C R O S S R O A D S

A Newsletter of the Grail International Leadership Team

April 2020

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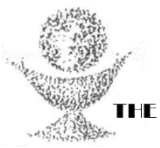

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Letter from the ILT

April 2020

Dear Grail Sisters Everywhere,

The theme for this issue of Crossroads, decided many months ago, focuses on racism, inequity, and intolerance. Who could have imagined even one month ago, that in the blink of an eye the whole world as we have come to know it, would be stopped by Covid 19, the novel corona virus. For most of us, it is almost impossible to comprehend the ferocity with which life has been upended.

We know beyond the shadow of a doubt that we are all in this together—indeed, we are one. This virus does not discriminate.

Regardless as to where we live in this world, these are scary and uncertain times for all of us. Many of us find ourselves under Shelter-in-Place orders, essentially confined to our homes and apartments. Some of us have loved ones and family members who are needing emotional support, help getting food and medications; others have family members who have lost jobs and livelihood in the midst of this. Yet as always, a greater level of desperation has been inflicted on the most vulnerable.

Yet, in our own corners of the world, we seek to rise and face the challenges that this virus presents in our families and in our local communities. Everywhere we turn we can witness people are helping people. In this moment, we can find ourselves longing for what has been lost more than dreading whatever might come.

As I write this, a quote from the 13th Century theologian, Meister Eckhart, came to mind, *"And suddenly you know: It's time to start something new and trust in the magic of beginnings. Be willing to be a beginner every single morning."*

It's hard to believe that just over one month ago, the ILT was in Milan meeting with our sisters in Italy. And what a wonderful time we had together, hearing each one's story in relationship to their Grail journey. Prior to Milan we were in Golega and spent almost a week meeting with members of the Big Meeting Team (One Hundredth Anniversary), and then had the long-planned international Financial Meeting. The life and work of the Grail continues as it has over the last 100 years, meeting challenges and working to bring about change in our communities.

And in these days, when we are forced to stand alone as we practice social distancing, we are finding new ways to build community and to be together.

The certainty that we are a community of women of faith scattered in different countries and regions of the earth, in search of transforming this world into a better place to live for all peoples and all forms of life makes us move forward together in gloomy times even if physically distant. But we sang with the poet: "there will be good times to relieve this pain!"

Dilma, Maria Carlos and Mary

Letter from the Editor Carol Siemering

The theme of this issue of Crossroads is Racism. In these terribly challenging times of this pandemic, as reported in the New York Times, public researchers say that the racial disparities in coronavirus cases and outcomes reflect what happens when a viral pandemic is layered on top of entrenched inequalities.

I am very grateful to all submitted to this issue and to my proofreaders Judith Blackburn and Marian Schwab. Thank you also to Mary Omedo for her invaluable assistance in putting this together.

May we all get through this wiser, more loving, and more connected than before.

Why I Celebrate Black History *Renee P. Wormack-Keels U.S.A.*

Actually, Black History is World History. Black people, our culture and heritage can be found on every continent and every island in the world.

As a young "Negro" child growing up in Cincinnati, Ohio – raised by my paternal Southern grandparents -- I rarely if ever heard the word "Negro" but recall often hearing my grandparents refer to people in our community as "Colored" people. Unfortunately, I was very naïve and never really inquired as to what color was a Colored person – green, orange, purple – what? My box of Crayola crayons only had "flesh" as the color for skin.

It wasn't until the late sixties / early seventies that I clearly began to understand how the complex issue of identify tied to skin color made vocabulary important in my world. To call someone "black" was perhaps the most serious insult and could result in physical confrontation. It was becoming clear to me how my community struggled with identify and self-definition.

Then I went to a graduate school and was introduced to Afro-American studies (a term that I totally rejected then and now) because ***Afro*** is not a place or continent, nor does it represent a cultural heritage and identity. I became an "African American" as a result of being introduced to a culture and heritage that was ***universal*** and not just "American." During the course of the next ten years, by learning about Black History and especially the Nile Valley contributions to civilization, did I fully embrace a new self-image and identify.

Traditionally in the United States, Africa evokes images of Tarzan and Jane, jungles of wild animals and people who are depicted as savage. My study of the world in which African people reside allowed me to reject those negative images and view the history of African people, especially those in the diaspora, with a new and interesting re-interpretation.

Before I visited "the motherland," I had an idealized notion of the African continent – a place not of just one people but a land of many nations, tribes and cultures, with a varied and diverse history. It was an

amazing experience to deepen my knowledge and awareness of aspects of our American culture that are deeply rooted in African cultures. Identification with one's past (history) is an important step towards mental liberation and identification. Noted historian Dr. John Henrik Clarke provides us with a working definition of history:

> *History is a clock that people use to tell their political and cultural time of day. It is also a compass that people use to find themselves on the map of human geography. The role of history is to tell people what they have been, and where they have been, what they are and where they are. The most important role that history plays is that is has the function of telling a people where they must go and what they still must be.*

Black History is not just for Black or African American people. It is also a history that all others need to know, to learn and to be aware of. There are probably as many black people in the lineage of white people as there are white people in the lineage of black people. Lerone Bennett's ***Before the Mayflower*** specifically states that our history and our DNA are and will forever be mixed. All the more reason for all of us to know more about Black History. Our history is linked through all the ages of time – slavery, the American Revolution, the Civil War, every war since the beginning of America and now in the "new Jim Crow" of mass incarceration.

It is IMPOSSIBLE to talk about racism in the United States and any issue of race without addressing mass incarceration and its relationship to the 13th Amendment. (See Ava DuVernay's documentary, ***13th,*** that explores the history of racial inequality in the United States, and focuses on the fact that the nation's prisons are disproportionally filled with African Americans.)

Why is Black History important? It is a history that tells the complex history of people of color – universally. One month, the month of February – which is the shortest month of the calendar -- cannot hold all the history that is yet to be known about the richness of the history of African people in the world.

A luta continua (The struggle continues).

Os Desafios do ser Mulher Negra no Brasil *Fernanda Aparecida de Souza e Ivanete Cordeiro dos Santos Brasil*

Antes – agora – o que há de vir.
Eu fêmea-matriz.
Eu força-motriz.
Eu-mulher
abrigo da semente
moto-contínuo
do mundo.
Maria da Conceição Evaristo

Ao falar sobre a mulher no Brasil é preciso considerarmos suas especificidades para não incorrermos no risco da generalização. Além de seus fenótipos, cada uma carrega consigo uma história que deixa marcas em sua subjetividade, muitas vezes indeléveis. Ao abordarmos, especificamente, a mulher negra, podemos afirmar que a discriminação racial é uma dessas marcas que todas nós trazemos em comum. Ser mulher negra neste país claramente racista, sexista e classista é, certamente, lidar diariamente com inúmeros desafios que a intersecção desses marcadores sociais nos impõe. No Brasil, mais de 50% da população do país se autodeclara negra.

As práticas racistas e sexistas no Brasil são seculares, embora prevaleça a crença de que vivemos numa democracia racial impregnada pelo discurso de igualdade. Cotidianamente, mulheres negras são alvo de preconceito racial e discriminação expressos de diferentes maneiras.

