Tatjana Louis | Mokgadi Molope | Stefan Peters [Eds.]

Dealing with the Past

Perspectives from Latin America, South Africa and Germany

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Higher Education for a Peaceful and Sustainable Future

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Dealing with the past in Latin America, South Africa and Germany

Tatjana Louis / Mokgadi Molope / Stefan Peters

There seems to be no issue that is timelier than the past. We can hardly imagine a day without news pertaining to the past. Dealing with a mostly conflictual, or traumatic, past has become a political issue that is negotiated not only nationally but also across the borders of countries and continents. Just as globally entangled as history is the politics of memory. A recent example in May 2021, French President Emanuel Macron recognized a shared responsibility of France for the genocide in Rwanda. The German Parliament recognized the Genocide against the Nama and Herero during their colonial rule over today's Namibia. In Latin America, a lot of the polemic on the 2021 Peruvian Presidential elections was related to the past dictatorship of Alberto Fujimori, and the crimes of Maoist Shining Path Guerrilla. In Great Britain, the US, and recently in Colombia activists tear down monuments to slaveholders and colonial masters. And in South Africa it is impossible to understand skepticism against vaccination without knowing about the medicinal atrocities committed by the Apartheid regime. In short, if we want to understand current political and social dynamics, we need to know not only about the past, but also analyze the way current societies are dealing with the past.

During the last decades, the question of how societies are dealing with the past has received increasing attention by political actors, civil society and academia. If anything can dependably confirm the mainstreaming of memory studies and transitional justice in the international debate, it is the number of handbooks recently published on the topic (see e.g. Erll & Nünning, 2010; Buckley-Zistel et al., 2014; Tota & Hagen, 2016; Lawther et al., 2017; De Nardi et al., 2020). Yet, dealing with the past continues to be a very controversial issue. Indeed, the above-mentioned examples have all caused fierce controversies and polemic debates. It is striking that these debates take place not only about recently overcome events and periods, but the focus is increasingly on coming to terms with injustices that occurred longer ago, as for example colonialism. Even the memory of pasts for which a routine of remembering has long been established, such as the memory in Germany of the human rights crimes committed

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by the National Socialists, are repeatedly questioned and renegotiated. This is due to the fact that there is no definitive answer to the question of the "right" way to deal with the past. It is up to each generation to justify anew for itself why, how, and with what end historical events should be remembered.

It is obvious that there is no patent remedy for successfully coming to terms with the past. This process is highly context dependent. Each society and each generation must seek the path that is appropriate for them and ascribe its own meaning to the past knowing that there will never be a total consensus on how to deal with the past. This is no surprise. Conflict is essential to modern politics and societies, dealing with the past is no exception.

The comparative view beyond the society's own limits is important and useful. For example, to benefit from experiences of longer-term memory processes, to find a different approach, or to reflect on one's own practices from the outside. This book is a result of are an ongoing trilateral project "Transitional Societies"; a cooperation between the University of Gießen in Germany, the Universidad de los Andes in Colombia, and the North-West University in South Africa and funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) from which this publication emerges.[1] With these three countries, we connect not only three continents, but also three societies that are at different moments of their respective memory processes. With the commemoration of the Holocaust, Germany is already at the extreme limit of a communicative memory (Assmann, 2016) and faces the challenge of passing on this memory in a meaningful way to the now third or fourth post-war generation. However, this is not to state that Germany has done its 'memory work'. For example, a debate about the persecution of socially disadvantaged groups during national socialism and the continued discrimination against them has hardly begun (Wiedemann, 2019; Lölke & Staats, 2021). Moreover, the atrocities committed by German colonizers only recently got broader public attention thanks mainly to the pressure from the former colonies and civil society activists in Germany. The issue of colonialism is also linked to questions of how to deal today with cultural heritage stolen by colonial powers as shown by the discussions on the new Humboldt Forum in Berlin (Morat, 2019; Habermas, 2019; see also the contribution by Kößler and Melber to this volume). Of course, the increasing debate on colonialism can also be seen

1 For further information about the project see: https://www.transitional-societies.org.

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in other European countries. For example, in the Netherlands there is a polemic debate on the legacy of colonialism and racism (Wekker, 2016: Ariese, 2020). Moreover, we can observe a growing social sensitivity, for example, in the case of streets and squares named after colonial masters or the colonial and racist roots of cultural habits (Ward & Rocha, 2018; Dikmans, 2020). Nevertheless, there is also a recognition of responsibility for human rights crimes, or the theft of cultural assets that occurred in colonial contexts. However, colonial violence also left enduring legacies. For the case of German colonialism, Apoh and Mehler (2021: 55) highlight that the violent land expropriation under German colonial rule continues to have socio-economic consequences in the current plantations economy in the South-West of Cameroon.

In South Africa, more than 25 years after the end of the Apartheid regime, the shadows of the past are still very present. There is no doubt that the South African society continues to suffer from the legacies of the Apartheid regime. The transition towards democracy in South Africa represented a landmark moment with an enthusiastic reaction both within and beyond the country. In the context of the political transition, the importance of dealing with the violent past was addressed right from the beginning. In the country's quest for democracy and to end more than 50 years of human rights violations and atrocities, South Africa mandated the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) through the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act 34 of 1995, to establish the cause and nature of these inhumane actions thus paving a way for granting of amnesty to those who make full confessions (Pityana, 2018). The TRC was "the fruit of a political compromise" (Mamdani, 2002: 33) and based in the recognition by both the political movements and the Apartheid regime that a peaceful transition was necessary (van Zyl, 1999). It started its work in 1996, presenting the first five volumes of its report in 1998. The TRC focused on restorative justice[2] and reconciliation. Although, by far, not the first truth commission in history (see also the contribution of Figari Layús to this volume), the South African TRC was groundbreaking for international debates on transitional justice and human rights (Gready, 2011). Vori and Vori (2004: 305) even argue that the TRC was "one of the most remarkable efforts of peace making in our times." Yet, there is also harsh criticism on the TRC. Mamdani (2002) argues that the TRC individualized the victims and failed to understand the nature of the

2 For a discussion on restorative justice see e.g. Clark (2008) and de Gamboa Tapias (2020).

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apartheid regime. Moreover, he criticizes the non-criminalization of the perpetrators of human rights violations and holds that the country would have needed a combination of political reform and judicial reconciliation (Mamdani, 2002; Mamdani, 2015). Therefore, this could be the reason why victims still hold that despite the extent of its success by giving a voice to the silenced (Gready, 2011), the TRC has not facilitated justice to some of the victimized. The yet to be prosecuted 300 hundred cases referred to the National Prosecuting Authority by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission confirms concerns of lack of justice raised by the victims and their families. From a different perspective, Gready (2011: 2) criticizes the lack of conceptual clearness in the work of the TRC. Yet, there is another issue that gets increasing attention in recent times. South Africa witnessed a comparatively successful political transition although the socio-economic legacies of the apartheid continue to be conspicuous. The country notoriously leads the ranking of the most unequal countries of the world. The extreme social inequalities increasingly raise the attention of international media (Time, 13-05-2019). Arguably, the transition afforded a few individuals social upward mobility,[3] but social stratification and social segregation hardly changed. This exposes a well-known gap in both practice and scholarly work on political transitions and transitional justice: socio-economic change or transformation is generally not considered, and if so, it is not to be a priority. Consequentially the social grievances by the victims of the apartheid regime continue to exist, and there it seems that the transitional process ends up in a situation where "the marginalized are remarginalized" (Gready, 2011: 8).

Despite the ongoing peace process, one could argue that Colombia has not even ended the conflict that needs to be dealt with but has begun the reconstruction of a historical memory before the present could turn into a past. This situation, which the Colombian historian Gonzalo Sánchez calls circular memories (Sánchez 2006), presents a very special challenge for the creation of a meaningful memory. For Colombia it should be noted that the approach to the recent past brings the country's entire history under review. Questions, such as the reasons for the conflict that has lasted for over 50 years, very quickly lead to the structural inequality that ultimately has its origins in colonial structures in society that have not been overcome.

3 However, a recent OECD (2018) report reveals the lack of social upward mobility in South Africa. According to the OECD (2018: 27) in South Africa it takes nine generation to achieve the mean income for those born in low-income families. From the countries analyzed by the OECD only in Colombia there is less social upward mobility.

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Yet, the memory of the past might trigger current political discussions and perhaps even political change. With an expansion of the concept of victimhood, which has gained increasing social recognition in the last 15 to 20 years, traditionally disadvantaged groups such as indigenous communities can back up their demands with historical-political arguments. The bringing down of statues depicting colonial masters, as happened several times recently in Colombia in the context of violent protests between April and June 2021, is striking evidence that historical injustices are long-lasting and that the descendants of historical victims want to renegotiate these events, which are long beyond the limits of communicative memory, and include the voices of the oppressed in the national narrative.

In South Africa the post-colonial state undertook measures for institutional change (Gatsheni, 2012). In both public and private institutions, the challenges included to increase ethnic diversity and to reduce the influence of occidental thinking. However, the state did not give priority to these promises. This led to demands for the decolonization of the public spaces, buildings, universities etc. A crucial case was the removal of the statue of Cecil John Rhodes from the campus of the University of Cape Town. In the debates, Achille Mbembe (2015) dismissed in one of his public lectures on *Decolonizing knowledge and the question of the archive* the view that removal of colonial statues such as that of Rhodes is tantamount to erosion of history. He rather argues that such statues must be placed in museums for narrations that aim to demythologize history and whiteness in South Africa.

Dealing with the Past in Latin America, South Africa and Germany

This publication contributes to an exchange of dialogue on experiences from a transnational and transregional perspective, focusing on a) the legal issues of coming to terms with a conflictive and traumatic past, b) the memory policies that have resulted from the legal process and its impact on society, and c) finally on education as a central tool for a sustainable dissemination of historic memory in society.

Rosario Figari Layús addresses the normative side of transition processes in her contribution on Transitional Justice in Latin America. She describes which perspectives of transitional justice have been primarily adopted in Latin America and how they have affected the process of coming to terms with the past, the prosecution of perpetrators, and the treatment of victims. In doing so, she succeeds in demonstrating not only the scope, but

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also, and foremost the limits of legal processes of coming to terms with the past.

Sethulego Matebesi also focuses on the limits of the transition process by raising the question of their sustainability. In his contribution to Transitional Justice in South Africa, he discusses the need for civic participation and political trust in institutions to bring about sustainable change in society. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has a much-celebrated model character, and it has proved to be critical in advancing the country's transformative agenda. Matebasi argues that the interface between participation and political trust is significant in promoting or preventing the capacities to implement and sustain complex institutions that are supposed to engender a sustainable memory culture. It concludes by calling for renewed attention and action to embody a sustainable memory culture in contemporary South Africa.

Afterwards, *Stefan Peters* opens the debate on memory with a conceptual contribution to the topic. He discusses recent publications that argue "in praise of forgetting" (Rieff, 2016), highlighting the fragility of the advances regarding the social and political recognition of the value of remembering the past. Peters argues that there are different types of forgetting and he focuses on those that should better understood as silenced pasts. Thereby he highlights the importance of power relations and social inequalities for understanding whose memories are listened to and which memories are excluded from the public sphere.

In the following chapter, *Reinhard Kößler and Henning Melber* deal with a particular case of 'selective commemoration'. They introduce theoretical debates on dementia, amnesia and aphasia before focusing on German colonialism and particularly the genocide against the Herero and Nama in today's Namibia. The authors discuss the German debate on the issue and highlight the hard struggles to bring the topic into public debate. Moreover, they particularly highlight the way the right-wing party *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) works to downplay the genocide. Thereby they show the ongoing struggle related to the genocide and its memory in Germany.

In the next contribution, *Mokgadi Molope* deals with memory in South Africa and links the discussion about the legacies of the Apartheid regime to the current Covid-19 pandemic and higher education.

José Fernando Serrano addresses the discussion through the concept of reconciliation, being one of the most elusively used, but also contested, ideas in dealing with past wrongs and present injustices. The politics and policies deployed to deliver reconciliation risk impose unilateral and restricted agreements which can cause social justice issues to stay unresolved or are displaced to other arenas. With the cases of Colombia and Australia,

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Serrano shows how the different national approaches – community-based efforts lead by the civil society in Colombia and state-lead national policies in Australia – are made concrete through different social pedagogies that, nonetheless, in both cases reproduce old injustices and shape new ones.

Afterwards *Enrique Chaux, Alexander Ruiz, María Andrea Rocha, Juliana Machado, Juana Yunis, Laura Bastidas and Charlotte Greniez* bring the discussion on memory to the field of education. In their article, the authors discuss the way how the past is dealt with at Colombian schools. They later present four initiatives on dealing with the past in educational surroundings in Colombia. Based on their empirical work they highlight problems, dilemmas and tensions on dealing with the past in the Colombian post-conflict context.

Tatjana Louis and *Jennifer Cantillo* examine in their chapter the language used to refer to the concepts of war and peace through an examination of history textbooks whose socially accepted discourses and worldviews at a given moment are manifest, and where the contents and narratives are found that society would like to pass on to its future citizens. With an analysis of Colombian schoolbooks from different moments in time, they show how the words and constructions used in the different narratives justify or delegitimize actions, visibilize or blur actors and assign responsibilities and agency.

At the end of this volume, *Nico Weinmann* presents his work based on teaching holocaust in Germany. He argues that historical-political education should not be limited to history or social sciences, but rather should be a cross-sectional task. In order to highlight the potential of such an approach he discusses the well-known Anne Frank diary and highlights its potential for both historical and literally learning. Based on this example, Weinmann claims that more cross-sectional work should be done. However, this would also need interdisciplinary teacher training and more financial and time resources for such approaches.

The contributions offer an approach through multiple perspectives on the common subject of how to deal with the past. They address the topic from a variety of disciplinary and theoretical backgrounds, thus providing an overview that aims to bridge the gap between different regional contexts by highlighting the shared challenges and tensions.

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Transitional Justice in Latin America: Toward What Kind of Justice?[1]

Rosario Figari Layús

1. Introduction

This article analyses various models of transitional justice and their practical implications in Latin American contexts, by considering the advances, potential, difficulties and limitations associated with each model. Transitional justice as a paradigm emerged gradually as a normative *dispositif* to respond to the rights and demands of victims of human rights violations and political violence caused by authoritarian regimes and internal armed conflicts that took place in Latin America in the second half of the twentieth century. This massive and systematic violence left profound wounds that continue to have a dramatic impact in many areas of present-day social, political, legal and even economic life in Latin America. The first policies and initiatives in the search for truth and justice for dictatorship-era crimes took place in the 1980s in the Southern Cone, in particular Argentina and Uruguay. Over time, these mechanisms were replicated in other Latin American countries and the transitional justice ('TJ') paradigm was consolidated. The expansion of the use of TJ mechanisms in Latin America has turned the region into a central referent in international debate on how to address the legacy of authoritarian regimes and armed conflict.

The objectives of TJ are many and varied, dependent on context, but one or more of the following often feature: i) to make known the truth of what happened (Hayner, 2002); ii) to identify, and if possible sanction, those responsible; iii) to provide official recognition of the crimes committed; iv) to extend legal, economic and symbolic reparations to victims (De Greiff, 2008); v) to contribute to the construction of a peaceful, inclusive, democratic order (Lambourne, 2009, Baker & Obradovic-Wochnik, 2016);

1 I would particularly like to thank Boris Hau, Tania Palencia, Florinda Petronaa, Debbie Sharnak, Yax Tiu, Maria Eugenia Ulfe, Juliette Vargas, and Valeria Wegh Weis for their comments. Thanks also to Cath Collins, who provided comments and translated the article into English.

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vi) to strengthen the legitimacy of, and confidence in, the rule of law and the institutions of the new political regime or order (Gloppen, 2005) and; vii) to guarantee the non-repetition of crimes (Zalaquett, 1995). These objectives represent on the one hand, the aspirations, demands and rights asserted by a range of actors who are advocating for social change to help construct more inclusive, democratic and peaceful societies. Paradoxically, on the other hand, these objectives do not necessarily call into question a liberal, exclusionary economic model. In fact, the implementation of transitional justice policies has in various contexts been conducive to the consolidation of a neoliberal economic and democratic model. Post-Fujimori Peru offers one example, where, as Ulfe (2016) points out, the conceptualisation of reparations and compensation for victims adopted minimal standards. When we consider Latin America's present political and economic configurations alongside its recent TJ processes, a range of questions therefore arise: what concrete interests have been served by TJ instruments? What has been their scope? What transformative horizons, if any, has TJ in the region adopted?

In order to answer these questions, this article first traces the evolution of the transitional justice paradigm in Latin America. It goes on to examine three normative and theoretical conceptualisations of what type of justice transitional justice ought to be, explaining, in turn, restorative, retributive, and transformative approaches to TJ. Each takes a different view as to the proper function and objectives of the TJ paradigm. The article goes on to analyse praxis, looking at the kinds of TJ policies applied in Latin America through to the present day, to deduce which of these perspectives have been adopted. For this purpose, we will focus particularly on four measures: amnesty, truth commissions, reparations, and criminal prosecutions. A survey of the use of these processes continent-wide will allow us to see what their achievements, limits, and challenges have been.

2. *The Transitional Justice Paradigm in Latin America*

Transitional justice has experienced a veritable 'boom' over the past three decades, becoming an almost obligatory paradigm in what are referred to as transitional scenarios. This notion tends to refer to a specific ideal type of transition and/or process of change, accompanying the move from an authoritarian regime or armed conflict toward a democratic and peaceful regime. Latin America has today become the region with the largest repertoire of TJ policies at its disposal. Instruments such as truth commissions; civil and criminal legal processes; amnesty laws, and reparations for

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victims of massive human rights violations have become familiar parts of the vocabulary of many transitional processes for addressing the legacy of a violent past. The formulation and implementation of TJ measures is not, however, a haphazard affair. It represents a space in which power struggles between a range of actors and interests are conducted, each in its particular time frame and socio-political context. Some actors see their demands reflected in the measures finally adopted, while others do not. The creation of these measures, which tend to be ad hoc and time-limited, also reflects the fact that existing institutions are incapable of providing a response to the overwhelming consequences that state crime and other types of political violence have. These consequences weigh not only on directly affected victims, but also on a broad range of other social groups. Resort to TJ measures has grown so exponentially in Latin America that they have moreover ceased to be applied only in the contexts traditionally classified as "transitional" or "post-transitional" (Collins, 2010), increasingly appearing also in "non-transitional" contexts (Cantú Rivera, 2014). The case of Mexico offers a prime example, with the creation, in 2018, of a Presidential Commission for Truth and Access to Justice (*Comisión Presidencial para la Verdad y Acceso a la Justicia*) to investigate the case of the disappearance of 43 students in Ayotzinapa (Figari Layús, Krüger & Peters, 2021; CNDH, 2018). This increasingly frequent deployment of TJ instruments is an indicator of the transit of the TJ paradigm itself, from exceptionality to normalisation.

This expansion of the transitional justice paradigm is also reflected in the increasing breadth of the spectrum of actors linked to TJ processes (see Table 1). While in the beginning – in particular, in the 1980s Southern Cone – TJ policies were primarily the concern of national governments and local civil society, from the 1990s onward, a greater number and range of actors became involved (Teitel, 2003; Collins, 2010; Subotić, 2012). These include third-country governments, international donors, NGOs, churches, universities, peasant and indigenous communities, women's organisations, the LGBTQI community, and experts from various other regions of the world (Scheuzger, 2009; Arthur, 2009). The burgeoning growth of organisations, conferences, research, publications, and academic offerings on the subject of TJ have turned the field into a discipline in its own right. This has brought in its wake a high degree of professionalisation, standardisation, and sometimes even banalisation, something which has come in for frequent criticism (Bilbija & Payne, 2011; Lefranc & Vairel, 2014). The increasing complexity and dynamism of the TJ scenario may lead us to ask: what type of justice, and therefore what sorts of social and political change, has transitional justice wrought in Latin America? In

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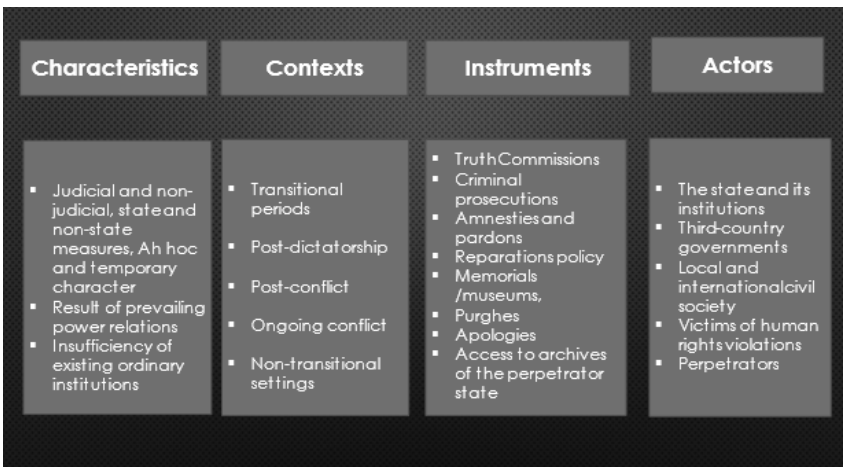
order to establish which has been the predominant model of TJ in Latin America, and evaluate its aspirations and actual potential for change, we need to consider, first, the diverse theoretical and methodological conceptualisations of transitional justice that exist, and their actual application and implications in the region. Accordingly, in the following sections the paper explores the main perspectives that transitional justice has adopted, in theory and in practice.

Table 1: Features of the transitional justice paradigm



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3. *Models of transitional justice*

Transitional justice comprises a broad range of instruments, both judicial and non-judicial, state and non-state. These may include truth commissions, investigative commissions on the past, criminal prosecutions, amnesty, reparations programmes or policies for victims, the creation of memory sites and museums, security sector reform, purging from public office of members of the previous regime, and official apologies (Kritz, 1995; Teitel, 2003). It is possible to discern, depending on which TJ instruments are prioritised, the predominant underlying position or perspective as to what kind of justice is aspired to. This in turn can tell us what types of social, political, legal and economic change have been identified as desirable. The implementation of one model of TJ rather than another

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is not necessarily the result of conscious choice or free decision: it is more likely to expose the power struggles and conditions of socio-political possibility that are hegemonic or predominant in a particular society. Recourse to one or other TJ mechanism reflects the results of a political, material and symbolic struggle between the various political (and economic) interest groups in a society. This struggle is both ongoing and dynamic over time, giving rise to alternation of different voices, interests and rights. In general terms, we can identify three perspectives on what type of justice TJ ought to pursue: retributive, restorative, and transformative. These three perspectives – retributive, restorative and transformative- are in no way intended to be exhaustive, nor do they preclude the existence of other conceptualisations.

3.1. Transitional Justice as (Imperfect) Retributive Justice

This perspective views criminal justice as one of the most important instruments the state can offer to provide reparation to victims and contribute to guarantees of non-repetition (Figari Layús, 2017; Sikkink, 2011, 2016). Criminal justice within the framework of transitional justice in Latin America has taken a range of forms. In cases such as those of Chile and Argentina, existing courts and criminal codes were used to carry out investigation and trial of members of the armed forces and police, who had been responsible for human rights violations during the respective civilian-military dictatorships. Contexts where internal armed conflict took place – have sometimes instead create special legal frameworks to judge those who committed crimes against humanity, or other serious violations of international human rights law, international humanitarian law, or the laws of war during the course of the armed conflict. Colombia is one such example, with the 2005 Justice and Peace Law for paramilitary demobilisation, or 2016 creation of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, JEP.[2] The statute that defines the material competence of the JEP clearly limits its mandate to conduct that took place "by cause or reason of, or in direct or indirect relation to, the armed conflict" before 1 December 2016.[3] It

2 The acronym, derived from the official title of the body in Spanish (*Jurisdicción Especial por la Paz*) is in sufficiently common usage in English-language texts that it is preserved here.

3 "[C]onductas cometidas con anterioridad al 1 de diciembre de 2016, por causa, con ocasión o en relación directa o indirecta con el conflicto armado." Ley Estatutaria 1957, 2016, art. 8.

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is in this kind of case that the political and partially negotiated nature of TJ is perhaps most clearly visible. In such cases criminal sanctions may be reduced, or foregone altogether, in return for an end to violence, the revelation of truth, or the provision of some kind of reparation to victims. Various authors have nonetheless questioned whether criminal law, even in these attenuated forms, can ever be appropriate for addressing the consequences of violent regimes. These critics would argue that criminal justice only contributes to more violence, obstructs access to truth, and marginalises victims (Forsberg 2003, Hayner 2002). Additionally criminal prosecution is one of the most difficult measures to apply, given its high direct impact on perpetrators. This is self-evidently particularly true where perpetrators still hold power in the post-transitional order.

