8 Whose past, whose present? Representation through temporal (dis-)connection in journalism

Given the structures of epistemic violence that still shape how the genocide is constructed as a historical event in journalism (cf. chapter 7), the following chapter asks: How can present speakers connect to the past in journalism to legitimize their demands? In answering this question, the following chapters address a blind spot in much of the previous memory research: Many studies often presuppose that witnesses of past atrocities can, at least in theory, speak about their past experiences and make claims for the present (cf. chapter 3.3.2). How is this claim to represent the past journalistically maintained or challenged when all living witnesses have died? Which mnemonic practices does journalism use to bridge or widen this gulf between past and present affected communities? How do these shape the construction of belonging or exclusion and, by extension, the ability to make legitimate demands for "our" present?

To answer these questions, the following chapter brings together mnemonic practices of speaking *about* the past (re-presentation), which were discussed in chapter 7, with the question of who can speak *for* the interests of present communities in German and Namibian journalism. In this way, the following chapters add a temporal aspect to the theoretical conceptualization of representation as "strategies of persuasion" (Spivak, 1988, p. 276). For this, I ask how the "sphere of legitimate controversy" (Hallin, 1986, p. 117) and "prospective demands" (Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2014) for colonial reparations are legitimized in journalism by the positioning of present speakers through the past. The previous chapters 6 and 7 have already shown that whereas Namibian journalism often foregrounds material demands, German journalism tends to focus on cultural and performative solutions for the genocide. This chapter now asks how this multiplicity of demands is normalized through the position of present speakers in journalistic memory production.

For this, chapter 8.1 begins by asking how the 1904–1908 genocide is connected to Herero and Nama communities in the present. Then, chapter 8.2 considers how this connection to the past simultaneously limits the prospective demands that Herero and Nama communities can make by alternatively constructing them as representatives of the past or as representatives of present demands. Finally, chapter 8.3 explores the role

that German speakers play in this structure as observers of the past. The following chapters primarily view German and Namibian journalism together. However, when certain chapters focus exclusively on one national context to make a larger argument, this will be clearly noted in the title of the chapter.

8.1 "Herero customs": Commemorative coverage in journalism

Previous research has shown that commemorative articles are often the spaces where journalism (re-)activates the past for a present audience (cf. chapter 3.3.1). This finding was confirmed in my sample, as Herero and Nama speakers were able to explicitly connect to the past in articles that covered commemorative ceremonies or rituals. However, as the previous chapters have shown, these commemorations were often shown as an expression of indigenous identity, perhaps best expressed through the label given to National FM's coverage of genocide commemorations: "Herero customs" (cf. chapter 6.1.3). There were no public national commemorations of the genocide throughout my sample. How does this connection between commemoration and indigenous community shape the position of Herero and Nama speakers to make demands, especially given the journalistic connections to the German and Namibian national context described in the previous chapter 7?

To begin answering this question, chapter 8.1.1 shows how German journalism's coverage of "other" commemorations is strategically used to produce temporal and spatial disconnection. For this, the chapter focuses specifically on the role of German foreign correspondents in shaping commemorative coverage in journalism. As has been described in chapter 6.2.3, articles written by German foreign correspondents are the primary spaces where Herero and Nama speakers are quoted in-depth. These pieces are found across my sample, even though they have notably decreased in recent years. Here, I consider how these articles intersect with the description of the Herero and Nama genocide as a historical event in the previous chapter. Then, chapter 8.1.2 shows how juxtapositions between the past and present shape arguments for development in both German and Namibian newspapers.

8.1.1 "An unusual sight": Herero and Nama traditions in German foreign reporting

In German journalism, articles written by foreign correspondents are often the only spaces where multiple Herero and Nama speakers from Namibia directly make demands for the genocide. However, research has shown that the performative production of "truth" by foreign correspondents depends on the separation between the "home" audience and "foreign" events (Mükke, 2009, p. 183). How does this shape German journalistic coverage, and specifically the speaking position of the Herero and Nama within that coverage? Which connections to the past become (im-)possible through this structure? Answering these questions will provide me with a foundation for the representative patterns described in the following chapters.

In 2016, the *SZ*'s foreign correspondent in Africa, Tobias Zick, wrote a three-page article in the newspaper's weekend edition features section, "Book Two" ("*Buch Zwei*").[1] Even though the article was written in the wake of German parliamentary debates on the Herero and Nama genocide, Zick's article takes place entirely in Namibia – a common thread for many German articles published after political developments in the genocide negotiations. The article begins with the following words:

> "Outside, beyond the fence, the ghosts rise from the desert sand. Men, women and children stare at the enemy, a lost cluster gathered around a water hole. Soldiers in khaki bark commands. Two of them stand in front of the frightened people, guns at the ready. […] Bodies twitch in the sun. A man protests, flailing his arms. The soldiers drag him to a tree. A noose hangs from a branch." (*SZ*, 22.10.16)

In this introductory paragraph, Zick gives no indication that this is a reenactment. The paragraph describes violence by "the enemy" against an anonymous group of "[m]en, women and children." "Soldiers in khakhi" are the only individuals shown speaking, or "bark[ing] commands." This reflects many of the power structures that have been described in chapter 7. Yet, the symbolic description of "ghosts ris[ing] from the desert sand" adds a supernatural element to the described events, blurring the boundaries between past and present as well as fiction and reality. This suggests that these events did not really happen, that they are perhaps a hallucination or an imagination.

Only in the second paragraph does Zick explicitly reveal to the audience that this is a present-day reenactment by producing a dichotomy between the past and the present through the figure of Wilhelm Diekmann, a German-speaking Namibian farm owner: "A few kilometers away, Wilhelm Diekmann, owner of the 'Hunting and Guest Farm Hamakari,' rumbles through the sand in his all-terrain vehicle [*Geländewagen*], always along the fence that separates his property from Herero land." (*SZ*, 22.10.16) The sudden appearance of Diekmann riding his car along the fence irritates the historical description of soldiers yelling commands or a noose hanging from a branch. Moreover, it sets up a dichotomy that will become a common thread through many of the examples described below: In foreign reports, the Herero and Nama are often not only spatially but also temporally separated from the imagined audience. They are often shown as anachronistic, a description that is heightened by placing past traditions and commemorations into present-day settings, which frequently serve to juxtapose modernity and tradition. In the quotes above, Diekmann, a German-speaking Namibian, is described as driving a vehicle, whereas the Herero and Nama are shown wearing historical costumes. Anachronism functions in journalism to exoticize the relationship of the Herero and Nama to the past while simultaneously constructing it as unthinkable in the present reality of the German audience. Moreover, in contrast with Diekmann, the Herero reenactors are shown as a group, continuing a pattern that was already shown in many historical accounts of the past (cf. chapter 7.1).

1 This article is described in-depth by Haritos (2019, pp. 51–52) and Wolff (2021, p. 333). The following subsection focuses primarily on the aspects that are relevant for the construction of Herero and Nama speakers, as other elements of the article are touched on throughout the chapter.

The juxtaposition of demands by a German-speaking Namibian with Herero individuals is not found particularly often in my sample, even though this general construction spans newspapers across my time frame (cf. *FAZ*, 02.10.21; *taz*, 16.11.19), which will be explored in more detail in the ensuing chapters. However, what stands out particularly in the article above is the construction of anachronism that produces both a temporal and spatial gulf between the audience and the portrayed speakers through their connection to the past. This gulf is visible in a variety of other articles and shapes how the present demands of Herero and Nama individuals living in Namibia are legitimized in German journalism.

For example, on February 16, 2020, the *FAZ* prints a full-page article on page 11 in their "Life" ("*Leben*") rubric. The article is written by Christine Habermalz, a *Deutschlandfunk*[2] correspondent for culture and education who has previously written about the negotiations with Namibia. The article begins with Habermalz meeting Freddy Nguvauva in Berlin. Freddy Nguvauva is part of the Namibian government's ongoing negotiations with Germany, as Habermalz mentions in the beginning of the article. During their meeting in Berlin, Nguvauva tells Habermalz about a belt that was taken from Mbanderu chief Kahimemua Nguvauva after his execution by Germans (cf. chapter 7.2). Nguvauva tells Habermalz that the belt is "a very historical and holy belt that was passed down from father to son" (*FAZ*, 16.02.20). A few lines later, Habermalz rhetorically asks, "Could the magical belt of Kahimemua really still be somewhere in Germany?" (*FAZ*, 16.02.20) Although Nguvauva describes the belt as "very historical and holy," the interpretation of the belt as "magical" rests in the interpretation of the journalist. The term "magical belt" will continue throughout the article, revealing a discursive connection of tradition and superstition for indigenous speakers. This aligns with research by Benker (2021): In German newspapers, restitution claims are frequently legitimized through the claim that indigenous communities need cultural artifacts for religious ceremonies. Rather than the material value of these objects, which is typically prized by colonial sellers or European museums, the Mbanderu community represented by Freddy Nguvauva is instead shown as requiring this object for its sacred value.

When Nguvauva sends Habermalz the story of the execution of Kahimemua Nguvauva, Habermalz writes, "That's what Freddy wrote to me on WhatsApp. Over 120-year-old traditions sent via messenger app." (*FAZ*, 16.02.20) Here, the journalist produces a moment of irritation and surprise by suggesting incompatibility between the presence of tradition in modernity, or Nguvauva's story told through the modern technology of a messenger app. This also legitimizes the interpretive role of the journalist in formulating and judging Freddy Nguvauva's demands and stories. For instance, Chief Kahimemua Nguvauva's execution is shown as a "120-year-old tradition," placing it into the realm of legend.

This characterization shapes Freddy Nguvauva's speaking position throughout the article, as he primarily becomes visible in the retelling of oral "legends", which function to relay his desire for the belt to be returned. The remainder of the article focuses on Habermalz's search for the belt. For this search, Habermalz quotes historians, archivists

2 *Deutschlandfunk* is a German public radio station.

and museum directors. The German-speaking Namibian historian[3] Dag Henrichsen is introduced with the words: "Henrichsen, it was said, knows everything about German-Namibian history, traditional African cultures and the 'Praise Poetry' of the Herero." (*FAZ*, 16.02.20) Again, the Herero are described through their "praise poetry," oral poems about historical figures that are traditional but not necessarily factual: "Dag Henrichsen is convinced that the holy belt of Kahimemua is not a belt in the traditional sense, but rather an 'ancestral cord' [*Ahnenschnur*]" (*FAZ*, 16.02.20). The next sentence explains that these cords preserved the history of families and tribes through a series of knots. Henrichsen is implicitly contradicting Nguvauva by suggesting that his conceptualization of a "belt" is rooted in tradition rather than the common understanding of the term "belt" held by the audience.

This presumption is especially clear in the rhetorical question Habermalz poses when the belt is finally found in the Linden Museum in Braunschweig: "The magical belt of Kahimemua is a plain cartridge belt?"[4] (*FAZ*, 16.02.20) Here, Habermalz again expresses irritation at the contradiction between the assumptions of the "historian who knows everything about German-Namibian history" and the material reality of the historical artifact. The next sentence reads, "Freddy is sure: This is the sought-after belt of his people." (*FAZ*, 16.02.20)

Rather than this contradiction functioning to question the assumptions and speaking structures underlying the text, it continues to further characterize the Mbanderu community as a homogenous tribe: "An old leather cartridge belt. […] It crystallizes everything that the once powerful and proud pastoral people ["*Hirtenvolk*"] have lost. Their leaders, their land, their cattle herds. Their spirituality, their independence, their cultural identity." (*FAZ*, 16.02.20) This quote reveals a common contradiction: Although the journalist suggests that the people have lost "their" spirituality and cultural identity, Freddy Nguvauva is primarily quoted when he is talking about spirituality and tradition. The article ends with Habermalz observing Freddy Nguvauva standing at the graveyard for Herero and Mbanderu chiefs in Okahandja:

> "A few weeks later, I am standing with Freddy in Okahandja, close to the Namibian capital of Windhoek, at the grave of his great-great-grandfather Kahimemua Nguvauva. […] Somewhere close to here must have been the execution, but the exact spot has not been recorded. […] It is a holy site." (*FAZ*, 16.02.20)

Once more, the boundaries between past and present are blurred in this journalistic description: The site of Kahimemua Nguvauva's grave is connected to a historical event that seemingly occurred "[s]omewhere close to here." Moreover, the grave is described as a "holy site," although the reason for this holiness is not explained further. Functionally, this description again localizes and focuses the effects of colonialism in Namibia rather than in Germany, where the belt has been kept for over a century.

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3 The position of German-speaking historians in German and Namibian journalism will be described in more detail in chapter 8.3.

4 The original German sentence is "*Der magische Gürtel des Kahimemua ein schnöder Patronengurt?*"

While the article addresses the difficult question of whether the belt should be restituted to the Nguvauva family or to the government, these questions are not probed in-depth, and Freddy Nguvauva's opinion is not heard on this topic. This is especially interesting considering his family's position as part of the government's effort to negotiate the genocide. Freddy Nguvauva is quoted in the article insofar as he becomes a way of connecting past and present; however, he is not shown as having any agency in locating the belt beyond telling oral histories that the journalist verifies and interprets. Therefore, this *FAZ* article demonstrates how the construction of speaking positions through "tradition" is often a double bind for Herero and Nama speakers, who must emphasize their unbroken continuity with the victims of genocide at the risk of being connected to colonial representative patterns. At the same time, as the article above shows, the perspective from which "modernity" is constructed is frequently the position of the journalist and their imagined home audience.

This double bind is also clear in an article in the *Zeit*, which describes the OTA/NTLA lawsuit against Germany in New York. In the opening lines of the article, the *Zeit*'s foreign correspondent in New York, Heike Buchter, writes:

> "In Hall 17C of the Southern District Court at the southern tip of Manhattan, every seat is full […]. Even by New York standards, they offer an unusual sight: The women wear black bolero tops with gold borders and floor-length pleated skirts in red or emerald." (*Zeit*, 11.01.18).

In this quote, the otherness of the Herero and Nama ("an unusual sight") is emphasized "even by New York standards," contrasting their outfits with the imagined coolness of a New York courtroom. Again, the Herero and Nama are constructed as anachronous presences that are out of place in present reality, suggesting an incompatibility between their outfits and a legal proceeding. Later in the article, Buchter introduces Paramount Chief Vekuii Rukoro:

> "Vekuii Rukoro is satisfied. Since 2014, he has been the Paramount Chief ("*Oberhäuptling*"[5]) of the Ovaherero and the driving force behind the claim. In the crimson uniform that Rukoro wore to the hearing, he towers over those around him – or at least that's what it seems like. The medals and badges that he wears are as big as a hand." (*Zeit*, 11.01.18)

In this discursive structure, the same descriptions that are used to legitimize the Herero and Nama as representatives of the affected communities are now used to delegitimize Rukoro's speaking position. The speaker describes his towering size as a trompe l'oeil – "at least that's what it seems like." The "medals and badges" that are "as big as a hand" are shown as slightly ridiculous. Rather than outlining Rukoro's discursive authority by showing him as connected to the past, they now serve to cast doubt on his ability to represent the Herero and Nama. This also enables the journalist to cast doubt on Rukoro's

5 The journalist adds this German word in parentheses after the English "Paramount Chief." See Dunker (2018, p. 33) for an in-depth description of how the word "*Häuptling*" has been used to simultaneously exoticize and diminish traditional authority through the suffix -ling.

criticisms and demands: "[The Namibian government] apparently want[s] to plug holes in the national budget with the compensation that Rukoro is firmly counting on." (*Zeit*, 11.01.18) Phrases such as "apparently" and "that Rukoro is firmly counting on" ("*von dem Rukoro fest ausgeht*") show the lawsuit as a personal project of Rukoro while also suggesting that his assessment of the lawsuit might be wrong.

The examples above show how discursive authenticity hinders discursive authority in German journalism's production of cultural memory about the Herero and Nama genocide. In articles written by German foreign correspondents, the Herero and Nama become visible through traditional ceremonies, which amplifies their difference to the imagined audience and exoticizes present groups by showing indigenous tradition in juxtaposition to present-day modernity. In this way, the past continues to be localized in Namibia and requires the German foreign correspondent to translate both the rituals and the desires of the Herero and Nama to the home audience (cf. Mükke, 2009). Moreover, this localization of the past in Namibia means that the effects of the genocide are typically limited to the experiences of Herero and Nama communities. This is especially clear in instances when journalism uses the past to contextualize the present condition of the Herero and Nama (Edy, 1999, p. 80). The following chapter delves into this journalistic contextualization through commemoration and shows how the juxtaposition between tradition and modernity outlined above does not remain rooted in German journalism but also often is visible in invocations for present development across national boundaries.

