

## **Hope for inclusion? The three ways of thinking of Immanuel Kant**

The United Nations has created a body of law that puts all people on an equal footing:

c) All human rights and fundamental freedoms are universal and direct, they are interdependent and interrelated. People with disabilities must be guaranteed the full enjoyment of these rights and freedoms without discrimination.

The term inclusion is used in this Convention. In this sense, the German government committed itself by law in 2008 to achieving inclusion.

Teachers, educators and professors are therefore obliged to implement joint learning in kindergartens, schools and universities.

It is now up to us to think about whether the demand for inclusion can be a perspective for the work of educators; all children and young people are getting the possibility to learn together.

Kant's maxims about thinking are helpful to face the task full of hope.

These three principles are:

1. The unprejudiced way of thinking.  
The Self Thinking
2. maxim: The extended way of thinking.  
In the place of any other thinking
3. maxim: the consequent way of thinking.

Thinking in unison with yourself at all times.

(cf. Kant 1977 pp. 224-228)

I turn to the **first maxim** of the unprejudiced thinking:

Kant formulates these demands as maxims.

Maxims are principles for your own actions.

He wants to point out that one must also want to think for oneself, because it is not the case that we automatically think for ourselves. Rather, we have to set out to do so and also keep up. This is why Kant speaks of self-inflicted immaturity in the sense of: not having the will to think for ourselves.

The three maxims show that for Kant practical reason and thinking are basically one:

Thinking is practical as a theoretical thing and thus bound to morality, for thinking must also be held responsible.

The first maxim, the maxim of thinking without prejudice, makes the use of one's own reason the rule. Understanding means activity and sometimes it is even dangerous to think, especially to think out loud. Trouble and risk can be avoided by being passive and letting others think for you, in both practical and theoretical terms.

A judgment that is adopted in this passive way before being tested by one's own mind and others is called prejudice by Kant.

Prejudices are not judgments. In prejudice someone has judged for me. It can be religious writings, the ancestors, the king or the political party.

In prejudice I am externally determined, underaged, dependent.

They demand the opposite: to judge for myself.

We must learn to do that.

We need people who can help us on this path:

I was on the train from Munich to Hamburg.

It was fifty years ago. I remember the situation like it happened yesterday.

I'm sitting in a compartment where a Spanish family had settled.

The woman next to me and her husband in front of me with two children. The girl was five and the boy four years old.

They didn't sit still for a moment.

Everyone wanted the biggest piece of the father

They stood on his lap, they hugged him from both sides.

Then they sat down.

Everyone on one leg. Then they tickled him.

He took the girl in his hands and held her in the air.

Then it was the boy's turn.

The father said, "Excuse us for being so loud. If we're disturbing you, please say so."

I said, "No, not at all."

The girl was in a wine-red velvet dress with a white lace collar, white socks and black patent leather shoes, and a gold clasp in her hair.

She ran her hands through her thick black tousled curls.

Her whole face laughed.

The boy wore a white shirt with bow tie, blue long trousers, white socks and black shoes.

His thick hair was short.

It looked like the family was dressed up for a party.

The girl sat down next to her father and looked at me:

"Como te llamas?"

I reply, "Christel."

She says, "Yo soy Lucía."

I have to slowly realize that Lucía is a girl with Down's syndrome.

This girl looks like a little princess.  
She stood out.

Happy children are always beautiful.

When I met "the Mongos" in Germany, I thought they all looked the same.

Usually they wore the typical fringe hairstyle, the typical glasses and were dressed in typical inconspicuous clothes. They should always sit still, no matter where the family was, in the ice cream parlor or on the tram.

They should not attract attention.

At that time I felt sorry for parents who had a mentally handicapped child.

To this day, Germany is infected by the ghost:

"Better five healthy children than one of those."

That sentence haunted my little head when I first saw "such one" on the street.

My mother said:

"Don't look there, it's not right."

I looked away. I didn't understand it.

It's taken me all my life to see the happiness, that the Spanish family had radiated.

Again and again I have to remind myself what Kant teaches me when he writes:

The phrase "it is written" should be replaced by "I assert".