3.2. Transitional Justice as Restorative Justice

The concept of restorative justice is usually understood as a form of justice that contributes to repairing the harm done, not only to direct victims but also to other social groups affected by violence. Many therefore characterise this type of justice as 'relational', since it aims to address and repair the damage done to social relations by violence (Clamp, 2014; Laplante, 2014). This perspective places emphasis on non-punitive mechanisms such as truth commissions, memorials, apologies, and reconciliation and dialogue initiatives as alternative forms of dealing with the past, questioning the reparatory potential of criminal justice. This model of justice frequently includes amnesty laws. Restorative initiatives, unlike criminal justice, do not depend entirely on state support, although the state may be behind them, as is the case of many truth commissions. In fact, many cases present themselves in which acts of commemoration, informal memory sites, artistic interventions and local-level dialogue between actors previously in conflict with one another take place without the involvement of any state institution. The downside or risk associated is that these restorative actions are often characterised by high levels of informality and arbitrariness, which can spark new local conflicts if those who take part have divergent views about the past (Bernuz Beneitez & García Inda, 2015). Although in the 1990s public debate tended to portray restorative and retributive

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[La JEP] conocerá de forma exclusiva de las conductas cometidas por causa, con ocasión y en relación directa o indirecta con el conflicto armado." http://www.secretariasenado.gov.co/senado/basedoc/ley_1957_2019.html.

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justice as antagonistic and mutually incompatible, more recent thinking seeks to view them as potentially complementary.

3.3. Transitional Justice as Distributive-Transformative

A third perspective considers transitional justice to have potential to exercise a transformative function, at the level of structures, in order to achieve one of its most prized objectives – guarantees of non-repetition. Some scholars link this perspective to economic compensation or other types of reparations entitlements, such as differential access to specialised health and education services for victims and survivors. To date, however, these types of policies have tended not to have massive reach, nor to have shown themselves capable of generating profound structural changes (Uprimny & Saffon, 2007). According to this view, justice and reparations initiatives should be accompanied by, and co-ordinated with, more structurally-focused policies and social intervention. These might contribute, for instance, to combating socioeconomic inequality, rebuilding infrastructure, offering psychosocial support, promoting economic development and social integration, and initiating political reform that will allow greater participation by marginalised sectors. The underlying idea is that transitional justice must respond to the underlying causes of social conflict if it wishes to be genuinely effective in ensuring non-repetition of crimes and achieving peaceable, inclusive democracy (Lambourne, 2009: 30). Various authors point out that neither perfect judicial processes nor exhaustive truth commissions can avoid violence breaking out once again, if fundamental social, economic and political injustices are not addressed (Evans, 2016: 4; Franzki, 2012: 69, Servaes & Zupan, 2010: 3). The dominant strain of transitional justice implemented to date has however appeared to ignore the importance of social, economic and cultural rights as a fundamental condition for achieving substantive, inclusive and sustainable peace and democracy (Muvingi, 2009; Alexander, 2003). The exclusion of a redistributive emphasis is precisely the weak point many identify in the capacity of the TJ paradigm to achieve real transformation in pursuit of its own oft-reiterated long-term objectives (Franzki, 2012; Mani, 2008). Others meanwhile question whether TJ is a sufficient, or the most appropriate, tool for the meeting of such objectives (Waldorf, 2012: 176p.). Which transitional justice perspective has been hegemonic in Latin American TJ practice to date, with what consequences?

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4. Implementing Transitional Justice in Latin America

This section analyses the scope of implementation in Latin America of what are defined below as four central or classic transitional justice instruments (criminal trials, amnesties, truth commissions and reparations). In doing so, it will examine what kinds of transitional perspective have been prioritized, and what kind of consequences, challenges, transformations and changes implementation appears to have brought about to date. Table 2 provides a detailed overview of TJ measures applied in Latin America, setting out which type(s) of instrument has or have been utilised in each of the 18 Latin American countries that has chosen to adopt at least one mechanism from the transitional paradigm.[4] The table clearly shows which TJ policies have proved 'possible' in Latin America over the past 40 years, allowing us to see also which type of model, and conception of transitional justice, has predominated in the region. The table is historical, in the sense that it records measures implemented at any point over the past four decades, irrespective of whether these remain live in the present day (for example, the amnesties/ pardons deployed in Argentina and in Peru are included even though they are no longer in force). For reasons of space, the table cannot exhaustively document every transitional justice instrument used. Accordingly, it concentrates on four of them, linked to the models of justice described in the preceding section: truth commissions, amnesties, criminal prosecutions and reparations. Three of these four transitional justice mechanisms – namely trials, amnesties and reparations - can only, strictly speaking, be carried out by the state. The case of truth commissions is potentially more complex, depending on what definition is adopted. In this article the truth commissions are defined as "official" bodies - i.e. commissions carried out by or at the behest of the state (Hayner, 2002). Hence, the table below excludes other commissions created only by non-state actors, this includes initiatives conducted by civil society organisations and the Catholic Church.[5]

4 The countries and island states of the Caribbean are not included, as TJ mechanisms have not been applied there.

5 Other truth initiatives were created by social movements and organizations (such as in Honduras) and-or impulsed by the Catholic Church (for example in Brazil, Guatemala, and Uruguay).

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Table 2: Transitional Justice Policies in Latin America (1975-2020)

Country and period of military regime or armed conflict[6]	**Truth Commissions**	**Criminal trials**	**Economic reparations**	**Amnesties/ pardons**
Argentina (1976-1983)	X	X	X	
Bolivia (1964-1982)	X		X	X
Brazil (1964-1985)	X		X	X
Chile (1973-1990)	X	X	X	X
Colombia	X	X	X	X
Costa Rica				X
Ecuador (1984-2008)	X		X	X
El Salvador (1980-1992)	X	X	X	X
Guatemala (1960- 1996)	X	X	X	X[7]
Haiti (1991-1994)		X		X
Honduras (2010)	X			X
Mexico (2014)				X
Nicaragua (2018)				X
Panama (1968-1989)				X
Paraguay (1954-1989)	X	X		
Peru (1980-2000)	X	X	X	X
Uruguay (1973-1985)	X	X	X	X
Venezuela (2007-2015)				X
Total	**12**	**9**	**10**	**17**

Source: Author's own construction

The aim of the table is to provide an overview of which transitional justice mechanisms have been most frequently implemented to date, allowing us to appreciate which model of justice has dominated in the region, and what the consequences of this have been.

6 This column specifies first the country, and then the time period to which the respective transitional justice mechanisms refer.

7 A limited amnesty was contemplated in Guatemala's Law of National Reconciliation, approved during the signing of peace accords and introduced in 1996.

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4.1. Amnesties

At least 17 Latin American countries have extended amnesties and pardons to those responsible for human rights violations, mass atrocities or crimes against humanity, meaning that impunity is the continent's most frequent measure to deal with these kinds of crimes. Governments tend to justify recourse to amnesty laws by appealing to peace, truth, and even to the highly disputed notion of reconciliation (Figari Layús, 2017: 27p.). However, the question is unavoidably raised of whether amnesties have really contributed to these objectives. Has amnesty been an effective instrument of transformation towards sustainable peace and stronger democracy?

We should note here that impunity does not only take the form of laws. As a sociopolitical as well as a legal state, impunity may be *de iure* – established legally, through statute – or *de facto*. In the latter case it may consist of the state's omitting to act, or of acts of corruption that mean that existing laws and criminal codes are simply not applied or invoked against those responsible (Ambos, 1999). Legalised impunity has taken various forms in Latin America. We may distinguish four types of laws of exemption from, or reduction of, criminal sanctions, according to the moment of political transition during which the laws were approved. Such laws may be brought in before, during or after regime change or the signing of a peace accord. Those brought in beforehand tend to be self-amnesties, approved by the same actors responsible for human rights violations, in order to avoid criminal sanctions once they formally leave power. This type of law was applied principally in Chile, Brazil, Argentina and Peru. While these laws remain formally on the books in Chile and Brazil, the other two of these self-amnesties were annulled shortly after elected administrations were sworn in: in Argentina, after Raúl Alfonsín assumed the presidency in 1983,[8] and in Peru, where an adverse 2001 Inter-American Court ruling finally helped to quash self-amnesty laws

8 Argentina also experienced subsequent 'impunity laws', introduced some years after transition (see below, main text), but the reference here is rather to a failed self-amnesty attempt by the outgoing military regime, in 1983. Law 22924, officially entitled the 'Law of National Pacification' (*Ley de Pacificación Nacional*) but widely referred to in common parlance as the "self-amnesty law" *(ley de autoamnistía*), sought to grant blanket amnesty to members of the security forces for all crimes committed 'in order to put an end to terrorism or subversion' between May 1973 and June 1982. The proposed start date is in itself revealing, showing that illegal repression by state forces predated the actual military coup of 1976. This law was repealed by the Alfonsín administration immediately on taking office in 1983.

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decreed in 1995 by the country's autocratic then-ruler, Alberto Fujimori. Next come the laws whose negotiation begins before transition, but which take shape while it is in progress. This type of amnesty often comes about in contexts of peace processes such as those taking place in Colombia, El Salvador, or Guatemala. Here, full or partial amnesty or exemption from criminal sanction becomes a tradeable good, a key bargaining chip for negotiating demobilisation. A third type of amnesty law, brought in after transition, demonstrates the residual power exercised by those responsible for grave violations and/or crimes against humanity. Argentina and Uruguay provide clear examples of this type. In Uruguay, a statute called the Law of Cessation of the Punitive Pretensions of the State (*Ley de Caducidad de la Pretensión Punitiva*), was brought in in 1986. It declared that the statute of limitation on politically motivated crimes committed by officers of the police or armed forces prior to 1 March 1985 had run out. In Argentina, two laws were passed in 1986 and 1987: the Full Stop Law (*Ley de Punto Final*, 1986) and Due Obedience Law (*Ley de Obediencia Debida*, 1987). These acted in various ways to impede the prosecution of those who had formed part of the repressive apparatus of the civic-military dictatorship and had participated in kidnap, torture, homicide, and enforced disappearance.

A final mode of exemption from criminal sanction, and one which also takes effect after the handover of power, is the pardon or presidential pardon. This may involve the dissolution or commutation of a sentence already handed down, that is, it is necessarily applied only after someone has been convicted. This type of measure tends to come into play some years after regime change. Examples include decrees issued in 1989 and 1990 by Argentine president Carlos Menem, in 1989 and 1990, pardoning civilian and military perpetrators - including some of high rank - who had been sentenced after the Junta trial. In 2017, then-Peruvian president Pedro Pablo Kuczynski pardoned Alberto Fujimori for purportedly 'humanitarian' reasons (Ulfe & Ilizarbe, 2019). Regarding amnesty laws, some – e.g. those of Chile and Brazil– are still in force, even though there have been significant advances in removing or reducing the scope of others, by derogation, annulment, and/or declarations of unconstitutionality (examples include Argentina, Peru and El Salvador). The use of amnesty laws for grave violations has been challenged by a range of national and international actors, including victims' associations, human rights organisations,

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and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (Caso Barios Altos vc. Peru, 2001).[9]

Impunity, whether *de iure* or *de facto*, is one of the principal indicators that perpetrators still wield power and are able to impose conditions on the new regime – especially, but not only, when impunity prevails for crimes against humanity and other grave violations of human rights or international humanitarian law. Impunity has social and political, as well as legal, consequences. In many contexts, particularly in small rural communities or places otherwise removed from large urban centres, it was and is common for surviving victims to come face to face with perpetrators in the street, or be forced to live alongside them in the same neighbourhood. This enforced proximity often goes hand in hand with incidents of ongoing or renewed perpetrator intimidation of victims (Figari Layús, 2018).

In this way, impunity becomes one of the principal mechanisms of reproduction of fear, and a method of exercising social control: over victims, and in time, over other social groups also. This situation of (victim) vulnerability is reinforced when perpetrators retain their status as authority figures or public officials, particularly at local level, despite regime change or a peace process. Impunity, and the continuity in office of known or suspected perpetrators that comes with it, therefore stands as testament to fault lines in the concept of transition. Similarly, and as Castillejos (2017) has emphasised, transitions do not connote total system change. Even changes from authoritarian to constitutional regimes are characterised by continuities, as well as rupture. Such continuities signify not only the continued presence of certain persons in the new regime or socio-political order, but also, often, the persistence of repressive practices within the culture of the security forces. This phenomenon has been observed, for example, in various of the northern provinces of Argentina Figari Layus (2017: 82-85). Similarly, paramilitary groups continue to exist, and to exercise social control, in various regions of Colombia. Alongside the persistence of a range of violent and repressive practices, many post-con-

9 The Inter-American Court of Human Rights has emphasized in several of its judgments that states parties to the American Convention on Human Rights cannot invoke domestic law provisions such as amnesty laws, to justify failing to meet their obligations to ensure the full and proper functioning of the justice system. In the Barrios Altos case, for example, the Court held amnesty provisions, statutes of limitation and the establishment of exclusions of responsibility that seek to prevent the investigation and punishment of those responsible for the crimes committed to be incompatible with the international obligations of states under the American Convention (Caso Barios Altos vc. Peru, 2001)

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flict or post-peace-agreement settings such as that of Central America or Colombia see an increase in other forms of aggression. These may include violence against social leaders (Human Rights Watch, 2020), or incidence of juvenile crime by or between criminal groups or gang members, who have seen little prospect of increased inclusion in the aftermath of peace processes in their respective countries (Kurtenbach, 2014).

These continuities of violence in post-conflict contexts are often related to high levels of impunity and corruption. They also proceed from the lack of redistributive social and economic measures to address the needs and exclusion of those most affected by social inequalities, inequalities which themselves often have roots in armed conflict (Parlevliet, 2017). As explained above, amnesties and the reduction of criminal sanctions are usually implemented under restorative perspectives on transitional justice. Impunity for serious crimes, whether it comes about as result of pressure of perpetrators or as part of peace negotiations, cannot lead to genuine conflict transformation and the elimination of violence, unless the political, economic and social rights of those who were involved in the conflict are properly addressed (including demobilised ex combatants). Impunity can only contribute to the reproduction of social inequalities, marginalisation, and the continuation of practices of corruption and violence by and on behalf of the state (e.g. excessive use of force by the security forces, criminalisation of social activism, repression of protests, etc). It also fuels violence at the non-state level (gangs, drug trafficking, the illegal economy, and the persistence or emergence of paramilitarism), as the cases of Colombia, Guatemala and El Salvador show (Kurtenbach, 2014; Aguirre Tobón, 2016; Nussio & Howe, 2016; Devia Garzón et al., 2014). [10] Although these conditions do not always or automatically prevail in post-conflict and post- authoritarian settings, the link between impunity, poverty, marginality, violence, and the absence or precariousness of the

10 A distinction must be made here between the formulation of transitional justice measures in or around peace agreements, and their actual implementation. In some cases, such as El Salvador and Guatemala, peace agreements included some economic, social and institutional reform measures, but these were not effectively implemented (Matul & Ramírez, 2009). Between 25 and 30 years after the signing of the peace accords in these two Central American cases, the political, social and economic scenario in Central American countries is influenced by different forms of economic and social exclusion. These lead in turn to various forms of criminal activity, further increasing levels of insecurity and violence in the region. The peace agendas were only partially implemented, without proper follow-up (Devia Garzón et al., 2014).

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state in guaranteeing basic rights and needs is undeniable in many of these contexts.

4.2. Truth Commissions

Over the past few decades, Latin America has been the site of over a third of all the truth commissions, ever carried out worldwide. These kinds of instrument are second only to amnesties in the list of measures most frequently adopted in the region and are one of the mechanisms classically associated with a restorative perspective on TJ. At least 12 countries have set up an official truth commission at some time over the past 40 years (see table 2). Truth commissions are state sponsored temporary bodies whose objectives usually include: a) piecing together the violent past and satisfying victims' and society's right to truth; b) investigating and identifying patterns of violence and repression, their causes and consequences; c) acknowledging victims' voice and narratives; d) constructing an inclusive, forward-looking collective memory, and e) preventing new acts of violence (Hayner, 2002; Beristain, Páez, Rimé & Kanyangara, 2010). To this end, commissions normally collect testimony from victims and other relevant actors, as a basis for drafting and publishing a report that includes recommendations designed to ensure non-repetition (Bakiner, 2016: 24).

Although truth commissions have made significant contributions, and have usually been important for victims and societies, they have not been exempted from criticism and debate over issues including their impact, role, and relevance. The themes, patterns and perpetrators that they decide to include or leave out; their use of innovative strategies for truthseeking, and their political limitations have also attracted attention, making them one of the TJ paradigm's most studied instruments (Roht-Arriaza, 1998; Hayner, 2002; Dancy, Kim & Wiebelhaus-Brahm, 2010; Bakiner, 2014; 2016). If we want to evaluate their transformative potential, various questions arise. The rise of truth commissions has gone hand in hand with a fundamental demand, by victims, to know what happened (to themselves or to loved ones), to give testimony about their experience of victimisation and be acknowledged, and to offer an account of the causes and consequences of the violence they lived through. However, and in spite of the achievements of many commissions, it is impossible not to question their scope and transformative power, since to date most have not generated a before-and-after, or a generalised questioning whose real-world consequences challenge or change the status quo, or the continued power enjoyed by elites and/or perpetrators. In practice, truth commissions

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often took place in contexts where amnesty laws or reduced sentences were also deployed. Thus, the political and legal costs to transition-era administrations of the implementation of truth commissions has not been particularly high, at least in the short term. The commissions themselves have mostly failed, at least to date, to alter the underlying interests and configurations of power that produced massive human rights violations.

Another key aspect of truth commissions that has been signalled as a limitation on their transformative power is the type of account of the past that they construct, and the repercussions of this in the present (Bevernage, 2010, Franzki, 2012). The sociopolitical implications of certain models for explaining violence - models that truth commissions have contributed to generating, reproducing and legitimating - have been called into question. The logic of truth commissions reflects a modern conception of history, presupposing a qualitative separation between past, present and future – treating them as non-simultaneous, distinguishable, and non-overlapping (Bevernage, 2010). Commissions are predicated on this linear notion of history, which helps to foster a moral consensus that crimes and injustice belong to the past (Meister, 2002: 96; Franzki, 2012, 76). This lends weight to the idea of a new order, one that does not acknowledge possible sources of continuity with the previous one in aspects such as favoured actors and interests, and/or the practice of violence and repression. A holistic analysis of the causes and patterns of 'past' violence would, for example, require investigation of civilian collaborators (not just armed actors). It might stretch, for example, to considering the possible responsibilities of businesses and the judicial branch for the exercise of violence (Basualdo, 2017). Recognition of the key role played by these sectors in the dictatorial regimes of the Southern Cone of Latin America has led these regimes to be recently re-branded as 'civic-military' dictatorships. Many of the actors involved in the exercise of past violence continue to be active in the subsequent regime or social order, even when this presents itself as completely new. Accounts that include the role played by businesses in dictatorships and armed conflict, and document the economic benefit that often accrued, can allow present-day continuities to be detected, and appropriate measures taken. Accordingly, the important question to ask here is how truth commissions, and other TJ measures can contribute to formulating demands for historical justice in ways that support current political struggles, or at least, those which seek to address social inequalities and forms of political, social and economic exclusion: instead of defining the past as something distant and completely different from the present (Franzki, 2012).

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Finally, another limitation of the transformative power of truth commissions lies in the poor track record of implementation of their recommendations (Martínez Barahona & Centeno Martin, 2020). Although few academic studies to date have looked at this, those that have done so have found very low levels of implementation, combined with the absence of substantive discussion of the matter. One reason often advanced for this failure of implementation is the absence of designated (state) bodies for oversight and followup. This criticism however locates the problem in a practical obstacle: we should also keep in view the underlying political factor. Lack of political will to ensure effective implementation of a truth commission's recommendations again exposes the continuity into the present, of past interests and power struggles. These continuities will determine whether present-day political and economic forces promote or permit a profound change towards a more just, peaceful, inclusive and /or democratic regime.

4.3. Reparations

Reparation for victims, as a TJ mechanism, refers to administrative or judicial procedures designed to respond to the consequences of political violence or human rights violations with concrete measures (Correa, 2011; Laplante, 2014). The meaning of reparations has however broadened since 2010. Recent international legislation defines 'reparations' as a set of material and symbolic modes of redress for victims of human rights violations (De Greiff, 2008; Beristain, 2009). International law has established that the state has the obligation to provide measures that guarantee reparation to victims of grave violations of human rights and/or international humanitarian law. The UN principles developed by Theo Van Boven describe four types of reparation: 1) restitution, 2) compensation, 3) rehabilitation and 4) satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition (United Nations, 2005).

A range of measures of material and symbolic reparation have been attempted in Latin America. While symbolic reparations cover a host of forms of recognition and commemoration of victims and crimes, for present purposes the focus is on what are usually referred to as material reparations. Policies undertaken in this area include monetary compensation, whether in the form of one-off payments, or as lifetime pensions (Abrão & Torelly, 2011 on Brazil; Guembe, 2004, on Argentina). Social welfare programmes for victims, survivors and/or their dependants have been introduced in some countries, such as Chile, where educational

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scholarships and entitlements to certain public health provisions have been established.[11] Brazil, like other post-dictatorial settings, introduced the right to reinstatement or redeployment for people who were arbitrarily sacked or blacklisted due to dictatorship-era persecution.[12] While all these measures have been important, they are not easy to implement: as table 2 shows, only ten countries in Latin America have established programmes and/or laws to provide economic or other forms of material compensation for victims of human rights violations and political violence.

Any discussion of the meaning of reparation for victims of human rights violations necessarily requires mention of its unavoidable limitations and fundamental contradictions. First, of course, reparation of crimes such as torture, sexual abuse, homicide and enforced disappearance is impossible. The harm caused is such that it simply has to be lived with: it is impossible to undo the pain caused by the death or disappearance of a loved one. This type of policy is therefore able at best to provide social, economic, civil and legal conditions that contribute to improving victims' quality of life. Second, the fact that reparation has an anchor point in international law does not give it a single, universal meaning across contexts. What is considered reparatory may vary from person to person, and setting to setting. While the international definition is highly relevant, and offers a general vision of the elements that a reparatory measure should contain, it does not directly address the particularities of each context. What is, or is not, reparatory takes on a particular meaning in each political and historical setting, and is intimately connected with the harm suffered by victims. Third, reparations measures – particularly monetary ones – are always selective. That is, they include certain types of victimization while excluding others. They rarely if ever cover all types of crime nor all victims (Correa, 2011). A clear example is offered by the experience of victims of sexualised violence during dictatorships and armed conflict: while there have been some advances, as can be seen in the case of the 2011 Colombia

11 In Chile, children of victims of enforced disappearance or extrajudicial execution were awarded educational scholarships (in effect, higher education subsidies), an entitlement later extended to grandchildren, and to survivors of political imprisonment. In 1991 a specialized health program, *the Programa de Reparación y Atención Integral en Salud y Derechos Humanos* (PRAIS) was created, to provide entitlement to public health assistance and to specialised attention, particularly in the area of mental health support (Correa, 2011).

12 The Brazilian dictatorial regime undertook a far-reaching program of removing so-called 'subversives' from public and private employment, particularly between 1979 and 1985 (Abrão & Torelly, 2011).

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Victims' Law,[13] this category of victim has historically been excluded from a large proportion of Latin America's reparation and compensation laws and programmes (Figari Layús & Oettler, 2017; Rivera Revelo & Peters, 2017). Fourth, in many cases reparations policies implemented to date, whether individual or collective, have been insufficient or unsatisfactory in many aspects. This insufficiency manifests itself in slowness and delay, or worse, in the payment of economic compensation. In Argentina, where compensation was often awarded in the form of government bonds instead of direct monetary transfers, the fate of the bonds was linked to levels of public debt, meaning long waits as well as the danger of devaluation in case of subsequent economic instability (Guembe, 2004). In Peru, the amounts awarded were small in both absolute and relative terms, and the process of registration to obtain access has been painfully slow, particularly for victims in rural areas (Correa, 2011).

The many forms of reparation have enormous transformative potential, offering the chance to break vicious cycles of victimization and intergenerational transmission of harm. At the same time, to be successful, a transformative reparations policy must be based on acknowledgment of the crimes committed and recognition of state responsibility. It must seek to reach all victims via measures that repair the consequences of harm to the fullest extent possible, and guarantee non-repetition. This requires a holistic approach, meaning that reparations cannot be reduced to simple monetary transfer. Public acknowledgment and apologies, issued by the highest public authorities, have been relatively infrequent in Latin America, and would in any case have only limited transformative potential absent the proper implementation of effective social and material measures. Victims and survivors will meanwhile be unlikely to feel reparation has been effected if the provision of material goods or services is not accompanied by recognition of what occurred, and responsibilities for it, alongside modification of the structural conditions that made the crimes possible in the first place.