Na verdade, a população negra, de maneira geral, teve o seu direito expropriado desde o processo civilizatório da sociedade brasileira às custas de privilégios de outros segmentos raciais, e tal processo histórico baseou-se no estabelecimento de uma hierarquia de raças que se orientou a partir da concepção de inferioridadedos negros e superioridade dos brancos, pautada em proposições teóricas que se apropriaram das características fenotípicas e biológicas dos seres humanos para (des)qualificá-los.É importante ressaltar que raça aqui empregado é entendido como uma categoria socialmente construída.

A situaçãode escravização a que foi submetida a população negra em diáspora no Brasil foi um processo marcado pela desumanização e violências diversas que ainda exercem grande impacto na vida e na história deste grupo. São séculos de violações extremas dos direitos humanos, sociais, culturais, econômicos, políticos e psicológicos.

Ao analisarmos o impacto dessa herança escravocrata, especificamente na realidade das mulheres negras, verificamos que ela continua delineando suas experiências no cotidiano de nossa sociedade. Um exemplo claro são os principais indicadores sociais e de mercado (IPEA[1], 2013) que revelam uma sistemática situação de desvantagem desse grupo.Elas estão sobrerepresentadas no trabalho doméstico e subrepresentadas no mercado de trabalho formal.

Cabe destacar, também, a especificidade das representações sociais construídas historicamente em relação à mulher negra. Desde o sistema escravocrata até a atualidade, elas são estigmatizadas como fáceis, fortes para a dor, incapazes intelectualmente, além da erotização de seus corpos. Acrescenta-se a isso, uma insistência cultural em que as negras sejam vistas como empregadas domésticas, independente do status no trabalho ou carreira que ocupam (HOOKS, 1995).

Sãoas mulheres negrasque têm de enfrentar sozinhas as inúmeras violências a que estão submetidas cotidianamente. No caso de morte materna, por exemplo, o perfil daquelas que são mais atingidas é: negra, baixa renda, menor escolaridade, e isso se deve à maior discriminação no acesso aos serviços de saúde e sua vulnerabilidade (MARTINS, 2013, p. 23). Como são as mulheres que utilizam com maior frequência o SUS, seja para tratamento próprio ou para levar filhos ou outro familiar, elas acabam sendo

[1] Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada

os principais alvos das desigualdades de gênero, raça e classe. Nesse sentido, a luta por um atendimento igualitário no Sistema Único de Saúde - SUS, travada pelo Movimento Negro Unificado e Brasileiro, foi devido aos maus tratos às mulheres negras e aos homens negros nesse contexto (SANTOS, 2017).

Tais situações, dentre inúmeras outras, podem ser vistas como violências que reatualizam o passado colonial fortemente marcado por abusos e agressões direcionados a todo um segmento racial (SEGATO, 2010).Na sociedade brasileira, não importa qual seja a classe, a idade, o status profissional da mulher negra. A defesa de que o preconceito é de classe e não de raça perde legitimidade quando verificamos que mesmo as mulheres negras que se posicionam em extratos sociais mais elevados são vítimas de preconceito e discriminação em função de sua condição racial. Se há algo possível de se generalizar é a afirmação de que todas nós, mulheres negras, já vivenciamos situações de racismo. E isso tem impactos incomensuráveis em nossas vidas.

À medida que as mulheres negras começam a romper com os padrões socialmente determinados, que tendem a colocá-las em alguns lugares e lhe dificultar o acesso a outros, mais ainda elas parecem ser atacadas de diferentes formas. Diariamente vemos na mídia televisiva, atrizes, jornalistas, mulheres públicas de vários setores da sociedade, se movimentarem para denunciar o racismo do qual têm sido vítimas. E somam-se a essas mulheres públicas uma multidão de outras mulheres, em sua grande maioria, invisíveis, que derramam lágrimas, recuam em seus projetos, silenciam seus gritos, desistem de prosseguir, adoecemem função de agressões fomentadas pela questão racial. Os efeitos da discriminação racial nas identidades

e subjetividades das mulheres negras deixam marcas profundas, podendo desenvolver sintomas psicossomáticos que prejudicam a saúde das mulheres, muitas das vezes, a vida inteira, sobretudo as mulheres pretas.As sequelas são muitas pra quem é vítima do racismo, e um deles é o adoecimento psíquico destas mulheres, muitas se “curam” dentro da comunidade do pertencimento de umas com as outras.

Quando se percebe que o problema do racismo e do preconceito racial não é nosso, mas sim daqueles que são os agressores;quando sabemos que nossos corpos e nossa estética negra desafiam os padrões socialmente aceitos;quando nos vemos ocupando lugares anteriormente negados a nossa existência;quando nos movemos nessa sociedade racista e hipócrita, comportamentos racistas que objetivam humilhar, desprezar, envergonhar, devem ser entendidos como uma recusa social em aceitar que nós, mulheres negras, vamos estar onde nós quisermos estar. Nesse sentido, é crucial criarmos estratégias de ressignificação das situações de discriminação racial e racismo que cotidianamente nos são direcionadas, buscando, dentre outras coisas, nos oprimir e nos diminuir, e tentando incutir a ideia de que o problema é nosso, pois somos nós que estamos indevidamente em determinados lugares.

No atual contexto político no qual estamos vivendo, fortemente marcado por um viés ideológico, constatamos diariamente os inúmeros retrocessos nos diferentes âmbitos da sociedade, e não seria diferente em relação às questões diretamente relacionadas aos direitos da população negra. Tais questões nos alertam para a necessidade de fortalecermos a luta, não apenas para a manutenção dos direitos de todo o segmento populacional negro e, prioritariamente, das mulheres negras, por estarmos inseridas em um movimento de mulheres no Brasil.

O Movimento do Graal no Brasil é um desses espaços de luta, de resistência, de uma educação antirracista. Nele, encontramos mulheres negras que se apoiam de maneiras distintas, inclusive no estudo e na pesquisa das questões étnico-raciais. Enquanto associadas deste movimento, indagamo-nos de que forma a nossa prática e conhecimento tem contribuído para que práticas discriminatórias sejam revistas e superadas.

Talvez o desafio que se impõe é o de fortalecer essa pauta junto aos Objetivos de Desenvolvimento Sustentável – ODS,cujo propósito é o de empoderamento de todas as mulheres e meninas, além do desenvolvimento de projetos e ações que interseccionem gênero e raça.

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The Challenges of Being a Black Woman in Brazil *Fernanda Aparecida de Souza and Ivanete Cordeiro dos Santos, Translated by Nádia Villefort*

Before - now - what is to come.
I, a female matrix
I, a driving-force.
I, a woman
seed shelter
continuous motor
of the world.
Maria da Conceição Evaristo

When talking about women in Brazil, we must consider their specificities so as not to incur the risk of generalization. In addition to their phenotypes, each carries a history that leaves marks on their subjectivity, often indelible. In addressing specifically the black woman, we can say that racial discrimination is one of those marks that we all share in common. Being a black woman in this clearly racist, sexist and classist country is certainly dealing with countless challenges that the intersection of these social markers imposes on us daily. In Brazil, more than 50% of the country's population declares itself to be black.

Racist and sexist practices in Brazil are secular, although the belief that we live in a racial democracy permeated by the discourse of equality prevails. Every day, black women are the target of racial prejudice and discrimination expressed in different ways.