I maintain that there are no mentally retarded children.  
To assert something means to present and represent this conviction in the first person singular, or to say it with a formulation of Kant:

"To be master in your own minds".

In the quoted text, Kant also calls this maxim of the Enlightenment a negative way of thinking.

It is easy to understand why this negativity is identical with the actual tendency and intention of the Enlightenment. It fights back against authority and guardianship, to which everyone submits who renounces thinking for himself.

The Enlightenment does not prescribe what is to be thought and how it is to be judged. It rather reminds us - as a maxim - not to do something specific: The only instance by which we can distinguish true from false, namely our own mind, never to delegate.

I became aware of this when I saw a young woman with Down's syndrome on German television for the first time on a talk show.

She graduated from high school.

She is training to be an actress.

She was starring in a film.

She is an exception in Germany.

She knows that.

She's being asked:

"What do you want most of all?"

I wasn't prepared for that answer:

"I want you not to be afraid of us."

In this she differs from the little Spanish princess.

Pablo Pineda went to school in Spain.

He studied teaching and psychology.  
He teaches as a teacher.  
This has not yet happened in Germany.

Pineda is convinced:

"For me, there are two concepts: The concept of fear and the concept of love. And if we have lived with the concept of fear until now, it is time to leave it."

More than fifty years ago, it was forbidden in Germany to teach children with Down syndrome the cultural techniques of reading, calculating and writing. They were mentally retarded no matter how intelligent they were. Because the tests were designed to fail.

This was to change in Germany in the seventies. I belonged to a group of scientists who set out to prove that the conventional tests only rank the children, but are not helpful in helping the teachers to develop better teaching.

We worked in the project "curricular diagnostics" at the University of Munich under the direction of Prof. Schiefele. We worked on making an analysis. Our goal was that the lessons should be adapted to the children and not the children to the lessons (project group 1973).

During this time the Russian psychologist Prof. A. Leont'ev wrote:

"The aptitude tests, which only determine which tasks the test person can and cannot solve and which cannot say anything about the specifics of the mental processes, are not suitable for assessing the mental potential of a child. They fail especially with boys and girls who are a little bit retarded in their mental development" (Kussmann 1971

p.129).

Today the conventional tests are back in use. We know that the test results are neither valid nor objective, no matter how large the sample is.

Every child is a secret. A child's potential developmental opportunities do not light up after answering the test questions.

How smart children with Down syndrome respond to nonsensical test items, is not examined yet.

I would like to illustrate this on the basis of three examples:

At the School Entrance Examination Flora should repeat the word "horse".

Flora says, "Eats hay."

The psychologist says, "Repeat after me: horse."

Flora says: "Daddy, it's better if we go home."

The father tries to explain to the psychologist, that Flora's answer was to say that she knows what a horse is. But the psychologist cannot accept that. Flora does not need to know what a horse is and what is typical for a horse, but she should repeat the word "horse" and she does not know why.

This is what the father told me in a way that makes sense. After that he went home with Flora.

Paul's school assistant accompanies him to the School Entrance Examination.

Paul has to paint a man. Hegel would say, like Paul, "I can't."

The man himself has never been met, so you can't paint

him.

Man is a generic term, and it defies experience. That's what the philosopher Hegel would have said:

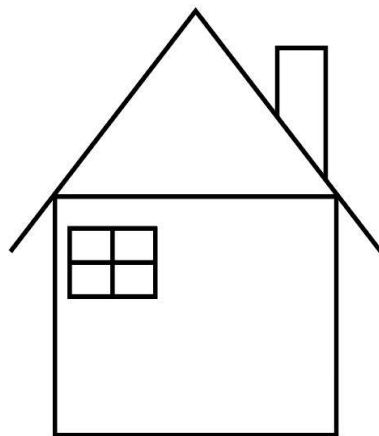
"I've never seen anyone eat fruit, just an apple or a pear."

Paul says, "I'm going to paint Daddy."

To the psychologist's great astonishment, he was able to do this. He painted Daddy with head and body and arms and legs and a big hat. And he didn't forget his eyebrows.

He should paint a man and not a Daddy, otherwise the objectivity is shaken, because all children should find the same conditions.

I showed Kevin a map with a house without a door.



And I said, as instructed, "What's missing?"

