Global Memories of German Colonialism

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Jürgen Zimmerer and
Julian zur Lage (eds.)

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INHALT

Preface: Global Memories of German Colonialism 7
Jürgen Zimmerer and Julian zur Lage

I INTRODUCTION

Challenging Eurocentrism in Memory and Historiography 13
Julian zur Lage

II CASE STUDIES: MEMORIES, MEMORIALS AND ORAL HISTORY

Colonial Heroism in German, British and Tanzanian Commemorative Culture 37
Melanie Boieck and Reginald Elias Kirey

Remembering the Majimaji Trauma in Tanzania 55
Nancy Rushohora

German Colonial Memory in the Gbaya Oral Tradition 81
(Bertoua, East Region, Cameroon)
Amina Djouldé Christelle

III ARTISTIC INTERVENTIONS: REMEMBERING COLONIALISM

Shadow Work in *Ovizire-Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?* 101
Vitjitua Ndjiharine and Nashilongweshipwe Sakaria

Basters 125
Mercia Kandukira

IV OUTLOOK: HISTORIES AND METHODOLOGIES

Epistemological Silences in Tanzania-Germany Entangled Histories 141
A View from Hamburg's Twin City, Dar es Salaam
Oswald Masebo

Contributors 159

Preface: Global Memories of German Colonialism

Jürgen Zimmerer and Julian zur Lage

This book is both a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and of years of research in the fields of memory and colonialism. Paradoxical as this may seem, both phenomena are testament to today's globalized world, which is rooted in centuries of colonial globalization. While past scholarship shaped the contents of the volume and its individual essays, the 'virus' determined their origins in practice.

In order to address the pertinent questions of colonial legacies around the world, we had originally planned to invite fellows to Hamburg – an endeavour that the Zeit-Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius had generously agreed to support. In 2020, however, it became obvious that in-person visits from international scholars would not be feasible for the foreseeable future. With the new conditions of the pandemic order in mind, we concluded that postponing these visits would be impractical. We therefore switched to a model of in-place fellowships, to be conducted by scholars whose work focused on 'Global Memories of German Colonialism' – including Nancy Rushohora, Mercia Kandukira, and Amina Djouldé Christelle. These fellowships funded the scholars' research and writing wherever they worked or lived.

This turned out for the best, and we are now able to present this collection of essays from the fellowship programme (which also gave the book its title), supplemented by reports of other scholars working on similar topics, also in association with the research centre on 'Hamburg's (post-)colonial legacy'. The project's particular genesis has allowed us to bring together texts from esteemed authors in Africa and Europe, with backgrounds in a number of different disciplines – including history, archaeology and heritage studies, creative nonfiction writing, and performing and visual arts. We thus achieved our goal from the beginning: a diversity of approaches that characterise the projects of the research centre here at the University of Hamburg.

It is particularly important not to limit our understanding of global memories with the constraints of European academic historiography. As demonstrated in the introduction, this limitation risks perpetuating Eurocentric patterns and omissions. Instead, approaches that are both international and interdisciplinary to the core have proven extraordinarily fruitful – as exemplified in the German-Namibian project 'Visual History of the Colonial Genocide', which provided the impetus for exhibitions in Hamburg,

Windhoek, and online.[1] Project members Nashilongweshipwe Sakaria and Vitjitua Ndjiharine contributed to this volume with a reflection on their work.

The articles by Oswald Masebo, and by Melanie Boieck and Reginald Elias Kirey, grew out of a longstanding cooperation on entangled German-Tanzanian history, which highlighted elements of colonialism that had received limited attention in Germany.[2] Their contributions to this volume are all the more important for combating colonial amnesia.[3] Both articles were first published in German in 'Hamburg: Tor zur kolonialen Welt' (Eds. Jürgen Zimmerer and Kim Sebastian Todzi), and are now available for the first time in English.[4]

As with every edited volume, numerous people and institutions played an instrumental role. To name but a few: We extend our thanks to the Zeit-Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius for funding the original 'Global Memories of German Colonialism'-project, and, together with the Gerda Henkel Stiftung, for contributing to the publication costs of this volume. The flexibility of these foundations allowed us to proceed with this project despite the challenges of the global pandemic. The Gerda Henkel Stiftung also funded the earlier project 'Visual History of the Colonial Genocide'.[5] We are particularly grateful to both foundations.

For the selection of fellows in the Global Memories project, we thank the international jury, which was comprised of experts with whom we had previously cooperated:

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1 See Vitjitua Ndjiharine, Nashilongweshipwe Mushaandja, Nicola Brandt et al., *Ovizire • Somgu: From Where Do We Speak? – Von woher sprechen wir?* (Hamburg: Eigenverlag Museum am Rothenbaum (MARKK), 2018).

2 See for example: Reginald Elias Kirey, *Memories of German Colonialism in Tanzania*, Dissertation (Berlin: de Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2023); Melanie Boieck, *'Heia Safari' in der Hafen-City – (Post-)Koloniales Erinnerungsbewusstsein in Hamburg*, Dissertation, (Hamburg: Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, 2018) https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:gbv:18-94353.

3 The concept of 'colonial amnesia' was first developed by Jürgen Zimmerer in 'Kolonialismus und kollektive Identität: Erinnerungsorte der deutschen Kolonialgeschichte', in: Jürgen Zimmerer (ed.), *Kein Platz an der Sonne. Erinnerungsorte der deutschen Kolonialgeschichte*, Frankfurt a. M. 2013, pp. 5–33, here p. 5.

4 Oswald Masebo, 'Epistemologische Leerstellen in den verflochtenen Geschichten Tansanias und Deutschlands. Eine Sicht aus Hamburgs Partnerstadt Dar es Salaam. Aus dem Englischen übersetzt von Daniel Fastner', in Jürgen Zimmerer and Kim Sebastian Todzi (eds.), *Hamburg: Tor zur kolonialen Welt. Erinnerungsorte der (post-)kolonialen Globalisierung* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2021), pp. 549–65; Melanie Boieck and Reginald Elias Kirey, '„Kolonialheroen" in deutscher, tansanischer und britischer Erinnerungskultur. Das Beispiel des Wissmann-Denkmals und des „Askari"-Monuments in Hamburg beziehungsweise Dar es Salaam. Aus dem Englischen übersetzt von Julian zur Lage', in Jürgen Zimmerer and Kim Sebastian Todzi (eds.), *Hamburg: Tor zur kolonialen Welt. Erinnerungsorte der (post-)kolonialen Globalisierung* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2021), pp. 517–30.

5 See the four-part online video produced by the Gerda Henkel Stiftung on the project: 'Kolonialgeschichte Kreativ' https://lisa.gerda-henkel-stiftung.de/gemeinsame_aufarbeitung?nav_id=7776 (last accessed 27.7.2024).

Vitjitua Ndjiharine, Jessica Nupen and Reginald Elias Kirey. A special thank you for the support of all our colleagues in Hamburg – particularly Josèfa Cassimo, Arne Meinicke and Kim Sebastian Todzi, who contributed to the publication of the volume, and also to Marianne Weis-Elsner for her administrative support. We are grateful to James Powell for his proofreading, and also to Tobias Buck and his colleagues at Hamburg University Press for their work on the volume. We thank the Wallstein Verlag for allowing us to publish the contributions of Oswald Masebo, and Melanie Boieck and Reginald Elias Kirey, in their original English versions here.

As the editors of this volume, we especially thank our contributors, in alphabetical order: Amina Djouldé Christelle, Melanie Boieck, Mercia Kandukira, Reginald Elias Kirey, Oswald Masebo, Vitjitua Ndjiharine, Nancy Rushohora and Nashilongweshipwe Sakaria. Their outstanding articles made this volume possible.

Introduction

Challenging Eurocentrism in Memory and Historiography

Julian zur Lage

History and collective memory are closely interconnected: Historiography as an academic discipline developed out of general memory practices and cultural interaction with the past.[1] Debates on historical events in the media are often fuelled by their relevance to public remembrance, particularly when research contradicts general opinion. While this connection was never truly forgotten, it would receive little attention for the majority of the twentieth century.[2] One particular project turned 'memory' into a major field of contention in European historiography four decades ago: Pierre Nora's *Lieux de Memoire* (1984–1992), on sites of French national memory, created a surge of similar projects for other countries, specific epochs and for overarching themes.[3] A significant number of publications developed out of explicit or implicit opposition to the notion of a predominantly national collective memory and its inherent weaknesses, achieved most prominently by highlighting shared European memories.[4]

The inclusion of global and colonial dimensions in the debate on memory cultures took a few more years to take hold, particularly in Germany – where projects dedicated to this field emerged only in connection with the rise of global history after the turn of the new millennium. Starting in the first decade of the twenty-first century, Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad as well as Indra Sengupta and Jürgen Zimmerer all published edited volumes on the subject.[5] Nevertheless, Michael Rothberg's ground-break-

1 This chapter is partially based on earlier internal research papers by the author. My thanks to Jürgen Zimmerer, Myriam Gröpl and Kim Sebastian Todzi for their comments and questions.

2 See, for example, the works of Maurice Halbwachs on collective memory, which only gained real momentum in the second half of the century: Maurice Halbwachs, *Das kollektive Gedächtnis* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer-Taschenbuch, 1985) [French 1925].

3 Pierre Nora (ed.), *Les lieux de mémoire*, 3 Vol. (Paris: Gallimard, 1984–1992); among the projects with a narrower scope see Elke Stein-Hölkeskamp and Karl-Joachim Hölkeskamp (eds.), *Erinnerungsorte der Antike* (München: Beck, 2006); Christoph Johannes Markschies and Hubert Wolf (eds.), *Erinnerungsorte des Christentums*, Barbara Schüler (München: Beck, 2010).

4 For example Jacques Morizet and Horst Möller (eds.), *Allemagne – France*: *Lieux et mémoire d'une histoire commune* (Paris: Michel, 1995); Pim den Boer et al. (eds.), *Europäische Erinnerungsorte*, 3 Vol. (München: Oldenbourg, 2012).

5 Jürgen Zimmerer (ed.), *Verschweigen – erinnern – bewältigen*: *Vergangenheitspolitik nach 1945 in globaler Perspektive [=Comparativ 14 (2004) 5/6]* (Leipzig: Leipziger Univ.-Verl., 2004); Indra Sengupta (ed.), *Memory, history, and colonialism*: *Engaging with Pierre Nora in colonial and postcolonial contexts* (London: German Historical Institute, 2009); Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad (eds.), *Memory in a Global Age*:

ing 2009 study *Multidirectional Memory. Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* originally received relatively limited attention in Germany.[6] Following the translation of this work into German in 2021, however, debates on Rothberg's work and the connections between collective memories of the Holocaust and colonization spread far beyond just academic circles.[7] A number of other recent publications such as Jürgen Zimmerer's *Erinnerungskämpfe* (*Memory Wars*) or Natan Sznaider's *Fluchtpunkte der Erinnerung* (*Vanishing Points of Memory*) picked up on the issue and connected memory with historiography and politics.[8]

While confirming the continued relevance of memory studies, now with particular focus on the colonial dimension, the sceptical reception of the concept of 'multidirectional memories' demonstrates the necessity to ask: Whose memories are we even talking about? How can we overcome the tendency to focus on the metropolis, even when dealing with the topic of colonialism?[9] *Global Memories of German Colonialism* aims to provide, then, a number of different perspectives from Germany's former colonies which aim to help break the Eurocentric mould.

It may seem paradoxical, in striving to shift perspective on memories, to start once again with the European point of view. However, any attempt to decolonize or globalize memories of colonialism needs to be based on an understanding of the Eurocentric

Discourses, Practices and Trajectories (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Jürgen Zimmerer (ed.), *Kein Platz an der Sonne*: *Erinnerungsorte der deutschen Kolonialgeschichte* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2013); later publications with a similar scope include Dirk Göttsche (ed.), *Memory and Postcolonial Studies*: *Synergies and New Directions* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2019) and recently for France Charles Forsdick, Etienne Achille, and Lydie Moudileno (eds.), *Postcolonial Realms of Memory*: *Sites and Symbols in modern France* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020).

6 Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*: *Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009).

7 Among the number of contributions to major outlets: Michael Rothberg and Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Enttabuisiert den Vergleich! Die Geschichtsschreibung globalisieren, das Gedenken pluralisieren: Warum sich die deutsche Erinnerungslandschaft verändern muss.' Originally published in: *Die Zeit* (2021) 14, 31.3.2021 https://www.zeit.de/2021/14/erinnerungskultur-gedenken-pluralisieren-holocaust-vergleich-globalisierung-geschichte/komplettansicht (last accessed 27.7.2024). Much of the academic debate was published by online outlets Geschichte der Gegenwart (https://geschichtedergegenwart.ch, in German, last accessed 27.7.2024), and New Fascism Syllabus (http://newfascismsyllabus.com, in English, last accessed 27.7.2024).

8 Jürgen Zimmerer (ed.), *Erinnerungskämpfe*: *Neues deutsches Geschichtsbewusstsein* (Ditzingen: Reclam, 2023); Natan Sznaider, *Fluchtpunkte der Erinnerung*: *Über die Gegenwart von Holocaust und Kolonialismus* (München: Hanser, 2022).

9 Seminal texts on the issue of Europe as the center in general: Stuart Hall, 'The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power [1992]', in David Morley (ed.), *Stuart Hall. Essential Essays, Volume 2. Identity and Diaspora* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018), pp. 141–84; Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*: *Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

memorial practices of the last few centuries and the historiography which helped shape them. The following introduction aims to map out this field from the early modern period to the present, drawing on some representative examples of the broader debates.

The connection between historiography and collective memory is in some ways obvious, as neither has ever existed in isolation from the other. However, the aforementioned fact that the return of 'memory' to European academia can be traced back to one major project – the *Lieux de Memoire* – indicates that it is necessary to look beyond the seemingly self-evident. How memory and historiography of colonialism were connected in some ways and disconnected in others is of particular importance to the current state of related debates. A 'colonial amnesia'[10] or 'colonial aphasia'[11] has been diagnosed for both German academia and the broader public for the second half of the twentieth century, when neither paid much attention to the history and the consequences of colonialism. Scholarship on colonialism would, of course, emerge nevertheless, but it was shaped by a disconnect between memory and historiography: European researchers – in History, Geography and Anthropology alike – usually established their claim to objectivity based on the use of written sources and general methodology, while they characterized the memories of the colonized as unreliable or even fictional.[12]

It is of vital importance, therefore, not to perpetuate this hierarchy, requiring the acceptance of memory and historiography as fields on equal footing and ones heavily influencing each other; the former focuses on the public realm, the latter is based in academia. A number of methodological shifts have bridged the gap between historiography and memory over the last few decades, the most important being the establishment of an academic oral history. Nevertheless, despite similar timelines, European and African oral history remain remarkably disconnected.

10 On the relevance of the concept for Germany see Michael Perraudin and Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Introduction: German Colonialism and National Identity', in Michael Perraudin and Jürgen Zimmerer (eds.), *German Colonialism and National Identity* (New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 1–8, here p. 1; Monika Albrecht, '(Post-) Colonial Amnesia? German Debates on Colonialism and Decolonization in the Post-War Era', in Michael Perraudin and Jürgen Zimmerer (eds.), *German Colonialism and National Identity* (New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 187–196.

11 On the concept, originally in the French context, see: Ann Laura Stoler, 'Colonial Aphasia: Disabled Histories and Race in France', in Ann Laura Stoler (ed.), *Duress. Imperial Durabilities in Our Times* (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2016), pp. 122–70, here p. 128. For Germany: Rebekka Habermas, 'Restitutionsdebatten, koloniale Aphasie und die Frage, was Europa ausmacht', *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 69/40–42 (2019), pp. 17–22, here p. 18.

12 See Jacques Le Goff, *Geschichte und Gedächtnis* (Frankfurt am Main, New York, Paris: Campus, 1992), p. 131 for similar thoughts on memory in anthropology in relation to history.

Memorials and Memory in Northern Germany: Remembering Colonial Wars

To analyse the history of *German* shared memories of *German* colonialism, it is necessary to identify a field suitable for a case study, where an active, longer-lasting impact on collective memory can be observed. There is not an abundance of cases to choose from here due to 'colonial amnesia'. Most aspects of colonialism have, as noted, received scant attention among the German public, even less so over a longer period of time.

The colonial wars might constitute one of the few exceptions to this, with recurring debates hereon from the Kaiserreich to the present. The 1880s' and 1890s' establishment of the 'Schutzgebiete', the euphemistic term used at the time, was largely conducted by private enterprises and not perceived primarily as a military feat in Germany.[13] Public attention paid to colonialism originally peaked with the anticolonial resistance wars at the turn of the twentieth century. This is particularly true for the suppression of the so-called 'Boxer Rebellion' in China and the Herero and Nama Wars in what is now Namibia, while significantly less interest was paid to the Majimaji Movement in today's Tanzania and the resistance to German colonial rule in West Africa or the Pacific Islands.[14]

The main reason for this imbalance was, to put it bluntly, the number and prominence of White Germans dying in these wars. The German government and public usually treated victims from among the local population with indifference at best, or even welcomed the killing of presumed insurgents and their supporters. This indifference extended to Black soldiers in German service: namely, the '*askaris*' who bore the main burden of fighting in East Africa but who received little recognition in metropolitan imperial Germany.[15] Regarding memorials erected in the colonies themselves, however, their inclusion was more in focus for all colonial powers, as the contribution by Melanie Boieck and Reginald Elias Kirey in this volume demonstrates.

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13 On the transfer from private to public control in the case of East Africa, see: Tanja Bührer, 'Die Kaiserliche Schutztruppe für Deutsch-Ostafrika' (München, Oldenbourg, 2011), pp. 79–86.

14 Joachim Zeller, *Kolonialdenkmäler und Geschichtsbewußtsein*: *Eine Untersuchung der kolonialdeutschen Erinnerungskultur* (Frankfurt am Main: IKO, 2000), pp. 69f.

15 For several mentions of 'hierarchies' (*Hierarchien*) between fallen White and Black soldiers, see: Stefanie Michels, *Schwarze deutsche Kolonialsoldaten*: *Mehrdeutige Repräsentationsräume und früher Kosmopolitismus in Afrika* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2009), for example pp. 172, 215. On the role of African soldiers in German East Africa generally, see: Michelle R. Moyd, *Violent Intermediaries*: *African Soldiers, Conquest, and Everyday Colonialism in German East Africa* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2014).

An additional factor for the ethnocentricity of German war memorials and memory was a tradition which had developed since the Napoleonic Wars: Remembrance in the Kaiserreich was often localized, and thus focused on the fallen soldiers of a particular municipality or garrison.[16] As such, memorials generally mentioned only those with a connection to the location in question, usually northern German harbour cities such as Hamburg and Wilhelmshaven in the case of the colonial wars. The former – Germany's biggest urban agglomeration with direct access to the ocean – was home to many soldiers in the naval contingents deployed in the colonial wars, while the latter was one of the main bases of the Imperial Navy.

In both Hamburg and Wilhelmshaven, local authorities cooperated with the imperial government and the Protestant Church to erect memorial plaques in the aftermath of the colonial wars at the turn of the twentieth century. In one of Hamburg's main churches, St. Michaelis (the 'Michel'), a plaque commemorates sons of the city who died 'for Emperor and Empire in China' and 'in Africa'.[17] 'Africa' in this case refers to the colonies in the continent's both south-west and east, with just one soldier in the latter case compared to four soldiers dying in China and ten in Namibia – each mentioned by name, and with some details of service and death being provided. In Wilhelmshaven, meanwhile, a number of memorials covering different colonial wars are to be found, with the most remarkable of them being the one honouring about 30 Germans who died in the Herero and Nama Wars, mentioned with last name and detachment.[18] Both churches also have several memorials for those lost in European wars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

As evident, the similarities between these two churches' memorial plaques – and quite a few others as well[19] – are significant: beginning with their relatively sparsely documented practices of remembrance from their respective inceptions through the turn of the new millennium, whereupon they were included in general forms of commemoration without special attention being paid to the colonial dimension.[20] The key difference between the

16 On the German memorial tradition in the nineteenth century in general, see: Manfred Hettling, 'Die zwei Körper des toten Soldaten. Gefallenengedenken in Deutschland seit 1800', in Martin Clauss, Ansgar Reiß, and Stefanie Rüther (eds), *Vom Umgang mit den Toten. Sterben im Krieg von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2019), pp. 159–162.

17 Author's own translation. For the German text, see photo.

18 See photo.

19 For other examples of colonial war memorials in German churches, see: Zeller, *Kolonialdenkmäler und Geschichtsbewußtsein* (above, n. 14), p. 69.

20 See the detailed study on the Michel memorial: Karen Stubbemann, *Die Hamburger Große St. Michaeliskirche als postkolonialer Erinnerungsort*: *Die Gedenktafel für die in den deutschen Kolonialkriegen gestor-*

two memorials has been how each parish has respectively decided to deal with the colonial connections of their churches in the last two decades. In Wilhelmshaven, clergy and parishioners actively campaigned for a key intervention to transform the plaque – and with it, the church – in 2005. Now, the original text is partially covered with photo and text inscribed on translucent glass commemorating the Herero victims of the war. The text might leave the uninformed visitor perplexed, in referencing a supposed Herero quotation:

> When they came to a sand well and there was water, the warriors drank. The women did not drink so that the warriors would have strength to fight. And when they were hungry, the men said to the women: 'The child can die if necessary. I must suck the milk from your breast, because I cannot help it, so that I can fight.'[21]

While clearly highlighting the genocidal thirst and famine German warfare brought upon the Herero, the phrasing raises the question of whether the implied cruelty towards women and children paints the Herero as ultimately responsible for their own demise. The Namibia-shaped cut-out of malnourished prisoners is another possible point of contention, similar to other debates on photos from colonial contexts where the depicted had little leeway to decline participation. The personal dignity of the deceased is at odds with an accurate portrayal of the atrocities in many of these cases, an issue also discussed in reference to the 'colonial gaze' by Vitjitua Ndjiharine and Nashilongweshipwe Sakaria in this volume.[22] However, the adequacy of quote and depiction is not a question for extended deliberation here, and will probably be up for public discussion in the years ahead – as will be the lack of contextualization regarding other plaques featuring in the church. For Wilhelmshaven, one of the cities most influenced by militarism and imperialism in both the Wilhelmine Empire and Nazi Germany, dealing with its past is a matter of ongoing debate.[23]

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benen Hamburger Soldaten ([Unpublished M. A. thesis], Hamburg, 2017), p. 80, for decorations of the plaque in the 1960s.

21 Author's (re-)translation, see photo for the German version.

22 On the approach to 'distort' (Vitjitua Ndjiharine) similar pictures, see also Julia Rensing, 'Ovizire · Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?: Artistic Interventions in the Namibian Colonial Archive (2018–2020)', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 48/1 (2022), pp. 81–102, here p. 85. The explicit depiction of victims on the other hand was chosen in the next case, with the photos for St. Michaelis Hamburg by Israel Kaunatjike et al. For this contribution, I consider the small size of the photos-in-the-photos an effective anonymization similar to modern media practices of pixelation.

23 Benno Schirrmeister, 'Wilhelmshavens Last der Vergangenheit: Kolonialer Alptraum', *taz, die tageszeitung – online,* 3.4.2022 https://taz.de/Wilhelmshavens-Last-der-Vergangenheit/!5844372/ (last accessed 27.7.2024).

Fig. 1: Christus- und Garnisonkirche Wilhelmshaven: memorial plaque for German soldiers who died in German South West Africa, partially covered by 2005 memorial for Herero and Nama victims, 2022. Photo: Julian zur Lage.

In Hamburg's Michel, on the other hand, the unsuspecting visitor finds hardly any trace of endeavours to actually *deal* with the colonial past. Its pro-colonial commemorative plaque is to this day still standing in its original state. Not for a lack of trying to change its appearance by civil society, however; the church's clergy and parish have only recently agreed to add a small plate giving some context. Louis-Henri Seukwa, Professor at HAW Hamburg, already demanded intervention in 2002.[24] In 2013, a group headed by German Herero activist Israel Kaunatjike took the opportunity provided by a panel discussion to add framed pictures of German colonial atrocities. While the pictures remained in place for a few years, church clergy eventually removed them in 2016 – according to Kaunatjike, doing so without first consulting the group which had initiated their installation.[25]

24 Louis Henri Seukwa, 'Deutschland muss den Völkermord an Herero und Nama beim Namen nennen.' [Rede vom 18.2.2002, gehalten in der St. Michaelis-Kirche Hamburg], 2018 https://louishenriseukwa.wordpress.com/2018/04/08/deutschland-muss-den-voelkermord-an-herero-und-nama-beim-namen-nennen/ (last accessed 27.7.2024).

25 With thanks to I. Kauntjike for our exchange in September 2019. See also: Anke Schwarzer, 'Eine solche Tafel hat in der Kirche nichts zu suchen.' [Interview mit Israel Kaunatjike, 2020/2021] https://www.re-mapping.eu/de/interviews/israel-kaunatjike (last accessed 27.7.2024).

Fig. 2: St. Michaelis Hamburg: memorial plaque for German soldiers who died in colonial wars with contextualizing images of German atrocities, 2015 (now removed). Photo: Kim Sebastian Todzi.

This key difference between the two churches is particularly remarkable given Hamburg's history of protest against colonial monuments ever since the 1960s, when students toppled the statues of colonial officers Hermann von Wissmann and Hans Dominik in the direct vicinity of the University of Hamburg. In fact, they did so twice in the case of Wissmann, after the statue was reinstated on the orders of the University after its first felling. After the administration bowed to the fact that it could not keep them on their plinths, both statues now only find their way out of storage for exhibitions and installations debating colonialism and memory. Their original purpose to celebrate the 'colonial pioneers' Wissmann and Dominik has effectively been overwritten. According to contemporaries, however, the Michel plaque never turned into a similar point of contention in the 1960s and 1970s.[26] Anti-colonial protest in those decades remained instead a somewhat isolated phenomenon.

26 With thanks to Arwed Milz for our email exchange in August and September 2019. See also: Jürgen Zimmerer et al., '50 Jahre Denkmalsturz. Der Sturz des Wissmann-Denkmals an der Universität Hamburg 1967/68' https://kolonialismus.blogs.uni-hamburg.de/50-jahre-denkmalsturz-der-sturz-des-wissmann-denkmals-an-der-universitaet-hamburg-1967-68/ (last accessed 27.7.2024); Ndzodo Awono, 'Hans Dominik. Kolonialheld oder Verbrecher?', in Jürgen Zimmerer and Kim Sebastian Todzi (eds.), *Hamburg: Tor zur kolonialen Welt. Erinnerungsorte der (post-)kolonialen Globalisierung* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2021), pp. 463–475; Melanie Boieck and Reginald Elias Kirey, '"Kolonialheroen" in deutscher, tansanischer und britischer

Fig. 3: The 'Askari Reliefs' at former Lettow-Vorbeck Barracks, Hamburg 2021. Photo: Julian zur Lage.

Public debate on Hamburg's colonial legacy only re-emerged after the turn of the new millennium, once again due to a war memorial: With the post-Cold War restructuring of the Bundeswehr, the barracks in the suburb of Jenfeld were to be turned into a civil space. The Nazi-era complex – named after Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck, commander of the colonial troops in German East Africa during the First World War – also contained several statues, plaques and ornaments with colonial motives. In contrast to the pre-1919 plaques, the later memorials such as the so-called Askari Relief emphasized Black soldiers' participation in the *Schutztruppe* to argue for presumed support for German rule among the local population by utilizing the '*askari* myth' of voluntary, obedient service.[27] This position was just as much in tune with the nationalist, pro-colonial movement in the interwar period as with fascist ideology; however, the former had largely been incorporated into the Nazi state by the late 1930s.

Erinnerungskultur. Das Beispiel des Wissmann-Denkmals und des „Askari"-Monuments in Hamburg beziehungsweise Dar es Salaam', in Jürgen Zimmerer and Kim Sebastian Todzi (eds.), *Hamburg: Tor zur kolonialen Welt. Erinnerungsorte der (post-)kolonialen Globalisierung* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2021), pp. 517–530.

27 See Stefanie Michels, 'Der Askari', in Jürgen Zimmerer (ed.), *Kein Platz an der Sonne. Erinnerungsorte der deutschen Kolonialgeschichte* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2013), pp. 294–308.

When heated discussion of these statues first arose around the turn of the twenty-first century, that Nazi connection certainly boosted public interest – contributing to a debate which has been ongoing for more than two decades by now. The plans developed by local associations in 1999 to use the memorials as centrepieces for a park dedicated to Dar es Salaam and Hamburg being declared twin cities received critique from postcolonial initiatives for its inherent colonial nostalgia and lack of a refined concept. While the connection to Tanzania is at least obvious in the monument to the war in German East Africa, a second memorial is dedicated to all German participants in colonial theatres of war since 1914 – including General Erwin Rommel's North African Corps in the Second World War, a plaque that would only be added in 1965.[28]

Due to the unresolved issues around the so-called Tansania Park, it remains closed to the public – despite several commissions being tasked with developing an appropriate concept, contextualizing the plaques as well as undertaking attempts to rename or repurpose it. These intense debates have contributed to initiatives by activists and ultimately the City of Hamburg itself to commemorate the colonial heritage of Germany's major port city.[29] However, the mere fact that the involvement of civil society activists was necessary to halt plans which had originally received support from the city demonstrates the uncritical attitude towards colonialism which had shaped German public memory in the second half of the twentieth century, only starting to change in the last 25 years or so.

Nevertheless, not only institutions like state or church but even academia had scant interest in critical memories of the colonial era for decades. The first major publication on Hamburg's past as a colonial metropolis, Heiko Möhle's *Bibeln, Branntwein und Bananen* (1999), developed out of a context of activism.[30] This demonstrates how debates on public memory and critical activism can ignite scholarship or even act as a corrective to a one-sided or simply non-existent historiography. The scrutiny of said historiography's trajectory, or in some ways lack thereof, is another aspect needing to be highlighted in regards to global memories of German colonialism.

28 For more detail hereon, see: Jürgen Zimmerer and Julian zur Lage, 'Kolonialkriegerverehrung in (post-)kolonialen Zeiten. Von der „Lettow-Vorbeck-Kaserne" zum „Tansaniapark"', in Jürgen Zimmerer and Kim Sebastian Todzi (eds.), *Hamburg: Tor zur kolonialen Welt. Erinnerungsorte der (post-)kolonialen Globalisierung* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2021), pp. 531–546.

29 See the homepage of the city of Hamburg for more detail: https://www.hamburg.de/politik-und-verwaltung/behoerden/behoerde-fuer-kultur-und-medien/themen/koloniales-erbe/was-ist-koloniales-erbe-110458 (last accessed 27.7.2024).

30 Heiko Möhle (ed.), *Branntwein, Bibeln und Bananen*: *Der deutsche Kolonialismus in Afrika – eine Spurensuche* (3rd ed., Berlin: Assoziation A, 2011) A number of similar projects for other German cities followed, for example: Ulrich van der Heyden and Joachim Zeller (eds), *Kolonialmetropole Berlin*: *Eine Spurensuche* (Berlin: Berlin-Ed, 2002).

From Universal History to Global History

With European expansion, scholarship on all parts of the world gained in relevance, with major differences therein based on levels of interaction, cultural trends and other determining factors. For the early modern period, a focus on the African territories suggests itself as pivotal – not only for their importance to imperialism, but also the continent's special role in the writing of history. European historiography treated the interior of Africa as an unknown – and as a singular one with little local variety at that – for centuries despite the geographical proximity to other areas of interest to the colonial powers.[31]

A dedicated European scholarship on Africa would emerge in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as Olfert Dapper's *Naukeurige Beschrijving der Afrikaensche Gewesten*.[32] As usual for scholarship of the time, it combined geographical, historical, cultural and political information with knowledge compiled from a variety of sources.[33] By the mid-eighteenth century, a more specialized historiography had developed in the Western European countries, as fuelled by a growing interest in 'histories of mankind' – or, as one of the major projects of the time was entitled, *Universal History*. As an excellent example of the inner contradictions of European scholarship, its unnamed authors first proclaim 'a general uniformity runs through all those regions and people [of Africa]', while nevertheless devoting a total of four sizeable volumes to the continent.[34] This discrepancy demonstrates the desire for a comprehensive history of the world, mirroring the contemporary idea of the encyclopaedia. The project found translators, imitators and adaptors in a number of different languages, such as the attempt from Germany's leading university of the time, in Göttingen, to rewrite the series based on refined academic standards.[35]

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31 See: Dane Kennedy, *The Last Blank Spaces*: *Exploring Africa and Australia* (Cumberland: Harvard University Press, 2013), pp. 1–6.

32 Olfert Dapper, *Naukeurige Beschrijvinge der Afrikaensche Gewesten […]* (Amsterdam: Meurs, 1668).

33 On the role of compilation in Dapper's work, see: Adam Jones, 'Decompiling Dapper: A Preliminary Search for Evidence', *History in Africa*, 17 (1990), pp. 171–209.

34 *The Modern part of the universal history*: *Compiled from original writers. By the authors of the antient. Which will perfect the work, and render it a complete body of history, from the earliest account of time, to the present,* (London, 1759–1765), Vol. XIV, p. 17. See: Ann Thompson, 'Thinking about the history of Africa in the eighteenth century', in Guido Abbattista (ed.), *Encountering Otherness*. *Diversities and Transcultural Experiences in Early Modern European Culture* (Trieste: Edizioni Università di Trieste, 2011), pp. 253–265, here pp. 254–257.

35 Marcus Conrad, *Geschichte(n) und Geschäfte*: *Die Publikation der „Allgemeinen Welthistorie" im Verlag Gebauer in Halle (1744–1814)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), pp. 5–15 for the english project, pp. 149–170 for the new concept since 1766.

This attempt to change the shape of *Allgemeine Weltgeschichte* – the project's German title – was only the beginning; the encyclopaedic approach now came under scrutiny. Writing a 'history of everything' proved unsurprisingly as impossible as teaching it in school or university would be. Leading proponents suggested imposing criteria for asserting the relevance of respective peoples and their prospective roles in universal history. Those systems of classification, for example according to political or cultural standards, provided a pretext for dismissing as irrelevant all those whose existence and deeds did not directly affect Europe. The interior of Africa, the Americas before colonization and Oceania as a whole were considered 'geographically and historically unknown' to the relevant (i. e. European) contemporaries and could thus simply be ignored.[36] A significant number of authors attempted to justify the omission of highly influential Asian cultures based on the 'principle of contact' as well, meaning only by interaction with Europe would a state or group of people obtain sufficient importance to justify their inclusion.[37] German philosopher of history J. G. Herder even compared China to a 'mummy' in his *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man*, implying the country had enjoyed a long history – however one seeing little development, and hence too stale for having a major impact on the world.[38] Despite the methodological necessity of establishing some relevance criteria, all these concepts were ultimately attempts to embellish the role of Europe in the history of humankind – a topic which Enlightenment thought had established a particular interest in.

Somehow, despite the various approaches to casting aside non-European and particularly African history as unnoteworthy, the aforementioned scholars of European historiography and philosophy of history in the second half of the eighteenth century still maintained more of an interest in the subject than their peers would some decades later.

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36 'geographisch und historisch unbekannt" (author's translation) in reference to all those parts of Africa not part of the 'Baghdad [i. e. Abassid] Caliphate', Julius August Remer, *Handbuch der mittlern Geschichte*: *Von der Gründung der jetzigen europäischen Staaten bis auf die Kirchenverbesserung* (4th ed., Braunschweig, 1801), p. 206. While Remer is not one of the most outstanding historians of his time, his position matches his contemporaries in German universities. More on Remer: Julian zur Lage, *Geschichtsschreibung aus der Bibliothek*: *Sesshafte Gelehrte und globale Wissenszirkulation (ca. 1750–1815)* (Wolfenbüttel: Herzog August Bibliothek 2022).

37 On its use in reference to China, see: Andreas Pigulla, *China in der deutschen Weltgeschichtsschreibung vom 18. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1996), p. 73.

38 Johann Gottfried von Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (Riga.: Hartknoch, 1784–1791), Vol. 3, p. 17. See also: Eun-Jeung Lee, *'Anti-Europa'*: *Die Geschichte der Rezeption des Konfuzianismus und der konfuzianischen Gesellschaft seit der frühen Aufklärung: eine ideengeschichtliche Untersuchung unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der deutschen Entwicklung*, (Halle, 2001), pp. 262f; Sonia Sikka, *Herder on Humanity and Cultural Difference*: *Enlightened Relativism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 112f.

The German philosopher G. W. F. Hegel infamously denied the part of the continent he deemed 'Africa proper' to be a 'historical part of the World', therefore pledging 'not to mention it again'.[39] His statements, first formulated in lectures in the 1820s and reprinted in innumerable editions over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, may sound radical to modern-day ears but were mostly representative of the time.

As German historian Jürgen Osterhammel phrases it: 'At no point before about 1830 and hardly ever again after 1920 is the notion as powerful that the peoples of colour overseas are 'without history' or possessed at most a history not worth studying'.[40] Research into non-European peoples was pushed out of the major disciplines of the humanities into specialized subjects such as ethnology, particular branches of linguistics or early iterations of area studies. This shift coincided with the general differentiation of disciplines in academia, but its effects extended beyond just the scholarly world. Public interest in non-European cultures waned with it, while the alliance of specialized academics and the state for colonial purposes was amplified.[41]

Osterhammel's end date of 1920 certainly has its merits for the high watermark of imperialism and eurocentrism, but for European historiographies of Africa in particular a longer time frame can be argued to exist as well. Exemplifying the prolonged duration of such negative images is British historian Hugh Trevor-Roper's assessment, probably just as infamous as Hegel's: 'Perhaps in the future there will be some African history to teach. But at present there is none; only the history of Europeans in Africa. The rest is largely darkness, like the history of pre-European, pre-Columbian America. And darkness is not a subject for history.'[42]

Originally published – and even televised – in the 1960s, namely at a time when most African states had achieved independence, this statement is certainly on another level

39 Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*: *Translated from the third German Edition by J. Sibree* (London, New York, 1894), pp. 95, 103. See also: Babacar Camara, 'The Falsity of Hegel's Theses on Africa', *Journal of Black Studies*, 36/1 (2005), pp. 82–96, Esperanza Brizuela-Garcia, 'Africa in the World: History and Historiography', 2018, in: Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History, https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.013.296, p. 3.