In fact, the black population, in general, had its rights expropriated since the civilizing process of Brazilian society at the expense of privileges from other racial segments, and this historical process was based on the establishment of a hierarchy of races that was oriented from the conception on inferiority of blacks and superiority of whites, based on theoretical propositions that appropriated the phenotype and

biological characteristics of human beings to disqualify them. It is important to emphasize that race used here is understood as a socially constructed category.

The situation of slavery to which the black population in diaspora in Brazil was subjected was a process marked by dehumanization and diverse types of violence that still have a great impact on the life and history of this group. There are centuries of extreme violations of human, social, cultural, economic, political and psychological rights.

When analyzing the impact of this slave heritage, specifically on the reality of black women, we find that it continues to outline their experiences in the daily life of our society. A clear example is the main social and financial indicators (IPEA[2], 2013) that reveal a systematic disadvantage for this group. They are over-represented in domestic work and under- represented in the formal labor market.

It is also worth highlighting the specificity of social representations historically constructed in relation to black women. From the slave system to the present, they are stigmatized as easy-going, with high tolerance for pain, intellectually incapable, in addition to the eroticization of their bodies. Added to this, there is a cultural insistence that black women are seen as domestic servants, regardless of their job or career status (HOOKS, 1995).

It's the black women who alone have to face the incalculable violence they are subject to daily. In the case of maternal death, for example, the profile of those who are most affected is: black, low income, less education, and this is due to greater discrimination in access to health services and their general vulnerability (MARTINS, 2013, p. 23). As it is, the women who use SUS (Unified Health System) more frequently, either for their own treatment, for their children or for other family members, end up being the main targets of gender, race and class inequalities. In this sense, the fight for an equal service in the SUS, fought by the Unified Brazilian Black Movement was due to the mistreatment of black women and black men in this context (SANTOS, 2017).

Such situations, among countless others, can be seen as violence that revives the colonial past strongly marked by abuses and aggressions directed at a whole racial segment (SEGATO, 2010) in Brazilian society, no matter what the class, the age, the professional status of black women. The defense that prejudice is of class and not of race loses legitimacy when we find that even black women who position themselves in higher social strata are victims of prejudice and discrimination due to their racial condition. If there is anything that can be generalized, it is the statements that all of us black women have already experienced situations of racism. And it has an immeasurable impact on our lives.

As black women begin to break with socially determined patterns, which tend to place them in some places and make it difficult for them to access others, even so they seem to be attacked in different ways. Daily we see on the television media, actresses, journalists, public women from various sectors of society, move to denounce the racism of which they have been victims. And these public women are joined by a multitude of other women, most of them invisible, who shed tears, back off of their projects, silence their

[2] Institute of Applied Economic Research

cries, give up on going on, get sick due to the aggressions fomented by the racial issue. The effects of racial discrimination on the identities and subjectivities of black women leave deep marks and may develop psychosomatic symptoms that harm women's health, often their entire lives, especially black women. The consequences are many for those who are victims of racism, and one of them is the psychic illness of these women, many "healing" themselves within the community of belonging to each other.

When we realize that the problem of racism and racial prejudice is not ours, but of those who are the aggressors, when we know that our bodies and our black aesthetic defy socially accepted standards, when we find ourselves occupying places previously denied to us, when we move up in this racist and hypocritical society, racist behavior that aims to humiliate, despise, shame, must be understood as a social refusal to accept that we, black women, are going to be where we want to be. In this sense, it is crucial to create strategies to redefine situations of racial discrimination and racism that are routinely directed at us, seeking, among other things, to oppress and diminish us, and trying to instill the idea that the problem is ours because we are the ones who are unduly in certain places.

In the current political context in which we are living, strongly marked by an ideological bias, we see daily the countless setbacks in different areas of society, and it would not be different in relation to issues directly related to the rights of the black population. Such issues alert us to the need to strengthen the struggle, not only for the maintenance of the rights of the entire black population segment but mainly of black women, since we are part of a women's movement in Brazil.

The Grail Movement in Brazil is one of those spaces of struggle, of resistance, of an anti-racist education. In it, we find black women who support each other in different ways, including in the study and research of ethnic-racial issues. As members of this movement, we ask ourselves how our practice and knowledge is contributing to see that discriminatory practices may be reviewed and overcome.

Perhaps the challenge is to strengthen this agenda with the Sustainable Development Goals - SDGs, whose purpose is to empower all women and girls, in addition to developing projects and actions that intersect gender and race.

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Anti-discrimination project in Duisburg-Hochfeld *Britta Willigalla Germany*

Duisburg is a German city with about 500,000 habitants in the Ruhr district located in the center of Germany. In the early sixties, it was renowned for its production of steel. Back then, Duisburg-Hochfeld, a suburb that today has 18,000 inhabitants, was a prosperous part of the city. There were so many work opportunities that even people from Italy, Greece or Turkey were asked to immigrate to Germany in order to work for the steel factories. Since the production of steel was reduced, many people lost their jobs and the living conditions in Hochfeld changed and got worse.

Today Hochfeld is a district with a large number of unemployed people, young families, and also a big proportion of people from different countries (58%). In 2015, a lot of refugees from Syria arrived in Hochfeld and stayed. Also people from the southeast of Europe try to improve their living conditions and escape from discrimination in their home villages by moving to Germany. Hochfeld and Marxloh in Duisburg seem to be popular or common to the foreign people. Some may just follow their families.

When you enter a kindergarten you will realize the diversity of the 100 different nations that live in Hochfeld by seeing children who come from Italy, Turkey, Greece, Vietnam, Poland, Russia, Syria, different countries of Africa, Bulgaria, Rumania and many more. On the one hand, it is a nice picture. On the other hand, when people of different nations and cultures are supposed to live close to each other, problems of misunderstanding, conflicts and discrimination cannot be avoided. The prejudices of the parents towards other ethnic groups influence the children´s minds and so the conflicts escalate.

Of course, there are different projects of many social institutions working in this part of Duisburg trying to solve problems of racism and discrimination in order to improve the living conditions of the people and to encourage a tolerant attitude towards all habitants. Especially in Hochfeld there are a lot of persons who have been doing a great job for society for years.

In 1972/73 the Grail-members Hilde Derksen and Silvana Ferraguti laid the foundation stone for the **Internationale Initiative Hochfeld *eingetragener Verein* (e.V.)** which is shortened as I.I.H.e.V. Until today, the I.I.H.e.V. is supported by the Grail-Germany. Without this financial help, all the integration projects for women from other countries that help them to learn how to write, read and speak the German language could not take place.

Besides the women's projects there are groups for children where they can find help for daily homework, help that they cannot expect from their own parents. Furthermore, children can visit groups of the same age to practice speaking, writing, playing games, and having fun.

The *Internationale Initiative Hochfeld e.V.* tries to empower all families, women, men and children living in the surrounding area by giving them a feeling of belonging and feeling responsible for their home by keeping it clean and beautiful. In one project, the efficient social network and the Initiative invited everybody in the street just to get to know the different opinions, the wishes and worries about the suburb and the neighbours.

After several meetings in our premises with drinks and biscuits, good conversations with the inhabitants helped to reduce any prejudices. By finding similarities and aims that can be interesting and improving for every family no matter their cultural differences. We want to remove inequalities and focus on what brings people together.