Thus, we see that while there have been some significant steps toward reparation in Latin America, these steps remain scarce and few of them contain a fully integrated holistic vision such as would help them to have real transformative potential. Accordingly, they have generally not contributed to changing victims' situation – whether because they have been minimal, have not been delivered within the promised time frame, or were not designed to produce substantial transformations capable of mod-

13 Law 1448 of 2011 (UARIV 2020).

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ifying the social and economic inequalities that often underlie violence (Lambourne, 2009; Evans, 2016). These aspects are key to understanding the limited reach that reparations policies and programmes have had in Latin America.

4.4. Criminal prosecutions

Latin America is the region of the world that has carried out most prosecutions over crimes against humanity committed in the context of armed confrontation or dictatorial regimes, even though such prosecutions have taken place in only nine countries. These trials have been of former heads of state and/or of other perpetrators, whether civilians, members of the security forces, or members of illegal armed groups. Their scope, impact and systematicity varies widely across the nine countries: for the purposes of the paper we have considered countries in which at least one trial has taken place. Prosecutions, unlike truth commissions, connote concrete sanctions against perpetrators, making them difficult to carry out where perpetrators retain social, political and economic power. The fact that perpetrator prosecutions is one of the TJ mechanisms least frequently implemented in the region is testament, inter alia, to the power that these actors retain in the present day. This factor, while not the sole explanation for scarce prosecutions, is undoubtedly one of the principal ones. This continuing influence, while it varies from place to place, again raises a question mark over the notion of a rupture, or definitive transition, between past and present.

Even in countries where trials have taken place or are ongoing, we cannot claim that impunity has come to an end. In the Southern Cone countries, for instance, the time elapsed between the end of dictatorships and the current trials means that many suspects, victims and witnesses are elderly. Some die before or during investigations, giving rise to what has been called 'biological impunity'. Further delays produced by the Covid-19 pandemic have aggravated this issue, at least in the example of Argentina (Página 12, 2020). Impunity is also present in the fact that the actors who were involved in repressive regimes are not prosecuted in equal measure or to the same extent. Although some civilians have been prosecuted, members of the armed forces predominate on the stand. Moreover, while civilian prosecutions have included church figures, doctors, judges and individual businesspeople, the role of business per se in collaborating with grave human rights violations remains a challenge for criminal justice in particular, and transitional justice in general (Payne & Pereira, 2016).

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Criminal prosecution in these types of case is not necessarily aimed only at perpetrators. It can have great significance for victims, who in Latin America have spent decades demanding justice. What is known as the 'legal paradigm', or 'juridical paradigm', considers the use of law to be the most appropriate instrument for offering reparation to victims (Figari Layús, 2017). Many academics and activists conceive of trials, and the right to justice, as a central element of social reparation in response to victims' rights and needs (Edelman, 2010: 107). It has also been thought of as a means of promoting the rule of law after massive atrocity crimes (Roht-Arriaza, 2009; Sikkink, 2011). Various studies have demonstrated that trials can contribute to: 1) the reconstruction, discovery, and diffusion of truth about crimes committed in the past (Figari Layús 2018); 2) the avoidance of future human rights abuse (Sikkink, 2011); 3) the provision of a response to victims' needs and desires (De Greiff. 2008; Capdepon & Figari Layús, 2020: 4) the promotion of the rule of law in emerging democracies, and guarantees of greater civic and legal inclusion for victims in their identity as citizens (Lutz & Sikkink, 2001; Figari Layús, 2018). Trials mark an important change, by including victims as citizens, rights holders, and members of society. Trials also provide an opportunity for victims to speak about their experiences in public, or otherwise take an active part in the justice process. The power to relate one's experience of having been victimised in a public setting that offers trust and respect, and to feel listened to, can be reparatory (Hayner, 2002; Parlevliet, 1998).

It is nonetheless important to emphasise that while trials can contribute to reparation in different aspects of victims' lives, they cannot wipe out or reverse the consequences of violence. Trials are not, either, necessarily reparatory: the way in which they are conducted, the treatment of victims and witnesses, and the sensitivity shown by judicial personnel all matter. So too do the social and political conditions that surround them. All these factors play a role in making a trial reparatory or otherwise, and these conditions can vary between settings. Other issues such as victim and witness safety, the slowness and bureaucratic nature of the justice system, inadequate training of justice system operators for this type of case, and budget problems – which can lead to inadequacies in staffing, resources, and investigation – add to the challenges faced by prosecutions that are already sensitive in divided societies. Nor can criminal justice be expected to be equal to the task of effecting deeper social transformation: this will inevitably require other measures.

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5. Conclusions

This article has analysed, on the one hand, the distinct concepts and expectations associated with the transitional justice paradigm; and on the other, the types of measure that have been undertaken in practice in Latin America. For reasons of space and scope, the article has not addressed all types of transitional justice instrument, leaving pending analysis of measures such as museums, memorials, official apologies, access to archives, and security sector reform. However, the instruments studied serve to give a general idea of the forms that transitional justice has taken in the region. By observing which measures have been applied most frequently over the past 40 years, we can observe what type of transitional justice has been hegemonic. In general, the prevalence of non-punitive measures (e.g. truth commissions), combined with the high incidence of the extinction, attempted extinction, or reduction of criminal sanctions via forms of amnesty, suggests a clear predilection for a restorative conception of transitional justice (followed in second place by a more retributive one). Important efforts at reparations in various countries have not reached the heights of holism or sufficiency that might qualify them as part of a transformative approach to transitional justice. Moreover, we have as argued above, while trials, exhaustive truth commissions, and economic reparations can be important for truth and justice, they are not sufficient to effect structural change such as would produce more inclusive and equitable democracies. A vision of justice that is transformative in a socioeconomic and distributive sense has not yet taken shape. This tells us what type of change TJ has been used to pursue, and what kinds of interest have been in tension, and have prevailed, in Latin American transitions. This is to a large extent reflected in the region's current social, political and economic situation.

The paper has shown that transitional justice measures and their associated programmes, while important for society and victims, are also the object of much criticism by those sceptical of their effects, politicisation, and short and long-term scope. Latin America as a whole offers examples of both the achievements and the frequently criticised shortcomings of transitional justice processes. The privileging of one model of transitional justice over another depends on the range of factors, possibilities, and local and international interests that coexist in each setting. Decisions as to what TJ instruments to adopt, and how to implement them, are not exempt from the contradictions and difficulties that are characteristic of contemporaneous social and political struggle. This being so, the application of TJ policies brings with it a host of social, political and juridical

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challenges. Some are decades old but still unresolved, others are newly arising due to current events and emerging social and political demands. These new needs and demand raise questions that require further research, concerning for example the persistence of violence, the role of a security perspective in transitional justice processes, the addressing of social inequality, and the challenges of new technologies such as those that have come to the fore in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

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Transitional Justice in South Africa

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Introduction

Ever since the release of Nelson Mandela on 11 February 1990, South Africa has undergone multiple transformations. The primary and perhaps most challenging one was to address the legacies of an unjust past punctured by racial division. As was the case with many African countries, South Africa attempted to address past human rights abuses through several policy reforms such as the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). However, the overall approach toward addressing the violent and painful past into a stable and peaceful South Africa democratic state is somewhat murky. The consequence is that decades after the demise of apartheid, South Africans are still yearning for the so-called rainbow nation with minor trauma.

Internationally, the United Nations has played a significant role in setting standards for transitional justice efforts. In this regard, the United Nations supports nationally determined transitional justice initiatives. Still, in turn, it expects nation-states to conform to the growing body of international standards it has set (Grover, 2019). Globally, diverse interventions and complex and contested contexts that include, for example, truth commissions, reparations, and memorialization, characterize transitional justice (Waterhouse, 2009; Hayner, 2011; see also Figari Layús' contribution in this volume). While transitional justice goals at the state level are often framed to encompass outcomes such as reconciliation and peacebuilding (Duggan, 2012), there is a need to balance principles and pragmatism. Gready and Robin (2020) aptly note that addressing the past in transitions from conflict or repressive rule includes different mechanisms or approaches. However, constructing peace and ensuring justice have been criticized for being exclusive alternatives, as maintenance of peace often proceeded justice (Ramsbotham et al., 2011).

Notwithstanding significant progress in transitional justice efforts globally, South Africa's TRC offers ample examples of how a restorative approach can be implemented for nations to forgive and reconcile after periods of injustice. The TRC moved away from retribution by focusing on

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reparation, compensation and reconciliation, before actual reintegration programmes (Walaza, 2003; Bubenzer, 2014; Aiken, 2016). As a result, the TRC in South Africa played a critical role in advancing transformation in the country. For this and many other reasons, the country's TRCs are globally regarded as exemplary (Christodoulidis, 2000; Moon, 2009).

Against this background, the chapter examines the role of citizen participation and political trust in the context of transitional justice in South Africa, assesses the interaction of these phenomena, and reviews the literature on civil society mobilization for a just society as well as current perceptions about reconciliation efforts. Primarily, the focus is on how citizen participation and political trust shape perceptions of transitional justice efforts. I argue that stakeholders need renewed attention and action to embody a sustainable memory culture in contemporary South Africa. Besides, this suggests a restorative justice pathway that emphasizes inclusion and participation as instruments to engender trust in the processes aimed at healing past atrocities.

Intersection of Social Justice, Political Trust, and Participatory Processes

There is considerable variation worldwide in the legal status of restorative justice processes in transitional societies, with some programmes enshrined in law and others having no formal legal status. The latter relates to Pakistan's peacemaking processes, the Middle East, and the community-based mediation programmes in Guatemala (Jakobsson, 2018). Most transitional justice research in South Africa focuses on disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating ex-combatants. The research further focused on creating a new defence force that consists of different military structures (van der Merwe & Lamb, 2009). The TRC found that the state perpetrated several gross human rights violations in South Africa and other Southern African countries (Swaziland and Zimbabwe). These violations include torture, abduction, severe mistreatment, sexual assault, unjustified use of deadly force etc. (TRC, 1998). Therefore, it is necessary to consider the role of trust and citizen participation in the transitional justice efforts in South Africa.

Political trust is seen as the structural component of social capital (Bains & Hicks, 1998) and a direct consequence of institutional performance (Krisna & Shrader, 2000). It is based on the political circumstances in which citizens find themselves at a given time (Gormley-Heenan & Devine, 2010). The national contexts, including its institutional organization, policy, and socioeconomic conditions, influence people's cognitive

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ability to assess their circumstances (Krishna & Shrader, 2000). Duckitt and Phuting (1998) argue that perceptions of and outrage about intergroup socioeconomic inequality and deprivation dominate the attitude of the oppressed towards its erstwhile oppressor. In this regard, reconciliation is a complex set of processes of rebuilding relationships in the aftermath of human rights violations. In the absence of trust at the individual, interpersonal, socio-political, and institutional levels, these relationships can be described as thin reconciliation. Thick reconciliation is when relationships are based on dignity restoration through trust, respect, and shared values, reversing structures (Seils, 2017).

For both reconciliation and transitional justice, trust is a critical factor shaping the processes and their aims. As governments and public institutions play a fundamental role in supporting inclusive societies, their performance and expectations influence the level of trust and citizens' experience in decision-making (Matebesi, 2017). Thus, the erosion of trust in government poses severe consequences for the quality and ability of representative democracy, its institutions, and its actors (van der Meer, 2017). In this regard, Hardin (2002) argues that newly built institutions can weather citizen distrust of the government.

Citizen participation is a critical factor that can enhance trust in institutions and transitional justice processes. A key part of citizen participation is to involve people who have experienced periods of conflict and human rights violations and the prime beneficiaries of transitional justice strategies (Shaw & Waldorf, 2010). In this regard, Triponel and Pearson make a valuable contribution when they contend:

> "Maintenance of peace in the long term in post-conflict society depends on a number of factors. In particular, the objectives of transitional justice can only be met if the population demonstrates ownership of the structures that are established. Countries can achieve this ownership by building meaningful consultation into the transitional justice mechanisms at the outset" (Triponel & Pearson 2010: 103).

Therefore, unlike state-driven or top-down approaches (McEvoy, 2008), involving citizens in designing and implementing transitional justice strategies creates opportunities for a bottom-up approach. This form of participation indirectly addresses the marginalization and disempowerment that are the root causes of human rights violations. In this way, citizen participation in transitional justice processes enhances the self-esteem and confidence of victims (Laplante & Rivera Holguin, 2006). Citizens are also more likely to support initiatives they were actively involved in from the outset (Laplante, 2013). Some scholars argue that transitional justice is a

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process embedded in power yet highly depoliticized (McEvoy, 2008; Millar & Lecy, 2016). However, others have also warned that both top-down and bottom-up approaches can potentially ignore, neglect and undermine local agencies as they depoliticize both the conflict they seek to address and the peace they intend to build (Triponel & Pearson, 2010; Laplante, 2013; Charbonneau & Parent, 2013).

Specific reconciliation policies or activities promote reconciliation through various processes in transitional societies. In this regard, citizen participation in transitional justice is crucial. The need for transitional justice initiatives to be perceived as legitimate by citizens cannot be overemphasized. They have to participate in transitional justice institutions and accept their decisions. When viewed as illegitimate and biased, transitional justice efforts can foster division instead of overcoming them. Participation can provide avenues for the voices of victims in the design of transitional justice strategies. This will more likely make the strategies responsive to local priorities (Selim, 2014). The degree of citizen participation in the varying transitional justice mechanisms is dependent on the type of transitional justice system being implemented (Triponel & Pearson, 2010). Scholars have also found that when transitional justice is imposed internationally, it creates gaps with local citizens and affects its legitimacy. This gap widens further if the government and other leading stakeholders in the transitional process do not understand what victims need and ultimately deliver (Shaw & Waldorf, 2010).

Bosire (2006) cautions that transitional justice is typically understood within the legal framework of state responsibilities. Therefore, transitional justice measures primarily seek to establish or restore trust between the state and citizens who conform to specific parameters. However, 'the unmet expectations of transitional justice efforts are partly due to a default resort to a legally and institutionally demanding understanding of transitional justice that is not congruent with the quality and capacity of state institutions in times of transition' (Bosire, 2006: 31). I now turn to transitional justice processes in South Africa.

Transitional Justice Process: the South African Experience

According to Laplante, "truth commissions often elaborate very general, and often overly ambitious, reparation plans to provide an effective remedy to human rights victims" (2013: 222). This section focuses on trust and citizen participation in transitional justice processes in South Africa.

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It is historically widely known that South Africa was characterized by violence and institutionalized racial discrimination (Aiken, 2016). White South Africans generally enjoyed a disproportionate share of resources under a system, which was enforced with brutal violence, shame and humiliation. After nearly five decades of this cruel system, South Africa made a peaceful transition to a more democratically elected government in 1994 (Kunnen, 2018). The negotiated Constitution of South Africa received broad support, with its provisions widely accepted by political parties and citizens. A central feature of the negotiations for liberation parties and the government was amnesty for past human rights abuses. This provision was a significant victory for human rights campaigners (van der Merwe & Lamb, 2009). For example, while Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch were opposed in principle to granting amnesty for gross human rights violations, they were satisfied with the conditionality and specificity of the TRC's amnesty process. These included allowing survivors or relatives of human rights abuses to oppose amnesty applications, extensive investigations and cross-examination of the applicants. The human rights organizations also welcomed the decision to individualize amnesty applications instead of granting blanket amnesties for political organization parties (Bowsher, 2020).

Despite several challenges facing the TRC, including criticism for producing truth far from truth (Gibson, 2005), the Commission played a central role in managing racial conflicts and state-sponsored and state-supported crimes against the Black majority. Furthermore, the nonviolent approach adopted by the TRC was instrumental in engendering the tacit principle of Ubuntu (the African philosophy of humanism) (Vora & Vora, 2004) introduced by the TRC Chairperson. The Ubuntu principle promotes values of empathy, forgiveness, and sharing in a conscious effort to resolve common problems. This enabled South Africa "to transform the conflict situation largely to harmony and reminded the groups of their shared unity" (Arthur et al., 2015: 75).

At the TRC hearings, the focus was on the victims and their families. As a result, for many victims of apartheid, testifying before the TRC was a transformative experience. The TRC offered amnesty for individuals under specific conditions. Perpetrators had to fully confess their crimes and had to show that their crimes had been politically, not personally, motivated. Despite some flaws, the TRC was a successful form of restorative justice as it sought to promote the acceptance of responsibility on the part of offenders to acknowledge the harm suffered by victims, and the victims aim of healing and restoration for all concerned (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, 2011).

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Closely linked to transitional justice processes in South Africa were the issues of reparation and prosecutions. For instance, the philosophy of restorative justice rose to respond to the need for changes in the country's punitive criminal justice system. This was to accommodate indigenous African legal practices, which are more participatory and reconciliatory (Joyce, 2006). Van Zyl argues that the "TRC represents a 'third way' in dealing with past human rights abuse and attempting to institutionalize justice" (1999: 648). In this regard, the TRC followed a middle path by insisting on the prosecution, acceptance of amnesty and impunity. South Africa has a relatively well-developed and modern criminal justice system that draws its roots from a blend of Roman-Dutch and English law. In addition, it has, over the years, drawn and borrowed from a variety of respected international legal systems. Generally, though, the foundation upon which the South African criminal justice system rests was designed to provide a human rights system either not previously available to all citizens or not entrenched in law (Downes et al., 2016).

Reparations and Local Transitional Justice Initiatives

The TRC was not the only tool of transitional justice in South Africa. Others included were reparations, institutional reform, and local transitional justice initiatives. Regarding reparations, the TRC mandated its Reparations and Rehabilitation Committee to design a policy of how best to assist the victims. These victims included direct survivors, family members and/or dependents of someone who had suffered a politically motivated gross violation of human rights (Hamber, 2000). A significant challenge for the TRC was to deal with a myriad of reparation strategies which ranged from monetary (compensation payment) or symbolic reparations (for example, building memorials and renaming public facilities) (TRC, 1998).

While victims only began to receive reparations in 2003, perpetrators benefited immediately from the amnesty process. As a result, the TRC was heavily criticized for failing to advance the victims' interests in comparison to the perpetrators', including defining the concept of victims too narrowly. Again, victims of human rights abuses could not pursue civil claims against perpetrators who were granted amnesty (Hamber & Kibble, 1999; van der Merwe & Lamb, 2009). The TRC also understood the need to ensure that reparations become visible, directed, and individualized, but it focused only on gross violations. Thus, social reconstruction as a form of reparation, for example, providing better access to health care and

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development, was to take place in addition to and not to the exclusion of individualized reparations or collective reparation strategies (Hamber, 2000).

International literature on local transitional justice initiatives highlights that local ownership—as a form of community engagement and empowerment—is a significant currency in post-conflict societies. The literature argues that the most effective transitional justice interventions emerge from the locals (McEvoy, 2008; Bell, 2009; Lambourne, 2009; Jakobsson, 2018; Grover, 2018). Peace processes and justice mechanisms not embraced by those who have to live with them are unlikely to be successful if they are perceived as being imposed by external actors. This may create resentment that undermines both the legitimacy and effectiveness of transitional justice processes (van der Merwe & Lamb, 2009).

In trying to effect these principles, various local justice and reconciliation initiatives were developed in South Africa. These initiatives included, for example, processes of local community healing meetings, disappearance support and investigation programs, restorative justice dialogues, victim counseling programs, survivor advocacy initiatives, memorialization projects and ex-combatant reintegration programs. Some of these initiatives, such as restorative justice dialogues, enabled ex-combatants to engage directly with victims, affecting collaboration in developing local community memorialization initiatives. The restorative justice dialogues enabled ex-combatants to engage directly with victims. This increased collaboration in developing local community memorialization initiatives (Greenbaum, 2006).

Institutionalization of Transitional Justice Measures in South Africa

The history of transitional justice shows that its high degree of institutionalization in countries in the Southern Cone of Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, and South Africa has aided its efforts to deal with the human rights abuses of the past. Institutions regulated by laws in these countries ensured interactions between citizens and the state. Transitional justice measures included a significant dimension of institution-building to respond to the context and to strengthen civil society in advocating for truth, justice, reparation and non-recurrence (Special Rapoteur, 2017). While transitional justice has contributed to the entrenchment of rights to justice, truth and reparation, and to their operationalization, there are limitations to the institutions' achievement of even the narrowest goals. Thus institutions may reinforce ownership of the process by the state and

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elites (Robins, 2017). Conversely, poor institutionalization causes underperformance of transitional justice measures. For example, in conditions with few legitimate rules and institutions, transitional justice prosecutions and vetting programs can clash with the informal state's patronage logic (van der Merwe & Lamb, 2009).

Internationally, efforts to further develop norms and standards to address human rights violations contributed to the legalization and codification of international criminal law, international humanitarian law and human rights law by special bodies (Bell, 2009; Subotić, 2009). For instance, in 1993 and 1994, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) were established. The expansion of transitional justice institutionalization found further expression in the International Criminal Court (ICC), established in 1998. The ICC was created to investigate and try individuals charged with the world's gravest crimes of concern to the international community. This expansion of the institutionalization of transitional justice efforts enabled its mainstreaming, thereby strengthening accountability for past crimes and the struggle against impunity in post-conflict societies (Rubli, 2012).

In the South African context, violations' conditions and historical context demanded a comprehensive and more substantive conception of transitional justice that went beyond juridical and legal forms of justice. For the TRC to encourage participation and support testimony from those directly involved with the issues under investigation, processes and structures needed to be in place to protect both the victims and perpetrators from the dangers of participation. In this regard, the Commission of Inquiry for the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation, popularly known as the Goldstone Commission, played a central role in, among others, transforming information gathering measures and the institutionalization of witness protection in South Africa. The Goldstone Commission is a precursor to the legislative framework and institutionalization of TRC processes in South Africa (Lambert, 2020). A notable feature of the Goldstone Commission—specifically with the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation Act—was its power to search and seize documents, and thus move beyond voluntary witness testimony in gathering evidence for its investigations (Government of South Africa, 1992)

Later, the South African TRC would benefit from the operation of the Goldstone Commission in terms of investigative credibility and institutional experience. The Commission's work helped strengthen information gathering during the negotiating period in South Africa and facilitated further change in information-gathering capacities, including institutional-

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izing witness protection in South Africa (Lambert, 2020; Newham, 2015). Lambert notes:

> "Given the reliance on witnesses and testimony, the operation of credible witness protection is a valuable indicator for the institutionalization of conditions conducive to truth-seeking. The South African TRC is notable in that it was the first truth commission to establish a witness protection program" (Lambert 2012: 217).

Therefore, the shortcomings of witness protection highlighted by the Goldstone Commission's operations resulted in the development of witness protection measures that were more conducive to truth-seeking. The Unity Act required the TRC to make recommendations for a witness protection program and ensure that the identity of vulnerable witnesses remained concealed (van Zyl, 1999). The conscious recognition of the centrality of institutionalization to the success of transitional justice and the actual operation of the South African TRC influenced the adoption and design of several truth commissions elsewhere in the world (Lambert, 2020).

The Aftermath: Reconciliation and Nation-Building in Contemporary South Africa

Twenty-seven years into democracy and the 22nd year after the TRC report was submitted to South Africa's then President, Nelson Mandela, poverty, inequality, unemployment, and racism are still pervasive. South Africa's response to nation-building, aptly adopted through the Rainbow Nation ideology, was primarily associated with the chairpersons of the TRC, Bishop Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela. In Tutu's case, he believed in the interconnectedness of people from different traditions and racial groups. He used rainbow colours to evoke the significance of racial and cultural diversity in the country (Tutu, 2006; Evans, 2010; Palmer, 2016, Motlhoki, 2017). In Mandela's case, Evans (2010) reasons that three televised media events primarily enhanced the new nationalism that swept across South Africa. These events include Mandela's release from prison, his inauguration as the country's first democratically elected president, and the opening ceremony and the final game of the Rugby World Cup of 1995. The broadcasts were not only successful in creating an appearance of unity and stability, they most likely also generated increased support for the South African transition (Carlin, 2008; Evans, 2010).

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Despite a commitment to non-racialism in the South African Constitution and the emphasis of the Rainbow Nation ideology on multiculturalism, scholars criticize the ideology for being a barrier to structural inequality in South Africa (Gachago & Ngoasheng, 2016), while others argue that racism continues to thrive in the country. A section of the white population uses a general culture of victimhood expressed in the so-called 'white genocide' rhetoric promoted by Afrikaner nationalist group Afriforum (Mncube, 2019).