8.1.2 Between tradition and modernity: Calls for development in journalism

In addition to traditional rites and ceremonies, German and Namibian journalism often connects the Herero and Nama community to the colonial past through descriptions of poverty. A typical example of this can be found in an article in the *FAZ*, printed after the announcement of the German-Namibian joint declaration, which shows how the discursive structures of chapter 8.1.1 begin to blend into the description of the Herero and Nama in the present. Here, the *FAZ*'s foreign correspondent in Africa, Claudia Bröll, begins the article by describing a man in Namibia:

> "When Ngeke Katjangua sits down to relax at sunset, he lights a fire on the sandy ground of his family's homestead. There's not much around him: sand, thorn bushes, termite hills as far as the eye can see. […] Every morning and every evening, he lights the 'holy fire.' It is a religious ritual of his people in Namibia. The fire is said to have healing effects, to connect him to his ancestors." (*FAZ*, 02.10.21)

This description mirrors the exoticization that was explored throughout the previous chapter: Katjangua is portrayed as a figure following ancient tradition. This connects him to "his people in Namibia," repeating imaginations of indigenous identity tied to the adherence to rituals. These rituals literally "connect him to his ancestors," even as the "holy fire" again amplifies the supernatural element of this connection. The description of the landscape surrounding Katjangua's property is later supplemented by Bröll's description of Katjangua's poverty: "There is no electricity cable anywhere on the homestead, no

paved road and no solar panel. Only a rickety fence made of wooden sticks throws long shadows." (*FAZ*, 02.10.21)

This sudden turn in the description of Katjangua's situation is important, since it moves away from descriptions of reenacted events towards present-day issues. By connecting poverty in the present to the historical experience of the genocide, the Herero and Nama can begin to articulate demands for the present. An example of this can be found in a two-page *Reuters* article that was reprinted in the *Namibian Sun* in 2017, which directly quotes a Herero woman:

> "'The OvaHerero are poor because of German people,' [Alex Kautauuapela] said, hunched over a walking stick as one of her grandchildren chased a stray dog around her crumbling house in the Herero ancestral capital of Okahandja north of the capital Windhoek." (*Namibian Sun*, 03.03.17)

Kautauuapela's statement that the "OvaHerero are poor" is underlined through the journalist's observation that she is living in a "crumbling house" or that her grandchild is chasing a stray dog. Kautauuapela thus becomes a physical manifestation of poverty and embodies the effects of colonialism in the article. Interestingly, Kautauuapela is not quoted anymore in this article – her purpose is to illustrate poverty, and her desires are interpreted through the journalist's descriptions. This reflects the portrayal of poverty also found in the *FAZ* article above: Katjangua does not call himself poor but is rather shown as poor through the foreign correspondent's description of a lack of infrastructure at his home. This observation again builds a juxtaposition between the position of the imagined audience and the portrayed subject.

Through this speaking structure, descriptions of poverty enable journalists to make demands for the Herero and Nama communities by observing their current poverty and without requiring the Herero and Nama to speak (cf. Spivak, 1988). This often results in demands being made for development aid. For instance, the *Namibian Sun* article above ends with a quote by "a U.S.-based academic," Robert Murtfeld, who says, "I believe the chances for a deal being reached are very little." (*Namibian Sun*, 03.03.17) Similarly, Bröll concludes her article in the *FAZ* with the observation: "Meanwhile, Ngeke Katjangua is still waiting on his homestead for electricity, for a paved road." (*FAZ*, 02.10.21) In this way, the journalistic articles suggest that Kautauuapela and Katjangua need some form of aid that is not necessarily reparations, since this will not immediately address their poverty. This reflects a paternalistic gaze whereby Germany is both the donor and decision-maker on Namibian aid (cf. Robel, 2013, p. 271).

The statements above tie into a larger discursive structure: For many years, development aid was strategically invoked by German politicians and journalists to negate claims for development aid (Robel, 2013, p. 260; Wolff, 2021, p. 314). In my German sample, this explicit counterbalance between development aid and reparations claims is no longer as prominent (cf. Rausch, 2022), even though the topic remains highly contentious in Namibia, as the examples below will show. To understand how development aid is de-/legitimized as a prospective demand for the genocide, it is necessary to show how the juxtaposition of (tribal) tradition and (national) modernity is maintained or challenged in Namibian journalism.

In contrast with German journalism, commemorations are rarely shown as ancient rituals in Namibian journalism and are instead typically reported through their novelty or necessity. An example of this can be found in an opinion piece by Kae Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro in *New Era*, entitled "Ohamakari came and went unnoticed," which criticizes the lack of commemoration for the Battle of Ohamakari in 2015 (*New Era*, 14.08.15). In the article, Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro asks, "Are the descendants of the great warriors of the war of resistance against German colonialism busy relegating their own and the history of their ancestors to the dustbin of history?" (*New Era*, 14.08.15) The symbol of a "dustbin" equates forgetting with waste, echoing A. Assmann's (2011, p. 334) understanding of "trashing" as a form of forgetting. Through his rhetorical question, Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro blames "the descendants of the great warriors of the war of resistance," or the Herero community, for not commemorating the Battle of Ohamakari.

One year later, the commemoration takes place, and Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro writes an article entitled "Wailing, mourning souls of Ohamakari" (*New Era*, 12.08.16). The reference to "wailing" and "mourning" suggests feelings of pain and sadness towards the past. The way Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro describes and justifies these feelings shows how tenuous the connection between past and present is:

> "Perhaps for the first time in the commemorative history of Ohamakari, the day is to be commemorated through a night-long open wailing and mourning by the Ovaherero and Ovambanderu communities […]. For the unconverted this is by no means meant as a simulation of such a vigil, or in any way a symbolism thereof, but the real and actual mourning" (*New Era*, 12.08.16).

With the phrase "[p]erhaps for the first time," Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro emphasizes the novelty of the vigil. He then emphasizes that the vigil is "the real and actual mourning" rather than a "simulation" or "symbolism." The passage of time since the genocide is shown as potentially delegitimizing to the emotions that are performed in the vigil. This irritation between in-/authentic expressions of emotion in the present commemoration of past deaths also becomes clear later in the article, when Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro notes:

> "Not that it has been an easy decision to hold such a vigil, but it comes after intense and meticulous consultations with the communities' traditionalists and culturalists, lest the ancestors do not take kindly to such a vigil. A vigil in the tradition and culture of the concerned communities is usually a taboo and sacred thing, which is only done in the case of death within the communities." (*New Era*, 12.08.16)

Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro shows the commemoration as the result of a negotiation between wanting to commemorate and noting that this commemoration goes against some of the traditions in the community, since the vigil is usually "taboo" and only done "in the case of death." The vigil therefore had to first be approved by "the communities' traditionalists and culturalists." Interestingly, this description does not suggest that the "vigil" will become an annual occurrence, and there are no further descriptions of it in my sample.

The two articles above show how commemoration in Namibian journalism often emphasizes rather than blurs the distinction between past and present in its reporting. This

is especially clear when considering the role that development plays in commemorative articles. One typical example that highlights this discursive structure is a *Namibian* article written after the first Nama cultural festival in July 2018. The article, which is published in "*The Weekender*" section of the *Namibian*, is written by Salmaan Dhameer Jacobs and Annarine Beauty Jacobs, two writers for whom there is no supplemental information. The title of the article is "Witbooi: A wish fulfilled," followed by the subheading "Significance and prospects of Nama cultural festival" (*Namibian*, 13.07.18). The reference to Witbooi in the title provides a connection to the past, with the insinuation that the current cultural festival is the culmination of his "wish." The subheading shows the cultural festival in terms of its "prospects" in the future. The first few paragraphs of the article note:

> "Comments on social media about the festival were overwhelmingly expressions of praise and that the event was a resounding success. Others said it exceeded expectations and that the doomsayers had been proved wrong. They all felt the event should be made an annual event." (*Namibian*, 13.07.18)

The Nama cultural festival is shown as something new that should be continued because it was a "success" – but what does this success hinge on? The article focuses on the aim of the commemoration in "uniting the Nama people" (*Namibian*, 13.07.18), an aim that is even more clear in the festival theme of "*Nama Khoeda ge* (we are Nama people)" (*Namibian*, 13.07.18). The festival serves to affirm a unified Nama identity.

After this confirmation of the festival's "success," the article describes various historical events that impacted the Nama community during German colonialism, which echo many of the patterns already described in chapter 7. After this brief description of German colonialism, the article makes a transition to the present and suddenly switches into personal pronouns:

> "Their blood waters our freedom. Their blood should therefore propel festivalgoers to make individual resolutions: I will better my life. I will try to live a productive life. The innocent blood of my forebears that flowed for me to have freedom cannot go wasted. […] Make use of people's talents. Your dressmaking is colorful, commercialize it. You have talent in music and singing, cut CDs and DVDs and make a living out of it. Your shoes are comfortable. Promote them widely." (*Namibian*, 13.07.18)

In this section, the "blood" of individuals such as Witbooi becomes interpreted by the authors as an invocation for personal development through individual actions in the present. This echoes the theme and symbolism of waste that was also seen in Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro's article above: The reason for the "innocent blood of my forebears […] go[ing] wasted" is individual slothfulness.

Commemoration serves as an invocation for a successful existence in the present, defined through unity and capitalism. Whereas commemorative activities are shown as shaping and defining the entire indigenous community, current demands are shown as individual statements by traditional authorities or opposition politicians in a present debate. In fact, when Herero and Nama speakers make present demands or criticize the present, they are often editorially separated from commemorative coverage. For exam-

ple, on May 28, 2018, the *Namibian* publishes two articles, both written by journalist Luqman Cloete. The first, on page five, is entitled "First Nama cultural festival a huge success"[6]. This article focuses on commemoration as a way for the Nama people to come together and to develop their economic potential, using much of the same language as the example above. The second article is found on page seven and entitled "Nama could become own liberators on genocide reparations" (*Namibian*, 28.05.18). This article repeats statements by the "Chief of the Kai-||Khaun Nama clan, Petrus Kooper" that were "made on Friday during the official opening of the first-ever Nama cultural festival at Keetmanshoop" (*Namibian*, 28.05.18). No further information about the Nama cultural festival is provided in this article, and it stands in stark contrast to the positive tones that are expressed in the former article.

Another example of this can be found in Namibian journalistic coverage of Red Flag Day, a commemoration of the reburial of Samuel Maharero in Okahandja (cf. chapter 2.2). The only time Red Flag Day appears in my sample is when there is infighting between Herero groups and authorities: "Ovaherero face off at Okahandja," writes the *Namibian* (27.08.19). Another report, entitled "Red Flag Day called off," notes: "After urgent negotiations among parties and government institutions, it was decided that neither the Maharero Royal House Traditional Authority nor the Ovaherero Traditional Authority (OTA) would commemorate the day." (*Namibian Sun*, 29.08.16) These articles rarely mention the genocide in any detail at all, concentrating instead on the conflicts of the present. Red Flag Day is thereby constructed as a flashpoint of inner-tribal tensions, and events from the past are rarely mentioned in this coverage.[7]

The examples above provide insights into how journalism affords or denies connections to the past in its coverage. Connecting past and present in Namibian journalism is premised on an acceptance of present national power structures. This limits the speaking position of Herero and Nama communities in the present, since commemorative connections are effectively only possible if no demands for the present are made. While this reflects the specific discursive context of Namibian journalism, the expectations of the Herero and Nama communities in the examples above also connect back to the mnemonic structures found in German journalism: Indigenous commemorations of the 1904–1908 genocide function to produce expectations of homogeneity and unity for the Herero and Nama communities, who are often shown directly tied to the past through their traditions. These traditions simultaneously serve to separate the Herero and Nama

6 This article is not part of my in-depth analysis because it repeats many of the arguments from the previous example, also published in the *Namibian*, with the difference that the article on May 28 does not have the Herero and Nama genocide as a central topic of reporting. For this reason, it functions here only as an illustrative case.

7 It is important to note that one example in my NBC sample suggests that Herero commemorations are covered differently in the Otjiherero-language NBC radio station Omurari FM. In my sample, the archivist included a two-hour live broadcast from Omurari that focused on the commemoration of von Trotha's extermination order on October 2, 2016. According to the transcript of this commemoration, "Ovaherero-speaking Namibians gather at Omatupa village in the Okakarara Constituency to mark the seventh annual Otjihenda commemoration." (Omurari FM, 20.10.16). This suggests, as Förster (2010) has noted, that indigenous-language radio might offer a space for commemorations that do not fit within the discursive confines of English-language newspapers.

communities from the broader German and Namibian national collective (and imagined journalistic audience), limiting the ability of Herero and Nama speakers to directly make demands in the present. Given the temporal boundaries outlined above, how do Herero and Nama speakers connect to the past and make demands outside of commemorative frameworks in journalism?

8.2 "I will not stop fighting": Temporal continuity as a threat

While the previous chapter has shown how German and Namibian journalism describes Herero and Nama communities in commemorative coverage, this chapter now focuses on the moments when Herero and Nama speakers connect to the past in their own words, typically in articles focused on the present political repercussions of the genocide negotiations. Then, it asks how these connections function to (de-)legitimize the Herero and Nama as representatives of present interests in reporting. Chapter 8.2.1 begins by analyzing how Herero and Nama speakers reject the separation between past and present outlined above and how German and Namibian journalism limits this temporal continuity by constructing Herero and Nama speakers as threatening. Then, chapter 8.2.2 examines how these discursive structures combine and overlap to portray the Herero and Nama as responsible for reconciliation, which is often equated with performances of affinity towards Germany in the present.

8.2.1 "No option but to become their own liberators": Herero and Nama demands in the present

When they are directly quoted or print guest articles in Namibian journalism, Herero and Nama speakers are often shown using bellicose language that explicitly contests the temporal boundaries described above. This language connects with the findings of chapter 7.2, where the Herero and Nama genocide is discursively linked with the Namibian liberation struggle. However, it also flips the temporal connection in chapter 8.1 on its head: Rather than primarily connecting themselves to the past, Herero and Nama speakers now also connect the German and Namibian governments to the past while extending the genocidal struggle into the present.

This is exemplified in an opinion article in *New Era*, guest-written by Kavemuii Murangi. In his own words, Murangi is a "Namibian-born educator currently living in the United States of America, and a descendant of direct victims of the Ovaherero and Nama genocide" (*New Era*, 01.10.21). The article is entitled "Genocide Deal Undermines Century-Old Quest for Justice," and throughout the article, Murangi makes multiple references to the ongoing fight of the Herero and Nama:

> "For more than a century, we have been fighting. Imagine. Fighting continuously for almost 120 years. Fighting the Germans. Fighting extinction. Fighting for international recognition. Fighting our own government for acknowledgment of the genocide." (*New Era*, 01.10.21)

Here, Murangi shows the genocide as part of a continuous fight culminating in the current struggle against the Namibian government. Murangi ends his article with the words: "Their cries ring in my ears, and I will not play deaf. I will not stop fighting. I am resolved that my children will know justice or will die fighting." (*New Era*, 01.10.21) The symbolic reference to the "cries" of the ancestors makes the fight against current institutions a responsibility of present generations. The statement that his children "will know justice or will die fighting" adds a violent undertone to the fight he describes.

Another typical example of this can be found in the article "Nama could become own liberators on genocide reparations" (*Namibian*, 28.05.18). The article centers around a long quote by Nama leader Petrus Kooper:

> "The outspoken tribal leader said that the Nama people would be left with no option but to become their own liberators to protect their rights and fight for their interests if the government did not engage them on their own terms around genocide reparations. […] Kooper added that there could be chaos, and that 'the author of that chaos' would this time not be the commander of Germany's armed forces, but the Namibian Defense Force (NDF)'s commander-in-chief, which is President Hage Geingob. (*Namibian*, 28.05.18)

Here, Kooper connects former Namibian President Hage Geingob with the "commander of Germany's armed forces" during colonialism, whom he does not name but is presumably Lothar von Trotha. The genocide is shown as a fight that the Nama must now wage against the Namibian government. By noting that "there could be chaos," Kooper suggests potential turmoil or even violence in Namibia.

However, Kooper later emphasizes that the Nama are not threatening any violence but are rather in a defensive struggle against the Namibian government:

> "[Kooper] was quick to say that the Nama people would not do anything unlawful, but simply sacrifice what is rightfully theirs. 'This time, we shall not flee to any neighboring country,' he stressed. 'Nothing about us without us, anything about us without us is against us,' Kooper threatened." (*Namibian*, 28.05.18)

Kooper is "quick to say" that the Nama will not break any laws. He notes that "[t]his time" they will not "flee to any neighboring country" – it is unclear what Kooper is referring to here, although it points to an interesting interpretation of the 1904–1908 genocide as a Herero and Nama military loss that echoes many of the colonial knowledge structures described in chapter 7.1. The suggestion is that "[t]his time" the Nama will be successful, in contrast with their battle against the German military forces in 1904–1908. Even though Kooper notes that the Nama will not break the laws with their actions, the journalist writes that "Kooper threatened," constructing him as a potential danger. The discursive link between the Namibian government and the former German or South African colonial forces is found multiple times in my sample (cf. *Namibian*, 09.06.21; *Namibian Sun*, 20.07.16).