40 Jürgen Osterhammel, 'Neue Welten in der europäischen Geschichtsschreibung (ca. 1500–1800)', in Wolfgang Küttler, *Geschichtsdiskurs, Band 2: Anfänge modernen historischen Denkens* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer 1994), pp. 202–215, here p. 202. Author's translation.

41 See: Brizuela-Garcia, 'Africa in the World: History and Historiography' (above, n. 39), here p. 7 on the organizational idea behind Area Studies. However, the separation of scholarship on the 'Global South' predates the concept of 'Area Studies', visible for example in the institutions dedicated to 'Colonial Studies' such as the Kolonialinstitut in Hamburg. See Jens Ruppenthal, *Kolonialismus als 'Wissenschaft und Technik'*: *Das Hamburgische Kolonialinstitut 1908 bis 1919* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2007).

42 Hugh R. Trevor-Roper, *The Rise of Christian Europe* (2nd ed. (rev.), London: Thames & Hudson, 1966), p. 9.

of racism and wilful ignorance compared to those made over a century before. The fact that Trevor-Roper used this argument explicitly against '[u]ndergraduates, seduced, as always, by the changing breath of journalistic fashion' in their demanding of Africa's inclusion in academic curricula, only emphasizes the degree to which the assessment is purposefully exclusive and derogatory towards public opinion – that is, memory.[43] Consequently, according to its index, all further mentions of 'Africa' in the book refer only to the Roman provinces.[44]

Refuting Trevor-Roper's assessment, the study of African history gained new momentum with the independence of many of the continent's states. Centres of scholarship such as the Universities of Dar es Salaam and Ibadan arose.[45] While to some degree focused on the newly formed states' national histories, these universities' impact went far beyond their respective regions. Guyanese historian and politician Walter Rodney's years in Dar es Salaam in the 1960s and 1970s are just one example of the interconnected global development of postcolonial thought in general and historiography in particular.[46] The UNESCO project of a *General History of Africa*, first published in 1981 with a large number of contributors from the continent as well as from the former colonial powers, was both a testament to the impressive scholarship which already existed at that point and to the necessity of reiterating the fact that 'Africa has a history'.[47]

The impact of historiography written in the former colonies – as well as dedicated works of postcolonial theory – was, however, particularly limited in (West) German academia, even more so than in other Western European countries and the United States. Studies like the seminal manifesto of Afro-German identity, *Farbe bekennen. Afro-deutsche Frauen auf den Spuren ihrer Geschichte* (*Showing our Colors: Afro-German Women Speak Out*) by May Ayim, Katharina Oguntoye and Dagmar Schultz could have paved the way more than a decade earlier. However, it was once again only with the turn of the new century that a boom in global and postcolonial histories occurred.[48]

43 See ibid., Foreword, p. 7, for its publication history in television and press.

44 Ibid., p. 210.

45 E. S. Atieno Odhiambo, 'Re-Introducing the 'People without History': African Historiographies', in Stephen Howe (ed.), *The New Imperial Histories Reader* (London: Routledge, 2010), pp. 391–404, here p. 394.

46 Horace Campbell, 'The Impact of Walter Rodney and Progressive Scholars on the Dar es Salaam School', *Social and Economic Studies*, 40/2 (1991), p. 99.

47 Joseph Ki-Zerbo, 'General Introduction', in Joseph Ki-Zerbo (ed.), *General History of Africa I. Methodology and African Prehistory* (Paris: Heinemann, 1981), pp. 1–23, quotation p. 1. For Ki-Zerbo's emphasis on oral tradition, see pp. 7–9.

48 Katharina Oguntoye, May Ayim, and Dagmar Schultz (eds.), *Farbe bekennen*: *Afro-deutsche Frauen auf den Spuren ihrer Geschichte* (Berlin: Orlanda-Frauenverl., 1986). Impactful for the transfer of postcolonial

Written Sources, Oral History

These short summaries of European and particularly German memory and historiography on Africa set the stage for what is in some ways the intersection of prevailing themes. Namely, the question of written sources versus oral history – and specifically their respective validity and accessibility. To what degree did European perceptions of writing cultures shape the trope of the *People without History*, as Eric Wolf's eponymous critique phrased it?[49]

A very revealing variation in this trope comes from the travel account of Georg Schweinfurth. In the German version, he describes how he visited 'a people without chiefs, without script, without history'. 'Script', or the more elaborately translated 'script culture', corresponds here to the German original *Schrift*. In contemporary translations of Schweinfurth's work, however, the latter has been taken to mean 'traditions'.[50] This substitution highlights an already remarkable quotation, noteworthy to the degree that German historian Christoph Marx incorporated a part of it in the title of his own study.[51] It stands to reason that translator Ellen E. Frewer considered the people of Central Africa being without script as something too obvious to bother translating, a by no means isolated view.

The question raised by the connection between 'script' and 'history' is one which continued to shape European historiography from the eighteenth through the twentieth century: Are only written sources valid in writing history at the academic level? Even when the answer to that question was not simply 'yes', the perceived unreliability of all other types of sources heavily influenced scholarly works. Additionally, most authors considered the 'lack' of written documents in a given culture a sign of its inferiority. In the late Enlightenment age, this was most prominently debated regarding the Americas.

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thought into German historiography: Sebastian Conrad and Shalini Randeria (eds.), *Jenseits des Eurozentrismus: Postkoloniale Perspektiven in den Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2002).

49 Eric R. Wolf, *Europe and the People without History* (Berkeley, California: Univ. of California Press, 1982).

50 German: 'Völkern ohne Oberhaupt, ohne Schrift und Geschichte", English 'a people which have been without chiefs, without traditions, without history'. Georg Schweinfurth, *Im Herzen von Afrika: Reisen und Entdeckungen im centralen Aequatorial-Afrika während der Jahre 1868 bis 1871* (Leipzig, London: Brockhaus; Sampson Low Marston, 1874), Vol. 1, p. 156. Georg Schweinfurth, *The Heart of Africa. Three years' travels and adventures in the unexplored regions of Central Africa from 1868 to 1871* 2 vol. (2nd ed., New York, 1874), Vol. 1., p. 145.

51 Christoph Marx, *‚Völker ohne Schrift und Geschichte'. Zur historischen Erfassung des vorkolonialen Schwarzafrika in der deutschen Forschung des 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1988).

One example is the Scottish 'stadial' or 'conjectural' history.[52] William Robertson, in his *History of America* and especially his attempted rebuttal of the critique expressed by the Mexican Jesuit Francisco Xavier Clavijero, discredited archaeological testimony and personal experience.[53] Even the imbalance in Robertson's assessment of Meso- and South American cultures on the one hand – being largely sceptical of their achievements – and of India's on the other – seeing greater positivity here than his contemporaries – can be attributed to the easily available translations of Sanskrit texts, as provided by Indian scholars and East India Company members.[54]

Scepticism towards non-written sources had its roots in historical Pyrrhonism. This school of thought, heavily influenced by antique concepts, had reached its peak in the early 1700s.[55] Self-proclaimed 'critical' philosophers of history revived some of the ideas in the late Enlightenment period to use them against sources and other texts they deemed untrustworthy, which included most of those offering positive depictions of non-European cultures. One of the most influential proponents of this Eurocentric Pyrrhonism was Cornelius de Pauw, a seemingly obscure Dutch-German cleric writing in the western German city of Xanten. He built on the earlier critique of travel accounts by philosophers such as Rousseau to argue for the superior vantage point of the sedentary scholar over travellers and eyewitnesses in general. Based on this system, he accordingly tried to argue for his Eurocentric theories on the Americas, China and Egypt:

> It is even a fortunate circumstance, that travellers did not agree in their narratives; otherwise their impostures could not have been so easily detected. So many errors must evidently have arisen from their total incapacity to describe the arts, trades, manner of living, and all such essential objects, by which real philosophers endeavour to acquire a knowledge of nations.[56]

52 Dugald Stewart retrospective attempted to summarize the works of his contemporaries: Dugald Stewart, 'Account of the life and writings of Adam Smith, LL.D', *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, 3/1 (1794), pp. 55–137, p. 86.

53 Robertson's attempt to discredit Clavijero is particularly striking in William Robertson, *Additions And Corrections To The Former Editions Of Dr. Robertson's History Of America* (London: Cadell, 1788), for example pp. 1–4, 30f.

54 In more detail: zur Lage, *Geschichtsschreibung aus der Bibliothek* (above, n. 36), pp. 180–190.

55 Markus Völkel, *'Pyrrhonismus historicus' und 'fides historica': Die Entwicklung der deutschen historischen Methodologie unter dem Gesichtspunkt der historischen Skepsis* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1987), pp. 200–202.

56 Cornelius de Pauw, *Philosophical Dissertations on the Egyptians and Chinese. Translated from the French of Mr. de Pauw, Private Reader to Frederic II. King of Prussia, by Capt. J. Thomson. In two volumes* (London, 1795), vol 1., p. 2.

De Pauw's theories received significant backlash. Frederick II of Prussia mocked his 'rigid Pyrrhonism'[57] in his correspondence with Voltaire, while Alexander von Humboldt claimed to be seeking to establish a 'sane criticism' instead of 'absolute scepticism' – remarks clearly directed against de Pauw.[58] Yet, the names of his critics are proof of his relevance in the European republic of letters. While in many ways an extraordinary case, the general notion of scepticism towards all sources not written by educated Europeans would long remain a staple of historiography.

The shift away from Enlightenment thought and towards historism in German academia reformulated Pyrrhonistic arguments against non-written sources, but by no means disavowed them completely. On the contrary, nineteenth-century historism laid the foundations for the enduring exclusion of oral sources from German historiography. While protagonists like Leopold von Ranke and Johann Gustav Droysen contributed to this trend, broader philosophical influences like Wilhelm von Humboldt[59] and in particular scholarly practices were just as important in the hierarchization of source types. Limited access and a lack of language skills, among other factors, discouraged historians from reaching out beyond the established European archival sources.[60] However, the philosophical background had the most significant long-term effect here: similar to with the adaption of postcolonial theory, the broader reception of oral history's core concepts and practical uses only developed slowly in Germany over the course of the second half of the twentieth century.[61] As another parallel, oral accounts also gained importance as 'alternate history' or 'history from below', with a focus on (European) women and working-class people in general.[62] Interest in non-'Western' oral history remained limited, however, as a brief

57 'Frédéric à Voltaire, Potsdam, 20 avril 1776' http://friedrich.uni-trier.de/de/oeuvres/23/426/text/ (last accessed 27.7.2024), author's translation.

58 Alexander von Humboldt, *Vues des Cordillères, et monumens des peuples indigènes de l'Amérique*, 2 Vols (Paris: Bourgeois-Maze, 1816), Vol. 1, p. 10, author's translation.

59 Detlef Briesen and Rüdiger Gans, 'Über den Wert von Zeitzeugen in der deutschen Historik. Zur Geschichte einer Ausgrenzung', *Bios*, 6 (1993), pp. 8–10.

60 Stefan Jordan, 'Schriftlose Kulturen in der deutschen Weltgeschichtsschreibung des 19. Jahrhunderts', in Lisa Regazzoni (ed.), *Schriftlose Vergangenheiten. Geschichtsschreibung an ihrer Grenze – von der Frühen Neuzeit bis in die Gegenwart* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019), pp. 109–128, here p. 118.

61 Briesen and Gans, 'Über den Wert von Zeitzeugen in der deutschen Historik. Zur Geschichte einer Ausgrenzung' (above, n. 59), pp. 15f. See also for Braudel and the Annales School on Africa: Steven Feierman, 'Africa in History: The End of Universal Narratives', in Gyan Prakash (ed.), *After Colonialism. Imperial Histories and Postcolonial Displacements* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 40–65, here pp. 42–47.

62 Annette Leo, 'Der besondere Charme der Integration. Einführende Bemerkungen zu diesem Band', in Annette Leo and Franka Maubach (eds.), *Den Unterdrückten eine Stimme geben? Die International Oral History Association zwischen politischer Bewegung und wissenschaftlichem Netzwerk* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2013), pp. 7–20, here p. 9.

remark from a retrospective volume on the development of the field from 2013 demonstrates. Annette Leo claims in this regard that 'in Africa, such a development has only just begun'[63] – therewith negating how its methodological importance had in fact been established in a number of African historiographical schools of thought for decades already.

To mention just a few examples relevant to German colonialism: E. S. Atieno Ohiambo highlighted the fundamental relevance of oral history for the Dar es Salaam school of historical thought, explicitly as a response to the trope of Africa being without history. 'Their biggest challenge was methodological: history as understood in the West was based on written documents. The greatest break came with the acceptance and refinement of the methodology of oral traditions as a means for recapturing the African voices from the past.'[64]

Similar methodological reassessments have been established for Namibia[65] and Cameroon, in the latter case for example as headed by A. Kum'a Ndumbe within the project 'Souvenirs de l'époque allemande au Cameroun' running from 1980 to 1986.[66] From Europe, ethnologists and historians such as Jan Vansina also highlighted the importance of oral tradition.[67] The present volume adds to this impressive scholarship, then, with the contributions from Amina Djouldé Christelle and Nancy Rushohora, who both focus on oral memories of instances of armed resistance in Cameroon and Tanzania respectively.

The Paradox of Script and Colonialism

A weakness of European scholarship on Africa similar to the longstanding ignorance towards oral history should also receive more attention, namely what could be called

63 Ibid., p. 12. Author's translation.

64 Atieno Odhiambo, 'Re-Introducing the 'People without History': African Historiographies' (above, n. 45), p. 394.

65 See: Gesine Krüger, 'Das goldene Zeitalter der Viehzüchter. Namibia im 19. Jahrhundert', in Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller (eds), *Völkermord in Deutsch-Südwestafrika. Der Kolonialkrieg (1904–1908) in Namibia und seine Folgen* (Berlin: Links, 2003), pp. 13–25, here pp. 13–16.

66 For some remarks on the project, see Kum'a Ndumbe, 'Introduction', in Kum'a Ndumbe (ed.), *L' Afrique et l'Allemagne de la colonisation à la coopération 1884–1986 (le cas du Cameroun)/Africa and Germany from Colonisation to Cooperation 1884–1986 (The Case of Cameroon)* (Yaoundé: Éd. Africavenir, 1986), pp. XV–XXXIV; Kum'a Ndumbe, 'Discours d'ouverture du directeur du colloque', in Kum'a Ndumbe (ed.), *L' Afrique et l'Allemagne de la colonisation à la coopération 1884–1986 (le cas du Cameroun)/Africa and Germany from Colonisation to Cooperation 1884–1986 (The Case of Cameroon)* (Série Sciences et recherches, Yaoundé: Éd. Africavenir, 1986), XXVII–XLII. See also: https://lisa.gerda-henkel-stiftung.de/stimmen_der_erinnerung?nav_id=6522&language=en (last accessed 27.7.2024).

67 Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965 [1961]).

the paradox of script and colonialism: while negating the very existence of local script cultures, European troops looted and removed African manuscripts. That further to, at the same time, restricting access to the documents produced by the colonial bureaucracy.

Early European travellers to Africa's interior, such as Mungo Park and Heinrich Barth, had explicitly and quite sympathetically engaged with the respective regions' script cultures and brought back copies or excerpts of texts.[68] However, the academic impact of this approach was limited, as demonstrated by both explorers' further careers and subsequent reception.[69] Their somewhat positive view is clearly distinct from that of later travellers such as Schweinfurth, whose aforementioned labelling of African peoples as 'without script, without history' coincided with a shift in interest from western to south-central Africa. Timbuktu, and the scholastic centres of West Africa visited by Park and Barth more generally, were often considered exceptions to the rule. Present-day public interest in the threat to Timbuktu's manuscripts mirrors the particular role ascribed to it by nineteenth-century European travellers: they had already designated a special image to the, from their perspective, almost inaccessible city and its scholarship.[70]

Yet in many other cases, European colonizers looted manuscripts from the continent. Just a few examples (beyond the century-old interest in papyri and North African manuscripts[71]): The British campaign against Maqdala in 1868 brought a major collection of Ethiopian manuscripts back to Europe, which have been the subject of restitution claims for decades now.[72] French troops looted Ségou in present-day Mali in 1890, bring-

68 Mungo Park and James Rennell, *Travels in the interior districts of Africa*: *Performed under the direction and patronage of the African Association, in the years 1795, 1796, and 1797* (London, 1799), pp. 314f.; Heinrich Barth, *Reisen und Entdeckungen in Nord- und Central-Afrika in den Jahren 1849 bis 1855*: *Tagebuch seiner im Auftrage der Brittischen Regierung unternommenen Reise* (Gotha, 1857/58), Vol. 4, p. 415; see also: Albert Adu Boahen, *Britain, the Sahara, and the western Sudan, 1788–1861* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1964), pp. 201f.

69 Park had to deal with accusations that his travel account was mostly a product of planter, anti-abolitionist and sedentary scholar on Africa Bryan Edwards; he died on his second trip to Africa in 1806, just a few years after his original return. See: zur Lage, *Geschichtsschreibung aus der Bibliothek* (above, n. 36), pp. 124–127. For Barth's limited success in academia, see: Klaus Schroeder, 'Art. „Barth, Heinrich"' in: Neue Deutsche Biographie 1 (1953), pp. 602f. https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd119076950.html#ndbcontentn (last accessed 27.7.2024).

70 Mauro Nobili, 'Introduction. African History and Islamic Manuscript Cultures', in Andrea Brigaglia and Mauro Nobili (eds.), *The Arts and Crafts of Literacy* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2017), pp. 1–24, here pp. 6f.

71 A project on the colonial origins of the state libraries' papyri has been established in Hamburg: Jürgen Zimmerer and Jakob Wigand, 'Kolonisierte Manuskripte. Zur Erforschung der Papyrus Sammlung der Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg', *Provenienz & Forschung*, 2021, pp. 49–52.

72 Martin Bailey, 'British Museum, V&A, British Library and more face restitution claims as Ethiopia moves for Maqdala treasures', *The Art Newspaper – online*, 1.11.2008 https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2008/11/01/british-museum-vanda-british-library-and-more-face-restitution-claims-as-ethiopia-moves-for-maqdala-treasures (last accessed 27.7.2024). On the restitution debate in general, see: Jürgen Zimmerer, Kim Sebastian Todzi

ing back the library of Umar Tal to the metropolis.[73] German colonizers seized Nama leader Hendrik Witbooi's documents on several occasions, some of which were among the first objects returned from European museums to their African country of origin in 1996 – thus pre-dating more recent debates on restitution. Now stored in the National Archives of Namibia, they form part of the UNESCO Memory of the World Register.[74]

The availability of African manuscripts in European libraries did not lead to significant research interest therein for most of the time period following their acquisition. They were catalogued, and – if at all – researched by specialists, not included in global historiography.[75] Remarkably, the 'rediscovery' of African manuscripts by European scholars took even longer than the inclusion of oral sources, as scholar of Muslim manuscript cultures Mauro Nobili notes.[76] The manuscripts' limited availability to scholars from the Global South leads deeper into the restitution debate, as emphasized by Gloria Emeagwali.[77] Despite the fact that Iceland and South Korea seeing respective manuscripts returned marked two of the most important predecessor cases, they have since played a very limited role in current debates – with art and other non-manuscript objects receiving significantly more attention here.[78] However, the importance of manuscripts transcends the material-culture dimension: following Oswald Masebo in his contribution

and Friederike Odenwald (eds.): *Displacing and Displaying the Objects of Others. The Materiality of Identity and Depots of Global History*, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2025).

73 Graziano Krätli, 'West African Arabic manuscript heritage at a crossroads. Dust to digital or digital dust?', *Anuari de Filologia. Antiqua et Mediaeualia*, pp. 41–66, here pp. 42f.

74 Ellen Namhila, 'Memory of the World Register Nomination Form: The Hendrik Witbooi Papers', 2005 https://web.archive.org/web/20210715205334/http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_forms/letter_journals_of_hendrik_witbooi.pdf (last accessed 27.7.2024); 'Letter Journals of Hendrik Witbooi. Documentary heritage submitted by Namibia and recommended for inclusion in the Memory of the World Register in 2005.' https://web.archive.org/web/20210715210917/http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/memory-of-the-world/register/full-list-of-registered-heritage/registered-heritage-page-5/letter-journals-of-hendrik-witbooi/ (last accessed 27.7.2024).

75 See for cataloguing: William Wright, *Catalogue of the Ethiopic Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired since the Year 1847* (London: Longmans, 1877); Noureddine Ghali, Sidi Mohamed Mahibou, and Louis Brenner, *Inventaire de la Bibliothèque umarienne de Ségou* (Paris: Éd. du Centre nat. de la recherche scient., 1985).

76 Nobili, 'Introduction. African History and Islamic Manuscript Cultures' (above, n. 71), here p. 1 in regards to Muslim script cultures. It should be highlighted that many centers of scholarship developed with large degrees of independence from Arabic or European influences, see: Fallou Ngom, 'West African Manuscripts in Arabic and African Languages and Digital Preservation', 2017, in: *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History,* https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.013.123; Ridder Samsom, 'Die Swahili-Manuskriptkultur', *Manuscript Cultures*, 4 (2011), pp. 68–77.

77 Gloria Emeagwali, 'Intersections between Africa's Indigenous Knowledge Systems and History', in Gloria Emeagwali and George J. Sefa Dei (eds.), *African Indigenous Knowledge and the Disciplines* (Rotterdam: SensePublishers, 2014), pp. 1–17, here pp. 6–

78 See, for example, the Sarr-Savoy report and its public reception: while it mentions manuscripts repeatedly, they continued to receive little attention even following its publication; Felwine Sarr and Bénédicte Savoy,

to this volume, the inclusion of sources beyond those found in the colonizers' archives is of the utmost importance for the production of entangled histories which disrupt the limited perspectives imposed by the focus exclusively on European documents.

The archives for global memories of colonialism also include, accordingly, the oral tradition, thus venturing into the question of how colonialism influences communities to this day. In this volume, Mercia Kandukira as well as Vitjitua Ndjiharine and Nashilongweshipwe Sakaria address this very subject, in highlighting different approaches to one's engagement with the colonial archive. Generally, the impact of contemporary literature and art on postcolonial academic debates in Europe has been significantly larger than, for example, that of historiographies remaining within a national framework.[79] Opening up to different forms of memory without privileging 'pure' textual research over 'soft' arts may be the most important outcome of what originally represented a quest to include oral history.

Oral History, Memory and Historiography Goes Global

Global memories of (German) colonialism, oral history, memory and historiography are evidently closely interconnected, despite the very limited scholarship to date on this nexus itself.[80] Eurocentric historiography pre-dated formal German colonialism by at least a century and outlived it by almost the same again, if we take the shift towards postcolonial and global approaches emerging after the turn of the new millennium as the beginning of the end. Especially regarding Africa, European authors established the trope of the continent's lack of distinct cultures and history based, among other factors, on the hierarchization of civilizations – as determined by its deemed limited production of written records. Oral tradition as a distinct feature of collective memory would long remain ignored by European and particularly German historiography. At the same time, the colonial conquerors brought a significant number of manuscripts back to the metropolis, creating the paradox that written sources were available to European researchers yet continued to be mostly overlooked.

'The Restitution of African Cultural Heritage. Toward a New Relational Ethics', 2018 https://web.archive.org/web/20220901051009/http://restitutionreport2018.com/ pp. 33, 50f. 64 (last accessed 27.7.2024).

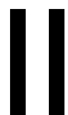
79 As demonstrated by the disciplinary backgrounds of several important scholars of postcolonial theory such as E. Said or G. C. Spivak.

80 On the limited connections made thus far, see: Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes, 'Introduction: Building Partnerships Between Oral History and Memory Studies', in Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes (eds), *Oral History and Public Memories* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Temple Univ. Press, 2008), pp. VII–XVII, here p. VII.

It took the establishment of universities in post-independence African states, with History departments highlighting the relevance of oral tradition and memory, to finally bring these elements into academia. For these concepts to truly arrive in Europe, however, impulses from civil society were required and will continue to be necessary for the foreseeable future: against Eurocentric practices of memory; for the restitution of looted artefacts and manuscripts; for postcolonial approaches to historiography. Academia cannot ignore these impulses going forward. This volume strives, then, to further incorporate global memories of German colonialism into international scholarship.

However, the relevance of memory and civil society to academia is not a one-way street. As Priya Satia has demonstrated in *Time's Monster: How History Makes History*, historiography helped to shape empires[81] – and today, with most colonial ones having been dissolved by now, imperial historiographies shape not only memory but also the contemporary political sphere. In many European countries, recent debates on transcontinental migration, on the global economy or on coming to terms with the colonial past have been heavily influenced by conflicting understandings of that very history.[82] The importance of challenging Eurocentrism in memory and historiography by including new approaches, additional sources and contributors from beyond the European academic sphere is evident.

81 Priya Satia, *Time's Monster*: *How History Makes History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2020).
82 On the German case, see: Zimmerer (ed.), *Erinnerungskämpfe* (above, n. 8).



Case Studies: Memories, Memorials and Oral History

Colonial Heroism in German, British and Tanzanian Commemorative Culture

Melanie Boieck and Reginald Elias Kirey

Remembering heroic figures in one country's history is often a sensitive procedure. Usually myths and legends are generated around these historic figures and it can be a difficult endeavour to try looking behind the embellished stories. Sometimes it can be necessary to dismantle the myths and tell the true and sometimes unheroic story which lies behind the legend. In its comparatively short colonial history, Germany has spawned a lot of so-called colonial heroes who were supposed to be role models of strong, adventurous and smart men, exploring and securing new territories for their home country. Most times these men became heroes after their death, while society forgot their mistakes or scandals and treated them as god-like. In a lot of cases, these positive receptions last until today. Many 'colonial heroes' were depicted in monuments and put on buildings or pedestals, where they stood – albeit not in every case – undisturbed.[1] Tanzania, too, has proud and powerful men who fought against the colonial oppressors, like Abushiri bin Salim and Mkwavinyika Munyigumba Mwamuyinga (Mkwawa) or who led the country into independence, like Julius Kambarage Nyerere. And finally Great Britain, one of the biggest colonial powers, has its own fair share of heroic figures of course.

This article intends to look at the symbolism of these monuments. Who were these colonial heroes and under which circumstances did the monuments get built? What was their message and how were and are they perceived throughout history? Since this topic alone could fill books, we decided to concentrate on two examples which are coincidentally related. One is the Wissmann monument, first built in Dar es Salaam, then rebuilt in Hamburg. In its place in Dar es Salaam the British colonial rulers erected the Askari monument which has lasted until today, while the Wissmann monument was torn down by students in 1968.

Both monuments exemplify places of colonial remembrance. The approach is partly taken from Pierre Nora's concept of the *lieux des memoires*, which defines places of remembrance – or in this case colonial remembrance, like monuments, rituals or memo-

1 See Winfried Speitkamp, 'Der Totenkult um die Kolonialheroen des Deutschen Kaiserreichs', *zeitenblicke* 3/1 (2004), http://www.zeitenblicke.de/2004/01/speitkamp/Speitkamp.pdf (last accessed 27.7.2024).

rial days as part of a nation's collective memory. In our case, three nations share this colonial memory, with the common denominator being the Tanzanian people who were ruled by German and British colonialists successively. Both monuments share another theme. The Wissmann monument not only depicts its eponymous figure but also an *askari*,[2] which is also the theme of the Askari monument. The perception and history of both places of colonial commemoration are intertwined and in need of critical rehabilitation, as are many topics on German colonial history and its remembrance today.[3]

On 14 October 2016, *the Deutsches Historisches Museum (German Historical Museum)* in Berlin opened the Exhibition 'German Colonialism – Fragments Past and Present'. Among the 500 artefacts featuring is the monument of Hermann von Wissmann.[4] His monument exemplifies German colonization in East Africa and its remembrance throughout German history. It was built in 1908 by sculptor Adolph Kürle during the height of German colonization. It posthumously honours the 'Explorer of Africa' and 'Reich Commissioner of German East Africa'. The conqueror and victor of the 'Abushiri War' – which was falsely called the 'Arab Uprising' in Germany – was depicted on a pedestal wearing the governor's uniform with a sabre and tropical helmet. Additionally, Wissmann was depicted with an *askari* and a lion at his feet looking up at him. The monument was inaugurated on 3 April 1909 in Dar es Salaam, in what was then German East Africa. Wissmann gradually came to be idolized as a 'colonial hero' after his death in 1905. Many monuments were built, for example in his hometown Bad Lauterberg, and colonial products were advertised with his picture on.[5]

The German Empire had acquired its colonies comparatively late, and with the support of mostly private organizations. It was the 'German East African Company'[6] which was supposed to govern German East Africa in 1888. The multi-ethnic population in the area had had its social difficulties before, but the arrival of the German colonists cul-

2 The *askari* was the lowest rung among the German colonial troops (*Schutztruppe*), which consisted of German officers and African mercenaries and/or soldiers. See Stefanie Michels, *Schwarze deutsche Kolonialsoldaten*: *Mehrdeutige Repräsentationsräume und früher Kosmopolitismus in Afrika* (Histoire, 4, Bielefeld: transcript, 2009), pp. 20–21.

3 Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Kolonialismus und kollektive Identität: Erinnerungsorte der deutschen Kolonialgeschichte', in Jürgen Zimmerer (ed.), *Kein Platz an der Sonne*. *Erinnerungsorte der deutschen Kolonialgeschichte* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2013), pp. 5–36.

4 See Deutsches Historisches Museum (ed.), *Deutscher Kolonialismus*: *Fragmente seiner Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Sebastian Gottschalk, Heike Hartmann, and Irene Hilden (Darmstadt: Theiss Verlag, 2016), p. 188.

5 See Gordon Uhlmann, 'Das Hamburger Wissmann-Denkmal: Von der kolonialen Weihestätte zum postkolonialen Debatten-Mahnmal', In: Ulrich van der Heyden (ed.), *Kolonialismus hierzulande. Eine Spurensuche in Deutschland,* (Erfurt: Edition tempus, 2007), pp. 281–285, here p. 281.

6 See Thomas Morlang, *Askari und Fitafita*: *'farbige' Söldner in den deutschen Kolonien* (Schlaglichter der Kolonialgeschichte, Bd. 8, Berlin: Links, 2008), pp. 10–14.

minated in an uprising and then a war.[7] Local governance was supposed to be handed over to the Germans, but in many places the inconsiderate and insensitive approaches taken resulted in the uprising, which spread throughout the colony. The company was overstrained and had to ask Chancellor Otto von Bismarck for help. Bismarck opted for a fast and inexpensive military solution. At that time, Wissmann was known for his travels to and in Africa and considered an expert. According to his plan, he wanted to hire 600 African mercenaries. The latter were supposed to be hired outside of the colony, however, in order to prevent them from joining the enemy's lines. The Reichstag therefore granted two million *Reichsmark* for recruiting and training these mercenaries.[8] Wissmann was promoted to 'Imperial Commissioner for East Africa', leading his so-called Police Troops[9] into battle against the inhabitants of the new German colony.

The German public and press portrayed the Abushiri War as retaliation against Arab slave traders in order to justify the military intervention, which is why, as noted, it is still called the 'Arab Uprising' in Germany today. In addition to the Arabs, Indian and Swahili colonial inhabitants also fought against the Germans. The war became one of liberation for the East African people, with Wissmann and his troops fighting it rigorously.[10] After the war ended in 1890, the temporarily assembled troops were to be dispersed because Chancellor Bismarck still favoured a government led by the German East African Company. He wanted to avoid a permanent, and therefore costly, military presence in the colonies. However, continued resistance by the locals made a standing military unit and thus Wissmann necessary. The Imperial Commissioner had free rein commanding his troops and *de facto* supervision of the German East Africa Company. He chose his officers personally. The mercenaries were mostly hired in Sudan and their training was completed in only a few weeks, while the equipment was distributed by the German Imperial Army.[11]

After the German East African Company was eventually deemed unfit to govern the colony – due to the fact that it could not rule without the aid of military – civil servants and clerks from Germany took over. However, the military was still needed, which resulted in the *Schutztruppengesetz* ('Colonial Army Law') of 1891. The newly founded 'Imperial Colonial Army for German East Africa' was still called the *Wissmann-Troop* by

7 See Michael Pesek, *Koloniale Herrschaft in Deutsch-Ostafrika: Expeditionen, Militär und Verwaltung seit 1880* (Frankfurt a. M.: Campus Verlag, 2005), pp. 185–189.

8 See Morlang, Askari und Fitafita (above, n. 6), pp. 15–19.

9 Ibid. p. 19.

10 See Pesek, Koloniale Herrschaft in Deutsch-Ostafrika (above, n. 7), pp. 188–189.

11 See Tanja Bührer, *Kaiserliche Schutztruppe für Deutsch-Ostafrika*: *Koloniale Sicherheitspolitik und transkulturelle Kriegführung 1885–1918* (Beiträge zur Militärgeschichte, 70, München: Oldenbourg Wissenschafts Verlag, 2011), pp. 55–63.

the general public.[12] Because he had trouble to align his troops with the German Imperial Army, Wissmann was not considered for the new posts of Commanding Officer or Governor (of the colony). Nevertheless, he was ennobled and honoured for his services, but under the rule of Chancellor Leo von Caprivi he never took an official office.

Only when Chlodwig Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst became chancellor, who looked more favourably on Wissmann's career, was he offered the governance of German East Africa in 1895. However, Wissmann was not satisfied. His position was a bureaucratic one and the morphine-addicted governor was not up to the task of his civic duties and bureaucratic rule. After only one year, he resigned and retired back to Germany. He later died in a hunting accident in 1905, rumoured by contemporaries and historians alike to have been suicide.[13] His legacy was his title of nobility and his reputation as a founder of the Imperial Colonial Army for East Africa and suppressor of the 'Abushiri Revolt'. His morphine addiction and conflicts with the government were forgotten. His monument stood in Dar es Salaam until the Germans left the city and the colony was dissolved. After World War I, the British, who took over most of the former German colony, dismantled it in 1919 and brought it back to London where it was stored in the Imperial War Museum.[14] The Wissmann monument was not the only colonial-era one to be taken down: statues of Hans Dominik[15] and Carl Peters[16] were similarly dismantled.

British colonial documents provide information on the granite base on which Wissmann's statue previously stood. Surprised by this massive pedestal, the director of the Imperial War Graves Commission (IWGC) asked the Department of Works in Dar es Salaam to furnish him with any available German records on the 'working plans of the Wissmann memorial', probably hoping to learn from them, 'but was informed that records of this nature were not available locally'.[17] Due to this, the director did not allow the granite pedestal to be removed to give space for the Askari Monument before photos and measurements of it had first been taken for 'future records'.[18] In fact, the director hesitated about demolishing the granite base before he was absolutely sure that the Germans did not need it; as he clearly stated:

12 Ibid., pp. 87–90.
13 Ibid., pp. 82–86.
14 See Uhlmann, Das Hamburger Wissmann-Denkmal (above, n. 5), pp. 281–282.
15 Colonial officer in Cameroon.
16 Founder of the 'Society for German colonization', for which he bought the land which later became the colony 'German East Africa'. He became an imperial commissioner but was dismissed because he arbitrarily hanged Africans. That prompted his nickname 'Hänge-Peters'.
17 TNA, 3300/11, From the Imperial War Graves Commission to the Chief Secretary, 19.2.1923.
18 Ibid.

> [T]he Commission would naturally prefer to take over an unencumbered site but as the statuary, which during the German regime was in position on the existing granite base, has now, I understand, found a new and suitable setting in Germany, I am prepared [...] to recommend to the Commission that this site be now finally adopted.[19]

The removal of the Wissmann statue and its derelict pedestal was indispensable because, having been entrusted to rule Tanganyika as a mandate territory by the League of Nations, the British wished to entirely erase German heroic memories and replace them with those which would suit their interests. As a matter of fact, 'the process of bringing the former German colony [Tanganyika] into line with other British colonies and protectorates in Africa [...] called for the gradual elimination of the vestiges of German influence'.[20] Therefore, the Wissmann memorial was to be replaced by the Askari monument, as that would temporarily make Africans have a more tolerant attitude towards British colonial rule.

As mentioned earlier, after the end of World War I in Tanganyika the Wissmann monument, together with other such statues, was safely shipped to London as a war trophy for public display. In 1921, however, the British government put the three monuments up for sale. A senator from Hamburg called Justus Strandes,[21] who was a member of the Senate Commission for Internal and Foreign Affairs in Berlin, answered immediately. He wrote to his fellow commissioners in order to encourage the acquisition of the monuments[22]:

> A little while ago, the Duke Adolf Friedrich von Mecklenburg and F. F. Eiffe visited him [State Secretary Müller from the Rebuilding Ministry], and advised him to purchase the monuments for Hamburg, which is Germany's primary overseas gateway. One condition would be that the country would not be bearing the costs for the reconstruction, since the aforementioned gentleman has ensured private funding for the reconstruction. He is awaiting the respective applications from private citizens.[23]

19 Ibid.

20 Peter A. Dumbuya, *Tanganyika under International Mandate* 1919–1946 (Maryland: University Press of America, 1995), p. 103.

21 Strandes used to be a merchant for Hansing & Co. on Zanzibar between 1879 and 1890. He was a member of the *Kolonialrat* ('Colonial Advisory Board') and a member of the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce. He was also an elected member of parliament in Hamburg (*Bürgerschaft*), a senator and an envoy in Berlin.

