7 Terms of genocide: Re-presenting the colonial past in journalism

The following chapter sketches the journalistic "strategies of tropology," or ways of speaking about the past, that maintain or challenge (post-)colonial power structures in memory production (Spivak, 1988, p. 276). With its emphasis on mnemonic practices of re-presentation, this chapter responds to a theoretical and research gap that was outlined in chapter 3: How does journalism shape knowledge of past events when there are no more living witnesses and most historical documents are told through the perspective of former colonizers? Moreover, this chapter responds to a question that arose from my material: My analysis begins in 2015, when the German government first officially begins using the term "genocide" (Bürger, 2017, p. 10). Yet, throughout my time frame, much of the journalistic discourse in Germany and Namibia is focused on whether the German government will use the word "genocide" to describe the events of 1904–1908. As one article in the *Namibian* puts it, "Arrogantly, Germany is now using the language of 'atrocities' to avoid using the G-word" (*Namibian*, 16.03.18).

Robel (2013, p. 277) writes that the term "genocide" has been used relatively consistently in German journalism since the early 2000s, a finding that is also reflected in my German and Namibian material.[1] Yet, even as newspapers overwhelmingly use the word "genocide," I find that this term is not replacing but rather coinciding with earlier terms such as "rebellion," "uprising" or "atrocities" (*Namibian Sun*, 06.05.15). How can this simultaneity of terms in my material be explained, especially when journalists often criticize the German government for using these same terms? And what does this simultaneity reveal about the boundaries of current power and knowledge structures in Germany and Namibia today?

1 These results also hold true for the *AZ*, which, until 2017, did not explicitly refer to the events of 1904–1908 as a genocide, instead using terms such as "uprising," the "war years of 1904–1908" or placing the term "genocide" in quotation marks (*AZ*, 04.04.16). However, the quotation marks around the word genocide have begun to fall in recent years, as this headline demonstrates: "President of the Bundesrat remembers the victims of the genocide" (*AZ*, 18.07.19). This headline suggests a shift in the un-/sayable surrounding the genocide in the *AZ* that mirrors the political shift in speaking about the events of 1904–1908.

This chapter tackles these questions through a focus on the sources, figurative and symbolic language as well as the connections to other memories that German and Namibian journalism uses to construct the Herero and Nama genocide as a past event relative to the present audience. Hence, chapter 7.1 begins by analyzing how German and Namibian journalism remediates similar colonial source material in its coverage (cf. Erll & Rigney, 2009). Then, chapters 7.2 and 7.3 consider how this source material is used to make different discursive connections that outline the present boundaries of the collective, from the Namibian liberation struggle to the Maji Maji War. Finally, chapter 7.4 combines German and Namibian journalism to explore a connection that both newspapers make to the Holocaust. This chapter asks which knowledge can or cannot travel between both nations as the Herero and Nama genocide increasingly moves from a historical event to a present debate with material consequences. This chapter functions to showcase how the construction of the past serves as a basis for normalizing speakership and claims in the present, as will be explored in more detail in the ensuing chapter 8.

7.1 "As it was called back then": Describing colonial genocide in German and Namibian journalism

This chapter shows how journalism delimits the available knowledge about the Herero and Nama genocide within Germany and Namibia through and despite the colonial archive. For this, chapter 7.1.1 begins by exploring how German and Namibian journalists introduce and use colonial source material in their reporting. Then, the following chapter 7.1.2 explores how journalism's use of historical source material is often used to personalize the genocide around key figures such as Lothar von Trotha. Finally, chapter 7.1.3 provides a brief excursus on the use of colonial imagery in German and Namibian journalism that helps to tie together the findings of the previous chapters.

7.1.1 "Our place in the sun": Remediations of colonial source material

Journalists in both Germany and Namibia frequently draw on quotes and language from similar colonial source material in their articles. These quotes transcend editorial rubrics and years and can be found in almost every type of article and newspaper. Journalism's reliance on colonial source material reflects (post-)colonial knowledge structures that have been reflected throughout this dissertation: Much of the recorded information on the Herero and Nama genocide was collected and archived by former German colonizers. The fact that both German and Namibian journalism rely on these quotes highlights structural inequalities that go beyond the individual choices of journalists and newspapers.

Often, quotes from colonial sources are not just used to describe what occurred between 1904 and 1908, but also to explain why the genocide occurred. This question of *why* is important because it shows which power structures are ab-/normalized in the characterization of participants in the Herero and Nama genocide. To exemplify this, it is useful to consider a phrase that is found repeatedly in German journalism: "'Our place in the sun'" (*Spiegel*, 20.06.20). This phrase was originally used by German Chancellor Bern-

hard von Bülow in a debate to advocate for the acquisition of colonies (*Spiegel*, 20.06.20). Often, however, this phrase is not attributed to anyone but rather becomes a general way of describing the preconditions of genocide: "The German Empire looked for and found a 'place in the sun,' as it was called back then; it beat the land free with the sjambok[2]." (*SZ*, 19.06.21). Here, the *SZ* opinion columnist Heribert Prantl describes the "place in the sun" with the phrase "as it was called back then"; in this way, he produces temporal distance between himself and the phrase he is using. This performatively distances the author from the colonial source material, even as he still draws on the quote to describe the genocide. This is a typical strategy, particularly for German journalism, that will be explored in more detail throughout this chapter. For now, I consider which historical power relations this use of colonial source material symbolically normalizes.

As this quote demonstrates, the genocide is often shown as an outcome of German colonial expansion. However, the terms used to describe these events reflect the colonial perspective that is normalized in the retelling of the past. As one article in the *New Era* writes, "Historical reports indicate that between 1885 and 1903 German settlers seized about a quarter of the Ovaherero and Nama lands. In 1904 the tribes rebelled and as a result were massacred by German imperial troops" (*New Era*, 06.06.17). Even though this article does not quote specific "historical reports," it nevertheless echoes the power relationship seen above: The acquisition of land by German settlers is shown as almost inevitable. Moreover, the first visible act of resistance, or "rebell[ion]," in journalistic coverage is immediately followed by a massacre. As has been described by Wolff (2021, p. 24), the term "rebellion" (or "*Aufstand*") suggests that the Herero and Nama were fighting against established rulership. This makes the act of war by the Herero and Nama, rather than German colonialism, appear abnormal and extraordinary.

At the same time, the "rebellion" of the Herero is described as self-defense, something that occurred through complete economic loss and deprivation: "The uprising went hand in hand with colonization: land grabbing, cattle theft, rape. At some point, the Hereros had lost everything and were no longer allowed to own anything." (*taz*, 08.04.17) However, this description is illustrative because it shows how the term "uprising" produces the conditions in which the genocide is spoken about. A German position of strength is often presupposed and almost never questioned in journalistic reporting, whereas Herero and Nama actions are often shown as reactions to the conditions set by German colonizers.

The example above points to another common use of colonial source material: to describe the physical suffering of the Herero and Nama prior to and during the events of 1904–1908. One source that continues to be frequently used in German journalism is the report of the Great General Staff of the German Army about the 1904–1908 colonial war (*Großer Generalstabsbericht*). One typical example of this quote is found in an *SZ* review of a 2016 exhibition about colonialism in the German Historical Museum. The article is entitled "With the sjambok", repeating the symbol of the whip and physical punishment seen at the beginning of this chapter (*SZ*, 17.10.16). The article introduces the Herero and Nama genocide with the following words:

2 Whip made from hippopotamus skin ("*Nilpferdpeitsche*").

> "The Herero, in a desperate situation after cattle epidemics and drought, had been deprived of their land by the Germans, had risen, were militarily defeated and […] were driven into the Omaheke Desert, where the vast majority of people died of thirst. 'The closure of the desert, which was carried out with iron severity for months… completed the work of destruction,' it says in an account by the military history department of the Great General Staff in 1906, and it continues: 'The wheezing of the dying and the rage of madness died away in the sublime silence of infinity. The punishment had come to an end. The Hereros had ceased to be an independent tribe.'" (*SZ*, 17.10.16)

Even before the article begins quoting the colonial source, the journalist describes the sequence of events leading to the genocide as a cycle of uprising and military defeat. The metaphor of "iron" severity on the part of the German colonial forces continues to normalize German military prowess, making the death of Herero individuals appear an almost simultaneous reaction to the act of rebellion as well as caused by natural rather than human forces ("completed the work of destruction"). The legitimacy of German colonialism is further underlined by the description of the genocide as a punishment or divine judgment ("*Strafgericht*") through the sentence "[t]he punishment had come to an end." The journalist does not question this description or source but rather continues by noting that more people should know about the genocide and praising the museum exhibition.

The description of the genocide as punishment is also found in Namibian journalism, for instance in *New Era*: "Germany targeted the Herero for genocide, inter alia, to punish the Herero for impudently rebelling against German colonial rule, and for supposedly killing Germans during the uprising in 1904" (*New Era*, 29.04.16). The adjective "impudently" to describe the rebellion of the Herero again suggests that their action was illegitimate while simultaneously making them responsible for the Germans' "punish[ment]." This is a common pattern in German colonial sources and shows how the power structures and terms found within colonial sources have become normalized in journalistic descriptions of the genocide, even when these sources are not directly quoted.

Another quote from the Great General Staff report, this time in the *Zeit* in 2021, exemplifies how colonial terms reverberate in journalistic memory production. The report reads: "Like a wild animal hunted half to death, [the enemy] was chased from waterhole to waterhole […]. The waterless Omaheke was supposed to complete what German weapons had begun: the destruction of the Herero people." (*Zeit*, 24.06.21) Here, the Herero are figuratively compared to "wild animal[s]" being chased through the desert. Moreover, in this quote, "German weapons" are placed against "wild animal[s]," repeating a common colonial dichotomy of culture and nature that constructs and normalizes the colonial power's dominance over indigenous populations. The animal language dehumanizes the Herero and Nama and furthers the inevitability of a German victory and the anonymous mass death of indigenous groups. It is important to note that the guest author of this *Zeit* article, the history teacher Steffen Wenig, does add context to this quote. However, he focuses on the motives rather than the content of the source: "These statements do not reveal any compassion; on the contrary, they prove once again that the Great General Staff views genocidal warfare as legitimate and not at all morally reprehensible." (*Zeit*, 24.06.21) In this way, Wenig condemns the lack of "compassion" in the Great General Staff report but does not question its description of the events of 1904–1908. The content of the

source becomes the basis for the criticism of the source, echoing the example from the *SZ* at the beginning of this chapter.

Symbolic language referring to animal death is also found in Namibian journalism, with verbs such as "butchered" or "slaughtered" to describe the events of 1904–1908, with the Shark Island concentration camp even being described as "a rocky butchery" (*Namibian Sun*, 01.12.21). These terms are not shown as emanating from colonial sources, for instance through quotation marks, and are thus shown as the words of the author. However, an article in the *Namibian* describing the deportation of Nama families during the genocide shows how colonial source material both implicitly and explicitly shapes coverage:

> "The 'deportation of Hottentots' became costly according to the newly appointed Colonel Berthold von Deimling, who took over as Commander-in-Chief of South West Africa. He suggested transporting them to Shark Island at Lüderitz. Namas died like flies according to some reports because of severe cold and windy conditions, neglect, malnutrition and starvation." (*Namibian*, 13.07.18)

Here, the "deportation" is described through the perspective of Colonel Berthold von Deimling, which uses derogatory colonial language to describe the forcible removal of Nama families from the colony. The authors of this piece, Salmaan Dhameer Jacobs and Annarine Beauty Jacobs, then include the phrase "died like flies according to some reports," using animal symbolism to describe the death of the Nama. The Nama are again shown in animalistic terms, their mass death anonymized. However, these terms are no longer directly drawn from colonial sources but are rather shown as the interpretation of the journalist.

The durability of colonial language and symbolism reflects colonial power-knowledge structures that limit the available witness accounts for journalism to draw from. However, the patterns above are also perpetuated through remediations of journalistic coverage. To exemplify this, I will now focus on information boxes in German newspapers, which provide a window into inner-journalistic patterns of remediation.

Remediating prior journalistic coverage: The information box

Both the *SZ* and the *FAZ* publish information boxes to accompany their "political" articles after the announcement of the 2021 genocide agreement. Both information boxes are graphically separated from the main articles, which focus on reactions to the agreement in Namibia and Germany and are not connected to the information box. The past is separated from the present negotiations and performatively serves as additional information for the reader. The *FAZ* titles its information box "The consequences of the Herero and Nama uprising against the colonial masters [*Kolonialherren*]" (*FAZ*, 29.05.21). The information box is written by the *FAZ* journalist Peter Sturm, who only wrote one other article on the genocide in 2016, where he repeated much of the language found in this information box. In 2016, he wrote, "Life in the colony became increasingly difficult for the indigenes as colonial masters ["*Kolonialherren*"] kept expanding. […] The discontent grew and finally bloodily erupted in January 1904." Sturm repeatedly uses the word "*Kolonial-*

herren," or "colonial masters," to describe the relationship between colonizers and colonial subjects, repeating some of the power structures described above.

These terms are not used in the ensuing articles on the genocide in the *FAZ* until Sturm returns to write an information box in 2021, where he repeats similar descriptive patterns. In 2016, Sturm described the reaction of German colonizers to the Nama war declaration: "The colonial rulers were surprised, as they had considered the 'Hottentots' to be loyal." (*FAZ*, 24.06.16) Here, Sturm uses a colonial denigratory phrase for the Nama. While this word is placed in quotation marks, however, Sturm continues to rely on the perspective of the colonizers to describe the (changed) motivations of the Nama, which are not placed in quotations. He also foregrounds the reaction and perspective of German colonizers by noting they were "surprised." In 2021, Sturm largely repeats this description, albeit without the colonially denigrating terminology: "The Nama uprising began in October 1904. Here, too, the colonial rulers were surprised by the 'disloyalty' of the ethnic group." This shows how phrases that are no longer common in the reporting of the *FAZ* are nevertheless reused when the same author is asked to write about the genocide. While the terminology has shifted, the power relationship that normalizes the perspective of the colonizers in describing the genocide remains unquestioned.

A similar example can be found in the *SZ* in 2021. The author of this information box is Reymer Klüver, an editor for the features section. Klüver, who has apparently not written about the genocide previously, suddenly repeats language that has not been used in the *SZ* for multiple years (cf. Haritos, 2019; Wolff, 2021). He writes: "The Herero, a pastoral people, bloodily resisted German restrictions on their water and grazing rights and murdered German farmers." (*SZ*, 29.05.21) By describing the Herero as "a pastoral people" ("*ein Hirtenvolk*"), Klüver draws on colonial language that simultaneously expresses idealization and inferiority (Robel, 2013, p. 299). This also becomes clear in terms such as "resisted" and "murdered," the latter of which will be described in more detail below. Interestingly, Klüver does not use any quotation marks, thereby suggesting that these terms and phrases are common knowledge in the description of the genocide. This continues in the rest of the information box. After mentioning the Herero, Klüver writes: "The Nama, often called Hottentots in Germany, were also persecuted, and their uprising was brutally suppressed." (*SZ*, 29.05.21). The use of the word "Hottentots" without quotation marks in the text again makes this term appear to be the consensus for referring to the Nama in Germany.

The examples above have shown how colonial source material and terminology are remediated in German and Namibian journalistic coverage, traveling beyond temporal and spatial boundaries in the description of the genocide (cf. Erll, 2011; Erll & Rigney, 2009). Even when journalists performatively distance themselves from their colonial source, the sustained reliance on these quotes normalizes colonial power relations in the description of 1904–1908 in both German and Namibian journalism. From these descriptions, the genocide continues to be constructed (if not condoned) as the outcome of unequal martial and economic strength, where the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is determined by the unequal application of violence. The Herero and Nama as historical participants are often shown as anonymous groups of people who cannot speak for themselves but whose suffering is described by the perpetrators, often in ani-

malistic symbolic terms. This leads to the question: How does the continued reliance on German colonial source material shape the personalization of the past in journalism?