Kevin said, "Nothing."

I helped him against the instructions:

"Look closely. You can't climb through the window."

Kevin is very serious. "I can climb through the window. My mother has to go around the house."

He points his finger at the door, which is not visible on a two-dimensional image.

The behaviour of a child in a test situation is a mirror of it's social situation.

These examples show that it is not the children,



who unfortunately fail.

The engineers of social science have to play their role, beyond all reason.

They are not fulfilling their mandate to allow children to develop.

They block the children's learning path.

They are the barrier.

They suspect it. This presentiment makes them unhappy.

The completely senselessly determined intelligence quotient decides of the school career and therefore of the life of the children.

For example, if a child in Germany is tested as mentally handicapped, it is almost impossible to free this child from this stigma.

Christian and Tom, as I said before, are able to graduate from high school despite the diagnosis.

Tom studied media sciences.

This was only possible because a teacher included him into her regular class and was able to compete against all official regulations.

These are exceptions. Usually, parents have to litigate for years to get their child recognised as mentally normal.

Our gaze should not focus on the therapist or the child during a diagnosis. We should only pay attention to how the communication between the child and the therapist develops.

During an appreciative communication the uniqueness of the adult and the uniqueness of the child appear and enables us a deeper understanding of both.

We listen without judging.

We dive into the action.

With this I turn to the **second maxim** of the extended way of thinking:

The extended way of thinking.

Thinking in the place of everyone else.

When I read a text about the children with Down syndrome that corresponds to my own experiences, this sentence is milk and honey for my awareness.

To have this experience, I have to make an effort to read.

I find myself in this text. A text written in this way reflects my thinking about these children.

I do not learn anything about the children, but I learn something about myself. There is something that I have always been looking for. I could not say the text until I had read it.

Now I know what I always wanted to say, but I was missing the words.

L. Vygotskij wrote a text like this: I read it when I was 37 years old.

"All the clearly psychological characteristics of the disabled child are based not on biological, but on social factors. Perhaps the time is not far off, that the pedagogy will find it embarrassing to talk about a disabled child, because it could be an indication that it is an insurmountable deficiency of its nature. It is in our hands to act in such a way that the deaf, the blind, the feeble-minded child is not disabled. Then the word itself will also disappear, the true sign of our own disability" (Vygotskij 1975 p.71f).

I was reconciled with creation.

In my publications L. Vygotskij's sentences appear again and again.

They are like a warm coat. It warms, it protects.  
I walk through the cold and the freezing wind blows through  
my hair and into my face.  
I put my hands in my deep pockets.  
I pull the collar over my ears.  
I am armed.  
I can feel the freezing rain coming down on me,  
but I'm not freezing.  
I don't have to look away, I don't have to run away,  
I don't have to listen away, I don't have to die.  
Outside it's cold and inside I stay warm.  
I'm not alone.  
The children with Down's syndrome freeze to death in the  
cold, that surrounds them.  
Most don't survive the social ice rain.

In Germany, children with Down's syndrome can be aborted  
by the ninth month.  
As a result, children survive abortions.  
Doctors are then obliged to provide passive euthanasia -  
they are not allowed to kill the children after birth.  
To ensure that no child survives the abortion, the mother  
must agree to an intrauterine cardiac death injection before  
the birth.  
No name, no burial.  
Nele, eight years old, says:  
"Mom cried when I was born. Mama wanted a girl. A girl I  
am, but with Down's syndrome. Mama didn't want a girl like  
that."

Marvin says:  
"It's true that I have a wrinkle in my hand. I imagine that the  
wrinkle is gone. I live without a wrinkle. Then I feel better."

To test your own judgement against that of others, to put

yourself in the other person's position, is necessary to become aware of the limitations of our opinions. Whoever renounces the testing of his own judgement, whether it stands up to the pluralism of opinions or fails, is on the way to "logical egoism". This would be a path to mental illness, as Kant says.

The healthy mind is the mind of common sense. Those who refrain from extending their judgments lose themselves in a world of madness.

The one who thinks in prejudices withdraws into his private world, which means the common world for him.

This idea is recorded in the English term "common sense".