Several interventions in postapartheid South Africa promoted the concerted effort to create a new national identity that rested on recognizing bonds of solidarity across racial boundaries (Guelke, 1999; Carlin, 2008) and the hope embodied by Mandela's presidency. For example, the TRC set a transformative agenda visible in the country's policy regime in the early stages of democracy. The emphasis on participatory governance in postapartheid South Africa has been linked to substantive innovations in public participation. One such innovation included a set of requirements for public involvement in various decision-making processes similar to those in Argentina, Brazil and Mexico (Barichievy et al., 2005; Booysen, 2009; Piper & Nadvi, 2010). The participatory governance approach in several sectors of society, such as education, fostered trust in the government (Matebesi, 2020).

Today, novel insights into the social and political conditions of South Africa indicate that memories of past suffering bring pain and anger (Motlhoki, 2017; see also Molope's contribution to this volume). Despite the progressive proclamations in the 1994 Constitution, the problems at the centre of racial exclusion and marginalization in South Africa have become entrenched in governance institutions. This has sparked a sporadic public confrontation between racial groups and protests by predominantly black communities. Again, there is doubt among many South Africans, whether the objectives and goals envisaged by the TRC and the Constitution will be met (Lues, 2014). There is huge disappointment in much of the black population, as Southall's assertion eloquently captures:

> "Disappointment among the black population at the limits of the democratic settlement is mounting; community protests against perceived ANC arrogance have continued into the new era; and Ramaphosa's renewal of the ANC has yet to see the removal of Zuma strongmen within key provinces, prompting questions of whether the party can really reform. Much depends on whether Ramaphosa's reformist agenda succeeds or falters. … But if it fails, the prospects of deepening political polarisation, resulting in Zimbabwe-style authori-

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tarianism and political decay, will be worryingly increased" (Southall, 2018: 206).

Conclusion

This article has set out to understand the role of citizen participation and political trust in the context of transitional justice in South Africa. South Africa moved from a political system concerned with racial polarization and economic inequality to a nation concerned with truth and reconciliation. However, in the current political environment—based on patronage and lack of accountability, and dishonesty and corruption as political capital—fractious racial relations and hopelessness reign supreme. This situation poses a serious threat to the contribution made by the TRC in advancing constitutional democracy in South Africa.

The article argues that the interface between participation and political trust is significant in promoting or preventing the capacities to implement and sustain complex institutions that are supposed to engender a sustainable memory culture. The institutional memory and culture of oppression and hatred in South Africa call for the enhancement of structures that deal with the promotion of racial pluralism rather than further regulation or policies. Such an approach calls for renewed attention and action to embody a sustainable memory culture in contemporary South Africa.

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Political Power and Social Inequalities in Memory and Oblivion

Stefan Peters

Yo no me acuerdo,
no me acuerdo
Y si no me acuerdo
No pasó, eso no pasó[1]
Thalía und Natty Natasha

Not only in Reggaeton: Forgetting is *en vogue*! The question of forgetting on the Internet is discussed just as centrally in the cultural pages of daily newspapers as the challenges of caring for dementia patients in an ageing society. But beyond that, forgetting has experienced an unexpected revival in recent years. Already almost a decade ago, a new "conjuncture of forgetting" (Dimbath & Wehling, 2011: 8) was noted in the debates on collective memory. In part, this goes hand in hand with the intention of shifting the political direction of the past. According to a growing number of voices, the memory of past violence does not allow the wounds of a violent past to heal, but rather perpetuates social rifts and polarization, or even contains the seeds of future (violent) conflicts.

This position stands in remarkable contrast to the hard-won consensus on the value of memory as part of dealing with the violent legacy of dictatorships, civil wars and massive human rights violations. In so doing, it also opposes the importance of collective memory as a *condition sine qua non* on the way to preventing the recurrence of such acts of violence. To avoid misunderstandings: the imperative of memory remains widespread and is based on a solid foundation. This could be observed, for instance, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the former concentration and extermination camp in Auschwitz.[2] But it is not restrict-

1 Lyrics by the Duo Thalía and Natti Natasha from the song "No me acuerdo" (English: I don't remember) from the genre of Reggaeton. English: "I don't remember and if I don't remember it didn't happen, this didn't happen."

2 Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier said on this occasion: "Auschwitz - a place of terror and a place of German guilt. We know what Germans did to others, but we struggle for words to describe the extent of the horror. The times are

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ed to Europe and the memory of the atrocities committed by the Nazis. The generalized consensus on the value of memory is, for example, also manifested in Latin America in current debates on dealing with the past of dictatorship and civil wars. In addition, there are a large number of representations of the past in the culture of remembrance, each of which makes it its task to deal with history and often also - at least in part - has educational intentions (Jelin, 2015).[3]

Despite the ubiquity of memories in political and cultural interventions in the public arena,[4] the imperative of remembering the past is being increasingly torn apart. In some cases, arguing in favor of forgetting is already a socially acceptable position. In striking contrast to the optimism of the majority of research on collective remembrance with regard to the

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different today, the words are different, the deeds are different. But sometimes, when we look back into those times, I have the impression that the evil is still there, the evil is the same. And that is why here in Auschwitz we do not only talk about the past, but also see it as an enduring responsibility to resist the beginnings, also in our country" (https://www.bundespraesident.de/SharedDocs/Berichte/DE/Frank-Walter-Steinmeier/2020/01/200127-Reise-Polen-Auschwitz-Gedenken.html).

3 Increasingly, (new) forms of (popular) cultural communication of historical content are also being used. These include TV series, graphic novels and video games. The latter includes, for example, the German-language game *Through the Darkest of Times*, in which the player leads a resistance movement in Berlin during the National Socialist era and has to make moral decisions time and again. Moreover, in the current Colombian Peace Process, there are initiatives to use eduentertainment in order to get discussions on the past atrocities to a broader audience.

4 For analytical purposes, a distinction can be made between the politics of the past and the culture of remembrance in researching processes of remembrance. The politics of the past refers to the public construction of interpretations of violent and traumatic events of the past (Bock & Wolfrum, 1999; Kohlstruck, 2004). In particular, it refers to the state's administrative handling of the past and the conflicts and discussions associated with it. The actors in politics concerning the past use privileged political and/or social positions to transmit their interpretations of the past within society. In addition to laws, political speeches, the setting of days of remembrance, the financing and construction of monuments, museums or memorials, the media of *Vergangenheitspolitik* also include the establishment of official readings of history, e.g. in curricula, textbooks, truth commissions and court rulings. In contrast, the term refers to the manifold social, political and cultural articulations of memory. To this end, the culture of remembrance relies on a variety of different media: literature (novels, poems, plays and their stagings), music, (documentary) films and various forms of art. High-priced paintings are just as much a part of this as everyday caricatures or subcultural forms of street art or graffiti interventions. This is supplemented by memory rituals, political actions of social movements or civil society groups, readings, exhibitions or public articulations in letters to the editor, blogs and commentary columns.

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politics of the past, forgetting as a mechanism to avoid social conflict is once again being broached - in line with the reggaeton lines quoted at the beginning.

This turn towards forgetting appears to be a journey back to the future. Therefore, it is no coincidence that Christian Meier (2010), a historian of ancient history, is the key figure in the German-speaking world for the revaluation of forgetting. Meier refers back to the ancient Greeks - more precisely to the Athenian amnesty in the years 404/403 B.C. - to develop his thesis on the healing power of forgetting. In fact, Meier cites further examples from the history of the Roman Empire, but also from post-revolutionary France, to support his argument of the importance of forgetting for maintaining social cohesion. While Meier presents his theses cautiously and prudently and allows exceptions - for example, with regard to Holocaust remembrance - the US-American journalist David Rieff (2011; 2016) takes the same line with essayistic charm and pointed exaggerations. In essence, both authors argue that the memory of past violence and human rights violations is in constant danger of tearing open the wounds of the past and thus undermining the successful consolidation of democratisation or post-conflict processes. In contrast, only (temporary) forgetting can guarantee harmonious or at least peaceful social coexistence. The authors thus recycle arguments that already justified the silence pacts and amnesties in Spain and the Southrern Cone during the transitions of the 1970s and 1980s (Aguilar, 2002; Fuchs, 2010; Lessa, 2011). But it was only when Meier and Rieff brought the issue to a head that this position received a great deal of attention in the academic world and, above all, in the arts pages and in politics.

This article analyses this new attention to forgetting in research on collective memory and argues that forgetting, like memory, must always be thought of in the plural. Consequently, there are different forms of forgetting, which are briefly presented. The focus is then shifted to collective forgetting or hushing up[5] events or contexts of the past and the concept of (non-)memory is introduced, before (non-)memory is finally dealt with in greater depth using case studies from Latin America and Europe.

5 The term 'hushing up' is used here in reference to the debates on dealing with the past in Germany as a mostly conscious non-topicisation of the past (Lübbe, 1983; see also: Assmann, 2012: 58).

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Dealing with the past between remembering and forgetting

In large parts of (European) history, for a long time forgetting rather than remembering the painful past was the rule (Meier, 2010).[6] This is also reflected in the classic texts on collective memory: Maurice Halbwachs, one of the pioneers of research on collective memory, has dedicated himself in his texts not only to remembering but also to forgetting. In his famous lecture "Qu'est- ce qu'une nation?" from 1882, the French intellectual Ernest Renan also emphasized that the construction of a nation is not only based on shared memories, but always on forgetting a part of violent history (Renan, 1995: 45f.). But that is not enough: the deliberate forgetting of the (violent) conflicts of the past must also be forgotten (Castiñeira, 2005: 65).

This hegemony of repressing and forgetting the painful past was only seriously shaken in the second half of the 20th century. Since then, a veritable "boom of memory" has been observed in many regions of the world (Bernecker & Brinkmann, 2006; Hite, 2017: 191). This boom often emanated from civil society initiatives, the arts and/or culture. In terms of dealing with the crimes of the Nazis, it was not the Nuremberg Trials or the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial that broke the social silence about the crimes of the past. Rather, it was the social conflicts surrounding the 1968 movement, the impact of the TV series 'Holocaust', the work of the countless civil society local history groups (*Geschichtswerkstätten*) and various cultural and artistic projects that brought the memory of the crimes of the past into broad sections of society with some delay. Forgetting became increasingly disreputable and at the same time the remembrance of the crimes of the past was gradually declared a civic or at least a civil society duty.

The way the past is dealt with is often ascribed magical but rather unrealistic abilities. A frequently quoted phrase is a good example of this: 'Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it'. This phrase is usually attributed to the philosopher George Santayana and has long been widely accepted without question. As a result, the often-painful process of dealing with the past uses to be presented as a 'guarantee of non-repetition'. On the one hand, this has a calming effect on the academic discipline of history, whose socio-political relevance is strengthened by the *bon mot* and its implications. On the other hand, this position is also

6 This was accompanied by a heroic remembrance of past battles, which were usually important as national myths for the construction of nations and were immortalized in national history, monuments and museums.

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extremely attractive for practical politics: a comprehensive examination of the past becomes an effective vaccine against anti-democratic regression.

In many Latin American countries, a similar development towards a "duty to remember" can be observed increasingly (Jelin, 2002). Although powerful voices in Latin America argued for forgetting the past, to stop looking backwards and therefore forgetting the atrocities of the past, ultimately this position was increasingly rejected. Regarding collective memory from the 1980s onwards, initially the memory of the civil-military dictatorships of the Southern Cone was the focus of attention. Of central importance here was the Argentinean case, where the demand *Nunca Más* (Never Again) became a powerful slogan for dealing with the past as a prerequisite for non-repetition and against forgetting and was soon taken up by human rights organisations in other contexts in the region. Since the beginning of the 1990s, this has been complemented by a turn to remembering colonisation and the violence of the civil wars in Central America, Peru and Colombia. The remembrance of the past was by no means a harmonious process but was itself the subject of fierce social and political conflicts. Various publications analysed not only the political and social conflicts between different social groups but also within human rights organisations regarding the interpretation and representation of the past in the present (Allier Montaño, 2010; Fuchs, 2010; Lessa, 2014; Allier & Crenzel, 2016; Olaso, 2016; Jelin, 2017; Alarcón, 2020). The multiplicity and plurality of the memory actors involved is the reason for the polyphony of historical interpretations within a society. This heterogeneity of interpretations of the past, which can result from different political positions, ideologies, interests or social positioning in the present, not only makes it difficult to reach a social consensus on the assessment of historical figures, processes and epochs, but also proves to be a fruitful source of political and social mobilisations for or against certain policies on the past, interpretations of history and/or narratives of memory. These "political struggles for memory" (Jelin, 2002: 39) in turn feed the dynamics of interpretations of the past and guarantee that memories and interpretations of history are not static but in a state of permanent change.

At the international level, Latin America soon became a central reference point for research on dealing with the past of massive human rights violations in the context of civil wars and dictatorships. This was due on the one hand to the dynamics of the region's politics of the past and its culture of memory, and – closely related to this – to various theoretical and conceptual impulses for academic debate. On the other hand, Latin America also became a fixed point for practical transitional justice debates. The various instruments of Transitional Justice – legal processing and/or

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truth commissions, compensation, etc. – soon became a kind of gold standard for policies dealing with a violent past (Oettler & Buckley-Zistel, 2011; Figari Layús, Krüger & Peters, 2021).

Although there is no doubt that the enthusiasm for the politics and culture of remembrance of the past continues, authors and positions that are critical of memory and tend to affirm the healing power of forgetting were widely received and discussed. In the discussion about the role of forgetting, however, it is important to note that there are different forms of forgetting and that this should therefore be thought of in the plural (Cohen, 1995; Ricoeur, 2004; Connerton, 2008; Assmann, 2016). In the following, different types of forgetting will be presented first, followed by a look at a form of forgetting that can be grasped with the concept of (non-)memory (Eser & Peters, 2016) and includes various reasons for the exclusion of certain narratives of memory from public debate. This form of forgetting, which can occur either as a deliberate act of silencing or as a structurally determined absence of a space of resonance[7] in the politics and culture of remembrance, will be illustrated with short examples. On this basis, the article ends with reflections on the possibilities and limits of science and culture in making visible such excluded memories.

Thinking about forgetting in the plural

Forgetting is an everyday phenomenon. This applies to both individual and collective memory. In fact, any construction of (collective) memory is always based on the explicit or implicit exclusion of some elements of the past. As a rule, however, this is not a matter of complete forgetting. Rather, with Aleida Assmann (2016), collective memory can be understood as the staggered space of a shop. Emblematic memories can be found in the shop window, while in the shop itself further memories are constantly recalled. The vast majority of memories are found in the store or archive and are therefore out of sight of the general public and even invisible for most specialists. Nevertheless, they are in principle available to the public for inclusion in the collective memory. However, it is important to keep in mind that the processes of collective memory and forgetting are dynamic. What is in the shop window today can be disposed of in the attic tomor-

7 With Rosa (2016), the concept of resonance here simply refers to the opportunities for communication, without transferring its baggage of the relationship between individual and society to Latin America.

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row and vice versa.[8] Forgetting is therefore not necessarily permanent or absolute – at the very least, the concept of forgetting is blurred. It should rather be spoken of as silence or lack of resonance, which can be grasped with the concept of (non-)memory.

For research on processes of collective memory, the question of the reasons why certain fragments of memory are banned from public space is of particular importance. To this end, a distinction can be made between different types or forms of forgetting or (non-)memory (Connerton, 2008; Assmann, 2016).[9] Following and extending Assmann's thesis on the collective memory of violence and human rights violations of the past, five forms of (non-)remembrance gain particular relevance: i) the conscious 'forgetting' of the past as a means of containing socio-political conflicts à la Meier and Rieff; ii) the forgetting or concealment of crimes by the perpetrators; iii) the forgetting or concealment of violent experiences by the victims; iv) an emptying of memory through commercialisation or trivialisation; and v) the forgetting or lack of resonance of the memories of marginalised and/or subaltern groups.

Firstly, conscious forgetting as a protective shield against a supposed resurgence of past conflicts as a mode of social conflict management can be found in a number of examples from the past and present. As already mentioned, German historian Christian Meier already referred back to forerunners from antiquity. However, even in the recent past, the argument of preventing the rupture of old lines of conflict through the 'struggles for memory' (Leggewie, 2011) has lost hardly any political relevance. In the 20th century, the political will to forget the past manifested itself particularly in post-war Germany. After the Nuremberg Trials, the discussion of Nazi crimes was almost completely banned from social debates. The focus of German society was on reconstruction and 'economic growth'; in contrast, an intensive social confrontation with the past seemed of secondary importance or was even perceived as disturbing (Karstedt, 2010: 14p.).[10] For all the differences between the cases and the crimes, similar arguments can be found in other contexts. The Spanish transition from the dictatorship under Francisco Franco to democracy

8 This is also true for museums. The world's most important museums usually show less of 10 per cent of their collections to the public (https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20150123-7-masterpieces-you-cant-see, 30-09-2020).

9 Psychoanalytic approaches to forgetting are not dealt with in this article.

10 The historian Tony Judt (2005: 61) argues in this respect that without "collective amnesia Europe's astonishing post-war recovery would not have been possible." However, the question remains as to which social groups opted for forgetting.

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was bought by the renunciation of memory in the form of a pact of silence (*pacto de silencio*), and in Portugal after the Salazar dictatorship, dealing with the past was not initially on the political priority list either. Looking back was seen not least as a danger to successful democratization (Capdepón, 2018). Similar dynamics can also be observed in parts of Latin America. The Spanish example became a role model for Latin America. In Brazil and Uruguay, for instance, memories of past human rights crimes committed by civil-military dictatorships were banned from public discourse. Here, too, it was argued that keeping silent or forgetting the crimes of the past would lay the foundation for stabilizing democracy (Lessa, 2014; Schelotto, 2017).

The perpetrators and their accomplices are – secondly – a central source of forgetting, silencing or concealing the past. This is perfectly legitimate: the right to remain silent and to refuse to testify is undoubtedly one of the pillars of constitutional principles (Förster, 2008: 123). In the context of dealing with the past of massive human rights violations, however, it is at the same time an obstacle to the clarification of the violence of the past and thus also to the practices of remembrance. The practice of transitional justice has taken this dilemma into account in that conditioned amnesties or mechanisms of restorative justice are intended to increase the perpetrators' willingness to testify, so that victims and society in general could gain certainty about the crimes of the past. This calculation can aptly be characterised as "trading justice for the past in exchange for justice in the future" (Roht-Arriazas, 2006: 3). A much-discussed example of this is the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission for dealing with the crimes of the apartheid regime. It was given quasi-judicial powers and was able to grant the perpetrators legally binding amnesties in exchange for telling the truth (Krüger & Scheuzger, 2019). Nevertheless, when taking a global perspective, many of the perpetrators insist on their right to remain silent, thus hindering the clarification of the truth about the past, and in the medium and long term they can promote forgetting the crimes.

Thirdly, the silence about the past is by no means limited to the perpetrators and their obvious motives. Often it is precisely the victims who do not want to talk about the suffering they have experienced or who cannot talk about it for psychological, social and/or political reasons. The reasons for this are manifold and range from the presence of violent actors in everyday life and the associated fear of making the crimes public, to feelings of shame regarding the discussion of one's own experiences of violence or the social preference for keeping silent about particularly shameful forms of violence (for example in the case of sexual violence), to questioning the victim's status as a result of a naturalisation of certain patterns of violence

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and the associated concern not to be heard (Pollak, 2006; Karstedt, 2010: 16p.; Wilches, 2010). In this case, one can therefore hardly speak of an active decision to keep the past quiet to a limited extent. But Clair (1998: 162) places the silence of the victims between the poles of oppression and agency. In this respect, Mannergren Selimovic (2020: 11p.) points out that silence can also be an expression of resistance – as a denial of the rules of the memory industry – or that the silent presence of previously displaced persons is a constant non-verbal indictment.

Another form of forgetting is – fourthly – promoted by the commodification of memory. The memory of the past has long been part of a commercialised culture of remembrance. This manifests itself in cultural artefacts (films, novels, songs, etc.) but also in the development of places of remembrance for tourist purposes, known as "dark tourism" (Bajohr, Drecoll & Lennon, 2020; see also: Alier Montaño, 2018; González Vázquez & Mundet i Cerdan, 2018).[11] This reveals an ambivalence in the culture of remembrance. On the one hand, the popularity of the themes allows for a broad impact, and on the other hand, the massive interest in memory runs the risk of encouraging banalisation, which ultimately encourages a form of forgetting despite the omnipresence of the past (Payne & Bilbija, 2011).

While the aforementioned dynamics of forgetting or hushing up the violent past each involve a decision to refrain from a public discourse on the violence of the past, the fifth form of non-remembrance aims at a forced or power-based exclusion from the public space of remembrance. These are memories that are very present at the level of individuals or social groups and are also endowed with the desire to articulate them. Nevertheless, these articulations of the memory of the violence of the past are denied resonance in the public space for political and/or social reasons (Eser & Peters, 2016; Rivera Revelo & Peters, 2017).

Silencing as an expression of power: the two facets of (non-)memory

What the five forms of silence have in common is that, although at first glance non-articulation suggests forgetting, memory actually manifests it-

11 The potential for commercializing the memory of the violent crimes of the past has been recognized, for example, by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Business School. In a blog entry it says: "Memory tourism is a branch of the tourism industry that is concerned with transforming 'collective and individual memories' into a cultural heritage with tourist appeal" (https://blogs.imf-formacion.com/blog/mba/tendencias-viajes-turismo-memoria 07-03-2020; own translation).

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self in silence. The (non-)recollection of emblematic events of the past can therefore hardly be interpreted as accidental forgetting. It is rather an actively produced silence and/or a silence due to structural obstacles to resonance in public space, which is actively produced just like memory (Eser & Peters, 2016). Mirroring the work of memory (Jelin, 2002), a practice of working on forgetting can also be observed.

From this, the academic and political relevance of the analysis of (non-)memory can be deduced. Absent or marginalised memories represent the other side of the coin of socially respected interpretations of the past.[12] In this sense, silence through (unintentional) exclusion from the public space of memory is of particular interest. This is a consequence of power asymmetries, which are reflected in a different resonance of the articulation of memory narratives in the public space. In other words, it is not a matter of forgetting *strictu sensu*, but rather of keeping silent about the past. Yet this silence does not necessarily obey the wish of the actors or even the victims. Rather, memories are very present on an individual and/or social level, although there are political and/or social barriers that prevent the corresponding narratives from being thematised in public space. In short: these are memories that exist and can be documented but which cannot find a place in the spaces of (counter-)hegemonic politics of the past or remembrance culture and therefore do not receive a resonance in public space (Eser & Peters, 2016).[13]

Here, a distinction can be made between political and social reasons for exclusion from the space of legitimate memory narratives. The former focus on interpretations of the past that challenge, irritate or even contradict the (counter-)hegemonic memory narratives. In contrast, the social reasons for exclusion from the legitimate public space of memory – secondly – focus on the social positioning of the emitters of the memory fragments. Accordingly, various determinants of social inequalities (social

12 The manifold struggles for memory make it clear that the space for the articulation of legitimate interpretations of history is often very broad and includes both hegemonic and counter-hegemonic narratives. Especially in democracies, controversies about the past can even be fruitful as an expression of a lively culture of remembrance for the construction of a positive self-image. Positions beyond the legitimate scope of interpretation, on the other hand, are marginalised, stigmatised and sometimes even criminalised. Recent examples include the Armenian genocide in Turkey or the criminalization of supporters of radical Basque nationalism through the criminal offence of 'glorification of terrorism'.

13 This is not necessarily problematic: not all interpretations of the past stand up to historical scrutiny, while in other cases a contextualization at least relativizes the memory narratives.

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class, ethnicity, gender, social-territorial inequalities, age, etc.) and their intersectional entanglements (Viveros Vigoya, 2016) are reflected in the possibility of achieving resonance for articulations of memory narratives.