German journalism often reprints quotes from Namibian newspapers in its coverage. For example, after the announcement of the 2021 joint declaration, the *Namibian*

releases an article entitled "German genocide offer 'an insult,'" quoting the Namibian opposition politician Inna Hengari (PDM) (*Namibian*, 28.05.21). The next day, a piece in the *taz* uses this headline in a pull quote in the middle of its text on the 2021 joint declaration: "'German genocide offer an insult' is the headline of a leading Namibian newspaper" (*taz*, 29.05.21). However, in contrast to Namibian coverage, where these quotes are part of relatively consistent coverage between 2015 and 2021, German articles typically only print these quotes in reaction to political updates in the negotiations process. This shifts the context and position of Herero and Nama speakership.

This is especially clear in a statement made by Herero Paramount Chief Vekuii Rukoro after the announcement of the declaration, which becomes the headline of a *Spiegel* report on the joint declaration: "'To hell and back'" (*Spiegel*, 05.06.21). The full quote reads, "This is not enough for the blood of our forebears. We will fight to hell and back." (*Spiegel*, 05.06.21; cf. *taz*, 29.05.21) Rukoro's symbolic evocation of "hell" and his rhetorical willingness to go there "and back" suggest that the Herero and Nama will halt at nothing. However, in this construction, Rukoro's quote is shown as a one-time reaction to the genocide agreement rather than as part of a longer pattern of criticism. Moreover, German journalism rarely directly quotes Herero and Nama demands. Instead, the quotes above function primarily to indicate Herero and Nama dissatisfaction towards present developments.

These statements are used in both German and Namibian journalism to characterize Herero and Nama communities as powerful and even responsible for preventing political action on the genocide. For instance, the *Spiegel* article quoted above, "To hell and back," ends with the words:

> "The German negotiator hopes that the Namibian government will still manage to convince the critics. […] Not only could [German President, C.H.] Steinmeier's travel plans be ruined, but also those of Foreign Minister Heiko Maas. He had planned to fly to Windhoek this week to sign the joint declaration. Nothing will come of it now." (*Spiegel*, 05.06.21)

The suggestion is that Steinmeier and Maas' plans are "ruined" because of the critical position of the Herero and Nama. Furthermore, the expression of criticism by the Herero and Nama is shown as surprising and irritating to the expectations of the German and Namibian governments. This position of irritation only becomes possible by ignoring the years of consistent criticism above and only printing Herero and Nama statements sporadically. A *FAZ* article on the negotiations writes:

> "Dates for the visits of the German foreign minister and president are not settled yet. Germany and Namibia wanted to make history with the agreement and improve the dialogue between both nations. Encounters at all levels were planned. These are needed now more than ever." (*FAZ*, 06.06.21)

This quote is particularly illuminating because it suggests that the Herero and Nama are not only hindering the signing of the joint declaration but are also hindering reconciliation from occurring. Hence, the Herero and Nama function as a deterrent for successfully

confronting the past. Tellingly, however, the Herero and Nama are not explicitly mentioned in the example above. Even though they are quoted throughout the article, their position remains between the lines rather than explicit in explaining why the German foreign minister and president have "not settled" their dates yet.

At the same time, German and Namibian political figures are rarely shown directly responding to guest articles or quotes by Herero and Nama traditional authorities that demand legally binding reparations. This contrasts with previous years of German journalistic coverage (cf. Haritos, 2019; Robel, 2013; Wolff, 2021). As Rausch (2023b, p. 192) has pointed out, much of German journalism is now supportive of financial compensation being paid to Namibia, as the 2021 joint declaration lays out. However, in German journalism, there is almost no discussion about whether this aid should be directly paid to the Herero and Nama. Instead, the figures that are often shown directly responding to the quotes above are other Namibian speakers or German activist communities. The examples above have shown that Herero and Nama dissent is typically shown in conflict-oriented terms. How does this shape the interaction between Herero, Nama and German-speaking Namibian communities, and what does this reveal about the power structures underlying prospective memorialization in journalism?

To answer these questions, I consider how land reform functions as a topic in journalism to limit the connections between past and present evoked by Herero and Nama speakers. Especially in the early 2000s, references to violent land reform in Zimbabwe were often used in German journalism to delegitimize Herero and Nama demands (Wolff, 2021, p. 389). These connections to Zimbabwe are not found anymore in my sample. However, land reform is still used in journalism to distinguish between "moderate," or government-aligned, and "radical" Herero and Nama representatives. Thus, I can show how German foreign reporting and Namibian news articles align to structure power within and between both nations through cultural memory.

"We are law-abiding": Land and the boundaries of "legitimate controversy"

A typical example of this discursive structure is found in an article written in 2016 by the foreign correspondent of the *FAZ*, Thomas Scheen. In the article, Scheen first quotes Chief Kilus Munjuku III. Karaerua Nguvauva, who is part of the government's effort to negotiate with the Germans:

> "'We are law-abiding; that is why we want to buy land and not just occupy it,' says the Chief. He also wishes that Germany would build better roads and better mobile connections, new schools and hospitals […]. And yet, the Chief is one of the more moderate ones. One who has accepted that the Namibian government is negotiating in his name." (*FAZ*, 04.07.16)

Nguvauva clearly speaks out against land occupation and wants to "buy" land rather than "occupy it." By emphasizing that he is "law-abiding," he acknowledges that a rupture of present power structures is considered illegal and deviant. Nguvauva is shown as "one of the more moderate ones" because he "has accepted that the Namibian government is negotiating in his name." This acceptance of the Namibian government is tied to the acceptance of development aid as compensation for the genocide (cf. chapter 8.1.2).

Then, the foreign correspondent Scheen introduces the Paramount Chief of the Herero, Vekuii Rukoro: "The other, much more radical camp is represented by Vekuii Rukoro, the self-proclaimed 'Paramount Chief' of the Herero." Showing Rukoro as "more radical" immediately sets him up as both a fringe element in Namibia and a potential threat. Scheen writes:

> "Rukoro wants a lot of money, and he wants to negotiate directly with the federal government. […] Rukoro fears that the Namibian government could be bamboozled into accepting a pittance and that this money will not benefit the affected groups but the clientele of the ruling party SWAPO, the Ovambo from northern Namibia. He says he is concerned with eliminating the 'intergenerational poverty of the Herero, into which von Trotha has brought us.'" (*FAZ*, 04.07.16)

Rukoro is shown criticizing potential corruption in Namibia. Here, Rukoro also makes the claim of "intergenerational poverty" through the genocide. However, Scheen delegitimizes Rukoro's prospective demands by delegitimizing him as a representative in the present. This builds on the assumptions of homogeneity described in chapter 8.1.2:

> "There are voices that accuse Rukoro of only wanting to enrich himself. The six royal houses of the Herero reject him. Rukoro describes the royal houses as 'indigent clans that can't even get a busload of supporters together.' […] And he threatens, 'If social cohesion collapses in this country, then German-speaking farmers will pay the price.'" (*FAZ*, 04.07.16)

This quote clearly distinguishes the positions of legitimate controversy in the discourse (cf. Hallin, 1986, p. 117): Rukoro is shown as "radical," with quotes where he describes the royal houses as "indigent clans" and then also "threatens" German-speaking farmers, who will "pay the price" if he doesn't get his will. This draws on a common representation of Rukoro in German journalism, who is often shown as a threatening, immoderate and unpredictable representative of Herero and Nama interests (Wolff, 2021, p. 332). In the structure of this article, however, this means that Rukoro's arguments for legally binding reparations are not refuted by the German government but rather through the threat that he supposedly poses in Namibia. His demands are shown to be both radical and impossible, even though the German collective does not have to be shown directly negating these claims.

Scheen's description of Nguvuava and Rukoro is indicative of the discursive authority that he confers on them throughout the article. Nguvauva is consistently referred to as a "Chief" throughout the article, with the journalist reproducing his traditional self-portrayal as a legitimate representative of Mbanderu interests (*FAZ*, 04.07.16). Rukoro, by contrast, is introduced as the "self-proclaimed 'Paramount Chief.'" Placing his title in quotation marks suggests that his legitimacy is open to questioning, a point that is amplified by the statement that the "six royal houses" of the Herero reject him (*FAZ*, 04.07.16). The designation is shown as a title made up by Rukoro in the present.

This leads to a delegitimization strategy that is found multiple times throughout my sample in a variety of newspapers: "It is impossible to estimate how many Herero really

support Rukoro and his radical positions" (*AZ*, 26.04.18; cf. *FAZ*, 04.07.16; *SZ*, 29.05.21). Interestingly, some authors in the *AZ* even repeatedly refer to Rukoro as "Vekuii Reinhard Rukoro," emphasizing his German middle name to delegitimize his position as a Herero representative (cf. *AZ*, 10.11.17). This connects with findings from chapter 8.1 that have shown how the journalistic construction of "authenticity" often hinders speakership by connecting speakers to an anachronistic past; here, it is used to expressly deny speakership by limiting the connection of the past in the present.

By characterizing both government representatives and OTA/NTLA members as primarily "Herero" or "Nama," journalists continue to position these communities through their past experiences while obfuscating their position in present power structures. This is also important for positioning the German-speaking Namibians who would be affected by land reform. One example of this can be found in a multi-page *taz* article written by Elisabeth Kimmerle that was translated and reprinted in the *Namibian*. The article is entitled "The land that never was" in the *Namibian* (08.01.20) and "*Das Land der Ahnen*," or "The land of the ancestors," in the *taz* (16.11.19). Already, this disparity in titles shows how contentious the idea of "ancestral" land is in Namibia, which suggests that certain groups can claim land because their ancestors lived there. Nevertheless, the rest of the article remains consistent with the original work published by Kimmerle.

The article begins by introducing a German-speaking Namibian farm owner, Johann Vaatz. Vaatz describes his family's purchase of the farm Düsternbrook (cf. chapter 7.1). Vaatz explicitly refutes the emotion of fear surrounding potential land expropriation: "Vaatz says he is not afraid of expropriation. 'I am a Namibian citizen, why should I be afraid? I belong to this country.'" (*taz*, 16.11.19) Vaatz's fear is dispelled through the suggestion that the claim of land expropriation is unfeasible and unlawful ("I am a Namibian citizen"). In this way, Vaatz's landownership is shown as complying with the rule of law and his assertion of his identity as a Namibian.

At the end of the first page, the article then quotes Mutjinde Katjiua[8], who is introduced as a professor at the Namibia University for Science and Technology: "'Losing the ancestral land meant that the dispossessed groups lost their connection to their ancestors,' [Katjiua] says." (*taz*, 16.11.19) Katjiua is shown as describing the connection of the Herero and Nama to the past as effectively severed. While Vaatz expounds at length about the past of his family, Katjiua only speaks of the past through the idea of collective loss, both to land and to the past. In fact, Katjiua is only shown making demands in the article. The journalist mentions the lawsuit in New York and then writes:

> "After decades of fighting, the descendants of the Ovaherero and Nama are losing patience. 'We are very peaceful and patient, but when all peaceful paths are not working, then we will return to our land,' Mutjinde Katjiua says calmly. It sounds solemn, like a declaration. 'If all legal and diplomatic processes fail, then we will resort to self-liberation and the German farmers on our land will have to pack up and leave. Is that what we want?'" (*Namibian*, 08.01.20; cf. *taz*, 16.11.19)

8 Katjiua later briefly becomes the (disputed) Paramount Chief after the death of Vekuii Rukoro in 2021.

The reference to "self-liberation" echoes the quote by Kooper at the beginning of this chapter. However, Katjiua's criticism is directed at "German farmers on our land" rather than the Namibian government. As with Kooper, Katjiua notes that "[w]e are very peaceful and patient" and shows his predictions as a reaction "[i]f all legal and diplomatic processes fail." Yet, who is responsible for not meeting Herero and Nama demands? Again, the article focuses primarily on the effects of Herero and Nama statements in Namibia.

This quote is the last time that Katjiua is visible in the article. Next, the journalist moves on to interviewing Uhuru Dempers, who is part of the Ancestral Land Commission at the second land conference in Namibia. The land conference was organized by the Namibian government and was boycotted by some Herero and Nama organizations. Dempers is characterized in the article as follows:

> "Uhuru Dempers likes to say 'we as a civil society' when he speaks about his work. He is a pragmatic idealist, ready to negotiate compromises. […] It also means that Dempers got caught between two fronts. Some traditional authorities of the Ovaherero and Nama are boycotting the second land conference because they don't feel included. They criticize the Ancestral Land Commission as a campaign gimmick. 'I have even been called a traitor,' says Dempers, whose ancestors are Ovaherero, Nama and Damara. He is visibly hurt by this. 'I see the work in the Commission as just another side of the struggle, another strategy to achieve what we have fought for.'" (*Namibian*, 08.01.20; cf. *taz*, 16.11.19)

As with the example of Nguvauva from the *FAZ* above, Dempers is shown as "pragmatic" and "ready to negotiate compromises." This legitimizes his statements while also making the demands of Katjiua appear unpragmatic and uncompromising by comparison. In this way, the second land conference is constructed as a legitimate institution for addressing the demands of the Herero and Nama. Dempers is legitimized as a speaker through the statement that his "ancestors are Ovaherero, Nama and Damara," suggesting that he has a claim to represent Herero and Nama interests in the present. As was already visible for Katjiua, Dempers uses the personal pronoun "we" multiple times to suggest that he is speaking as part of the Herero and Nama communities. However, Dempers' role working for the Namibian government is not explicitly thematized. Dempers' emotional response to being called a "traitor" is pain ("visibly hurt"), suggesting that other Herero and Nama are the ones causing him pain. The pain caused rather than felt by the Herero and Nama is thus foregrounded and normalized as the perspective through which journalists write about the repercussions of the genocide.

"Like a poison": Reactions to land reform in Namibian journalism

Whereas German journalism has largely stopped showing German-speaking Namibian landowners as fearful of expropriation claims after 2015/2016, this pattern is still visible in Namibian journalism throughout my sample. As with the example from the *taz* above, the Herero and Nama are often shown in these articles inflicting pain on individuals in the present. Thus, rather than being explained through the past, the actions of the Herero and Nama are condemned through the perspective of the present and promise of the

future. This present and future, however, is now described through the perspective of Germans and German-speaking Namibians.

In Namibian journalism, there are multiple articles in the *Namibian* and the *Namibian Sun* that focus exclusively on reactions by German-speaking Namibians to demands of land reform, even though the specific demands and the individuals making these demands often remain unspoken in this reporting. While *New Era* regularly reports on Herero and Nama criticism against the government, it does not prominently report on complaints about potential land expropriation by German-speaking Namibians. This reflects the sensitivity of the topic of land reform in Namibia, which already became clear in the different title used for the reprinting of the *taz* article above. However, despite the sensitivity of these topics, articles on land reform are some of the only spaces where German-speaking Namibians are explicitly heard in Namibian journalism. These articles are also some of the most explicit negations of Herero and Nama demands, which makes them important for understanding the boundaries of the un-/sayable and im-/possible underlying the discourse.

An article that exemplifies these boundaries is the news report "Expropriation threats 'like a poison'" (*Namibian Sun*, 27.03.19). The article uses a controversial quote to draw attention to its article, which highlights the apparent vulnerability of German-speaking Namibians. This is also visible in the subheading of the text, which is amplified in red font: "White Namibians of German heritage say expropriation threats are creating a rift between them and the Ovaherero" (*Namibian Sun*, 27.03.19). The article begins by introducing a German-speaking Namibian, Erika von Wietersheim:

> "During a panel discussion on Tuesday, organized by the European Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights as part of a symposium aimed at interrogating the 1904–08 genocide, an emotional Erica [*sic*] von Wietersheim said most German-speaking Namibians love their motherland, Namibia, adding the graves of their ancestors are there. 'Unfortunately, threatening remarks by your Chief Rukoro and others, threatening German-speaking farmers that they will take our farms, worked like a poison. They deepen the rift between the Herero and Germans instead of bringing us together,' she said." (*Namibian Sun*, 27.03.19)

In this quote, von Wietersheim first focuses on the "love" that German-speaking Namibians feel for the "motherland, Namibia." As with Vaatz in the *taz* article above, von Wietersheim clearly positions herself as a Namibian through her love for the country. She underlines this love through a connection to the past, noting that the "graves" of German-speaking Namibians' "ancestors" are in Namibia. Von Wietersheim's reference to the "common motherland" also shows that adherence to the nation is the primary framework in which legitimate claims can be made for the genocide, thereby implicitly going against many of the critiques of Herero and Nama organizations such as the OTA/NTLA.