7.1.2 Personalizing genocidal violence in journalism

Journalism's frequent quoting of colonial source material reflects a common pattern in memory production: Journalism often personalizes the past around certain figures (Kinnebrock, 2019, p. 393) and uses firsthand testimony to legitimize its interpretations of the past (Zandberg, 2010, p. 12). This chapter explores how journalism's practices of personalization are affected in the context of colonial epistemic injustice. For this, it begins by asking how German and Namibian journalism use quotes by German colonial officers and soldiers, especially Lothar von Trotha, to describe the genocide. Then, it shows how these depictions bleed into victimization in historical feature stories in the *AZ*. The final section considers how these patterns are irritated or maintained when English-language Namibian journalism reports on historical genocide survivors, also in historical feature stories. In this way, the chapter showcases the complex relationship between gaps in the colonial archive and the continued reliance on witness accounts in journalistic memory production.

"Imperial Germany's chief henchman": The case of Lothar von Trotha

The figure who is most consistently and frequently quoted in German and Namibian articles is Lothar von Trotha, specifically his "extermination" order against the Herero (cf. chapter 2.1). A typical example of this can be found in a guest article written by the former President of the German Bundestag, Norbert Lammert, where he writes that the events of 1904–1908 constituted genocide. Lammert begins his guest article repeating the arguments seen above, noting that "the native population suffered greatly from the humiliation caused by the racist feudal power of the colonial rulers [*Kolonialherren*]. In 1904, after years of resistance […], conflicts […] escalated into a merciless war, which the Germans called a 'race war.'" (*Zeit*, 09.07.15) Then, Lammert quotes Lothar von Trotha:

> "'Within the German border, every Herero will be shot with or without a gun, with or without cattle. I will no longer take in women or children, I will drive them back to their people or have them shot,' was the infamous 'shoot to kill' order ["*Schießbefehl*"] issued by the German commander-in-chief, Lieutenant General Lothar von Trotha. 'No pardon' ["*Kein Pardon*"] was the general slogan at the time." (*Zeit*, 09.07.15).

This excerpt from von Trotha's order is quoted multiple times in my German sample. Lammert's use and interpretation of von Trotha's quote highlights an interesting contradiction that lies beneath the surface of all German and Namibian reporting. On the one hand, the quote above makes the description of the Herero and Nama genocide appear a result of the intention of von Trotha. On the other hand, Lammert explicitly links this description of von Trotha to "the general slogan of the time." Lammert's guest article is also entitled "*Deutsche ohne Gnade*," or "Germans without mercy," furthering the connection between von Trotha's statement and a description of German actions (*Zeit*,

09.07.15). The reliance on von Trotha to justify the genocide stands in tension with the interpretation of the genocide as a general outcome of colonial expansion and violence.

This tension is normalized through the colonial knowledge structures described above, whereby the Herero and Nama are shown as largely passive and speechless victims, as becomes clear in the anonymized violence that Lammert describes in his guest article:

> "Tens of thousands of Herero and Nama fell victim not only to fighting but also to disease and targeted killings through starvation and thirst, while others died in concentration camps or in forced labor. In the end, the survivors were completely dispossessed. They lost their land and their herds and thus their livelihood." (*Zeit*, 09.07.15)

This is the last time that Lammert's guest article focuses in-depth on the historical moments of 1904–1908, moving on after this point to discuss the recognition of the genocide, noting:

> "Measured by today's standards of international law – according to which the crime of genocide is committed if there is an intention to 'destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such' – the suppression of the Herero uprising was genocide." (*Zeit*, 09.07.15)

As this quote indicates, von Trotha's order is typically used in reporting to indicate genocidal intent. This emphasis on intent has been critiqued by Häussler (2018, p. 15), who writes that this has often reduced the events of 1904–1908 to a single moment in 1904 rather than the events, decisions and individuals that propelled the genocide forward. Interestingly, von Trotha's order against the Nama, which was issued in 1905 (Zimmerer, 2016b, p. 54), is almost never mentioned in my German or Namibian sample.

In both German and Namibian journalism, quoting von Trotha's order is often shown as the cause for mass death among the Herero and Nama genocide. This is particularly pronounced in Namibian journalism, where articles typically only include one or two sentences on the history of the genocide. This historical background, however, almost always includes references to von Trotha: "Determined to crush the rebellion, General Lothar von Trotha signed a notorious 'extermination order' that would lead to the deaths of some 60 000 Herero and 10 000 Nama people." (*Namibian*, 30.03.18). As this example indicates, English-language journalism almost never quotes from the original order. This is not merely a function of short news reports but is even found in long reprints from newspapers like the *New York Times*: "[A] German general, Lothar von Trotha, issued an extermination order for the Herero [….] Within three-and-a-half years, four fifths of the Herero […] were dead." (*Namibian*, 14.09.18) As the original order was written in German, the lack of direct quotes from the order could again reflect structural inequalities in the production of knowledge. Nevertheless, this also means that von Trotha's order often functions as a stand-in for genocide.

Especially in Namibian reporting, the Herero and Nama genocide has become inextricably intertwined with von Trotha's order, which is the primary commemorative event for the genocide in reporting. October 2 is suggested as an official date for Genocide

Remembrance Day: "[OTA secretary general Mutjinde] Katjiua explained that they suggested 2 October, as this was the day the Germans proclaimed the extermination order, which led to the first genocide globally of the 20th century" (*New Era*, 13.02.20). Additionally, in 2015, Herero Paramount Chief Vekuii Rukoro named October 2 as a deadline for the German government to respond to his reparations demands, as noted in an opinion piece by Kae Maṯundu-Tjiparuro in *New Era*:

> "October 2 is the day when Imperial Germany's chief henchman in the then Deutsche Südwest-Afrika, General Lothar von Trotha, issued the infamous order for the extermination of the Ovaherero. This October, the extermination order turns 111 years. By then Rukoro would like to have seen Germany having come to some seriousness in terms of dialoguing with the Ovaherero, Ovambanderu and Nama on the vexed question of Germany's historical and moral responsibility" (*New Era*, 16.01.16).

Here, the journalist's inclusion of the temporal indicator "111 years" adds emphasis to present demands (Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2014). Furthermore, the reference to von Trotha as a "chief henchman" highlights his personal responsibility for the genocide, making him the centerpiece for connecting the genocide with reparations demands. In one opinion piece, Joshua Kaumbi, a member of the Zeraeua Royal House, even notes that von Trotha's order is "[t]he raison d'être for our [reparations] case" (*Namibian*, 16.02.18).

This personalization of Lothar von Trotha in the construction of the Herero and Nama genocide is shown in descriptions throughout my Namibian sample, from "genocide general" (*Namibian Sun*, 26.11.21) to "the cruel general" (*Namibian*, 29.06.18). Similar strategies of personalization are also found in German-language journalism. However, in German-language journalism, the focus on von Trotha also functions to produce distance between the past and the present by characterizing von Trotha as ridiculous from the perspective of the present audience.

One example of this is found in a 2016 *Spiegel* article entitled "Certain uncertainties" that cast doubt on the assessment of the colonial war as genocide (cf. chapter 6.2.3). In this article, Africa correspondent Bartholomäus Grill writes that many German historians use von Trotha's order to justify the interpretation of genocide. Next, Grill repeats the explanations for genocide found in multiple examples above, emphasizing the exploitation and "rebellion" of the Herero and Nama (*Spiegel*, 11.06.16). Then, Grill shifts to describing Lothar von Trotha:

> "The comparatively moderate governor Theodor Leutwein is removed from his position as commander of the *Schutztruppe* and replaced by Lothar von Trotha, a staunch iron-eater [*Eisenfresser*] who had already proven his brutality in suppressing uprisings in China and German East Africa. The lieutenant general leaves no room for doubt about his mission: 'I believe that the nation [of the Herero, B.G.] as such must be destroyed.'" (*Spiegel*, 11.06.16)

Lothar von Trotha is contrasted with Leutwein, the "comparatively moderate governor," and is shown as an "iron-eater," repeating the symbolism of iron to symbolize German

military prowess (cf. chapter 7.1.1). Later, Grill writes, " [Von Trotha] was the prototype of a Prussian military man; in the officer corps he was considered power-hungry, unforgiving and cold-hearted." (*Spiegel*, 11.06.16) Von Trotha is shown almost ironically as an "iron-eater," somebody who is condemned for his cold heart but simultaneously is shown as an aberration rather than as a stereotypical German colonial individual at that time.

Grill's article is relatively untypical in my sample for its assertion that the events of 1904–1908 did not constitute genocide: "The bloodthirsty military leader was obsessed with the delusional idea of a race war against the 'Negroes'[3]; he clearly harbored genocidal intentions. But the accusation that the Reich government carried out a genocidal plan under his direction cannot be substantiated either." (*Spiegel*, 11.06.16) These arguments are also found in the *AZ*, specifically in readers' letters to the editor or feature stories written by guest authors (cf. *AZ*, 30.10.15).

Even though almost every other article in my German sample rejects this claim, guest authors interestingly often rely on similar quotes and characterizations by colonial sources to make the opposite argument that the events of 1904–1908 were genocide. One typical example of this is found in a full-page article in the *Zeit*'s "history" section guest-written by the Hessian history teacher Steffen Wenig. The article is entitled "Colonel, do you condone these atrocities?" ("*Herr Oberst, billigen Sie diese Abscheulichkeiten?*") (*Zeit*, 24.06.21). Although the article was published a few weeks after the announcement of the joint declaration between Germany and Namibia, the agreement is not mentioned. Instead, the article is ostensibly about the question of whether the events of 1904–1908 will be recognized as genocide, beginning with the question, "Was it a genocide? Yes, says the overwhelming majority of historians." (*Zeit*, 24.06.21) The article then continues: "A look at the sources shows that […] there was by no means a consensus about the ruthless intervention [in GSWA]." (*Zeit*, 24.06.21) The article produces a connection between past and present by showing that, even at the time, the events of 1904–1908 were condemned. This structures the entire discussion on the genocide through the perspective of German colonial sources. A typical example of this is found in a key dialogue between Colonel Berthold von Deimling, a commander of the German colonial forces in GSWA, and Georg Lebedour, a Social Democratic politician:

> "Colonel Berthold von Deimling, a participant in the colonial war who had just been knighted for his 'services' in German South West Africa, defended himself by accusing the Herero of chopping off the hands and feet of German soldiers. 'Should we have made war against such bestial, cruel, treacherous foes with kid gloves?' […] Ledebour later replied, 'But does that justify our waging war in the same way? […] Do German soldiers act like that […], Colonel?'" (*Zeit*, 24.06.21)

In this exchange, Ledebour does not challenge the critique of the Herero as "bestial, cruel, treacherous foes" but instead asks whether "German soldiers act like that." This argument states that German soldiers should not act "in the same way" as Herero and Nama fighters, continuing a binary distinction between the colonizers and the colonized. While the

3 At this point, the author uses a derogatory German colonial term ("*Neger*").

author includes these arguments to show that the genocide was known at the time, it nevertheless limits the available perspectives on the genocide to exclusively German participants. Similar examples can be found in other *Zeit* "history" articles about the genocide at this time (cf. *Zeit*, 14.10.21).

Another example of this strategy is found in a *FAZ* article written in 2016 by the political journalist Peter Sturm (cf. chapter 7.1.1). In contrast with the *Zeit* article above that was published in the "history" section, this article is published in the "politics" section. Nevertheless, it focuses almost exclusively on the historical events of the genocide – through the perspective of German colonizers:

> "The files of the colony's Evangelical Lutheran Church contain an admission of the reasons for the uprising: 'The truth is that the fuel for the uprising in 1904 was laid by those whites [*solchen Weißen*] who, conscious of their master status [*Herrenmenschentum*], felt they could trample the sense of justice among the Herero.'" (*FAZ*, 24.06.16)

As with the *Zeit* article above, the author relies on colonial source material to condemn the actions of "those whites" who have abused the Herero. In this way, the article produces a distinction between perpetrators and the wider population without having to question the broader colonial system that continues to portray the Herero underneath the power of the colonial "masters."

A final example of the condemnation and resulting personalization of the genocide around certain colonial actors and groups can be found in the contrast that is produced between Kaiser Wilhelm II. and Otto von Bismarck in German newspapers. The characterization of the Kaiser mirrors some of the patterns seen for Lothar von Trotha above, showing him as both a failure as well as the cause for colonial violence, as noted in an *SZ* article in the "history" rubric: "Under the confused ["*verpeilt*"] and nationalistic Kaiser Wilhelm II., naval construction and colonies were intended to secure the 'place in the sun' for the empire – but most of these pursuits were a losing business." (*SZ*, 23.01.21) This economic measure of success is often used to contrast the Kaiser with his chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, as became clear in the guest article by Norbert Lammert from the beginning of this chapter: "One of the great failures of [Bismarck's] chancellorship was that he did not decisively oppose the influential colonial lobby, the imperial aspirations of the young Wilhelm II." (*Zeit*, 09.07.15). This juxtaposition between the Kaiser and Bismarck has become less pronounced in recent years, especially in the wake of the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests, when multiple articles reported on the potential removal of a Bismarck statue in Hamburg. A *Spiegel* article in the cultural rubric entitled "Must Bismarck fall?" typifies this shift: "Bismarck gave in for domestic political reasons and led Germany into a colonial adventure that ultimately led to a genocidal war against the Herero and Nama under Kaiser Wilhelm II." (*Spiegel*, 20.06.20) However, here again, Bismarck is shown as giving in "for domestic political reasons," acting against his better judgment.

The examples above center on the journalist and audience identifying the motives of perpetrators through the perpetrators' own words. In this sense, Lothar von Trotha remains a transnational figure whose order against the Herero remains at the center of both German and Namibian historical explanations of the genocide. While this focus on von Trotha may be necessary to establish the intentionality of genocide, it contin-

ues to personalize and individualize the genocide around key German decision-makers. In German journalism, the perspectives of German colonial soldiers are not only used to describe but also to criticize the actions of Lothar von Trotha, specifically his mode of leading war against the Herero and Nama. The reliance on German colonial soldiers to show "both sides" (Tuchman, 1972, p. 665) of the historical genocide enables German journalists to disconnect past perpetrators from the wider German collective.

These results add nuance to A. Assmann's (2018b, pp. 171–173) idea of "externalization" as a strategy of forgetting: The individualization of past actions enables individuals to be condemned without implicating the wider collective. However, the example of the Herero and Nama genocide shows that externalization always requires a presumption of aberration. In colonial contexts, this is normalized through structural epistemic injustice in the archiving of source material (cf. chapter 2) as well as specificities in the definition of genocide, which become especially clear when considering that von Trotha is at the center of both German and Namibian journalism. Especially in German journalism, the reliance on colonial source material to criticize characters like von Trotha simultaneously enables continuity between past critics and the current collective. Whereas this continuity is mainly implicit in German journalism, it becomes especially visible in the German-language Namibian newspaper *AZ*. In the following, I explore this coverage to show how the mnemonic strategy of personalization in journalism can also lead to victimization.

Victimization through witness accounts in the AZ

Rather than relying primarily on German colonial officers, the *AZ* is the only newspaper in my sample that provides in-depth witness accounts from German settlers during colonialism. These witness accounts are part of books that the newspaper reprints in installments, typically in the paper's weekend inlay (cf. chapter 6.1.3). The books are reprinted with almost no journalistic contextualization beyond a note on the book's publisher. However, they provide an insight into sources not found elsewhere in my sample, including personal documents and images. The lack of journalistic contextualization for these reprints assumes that much of the context in which these settler accounts arise is already known to the audience and thus requires no further explication, highlighting the unique position of the *AZ* in my sample as a medium for the German-speaking community in Namibia.

In the following, I focus on two serial accounts published in the *AZ* in 2020 and 2015, which bookend the time frame of my analysis. The first series is "Hans Warncke, alias 'Hans *Waffenschmied* [armorer],' from Windhoek and Hamakari," based on a book entitled "*Briefe*," or "Letters," that was published by the Namibia Scientific Society in Windhoek. Each week, the newspaper chronicles Warncke's challenges in the colony as a merchant. The *AZ* graphically highlights these full-page reprints, for instance by putting the greeting ("*Lieber Hans*") and ending of each letter ("*Euer Sohn Hans*") in cursive font. This performatively indicates that these reprints are primary documents while also separating them from regular journalistic coverage.