22 See Justus Strandes, *Hamburgische Gesandtschaft J.-No 3292*, 23.7.1921 (authors' own translation).

23 Ibid. (authors' own translation).

Fig. 1: Unveiling of the Wissmann Monument in Dar es Salaam, 3. April 1909. Photo: Bildbestand der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft, Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main, 004-1081-24, https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hebis:30:2-771275.

The senator guessed that the money for the monuments would be funded by private citizens. He was right: the Association of Colonial Germans and Citizens Interested in Colonialism agreed to collect the money for and fund the reconstruction of these monuments:

> Yesterday the local division's board of the 'colonial society' decided to collect and fund the money for the restoration of the colonial monuments in Hamburg. Soon after their meeting they went to the Hamburg Stock Exchange, where they successfully collected the necessary sum. According to an expert estimation the Wissmann monument will need 170,000 [Reichsmark], the other monuments will need roughly the same. If the monuments can be bought for Hamburg, then the Senate couldn't possibly refuse them and will presumably commission us to rebuild the monuments. According to the monetary restrictions, that could take two to three years. The first restoration (Wissmann) should be executed this spring.[24]

24 StA Hamburg, *Wissmann Denkmal soll nach Hamburg*, Briefe Schreiben vom ‚Reichsverbands der Kolonialdeutschen und Kolonialinteressenten' an Ministerialart Dr. Ruppel in Berlin vom 9.1.1922.

Fig. 2: The Wissmann Monument in front of the University of Hamburg main building. Photo: Bildbestand der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft, Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main, 018-0092-09, https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hebis:30:2-786076.

The above correspondence confirmed Hamburg as the best possible city to rebuild the monuments, as other big German cities had not actually attempted to buy them.[25] During the year 1922, the Wissmann monument was rebuilt next to the University of Hamburg, which was only three years old by then. The choice of location was no coincidence. The building had hosted the 'Colonial Institute' before the war. The Institute had been founded in 1908 and was no longer needed, since Germany did not have any colonies after World War I. Since the building already provided lecture halls and other infrastructure, the University of Hamburg was founded on this site in 1919.[26] On 4 November 1922, the newly erected Wissmann monument was officially unveiled. The chosen date was the anniversary of the Battle of Tanga in 1914, where outnumbered German colonial troops, under the command of Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck,[27] had beaten back the British colonial army. The

25 Ibid. Informationen über Wissmann und den Denkmalsstandort.

26 For more information about the ‚Colonial Institute' see: Jens Ruppenthal, *Kolonialismus als „Wissenschaft und Technik"*: *Das Hamburgische Kolonialinstitut 1908 bis 1919* (Historische Mitteilungen im Auftrag der Ranke-Gesellschaft, 66, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2007).

27 Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck was an officer in the colonial army in the Herero-Nama-War in German Southwest Africa and became commander of the colonial troops in German East Africa in 1914. For more information

inscription referred to the original monument's site: 'The monument's pedestal had the following inscription: "Built in Dar es Salaam 1908–1918 / Rebuilt in Hamburg 1922 until [...]." It implied the aspiration to return the monument to its original site.'[28]

The reference to the original site in the former colony is not the only significant part of the inscription. The university was not intended to be the monument's final resting place, with the idea being to return it at some point to its home in Africa. This is an example of the colonial fervour which (re)awoke after the Versailles Treaty of 1919. The so-called *Schmach von Versailles* ('Humiliation of Versailles') not only meant that Germany was to pay reparations and give up certain border territories, it also stated that the country was not fit to rule or govern colonies responsibly. Therefore, it stated that the German colonies would be administered by other European powers. The Germans were offended by that statement and called it a lie. Out of that sentiment grew the wish to regain their colonies. Colonial enthusiasts organized themselves in societies and met with other former inhabitants of the German colonies. The so-called colonial heroes, mostly former explorers or Imperial Army veterans, published books or gave speeches about their experiences. In the following years, many streets, schools and barracks were named after them. Later, those same veterans were recruited by the Nazis, who promised them the colonies back in return for their help with election campaigns.[29]

Every year the 'colonial societies' would celebrate reunions and other memorial festivities at the Wissmann Monument, usually on the anniversary of the Battle of Tanga.[30] For example, the Stahlhelm, or 'Union of Former Front-Line Soldiers', celebrated 'in memory and honour of our great colonizer'[31] the 9th annual *Reichsfrontsoldatentag* in June 1928.[32] That numerous festivities occurred celebrating the country's former imperial glory exemplifies how there was no reconditioning or even debate of Germany's colonial legacy in postcolonial Hamburg.

The Wissmann monument did not stand next to the university undisturbed. In 1943, the government planned on melting down the monument and using the material for the war effort. The rector of the university ultimately intervened and prevented that happening. Two years later, however, a bomb hit the monument and tore it down. Again, the

see: Eckard Michels, *Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck: Der Held von Deutsch-Ostafrika. Ein preussischer Kolonialoffizier* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2008).

28 Uhlmann, Das Hamburger Wissmann-Denkmal (above, n. 5), p. 282.

29 For more information about colonialism and the Nazis see: Jürgen Zimmerer, *Von Windhuk nach Auschwitz?: Beiträge zum Verhältnis von Kolonialismus und Holocaust* (Periplus-Studien, Münster [u. a.]: LIT Verl, 2011).

30 See StA Hamburg 361-5 II Wg 14.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

university administration intervened and had it reconstructed in 1949. The monument and all that it stood for was finally questioned only a full 20 years later.[33] Students in the late 1960s revolted against the establishment, parents and their teachers and started to ask questions about German history and World War II, urging society to discuss the Nazi dictatorship among other things. In this regard, colonialism was also discussed and the students in Hamburg started to make the university's history as a 'colonial institute' a subject of discussion. Officially the eponymous institute had been closed down, but many of its departments and chairs lived on.

Some professors saw themselves as teaching in the tradition of the 'Colonial Institute'. Between 1938 and 1945, the historian Adolph Rein had actually been in charge of another 'colonial institute' at the university. That had also been in light of the National Socialists' policy of expansion. For that reason, students gave their university the nickname the 'permanent colonial institute'.[34] In August 1967, they attempted to bring down the Wissmann statue for the first time, but the police prevented it. A couple of months later, the students were now successful, but the administration again rebuilt it. So, when the students finally succeeded in bringing down the statue during the night of 1 November 1968, they spray-painted it red and displayed it in front of the campus dining hall. Because the statue had been vandalized and taken away the administration did not attempt to put it back on its pedestal, but stored it, along with the statue of colonial officer Hans Dominik, in the cellar of the observatory in Bergedorf.[35]

The disassembly of the two colonial monuments had another effect: once they were again in public view, they needed to be dealt with. As long as they were standing on their respective pedestals, their existence was not an issue in the public eye. The protest and the deconstruction by the students caused a media coverage and put the monuments back into public consciousness. The students, on the other hand, freed themselves of the university's colonial past symbolically and broke with the tradition of honouring the so-called colonial heroes while doing it. It was the first time in the history of Hamburg that its citizens openly criticized and actually removed colonial images from the public eye. This also proves that at least some parts of German society dealt with the question of colonial legacy as early as the 1960s.[36]

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33 Uhlmann, Das Hamburger Wissmann-Denkmal (above, n. 5).

34 For further information on that term see: Allgemeinen Studierendausschuss, *Das permanente Kolonialinstitut*: *50 Jahre Hamburger Universität* (Hamburg, 1969).

35 Uhlmann, Das Hamburger Wissmann-Denkmal (above, n. 5), pp. 283–284.

36 See Winfried Speitkamp (ed.), *Denkmalsturz*: *Zur Konfliktgeschichte politischer Symbolik* (Kleine Vandenhoek-Reihe, 1581, Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1997), pp. 6–9.

Both monuments were stored in the basement of the Hamburg Observatory until 1986, when an art show organized by the *Museumspädagogischer Dienst* (Museum Education Service) displayed the Wissmann monument in Hamburg. A few years later, it was used for an artistic performance in Hamburg's harbour. Wissmann was displayed there in full, including the lion and the *askari* from 2004 until 2005. While displaying the Wissmann Monument, the artist launched a website [37] on which interested citizens could discuss the topic and vote for the monument's theoretical future. Traffic on the homepage was high during its 14-month running time. Some 35,000 users visited the site and left about 1,000 comments in total. [38] The results of the vote were unmistakable according to the operators:

> Ninety-five per cent of the voters opted for not storing the monument in a cellar again. Unpopular monuments should not be hidden, but displayed openly for discussion. Many people want to remember and discuss the monuments critically. According to city regulations, the monument had to be taken down and stored in the cellar again. The confrontation between Hamburg's commemorative culture and an adequate postcolonial handling of the dismantled monuments will therefore be continued. [39]

Since then, the Wissmann monument has only twice been taken out of the cellar. In 2013, director Eva Knopf reconstructed the downfall of these monuments by students for her documentary *Mahjub's Journey*. [40] Up until May of 2017, the Wissmann monument was on display as part of the exhibition in Berlin's aforementioned Deutsches Historisches Museum.

It may perhaps be worthwhile, at this stage, to turn to the Askari monument which was erected by the British in Dar es Salaam nine years after the removal of the Wissmann one. As will be shown, the Askari monument was built on the site formerly occupied by its Wissmann predecessor. The Askari Monument was put up by the IWGC in the 1920s, and with no major changes having ever been made it is still to be found *in situ* in Dar es Salaam's city centre today. Its construction was meant to commemorate Africans and Arabs who fell in World War I while serving the British Army. The official records provided by Lord Alfred Milner in April 1920 provide a figure of 5,000 known

37 See http://www.afrika-hamburg.de (last accessed 27.7.2024).
38 Uhlmann, Das Hamburger Wissmann-Denkmal (above, n. 5), p. 284.
39 See http://www.afrika-hamburg.de/willkommen.html (authors' own translation) (last accessed 27.7.2024).
40 Deutsches Historisches Museum (ed.), *Deutscher Kolonialismus* (above, n. 4), p. 188.

Fig. 3: The Wissmann Monument displayed at the Deutsches Historisches Museum 2016. Photo: Jürgen Zimmerer.

graves of the *askaris* and 50,000 unknown graves of the African carriers who were to be commemorated by the monument in question.[41] This figure, nevertheless, excludes a considerable number of people who died in the campaign but whose records could not be established at the time the monument was constructed.[42] Initially, the government proposed that for the *askaris* whose graves were already known headstones would be placed on them. This was challenged by the IWGC, which argued that Africans were too ignorant to know the value of the headstones and would therefore not appreciate such an honourable government gesture. The Commission also thought that if such an idea was put into practice many people whose graves could not be identified would automatically lose the right to commemoration.

Finally, the government reasoned that three separate African memorials should be erected in the three major towns of Dar es Salaam, Nairobi and Mombasa.[43] In 1921, the IWGC expressed the hope that a African memorial would be built in Dar es Salaam, Tanga

41 Tanganyika National Archives hereafter TNA, AB/754: From Milner to Tanganyika Territory, 8.4.1920.
42 TNA, AB/754/2, Director of Imperial War Graves Commission to governments of Kenya and Tanganyika, 17.2.1921.
43 Ibid.

and Tabora, but this turned out to be unrealistic.[44] In 1923, for example, the IWGC was busy working on a plan to start the construction of the African memorial in Dar es Salaam, but nothing of a similar kind was being done in Tanga and Tabora. At the initial stage of the African memorial's construction in Dar es Salaam, a number of issues were raised. First, there was the one of selecting an appropriate site for the memorial; in this regard, the key question was whether it was right to erect an African memorial on the site of the former Wissmann monument. The second issue concerned the kind of inscription to be included on the memorial and the language to be used. Third and finally, the issue of the structure of the monument – that is, what the memorial should even look like.

The government's expectation was to have as simple memorial as possible so that it could be 'readily understood by the natives'.[45] To this end, the monument had to 'take the form of a pedestal with bronze panels and a life-sized figure or larger of a Kings African Rifles soldier on top' and 'the panels depicting groups of African Soldiers and Carriers on active service'.[46] It was previously proposed that the monument should bear English and Swahili inscriptions which the Africans could easily read and understand, but before this was finally approved the government issued a further instruction that a similar inscription in Arabic should also be included.[47] The English version of the inscription was supposed to read thus: 'This is to the memory of the Native African troops who were the hands and feet of the army: and to all other men who served and died for their King and country in eastern Africa in the Great War 1914–1918. If you fight for your country even if you die your sons will remember your name.'[48]

To ensure that the sculptor, Mr. J. A. Stevenson,[49] did the job of designing the monument properly, the pieces of equipment used by the African troops and carriers were sought from Kenya and Tanganyika for his use. Among these were the materials formerly used by the *askaris* like a leather belt, braces, a haversack and a round water bottle. In this list was also a 'photograph of a machine gun in action taken from the right-hand side' and 'manned by Askari equipped as in the war'.[50] By April 1927, the African memorial was all but completed; a bronze figure of a King's African Rifleman had already been erected on top of the stone pedestal and a bronze panel bearing the inscriptions in

44 Ibid.
45 TNA, AB/754/3, From Commanding Troops Tanganyika Territory to Chief Secretary, 9.4.1921.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
48 TNA, No. 23428/2, Report by Deputy Director of Works, East Africa, 4.11.1927.
49 Ibid.
50 TNA, No. AB/754/15, Deputy Director of Works to Chief Secretary, 28.12.1923.

Swahili and Arabic placed on the latter's front side.[51] A similar bronze panel bearing the English inscription occupied the pedestal's rear side. The only thing yet to be fixed was the decorative panels of African soldiers on the battlefield, which were to be placed on either side of the pedestal but had not arrived from England yet.

Construction of the African memorial was completed in November 1927; the unveiling ceremony was scheduled for the 11th of that month, but, for reasons unknown, was suspended until 14 March 1928.[52] The monument was, however, inaugurated without a ceremony, much to the surprise of the Officer Commanding Troops who did not hesitate to drop a line to the chief secretary expressing his disbelief: 'I beg to request that I may be informed of the reasons which led to the memorial to Native African Troops being uncovered without the ceremony'.[53] The chief secretary responded accordingly: 'I am directed by the governor to inform you that the Imperial War Graves Commission left it to His Excellency's discretion whether the memorial should be revealed with or without ceremony and that His Excellency chose the latter alternative'.[54]

The officer in question was definitely troubled having seen the unveiling of the African memorial at Mwembe Tayari in Mombasa in May 1927, accompanied by a ceremony which was even attended by the governor of Kenya, but nothing similar was organized for Dar es Salaam.[55] The selection of the memorial site engendered conflicting opinions among the Europeans living in Dar es Salaam at that time. A section of the European population in Tanganyika, most definitely those of German origin, was deeply concerned about the decision to erect an African memorial in the same place where the Wissmann monument had stood. This move was interpreted as a way of humiliating the people who had previously considered Wissmann their heroic leader. In reporting to the governor the complaints Mr. Howe Browne had forwarded to the British colonial government in Tanganyika, the chief secretary wrote:

> He [Mr. Browne] said that there was a strong body of opinion which held that it was a most unnecessary insult to the memory of Dr von Wissmann, who might be regarded as

51 Ibid.

52 See TNA, No. 23428/26, from Deputy Director of Works to Chief Secretary, 14.3.1928 and No. 23428/27 from Kings African Riffle's office to Mr. Scott, 14.3.192

53 TNA, No. 23428/30, from the Officer Commanding Troops Tanganyika Territory to the Chief Secretary, 28.3.1928.

54 TNA, No. 23428/32, from Chief Secretary to the Officer Commanding Troops, 5.4.1928.

55 TNA, No. 23428/4, 'His Excellency and Native Fallen: Striking Tribute to K. A. R. and Other Troops: A Native V. C. Some Astonishing Figures of African Service, Mwembe Tayari Speech", *The Mombasa Times*, 26.5.1927.

> a great and distinguished German, that a statue of a native soldier should be put up in the place where his statue had stood. Those we represented regarded it as right and proper that the von Wissmann Statue should be removed, but considered it most improper and insulting to replace it with a statue of a native Askari when there was all the rest of Tanganyika in which to erect such a statue. He expressed the hope that before the statue was unveiled, it might be removed to a more appropriate site in front of the Boma.[56]

Despite this public outcry, the British government turned a deaf ear. The chief secretary was overwhelmed at the thought that such grievances had existed in the colony all along and yet nothing had been reported of them.[57] Opposition to the location of the monument resulted from the fact that the public was not involved in giving their opinions as to where it should be erected, as this was entirely left to the respective government departments to decide. To give but one example, in 1921 the Town Planning and Building Committee had suggested to the government that the monument be erected either at the place where the bust of Kaiser William I had been or where the Wissmann statue had hitherto stood.[58] In the end, under Sir Horace Byatt's governorship, the decision was taken in favour of the latter location.[59]

The refusal to change the site of the African memorial created a strong sense of solidarity among the Germans, who had such a keen memory of their departed that they were highly motivated to build memorials to them. In December 1936, for instance, the German community in Morogoro, Tanganyika, expressed their desire to the governor, through the acting regional commissioner, to erect a war memorial in the cemetery existing for their fellow Germans who had fallen during World War I.[60] The memorial was expected to take the shape of a German Iron Cross Medal, on which's body the following dedication would feature: *UNSEREN HELDEN, Die fuer Deutschlands GROESSE starben* ('Our Heroes who died for the greatness of Germany').[61]

56 TNA, No. 2342/7, From Chief Secretary to the Governor, 31.10.1927. *Boma* here means 'headquarters'.
57 Ibid.
58 TNA, AB/754/6, from Chairman, Town Planning and Building Committee to Chief Secretary, 22.6.1921.
59 Seen in TNA, No. 23428/10, A letter to the Chief Secretary, 19.12.1927. see also TNA, AB/754/7, from Chief Secretary to the Assistant Director of Works, 13.7.1921.
60 TNA, No. 24678, Erection of War Memorial; Morogoro Cemetery of Germans, 1936.
61 Ibid. In a somewhat similar incident, the Germans expressed their happiness about the decision taken by the district commissioner of Bagamoyo in 1931 to renovate their monument. See, for example, Robert Heussler, *British Tanganyika: An Essay and Documents on District Administration* (USA: Duke University Press, 1971), pp. 14–15.

Fig. 4: The Askari Monument in the Center of Dar es Salaam. Photo: Reginald Elias Kirey.

The history of the two monuments outlined above takes us to a further necessary level of discussion. Judging by what we have outlined so far, two interpretations can be made. First, the colonial monuments represented a symbol of victory to the imperial powers. The ability to engage Africans in colonial wars and to make them totally submissive and loyal was a sign of imperial greatness. The Wissmann monument in Dar es Salaam was toppled not because it occupied an important space but because it glorified German imperialism. Second, Africans were, with the help of these monuments, described as beings of inferior intelligence. The panel of the *askari* placed just below the Wissmann statue was presumably meant to describe Africans as the latter's loyal subjects.[62] As indicated earlier, the unveiling of the Askari monument in Dar es Salaam

62 The issue of Africans being loyal to Germans in colonial Tanganyika has been widely dealt with in many studies. German *askaris* and porters are described as people who, wholeheartedly, fought on the side of Germany during World War I. 'The porters', argues R. F. Eberlie, 'did a difficult and vitally necessary task without a murmur ever having been recorded'. This is what he calls 'the coming together of ruler and subject'. Such comradeship is thought to have blossomed after the suppression of the MajiMaji War. Historians like John Iliffe have written that the period after the latter was a peaceful one in Tanganyika, as no further African uprisings were reported. However, it is historically incorrect to assume that Africans were loyal to Germans for the sake of it. The systematic suppression of African resistances by the Germans starting from the late nineteenth through the early twentieth century was extremely violent. Executions, widespread as they were, served the purpose of instilling fear in the colonial subjects – thus forcing them

did not receive any serious attention from the British government, as it saw no need to organize an unveiling ceremony. Soon after the monument became a thing of the past, as no efforts were made to preserve it.

A writer in the *Tanganyika Times* lamented: '[S]urely a small sum might be allocated by the government to erect a railing round the monument. Such a railing would not only protect, *but would lend dignity to a work of art*.'[63] The derogatory tone of this writer speaks for itself. Though the writer of the article was well-aware that it was a monument to the memory of the Africans who died during World War I, he/she did not see anything wrong with such a comment. It is therefore absolutely true that the African memorials were not only intended to honour those Africans who, willingly or unwillingly, fought on the side of warring imperial groups, but also they were beautifully designed to instil a sense of dependence or inferiority in the colonial subjects. One more example illustrates this point. The governor of Kenya, when inaugurating the African memorial in Mombasa on 26 May 1927, delivered a speech with such an air of contempt that we are left with no doubt there was a hidden agenda behind its erection:

> Let us today give a special thought to what the Arab and African did for us in the Great War. Let us see in this monument a tribute to those fine qualities of infinite patience, loyalty and devotion, which were displayed by the men to whom this monument is raised. There is an African proverb that iron is not much used without wood. The proverb was exemplified in the war when the successes to which the valour of the Arabs and Africans, which I have endeavoured to describe to you, contributed could not have been secured had it not been for the leadership of the European officers under whom they served.[64]

To stress his point, the governor referred to these *European officers* as 'intelligent men'. This example provides a broader understanding of the colonial ideologies which were implicitly or explicitly attached to such African memorials. To assume that they were only meant to convey messages of honour, affection, commemoration, dignity and com-

to co-operate. As J. K. Nyerere puts it: '[M]emories of the Hehe and MajiMaji wars against the German colonialists, and their ruthless suppression, were deeply engrained in the mind of our people'. See for example, John Iliffe, *Tanganyika Under German Rule 1905–1912*, (London: Syndicate of the Cambridge University Press, 1969) p. 5; R. F. Eberlie, 'The German Achievement in East Africa', *The Journal of Tanganyika Society: Tanganyika Notes and Records*, September (1960), pp. 210–211; J. K.Nyerere, *Freedom and Unity: A Selection from Writings and Speeches*, 1952–1965 (Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 2.

63 TNA, No. 23428/33, *Tanganyika Times*, 6.2.1930 (italics added for emphasis).

64 TNA, No. 23428/4, *The Mombasa Times*, 26.5.1927.

radeship vis-à-vis Africans is to definitely make a sweeping and ultimately erroneous generalization. The monuments were officially, of course, said to communicate these kinds of sentiments, but it is also true that there was more to this than met the eye. Colonial monuments in Tanganyika were, wittingly or unwittingly, erected not only for the purpose of perpetuating hegemonic memories of imperialist wars or of colonialism in general, but also of portraying Africans who fought in these battles and who were the victims of Western imperialism as loyalists or stalwarts.

The question which still remains unanswered is: Does current Tanzanian society consider the *askaris* who fought either on the side of the Germans or of the British heroes or not? If the answer is affirmative, then in whose interests were the *askaris* and carriers actually fighting? It should be borne in mind that other forms of anti-colonial heroism have emerged in Tanzania since the end of imperial rule. The inherited colonial institutions were given new names to glorify African heroism. In 1963, for example, the former Princes Margaret Hospital and its ward, Twinning Block, were renamed Muhimbili National Hospital and Kibasila Block, respectively.[65] Chief Kibasila was among the MajiMaji fighters hanged in Dar es Salaam. The decision to rename the hospital marked a new era of colonial commemoration as other public facilities were later named after anti-colonial heroes. No wonder that the chiefs who fought against German colonial penetration were honoured and commemorated in a similar way. For example, Sina Lane and Sina Secondary School in Moshi commemorate the bravery shown by Chief Sina of Kibosho; in the same way, Mkwawa University College of Education (formerly Mkwawa High School) in Iringa commemorates the heroic deeds of Chief Mkwawa of Kalenga. Over and above this, new memorial sites were established or rather upgraded soon after independence – like Kalenga Memorial Site in Iringa for Chief Mkwawa and MajiMaji Memorial Site in Songea for the fallen heroes of the MajiMaji War.

This chapter has examined colonial heroism as reflected in the erection of monuments in Tanganyika and in post-World War I Germany. We have endeavoured to provide background information on the Wissmann and Askari monuments in Dar es Salaam, and to explain the course of events which preceded the erection and then subsequent removal of the former to Hamburg (eventually). What is apparent from the preceding discussion is that World War I, which ushered in Germany's loss of Tanganyika to Great Britain, led to the removal and re-erection of colonial monuments. This, however, did

65 Raia, Gazeti la Wilayaya Geita, May 1963, Toleo No. 38. Kibasila and his colleagues were the MajiMaji fighters who were hanged in Dar es Salaam by the Germans.

not kill the spirit of colonial heroism among Germans who, in the course of the 1920s and 1930s, expected to get their colonies in Africa back. Meanwhile British colonial officials, happy as they were after having been granted Tanganyika as a mandated territory, were determined to do away with monuments glorifying Germany's erstwhile imperial rule there and to erect their own in their place.

As we have shown, this objective was not easily achieved nor did it go unchallenged. The erection of the Askari monument on the former site of the Wissmann one was heavily contested by the German community in Tanganyika. As a matter of fact, the majority of Germans living in the mandated territory supported colonial revivalism.[66] As a result, the Wissmann monument's re-erection in Hamburg revived the spirit of colonial heroism among the Germans living in Tanganyika. However, some 46 years after its inauguration a series of protests by University of Hamburg students demanding its removal bore fruit, in 1968. It was apparent by this time in Germany that any form of colonial glorification could not be tolerated any longer. With the independence of Tanganyika in 1961, the Askari monument remained as a key relic of colonial heroism. While its Wissmann counterpart became the object of extensive scholarly discussion on anti-colonial heroism and at the same time a subject of opposition in Germany, the Askari monument has remained an inherited colonial memorial preserved by the Tanzanian government for its historic value and symbolism.

66 See Michael S. Macoum, *Wrong Place, Right Time: Policing the End of Empire*, (London: The Radcliffe Press, 1996), pp.115–133.

Remembering the Majimaji Trauma in Tanzania

Nancy Rushohora

Introduction

Silence enters historical production at four critical moments: in the making of sources, in the making of archives, in the making of narratives and in the making of history. Silence in African history is a common phenomenon, thus an African viewpoint on resistance to colonial rule has long been overdue. The process of making Majimaji history padlocked a big silence in sources, in archives, in narratives and in recounting the atrocities which the Germans committed between 1904 and 1908 in Tanzania and the inflicted traumas which have henceforth affected its communities. The simple definition of the Majimaji War explains it as an act of resistance to German colonialism in Tanzania initiated by the ritualistic leader Kinjekitile Ngwale, who provided water to spray, rub or bathe oneself with as immunity against the German bullet. The eastern and southern parts of Tanzania, the regions which were ignored by the colonialists became the battleground. From its inception, the term 'Majimaji' mimicked a cry of the Tanzanian warriors who were instructed by Kinjekitile Ngwale to scream the words 'Maji! Maji! Maji!' whenever the Germans shot at them. Allegedly, the scream would have turned the bullets to water (*maji* means 'water' in Kiswahili). It is from these words that the war acquired its name.

The German eyewitnesses to the war called the Majimaji a 'revolt', an 'uprising' and a 'rebellion'. These terminologies are unqualified as they allude to treason by a country's citizens. A true rebellion, for example, may occur if those who rise are a body of legally constituted citizens against a legally established government. This is obviously so, because it is unrealistic to expect that a freedom movement would be called as such by those it opposed.[1] From the affected communities' vantage point, however, evidenced in local languages, the Majimaji is described as *ngondo/vita* – both translated as 'war'. For example, *Ngondo ya Mase Mase in Kimatumbi* and *Vita ya Majimaji* in Kiswahili are both translated as 'the Majimaji War'. With the exception of the colonial period when

1 Gilbert Clement Kamana Gwassa, *The Outbreak and Development of the Maji Maji War, 1905–1907*, Dissertation (Dar es Salaam, University of Dar es Salaam, 1973).

calling the Majimaji a war was a punishable offence,[2] at no other point in Tanzania's history has the Majimaji been referred to as a revolt, uprising or rebellion.

The writing of the term 'Majimaji' was promulgated by colonial-era publications rather than the African oral testimonies which use it today. Different forms of writing have been adopted: as two separate entities 'Maji Maji'[3]; with an intervening hyphen 'Maji-Maji'[4]; and as a single word 'Majimaji'.[5] There are some languages in which its orthography and pronunciation are different while in others the two are the same.[6] English serves as a good example of the former, Kiswahili of the latter. 'Majimaji' as a term retains the Kiswahili meaning and identity while reflecting the original cry which the fighters in question articulated. This article abides by Kiswahili syntax where compounds are written as one word: in this case, Majimaji and not Maji Maji.

In remembering a contested African colonial resistance and inflicted trauma such as that of the Majimaji, which over time has been conceived as resistance, heritage and memorial, is very complicated. Such difficulties arise for three main reasons. First, remembering the Majimaji War involves memories, which are dynamic as they range from individual to collective forms of remembrance. Second, the Majimaji War heritage involves historicizing the power and agency which led to the formulation of memorials. Third, a significant part of resistance and war is intertwined with questions of political power and propaganda – phenomenon which do not necessarily immediately and directly generate material remains.[7]

Background

The Majimaji was not the only instance of colonial resistance in Tanzania, and the Germans did not win control of the latter on a silver plate. They had to destroy the power of

2 Yusufu Lawi, 'Pros and Cons of Patriotism in the Teaching of the Maji Maji War in Tanzania Schools', *Journal of Historical Association of Tanzania*, 6/2 (2010), pp. 66–90.

3 B. B. Mapunda, 'Re-examining the Maji Maji War in Ungoni with a Blend of Archaeology and Oral History.', in: James Leonard Giblin and Jamie Monson (eds), *Maji Maji. Lifting the Fog of War*, Jamie Monson (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2010), pp. 220–238; Felicitas Becker, 'Traders, 'Big Men' and Prophets: Political Continuity and Crisis in the Maji Maji Rebellion in Southeast Tanzania', *The Journal of African History*, 45/1 (2004), pp. 1–22.

4 Dominik Schaller, 'From Conquest to Genocide: Colonial Rule in German Southwest Africa and German East Africa', in A. Dirk Moses (ed.), *Empire, Colony, Genocide. Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History* (New York, NY: Berghahn Books, 2008), pp. 303–324; John p. Moffett, *Handbook of Tanganyika* (Dar es Salaam: Government Printer, 1958).

5 Elzear Ebner, *The History of the Wangoni and their Origin in the South African Bantu Tribes* (Peramiho: Benedictine Publications Ndanda, 2009).

6 John Lyons, *Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968).

7 Si Vencl, 'War and Warfare in Archaeology', *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*, 3/2 (1984), pp. 116–132.

the chiefs and in the process encountered more than 50 instances of resistance between 1889 and 1896.[8] The earliest major ones occurred in the coastal region in three different chiefdoms, being led by Abushiri Salim, Bwana Heri and Hassan Omar Makunganya respectively. The coastal resistances led by Abushiri Salim and Bwana Heri occurred almost spontaneously in August and September 1888.[9] Thus, the Germans recognized the coastal resistances as the Abushiri War or *Araberaufstand,* meaning the 'Arab Revolt' (Pike 1986).[10]

The outbreak of the Abushiri Salim and Bwana Heri resistances resulted in the arrival of the Germans on the coast and establishment of their authority there. German occupation threatened the existence of Abushiri Salim's and Bwana Heri's power economically and politically. Abushiri Salim was an Arab and a plantation owner, while Bwana Heri was of the Zigua ethnic group and someone who collected tolls from the caravans which passed through the town of Muheza inland from Tanga. Hassan Omari Makunganya led the Kilwa coastal resistance in 1894, almost at the end of the Abushiri war. This made the coastal iterations look like a continuation of the same resistance covering almost the whole coast of mainland Tanzania, north to south. Sources informing us about these wars are mainly archival, ones presenting the aftermath of the war as tragic. Abushiri Salim was arrested and hanged in Bagamoyo on 15 December 1889, Hassan Omar Makunganya was arrested and hanged in Kivinje on 15 November 1895 while there is no evidence that Bwana Heri was either arrested or hanged[11] – although this is a form of information which one may expect from the archives. The fact that the latter are silent about the death of one of the prominent leaders of the resistance poses a major challenge to contemporary scholarship.

In the northern part of Tanzania, especially among the Chagga of Kilimanjaro, resistance was not the first reaction of the local chiefs. While hoping for material rewards, chiefs such as Rindi welcomed the Germans – who established their first residence on his land. Using this alliance, the Germans established their rule in Kilimanjaro and mounted their flags throughout all the Chagga chiefdoms. One of the famous and strongest chiefs of the Chagga was Sina Kisaro Masele of Kibosho, who resisted German rule and pulled down the German flag. In February 1891, the Germans laid siege to Chief Sina's fort for

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8 Andrew Coulson, *Tanzania: A Political Economy* (2nd edn., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

9 Isaria n. Kimambo, *A Political History of the Pare of Tanzania, c. 1500–1900* (Nairobi: East Africa Publishing House, 1969).

10 Charles Pike, 'History and Imagination. Swahili Literature and Resistance to German Language Imperialism in Tanzania, 1885–1910', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 19/2 (1986), pp. 201–233.

11 Kimambo, *A Political History of the Pare of Tanzania,* (above, n. 9).

four days. His men fought back until he managed to escape. He was later induced into signing a treaty with the Germans to guarantee peace in his chiefdom.[12]

Similarly in the western part of Tanzania, there were small and scattered resistances all over the region. In 1885, the centre of resistance was in Tabora under Chief Isike who had built a good army and levied taxes from caravans passing via his chiefdom.[13] Chief Isike, who mobilized between 7,000 and 11,000 *askaris* ('police/soldiers'), made the Germans consider him one of the most dangerous chiefs in the entire colony.[14] During the resistance, Chief Isike confiscated property and forced out the White Fathers missionaries of Kipalapala before the Germans forces concentrated on breaking his power.[15] After years of sporadic conflict, the German army stormed Chief Isike's fortress in 1892. He either committed suicide by blowing up his gunpowder store or was hanged by the Germans after the explosion.[16] Other resistances occurred in Ugoro, Kilimatinde, Mwanza, Bukoba and Kigoma. An extremely important instance of the genocide committed against the Haya of northern Tanzania and concealed by the Germans is reported by Peter Schmidt.[17] Both the massacre and the testimonies of trauma inflicted on these people are missing in German records and Tanzania archives; these events have faded from memory in contemporary oral accounts, too.

More often than not, analyses of African colonial resistance have helped inform other investigations of indigenous responses to colonial rule beyond the continent for purposes of comparison and theorization.[18] Patterns of African resistance were complex. There were cases of successful integration in the early history of colonialism, where improved forms of co-operation and mobilization against the colonizers were developed, whereas other African resistances to the colonial invasion were mass reactions cutting across ethnic boundaries and being led by millenarian figures. Virtually every sort of African

12 Valence Valerian Silayo, 'Pre-colonial Ethnic Wars and the colonization of Northern Tanzania from 1800 to 1950 CE: The Case of Chagga of Kilimanjaro', *Archaeologies*, 12 (2016), pp. 163–181.

13 Stephen J. Rockel, *Caravan Porters of the Nyika, Labour, Culture, and Society in Nineteenth Century Tanzania*, Dissertation (Toronto, University of Toronto, 1997).

14 David Pizzo, 'Cunning Tactics. Indigenous Responses to the Imposition of German Colonial Rule In East Africa', *History Research*, 2/2 (2012), pp. 73–109.

15 Kevin Shillington, *Encyclopedia of African history*, 3 vols. (New York [u. a.]: Routledge, 2005).

16 Aylward Shorter, 'Nyungu-Ya-Mawe and the "Empire of the Ruga-Rugas", *The Journal of African History*, 9/2 (1968), pp. 235–259, here p. 252.

17 Peter R. Schmidt, 'Contests between heritage and history in Tanganyika/Tanzania: Insights arising from community-based heritage research', *Journal of Community Archaeology & Heritage*, 4/2 (2017), pp. 85–100.

18 Peter J. Hempenstall, 'Resistance in the German Pacific Empire: Towards a Theory of Early Colonial Response', *The Journal of Polynesian Society*, 84/1 (1975), pp. 5–24.

society resisted colonialism.[19] Some African countries like Ethiopia were engaged in a severe struggle to protect their areas not only against imperialist encroachment by European powers but also against aggressive African neighbours like the Mahdist State of Sudan.[20] Examples of mass resistance in Africa include the Chimurenga in Zimbabwe, Asante in Ghana, Nama and Herero in Namibia, Zulu in South Africa, Giriama in Kenya and Chilembwe in Malawi. The archives remain the main sources of information about these encounters, although descendants' narratives have potential to shed light on this crucial past too.

'Ideology' is one of the key components of African resistance. The term relates to the exercise of specific group interests, associated with discourse or conscious management of ideation. Ideology is a matter of belief or conscious imagination which rationally mediates all action upon the world, while as a discourse it entails an essentialist theory of meaning in terms of which ideas are either true or distorted.[21] Most of the African cases of resistance were guided by ideology. For example, the Majimaji War was guided by the *maji* ideology. The Chimurenga had a Mwari (supreme creator) cult.[22] Samori Toure and the Mahdist war had Islamic jihad ideologies.[23] Ideologies were also influential among the Zulu, who referred to *umKhosi (the king)*.[24] These ideologies were sometimes borrowed from or influenced by the neighbours; for example, the Mahdist ideologies spread across a vast region encompassing the Islamic communities stretching from the Horn of Africa to West Africa.[25] The main function of ideology was the unification and mobilization of large masses of people from numerous political units.

Looking particularly at the Majimaji, Chimurenga and Samori Toure, societies which shared an experience of adversity achieved mass organization against colonialism. In the

19 Colleen Roach, 'Cultural Imperialism and Resistance in Media Theory and Literary Theory', *Media, Culture and Society*, 19/1 (1997), pp. 47–66.