From this position, von Wietersheim then moves on to "threatening remarks" that have been made by "your Chief Rukoro and others." The use of the word "your" is interesting, suggesting that she is addressing a Herero audience, even though this is not clarified anywhere in the article. Despite her declaration of national love above, the use of "your" produces a distinction between us and them, which is furthered by her later statement

of "Germans" and "Hereros." Despite the love for the Namibian nation that is used to legitimize her speaking position, the German and Herero communities are still shown as distinct in her complaint. The symbolic use of poison is illustrative in the quote above: Describing Herero and Nama "threats" as a "poison" suggests that they are ruining an otherwise healthy body. The body does not have to be healed but is rather actively being harmed in this symbolic use of language. In this discursive structure, the Herero are again made responsible for "bringing us together." Furthermore, "bringing us together" is equated with not making threatening demands for material change towards the German-speaking Namibian community.

The *Namibian Sun* article continues by quoting Werner Hillebrecht, the former head of the Namibian National Archives, who suggests that both German-speaking Namibians and Herero and Nama should consider "the wider context of colonial rule." (*Namibian Sun*, 27.03.19) He notes that "these facts do not take away from the trauma inflicted on those directly affected by the genocide, but it is important to look at what happened afterwards." (*Namibian Sun*, 27.03.19) The "trauma" of the Herero and Nama is invoked and simultaneously located in the past, immediately moving to "what happened afterwards." Herero or Nama participants are not quoted in this article, which exclusively contains the statements of German-speaking Namibians.

The announcement of the 2021 joint declaration led to a slight shift in Namibian coverage: The rejection of demands for land expropriation is now frequently tied with the acceptance of the 2021 German-Namibian joint declaration. A *Namibian* article written by political journalist Charmaine Ngatjiheue shortly after the announcement of the joint declaration, entitled "Local Germans upset about land-grabbing threats" (15.06.21), exemplifies these discursive strategies. Again, the "upset" emotion of the "[l]ocal Germans" is the unquestioned basis of the article. The article interviews the chairperson of the Forum of German-speaking Namibians (FDN), Harald Hecht, who says:

> "Hecht in a statement yesterday said the forum has taken note of the fact that sections within the Ovaherero, Ovambanderu and Nama communities are dissatisfied with the negotiations and with the amount finally agreed upon. He said some of the community members' reactions, and in particular the tonality used, are 'neither acceptable nor helpful.' 'These could harm future efforts to reconcile and to find a peaceful way forward.'" (*Namibian*, 15.06.21)

Hecht here clearly outlines unacceptable forms of disagreeing with the "negotiations," specifically mentioning the "tonality used." He then suggests that this "could harm future efforts to reconcile" and is detrimental to peace. However, even though the focus of this article is still on land expropriation, Hecht's emphasis now shifts to accepting the 2021 joint declaration. The illegitimacy of the "tonality" of Herero and Nama community members is measured by how they react to the agreement. Hecht notes later in the article that "the FDN welcomes the negotiations and feels the pain and suffering endured during what Germany is now willing to call genocide." (*Namibian*, 15.06.21) Hecht's reference to the fact that the FDN "feels the pain and suffering" echoes Hillebrecht's focus on the "trauma" of the affected communities. Yet, in these articles, Hecht and Hillebrecht can

outline legitimate statements about and (in-)appropriate reactions to this past trauma in the present.

How can German-speaking Namibians take on this role in Namibian reporting? And what impact does it have on shaping the discourse about reparations? For this, it is important to understand the position of German-speaking Namibians in Namibia, which is often implicit in many of the reactions to the "threats" above but only explicitly mentioned in the *AZ*.

On March 27, 2020, the secretary of the FDN, Anton von Wietersheim, writes a letter to the editor in the *AZ* to respond to criticism from a German reader, Helmut Lessing. Lessing had suggested that the FDN should not exist because it lends credence to the genocide claims of the Herero and Nama. Von Wietersheim writes:

> "The discussion group arose from the perception that German-speaking Namibians hardly participate effectively and meaningfully in current public events as a language and cultural group in the country. […] Such a development could have consequences for the continued existence of the German minority of around 0.7% of the population." (*AZ*, 27.03.20)

This quote exemplifies two interesting premises that underline the speakership of German-speaking Namibians. To begin, there is an understanding that "German-speaking Namibians hardly participate effectively" in Namibian debates. Second, there is an assumption that the German minority "of around 0.7% of the population" may no longer exist if it does not make its position heard. In this understanding, any threat against the livelihood or economic position of German-speaking Namibians is constructed as an existential threat.

The position of German-speaking Namibians outlined in this letter is to maintain their current position in society. From this understanding, any demands for the past are often shown as threats for the future. This juxtaposition of the future with the past is found multiple times in Namibian journalism. For example, in one guest article, the German-speaking Namibian scholar Henning Melber writes:

> "It is long overdue that the descendants of perpetrators meet and talk to the descendants of victims. Not for entering a blame game, but for seeking a common future based on a shared past – as different as the perspectives might be." (*Namibian*, 19.05.20)

This quote effectively sums up many of the strategies seen above. The Herero and Nama can reach reconciliation if they do not "enter[…] a blame game" and accept the current power relations, with the suggestion that this can lead to a "common future." This adds critical nuance to the idea of "prospective memory" (Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2014): Rather than the past being used to motivate future action, visions of the future are used to limit connections to the past. The journalistic normalization of German-speaking Namibian speakership above shapes this juxtaposition of future and past to legitimize the maintenance of current power structures.

This journalistic construction is not limited to the position of German-speaking Namibians but is also found in German journalism. Here, the Herero and Nama are fre-

quently asked to renounce any hatred for the present German collective to legitimately make demands in the present. For instance, in a *taz* interview with the Berlin-based Herero activist Israel Kaunatjike, the interviewer asks, "Do you have a grudge against Germans?" (*taz*, 08.04.17) Kaunatjike responds with the words, "No, we don't hate the Germans. Hereros don't attack them, either. It's about coming to terms with the past and mutual respect. We have no tradition of hate. But we also don't want to be told what we should do." (*taz*, 08.04.17) Kaunatjike must first confirm that there is no "hatred" towards Germans and reaffirm that "Hereros don't attack them" before making his demands. This structure is often found in German-language newspapers, where Hereros often emphasize that they mean no harm to all Germans and are even friends with those that support them (cf. *AZ*, 02.02.18; *AZ*, 05.09.19; *FAZ*, 02.10.21). Hence, performances or expressions of affinity towards Germany are frequently equated with a willingness to reconcile and a position of moderation in the discourse.

Given these examples, which power relations does the construction of reconciliation through the juxtaposition of past and future maintain or challenge between Germany and Namibia in the present? While the effects of the Herero and Nama genocide are often localized in Namibia, as shown through the topic of land reform, the entangled power structures underlying journalistic memory production often become clear in questions of tourism in the present.

8.2.2 "The 'sentimental values' of some individuals": The economic limits of the past

A subtheme that became clear in the chapter above is that Herero and Nama demands and speakers are often not only shown as a physical threat to German-speaking Namibians but more concretely as an economic threat to the entire Namibian nation. This is especially visible in coverage on public renaming and local protests in Namibia, which is often tied to the question of German tourism. In this chapter, I show how these protests in Namibia are shaped through the representative structures outlined above.

A typical example of this can be found in an interview in *New Era* with the Swakopmund-based activist Laidlaw Peringanda, who advocates for the removal of the *Marinedenkmal*[9] in Swakopmund. In 2015, Peringanda is interviewed by *New Era*'s local correspondent Eveline de Klerk in a page-long article entitled "Coastal Activists Call for Removal of Marine Denkmal" (*New Era*, 17.07.15). The article begins with a brief preface on the monument: "The monument was first unveiled on July 26, 1908, under the German colonial regime and has stood in its place for 107 years. It was proclaimed a national monument on January 2, 1969." (*New Era*, 17.07.15) Through this description, the monument is not explicitly connected to the genocide, even though the reporter notes that the communities who want the monument removed are "[d]escendants of the survivors of the genocide of 1904–08" (*New Era*, 17.07.15). Again, the genocide is the implicit background rather than the main subject of this article. The request to remove the *Marinedenkmal* is shown as part of a present-day debate.

9 See Zeller (2016b, p. 195) for an in-depth description of the *Marinedenkmal*, which commemorates German naval soldiers that died in 1904 during the colonial war in GSWA.

The interviewer first asks Peringanda to outline his motivation for the removal of the *Marinedenkmal*:

> "I have been a resident for long in Swakopmund and through the years I have seen people, especially tourists, coming and taking pictures at the monument. And watching how excited they are when they do this made me realize that this monument is mocking Namibians." (*New Era*, 17.07.15)

Peringanda's criticism is not directed at the monument's relativization of past genocidal events (cf. Zeller, 2016b), but interestingly at its current role in attracting German tourists. He notes "how excited they are" when they visit and photograph the *Marinedenkmal*. He takes direct aim at the present emotions of excitement that German tourists are expressing at these monuments and, by extension, towards German colonial history.

Later in the interview, de Klerk asks Peringanda, "As you know, this monument is a major tourist attraction at Swakopmund. Will the removal of the monument not affect our tourism industry, which could lead to further unemployment?" (*New Era*, 17.07.15) With this question, de Klerk makes a few discursive connections: First, the emotions of German tourists towards the monument are shown in terms of an economic benefit to Namibians. Second, by suggesting that the monument is a "major tourist attraction," the journalist makes Peringanda responsible for the threat of "unemployment" that would apparently occur if the *Marinedenkmal* were removed from Swakopmund. Peringanda responds, "Yes, it's an undeniable fact that Swakopmund is a tourist town and attracts thousands of tourists every year, but is that the only attraction we have?" (*New Era*, 17.07.15) In another part of the interview, he says, "I admit that there will be undesirable consequences if we succeed in removing the monument. One of those will most probably be the relationship between the two countries, and funding of our country will be one of the areas that may be affected." (*New Era*, 17.07.15)[10] Through this answer, a threat towards the position of German heritage, even if mainly symbolic, is immediately portrayed as an economic peril that would impact all Namibians. In this understanding, the current economic and tourist relations between Germany and Namibia are premised on Germany's positive rather than negative associations with the colonial past.

The example above from *New Era* adds to the findings above: The connection of German tourists to the past is shown in present economic terms. While German tourists can positively connect to the colonial past, the only connection possible for Herero and Nama activists or authorities is to move beyond the past. To further explore this structure, I will now highlight an example from debates on the renaming of Lüderitz, which was covered in the *SZ* and in the *Namibian* in 2015.

In 2015, the *SZ*'s foreign correspondent in Africa, Tobias Zick, writes a page-long article entitled "The difficult sound of names" (*SZ*, 14.04.15) about local Namibian debates to rename the city of Lüderitz to !Nami≠nûs. The article Zick begins his article by setting the scene in Lüderitz:

10 Peringanda's interpretation is especially interesting since the *Reiterdenkmal* statue in Windhoek was removed in 2009 with no change in relations with the German government. See Shigwedha (2023) for an in-depth description of the debates surrounding the *Reiterdenkmal*.

> "Something white gleams in the sand, the woman bends down and reaches for it with her thumb and forefinger: a vertebra, small and fragile. […] Human remains laid bare by the wind: Nothing unusual in this part of the Namibian desert. Barbara Fredericks, 43 years old, knows this old graveyard […] the Germans used to bury many of their victims here. Probably also her great-grand-uncle Cornelius Fredericks, who led the uprising against the colonial masters [*Kolonialherren*]." (*SZ*, 14.04.15)

In this example, Barbara Fredericks is directly connected to the past through her great-grand-uncle Cornelius Fredericks. The bones "laid bare by the wind" connect past and present while also localizing the effects of the past in Namibia. The finding of human remains is shown as "[n]othing unusual in this part of the Namibian desert," suggesting that this is a commonplace occurrence, in contrast to the experiences of the home audience in Germany.

This connection to the past initially shapes Fredericks' speaking position. In the next part of the article, Zick asks Fredericks what she thinks about efforts to stop the renaming of Lüderitz to !Nami≠nûs: "'It hurts,' says Barbara Fredericks. 'Why don't people want to understand which associations the term Lüderitz evokes for us Nama?'" (*SZ*, 14.04.15) Here, Fredericks expresses pain at the thought that some individuals do not want to rename Lüderitz. This pain is legitimized through a connection to the past, whereby Lüderitz evokes memories of the genocide for the Nama community.

To this point, the article above challenges many of the power relations above, as a Nama speaker is shown making demands for the present through a connection to the past based on pain rather than immediately evoking conflict or threats. The article then shifts away from Fredericks as Zick interviews opponents of the name change. He visits the Lüderitz Museum, which displays artifacts from German colonialism. In the museum, Zick speaks to a German-speaking Namibian cashier, as outlined through this brief exchange:

> "The German Imperial flag [*Reichsfahne*] in black, red and gold hangs above the cashier's desk […]. Wasn't there something else going on back then? The cashier, Betty Klein, born in 1938, looks up from her crossword puzzle and shrugs her shoulders. […] A very unpleasant chapter, but at the same time, 'You can't undo the past.'" (*SZ*, 14.04.15)

The description of the German Imperial flag and the mention of Klein's birth date suggest that her position is outdated relative to Zick and his home audience. This applies strategies that are often used to position Herero and Nama speakers to a German-speaking Namibian (cf. chapter 8.1.1): Klein is shown in an anachronistic position that can be judged from the current standpoint of the foreign correspondent and his audience. Zick punctures the revisionist connection to the past suggested by the "German Imperial Flag" by asking if there was "something else going on back then."

After this interaction with Klein, Zick interviews another German-speaking Namibian "who is doing everything he can to resist the renaming": "Ulf Grünewald, manager of the biggest hotel in the place" (*SZ*, 14.04.15). The journalist legitimizes Grünewald's claims by suggesting that he is not revisionist, unlike Klein: "[He is] anything but a German revisionist [*Deutschtümler*]. His wife is 'colored,' a Black woman from South Africa"

(*SZ*, 14.04.15). Through the body of his Black wife, the journalist emphasizes Grünewald's embeddedness in modern values. In this way, his arguments are shown as a legitimate mode of disagreement with the name change. In the text, his arguments are presented as purely economic rather than personally motivated:

> "No, his opposition has nothing to do with German nostalgia, says Grünewald; he argues economically: Who should bear the costs? The government? Aren't there more pressing problems in Namibia?" (*SZ*, 14.04.15)

This description suggests that emotions of "nostalgia" for the German colonial past and economic argumentation are incompatible. At the same time, Grünewald's position as a seemingly uninvolved observer with purely economic interests is taken at face value, and his economic position as a hotel owner in Lüderitz is not questioned.

Interestingly, Grünewald's economic position is also visible in a *Namibian* article written by Luqman Cloete, who often writes articles pertaining to the Nama community. However, in the *Namibian* article, Grünewald implicitly voices his business interests through a discursive connection between the name of "Lüderitz" and the "nostalgia" of German tourists:

> "According to Grunewald [*sic*], businesspeople in the town opposed the name change because it will 'badly affect' their business. 'They are selling their businesses under the trade name Lüderitz,' Grunewald explained, adding that the proposed name change will also impact negatively on tourism. He noted that 60% of tourists visiting the town are German citizens because its name has a German origin." (*Namibian*, 24.02.15)

Again, Grünewald makes an economic argument in opposition of the renaming of Lüderitz, even though he is quoted with different arguments in this *Namibian* article than in the *SZ* article. Grünewald represents the interests of "businesspeople" in the town, which are not shown as personally connected to German colonial history or to the German tourists they serve. Yet, it is precisely Grünewald's position as a German businessman that enables him to interpret the motivations of "German citizens" visiting Lüderitz "because its name has a German origin." The statistics and suggestions of Grünewald are not questioned by the journalist and are suggested to be representations of reality.

The position of the Herero and Nama demands, which apparently stand contrary to these economic considerations, is voiced by another participant in the meeting, Reginald Hercules:

> "[Hercules] accused the government of wanting to impose the name change on the residents to satisfy the 'sentimental values' of some individuals. This was an apparent reference to the !Aman chief Dawid Frederick who proposed the name change 10 years ago." (*Namibian*, 24.02.15)

Effectively, this discursive structure implies the "'sentimental values'" of paying German tourists are more important than those of the Nama. By suggesting that the name change

is being "impose[d]" by the Namibian government, Hercules avoids direct criticism towards the Nama, even as he describes their demands as "sentimental." In the logic of both the *SZ* and the *Namibian* articles on the name change, these sentiments are implicitly understood to be incompatible with business interests, which are journalistically represented by German-speaking Namibian business owners in both articles. In the *Namibian* article, Dawid Frederick[11] is not quoted, and his characterization by Hercules remains unopposed.