In contrast to the second maxim, the maxim of extended thinking, the first maxim is the self-thinking.

Put simply, the difference between the two maxims is as follows: The maxim of self-thinking explicitly turns away from the foreign point of view and the maxim of the extended way of thinking explicitly turns to the foreign point of view.

The German government committed itself by law in 2008 to the realization of inclusion.

It is now over twenty years ago.

A discussion on integration between scientists and politicians took place in the Hamburg City Hall.

I said:

"As long as we do not have teaching and learning materials for the teachers and students, we will fail.

Under the given conditions it still seems impossible to do

justice to the educators and the children.

We should explore inclusive education in model schools together with students, parents, educators and scientists before it becomes a commitment to the maxim for all schools".

We now know that the commitment to inclusive education is a tragedy for many children with Down syndrome, for educators and parents.

When children with Down syndrome are enrolled in regular school, they realize after a few weeks that they are excluded from learning together with the other children.

Many become ill.

PD Dr. med. Kowark, child and youth psychiatrist, usually diagnoses: "The reason for the developmental delay is the depressive or autistic reaction of the child".

For Kant, the connection between prescribed morality and the satisfaction of teachers and children in class is problematic.

His theory of hope should be a solution to the problem.

For we cannot ensure that even if teachers make an effort to teach the maxim of inclusion, the children in inclusive education will really be happier.

This, Kant believes, is what we can only hope for.

Teachers can, after all, find themselves in a desolate state despite all morality.

And that is what they are currently doing in Hamburg.

The affirmation of the maxim under the premise of morality would only be possible by realizing the maxim "Inclusion for all children".

Conceptual insight - and this is what morality is about -

would then have empirical effect as such, which would consequently lead to a kind of magic belief in the long-distance effect of concepts.

So it can only be said that we, as moral beings, can lay claim to redesigning schools in such a way that all children and teachers affirm them.

According to Kant, a school in which justice is done to all children can only be thought of as a synthesis of morality and reason.

For Kant hope is the adequate relation between reason, which we humans are capable of, and morality.

We can hope for a school in which reasonable educators and students act morally.

Thus hope becomes a structural moment of human reason.

It articulates the idea of a balance between demanded morality and a happy and content life.

The maxim: "All children must learn together", does not then become dogma, it does not then end in fanaticism.

What does this thinking mean for the moral demand for the inclusion of children with Down's syndrome in mainstream schooling?

Twenty years ago I gave a lecture on the concept of learning together with all children.

After that I was interviewed by three journalists from different newspapers one after the other.

The next day there was only a small article about my lecture in one newspaper.

I did not understand this and I asked the organizer why only one newspaper mentioned the lecture shortly.

The answer was so honest that I did not find any words.

He said accordingly:

"You were able to convince many listeners that it might be possible to support these children better, that some of them might actually graduate from school, because that's what they're all about, if I understood you correctly.

It may be good for the individual child, but when we think of society as a whole, it could lead to a problem.

Now, if all these children were born, that could put a strain on our society."

In Denmark, the government is proud that almost 100 percent of parents abort their child when they learn that the child would be born with trisomy 21.

The word euthanasia is like a ghost from our short history.

We know that the body of law brought in by the United Nations calling for inclusion that a school that is fair for all children becomes reality, a school that can also make the children with Down syndrome happy is doomed to failure, we do not give up the idea of working on it.

What can we do to support children with Down's syndrome to learn successfully at school like the other children?

We have to take the trouble to see these children with different eyes.

We must, in the spirit of J. Derrida.

"Down syndrome children are mentally retarded" as a construction guided by interests and deconstruct our view "Children with Down's syndrome are not mentally retarded."

We know that our view is also a construction, but it is humane and does justice to our democratic constitution. The social consensus based on humanity does not come about by itself.

It is our task to seriously examine every thought to see if it is helpful to a humane social order to give you a chance.

In this sense, everyone is called upon to take up the discourse and make their contribution.

The mere fact that we are all making an effort to understand each other and not to judge each other, is humane and healing.

How can we imagine the social discourse?

1. Scientific research should provide development opportunities for children.

The project School Career Guidance at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich under Prof. Schiefele tried this with curricular diagnostics fifty years ago.