(Non-)memory through political exclusion

Political reasons for exclusion from the public space of remembrance are particularly evident in authoritarian regimes or dictatorships. Here, the lack of freedom of the press and freedom of opinion allows for a particularly effective exclusion of unwelcome memories of the past. This applies, for example, to the memory of the murder of opposition politicians in Belarus at the end of the 20th century (FAZ 30-12-2019) or the repression of the memory of the massacre on Tiananmen Square in Beijing in 1989 (Hilpert, Krumbein & Stanzel, 2019: 6p.; Tiffert, 2019).[14]

Although dictatorships and authoritarian regimes are particularly repressive and rigorous in excluding unwelcome memory narratives from the public space of remembrance and often sanction violations of the official line directly, other forms of politically motivated renunciation of memory can be found in democracies. This can be observed, within the processes of dealing with the past, for example in the selection of the victims' voices. The "quality of voice" (Hamber, 2009: 130) or the importance of a (judicial) case, is usually assessed by experts and, given the quantity of testimonies of victims, necessarily involves a selection process. The selection mechanisms can also be oriented towards questions of political desirability of the victims' positions. This was the case, for example, with the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, where the focus on the goal of reconciliation tended to exclude those voices of victims who could not be integrated into this politically motivated goal, or at least

14 Tiffert sums up the exclusion of specific topics from collective memory in the People's Republic of China in the following way: "Thirty years on, media and online references to the protests and their suppression are still banned in the PRC. Zhao Ziyang, the CCP general secretary ousted in the attendant leadership struggle, remains nearly unmentionable. Police harass or arrest those who persist in demanding that the government issue an honest accounting of what happened. Plainclothes officers, intent on forestalling any acts of remembrance, inundate the relevant sites on the relevant anniversaries, supported by ubiquitous cameras capable of facial recognition. The result is coerced public amnesia on an epic scale. With 40 percent of the Chinese population now too young to recollect it personally, this history, so searing to those who experienced it firsthand, risks slipping from the consciousness of a nation" (Tiffert, 2019: 38).

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manoeuvred them into a subordinate position (McEvoy & McConnachie, 2013: 496p.).

Another example of politically motivated renunciation of memory is the case of the (non-)memory of the ETA assassination of the designated successor to the Spanish dictator Francisco Franco, Luis Carrero Blanco in December 1973. The violent assassination of Carrero Blanco removed the option of the dictatorship's preferred continuation of Francoism without Franco in Spain. At the same time, the assassination contradicts the equally established and comfortable interpretations of the Spanish transition by a large part of Spanish society. According to these interpretations, there was a peaceful and exemplary transition from a dictatorship to a democracy under the auspices of a constitutional monarchy. The fact that a violent assassination of Franco's designated successor acted as a trigger for the Spanish transition at least puts the prevailing interpretation of the past into distress. This unease is further reinforced by the fact that ETA, and with it the military arm of radical Basque nationalism – which broad sections of the population regard as terrorism – has, to put it bluntly, blasted open the door to Spanish democracy. To avoid any misunderstanding, it is not the intention to justify or even glorify the attack on its aftermath. Rather, the example is intended to illustrate how politically uncomfortable elements of the past are excluded or marginalised from the hegemonic memory narrative and thus forgotten or better concealed (Eser & Peters, 2016).

Another example concerns the so-called 'peaceful revolution' in the former GDR and German reunification. This historic turn of events was debated extensively in 2019 during the celebrations for the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall (Pollack, 2020). The public attention of the round day of remembrance provided space for controversies about the role of the *Treuhand* or how the well-known slogan 'We are the people' and the Monday demonstrations are dealt with today. Regardless of these controversies, we can also observe a broad consensus: There is vast agreement in politics and society that the end of the GDR and reunification was supported by courageous democrats and allowed "the transition from a society of dictatorship and consumer restrictions to one of political freedom and access to an international labour and consumer market" (Ahbe, 2019: 11). There is no doubt that both the civil rights movement and ordinary people in the GDR played a major role in reunification. This was accompanied by a significant increase in political freedom and a deep economic transformation. However, the focus on the role of courageous democrats outshines the unappetizing side of the presence of neo-fascist groups at demonstrations in the wake of the fall of the Wall and reunification. It is precisely this dark side that is excluded from the interpretation of the past

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by the politics of memory (Farin & Seidel, 2019: 9). It is no coincidence that Peter Richter (2015), a journalist and writer, illustrates the potential for alternative interpretations of history in his novel *89/90*:[15] "It could be felt that later, as on 17 June, there would be two versions of history, one by courageous citizens and one by the neo-fascist mob" (Richter, 2015: 207p.; see also: Ahbe, 2019: 12; Farin & Seidel, 2019; Lierke & Perinelli, 2020). In his novel, Richter describes the period of upheaval in the years 1989/90 in Dresden from the point of view of a young person and deals with the growing presence of nationalist, fascist and neo-Nazi groups in the GDR and their political significance for the period of change: "Since the fall of the Wall, entire choirs have suddenly been shouting non-stop nothing but: Germany!" (Richter, 2015: 207). Richter draws attention to a part of GDR society and the supporters of unification that is hardly ever heard in today's debate about the 'peaceful revolution' of reunification, both in terms of the politics of the past and the culture of memory: "These were not the demonstrations of a month ago, but two demonstrations in a row. In the front was, so to speak, Germany! and at the back of the front was Groszdeutschland. Freedom of the press, self-determination, democratic GDR and so on ran at the back" (Richter, 2015: 210). Richter's description of the famous speech given by the then Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl in Dresden on 19 December 1989 is particularly haunting (Richter, 2015: 224pp.). Kohl saw the day as a "key experience" and the reaction to this speech later as a mandate for rapid reunification, while Richter points to the presence of a mob who ranged from German-national to neo-fascist. The Federal Chancellor and his staff were well aware of the nationalist mood in Dresden and wanted to avoid negative images, for example by singing the – prohibited – first verse of the national anthem of the Federal Republic of Germany - also in view of the reactions from Europe, the USA and the Soviet Union, at all costs.[16] A similar approach can be found in the

15 The generic term novel is at least controversial: In his book review, Dietmar Jacobsen calls the text a "semi-fictional report" (https://literaturkritik.de/id/20521; 31-12-2019).

16 This is by no means about a single (literary) voice: The Austrian journalist Ewald König also recalls the nationalism in the audience: "I [...] stood in the front row in front of the podium [...]. All around me were many tall blond men, who pushed their fists up into the sky and shouted out in a militant rhythm: "Germany! Germany! Germany! Germany!" Twenty years later the echo still gives you goose bumps." (https://www.euractiv.de/section/wahlen-und-macht/news/kohls-balanceakt-in-dresden/; 31-12-2019). And the Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung also addresses the tension between democracy and nationalism at the time of the Wende: "He [Helmut Kohl; S.P.] speaks somewhat circumstantially

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interview volume *Wendezeit* by Klaus Farin and Eberhard Seidel (2019), published by a publisher on the margins. In the introduction, the two authors describe an event from the night of the fall of the Berlin Wall that also has no place in public memory:

> "In the middle of the Trabbi caravan, a West Berliner of Turkish origin comes from the eastern part of the city in his VW bus. His appearance disturbs the euphoric crowd, which greets every Wartburg and Trabant with rhythmic clapping. Some faces darken, the singing stops, the clapping stops. In response to the frosty reception he shouts, 'Welcome unemployment' to the crowd. The mood changes. The first of the drunken reception committee kick the VW bus. 'What does he want here?' is still one of the most quotable reactions" (Farin & Seidel, 2019: 7).

It is not a question of precisely determining or even quantifying the importance of the nationalist and neo-fascist groups within the Monday demonstrations or their relevance for reunification. But they were undoubtedly a factor that shaped the period of change on the streets (Siegler, 1991; Wagner, 2014).[17] This could be of interest, especially in view of current debates on neo-Nazi structures and/or the electoral successes of the right-wing or even neo-fascist AfD (*Alternative für Deutschland*) in the former GDR. Accordingly, the focus is on the question why this dark side of the 'peaceful revolution', despite its importance for the streets and its aftermath, is hardly present in German politics of the past, and why it is only occasionally negotiated on the fringes of the culture of remembrance. The various

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on this evening of democratization in the GDR, of free elections. But then the first choruses are already being chanted by people who would like it to be more direct: 'Germany, one fatherland! The historic speech [...] marked not only a triumph, but also a problem - for Kohl as well as for the current CDU. From the very beginning, there was tension between the full-bodied national feeling and what a CDU involved in nationwide and worldwide government policy was able to offer them as real politics" (HAZ 29-08-2018). The German national flank was nevertheless wide open under Kohl: After the neo-Nazi attack in Mölln (1992), then Chancellor Kohl refused to attend the funeral service on the grounds that he did not want to fall prey to 'pity tourism' (Jakob, 2016: 10).

17 See, for example, the 27.5.1991 edition of Der Spiegel, which contains a list of neo-Nazi violence in East Germany. In this context, the murder of the student Mahmoud Azhar in March 1990 by drunk GDR citizens, which was accompanied by German nationalist slogans, is worth mentioning (Farin & Seidel 2019: 11). Moreover, the project 2nd October 1990 is a very important space for documenting the racist and neofascist violence in the context of German reunification: https://zweiteroktober90.de/.

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actors seem to have no interest in addressing this issue, either because they do not want to devalue the success story of reunification through ambivalence, or because they are reluctant to admit that they demonstrated together with fascists, or because they do not want to question the nostalgia of a supposedly intact world of anti-fascism in the GDR. For future research, it would be useful to find out the reasons for the exclusion of this dark side from the memory of the time of reunification. It is important to determine empirically what role the Kohl government played, which did not want to tarnish its political success by addressing neo-Nazi structures, or whether and to what extent the grassroots democratic GDR citizens' movement opposed such thematization, so as not to have to relativize its own role through the ambivalence of the protests in the run-up to reunification.[18]

Social inequalities and (non-)memory

The forgetting or silencing of certain facets of the past, which lie transverse to the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic narratives of memory, represents only one facet of (non-)memory. It is supplemented by those memories that exist but whose marginalised actors have little or no resonance in the public space. Here it is social factors that make it difficult for these memories to articulate themselves or to make themselves heard in past political and/or memory cultural spaces. Power asymmetries are thus based on social inequalities and the exclusion of certain population groups. Social inequalities must therefore be understood in a multidimensional way, taking into account Bourdieu's reflections on economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital, including not only vertical but also horizontal inequalities and the intertwining of various axes of inequality in line with the approaches of intersectional research (Bourdieu, 1983; Kreckel, 2004; Viveros Vigoya, 2016).

Latin America appears to be a particularly fertile field of investigation for the analysis of the effects of social inequalities and marginalisation on (non-)memory or on the concealment of memory narratives of subaltern population groups. The region is characterized by the common structural feature of extreme and historically persistent social inequalities as well as the aftermath of colonialism with regard to structural discrimination against black and indigenous population groups, an entrenched

18 I would like to thank Markus Ciesielski for this advice on possible explanations.

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patriarchy and strong socio-territorial inequalities (Reygades, 2008; Pérez Sáinz, 2014). In the following, the significance of social inequalities for the presence or absence of memories in Latin America's politics and culture of remembrance will be discussed on the basis of two examples: i) enforced disappearance and ii) the memory of sexual violence.

Cases of violent disappearances of political opponents unfortunately can be found in almost all of Latin America. For the relatives, this form of violence means continued insecurity and the impossibility of a ritual funeral. Nevertheless, the significance of disappearances in collective memory varies considerably from one country to another. In Argentina today, the memory of human rights violations during the civil-military dictatorship (1976-1983) cannot rightly be discussed without focusing on the practice of enforced disappearances. Human rights organisations talk about 30,000 disappeared during the dictatorship, while the National Commission for the Search for Disappeared Persons (*Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas*, CONADEP), set up immediately after the end of the dictatorship, documented 8,960 disappeared persons in 1984 (Crenzel 2008: 115). In comparison to the other civil-military dictatorships in the Southern Cone (Brazil, Chile, Uruguay), violent disappearances were thus a form of human rights violations against alleged or actual opponents of the dictatorship, especially in Argentina (Peters, 2016).

Nevertheless, Argentina's special role in enforced disappearances is at least debatable in relation to other Latin American countries. To avoid misunderstandings: this is not about a rigorous comparison between different case studies, nor is it about a simple quantification of suffering. Rather, the focus will be on the differences in the social resonance of disappearances in different Latin American countries. In Mexico, according to official figures and in spite of a high number of unreported cases, more than 73,000 victims of enforced disappearances are lamented.[19] In Colombia, tens of thousands of people also became victims of enforced disappearances during the armed conflict in the country: the Colombian Victims' Registry lists 49,000 disappeared, while the National Remembrance Centre lists more than 82,998 disappeared and also suspects a number of unreported cases (Olarte-Sierra & Castro Bermúdez, 2019: 122). No attempt will be made here to offset the number of victims. Rather, the crime of enforced disappearance must always be analysed in terms of its social impact, regardless of the numbers involved. This is why it is all the more surprising

19 https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/politica/Segob-reporta-73224-personasdesaparecidas-en-Mexico-20200713-0064.html (13-09-2020).

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that enforced disappearances in Colombia play at best a subordinate role in dealing with the past. It is true that the peace process also established a 'Unit for the Search of Disappeared Persons' as part of the country's Transitional Justice Instruments. However, this authority was only established under pressure from the victims and has received little public attention to date. It is hardly surprising that the issue of the disappeared is not the focus of remembrance work.

The striking contrast in the public response to the issue of the violently disappeared in the treatment of the past between Argentina and Colombia can be partly explained by the different contexts of violence. In Argentina, a large proportion of those murdered under the dictatorship had been victims of enforced disappearances, while the high number of disappeared in Colombia stands alongside incomparably higher numbers of victims (over 230,000 murdered; approximately 8 million internally displaced persons). In short, these are completely different contexts of violence. However, this explanation alone does not seem sufficient: Behind every violent disappearance there are relatives and friends as victim groups, who at least potentially can raise their voices, demand an investigation of the crimes and maintain the public memory of their relatives. However, this happens much more frequently in Argentina than in Colombia, for example, and the public presence in Argentina is unequal. In order to come closer to an explanation for the comparatively low presence of enforced disappearances in Colombia, it is necessary – according to our argument – to take greater account of the social composition of the victim groups. In Colombia, the victims of enforced disappearances are generally left-wing political activists and – as a study on disappearances in Buenaventura on the Colombian Pacific coast has shown – people "with low incomes" (CNMH, 2015: 227; see also: Sánchez, 2016: 17; Aranguren, 2020). This predominant picture is also confirmed by a recently discovered mass grave in Dabeiba in the Colombian province of Antioquia. At the behest of the Colombian Special Jurisdiction for Peace (*Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz*, JEP), exhumations of disappeared bodies of so-called *falsos positivos* are being carried out here. The victims are young people from the poor outskirts of the city of Medellín, poor rural dwellers, homeless people and people with disabilities (*Semana* 15-12-2019). In short, these are groups of victims who, due to their marginalised social position, hardly have a voice to effectively denounce the crimes or find a resonance in the urban debate on dealing with the past. In contrast, a large proportion of the victims of disappearances during the civil-military dictatorship in Argentina came from the urban middle class and often belonged to the student milieu. Their relatives therefore had different social conditions to make their voices heard in the

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debate on memory. The social position is thus a (often forgotten) factor in explaining which crimes of the past are present in the debate on the past and on the culture of memory.

This pattern is confirmed by the presence of memories of female victims of sexual violence in the context of armed conflict. In 2017, the *Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica* reported the number of 15,076 victims of sexual violence in the context of the armed conflict (CNMH, 2017), while the *Unidad para las Víctimas* registered 26,534 victims of sexual violence by 2019. Especially with this form of violence, a high number of unreported cases must be assumed. In particular women and girls from the remote areas of the country and often Afro-Colombian or indigenous communities became victims of this violence by paramilitary groups, guerrilla groups and the military (Rivera Revelo, 2020). As a rule, however, these women are nameless victims, and the documented cases disappear into archives or into well-researched but hardly publicly perceived reports.

An exception is the case of the famous Colombian television journalist Jineth Bedoya. Bedoya became a victim of sexual violence by paramilitary groups, made these crimes public and was thus able to draw public attention to sexual violence in the context of the armed conflict. The day on which she became a victim of sexual violence was declared in 2014 by the then President Juan Manuel Santos as the national day of dignity for women who were victims of sexual violence in the context of the armed conflict, following a petition by a women's group around Bedoya.

There is no doubt that Bedoya's addressing of the violence suffered and her subsequent commitment to victims of sexual violence is an important contribution to the victims and to the memory of an often-silenced topic of violence. Nevertheless, it is evident that it was a woman from the upper middle class, with a high profile and rich cultural and social capital, who – after a protracted struggle and with the help of international support – positioned the subject in the public eye. By contrast, a large proportion of victims come from socially disadvantaged groups and are sometimes denied access to justice, particularly to the public and to the authorities of legitimate (remembrance) culture (Rivera Revelo 2019). Here too, social inequalities explain who has a voice in the debate on violence and who is heard or silenced – or even forgotten.

Conclusions

Collective memory processes do not have magical abilities and are therefore no guarantee for a more peaceful future. This insight is banal, yet

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it runs counter to the widespread enthusiasm for memory (Daly, 2008). However, to deduce from this a plea for forgetting or for the renunciation of measures for collective remembrance seems problematic not only in normative terms. Various empirical examples from the past also suggest that political and/or social agreements regarding the hushing-up of past violence are repeatedly caught up in reality and are often followed by a particularly intensive examination of the violent past (Pollak, 2006: 20). But above all, sweeping praise of the healing power of forgetting, the central question of the groups responsible for the decision to remember or forget, and the consequences of forgetting for different social groups are ignored: In this line there is need for new approaches. "The crucial question must always be: who profits, who suffers from forgetting? (Assmann, 2012: 68; see also: Sosa González & Mazzucchi Fereira, 2012: 893). While the victims must be granted a right not to talk about the past, they also have a right to bring their suffering and grief into processes of collective memory. In other words: Silence must be a choice chosen, not a state enforced. Exclusion from the public space of remembrance can be politically motivated and/or have their origins in structural inequalities. What both cases have in common is that forgetting or remaining silent is unintentional. In these cases, forgetting in collective memory is contrasted with painful memories in individual or social memory.

There is often an academic concern to feed these hidden, "subterranean memories" (Pollak 2006: 18) into the collective memory and make them visible. In view of the lack of resources (material, cultural, social and/or symbolic), however, these aspirations are disappointed time and again. It is precisely here that art, culture and science can contribute to increasing the visibility of marginalised memories by positioning them at the heights of legitimate culture. This is presuppositional for various reasons: On the one hand, there is the theoretical and methodological problem of the (possibility of) representing the memories of subaltern groups by privileged actors and the pitfalls associated with this. Thus, it seems hardly avoidable that the narrative of memory experts does not reflect the voice of the victims or witnesses – but rather a version adapted to the requirements of memory politics (hooks, 1990; Spivak, 1998; Ruiz, 2020). On the other hand, there is the empirical or pragmatic challenge that the forgotten or hushed up memories must first be discovered in order to enable scholars to subsequently analyse the mechanisms of (non-)memory – understood as silence, repression or forgetting – and/or to be able to make these memories visible in the public space of legitimate culture (Peters, 2015). At best, the latter can, in cooperation with historically disadvantaged social

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groups, promote the presence of their memories in the public space and thus contribute to a change in interpretations of the past.

However, the analysis of (non-)memory is not only politically relevant, but also academically promising. The academic gain of analysing processes of (non-)remembrance is thus not limited to supplementing the cartography of a society's memory landscape with aspects beyond the legitimate culture and official politics of the past. The systematic analysis of (non-)memory makes it possible to track down uncomfortable and/or marginalised memories that stand perpendicular to the established narratives about the past. In a further step, the empirical analysis of the processes of concealment or exclusion of these subterranean memories can be used to make further statements about the mode of construction of (counter)hegemonic memories and exclusion mechanisms of marginalising interpretations of the past. In this way, in many cases the strengthening of the perspective of inequality can be productively intertwined with the promotion of analyses of the (non-)memory of events and processes of the past in order to analyse the manifestation of social power relations in memory processes.

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Selective commemoration: coming to terms with German colonialism

Reinhart Kößler / Henning Melber

German colonialism lasted for three decades between 1884 and World War I. With the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, the German empire was officially declared unfit to colonise and its colonial territories were transferred by the League of Nations as trusteeships to mandatory powers. But while this was the official end of a German colonial empire, it survived in German mindsets and ambitions, further reinforced under the Nazi regime. Notwithstanding its end, the ideological impact of the colonial project on the expansionist warfare especially into Eastern Europe and the treatment of people, escalating in the Holocaust and other forms of systematic mass extermination, remained to a large extent ignored ever since. The quest for coming to terms with the violent German past focused mainly on the Third Reich.

While in West Germany, Nazi crimes were largely repressed from public discourse during the 1950s and Nazi perpetrators continued in the ranks of the state and public services, this began to change around 1960, largely due to single-handed action of persons such as state attorney Fritz Bauer who initiated the Auschwitz trial in Frankfurt, and increasingly also through insistence by a younger generation who turned towards a painful and soul-searching engagement with the dire past. Such quests for recognition of state-sponsored crimes met dogged resistance and could prevail only in a long process, in which successive groups of victims besides Jews, such as Sinti and Roma and gay people came to the fore. Claims raised in 2020 against the German railways (Möller, 2020), which had been instrumental in ferrying millions to annihilation camps, underscore that this process has by no means come to a conclusion. Still, in the eyes of the world, these efforts have received a lot of recognition, respect and earned Germany international credibility.

In keeping with this, speaking at the 75th commemoration of Victory in Europe Day (VE) in May 2020, German president Frank-Walter Steinmeier called this a day of liberation imposed by Allied military forces, including the Soviets. But as he stated, "internal liberation", the coming to terms with the heritage of dictatorship and above all the horrific mass crimes, re-

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mained "a long and painful process".[1] Steinmeier's plea to "accept our historic responsibility" met broad consensus. "Internal liberation" had come some way – leaving aside comparatively weak statements by the right-wing Alternative für Deutschland (AfD). Even though this attitude and practice is viewed by many as exemplary, it has some grave shortcomings.

As noted, remembrance of Auschwitz as a substantial part of German state rationale has come about through a halting and conflicting process. For all its merits, still, by virtually singling out the Shoah (the genocide of the Jews in Europe), it marginalizes and disregards other mass crimes of the Nazi period. As recalled during the VE-Day anniversary, such elision from memory includes over 30 million victims of the war against the Soviet Union and the occupation of eastern territories in what are today Russia, Ukraine, Belorussia, Moldavia, Poland and the Baltic states. This blank spot relates to an ingrained culture in Germany of discrimination against Slavic people and to a refusal to acknowledge the crimes perpetrated by millions of ordinary German soldiers.

Another glaring lacuna concerns Germany's past as a colonial power. Despite its relatively short duration, this experience had a great impact on Germany's violent trajectory during the first half of the 20th century. Since 1945, however, this history has been largely excised from public memory. Today, many Germans are not even aware that their country once ruled colonies in Africa, Oceania, and China. Such public amnesia (Kößler & Melber, 2018) does not imply only a lack of knowledge. Rather it is rooted in a refusal to acknowledge the practice of German colonialism and countenance the consequences.

This chapter takes up blind spots when it comes to the selective treatment of a violent German past with regard to colonialism in the current German public. While inroads have been made not least by a growing number of post-colonial initiatives and their local activities, an intimate engagement with the implications of the German colonial empire on both the people in the colonies as well as the mindsets of Germans so far remains to a large extent at the margins of a dominant culture.

1 https://www.bundespraesident.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Reden/2020/05/200508-75-Jahre-Ende-WKII-Englisch.pdf?__blob=publicationFile.

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Dementia – amnesia - aphasia

Historian David Andress (2018: 1) attested "cultural dementia" in the UK, France and the USA, as "particular kinds of forgetting, misremembering and mistaking the past". This goes beyond amnesia, as he argues: "In most cases, the amnesiac is aware that they do not remember; and knowledge of that lack – and of the potential to fill it from external information – is something to cling to." In contrast: "The dementia sufferer is denied the comfort of knowing they don't remember" (ibid: 1.). With reference to Holocaust commemoration, Andress explicitly excludes Germany from this diagnosis. However, his characterisation of selective (or absent) memory in the three societies applies to Germany too: "They are detached from the actual history of how our societies took on their current social, economic and cultural forms; and they are wrong about where those societies fit into the world around them" (ibid: 5). Their patriotic identity "embroils people in assumptions that have visible harmful consequences for anyone outside the core of that identity, and where the collective trajectory is towards further exploitation of a historical privilege that is, as much as it is anything else, racial" (ibid: 68).

What requires clarification, however, is the use of the term dementia. Cultural dementia, as Andress insists, is irreversible. As we believe, colonial amnesia is not. It ignores existing knowledge or applies some degree of immunisation against such knowledge. But its existence provides access and can be also accessed by those who are willing to do so. In the terms of Aleida Assmann (1999: 133-140), such knowledge is not expunged from "storage memory", but still kept away from "functional memory". In this way, the existence of such knowledge, as we know, does not protect from amnesia. Authors such as Christiane Bürger (2017), less critical of the ignorance which still characterises the denialism of the ugly colonial past in German history, point out that evidence is available that, in their view, contradicts the diagnosis of amnesia. They refer to a continuous presence of the subject since the days of German colonial rule and to the accumulated knowledge about these issues. The selective, restricted, filtered or biased treatment of much of such knowledge and insights is for them a sign of aphasia – a lack of adequate language rather than a lack of memory. Lack of memory and lack of adequate language can indeed be considered as complementing mental disruptions (in our case as regards the mindset) and are not contradictory.