In these letters, the colonial war is shown impacting Warncke's life by literally ending it. The final letter in the series is not written by Warncke but by a local priest to Warncke's father. The letter states:

> "About six or seven days before the disaster I saw your son at the Wecke & Voigts store. He had come to Waterberg with a cart to buy goods in the shop, since the Hereros had completely bought his stock. […] The only thing I learned from a Herero about the death of your son was that he was killed and buried by Hereros. […] The walls of his house were still standing, but the roof had been torn down and the windows and doors taken away." (*AZ*, 25.03.20)

Complementing this letter is a historical image of a damaged house, with German colonial soldiers standing in the open doorways and windows. The source of this image is the "Warnke archive," spelled differently than the name of the main character of the article, yet presumably coming from the same source as the letters (*AZ*, 25.03.20).

In this letter, colonial source material is reproduced to construct the colonial war as a "disaster" – however, this disaster does not impact the Herero but rather results in the death of a German settler. Interestingly, the letter also explicitly notes that the priest is informed of Warncke's death by a Herero. The Herero becomes the informant for the priest, a rare example of an interaction between colonial settlers and indigenous groups beyond anonymous violence. This reflects a common pattern, namely that German witness accounts in the *AZ* often show Herero actors with the most individual agency in my German-speaking sample. Nevertheless, the perspective recounting this interaction is clearly that of a German colonial settler. The colonial structures that led Warncke to the colony are the backdrop and not the subject of the text – both for the letter writer and for the *AZ*, which provides no further context. In this way, the colonial war is constructed as a seemingly random act of violence by anonymous Herero groups against a single German settler, murdered apparently without cause. The focus on an individual person enables this pain to be personal, and the reader is placed in the position of a father finding out about his son's death.

The second series printed by the *AZ* takes this strategy one step further by describing fighting during the colonial war through the perspective of German colonial soldiers. Printed over the course of 2015, this series is based on a book entitled "Driven away from beloved earth" ("*Vertrieben von geliebter Erde*") that was published by the Gondwana Collection Namibia, a company involved with the tourism industry[4] in Namibia (*AZ*, 14.08.15). The book tells the story of two brothers, Alfons and Stephan Schandel, as they arrive in the colony as soldiers, acquire land after the colonial war and genocide, and later lose this land in the aftermath of the First World War. Already in the title, "Driven away from beloved earth," German settlers are shown as victims of British expropriation, while their claims to land and settlement in the colony are normalized and become the basis through which the past is interpreted (*AZ*, 14.08.15).

This interpretation continues through the reprinted segments that focus on the colonial war under the subtitle "Years of Nama guerrilla warfare" (*AZ*, 14.08.15, 21.08.15). Already in this title, the blame for the war is placed at the feet of the Nama. Even though these reprinted segments describe fighting, they continue to characterize the Schandel brothers as weak and harmless, as in the following quote: "In the evenings, Alfons sinks

4 The role of tourism in shaping journalistic memory production will be described in more detail in chapter 8.2.2.

exhausted onto his hard resting place. […] Now he lies here, looking more like a butterfly than a shield-wielding warrior." (*AZ*, 14.08.15) The description of Alfons "like a butterfly" uses the figurative language of an innocuous animal to juxtapose the characterization of him as a "shield-wielding warrior." This is a stark contrast to the animal descriptions used for indigenous actors in colonial sources (cf. chapter 7.1.1). The description of Alfons is further amplified through a dichotomization that emphasizes Nama military prowess: "The enemy [Nama under Jakob Marengo, C.H.] may lurk around every bend. It is true that Marengo's men […] are […] somewhere in the Great Karas Mountains. But the agile Nama cover this distance in one night" (*AZ*, 21.08.15). By retelling the past through the perspective of German colonizers, the Nama are shown as threats to Alfons, thereby normalizing his fear in the retelling of the past.

As the examples above show, the Herero and Nama genocide is never named within these reprints, even though they often mention the colonial war and describe the events of 1904–1908. These reprinted stories seemingly tell stories of settler hardship without explicitly being connected to the genocide, which is being debated in the political sections of the newspaper. In my master's thesis (Haritos, 2019, p. 36), I connected strategies of victimization in the *AZ* with the concept of "offsetting" ("*Aufrechnen*") by A. Assmann (2018b, p. 170), where perpetrators take refuge in a memory of victimhood by noting their own casualties (cf. Lim, 2010). However, the more recent examples here slightly refute this idea, as Herero and Nama victims are no longer mentioned at all. Instead, by constructing the past through the perspective of German settlers, the focus remains entirely on German victims of almost anonymous violence. This is victimization not through the comparison with other victims, but rather through the absence of other victims.

While these mnemonic practices are relatively unique to the *AZ*, there are traces of these strategies in German journalism, especially when German-speaking Namibians are asked to introduce themselves. For instance, in a *taz* article that covers land reform in Namibia, a German-speaking Namibian farm owner is characterized with the words:

> "Johann Vaatz learned from his father that you can lose everything in life […]. When his parents bought a farm in Namibia in the 1940s, his family had already undergone land reform. During the October Revolution in 1917, communists expropriated his father's family – Black Sea Germans who had farmed in Ukraine for several generations. […] Johann Vaatz's parents bought the Düsternbrook farm, around 45 minutes by car from Windhoek, during the Second World War as security. They were afraid that the South African administration would freeze their money in the bank. Vaatz's father was interned by the South African regime like many other Namibians of German descent and only returned from the camp after six years." (*taz*, 16.11.19)

As in the reprint of "Driven away from beloved earth" (*AZ*, 21.08.15), Vaatz here focuses on expropriation and even describes the purchase of the farm Düsternbrook, which his family still owns, as a reaction to feared reprisals by British authorities during the First World War. Vaatz here draws on a cultural memory of expropriation in the former Soviet Union that might be comprehensible to a German audience. This *taz* example shows how victimization can travel from the past to the present description of the German-speaking Namibian community, even though this connection often remains implicit in the *AZ*. The

position of the present German-speaking community in journalistic reparations debates will be discussed in more detail in chapter 8.2. For now, I want to consider how the power structures that have become clear in the previous chapters are maintained or challenged in Namibian journalism, which contains some of the only witness accounts by genocide survivors.

Genocide survivors in English-language Namibian journalism

So far, this chapter has focused almost exclusively on German-language journalism, repeating some of the power structures that are also echoed in my material: German-language newspapers have access to German historical sources, and they also have the most in-depth historical descriptions of the events of 1904–1908. However, I now want to explore a few untypical examples in Namibian journalism that explicitly retell stories of genocide survivors, typically in historical articles. Given the dominance of German colonial perspectives in describing the genocide in Namibian news reports and opinion sections, these untypical examples can showcase how these power structures are maintained or challenged where journalists have more space to write about the past.

As has been described in chapter 2.2, one of the only documents that describes the events of 1904–1908 through the perspective of indigenous witnesses is the Blue Book, which was compiled by British colonial authorities after the First World War to legitimize British claims to GSWA. Interestingly, in my sample, neither German nor Namibian journalism ever extensively quotes from this document, with one exception in *New Era*:

> "'On one occasion, I saw about 25 prisoners placed in a small enclosure of thorn bushes. They were confined in a very small space, and the soldiers cut dry branches and piled dry logs all around the men, women and children, and little girls were there when dry branches had been thickly piled up all around them: the soldiers threw branches also on top of them. The prisoners were all alive and unwounded but half starved. Having piled up the branches, lamp oil was sprinkled on the heap and it was set on fire. The prisoners were burnt to a cinder.' Witness account by Hendrik Fraser, a Baster[5]" (*New Era*, 16.01.16).

This quote is rendered in first-person pronouns, inviting the reader to directly become a witness to the observed violence. Rather than focusing on violence through weapons, as is often the case in accounts by German colonizers, this scene is very personal and describes direct, almost intimate violence by German soldiers towards a small group of individuals. The special emphasis on the fact that "little girls were there" demonstrates the innocence of the victims. However, this entire scene is remarkably quiet: There is no interaction between these figures, and the murder perpetrated by the German colonizers appears strangely motiveless. It functions as an example of brutality, and no further explanation for this event is provided in the article. Instead, the article then pivots to the question of reparations and the various battles that the Herero and Nama communities fought against the Germans, providing no resolution to this question or further expansion of this quote.

5 An ethnic group in Namibia.

This is typical for indigenous witness accounts of the genocide, where individual acts of colonial violence are frequently emphasized. This pattern becomes particularly clear in two large historical articles in *The Namibian* that focus on two women: Jahohora Petronella, also known as Mama Penee, a survivor of the 1904–1908 genocide, and Ouma /Usen, also known as Verona von François, a granddaughter of Curt von François, the governor of South West Africa from 1890 to 1895. The fact that these articles center exclusively on women offers an interesting shift in perspective compared to the pieces on male colonial soldiers and settlers in the previous chapters. Both articles expressly describe women surviving and thriving, and neither article has in-depth descriptions of brutality, death or loss. However, both articles do not include direct quotes by the women at the center of the article but are rather told through the stories of male relatives in the present. This exemplifies subsequent memorialization in journalism, where relatives explain the motives of individuals who can no longer speak in the present (Zandberg, 2010, p. 16).

The article on Petronella, entitled "Transcending the genocide," highlights the complicated structures behind journalistic memory construction in the absence of living witnesses (*Namibian*, 10.03.20). The article on Petronella's life is a book review classified under the rubric "On the bookshelf" on page eight of the newspaper. The book review is written by Heike Becker, introduced at the end of the article as follows: "Heike Becker teaches social and cultural anthropology at the University of Western Cape (UWC) in South Africa" (*Namibian*, 10.03.20). The role of academic speakership in journalism will be discussed in more detail in chapter 8.3; for now, it is important to note that Becker is a guest author reviewing this book, which is in turn written by Petronella's great-grandson. Yet, this is not all: The great-grandson's book is itself inspired by a previous novel about Petronella written by the U.S.-American author Mari Serebrov. The complicated speaking structures underlying this article show the multiple layers of remediation that have led to this account of the genocide. Whereas the chapters above have often relied on direct quotes from German colonial speakers, indigenous survivors are presented in different discursive structures, with individuals in the present representing and reconstructing Petronella's experience.

In the article, Petronella's experience is not shaped by acts of violence, but rather by her continuous evasion of violence. The article refers repeatedly to "moments of humanity in an entirely inhumane era" (*Namibian*, 10.03.20), as exemplified in this description:

> "In the opening scene [of the book, C.H.], one young German soldier turns to the girl and waves her away from certain death. In a later moment Jahohora, who has been wandering the veld, encounters a German postman who gives her a bottle of life-saving water." (*Namibian*, 10.03.20)

The "girl" in this quote is Jahohora Petronella, who is repeatedly referred to by her first name in the article. The focus on a female child echoes the construction of an "ideal victim" in journalism (Höijer, 2004, p. 513). By "wav[ing] her away from certain death," the German soldier effectively becomes a lifesaver. The brutality of anonymous genocide is softened by personal interactions that are largely positive. In fact, the only act of murder in the article is described as follows:

> "The eleven-year-old girl approached the cave where she and her parents were hiding. A series of loud cracks rang out […]. A line of soldiers was coming towards them. She saw the soldiers lift their rifles and aim at her parents. They fired again and her parents collapsed on the ground. The soldiers cheered. Almost as if she were sleepwalking, the girl went slowly towards the soldiers to embrace the same fate as her parents. As she got closer, she caught the eye of a young German soldier who stood a little apart from the others. Their eyes met, and with an almost indiscernible movement he waved his cap to indicate that she should leave" (*Namibian*, 10.03.20).

This cinematic description reproduces key elements of the book, with the reader and Petronella both taking on the role of a witness to violence occurring against others. From this position, the author suggests that the events above are "true" depictions of what occurred in the past. There is no explanation of whether this scene occurred, whether it was part of an oral memory by Petronella or a reimagination by her great-grandson. Perhaps even more importantly, the reason for why Petronella and her parents are "hiding" in a cave is not explained, nor is the context of the 1904–1908 genocide laid out. The genocide is the backdrop to Petronella's survival rather than an explicit topic of reporting. The murder scene above echoes some of the strategies and patterns also seen with the excerpt from the Blue Book, where violence is both deeply personal and yet strangely motiveless. Petronella is also not shown as portraying any emotion in reaction to her parents' murder. Instead, she is described as "sleepwalking."

Beyond this description, the remainder of the article centers on Petronella's story of survival. As part of this story, the author describes two acts of violence against Petronella. The first is by a colonial woman during her employment for a German farmer:

> "Jahohora suffers deeply humiliating experiences. During the 'civilizing' washing and re-attiring, her ceremonial Herero headgear is cut into pieces and burnt by the farmer's wife. The headgear was her mother's significant gift for her growing daughter just before the start of hostilities in 1904." (*Namibian*, 10.03.20)

It is interesting that the violence against Petronella is perpetrated by a colonial woman who emphasizes purity, "washing" Petronella and destroying her tribal affiliation. The second scene of violence repeats this motif of purity, this time surrounding the topic of rape:

> "In an extraordinary act of courage, she protects herself against rape and 'having children with German men,' a calamity that happened to many other young OvaHerero women during and in the aftermath of the early 20th century colonial war and genocide. […] 'I walked into the veld until I found a lot of nettles which I repeatedly rubbed on my arms and legs. The pain was excruciating but I repeatedly burnt my body until the swellings started to show. […] Not too surprisingly, the German men stayed away from me.'" (*Namibian*, 10.03.20)

The final scene is one of the only times when Petronella's voice is heard from a first-person perspective in the article, suggesting that these are words she has spoken to her great-grandson. The scene above ensures that the sanctity of Petronella's body is maintained

throughout the article. Her role in this article is to witness violence rather than to be a target of this violence.

A similar trajectory is also seen in the *Namibian*'s article on Ouma /Usen, who is the granddaughter of former German colonial governor Curt von François. This article is published on page six of the newspaper in the "national news" section and is written by the freelance journalist Ester Mbathera and the investigative journalist Tutaleni Pinehas. Despite the differences of their discursive positions and the placement of this article in the "news" rubric, it repeats many of the structures seen above.

Before beginning with oral recollections from Ouma /Usen, both journalists contextualize her story with an interesting source: "According to a local travel blog post, [Curt] von François married twice during the five years he spent in Namibia. He married Amalia Gereses, a Damara princess, and had a daughter with her, the blog post says." (*Namibian*, 17.11.21) The reference to a "travel blog post" again illuminates the power relations underlying the construction of the Herero and Nama genocide: A blog for non-Namibian tourists is the only source that journalists use to find in-depth information on this figure. From this perspective, the journalists repeat the blog's interpretation of the relationship between von François and Gereses as based on mutual affinity rather than unequal power distribution.

Nevertheless, this interpretation is irritated later in the article: "Because [their daughter] !Gawaxas was very light of complexion, her mother allegedly used to smear her skin with charcoal to prevent her from being killed by the German authorities." (*Namibian*, 17.11.21) The suggestion that the child !Gawaxas would have been "killed by the German authorities" because she was the product of an interracial relationship belies the idea that von François and Gereses were in an equal partnership. Additionally, von François' massacres against the Nama are briefly mentioned, but they are not further explored in the context of his relationship with this family.

Notwithstanding these brief irritations, the article continues to construct the relationship between von François and Gereses as a legal and happy marriage, with von François' granddaughter Ouma /Usen even shown as expressing her German heritage: "She would address us in German by saying '*Schule macht das Leben süss*' (school makes life sweet),' [her grandchild Hiskia] says. True to her German lineage, Ouma /Usen was an orderly person who followed rules and expected everyone to do the same." (*Namibian*, 17.11.21) Again, the article avoids showing the clear colonial context as a perpetration of violence on an individual woman. Yet, in the construction of the article, this essentially prevents any specific condemnation of German colonial actions.

At first glance, these articles about a Herero and Damara woman suggest that perspectives that had previously been silenced in the discourse are now being heard. However, a closer look at the structure of these articles adds nuance to this interpretation and shows how colonial power relations can continue to shape how these voices become visible to the reader. The articles above invite the readers to become witnesses to events occurring in the colony. In this way, the reader takes on the perspective of figures like Petronella or Ouma /Usen. This differs markedly from how colonial figures such as von Trotha are separated from the imagined present audience through irony or even explicit condemnation (see above). Yet, just as von Trotha is shown as perpetrating violence against an anonymous group, the violence against Petronella and Ouma /Usen is also

surprisingly anonymous or even downplayed. This shapes the speaking structure that the indigenous women have: They can describe, but they cannot speak to or confront the perpetrators of violence. This also contrasts markedly with the witness accounts in the *AZ* described previously. German-speaking settlers show emotions, vulnerability and even pain in ways that historical Herero and Nama figures do not.