2. Initiatives should be founded, which is the same for people with Down's syndrome and enable parents of children with Down syndrome to present themselves and publish the discussion of their views.

3. Support and organize self-help groups, which provide parents and children with opportunities to support each other.

4. Teaching and learning materials should be published that give recognition to children and parents so that they become capable of action and self-confident.

5. The political parties should participate in this discourse participate.



6. The media should face this discourse.

7. Training places should be provided for people with Down's syndrome.

8. Pupils and young people should actively participate in cultural life. The Thalia Theatre is going on tour with children with Down's syndrome with the play "Outside the Door". Josefine, a student of my practice, becomes an actress.

9. Discourse with other countries should take place.

10. 98.5% of parents who decide to abort their child when diagnosed with Down's syndrome would decide to support their children's graduation from school.

It makes sense for me to commit myself to the children.

These children make me happy.

They make me self-confident.

I could grow with them.

I have written books and produced films with them.

I grew old with them,

I will live on with them.

I know myself by them.

They give me the strength to go to work every day, to give lectures and to dare new projects again and again. These children help me to affirm my life in the spirit of Kant.

Therefore, for me the prescribed demand, that all children must attend regular school, is no longer formalistic.

It gives my life a perspective.

No matter how difficult the road, it is the hope

that restructures my actions daily.

The term inclusion as such already has an empirical effect, because we have partly succeeded in to realize adequate teaching.

I follow Kant when he says it is the hope, that mediates between the moral imperative and gives me the meaning of my life.

If we are to apply the moral maxim "Inclusion for all children" with hope, that all children could learn happily together, then we prevent the dogmatization of this demand.

Then we come to the conclusion that as moral subjects we are obliged to demand the practical idea, without recognizing it as the real order of the world or to be able to experience.

Consequently, the idea of a school for all children cannot correspond to any state of the world.

So the idea of a fair school reflects for all children its own unreality, if it becomes a claim in principle, but it remains as hope and gives the moral demand a perspective and without it it would be frozen in formalism.

We are therefore not losing hope of a school for all children. This hope serves us as a perspective.

On this way we always make new insights.

Our inner certainty that the thought, that all children learn happily at school and develop in such a way that they become self-confident people, we carry in our hearts and always cultivate it new again.

We cannot guarantee a fair school for all children  
but we can get on the road -  
not lonely, but with different certainties, which we approach  
as our ever new maxim.

As Lessing already taught:

"If God in his right hand holds all truth and in his left hand  
the one ever-present drive for truth,  
although with the addition of always and eternally erring I  
would keep closed and would say to me: choose!  
I would humbly fall into his left and say: "Father, give! the  
pure truth is only for you alone!"  
(cf. Lessing 1777).

We are happy when we are allowed to strive together for the  
truth and when we are able to distinguish this from our  
society.

Then we hurry from one mental horizon to the next until at  
some point a new maxim challenges us and new hopes  
structure our actions.

If even one person is excluded from this hope, we should be  
vigilant.

I remember a sentence by Martin Niemöller:

When the Nazis took the Communists, I kept silent;

I wasn't a communist.

When they imprisoned the Social Democrats, I was silent;

I wasn't a social democrat.

When they took the trade unionists, I kept quiet,

I wasn't a union man.

When they came for me, there was nobody left to protest

(cf. Karnick / Richter 1988).

The land of the thinkers and the Enlightenment sank into

ruins. It has not recovered from it until today.  
I am a child of the parent generation, which must take responsibility for this catastrophe.  
Our parents' generation is still divided into victims and perpetrators. To this day it is hardly spoken about.

B. Brecht wrote, "The womb from which this came is still fertile." (from: The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui).

I was a child.  
I don't feel guilty for the crimes.  
I feel responsible.

For me, this means that as an educator, I must do everything humanly possible to ensure that never again in our country may children be persecuted on the basis of their faith, origin, race, psychological and physical condition.  
Now I turn to the third maxim of consistent thinking:  
This is a maxim that Kant says concerns our reason.  
Reason focuses on the universal context of things and all events.

This basic function of reason is then also central to the third maxim of the consistent way of thinking.  
To be consistent, this means to act according to principles in both thought and action, but not to act arbitrarily and arbitrary.