The existence of sufficient evidence concerning colonial atrocities and the fundamental systemic injustices with lasting structural consequences does not mean that such facts are actually taken into consideration; even

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less, that they are adequately acknowledged in the sense of being integrated in the (self-)positioning. Denialism of empirical facts as well as shunning their moral dimensions and obligations is more than aphasia. It is the (at times indeed deliberate) act of not wanting to acknowledge what could and should be known. When a staff member of the German Federal Archives (*Bundesarchiv*) finds it difficult – with reference to the available and meanwhile also accessible archive of the former Imperial Colonial Office (*Reichskolonialamt*) – to acknowledge colonial amnesia while as an archivist she is literally sitting on the documents (Herrmann, 2019: 21), such reasoning distracts from the realities in society. The mere fact that such archives and knowledge exist does not save from misperceptions or prevent denialism. In reality and despite gradual inroads and achievements by post-colonial initiatives since the turn of the century, such misconceptions are still rife and even dominant.

As Bürger (2017: 264) shows, colonial-apologetic efforts – directly or indirectly supported by institutionalized historical studies – were set to counteract and dismiss the new colonial-critical discourses that gained momentum since the late 1960s and were related to a rise in international solidarity. Bürger concludes (ibid: 276) that academic debates of the 1980s confirmed the continued existence of colonial-revisionist networks, influencing the public discourse. Such networks have not retreated or become irrelevant. These findings therefore stand in striking contrast if not in contradiction to Bürger's own steadfast dismissal of the notion of colonial amnesia, which she as well bases on the sheer existence and amount of scholarly engagement with colonialism.

Overcoming deficits caused by amnesia (or aphasia, for that matter) requires a fundamental and principled revision of perspectives, mindsets and behaviour, which would then translate into everyday practices and a common culture based on shared historical awareness, impregnating daily life as much as politics. At best, it is still a long way to get there, in a world which continues to be governed by asymmetric power relations, both globally and locally.

Everyday remnants of colonial 'leftovers'

It needs to be acknowledged that most, in particular white, Germans can afford feigning ignorance or unawareness of their country's colonial past. This is in clear contrast to descendants of the colonised who, in a country such as Namibia, have to confront the vestiges and consequences of colonialism on a daily basis. At the same time, it is a continued selective

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perspective on who Germans are, of which in particular Afro-Germans have a tale to tell – and it's not a pleasant one (Della & Lehmann 2019).

The pitfalls of a colonial past in everyday discriminating racist language that often still transports racist stereotypes have been displayed, among others, by the continued work of Susan Arndt (Arndt, Thiel & Walther, 2001; Arndt & Hornscheidt, 2004; Arndt & Ofuatey-Alazard, 2011). Such stereotypes have been internalised to an extent that they are even reproduced without any conscious intent of discrimination. Such verbal discrimination can therefore often be considered as aphasia. However, the ignorance about the context which shaped such language at the same time borders to amnesia too. Despite a growing amount of research-based scholarly insights testifying to the lasting destructive effects of the colonial-imperialist era, efforts at downplaying of German colonialism as "short-lived adventure" or "episode" (Gründer & Hiery, 2017: 24) have survived as part of a continued dominant German perception. Such euphemisms used by the editors of a widely praised volume have not prevented further dissemination by the Federal Agency for Civic Education (*Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung*) in 2018. The problematic can be clarified further by taking a look at some novels that claim to engage colonialism.

Even the best of intentions cannot always protect from a lack of sensitivity. Thus, Gerhard Seyfried (2003) – well known in the left-leaning scene for his anarchistic cartoons in the 1970s through the 1990s – drew inspiration from a visit to Namibia and as a novelist engaged the Namibian-German war of 1904 to 1908 in what was then the colony of South West Africa. His could be seen as a failed effort to emulate the pioneering novel *Morenga* by Uwe Timm (1978), a "benchmark for the poetics and politics of postcolonial memory in German literature", marking "the literary rediscovery of colonialism" (Göttsche, 2013: 7 and 70). In contrast, Seyfried's *Herero* is "an anti-Morenga that fails in its attempt to emulate his superior predecessor" (ibid: 91). It strongly reminds of romantic conceptions about European life in African colonies following the Hollywood movie *Out of Africa*: "Fictionalizing colonial history from a seemingly historiographical, or rather an antiquarian point of view paradoxically achieves very similar effects to reenactments of colonial life in prime-time German television features, where since the millennium docudramas have been just as popular as in literature" (ibid: 89).

This colonial gaze is reproduced in a wide panorama of (mainly female) narratives in which women share their interactions with locals if not even their experiences in "going native". Among the most prominent and successful examples in this category is 'the white Massai' by Corinne Hofmann (1998). The book turned into such a bestselling title that two more

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novels followed (Hofmann, 2003 and 2005). It also turned into a movie and the author summarised her passion for Africa in a fourth monograph (Hofmann, 2011). The implicit, not very subtle racism inherent in such narrative has been analysed by Reiniger (2008) and Maurer (2010). As observed by Göttsche (2013: 416):

> "One of the modern twists in the reenactment of colonial myths … is the shift from the male heroes of colonial novels to the female protagonists of recent works. These sometimes combine the fascination of colonial adventure in exotic terrain with the stance of a courageous anticolonialism in colonial space which gives rise to yet another myth, which is postcolonial only in the historical sense of the term, namely the myth of a 'better colonialism' (Sartre's term) which history failed to give a chance to develop."

Where in marked contrast to such romanticising clichés and the portraying of 'noble savages' the brutality of the colonial frontier society is described in drastic fiction – as in a novel that evokes the particular horrors of war in German South West Africa in all its brutality also in terms of gendered violence (Brink, 2002) – it required a new and rather small publisher even to secure a German translation (Brink, 2008).[2]

Given these and other gaps (if not losses) in memory or serious linguistic disorders, a supposedly ironical title such as 'No Place in the Sun' (Zimmerer, 2013) for a volume surveying 'German colonial memory places' unintentionally runs the risk to create a misleading association, which is in marked contrast to the enlightening contributions compiled. In a variety of aspects, these studies actually convey a sense of how the colonial-romantic identification has survived the loss of colonies in form of projections and desires, keeping the colonial glorification alive among subsequent generations.

Revisiting colonial amnesia

It took 110 years until the German Foreign Office acknowledged at last that the extermination strategy executed between 1904 and 1908 in then

2 Many of André Brink's novels in mainly historical colonial settings of South Africa had been published by Kiepenheuer & Witsch. This one was considered as unsuitable for a German audience – which indeed might be a correct diagnosis as regards a public pegged to colonial amnesia.

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the German colony of South West Africa (today's Namibia) was tantamount to genocide. This long road included a resolution of the (West) German parliament in 1989 which at the dawn of Namibian independence declared, without specifying any reasons, Germany's "special responsibility" for the former colony; further, an exceptional, but in the last analysis, personal admission of guilt and a sign of remorse by the German Minister for Economic Cooperation, Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul at the centennial commemoration ceremony at the Waterberg in August 2004; and many evasive subsequent efforts by high-ranking representatives of the German state and government at avoiding acknowledgement of the elephant in the room when it comes to German-Namibian relations in the shadow of genocide. The turn-around occurred almost in passing at a press conference in July 2015 when a spokesperson of the Foreign Ministry responded to insistent questioning by a journalist.[3]

Despite such admission, an official recognition – such as the resolution adopted in 2015 by the German Parliament regarding the Armenian genocide – has not followed. Neither has the German President or the German Chancellor touched upon the subject. Both have remained tight-lipped so far, at least in their official capacities. However, the informal acknowledgement still cleared the way for bilateral negotiations that began in late 2015 between special envoys appointed by the Namibian and German governments.

At that time, a documentation compiled by the academic services of the German parliament had stated in an almost charming way (Wissenschaftliche Dienste, 2013: 4) that only to very limited degrees Germans are aware of the colonial history of the German empire in Africa and other parts of the world.[4] As the paper concluded, the German colonial past in Namibia continues to remain a sensible subject, which bears some potential for excitement (*Erregungspotenzial*), while overall the German-Namibian relations were graded as good (ibid.: 9). Since 2015, a total of nine meetings behind closed doors had by late 2020 not yet resulted in any official results (Melber, 2020). Reportedly, progress has been made

3 For a detailed account from the historic events until early 2017, including the build-up and aftermath to this kind of turning point, see among others Reinhart Kößler and Henning Melber (2017) and Henning Melber (2017).

4 In the original: "Grundsätzlich lässt sich feststellen, dass die koloniale Geschichte des deutschen Kaiserreiches in Afrika und anderen Teilen der Welt nur in sehr geringem Maße im Bewusstsein der Deutschen präsent ist." Notably, the name of the author as well as several other references to sources and related information are blackened.

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and it has been claimed repeatedly that an end seems in sight. It remains in doubt, however, whether an agreement between the two governments might solve the pending matters as long as the affected communities in Namibia, who make up the majority of descendants of those who survived the genocide, will not agree. So far, such agreement is not in sight, since the Namibian government has not found a way to accommodate these concerns adequately in the negotiation process (cf. Kößler, 2020b).

Further blockages are rooted in an inadequate dealing with the post-colonial situation on the German side (cf. Kößler, 2020a). It may be said that the German special envoy in these negotiations, Rupert Polenz, stands for the predicament. There can be little doubt about the good intentions and the personal integrity of the envoy. Nevertheless, his path in the negotiations is littered with minor and more serious blunders (Kößler & Melber, 2017: 84-94): From a purely German point of view, it may have made sense to link the original timetable of the negotiations to the German election calendar, when the election of 2017 could be expected to return a parliament clearly less amenable to the aim of reconciliation after the genocide. However, the public announcement of such issues in Namibia lent credence to concerns that the Germans were trying to call the shots. More seriously, in a meeting with members of victim communities, Polenz blew up the situation by bluntly denying any relationship between the genocide in Namibia and the Holocaust (ibid.: 87-91) – an issue that has been debated for long and also has played an important part in the reasoning of Namibian communities. Apparently, the envoy was not aware of this basic circumstance or insensitive to relevant sentiments. One of the icons of German diplomacy once stressed the need "to take your contracting partner … seriously" and "to get a picture of the situation and of what moves this man or this woman" (Genscher, 2014: 58). Against this benchmark, German diplomacy has failed miserably in handling the intricacies of the Namibian situation during the negotiations since 2015. This is hardly because of a lack of general diplomatic skills, but rather, points to a lack of awareness related to grossly underestimating the problem at hand. One may surmise that such a slippage may have been more likely to occur in relation to Africa than, say, in transatlantic relations.[5]

5 In May 2021, an agreement between the Namibian and the German government was initialled that by the end of 2021, remains highly controversial, above all in Namibia. On the deficiencies of the agreement and particularly its colonialist bend, see ECCHR, 2021.

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It would be mistaken to suspect that those who drive German foreign policy were not aware of the exigencies they face. In a position paper on transitional justice of mid-2019, the Foreign Office "advocates a *comprehensive understanding of confronting past injustices*" (The Federal Government 2019: 8; original emphasis). It clarifies that the approach is widely defined, including "violations of economic, social and cultural rights" and "various dimensions of justice (such as retributive, distributive and restorative justice)", with transitional justice as part of social transformation processes (ibid: 8f.). As the paper argues, "*in the long term*, transitional justice measures help to develop inclusive cultures of remembrance" (ibid: 10; original emphasis). The authors advocate, "*(p)articipative processes with a broad scope* … to ensure that transitional justice is not perceived as a project of the elites, and that the expertise and political ideas from civil-society organisations and groups (particularly those that represent victims and survivors, or have direct access to them) can be put to use" (ibid: 16; original emphasis). The paper then presents examples of transitional justice in Germany: "*acknowledging and providing reparations for past injustices*" (ibid: 23; original emphasis). Reference is made to "reparations and compensation for National Socialist injustices" and the paper maintains: "Given its decades-long and multifaceted experiences in this policy area, Germany can provide information about basic requirements, problems and mechanisms for the development of state and civil-society reparation efforts" (ibid.). Strikingly, however, the term *colonialism* (our emphasis) does not feature even once in the 32-page document. Further, the experience of the bilateral negotiations between the Namibian and the German government, dragging into their sixth year by late 2020 and apparently hinging on the issue of proper reparations, is hardly encouraging.

Still, more recently some significant shifts could be observed. When on 19 November 2020, parliament debated a whole series of motions to do with the way how to deal with the German colonial past, a remarkable consensus could be observed across all parties, with the significant exception of the right-wing AfD[6]. There were no longer denialist approaches toward the genocide in Namibia, or attempts to play out development cooperation against Namibian demands for reparations that had made up arguments particularly of the conservatives and liberals only a few years ago (Kößler & Melber, 2017: 74-81). Speakers of the Left Party did critique the conservatives for a lack of consistency, but again there was almost

6 See, also for the following, Deutscher Bundestag, Plenarprotokoll 19/192, Berlin, Donnerstag, 19. November 2020, 24228 B-24241C.

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common agreement about the need to seriously address the dire colonial heritage and in particular, to earnestly look into the need for restitution of deported cultural goods now kept by German museums, which had occasioned the debate. One might consider this as a major success of years of patient and insistent work by postcolonial initiatives, mainly based in civil society (see *infra*); but on the other hand, a very different factor may have contributed towards this surprising unity of mind: the onslaught from the right.

Maybe it even was no coincidence that on the day before, the parliament had seen a second act of aggression in connection with demonstrations of opponents against the measures to cope with the Covid-19 pandemic. After an unsuccessful, seemingly spontaneous and failed attempt to physically storm the building in October, this time, rightist activists, with the connivance of AfD deputies, had, on occasion of another demonstration, infiltrated the building. They pestered deputies and even tried to enter offices. The outcry was treated in plenary session on the following day, but the occurrence may very well have contributed towards a closing of the ranks among the democratic parties.

Still, within the "consensus" stressed by conservative deputy Markus Koob,[7] one can recognise clear differences among parties. Whereas the conservatives and the liberals, much in keeping with their former approach stressed the achievements of German policy (even though on a clearly different terrain than before), particularly the Green and the Left parties insisted on the unfinished business; they pointed to the need of a pro-active policy of remembrance including bolstering the long-term work of postcolonial initiatives,[8] questioned the framework of international law,[9] and called for an immediate apology not only for the genocide in Namibia but for colonial crimes more generally, along with a reconsideration of the broader framework of present day trade relations.[10] Remarkably, a conservative voice stressed the need for "empathy with the victims" which ought to motivate a "dialogue" "with African states" in a spirit of true partnership.[11]

7 Ibid., 24229D.
8 Agnieszka Brugger (Green Party), ibid., 24229A.
9 Kathrin Vogler (Left Party), 24235A.
10 Eva-Maria Schreiber (Left Party), ibid., 24241A-B.
11 Volker Ulrich (CDU/CSU) 24242A.

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Denialism reloaded: the role of the AfD

As mentioned, this needs to be set against serious efforts on the Right who work towards not only a roll back, but for a very different revitalisation of colonial topics that runs directly counter to concerns about adequate remembrance and reconciliation. Such possibilities might indicate that the window of opportunity has narrowed again with right-wing populism gaining ground. Evidence is the visibility and impact of the AfD, which for some years now has secured a significant presence in the German Parliament as well as in the parliaments of the German federal states and the European Parliament. For years now it has become clear that Nazi sympathisers are wielding considerable influence in the party and have gained positions even in the highest party ranks. Thus, the new right-wing white supremacist reincarnations of megalomaniac thoughts and claims of Empire have gained serious traction in Germany.

What has been diagnosed as "cultural dementia" mainly with reference to the prevailing public mood is applicable in the changing political environment of Germany and certainly in a different vein, with regard to AfD as well.

> "[…] the layering of mythology around history is not something that can be simply and uncontroversially pulled back by the application of expertise. The West's current relationship to the past is not the passive victimhood of an individual dementia sufferer, but rather an actively constructed, jealously guarded toxic refusal to engage with facts that are well-known but emotionally and politically inconvenient, and with other experiences that are devastating to the collective self-regard of huge segments of societies that have no visible desire to come to terms with reality" (Andress, 2018: 144).

Obviously, the aggressive and unashamed rebirth of colonial-apologetic propaganda runs directly counter to quests for a dialogue, seeking to find ways to address the past colonial crimes, if only as a reluctant compromise with continued flaws. Such attacks are even put forward abusing the German Parliament as a forum.

On 11 December 2019 the AfD invited for a public lecture to its chamber in the German Parliament. The event had the programmatic (sub-)title: "The balance of German colonialism. Why the Germans do not have to

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apologise and even less, to pay for the colonial era!"[12] The speaker was not some "patriotic" German, but none less than Bruce Gilley, who had managed to obtain dubious fame with an article in 2017, in which he eponymously argued "The case for colonialism."[13] In his lecture (see also Heinze, 2020), he asserted his claims to competence in the following way:

> "I am not a historian, much less a historian of colonialism. I am a social scientist, and I have come to the conclusion that very little history on German colonialism meets the most basic standards of social scientific research as normally understood. It is ideological, biased, and often self-contradictory. So, my main qualification for writing about German colonial history is that I am not a historian of German colonialism" (Gilley, 2019: 1).

Having established his credentials in this way, Gilley directly moved to German South West Africa – and right away documented his profound knowledge by stating wrongly that under German rule, the territory also included "parts of present-day Botswana." As he reasoned, "unless we confront this head-on and get it right, everything we say about the rest of German colonialism will always come with the riposte 'Well, what about the Herero?'" (ibid.) Be aware, that his answer is not meant to be misunderstood as mis-guided satire:

> "[…] let's remind ourselves that Southwest Africa was about 2% of the German colonial population (measured in terms of people-years). Just logically, imagine we conclude that Germany did a really horrible job with this 2% and a superb job with the other 98%. What would our overall conclusion be about German colonialism?" (ibid).

He then, without disputing the decimation of Ovaherero by 75% and the Nama by 50% as a consequence of the German annihilation strategy, puts the blame entirely on General Lothar von Trotha as the military commander and thereby individualises the root cause of the genocide: "Germans and German policy was not genocidal: Trotha was" (ibid: 2). He

12 In the original: "Die Bilanz des deutschen Kolonialismus. Warum sich die Deutschen nicht für die Kolonialzeit entschuldigen und erst recht nicht dafür bezahlen müssen!" (note the exclamation mark).

13 See among the numerous contributions to the debate since then for the context and in response Hira (2017). The significance of the concerted efforts personified by Gilley and a few others in terms of revisionist claims about colonialism has been highlighted by Brandon and Sarkar (2019).

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then continues with an unreserved praise song of the civilising mission to end with the appeal:

> "German memory and writing on colonialism continues to suffer from a post-1918 ideological indoctrination campaign redolent of the worse aspects of totalitarianism. Having variously allied itself with totalitarian movements of the left (Soviets) and right (Nazis), this scholarly industry continues to get a free pass and to be accepted as truthful and just. It is neither. Germany's reassertion of its classical liberal and Western identity must begin with a rejection of the dogmatic and totalitarian ideology of anti-colonialism" (ibid: 6).

This reasoning coincided with an AfD draft resolution, circulated to Parliament the same day, to address the German colonial era in – as they call it – a cultural-politically differentiated fashion (Alternative für Deutschland 2019). With direct reference to a controversial statement by Günter Nooke, the Personal Representative of the German Chancellor for Africa (Heinze, 2019) the resolution claims that the German empire's colonialism contributed to liberate the African continent from archaic structures. It then recognises (following Gilley's line of argument) that the war by the German colonial troops in South West Africa led to un-proportional rigorousness and cruelties, but denies any systematic or intentional genocide by putting the blame only on von Trotha. In the context of transitional justice, such reasoning takes pride of place in devolving guilt by personalising it and attributing it to single individuals (Teitel, 2006; Galtung, 1996: 107; Galtung, 2005). In the plenary debate mentioned above, an AfD deputy even claimed, falsely, that Trotha had been punished after having been recalled because of his crimes.[14] In reality, Trotha continued into late 1905 as commander in chief and governor, issued a further genocidal proclamation against Nama and received the Prussian Order of Pour le Mérite upon his return, even though he was subjected to public criticism. Such falsification clearly serves to exonerate the state which was responsible for the crimes committed under its purview.

The AfD also recognises the suffering of the victims of the colonial wars but dismisses any idea of compensation. Rather, the amount of development aid transferred since Namibia's independence is considered as impressive evidence that Germany has lived up to its historical responsibility towards a former colony. The submission therefore finds it justified to counteract the growing amnesia by means of an intensification of com-

14 Petr Bystron (AfD), Deutscher Bundestag, l.c., 24237A.

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memorative and cultural-political enlightenment. For this a federal foundation could be established to not only address German colonial history in a differentiated way (according to the understanding of the AfD), but also to transmit it accordingly. The resolution then calls on the federal government to cultivate a commemorative culture, which should bring to the fore the gainful sides of the German colonial era; to work towards a differentiated view of the time period; to promote such perspectives in the curricula for schools; to decisively oppose demands for reparations; to rebuke demands for the restitution of cultural goods from a colonial context based on the supposedly untenable classification of the colonial times as "criminal"; to appeal to communal levels in the federal states to maintain those street names which have been brought up for re-naming.

Notably, with this draft the AfD seeks to occupy the term 'amnesia', which hitherto had been applied in the opposite meaning by those critical of the colonial apologetic traits (Kössler & Melber, 2018). In its justification for the draft resolution, it unashamedly appropriates for its own purposes studies which had a different (arguably ambiguous) intention, most prominently Bürger (2017). It attacks "cultural Marxist inspired post- and de-colonialism" and bemoans a paradigm shift since German unification, creating the impression that critical colonial-historical studies since then were all indoctrinated by and simply echoed East German ideology. The AfD blames the "left spectre" for having imposed its "normative interpretation of the past" as dominant opinion and turns those who are criticised for advocating colonial apologetic interpretations of a civilising mission into victims. The demands for restitution of cultural artefacts are disqualified as "inquisitory logic" aimed at the "removal of inalienable property" (Alternative für Deutschland. 2019: 9-11).

On 12 June 2020, the AfD tabled another draft resolution to restrict the restitution of cultural artefacts from colonial contexts (Alternative für Deutschland 2020). They deserve, as they argue, to be conserved in the cultural memory of human kind, and claim that this can only be secured under the caring and professional protection in German museums. Restitution, in contrast, would risk the loss of these objects for humanity due to neglect and is pushed due to a morally narrowing rhetoric of guilt, getting out of hand and orchestrated with regard to the colonial era. The reasoning bemoans the contamination of the entire colonial history as a crime against humanity and as a result the hyper-moralistic demands for restitution.

After giving much attention to this reactionary reasoning, one should however not throw out the baby with the bathwater: public discourse in Germany around the genocide committed in Namibia and atrocities perpe-

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trated in other parts of what was then the German colonial empire has made considerable inroads into the public sphere. This is true regarding the debate on the restitution of cultural artefacts appropriated in forms that tantamount to theft made and also with respect to deported human remains. The merit belongs decisively to a pro-active civil society. Such advances might be one of the more positive factors to explain the current colonial revisionism by right-wing populists. But then such findings may also serve as a reminder that the uphill battle is far from over.

However, revisionist thinking is not only on the offensive by right-wing extremism such as the AfD. Some writers have reversed their positions and backtracked, now to side with the those who deny genocide. Most notable among these is the renowned journalist Bartholomäus Grill, who discovered the writings of Hinrich Schneider-Waterberg, a "Southwester" farmer and hobby-historian (occupying, by the way, a farm which has been at the heartland of the Ovaherero when the Germans came and occupied by the settlers as a result of the genocide), who dismisses the genocide in German South West Africa wholesale. Grill subsequently provided him a prominent space in Germany by elevating him to the ranks of a "crown witness".[15] Hardly by accident, Grill is amply referenced in the AfD resolution submitted to the German Parliament.

Postcolonial initiatives making headway

Such revisionist forays cannot obliterate the impact of a growing, if still minoritarian, postcolonial presence in the German public. Since the turn of the century, an increasing number of mostly localised initiatives have raised awareness about the colonial references in the everyday, such as street names or memorials. To this must be added a number of websites run by activists and which have changed fundamentally the choices of those who are looking for relevant information in the internet. A first visible sign of progress was the number and range of civil society activities both in Namibia and Germany that marked the 100th anniversary of the genocide in Namibia (Zeller, 2005). In the scholarly field, several collective volumes have subsequently documented efforts to promote (self-)critical reflections on how to come to terms with an also German colonial past

15 See in detail Kößler & Melber (2017: ch. 4), and on denialist misrepresentations Kößler (2015: ch. 5).

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(see e.g. Hobuß & Lölke, 2007, Perraudin & Zimmerer, 2011, Bechhaus-Gerst & Zeller, 2018, Zimmermann & Geißler, 2020).