20 Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim, 'Mahdist Risings Against the Condominium Government in the Sudan, 1900–1927', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 12/3 (1979), pp. 440–471.

21 Jean Comaroff, *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance*: *The Culture and History of a South African People* (Reprint, Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2013).

22 Robert Ross, 'African Resistance to the Imposition of Colonialism: A Historiographical Review', *Itinerario*, 3/2 (1979), pp. 89–96.

23 Sengulo A. Msellemu, 'Common Motives of Africa's Anti-Colonial Resistance in 1890–1960', *Social Evolution and History*, 12/2 (2013), pp. 143–155; G. n. Sanderson, 'Conflict and Co-operation between Ethiopia and the Mahdist State, 1884–1898', *Sudan Notes and Records* 50 (1969), pp. 15–40.

24 John Laband, *Kingdom in Crisis*: *The Zulu Response to the British Invasion of 1879* (War, armed forces, and society, Manchester, New York, New York: Manchester University Press; Distributed exclusively in the USA and Canada by St. Martin's Press, 1992); Adrian Greaves, *Crossing the Buffalo*: *The Zulu War of 1879* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2012).

25 Ibrahim, 'Mahdist Risings Against the Condominium Government in the Sudan', (above, n. 18).

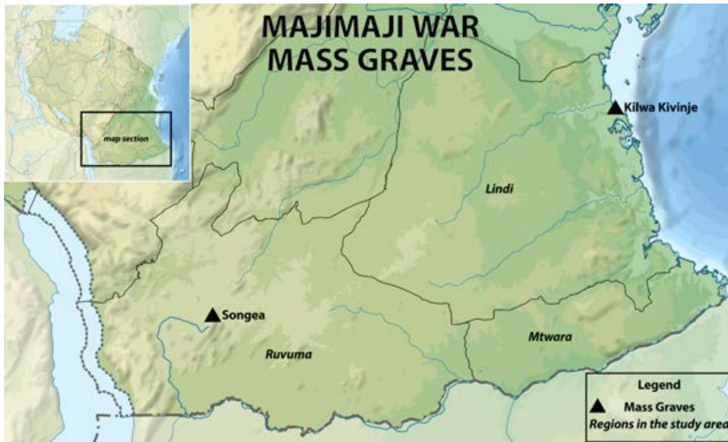

Fig. 5: Majimaji War mass graves. Based on research by Nancy Rushohora, Map of Tanzania (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tanzania_relief_location_map.svg) by Sémhur, CC BY-SA 4.0 https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.de, Adaption for this volume by Maik Furmanek, University of Hamburg, CC BY-SA 4.0 https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.de.

case of the Majimaji, the people of southern Tanzania spoke a number of different languages and were antagonistic to the Ngoni.[26] In Chimurenga, numerous traditionally hostile groups had fought together against the whites; the war itself had different names as the Ndebele call it 'Umvukela' while the Shona term it 'Chimurenga'.[27] Samori Toure's resistance grew out of his harsh regime, thus he forced his neighbour's collaboration in resistance against colonialism.[28] This was possible because of the ability of ideology and rituals of the area to motivate, facilitate and coordinate resistance.[29] In these great resistances, not only religious leaders were of importance but also African resistance was often expressed in messianic movements and religious upheavals.[30] Archival sources misrepresent these ideologies, and thus research into individual beliefs or cults is of paramount importance. German eyewitnesses, for example, thought that the sophisticated organization of the Maji-

26 James Leonard Giblin and Jamie Monson (eds), *Maji Maji: Lifting the Fog of War* (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2010).
27 S. Makuvaza and V. Makuvaza, 'Empty Promises and False Hopes: The Case of Matobo Hills Cultural World Heritage Landscape, Southwestern Zimbabwe', *Heritage and Society*, 5/1 (2012), pp. 9–34.
28 Brian J. Peterson, 'History, Memory and the Legacy of Samori in Southern Mali', *The Journal of African History*, 49/2 (2008), pp. 261–279.
29 Ross, 'African Resistance to the Imposition of Colonialism' (above, n. 22).
30 Donald Denoon and Adam Kuper, 'Nationalist Historians in Search of a Nation: The "New Historiography" in Dar es Salaam', *African Affairs*, 69/277 (1970), pp. 329–349.

maji War could not have come from Africans themselves in being unqualified for such an endeavour. Eduard Haber, the then chief secretary in German East Africa, claimed that the development of the Majimaji was controlled in a logical manner by experienced strategists. Arabs, Muslims, missionaries and German allies such as discharged *askaris* were credited with being the masterminds of the war instead (Gwassa 1969).[31] This implied that Majimaji societies could not have been capable of such a feat. Yet Haber was unable to explain why and how discharged *askaris* or individual Arabs might have decided to fight against the Germans and how they (or he) could mobilize such a vast population.

Memory

'Memory', 'memorial' and 'memorialization' are three important terms.[32] Although they may sound confusing and often stand for the same concept, 'memory', each of the three words presents a unique form of meaning which can neither be substituted for nor merged with the rest. 'Memory' is concerned with the ability to remember information, experiences and other people.[33] It is a cognitive device which, while used by particular individuals, can only be understood as a social process catalysing emotions, senses, participation, pain, joy and togetherness.[34] A 'memorial' is an object created for purposes of remembering a person or people who have died in a particular place. It is normally a statue, a stone, a building or a structure put in place to remind the viewer of people who died in an important past event or to mark a famous person's death.[35] A memorial can also be a landscape without any human-made feature but recognized by the community as a marker of a particular event. 'Memorialization' is the process of

31 Gwassa, Gilbert Kamana, 'African Methods of Warfare during Maji Maji War 1905–1907', *Social Science Council of the University of East Africa*, 1 (1969), pp. 256–272.

32 Wulf Kansteiner, 'Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies', *History and Theory*, 41/2 (2002), pp. 179–197; Katharine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone (eds), *Contested Pasts: The Politics of Memory* (Routledge studies in memory and narrative; First issued in paperback, London, New York: Routledge, 2003); Alessandro Portelli, 'So Much Depends on a Red Bus, or, Innocent Victims of the Liberating Gun', *Oral History*, 34/2 (2006), pp. 29–43; Helen Alexandra Keremedjiev, *The Ethnography of On-Site Interpretation and Commemoration Practices. Place-Based Cultural Heritages at the Bear Paw, Big Hole Little Bighorn, and Rosebud Battlefields*, Dissertation (Montana, University of Montana, 2013).

33 Pierre Nora, 'Between Memory and History. Les Lieux de Mémoire', *Representations*, 26 (1989), pp. 7–24.

34 Mario I. Aguilar, 'The Archaeology of Memory and the Issue of Colonialism', *Biblical Theology Bulletin*, 35/2 (2005), pp. 60–66.

35 Debbora Battaglia, 'The Body in the Gift: Memory and Forgetting in Sabarl Mortuary Exchange', *American Ethnologist*, 91 (1992), pp. 3–19; Edmon Castell and Sònia Roura, 'The Thirty-Years War, 1914–1945: Mapping the Battlefields of the Past for the Construction of the European Future', in Peter Doyle and Matthew R. Bennett (eds), *Fields of Battle. Terrain in Military History* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2002), pp. 143–148.

remembering.[36] It is the act of creating agents which will continue to exist and remind people of somebody who died or something gone. An example of memorialization is a commemoration ceremony.[37]

Tanzania can be said to have experienced three broad colonial phases which ran for over 85 years between 1860 and 1945: the 1860–1890 period / pre-colonial phase; the 1890–1917 period / German colonial phase; and the 1917–1945 period / British colonial mandate. Among other things, the second phase was dominated by the brutal establishment of colonial rule and extensive warfare. A lesser-known mammoth of Tanzanian history is the majority societies that resisted German colonialism: the Abushiri coastal resistance of 1888; the Mkwawa-Hehe resistance of 1891; the Nyamwezi-Isike resistance of 1892; the Zinza-Rwoma resistance of 1892; the Makunganya-Kilwa resistance 1894; the Buha-Heru resistance of 1896; the Machemba-Yao resistance of 1899; the Nyiramba-Gidamausa resistance of 1902; and the Makongoro-Musoma resistance of 1905–1906. These wars were followed by the Majimaji one of 1904–1908, which was more extensive than its predecessors in terms of organization and area coverage. The Majimaji War covered more than 20 ethnic groups and seven regions of present-day mainland Tanzania: Lindi, Mtwara, Dar es Salaam, Pwani, Njombe, Ruvuma and Morogoro.

Colonialism severely and often times brutally disrupted the lives of locals. The wounds of colonialism among the people of Tanzania, especially those living in southern Tanzania, have remained permanent and awake. This is because most of those who died were never buried and their graves are absent in their communities. To the Tanzanian communities, graves are shrines. Taking care of ancestors' graves is a practice of family pacification. Many African burial rites begin with the sending away of the departed with a request that they do not bring trouble to the living, and they end with a plea for the strengthening of life on Earth and all that favours it. According to the Tanzanian theologian Anthony Chilumba, funerary rites simultaneously mourn for the dead and celebrate life in all its abundance. Funerals are a time for a community to be in solidarity and to regain its identity. In some communities, this may include dancing and merriment for all but the immediate family, thus limiting or even denying the destructive powers of death and providing the deceased

36 Mary Nooter Roberts and Allen F. Roberts, 'Memory. Luba Art and the Making of History', *African Arts*, 29/1 (1996), pp. 22–35; Gavin Lucas, 'Forgetting the Past', *Anthropology Today*, 13/1 (1997), pp. 8–14; Anna Green, 'Individual Remembering and 'Collective Memory': Theoretical Presuppositions and Contemporary Debates', *Oral History*, 32/2 (2004), pp. 35–44.

37 Elisabeth Domansky, 'Kristallnacht, The Holocaust and German Unity: The Meaning of November 9 as an Anniversary in Germany', *History and Memory*, 4/1 (1992), pp. 60–94.

with 'light feet' for the journey to the other world. The absence of graves for those forebears who died during the colonial wars can never be erased in Tanzanian minds. As told by local families, the Germans also repatriated bodies/ashes and everything that was buried in the Tanzanian soil. This not only reiterated the colonizer-colonized dichotomy but also emphasized that the period of imperial rule is unforgettable.

Missing graves aside, some remnants of the wars do still remain. Weaponry in existence across the country, like in Mikindani and Kilwa, remind people of the severity of the colonial encounters, hardships they had to endure and deaths that took their forebears. Some places became the scenes of battle. Nyangao, Lukuledi, Namabengo, Kibata and Mtumbei are some such sites which experienced both the Majimaji War and the First World War. These sites have ditches and trenches, which are typical features of the First World War, lying parallel to hills and escarpments. Their peoples consider the colonial wars both tragic and European calamities without exception. To them, the name of the war does not matter and they do not differentiate time or battle; they were colonial calamities! Whilst in Tanzanian history books emphasis has been placed on the political, economic, social and cultural impacts of colonialism, the contemporary societies consider the wars as the source of the droughts and environmental upheavals which prevail today. In Lukuledi, for example, before the colonial wars – especially the First World War – the area was irrigated by the Lukuledi River – a prominent waterway with a total length of 160 kilometres, rising from the boundary between the Lindi and Mtwara regions. According to the local people, in the course of the First World War the British bombed the area, which resulted in drought. The people demanded reparation, whereby a dam was constructed near Lukuledi mission to mitigate water shortages.

Colonial wars have continued to kill until very recently. During my own reconnaissance, I encountered a bullet casing (see Image 3) which was identified to me by a retired military officer (former head of the Geography department of Stella Maris Mtwara University College) as being from a British rifle. Although I intended to collect Majimaji memories and trace archaeological evidence of the war so as to document its battlefield sites, First World War memories in Nyangao surpassed those of the Majimaji War. Apart, for example, from the First World War weapons which have remained in the former German *boma* ('headquarters') of Mikindani and Kilwa (see Image 2) as memorials, the local people encounter bullet casings and even bombs in their agricultural activities. An instance was mentioned where an ironsmith took a bomb unknowingly of what it contained. To him it was a heavy metal which he intended to heat and smith. Upon heating, the bomb exploded and killed him on the spot. People wonder how to interpret the

Fig. 6: The German cannon at Kilwa Kivinje, 2020. Photo: Nancy Rushohora.

Fig. 7: Bullet casing, 2020. Photo: Nancy Rushohora.

cause of his death; is it the First World War still in progress? Or is it the after-effect of the war and the enemy unknown? Memories of the German wars in Tanzania are thus present and traumatic.

With or without memorials and commemorative ceremonies, the colonial-era wars affected Tanzanian lives tremendously. It is illogical to ignore this past, which is still eating away at the psychology and doings of Tanzanians on their soil. These wars devastated the landscape, caused hunger and brought annihilation. Memory is the last thing remaining in Tanzanian hands. Thus, distortion can result in half-truth or complete obliteration of their own stance on colonial warfare.

The Majimaji memories can be assigned to three levels of agents: the individual, the small group and the collective. Individual Majimaji memories are those formed by the remaining descendants of the leaders of the war, of the known warriors and of the *maji* agents. Small groups' memories involve villages, districts and the regional scale. Collective memory encompasses teachings about Majimaji as part of the national-history project and the creation of official commemoration days, activities and rituals. Jennifer Cole asserts that there is no spontaneous memory.[38] We must deliberately create archives, maintain anniversaries and organize celebrations because such activities no longer occur organically.

Majimaji War studies are far more important now due to the decline of actual memory.[39] Some families of the Majimaji warriors forget or ignore the war memories while

38 Jennifer Cole, *Forget colonialism?: Sacrifice and the Art of Memory in Madagascar* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

39 Jamie Monson, 'Claims to History and the Politics of Memory in Southern Tanzania, 1940–1960', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 33/3 (2000), pp. 543–565.

others are keen to remember them. The family of Abdallah Mchimaye for example, who was the Majimaji warrior responsible for the killing of Bishop Cassian Spiss and his associates, did not appear to be aware of their grandfather's participation in the Majimaji War. In an interview in Liwale, Abdallah's grandson Hussein Mchimaye explained that he was unaware of the pivotal role that the warrior had played in the Majimaji War. According to Father Anthony Chilumba, the parish priest of Liwale, the family is probably hiding its identity due to fear that they may be hunted and killed by the bishop's family and the Catholic communities in seeking revenge. On the other hand, the family of Songea Mbano, the sub-chief and war general of the Ngoni, keeps alive memories of both the war and of their grandfather. According to his grandson Ally Songea Mbano, the family performs rituals at his refuge cave and participate in the Songea commemoration events every year.

Memorial

Memories of ancestors are created and sustained in what Pierre Nora called *lieux de memoire* or 'sites of memory'.[40] The latter are equivalent to memorials. The memorial treasures of the Majimaji War, which were intentionally placed for the purpose of commemoration, are very few in number. A survey of 26 Majimaji battlefield sites in Ruvuma, Lindi and Mtwara indicates only six memorials of the war in Nyangao, Mikukuyumbu, Nandete, Peramiho, Songea and Kilwa Kivinje. Yet, the available memorial obelisks pose a great challenge. With the exception of the Songea, Nandete and Kilwa Kivinje memorials which are government monuments, the rest are missionaries' memorials and pilgrimage sites for the purpose of commemorating individuals or groups of missionaries who died in particular areas. The Nyangao memorial, for example, was installed at the death site of Sister Walburga Diepolder OSB; Peramiho for Reverend Father Franziskus; and Mikukuyumbu for Bishop Cassian Spiss, the two reverend sisters and brothers respectively. Obviously, the missionaries' memorials single out people with importance for them rather than all those who died there. With these memorials, the complete picture of the war is obscured.

Second, the memorial in Kilwa Kivinje is controversial. It is located at the exact point where there was a 'mango tree used for hanging fighters' (*mwembe kinyonga*) during German colonialism. According to the Antiquities Officer in Kilwa, Mohamed Chidole, the mango tree dried up and collapsed in 1996 and thus the memorial is the only identity

40 Nora, 'Between Memory and History', (above, n. 33).

marker remaining. While other Majimaji warriors – including Kinjekitile Ngwale – were hanged at Muhoro, the names of the people under the *mwembe kinyonga* memorial include those who died during the coastal resistances prior to the Majimaji War. One of them is Chief Hassan bin Omari Makunganya, who, as noted earlier, was executed in 1895. His death was then followed by the mass execution of Kilwa elites after he was found with numerous letters in his possession on his arrest which depicted his conversations with other Kilwa inhabitants.[41] Others who were executed and are memorialized at *mwembe kinyonga* are Abdallah Waziri, Maalim Mwitta, Mzee Mandanda, Bakari Kimbangwa Kipukuswa, Mzee Ahmad Wanjale and Mzee Malenganya. The Majimaji memorials have thus combined different heroes and wars into singular monuments. The Majimaji museum in Songea, for example, commemorates the Kagera war heroes of the Songea battalion who died on their way home after the Tanzania-Uganda war of 1978–1979. Thus, the available Majimaji memorials have collectively commemorated different but adjoining events.

The reason for incorporating Kilwa resistance warriors with the Majimaji ones is unknown. The commemoration memorials have sometimes been influenced by government officials. Arguably what is publicly memorialized is selected by those in power, which reflects the interests of official elites, of men rather than women and of dominant rather than subordinate groups.[42] However memorials can also embody instrumental interpretations of national myths, with different purposes and popular resonance because the initiative in commemorating military sacrifice in national terms is often taken from below by a variety of social groups.[43] Myth creation is also a recurring process, and there can be a considerable time gap between the end of a war and the crystallization of a hegemonic narrative in which episodes of cowardice, internal conflicts and acts of collaboration are forgotten or reinterpreted.[44] The Kilwa memorial's amalgamation of its warriors in the same monument is not recorded. The addition of information to the Kilwa memorial is, therefore, of paramount importance to enhance the memorial's meaning and purpose. The Kilwa Islamic community has secured a plot near the memorial and intends to establish a commemorative mosque. The addition of information to the existing and planned memorial is important to help better provide awareness of the appropriate meaning of it.

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41 Becker, 'Traders, "Big Men" and Prophets' (above, n. 3).

42 John R. Gillis (ed.), *Commemorations*: *The Politics of National Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

43 John Hutchinson, 'Warfare and the Socialization of Nations: The Meanings, Rituals and Politics of National Remembrance', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 38/2 (2009), pp. 401–417.

44 Ibid.

Third, the museum and memorial of Songea are affected by propaganda. Memorials on this scale are dictated in part by the media and government bodies, which can choose to represent a memorial as symbolic of the conflict in question in general.[45] The Songea museum and memorial offers strong evidence of the Majimaji War and it is well commemorated not only by the structures but also by the communities surrounding them who cherish these memories immensely. The Songea community initiatives to put up a war memorial resulted in the building of wooden memorial / hanging posts in 1980 and later a concrete memorial on the government's initiative in 2006. As it is the only well-organized memorial, however, the majority of Tanzanians have come to narrowly associate the Majimaji events only with their Songea dimensions. Nandete has a well-built obelisk which came into use in 2010, but the remoteness of the area and poor infrastructure have rendered it unknown. Ngarambi, the home of Kinjekitile Ngwale and source of *maji*, has no memorial. Communities' demand for such memorials is very high. It is therefore important to install these memorials for a comprehensive elaboration of the Majimaji War's scale and significance.

Memorialization

Telling the story of a nation's past is highly political, involving struggles over whose stories will be remembered and preserved and whose will be repressed or forgotten.[46] Individuals and groups contest who has the right to represent the past and whose memories will become institutionalized.[47] The Majimaji memorialization is facilitated by the Remembrance Day ceremony which has been conducted in the Ruvuma region since 1980. The event takes place on the 27th February annually, remembering the day when more than 68 leaders and warriors in Ungoni were publically hanged by the Germans. Symbolically, the event has been used as a commemoration of the Majimaji War throughout southern Tanzania. Regional representatives from the areas concerned also participate in the commemoration ceremony.

Another form of memorialization involves the use of songs in commemoration of particular battlefield sites. Archaeological monuments and battlefield landscapes have

45 Gabriel Moshenska, 'Sales of Memory in the Archaeology of the Second World War', *Papers from the Institute of Archaeology University of London*, 17 (2006), pp. 308–362.

46 Cheryl Natzmer, 'Remembering and Forgetting: Creative Expression and Reconciliation in Post-Pinochet Chile', in Jacob Climo and Maria G. Cattell (eds), *Social Memory and History. Anthropological Perspectives* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2002), pp. 161–180.

47 Ibid.

attracted folklore and songs which are important factors in the monuments' continuing histories.[48] Some of the Majimaji battlefield sites are thus remembered in song. For example, the Muhuru battlefield site of the Mwera is commemorated in their songs which accompany tribal dances. One goes as follows:[49]

Mwera/Literary meaning

Mwera	Literary meaning
Chorus: Shionako sho ndi?	Chorus: What do we hear over there?
All: Mauti ku Ng'ulu	All: Death at Ng'ulu
Mauti gagomba askari	Guns fired by soldiers
Kwia kwagombela Wamwera kuona hasara	At the Mwera ruthlessly
Mchunu kumtanduwanga,	We should not provoke Europeans
juna jwa ngomo	Because some are very cruel

Considering written literature an archaeological source is but a recent phenomenon.[50] In African societies, literary works which include folklore, songs, idioms and riddles suggest the structure of people's lives, actions, movements and use of the local landscape.[51] Songs can be representative of individual and collective agency in a particular setting.[52] Although the individual participants change and the song can thus be modified, they provide the structure of commemoration – having the ability to transcend generations,[53] while holding up the past as an example of how people should live.[54] As Jamie Monson writes, 'the legend of Majimaji is magnificent, but the truth is even more interesting'.[55]

48 Martin Brown and Pat Bowen, 'The last Refuge of the Faeries: Archaeology and Folklore', in Amy Gazin-Schwartz and Cornelius J. Holtorf (eds), *Archaeology and Folklore* (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 255–273.

49 Aidan K. Kalembo, 'An Account of the Maji Maji Rising in the Lukuledi Valley', *Maji Maji Research Project Collected Papers* 7/1 (1968).

50 James Symonds, 'Songs Remembered in Exile? Integrating Unsung Archieves of Highland Life', in Amy Gazin-Schwartz and Cornelius J. Holtorf (eds), *Archaeology and Folklore* (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 106–128.

51 Peter R. Schmidt and Jonathan R. Walz, 'Re-representing African Pasts through Historical Archaeology`, *American Antiquity*, 72/1 (2007), pp. 53–70.

52 Symonds, 'Song Remembered in Exile', (above, n. 50), p. 124.

53 Ibid., p. 123.

54 Paul A. Shackel and David A. Gadsby, '"I wish for Paradise": Memory and Class in Hampden, Baltimore?', in: Chip. Colwell-Chanthaphonh and T. J. Ferguson, (eds) *Collaboration in Archaeological Practice* (New York: Altamira Press, 2008), pp. 225–242, here p. 230.

55 Jamie Monson, 'War of Words: The Narrative Efficacy of Medicine in the Maji Maji War', in James Leonard Giblin and Jamie Monson (eds.), *Maji Maji. Lifting the Fog of War*, (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2010), pp. 33–69.

The Aftermath

Countless Tanzanians who were deemed guilty of resistance to the imposition of colonial rule between 1890 and 1912 were either killed without due process or handed over to the executioner following conviction by court-martial. In 1905, for example, the Dar es Salaam administrative headquarters, constructed in the 1860s, were converted into a jail holding 200 Abushiri – coastal-resistance prisoners. Corporal punishment – particularly whipping (*kiboko,* also stemming from the Germans use of hippo's skin, which is known as *kiboko* in Kiswahili), execution and incarceration – went hand in hand as instruments of the colonial state. These instruments affected both the bodies and minds of the colonized. Colonial punishments had a major impact, bringing about the destruction of the jurisdiction, culture, identity and dignity of local communities.

The fate of Hassan Omar Makunganya, who was, as noted, arrested and hanged in Kivinje on 15 November 1895, is important to bring up here. Up until the writing of this article, both oral and historical accounts of Makunganya stopped immediately after his execution. Nevertheless, a number of factors make the continuation of Makunganya's history relevant. First, the inscription of his name on an emancipation memorial constructed in the 1970s to commemorate the Majimaji War heroes and heroines of Kilwa, who were executed by the Germans almost ten years after his demise. Second, there is a story beyond Makunganya's execution involving the removal of his remains from Tanzania to Germany and later of their trade to the United States. Such exchange between the Germans and US museums – the former being the sellers and the latter the buyers who benefitted (and still do) from colonial plunder – enhances our understanding of colonial power. Moreover, the disappearance of Makunganya's memory in both Kilwa and Lindi among his descendants is attributed to the aftermath of such plunder, where mourning empty graves becomes insignificant and the loss of the loved one perpetual unlike where a decent burial is accorded and communication between the living and the dead warranted.

The Skull of Makunganya

Colonial records have it that after the execution of Makunganya remains were never buried but rather transported to Germany for racial studies. A military doctor known as 'Simon' examined Makunganya's body. His skull was then sent to Berlin to Felix von Luschan, who was the head of the Africa section at the Völkerkundemuseum (Ethnological Museum). Von Luschan held two different collections of human remains: the

Fig. 8: Opened grave at Kilwa Kivinje, 2022. Photo: Nancy Rushohora.

official collection of the museum called 'S-Sammlung' still in Berlin today. The second was his private teaching collection. After von Luschan's death, his private collection was sold to New York and is held by the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) as the 'Luschan Collection'. The skull in question was part of the private collection. It was given the number 4728, and is still held by the AMNH at present. The museum proves the availability of the remains. The related procedure and funding, however, remain the sole responsibility of the demanding country. This is contradictory, as the latter was never involved in negotiation for the removal of these remains in the first place. Why should the return then not be seen as an act of social justice – returning the remains to their original soil? Probably this is a question that will remain unanswered for many years to come.

Back home, the name 'Makunganya' is fading from the historical records owing to this bodily appropriation. Chief Makunganya's name is, though, inscribed on the emancipation monument created in the 1970s together with the Majimaji War victims of the same region (see Image 5). This inclusion is contested not only because it is misplaced but also due to having been used to cover up the trading of his skull, which is here argued to constitute a deliberate act of dehumanization and shaming of the African body. The memorial monument's construction was originally the result of the Chama cha Mapinduzi ('Party of the Revolution') political movement's attempts to commemorate specif-

Fig. 9: The Majimaji Memorial Monument in Kilwa, bearing the name also of Chief Makunganya, 2022. Photo: Nancy Rushohora.

ically the victims of German colonialism during the Majimaji War, which commenced almost ten years after Makunganya's demise. As such, his inclusion here contradicts the available chronological records of the coastal resistances' and the Majimaji War's respective participants.

War or Genocide

Article II of the United Nations Convention of 1948 defines 'genocide' as any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, national, ethnic, racial or religious groups.[56] These include killing members of a group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. During the Majimaji, German troops used a scorched-earth policy, 'gendercide' (killing of women), starvation and mass killings as weapons of war – all explicitly prohibited under the law.

56 K. C. Kamanga, 'The Maji Maji War: An International Humanitarian Law Perspective', *Journal of Historical Association of Tanzania*, 6/2 (2009), pp. 47–65.

The notion that local communities experienced 'genocide' at the hands of their white conquerors is not only dismissed but openly derided.[57] Colonial and imperial wars are not usually considered genocidal in intent, but they could nonetheless still be so in their effects. Although the aim of the colonizer was not just to defeat military forces but also to annex territory and rule over a foreign people, they often ended up waging war against the entire population because it was difficult to distinguish between civilians and combatants – especially when guerrilla-style resistance ensued.[58] For the case of Tanzania, it is often argued that the German military campaign in the country cannot be called 'genocide' because the murder of hundreds of thousands of people in the colony was never the end goal.[59] The Germans used the excuse that the killing of a large part of the indigenous Tanzanian population was a grave mistake. It endangered economic development in the colony and stood against the colonizers' aim of gaining control over African land and labour at the same time.

Historians accept that the people of southern Tanzania initiated the war whose target was German authority[60]; however, there is no scenario where genocide occurs as an act of self-defence.[61] The civilian population was, therefore, systematically targeted during the Majimaji War: entire villages, fields and granaries were burnt and starvation was used as a weapon of war to bring the guerrillas to their knees. The German counterinsurgency campaign in southern Tanzania presents an extreme case of colonial violence which fulfils the criteria for 'genocide'. There was intent to destroy the groups in question by killing, causing serious bodily or mental harm, and inflicting conditions calculated to bring about their physical destruction – all features of genocide.[62]

The question of whether the Majimaji should bear the name 'war' or 'genocide' induces mixed feelings not only among scholars (both German and Tanzanian) but also local communities. Recognition of the Majimaji as a 'war' dignifies the efforts and sacrifices of our forebears for Tanzania as a country. As a 'war', the Majimaji signifies a battalion-against-battalion encounter where Tanzanians won some battles. 'Genocide', contrariwise, would represent the Tanzanians as a completely weak group which had not the power, means or military tactics to counterattack – which was certainly not the

57 Tilman Dedering, 'The German-Herero War of 1904: Revisionism of Genocide or Imaginary Historiography?', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 19/1 (1993), pp. 80–88.
58 A. Dirk Moses (ed.), *Empire, Colony, Genocide*: *Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History* (New York, NY: Berghahn Books, 2008).
59 Schaller, 'From Conquest to Genocide', (above, n. 4).
60 Gwassa, 'The Outbreak and Development of the Maji Maji War', (above, n. 1).
61 Adam Jones, *Genocide*: *A Comprehensive Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2006).
62 Lynn Berat, 'Genocide: The Namibian Case against Germany', *Pace International Law Review* 5/1 (1993), pp. 165210.

case for the Majimaji. It should also be remembered that the Majimaji was initiated by the Tanzanians, with Germans defending themselves. Their self-defence, then, is what went to the extremes; this is the grounds now invoked by those Tanzanians affected in demanding an apology.

After the Majimaji War, the Germans were terrified by the extent of the violence – as were the local communities involved, too. The latter understood the strength of German military power and thus opted for surrender. The Germans set the terms and conditions of submission either for individuals or for the whole battalion as follows: First, the structure of ringleaders and witchdoctors had to be declared. Second, the surrender of all firearms, bows, arrows and spears. If necessary, pressure was exerted by arresting the leaders until the required weapons had been surrendered. Third, besides the tax which normally every person paid, all those who submitted were to pay a fine of three rupies. In cases where this was not available, the person was required to perform paid labour for a productive enterprise or a public corporation to pay off the fine. The requirement of fines did not prejudice the right of military commanders to still require especially refractory ethnic groups to perform compulsory labour, for example to construct fortifications.

Fourth, sultans and other influential ethnic leaders who declared the submission of the communities they ruled were required to provide contingents of several hundred men for punitive and compulsory labour for the government on the coast. The punitive labour would last three to six months for each contingent.[63] The ringleaders and witchdoctors who either willingly surrendered or were hunted down were executed without exception. About 100 Ngoni elders were executed in 1906 in order to eliminate the entire military and political elite.[64] The Germans carried out military expeditions and killed traditional healers (*Zauberer*). The term *Zauberer* in German is masculine and translates as 'magician/wizard'.\2 Traditional healing is the profession of a few experts.[65] The mass killing of traditional healers destroyed the Tanzanians' right to worship and cures.[66]

63 Gwassa, 'The Outbreak and Development of the Maji Maji War' (above, n. 1).

64 Heike Schmidt, 'Deadly Silence Predominates in this District: The Majimaji War and its Aftermath in Ungoni', in James Leonard Giblin and Jamie Monson (eds), *Maji Maji. Lifting the Fog of War* (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2010), pp. 183–219.

65 Filip de Boeck, 'Beyond the Grave: History, Memory and Death in Postcolonial Congo/Zaire', in: Richard p. Werbner (ed.), *Memory and Postcolony. African Anthropology and the Critique of Power* (London, New York: Zed Books, 1998), pp. 21–57.

66 B. F. Masele, 'The Unfought Majimaji Wars: The Lessons of History are Never Learnt', *Tanzania Zamani*, 7/1 (2010), pp. 76–103.

The surrender of weapons, on the other hand, perpetuated starvation, which affected southern Tanzania between 1907 and 1910. The aftermath of the Majimaji War saw the disarming of native fighters. The Germans demanded that they surrender weapons of all sorts to the government, so that the memory of their subjugation would be permanently alive.[67] Subsequently any engagement in weapons' manufacture was punished, rendering the country's technological development impotent.[68] What were so-called weapons in German eyes were, in fact, also instruments of labour: hoes, bush knives, axes, swords and spears. While the Tanzanian government urged the spirit of reconciliation to prevail among the populace, the communities of southern Tanzania cannot forget the suffering inflicted on them and their ancestors by the German colonizers.

Although the above terms of surrender were extremely harsh, and our forebears fulfilled them, they do not tell the true story of what happened after the Majimaji War. Perhaps, other forms of punishment involved thereafter were not official or as widespread as incarceration and execution. Yet, early collectors of the Majimaji narratives recorded a lot of inhumanity. In Upangwa, Kinyokola, the leader of the German *askaris* had inflicted grave cruelty. He ordered his fighters and a few captives to cut off the penises and testicles of all male Majimaji fighters killed in battle at Mlama. The *askaris* managed to fill seven big baskets with these male genital organs.[69] In Liwale, for example, one of the earliest historical scholars of the Majimaji War, R. M. Bell, explained two scenarios: first and foremost was that of mercenaries who cooked children alive together with beans, which their parents and other captives were after forced to eat. Then, second, Somali trader Hussein Said, who had arrived in Liwale three days after the last Majimaji leader had been hanged, was surprised on paying his respects to the District Officer to find a number of African skulls lying on the latter's table. The skulls were lying there openly, as if papers or cups.[70] The question of skulls from German East Africa is another puzzle that has never been tackled. The Germans collected more than 2,000 from the colony to be archived back home. The unavailability of these remains has traumatized the victims of the Majimaji War who turn to ritual sites, mass graves and memorial monuments for solace.

67 Thaddeus Sunseri, 'The War of the Hunters: Maji Maji and the Decline of the Ivory Trade', in: James Leonard Giblin and Jamie Monson (eds), *Maji Maji. Lifting the Fog of War* (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2010), pp. 115–147.

68 Masele, 'The Unfought Majimaji Wars', (above, n. 67), p. 83.

69 G. K. Mbeya, *The Majimaji war in Upangwa* (Research Paper, Dar es Salaam: University of Dar es Salaam, 1969).

70 R. M. Bell, 'The Outbreak of the Maji Maji Rebellion in the Liwale District', *Tanganyika Notes and Records*, 28 (1950), pp. 38–57.

The Majimaji trauma was also inflicted on the local landscape. Afterwards, the affected communities opted to live far away. The memories of execution and death were unbearable, to the extent that in some places population outflows were acute until 2010. The families of certain chiefs such as Songea Mbano relocated completely from their ancestral homes to new places – in his case Matimira, where his descendants live today. The displacement of sub Chief Songea's family and the trauma inflicted is still endured today for up to the fifth generation of victims of the war.

Numerous battles ended up with the wiping out of ethnic groups making up the Majimaji battalions and of their home villages. The Battle of Namabengo, for example, was fought on 21 October 1905 when the Ngoni warriors who had gathered for an assault on the German garrison were unexpectedly attacked by the colonial army. Ngoni warriors, 5,000 strong and with 200 guns under the leadership of both Chief Mputa and Chabruma, had assembled for a face-to-face battle with the Germans. The colonial forces consisting of 11 Europeans, 122 *askaris* and numerous auxiliaries managed to set up an ambush, however. The Germans planned for a night-time assault on the Ngoni camp. Very few survived the battle, and it was after this encounter that *Chief* Chabruma ended his involvement in the war.[71] The Battle of Namabengo changed the course of the war in Ungoni. The Ngoni reverted to guerrilla warfare with ambushes and running attacks by small mobile units rather than face-to-face battles.

Another battle was the Mahenge assault. The Mahenge *boma* was both the German headquarters and a fortified military station built in 1899.[72] The Ngindo and Luguru prepared for an attack on the Mahenge *boma* on 30 August 1905 during the early periods of the war. It was the first time that Majimaji forces had confronted a full military field company reinforced by reservists and African auxiliaries. The attack was intended to burn down the *boma*, but the German forces from south-western Tanzania managed to prevent this. The Ngindo and Luguru were killed mercilessly and many withdrew from the war as the *maji* medicine proved to be a lie.

71 Schmidt, 'Deadly Silence Predominates in this District' (above, n. 64).

72 Lorne Larson, 'The Ngindo: Exploring the Center of the Maji Maji Rebellion', in: James Leonard Giblin and Jamie Monson (eds), *Maji Maji. Lifting the Fog of War*, Jamie Monson (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2010), pp. 71–113.

Repatriation and reparation

Repatriation and reparation are two further important aspects for contemporary Majimaji communities. Although the German militants never acknowledged their looting of human remains as trophies during the Majimaji War, their *askaris*, as noted, apparently mutilated enemy corpses and cut off the genitalia of the dead to prove that they had killed these warriors.[73] The full nature of the subsequent disposal/retention of these body parts remains uncertain.

Sometimes repatriation is a symbol of autonomy.[74] It serves as a catalyst for processes of public and civic mourning, without which people living in societies torn apart by ethnic conflict and crimes against humanity may be unable to find healing.[75] The mass grave at the Majimaji museum does not represent southern Tanzanian burial rites. While the communities wish to have their forebears interred in their families' traditional burial places, the mass grave has become the symbol of all who died during the war. It is estimated that the mass grave holds 100 or so bodies of warriors who were hanged after the summary executions by Major Johannes on three dates: 27 February, 20 March and 12 April 1906. Among the Ngoni, scarcely a single family exists today that did not lose members either by execution or starvation between 1904 and 1910.