It is, then, reason that teaches us to make purposeful use of reason, so that it can be said that the wisdom of reason must dominate the rationality of understanding, which otherwise only obeys the partiality of particular interests.

But such rationality does not happen by itself.  
Although, according to Kant, everyone has been granted the disposition of reasonableness, in order for this possibility not only to remain a possibility but also to be confirmed, a

resolution that has become a habit - precisely that maxim of the consistent way of thinking - is necessary.

That is why Kant also said of this maxim:

"To think with oneself unanimously at all times".

Thus, reason thus has an identity-defining function.

It proves its worth not only in theoretical thinking, but also in practical thinking.

The **third maxim** thus addresses the demand of consequence to thinking.

Without such consequence, all thinking, all knowledge would remain lifeless.

But he who has only dead knowledge, says Kant, is split in himself:

On the one hand, he possesses a knowledge that could serve as a compass for his thoughts and actions, on the other hand, it is not based on that, but on random circumstances.

It's the lack of consistency, who here takes the life out of knowledge and life its identity.

For Janusz Korczak it was only logical to go to the concentration camp with his Jewish pupils with their heads held high.

I hope that we will never again be faced with such an alternative.

I hope that the idea of the Enlightenment will continue to be the basis of our society in the future.

I hope that as long as I live, I will be allowed to say, think and act what is deeply identical with me.

And I will, if I continue to write books with the children with Down's syndrome that enable them to learn successfully.

And I will, if I continue to try to realize the ideas of L. Vygotskij.

And I will if I continue to encourage mothers to welcome their children into this world.

And I will if I continue not to tell any mother how to behave when she finds out that her child has Down's syndrome.

And I will if I continue to advocate a class that offers all levels of psychological development in one lesson, as Vygotskij described it in the crisis theory, unless I find something better.

And I will, if I continue to advocate school graduation for children with Down's syndrome, so that they can learn a profession that suits them.

My godchild graduated from secondary school at twenty and then successfully completed an apprenticeship as a florist. Then she got married and is a happy mother.

What does it mean to be in harmony with oneself  
To be authentic in every way?  
These are only short moments.

There is a rare cactus called "Queen of the Night". It opens its beautiful flower only once a year in the night for a few seconds. When it has faded it takes a long time for the next bud opens for a short moment.

It was in 1986 shortly after the revolution in Nicaragua. I was giving lectures at the Ministry of Culture. I was to work with a five-year-old girl traumatized by the war. She did not speak.

She was mute.

I was hoping she would read letters with me.

I was carrying wooden letters, two inches high.

She learned to read the two letters M and A.

When I said, "Give me the M," she took the M, said "M" and gave it to me.

When I said, "Give me the A," she took the A, said "A" and gave it to me.

Then I put the M and the A on the table at a distance of 30 cm.

She put her closed hand under the "M" with me and said "M" with her mouth closed.

Then she learned to lead the closed hand to the A and while she opened the hand under the A the opening hand pulled the opening of the lips with her and she read the syllable "MA."

Then she learned the O.

Thumb and index finger formed a closed circle, the O.

She put the closed hand under the M, then led the hand to the O.

She formed the circle with her thumb and index finger.

She spoke "MO."

We practiced the syllables Ma and Mo.

Then I laid the sentence:

AMO A MAMA

The unexpected happened.

For the first time in her life, the mute girl spoke a sentence that meant the universe to a child.

She spoke loud and clear.



## I LOVE MAMA

Sacred silence, deathly silence, remembrance of all who have fallen.

One by one the participants got up and clapped. There were the employees of the Ministry of Culture, pedagogues and psychologists, the girls parents and soldiers in the room in the green Sandinista uniform, about forty participants.

I will never forget the six-year-old girl in the red dress with the white collar, the black curls and the white socks with lace edging and the shiny black shoes.

When I close my eyes, I see everything in front of me - the hall, the table we were sitting at, the sentence made of wooden letters.

I hear her reading the sentence with her fingers.

"A MO A MAMA"



I hear myself talking:

"A school where all children, teachers are happy in a democratic Nicaragua, it is our common hope."

To this day I carry our common hope in my heart.