In the *SZ* article on the renaming of Lüderitz, foreign correspondent Zick ends the article by once again speaking to Barbara Fredericks. When asking what she thinks about the change, he writes: "Such suggestions make Barbara Fredericks even more angry. 'Whoever talks like that just shows that they understood nothing.' She stands in front of the memorial slab for Cornelius Fredericks on Shark Island." (*SZ*, 14.04.15) Fredericks' expression of anger here is indicative of the different temporal framework underlying her expressions. Whereas her emotion towards the feelings that the genocide evokes as a past event was pain, her emotion towards the debate in the present is anger. Additionally, by only quoting Fredericks with emotions, her arguments on the case are effectively shown as "sentimental" (*Namibian*, 24.02.15). The power structures enabling Grünewald, an economically elite business owner in Lüderitz catering to German tourists, to speak with apparent neutrality as a figure of compromise are not questioned, neither in the *SZ* nor in the *Namibian*.

The emphasis on the "feelings" of the Herero and Nama is found multiple times in my sample, often in descriptions of Herero and Nama criticism towards the genocide negotiations: "The main problem from the perspective of the Herero and Nama is that their most important leaders do not view themselves as represented by the Namibian government and feel left out of the negotiations with Namibia." (*taz*, 29.05.21) The formulation that the Herero and Nama "feel" a certain way about the negotiations (cf. *taz*, 10.08.19; *FAZ*, 29.05.21; *SZ*, 25.01.18) shifts the focus of their critique away from tangible material realities towards the felt reality of the Herero and Nama. Even when journalists engage with demands for legally binding and exclusive reparations, their argument centers on appeasing the feelings of the Herero and Nama to avoid unpredictable or threatening outbursts of anger rather than engaging with the substance of their criticism.

To a degree, this reflects prior findings for German journalistic reporting: "The articles reproduce common colonial and racist dichotomies by constructing rationality as Western and attributing emotionality to the 'others.'" (Rausch, 2023b, p. 188). However, the chapters above have shown that the directionality of these emotions towards the past, present and future is important to understand how the expression of emotions is de-/legitimized in journalism. Robel (2013, p. 74) writes that the legitimization of genocide victims' demands hinges upon the recognition of their deaths as painful (cf. Butler, 2009, p. 1). While my analysis does not specifically explore affects and emotions in its theoretical lens, it is interesting to note that emotions of pain and suffering typically become possible when Herero and Nama look back towards or reenact the past. However, any ex-

11 There is a disparity between the German and Namibian writing of this family's last name; in the *SZ*, they are referred to as the "Fredericks" family, and in the *Namibian*, as the "Frederick" family.

pression of emotion in the present is almost exclusively shown in terms of conflict, anger and frustration.

In many of the discursive strategies above, the Herero and Nama are shown requiring a translator to bring their demands into the present or to provide a moderate perspective to seemingly radical demands. This raises the question: How do German speakers become part of the representative structures outlined above? And how do they shape the prospective demands that can be made for the events of 1904–1908?

8.3 "Hardly secret Bismarck admirers": Positioning German speakership against the past

The previous chapters have shown that German-speaking individuals are often not directly connected to the past in journalistic reporting. While the previous chapter has primarily analyzed how this functions to limit the prospective demands of the Herero and Nama, this chapter now explores how journalism produces the conditions through which German speakers can legitimately produce connections between the 1904–1908 genocide and the present. In this way, the chapter brings together the various discursive structures that have been outlined in the previous chapters. It also draws attention to the articles that are primarily focused on the genocide as part of a local academic and cultural debate in Germany (cf. chapter 6.2). As I show in this chapter, the representative structures that construct this discursive strand are inseparable from the speakership position of the Herero and Nama communities outlined in the previous chapters.

To this end, chapter 8.3.1 explores how journalism constructs historical authority in its production of cultural memory. This connects with previous findings, which have shown that German academics take on an important transnational role in shaping German and Namibian memory discourse (cf. chapter 6) and that German journalists often position themselves against an unknowledgeable German collective (cf. chapter 7.3). The following chapter 8.3.1 now goes one step further and asks how German-language journalism produces the structures in which German-speaking "experts" can make claims for the Herero and Nama community. Chapter 8.3.2 then considers how the performance of (newfound) knowledge is also used to position German-speaking political speakers and articulate legitimate demands in journalism. Finally, chapter 8.3.3 asks how Herero and Nama speakers interact with, challenge or negate these demands in coverage, thereby bringing together the results of this and the previous chapter 8.2. For this, chapter 8.3.3 focuses specifically on restitution ceremonies, which is where the cracks and tensions in journalistic memory production become most visible in my sample. This will then function as a springboard for my final discussion and conclusion.

8.3.1 German-speaking academics: Knowing the past, speaking in the present

In the following chapter, I begin by showcasing the transnational role of German-speaking academics in German and Namibian journalism. This will allow me to uncover representative structures that extend well beyond academic speakership and shape who can speak and make demands for Herero and Nama interests in the present.

Academic authority in journalistic memory production

Wolff (2018, p. 425) has shown that, in the past few decades, German-speaking historians have played an important role in shaping German newspaper coverage on the Herero and Nama genocide. As chapter 6.1 indicated, this prominence of German historians is also found in Namibian journalism. At first glance, the prominent position of German-speaking historians in journalistic coverage appears self-evident: There are no more living witnesses for the Herero and Nama genocide, which means historians could thus provide an important perspective to describe what happened in the past. However, as chapter 3.3 has shown, research on Holocaust commemorations finds that academic authority in Israeli journalism is often rejected in favor of biographical authority because witnesses "did not agree with historians' conclusions regarding the Holocaust" (Zandberg, 2010, p. 13). This led Israeli newspapers to only draw on academic writers if they "held two sources of authority – biographic and academic" (Zandberg, 2010, p. 14).

Zandberg's (2010) results open questions about why German academics continue to hold prominent positions in both German *and* Namibian journalism, especially since I do not find any instances of Herero or Nama authorities or politicians disagreeing or even engaging with historians in journalistic coverage. In addition, biographic authority is never explicitly used to introduce or legitimize German-speaking scholars in German and Namibian journalism. Again, at first glance, this makes sense: Showing German speakers through personal connections to the colonial settlers and soldiers responsible for the 1904–1908 genocide would presumably not legitimize their speaking position. Instead, both German and Namibian journalists often exclusively introduce German-speaking academics through their professional titles, as these two typical examples demonstrate: "Henning Melber is an extraordinary professor in the department of political science at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. Reinhart Kössler is a professor in political science at the University of Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany." (*Namibian Sun*, 21.05.20) "Jürgen Zimmerer, born in 1965, is a professor of African history at the University of Hamburg and heads the research center 'Hamburg's (post-)colonial heritage / Hamburg and early globalization'" (*taz*, 02.06.16).

In this way, journalism signals to its audience that the discursive authority of Melber and Zimmerer is rooted in their disciplinary expertise. Yet, whereas the *taz* describes Zimmerer as a "professor of African history," giving him a thematic connection to the Herero and Nama genocide, this is not the case for Melber and Kößler, who are described as professors of political science with no discernable connection to the Herero and Nama genocide.[12] Moreover, as chapter 6.2 has shown, German academics typically do not write commemorative articles on the genocide but instead overwhelmingly provide analysis on the ongoing German-Namibian negotiations, frequently articulating demands towards the German government. In this sense, their speaking role is not functionally different from that of many Herero and Nama speakers (cf. chapter 8.2). How does their position shape their representative power in journalistic memory production?

12 Both Kößler and Melber have extensively researched the Herero and Nama genocide, as has become clear in chapter 2. However, by merely introducing them through their academic discipline, as many Namibian newspapers do, this subject matter expertise often remains unspoken in favor of their official academic position.

Even though their "biographic" authority (Zandberg, 2010, p. 12) typically remains unspoken, I find that the personal position of German-speaking individuals still plays an important role between the lines of journalistic coverage. To exemplify this, I briefly focus on how German and Namibian journalism shapes the role of the German-speaking Namibian academic Henning Melber. Melber's guest articles and interviews are printed widely in both German and Namibian newspapers. Therefore, focusing on his role can help to expand some of the normalization strategies described above.

After the announcement of the 2021 joint declaration, the *SZ* published an interview with Henning Melber in the cultural rubric entitled "That remains an open wound" (*SZ*, 04.08.21). This quote is telling: Melber himself is not shown as "wound[ed]"; instead, he observes and interprets this wound for a German audience (cf. chapter 8.1). Melber is introduced in the article as a "political scientist and sociologist […] who has researched German-Namibian history for over 40 years" (*SZ*, 04.08.21). Interestingly, the article does not mention that Melber is a German-speaking Namibian until the very last question, where the journalist notes that Melber has been a SWAPO member since 1974. Hence, the earlier questions that the journalist poses appear to be merely asking Melber about his academic expertise. The first question to Melber is, "Mr. Melber, what are the most serious allegations against the agreement?" (*SZ*, 04.08.21) Melber responds:

> "On the one hand, the promised cash payment of 1.1 billion euros was criticized as being far too small. On the other hand, descendants of the Herero and Nama are outraged that they were not involved in the negotiations. Both are serious allegations. If reconciliation is meant seriously, it must be practiced with the descendants of those primarily affected by the genocide, particularly the Herero and Nama, but also the Damara and San ('Bushmen'), who were also victims of colonial crimes." (*SZ*, 04.08.21)

In this answer, Melber begins by summarizing the criticisms and "outrage[…]" of "the Herero and Nama." Then, he moves on to setting the boundaries of legitimate reconciliation and providing his own interpretation. By placing this interpretation after the summary of Herero and Nama criticisms, he can position himself as making suggestions in their interest. His interpretation notes that all "those primarily affected by the genocide" should be included in the negotiations – meaning not only the Herero and Nama, but also the Damara and San. As chapter 7.2 has shown, this is an argument often used by Namibian government speakers to delegitimize Herero and Nama claims for exclusive reparations. Even if this is not Melber's intention, his statement can nonetheless remain unquestioned because he is shown as an expert and a legitimate representative of Herero and Nama interests, who are not interviewed for this article.

In response to Melber's answer, the interviewer asks, "But a government must always negotiate with another government. How is everyone supposed to sit at the same table?" (*SZ*, 04.08.21) Melber responds:

> "The Herero and Nama peoples' criticism of exclusion from the negotiations is not primarily towards the German government, but at least equally directed at the Namibian government. […] The Namibian government is dominated by the northern population

> groups of the Ovambo, who were never robbed of their land and were never the target of genocidal warfare." (*SZ*, 04.08.21)

Instead of making concrete suggestions for the German government based on Herero and Nama critiques, the interview turns to inner-Namibian politics. Through the construction of Melber as a speaker, these demands are not shown as his opinion but rather as a suggestion based on impersonal observation of Herero and Nama communities. In the final interview question, the journalist asks why Melber criticizes SWAPO even though he is a SWAPO member. Melber's response to this is that "The slogan 'Solidarity, Freedom, Justice' was never truly realized." (*SZ*, 04.08.21) The journalist does not ask why Melber became a SWAPO member or what his personal history with Namibia is. Melber can criticize Namibian power structures without having to reflect on his position within these structures.

This example shows how academic authority in journalism often obscures the personal position of German-speaking scholars. A counterexample of this journalistic positioning of Melber can be found in a single *Namibian* article in my sample. In a 2020 opinion piece entitled "Dealing with genocide," Melber writes about conflicts in the German-speaking Namibian community. At the end of the text, Melber's biographical note untypically reads, "Henning Melber came to Namibia in 1967 as the son of German immigrants. He joined SWAPO in 1974." (*Namibian*, 19.05.20) Melber's authority to write about and to the German-speaking Namibian community is now rooted in his biographic position as "the son of German immigrants" and as a member of SWAPO, which provides him with a specific position in the Namibian discourse.

While Melber, as a German-speaking Namibian academic, inhabits a unique position, he nevertheless functions as a prominent example of the role academic authority plays in shaping journalistic memory production. Academic authority enables speakers to present their interpretations as "truth" in journalism. This normalizes German-speaking academics' representative position in conveying the demands of "the" Herero and Nama, even though their claims often contradict the demands outlined in chapter 8.2, as will be described in more detail below. In the context of the Herero and Nama genocide, this discursive strategy also disconnects speakers from the past they are describing, enabling Melber to speak as an individual academic rather than as a representative of "the" Germans or German-speaking Namibians.

"Truly independent 'scholars'": Defending academic authority through/despite biographic authority

The function of academic authority in journalism's production of knowledge about the genocide is particularly clear when considering the debates surrounding "true" academic authority, especially in the German-language Namibian newspaper *AZ*. This newspaper often publishes opinion articles that critique German historians for not sufficiently knowing the colonial source material. The focus on colonial source material to legitimize academic authority connects to the findings of chapter 7: Most of the sources on the Herero and Nama genocide come from the descendants of German settlers and soldiers. While German-speaking individuals are rarely directly connected to these events, their access to this source material legitimizes their discursive authority in memory pro-

duction. A figure that exemplifies this strategy across my German-language material is the German-speaking Namibian farmer Heinrich Schneider-Waterberg. In a guest comment published in the *AZ* in 2015 and entitled "Free from having to provide evidence" (*AZ*, 30.10.15), Schneider-Waterberg makes the argument that the Herero and Nama genocide did not occur. To legitimize his argument, he draws on a suggestion from the Herero opposition politician McHenry Venaani that the discussion of the Herero and Nama genocide should take place in an "educated" atmosphere:

> "If that is what Venaani wants, the negotiation of the Herero War should be entrusted to truly independent 'scholars' who understand the primary sources, in contrast to some loud Bundestag politicians who, if at all, have obviously read little more than one bad book on the subject." (*AZ*, 30.10.15)

Using Venaani's quote as a springboard, Schneider-Waterberg outlines who is a legitimate representative of past knowledge: independent "scholars" who understand the primary sources. These scholars are then contrasted with "some loud Bundestag politicians" who have only "read little more than one bad book on the subject." The knowledge of and access to primary source material thus distinguishes "true" knowledge about the genocide.

Importantly, Schneider-Waterberg's quote above assumes that all "scholars" involved in the discussion on the genocide are German-speaking individuals: The question is not *whether*, but *which* German-speaking individuals should be heard. In this way, Schneider-Waterberg can suggest that German politicians are not adequately "informed" without having to make the argument for increased Herero and Nama speakership. This strategy is important because it extends well beyond the *AZ*: Through the construction of academic authority as a legitimized position for producing "true" knowledge about the Herero and Nama genocide, the "sphere of legitimate controversy" (Hallin, 1986, p. 117) continues to be drawn exclusively around German perspectives, effectively silencing Herero and Nama perspectives. This strategy will continue to be explored throughout this chapter.

Another example of journalism's (de-)construction of academic authority is found in a comment written by the former editor-in-chief of the *AZ*, Eberhard Hofmann. The article is a review of a genocide symposium held in Windhoek for which multiple German academics travelled to Namibia. Hofmann ends his column with the words:

> "Now many Namibians of German descent represent an irritation for the dogmatic genocide camp. The explanation is simple and once again became clear at the recent symposium: Genocide dogmatists base their position selectively and one-sidedly in chronic myopia on sources such as the British Blue Book and historiography from the GDR. So, they keep stewing in the juices of post-factual smugness. They can neither tolerate nor strive for an integrated view of history based on a comparative study of sources. Recommendation: Do a critical source review, don't just parrot others [*nachplappern*]." (*AZ*, 02.04.19)

Here, Hofmann is explicitly pitting "Namibians of German descent" against the "dogmatic genocide camp." However, instead of considering the personal positions that might make one group more disposed to deny that the events of 1904–1908 were genocide, he suggests that the "[g]enocide dogmatists" are not doing historical research correctly, instead making their arguments "selectively and one-sidedly in chronic myopia" (*AZ*, 02.04.19). In the quote above, the "British Blue Book" and "historiography from the GDR"[13] are shown as illegitimate sources in academic knowledge production that amplify "myopia" by presumably only highlighting one perspective. The use of figurative language and colloquial phrases shows how the author uses the scientific paradigm to discredit German historians: They should be listening to contrasting perspectives (instead of "stewing in their own juices"), should voice their own opinion (instead of "parrot[ing] others") and should do "critical source review." The contrast that Hofmann draws between German-speaking Namibians and German historians is a contrast within the paradigm of academic research rather than of personal position. Again, the claim that there is a need for academic approaches to the genocide is not denied; the claim is merely that German historians are not doing research correctly. However, the ability of German-speaking historians to do this "research" is implicitly tied to their personal position, which enables them to access colonial source material.