Reparation, meanwhile, is not just about money; it is not even predominantly about money. Reparation is, rather, mostly about making amends: self-made repairs on ourselves, mental repairs, psychological repairs, cultural repairs, organizational repairs, social repairs, institutional repairs, technological repairs, economic repairs, political repairs, educational repairs – repairs of every possible type.[76] The keeping alive of the memory of our ancestors whose bodies are in mass graves, their personal identities obscured and own cemeteries marginalized,[77] is a lifelong torment. The affected communities feel relief and a sense of responsibility when they are compensated for a miss-

73 M. R. Moyd, 'All People were Barbarians to the Askari… Askari Identity and Honor in the Maji Maji War, 1905–1907', in James Leonard Giblin and Jamie Monson (eds), *Maji Maji. Lifting the Fog of War* (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2010), pp. 149–179.

74 Larry Nesper, 'The Meshingomesia Indian Village Schoolhouse in Memory and History', in: Jacob Climo and Maria G. Cattell (eds), *Social Memory and History. Anthropological Perspectives* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2002), pp. 181–197.

75 Innocent Pikirayi, 'Public Involvement in Archaeological Excavations in Southern Africa', in: Peter J. Ucko, Qin Ling, and Jane Hubert (eds.), *From Concepts of the Past to Practical Strategies. The Teaching of Archaeological Field Techniques* (London: Saffron Books, 2007), pp. 305–320.

76 Brandon Hamber, 'Repairing the Irreparable: Dealing with the Double-Binds of Making Reparations for Crimes of the Past', *Ethnicity and Health*, 5/3–4 (2000), pp. 215–226.

77 Boeck, 'Beyond the Grave', (above, n. 66).

ing person, for a life annihilated or for mental anguish.[78] While the Germans may have paid symbolic reparation through scholarships and aid donations to the Government of Tanzania, according to the African tradition the demand for reparation should take material form – thus being physical rather than symbolic, for example cattle, goats or cash to restore a sense of justice to the injured party.[79] The Majimaji communities have not received such direct reparation, and thus continue to demand it.

Digitalization of the Majimaji Archive, Memories and Landscape – The Future Aspiration

The primary historical evidence regarding the Majimaji War comes from German documents. These are found in public, missionary and personal archives; the challenges vis-à-vis accessing them are acute. A few others are found in the Tanzania People Defence Force Museum (currently closed), the National Museum of Tanzania and the Majimaji museum. Published documents about the Majimaji War are archived in the library of the oldest university in Tanzania, the University of Dar es Salaam. This, however, is not without its issues as the collection of Majimaji research papers and publications has been left to decompose on shelves while audiotapes of interviews suffer from technological outdatedness. Colonial documents were published in the German language, and only a few have since been translated. On the other hand, there is a vibrant public interest in being involved in the discussion, memorialization and activities pertaining to honouring the heroes of the nation – particularly among the communities most affected by the war. According to the descendants of the latter's local victims, very little correct information is presented in textbooks where Majimaji is taught in History from primary schools to college level.[80] Narratives and memories at play in the home environment and through daily encounters with the battlefield sites have not been integrated into official textbooks. With the dawn of machine technology and increased urbanization, traditional oral storytelling at home is dying at an alarming rate – rendering it imperative to have a record of these memories in non-altered digital format.

78 Nancy Scheper-Hughes, 'The Politics of Remorse', in: Conerly Casey and Robert B. Edgerton (eds), *A Companion to Psychological Anthropology. Modernity and Psychocultural Change* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), pp. 469–494.

79 Richard p. Werbner (ed.), *Memory and Postcolony: African Anthropology and the Critique of Power* (Postcolonial encounters, London, New York: Zed Books, 1998).

80 Nancy A. Rushohora, 'The Challenges of Teaching the Majimaji War in Contemporary Tanzania', *Teaching African History in Schools* (2020), pp. 107123.

At the national level, the Majimaji has been a political pendulum used for sporadic government agendas. During the struggle for independence, the unity displayed during the Majimaji was emulated by political elites such as Julius Nyerere to emphasize the necessity of coming together in fighting for freedom.[81] After Tanzania achieved independence on 9 December 1961, regional politics emphasized the inclusion of the leaders of the anti-colonial resistance among those considered heroes of the nation. Memorials were also installed, mainly for purposes of political-identity formation. Such leaders include Kinjekitile Ngwale for the Majimaji War and Mkwavinjika Munyigumba (Mkwawa) of the Hehe resistance. The preliminary attempts to harness the archives and collections of oral narratives of the anti-colonial struggle to that end would be criticized for supporting a political agenda.[82]

Creating a documentary film, as aspired to by this project, is a vital initiative to take the archival sources and academic research to the wider public eye, particularly among the communities most affected by the war. Namely, for the formal written records to be accordingly criticized, debated or questioned. It is also an attempt to collect the affected communities' voices and record them in a more sustainable technology while allowing them to be heard across a broader spectrum of society. The country currently lacks, as such, a documentary film featuring the battlefields, memories and legacies of the Majimaji War that could help better inform cultural policies and classroom-learning resources.

It is my aspiration that the Majimaji project will end up with a documentary that captures transgenerational memories. Through this approach, the inflicted trauma that lies underneath contemporary landscapes and stories that would otherwise remain silent or forgotten will be unearthed. Prominent here, for instance, is the return of Songea Mbano's skull, which was taken by the Germans during the Majimaji War – with the Ngoni still demanding its return over 100 years later. The digitization of the Majimaji War is thus a form of public archaeology allowing a personal interaction with the past and airing demands and contestation over repatriation, reparation, genocide and remedy across the regions concerned – as well as seeking to counter the political appropriation

81 Julius K. Nyerere, *Freedom and Unity* (Dar es Salaam. 1966).

82 Elijah Greenstein, 'Making History: Historical Narratives of the Maji Maji', *Penn History Review*, 17/2 (2010), 60–77; Giblin and Monson (eds), *Maji Maji* (above, n. 26); Thaddeus Sunseri, 'The War of the Hunters: Maji Maji and the Decline of the Ivory Trade', in James Leonard Giblin and Jamie Monson (eds), *Maji Maji. Lifting the Fog of War* (Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2010), pp. 115–147.

of the same.[83] It is also a form of healing where the affected communities will be able to grieve and be heard.

Filming has already started, but a lack of funds has hindered its production.[84] The documentary started with the museum where about 100 bodies and remains of those executed by the Germans are based. Between 25th and 27th February annually, people gather at the Majimaji Museum – where, as noted, a mass grave and previous execution site are located. The documentary therefore utilizes the same space to facilitate dialogue with the people in question on how colonialism continues to affect their lives and how they remember and reconstruct memories of the war. By displaying a visual documentary parallel to the Majimaji War objects, photographs, graves and sculptures, visitors to the museum will be given a sense of what happened through means of direct interaction – thus enhancing their experience of the site. The documentary will also be used as teaching aid given the fact that the Majimaji War is a topic of key interest in historical scholarship.

Intellectual Collaboration

The digitization of the Majimaji War project poses intellectual and political challenges. The intellectual one exists around the need to better contextualize the colonial atrocities, a prominent theme in the history of Africa. The role of the digitization project is to bring together the public, learners of African history and researchers to discuss colonialism as a past phenomenon – but also the future of the continent in light of those historical legacies. This brings attention to new voices, perspectives and stories that would otherwise remain unheard if history was to rely on formal archives and written documents alone. A documentary also factors in the possibility of allowing people to explain how interacting with the battlefield landscape in their everyday lives evokes painful memories and how the affected communities have adapted to the trauma imprinted on their daily environment.

It is believed that when the documentary is finalized, the dominant narratives of the Majimaji War will be interrogated, new knowledge will be created and the contemporary

83 Nancy A. Rushohora, 'Graves, Houses of Pain and Execution: Memories of the German Prisons after the Majimaji War in Tanzania (1904–1908)', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 47/2 (2019), pp. 275299.

84 See short version of the Majimaji War documentary https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8myesAoe0Q (last accessed 27.7.2024) and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWt4zleTfjg (last accessed 27.7.2024).

reconstruction of the sites by the affected communities will be made apparent. The documentary aspires to cover the eastern and southern Tanzania regions of Lindi, Mtwara, Ruvuma, Njombe, Morogoro, Dar es Salaam and Pwani. Specifically, 26 sites containing memories, memorials, memorialization activities and the landscape which constitutes the palimpsest of the Majimaji War. These sites contain two Majimaji War mass graves, seven memorials, refuge caves, forests, rivers (which were the erstwhile source of the ritual *maji* waters) and numerous commemorative toponyms. Colonial photographs, pictographs and cartographic records which can be used to further explain the ruthlessness encounters playing out between the Germans and Tanzania's local communities during the Majimaji War will also form part of the documentary.

Conclusion

Although the Majimaji War seems to have been over-researched, it is a topic that involves continuous re-interpretation. The use of a documentary film, for instance, for data collection and dissemination helps diversify research sources and contributes to knowledge enhancement. Nevertheless, from the preliminary filming a number of technical and epistemological challenges have already been observed. One of these is the involvement of the Tanzanian government – and particularly the army – in commemoration ceremonies. Filming of the army undertaking their responsibilities during commemorative activities requires a stricter permit. Ownership of the Majimaji memory and landscape are equally shared between the government and the affected communities.

Another challenge is the ideal approach for distribution of the documentary to history teachers throughout Africa and beyond, which is the main role of the project – namely, to enhance access to research output on what would otherwise remain at the local level, therewith contributing to knowledge production and dissemination. An online domain and a visual lab in Tanzania will thus host the project. Archives with German documents in Tanzania have not been very useful due to linguistic barriers. The Tanzania National Archive has no personnel who are linguistically capable of handling the German documents. The project has been well-received by the Majimaji community, whose attempts to move away from the archives and oral traditions to embrace also audio-visual material are already observable.[85]

85 Nancy A. Rushohora, 'German colonial missionaries and the Majimaji memorials in southern Tanzania', *Journal of Social History* 50/3 (2017), pp. 481–501.

German Colonial Memory in the Gbaya Oral Tradition
(Bertoua, East Region, Cameroon)

Amina Djouldé Christelle

Introduction

This paper analyzes the corpus of the oral tradition of the Gbaya[1] of Bertoua[2] as an entry point to grasp the local dynamics of German colonial domination. From the perspective of Cultural Studies, the aim is to demonstrate how, among the Gbaya, oral tradition constitutes both a documentary source and form of mnemonic support regarding German colonization in Cameroon. These people, relying on oral literature, have produced an endogenous version of memorization of their colonial encounter with Germany that is transmitted orally from generation to generation. Specifically, songs and epic tales of an oral nature are valorized as evidence of the Gbaya version of the German colonial experience.

Indeed, as a fact of civilization, the Gbaya oral tradition – like that of many peoples in Africa – appears to be the foundation of historical consciousness.[3] Via songs, epic oral narratives, tales, myths, and proverbs, the Gbaya manage to record their historical dynamics and transmit them through the ages.[4] Thus, when the encounter with the German colonizers occurred, it was through an oral corpus that these people chose to record this page of their history.[5] Like with archival, archaeological, and iconographic materials, the

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1 Gbàyà in the Gbaya writing system.

2 Bertoua is the capital city of East Region, Cameroon, being situated in the Division of Lom-et-Djérem. Years ago, this town was a group of small villages and hamlets under the main town. To learn more about the history of this town, see: Dieudonné Ndanga Ngnantare, *La chefferie de Bertoua, Ca 1840–1947*, Memoire de Maîtrise en Histoire (Université de Ngaoundéré, 2003).

3 Philip A. Noss, 'Héros et l'héroïsme dans la tradition et la vie Gbaya', in Jean Boutrais and Adala Hermenegildo (eds), *Peuple et culture de l'Adamamoua* (Paris: Ostorm, 1993), 203–217, here p. 203; Philip C. Burnham, *The Politics of Cultural Difference in Northern Cameroon* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press International African library, 1996), p. 17; Philip C. Burnham, *Gbaya. The Heritage* (The Heritage Library of African Peoples, New York: Rosen Pub. Group, 1997), p. 6.

4 Dieudonné Ndanga Ngnantare, *Returning to the Past*. Film presented for a Degree of Master of Philosophy in Visual Culture Studies. Dieudonné Ndanga Ngnantare (Regie), (Tromsø: University of Tromso, 2007), p.10.

5 Dieudonné Ndanga Ngnantare and Henri Alexis Ndanga, *L'identite Gbaya. Essai de reconstitution de l'Histoire et des Coutumes des Gbaya de l'Est du Cameroun* (Saarbrücken: Éditions universitaires européennes, 2014), p. 95; D.-B. Beloko, *L'homme Gbaya, son histoire, sa culture* (Ngaoundéré: EELC, 2002), p. 22; Philip

Gbaya's oral literature is an epistemological and heuristic entry to understand the trajectory of German colonial domination from a local perspective. Hence the need to make this cultural fact intelligible as a memorial paradigm that serves to remember the German colonial past from the perspective of the dominated. Following this logic, this study is a contribution on colonial memory in Cameroon.

In general, the literature hereon mostly presents the German colonial domination on the territory and the transformations undergone as a result. From then on, to describe the territorial formation of Kamerun, the peaceful and military mechanisms of German occupation are highlighted.[6] From a postcolonial perspective, the assessment of the relationship between Cameroon and Germany scrutinizes the politics of colonial memory that continue to shape diplomatic ties between the two countries.[7] Thus, the historiography of German colonization highlights inclusive and complex dynamics. The reflections decipher the dichotomy between endogenous actors during the process of colonial expansion. Local chiefs[8] as well as the general population[9] have been identified as being German accomplices. Alongside the collaborative approach, biographical

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A. Noss, *Gbaya, phonologie et grammaire: dialecte yaayuwee* (Meiganga: Eglise évangélique luthérienne du Cameroun, Centre de traduction gbaya, 1981), p. 1.

6 Siegfried Passarge, *Adamawa. Rapport de l'expédition du comité allemand pour le Cameroun au cours des années 1893–1894* (Paris: Karthala Relire, 2010); Florian Hoffmann, *Okkupation und Militärverwaltung in Kamerun. Etablierung und Institutionalisierung des kolonialen Gewaltmonopols 1891–1914* (Göttingen: Cuvillier, 2007); Curt von Morgen and Philippe Laburthe-Tolra, *À travers le Cameroun du sud au nord. Voyages et explorations dans l'arrière-pays de 1889 à 1891*. With the collaboration of Rudolf Hellgrewe (Paris: L'Harmattan; Racines du présent, 2009); Adalbert Owona, *La naissance du Cameroun. 1884–1914* (Paris: L'Harmattan; Collection Racines du présent, 1996); Albert Pascal Temgoua, 'La conquête militaire allemande et son impact sur l'économie de l'Adamaoua 1899–1906', *Païdeuma,* 40 (1994), pp. 67–79.

7 Stefanie Michels and Albert-Pascal Temgoua (eds), *La politique de la mémoire coloniale en Allemagne et au Cameroun. Actes du colloque à Yaoundé, octobre 2003, organisé par Goethe-Institut* (Encounters/ Begegnungen, 5, Münster: Lit, 2005); Samuel Nleme Afan and Sil Grâce Mabouang, *La diplomatique et la communicabilité des archives de la période coloniale allemande (1884–1916): cas des archives relatives aux africains ayant servi sous l'égide de l'administration coloniale allemande* (2018) https://www.goethe.de/resources/files/pdf171/nlemesil_article_master-class_fr.pdf (last accessed 27.7.2024); Alexandre Kum'a Ndumbe III, *L'Afrique et l'Allemagne de la colonisation à la coopération. 1884–1896; le cas du Cameroun* (Yaoundé: Éd. Africavenir, 1986).

8 Christian Bommarius, *Der gute Deutsche*: *Die Ermordung Manga Bells in Kamerun 1914* (Berlin: Berenberg, 2016); Alexandra Loumpet-Galitzine, *Njoya et le royaume bamoun*: *Les archives de la Société des missions évangéliques de Paris, 1917–1937* (Hommes et sociétés, Paris: Karthala, 2006); Eric Young, 'Samba, Martin-Paul. 1853–1914 German Military Officer and Nationalist Leader in Cameroon', in Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Kwame Anthony Appiah (eds), *Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 669; Joseph Gomsu, *Colonisation et organisation sociale. Les chefs traditionnels du Sud-Cameroun pendant la période coloniale allemande (1884–1914)* (Thèse de doctorat de 3e cycle, Saarbrücken, Universität des Saarlandes, 1982).

9 Eugène Désiré Eloundou, *Le Sud-Kamerun face à l'hégémonie allemande*: *1884–1916* (Émergences africaines, Paris: L'Harmattan, 2016).

studies on some local chiefs have demonstrated that there was also resilience to colonial conquest.[10]

In the same vein, historians have increasingly examined various objects and themes to reconstruct the trajectory of the geostrategic issues that shaped German colonization in an urban and cultural sense. As a result, German colonization in Cameroon has become the subject of historical studies taking a multidisciplinary approach to the logic of memorization. Despite their relevance and the quality of their methodology, the historical literature on German colonization in Cameroon has, however, marginalized oral tradition. Historiography has long privileged the use of written, material, and iconographic sources.[11] When called on, oral sources have relied primarily on the testimonies of direct/indirect actors or specialists of colonization; very often, though, oral tradition is marginalized. Because of this fragmented nature to historical research, this analysis is innovative in the sense that it proceeds to a re-reading of German colonization in a part of east Cameroon from a local perspective that privileges the use of oral tradition. In this way, the colonial episode is not only reconstructed according to the version of the colonized but also from their inventiveness in producing knowledge based on orality.

The mechanisms of reconstruction of a historical order from the Gbaya oral literature require that the invention of tradition is convened as a theoretical framework Speaking of the relationship between colonization and the invention of tradition in African cultures, Ranger argues that the quest for recognition among colonized peoples has led them to proceed to such invention.[12] Thus, elements of culture are reshaped through further additions to create traditions that are adapted to local forms of historical memory. In this perspective, the Gbakisi (a group of Gbaya people native from Bertoua) with their ability to tell their version of the history of the colonial encounter with Germany through songs and epic tales manage to revise and invent a tradition. For the Gbaya,

10 Bommarius, *Der gute Deutsche* (above, n. 8); Young, 'Samba, Martin-Paul. 1853–1914 German Military Officer and Nationalist Leader in Cameroon.' (above, n. 8); Hanse Gilbert Mbeng Dang, *Le prince Nkal Mentsouga et la colonisation allemande 1850–1916* (Université de Yaoundé I: Maitrise en Histoire, 2005); Ndanga Ngnantare, *La chefferie de Bertoua* (above, n. 3); Madeleine Mbono Samba Azan and Bernard Rouzet, *Martin Samba*: *Face à la pénétration allemande au Cameroun* (Grandes figures africaines, Paris: A.B.C. [Afrique biblio club], 1976).

11 Thierno Moctar Bah, *Historiographie africaine*: *Afrique de l'Ouest, Afrique Centrale* (Série de livres du Codesria, Dakar: Codesria, Conseil pour le développement de la recherche en sciences sociales en Afrique, 2015); Paul Thompson and Joanna Bornat, *The Voice of the Past*: *Oral history* (Oxford oral history series; 4th edn., New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017); Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition*: *A Study in Historical Methodology* (New Brunswick, London: Aldine Publishing Company, 2009).

12 Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence O. Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition* (Canto classics, Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

it is a question of valorizing their potential as warriors and symbolically safeguarding their dignity. However, as part of a postcolonial approach, the analysis of the oral corpus shows that this invented tradition ultimately serves the colonial reasoning. In this respect, the reflections of Kavwahirehi are relevant to understanding the postcolonial dimension of invented traditions. The author argues that oral literature is a mode of colonial production that serves to sustain colonial reasoning.[13] In other words, the oral corpus produced in Africa on colonization, when exploited by the West, has a colonial purpose. In contrast to Kavwahirehi's approach, which considers the colonial order to be at the heart of the manipulation of oral discourse, this study highlights the dichotomous dimensions to the invention of tradition among the Gbaya. More explicitly, by inventing their version of colonization, the Gbaya construct their own mnemonic mechanism that is both supportive of the imperialist image of German colonization and also of the Gbaya's glorious warrior past.

This work on Gbaya local German colonial memory through oral literature is the result of three months of fieldwork in Bertoua.[14] This town was chosen because of its extensive colonial history. The materials used are written, oral, and iconographic. The written data made it possible to situate the historical contexts that determine the emergence of traces of German colonial actions in stories and songs. The oral sources – essentially qualitative, and collected via semi-structured interviews conducted exclusively with the Gbaya – provide information on the different versions and meanings of the songs and stories collected. The sampling of oral literature was based on songs and stories that are popular within the Gbaya community. Transcriptions of this oral literature were made by Gbaya language specialists and a research assistant specializing in the history of Bertoua to ensure that the data contained the signs necessary for understanding the texts. Note-taking and audio recordings were my primary data-collection tools. The analysis of the data was done by comparing the primary and secondary sources, which made it possible to detect truth and invention in the telling of the story of German colonization. It combined transdisciplinary and multimethod approaches. The historical approach was combined with the analysis of literary texts. The collected oral information was subjected to literary, historical, and sociological criticism. On the whole, the data

13 Kasereka Kavwahirehi, 'La littérature orale comme production coloniale', *Etudes Africaines*, 44/176 (2004), pp. 793–813.

14 I am indebted to my research assistant Belya Zeck Chrystelle, who enabled me to listen all 30 versions of the songs and epics tales she recorded. Her knowledge on Gbaya culture helped me to understand certain symbols and to situate their use.

collected made it possible to build the work around two major articulations. First, it is a question of making a brief history of the colonial encounter between the Gbaya and the German colonizers. Second, it is also a question of restoring the analysis of songs and epic biographical narratives as mechanisms of colonial memorial construction in the invention of oral tradition.

The Gbaya and the German colonial encounter

Several authors maintain that the area that makes up present-day central Sudan is the point of origin of Gbaya migration.[15] This version is anchored in the collective memory of the Gbaya, as numerous oral testimonies situate Sudan as where these people hail from originally. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the pressures of slave raids and drought would have amplified this migration. This justified their presence in the area that would later become Cameroon after a stay in the Central African Republic. The settlement of the Gbaya in the territory that would become Bertoua dates back to the eighteenth century.[16] Initially, they were hamlets made up of huts called Gaïmona. The area was ruled by King Mbartaoua.[17] The latter reigned from 1884 to 1903 (hence the origin of the city's French name, Bertoua) and organized the structure of the village like a hierarchical chieftaincy.[18] Thus, in the image of centralized power, the Gbaya from Gaïmona together formed an independent territory, one governed by law and managed by a chief who had a palace, an army, and a court. The Germans found, therefore, an organized society.

Contact between the Gbaya and the Germans dates back to the end of the eighteenth century. Following the signing of the German-Douala treaty on 12 July 1884, the Germans began their colonial rule in Kamerun.[19] After the annexation of the territory's littoral regions, the Germans planned to conquer the hinterlands. Hence, they needed to penetrate the territory's eastern part. The Germans began to settle in Doumé, where they established

15 Burnham, *Gbaya,* p. 10 (above, n. 3); Bah Mouctar Thierno, 'Le facteur Peul et les Relations inter-ethniques dans l'Adamaoua au XIXe siècle', in Jean Boutrais and Adala Hermenegildo (eds), *Peuple et culture de l'Adamamoua* (Paris: Ostorm, 1993), p. 67.

16 Ndanga Ngnantare and Ndanga, *L'identite Gbaya* (above, n.5), p. 75.

17 Mbàrtouà in the Gbaya language.

18 Léonidas Bateranzigo, *Les Gbaya et les Kaka de l'Est-Cameroun. Des origines à 1960: Approche historique* (Thèse Soutenue en vue de l'obtention d'un Doctorat de 3e cycle en Histoire à l'Université de Yaoundé, 1995), p. 123.

19 Adelbert Owona, *La naissance du Cameroun (1884–1914) (*Paris, L'Harmattan, 1996), p. 9.

a military base. With the ambition to link Doumé to Ngaoundéré in Adamawa Region, they were forced to follow the Nyong River from the north. This led them to the Gbaya chiefdom of Gaïmona,[20] which means, freedom, independence, and absence of aggression.

This version of the German arrival from Doumé is the most common in Gbaya literature and oral testimony. The written sources indicate the opposite. The archives and secondary written sources state that the Germans penetrated Gaïmona from Moulondou, which was once part of Sangha-Ngoko district. It was the accounts of Dr. Plehn's scientific explorations that allowed the Germans to master the territory of the Gbaya. Also, current oral sources indicate that Plehn was the first German to penetrate the Gaïmona chiefdom. In 1895, coming from Ngaoundéré via Kundé, Hans Dominik was the first German to stay in this chiefdom. Two years later, Officer Stand stayed there.[21] The Gbaya in their historical tradition considers Plehn as the pioneer of the German presence on their territory.

From first contact, the Gbaya were curious and amazed to see a being with white skin that they initially equated with the kɔyɔ.[22] After, the Gbaya quickly realized that the 'white-skinned beings'[23] they had just met were not fish but rather human and similar. From then on, based on their phenotype, the Gbaya referred to the Germans as gbouï ('white men'). The evolution of relations with the newcomers allowed the Gbaya to later understand that the gbouï were called 'Germans'. Unable to articulate the name 'German' any better, the Gbaya reappropriated the word and designated the new collaborators zɑ̀mɑ̀n. The information collected testifies that the first contacts between the Gbaya and the Germans were peaceful. After being received by Chief Mbartoua, the Germans were installed as his guests in the village. After, they began to express their desire to exploit the territory. To realize this ambition, Plehn as head of the district began introducing forced labor and the payment of taxes. These many waves of abuse pushed Chief Mbartoua to incite his people to revolt, namely to disobey the orders of the German settlers. To demonstrate his authority, Chief Mbartoua murdered Plehn and buried his body in the bush.[24] This act was used by Lieutenant Von Stein as an argument to launch the expedition against the Gbaya from 1901 to 1903. The resistance organized by Chief Mbartoua manifested in the form of armed conflict, which the Gbaya have not failed to evoke in war songs readapted to remembering this colonial period.

20 In Gbaya writing, gɓɑ̀ g d , Gaìmɔnɑ̀, or Grand Campement *Gaìmɔnɑ̀*.
21 Bateranzigo, *Les Gbaya et les Kaka de l'Est-Cameroun* (above. n.18), p. 123.
22 Fish in the Gbaya language.
23 The Gbaya used to called Germans this.
24 Ndanga Ngnantare and Ndanga, *L'identite Gbaya* (above, n. 5).

Invented oral tradition and colonial memory in Gbaya folk songs

The Gbaya people by essence are a people of hunters and warriors; as a teenager (around the age of eight), the young boy is gathered to endure the Làɓí rite of passage. During these initiation rites, he is removed from his family and spends several months in the forest. After, he returns haloed with the socio-spiritual knowledge that allows him to assert himself within his community. He could therefore master the strategies of war. It is in this sense that Yaziki reveals that 'The young boy during his làɓí initiation was trained in the practice of war. The latter was therefore ready to defend his community wherever the need arose.'[25]

In reality, the Làɓí was not just a simple initiation rite but also a school of life that is at the foundation of Gbaya civilization. According to Thièrno, the làɓí is at the heart of cultural mores that allows the development and perpetuation of magico-religious practices, ecological knowledge, and social and political regulatory codes that constitute a coherent system.[26] The làɓí is also the Gbàyà initiatory school during which the art of waging war is inculcated in the youth to perpetuate the grandeur of the Gbaya. Through the words of these authors, one can understand that in Gbaya society làɓí constitutes the backbone of its civilization. It is the basis for the training and selection of the members of the sirtà whose lives are now devoted to collective hunting and the practice of warfare.

Indeed, according to Dieudonné Ndanga, in ancient Gbaya society, the sirtà constituted a particular group of men initiated into the làɓí. They had mastered the handling of weapons intended for hunting as well as for armed confrontations.[27] The sirtà fulfilled the supplying of food and security for the community. After initiation, one officially becomes a sirtà following a public naming ceremony that takes place very early in the morning during the beginning of the hunting season. This ceremony is presided over by the dean of the Sirtà who blesses them by sprinkling Zɔ̀rà water on the neophytes, urging them to become 'Sirtà Lions' (i. e. to symbolically be strong). To ensure their identity specificity, the neophytes are scarified and are presented to the rest of the community. In contempo-

25 Formal interview with Yaziki Simon, Bertoua, 31.8.2021.

26 Ninga Songo, 'Le 'Labi', Rite d'initiation des Gbaya', in Hermenegildo Adala and Jean Boutrais (eds), *Peuples et cultures de l'Adamaoua, Cameroun. Actes du colloque de Ngaoundéré du 14 au 16 janvier 1992* (Collection colloques et séminaires/Institut Français de Recherche Scientifique pour le Développement en Coopération, Paris: Editions de l'Orstom, 1993), 181–186, here p. 181; Thierno Mouvtar Bah, 'Le facteur peul et les relations inter-ethniques dans l'adamaoua au XIXe siècle', in Hermenegildo Adala and Jean Boutrais (eds), *Peuples et cultures de l'Adamaoua, Cameroun. Actes du colloque de Ngaoundéré du 14 au 16 janvier 1992* (Collection colloques et séminaires / Institut Français de Recherche Scientifique pour le Développement en Coopération, Paris: Orstom, 1993), 61–86, here p. 61.

27 Ndanga and Ndanga, *L'identite Gbaya* (above, n. 16), p. 123.

Fig. 1: A young Sirtɑ̀ wearing war clothes like old Sirtɑ̀, Bertoua, September 2018. Photo: Amina Djouldé Christelle.

rary Gbaya oral epic narratives, this grandiloquent perception of the Sirtɑ̀ persists among the youth as well as adults. Thus, Mboundar states to this effect that 'The sirtɑ̀ were such strong and fearless men practicing skillful hunting who could kill or capture any animal no matter how powerful. The sirtɑ̀ were fearless in war and no people could subdue the Gbaya.'[28]

From Mboundar Constantin's testimony, a grandiloquent logic emerges that falls under the invention of tradition. For, so far, no military defeat of the sirtɑ̀ is evoked. There is this desire of the Gbaya to safeguard their representation in the collective memory as powerful warriors and the prospect of perpetuating their legitimacy as brave persons. For by the time that the Germans arrived, the military power, the prestige, and the prowess of the Gbaya and Chief Mbartoua had already been established in the East Region. In addition, the Gbaya believed that their capacity for warfare had mystical origins related to the lɑ̀ɓí. Amulets were part of the local war dress. The war uniform is deerskins on the torso and the genitalia cover[29] made of panther skin because wearing it connotes the appropriation of the animal's hunting skills. On the legs, sported is the gɑ̀mɓɑ̀s counter shins made of ebam dumbu tree bark – the shield is always based on this tree. The latter is very resistant. Bounda tells to this effect that

28 Formal Interview with Gabana Mboundar Constantin, Bertoua, 30.8.2021.
29 Locally called yɑ̀k d .

Fig. 2: Young Sirtà women wearing war clothes like old Sirtà women with the peace tree in their hands, Bertoua, September 2018. Photo: Amina Djouldé Christelle.

> The war uniform consisted of hind animal skins on the torso, and the gambas on the shins. The guru amulet of protection was the most important item that had to be worn because when the gbàyà wore it made them invisible and even invincible.[30]

It is therefore with their military legitimacy and above all their philosophy of peace[31] that the Gbaya, proud of their freedom, have undertaken to resist all forms of oppression. The Gbaya have built a philosophy centered on peaceful cohabitation, conflict resolution, reconciliation, and the fight against oppression, among other things.[32]

Attached to their freedom by refusing all forms of domination and oppression, the Gbaya do not hesitate to declare war on any people whose ambition is to conquer them.

30 Formal interview with Gabana Mboundar Constantin, Bertoua, 31.8.2019.

31 Peace among the Gbaya is referred to as *nga'a mo*, which can be translated as calmness, gentleness, tranquillity, and the absence of disorder. That is why the Gbaya have considered colonial occupation and domination as a form of violence that destroyed their peace. To overcome it, they did not hesitate fight for their freedom. For more information, see: Amina Djouldé Christelle, 'Gender approach to peacebuilding in Cameroon and Central African Republic. The case study of the Oko'o Nga'a mo (women of peace)', in Thomas Kwasi Tieku, Amanda Coffie, Mary Boatemaa Setrana et al. (eds), *The Politics of Peacebuilding in Africa* (Routledge Studies on African Politics and International Relations, Abingdon, Oxon, New York, NY: Routledge, 2022), pp. 189–202.

32 Thomas Christensen, *An African Tree of Life* (American Society of Missiology Series, 14, Maryknoll: Orbis, 1990), p. 1.

Fig. 3: Gbaya's mystical amulets inspired by past models, Bertoua, September 2018. Photo: Amina Djouldé Christelle.

During German colonization, the Gbaya refused to be submitted to the injunction of Dr. Plehnn and got rid of him to keep their sovereignty. This revolt resulted in several significant deaths on both the German and the Gbaya sides. The Gbaya set up kidnappings as a means of waging war. Therefore, after the Germans were captured, the Gbaya made them consume a poison called mìní (made from the excrement of the mole). After ingesting it, the captive was dead within seconds. Ngaré's description of this practice can be summed up in these words:

> After the capture of a German, the Gbaya made a poison from mole excrement. This poison called mìnì was rubbed on the end of spears during the war or otherwise, this toxic product was made to be ingested by the captive who lost his life after a few seconds. The latter was very quickly butchered before the poison spread to the rest of the body and its flesh was consumed.[33]

It is difficult to verify this practice of anthropophagy among the Gbaya, but this discourse is common in the oral tradition. The practice was a guarantee of domination and subjuga-

33 Formal interview with Aiba Ngaré, Bertoua, 1.8.2021.

tion of the ‘white man considered invincible’[34]. In addition, in popular imagery, it is told that Chief Mbartoua had Dr. Plehn killed and ate his flesh This act made him mystically stronger. Also, the consumption of human flesh by the Gbaya of this period was a guarantee of longevity and allowed for invigoration. During the conquest launched by Lieutenant Von Stein, the German superiority in terms of arms forced the Gbaya to adopt asymmetrical means of warfare. Instead of confronting the Germans directly with their spears and arrows, they kidnapped them and murdered them with poison. When one of the settlers was killed, the Gbaya performed the war dance yɔ gànà mɔ and sang in chorus songs such as Gàwí (Wicked man) and Sàkongó (All people) that Baradoma was kind enough to share with us.

> ŋgàwí éé x3
> Wicked man (Translation)
>
> ɔ tɛ̀ kpà kà dàà ŋdàà ŋgawí x2
> We will find the weakness of the wicked man (Translation)
>
> ooo ŋgàwí ééé ŋgàwí éééé bíró gbɛ̀ ŋgàwí x2.
> Oooo wicked man, wicked man, we killed him during the war (Translation)

This first refrain means that no matter how long the escape, the secret of the supposedly stronger person (meaning the German colonizer) was always going to be discovered eventually. We were right about him and killed him. The ŋgàwí refers to the wicked, the one who wants to coerce and subdue the Gbaya through violence. Contextual analysis of this song allows its readaptation to be situated in the period when Plehn was murdered. For the Gbaya, as a sign of celebration of the disappearance of the district chief considered an executioner, they have readapted this hunting song into a war song. It is demonstrated in the second refrain of the song.

> sàkɔgó ééé wànrɛ́ ééé sakɔgó x2
> All people come quickly (Translation)
>
> sàkɔgó aaa ɛ̀ ŋgàn wànrɛ́
> All people come to celebrate (Translation)

34 Formal interview with Aiba Ngaré, Bertoua, 1.8.2021.

éééé sάkɔgó
All people (Translation)

bíró gbὲ bέ wὰn ndέ éééé sὰkɔgó
Can the king (Gbaya) be killed in the battlefield? (Translation)

This second song means that the war permitted the elimination of the strongest (i. e. the German colonizers). The Gbaya are now mightier than the Germans and they will always crush their enemies. In other words, the Gbaya managed to get the upper hand over the oppressor. Historically, this war song was invented during the period when Plehn was murdered.[35] As a sign of victory following the death of the oppressor, the Gbaya orchestrated this song as a means of confirming their military superiority. The population repeated all these songs in chorus after those considered the strongest had been neutralized. In addition, the Gbaya had rallying songs to refine their possession and domination of their territory. This is the case with this song of welcome to foreigners that was very quickly reinvented or reapplied as a rallying song in conflict situations.

Sayé nè sayé kè yé, eh eh
This village is our own (Translation)

Eh eh sayé nè sayé kè yé
Eh eh eh, This village is our own (Translation)

mo'o sa'a yé
Until tomorrow (Translation)

This song can be interpreted as meaning 'This village is ours, it is ours forever.' The song is orchestrated according to two distinct situations. Sometimes, following victory after an attempted invasion, the Gbaya sang this song to mark their autonomy and also to assert their sovereignty. On the occasion of a revolt or rebellion against German colonial oppression, this song was sung to incite resistance. The interpretation made here is that the Gbaya invented a patriotic song now a symbol of resistance to German colonization.

35 Formal interview with Aiba Ngaré, Bertoua, 1.8.2021.

This page of history remains painful for many Gbaya. The colonial violence used in Bertoua was traumatic, being imprinted on and evolving within the collective memory. For several informants, the memory of the Germans remains bitter in their hearts because the exactions committed against the Gbaya were marked by the seal of violence. The violence of the German war of conquest in Bertoua, coupled with the trauma of forced labor, led the Gbaya to recognize the domination of the colonizer. This domination is recorded in one of the songs that would almost become a Gbaya anthem.