The depictions in German-language and English-language Namibian newspapers do not cross over. Nevertheless, what does it mean that figures such as Hans or Alfons are shown as victims, whereas figures such as Petronella are shown as survivors? The examples above show that while figures such as von Trotha are criticized, there is a broad reluctance to critique individual German actors or settlers. This shapes the knowledge about the past that is available: There are almost no examples of in-depth descriptions of the genocidal violence that occurred during 1904–1908. Given this background, the following section provides a brief excursus on the colonial imagery that is used to illustrate many of the articles on the Herero and Nama genocide, which will help to tie together many of the findings of the previous chapters.

7.1.3 Excursus: Journalism's use of colonial photographs

Even though a visual analysis was not part of my CDA, it would be remiss to describe journalism's use of colonial sources without briefly mentioning the imagery that is used to depict the events of 1904–1908 in German and Namibian newspapers, which underline and exemplify the discursive strategies found in the content of articles. The images used to depict the historical events of 1904–1908 are typically staged images shot by colonizers and follow a template that was already described by Bijl (2016, pp. 55–60) in the context of Dutch colonial massacres: Captured Herero and Nama men are shown in chains, usually with armed German colonial soldiers standing or riding behind them. Another frequently used image is a picture of emaciated and half-naked men, women and children, staged by colonial soldiers after reappearing from the Omaheke desert.

New Era and the *AZ* offer a slight divergence to this pattern. In *New Era*, many of the images depicting the genocide are portraits of present-day Herero and Nama traditional authorities, political figures, images from commemorations or meetings, or no images at all. The *AZ* also rarely uses the iconic images of Herero and Nama "prisoners" described above. Especially in articles placed in "history" sections and published in weekend installments, the *AZ* includes unique historical images, often from private archives, that show Herero and Nama individuals going about daily life. Some examples include a photograph of Kaptein Witbooi with his other leading Kapteins carrying weapons (*AZ*, 14.08.15). Other images show Hereros dancing (*AZ*, 03.01.20) or historical portraits of Herero Chief Kambazembi (*AZ*, 21.02.20).

The imagery provided by the *AZ* demonstrates the complexity of journalism's construction of the Herero and Nama genocide that has been described above. In the *AZ*, the choice to not show staged colonial images that portray Herero and Nama in chains can functionally relativize the brutality of the genocide. By contrast, all other newspapers in my sample draw on colonially staged images of Herero and Nama subjugation to demonstrate the brutality of German colonial violence. On the one hand, this reverses the original intention of the photographs, which were meant to show German colonial dom-

ination (Bürger, 2017, pp. 61–62). On the other hand, these images can continue to circulate colonial patterns of re-presenting the Herero and Nama through the dehumanizing positions that they must take on in these staged images. This is amplified when colonial photographs are shown as neutral depictions of the past, with captions such as "German colonial soldiers with imprisoned inhabitants in chains" (*taz*, 29.08.18). In these images, the Herero and Nama are shown exclusively as subjects of German violence. Despite the intentions of the *AZ*, the photographs selected effectively provide insights into Herero and Nama life and agency during colonialism that are absent from all other newspapers. Nevertheless, what unites the use of historical photographs in all newspapers, whether in the *AZ* or elsewhere, is the German colonial gaze behind the camera. These findings thus build on previous work while inviting future research into the use of colonial imagery in journalism.

Taken together, the chapters above show that journalism continues to rely on German colonial source material to re-present the events of 1904–1908. This shapes how the historical participants of the genocide can become visible in the journalistic text: Often, German colonial perspectives are normalized in the description of the genocide as part of broader German colonial expansion or, alternatively, as individual acts of extreme violence. Given this construction of the Herero and Nama genocide as a historical moment in German and Namibian journalism, the following chapter now asks: How does German and Namibian journalism link the Herero and Nama genocide to "other" cultural memories in its reporting? And how do these links produce a connection between the genocide and the present audience? For this, the following chapter begins by focusing on Namibian journalism.

7.2 "The first freedom fighters": Connecting the genocide to the liberation struggle

The following chapter builds on the results of chapter 7.1 to show how colonial terms such as "rebellion" are strategically used in English-language Namibian journalism to connect to the national liberation struggle. Interestingly, this connection is not prominently visible in the *AZ* during my time frame, which reflects the fact that the *AZ* primarily describes the genocide as a historical event retold by German witnesses (cf. chapter 7.1.2) or as a present-day political event, as will be described in more detail in chapter 8. The mnemonic connection to the national liberation struggle thus reflects a different circulation of meaning and negotiation of "cultural citizenship" between journalists and audiences in English-language newspapers (cf. chapter 4.3.2). While the mnemonic connection between the genocide and the liberation struggle reverses some of the power structures above, it nevertheless solidifies some of the results from the previous chapter by reinforcing a national framework of interpretation that builds on colonial silences. To explore this, the following chapter first shows how military terminology is used in English-language Namibian journalism before considering how journalism produces a contested national framework of interpretation through competitive mnemonic connections.

The subversive potential of colonial "uprising"

Previous research has shown that terms such as "uprising" or "rebellion" are used in colonial source material to portray the genocide as a reaction to Herero and Nama violence and to justify the events of 1904–1908 as "normal" colonial warfare, especially in response to criticism by British colonizers (cf. Bürger, 2017; Häussler, 2018). Chapter 7.1 explored how these terms continue to pervade both German and Namibian journalism. However, in Namibian journalism, these terms interestingly also enable distinct connections to the Namibian liberation struggle. One typical example of this link is found in the "opinions" section of the *Namibian Sun*. Entitled "Shark Island is a sacred graveyard," this article is written by Festus Muundjua, a speaker for the Ovaherero Genocide Foundation, and it argues for the preservation of Shark Island as a museum and memorial site (*Namibian Sun*, 01.12.21). In the text, Muundjua describes Shark Island as follows:

> "It was a butchery for the prisoners of war who were brought here to die of starvation and the unforgiving cold weather of the very cold waters of the Southern Atlantic Ocean. After their death, the bodies of some of them, including that of Gaob Cornelius Frederick and a seventeen-month-old Nama girl were decapitated and taken to Germany." (*Namibian Sun*, 01.12.21)

The quote above first describes the inhabitants of Shark Island as "prisoners of war." Yet the very next sentence appears to belie this description, where Muundjua writes that not only a leader of the Nama, Cornelius Fredericks, but also a "seventeen-month-old Nama girl" was decapitated after death (*Namibian Sun*, 01.12.21). Depicting an infant as a "prisoner of war" repeats colonial imaginations of collective punishment, even if that is not the author's intention. The reason for this description of Shark Island as a graveyard becomes clear later in the article, when Muundjua, mentioning the government's ideas to turn Shark Island into a tourism site, notes:

> "Our forebears who shed their blood and sacrificed with their death to stave off German Settler Colonialism could not have done so for the future benefit of a handful of business tycoons who care less or perhaps not even at all about the Nama and Ovaherero genocide but who put their stomachs (economic interests) above their conscience." (*Namibian Sun*, 01.12.21)

Showing the Herero and Nama genocide in militaristic terms ("prisoners of war") helps speakers to connect the events of 1904–1908 to the Namibian liberation struggle ("shed their blood"). Muundjua here uses the idea of the genocide as a fight against "German Settler Colonialism" to legitimize his claims to turn Shark Island into a memorial site that is run by the affected communities rather than "business tycoons." Hence, the connection to militaristic language enables a specific claim to authority that comes through resistance against colonialism.

Depicting the genocide as part of a "brutal conflict" (*Namibian*, 24.05.21) shows the Herero and Nama actively engaging German colonial troops. It also challenges the relationship between the colonizers and the colonized that is often presupposed by colonial source material, especially against the backdrop of the successful Namibian liberation

struggle. This construction of the genocide connects to the idea of "reversed memory" by Neiger et al. (2014, p. 113), which describes the reinterpretation of memory "from the pain of the traumatic past to the victorious present." In the following, I unpack the mnemonic connections underlying this reversal before considering how my results add nuance to this concept.

One of the most common strategies for mnemonic connection in Namibian journalism comes through references to famous military leaders in the genocide and in the liberation struggle. Namibian journalism specifically mentions the Herero Paramount Chief Samuel Maharero, the Mbanderu Chief Kahimemua Nguvauva, and the Nama Kaptein Hendrik Witbooi. The emphasis on Maharero and Witbooi reflects official cultural memory in Namibia, as both men are commemorated in the Heroes' Acre outside Windhoek, and a portrait of Witbooi is even printed onto Namibian dollar bills (Zuern, 2012). However, in contrast with von Trotha (cf. chapter 7.1.2), these leaders are rarely quoted in my sample, and very little information about them is typically provided in articles. This could indicate that journalists presume that their readership already knows enough about these figures.

A typical example of this is found in an opinion column by Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro in *New Era*, entitled "Has [German] Ambassador Hückmann ever conveyed a message to Berlin on the unfinished business?" (*New Era*, 16.01.16) The "unfinished business" that Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro refers to is reparations payments for the Herero and Nama genocide. As has been discussed in chapter 6.1.1, Namibian journalistic reporting on the genocide often focuses on the negotiations for reparations. This question of reparations underpins most mnemonic connections to the liberation struggle, as will be shown below. The article begins by recapitulating the past:

> "Monday, January 12, marked exactly 111 years since Ovaherero Paramount Chief Samuel Maharero declared an outright resistance against the continued occupation of the mother- and fatherland in Okahandja. On this day […] close to 150 of colonial Germany's servicemen succumbed to the battle that ensued against the Herero warriors. […] These outbreaks in Okahandja eventually culminated in many battles fought all over Namibia in 1904. […] All these battles, most of which took place between the years 1903 and 1912 […] preceded in early years by many battles by the indigenes like the Battle of Hoornkrans in April 1893 when Curt von François marched on the Witboois with the intent to destroy them. Later in 1896 there was a joint Ovambanderu and Gei-/Khausan resistance. This was accentuated on June 11, 1896, by the summary execution on trumped-up charges against Ovambanderu Paramount Chief Kahimemua Nguvauva and Nicodemus Kavikuna." (*New Era*, 16.01.16)

In the article, Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro does not describe the battles or military figures in any detail; instead, they function as general examples of Herero resistance against the German colonial forces. However, this description of the genocide as a series of battles extends the temporal boundaries of the genocide. For instance, in addition to multiple military incursions during 1904, Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro also lists "Otjunda (May 1896)" and earlier in the article mentions "Hoornkrans," which occurred in 1893. This is not an outlier in Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro's article but is rather typical of Namibian coverage, which often

mentions battles that did not occur between 1904 and 1908 to describe the genocide, especially Hornkranz[6].

What defines the genocide, then, is a general act of opposition against German colonial forces, which becomes possible through terminology such as "rebellion." In this vein, articles typically emphasize the genocide's uniqueness through its temporal primacy as one of the first resistance struggles in Namibia. In his opinion article, Matundu-Tjiparuro repeats this argument by writing, "These are battles which laid the foundation for the latter-day liberation struggle," showing the genocide as a precursor and template for the later independence war against South Africa (*New Era*, 16.01.16). Another example is found in a *Namibian* article entitled "Schools must teach about genocide" (*Namibian*, 09.04.19). In the article, Namibian education minister Katrina Hanse-Himarwa argues for teaching the Herero and Nama genocide in schools and is quoted with the words:

> "The Namibian genocide is regarded as the first in the 20th century. It marks a significant chapter in the early resistance struggle. It crafted the way for the resistance struggle of Namibia and therefore can be considered as the moulding puzzle [piece, C.H.] in the complete history of Namibia's total liberation." (*Namibian*, 09.04.19)

Referring to the events of 1904–1908 as "the Namibian genocide" places the events of 1904–1908 into a national framework that eliminates the need to mention specific tribal groups such as the Herero and Nama. This shows the fundamental irritation underlying this mnemonic connection of the genocide to the Namibian liberation struggle. If the genocide is a general act of resistance that can extend beyond 1904–1908, what makes this experience specific to the Herero and Nama communities?

Hence, connections to the liberation struggle, while often necessary to show Herero and Nama figures actively fighting German colonialism, can simultaneously blur the specificity of the genocide in ways that are strategically utilized by Namibian government speakers in articles. One example of this is found in a two-page *Namibian Sun* interview with the chief negotiator of the Namibian government, Zedekia Ngavirue, entitled "Mapping the road to reparations" (*Namibian Sun*, 19.05.16). In the interview, journalist Joseph Gordon asks Ngavirue, "The term 'affected communities' remains contentious. Who would you describe as the affected communities?" (*Namibian Sun*, 19.05.16) Ngavirue responds:

> "Well, the affected communities, that's a broad definition. This is a case of genocide; the people who were targeted were the OvaHerero and the Nama. But we are also aware that there were other communities that suffered – the Damara and San. Some were collateral damage, but they also ended up suffering. We also know that because of the friendship that existed, especially between the OvaHerero and Ondonga people, that King Nehale sent 500 forces when they attacked." (*Namibian Sun*, 19.05.16)

6 There are multiple spellings for Hornkranz (Hoornkrans, Hoornkranz, Hornkranz) in English-language Namibian journalism. In keeping with the research literature, for instance in Kößler (2010, p. 239) or Silvester and Gewald (2010, p. xxv), I use the spelling "Hornkranz."

Ngavirue's answer shows how the construction of the genocide as part of a broader pattern of German colonial violence and fighting extends the boundaries of the "affected communities" who can claim reparations for the events of 1904–1908. Moreover, this construction helps to legitimize Ngavirue's discursive authority as a representative of the national Namibian government negotiating with Germany over reparations.

The "true" liberation struggle

As shown above, connections to the liberation struggle are not only made by government speakers seeking to legitimize SWAPO's claim to power but also by Herero and Nama speakers to legitimize their claims. Previous research has shown that the construction of the genocide as anti-colonial resistance must be understood in connection with the liberation struggle in Namibian memory culture, which has become central in legitimizing SWAPO's consistent hold on power in post-independence Namibia (Becker, 2011; Zuern, 2012). To become part of cultural memory in Namibia, speakers must reference the liberation struggle, adhering to its central values if not its current representatives. However, this also reflects the necessity and propensity of journalism to describe and construct the past in national terms. Connecting to this cultural memory enables Namibian journalists to quickly describe the relevance of the genocide for an audience not primarily comprised of Herero, Nama or Mbanderu readers. Interestingly, this means that even if speakers are making claims for tribal authority or reparative exclusivity, they must nevertheless adhere to national frameworks of meaning-making to make this claim in journalism.

Two opinion pieces highlight this tension. These texts were published in the *Namibian* and *New Era* on June 16, 2017, following the death of a prominent liberation fighter, Andimba Toivo ya Toivo. While both articles are ostensibly commemorative pieces, they only focus briefly on Toivo ya Toivo's death and instead provide conflicting interpretations on who is a "true" representative of liberation values in the present. The first article on the former activist and politician Andimba Toivo ya Toivo's death is written by the presidential press secretary, Alfredo Hengari. The article is entitled "Thinking about a nation with Toivo" (*Namibian*, 16.06.17), immediately presupposing a national framework of commemoration. Hengari writes:

> "The first genocide and holocaust[7] of the 20th century was minted here in our land during that phase of primary resistance. Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, Sam Nujoma, with the latter under the tutelage of chief Hosea Kutako, […] were to lead the second phase for the emancipation of our people." (*Namibian*, 16.06.17)

Toivo ya Toivo is connected to the genocide through his role in the "second phase" of "the emancipation of our people." The personal pronoun "our" in this context suggests a national collective of Namibians in which experiences such as the 1904–1908 genocide are made meaningful. In addition, Hengari's choice of the verb "disinfect" suggests that questions of "what is in it for me," a reference to demands of exclusive reparations,

7 In the quote, this word is not capitalized, suggesting that this term is used here to refer to mass death and destruction more generally rather than the Holocaust specifically. See chapter 7.4 for a more in-depth description of discursive connections to the Holocaust.

sully the idea of national harmony and go against the will of previous liberation struggles (*Namibian*, 16.06.17). In this way, the Herero and Nama are accused of tribalism and of being a threat to the post-colonial nation (cf. Mamdani, 1996). Toivo ya Toivo's death is thereby effectively used in this opinion article to draw a commemorative line from the Herero and Nama genocide to the present and to suggest that criticism against the Namibian government goes against the spirit of liberation embodied by the Herero and Nama genocide.