Aspects of this discursive strategy can also be found in German papers, especially in descriptions of Heinrich Schneider-Waterberg. In a controversial *Spiegel* article written in 2016 that questioned whether the events of 1904–1908 were genocide (cf. chapter 6.2.3), foreign correspondent Bartholomäus Grill introduces Schneider-Waterberg with the words:

> "Schneider-Waterberg […] leaning on a stick, walks into the house library. There are three dozen old maps on the walls, mountains of paper everywhere, documents, historical books – the Namibiana collection alone contains over a thousand works. This is where Schneider-Waterberg delved into his country's colonial prehistory; this is where the sources of his controversial book 'Make way for the truth' [*Der Wahrheit eine Gasse*] lie. It is an attempt to refute the thesis of German genocide." (*Spiegel*, 11.06.16)

The scene-setting of Schneider-Waterberg's farm as filled with "old maps […], mountains of paper everywhere, documents, historical books" suggests that he is knowledgeable. It legitimizes his "controversial book" by suggesting that the book is a condensation of this source material. A similar characterization for Schneider-Waterberg is used in a 2021 *FAZ* article written by foreign correspondent Claudia Bröll:

13 In Haritos (2019), I have explored how the GDR functions to outline the boundaries of the un-/sayable in the discursive production of the Herero and Nama genocide, especially in the *AZ*. This reflects a larger history between Namibia and the former GDR, especially during the Namibian liberation struggle (cf. chapter 2.2). The *AZ* continues this pattern from 2015 to 2021, even though it is now primarily delegated to letters to the editor and opinion pieces by the former editor-in-chief Eberhard Hofmann, suggesting a potential shift in how the boundaries of the un-/sayable are being drawn, as I show here.

> "There are few people in Namibia who have dealt so intensively with the Herero War and the German colonial period. The now almost 90-year-old farmer has put together a library with thousands of books, documents and historical maps of Africa. […] After meticulous specialist research, he found discrepancies between the accounts of some historians and his own findings." (*FAZ*, 02.10.21)

In both examples, Schneider-Waterberg is shown as a speaker whose opinions rest on meticulous research ("*akribischen Fachrecherchen*"). It is interesting to note that in this description, Bröll takes over Schneider-Waterberg's own language (cf. *AZ*, 30.10.15) by referring to the "Herero War." These two articles focus on performances of academic authority, such as an extensive library, to indicate Schneider-Waterberg's authority to speak in the discourse.

The examples above show how historical expertise is often implicitly combined with experience in German journalism, where the assumption is that most readers do not have direct experience with conditions in Namibia. However, this focus on "experience" is rarely used to justify including more Herero and Nama perspectives. Instead, it connects to and expands the biographic and academic authority that Zandberg (2010, pp. 13–14) noted. Rather than biographic experience discrediting academic authority, German journalism especially often uses the latter to obscure biographic experience and continue to draw the boundaries of "legitimate controversy" (cf. Hallin, 1986, p. 117) around other German-speaking individuals. It is important to note that this discursive strategy does not only apply to German-speaking academics but rather to a wide variety of individuals who are positioned through their (lack of) knowledge about the genocide, as I show in the following examples. For this, the following section now asks: How does the speakership position described in this chapter shape which prospective demands can legitimately be made for the Herero and Nama communities in journalism?

"Something more highly symbolic"

A typical example that shows how academic authority intersects with prospective memorialization can be found in a reprint from the German local paper *Berliner Zeitung* in the *AZ*. The article was written by Ulrich van der Heyden, whom the *AZ* introduces as a "historian and specialist for African colonial history working at the Free University and the Humboldt University of Berlin as well as in Pretoria" (*AZ*, 31.12.19). Interestingly, this article is not introduced as "opinion" but is rather placed on page two in the politics section, demonstrating its importance for the *AZ* despite its obvious focus on local Berlin politics.

The teaser of the article states that "[v]an der Heyden tries to separate real facts from aberrations in the debate" (*AZ*, 31.12.19). Van der Heyden also makes use of this argument in the text when he writes, "Claims are often made or spread uncritically without any in-depth knowledge of the sources, which only causes astonishment among experts." (*AZ*, 31.12.19) Van der Heyden thus positions himself as one of the "experts" who is "astonish[ed]," legitimizing his own position through the apparent lack of knowledge held by other Germans. In this way, he also legitimizes his suggestions that counter local demands to rename streets in Berlin:

> "Should other cities or even villages now also take responsibility for 'their' colonial past? […] This could be the task of a broad political debate. Memorial activities and improving knowledge of colonialism in museums, schools and universities could be included. That is very necessary!" (*AZ*, 31.12.19)

Van der Heyden's demand for "a broad political debate" as well as "[m]emorial activities and improving knowledge" reflects his discursive legitimization as a historical expert on the genocide. He is not just the person who can speak about the solution: In a way, he *is* the solution, since he is able to provide the "knowledge of colonialism" he simultaneously demands. This shows how the personal position of speakers becomes intertwined with their prospective memorialization of the Herero and Nama genocide. Moreover, although van der Heyden separates himself from other Germans who argue for street renaming, his prospective tasks overlap with many of the same solutions proposed by German-speaking "experts" across German and Namibian newspapers.

To exemplify this, it is useful to consider the guest articles that the German historian Jürgen Zimmerer writes for all German newspapers in my sample. A typical argument articulated in these guest articles can be found in the piece entitled "Colonialism is not a game," published on page 11 in the cultural rubric of the *FAZ*. In this article, Zimmerer primarily critiques the Humboldt Forum; however, during this critique, he also references the current German-Namibian government negotiations:

> "While the mood in Namibia is becoming more and more tense, the Herero and Nama are trying to take legal action in New York to enforce their participation in the negotiations and reparations […]. Germany must face its colonial past. There is currently no central location for this. The inaction of foreign policy experts and museum planners intensifies the criticism" (*FAZ*, 09.08.17).

This example shows how the discursive structures described in chapter 8.2 intersect with and shape Zimmerer's representative position in the article. Zimmerer begins by noting that the mood in Namibia is becoming more "tense," suggesting a potential eruption in the future. Zimmerer uses the perception of the tension in Namibia to argue that Germany "must face its colonial past." He then acts as the discursive authority who can determine what the German readership and German institutions should do.

Importantly, Zimmerer's suggestion for how Germany should "face its colonial past" does not engage with Herero and Nama demands for "reparations." Instead, he notes that "[t]here is currently no central location" for confronting colonialism. This enables Zimmerer to make his argument: "There needs to be an open discussion by civil society(s) [*Zivilgesellschaft(en)*] about the meaning and also the significance of the world-historical phenomenon of colonialism for Germany as well as for the colonized (both in the German colonial empire and beyond)." (*FAZ*, 09.08.17) The idea of an "open discussion" mirrors van der Heyden's demands earlier in this chapter for "a broad political debate" (*AZ*, 31.12.19). At the end of the article above, Zimmerer notes that there is "currently no central location" for Germany "to face its colonial past." He then mentions in a side note that "Hamburg

could be a good option due to its central role in colonialism" (*FAZ*, 09.08.17)[14]. This reflects Zimmerer's personal position as a professor in Hamburg, even as the legitimization of his discursive authority in the article suggests that he is speaking for the Herero and Nama.

The effect of this discursive structure is that cultural demands are frequently not shown in contrast or dialogue with Herero and Nama demands but are rather equated with Herero and Nama desires. As Zimmerer notes in one interview, "Something more highly symbolic is needed [*Es braucht etwas Hochsymbolischeres*]." (*FAZ*, 03.01.19) In an opinion piece published in the *taz* one week before the announcement of the joint declaration, Zimmerer even mentions the disparity between cultural solutions and material demands:

> "For true decolonization, it is not enough to return objects and distribute art – it is also necessary to share wealth and opportunities. Perhaps now would be the moment to visibly connect both topics. Why not fill the Schlüterhof [*courtyard of the Humboldt Forum, C.H.*] with sand from the Omaheke Desert, where German colonial troops wanted to let the Hereros perish in 1904, or break the baroque facade with barbed wire, which is reminiscent of the concentration camps of that time?" (*taz*, 17.05.21; cf. *taz*, 02.06.16)

While Zimmerer notes the importance of "wealth and opportunities" being "share[d]," his suggestion exclusively focuses on a symbolic gesture by a German museum. While Zimmerer critiques the form of exhibition, the German museum remains normalized as a legitimate institution for negotiating and producing knowledge about the Herero and Nama genocide. According to A. Assmann (2018b, p. 57), museums are expressions of archival rather than functional memory. This is useful for understanding the relationship to the past embodied and expressed by German-speaking experts in journalism: The events of 1904–1908 can be spoken and learned about by a German audience, but they do not have to be ritually relived or placed in a direct connection with the daily lives of German speakers and audiences in the present. Cultural citizenship, and thus legitimate speakership, is produced through distinction from the past, which is performed through knowledge of the past. At the same time, the directionality of Zimmerer's suggestion reflects the directionality of speaking power in the discourse: Material from the Omaheke desert is taken to fill a museum courtyard in Germany.

This directionality is exemplified in another *taz* article on a local museum exhibition on colonial photographs. Zimmerer, the initiator of the exhibition, describes it as follows:

> "A Hamburg historian is working on the photos, and there are three artists from Namibia who are developing their own projects and their own language. At the end we will show their perspective in an artistic presentation – in Hamburg and Namibia. Because we have a lot of sources on this genocide from a German perspective, but hardly any sources that give us the perspective of the colonized." (*taz*, 21.02.18)

14 The original passage reads: "*Ob das Humboldt-Forum nach seiner Einweihung auch die politischen und ökonomischen Fragen im Zusammenhang der Folgen des Kolonialismus zu Gegenständen der 'Agora' unter dem Schlossdach machen will oder ob diese Fragen an einem noch zu schaffenden Ort abgibt, Hamburg böte sich aufgrund seiner Rolle im Kolonialismus an, wäre dann zweitranging.*" (FAZ, 09.08.17)

This interaction between the "Hamburg historian" (not Zimmerer) and the "three artists from Namibia" shows who can effectively speak from which position in the discourse. In this description, the Hamburg historian is shown providing "truth" about the colonial past against which the Namibian artists "develop[…] their own projects and their own language." Interestingly, the position of the Namibian artists is legitimized through the suggestion that they provide "the perspective of the colonized" that has been missing from historical source material. This connects to the structures of chapter 8.1: Present Namibian speakers must provide the link to the past; the past, however, is primarily interpreted by German experts. While the local position of the historian (Hamburg) is emphasized, this is not the case for the description of the artists or the second location of the exhibition (Namibia). This reflects the imagined audience of the newspaper, which is presumably unfamiliar with the local context in Namibia. The artists are representative of "the perspective of the colonized" merely because they come from Namibia. This takes the national framework that is so hotly contested in Namibian journalism for granted (cf. chapter 7.2). It also enables (post-)colonial power structures in the production of "truth" about the past to remain unspoken: German experts functionally produce the conditions in which Namibian perspectives on the past can be heard.

How is it possible for newspapers such as the *AZ* to suggest that the demands of van der Heyden are different from speakers such as Zimmerer? As I show above, this becomes possible through the omission of Herero and Nama perspectives through representative structures that disconnect the individual speaker from the collective past. This enables speaking *about* the past to become equated with speaking *for* present communities. However, I find that this also leads to a journalistic formation of German speakership along temporal rather than defined political positions. To exemplify this, I now focus on a few typical examples from both German and Namibian journalism.

8.3.2 "German MPs fight for genocide victims": Mapping political positions onto (a lack of) knowledge

At first glance, the article published on page 13 in the culture rubric of the *SZ* does not have much to do with the 2021 German-Namibian joint declaration. The *SZ* even acknowledges this in the subheading of the article: "Germany finally wants to confront its colonial crimes in what is now Namibia. What does this have to do with a 43-year-old novel? A visit with Uwe Timm, the author of 'Morenga'" (*SZ*, 25.06.21). The rhetorical question above is quickly resolved through the journalistic construction of Timm's representative role. Written by cultural correspondent Peter Richter, the article begins with the words:

> "There are books that have an impact. There are also books that have long-lasting impacts. And then there is the novel 'Morenga' by Uwe Timm. It was already published in 1978, but Germany has only now finally managed to produce a statement about its colonial crimes in former South West Africa. This is mainly due to pressure from present-day Namibia – but perhaps also due to this book in the back of the minds of the German public. The author at least thinks that it is quite possible that his work might have contributed." (*SZ*, 25.06.21)

This quote illustrates the discursive conditions and assumptions through which German speakers become part of the memory discourse: The "impact" of Timm's books is presupposed through its German readership. His discursive position is produced through his ability to educate a German audience. This enables the author to suggest that the genocide negotiations are not only "due to pressure from present-day Namibia," but also "perhaps" due to Timm's novel. This legitimizes the complete lack of Namibian voices in the article, with the focus remaining on Timm and his book.

The article begins by describing Timm's book, which follows both the commander of a Nama group, Jakob Marengo[15], and a German veterinarian, Gottschalk, who arrives during the colonial war and becomes disillusioned with German warfare. In the article, Timm draws a parallel between himself and Gottschalk:

> "And Uwe Timm confirms on this June afternoon in Munich that Gottschalk is also a sort of self-portrait that goes far back to his childhood in a Hamburg merchant family. 'At our house, old colonial troops ["*alte Schutztruppler*"] still met with my father. They talked about Hottentots whose children […] didn't have to go to school […]. Clichés that were intended to be derogatory instead described an enviable situation for me.'" (*SZ*, 25.06.21)

The article never mentions whether Timm's father was a colonial soldier or why "old colonial troops" were meeting at his house when he was a child. Despite the clear connection to German colonialism that inspired the book, Timm claims for himself the position of uninvolved bystander that he also ascribes to his main character (cf. Kansteiner, 2019). Timm's position is legitimized through his reversal of "[c]lichés" as "enviable" (cf. chapter 7.3). Even though Timm clearly positions himself as personally connected to colonialism, he can still present himself as an observer.

How is this possible? As has become clear in the examples above, this is normalized in journalism by plotting Timm in an inner-German landscape. However, in contrast with the academic speakers above, Timm is explicitly shown in a German political landscape. For instance, the journalist describes the reception of Timm's book in the 1970s as follows:

> "And if there is an image of the classic West German student protester from 1968 ["*Achtundsechziger*"] […], his name is Uwe Timm. But when Timm signed his contract for the book, even his colleagues at the publishing house said he was 'crazy' for writing about 'the Hottentots,' of all things. Who should read this, who should care?" (*SZ*, 25.06.21)

In this quote, Timm is shown as being ahead of his time – an interesting contrast to the anachronistic characterization of the Herero and Nama described in chapter 8.1.1. Not only is Timm part of the left-leaning protest movement of 1968, but he seemingly even challenges the protest movement through his interest in a historical Nama figure. The repeated use of derogatory colonial terminology to refer to the Nama throughout this

15 In the following, I use the spelling "Marengo," which is officially used in Namibia and in the research literature, rather than the spelling "Morenga" that Timm uses. See Nielsen (2017) and Silvester and Gewald (2010) for descriptions of Marengo's historical role.

article is used to characterize Timm's father's friends and those at the publishing house, which enables Timm to suggest that he is not a colonial revisionist.

From this position, Timm makes demands for the present:

> "Timm was already participating as a student when they took the statue of colonial apologist Wissmann (with a submissive African at his feet) from its pedestal at Hamburg University. But he would be very much in favor of leaving the Bismarck Tower on the Elbe, whose demolition is now being called for, intact with critical comments or spotlights or confronted by a political culture festival – suggestions that have already been made by the Social Democrats in Hamburg-Mitte, hardly secret Bismarck sympathizers." (*SZ*, 25.06.21)

The example shows how the construction of controversy around the genocide is not only divided between the German political left and right, but also between present-day and historical or revisionist positions. These discursive positions outline a specific relationship to the past rather than consistent policy ideas. Left-leaning positions are often shown as critically distanced from the events of 1904–1908, whereas opposing (often, but not exclusively, right-leaning) positions are typically shown in continuity with colonial ideologies. This becomes clear in the journalist's assertion that the Social Democrats are "hardly secret Bismarck sympathizers," the implication being that affection for Bismarck is the determining factor for prospective tasks in the discourse, even as Timm advocates for keeping a statue of Bismarck standing.