> ɑ̀yɑ̀ éé ɔ yu nɛ̀ nɑ̀sɑ̀rɑ̀[36] ééé (x2) aya éé
> *Aya eheh* we are afraid of the white man (German) (Translation)
>
> ɔ ndɛ́ nɑ̀m bônɑ̀ ndé
> They (the Germans) are not from our family or ethnic group (translation)
>
> ɑ̀yɑ̀ éé ɔ yu nɛ̀ ŋgɑ́ wɩ́ aya ééé
> We are afraid of those who dominated us with guns (translation)

In its essence, this song expresses the painful resentment of the Gbaya after they lost their autonomy and freedom under the Germans. At the same time, this song is considered as a distress signal that denotes their submission to the colonial order. Therefore, the Gbaya recognized that the Germans were stronger than them. Namely, because they managed to wrest their freedom from them and to assassinate their mythical leader. The Gbaya attributed this superiority to the skin color of the Germans and the powerful war logistics deployed against them.

Through this song the figure of the Germans is associated with terror, violence, and especially domination by arms. Like with French colonization (1914–1960), this song was also used to express the military and political domination of the Gbaya community. As French colonizers imposed forced labor and poverty among the local population, the Gbaya considered it as a form of violence.[37] As a result, they rallied behind Karnu in an insurrection.[38] This war (called ‘Kongo Wara’ or ‘Karnu’s insurrection’) against French

36 Nassara here refers to the Germans. Because of contact with the Fulani, the Gbaya adopted the appellation of Zaman as also Nassara.

37 Christelle, ‘Gender approach to peacebuilding in Cameroon and Central African Republic’ (above, n. 31).

38 A native of the Sangha River Basin (modern-day Central African Republic), Karnu was the figurehead of Gbaya resistance to French colonization. Considered by the Gbaya both a religious leader and traditional

Fig. 4: German colonial building (Home of the current Bertoua 1 Head of Subdivision), Bertoua, August 2021. Photo: Amina Djouldé Christelle.

colonization, which lasted from 1928 to 1930, was based on the quest for freedom and harmony.[39] Moreover, after their defeat at the hands of the French colonizers, the Gbaya used to sing this song as a form of remembrance of this painful period. Indirectly, this song allowed the colonists to establish their notoriety among these people, who were proud of their freedom. Historically, a context analysis of the Gbaya's military defeats during the colonial era has made it possible to situate the origin of this song as around 1903, after the death of Chief Mbartoua and the submission of the Gbaya to the Germans following the expedition of Lieutenant Von Stein.

Chief Mbartoua's epic biography and the making of the hero's tradition

Among the Gbaya, the biography of Chief Mbartoua, the founder of the city of Bertoua, is an established oral tradition. This story is full of grandiloquence that allows Chief

healer, he remains posthumously a prophet. The French army assassinated him on 11. 12. 1928. For more information, see Martin Thomas, *The French Empire between the Wars*: *Imperialism, Politics and Society* (Studies in imperialism, Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp. 211–245.

39 Thierno Moctar Bah, 'Contribution à l'étude de la résistance des peuples africains à la colonisation. Karnou et l'insurrection des Gbaya (la situation au Cameroon 1928–1930)', *Afrika Zamani* 3 (1974), pp. 105–161.

Mbartoua to be perceived as a mythical figure in local history. In this case, too, the creation of the Mbartoua myth reveals a historical inventiveness that aims to maintain the Gbaya's grandeur in the region. This logic can be observed in the account of Mbartoua's death given by one of his great grandsons, Aiba Ngaré[40]:

> Chief Mbartoua, indignant and heartbroken at seeing his impoverished population enslaved by the zàmàn, will set up operations to capture and poison the latter. This chief was endowed with supernatural powers that made him invisible to his opponent. The zàmàn, as the Gbaya called them, on seeing several of their own kind die or disappear set up an operation to capture Mbartoua; according to them, they could destabilize the Gbaya by executing their chief. Except that it was difficult for them to capture him because of his supernatural powers and his inaccessible cave barracks. The capture of the king's eldest son by the zàmàn[41] and the death of many in his community will push the chief to strip himself of his magical amulets. It was after this act that he was therefore executed by shooting.[42]

This version of Mbartoua's death presents him as a mystical warrior whose power is superior to that of the German army. In addition, it is stated that the chief decided to surrender to the colonizers to be executed. This shows that, contrary to the written sources, Mbartoua decided to surrender himself to death. This is proof that he remained master of his destiny by choosing when to die. This is the complete opposite of the accounts given in the written sources.

According to the latter, contrariwise, the Germans overcame Mbartoua's resistance.[43] From 1901 to 1903, Lieutenant Von Stein led two expeditions to east Kamerun that paved the way for the conquest of the Mbartoua chieftaincy. These expeditions had three objectives. First, Von Stein sought to avenge Plehn's death by subduing Mbartoua and his people. Second, it was a question of establishing headquarters in Bertoua to

40 Aiba Ngaré is the current Gbaya community head in Bertoua. His father was Ngové, son of Ndiba Mbartoua.

41 German in Gbaya language.

42 Formal interview with Aiba Ngaré, Bertoua, 1.8.2021.

43 Ndanga Ngnantare and Ndanga, L'identite Gbaya. Essai de reconstitution de l'histoire et les coutumes des Gbaya de l'Est du Cameroun (above n.16), Dieudonné Ndanga Ngnantare, When the Past becomes the Future : Aspects of Culture Revitalization Amongst The Gbaya in Bertoua, Eastern Cameroon, MA Thesis, University of Tromsø, 2007; Bateranzigo, Les Gbaya et les Kaka de l'Est-Cameroun (above. n.18); Ludwig von Stein, The Expedition on Bertoua (Yaoundé National Archives, 1903).

coordinate colonial rule and actions in the region. Third and finally, Von Stein wanted to exploit local natural resources and boost trade. In August 1903, hostilities with the Gbaya commenced when Mbartoua refused to submit to Von Stein's authority. To organize his troops to drive out the German lieutenant, Mbartoua fled into the forest with his son Abo (who Mbartoua chose to be his heir). After two months of resistance, Mbartoua was killed on 12 October 1903, by a 'colonial soldier' near the village of Gunté in Gari-Pondo district after being betrayed by one of his sons[44] who had revealed his hiding place to German troops.

These two versions of Chief Mbartoua's death effectively demonstrate the mechanisms of the invention of oral tradition. This invention is the key to colonial memory among the Gbaya. The latter are distorting or fabricating historical knowledge about colonization to take advantage of circumstances by describing themselves as winners. In addition, they are more concerned with preserving their glorious past as warriors. On the other side, according to the 'colonial library' used to 'invent Africa',[45] it can be considered that the German colonizers have through their writing distorted and fabricated historical knowledge to express their domination. Mudimbe argues that during colonization, Westerners used to produce discourses and reflections on African cultures and societies that were the offspring of imperialism.[46] In others words, the types of discourses produced on Africa are characterized by the discrepancy between pictorial representation and social reality.[47] At least, it can be observed that despite the high-quality war strategies possessed by the Gbaya the military superiority of the Germans was no less important. The mastery and possession of sophisticated weapons of war by the latter allowed them to pacify the Gbaya and impose colonial rule locally.

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44 Historical Sources converge to validate that Mbartoua was betrayed by his son Ndiba Mbartoua, who became a German accomplice.

45 Valentin Yves Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and the Order of Knowledge* (Bloomington: Indiana Press, 1988), p. 5.

46 Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa* (above, n. 45), pp. 4–5.

47 Amina Djouldé Christelle, 'Satirical Cyber-Pictorality and Transcription of the Western Imagination on Sub-Saharan Africa: Colonial Persistence in the Post-Independence Era', in Jean-Bernard Ouédraogo, Mamadou Diawara, and Elísio Salvado Macamo (eds), *Translation Revisited. Contesting the Sense of African Social Realities* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018), 426–56, here p. 429.

Conclusion

It is clear that the colonial encounter between the Gbaya and the Germans contributed to the fall of the myth of the invincibility and superiority of this warrior people. The data presented here allow us to conclude that, among the Gbaya of east Cameroon, oral tradition is a source of information that makes it possible to share the local version of colonial domination. This colonial memory is the result of an invention of tradition. Indeed, the Gbaya preserve orally and pass on from generation to generation their developed understanding of colonial history. They have created orally adapted songs and epic tales to perpetuate the colonial experience they underwent. Thus, a local approach to colonial memory is developed, which is grafted onto a global approach to understanding the phenomenon in all its complexity. This complexity is based on the dual meaning that emerges from this way of constructing German colonial memory. On the one hand, oral literature as a material of history positions the Gbaya as heroes, brave warriors, and victors. On the other, it recognizes the power of the German colonialists but also its pernicious effects on Gbaya society. In any case, the materials evaluated here suggest that the Gbaya and the Germans did not peacefully cohabit with one another during the colonial era.

Initially, the arrival of the Germans was not ill-received by the Gbaya. This first contact was peaceful. But the Germans quickly made it clear that their intention was to colonize the local area and its people. The abuses inflicted on the Gbaya by the Germans established patterns of oppression and violence that weakened the harmony that had initially existed between these two groups. This inevitably led to conflict, as resulting in the subjugation of the Gbaya to the German colonial order. In essence, by perpetuating their own version of colonial history, the Gbaya are expressing herewith the pain of collective trauma. In reality, the Gbaya have not yet overcome their failure during this period. Observing the depth of this historical wound on Gbaya memory, I wonder whether these people could keep a low profile and think about a fruitful cooperation with Germany to spur reconciliation with their shared past.

References

Main informants

Name	Given name	Age	Ethnicity	Gender	Profession	Date and place of interview
Gabana Boundar	Constantin	74	Gbaya	M	Retired	30.8.2021, Bertoua
Boundar	Bernard	85	Gbaya	M	Farmer	30.8.2021, Bertoua
Yaziki	Simon	83	Gbaya	M	Retired	31.8.2021, Nganké
Aiba	Ngaré	82	Gbaya	M	Chief of Gbaya Community, Bertoua	1.9.2021, Bertoua
Baradoma	Adéline	36	Gbaya	F	Housekeeper	2.9.2021 Bertoua
Nando	Mariane	79	Gbaya	F	Housekeeper	4.9.2021 Nganké
Nangbengué	Ester	64	Gbaya	F	Housekeeper	6.9.2021 Bertoua

III Artistic Interventions: Remembering Colonialism

Shadow Work in *Ovizire-Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?*

Vitjitua Ndjiharine and Nashilongweshipwe Sakaria

Introduction

In this chapter, we reflect on *Ovizire-Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?,* an applied arts and transhistorical exhibition curated and facilitated in Germany and Namibia between 2018 and 2020. This archival endeavour culminated from a project titled *Visual History of the Colonial Genocide*, which initially began with a residency hosted by the Center for Hamburg's (post-)colonial Legacy based at the University of Hamburg, under the leadership of Professor Jürgen Zimmerer. We were among the participating artists-in-residence, along with Namibian artist Nicola Brandt as well as German historian Ulrike Peters. Our historical research and artistic practices responded to a colonial-photography collection archived at the Museum am Rothenbaum – Kulturen und Künste der Welt (MARKK), previously known as Hamburg's Museum of Ethnology.

Alexander von Hirschfeldt's photography is part of MARKK's larger inventory of captured images. Johanna Wild – who, along with Bisrat Negasi, co-curated the exhibition – says of von Hirschfeldt's photography:

> Consisting of roughly 1000 images, it includes glass plates, prints, dia-positives, negatives, and postcards that depict landscapes, colonial cities and infrastructures; portraits and ethnographic photographs of colonized individuals and groups, as well as private snapshots of white colonial agents at leisure. The latter are starkly contrasted by images of forced labor and the genocide of the Herero, Nama, San and Damara people during the German-Namibian War of 1904 to 1908.[1]

The 12-month residency programme resulted in a December 2018 exhibition at MARKK and M. Bassy.[2] *Ovizire-Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?* also included work by another Namibian artist, Isabel Katjavivi. The exhibition was made up of collages, paintings,

1 Johanna Wild, 'Collaboration is an opportunity to fail in the most splendid way', in: *Ovizire-Somgu, From Where do We Speak?* (Exhibition Brochure, MARKK: Hamburg, 2018), p. 8.

2 The latter is a Hamburg-based 'non-profit organization pursuing the goal to promote contemporary artistic positions and discourses from Africa and the Diaspora in the areas'.

music, sound, photography, poetry, installation, video and found objects. It addressed key questions and methodological concerns which we had debated during the residency process. What, though, are the ethics of doing creative work in a colonial archive? What methods and tools can we use to reimagine/restore/heal/reconcile African bodies and lives which have endured colonial erasure, as reflected in this photographic collection visualizing genocide? In making 'histories of the future', which positionalities will we speak from?

We would pose these questions in the project team, attentive to the history of colonial photography and its role in the production of difference in German South West Africa. Scholar on Namibian historiography Lorena Rizzo writes, 'Landscape photography naturalised the spatial structure of the territory and visually inscribed the reserve as an absent presence, enabling colonial rule without undermining African "virgin" nature and culture'.[3] It was a tool for producing images of the 'ideal conquest', as Silvester, Hayes and Hartmann have discussed in their book *The Colonising Camera: Photographs in the Making of Namibian History*.[4] Like in other colonies in Africa, photography was part of the colonial gaze producing difference and 'the other'.[5] Von Hirschfeldt's collection reflected this colonial gaze in its representation of both colonizing and colonized subjects in the countries currently known as Namibia, South Africa, Togo and Zimbabwe.

It is because of this burden of colonial photography that we made the choice to compare this collection with other archives and histories which are not necessarily colonial. As a team, we became invested in the work of shifting the colonial gaze, and de-centring the dominant narratives marked in MARKK's photography collection, by focusing on themes and topics related to finding love in the archive, queering the latter, remembrance of our ancestors as well as self-reflexivity in our respective bodies of work produced for the exhibition. Another approach we took was to use indigenous Namibian languages in naming our exhibition, allowing us to unpack specific localized forms of knowledge embedded therein.

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3 Lorena Rizzo, 'A Glance into the Camera: Gendered Visions of Historical Photographs in Kaoko (North-Western Namibia)', *Gender and History*, 17/3 (2005), pp. 682–713, here p. 686.

4 Wolfram Hartmann, Jeremy Silvester and Patricia Hayes (eds), *The Colonising Camera*: *Photographs in the Making of Namibian History* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1999).

5 Brent Harris, 'Photography in Colonial Discourse: the making of the other in Southern Africa, c. 1850–1950', in Wolfram Hartmann, Jeremy Silvester and Patricia Hayes (eds), *The Colonising Camera*. *Photographs in the Making of Namibian History* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1999), pp. 20–25.

The title of the exhibition draws on two concepts, namely 'Ovizire' and 'Somgu'; these translate as 'shadow'[6] in Otjiherero and Khoekhoegowab, respectively. In terms of curation, the exhibition would explore the conceptual usefulness of these cultural notions. For example, shadows provide shade but they also follow us everywhere we go. They appear and they disappear, reminding us of their inevitable presence and absence. Shadows are like ghosts, in the sense that they are haunting. In the different Namibian villages where we come from, there are trees which provide shade for family and community gatherings. We juxtaposed these ideas in relation to the materiality of photographs in which light is transfixed to a photosensitive surface to create an image. In a literal sense, variations of light create observable information; an absence of light creates shadows, meanwhile. We metaphorically applied this marking of absence and presence to the colonial-photography archive, a space with empirical contradictions and refracted forms of knowledge. It eventually became evident that we were working with different kinds of shadows, and for varying reasons. In the context of our project, however, we were imagining shadows as sources of erased, hidden, distorted and displaced knowledge inside and outside both the colonial archive and a postcolonial museum. The shadows are the dark spots which have remained unattended to in Namibia–Germany relations. And it is in paying attention to these shadows that we can recover hidden truths.

Our various translations of the shadows discovered in a particular colonial archive brought us to questions of positionality and multivocality. This is how the exhibition's subtitle *From Where Do We Speak?* emerged. As the project progressed, colonial photography was interfaced with Namibian orature and contemporary literature to explore possible transhistorical and artistic approaches. This process was extended to talks, workshops, exhibitions and a series of online interventions. *Ovizire-Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?* became an applied arts project relying on cultural knowledge and artistic processes to oversee educational and community engagement. Our approach allowed us to take alternative pathways to reconciling with and healing the wounds of the colonial past. It is on this basis that we conceptualize this process as 'shadow work'[7] in this chapter.

6 In other contexts, these terms are also translated as 'shade'.

7 Jeremiah Abrams and Connie Zweig, 'Introduction: The Shadow Side of Everyday Life', in: Jeremiah Abrams and Connie Zweig (eds) *Meeting the Shadow: The Hidden Power of the Dark Side of Human Nature* (New Consciousness Reader Series, New York, NY: Tarcher/Putnam, 1991), pp. XVI–XXV.

Shadow Work as an Archival Methodology

In reflecting on the project's journey, we adopt and put forward this notion as a creative and affective form of labour regarding working in and with the archive. 'Shadow work' is a term largely used in Psychology to refer to individual processes of working through the conscious and unconscious selves, as a way of discovering those parts of ourselves which have been suppressed and hidden. It includes introspection, critical self-reflexive praxis and processing and healing traumatic histories. The notion comes from Carl Jung's conceptualization of the 'shadow self'.[8] Aspects of one's shadow develop in the unconscious mind from a young age based on individual life experiences. These experiences may be influenced by family structures or societal beliefs shaping one's values, behaviours and overall sense of identity. Personality traits or values considered taboo are contained in the shadow, as are also other aspects of the self-deemed negative or too difficult to manage – for example, emotions such as jealousy, lust and rage. The shadow therefore becomes a container of repressed ideals which are defined as unacceptable or undesirable. Authors Jeremiah Abrams and Connie Zweig give us an overview of how to understand the shadow in the conceptualization of the self in their introduction to a collection of texts by Jungian scholars, *Meeting the Shadow: The Hidden Power of the Dark Side of Human Nature*:

> The shadow acts like a psychic immune system, defining what is self and what is not-self. For different people, in different families and cultures, what falls into ego and what falls into shadow can vary. For instance, some permit anger or aggression to be expressed; most do not. Some permit sexuality, vulnerability, or strong emotions; many do not. Some permit financial ambition, or artistic expression, or intellectual development, while some do not.[9]

This understanding refers to the personal shadow which is shaped and defined through family values, social structures and collective social imagination. As such, the personal shadow contains all that which has been rejected by a society's conscious awareness: namely, those feelings and actions seen as dissonant with its self-image and self-understanding. The collective shadow holds negative projections embedded within shared

8 JUNG, C. G. (1969). Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Volume 9 (Part 1): Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious (G. ADLER & R. F. C. HULL, Eds.). Princeton University Press, p. 20–21.

9 Zweig and Abrams, *Meeting the Shadow* (above, n. 7), p. XVII.

memory, for example in the othering of entire groups of people deemed to be different. Throughout history the shadow has taken the form of racism, scapegoating, religious wars and other acts of violence linked to negative emotions such as fear, resentment and anger.

Other iterations the collective shadow can take are the folktales, myths, legends and collective orature exposing the dark side of humanity. Through shadow work, these aspects can be flushed out in order to gain a truer sense of our collective fears and heal ourselves through more honest self-reflection. Our delving into the shadow brings these notions to the (post)colonial space. When thinking about previously colonized bodies and societies, what aspects of the collective subconscious do they hold, and how do these play out on the individual level? Moreover, what are the undeveloped or unexpressed traits needing to be brought into the light so as to collectively create a new framework for a liberated future?

Shadow work holds a space for using creative imagination through writing, drawing, performance and more to own our disowned selves, as a way to recognize colonial projections which have been internalized and therewith come to a more authentic understanding of who we are both as individuals and as a society. It has always been crucial to adopt this study of the colonial archive in relation to ourselves as artists, scholars and activists as a means of paying attention to the affective and the imagination. This was an important consideration in *Ovizire-Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?* because, from the Namibian perspective, we observe how the space for artistic and therapeutic imaginaries in Namibian nationalism has been shrinking and controlled. Hence, shadow work as a methodological approach to the colonial archive means fading, shading, reconciling, speculating, breathing, restoring, haunting, loving, healing and resting. It implies remaining with the dark history of Namibia–Germany relations, bringing these long shadows into the light in order to heal them ultimately.

If we think of this expansive notion of shadow work in the context of the nation, for example, what this represents is the unfinished business of decolonization in Namibia and Germany alike. We have already established that coloniality is deeply present in the afterlives of imperialism, which we recognize in the lived experience of shared intergenerational trauma – as necessitating calls for collective healing and restorative justice. The Namibian genocide in itself is a shadow continuing to haunt both countries.

We identify four features to our chosen methodological approach, and given that shadow work is not a linear process they occur simultaneously: 1) digging (also referred to as 'mining the archive'); 2) critiquing; 3) smuggling; and 4) curating. These characteristics are not exhaustive in framing and designing what we mean by shadow work in this context. We foresee that other artist-academic-activists who are interested in archives

of any kind will have to expand on this. The four features are meant to remind us of the complexity of our decolonial responsibilities, inviting us to think beyond popular frameworks relying exclusively on critique. This complexity is reflected in Irit Rogoff's (2006) thought-provoking questions.

> But what comes after the critical analysis of culture? What goes beyond the endless cataloguing of the hidden structures, the invisible powers and the numerous offences we have been preoccupied with for so long? Beyond the processes of marking and making visible those who have been included and those who have been excluded? Beyond being able to point our finger at the master narratives and at the dominant cartographies of the inherited cultural order? Beyond the celebration of emergent minority group identities, or the emphatic acknowledgement of someone else's suffering, as an achievement in and of itself?[10]

Rogoff's lines of inquiry are significant in framing our own methodology because they remind us that this historical and creative work is more than a practice of mere critique. The latter is certainly one of the many things we do; however, critique of gaps and silences in the archive alone does not factor in aspects like love or empathy. How else are we to relate to the transformation of entire groups of people who were stripped of their possessions and identities, catalogued, labelled and presented as tools for labour and economic activity as well as knowledge production? Firstly, by identifying the archive as something which relates to people and their (hi)stories, and not just as a space of objects from a time and place far removed from us. Secondly, by approaching people from a position of love and empathy. Our framing of shadow work in the archive is a mediation on intimacy and relationship with the colonized bodies and objects held within its confines. Here, we do not take a stance of critical distance.

> For alternatives to imperialism to exist, unlearning what is assumed to be a structural distance between actors – in time, space, and the body politic – is a distance in relation to which we are enticed, encouraged, impelled, and interpellated to introduce ourselves; it

10 Irit Rogoff, *Smuggling: An Embodied Crticality* (2006), available online at: https://xenopraxis.net/readings/rogoff_smuggling.pdf (last accessed 27.7.2024).

> is a distance that transforms others from political actors into subjects or objects of alternative histories and deprives them and us of the common ground of a shared tradition.[11]

Ariella Aïsha Azoulay positions the archive as an entity which pertains to people, and thus it relates to all people There are those who are present within the folds of its documents and translations, transformed by imperial objectives and those conspiring together with the archive itself to arrange, organize and store memories. The process of archiving is one which entails deliberate intervention through the creation, erasure and preservation of particular information, acts carried out by human beings no less. Azoulay's sentiments on relating the archive to people and their things are similarly echoed by Molemo Moiloa in the context of museums in the postcolonial era (more hereon in due course).

By relating to people, we smuggle warmth, passion, playfulness, care, affection and, most importantly, love into the archive. In *All About Love*, bell hooks muses on the meaning of love. hooks notes that 'affection is only one ingredient of love. To truly love we must learn to mix various ingredients – care, affection, recognition, respect, commitment, and trust, as well as honest and open communication'.[12] hooks associates love with being more than just a feeling: it is, rather, a set of expansive actions and challenges which cultivate growth both on the personal and spiritual level. Love assumes accountability, responsibility, respect and, most importantly, healthy boundaries.

Love is a practice nurtured and taught from one generation to the next, for example a child learns how to love by observing the practices of their parents. In mainstream culture, love is understood as something that starts with the self, as in self-love. How, then, might we account for love in the bodies of the colonized when they were stripped of the ability to love themselves, when their boundaries were violated time and time again? Might the absence of love they experienced during the imperial age play out as particular symptoms of intergenerational trauma? These questions can be asked not only for the colonized but for the colonizer as well. Might the concept of White guilt be considered a symptom of intergenerational trauma, and if so what are the possibilities for healing here? Attending to the dark spots in our entangled histories in the context of healing practices and actions rooted in love comes a step closer herewith. Smuggling the

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11 Ariella Aisha Azoulay, *Potential History*: *Unlearning Imperialism* (London, New York City: Verso, 2019), p. 200.

12 bell hooks, *All About Love*: *New Visions* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2018).

ingredients for love into the archive via shadow work helps us, then, learn and uncover new imaginings of ourselves beyond the colonized/colonizer binary.

According to Jacques Derrida, the archive lies at the intersection of law and privilege. It is a political space which not only governs memory but also claims the beginning of memory. The latter is systematized and enacted in a synchronous manner.[13] These processes of systemization (storing and cataloguing) and enactment (authorized and put into practice) are referred to by Julietta Singh as the 'archive's archive'[14] – namely, the process of institutionalization where knowledge is structured in private but for public interests. This, too, is a realm for interventions of digging, critiquing, smuggling and curation. In the next section, we explore our respective bodies of work which were displayed for the 2018 exhibition at MARKK and M. Bassy. Our collaging, painting, performing, deep listening and curating resulted in various methods of institutional critique which inform the above-mentioned features of carrying out shadow work in the archive.

Imagination and the Politics of Display in *We Shall Not Be Moved* and *Ondaanisa yo pOmudhime*

The exhibition *Ovizire-Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?* was a meeting of artistic and historical imaginations. It was hosted at MARKK and M. Bassy in Hamburg from December 2018 to March 2019, at the National Art Gallery of Namibia in July 2019 as well as at the Frans Nambinga Art Training Centre (both Windhoek) in November 2020. Our practices of exhibition-making were accompanied by a series of public talks and workshops as a way of facilitating the and envisioning of both histories and futures. *Ovizire-Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?* eventually transformed into a project perpetually shifting between an exhibition and workshop format.

Let us unpack the idea of the exhibition and explore the process around it, as well as what it ultimately achieved. The objects on display in this mobile exhibition included paintings, videos, drawings, sound recordings, poetry, installations, collages, colonial photographs as well as other found objects. The approach taken to exhibition-making was a dialogic process playing out between the curators, artists and historians involved.

13 Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (Religion and Postmodernism; Reprint Edition, Chicago, IL: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2017).

14 Julietta Singh, *No Archive Will Restore You* (Santa Barbara, CA: Punctum Books, 2018).

The 2018 Hamburg exhibition at MARKK and M. Bassy featured the work of Ndjiharine, Brandt, Katjavivi and Peters. It represented an institutional critique of MARKK, as reflected in the curatorial choice of the alternative venue, M. Bassy. The latter is a space promoting contemporary artworks and discourses from Africa and the Diaspora. Dialogues moving back and forth between these two venues were facilitated by the chosen format. For example, Ndjiharine's notable collage work was made up of figures of African bodies which she cut out from colonial photographs and pasted on canvases, layering them with paintings as well as images of cultural objects like spears, plants and colonial architecture. The two images below are from the collage *We Shall Not Be Moved* which was hung on M. Bassy's wall. This title reflects the artist's intention of bringing the bodies into relationship with space, land and material culture hereby. This is critical spatial commentary, reminding us that genocide was directed at erasing the Black body as much as it was about spatial dispossession, and hence displacement. This artistic position, which can also be read as a political statement, showcases refusal and resistance – which the artist continues to uphold, as the descendent of genocide survivors.

Julia Rensing explains that 'cutting, altering and manipulating "colonial" photography is a way for Ndjiharine to reinterpret and subvert the image. The blank spaces gesture to the voids in the colonial archive, to the unknown that remains untraceable.'[15] This speaks to Ndjiharine's described use of multidisciplinary practice, which includes developing strategies of deconstructing and re-contextualizing the pedagogical function of the texts and images found within colonial archives. This labour in transforming the pedagogical intention of colonial knowledge was central to our dialogues occurring as part of the residency process.

Ovizire-Somgu: From Where Do We Speak? helped shed light on MARKK as a site of colonial knowledge, emphasizing therewith the need to decolonize the museum. At the same time, we were also aware that one exhibition addressing solely a colonial-photography archive held at the museum was not going to single-handedly fulfil that ambition. During our residency process, however, we were interested in exploring and experimenting with making an exhibition space which was critical, dialogic and democratizing of knowledge. We hence drew on Richard Watermeyer's (2012) conceptualization of the 'post-museum', existing as a pedagogical space. As Watermeyer writes:

15 Julia Rensing, 'Ovizire · Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?': Artistic Interventions in the Namibian Colonial Archive (2018–2020)', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 48/1 (2022), p. 6.

Fig. 1: Vitjitua Ndjiharine, *We Shall Not Be Moved* (2018), mixed media on canvas. Photo: Nils Schliehe.

Fig. 2: Vitjitua Ndjiharine, *We Shall Not Be Moved* (2018), mixed media on canvas. Photo: Nils Schliehe.

> Transformed from isolated and passive to collective and participatory, the post-museum experience is primed not only to enlarge the critical consciousness and sharpen the critical lens but extend the diversity of its patrons. The post-museum is for and belongs to educators, museum specialists, scientists, students, artists, parents, the general populace.[16]

This ethos of critical consciousness Watermeyer writes about derives from the educational philosophy of 'critical pedagogy', as theorized by those such as Paulo Freire and hooks. One way in which the exhibition forged such critical consciousness was through the ritual performance of Nashilongweshipwe Mushaandja, *Ondaanisa yo pOmudhime* (*Dance of the Rubber Tree*). This site-related work responded to erasure by assembling found objects, which were treated as items to be used in relation to those the colonial archive itself offered up. This application of objects such as fire and salt was made possible by drawing on embodiment and spatiality as archival containers. In *Ondaanisa yo pOmudhime*, Mushaandja performed a cleansing of the museum (using fire, salt, spears and marula stones), speaking back to the erasure which is inherent in the colonial archive. This spiritual labour of love was activated as part of mobilizing decolonial praxis, on a site burdened by its colonial histories. Another way in which the performance achieved this was through its poetic and musical utterances displayed at M. Bassy, which called for *odalate nayi teke* ('the fence/wire must break'), burning the museum and the archive, as well as disrupting white-monopoly capital. All of these suggestions were meant to be both symbolic and literal, in the process of working towards restorative justice for historically colonized communities.

These examples of our (Ndjiharine's and Mushaandja's) artistic endeavours were part of the larger collection of artworks, photographs and other objects put on display in the course of the initial exhibition. All these offerings were appreciated as much as they were contested and challenged, both within the organizing team and among the exhibition's audiences. For example, there was reluctance on the part of one team member about embracing fire and the suggestion of burning the museum. This issue became a bone of contention which allowed us to unpack the cultural meanings embedded in this artistic suggestion, particularly in this work of ritual-making. In other instances, some German audiences felt that the exhibition, particularly at MARKK, was not making a significant

16 Richard Watermeyer, 'A Conceptualisation of the Post-Museum as Pedagogical Space', *JCOM*, 11/1 (2012), p. 3.

Fig. 3: Nashilongweshipwe Mushaandja, *Ondaanisa yo pOmudhime* (*Dance of the Rubber Tree*), performance at MARKK in 2018. Photo: Nils Schliehe.

intervention vis-à-vis critiquing the museum and its colonial heritage. And yet, many who visited it in Germany argued that the exhibition was bringing an unknown history into the public discourse.

The exhibition at the National Art Gallery of Namibia was expanded in terms of the objects put on display. It also included documentation from the first exhibition. We maintained the initial principle of refusing to show the colonial violence, as reflected in visualities of the archive we had begun with. It came as a surprise to us, then, that local audiences wanted to see depictions of such colonial violence in an exhibition about the long-forgotten Namibian genocide. This was interesting for the organizing team because it allowed us to reflect on the relationship Namibians and Namibian history have with violence, while simultaneously pointing once again to the exhibition's central question of *From Where Do We Speak?* It reminded us of the difficult conversations and questions which shadow work will always unearth. In reflecting on the relational ethics of doing the latter, we realized that the exhibition and project at large had achieved its objective: namely, to hold space for transhistorical work. In this case, in museum, gallery and university settings.

Moiloa, who mobilizes the approach of moving from object-centred museums to humanizing African museums, reminds us of working beyond the burden of colonial heritage. 'We are looking for skills that enable the provisional and the incomplete, that makes space for multiple voices, for anger and for pain, but also for healing and explo-

ration'.[17] Our pursuit of shadow work in the archive speaks to this ethos of humanizing and of being attentive to the affective labour this requires. Moiloa draws our attention to IsiNtu linguistics ('nto' and 'ntu'), which that are useful in mobilizing a relational infrastructure here. Nto refers to a thing, while ntu refers to a human being. Moiloa uses these two terms to remind us that museum-making practices and cultural work on the African continent at large have defined relatedness through ntu, which in essence situates the human as regards other humans, their community and their ecology.

> A social and relational infrastructure, then, is a possible way to think away from the physical, the accumulated, and the left behind by our colonial ancestors. People as museum infrastructure potentially becomes a move away from the grand building and the stuff inside it; and towards the infrastructure of relationship, economy and social value. Museums perhaps function not as houses of civilization, but rather as central nodes from which a network of social knowledge frameworks, meaning making, and collective education might emerge.[18]

These insights point us to the potentialities existing for museums in the decolonial age, but they also remind us that, like galleries, the latter will always ultimately constitute limited and restricted spaces. We are also told herewith that, if we adopt this idea of 'people as museum infrastructure', we might encounter other public spaces allowing us to do shadow work beyond display, exhibition-making and the burden of representation. In the following section, we will discuss, then, how *Ovizire-Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?* slides into other spaces which are not galleries, museums or universities.

Another critique which can be extended to our own endeavour as well as to contemporary exhibition-making practices more broadly is the flawed idea of even holding group exhibitions. Writing on South Africa's fixation with making women-based group exhibitions, The Two Talking Yonis (Nontobeko Ntombela and Reshma Chhiba) point us to the limits facing contemporary museums when it comes to this tradition. Ntombela and Chhiba argue that the issues with women's group exhibitions lie in this very curatorial gesture of grouping, often along gender lines, as well as in the use of racial terms. 'While group shows continue to have a valid function in demonstrating how different groupings

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17 Molemo Moiloa, 'nto>ntu: Reimagining Relational Infrastructures of Museums in Africa', in Leonhard Emmerling, Latika Gupta Lagalo and Luiza Proença (eds), *Museum Futures* (Wien, Berlin: Turia + Kant, 2021), pp.393–404, here p. 393.

18 Ibid. p. 360.

of works offer different narratives, those narratives can and should move beyond historical trappings if they are to engender new imaginative and political possibilities'.[19]

One could argue that *Ovizire-Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?* as a group exhibition was confronted by this very problem in predominantly displaying the work of African artists and their affective labour in the confronting of these traumatic histories. This is not to undermine the endeavours of the German historians and curators involved in the project. Rather, it is to show how the wealth of colonial racial capitalism is used to fund residencies and exhibitions for African artists in exchange for their affective labour. Despite the critical considerations directed at *Ovizire-Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?*, however, the project was also seen as an innovative intervention in Namibia–Germany histories. As local arts journalist Martha Mukaiwa wrote: '"Ovizire – Somgu" is articulate, illuminating and interrogative, held high by diverse young voices speaking from places of solidarity, resistance and healing'.[20]

After Universities and Museums

In 2020, the project evolved to now include art and history workshops across three locations in Namibia: namely, in the ǁKharas, Omaheke and Otjozondjupa Regions. These workshops strove to work with Namibian youth in order to (re-)imagine anti-colonial histories and decolonized futures. They were also aimed at enhancing community dialogues and expressions regarding imperial legacies, colonial photographic archives, memory culture, restorative justice and intergenerational trauma. We collaborated with various Namibian artists, cultural workers and curators[21] to create generative workshops which produced posters, illustrations, maps, collages, poetry, performances, paintings and so much more. The artworks arising from the workshop processes were later displayed in an exhibition at the Frans Nambinga Arts Training Centre,[22] as co-curated with StArt Art Gallery.

19 Nontobeko Ntombela and Reshma Chhiba (eds), *The Yoni Book* (Johannesburg, South Africa, 2019), pp. 197–211. This book is an extension of the work produced from the artist's exhibition *The Two Talking Yonis*, Johannesburg, 2013.

20 Martha Mukaiwa, *'Ovizire – Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?'* (2019). Available online at: https://www.namibian.com.na/ovizire-somgu-from-where-do-we-speak/ (last accessed 27.7.2024).

21 Collaborators and contributing artists: Isabel Katjavivi, Nashilongweshipwe Mushaandja, Kambezunda Ngavee, Nicola Brandt, Shomwatala Shivute, Prince Kamaazengi Marenga I, Fellipus Negodhi, Silke Behrens, Nguundja Kandjii, Nelago Shilongoh, Keith Vries, Esmeralda Cloete, Hildegard Titus, and Vitjitua Ndjiharine.

22 The Frans Nambinga Arts Training Centre is a non-traditional exhibition space located in Havana, an informal settlement on the outskirts of Windhoek. It operates as an arts training school and youth centre with

Prior to these regional workshops, the project organized a facilitator-training one which brought together cultural workers to explore artistic as well as popular education tools and methods vis-à-vis doing historical work. This initial workshop was rooted in critical pedagogy praxis, which we highlight throughout this section as the orientation which artists used to facilitate learning and culture in the above-mentioned regions. The respective workshops were held at the Keetmanshoop Museum, Omaheke Regional Library in Gobabis and The Okakarara Trade Fair Centre. Participants mainly included young learners and out-of-school youth.