Hengari continues: "The genocide of 1904–08, Omugulugwombashe[8], and what the Geingob Presidency represents in firming up the foundations of a people united in diversity should disinfect our national conversation of the philistine politics of 'what is in it for me.'" (*Namibian*, 16.06.17) Again, Hengari does not mention the Herero and Nama but instead merely writes of the "genocide of 1904–08." In this quote, Hengari draws a line from the Herero and Nama genocide through the liberation struggle against South Africa to the presidency of Hage Geingob. This serves to legitimize the nation's president as an embodiment of the ideals of liberation, which are rooted in "a people united in diversity." Hengari later drives this message home by writing, "The battles of Hamakari and Omugulugwombashe as plural moments in our history ought not to divide but harness the soul and principle of one nation." (*Namibian*, 16.06.17)

An opinion article published the same day by *New Era* makes the same mnemonic connection but reaches a quite different conclusion. This piece, authored by Kae Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro, is entitled "Homage to Ya Toivo superficial without serious soul searching" (*New Era*, 16.06.17). As with the *Namibian* article, this opinion article in *New Era* begins by listing Toivo ya Toivo's contributions to the liberation struggle, emphasizing the time he spent on Robben Island in South Africa. Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro then makes a discursive connection to the Battle of Otjunda:

> "Ya Toivo died three days before the 121st commemoration of the political execution of erstwhile paramount chief of the Ovambanderu, Kahimemua Nguvauva. […] He was executed exactly 121 years ago this Monday in Okahandja, together with another stalwart in the resistance against German colonialism, Nikodemus Kambahahiza Kavikuna after the Battle of Otjunda on May 6, 1896, in which a German by the name of Lampe was killed." (*New Era*, 16.06.17)

Here, Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro ties the death of Toivo ya Toivo with the deaths of Nguvauva and Kavikuna by constructing them as "stalwart[s] in the resistance" against colonialism and mentioning the time that has elapsed since both men's deaths. The naming of the German killed in Otjunda is an interesting detail that reflects the source material documenting the Battle of Otjunda (cf. chapter 7.1).

The purpose of the discursive connection between Nguvauva and Toivo ya Toivo becomes clear later in the article, when Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro writes:

8 Omugulugwombashe was the first battle fought in the liberation war with South Africa. This battle is also spelled multiple different ways in my sample; when put in my own words, I will rely on the spelling most often used in my sample (Omugulugwombashe).

> "But it is futile for Namibians to pay tributes to the likes of Nguvauva and Ya Toivo if we cannot emulate their heroism. […] If one thinks of the rampant looting of national wealth, it is a sad reminder of the decadence in which the country has slowly been regressing and deteriorating while the national coffers have been looted empty in broad daylight" (*New Era*, 16.06.17).

In this quote, references to "Namibians" and the personal pronoun "we" again reflect a national framework of memory production, as in the *Namibian* article above. Rather than refuting the government's interpretation of the national liberation struggle, Maṯundu-Tjiparuro instead uses the connection between the genocide and Toivo ya Toivo's death to suggest that the current government is not living up to the ideals of liberation that were espoused by Nguvauva and Toivo ya Toivo. He roots this criticism in the way "national coffers have been looted" and "the country has slowly been regressing." Later, he writes, "The irony is that these very same looters are jumping on the bandwagon in paying homage to icons, like Ya Toivo. How dishonest! And most disturbing, those responsible will never be brought to book." (*New Era*, 16.06.17) *New Era*'s publishing of a critical article compared to the article published in the *Namibian* is especially interesting given the government ownership of *New Era* (cf. chapter 5.2.3).

This construction, which accepts the general interpretation of the Herero and Nama genocide as a precursor to the liberation struggle while suggesting that the current government does not live up to these ideals, is common throughout my sample. It continues to reinforce the boundaries of the un-/sayable: No journalists in my sample ever directly contradict or question the prior memorialization of the national liberation struggle. In an interview with the *Namibian Sun*, a speaker for the Ovaherero Genocide Foundation, Festus Muundjua, is quoted as saying, "Those who say they fought for the liberation of the land are not truthful. They only fought for the hoisting of the flag and jobs for themselves and their kith and kin. The people who fought for the land and lost it through the genocide are the Ovaherero and Nama." (*Namibian Sun*, 09.08.18) This suggests that SWAPO was "not truthful" in its fight for liberation since it fought mainly for self-enrichment.

This dual discursive structure leads to irritations that become particularly visible in the discussion of how to commemorate the Herero and Nama genocide in the present. While there are numerous public holidays in Namibia commemorating the liberation struggle, there was no public holiday to commemorate the genocide during my analysis time. This shows that commemorative coverage not only produces a link between the genocide and the liberation struggle but also often produces or challenges the mnemonic hierarchy between both events.

Commemorating genocide through (or despite) the liberation struggle

An example of this commemorative struggle is found in a comment from *New Era*'s editorial board entitled "Marry Cassinga and genocide into one" (*New Era*, 06.05.16). This article focuses on parliamentary calls for a Genocide Remembrance Day and suggests that genocide remembrance should be incorporated into the already-established Cassinga Day, which commemorates a South African attack on a SWAPO camp in Angola. To make this argument, the editorial team writes:

> "[More] often than not, comparisons are drawn between the infamous Cassinga massacre of 1978 and the four-year genocide wave that scholars of this tragedy say killed about 90000 citizens. The Cassinga attack saw nearly 1000 innocent Namibians being killed within hours of sustained attacks by forces of apartheid South Africa." (*New Era*, 06.05.16)

The suggestion that Cassinga Day is frequently compared to "the four-year genocide wave" is not borne out in my sample. Nevertheless, by establishing this comparison, the *New Era* editorial team effectively suggests that both events are similar. This similarity is premised on the death of Namibians, as the next sentence clarifies: "Cassinga and the German genocide of Namibians have a lot in common, in that innocent citizens whose only demand was sovereignty and self-determination were mercilessly butchered like hunted animals." (*New Era*, 06.05.16) The animal connection here harkens back to discursive patterns discussed in chapter 7.1.1. Even though the number of deaths for both events is explicitly mentioned, the casualty count is not a cause for contrasting both events but rather for showing that both are similar. The victims of the genocide are shown as "citizens" and "Namibians" who are claimed to have demanded "sovereignty and self-determination" in a precursor to the national struggle.

The article continues: "[O]ur history as a nation is littered with other incidents of a brutal nature for which no national days have been declared" (*New Era*, 06.05.16). The use of the word "littered" suggests that the genocide is merely one atrocity among many that clutters the perspective on the Namibian past. The fact that the genocide took place prior to the establishment of the nation irritates this interpretation, furthering the need to incorporate it into existing frameworks rather than emphasizing the experience of certain tribes. The final sentences of the editorial state that "we would promote unity in this country by recognizing the efforts and suffering of all Namibians, instead of creating impressions that the suffering of certain generations are [*sic*] less important and therefore do not deserve special attention." (*New Era*, 06.05.16) The editorial board does not question that memorial holidays such as Cassinga Day or Independence Day have already existed in Namibia for thirty years and that this request requires the Herero and Nama genocide to become an add-on to a pre-established mnemonic framework.

An article refuting this central argument is interestingly found in the German-language Namibian newspaper *AZ*. In a page-long letter to the editor, a representative for the Nama Traditional Leaders' Association, Sima Luipert, criticizes the lack of commemoration for the genocide (*AZ*, 09.10.19). The fact that this critical letter is published in the *AZ* suggests that the German-language newspaper might be a space where Namibian national commemoration can be criticized in a way not seen in other English-language newspapers. This reflects the paper's unique position between a German and a Namibian national context. The letter is translated into German by Christine Kramp, who is identified in the author's note as a representative of the Nama Traditional Leaders' Association in the German city of Heidelberg. The title, "Deafening silence," uses an oxymoron to point out the inconsistency between the government's commemoration of the liberation struggle compared to the Herero and Nama genocide. The letter begins by noting Luipert's emotional response to October 2, the day that the extermination order against the Herero was declared by Lothar von Trotha. She writes:

> "The heinous atrocities that were committed [...] are a bitter pill to swallow. [...] I think what made this day even more painful was the fact that the Namibian nation said nothing. [...] The Namibian nation, led by the Namibian government, would rise on the occasion of Ongulumbashe[9]. The martyrs of the so-called liberation struggle would be called by name and the Namibian people would be called to attention by the nation's Commander-in-Chief. But for the fallen heroes and heroines of the Nama and Herero genocide, there was a deafening silence." (*AZ*, 09.10.19).

Luipert describes the "heinous atrocities" ("*abscheulichen Gräueltaten*") of the genocide through the symbol of a "bitter pill," something that is "painful" but must still be taken for the benefit of the body. In her words, her pain is amplified by the lack of government response, which she directly contrasts to how the nation commemorates Omugulugwombashe. Here, Luipert is arguing for structures of public remembrance like the national commemoration of the liberation struggle. Her article is therefore not a criticism of how Omugulugwombashe is commemorated but an argument that a similar honor should be bestowed on the Herero and Nama genocide.

This points to a fundamental conundrum at the heart of reporting on national and/or community memory in Namibia. Later in the article, Luipert writes, "[B]y denying the Nama and Herero anti-colonial resistance and subsequent genocide, the Namibian government is also denying us our citizenship" (*AZ*, 09.10.19). Luipert draws on "citizenship," even as the personal pronouns here distinguish between the "Namibian government" and "our" rights. In contrast to all the examples above, Luipert's use of the pronoun "our" points towards Nama and Herero communities instead of a Namibian national identity. In the article, she also explicitly calls to "our German brothers and sisters" to support the cause of the Herero and Nama. She writes, "Whether you like it or not, your blood flows in our veins." (*AZ*, 09.10.19) Referring to widespread colonial rape and relationships, Luipert argues that the Germans should join the Nama based on their shared ethnic heritage rather than, for instance, their shared position as Namibian citizens.

In her piece, Luipert explicitly critiques the position of national unity that is often taken for granted in many English-language Namibian newspapers: "Well, One Namibia One Nation is killing us, it is not building us up." (*AZ*, 09.10.19) The phrase "One Namibia One Nation" is one of the slogans that have become ubiquitous with the process of nation-building after the independence struggle. This challenges many of the connections to the liberation struggle seen above: The nation is seen as actively hindering the remembrance of the Herero and Nama genocide. Nevertheless, Luipert still points to national commemorations and critiques the lack of national recognition for the genocide. Even as the national government is frequently viewed separately from or even as an adversary to Herero and Nama interests in the present, the government is still the addressee for and the legitimate format in which these communities aim to position their memorial activities. This also becomes clear in later parts of the article, where Luipert criticizes that some Nama organizations have not been recognized by the Namibian government (*AZ*, 09.10.19).

9 This is an alternative spelling for Omugulugwombashe (see above).

The results above expand the concept of "reversed" memory by Neiger et al. (2014, p. 113): Whereas the Namibian government often shows the traumatic past of the Herero and Nama genocide as "reversed" through the perspective of the "victorious present," many of the Herero and Nama speakers above view the "victorious present" as unsettled, something that must still be achieved in the future (Neiger et al., 2014, p. 113). Whereas different speakers all connect to the liberation struggle, these different temporal frameworks lead to irritation when speakers make the same connection but reach different outcomes. This is a theme that will continue to resonate throughout all remaining chapters. Moreover, the results above add to the prior literature on mnemonic connection, such as "multidirectional memory," through the lens of communication studies (Rothberg, 2009; cf. chapter 3.1.3). Mnemonic connections are used strategically in journalism to (de-)legitimize national and tribal claims to power. Hence, the Herero and Nama genocide is made meaningful in journalism through the connection to a national mnemonic framework, even as this framework simultaneously can eliminate the tribal specificity of the events of 1904–1908 and erode the argument for exclusive reparations.

In connection with the results of chapter 7.1, the results above also point to a conundrum that will continue to be explored in the following chapters: Mnemonic frameworks of colonial violence/resistance and genocidal atrocity are often difficult to connect in journalistic reporting. This tension is not unique to the Herero and Nama genocide. Zelizer (1998, pp. 160–161) has shown that photographs of Holocaust victims directly interacting with and even attacking their former guards have largely been eliminated from the visual canon of the Holocaust. In Namibian journalism, the focus on Herero and Nama resistance is often used to construct the genocide as merely one step in the liberation struggle, not indicating what makes this event a "genocide" beyond the fact that indigenous populations were killed by colonial forces. This structure leaves little space for exploring experiences that do not include acts of fighting, which could also explain the emphasis on survival when indigenous witnesses are portrayed in journalism (cf. chapter 7.1.2).

Whereas the previous chapter has focused on the negotiation of memory between tribal and national contexts in Namibia, the following chapter now explores how this temporal and spatial expansion of the Herero and Nama genocide also becomes visible in German journalism – albeit through a comparative rather than a competitive mnemonic framework.

7.3 "Europe's dark side": Connecting the genocide to European colonialism

The previous chapter 7.2 has shown that Namibian journalism often reverses the power relation at the heart of colonial descriptions of genocide by connecting to the Namibian liberation struggle. The reversal and refutation of prior colonial depictions is also a mnemonic strategy found in German-language journalism. A typical example of this can be found in an *SZ* article entitled "Life-long lies of a colonial power" ("*Lebenslügen einer Kolonialmacht*") (*SZ*, 16.09.21). The article, published on page 11 of the culture section and written by the legal and political correspondent Ronen Steinke, begins with three statements:

> "The first dogma: Germany was always the nice dwarf among the colonial powers, not comparable with countries like France, Belgium or Great Britain. The second dogma: At most, Germany subjugated the Africans in its "protectorates," but it did not brutally destroy them through slavery. The third dogma: Germany – as the world champion of remembrance that it is – has at least compensated the victims of its colonialism more generously than any other nation." (*SZ*, 16.09.21)

By describing these descriptions of German colonialism as "dogmas" ("*Glaubenssätze*") or "life-long lies" ("*Lebenslügen*"), Steinke suggests that these are merely convictions that are not tethered to reality. In this way, the correspondent establishes himself as an authority that will provide objective "truth" about colonialism. Steinke's use of the term "dogmas" also suggests that these statements are commonly known by the present German readership, even as his disparaging description of the statement suggests that both he and the readers recognize that these "dogmas" are no longer accurate. The three statements he outlines all minimize the impact of German colonialism and broadly mirror academic and popular arguments that are often used to explain German "colonial amnesia" (Wolff, 2021, pp. 67–69): German colonialism was overshadowed by its own crimes, particularly in the Second World War, and was relatively small compared with the rest of European imperialism.[10]

Steinke's quote and his outline of "life-long lies" (*SZ*, 16.09.21) point to a conundrum that is at the center of German descriptions of the genocide. On the one hand, the population is shown as fundamentally unknowledgeable about the genocide. On the other hand, there is a broad underlying (revisionist) knowledge about European colonialism that many authors reference to describe the events of 1904–1908. This leads to the question: Given the reliance on German colonial sources described in chapter 7.1, how does German journalism draw on and reject previous cultural memories of colonialism in its reporting? The following chapter answers this question by focusing on the discursive connections that German journalism makes to other colonial memories in its reporting. It shows the ambiguous relationship between journalists emphasizing the genocide's importance in connection with "other" colonial crimes while simultaneously emphasizing its novelty as an event that has been "forgotten" by the audience.

"The fourth largest colonial power"

As in Namibian journalism, German journalism's construction of the Herero and Nama genocide as part of a colonial military incursion provides both opportunities and challenges in delimiting colonial knowledge structures. The first revisionist dogma that Steinke outlines in his article "Living lies of a colonial power" is that Germany was a relatively small colonial power, "not comparable with countries like France, Belgium or Great Britain." He then writes:

> "Germany was the fourth largest colonial power in the 19th century. This means that […] its violations of international law were only surpassed by three other European states.

10 See Haritos (2023) for a more general discussion of how the term "amnesia" has been used in the context of the Herero and Nama genocide to delimit the un-/sayable about German colonialism.