While this suggestion is focused on a local German statue, the other tangible suggestion that Timm makes in the article is indicative of how the discursive strategies above continue to normalize the flow of power and knowledge between Germany and Namibia:

> "At the end of this long Munich afternoon, Uwe Timm doesn't know what advice he would give [the negotiators, C.H.]. But he does have a small emancipatory side suggestion: to finance a counterpart to his novel, which was written strictly from the perspective of the perpetrators. 'That has always been my utopia. A novel by the colonizers that still needs to be written, in the Nama language. A Nama would have to do that. Germany should give money for that.'" (*SZ*, 25.06.21)

Timm admits here that he cannot speak for the Nama, even as he suggests they follow a template that he created and write a "counterpart to his novel." This is only part of the article where the journalist makes explicit that his novel is written "from the perspective of the perpetrators," even though this does not delegitimize Timm's position or his ability to make demands for the Herero and Nama communities in the article.[16]

16 Interestingly, Timm's position does not remain limited to German newspaper discourse. In a *Namibian* opinion article published on January 28, 2022, and entitled "Finding Jakob Marengo," two members of the Marxist Group of Namibia, Shauen Whittaker and Harry Boesak, suggest that Timm's book should be taught in Namibian schools for students to learn about the genocide. This article regrettably could not be included in my sample because it was published in 2022, but it shows the transnational directionality and representative power underlying Timm's discursive position that can remain unspoken in the *SZ* article above by constructing speakership through an inner-German context of debate.

How does the construction of political positions, outlined in Timm's example above, shape the way that German positions are shown in journalistic coverage in the present? Whereas the examples above have focused primarily on German journalism, I will now show how the structures outlined above also travel between German and Namibian journalism.

Throughout my sample, German figures are occasionally introduced in ways that seem to completely undermine their role as speakers on the 1904–1908 genocide. In one typical example, the *SZ* describes Germany's special envoy in the genocide negotiations, the CDU politician Ruprecht Polenz, as follows:

> "Africa – that wasn't [Polenz'] topic until 2015. To this day, he still remembers a lesson from his history class in Tauberbischofsheim about the German colonial period. That was in the early 1960s. 'Germany lost its colonies in 1918,' the teacher said at the time, 'that's why it's not a problem for Germany today.' Since Steinmeier made him the negotiator in the talks in 2015, Polenz has made it his mission to correct this long-standing widespread error." (*SZ*, 29.05.21)

This description is published in an article entitled "Time of guilt" ("*Zeit der Schuld*"), which is part of a series of articles published on page two in the politics section on May 29, 2021, after the announcement of the 2021 genocide agreement. The title, which references guilt, suggests that Germany has acknowledged wrongdoing in the past, which will be explored in more detail below. Throughout the article, Polenz is quoted to explain the 2021 agreement in largely positive terms. In the quote above, Polenz is shown as unknowledgeable about "Africa" ("that wasn't his topic"), even as the next sentence writes about a history class that relativized the impact of colonialism for Germany. Yet, this does not delegitimize Polenz as Germany's special envoy. Instead, it shows him as someone who wishes to "correct this long-standing widespread error." The implication is that Polenz has now rectified his lack of knowledge, enabling him to speak about the events of 1904–1908, echoing the strategies discussed in the previous chapter.

This characterization of Polenz is also visible in a *Namibian Sun* interview with the Namibian special envoy, Zedekia Ngavirue: "When the two envoys were appointed, my counterpart [Polenz, C.H.] phoned and he was very keen to first of all come and familiarize himself with the conditions in this country, because he had never been to Namibia before." (*Namibian Sun*, 19.05.16) Here again, neither Ngavirue nor the journalist questions why Germany has appointed someone who apparently has never been to Namibia and does not know about the Herero and Nama genocide. The fact that Ngavirue explicitly shares this fact without discrediting Polenz's position shows the general assumption of ignorance applied to German speakers. Polenz' willingness to "familiarize himself with the conditions in this country" can thus be interpreted as an eagerness to negotiate.

How does this performance of (re-)discovery limit the reactions that can be shown towards the past? In an example from the *taz*, the German-speaking Namibian author Erika von Wietersheim is introduced by the journalist Elisabeth Kimmerle:

> "Erika von Wietersheim knows what she is talking about: She lived and worked on a farm in the south of Namibia for 20 years. When she and her husband moved to her

> in-laws' farm after studying, she lived together with Black families for the first time. 'As white Namibians, we had hardly had any contact with Black people before, apart from our domestic workers.'" (*taz*, 16.11.19)

This example highlights the irritations that are often normalized at the nexus of experience and expertise in journalistic reporting: Von Wietersheim is shown as "know[ing] what she is talking about." Yet, the next sentence notes that she apparently had no prior contact with Black people before she moved to a farm, "apart from our domestic workers." Von Wietersheim is simultaneously shown as an expert as well as removed from any direct responsibility.

The irritation underlying this speaking position becomes even more jarring in the next paragraphs:

> "[Von Wietersheim] founds a farm school for the children of farm workers. As she is preparing the lesson for eighth grade, she stumbles on her own history. 'In my childhood, we rarely heard anything about colonialism, and when we did, it was horror stories about whites getting murdered by the Herero,' says von Wietersheim. As she was preparing the lesson plan, she read with horror what had happened in Namibia during German colonialism." (*taz*, 16.11.19)

In the quote above, von Wietersheim is shown happening upon the genocide while preparing a lesson plan. Even though this is shown as "her own history," and she admits to hearing "horror stories about whites getting murdered by the Herero," she is still able to note that "we rarely heard anything about colonialism." Her prior knowledge, as with Polenz, is revisionist rather than nonexistent. Yet, by equating revisionist knowledge with a lack of knowledge, it is possible to legitimize the current speaking role of von Wietersheim and Polenz through a performance of discovery.

Von Wietersheim's use of the emotion "horror" in the quote above is illuminating: It is used first to describe the past and then to describe von Wietersheim's present emotional reaction to finding out about German colonialism. Horror enables von Wietersheim to simultaneously acknowledge the past while also distancing herself from the colonial structures she describes. A similar structure, albeit for the emotion of shame, has been described by Wolff (2016, p. 409): "[T]he idea of feeling 'shame' shifts the focus from the suffering of the Herero people as victims of German colonialism and their demands to the site of the perpetrators." The reference to horror fulfills a similar function in foregrounding the perspective of German-speaking individuals, albeit with a crucial difference: Whereas shame requires some form of knowledge about past events, horror and disgust underpin a construction where German speakers disconnect themselves from the actions of the larger German collective.

Interestingly, when there are references to shame in my sample, the shame is often directed inwards towards the German collective. An article that exemplifies this is a two-page "features" article in *New Era* that was published in 2017. For this article, the journalist Israel Zemburuka travels to Berlin in an article entitled "A genocide descendant's search for answers" (*New Era*, 06.06.17). The fact that Zemburuka, a "genocide descendant," travels to Berlin to "search for answers" reflects the directionality of knowledge production

visible throughout this chapter. In the article, Zemburuka describes the reactions of German politicians and activists to the German-Namibian genocide negotiations:

> "Speaking at a commemorative event in June, the German Ambassador to Namibia, Christian Schlaga, stated that Germany is fully aware of the crimes committed by its former rulers. And although these atrocities cannot be undone, it acknowledges that the 'wounds and scars' left on the souls of the victims have 'cast a shadow over the relationship' of both countries. But the problem still remains. Those 'wounds and scars' are not documented in German history books, explains Nicolai Röschert, Deputy Chair Person of AfricAvenir – an international organization dedicated to advocating critical reappraisal of African-European history. 'It is hard to find people that are educated on the subject of the war as Germans' colonial past appears nowhere in the history books. That is a shame,' expressed Röschert, while shaking his head from side to side." (*New Era*, 06.06.17)

In the quote above, Schlaga's assessment of the German colonial past is critiqued by Röschert. The point of argumentation between both individuals is interesting: Schlaga is noting that Germany is aware of its colonial crimes and uses symbolic language of "shadows" and "wounds" to suggest darkness and pain that can simultaneously be illuminated and healed by Germany (cf. chapter 7.3). Röschert, by contrast, is suggesting that Germany knows nothing of its colonial past. Röschert is shown "shaking his head from side to side" and expressing "shame" at the lack of German knowledge. This expression of shame and even embarrassment towards the present German collective is found multiple times in my sample, as will be shown in more detail below. However, this essentially erases the (political) difference between both speakers to a question of what is known about the events of 1904–1908.

This construction of political (in-)difference means that German political speakers are rarely shown negating Herero or Nama demands in journalism, even in political debates. A final example of this can be found in a *Namibian Sun* article entitled "German MPs fight for genocide victims" (01.04.16). In this article, political journalist Jemima Beukes covers a debate in the German Bundestag over a motion "calling for an official apology to the OvaHerero and Nama people as well as other groups affected by the 1904 genocide" (*Namibian Sun*, 01.04.16). Interestingly, this debate does not take place between German political parties but rather with the Namibian government: The Namibian ambassador to Germany, Andreas Guibeb, had asked the Left and Green parties not to table this motion, as it might undermine the ongoing negotiations between both governments. In legitimizing the decision to table the motion anyways, the *Sun* writes: "Movassat, who recognized Guibeb's presence at the Bundestag, said if the motion was withdrawn no debate would take place, and that would be disrespectful towards the descendants of the victims" (*Namibian Sun*, 01.04.16). Movassat here is clearly positioning himself as a "true" representative of Herero and Nama interests – in contrast with the Namibian ambassador to Germany. Yet, the article does not quote him calling for legally binding reparations. Rather, his demands echo his statements in *New Era*: "[Movassat] said in Germany there is almost no culture of remembrance of the crimes committed in that era. […] 'It is really high time to finally change that,' he said." (*Namibian Sun*, 01.04.16) At another point:

> "[Movassat] said although it was good the German government and Namibian governments were finally talking to each other, it would be better if the German federal government was doing so on the basis of a clear mandate from the German Bundestag." (*Namibian Sun*, 01.04.16)

In this quote, Movassat suggests that the government-to-government negotiations are fundamentally "good," with his critique resting on the fact that there is no clear Bundestag mandate.

Later in the article, the *Sun* also quotes an SPD politician, Stefan Rebmann, who expresses the same demands as Movassat: "'The injustice inflicted […] also require[s] intensive joint steps to address this chapter in history. That includes a shared culture of remembrance and, crucially, joint efforts to promote reconciliation.'" (*Namibian Sun*, 01.04.16) In the organization of this article, Movassat is positioned in opposition to Guibeb rather than to Rebmann. This enables Movassat to present himself as a speaker for Herero and Nama interests while simultaneously enabling potential irritations between his demands and the demands of the OTA/NTLA to remain unquestioned. Rebmann, whose party (SPD) was part of the German government and responsible for negotiations with Namibia at the time, is only shown calling for more "remembrance."

A crucial result of the discursive structures outlined above is that German speakers continuously temper or even negate Herero and Nama demands without having to directly confront Herero and Nama speakers. In the following chapter, I now explore the rare instances when German political speakers and activists are shown interacting with Herero and Nama speakers in journalism, which is almost always in restitution ceremonies. How does the construction of legitimate German speakership and political positions in terms of (lack of) knowledge about the past shape interactions between German and Herero and Nama speakers in the present?

8.3.3 "Restitution as an opportunity" – for whom?

"Geingob tells Germany to 'eat humble pie,'" reads the headline of a *New Era* article published on March 1, 2019, about a restitution ceremony. The words "eat humble pie" are graphically highlighted in red font, emphasizing the confrontational potential of Geingob's statement. However, underneath this headline is an image of Geingob and a white woman looking into the camera and smiling. The irritation evoked by this combination of headline and image showcases the interaction between the various discursive strategies described in this and the previous chapters. Hence, the first sentence of the *New Era* article reads: "President Hage Geingob yesterday told Germany to extend an olive branch to Namibians for atrocities committed by its forefathers – as part of settling the marathon issue once and for all." (*New Era*, 01.03.19) Here, Germany is shown as responsible for "extend[ing] an olive branch," a symbolic gesture that suggests reconciliation and peace. This gesture of peace contrasts markedly with the conflict often used to describe Herero and Nama speakers opposed to the government in German and Namibian journalism (cf. chapter 8.2). Moreover, the act of reconciliation is shown as "settling the marathon issue once and for all" – the genocide is shown as an event that must be concluded, and this conclusion hinges on German recognition. Finally, the reconciliation is shown as taking

place between "Namibians" and Germany. As the President of Namibia, Geingob can thus present himself as a legitimate receiver of this reconciliation.

A *Namibian* report printed on the same day and entitled "Germans must acknowledge genocide – Geingob" repeats this pattern (*Namibian*, 01.03.19):

> "Before delivering his message, Geingob said he had prepared a tough speech, but had toned it down after the German [*sic, only for the state of Baden-Württemberg, CH*] minister of science, research and arts, Theresia Bauer, admitted her country's role in the atrocities committed against the Nama and Ovaherero people. 'Something terrible has happened, and they ought to have apologized […].' Geingob added that Namibia would accept an apology issued by Germany." (*Namibian*, 01.03.19)

This quote suggests that Geingob spontaneously changed his mind and speech during the ceremony after Bauer "admitted her country's role in the atrocities." Importantly, Bauer is not the first German politician to admit the genocide. Nevertheless, suggesting that her admission of "atrocities" (not genocide) is unique lends credence to Geingob's apparent change of mind. This suggests that Geingob has achieved something significant, even though the power relations between both nations are effectively unchanged, and the quote ends with Geingob noting "that Namibia would accept an apology." This again makes reconciliation dependent on German willingness to speak about the genocide.

Both articles above are typical of restitution coverage in Namibia. As with the commemorative articles described in chapter 8.1, Namibian restitution ceremonies are often explicitly separated from the inner-Namibian political conflict typically associated with the genocide. This is possible because restitution is plotted in an almost exclusively national framework, which can then be shown as reconciliation in journalism. This is also a departure from earlier research, which often focused on conflicts surrounding a 2011 restitution in Germany (Wolff, 2021, pp. 282–283). With the shift in location from Germany to Namibia, the tenor of coverage markedly shifts in both German and Namibian journalism.

A typical example of this can be found in a *taz* article on the same restitution ceremony described in Namibian coverage above. The article is entitled "Restitution as an opportunity" (*taz*, 09.03.19); it is the only article that covers the Witbooi restitution in my German sample. The article is written by the head of the culture resort of the *taz*, Andreas Fanizadeh. Whereas the Namibian articles above center on Geingob's expression of anger or incredulity, not mentioning much of Bauer's statements, the *taz* article writes that Bauer is "visibly touched" during the ceremony: "She expresses her regret to [Ida] Hoffmann and apologizes in the name of the state government of Baden-Württemberg for what the Germans did here in 1893." (*taz*, 09.03.19) Hoffmann responds with the words:

> "'None of us thought,' says Hoffmann to Bauer on March 1, 2019, in Hornkranz, 'that the day would come that we would stand here together.' And more: 'It is your responsibility to inform your compatriots and to return to Namibia to show the necessary respect so that we can win a new perspective.' To which Bauer replies, 'All institutions in Baden-Württemberg will receive a letter from me. They must take responsibility and

> look through their collections, like the Linden Museum, uncover the contexts of acquisition and return all human remains.'" (*taz*, 09.03.19)

Hoffmann praises Bauer's action as groundbreaking, saying that "none of us thought" that this moment would come. This construction initially suggests reconciliation between Germany and Namibia. Yet, this brief exchange also shows how Hoffmann and Bauer effectively speak past each other in the article. Hoffmann asks Bauer to "inform [her] compatriots" – as described above, Bauer is asked to become an educator for the ignorant German collective. Bauer, in turn, interprets Hoffmann's statement as a call for more restitution, holding up the current restitution as a template ("like the Linden Museum"). Bauer interprets the restitution as the culmination of rather than an impetus for "a new perspective" on the genocide.

Hence, Bauer's actions are continuously legitimized through the positive reactions of those around her:

> "How right the delegation from Stuttgart is with their carefully prepared Namibia initiative became immediately apparent upon their arrival at the airport in Windhoek last week. The presidential guard greeted them, a red carpet was laid out on the tarmac. Education Minister Katrina Hanse-Himarwa and Vice President Nangolo Mbumba appeared at 6 a.m. to welcome the delegation." (*taz*, 09.03.19)

The fact that a minister from Baden-Württemberg is greeted by a "red carpet" is interpreted as a legitimization of her current action, a gesture of gratitude by the Namibian government. In this structure, there is no mention of the criticism of the Nama, who sent a letter to the Linden Museum through their lawyer a few days earlier asking for the restitution to be halted since the artifacts would go to the Namibian government – a point that is neither mentioned in German nor Namibian coverage of the ceremony (cf. *Namibian*, 19.02.19). The *taz* instead writes:

> "The people of Baden-Württemberg also know how important it is for national minorities like the Nama that the old Bible and (cattle) whip of the legendary leader first pass through their hands and only then go to the national archives in Windhoek." (*taz*, 09.03.19)

This quote refers to a part of the ceremony when the whip and Bible are handed to representatives of the Witbooi family, who later hand them to Geingob. Rather than showing this moment as a point of tension, the article again sees this as confirmation of the actions of the German minister, suggesting that she is complying with Nama demands.