In the development of the workshops themselves, our main point of focus was to consider the arts as a critical tool for a liberatory pedagogical praxis which can empower youth. We used artistic practices like drawing, collaging, writing and performance to reflect on imperial history. We believed that using the arts would enable us to work through the colonial-photography archive in question as well as its gaps and shadows beyond the confines of a traditional academic approach, thereby exploring the utility of this repository outside of the museum space. Furthermore, we were interested in utilizing traditional methods like 'applied art'[23] – with the end product being a robust history lesson which can be administered in any learning environment, such as a classroom or youth centre for example. Thus, making the artistic process – the both cognitive and physical activities via which art is realized – a function of teaching history. Here we will examine a few theoretical frameworks we used in the process. In addition to using traditional arts methods in the workshops, we turned also to 'applied theatre'[24] methodologies to facilitate active participation and an embodied process of (un)learning.

To unpack the concept of 'embodied (un)learning' further, let us consider Augusto Boal's proposed methods in *Theatre of the Oppressed*: 'We can begin by stating that the first word of the theatrical vocabulary is the human body, the main source of sound

after-school programmes for underprivileged kids. Havana is part of Katutura, a township historically tied to the legacy of apartheid in Namibia – as the place where Black residents were forcefully removed to from the centre of town. This legacy was an important consideration in displaying the project there. We consider Mushaandja's meditation on the township as a concentration camp here, as featuring in his poem *Dance of the Rubber Tree* (2018).

23 This term refers to the application of artistic design to objects in everyday use. Whereas works of fine art only provide aesthetic or intellectual value, works of applied art are usually end products created with both aesthetics and utility in mind. We expand this definition of applied arts by thinking of such items as not always end products but rather processes and interventions in industrial, educational, community and health contexts.

24 A way of doing applied arts which refers to the practice of using theatre-based techniques – such as acting, storytelling, role-playing and similar – as tools to explore issues of concern to a community and to actively rehearse solutions which facilitate the development of new perspectives in a safe and structured space.

Fig. 5: Installation process of the 2020 exhibition at the Frans Nambinga Arts Training Centre. Photo: Gina Figueira, StArt Art Gallery.

Fig. 4: The project team during the workshop planning process in Windhoek, July 2020. Photo: Hildegard Titus.

and movement'.[25] Our workshops were not theatrical productions; however, Boal's body space as a source for reflection and transformation in the teaching and learning process was a jumping off point in our quest to create workshops addressing the idea of 'embodiment'. We teach through the body, we learn through the body and it is through the body that we are on an equal footing with one another as workshop facilitators and participants. Moreover, it was important for us to factor in lived experience in the different localities in the creation of our workshop activities. We understood each participant as having their own set of information based on the bodies they occupy; as such, they too had knowledge to impart during our time together.

The workshop activities included reading and writing, dialoguing, storytelling, role-playing, process-mapping, energizer and warm-up activities, as well as creative and expressive exercises generating sources of reflection. This creative process would not have been possible if the transformation of the body into an expressive space had not been encouraged. One of the potential barriers for a project such as this – namely, in bringing topics heavily steeped in academic discourse to a fairly young audience – is in finding the appropriate language for expression. Taking into account the limited knowledge of the workshop participants about the archive and all its complications, expressing certain concepts through performance or role-playing was more feasible.

One of the activities taking place during the workshop in Omaheke Region was the creation of short scenes which the participants performed based on their recollection of historical narratives told to them by their own family members or others in their communities. The purpose here was to recall oral histories still present in the region, as a sort of memory held in this specific part of Namibia. One of the (hi)stories emerging was of people fleeing through the Kalahari Desert to Botswana. It recounts how these refugees survived by digging down in the sand for water and lighting big fires at night which would scare off the desert lions and other predators pursuing them. Another (hi)story told of the use of cannons to execute people in Omaruru, and how people fled from there to the Omaheke area to avoid persecution. Those who perished had their remains cleaned and packed up in crates for shipping to Europe. After these performances, participants reflected on their feelings so as to elucidate own thoughts and perceptions about colonialism in Namibia, as well to better understand history as a series of narratives which relate to and influence the lived experiences of individuals.

In recalling and performing some of these narratives of violence, workshop participants were able to situate their own lived experiences in the context of this very history.

25 Augusto Boal, *Theatre of the Oppressed* (London: Pluto Press, 2019), p. 102.

Our approach to embodied learning emphasized performance as a language in its own right, where expression and dialogue became tools for understanding history as multidimensional and non-linear. The short scenes performed showcased a transcription of the past, demonstrating it to be something still alive in the present. This helped participants to engage with history beyond just the pages of a textbook. In the Otjozondjupa Region workshop, for example, one of the participants reflected on the connection between the displacement of people from their land and the existence of a major South African retailer in the area monopolizing the grocery-food market and limiting the abilities of local retailers or vendors to sell their goods. Another participant made a connection between their family members being domestic workers and the central character in Elder Katjivena's *Mama Penee*.[26] In the novel, the eponymous figure survives the ordeals of war and genocide in colonial Namibia and subsequently continues to endure by working as a domestic worker for a German farmer. Therefore, a link was hereby made between colonial legacies and the domestic labour of Black and Indigenous people by the workshop participant.

Another framework which informed our dialogues and explorations in the workshop process was Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1950). We took into consideration his meditation on the 'banking' concept in our workshop planning process, a critique of the teacher/student paradigm in the traditional model of education. Per the latter, knowledge-sharing is but a one way stream in which only the teacher imparts it to the student, with the latter methodically memorizing and repeating this bestowed information. In our consideration of the lived experiences of workshop participants, however, our envisioned format centred on the integration of knowledge-sharing, emotional reflection, empathy and holding space alike. We believe these aspects to be crucially important in the teaching and learning process. In our (re)telling of our (hi)stories, it was not only necessary to be critical but to create a space in which youth could see themselves in Namibian history. Our approach guided participants to first identify with the photographic subjects in the archive, then to question and scrutinize the latter, and finally to reflect on their emotions and drive their own thought processes around certain images or historical narratives. This threefold method of identifying, questioning and reflection is a means of generating awareness (via both action and reflection): participants contemplate and confront oppression by examining the relationship between victim and perpetrator here.[27]

26 Kapombo, U. E, *Mama Penee: Transcending the Genocide*. Windhoek: UNAM Press (2020).

27 Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Translated by Myra Bergman Ramos. With an Introduction by Donaldo Macedo (50th anniversary Edition, New York, NY, USA: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020).

The ethics and worldview of the oppressor, which inform those of the oppressed, need to be reflected on and untangled in order to pursue a liberatory pedagogical praxis. The nature of this relationship is predicated on a notion which Freire refers to as 'prescription': namely, the understanding that the consciousness of the oppressed is connected to that of the oppressor.[28] The image of the oppressor is internalized by the oppressed, it is held as an aspirational ideal, whereby the oppressed long to become the oppressor in their quest for freedom. According to Freire, however, true freedom is a pursuit which should be reflected upon consistently and with a great sense of responsibility if the oppressed are to reach a lived experience authentic in nature.[29] 'The "fear of freedom" which afflicts the oppressed, a fear which may equally well lead them to desire the role of oppressor or bind them to the role of oppressed, should be examined'.[30] This pursuit of freedom should be taken up by the oppressed through education, which can be an instrument of critical discovery. Our workshops allowed for a process-based experience of critical thinking – therewith giving rise to reflection and creativity (as expressed in the latter case through art or performance).

The workshop process generated a series of visual artworks, a collection of poetry as well as song and performance. Many of the artworks carry an array of messages ranging from pan-Africanist and resistance ones, to depictions of the ubiquity of violence in postcolonial Namibia to forms of self-affirmation. The visual artworks are depicted in an elementary style which is easy to digest for everyone involved. Some of these are simple stick figures; illustrations of landscapes which emphasize ideas more than artistic forms also feature. In these artworks we see meditations on identity against the backdrop of apartheid and colonial history, the loss of land and natural resources, and accompanying problems in the community such as hunger, a lack of education and alcoholism. We also see critical reflections on borders and nationalism, as well as activism and solidarity. Lastly, we witness connections made to the land and the importance of the latter as a resource. This would be depicted in many of the artworks emerging from the Otjozondjupa Region workshops, where the poisoning of waterholes in the Waterberg area is an important collective memory. In many of these artworks there is an emphasis on the land, natural resources, cruelty, violence, resistance and identity. This can be seen in the images below (all photos courtesy of Gina Figueira, StArt Art Gallery):

28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid., p. 46.

Fig. 7: Asmara Kaffer and Conzetta Swartbooi, *Roots before branches*, Crayon on paper, ǁKharas Region. Photo: Gina Figueira, StArt Art Gallery.

Fig. 8: W. K. Sithole, *Speak Up Namibia*, Paint, glitter and oil pastel on calico, Omaheke Region. Photo: Gina Figueira, StArt Art Gallery.

Fig. 6: Immanuel Tjipanga, *Untitled*, Paint and oil pastel on calico, Omaheke Region. Photo: Gina Figueira, StArt Art Gallery.

Fig. 9: Michael Kapukare, *Untitled*, Wax crayon and pencil on paper, Otjozondjupa Region. Photo: Gina Figueira, StArt Art Gallery.

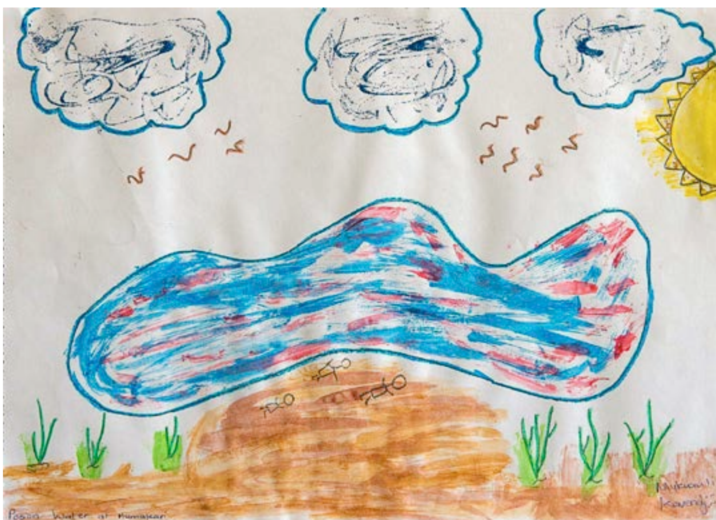

Fig. 10: Mukuauti Kavendji, *Poison water at Hamakari*, Watercolour, wax crayon and glitter on paper, Otjozondjupa Region. Photo: Gina Figueira, StArt Art Gallery.

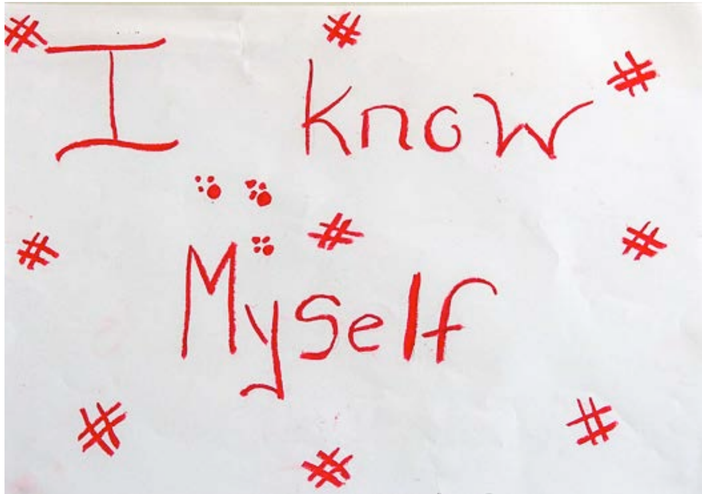

Fig. 11: Hanna Koffer, *I know Myself*, Oil pastel on paper, ǁKharas Region. Photo: Gina Figueira, StArt Art Gallery.

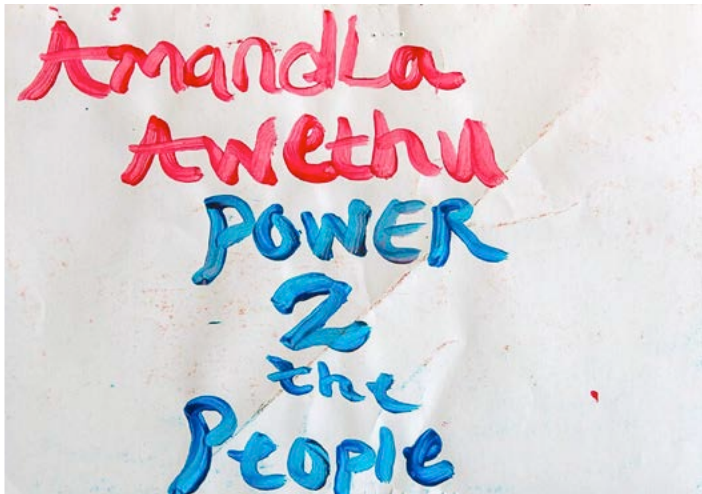

Fig. 12: Timothy Isaacks, *Amandla Awethu POWER 2 the People*, Powder paint on paper, ǁKharas Region. Photo: Gina Figueira, StArt Art Gallery.

When examining some of the methodologies we used in the workshop process, we are able to further relate our concept of shadow work not only to the archive but also beyond: namely, among the various localities and communities in Namibia. The affective labour of attending to the dark spots of history and doing the work of critical reflection and healing formed the basis of our workshop activities. The chosen methodologies for the latter similarly involved digging, critiquing, smuggling and curating. Here, we break each of these down accordingly and in the context of the workshop process: 1) digging – not only digging or mining in the archive, but digging in our communities as well: looking at our oral histories, our own memories and lived experiences for perspective; 2) critiquing – the learning process taking place in the workshops encouraged, as noted earlier, critical thinking, allowing participants to process their own thoughts and feelings along the way; 3) smuggling – smuggling love, play, creative expression, speculation, performance, emotional connection and empathy into the learning process; and 4) curating – overseeing healing, co-learning, co-creating and co-curating liberatory narratives together.

Conclusion: From Entangled Histories to Processes of Disentangling Histories

This chapter has unpacked several processes relating to the transnational and transhistorical project *Ovizire-Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?* held in Germany and Namibia from 2018 to 2020. We have offered detailed descriptions of the kinds of artistic processes and interventions made as well as of accompanying discourses. Throughout, we relied on the notion of 'shadow work' to think about how these interventions evoked an affective labour which required intense critical reflection on both the individual and collective levels. As a result, the chapter has demonstrated the key usefulness of cultural endeavours in historical studies and how applied arts particularly can be used to work through traumatic and difficult histories. We also posit that such reflection has opened up further space for the notion of 'disentangling histories'. The latter involves thinking deeply about the limits of 'entangled' or 'shared histories', and paying attention to the particular and productive ways in which artistic work inherently helps disentangle those very histories – meaning that culture creates space for unpacking the legacies of the past and for forging multivocality. This act of disentangling histories is visualized in Kambezunda Ngavee's sculpture below, which he produced for the *Ovizire-Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?* exhibition held in Havana, Windhoek.

Fig. 13: Sculptural installation by Kambezunda Ngavee in the Frans Nambinga Arts Training Centre yard, exhibited as part of *Ovizire-Somgu: From Where Do We Speak?*
Photo: Gina Figueira, StArt Art Gallery.

This sculptural installation is a depiction of prisoners of war during the genocide in Namibia. It reminds us that this part of the country's history remains largely scattered and forgotten even though it might be thought of as entangled both with Germany and with other colonial histories. Ngavee's response to this enduring legacy is attentive to the necessary work of assembling and gathering its scattered fragments, which fundamentally requires disentangling the different parts in order to make sense of the whole. We do not in any way wish to suggest, however, that applied art is the ideal means of disentangling histories and doing shadow work; we are simply speaking to what it can help generate while simultaneously remaining aware of the limits to our chosen approach. As Mushaandja reminds us, 'applied theatre is no rehearsal for the revolution' – meaning that even artistic interventions find themselves continuously challenged and prone to their shortcomings.[31]

31 Nashilongweshipwe Mushaandja, 'When Applied Theatre is no Rehearsal for the Revolution', in: Helen Vale and Sarala Krishnamurthy (eds), *Writing Namibia: Literature in Transition* (Baltimore, Md.: Project Muse, 2018), pp. 183–203.

Basters

Mercia Kandukira

'Just pick a random white dude and have him impregnate you,' my mother said over the phone one evening, 'andarire otjiporoporo – even a nobody.' My gaze turned to my bedroom ceiling as I exhaled, lowering my shoulders.

'I don't mean a bum from under the bridge,' she explained, 'I mean, he doesn't have to be your ideal guy for you to have his child.'

My mother's request was as vain as her desire for a pure cashmere tartan blanket in the color Stewart Royal. The German Boutique in Windhoek that sold tartan blankets in her day didn't stock them anymore and since that specific blanket meant so much to her, my mind was set on finding it, even though it was as elusive to me as conceiving.

'What if I really dislike the guy,' I asked her, 'what if the guy I meet is not white?'

'No,' she retorted with a force in her voice, 'I only want mixed-race grandchildren to run around my yard.'

'Ugh Ripukz,' I reasoned, 'all the guys my age are taken.' 'Don't worry, you are a beautiful, smart girl, you will find one.'

A month after this grandkid conversation I met a gentleman from Kassel at a graduate students get together. In the din of academic jargon, we leaned into each other on a couch, nursing cold beers.

'What do you study?' I asked him. I do not remember the exact words, but he said something to the effect of:

'I'm taking a philosophical approach to the concepts of speechlessness, the unsayable, and the unspeakable.'

'Have you read Spivak's work?' I enquired, finding this a great opportunity to send him material to read.

'No, I haven't,' he shook his head with interest in his grey-green eyes. 'What about you?' he asked, 'what's your study focus?'

'Well, I am an English Major, and I study both literature and creative writing.' I say, taking a swig of my lager. 'My special focus is creative nonfiction.'

We sat close enough to break the touch barrier then glanced as our knees touched before we continued the conversation unfazed.

'What are you writing about?' he asked.

'I am working on a memoir which will use the Ovaherero and Nama Genocide as a backdrop.' I shift around in my seat and place a hand on his knee. This is my turn to look both smart and interested. I continue. 'I specifically want to explore how trauma is intergenerationally transferable. So, I guess, in a way, I'm giving literary voice to a group which has largely been silenced.'

The conversation went on for a while, but I had to go, and we exchanged contact details.

A week after this conversation, the German asked me on a date, which led to another on the campus nature preserve in the winter of 2019. He laid a colorful blanket near a tree by the pond. We took selfies with our tongues sticking out and though I don't quite remember which Nietzsche aphorisms he shared, I laughed out loud. Later that night, I sent my mother some of the selfies from the picnic date.

'Hoooo, he's cute, get pregnant!' my mother exclaimed. My cheeks turned hot, and my palms suddenly moist. I lowered my iPhone and placed my mother on loudspeaker so I could appreciate the pictures again.

In the photo, my smile was too wide. Tufts of curly hair stuck out from my knitted beanie. I felt an unwelcome shame – as if by consorting with this German, I was betraying my ancestors. Even so, I felt like a rebel as I held and felt the warmth of those hands which so starkly contrasted with mine. In the picture, the tall guy by my side had an equally toothy smile and hair he described as 'Straßenköterblond.'

'Where's this guy from?' my mother inquired.

'Omundoishi.'

'Aaae mara Ovandoishi venombangu,' my mother responded. 'Eh, but Germans are unfair. They did us wrong.' She gave room to the static over the WhatsApp call. I didn't know what to say, so I focused on my rapid heartbeat. The moment was saturated, with an uneasy silence. My mother didn't retract the statement about me falling pregnant. I pursed my lips and started trembling. I couldn't say all the things I wanted to say, so we ended the call.

When my mother said Germans were unfair, she referred to Otjitiro Otjindjandja[1] – a dark time in Ovaherero history which involved a lethal clash with German settlers in

1 The Ovaherero and Nama Genocide (In Otjiherero).

1904. Like other Western powers, the Germans sought to expand their empire. This quest for 'Lebenraum' caused the displacement of large communities, as settlers confiscated arable land from the Ovaherero and Nama people. The settlers extensively appropriated livestock, a key means of sustenance and a symbol of Ovaherero wealth.

Ovaherero resistance was thwarted by extermination orders which saw 80 percent of the Ovaherero population killed. The few who survived were enslaved and ousted. Many died in the Omaheke Desert.

In the same week my mother and I had the conversation about the unfairness of German folk, I grabbed a morning coffee from Jazzman's Café and sat at a booth with the gentleman from Kassel. We placed our winter coats on the cushioned seats, wrapped our hands around warm paper cups. With our forearms on the wooden table, we bridged two worlds at odds.

'My mother is so stupid,' I said. The German's face twitched. I stared out the window at the snow falling.

'She wants a grandchild from me, and she doesn't let me breathe!' I said exhaling. 'Tell me, is your mom the same way?'

I didn't tell him it was after seeing our picture together that my mother ordered me to fall pregnant.

'My mother too doesn't have grandkids,' he responded, 'and she also wonders who between my sister and I will be first.'

'You know, what makes me angry, is that she doesn't care that I'm trying to get a PhD, she just wants what she wants.'

The German makes a joke, I don't quite remember but I leave the conversation elated.

*

To get used to one another, the German and I attended more happy hours together, and one night in the back seat of an UberX I proclaimed my love for Portugal.

'Aaah, Portugal is a peasant state,' the German mocked and looked through the front screen.

'Oooh, you didn't just say that!' I said moving my shoulder away from his.

Germans dubbed the Khoisan 'Hottentot,' which is onomatopoeia for the indigenous languages they came to hear in modern-day Namibia. Like the cuckoo is named after

the sounds she makes, native Namibians were named similarly. Being half-Khoisan, I wondered if the German considered me a Hottentot like Saartjie Baartman, the Khoisan woman who was trafficked to Europe in the early nineteenth century by a white man to be displayed on stages across Europe. She was sexually exploited and displayed to freak-show enthusiasts who were fascinated by her large buttocks and small waist. In one version of Baartman's story, she has a baby by a white man who has no love for her or the child. I wanted to try for my mother, but I didn't want to be a Hottentot body carrying a baby for a reason as superficial as meeting European beauty standards. Using a man just for sperm felt unfair and dehumanizing, for both the father and the would-be offspring, who would be more likely to be raised in a single-parent household. Even though my mother thought having a mixed grandchild would give her bragging points, a part of me felt like she was trying to erase or dilute our features. The thought that my mother rejected the idea of an unmixed grandchild made me feel invalid for not being biracial. If I ever have a child, I want that child's life and dignity to be respected regardless of phenotype.

During one Northern Hemisphere winter, I sent my mother pictures of my Otjiherero name printed in the snow. She was proud that I had finally embraced the name 'Kenouho' and shared this memory:

My mother was nineteen years old and eight months pregnant, in a long-back bakkie[2] with bleating goats around her stacked like sardines in a can. Her hand shielded her round belly from a goat's horn. Her circular pupils met a pair of rectangular pupils whose owner – a goat – wondered how weird my mother looked standing on two legs. Dung pellets were at my mother's feet, the stench of goat urine was thick in the air, and her eyes teared up the way eyes do with ammonia. She wore a tattered dress, yet smiled because she was leaving the reservation. My mother was escaping her mother's fury. My grandmother's words replayed in my mother's mind: something to the effect of 'I sent you to school and you couldn't even stay a year without men?' My mother looked saddened by the plural, 'men.'

After I was born, my mother went back where she shared a room with my father. She heard someone call her name, 'Ripuree,' in the street. She had her hand over her mouth, a gesture of surprise since nobody in Uis called her by her Otjiherero name. The voice, faint at first, got louder as it approached the room where my mother and I were. In this voice she recognized her grandmother. My mother ran to meet her. I imagine that at this

2 Pickup truck.

point the women embraced and shed a tear before entering the house where the swaddled newborn lay. This is where my great grandmother named me 'Kenouho.' My mother repeated my great-grandmother's words as she recalled them: 'Muatje, omuatje uaeta okandu, tara kenouho nu maketara' – 'Child, the child has brought forth a little one, look she has little eyes and is looking.' She told me to carry my name with pride. My name holds in its very essence the history of my existence. I was the taboo baby conceived in a polarized society which frowned upon tribal intermingling as much as it frowned upon interracial mixing. For my great-grandmother, my eyes were my humanizing factor. More than anything, this memory of my mother's plight strengthened the love I had for her.

*

When I went back to Namibia at the end of 2019, I was unaware that my mother had become immobile on account of her weight. Soon, as I gained intelligence that she'd been rushed to Outjo District Hospital, I stuffed my roller with a few items; among them, a tartan blanket I'd gotten for 20 USD at T. J. Maxx. On the road from Windhoek to Otjiwarongo, I sat shotgun in a Volkswagen Polo hatchback opposite a chatty man with a c-shaped scar on his forehead. He said a whole bunch of things, but the following conversation stuck with me:

'I want to own a farm one day,' the man said envying the fenced-off, undeveloped land by the roadside. The man spoke of rising from poverty, like I've heard my mother speak about so many times. Instead of responding, I swallowed saliva, on the verge of tears, wondering why my mother hadn't told me she'd been sick the entire time I was away. Most of my conversation with the driver was silenced by the friction on the road, and the wind that seeped in from the wide-open windows. The man showed me a video of a communal plot in Khorixas. There was a brown puddle, and new growth in an otherwise arid- looking wilderness. He looked at my face, bright-eyed yet quizzical, waiting for a reaction. I nodded.

'Nice,' I said, trying hard for my voice not to break and stared out the window. The air smelled like wet soil. Tufts of greenery drew warthogs to the roadside. I hadn't seen that much wildlife on a single trip.

'It's been raining really well these sides now that the drought is gone,' the driver said poking his hand out to point. 'Did you see all that water?' he said referring to the video he'd shown me on his phone.

'Yup, it's a lot of water,' I pretended to be impressed. 'Who owns all that land behind the fence?' I asked him and he dropped a Germanic name, a few kilometers later he dropped another. 'Some landowners,' he said, 'they don't even live here.'

*

The number '1' was written on a carton box taped to the wall adjacent to where my mother slept. Her neck folds glistened as rivulets of sweat made their way down to the threadbare hospital bedsheets. A few grey stands lined her soaked hairline. She opened her eyes and forced a smile when she saw me standing by her bedside. My sixteen-year-old male cousin sat on the vacant bed in the room, his eyes were droopy from the forty-two hours he'd been awake tending to my mother. I pouted my lips as soon as I saw his sinewy arms, then I looked at my mother's body. Her tummy was wide, and wobbly yet free of stretchmarks despite the four children she'd mothered. I kissed her lips and hugged her horizontal body, which felt cold and clammy. The window was wide open, and so I pulled a blue polka dot sheet over her chest, but she ripped it off revealing a set of black nipples contrasted against brown skin.

'I will not finish this year,' she said. My heart pounded faster.

'Don't say that,' I rebuked her while holding her hand. Her fingers were plump, as if fluids wanted to burst out.

'This is dying,' she said.

'Look,' I said as I pulled the tartan blanket out of my roller holding it up. 'I brought you the blanket you wanted. Is this the right one?' She smiled and gave me a weak nod before her pain erased her joy.

'Where's my Bible?' she asked.

I remembered the Bible with gold-trimmed pages on my Amazon wish list, picked according to her specifications:

'The words of Christ must be in red, large print so I can read better and a zipper, ooh and the pages must be cut so that I can easily find the books. I want everyone to ask me where I got such a fancy Bible,' she'd said.

'I'll bring it next time,' I noted, given the disappointment on her face.

'I'm tired of laying on my side,' my mother complained, 'turn me to the other side.' I looked at her legs, spotted with black, thumb-print sized bruises from all the times my cousin handled them turning her.

As I stared into my mother's moist, sun-stained eyes, I recalled the chronically few moments I'd spent with her. I had once asked her to narrate her childhood, hoping that somehow by knowing my mother I'd come to know myself.

'Baie sleg – very bad,' she had offered as I sat by her side in her social-grant house. The details my mother shared were scanty.

'We suffered a lot; I don't want to talk about it,' her response echoed my dad's on the same subject. 'Why peal the scab off an old wound?' I was half-filled, with only the experiences she wished to share. She'd told me about Waldfrieden, where she went to school as a young girl.

'The name 'Waldfrieden' means 'Forest of Peace,' but we call it 'Otjozongejama'; the Germans came to rename it,' she'd said. The Ovaherero had named that area after the lions who roamed in the vicinity of Omaruru, but now there's a boarding school.

'How was Wald Frieden in your time?' I'd asked her.

'Very bad, we were always hungry, and they only fed us dun pap,'[3] she'd rued staring into the distance. 'Our clothes were torn, and we had no shoes.'

When she mentioned shoes, I remembered the holes in mine when I was in high school. I recalled walking barefoot in my early teens, and told her how I stood against the walls, during interval at my high school, ashamed people would see my underwear through the threadbare uniform I wore in Grade 11. Long tears flowed down my mother's chubby cheeks.

'It's okay Ripukz, I survived, we survived, see?' I tapped her shoulders.

My mother was born in 1969, during German Southwest Africa's struggle for independence from South Africa's Apartheid regime, resisting erasure of her very existence. She grew up in Omutiuanduko – one of many colonial reservations which had their inception during German occupation. On school holidays, like generations of Ovaherero people before her, my mother sat around the evening fire with her siblings and mother sharing 'ovihambarere' – allegorical fairytales featuring the gullible Hyena and the cunning Jackal. These stories are how my mother learned history. Some stories stick and others don't, yet I remember this one:

> After an unsuccessful search for food, Jackal finds an angled rock along an elephant trail and decides to rest there. Then comes along Hyena, a bounce in his step and a small

3 Thin porridge made from maize meal.

carcass in his mouth. The hungry Jackal sees Hyena coming, he pretends to be holding the rock up, straining his breath as one who's weighed down.

"Heya, whatcha doing holding that rock like that?" Hyena asked.

"Man, I'm so glad you came around, I've been in this position for hours now," Jackal responded, "see this rock right here, looks secure, but it'll crush me at any moment."

"What do you mean?"

"I was resting beneath the rock and then it started falling, and since I was under it, I decided to hold it up, but now I'm stuck see..."

"Hmm," Hyena said observing the rock. He's skeptical of Jackal, who always cons him.

"Man, you gotta help me. Just help me rest my arms, and I can find a thick log to secure it. I swear it's heavy." Jackal squirms.

Hyena shrugs, places his meat beneath one of the trees, and switches positions with Jackal.

"You should push up on the rock," Jackal advises, "it's heavy though it seems light."

"Well, hurry up, I don't have all day, I need to take that meat to my children," Hyena says.

"Yeah, man, I'll be back, make sure not to move an inch from here, that rock will crush you!" Jackal says this, steals Hyena's meat and scurries off, never to return.

Hyena waits till the sky shifts from blue to orange to mauve, but Jackal doesn't return. Suddenly he hears the monkeys gibber, they come closer. One Monkey sees him and asks:

"Why are you holding that rock? Are you crazy?"

Hyena repeats the story and soon as he's done, Monkey falls on his back laughing so hard he holds his stomach.

"Why you laughing man?"

"You're so stupid, this rock is not falling! We play on this rock all the time! Come on now, let go of it!"

Hyena lets go, his arms are sore, and he's growls when he notices his meat is gone.

My mother and I didn't get enough time to talk of her childhood. But in many ways, I saw how my mother held up a rock she wasn't sure which way it would fall, if it fell. Two years before her final illness, my mother told me about a 'Baster'[4] who lived in the same town as my dad and her. This man often placed me on his shoulders and bragged in the

4 "Coloured/Kleurling," an ethnic group comprised of mixed-race people—usually being the descendants of European settlers and indigenous Africans. Mostly found in Southern Africa.

streets to everyone that I was his kid because my complexion had yellow undertones and my hair lay flat on my scalp. I looked exactly like a Baster she'd said, even now when I recall this conversation, my mother had a large smile on her face.

Like my mother, I didn't escape the mentality that valued white or lighter-complexioned people, after all my skin tone was the subject of mockery at play and at school.

I went to Dawid Bezuidenhout High School where the majority were 'Basters.' Many had long flowing hair with light-brown skin. If you looked around the school hall during merit award ceremonies, you'd not only see the turquoise and white school-uniformed students with high ponytails; you could count the unmixed students among the thousands.

Our principal, also a Baster man, stood on the stage one morning, holding a microphone in one hand and a paper in the other. Germanic names like 'Wasserfall,' 'Van Wyk,' and 'Schultz' would glide off his tongue, but he'd stumble on the occasional Bantu name hard to pronounce. Laughter would erupt in the school hall as everyone looked around for who the owner of *that* name was. Within moments, a dark- skinned student would make their way to the stage to a mixture of applause and laughter. If it were up to me then, my last name wouldn't be Kandukira; it would be Dixon and my mother would be white.

In the spring of 2021, a year after my mom's passing and still perplexed by her mixed-race grandchild request, I came across a story about Jahohora, a kinswoman who worked for German settler colonists as a teenage slave in 1904. To repel German soldiers, Jahohora rubbed her skin with stinging nettles, which caused her to breakout in blisters. Later when asked why she would maim herself in that way, Jahohora said she'd never wanted to have German-blooded children. However, my mother yielded to the possibility of a half-German grandchild despite saying 'Germans are fair.' She was ambivalent about the possibility of a German-blooded grandchild; in her silence, I read an unwanted permissiveness. Perhaps my mother wanted a mixed child when she picked my dad, whose father was biracial. From the times before my grandpa was born to a while after I was conceived, it was illegal for whites and blacks to be married. Placing dispossessed people on arid reservations was one way of ensuring this racial separation.

On the reservation where I lived as a toddler, my grandmother would cut all the children's hair but mine, maintaining that I'd blunt her scissors.

'Your hair is too slippery, like a white person's,' she would say to me. An aunt would shampoo and curl my hair. Keeping my hair long was a sign of higher status, like owning a cashmere tartan blanket in the color Stewart Royal, like having a daughter in the United

States, like that daughter having a mixed- race child. To be likened to white people brought pride to toddler me and perhaps to my mother, which is why at times I wonder if my mother would press me on the grandkid issue if I were biracial like my grandfather. Am I now supposed to sit on a bench historically meant for only white buttocks? How do I undo the thoughts of inferiority instilled in me from when I was a child by parents who were taught time and again that they weren't nearly as good as white people?

*

By the time I get back to the US, the flame that had flickered between the German and I had fizzled out. A while after the breakup, I lay on my bed and stared at the tiled ceiling blasting Yo-Yo Ma's rendition of Bach's *Cello Suite No. 1* in G major. I tried to enjoy the music but couldn't, and so I texted the German:

'I'm really curious, what does your mother think of biracial grandchildren?'

'Race is not a topic my family discusses,' he responds.

I traced back our race conversation to a moment in the past. In this memory of one occasion with the German, we're standing by my study table in my old Binghamton apartment. The room is dimly lit, I'm in my nightie. Curious I ask:

'Have you ever been with a black woman?' I look straight at him, and he fidgets, evades eye contact till he finds a spot on the wall to stare at before blurting out:

'Yes,' followed by a frown which left me scratching my scalp. He asked, still not looking at me: 'What kind of question is that?' Even though I tried to proceed with this conversation, it reached and an untimely end as the tension in the room thickened.

*

While studying in my carrel in January of 2020, my eyes froze on an image from *The Kaiser's Holocaust* which depicted dozens of white, human domes half-buried in desert sand. Clenching my teeth, I slapped my face with both hands. I'd just buried my mother two weeks ago; now I was in the US, reading our people's history from a textbook. My spectacles were on the desk next to the Contigo coffee mug which I twisted open. Steam rose from the black coffee. I grabbed a lime from my backpack, squeezed it into the black liquid with my teeth, and took a sour sip. In *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, I read a scene where a German soldier flogged an Omuherero woman walking down a sand dune with

a baby on her back. The baby cried but the mother didn't. I exhaled, sat back, and eyed the pencil in my hand shaking. My core churned as I held my mouth with both hands. I took a few deep breaths, staring through the window into the dark night.

Since I started reading *The Kaiser's Holocaust* and watching documentaries on the first Genocide of the twentieth century, my mind remains filled with memories that aren't mine but still feel real. I sometimes dream of bodies dangling off trees, snapped necks exfoliated by rough rope, and inertia; at times I see my own body, swaying in the breeze alongside my ancestors'. A heaviness I cannot trace back to a starting point sometimes wakes me with tears.

*

Later, I dream of my mom's dying words. 'Mepama omuinjo,' she'd said – meaning 'my breath is tightening' or 'my life is shrinking.' I told her: 'You are loved.' In my memories, my mother's smile is ever-fleeting, and her eyes hold a perpetual heaviness. Memories of my mom are coupled with those of the bones I saw on the roadside driving from Omatjete to Windhoek after her funeral, but also the images from the history book I was reading – the heart shape in the cranial bone where a nose used to be, imperfect, gnawed. I imagined my heart's contents spill into my gut. *Don't die yet, I had said, I still must give you your ourumbona,*[5] *remember?* But she died.

During the COVID-19 lockdown, I processed my fifty-year-old mother's death. My suicidal ideation coincided with an actual suicide by a fellow graduate student who drowned himself in one of the upstate New York rivers. I sat in my bedroom, staring at the carpet and contemplating walking to the bridge minutes from my apartment, knowing I couldn't swim, knowing the water was filthy, knowing we were in the middle of a Northern Hemisphere winter. I remembered scenes from movies where people stood on tall buildings' edges threatening to jump, but really wanting people who cared enough to stop them. I stood at by my bedroom window staring at hills lined by trees I concluded were hard to climb, let alone hang a noose on. I stared at sharp knives in my kitchen and at my wrists, I stared at my bathtub, and stared at the painkillers on my bathroom shelf. I thought of my little brothers' sad faces, my dad, and all those in Namibia waiting to see me again, eventually crying myself to sleep.

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5 Biracial grandchildren.