> The brutality of German colonial troops was no milder than anywhere else. There is little reason other than lack of information to say today that German colonialism wasn't that bad." (*SZ*, 16.09.21)

In this statement, Steinke does not refute the assumption at the core of the revisionist "dogma" he outlines, namely, that the cruelty or genocidal capacity of a colonial power is measured by its territorial size. Instead, he uses the same European territorial comparative framework to now emphasize the cruelty of German colonialism ("only surpassed by three other European states"). This comparative framework is clear again when Steinke writes that German colonial violence "was no milder than anywhere else." However, by remaining in this discursive framework, Steinke does not make the claim that German colonial genocide was worse than atrocities committed by other colonial powers; he merely makes the point that they *were not better*. Steinke's conclusion that only a "lack of information" could lead to revisionist interpretations of German colonialism again elevates his discursive position as a disseminator of "facts" contrary to "dogmas." This juxtaposition enables him to present his representation of German colonialism as the "fourth largest colonial power" as an irritation to preconceived notions while maintaining a European perspective in the construction of cultural memory.

The discursive structure described above is found across German newspapers, which mention the size or duration of German colonialism to emphasize its importance in a European framework. Another typical example of this can be found in a *Zeit* article that critiques the Humboldt Forum, published in the cultural rubric by journalist Hanno Rauterberg:

> "To this day, very few Germans know how long and cruel their own colonial history was. It may be that other nations were more domineering and assertive. Many countries also began colonizing earlier than the German Empire, which formally owned its colonies in Africa, Asia and Oceania for only four decades, from 1879 to 1919. But within this short period, the colonists managed to conquer huge areas with surprising fervor." (*Zeit*, 20.08.20)

As with the *SZ* article above, Rauterberg introduces German colonialism by noting that "very few Germans know" about "their own colonial history," positioning himself as a discursive authority that can provide this information. He then notes that German colonialism was a relative latecomer to colonialism with the temporal signifier "for only four decades," noting that "other nations were more domineering." The statement that German colonizers still managed to conquer "huge areas" is then presented as an irritation to the brevity of German colonialism, amplified by the adverb "surprising." Again, Germany is not shown as particularly cruel; the journalistic irritation stems from the fact that Germany is as cruel as other empires.

Kinnebrock (2019, pp. 393–394) has suggested that historical moments that generate surprise and are geographically close to the audience are often selected to be (re-)told in journalism and thus become part of cultural memory. This could explain why many German journalists often begin by outlining "revisionist" facts to then seemingly introduce the Herero and Nama genocide as a "surprise" to prior interpretations of German

colonialism. By purporting to irritate previous boundaries of the un-/sayable, however, German journalists often reinforce these boundaries by reversing rather than refuting the arguments at the core of previous revisionist claims and colonial sources (cf. chapter 7.1). Hence, German colonialism continues to be journalistically constructed through its comparison to other European nations rather than the experiences of formerly colonized individuals. On the one hand, this reflects the geographic position of the German audience, for whom comparisons to England and France are closer than the experiences of individuals in Namibia. Continuing to refer to colonial empires through present nation-states also emphasizes the national boundaries of community through which journalists address their German audiences. On the other hand, in this construction of cultural memory, colonialism continues to be shown as an aberration in German history.

An article in the *SZ* exemplifies this dual construction of German colonialism through juxtaposition. In an opinion article, the *SZ* columnist Heribert Prantl introduces German colonialism with the words:

> "Kaba [a brand of instant hot chocolate, C.H.], or 'the plantation drink,' is much better known than German colonial history. The instant drink dissolves quickly, is very sweet and contains a lot of sugar. This does not apply to German colonial history. It was a long time ago, it didn't last long, but it is very bitter." (*SZ*, 19.06.21)

Prantl contrasts a "sweet" colonial product, which he presumes is "much better known" by his German audience, with the "bitter[ness]" of colonial history, which he presumes is not well-known in Germany. Again, he builds on a contrast between the brevity and the violence of colonialism ("it didn't last long"). In the next paragraph, he then describes what the "bitter[ness]" of German colonialism entails: "Looking back on the colonial era, if anyone in this country looked back on it at all, they thought they were in a better position than the French, Belgians and British. The Mr. Clean image ("*Saubermann-Image*") was wrong." (*SZ*, 19.06.21) Prantl again mentions other European countries against which German colonialism has been compared. He then contrasts this with the statement that the "Mr. Clean image" that Germany apparently has. The symbolic reference to "Mr. Clean" suggests purity through innocence. In this framework, German colonial history becomes bitter and dirty.

The symbolic connection between dirtiness or darkness and colonial history is a common thread throughout my sample, and colonialism is often referred to as "a dark chapter in German history" (*taz*, 03.02.19). Darkness again emphasizes colonialism as an aberration in German history, while the symbolic reference to a "chapter" means that the past can theoretically be closed (Wolff, 2021, p. 245). In addition, darkness is symbolically used to equate the absence of light with an absence of the German audience's knowledge about the genocide – a gap that can then be filled by German journalists. This description of colonialism contrasts markedly with the description in Namibian journalism, where the Herero and Nama genocide is shown in continuity with a larger pattern of anti-colonial resistance. Yet, as with Namibian journalism, the specific identity of the indigenous populations that were exploited and killed by colonizers is often not mentioned or is secondary to the description of German colonialism as part of a broader European project.

European crimes, African victims

A typical example of this obfuscation of genocide victims through comparative mnemonic connection is found in the *SZ* on June 8, 2021, one week after the 2021 joint declaration between the German and Namibian governments. The article is printed in the politics section and written by the newspaper's correspondent for foreign politics, Arne Perras. The article is fittingly entitled "Europe's dark side," immediately producing a mnemonic connection to European colonialism (*SZ*, 08.06.21).

The article begins by constructing colonialism as an aberration of European ideals and norms:

> "Europe. Isn't that the birthplace of the Enlightenment and human rights? […] This Europe also has its dark side. It unfolded where the Europeans became conquerors, where they took land and subjugated other peoples. […] Countless punitive expeditions and massacres, which can be found in almost all colonial areas, from Australia to Asia to Africa to the Caribbean and America, were ignored in Europe for a very long time." (*SZ*, 08.06.21)

Following an established pattern, the author presents colonialism and colonial crimes as a surprise to common knowledge held about Europe, which he presents in a rhetorical question: "Isn't that the birthplace of the Enlightenment […]?" The Enlightenment is then symbolically juxtaposed with darkness: "This Europe also has its dark side". With the word "also," Perras' recognition of Europe's "dark side" does not negate that Europe is the "birthplace of the Enlightenment" but continues to show the "dark side" as an aberration rather than a constitutive element of the Enlightenment.

Perras' construction of Europe's "darkness" as "[c]ountless punitive expeditions and massacres" (*SZ*, 08.06.21) reproduces colonial language that has historically been used to describe the Herero and Nama genocide (cf. chapters 7.1, 7.2). As in Namibian journalism, the Herero and Nama genocide is incorporated into a string of seemingly similar colonial actions that have been committed from "Australia to Asia to Africa to the Caribbean and America" (*SZ*, 08.06.21). This becomes even more clear later in the article, when Perras writes, "Germany left terrible wounds in its short colonial period before the First World War. However, they were not unique to the German Empire, as the historians Robert Gerwarth and Stephan Malinowski have worked out" (*SZ*, 08.06.21). The journalist does not describe the results of Gerwarth and Malinowski's research, even as he draws on them as sources of authority.[11] Perras then goes on to describe Belgium's crimes in the Congo, French atrocities during the Algerian War, Great Britain's suppression of the Mau Mau Revolt in Kenya and slavery in the United States of America. These myriad examples expose the perspective from which the "terrible wounds" of colonialism are described: The only thing that combines the experiences of individuals from "Australia to Asia to Africa to the Caribbean and America" is the fact that the perpetrating colonizer comes from Europe. The experiences of colonial populations are homogenized and simplified to the mere fact of having been a victim of European violence. This is also clear through

11 The transnational position of German academics in journalism's production of cultural memory will be described in more detail in chapter 8.3.

the author's use of the word "Africans" to describe many of the victims of colonial violence (*SZ*, 08.06.21). The continental descriptor for the perpetrators of colonial violence is thus also transferred to the victims.

Constructing colonialism in this way impacts how Germany's reaction to its colonial past, specifically the 2021 joint declaration, is portrayed in the article. The author briefly notes the complaints of Herero and Nama organizations in two paragraphs in the middle of the article. Yet, he then writes, "Whatever the outcome of the dispute, the Namibia case will probably be a signal ["*Signalwirkung*"] for other countries." (*SZ*, 08.06.21) Two paragraphs above this sentence is a large pull quote: "In France, Macron made it clear that there will be no apology because of Algeria" (*SZ*, 08.06.21). Although Perras notes the criticism of the Herero and Nama, both the historical genocide and Germany's current reactions are measured through their connection to other European nations. The perspective from which the Herero and Nama genocide is constructed as a past event ("the fourth largest colonial power") is transferred to describing German actions in the present.

Perras' explicit comparison between France and Germany is found in much of German journalism. This became especially clear after President Emmanuel Macron of France gave a speech in 2017 in Burkina Faso promising restitutions. An example of this can be found in a guest article written by politicians Michelle Müntefering and Monika Grütters, who were responsible for questions of restitution in the German government. In an article entitled "A gap in our memory" that was published in the cultural section (*FAZ*, 15.12.18), the authors make clear whose perspective determines the "gap in our memory":

> "For many decades, colonial history in Europe was a blind spot in the culture of remembrance. […] Now the topic is coming into the public eye – we very much welcome that. […] The speech that French President Emmanuel Macron gave in Burkina Faso in 2017 also contributed to this debate coming to a head." (*FAZ*, 15.12.18)

The construction of colonial history as a "blind spot" that is now coming into the "public eye" builds on conceptualizations of colonial history as dark/light. Just as the experiences of indigenous actors in the past are equated and shown through the perspectives of former colonizers, so do the demands of present-day indigenous actors recede against the comparative actions being taken by other European countries. As the two cultural ministers in the *FAZ* article write, "As part of international culture and education policy, we are pursuing the goal of strengthening cultural cooperation with Africa and promoting cultural exchange and dialogue with African partners." (*FAZ*, 15.12.18) The *SZ* article by Perras written after the 2021 joint declaration follows a similar trajectory:

> "It is probably the fear of far-reaching financial demands that is slowing Europe's willingness to come to terms with colonialism. […] At the same time, you could approach the topic a little differently. […] Rich states in the north would have to practice foregoing wealth to enable others to get out of poverty." (*SZ*, 08.06.21)

Extending the responsibility of colonialism also expands the potential circle of recipients. However, this discursive pattern is not only found through connections to "other" European crimes. Instead, by dissolving the specificity of the Herero and Nama genocide against a backdrop of continental descriptions of colonial violence, many German journalistic articles have also begun to increasingly focus on "other" German colonial crimes in recent years.

In the article "Living lies of a colonial power" (*SZ*, 16.09.21), legal correspondent Steinke provides some of the most in-depth criticism of the reparation negotiations with Namibia (cf. Rausch, 2023b, p. 192). Yet, in the concluding paragraphs of his article, Steinke writes:

> "But Germany is familiar with this tactic. Among the major crimes for which Berlin has not yet paid a cent is the Maji-Maji War, which took place between 1905 and 1907, during which time the German colonial troops in today's Tanzania mainly made the civilian population suffer, around the same time as the genocide in Namibia." (*SZ*, 16.09.21)

By suddenly bringing the Maji Maji War into direct comparison with the "genocide in Namibia," Steinke suddenly argues for reparations for a wide range of crimes committed by the German colonial empire. The critiques of the Herero and Nama are thus not addressed, and instead their specific perspectives suddenly become unnecessary to describing further actions or demands. After all, their experiences are merely one of many "African" experiences. Interestingly, the Maji Maji War is only mentioned in my Namibian sample in reprinted newspaper articles originally written in Western newspapers such as the *New York Times* (*Namibian*, 14.09.18; cf. *Namibian Sun*, 03.03.17). In these reprints, the Maji Maji War also serves to suggest that Namibia might not be the last African nation to ask for reparations.

Another example of this discursive connection is visible in the *SZ* column written by Heribert Prantl after the 2021 joint declaration. After outlining "German colonial history between 1884 and 1918" (*SZ*, 19.06.21), Prantl brings the colonial past into the present by writing:

> "Only recently, after six years of negotiations, Germany and Namibia agreed on a joint political declaration on this genocide. […] It is very controversial on the African side, the victims' descendants are dissatisfied – with the compensation amount and with the fact that they were not included in the negotiations. […] And the crimes committed against the Herero and Nama are not the only ones crying out for an apology. Cameroon, for instance: The colony used to be called 'the land of 25' because that was the number of brutal lashings received for even the smallest offenses." (*SZ*, 19.06.21)

Prantl notes the German-Namibian negotiations while also noting that on "the African side," the agreement is criticized. By describing the victims as "African," Prantl can seamlessly move from describing the Herero and Nama genocide to crimes committed hundreds of miles away in Cameroon. Both are, after all, violence committed against "Africans." For the rest of the article, Prantl speaks of the execution of Rudolf Manga Bell, who was a king and the "forefront of a protest movement" in Cameroon (*SZ*, 19.06.21).

He ends with the recommendation to enact "the rehabilitation of Manga Bell" and to revoke the death sentence that had led to Manga Bell's execution by the German empire (*SZ*, 19.06.21). The discursive connection to Cameroon enables Prantl to shift attention away from the Herero and Nama genocide to another German colonial crime.

As was seen with Namibian journalism above, this expansion of the Herero and Nama genocide into a broader colonial experience dilutes claims for genocide reparations towards specific groups, frequently by blurring the temporal boundaries of the 1904–1908 genocide (cf. chapter 7.2). For example, articles have increasingly made connections between the Herero and Nama genocide and German merchants' involvement in the 17th-century slave trade, especially in articles on local street renamings. An article in the *ZEIT* exemplifies how this connection is made:

> "[T]he Brandenburg African Company became involved in the business with enslaved people, and the colony of Groß-Friedrichsburg was established in what is now Ghana […]. And finally, in the 19th century, merchants and colonialists like Carl Peters from Hamburg set off for Africa to blatantly pursue 'the ruthless and determined enrichment of our own people at the expense of other, weaker peoples,' as he wrote in a newspaper" (*ZEIT*, 20.08.20).

This produces a link between the Brandenburg African Company and the later German imperial colonization effort. This discursive connection only becomes possible by presupposing a connection between the involved actors (German) and the victims (African).

The examples above show how the normalization of a German and European imperial perspective makes Herero and Nama demands superfluous or unnecessary in German reporting. However, I find that the structures above are also found when Herero and Nama speakers are part of journalistic reporting. In 2018, the *Zeit* publishes an article on page eight of the politics section by the political journalist Elisabeth Knoblauch. The article reports on a visit of the former head of the Ovaherero Genocide Foundation, Esther Muinjangue, to Hamburg. Knoblauch writes, "It is the end of a three-day visit to the Hanseatic city, a peaceful protest. Just a few hundred meters away […], at the beginning of the 20th century, German soldiers got onto boats that took them to 'German South-West Africa,' present-day Namibia." (*Zeit*, 06.12.18) The city of Hamburg is explicitly connected to the past and used to legitimize Muinjangue's visit. However, the past connected to the city is shown as encompassing a wide range of colonial activities: "Hamburg became the German capital of colonialism. Carl Hagenbeck, founder of the zoo of the same name, showcased human zoos, where he displayed people from Mongolia and Somalia, later Ethiopians and Bedouins." (*Zeit*, 06.12.18)

The function of this connection between the genocide and human zoos becomes clear at the end of the article, when Hamburg's cultural senator Carsten Brosda apologizes to the delegation led by Esther Muinjangue. The article quotes Brosda with the words: "I expressly ask you for forgiveness for our city's involvement in the suffering that was inflicted on your ancestors and your people in the German name and whose devastating consequences continue to have an impact today" (*Zeit*, 06.12.18). Brosda does not mention the Herero or Nama communities by name. He does not apologize for genocide. He does not address the complaints of Muinjangue, namely that the Herero and Nama are

not negotiating partners or want legally binding reparations for genocide. The results of this structure are familiar and echo those described throughout this chapter: "Hamburg's trade relations with Africa are now also under scrutiny. The Hamburg Chamber of Commerce is wondering how lessons from the past can be used for the future." Specific actions are not mentioned.