A German academic is also acknowledged in the *taz* article: "Reinhart Kößler is also asked to come forward and be honored. The German sociologist and historian has made a decisive contribution to the German-Namibian dialogue for decades." (*taz*, 09.03.19) This shows how the power relations underlying German speakership converge to form reconciliation as an act that emanates from German speakers. Kößler is shown as one of the figures responsible for the restitution. In this structure, the demands of the Herero

and Nama, especially the demand to postpone the restitution (cf. *Namibian*, 19.02.19), become irritating and unthinkable.

However, the Herero and Nama do not remain completely voiceless. Instead, in coverage preceding or following restitutions in Namibia, there are occasionally moments of dissonance that indicate the power struggle underlying the surface of these seemingly consensual restitution ceremonies. To demonstrate this, I focus on the 2018 restitution of human remains in Windhoek's Parliament Gardens.

"Apology torn apart": Moments of dissonance in the 2018 restitution ceremony

One year before Theresia Bauer's visit to Namibia to restitute the Witbooi bible and whip, the German Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Foreign Office, Michelle Müntefering, visited Windhoek to restitute human remains. This ceremony in Windhoek was not covered in my German sample. However, it was the subject of a three-hour live broadcast on NBC's national FM. A brief excursus on this broadcast is useful for understanding the newspaper coverage that appeared in Namibia around this time. During the broadcast, NBC asks *New Era* journalist Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro about Müntefering's role in the ceremony. Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro says that Müntefering is a "young person" and "does not know" about this history and that "she is remorseful" (National FM, 31.08.18, 51:28), repeating many of the strategies discussed above. He then notes, "That is what we want to see continued in her speech today, the two nations embrace one another to bring a closure to this sad history." (National FM, 31.08.18, 52:05) Here, Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro repeats language that was also seen in *New Era* at the beginning of this chapter: He explicitly maintains a positive view of the current process and emphasizes the amicability between Germany and Namibia ("the two nations embrace one another"). He also shows the purpose of the ceremony as bringing "closure to this sad history," again making the focal point of the ceremony the conclusion of rather than confrontation with the past.

This conciliatory characterization of Müntefering in National FM is rebuked in a *Namibian Sun* article written by journalist Jemima Beukes a few days later. The article is entitled "Müntefering's apology torn apart": "The Nama and Ovaherero people have taken Michelle-Jasmin Müntefering's apology and admission of the 1904–08 Nama and Ovaherero genocide with a pinch of salt." (*Namibian Sun*, 03.09.18). Ida Hoffmann, a spokesperson of the Nama Genocide Technical Committee, is quoted as saying that "[Müntefering] is not senior enough to give that apology," directly negating National FM's emphasis on her youth as a legitimizing factor for her conciliatory discursive position (*Namibian Sun*, 03.09.18).

The irritation expressed by Hoffmann is also visible in an opinion piece that Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro authors in *New Era* just a few days before he is interviewed on National FM. The article, entitled "Return of remains must not eclipse reparations," paints a starkly different image of the restitution ceremony:

> "[I]t is incomprehensible how the affected communities and the country at large can really be expected to continue to hold the repatriation talks above the substantive matter of acknowledging the genocide and instituting reparations, and at last seeing a closure on the subject." (*New Era*, 31.08.18).

Again, Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro emphasizes that there is a need for "closure on the subject" – but now, this closure is explicitly *not* reached through restitutions but only through reparation. These dissonances highlight the power struggles for representation at the core of Namibian newspaper reporting. Journalists and Herero and Nama representatives do not articulate demands or critiques during the restitution ceremonies where the government is explicitly involved. However, this continues to separate German politicians from having to engage with Herero and Nama critiques in journalistic reporting.

The examples above have shown how restitution ceremonies are often shown through the perspective of a German will for reconciliation. This construction often presupposes the gratitude of the Herero and Nama, which becomes clear in the moments when German actions are criticized, as becomes clear in a final example in the *taz*, which summarizes and ties together many of the strategies discussed above. This example shows the limits of the journalistic confluence between German desires and Herero and Nama demands for how to confront the past.

In 2018, preceding the restitution ceremony above, the *taz* chronicles the personal quest of a German man, Gerhard Ziegenfuß, to return a human skull. The article's introduction of Ziegenfuß exemplifies a relationship with the past that sits uneasily in the German present:

> "There is Ziegenfuß standing in his rose garden in the Münsterland, a slight 77-year-old with a straight mustache, glasses and sports shoes, his checkered shirt tucked into his jeans. In his hands, he is holding the past that he has wanted to settle with for almost ten years – and yet he is always thrown back on it." (*taz*, 03.02.18)

Ziegenfuß's environment is shown as peaceful, at odds with the "past" or skull he is holding in his hands. In this way, Ziegenfuß is characterized as a victim of the past. The skull oppresses Ziegenfuß and is described as a "dark stain on the Ziegenfuß family history" (*taz*, 03.02.18). The focus of the story becomes removing the skull and thereby cleansing the stain upon the Ziegenfuß family. The quote notes that Ziegenfuß "has wanted to settle it" for a long time – repeating the theme of closure above.

The article then describes how Ziegenfuß came into possession of the skull: "'My mother was relieved when she gave me the skull,' Ziegenfuß says today. The crimes of colonialism were not a topic during the GDR." (*taz*, 03.02.18) The emotion that Ziegenfuß' mother feels when she gets rid of the skull is "relief," providing a pendant to the emotions of "horror" and "disgust" described above. Yet, at the same time, the skull is shown as a "burden" for which the Ziegenfuß family bears no direct responsibility through a lack of prior knowledge, legitimized through the discursive connection to the GDR. Yet, the apparent lack of family knowledge is belied later in the article when Ziegenfuß mentions a family story on the skull's origin: "According to the family legend, the skull belonged to a chief and was given to the priest Alois Ziegenfuß as a gift from a converted tribe. He supposedly packed it up together with animal bones and sent it to his family in Thuringia." (*taz*, 03.02.18) Ziegenfuß's family, in contrast to many of the figures shown above, has a clear connection to the events of 1904–1908.

In the article, there is a moment when Ziegenfuß expresses emotions of shame and embarrassment; however, these emotions are directed towards the German government that is making it difficult for him to restitute the skull:

> "Returning the skull was initially a chore for him, then a challenge. He now knows so much about the crimes of the colonial era that the skull has become a symbol for him: a guilt that has not been atoned for. He finds Germany's behavior unspeakable. 'For us, dealing with colonial history can't be surpassed in terms of embarrassment; I could be ashamed of that,' he says." (*taz*, 03.02.18)

Ziegenfuß' goal to rid himself of the past is described as a "chore" and a "challenge." The "guilt that has not been atoned for" becomes part of a collective German responsibility. This enables Ziegenfuß to direct his ire at the German national collective that does not know or does not care about the genocide, even as he is shown as separate from this collective due to his recognition of German colonial history. At one point, the Berlin-based Herero activist Israel Kaunatjike even expresses pity for Ziegenfuß: "Kaunatjike feels sorry for Ziegenfuß. 'He's been trying hard for years and has been ignored. I don't think it's good to leave this man hanging like that [*im Stich zu lassen*]', he says." (*taz*, 03.02.18)

However, Ziegenfuß' interactions with the Herero in Namibia irritate this discursive structure:

> "Gerhard Ziegenfuß still goes to Namibia, without the skull. There he wants to talk to representatives of the Herero and Nama […]. But the trip is not very successful. […] The Herero and Nama do not want to accept the skull unless it is clear which ethnic group it belongs to. Ziegenfuß realizes how little he knows about the feelings of those affected." (*taz*, 03.02.18)

In this quote, the Herero and Nama reject the conciliatory role and performance that Ziegenfuß seeks to embody. The journalist bridges this disparity between the desires of Ziegenfuß and the affected communities by suggesting that Ziegenfuß merely does not understand the "feelings of those affected." The concerns of the Herero and Nama are once again shown in terms of "feelings" (cf. chapter 8.2.2). This becomes especially clear with the anger that one Herero speaker expresses in the next paragraph:

> "The spokesman for the Ovaherero Genocide Foundation, Festus Muundjua, responded to the question of what Ziegenfuß should do with the skull: 'If the [Namibian] government doesn't want it, throw it into the Rhine.' His words reflect bitterness. Herero representatives have called on the German government to officially recognize the genocide and to formally apologize to the descendants of the genocide victims. But the German government is still negotiating with the Namibian government, and the victims' descendants feel excluded." (*taz*, 03.02.18)

Muundjua's statement that Ziegenfuß should throw the skull "into the Rhine" makes the disjunction between the various desires in the article visible and reflects Ma̲und̲u-Tjiparuro's article in *New Era*. Muundjua explicitly rejects not only Ziegenfuß's actions

but also the entire premise of the article that restitution is fulfilling the demands of the Herero and Nama. Yet, the journalist attributes this statement to Muundjua being "bitter" due to the length of the negotiations. In fact, reparations are not mentioned in the article. This becomes possible through the foregrounding of Ziegenfuß's desires and by equating his desires with the desires of the indigenous communities (cf. Spivak, 1988). This is one of the rare articles where Herero and Nama speakers are shown directly responding to German actions. Yet, despite the explicit rejection of the communities, Ziegenfuß does not change course, and the article continues to chronicle his efforts to restitute the skull. The restitution sought by Ziegenfuß finally takes place, despite the skull's seemingly uncertain origins, in the ceremony described in *New Era* and the *Namibian Sun* in 2018. Ziegenfuß is quoted before the German portion of the restitution with the words, "I am truly relieved. Every day, I was confronted with the burden we carry in the form of a skull." (*taz*, 29.08.18) Ziegenfuß' use of the word "we" shows that he collectivizes the "burden" of the past as part of a broader colonial history; however, the quest to return the skull is shown as his personal initiative.

To summarize, the examples have shown the performance of German recognition of colonialism and the restitution of colonial artifacts is often constructed as a moment of joint German-Namibian reconciliation. This has tangible implications for the (de-)legitimization of the German and Namibian governments. To begin, by continuously restaging reconciliation, the Namibian government can suggest that its negotiations with Germany are successful and that it is a legitimate representative of Herero and Nama interests. In Germany, the presumption of reconciliation can suggest that the demands of the Herero and Nama are being met without having to engage with thornier questions of legally binding reparations. As the examples above have demonstrated, this leads to a cycle in German and Namibian journalism where the recognition of the genocide is continuously shown as a new development. Even though there have been multiple restitutions since 2015, each one is shown as a new moment of recognition and, in this way, as a potential act of reconciliation. Given these findings, the following chapter offers a preliminary conclusion and poses questions for the final discussion and conclusion.

8.4 Preliminary conclusion: Recognizing the past in the present

This chapter began with the conundrum that Herero and Nama witnesses are largely absent from journalistic reporting about the historical events of 1904–1908 and asked: How do these re-presentative structures shape who can make demands for the Herero and Nama genocide in the present? The results above have shown various ways that journalism connects past, present and future to (de-)legitimize different speakers and demands in the present. In the following, I recapitulate these main findings before bringing them into dialogue with one another.

Chapter 8.1 began by asking how present Herero and Nama communities are connected to the past in journalism. In coverage, the genocide's impact in the present is primarily shown in connection with the actions and conditions of the present-day Herero and Nama communities, typically in commemoration ceremonies. These commemorations are often shown as local and tribal occasions. In this sense, commemorations for

the genocide often function in journalism to temporally and spatially disconnect the past from the audience. Yet, whereas German journalism often shows the Herero and Nama as anachronous figures, Namibian journalism's introduction of commemorations as novel events shows how the boundaries of past and present are still actively being negotiated in Namibia.

In both Germany and Namibia, journalistic coverage of Herero and Nama commemorations juxtaposes the genocidal past, represented by the Herero and Nama, with the modern present, represented by the Namibian nation. This can also be found in the prospective demands often made in these articles, which focus on how the Herero and Nama must develop themselves in the present. The connection of the Herero and Nama genocide with traditional identity is simultaneously legitimizing and delegitimizing in coverage: The nation is the framework through which demands can legitimately be made in the present, even though the framework for connecting to the past is indigenous identity.

This discursive boundary between the (indigenous) past and the (national) present becomes especially clear in the moments when Herero and Nama speakers use the genocide as a context for reparations demands, as chapter 8.2 explored. When Herero and Nama speakers connect to the past in their own words, they often refer to the genocide as part of an ongoing struggle of their communities against the Namibian and German governments. In journalism, these criticisms are shown as part of a political debate rooted in the present. Hence, while the Herero and Nama connect themselves to the past, similar connections are neither made nor expected of other present speakers, who frequently position themselves through a national context and are shown as being threatened by Herero and Nama demands in the present. This adds an important component to the production of temporal boundaries in journalism: The national future is often described in economic terms, whereas the Herero and Nama's connection to the past is shown in emotional terms. Again, the same mechanisms that enable the Herero and Nama to connect to the past in journalism, for example by expressing pain or anger, delegitimize them from making demands in the present.

The results of chapters 8.1 and 8.2 demonstrate how journalistic memory production is shaped by negotiations of cultural citizenship between national and tribal boundaries (cf. chapter 4.3). This builds on previous research on German politics and journalism, which has shown that reconciliation for the genocide is often shown in national frameworks (cf. Robel, 2013, p. 308). The results above have uncovered the temporal and power structures underlying this negotiation of cultural citizenship in/despite national frameworks. They have thereby added important nuance to the previous research literature, which has often presumed that the audience of journalistic reporting is the same as the participants of commemorative ceremonies (cf. chapter 3.3.1). In my results, the past is strategically used to evoke or obscure the tribal/national identity of individuals in Namibia, which shapes which prospective demands can be made for the past. Furthermore, these findings also expand the previous research literature on traumatic memories in post-colonial contexts, where the past is often seen as detrimental to a multiethnic present (cf. chapter 4.3.2). In Namibian journalism, there is little overt reference to potential violence between different ethnic groups: Instead, the focus is on economic

fallout by limiting German tourism and investments, showcasing the entangled power structures underlying journalistic memory production.

Finally, chapter 8.3 shows how the journalistic juxtaposition of past, present and future also extends to the representative position of German-speaking academic experts and German politicians. In contrast to the figures above, these speakers are shown as individuals rather than as representing "the" German perspective in the discourse. In addition, German speakers are either shown as previously unknowledgeable about the genocide or as one of the few Germans who knows anything about the events of 1904–1908. German positions of speakership are thereby constructed through academic or experiential observation. At the same time, the privileged position of German speakers in journalism is implicitly connected to the fact that they have access to and can interpret colonial source material (cf. chapter 7).

These results show how "aphasia" (Bijl, 2016; Stoler, 2016) becomes possible through journalistic memory construction: Despite having a long history of speaking about the events of 1904–1908, German-speaking individuals are continuously legitimized through recourse to an inner-German "sphere of legitimate controversy" (Hallin, 1986, p. 117). In contrast to the expectations of homogeneity and unity for Herero and Nama speakers, German-speaking individuals can use their position to distinguish themselves from the larger German collective in journalistic articles. This obscures the fact that most German speakers make relatively similar prospective demands for the genocide. While there is consensus that there should be some form of financial compensation, the form of German recognition continues to be shown as the primary point of controversy among German speakers, frequently in opposition to historical rather than political discursive positions.

Hence, German recognition of the genocide becomes the end point rather than the starting point of negotiations. In this way, the demands of the Herero and Nama for reparations become irritating to the performance of reconciliation that is discursively linked to the recognition of the past in journalism. The previous chapters have underlined the representative structures of recognition in journalistic memory production: The act of recognizing the past becomes a way for German speakers to suggest they are speaking for Herero and Nama interests in the present. In this construction, the Herero and Nama can only accept or deny reconciliation, but they cannot produce the conditions through which reconciliation is constructed in journalism.

Considering the results of the previous chapters 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 together leads to further interesting questions. A larger argument that appears from the previous two chapters is that material demands for reparations are often separated from the performative enactment of reconciliation in journalism. As Rausch (2023a, p. 440) has shown, mediated apologies for colonialism often obscure the uneven power relations between participants. The mere willingness to pay monetary compensation is shown as an act of remorse by the former perpetrator, a sign of their desire to reconcile. Yet, what is the position of the recipient – can they make demands for *more* money?

The previous chapters have offered some answers to this question: In both German and Namibian journalism, the acknowledgment of the past is often shown as the simultaneous overcoming of the past. Yet, if Herero and Nama communities serve in journalism as a link between past and present, overcoming the past also often means overcom-

ing the need for Herero and Nama demands to be heard. The act of accepting a German apology for the past and enabling "reconciliation" thus also becomes a way of negating future claims. Given these findings, the following conclusion connects the results of the previous three chapters back to my primary research questions, offers reflections on my theoretical framework and provides a broader outlook on the role of journalism in producing and potentially challenging memories of colonialism in the present.