Furthermore, there is a new project conceived by a German neighbour. The aim of this project is to have flowerpots with various flowers in front of every house's door in the street.

By doing this we want to promote solidarity among the local residents and encourage them to talk to each other, work on one project and feel the togetherness that results from the universal interest to enjoy life and to provide beautiful living conditions for the children.

The “Internationale Initiative Hochfeld e.V.” is interested in encouraging interaction between neighbours. We started with little steps, but we make a mark in the right direction like many other societies, too.

I am writing at the time where the Corona-Virus is spreading around the world. One sad consequence of this is that all the wonderful projects of these different community services and social institutes that were planned during the two International Weeks Against Racism that started yesterday (16.03.2020) cannot take place. However, this singular worldwide situation may promote a feeling of `togetherness´ and social responsibility.

Is Reconciliation In South Africa Possible without Difficult Dialogues? *Gertrude Fester South Africa*

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this sharing of my experiences of racism and to explore my own racism. Having been born in a country where racism was official policy for much of my life, I am sure that all of us in some way have been influenced by and maybe inherently have some racist tendencies.

As is usual in feminist writing I always outline my positionality and standpoint. My starting point is that of a Black African feminist, who has been classified by the Apartheid regime as 'coloured'. For those of you who do not understand the racial classifications in Apartheid South Africa, 'coloureds' are the descendants of First Nations, slaves brought from various parts of Asia by the Dutch colonialists and those of mixed parentage (as in many countries there were lots of violence and rape of the indigenous people by the colonialists). During apartheid we too could not vote but had a few more privileges than black Africans (Nguni- and Sotho-speaking). So there definitely were hierarchies of privileges. Black Africans had to have passes which gave them permission to be in a particular area. If they were caught in another area for whatever reason, they would be jailed. Hence millions of Blacks had been imprisoned. Key, too, was that the land was taken away (again similar to most countries which had been colonised) through a series of laws. These culminated in the 1913 Native Land Act, which took 87% of the land for whites (settler population) with 13% for the majority indigenous people - and of course the 87% land of whites included all the mineral-rich land with gold, diamonds, etc. I also like to use the example of education to illustrate the degrees of oppression and exploitation: all whites as rich as they were, received all their books and education free of charge; coloureds[3]/Indians some of their books/education free whereas the poorest Black African none at all. African blacks were also 'endorsed out' of their areas of birth to the black homelands, which were arid, poor and deliberately underdeveloped areas.

However, despite my decades’ long experiences of working with mixed groups for social justice in this country since the 1970's, I have had an unfortunate experience that has made me skeptical of my resoluteness and belief that a truly non-racial, non-discriminating and non-exploitative society is possible. Maybe with extensive dialogue and our confronting our pasts and privileges, it may be possible. Possibly

[3] Many people of mixed parentage reject the term coloured and prefer their First Nation status of Khoi and San.

sharing my experience could allow me new and better insights and also the opportunity to explore my own racism.

Just to summarise: In the early 1970s when all political activity was banned, we used drama as a tool to build social cohesion and work towards democracy, social justice and ridding our society of apartheid. As a descendent of First Nation Khoi and slave, I had to get a permit to attend the university of Cape Town (UCT) Drama School. Thereafter as a teacher at a local high school, together with white women UCT graduates, we did the most amazing creative theatre productions together, widening our students' horizons with socially relevant productions. We also took them to the university theatre (the only one which those classified as black could attend). Despite apartheid, we teachers built solid friendships and are still in contact today, 45 years later. They earned a higher salary than us blacks (called 'inconvenience pay' for teaching at black schools) even though we had the same qualifications.

The 1976 student uprising also inspired us to form non-racial organisations. What was exciting and inspiring to me was that despite the rigid apartheid, we formed the United Women's Organisation in 1981 (later becoming United Women's Congress) which consisted of women from all races. Yes, we were aware of the contradictions within our organisations and always promoted what we termed African Working Class leadership and highlighted the triple oppression of women (as black, working class and as women). The term intersectionality had not been coined as yet.[4] Our chairpersons were often domestic workers with the most acute political analysis of our oppressions as women. Many men and even some women challenged us that we 'were dividing and weakening the major struggle, that of the anti-apartheid struggle, by having a women-only organisation. We maintained that we needed to assert the emancipation of women, as national liberation we had seen in many countries did not necessarily result in the liberation of women.

I believe it was because of my political activism and commitment to social justice that I was privileged to get international scholarships and study at prestigious universities. Post-apartheid I was an MP in the first democratic government and thereafter had other political positions, including commissioner on gender equality, a constitutional position. So my qualifications and positions catapulted me into the middle class. Even though apartheid was officially over, the apartheid geography is still prevalent. The Apartheid Groups Areas Act designated specific separate areas for race groups and this also coincided with class as the majority whites are wealthy landowners (my ancestors' land was given to them). The wealth of the country is still in the hands of majority of whites. They also still have managerial and high-powered jobs. Even though it is 26 years post-apartheid, most group areas are in tact. A few of us blacks, now middle class, who are able to afford it, moved into formerly white areas. The majority of black townships are still steeped in poverty, sometimes accompanied by violence and crime.

In the mostly white area where I now live, we have formed a women's group and occasionally as the only black member, there have been moments of discomfort for me. I occasionally provide the contacts for the townships and marginalised groups, which our group supports. A current project is a crèche[5] in the local informal settlement (area consisting of homes built with corrugated iron or cardboard and plastic).

[4] As our struggles continued we became more aware of other axes of oppression; that of (dis)/ability, lesbian, gay, bi-, Transsexual, intersexed and queer (LGBTIQ).

[5] A special education institution for young children / a nursery where babies and young children are cared for during the working day.

Two of our members were eager to assist with teaching curriculum for the crèche. I, too, as an educator, was interested but due to other commitments could not be involved. I was very keen to see the curriculum when I learnt that the volunteers had found work they wanted to give to the crèche.

I then phoned the younger of the two members, who was eager to promote the curriculum. I enquired about the content and whether I could see the outline or get a web address for it. I realised from her response that she was not eager to share the work. She repeatedly emphasized how good it was. To my questions about the content she stressed that 'Education is education'.

The conversation that followed went something like this:

Gertrude (g): No, education is not education but education is deeply ideological. For centuries in this country my ancestors and I were taught that we were inferior and stupid. The idea that whites were superior was promoted and was government policy. Similarly, the issue of gender: girls / women still are seen as inferior, are not valued and often are seen as not capable of many jobs like engineering. Education can be used and abused to suit narrow political agendas.

Young white woman (YWW): Oh, why must you bring politics into this?

g: Oh, because everything is determined by politics. It is politics that determines how we live, where we live and what we can do or not.

YWW: That is not so. What do you mean?

g: Well, you obviously know that I or any black could not live in this area before, could only do certain jobs because of job reservation and if they did the same work they were paid less, etc.

YWW: But why are you interested in the curriculum? What do you know about early childhood education?

g: I studied education, including early childhood education, and taught students to teach early childhood education.

YWW: Oh, I knew you were a professor but I did not know that you knew anything about early childhood education.

g: As a black African feminist I am interested in all things education. I also know from experience that there are many well-meaning whites who think they know what is good for us. But they sometimes do not understand our reality and get things wrong.