Hence, even as journalists explicitly reject the relativization of German colonialism through a European comparison, a European framework remains central to how German colonialism is shown as important for the audience. This construction of cultural memory can also explain why, especially in recent years, the Herero and Nama genocide has increasingly receded in articles on German colonialism, even in articles relating to the 2021 joint declaration (cf. chapter 6.2): The Herero and Nama genocide functions as an example of broader European colonialism, and reparations for the genocide are shown as part of a larger European movement to atone for the colonial past. These discursive connections mirror similar findings of Namibian journalism (cf. chapter 7.2), where discursive connections often blur the boundaries of the genocide, widening the potential pool of recipients. Rather than the experiences of victims being in the center of journalistic reporting, the past is told through the perspective of a German colonial empire committing and reacting to a wide array of colonial atrocities. This journalistic construction of the past is normalized through the continued reliance on colonial terminology and arguments (cf. chapter 7.1), even if these are reversed to now justify the importance of the genocide.

Therefore, while German and Namibian newspapers connect to different events for their audiences, reflecting the different national contexts in which many of these newspapers are produced and consumed, the Herero and Nama genocide in both nations is constructed as one event in a larger string of (anti-)colonial events. Given these results, the following chapter now considers how the results of the previous chapters 7.2 and 7.3 shape a discursive connection that is also found in both newspapers: the Holocaust. How do connections to the Holocaust irritate or maintain the construction of the Herero and Nama genocide as part of a broader history of colonial violence and liberation? And how does this construction shape demands for or against reparations in both nations?

7.4 "Imperial Germany's Third Reich": Connecting to the Holocaust in German and Namibian journalism

This chapter asks how and why German and Namibian newspapers both produce discursive connections to the Holocaust. Rausch (2022, p. 420) writes that the Holocaust is a "dominant emotional order that the marginalized refer to in order to be heard by state governments of the Global North". Already, this quote shows that mnemonic connections to the Holocaust intersect practices of speaking about and speaking for the past. To unpack this process in journalism, the following chapter connects to the previous research on "travelling memory" (Erll, 2011) while also considering how these connections intersect with or irritate the national mnemonic frameworks outlined above. Chapter 7.4.1 first describes how connections to the Holocaust are used in German and Namibian journalism to describe German perpetrators. This focus on German actors connects

with the findings of chapter 7.1 and reflects the (post-)colonial power structures underlying journalistic memory production. Then, chapter 7.4.2 shows how these discursive connections are used in journalism to produce analogies for present German actions. These analogies frequently presuppose that the Holocaust is in the sphere of mnemonic "consensus" (Hallin, 1986, p. 117), thereby obscuring the conflicting and contradicting interpretations that different speakers express. These conflicting interpretations become especially clear when showing how references to the Second World War function in German-language journalism to limit potential connections to the present German-speaking collective. Taken together, these chapters begin to consider how journalism strategically uses the past to outline the present in its reporting, which will be crucial for understanding the representative structures explored in chapter 8.

7.4.1 Describing, addressing and temporally limiting German perpetrators

In English-language Namibian journalism, connections to the Holocaust are typically used to describe the actions and motives of historical German perpetrators. Authors often make this connection implicitly, as exemplified in a 2015 *New Era* opinion piece by Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro, entitled "Namibian-German relationship at 25" (*New Era*, 20.03.15). The article calls for reparations during the visit of the former President of Germany, Horst Köhler, to Namibia. Maṯunḏu-Tjiparuro begins by writing that "rarely has this relationship been given its proper meaning." (*New Era*, 20.03.15). He then describes the Herero and Nama genocide: "Subsequently respective Namibian indigenous peoples were subjected to various separate genocidal onslaughts by the armed forces of Imperial Germany's Third Reich, especially in the years 1904 to 1908" (*New Era*, 20.03.15). In this quote, the phrase "Imperial Germany's Third Reich" combines Imperial and Nazi Germany. Here, the perpetrators of the Herero and Nama genocide are equated with the perpetrators of the Holocaust, measuring the past by future events. The connection between the Herero and Nama genocide and the Holocaust is embodied by the seemingly continuous position of its German perpetrators. A similar example from the end of my analysis time in the *Namibian Sun* writes: "Other atrocities committed by German fascist imperial soldiers and their henchmen during 1904–08 also included robbing indigenous communities of their land, small live-stock, cattle and hard-earned wealth." (*Namibian Sun*, 26.11.21) The term "fascist imperial soldiers" again places both Nazi and Imperial Germany side by side, implying an equation between both periods. "Imperial Germany" does not exist on its own but is rather constructed through its fascist successor.

Both examples above draw on terms and discursive patterns that have become part of global Holocaust memory (Anyaduba, 2021; Wosińska, 2017). In this vein, describing German perpetrators as "fascist" or as "Third Reich" underlines genocidal intent by connecting to symbols and terms commonly associated with genocide. However, while implicit connections to the Holocaust are used to describe colonial soldiers, there are almost no connections between the Herero and Nama victims of the genocide and the victims of the Holocaust. There is one exception in a *Namibian* reprint of an article originally published in the U.S. magazine *Smithsonian*. Here, the U.S.-based journalist, Daniel Gross, compares starving Herero and Nama with Holocaust survivors: "Images from the period make it difficult not to think of the Holocaust. The survivors' chests and cheeks are

hollowed out from the slow process of starvation. […] These are the faces of people who suffered German rule and barely survived." (*Namibian*, 19.02.16)

Yet, this is the only time that this comparison is explicitly made. In a piece written by Namibian freelance journalist Hildegard Titus, this visual parallelism is contradicted with the following sentence: "When I looked at these images of emaciated women and children, there was a complete disconnect to the image I had of Namibians." (*Namibian*, 17.07.15) Constructing the Herero and Nama as (helpless) victims through the Holocaust does not appear to fit quite as easily into Namibian journalism's construction of Herero and Nama actors as Namibian resistance fighters, as discussed at the end of chapter 7.2.

Thus, most references to the Holocaust in both German and Namibian journalism are used to connect the actions and motivations of the colonial and Nazi perpetrators. This link then functions in English-language journalism to make the case for reparations and to criticize Germany for not responding to the Herero and Nama genocide in the same way that it responded to the Holocaust. One of the most deliberate comments in this regard is made by the Nama activist Sima Luipert in an opinion article for the *Namibian Sun* entitled "Is Germany really ready to apologize for genocide?" The text criticizes the 2021 joint declaration by alleging that Germany has not yet recognized that the events of 1904–1908 are a genocide, which would require legally binding reparations rather than voluntary payments by Germany (*Namibian Sun*, 24.12.21). Luipert begins by writing:

> "Within Germany, its own atrocities start to be narrated with the Jewish Holocaust. Any crime that Germany therefore committed before the Jewish Holocaust was not a crime because it was within the right of Germany to kill anyone who was not Caucasian. Only mass murder against Caucasians counts as crime." (Namibian Sun, 24.12.21)

This quote repeats a claim that is often found in Namibian journalism, namely that racism is hindering Germany from recognizing the 1904–1908 genocide. To argue for the events of 1904–1908 being a genocide, Luipert then makes explicit connections between practices using the Holocaust and the 1904–1908 genocide:

> "The German narrative refuses, despite glaring historical evidence, to even make the connection between the Auschwitz gas chambers and Shark Island. Historical evidence shows that the pseudo-scientific research on people other than the so-called pure German race, actually started at Shark Island in the former Great Namaland" (*Namibian Sun*, 24.12.21).

By showing the "Auschwitz gas chambers" in line with "Shark Island," Luipert suggests that both are worthy of similar recognition. The Herero and Nama genocide is shown as a precursor to the Holocaust, with Luipert stating that "pseudo-scientific research […] actually started at Shark Island." The emphasis on concentration camps and eugenics is also found in court documents filed by the OTA/NTLA against the German government in New York District Court (Rausch, 2022). However, in her guest article, Luipert does not describe any specific historical events or actions. The purpose of her discursive connection to the Holocaust is to criticize the present-day German political position.

Another example that shows how mnemonic connections between both events are constructed in journalism can be found in the German newspaper *taz*. Here, the Herero activist Israel Kaunatjike emphasizes personal continuity between perpetrators in the Holocaust and those who worked on skulls from Namibia in a *taz* article:

> "These are the skulls of prisoners from the internment camps in German South West Africa […]. The later Nazi physicians Josef Mengele and Eugen Fischer were also involved. Ever since I found out about this, I have been demanding that these skulls be returned to Namibia." (*taz*, 01.07.17; cf. *taz*, 08.04.17).

In this quote, Kaunatjike justifies the interest and demand for restitution with the fact that two well-known Nazi perpetrators, Mengele and Fischer, were involved in studying Namibian skulls. Mentioning these two names without any further context assumes that Kaunatjike's German audience already knows who these men were. Drawing on these well-known names enables him to make the point that human remains should be restituted because of the reprehensibility of the involved actors. This emphasis on personal continuity builds on the mnemonic practice of personalization (cf. chapter 7.1.2).

The examples above show the difficulties of connecting to the Holocaust as a global memory of injustice, especially against the backdrop of colonial sources that have primarily recorded the perspective of perpetrators instead of victims. The focus of these discursive connections is to describe the perpetrator's role in committing genocidal crimes. Furthermore, the quotes above also build on the understanding that references to the Holocaust invoke a clear moral boundary that Germany must react to. In another *taz* interview with Kaunatjike, the activist answers a question about street names in Germany: "I can't imagine that people here would still accept a name like Göring or Hitler. They have disappeared, but the names of colonialists who committed many crimes in Africa, for example, are still there." (*taz*, 08.04.17) Germany's reaction to the Holocaust is shown as a positive template for how Germans in the present should react to the Herero and Nama genocide.

Yet, what are the boundaries of the un-/acceptable reactions to genocide that German and Namibian journalists are advocating for? While German and Namibian journalism agrees that Germany's political reaction to the Holocaust was positive and successful, both nations differ in what this political reaction supposedly was. This can already be seen in the examples above: Whereas Luipert is clearly advocating for legally binding financial reparations, Kaunatjike in the *taz* speaks of restitutions and street renamings. This is an irritation that will continue to echo through this and the following chapters.

To start unpacking this irritation, it is important to note that connections to the Holocaust and especially the Second World War are not only used to indicate what should be done by Germany, but also to delimit what should *not* be demanded by activists. This discursive strategy was especially visible in the early 2000s, when connections to the Holocaust were often used in journalism to emphasize the uniqueness of the Holocaust and thereby discredit claims of genocide reparations (cf. Rausch, 2022, p. 424; Wolff, 2016, pp. 405–406). However, in my sample, this is often not the case anymore. One possible explanation for this shift is that German journalists have recently begun to construct mnemonic connections between the Holocaust and the Herero and Nama geno-

cide as part of an internal German academic debate that does not rely much on Herero and Nama speakership, as outlined in chapters 7.3 and 6.2. Nevertheless, as the examples above show, there is still often a discrepancy between the claims made in connection with the Holocaust in German and Namibian journalism. Therefore, a brief excursus into the untypical examples in my sample is a useful starting point for understanding how different temporal frameworks limit mnemonic connections across boundaries.

"Grim Aryans at the Kilimanjaro": Mnemonic connections as a boundary

On October 15, 2016, the *FAZ* publishes a review of an exhibition on colonialism in the German Historical Museum (DHM) in Berlin. The article is written by the cultural journalist Andreas Kilb and entitled "Grim Aryans at the Kilimanjaro" (*FAZ*, 15.10.16). This connection to Aryans comes from one of the museum exhibits, a 1941 movie poster advertising a film about the German colonist Carl Peters. Kilb writes that Peters, "a colonist in the Kilimanjaro area, was an anti-Semite and sadist, a 'fierce Aryan who, in the absence of Jews over in Africa, shoots Negroes[12] dead like sparrows.'" (*FAZ*, 15.10.16)

The continuity between antisemitism and racism embodied by Peters reflects the examples from English-language Namibian newspapers quoted above, where German colonial troops are described as "fascist imperial soldiers" (*Namibian Sun*, 26.11.21). Yet, in the context of this *FAZ* article, the placement of "grim Aryans" in an African colony functions as a dog whistle to a German audience aware of the taboos surrounding the term "Aryans" (Meyers et al., 2014, p. 148): Using the adjective "grim" in this context overdraws the taboo and produces irony around the DHM's exhibition. In contrast with earlier newspaper articles in Germany (cf. Rausch, 2022, p. 424; Wolff, 2016, pp. 405–406), Kilb does not suggest that the Herero and Nama genocide did not occur or that it should not be compensated by the German government. In the middle of his article, he writes:

> "Namibia could have – should have been – the second focal point of the exhibition, because it is associated with the memory of the first genocide of the twentieth century. To this day, the German federal government has refused to officially apologize for the genocide against the Hereros, in which half of the tribe died, for fear of the resulting legal claims for compensation." (*FAZ*, 15.10.16)

While Kilb advocates that the genocide should have been given *more* space in the exhibition, he also has a very specific idea of what this exhibition should look like. In the next sentence, he writes, "Literacy and genocide, the whip and the school, are part of German colonialism's heritage. The DHM could have formed an image out of these contradictions. Instead, it throws its debris at our feet." (*FAZ*, 15.10.16) Here, "German colonialism's heritage" is shown as multifaceted and not uniformly evil, in contrast to the depiction of Nazi Germany that the discursive connection to "grim Aryans" implies. The Second World War is thus shown as a boundary for il/legitimate constructions to the genocide.

In the German-language *AZ*, this distinction is even more clear: Here, connections between the Second World War and the Herero and Nama genocide function to disconnect the German-speaking Namibian community from demands made by Herero, Nama

12 At this point, the source uses a derogatory German colonial term ("*Neger*").

and even other German speakers. Most of these connections are found in articles written by the former editor-in-chief, Eberhard Hofmann. In one of his reports in the "politics" section entitled "Annual memorial march with monument desecration" (*AZ*, 04.04.16), Hofmann criticizes that protestors threw red paint on the *Marinedenkmal*, a monument in Swakopmund commemorating the German colonial soldiers that died in 1904. To illustrate his point, the paper includes an image of a Black man holding up a sign that says, "All Nazi symbols must fall!" (*AZ*, 04.04.16). This gesture again reflects the connection between "Imperial Germany" and the "Third Reich" shown at the beginning of this chapter. However, as in the *FAZ* article, this connection to the Second World War now functions as a dog whistle to the German-speaking audience and is overdrawn through irony, as shown in the image caption: "Here is an inscription that demonstrates historical ignorance or wishful thinking. The protester should be asked to show where Nazi symbols are." (*AZ*, 04.04.16) With this caption, the author implies there are no Nazi symbols in Namibia. The labelling of this action as "historical ignorance" and "wishful thinking" positions the journalist as someone who has "true" knowledge of the past, whereas the action of the protestor is interpreted as thoughtless and uninformed. In this way, the activist's demands for statue removal are delegitimized.

In an opinion article three years later, Hofmann again references the Second World War – this time to critique Germans arguing for genocide recognition: "Lecturing from Germany has a long tradition. In the 1930s, similar dogmatists came here from the Third Reich, who, following the Nazi ideology and the principles of the *Führer*, wanted to round up all *Südwester*[13] into a kraal." (*AZ*, 02.04.19) Here, Hofmann not only suggests that German-speaking Namibians in the 1930s had nothing to do with National Socialist Germany but also that they were victims of National Socialist policies. This builds on a broader discursive strand of victimization within the paper's coverage (cf. chapter 7.1.2). At the same time, Hofmann's ability to make these arguments is premised on a construction of collective identity for the German-speaking Namibian community that is not associated with the Second World War and thereby able to negate responsibility for accusations of genocide.

The examples from the *FAZ* and the *AZ* are outliers in my sample. Nevertheless, they point towards a larger pattern that I now explore in more detail: Even though mnemonic connections between the Herero and Nama genocide and the Holocaust are often no longer used to explicitly deny the genocide, they nevertheless often strategically produce and presuppose certain (dis-)continuities between the past and present German-speaking collective.

7.4.2 Holocaust reparations as a template for the present

The previous chapter has shown how discursive links to the Holocaust are used to describe and address the German perpetrators of the Herero and Nama genocide. In most articles, this link is then used to (de-)legitimize certain reparative or restorative claims. This chapter now explores this discursive strategy in more detail by focusing on journalism's use of analogy (Edy, 1999, pp. 77–78), which can help to explain the discrepancies

13 Self-designation for German-speaking settlers living in the former colony GSWA.

in claims described above. Mnemonic connections to the Holocaust often presuppose a similar understanding of the past. However, viewing both German and Namibian journalism together shows how these presuppositions are challenged when the past is connected to the present German collective.