In a related matter, public exchanges and even policy statements over the restitution of cultural artefacts and human remains have considerably shifted towards a more open engagement with the legacy of the criminal nature of transferring goods appropriated by use of force (Garsha, 2020). While in 2011, on occasion of a first restitution of human remains to Namibia the German government all but marginalised the event (Kößler, 2015: ch.12), the recent debate in parliament was marked by particularly conservative deputies proudly insisting on relevant achievements.

Such shifts continue to be underwritten by the work of local initiatives which has partly seeped into academia, such as in more systematic forays into local history (Grewe et al., 2019). Still, this important work still hinges on voluntary commitment and remains precarious, while the renaming of some streets, particularly in Berlin, that took their names from colonial stalwarts signals visible progress. Verbal political commitments such as the intention, proclaimed in the coalition pact for the Berlin state government in 2016, to work for memorial sites and institutions to honour the victims of colonialism and to project knowledge about German colonialism, largely remain on paper so far.

An on-going struggle

The significant inroads into the public discourse that postcolonial initiatives succeeded to make since the turn of the century are by no means secured. As we have seen, a backlash from colonial revisionism and white supremacy, combined with anti-migration xenophobia has become very visible, including on the parliamentary rostrum. As with the Black Lives Matter movement in the US, Britain or France and its attacks against racist and colonialist memorials in these countries, gains need to be actively defended and new advances cannot be taken for granted. The battles are far from over. What has been diagnosed for other states, applies for Germany too:

> "[…] there are entire bookshops' worth of good historical work, whole departments of bold young historians (and some grizzled old veterans) who have been telling their students, and anyone else who would listen, how it really was for at least a generation. The problem remains what to do when people don't want to listen, or learn" (Andress, 2018: 106).

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As Mark Terkessidis (2019: 191-192) points out, it remains a challenging task to see to it that German colonialism will not be forgotten. Terkessidis sees a potential problem of mainly local postcolonial efforts in their focus on Germany's oversea colonies. This might obliterate (post)imperial history within Europe. Such a tendency risks to limit engagement with racism and coloniality to 'black communities' and to deal with colonialism as a kind of separate special subject. Terkessidis concedes that there is no clear answer as to how commemorative work should look like and which forms it should take. With reference to Young (1992) he supports the view that the best form of commemoration might be a never-ending debate about how such memory work should be pursued and to expand such discussion into the arena of the post-imperial (Terkessidis, 2019: 199p.).

German memory politics and practices are not quite as exemplary as much of German mainstream public discourse would like to make us believe. In fact, the engagement with the violent past particularly of the first half of the 20th century is an ongoing and painful as well as conflictual process. Inasmuch as this process has been seen to consecutively encompass crimes and victim groups that had been silenced before, such an observation can only underline the magnitude of the task. "Internal liberation", as a goal stated in President Steinmeier's VE Day speech, remains hard work on a long road ahead. It means conflict and pain, and it must never end.

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Dealing with the Past in the Days of the Covid 19 Pandemic: The Higher Education Sector in South Africa

Mokgadi Molope

Introduction

The end of most dictatorships world-wide ushered in a moment for countries to introduce new governance, political and economic systems. It was up to the new governments to determine the characteristics of such a new dawn. Lambourne (2014) argues that while in some countries conscious decisions were taken to punish the perpetrators and violators of human rights through mass killings and torture, others opted to confront them through truth commissions which led to some people receiving amnesty while others got prison sentences. South Africa elected the latter. At the dawn of democracy, the country began a democratisation process aimed at transforming the social, political, economic, and environmental configuration to reflect the will of most of the people. The constitution of the country commands the transformation process and the country's development process to be guided by principles of accountability, equality, responsiveness, openness, non-racialism, non-sexism and advancement of human rights and freedoms. This constitution is a contract between the government and citizens guaranteeing that these constitutional principles are upheld by all and that the citizens enjoy their constitutional rights while the government carries out its constitutional mandate. At the centre of these constitutional imperatives is the need to assure that political dispensation translates into opportunities for the previously oppressed and conquered people to ensure their epistemology and philosophy are not ignored (Ramose, 2004).

In pursuit of its constitutional obligations, and as part of the transition from an oppressive governance system towards democracy, the South African government adopted a consultative approach to solidly establish a democratic system based on the principle of everyone's equality before the law as stated in the constitution. This consultative approach was chosen to avoid oppression of one person, race, or sex over another. At the centre of this was the reconciliation agenda. This agenda is part of an important collective memory, on whose basis the future is supposed to be built. The

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position stems from the recognition of past injustices committed against Black South African people and the quest for a peaceful and prosperous country whose citizens live together in harmony under the rule of law.

In this article, Black South Africans refers to all those who were not given the right to vote and suffered immensely at the hands of different development protagonists. These protagonists enjoyed making Blacks suffer during the apartheid era. The actions of these perpetrators were unfortunately protected by the laws of the country at that time. Legal as they were, these laws were inhumane. During this brutal era, many lost lives, family members, property and their human dignity. This resulted from the fact that the apartheid governance system was structured in such a manner that on paper it gave equal opportunity to all races to grow and develop on their own without interference from another racial group. In practice, however, this separation promoted domination of whites over Blacks because the white minority government gave economic, social, and political privileges to whites only. The privileges created opportunities for white people to prosper as they had the right to vote and thus to decide on policies that were oppressive to Blacks. They also received subsidies which boosted them financially and sustained their income generating ventures. Furthermore, they were given access to productive land, quality basic social services, health care and education.

Conversely, most of the Black South Africans' human rights were violated in a number of ways. They were restricted from moving within the country through laws such as the Group Areas Act. They were thus squashed in homelands, reserves, and unproductive pieces of land where there were no basic services nor activities to generate meaningful income. Consequently, these spaces became a pool of cheap labour for whites. Only a few Blacks were able to produce and become key role players in the economy. The system also produced an elite class that emerged from collaborating with whites to oppress Black people. The result was that many Blacks became impoverished and were forced to rely on subsistence production which lost labourers because of the migrant labour system. The latter was not helpful due to the low paying jobs whose salaries could not meet the needs of the families let alone sustain and support subsistent production and contribute to its conversion to commercial production. The system further contributed to the disintegration of families and communities. This racially based differential treatment engineered inequality among South Africans and the Black South Africans were the hardest hit as they were treated as second class citizens.

Surprisingly, these victims empowered themselves by opting for reconciliation rather than retaliation (Villa-Vicencio, 2012). Be that as it may,

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the decision to reconcile was the best for the country politically, as it was aimed at transforming the structural social and economic discrimination in the country. It was meant to pave the way for the country to deal with the injustices which led to Black South African people living in appalling conditions characterised by poverty, high unemployment, and poor-quality social services such as water, health and education. The latter was not only of poor quality, but it was used to control Black South African people to ensure that the majority did not study disciplines that would afford them opportunities for self-sufficiency and thus meaningfully contribute to the development of the country (Odero, 2017). The curriculum, as observed by Uzomah (2018), was European centred and critical of other forms of knowledge, which were discredited and portrayed as useless to the development agenda as noted by Dunga and Mncayi (2016).

Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Higher Education in South Africa

After the end of apartheid, the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act No 34 of 1995 was passed by the national parliament. The act made provisions to investigate the gross violation of human rights which occurred in and outside the country during the apartheid era. It was grounded on the notions that the perpetrators would voluntarily give full disclosure of evidence for what transpired. The victims also had an opportunity to express the violations they suffered. These mainly took place in the form of hearings which occurred from 1996. The first and last reports were released in 1998 and 2003, respectively.

This reconciliation process is important in the history of the country because it is one of the instruments adopted by the government to help the nation deal with the past apartheid injustices and human rights abuses in all sectors of society (Simmonds & du Preez, 2017). The Commission gathered pertinent information by listening to the confessions made by the perpetrators of apartheid crimes against the victims. The solemn purpose was to uncover the truth relating to the nature, causes and effects of these violations. The anticipated output of this process was that the sourced information would be used to facilitate forbearance, reception, and reconciliation across the nation and beyond racial lines. The ultimate goal was to enhance and strengthen the country's healing process (Mamdani, 2002).

The most interesting feature of South Africa's reconciliation process is that the confessions of human rights abuses were sought among all racial groups rather than focusing on one group and ignoring others (Mamdani, 2002). This served as a motivating factor especially among Blacks who

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perpetrated violence on fellow Blacks and whites on their own. To a great extent this illustrates that the Commission's work was not intended as retaliation against any or certain perpetrators but was meant to give all equal opportunity thus promoting the spirit of fairness and equality. These are some of the key requisites for citizens pursuing nation building.

The TRC process is hailed as a good initiative that provided people with the opportunity to admit wrongdoing openly thus building a space for reconciliation. It also provided the country the opportunity to build a memory of its past collectively (Simmonds & du Preez, 2017). It therefore goes without saying that the institutions of higher education could have contributed to the construction of this memory through the declaration of their role in sustaining the atrocities of the apartheid system. This makes the call by Mamdani (2002), that the TRC process ought to have been centred on the communities as victims as opposed to individuals, more pertinent. Mamdani argues that, as a consequence of this approach, the TRC lost the opportunity to illustrate how the actions undertaken by the higher education institutions constituted a 'crime against humanity'. Consequently, these institutions did not account extensively for the crimes committed in support of the apartheid system.

The humiliation of the Black people of South Africa, suffered during apartheid, needed the recognition of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission not merely as part of a political reconciliation but also as a social and cultural reconciliation. A crucial example is education. According to important evidence from academic work (Dunga & Mncayi, 2016; Uzomah, 2018) and international organizations, education is an important cornerstone in facilitating development. Consequently, the apartheid regime orchestrated intense efforts through the education sector to ensure that Black South Africans became dependent on other racial groups. They were offered inferior education to prevent them from being innovative and creative, and thus they were unable to develop solutions for their own problems. At the same time, their indigenous knowledge system was criticised, belittled, and never recognised as anything that could make any significant contribution to the country. Contributing to social and cultural reconciliation therefore would have had to include the creation of spaces for a different approach to redress and transform the entire education system, which did not happen, however. This anomaly can still be corrected to make sure the education sector can better manage the current problems and better prepare for the unpredicted moments such as the Covid 19 pandemic that has further exposed the sector's inequalities. This is critical since transformation in higher education has a great potential for triggering social change (Nkomo et al., 2007).

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(Post-) Apartheid and Higher Education

During apartheid, the institutions of higher learning played a critical role in strengthening and entrenching the violations of human rights through curricular and non-curricular activities. While white universities were seen as centres of excellence characterised by high ratings, talent management, access to resources, good student achievement and highly qualified and experienced academics and researchers, Black universities were seen as peripheral institutions with lack of resources, poor or no ratings, as well as minimal research output (Mamdani, 2016). These differentiations resulted in a well-orchestrated segregated higher education system that ensured that everything from historically Black institutions was inferior.

As the country was in transit to democracy and the Reconciliation Commission started its work, there was a natural expectation from society—especially from victims of racism and abuse of human rights within the higher education sector—that perpetrators of these injustices would confess and admit their deeds. This expectation emerged from the terms of reference of the TRC which made it clear that there was no room for general amnesty, that every person who committed an apartheid offence had to acknowledge what they did. It is for this reason that Villa-Vicencio (2003) encouraged them to account for their racist, discriminatory and segregative acts and behaviour through the TRC. However, little was achieved through this process and it became a missed opportunity for the sector to voluntarily assess and unearth its violation of human rights, construct a process to shed these and craft a future grounded on a reconciliatory foundation. Nevertheless, the move to commit through their mission and vision statements, which embrace protection of human rights and pursuit of fairness, equality, social justice and openness to name a few, is worth applauding. Still, Simmonds and du Preez (2017) warn that it is not sufficient to limit oneself to such statements, but putting them into practice is pertinent, especially by making education accessible to all. It is therefore important for education institutions to implement tangible and practical strategies which allow them to translate their mission and vision statements into material benefits especially for those coming from poor backgrounds. These are only possible if monitoring systems are not only limited to figures, but practical evidence coupled with qualitative narratives which give a clear picture of what is happening on the ground (Mzangwa, 2018).

In summary, the transformation system imagined by the Commission has unfortunately not managed to close the "historical bridge between the past of a deeply divided society characterized by strife, conflict, untold

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suffering, and injustice, and a future founded on the recognition of human rights, democracy and peaceful co-existence for all, irrespective of colour, race, class, belief or sex" (TRC, 2005: 103). The slow progress in bridging this gap does not come as a surprise. The Commission was successful to the extent of exposing apartheid crimes and getting confessions from the perpetrators of human rights violations but some of these were incomplete and lacking credibility (Villa-Vicencio, 2012). Getting the society that was deeply divided by these violations to reconcile requires more than confessions and what seems to be acceptance of these by the majority. This is premised on the reality that these atrocities are continuing in various forms and shapes even today (Mamdani, 2016). Perhaps Villa-Vicencio (2003) had anticipated this when he called for an education specific TRC whose focus would be able to unravel apartheid education sector inequalities thus paving the way for a just society. It is important to note that he also believes that such engagements must focus more on the truth, justice and reconciliation compared to amnesty (Villa-Vicencio, 2012). Putting these at the centre of a social reparation process may assist in creating a peaceful society because people would open up knowing that accepting responsibility will heal both the victim and the perpetrator, which illustrates the Ubuntu principle[1] (Ramose, 2002).

As a consequence of the lack of structural transformation of the system of (higher) education, Horsthemke (2005) observed that the majority of Black students are outraged by their alma mater. This is because of the oppressive environment that they studied under which promoted preference of one racial group over the other. A very similar argument is expressed about the same system that did not care about its effect on the academics and non-academic staff forced by the circumstances to promote oppressive classroom and outside classroom curriculum.

The outrage and resentment against these institutions are perhaps not misplaced because interventions such as *Education White Paper* 3 (1997) on the transformation of Higher Education and *Education White Paper 6* on 'Building an inclusive education and training system' (2003) as well the Higher Education Act of 1997—to cite a few—set a clear agenda which

1 Ubuntu is a wellspring that flows within African existence and epistemology in which the two aspects Ubu and ntu constitute a wholeness and oneness. As such, ubuntu expresses the generality and oneness of being human. It is also worth noting that ubuntu as an ancient philosophy or worldview has its roots deeply anchored in traditional African life. In this sense the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu is dialectical, that is, it informs African practice and is in turn enriched by the same practice.

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the higher education institutions had to adopt as a framework for transformation, but which have moved very slowly towards their aim. There has been more engagement on the discourse on how to Africanize, indigenize and decolonize the higher education sector as noted by Simmonds and du Preez (2017). While that is the case, the strides made in the realm of access particularly for Black students are now being eroded by socio-economic factors. High indebtedness among these students prevents them from enjoying access which is given by the sector's policies. These drawbacks find their origin in the segregative past which was orchestrated to sustain separate development thus keeping Blacks at the lowest level of the development echelon. Scholars argue that discussions have been taking place far too long and what needs to be done is to implement the decisions which have been taken.

These experiences have led to bitterness among people in this sector, especially when they realised that the Reconciliation Commission did not do much to hold perpetrators accountable for the 'crimes against humanity' they committed withing this context. The Commission by extension victimised both staff members and students for the second time as a community by not highlighting that their plight was more of a national catastrophe rather than an individual one. It can therefore be argued that this re-ignited decolonisation of the higher education agenda post 2010 in South Africa.

Redress in the Midst of the Covid 19 Pandemic

While the reality that these are long term processes is acknowledged, the outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic brought the realization that reconciliation and transformation have been very slow. It exposed the lack of care on the part of authorities for people who were disadvantaged during the apartheid and the post-apartheid era. These authorities have the constitutional obligation to ensure that all children have the right to education (Nkomo et al., 2007). Despite this Constitutional right, not all students—especially those who are from the rural areas, townships and informal settlements—enjoy this basic right. Today, these disadvantaged groups are even more affected because the Covid 19 movement restrictions prohibit them from going to school. As if this wasn't bad enough, because of their socio-economic reality, they are prevented from participating in educational activities due to lack of access to appropriate resources like a phone, laptop and reliable network bandwidth (Mhlanga & Moloi, 2020). The important question to ponder is whether the need for reliable technol-

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ogy in facilitating online learning should come as a surprise. Right from the beginning of the new dispensation, the government acknowledged the significant role that technology plays to enhance an inclusive learning landscape especially regarding access for marginalised groups which was supposed to be prioritized even then (Odero, 2017).

Unfortunately, the redress that marginal groups qualified for—given in the form of allowances from the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS)—could not meet all the needs. While the picture looked bleak for many, there were some students who received support from the same funding agency in the form of laptops. The process faced many challenges such as delays in the allocation process which led to some students receiving these quite late further limiting their distance learning project (Van Schalkwyk, 2020).

In addition to that, the government made commendable efforts to ensure effective learning during the lockdown which benefited students from all walks of life especially the poor (Mhlanga & Moloi, 2020). For example, agreements were reached with private network providers to provide zero-rated applications as well as educational websites to facilitate remote learning through virtual platforms. This kind of support needs to be praised because it is in keeping with the *White Paper on Higher Education* which promises 'to redress past inequalities and to transform the higher education system to serve a new social order, to meet pressing national needs, and to respond to new realities and opportunities' (Department of Education, 1997). Even though the additional funding that the institutions of higher learning needed was reduced from 4.6 billion Rand (roughly 308 million USD) to 2.5 billion Rand (approximately 167 million USD), the government through the Department of Higher Education still managed to sustain the redress project by further extending the allowances for NSFAS students to cover the needs of the extended academic year (DHET, 2020). Apart from the group of students whose family income of 350,000 Rand per annum is the limit to be eligible for this aid, those coming from households who do not qualify still battle to make ends meet and these families and students continue to endure the effects of the separate development system. This system of financing higher education serves as a gate keeping mechanism which alienates those who do not meet the criteria because their family income is above the threshold. The challenge they face is that the family income is not sufficient to support and sustain their education. While redress is good for one group, it disadvantages the other and contributes to financial exclusion and dropouts. The latter group does not therefore feel that the hand of Ubuntu is extended to them as they are excluded from redress. This therefore heightens the call

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to promote Ubuntu and reconciliation by being empathetic to the needs of the missing middle. Perhaps one way of doing this is to develop a funding model that is informed by the market needs, social and economic background of the students and their potential. This would create a pool of graduates who can regenerate resources for the wider education sector to sustain itself.

Covid-19 and the Voids of Dealing with the Past in South Africa

The apartheid system was structured in a manner that provided Black people little access to the infrastructure that facilitated a better life. People in white dominated areas had access to telecommunication systems and networks whereas the same cannot be said of rural, townships and informal settlement communities. This is one of the strategies used to deny Blacks access to the world and to ensure they are not easily connected to the rest of the country and the world, and vice versa. The expectation from these communities was that the TRC would highlight the need for equal opportunities and treatment in all respects for all South Africans because this would promote the spirit of oneness. It is for this reason that Mamdani criticised the TRC for its narrow perspective of political reconciliation as opposed to a more general and national reconciliation. This unfortunately denied the Commission the opportunity to "highlight the bifurcated nature of apartheid as a form of power that governed natives differently from non-natives" (Mamdani, 2002: 34). It is on the basis of this sad reality that during the on-going lockdown students who live in the most remote rural areas are denied access to education, not because they do not have the necessary equipment, but because they reside in spaces that have always suffered exclusion from the telecommunication system.

If the TRC acknowledged that all Black South Africans, who suffered during Apartheid, in these remote areas were denied access to the communication infrastructure as a community by the apartheid regime, perhaps an appropriate recommendation for redress in the form of access could have been made. Consequently, the students would not be suffering exclusion from learning activities due to issues of broadband access and network coverage. This caused many students to relocate to live with other family relatives for the sake of connectivity and access to education. By doing this, they were putting themselves at high risk of contracting the virus but the desire to learn and reach a better position to find jobs and contribute to social and economic development, pushed them to this extent. While the families that accommodated these students demonstrate

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Ubuntu, a principle on which the TRC was foregrounded, a different perspective is held about the Commission. This is a good example of the gaps in the redress programme within the higher education sector.

The pursuit of a just and equal society promised by the TRC report and the constitution proved to be unattainable objectives in the recent future. This is premised on the reality that while strides were made to transform higher education in the quest of a just society, the Covid-19 pandemic exposed the snail pace at which the process has been unfolding. Migration to online learning opportunities did not happen in a seamless way among the 26 public universities. While some universities announced during the end of the second term that they would be moving education to digital platforms in the subsequent semester, many others did not for clear reasons of inequality and lack of resources (Mhlanga & Moloi, 2020). The differences are not only experienced among these 26 public institutions. Moving to online platforms could not materialise as swiftly as people wished in some institutions because of inequalities among their students. These resulted from the unjust and preferential treatment during apartheid which favoured white institutions.

The current education system which is based on the pillars and principles of constitutional democracy, ought to illustrate appreciation of the spirit of Ubuntu in many respects. Simmonds and du Preez (2014) believe this should not be limited to the curriculum inclusion of concepts such as reconciliation, Ubuntu, social justice, and Human Rights. Rather these concepts ought to be illustrated from the point of access and be meaningfully integrated in inside and outside classroom activities. This may require rethinking these concepts to a great extent to ensure alignment and suitability for the purpose. Such a move may help the sector address the resentment that Horsthemke (2005) raised and which the TRC did not deal with properly. This is mentioned with the full understanding that reconciliation, which is a critical element in the transformation agenda, is a long-term process.

Conclusion

In this article we argue that apartheid placed all Black South Africans—who did not have voting rights—at a disadvantage, especially in terms of denying them opportunities to be schooled in well-resourced and equipped schools and higher education institutions. For this reason, providing support to a selected group of people, called apartheid victims and their dependents, while ignoring other groups seems to breed dis-

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crimination since during the pre-1994 era all Black children suffered the effects of a racially based educational system despite their background or affiliation, something that was legalised through the Bantu Education Act. Additionally, children from families in the category of households whose total income is below R350,000 benefited from a redress that came in the form of an NSFAS allowance. While this initiative is appreciated as it broadened access to the previously disadvantaged, those whose household income is between R350,000 and R600,000 unfortunately were left to fend for themselves even though their families could not afford to sustain their education costs. The important question is, how effective is this separation of the victims in breeding reconciliation? That is why this article argues that every Black child deserves redress which should not only come through funding, but also through training opportunities, at various national qualifications levels which are guided by the social and economic needs of the country. The positive aspect of this proposed investment is that once students become employers and employees, they will contribute to the economy through value added tax, company tax as well as the pay as you earn tax. This may even help develop citizens who will protect the same economy and the country's infrastructure as well as become actors and advocates of social responsiveness.

One of the positive outcomes of the Covid 19 pandemic is that it has proven that using technology to enable learning is useful and effective (Mhlanga & Moloi, 2020). Students are able to engage among themselves and the facilitator meaningfully while protecting themselves and their loved ones. However, the biggest challenge in South Africa is that not everyone can benefit from this innovation and creativity because some people live in spaces which have been deliberately isolated from the country's telecommunication system. The situation is worsened by the democratic state that still does not include such communities into the system. This obviously rubs salt into a wound that was beginning to heal. While the country has one of the greatest constitutions that promotes equality and protection of people's dignity, the government does not apply such principles to these communities on the basis that it does not have the means or resources. This causes resentment and ill-feelings among such communities because they feel they are not getting the opportunities promised in the constitution and the TRC report. As a result, we can argue that it is an act of social injustice and further perpetuation of inequalities to expect students who come from such discriminated communities to learn through technology. The pain of exclusion runs deep as it is instilled by a government that promises an equal society through its constitution. This action makes the students more vulnerable to humiliation and susceptible

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to dropping out, not out of their own will but because of the inability of the state to reach out to them and extend the hand of Ubuntu in pursuit of reconciliation.

It is important to note that reconciliation is understood as a long-term process, therefore impossible to materialise over a short period of time. Notwithstanding, care for communities that were previously marginalised ought to be prioritized especially when it comes to access to educational tools which have become a priority. The status quo may derail the very reconciliation process.

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Reconciliation as social pedagogy: restrictive and alternative models to deal with past and present injustices

José Fernando Serrano A.

Introduction

The practice and theory of social change and the transformation of structures of violence, inequality and injustice, are full of powerful ideas. When societies commit to deal with past and present wrongs, a number of key concepts are discussed in legal and social arenas. Terms such as conflict resolution, reparation, or reconciliation, are often used to sign the beginning, the conditions and the results of new social pacts. Those ideas are deployed through sophisticated policy tools for planned social change and in instruments for planning, accountability and evaluation. These technologies for change are translated and reproduced globally by international organizations, state institutions and social mobilizations. Dealing with past and present injustices is a complex machinery of discourses and practices.