YWW: But that's racist!

g: That is the reality. Perhaps you do not understand why I want to see the curriculum. Maybe we should have some coffee together sometime and discuss this.

YWW: (rather reluctantly) Mmmm..

g: OK, bye now . Let's chat sometime.
(not sure if she said good bye)

Sometime later I again telephoned her and asked whether we could chat. She used some rather unsavoury language, accused me of being the biggest racist and slammed down the phone.

A few weeks later we were scheduled to have an evening meeting. At 11.12 that day, she sent a whatsapp message on our organisational chat asking whether I would be attending the meeting. I did not answer. At 11.17 another message with the same question. At 11.20 another. At 11.45 she sent a very long chat stating once again that I was a racist, how I have exposed myself as the bigot I was and once again used some very unacceptable language. She also added that someone in our group had said that I was dangerous, a snake and the only thing I see is the colour of one's skin. She subsequently resigned from the organisation.

There is a constitutional body in South Africa, the Human Rights Commission, which investigates any violation of human rights. I have written to them for an education and mediation process. They will be following this up but informed me they are very busy and are limited in their work because of the lockdown. I would like to explore my own racism. Yes, it is my experience that some well-meaning whites sometimes just do not have an understanding of our communities and so have proposed inappropriate or culturally insensitive programmes. I have been part of mixed race, anti-apartheid women's structures for about 20 years. I was also detained for treason and spent time in solitary confinement in the apartheid jail. The charges were withdrawn after Nelson Mandela had been released and the African National Congress (current majority party in government) was unbanned.

I have much to reflect on. Yes, I am very sad that after our hard work fighting for social justice in South Africa there still is so much poverty and oppression of black people. The majority whites still live in wealth and there are occasionally some very racist incidents. However, I need to self-reflect. Was I condescending to think she did not understand what I was saying? I also do recall her sounding very shocked when I said I was a black African feminist. Maybe she had never encountered this term before. I do admit that I in turn was shocked when she argued that 'education is education'.

There are many social movements and NGOs in South Africa that take up issues of race, inequities, social justice and poverty and are trying to build social cohesion. In our Grail region some have embarked on discussions of racism and white privilege and there is a genuine concern to confront inequalities in our country. But not all blacks are poor. The approach I always advocate is an intersectional one - so that race, class, gender, location (rural/urban), (dis)abilities and other axes of marginalisation should be explored simultaneously.

A Minha Terra que me viu Nascer *Sonia Thandy Mocambique*

Moçambique localiza-se a sul do equador, na região da África Austral, tem como limites ao Norte pelo rio Rovuma que o separa da República Unida da Tanzânia e a sul pela República da África do Sul. A sua extensão territorial é de cerca 799.380km² que se subdividem em terra firme e águas. A terra firme com cerca 786.380km² e as águas (rios, lagos, lagoas, e pântanos) correspondem a 1.300km².

Estima-se que Moçambique tem cerca de 28,8 milhões de habitantes dos quais 15milhões são mulheres e 13, 800 milhões são homens. O País é muti- étnico. Moçambique destaca-se no mundo pela quantidade de variedade de recursos naturais existente de jazigos de petróleo e gás natural.

Sabe-se que Moçambique é um país de raça negra com cerca de 99,5% da população, misto com cerca de 0,45%, branco 0,08, indiano 0,08, outras 0,03 e desconhecidas 0,4. (fonte: www.revistas.usp.br).

A desigualdade é uma das realidades visíveis em relação a mulher do meu país, especificamente da província de Cabo Delgado no distrito de Palma, Macomia entre outros. Sabe-se através dos órgãos de comunicação social, que tem evidenciado imagens da violência contra a mulher, devido ao aparecimento de indivíduos sem rosto que semeiam dor luto nas mulheres expondo as aos seus direitos fundamentais que é o direito, família, casa, escola e meios de subsistência.

A mulher dos distritos acima mencionados e a mulher urbana da mesma província e do mesmo Pais e em outros contextos, não se equipara pela sua natureza de exposição ao sofrimento pelo facto de ver seu esposo, filho, irmão esquartejado e morto, ver o seu meio social, a casa que construiu com muito sacrifício formar-se em cinza, pelos indivíduos encapuzados sem nenhuma justificativa.

Por outro lado, depois deste infortúnio, deve percorrer longos quilómetros em busca de um abrigo, com trouxas e com crianças menores nas costas, onde é muita incerteza para o futuro, não se esgotam as palavras para expressar tamanha dificuldade do dia -a dia desta mulher de palma, Macomia entre outros distritos da Província de Cabo delgado.

Há que referenciar que apesar da mulher urbana da mesma província e do mesmo país viver aberta aos laços sociais na comunidade, desenvolver suas actividades quotidianas isenta desse sofrimento encontra outros desafios como de violações de crianças, e adolescentes, casamentos prematuros outros problemas de direitos.

A justificativa é elevada taxa de analfabetismo, o desemprego, défice de informação de indivíduos encapuzados sem rosto que contribuem para a intolerância étnica, política e enraizados na tradição, buscando o enriquecimento ilícito, culpando seus líderes em satisfazer as necessidades básicas, expondo desse modo a mulher a vulnerabilidade quotidiana.

A intolerância é verificada por fraca liberdade de expressão sobre essa temática porque pouco se fala do porquê da existência desses indivíduos quais são os seus objectivos, apenas sabe-se que existem os maiores jazigos de petróleo nesta província.

Precisa-se de uma imagem clara dos factos para não se iludir ou manipular a opinião pública para observar, debater para uma melhor proteção do uso do benefício dos recursos naturais. Evidenciando cada vez mais a possibilidade de livre acesso ao saber, recriando possibilidade de comunicação uns com os outros.

A mulher deve procurar uma nova região para sobreviver, o medo, a incerteza de continuidade, percorre longas distâncias a procura de lugares seguro para salvaguardar a sua vida sem oportunidade de escolha, isto tudo provoca barreira para o desenvolvimento, cada individuo aprende ao longo de toda sua vida no seio de espaço social, constituído pela comunidade de pertença.

A comunidade de pertença constitui o catalisador de desenvolvimento pelo facto de elevar a coesão na cooperação de relações humanas que fortalecem os laços, dignidade humana e o respeito pelos direitos

humanos. Enquanto a mulher urbana da mesma cidade tem várias possibilidades de dar continuidade seu estudos, trabalhar, cuidar de tudo que esta a sua volta ai reside a desigualdade de oportunidade para inserção social.

Verifica-se em Moçambique a existência de Organizações Não Governamentais (ONG`S) e Organização da Sociedade Civil (OSC), possibilitam a auscultação de se fazer ouvir a vozes de quem passa pela dificuldade já acima mencionada de atitude e sensibilidades humanas, com vista a suprir primordialmente as limitações e desigualdade materiais, buscando o respeito da pessoa humana no seio da comunidade através das relações sociais e políticas.

A verdadeira partilha de interculturalidade do Graal Moçambique composta por mulheres de diferentes faixas etárias macuas, kywane, sena, dau, bitongas, chopes, changane, ronga, contribui em entusiasmo do movimento e fortalecimento de laços.

