheit.de/politik/deutschland/2021/gruene-jugend-fordert-umbenennung-von-negernboetel/>