The 1952 reparations negotiations in Namibian journalism

When English-language Namibian journalists reference the Holocaust, it is overwhelmingly to critique the amount of money that Germany is offering for the Herero and Nama genocide. Multiple English-language newspapers carry some version of the sentence "[T]his is very little considering the reparations that were paid to the Jews after the Second World War" (*Namibian*, 26.01.18). After announcing the 2021 joint declaration with Germany, the Namibian Defense Minister Frans Kapofi justifies the amount of money in the agreement by saying, "Unlike the Jews, Namibia did not have favorable terms when negotiating with the Germans" (*Namibian*, 22.09.21).

The most in-depth historical knowledge provided in English-language Namibian journalism on the Holocaust is thus not on the events of 1941–1945, but rather on the steps that were taken by the German government during the 1952 reparations negotiations with Israel. A typical example of this discursive structure is a three-part installment entitled "On German-Namibian negotiations" in the *Namibian Sun*'s opinion section (31.03.21; 03.05.21; 04.05.21). Each of these full-page opinion articles is written by Dr. Freddy Omo Kustaa, introduced in the articles as "a retired professor, historian and political scientist living in St. Paul, Minnesota, U.S.A." These articles delve into the German-Israeli negotiations after the end of the Second World War. Kustaa describes the intention behind his articles in this way:

> "My inclusion of the largely successful Jewish-German reparations negotiations in this discussion is mainly focused on the effective strategies that the Jewish negotiators used to get Germany to agree to pay reparations for the genocide that it committed against the victims of the Nazi regime within a few months of negotiations in 1952." (*Namibian Sun*, 31.03.21)

Kustaa's stated intention reveals a few central premises: First, that the mechanism that led to German reparations after World War II was successful Jewish negotiation ("effective strategies"). Throughout the article, Kustaa names a variety of these strategies, such as a moment when the Jewish negotiators strategically left negotiations because they did not think the German negotiating side was being serious in their offer (*Namibian Sun*, 04.05.21). The second premise of Kustaa's discursive argument is that the German government has not significantly changed between 1952 and the present: "The Namibian genocide and reparations issue is not drastically different from that of the Jewish people because it is about negotiations with the same German government on the same issues." (*Namibian Sun*, 04.05.21)

This quote indicates that what connects the "Namibian genocide" with "that of the Jewish people" for the author is Germany, specifically the German government's negotiating position. This quote implies that Germany clearly does not want to pay reparations and that only pressure and negotiations will achieve this aim: "Since World War I [*sic*],

the tactics and manipulative methods of German officials have not changed in any significant ways." (*Namibian Sun*, 31.03.21) This connection is even more clear in a *Namibian* article covering the dismissal of the OTA/NTLA lawsuit from New York District Court in 2019:

> "Rukoro made reference to the case of the Jews, who also challenged Germany over the Holocaust in the same court, but lost the first round because Germany is a sovereign state. 'The Jews did not accept the judgment and appealed. They were persistent. As we all know, the Jews and the government of Germany ended up with a settlement agreement'" (*Namibian*, 08.03.19)

The focus is on how "the Jews" struggled and prevailed against Germany, repeating constructions of resistance that are rooted in how the genocide is constructed as a historical event in journalism.

"A re-entry ticket into the circle of civilized nations": The Holocaust as part of German memory culture

Given the frequent use of the Holocaust to make reparations demands towards Germany, how do German-speaking authors connect the Holocaust to the current negotiations over the genocide? Here, I find that constructions of the Holocaust by German-speaking authors, and specifically historians and academics, are not premised on the idea that Germany was only brought to pay reparations through hard tactics used by Jewish negotiators. Instead, German-speaking authors typically use the Holocaust and the performative remorse that has become attached to that event to explain why Germany is negotiating with Namibia at all.

This interpretative framework transcends national boundaries through the position of German-speaking academics, who write similar articles in both German and Namibian newspapers. While the role of German-speaking academics as representatives of Herero and Nama interests will be discussed in more detail in chapter 8.3.1, the fact that these authors often mention the Holocaust reflects their position as discursive authorities who can speak about the German past in both German and Namibian journalism. One example of this can be found in an article written by Henning Melber, a political scientist, and Reinhart Kößler, a sociologist, after the visit of the former President of the German Bundesrat (2018–2019), Daniel Günther, to Namibia. They write:

> "The visitor paid his respects at the Swakopmund graveyard monument erected in commemoration of the victims of the colonial concentration camp there. But he missed his opportunity to bend his knees. Willy Brandt had in 1970 turned a history page in Poland through the Warsaw genuflection." (*Namibian*, 06.08.19)

Kößler and Melber do not explain to their audience who the former German Chancellor Willy Brandt was or why he was kneeling in 1970. Rather, their text presupposes an audience that could identify and ascribe meaning to this event. Brandt's performative kneeling in front of a monument to the Warsaw Ghetto references an iconic moment in

German cultural memory. In Kößler and Melber's article for the *Namibian*, this comparison is used to suggest that Günther should have performed an act like Brandt.

Kößler and Melber repeat this pattern in other texts, using moments that are deeply rooted in a German mnemonic discourse after 1945 to critique present-day German actions. Another example is found in an opinion piece the authors write for the *Namibian Sun* in 2020 entitled "Colonial amnesia and Germany's efforts to achieve 'internal liberation.'" Here, they reference a speech by former German President Richard von Weizsäcker given in 1985, where he called the German nation's defeat in the Second World War "liberation" (*Namibian Sun*, 22.05.20). Kößler and Melber use this event to advocate for a similar moment of recognition for the genocide, which, the authors argue, could lead to an end to genocide denial and a speedy conclusion of the negotiations between Germany and Namibia.

Interestingly, these references to German cultural memory, the kneeling at Warsaw in 1970 and von Weizsäcker's speech in 1985, are not found in any German newspaper in my sample. However, the discursive structure underlying Kößler and Melber's connections between the Holocaust and the Herero and Nama genocide is visible in other German articles. In this construction, Germany's reaction to the Holocaust is shown as positive, successful and central to Germany's current identity. This builds on research findings that point to the Holocaust as a central template for German memory culture, often highlighting Germany's unique and exemplary relationship to its past (Kundrus, 2004; Robel, 2013, p. 270; Wolff, 2021).

The German historian Jürgen Zimmerer demonstrates this discursive structure in a guest article for the *taz*:

> "Dealing critically with one's own past, ruthlessly uncovering the dark sides of one's own history, was part of Germany's understanding of the state after 1945. In many respects, it was something like a re-entry ticket into the circle of civilized nations after the outrageous crimes of the Third Reich." (*taz*, 09.07.15)

Zimmerer's quote interprets the Holocaust as a turning point in German identity and as a moment of successfully confronting unpleasant parts of the past. This confrontation with the past is interpreted as effective and as "a re-entry ticket into the circle of civilized nations." The reference to "civilized nations" suggests that by recognizing the past, Germany signaled its "civilized" status and shed itself of its past uncivilized state. Later in the article, Zimmerer writes, "Coming to terms with the past and making amends made it possible for German politicians and individual German citizens alike to be able to look their European neighbors and, in particular, the Jewish victims and their descendants in the eyes again." (*taz*, 09.07.15) There is the assumption that German recognition for the past was necessary for Germany to regain dignity, to look "Jewish victims […] in the eyes again."

In the articles written by German-speaking authors, both in German and in Namibian journalism, the Holocaust is constructed as a moment of internal German reinvention and national reconciliation rather than as a product of negotiations. Hence, Germany must merely live up to its own standards if it wants to rectify the genocide. Only two articles in my entire German sample, both in the *taz* (24.10.16, 31.05.21), reference the

German-Israeli reparations negotiations that are so prominent in Namibian journalism. Both articles are again written by guest authors, first by the German-Romanian author Ursula Ackrill in 2016 after Bundestag debates on the Armenian genocide and then by the Herero activist Jephta Nguherimo after the 2021 joint declaration. Nguherimo's article follows many of the examples seen above, writing, "Federal President Steinmeier should take Konrad Adenauer as his role model, who followed the appeal of Jewish organizations and Israel in 1951." (*taz*, 24.10.16) Ackrill, by contrast, makes one of the only cases in a German newspaper for exclusive reparations to the Herero and Nama: "The reparations paid by the Federal Republic of Germany to Israel were not intended for all citizens of Israel – Jews, Arabs and other immigrants – but were directly related to the crimes committed by the Germans against the Jews" (*taz*, 24.10.16).

These examples show moments when the discursive connection to the Holocaust could bring the discussion between German and Namibian journalism into an alignment or at least into conversation. There are very rare instances when German journalists or guest authors mention reparations in the context of the Holocaust. However, these references are usually used to explain Germany's hesitancy to create a legal precedent: "In Greece, Poland and Italy, descendants of Nazi victims are still hoping for reparations payments." (*Zeit*, 13.12.18; cf. *Namibian*, 23.01.18).

Therefore, the chapter above has shown how German political reactions to the Holocaust after 1945 function as a positive template for the actions the German government is supposed to take in the present. Yet, whereas German authors and articles often maintain that the Holocaust is a caesura in German collective identity, Namibian journalism rejects this view. Rather than describing Germany as fundamentally changed since 1945, Namibian journalism produces the Holocaust in terms of the successful negotiations that Israel led in 1952. The goal becomes to emulate these tactics and receive a similar outcome – namely, legally binding and exclusive reparations payments. By contrast, German-speaking authors and German newspapers frequently use connections to the Holocaust as a template for describing performative actions of remorse. This irritation will continue to be explored in chapter 8.

My findings add nuance to prior research by showing how discursive connections to the Holocaust in journalism are shaped by post-colonial power structures. Namibian speakers connect to the Holocaust to address German speakers and make demands towards Germany in their articles. Thus, connections to the Holocaust function as a discursive strategy to ensure that speakers are heard in entangled mnemonic spaces and can legitimize their demands towards Germany. Moreover, the results above show how the Herero and Nama genocide is connected to the Holocaust while still maintaining the discursive structure outlined in the previous chapters, which often portray the Herero and Nama genocide as part of larger colonial incursions and fights. References to the Holocaust in both German and Namibian journalism are not used to describe what occurred between 1904 and 1908 or 1933 and 1945. Instead, they are primarily used to produce personal continuity for specific German actors and describe how Germany reacted to the Holocaust post-1945 to use this as a template and analogy for present action (Edy, 1999, pp. 77–78). This continues to shape the boundaries of the un-/sayable and limit connections to the Holocaust to describe how Germany should react to the past rather than defining what that past precisely is.

In addition, the chapters above have highlighted a tendency that has become clear throughout this chapter and the previous chapter 6: Namibian journalism equates coming to terms with the past with material and monetary reparations for the Herero and Nama genocide, whereas German journalism focuses on cultural solutions and performative actions to (re-)align German identity (Rausch, 2022, p. 429). Yet, this also leads to the question: How do these different interpretations shape the ascription of legitimate speakership in German and Namibian journalism? The previous chapters have shown that re-presentations of the genocide do not remain statically bound within national borders. How does this re-telling of the past enable or limit present speakership, especially given the different claims made above? These are questions that will be discussed in the following chapter. First, however, I offer a preliminary summary of the findings of this chapter and outline the mnemonic practices of re-presentation, or speaking *about* the past, that have become clear in the previous examples.

7.5 Preliminary conclusion: Memory production through/despite colonial sources in journalism

The previous chapters have examined the mnemonic practices by which German and Namibian journalism shapes the structures of speaking *about* the Herero and Nama genocide. Together, the results showcase the challenges that arise when journalism produces knowledge about a past event for which most documented source material comes from former colonizers.

Chapter 7.1 focused on mnemonic practices of remediation in journalism, whereby German and Namibian journalists use witness accounts to both describe and condemn the events of 1904–1908. Even though journalists often performatively distance themselves and their present audiences from the motivation of their sources, the continued reliance on these quotes to describe past events transports colonial terms, symbols, imaginations and power relations in German and Namibian journalism. Thus, the Herero and Nama genocide is often retold as a fateful clash between much stronger German colonial troops and ultimately doomed Herero and Nama. Especially in Namibian material, the genocide continues to center around von Trotha's 1904 order against the Herero.

These results indicate how difficult it is to describe historical victimhood when there are almost no testimonies of individual victimhood for journalism to draw from. Interestingly, the most intimate descriptions of victimhood are found for German colonial settlers in the *AZ*, reflecting the perspectives that are normalized in the source material. While Namibian newspapers also occasionally mention indigenous witnesses, these individuals are frequently shown as survivors and are not directly quoted about the genocide. The *AZ* includes photographic and textual material that shows the Herero and Nama also fighting against German colonizers; however, this material is told from the perspective of settlers and serves to relativize the interpretation of the genocide, which is never explicitly mentioned. These examples show that there are alternative sources of knowledge about 1904–1908, but they frequently go against established portrayals of the genocide in journalism.

Given this construction of the Herero and Nama genocide, chapters 7.2 and 7.3 have shown that both German and Namibian journalism simultaneously attempt to challenge elements of this colonial perspective through discursive connections to national and continental cultural memories that reverse (but frequently do not reject) colonial revisionist interpretations of the past. In Namibian journalism, the Herero and Nama genocide is shown as part of a broader anti-colonial struggle that connects to the liberation war in Namibia. By connecting to this broader cultural memory, Herero and Nama speakers emphasize the importance of the 1904–1908 genocide. However, attempting to integrate the Herero and Nama genocide into a national framework also comes with frictions and irritations, embodied by debates between government representatives and traditional authorities on whether and how the genocide should become part of national commemorations in the present.

In German journalism, the Herero and Nama genocide is connected to a broader history of European and German imperialism. In this construction, German journalists reverse prior revisionist arguments that argued German colonialism is not comparable to other European imperial powers by explicitly saying that German colonialism is comparable to atrocities committed by other European colonial powers. This brings discussions on the genocide into a larger European framework of dealing with the past while obscuring the specific claims of the Herero and Nama.

Therefore, even though German and Namibian journalism connect the Herero and Nama genocide to different cultural memories, both produce similar structures of silence: The Herero and Nama genocide becomes part of a larger story of (anti-)colonial action, thereby elongating the temporal and spatial boundaries of the Herero and Nama genocide. This not only reflects the gaps in historical source material but also continues to render the specific experiences of the Herero and Nama genocidal victims unnecessary for the journalistic retelling of the past.

At first glance, discursive connections to the Holocaust in German and Namibian newspapers might appear to contradict the previous construction of the Herero and Nama genocide by emphasizing its unique position in German and Namibian colonialism. Yet, chapter 7.4 shows that both German and Namibian journalism primarily refer to the Holocaust to highlight Germany's political reaction to the Holocaust after 1945. In this sense, the Holocaust functions not as a way of connecting the events of 1904–1908 with those of 1941–1945, but rather as a way of connecting post-war German political reactions to the Holocaust with present-day German political reactions to the Herero and Nama genocide. While both German and Namibian journalists and guest authors are unanimous in their interpretation that Germany positively reacted to the Holocaust, they differ in their understanding of what this means for the present. Hence, Namibian journalists exclusively call for legally binding reparations, and German journalists speak of the broader need for recognizing the genocide. This points to a tension underlying the discourse between both nations that will be explored in more detail in the following chapter.

The results above show how multiple points of contradiction and irritation exist side-by-side in journalistic reporting, normalized through a construction of the past that largely continues to omit the perspectives of Herero and Nama witnesses in reconstructing the past. As the previous chapters have shown, this reflects both structural and

strategic constraints in German and Namibian journalism and demonstrates how postcolonial power structures and epistemic violence in the historical record shape journalistic practices of cultural memory production: Gaps in the historical record continue to shape the knowledge that is available for journalistic reporting and which connections can be made between the past and the present in journalism.

These structures of re-presentation lead to the question: How can Herero and Nama communities legitimately connect to the past in journalistic reporting when their perspectives are often not heard in journalism's construction of the past? The following chapter analyzes this question to show how German and Namibian journalism's production of cultural memory shapes the present-day de-/legitimization of power between both nations.