A criatividade cultural eleva a cada mulher para que encontre maneiras acertadas de abordar as temáticas, essa abertura dá respeito pelo saber duma maneira contínua e melhora o discernimento em relação a vida em busca de crescer num ambiente cada vez melhor e em harmonia.

Há que referenciar que existe dificuldade alterar essa dificuldade pela sua natureza de extensão do território moçambicano porque o graal Moçambique encontra sediado na região sul na província de Maputo.

Para fazer face ao problema da desigualdade da mulher na inserção social, o graal Moçambique e graal beira, procuram em paralelo abordar as situações criticas que abalam a mulher, dialogando com raparigas adolescentes e mulheres vulneráveis a prostituição, casamento prematuros (forçados), drogas, e abusos sexuais, falta de informação.

Engajando as raparigas a uma educação contínua de esperança de vida melhor de justiça, paz e harmonia social para se ultrapassar situações criticas, através de alicerces de conhecimento dos conteúdos em relação aos valores morais que devem acompanhar a rapariga e a mulher em todos estágios de desenvolvimento.

O desenvolvimento requer uma orientação de equidade de modo a respeitar o meio ambiente para abertura a diversidades de culturas e tradições que servem para formação contínua ao longo da vida, respeitando a hierarquia de existência neste mundo.

Indigenous Peoples of Canada *Anne Leonard Canada*

The racism in Canada against the Indigenous Peoples of Canada is long standing, systemic, often hidden or denied, but becoming better understood by more and more Canadians today.

Indigenous peoples have been in Canada for thousands of years. There are many different Native tribes across Canada and Inuit groups across the northern part of the country. When European Christian settlers began "discovering" the land we call Canada 400 years ago, they assumed a superiority which has influenced the relationship between Indigenous people and settlers -- a group which now includes immigrants from around the world.

First, England's, and, later, Canada's government, had policies which tried to diminish and later assimilate Indigenous peoples. Their lands, spirituality and way of life were taken away especially as more settlers arrived. Our settler ancestors accepted these government policies and basically left matters to government agents to implement them. Indigenous peoples were moved to "Indian Reserves" and their children were sent away to "residential schools." But the Native and Inuit peoples did not go away or become assimilated into the white culture. In spite of many problems and injustices they remain proud peoples. Today many are highly educated, articulate and demanding to have their rights recognized.

This is some of the background of the colonial history which has resulted in racism in Canada. Many of us in the Grail have learned and seen this racism for what it is here and now – systemic, causing poverty far below the national average, reserves with inadequate housing, boil water advisories, substandard education, and health services.

One of the worst tragedies has been the high number of missing and murdered women among the Indigenous population. After much protesting and petitioning, a National Enquiry was held which documented and proved this reality. Sadly not very much – in fact almost nothing - has been done since the Enquiry. Being Indigenous and also a woman is dangerous in Canada.

We had hopes that the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) would be adopted and upheld by all levels of government in Canada. This would give Indigenous peoples free, prior and informed consent before any activity such as resource development, oil and gas pipe lines, or hydro dams could be undertaken by government or corporate companies on their lands. Sadly this Declaration has not been adopted by the federal and most provincial governments so far.

The colonization process has resulted at this time (February 2020) in a standoff between the Wet'suwet'en Indigenous Peoples and the Coastal GasLink Company which is demanding access to Wet'suwet'en territory to place a pipeline on their **unceded** Indigenous territory. Many Grail women also find that even the thought of building another pipeline is against our need to deal with the climate crisis. Other Indigenous groups and also many settlers are supporting the Wet'suwet'en by blocking roads and trains. What we are noticing is that more settlers are not only supportive of Indigenous initiatives but are demanding action on Indigenous rights.

Personally, for many years I have thought and felt that if we as settlers had listened to and worked with Indigenous peoples in taking care of our land, we would not be having the climate crisis we are experiencing today. Many of us Grail elders no longer picket or march, but we can and do pray for justice and peace for the Indigenous peoples of Canada.

There are of course, and unfortunately, other instances of racism in Canada against Blacks, Asians, Moslems, Jews, all of which are unacceptable. However, the racism that affects the Indigenous peoples of Canada is built right into the structure of our country and has been since it was founded.

The US Grail – Committed to becoming an Anti-Racist Organization *Renee P. Wormack-Keels U.S.A.*

At the fall General Assembly of 2017, the attendees voted on two important resolutions:

1) A spiritual core is the foundation of the Grail from which all else flows.
2) That the US Grail commit to becoming an Anti-Racist Organization

Needless to say, a working group was formed "on the spot" to begin working towards this resolution. African American and two women of Native and Hispanic origin. The co-chairs were a woman of color and a white woman – Carol Barton and Renee Keels lead the group in pulling the team together.

It was determined that IF the US Grail was to make this an authentic goal, then the leadership and movement needed to reflect the goal.

In preparation for the three-day meeting, each of us was asked to read the following materials:

1) White supremacy culture by Tema Okun at www.dismantlingracism.org and two things--And specific readings for white women and women of color

1. *What Is Spiritual Leadership?* by the Women's Theological Center
2. *This Is What Accountable Relationships Looks Like* by Dionardo Pizaña and Melanie S. Morrison
3. *The Uses of Anger*: *Women Responding to Racism* by Audre Lorde
4. *White Fragility and the Rules of Encounter* by Robin DiAngelo
5. *Dreaming Accountability: Dreaming a Returning to Ourselves and Each Other* by Mia Mingus

The workshop focused on the four dimensions of systems: a) internal, b) interpersonal) 3) institution and 4) cultural. These are the principle issues involved in unpacking and understanding the impact of racism in America.

We had two facilitators: Melanie Morrison and Donna Bivens. Melanie is a white women, who has been conducting workshops for white persons to understand their role and benefit in maintain racism in this country. Melanie conducts workshops called: Doing Our Own Work – an anti-racism intensive for white

people. Donna is an African American women with more than 35 years engaged in teaching anti-racism workshops in the greater Boston area. She is also a co-founder of the Women's Theological Institute (along with Grail member Nancy Richardson).

Approximately 52 women attended – 13 women of color, 29 white women, 5 women under the age of 50, women mostly from an urban setting and approximately 5 from rural areas. There were 8 members representing Grail Council.

We engaged in small group exercises – dyads and triads for more intimate conversation and then processed in the larger group.

We viewed a film "A LIGHT IN THE SHADOWS" by Shakti Butler that included white women and women of color in conversation regarding issues of race. Following that the film we talked about what we viewed in the film and the behavior of some of the participants. Undoubtedly, we each saw and heard something different.

Some of the questions that we explored included:

1) Where did you grow up and what experiences with race did you encounter?
2) What experiences, if any, have you had as a member of the U S Grail, with race?

A key take away issue for this group, has been how to look at structural and behavioral issues of racism in the U S Grail. One of those key issues has been to ways to support the work of Grail women of color. One of our new policies is to insure that a significant portion of mission monies are utilized for women of color.

As we move into the future, we have intentionally focused on more women of color serving leadership positions in the Grail.

At the conclusion of our time together, we re-committed to working towards being an anti-racist organization and to look at our mission and vision statements to insure that they reflected an "anti-racist" point of view.