I woke up, put on some coffee, took a shower, wrapped myself with the tartan blanket, and sat at my desk and wrote till dark. I'd go to bed and hug my pillow tight, wishing my life away. All I wanted was to bring my mother joy; with her gone, I felt a loss in purpose. I knew though that my time to die hadn't arrived yet, and that for the bigger fight ahead I had to keep going, even if that meant finding a new purpose.

At the time I write this, it's the fall of 2021, I'm taking a GMAP class where the furniture forms a 'U.' My cohorts and I sit together from 5:50 to 8:50 on a Tuesday night. The professor gestures at slides the color of twilight and asks:

'When you hear the word 'genocide,' what comes to mind?' His clear eyes scan the room. I think of carcasses in a ditch, tilted heads hanging from trees in the Omaheke, all in gray scale, like the pictures in *The Kaiser's Holocaust*. In this moment, the Ovaherero and Nama Genocide is an event in the past because nobody is being 'killed' anymore. The class fidgets, open palms shoot up, and I stare at the words on the screen ahead of me: *The Ten Stages of Genocide.*

The ninth stage is 'extermination,' I know this word from those television shows where a homeowner calls the 'exterminator' who comes armed with a deadly gas to get rid of 'the vermin problem.' I think of Von Trotha's 1904/5 extermination orders. I think of the exterminated we remember by the bones sticking out of sand dunes in old photographs.

It is done, it's in the past, get over it already, I've heard people say, you have lost the war fair and square. But you see it wasn't a war and it wasn't fair, and my mother called it out.

It's the next stage that perks me up from a long workday's stupor. When I see the white letters on the slideshow, I cannot calm my viscera from moving in a frenzy. Even though I've been breathing stale air all day from the face mask, there's a newness in my chest. In this moment, I absorb the voice coming from the front of the room. On the slide is the word that keeps popping up in my research on the Ovaherero and Nama Genocide: 'Denial.' 'Denial extends the crime of genocide to future generations of victims. It is a continuation of the intention to destroy the group.'

I bristle at this new knowledge. In the word 'continuation' I learn the genocide is not over if denial continues. 'Genocide is a structure that stays on,' the professor says, 'long after the killing has ended.' I hear the word 'structure,' and I'm reminded of a friend's grandpa's body, a structure where each scar is history nobody will know unless told. 'How could I forget?' the friend asked in response to those who think of atrocities as pasts that need forgetting, 'I still see the scars on my grandfather's back.' My friend's grandpa's back has skin lumps that had grown over wounds that were never stitched.

These wounds are ravines on sweaty days, they are the ripples a loved one feels hugging him. These scars are how we remember. For over a century after the genocide, Germany has denied it ever happened. Ovaherero and Nama people's scars aren't epidermal but epigenetic, which means we've genetically inherited them, and our behavior will remain influenced by those scars. I see these scars in the tears I cry when I read about Shark Island. I see these scars in the nightmares that wake me at night. I see these scars in the sudden panic attacks I get thinking that something bad is about to happen. Usually, I'm in a relatively safe space, which makes my feelings in the moment moot.

When I read literature on affective neuroscience, my psychological state makes sense and so does my mother's. My panic and fear are the scar tissue of my brain. I learn from neuroscientists that trauma changes our brain structure; to me, that means our brains want to ensure our survival if a similar traumatic event comes about. When I consider the psychosomatic substrates which govern our fight, flight, or freeze responses, then trauma is inheritable. If being white or mixed during the Ovaherero and Nama Genocide felt safer than being the hunted black, then my mother's instincts make sense.

Everything my mother said in her last days I thought was stupid; I now understand. I no longer question her desire for a mixed-race grandchild, neither do I question her asking for such a thing as a Bible on her deathbed. I no longer think my mother stupid; instead, acted on by the violence which continues to resonate in all who descend from genocide survivors.

In this current fall, an uncle sends me a song with the lyrics: 'muatje kukuta kapena njoko imba' – 'child, be strong, your mother isn't here.' You're wasting your tears as if tears are diamonds. And I'm drawn to the memory where my mother is in a hole. I cry. A woman in Herero dress glances around as if danger lurks: 'Don't cry in the wilderness like that,' she says; I wonder if this is an adage from 1904, when German soldiers roamed the land looking for Ovaherero to kill.

Pain is blood pooling in my throat, yet I mustn't cry. In my upstate New York apartment, I sit on my loveseat knowing tomorrow I must walk to campus. I sit with things I can only describe as strangling me like a potato I half-way swallow. The past is nothing to go back to; it lives with me as my body moves on a journey, I can only take myself step by step on a concrete-slab sidewalk, treading on cracks, hoping for solid ground. Breath is labor, I attend meetings, speak of random things as pre-research brainstorming exercises and rubrics, churning a lifetime's tears. I'm lucky sadness looks like exhaustion. I walk, it drizzles, my body leaks. I sniffle, convinced passersby will think it's allergies. 'Muatje kukuta' – 'child be strong,' they say, 'don't waste your tears.'

IV Outlook: Histories and Methodologies

Epistemological Silences in Tanzania-Germany Entangled Histories

A View from Hamburg's Twin City, Dar es Salaam

Oswald Masebo

Introduction

Tanzania and Germany have a deeply entangled history that can be traced from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. From around the 1860s and 1870s, numerous German missionary groupings started to operate in many parts of Tanzania. During the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, as European powers divided Africa into colonies, Germany acquired the present-day area of mainland Tanzania, which then included the areas that would later become Burundi and Rwanda. The boundaries of the Germany colony were created through successive agreements between Germany, Great Britain, and the Sultan of Zanzibar. The Anglo-German Agreements of 1886 and 1890 defined the concrete boundaries of present-day mainland Tanzania. Following the settlement of the Anglo-German Agreement of 1890, Germany embarked on an ambitious project to create a colony in East Africa – to be known as 'German East Africa'. The 1890s witnessed German colonial conquest and consolidation that continued until the First World War, through which German lost all of her African colonial possessions in 1919. The period from the late nineteenth century to the end of the First World War in 1918, therefore, witnessed momentous transformations in the history of Tanzania's making.

For the first time in history, the German colonial project had unified over 120 diverse ethnic communities into a territory framed in the context of imperial rule. The period also witnessed major economic, political, social, cultural, landscape, and ideological changes. For example, the Germans introduced colonial economies in the form of agriculture, mining, trade, and forestry; imposed new colonial politics; introduced socio-cultural and ideological institutions such as Western education, Christianity, racism, and racialism; built roads and railways that enhanced import-export trade between Tanzania and Germany; reorganized nature and landscape; and created state institutions such as colonial armies, prisons, courts, and government branches. The legacies of the German colonial project established from the late nineteenth century to the end of the First World War formed the foundation for imagining the entangled histories that continue to

shape relations between Tanzania and Germany today. Those legacies have also molded Tanzania and Germany into the nations they are now. Since 2010 Dar es Salaam, a key port city in East Africa, and Hamburg, similarly so in Europe, have been twin cities. They are not only connected by their geographical location and economic role, but also by their intensely shared history. I am therefore grateful to have the opportunity to draw attention to 'epistemological silences' regarding Germany's colonial history in Tanzania, which also seem relevant to both cities' past and present.

This chapter assesses the state of historical knowledge that has been produced on those entangled histories between Tanzania and Germany in the past one hundred years. It proposes that the nature of this historical knowledge is imbalanced because it has positioned the Germans at the center and relegated Tanzanians to the margins. This imbalance is a result of major 'epistemological silences', a term used in this chapter to refer to issues that should have taken center stage in historians' quest to write about the entangled histories of Tanzania and Germany but which have unfortunately remained on the margins of scholarship.

There are many of these epistemological silences. This chapter highlights four of them. They include the power and ability of Tanzanians to survive the difficult landscape that Germany colonialism created; the thoughts and practices of Tanzanians who shaped and reshaped German colonial relations; indigenous modes of expression and capture of memory; and colonial legacies in the making of national history and identity in postcolonial Tanzania and Germany alike.

Background to Entangled Histories

Clarifying the background to entangled histories between Tanzania and Germany is necessary for making sense of the epistemological silences that have remained an enduring feature of the production of historical knowledge about the ongoing ties between the two nations. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, European nation-states such as Great Britain, France, Portugal, Italy, and Belgium entered into an unprecedented 'scramble for Africa'. Germany joined this race as well. This competition for colonies was so intense that it almost resulted in a war between these European nations. The notorious Berlin conference of 1884–1885, convened on the invitation of Otto von Bismarck, averted the possibility of war. It created a legal and institutional framework for peacefully dividing up African colonies among European powers. By 1900, virtually all parts of Africa had come under colonial occupation, except probably Liberia and Ethiopia.

Germany acquired Namibia in southwest Africa, Togo and Cameroon in West Africa, and Tanzania in East Africa, which by then included present-day Burundi and Rwanda.

It is important to understand why European nations, including Germany, scrambled for colonies in Africa during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. This question has generated a great deal of debate and yielded diverse answers. Two key debate strands can be identified. The first camp is represented by scholars who privilege sociopsychological and political motives for the European colonization of Africa, emphasizing factors such as spreading Christianity and introducing 'civilization',[1] Social Darwinism,[2] social atavism,[3] balance-of-power and strategic considerations,[4] nationalism, as well as prestige.[5] The second camp, meanwhile, is represented by scholars who emphasize the economic drivers behind colonialism, linking it to the needs emerging in the wake of the industrial revolutions of the second half of the nineteenth century. This was the period when nations such as Germany and France joined Great Britain in rapidly industrializing. Germany and other European nations needed colonies for four specific economic reasons: namely to produce the agricultural goods and raw materials used by the growing industries in Europe; to exploit a cheap African labor force in order to reduce the cost of production; to expand markets for the manufactured industrial commodities; and to find new areas where they could invest surplus capital.[6]

Entangled histories between Tanzania and Germany were created through the complex process of colonial conquest and consolidation that involved creating different institutions. These became the foundation of both tangible and intangible Tanzania-German heritages in the two countries. Military, economic, ideological, state, social, and political institutions were thus inaugurated to transform Tanzania into a colonial space.

The creation of military institutions was an important intervention the Germans pursued to facilitate their building of a colony in Tanzania. Germany's imperial initiative was

1 Inspired by the travels and writings of nineteenth-century European travelers, explorers, and missionaries such as: John Hanning Speke, *Journal of the Discovery of the Sources of the River Nile* (Edinburgh: Blackwood and Sons, 1863); David Livingstone, *The Last Journals of David Livingstone in Central Africa, from 1865 to His Death* (London: John Murray, 1874).

2 Derived from and inspired by the work of Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (6th edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). First published in 1876.

3 See: Joseph A. Schumpeter, *The Sociology of Imperialisms* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1919).

4 Ronald Robinson, John Gallagher and Allice Denny, *Africa and the Victorians*: *The Official Mind of Imperialism* (London: Macmillan, 1961).

5 Hamilton Russell Cowie, *Imperialism and Race Relations,* (5th revised edition, Melbourne: Nelson Publishing, 1982).

6 Buluda Itandala, "The Anglo-German Partition of East Africa" *Tanzania Zamani* 1/1 (1992), pp. 7–18.

met with different forms of resistance from all local ethnic groups. The European nation resorted to military conquest, hiring Sudanese mercenaries and incorporating them into the invading colonial force. Between 1890 and 1900, different Tanzanian communities waged about fifty-seven wars of resistance against the German invasion.[7] Unfortunately, the end result was defeat. Resistances against colonialism continued even after the turn of the century as Tanzanians sought to combat economic exploitation, social exclusion, racism, and other forms of inhumane treatment. The Germans used forced African labor that was either very lowly paid or not remunerated at all. In fact, it was African resistance against forced cotton cultivation in southern Tanzania that led to the famous Maji Maji Wars of resistance from 1905 to 1907. Many German and local soldiers (*askaris)* died during the Maji Maji wars. It is estimated that over 300,000 Tanzanians died during the Maji Maji War either in military combat or through sheer starvation.[8] The scale of the war, its death toll, and its spatial coverage exceeded that of the Nama-Herero wars of resistance against German colonialism in Namibia, which scholars such as Jürgen Zimmerer have studied.[9] Tanzanians were defeated because of their relatively weak military capacity, lack of unity when it came to fighting the enemy, and due to the natural disasters that struck East Africa during the late nineteenth century. By 1910, the Germans had firmly imposed military rule in Tanzania. Many of the military posts and garrisons that the Germans built in Tanzania as they established their colonial presence can be found across the country today, in areas such as Tanga, Rungwe, Songea, Mahenge, Moshi, Tabora, and Singida.

Economic institutions were also created to support the colonial enterprise, and they left deep markers that remain visible even now. While imposing a military administration in Tanzania, the Germans moved decisively to create colonial economies geared toward meeting the needs of the growing industrial base back home. Emphasis was on creating plantations that would produce agricultural raw materials such as sisal, cotton, coffee, tea, rubber, and timber. This saw the creation of commercial agricultural and mining economies that continue to be major sources of income and employment even today. They are one of the important legacies demonstrative of the entangled history between Tanzania and Germany.

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7 Hedge Kjekshus, *Ecology Control and Economic Development in East African History: The Case of Tanganyika, 1850–1950* (London: James Currey, 1977).

8 G. C.K Gwassa, *The Outbreak and Development of the Maji Maji War 1905–7* (PhD Thesis, University of Dar es Salaam, 1973), p. 389; John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 200.

9 Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller (eds), *Genocide in German South-West Africa: The Colonial War (1904–1908) in Namibia and Its Aftermath* (Monmouth, Wales: Merlin Press, 2008).

The Germans also created ideological institutions whose legacies are evident today, notably Christian religious and educational ones. Some of these saw the introduction of religious denominations that Germany used as cultural agents to help spread Christianity. One of these denominations was the Moravian Church, which first put down roots in the areas of Rungwe, Ileje, and Kyela located on the northern frontiers of the Lake Nyasa region in 1890. In the mid-1890s, the Germans introduced the Moravian Church in areas around Tabora to venture into central and western Tanzania. The Germans also introduced the Lutheran Church in many places in Tanzania, with the earliest churches being established in the areas of Mwakaleli, Njombe, Mannow, Makete, Iringa, Dar es Salaam, and around Kilimanjaro. They also introduced the Roman Catholic Church, which took root in areas such as Masasi, Peramiho, Tabora, Dar es Salaam, and Moshi. Tanzania is home to a number of late nineteenth-century churches. They remain some of the country's largest ideological institutions, with many churches built during the German colonial period still being used for religious activities at present.

The introduction of Western education was an equally important ideological institution. The Germans built a range of schools. Some of the educational facilities founded during the German colonial period continue to be used even today, such as Tanga School. Remnants of similar facilities can be found in Dar es Salaam, Tukuyu, Mahenge, and Moshi. The Germans utilized such ideological institutions as a tool of cultural colonization to make Tanzanians accept the imperial project.

The Germans also built health institutions. The motive for this was to take care of the Germans living in the colony, to keep in check epidemics, and to safeguard the colonial labor force. Most of these health institutions were established in urban centers where many Germans resided, such as in Tanga, Dar es Salaam, Tukuyu, Iringa, Moshi, and Mahenge. They also built health facilities and provided medical care in areas around key sites of economic investment such as sisal plantations, and in places that were vital transit zones for migrant and forced laborers heading to and from core economic sites. Apart from such institutions built by the colonial state, a great deal of healthcare provision also came from German missionaries. Many of the stations established by the latter also built healthcare facilities like dispensaries and hospitals, which were used to spread European/Western medical ideas and practices and to legitimate the German colonial project. Some of these facilities are still in use today, such as Ocean Road Hospital in Dar es Salaam.

The Germans built, furthermore, institutions supporting transport and communication as integral components of colonial expansion. Railways, roads, and ports were inaugurated to integrate Tanzania into the German economic system. Two notable

Fig. 1: The former *Kaiserliches Gouvernements-Krankenhaus*, today Ocean Road Hospital. Photo: C. Vincenti, Bildbestand der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft, Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main, 006-1147-29, https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hebis:30:2-820993.

railway lines can still be witnessed today. The first is the famous Central Railway that runs from Dar es Salaam along the Indian Ocean and then inland to Kigoma on the western tip of Tanzania, along Lake Tanganyika. This railway line branches at Tabora to Mwanza. The Germans built another one starting from Tanga that reached Moshi before the outbreak of the First World War. This line was extended to Arusha during the British colonial period. The construction of ports and promotion of shipping lines was an equally important investment that the Germans pursued to make the colony economically viable. Dar es Salaam, Tanga, Bagamoyo, Lindi, Mtwara, Mwanza, Ujiji, and Lake Nyasa provided geographic spaces that made it possible to build ports for shipping. Some of the ships built during the German colonial period continue to be used at present, such as MV *Liemba* – which runs on Lake Tanganyika. Such institutions of transport and communication were built to promote colonial economies, to transport raw materials and minerals from the interior to the coast before shipping them to Germany, to move the colonial army, and to transfer laborers to different sites of economic investment. These networks are typical reminders of the entangled histories that exist between Tanzania and Germany.

Fig. 2: Residence of the German Governor, ca. 1904. Photo: Vincenti, C., Bildbestand der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft, Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main, ID 006-1157-14, https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hebis:30:2-774522.

The Germans also built state institutions to govern the colony and to ensure peace and security there. These included the army, government branches, courts, and prisons, further to the introduction also of numerous laws and regulations. Many of the present-day state institutions have their roots in the German colonial past in Tanzania, even if they have evolved quite significantly since. Some of the physical structures of these state institutions built between the 1890s and 1914 can be seen today, and some continue to be used by the postcolonial state in Tanzania. The State House in Dar es Salaam, which continues to be used as the Tanzanian president's official residence, can be traced back to German colonial influence. It was the official residence and seat of power of the colonial-era German governors, later being adapted by the British and then by the postcolonial government. Buildings such as the High Court one in Dar es Salaam were also built by the Germans.

These institutions were microcosms of the complex interactions that would evolve between Tanzania and Germany during the period from the late nineteenth century to the end of the First World War. Many of the so-called entangled histories were created through the consolidation of colonial relations in Tanzania. German colonialism, which lasted for twenty-five years only, was short-lived compared to British imperial rule,

which ran for over forty years between 1918 and eventual independence in 1961. Despite this difference in lifespans, the traumatic experience associated with German colonialism far exceeded that accompanying British rule. Many of the tangible and intangible painful colonial memories in Tanzania were actually imprinted under the Germans.

Based on these institutions of cultural heritage, historians have paid attention mainly to studying how the Germans built an empire in Tanzania and elsewhere. They have demonstrated extensively how the Germans were able to establish the colonial project and its attendant culture in Tanzania and other African colonies. As such, they have documented how the Germans conquered Tanzania and its peoples, created and operated a colonial state, founded supporting economies and political institutions, waged war, and ensured peace and security locally, all while producing and reproducing colonial ideologies and cultures. However, there remain rather loud epistemological silences.

Epistemological Silences

We know a great deal of the entangled histories between Tanzania and Germany in terms of the colonial motives involved; German military conquest and selected wars that Tanzanians waged to resist the establishment of colonialism; the measures taken by the German colonial state to create supporting economic, political, cultural, environmental, and social relations in Tanzania; the demise of German rule in Tanzania following the end of the First World War; and the economic and cultural effects of the German colonialism in Tanzania. Taken together, these issues represent the privileging of the history of Germans in Tanzania for the period from the 1880s through the end of the First World War. They are histories that have documented German actors in terms of their lives, their forms of work, their actions, their ideas, and the challenges they faced in establishing the colonial project. Reflecting back on the nature of the historical knowledge that has been produced on the entangled histories between Tanzania and Germany in the past one hundred years, this chapter makes modest attempts to identify four main epistemological silences that need to be clarified in order to enrich it.

The first epistemological silence centers on the ideologies, routines, and experiences that helped Tanzanians to navigate through the difficult realities of German colonialism. The latter was the most violent disaster that Tanzanians had experienced. It continued the trauma of the Arab-led slave raids of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Despite these violent and destabilizing processes, Tanzanians overcame them and managed to maintain their humanity in many ways. The thoughts and practices of Tanzanians, their lived

experiences, as well as their power to maintain core aspects of family life, cultural values, taboos, and traditions throughout the traumatic colonial period are important insights that need to be told by historians in order to develop a full and accurate understanding of the entangled histories between Tanzania and Germany. Yet these important questions of how Tanzanians survived, coped with, and made life bearable in the difficult colonial situation remain one of the major epistemological silences in the existing scholarship.

Nationalist and materialist historians have done an excellent job of documenting German colonial conquest, the imposition of colonialism, the creation of German economic, political, military, and ideological institutions, and the rendering of Tanzanians colonial subjects. These histories have played a significant role in uncovering the violence of German colonialism; in revealing its repressive and dictatorial nature; and in documenting its exploitative and dehumanizing modes of operation. In addition, these histories have documented that Germany, through colonialism, pumped out natural resources that simultaneously contributed to national self-development and to Tanzania's stunting.[10]

These histories have been dominant meta-narratives in the study of Tanzania-Germany historical ties since the 1960s. They have conveyed a notion that the Germans were hegemonic and had unlimited power to shape the ideas, practices, and lived experiences of Tanzanians. They have helped craft a shared history that is a one-sided story, with it situating the Germans at the center and Tanzanians at the margins. Unfortunately, this meta-narrative aggrandizing the German actors in the colonial situation has served to epistemologically silence the most interesting story in the entangled history between Tanzania and Germany. Namely how while German colonialism may have been repressive and violent it was also limited, vulnerable, and weak on the ground. It did not have sufficient resources to exert power and autonomy on the private realm of Tanzanians. It was unable to control their personal lives, kinship ties, or the reproduction of social, cultural, political, and economic relations that ensured that families, households, and communities remained intact in the context of violent colonial disruptions. This explains why, despite the violence and repression of Germany colonialism, key institutions of family, household, and community, traditions, taboos, indigenous culture, and patterns of reproduction all survived the difficult and brutal German imperialism enacted during the course of two and a half decades. Many precolonial institutions survived the harsh

10 This is the line of reasoning firmly entrenched in Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London: Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, 1972). For Tanzanian case studies, see, for instance, Martin H. Y. Kaniki (ed.), *Tanzania Under Colonial Rule* (London: Longman, 1980); Abdul Sherif and Ed Ferguson (eds), *Zanzibar Under Colonial Rule* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1991).

test of German rule. They included individual initiatives and choices, the maintenance of family relations and networks, ideas and values regarding one's existence, and the indigenous culture structuring and nurturing daily life.

Our understanding of these entangled histories will remain partial and incomplete if there are epistemological silences on the indigenous economies that sustained households and communities during the German colonial period; if indigenous politics and governance during that era are not recovered; and if indigenous culture – in all of its manifestations, such as child-rearing, socialization, marriage, intergenerational ties, gender relations, and family bonds – remains invisible in the existing historical narrative. It is fundamental that the writing of the entangled history between Tanzania and Germany takes into consideration the survival, continuity, and change in the native institutions that enabled indigenous communities to sustain their lives and selves during the years of German colonialism. Stories and narratives of Tanzanians about their lives, experiences, and modes of survival have to be brought back and find inroads into these entangled histories.

The second epistemological silence is the documentation of the historical agency of Tanzanian individuals and communities in shaping relations between the two countries. Existing knowledge hereon is dominated by heroic narratives that depict the dynamic ideas and practices of German actors specifically during the colonial period. Histories of Christianity, for instance, are dominated by the actions of German missionaries, while Tanzanians who served in Christian missions remain invisible. Military histories of the First World War in Tanzania romanticize the singular achievements of German military officers such as General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck while the voices of the thousands of locals who suffered so much in the course of this conflict remain inaudible.[11] Histories of colonial politics and governance lionize German governors, district commissioners, directors of regional departments, and experts who worked in different capacities in the colonial service. These Germans did not go about their business in splendid isolation. They worked with many Tanzanians under them, individuals holding low-level positions in the colonial bureaucracy. Historians are yet to document the inner lives of these Tanzanians. Their identities remain unknown, their work undocumented.

Histories of colonial economies, meanwhile, romanticize German settlers, plantation owners, managers, accountants, and overseers. The individual biographies of the thousands of Tanzanians who worked in those colonial economies remain largely unknown,

11 See, for instance: Robert Gaudi, *African Kaiser: General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck and the Great War in Africa, 1914–1918* (New York: Caliber, 2017).

however. They are simply generalized as 'laborers', as they have come to be called. Recently, efforts have been made to study who these individuals were, but they have thus far been reduced to mere intermediaries – in being considered but 'middlemen'.[12] Little effort has been made to bring Tanzanians back into the complex entangled history of Tanzania-Germany ties; to deal with the thoughts, actions, social positions, and lived experiences of Tanzanians in their own right as they engaged with Germans during the highly challenging colonial period.

A more sophisticated understanding hereof demands, as such, that historians now shift their angle of view from exclusive preoccupation with German colonial actors to reclaiming the Tanzanians involved and bringing them and their lives back into the story. This is necessary because German colonial officials were very few in number on the ground. They alone could not execute all the duties required for the colony's functioning. Relations were such that it was Tanzanians who were subjugated to shoulder colonial undertakings. Thus, Tanzanians worked in Christian missions; ran the colonial economies as laborers; built railways, bridges, and ports; were involved in the defense and security forces such as the army, police, and prison service; worked in botanical gardens and forestry; and took part in the colonial public service. Considering this important role Tanzanians played in sustaining colonialism, it is vital that historians trace and reclaim their individuality, uncover their identities and biographies, and capture their thoughts and deeds. The extent to which each of these individuals and their respective collectives shaped and reshaped German colonialism remains unknown.[13] It needs to be documented how Tanzanian and German actors interacted with and challenged each other; how they shaped and reshaped one another's lives; how their experiences diverged and intersected as colonialism evolved.

The third epistemological silence is a methodological one. Local opportunities that present historians with the potential to recover and make apparent the thoughts and deeds of Tanzanians in their entanglement with Germans have not received the attention they deserve. Oral traditions, oral reminiscences, historical linguistics, historical anthropology, historical archaeology, and ethnography are not privileged like colonial

12 See, for instance: Benjamin n. Lawrence, Emily Lynn Osborn, and Richard L. Robert (eds) *Intermediaries, Interpreters, and Clerks: African Employees in the Making of Colonial Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006).

13 This is a direction very much worth pursuing going forward; encouraging signs are evident in Michelle R. Boyd, *Violent Intermediaries: African Soldiers, Conquest, and Everyday Colonialism in German East Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2014).

archives are. There is a tendency among many historians when conceptualizing projects on entangled histories to start with archival sources in mind. They hence rely on the written records that German colonial officials and agents left behind. These records are housed in formal archives and museums in both Germany and Tanzania. The reality, however, is that these sources reveal much more about the stories of Germans and less about the ideas, experiences, and perspectives of Tanzanians.

No wonder, then, that much of the writing produced on these entangled histories is essentially about the narratives, ideas, and practices of the Germans who lived in Tanzania at the time. These records reflect the perspectives of Germans in the colony. They hardly capture indigenous imaginations. Even if scholars have recently suggested the possibility of reading African histories in European-authored archival sources,[14] this does not rule out the fact that such documents are colonial artifacts – thus predominantly reflecting contemporary Eurocentric depictions of colonial realities as the colonizers saw them. This epistemological silence is also a product, in some ways, of an implicit assumption that the credibility of history is to be found only in empirical records: if a phenomenon is not backed by rich archival documentation, its validity is hence questioned. This assumption has made some historians approach African history, including the entangled one of Tanzania and Germany, solely on German colonialism's own terms. In the process, the status quo of the Eurocentric and Western civilization model has been maintained. Despite recent innovations in global and postcolonial studies, then, scholars have found themselves continuing to struggle with the privileged location afforded to the colonial archive in making sense of the experiences of communities whose histories have been epistemologically silenced for a long time now.

Historians hence need to engage in a robust project of de-Westernizing and decolonizing the methodological basis of their scholarly enquiries, namely by taking into account the modes of thought and expression that Tanzanian communities have long used to keep their records, narratives, and memories alive. From the 1960s to the present, historians have indeed articulated the importance of some of these methodological directions in the form of oral memories and traditions, historical linguistics and anthropology, archaeology, the organization of space and landscape, as well as rituals, taboos, and customs. The majority of Tanzanians from precolonial times through the period of

14 See, for instance, Henrietta Moore and Megan Vaughan, *Cutting Down Trees: Gender, Nutrition, and Agricultural Change in the Northern Province of Zambia 1890–1990* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1994); Allen Isaacman and Barbara Isaacman, *Slavery and Beyond: The Making of Men and Chikunda Ethnic Identities in the Unstable World of South-Central Africa, 1750–1920* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2004).

imperial rule kept records of their ideas and actions via such modes of expression. Some of them have been transmitted from one generation to another and can be recovered. Historians dealing with entangled Tanzania-Germany histories must thus go beyond archival records and embrace these local methodologies to capture Tanzanian's ideas and practices under German rule.[15] This can help do greater justice to the thoughts and deeds of Tanzanians, as having a key role to play in shaping their complex interactions with Germans. Confronting this colonial past and appreciating the entangled nature of Tanzania-Germany history demands, then, a rethinking of prevailing methodological challenges and going beyond the formal archive to embrace modes of remembrance that Tanzanians have used to record their ideas and experiences for centuries.

The fourth and final epistemological silence is the one manifested in the little effort made thus far to study colonial legacies in the production of the history, memory, and identity of Tanzania and Germany alike. The focus of scholarship in both countries has been on colonialism for what it was: a system of oppression, subjugation, exploitation, racism, racialism, violence, and injustice. This feeling, of course, is understandable. No rational person can now defend German colonialism as a legitimate undertaking. Nobody can now romanticize and glorify it considering the ills it brought to the colonized communities in Tanzania. And the endurance of this feeling is evident today when Germans and Tanzanians meet. They both struggle to reconcile the colonial experience. When diplomats meet, they talk about contemporary relations. But you can easily notice that they all struggle to make sense of the colonial past, to reconcile themselves with it, to speak about that period in ways that unleash entanglement, connection, and sharing that goes deeper into their entangled history. Elements of sadism, guilt, and unease take center stage. Historians have a duty to clarify these uncertain circumstances. One way of dealing with the difficulties of the colonial experience is the acknowledgement that colonialism was one of the unfortunate episodes that had far-reaching implications for the evolution of ideas and practices about nationhood in both Tanzania and Germany. It makes sense to conceptualize German colonialism as one phase in the evolution of national history, memory, and identity in both countries. Any national understanding,

15 This is the direction some historians have advocated taking since the 1960s. See: Isaria Kimambo, *A Political History of the Pare of Tanzania, c1500–1900* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1969); Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965) and his revised version, *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985); Yusufu Lawi, *May the Spider Web Blind Witches and Wild Animals: Local Knowledge and Political Ecology of Natural Resources Use in the Iraqwland: Northern Tanzania, 1900–1985* (PhD Dissertation, University of Boston, 2000).

whether arising in Tanzania or in Germany, cannot ignore the role of the colonial past in its emergence and subsequent evolution. It is a truism also that the way the colonial past shaped the future evolution of Tanzania and Germany differed in each nation.

The period from the late nineteenth century to the end of the First World War witnessed, for instance, momentous transformations in the history and in the making of Tanzania. For the first time in history, as noted earlier, the German colonial project unified over 120 diverse ethnic communities within a single territory. That experience of unification was an important phase in the building of a sense of nationhood, with all of the involved communities being brought together under German rule. This sense of nationhood evolved as the Germans embarked on ambitious program of building a consolidated territory in the colony, therewith connecting the diverse communities making up Tanzania for the first time. Major infrastructural investment in the realms of Christianity, transportation, education, medicine, trade, agriculture, defense, security, ideology, and the natural environment helped establish the unprecedented physical presence of the Germans in Tanzania, connected diverse groups of peoples living within the now-formalized territory, and contributed to Tanzanian communities feeling (inter)connected. The formation of Tanzania as a nation can partly be traced from these momentous developments that unfolded during the German colonial experience from the last quarter of the nineteenth century to the end of the First World War in 1918.

At the heart of this endeavor are efforts to trace the critical role that the German colonial experience played in shaping the concept of the Tanzanian nation, and thus how the established infrastructure became the foundations for later nation-building from the 1960s to the present. Key infrastructure built under German rule such as railways, roads, schools, hospitals, agricultural sites, ports, defense organs, and state apparatuses were inherited by the postcolonial government in 1961. The independent state nationalized these infrastructures and used them to bring social, economic, and cultural development to the nation from then on. For instance, the railway lines that the Germans built connecting eastern, northern, and western Tanzania continued to be used post-independence. Education institutions such as Old Tanga School, which the Germans built in 1890, continued to admit pupils after 1961, thereby utilizing the heritage created during the German colonial era. Even State House, which the Tanzanian president still utilizes to this day, was initially built by the Germans. Some medical institutions such as Ocean Road Hospital, which now specializes in cancer treatment, were built by the Germans in the late nineteenth century.

These are a few examples demonstrative of the usefulness of conceptualizing colonial legacies in terms of the entangled history between Tanzania and Germany. They also reveal the pertinence of casting local remembrance of German colonialism as part of a larger narrative of national history, memory, and identity. It is, as such, one of the epistemological silences in the correct understanding of entangled histories between Tanzania and Germany.

The legacies of colonialism have had their ongoing impact for Germany too, of course. It would not be the way it is today had it not been for the country's imperial past. Its national identity – whether cast in economic, cultural, social, or political terms – is deeply embedded in the colonial experience. The major industrialization program pursued during this period, as was the case with other Western European imperial powers too, relied substantially on the colonial economies, including the 'German East Africa' one of which Tanzania was the constituent part. The agricultural goods and raw materials sustaining many of its industries were shipped from the colonies. Gross domestic product, flourishing industries, banking institutions, insurance companies, shipping lines, railway companies, revenue streams, and taxes flows were all partly linked to Germany's colonial possessions, including Tanzania.[16]

A great many Germans home and abroad were employed in the sectors connected to the country's colonial operations in Africa and beyond. Similarly, some German merchants made a fortune from their nation's colonized territories during this period. The deep-rooted racism, racialism, and feelings of German superiority that culminated in Nazism in the 1930s were not accidental; they were legacies also of the country's colonial past. Such elements of Nazism, in terms of ideas and practices, had their origins in how the Germans perceived and treated their colonial subjects in Africa and elsewhere. The inhumane techniques used to suppress the Maji Maji war of 1905–1907 in Tanzania and the Nama-Herero wars in Namibia amounted to genocide; this tendency formed a precedent to the notorious persecution that became the hallmark of Nazi-era concentration camps.

Colonialism continues, then, to define the memory and identity of Germany today. Some of the heroes of the time are still glorified as the protagonists in different colonial undertakings. Some colonial-era governors, military commanders, policymakers, and scientists are commemorated. Some street names and institutions bear the names of people or places that were connected to the imperial project. Cultural sites and muse-

16 John Iliffe, *Tanganyika Under German Rule, 1905–1912* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 64, 100, 167.

ums spread in many German cities housing thousands of objects plundered or simply procured in Africa during the colonial era. Stories such as these have remained on the margins of recounted Tanzania-Germany entangled histories. They remain invisible in the existing literature, despite having been some of the most important domains to have shaped Germany into the way it is today.

Dar es Salaam and Hamburg: Entangled Histories Then and Twin Cities Now

Colonialism is inseparable to the making of present-day Germany and Tanzania, and nothing illustrates this connection better than the identity of Hamburg – which now has twin-city status with Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's capital. Hamburg has a special place in Germany's colonial history in Tanzania and in many other African countries. It was the driving force for the economies that thrived in the German colonies of Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, Namibia, Cameroon, and similar. Many companies that invested in African colonies were headquartered in Hamburg; those operating in Tanzania had their suboffices in Dar es Salaam. In 1908, Hamburg established a Colonial Institute for training Germans who would assume responsibility for imperial operations in Africa, such as in the domains of economy, government, medicine, and law. This Institute was one of the forerunners to the University of Hamburg, founded in 1919. Many Germans started their journeys to the colonies in Hamburg and reached Tanzania through the port of Dar es Salaam. Those who survived the colonial experience returned to Germany through Hamburg, but their journey started in Dar es Salaam. Those who died had their bodies transported from Dar es Salaam to Germany through Hamburg.

Through its international port, Hamburg was a coordinating point for a transportation network that ferried people and goods from Germany to the African colonies and vice versa. The culture of Hamburg is therefore deeply entangled in the country's imperial past; it is essentially a typical colonial-era city. It grew, flourished, and became one of the richest cities in Europe precisely because of its entanglement with Germany's colonies in Africa, including Tanzania. Many of Hamburg's industries, shipping companies, insurance firms, banking institutions, and consumption patterns had a direct connection with African colonies. Many political decisions on the colonies were potentially made in Berlin; the economic basis of Germany colonialism, however, was very much in Hamburg.

Conclusion

Tanzania and Germany have a long history of complex cultural exchange that can be traced from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. Many of the lasting legacies that demonstrate the historic ties existing between the two nations were forged during the colonial period, from the 1890s to the end of the First World War in 1918. A significant amount of historical knowledge has been produced documenting the manner in which the Germans were able to conquer, colonize, and create new social, cultural, economic, military, and ideological relations and realities in Tanzania. This knowledge privileges the German actors living in colonial Tanzania. This chapter has modestly identified the epistemological silences remaining in this knowledge. Central to these epistemological silences is the missing story on the identities, biographies, ideas, and practices of Tanzanians who survived the difficult colonial situation that the Germans created. Their adaptive strategies and resilience are invisible in the existing scholarship. The methods and sources that would help re-center Tanzanians in these entangled histories have also remained on the margins of the scholarship, being little appreciated. The critical role of colonialism in shaping the identity, history, and memory of postcolonial Tanzania and Germany alike has not been rigorously examined. These epistemological silences require serious scholarly consideration, then, to give meaning and sense to the notion of an entangled history between the two countries.

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