We held An Opening ritual that focused on who we are as an intergenerational organization with many gifts to share and things to learn and teach. It allowed us to become more centered on why we had gathered.

The closing ritual was a sending forth ritual that focused on what our “take-aways” would be as we continued this work.

Sisterhood *Ine van Emmerik Netherlands*

During the UN Women's Conference in New York in 2017, I met Sulafa Diab. We were participating in a workshop on international cooperation. There was an immediate click -- she being a woman from Sudan, I being a woman from the Netherlands. Without words, we recognized our common drive: developing our talents and making them fruitful for a better world, especially for women. Two women living in very different settings, looking in the same direction.

Sulafa is a physician but also leads a local NGO, Mazaya, which is doing all sorts of projects to better the living conditions of women and children. I was happy to help her with some funds from the Dutch Grail for several projects for water supply in schools in Khartoum. We exchanged information and reports, and my first impression was right: she is both careful and decisive.

At the beginning of this year -- I had just sent her a message that again the Dutch Grail was willing to give some funds for a project -- I read all sorts of bad news about Sudan, about demonstrations and violence, a lot of violence. The people of Sudan organized themselves in a protest against the current regime. My mailbox stayed empty, frightening empty. But then, to my relief, I got a short message: "I have to email through another place now as the internet is almost completely down." She sent a video of the street violence. After a while, better news followed: it was getting calmer, the regime had changed. People are more hopeful and hopefully it will stay that way. Fortunately, the transfer of the funds went well. This time Mazaya built school latrines in Gazeira, a time-consuming job because they used second-hand materials to save money.

Then the emails came with other stories. More and more women and girls started to talk about the violence they experienced before and during the unrest. They started to stand up for themselves.

I wrote to Sulafa about the Sudanese artist Kamala Ibrahim Ishag who received the Dutch Prince Claus Award for her work. She is a woman who has often spoken out herself about the political situation and violence against women in Sudan.

Sulafa told me how she went to the UN Women's Conference in New York in 2016 and 2017. She was able to achieve this with minimal subsidies. To her annoyance, she saw that dozens of women from her country who were also in New York went shopping instead of actively taking part, while still receiving ample sponsoring. When she tried to find ways for funding for her own foundation by organizing information meetings in Khartoum, Sulafa was told by the chairperson of the Sudanese delegation that she could not interfere with the work of the national delegation in that way. It made me realize even more how

important our little threads of connection and practical support can be, providing hope and support. Last week I spoke with her again on the phone. She was attending an international conference of dermatologists in Paris, telling me enthusiastic stories about research for the treatment of psoriasis, a very common disease in her country. She is trying to start up a charter of Soroptimists in her country.

Sisterhood is global. Sisterhood exists worldwide. Last summer I spoke with Andjelka Rudic from Croatia. Years ago, we worked together in the LIEN network for young women and organized a meeting in her country. She is currently working for UNHCR, the UN Refugee Organization in Turkey. It was as if we had spoken to each other in the previous week. It felt like the same kind of sisterhood as I feel with Sulafa. There is a click, a friendship that can lurk for years and then be activated again. Many women all over the world, especially Grail women, will recognize my experience.

Global Migration through a Racial Justice Lens *Carol Barton*[6] *U.S.A.*

Maria Carmen is a waitress in New York City and an undocumented migrant worker. She and other servers make less than minimum wage, earn no sick leave, and live on tips to pay rent. Maria Carmen was laid off when restaurants in the city closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Without "valid work authorization" she receives no unemployment benefits. She does not qualify for federal emergency aid support, including paid sick leave, extended unemployment and cash payments. She fears what would happen if she has to go to the hospital, because of immigration enforcement. A global racialized economy that relies on cheap migrant labor is not willing to recognize or protect their human rights.

Rooted in Colonialism and Modern Imperialism

Global migration is one of the defining issues of our day, not only because there are so many more people on the move, but because it is deeply gendered and raced. Migration makes visible a global racial hierarchy of rights and resources.

While people have always moved across borders, these movements have intensified in the era of neo-liberal capitalism. The global economy reflects the legacy of white settler colonialism, where land, resources and peoples were pillaged from the Global South to feed the profit-making enterprises of the Global North. This reflected white supremacist structures of power where conquered and colonized black and brown peoples served the interests of white elites.

The pillage continues in modern-day imperialism, where former colonies remain economically dependent on rich nations, exporting raw materials and importing industrial goods and technology, going into debt in the process. The explosion of so-called "Third World" debt in the 1980s and beyond enabled International Financial Institutions to impose structural adjustment programs – austerity—on poor

[6] Carol Barton is a member of the US Grail and participates in the Grail Migrant and Refugees Network. She is Co-Convener of the Women in Migration Network. She has worked on migrant rights issues in the US and globally since 2007.

nations. Public institutions were privatized, public budgets cut, workers' salaries atrophied. Free trade deals in the 1990s intensified economic crisis. For example, through NAFTA the US dumped cheap, subsidized corn in Mexico. Small peasants could not compete and lost their livelihoods, moving to cities, borders, and then to the US seeking work.

Decades of both economic and climate devastation are central drivers of migration. This is exacerbated by wars and conflict, often over natural resources, which have created waves of refugee and asylum-seekers. Organized crime, as well as gender-based violence are also reasons people migrate.

Seeking Cheap Labor

This history meshes with a global capitalist system which seeks to efficiently move workers to where they are most needed, often creating two-tier labor structures. According to the UN, 70% of the world's 258 million international migrants come from Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. That is, most are black and brown from the Global South.[7] Many developed countries rely on migrants to meet labor demands, including caring for aging populations such as in Japan. In most of the world, nations make bi-lateral deals to export and import workers on short term contracts. Often tied to a single employer, these contracts may be made in a language unfamiliar to the migrant workers, who frequently owe fees to recruiters. This is most intense in the Gulf States-- 80% of the population of Qatar and UAE are foreign workers. But it is also prevalent in the European Union, Australia, Canada, Japan and among teachers, healthcare workers and farm workers in the United States. These contracts lead to high levels of exploitation and abuse, generally without the freedom to organize into unions or protest conditions. Other forms of migration, also prevalent in the EU and US, involve migrants who enter without documents, overstay visas or lose asylum status. For example, some 11 million people in the US are in irregular status. Working without documents often means having to accept lower pay and more dangerous and precarious work, while living in constant fear of immigration enforcement. In both cases, these migrations help to fill labor shortages in destination countries while enabling employers to pay migrants less than minimum wage, effectively lowering wages for all workers.

Gender, Race and Class

Half of international migrants today are women, increasingly migrating on their own to seek work. Gender inequality is exacerbated for women in migration—those who remain at home when loved ones leave, those in transit and destination countries, and those forcibly returned. Violence against women and girls is rampant on the migration journey, in the home, in the workplace, by enforcement officials and in detention. Reporting a crime could mean detention and deportation. In many countries, irregular migrants are denied access to public services and justice. Because society expects women to be the primary caregivers, lack of access to services for families falls disproportionately on women. Lack of access to reproductive healthcare in one's own language can put women at risk. Migrant domestic workers are

7 https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2017_Highlights.pdf

part of a global care chain, serving in other women's homes even as they leave their own children at home. Migration enforcement has led to divided families. Women have experienced the forcible separation of children and in some cases, permanent loss of custody. Because many women who migrate have not had access to education and skills-training, they find themselves in some of the lowest paid and most exploitative jobs.

Media images of migrants are not generally of white professionals, but of poor black and brown people. Decades of neo-liberal austerity in wealthy destination countries have undermined the economic stability of workers there. Debt, foreclosures and evictions, un- and under-employment, lack of adequate healthcare, the rise of temp work even among professionals and decline in real wages are widespread. Xenophobia and racism have become the preferred tool in the rise of right-wing populist movements and governments. Amidst growing discontent within deeply racist societies, they effectively scapegoat black and brown and Muslim migrants as the cause of their economic malaise, sowing hatred and fear.

According to Nunu Kidane of the California-based Pan African Network, "African immigrants face the double threat of being Black and immigrant. They are twice as likely to be racially profiled, first on the basis of their skin color and additionally on their status as immigrants. Then, an added factor of 'triple jeopardy' comes into play for the large numbers of African immigrants who are also Muslim."[8] Within a White Supremacist society, migration has been linked to national security, posing the migrant as a security threat. The common practice of police racial and religious profiling means that migrants of color are more likely to be stopped and potentially transferred to Migration officials. Laws have been passed that explicitly legitimize racial profiling in migration enforcement. Over the past two decades, militarization of borders, enforcement and criminalization have become the default policy response. Racism is present as a driver of migration, in unequal exploitation of labor, and in criminalization of migrants.

Learning, Networking, Advocating

The *Grail Migrant and Refugees Network* is an International Grail network facilitated by Rosaurora Espinoza (Mexico), Deirdre Cornell (USA) and Ticha (Teresa) Vasconcelos (Portugal). It involves 38 members from Portugal and other EU countries, Brazil, Honduras, US, Mexico, Ecuador, who share about migration realities in their contexts and organizing responses. *Grail Link to the United Nations*, GLUN, has participated in the NGO Committee on Migration and migration-related activities at the UN.

The *Women in Migration Network* (WIMN), www.womeninmigration.org is a global network of migrant, feminist and trade union organizations advocating for gender-responsive, human rights-based policy at national, global and regional levels, including through the new UN Network on Migration and the UN Global Compact for Migration. WIMN brings an intersectional feminist lens to migration policy, amplifying the leadership and perspectives of women in migration. WIMN points out that migrant women are not vulnerable but are often made vulnerable by unjust migration policies. Rather, they are agents of change.

[8] "New Africans in Old America" by Nunu Kidane in Injustice for All: The Rise of the U.S. Immigration Policing Regime, National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, 2010.
https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/nnir.pdf

A particular concern for WIMN is the exploitation of migrant women's labor and the exclusion of migrant women's voices in decision-making at all levels. They call for ratification and implementation of the U.N. International Convention for the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families as well as International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions C189 on rights of domestic workers and C190 on Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work.

Grail members around the world can connect with these efforts, share the work they are already doing for migrant rights, and make visible how racial justice is central to migrant rights.

Letter from *Gerda Kaufmann* *Germany*

Dear Grail women worldwide, my favourite activity is writing letters. I will write a letter for Crossroads about racism in the EU - European Union and Germany. In recent years it has become apparent that in political elections, parties with nationalist leanings are growing and moving into parliaments. Europe-friendly, democratic parties are fighting against the loss of votes.

In the Federal Republic of Germany, the AFD - Alternative for Germany, which initially found supporters in the eastern German states, has been in existence since 2013. Their citizen-friendly attitude was interesting for people who felt disadvantaged in society. Then it gradually became clear that many people with a migration background were excluded by AFD supporters. Refugees and German fellow citizens who do not look German are discriminated against and do not have the same democratic rights. They are addressed and treated unkindly, as in the case of apartheid in South Africa and the Jews in the German Hitler state 1933-45. In the past 2 years, terrorist attacks and murders have increased alarmingly. A right-wing extremist motive such as racism and /or anti-Semitism could be proven among the perpetrators. On 3.12.2020, the Office for the Protection of the Constitution officially recognized the AFD group "Wing" as extremist. It is under observation by the Office for the Protection of the Constitution with immediate effect. Racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and violations of the free democratic basic order seep into everyday life. This attitude becomes a breeding ground for hatred and often also for acts of violence. There are sympathizers and actors of a inhuman ideology in almost all areas of society: in the military, within the police, in the judiciary, among teachers, in sports clubs, even - and this is completely insane - among Christians. (Alexander Schwabe, Publik Forum) In my daily newspaper WAZ (Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung) the racism researcher Karim Fereidooni commented in an interview on the problem of racism in Germany. He is responsible for the training of future teachers at the Ruhr-Uni Bochum. He says there's no school without racism. Since the colonization of Africa 400 years ago and the definition of race, there have been prejudices in the minds of different peoples. In his opinion, such prejudices must be dealt with in the first years of school.

In my search for information about relevant news in the context of racism, I was pleased to find some news (WAZ 03.12.2020, Culture and Leisure) „A historical audio documentary lets celebrities raise their voices once again". We listen to those who did not remain silent when talk was required. 1946 for example when 12 million people fled from once German eastern territories, the district administrator from

Osterholz shouted: „it is our duty to ensure that they have a sense of home and a right to a home country here";. Thank God there are also programmes in the media in which critical journalists and courageous people from civil society have their say. A very remarkable woman is Dunja Hayali, born in Germany in 1974 as the daughter of Iraqi parents. She gave her book, published in 2018, the title: Haymatland - How do we want to live together? She has experienced and describes the hate messages she receives daily. Dunja Hayali is a journalist and has hosted various programmes on German Television since 2007. She said: „ I never had the feeling that I was not German. It was only when I appeared on television that I began to be denied my home. Today I ask myself: In which Germany do I want to live and do we actually want to live?"; On March 11, 2020 here in Mülheim an der Ruhr an event about everyday racism in Germany was held in the Media house. Ali Can, author and director of the "Viel-Respekt" Center in Essen, filled the evening with many insights into the secret thoughts of some Germans about expatriation. Now is the time to consider how to protect people who are the target of hate. „ Ali Can speaks from personal experience. He is 26 years old and son of a Turkish Kurdish and Alevi family. Activities on the Internet are particularly confusing and very disturbing. In a survey of 2500 mayors, 64% said that they were insulted, abused, threatened or attacked in their office.

Towards the end of my letter, I would like to mention an example of how the German and European majority society is again showing positive attitudes and critical commitment to democracy. ATTAC , a non governmental international organisation which is critical of global economy was founded in France 20 years ago. The French name is "Association pour une taxation des transactions financières pour l'aide aux citoyens". The range of topics has expanded continuously. At least in parts of the public, the expertise of their organisation has long been so recognised that they do not fall on deaf ears when it comes to issues other than financial market taxation. All the more so if it is possible to form broad alliances with local movements in a specific case (Stephan Hebel, Please do not grow up, ATTAC 1/2020, Newsletter).

Dear readers of Crossroads, I have shared with you some of the aspects of racism, which you can find in our papers. I hope that our active civil society will succeed in defending our democratic and free constitution and live it.

Now we have to change our communal life in order not to spread the Corona Virus. I wish you health and joy in the coming feast days.

Love Gerda