In these complexities, reconciliation is one of the most elusive and contested ideas, Reconciliation has several meanings and is applied through a disparate set of practices in countries recovering from socio-political conflicts and violence. In some cases, such as South Africa or Northern Ireland, religion played an important role in the meanings given to reconciliation. There, reconciliation was interpreted in terms of truth-telling and healing through forgiveness. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission was the laboratory in which several methodologies for reconciliation, memory and truth-telling were tested and later on exported globally, becoming a template for national reconciliation processes. In other cases, reconciliation comes associated with reintegration of illegal armed actors, legal truth-telling mechanisms and a focus on the rights of victims as in Colombia.

Reconciliation has been also applied in countries not often pictured in accounts of socio-political conflict. In Australia, reconciliation is associated with injustices against Aboriginal people, Torres Strait Islanders and Pacific Islanders that were embedded in the racial, gender and sexual order imposed by colonisation. There, reconciliation intends to rebuild relation-

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ships, promote respect and trust between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The politics of apologies have been a key instrument for reconciliation purposes in Australia.

Such extensive use could make reconciliation an unquestionable ideal. However, reconciliation is a contradictory mechanism to deal with past wrongs, negotiate the present and imagine possible futures. It attempts to resolve conflicts bringing them to public arenas. The policies deployed to deliver reconciliation such as truth telling, official apologies, compensation, and reparation of victims' risk imposing a unilateral and restricted agreements over past wrongs. Under the call for reconciliation as the requirement to new social pacts, several social justice issues stay unresolved or are displaced to other arenas. The same idea of 'pact' is problematic from the perspective of those in subordinated power positions. The politics of reconciliation not necessarily imply a balance of power between social actors and may end up maintaining them.

Acknowledging the problems of the concept of reconciliation but also its centrality in dealing with past wrongs, this contribution offers a discussion of the concept as a way to transform previous violent conflictive patterns of interaction and learning new non-violent ones. In practice, reconciliation is social pedagogies for change. The chapter presents preliminary results from a comparative study on the politics and pedagogies of reconciliation in Colombia, South Africa and Australia. The main goal of this project is to explore what is done under the name of reconciliation as a way to promote social change[1]. The chapter is organised in six sections. The first two sections offer a theoretical discussion of the two main concepts: reconciliation and pedagogy. The third section introduces the concept of 'social pedagogies of reconciliation' as the working notion that leads the chapter. The next sections present the cases of Colombia and Australia as examples of two different types of social pedagogies of recon-

1 This project was drafted in 2017 thanks to a *Thomas and Ethel Mary Ewing Postdoctoral Fellowship* granted by The School of Education and Social Work of the University of Sydney. The fellowship facilitated writing a first version of the project and some initial explorations of the topic in Australia and South Africa. The project was updated and started its implementation in 2018 at Universidad de los Andes, Colombia with resources of *Fondo de Apoyo para Profesores Asistentes,* FAPA. What is presented here are its first preliminary findings. This project have had the participation of Tatiana Bonilla, Carlos Andrés García, Lucia Guerrero and Juliana Hincapié, students of Universidad de los Andes, as research assistants. The statistics presented here were processed by García.

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ciliation. The chapter finishes with some conclusions on the possibilities and limitations of reconciliation as social pedagogy.

Before continuing, I would like to introduce a note on positionality and briefly talk in first person. The project on which this chapter is based continues a long-term interest on the studies of violence and the studies of peace. For a while I lived those areas of academic expertise as separated fields. I have tried to put them together in a broader discussion on the contradictory forces that produce social change and the struggles for social justice. This interest raises political, methodological and ethical challenges that are permanently interlinked in my work. My research has a permanent discussion on what kind of knowledge is produced and for what purposes. The study of violence, structural inequalities or long term injustice may end up supporting forms of violence, including epistemic violence (Fricker, 2007), if it does not maintains a permanent dialogue with the struggles for social justice. The study of social change implies not only the documentation of experiences of suffering, initiatives for change and social creativity, but also the ways in which individuals and collectives narrate and represent themselves with those experiences. I am also concerned with who is represented or underrepresented in knowledge and under which forms of representation. In my long-term research, representing someone as victim and someone as perpetrator, for example, results from a regime of representation under which we are allowed to exist. These issues underline the chapter and my positionality in the topic.

Reconciliation: empty signifier or social practice?

When talking about reconciliation, there is a reference to its theological and philosophical meaning. The core role of reconciliation in truth commissions, in particular the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, exemplifies also the translation of such underlying references into global strategies to deal with protracted conflicts. That translation has been the matter of intense academic discussions (Arneil & Tockman, 2015; Fassin, 2008) that vary from the call to consider its multiple meanings to suggest that is has not particular meaning at all.

Discussions can be approached considering what is expected to be obtained with reconciliation as the final steps of conflict resolution processes. Then, reconciliation is associated with the reconstruction of war-torn societies (Moon, 2008), the transformation of long-term social injustices (Humphrey, 2005), the rebuilding of social relationships after protracted conflicts (Lederach, 2001) or the strategies implemented to reconstruct the

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public sphere fractured by violence (Murillo Amaris, 2017). In these cases, the interest on reconciliation is based on recognising the importance of rebuilding social relations or create new ones.

The agreement in the extensive literature on reconciliation seems to be the lack of agreement about what is 'reconciliation'. The confusion of the term seems to be a taken for granted consensus and point of departure for analyses. Due to this ambiguity makes sense the argument that defines reconciliation as an empty signifier, a vehicle that carries a whole diversity of meanings that vary according to context and political culture. Discussing the South African case, German political scientist Judith Renner (2014, 2015) argues that reconciliation emerged as a universal signifier, a vague but powerful social ideal. She bases her argument on the work of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985) on the struggles for hegemony and political contention. In her argument, the vagueness and flexibility of reconciliation, is not a problem but a potential. Because of that, it could be embraced by antagonist parties such as the apartheid regime and the African National Congress and allowed their articulation for a new collective purpose. Reconciliation replaced apartheid as the key hegemonic discourse on social political order. However, it was a contingent articulation and its limitations are still haunting South African society.

Renner's argument is powerful. It allows to understand how discourses on reconciliation facilitate the creation of new social agreements. Embracing reconciliation as empty signifier allows accepting the theological and philosophical background of the concept and its multiples understandings and deployments in the peacebuilding industry. Locating reconciliation in disputes for political power would explain its importance to amend political polarisation or social fragmentation caused by violence. However, it is based on a dualistic model of political dispute and directs the attention to those in opposite positions in the political landscape. As it will be illustrated for the cases of Colombia and Australia, reconciliation is not an empty signifier able to be filled with meanings from antagonist parties but a signifier with restrictive and localised meanings.

This chapter takes a different approach in the discussion. Reconciliation is not just a discourse negotiated between political antagonist parties. It is also a complex set of social practices lead by social actors not only in antagonist positions in struggles for power but articulating[2] on the promotion of social change. Those practices include the interpretation,

2 Here articulation is defined in the perspective of cultural studies theory (Clarke, 2015).

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translation and contestation of knowledge about how to produce social transformations, as well as their embodiment and incorporation into the everyday practices of many social actors with limited presence in political debates. From this perspective, reconciliation is not a vague concept but an ecology of epistemologies about how to deal with conflicts, produce social change and create social pacts. Learning from a bottom-up perspective and looking more from a pedagogical approach rather than a philosophical or political sciences definition, there are possibilities for critical and alternative approaches to reconciliation. This approach allows also for new forms of contestation.

On reconciliation, education and pedagogies

A common element in the diverse definitions of reconciliation in relation to peacebuilding is its association with a time device. Reconciliation is pivotal in dealing with the past for its role in channelling change toward a different future. Reconciliation is the seal that signs a new social pact as result of commitments and planning. However, to reach and keep the pact, new ways of interaction are required to transform previous violent conflictive patterns of relationship and to learn new non-violent ones. In practice, reconciliation is social pedagogies. Even in the more theological and philosophical perspectives, reconciliation implies a call for education and learning.

The place of reconciliation in education and peacebuilding can be approached from two perspectives: one, from the importance of education in the removal of structural causes of conflicts and its consequences (Lerch & Buckner, 2018; Nelles, 2004; Schulz, 2008; Zembylas, Charalambous, & Charalambous, 2011); the other, from how is it included in specialised fields of expertise such as peace education (Jares, 1999; Ospina, Alvarado, & López, 1999; Salomon, Cairns, & ebrary, 2010). Both perspectives are complementary and give shape to the idea of education as a way to obtain reconciliation and to reconciliation as pedagogy.

About the first perspective, Sarah Dryden-Paterson (2016) claims that concerns about education, the causes of conflicts and its key role in peace have a long history. During World War II humanitarian organizations erected schools to attend children affected by war. However, it is until the 1990s that several long term concerns such as the enactment of education as human right, increasing interest in children in war settings, the creation of international standards on basic education needs, made education a particular field of attention in international organizations dealing with

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conflicts. Education and peace are not in a self-evident connection but are the result of accumulated efforts to make them a relevant issue when dealing with conflicts. This has also an impact on how much and in which ways reconciliation became a matter of consideration in education as part of conflict resolution agendas, as will be illustrated below for the cases of Australia and Colombia.

On the second perspective, peace education is already a complex and highly specialised field of expertise with its own paradigms and methodologies to teach non-violent ways to deal with conflict (Fisas & Armengol, 1998), promote tolerance and non-discrimination (Lerch & Buckner, 2018), deepening democracy and citizens´ participation (Ospina et al., 1999) or facilitate conviviality living (Comisión Internacional sobre la Educación para el Siglo, Delors, & Unesco, 1996), among other topics. As part of public polices for peace, peace education is seen as a field that offers diverse tools to learn conflict management in positive ways and to avoid its violent resolution, as illustrated in a recent document by the Colombian High Commission for Peace (Arboleda, Herrera, & Prada, 2017), for example.

In the richness of the peace education field, it is possible to trace multiple strategies to incorporate topics related to reconciliation such as coexistence, citizenship, non-violent conflict resolution or diversity in formal curricula. Following the contact hypothesis, the idea that bringing together divided communities with continuous educational exchanges has proved effective for building sustained relationship in cases from Palestinian and Israeli communities (Schulz, 2008) or Turkish and Greek communities in Cyprus (Zembylas et al., 2011). These strategies are widely promoted by international organisations and are common in post-conflict reconstruction agendas. They have been also under permanent critique, mostly because of the set of values promoted and for their positivist approach to education and pedagogies. Incorporating topics of peace and reconciliation in formal curricula does not imply changes in patterns of coexistence. As Beckman and Zembylas argue, the potential productivity of peace education is reduced when presented as universal utopia (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2012).

In the two perspectives mentioned above there is the risk of an instrumental and mechanic relationship between education and reconciliation. There, education is a mean, tool or mechanism to obtain peace or reconciliation. This use has two subsequent implications: education in itself brings reconciliation; and if reconciliation fails or is not obtained, education is to be blamed. In order to deal with this challenge, this chapter suggest

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discussing the relation between education and reconciliation as social pedagogy.

The idea of social pedagogy as the acknowledgement that individual education is a social process and is connected with social determinations has several roots and multiple developments and applications. With an European context in mind, Juha Hämäläinen (2019) traces a genealogy of social pedagogy in XIX concerns on shaping societies to face the challenges of modernization, industrialization and urbanization. The German philosophers Paul Natorp and Herman Nohl for example, connected social pedagogy and educational philosophy to help society facing the challenges of political reforms.

Here social pedagogy is not seen in such axiological or normative approach, but in connection with perspectives from critical pedagogies (McLaren & Kincheloe, 2007), cultural studies (Giroux, 2004; Kellner, 2005) and Latin American popular education (Cendales, Mejía, & Muñoz, 2016), that emphasise the role of pedagogy in social transformation. Based on the work of Stuart Hall, Henry Giroux (2000) brings pedagogy to the centre of political agency and to its possibilities for promoting social change. Not all pedagogical practices intend such goal since some in fact intend to reproduce the status quo rather than create radical democracy.

This idea has direct implications to the field of peacebuilding when discussing the type and amount of change promoted by peace and reconciliation practices. It is also of relevance to expand the connection between education and reconciliation to a variety of social and cultural practices not restricted to formal education or instrumental use. As the case studies will illustrate later, reconciliation is implemented using informal, non-schooling education and social transformation practices, such as the promotion of community dialogues or the facilitation of encounters among opposing groups. In Australia and Colombia civil society organisations, religious-based groups and women's organisations have been key activists and leaders in formulating reconciliation policies and pedagogies.

The expansion of the connections between reconciliation and education implies a constant discussion of interactions between politics and culture. The pedagogies of reconciliation are not just about the teaching of reconciliation topics such as historical facts or conflict management strategies but also the transformative, emancipatory destabilizing power of its pedagogical practices. Reconciliation deals with the emotions and feelings that surround suffering and belonging. Trust, respect and rebuilding of relationships are embodied processes. The pedagogies for reconciliation are also pedagogies of collective emotions, such as mourning, forgiveness, affiliation and identity. One example of those ideas can be found in the 'dis-

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comfort pedagogies' applied by Zembylas and McGlynn (2012) in Cyprus and Northern Ireland in order to destabilise hegemonic representations of subordinated groups or issues of social justice and to facilitate behavioural and attitudinal change. A similar use of those pedagogical strategies is illustrated by Zinn and Porteus (2009) in South Africa when exploring the emancipatory role of education in contexts of extreme inequalities. The section on Colombia will illustrate and expand this discussion.

Construction a working definition for pedagogies of reconciliation

Between September and December 2019, we explored databases and websites in order to collect a diversity of projects and initiatives that were illustrative of different ways to implement reconciliation. This search did not intend to be exhaustive but to offer a landscape of the diversity of reconciliation in practice. As a result, we obtained a collection of 122 initiatives for reconciliation in 25 countries globally. From each initiative, we made a description as close as possible of their own definition of reconciliation. Definitions were reviewed, classified and numbered in order to obtain a set of general categories and subcategories that constituted what we called a Thesaurus of Reconciliation. This Thesaurus became the raw material for our working definition of reconciliation.

Using different quantitative and qualitative strategies to process information, including word count analyses in Atlas.ti, we obtained a discrete set of categories to define reconciliation. We coined a working definition of pedagogies of reconciliation in three dimensions: as the practices that intend to transform and promote the learning of ways to live together, as new forms of communicating and as strategies to deal with the harms of protracted conflicts and injustices. These working categories will lead the description of the two case studies that will be expanded next.

Colombia: reconciliation as dealing with present injustices and forging better futures

In terms of the politics of reconciliation, Colombia exemplifies a process lead by civil society in which a diversity of issues associated with reconciliation has been deployed to recreate relationships among those most affected by socio-political violence and armed conflict. Reconciliation has been a social practice that has occurred long before its inclusion as a

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topic of attention for public policies. Civil society has displayed an intense and creative range of initiatives not only to deal with the past, but also to reshape the present and imagine possible futures through social pedagogies. Since most of these initiatives has been based in decades of intense social mobilizations for peace as documented by García-Durán (2013), there is also a connection with critical pedagogies and the Latin American tradition of popular education.

Reconciliation, as a topic in public policies, arrives after this long history and can be traced to early negotiations between state and illegal armed actors. Its content has been related to the type of negotiations implemented in each moment. Therefore, reconciliation as state lead policy has been an idea mostly subordinated to issues of peacemaking and peacekeeping, and less associated to long-term peacebuilding policies. A Council for Reconciliation, Normalization and Rehabilitation (*Consejería para la Reconciliación, Normalización y Rehabilitación*) functioned from August 1986 until August 1994 as an office dependant of the President´s Office to lead peace and negotiation policies. In its early stages, the Commission continued a previous policy, the National Plan for Rehabilitation (*Plan Nacional de Rehabilitación*) oriented to increase state presence in regions highly affected by armed conflict. It was mostly a policy to increase investment in rural areas where guerrillas had territorial control in order to reduce their support by civil society. In late 1980s, under Virgilio Barco´s presidency, reconciliation was seen as a strategy to gain state acceptance, legitimacy and reducing social tensions to facilitate negotiations with guerrillas such as M19 and other small groups.

Increasing waves of violence in the 1990s and a focus on procedures to negotiate with guerrillas reduced the space for long term public policies for reconciliation. This situation did not improve but worsened in the 2000s, first with the failure of negotiations between Andrés Pastrana´s government and FARC and then the arrival of Democratic Security (*Seguridad Democrática*), the Democratic Security Policy led by President Alvaro Uribe. This period inaugurated a dual strategy focused on defeating guerrillas and negotiating the demobilisation of paramilitaries. The enactment of Law 975 of 2005, known as Justice and Peace, offered a legal framework for negotiations, reintegration of individuals who were part of illegal armed groups of full groups and victims' rights for truth, justice and reparation. Both in its legal definition and its policy design, reconciliation was the final step of a long line of procedures for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration. In this frame, reconciliation was the last and accumulated result of stabilisation through legal frames and building institutions. Law 975 created an institutional infrastructure for

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peace that included a National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation (*Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación*). Of its seven main functions (Article 51, Law 975), one was related to the promotion of reconciliation initiatives to prevent the return of violence. Reconciliation at this moment was defined as an extension of negative peace, a peace mostly understood attacking the violent expressions of social conflict. The struggles for a more positive peace, a peace understood in terms of social justice, will characterise the subsequent approaches for reconciliation.

The Peace Agreement between the Colombian State and the FARC guerrilla offered a more positive and expanded approach to reconciliation not simply associated with negative peace but with for the creation of conditions for expanded political participation of diverse social sectors. Reconciliation was included as political reconciliation in the Point Two of the Agreement as a mechanism for more political participation and part of the conditions for ending the conflict, in particular securing participation in the implementation of the Agreement through a Program for Reconciliation, Coexistence and Prevention of Stigmatization – Point 3.4.7.4.4. For giving content to the program was created in 2017 the National council for Peace, Reconciliation and Conviviality (*Consejo Nacional de Paz, Reconciliación y Convivencia*), a national advisory body constituted by institutions and 67 civil society representatives. Civil society representatives include, members of churches; trade unions; economic sectors; Afrocolombian, Indigenous and Roma communities; women organizations; victim´s of conflict, demobilised and peace organizations; LGBTI, disabled, student and community-based organizations, among others. Most of the 16 duties of the Council as advisory body are related to social pedagogies. At the moment of writing this chapter the Program is still under design.

In this legal and policy frame for reconciliation, mostly subordinated to negotiation among antagonistic powerful actors, there are other histories for reconciliation in the diverse social mobilizations for peace. For this research we explored the database Collective Actions for Peace (*Acciones Colectivas por la Paz* - ACP), an extensive documentation of peace mobilisations in Colombia since 1981 organised by Center for Research and Popular Education (*Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular* – Cinep). Of the full database a selection of those actions classified as 'positive peace' from April 1981 until December 2019 was made, obtaining a universe of 2864 events. A first finding showed that 66% of those events were related to educational activities. Promoting positive peace from the perspective of social mobilizations highly involves education in a broad sense.

Using the working concept described above, of the 2864 actions we found 443 initiatives that could be considered as social pedagogies for

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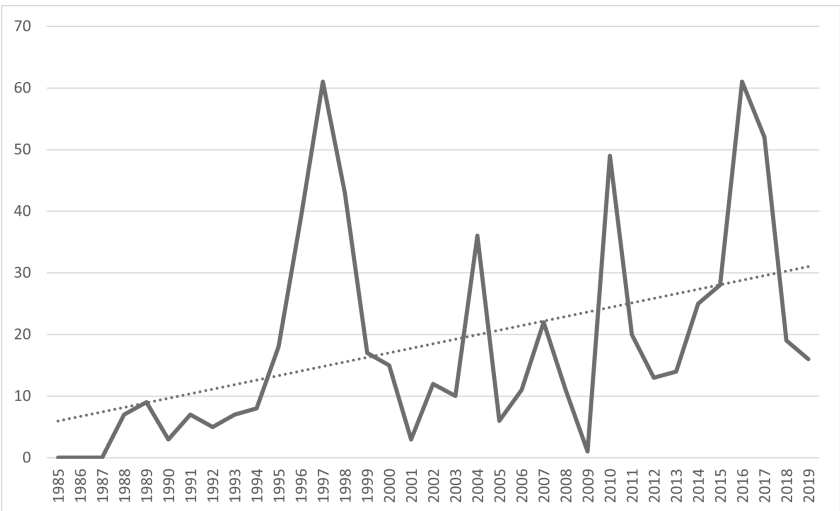
peace. We used the concept and its categories to identify which actions fit with our definition. This first finding was relevant. If we would explore the original database using 'reconciliation' as descriptive term, there would be just 36 actions, which would have offered a restrictive approach to reconciliation.

This broader approach produced three main findings: (i) reconciliation has been a long-term social practice, but with moments of more and less concentration; (ii) the meanings and practice of reconciliation are heterogeneous; (iii) actions related to reconciliation are less confrontational than other collective actions for peace. Next, these preliminary conclusions will be illustrated.

Graphic 1: Number of actions for reconciliation as social pedagogy from 1985 to 2019



This graphic illustrates the evolution of the pedagogies for reconciliation in time. On the left is the number of actions according with our definition. It shows two tendencies: the pedagogies for reconciliation are a constant an accumulative practice; however, their intensity varies. One possible interpretation of the periods of increasing actions for reconciliation is its connection with moments of more intense organizational peace activity and more massive mobilizations for peace. If we compare these peaks with the analysis provided by Mauricio García-Durán (2006: 239) they overlap with what he describes as the 'waves of organizational convergence' or

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moments of more intense organizational alliance building for peace. The period 1993-1998 is when two broader alliances for peace mobilisations emerged in the country: Redepaz, The National Network of Citizen´s Initiatives for Peace and Against the War (*Red Nacional de Inicitativas Ciudadanas por la Paz y en Contra de la Guerra*), emerged in 1993. The Permanent Assembly of Civil Society for Peace (*Asamblea Permanente de la Sociedad civil por la Paz*) was consolidated between 1996 and 1998. In 1996 occurred the Children´s Mandate for Peace (*Mandato de los Niños por la Paz*), a massive national mobilization lead by girls and boys and in 1997 the Citizen´s mandate for Peace.

Another wave of convergence described by García-Durán occurred during the peace talks between president Pastrana and FARC in early 2000s. A diverse range of NGO collided in Peace Colombia *(Paz Colombia*), a second level umbrella organization for other human rights, development, environment and social organizations, in order to coordinate the participation of social organizations in peace negotiations and peace building. This is also the second period of intense reconciliation pedagogies we identified. As it was suggested before, the practice of reconciliation, at least in early stages, is more an effort of civil society organizations than the result of state led policies.[3] Who were those organizations and why they decided to position reconciliation as a topic in public agendas requires further discussion.

Garcia-Durán's analysis of peace mobilizations covers the period 1978-2003. Two other periods we identified, 2009-2011 and 2015-2018, coincide with the beginning and resolution of peace negotiations between President Santos' government and the FARC guerrilla. They represent a parallelism between the changes in state policies for reconciliation described above and new waves of peace mobilizations.

3 This conclusion is still under testing in the research that supports this chapter. The conclusion could be result of the fact that we are using the same database than García-Durán. Currently we are doing another level of analysis in which we go to the original description of those actions for reconciliation in order to explore in more detail its context of emergence, main actors and purposes.

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Table 1: Meanings of the pedagogies of reconciliation

Reconciliation as social pedagogy: three main categories	**# of repetitions**	**% of repetitions**
Living together	292	60.8%
Dealing with the harms	98	20.41%
Communicating	54	11.25%
Other	36	7.5%
Totals	480	

The numbers in Table 1 result from reading the data base ACP with the working definition explained before. We applied the three main categories of our working definition to classify the corpus of reconciliation actions identified in ACP. We tried to use just one of them for each action. In spite of this decision, some actions were not possible to define just with one criterion. Therefore, the number of repetitions shortly exceed the number of actions. Result of such analysis showed that an important number of the actions for reconciliation intended to transform ways or relating to others or produce new ones. "Living together" was a criterion presented 60.8% times, while the next most used definition was about dealing with harms and with promoting different ways of communicating. In order to explain these differences it is useful to start with the second and third categories.

Forgiveness is one of the common definitions of reconciliation. Still, it was not the most common meaning in the actions for reconciliation pedagogies we found. Less than a fifth part of them we mainly associated with forgiving. A few others included issues of healing or transforming conditions that facilitated harms. Promoting dialogue and trust building between antagonist parties was also found in our sample, in a discrete number of cases.

A significant part of the pedagogical practices we identified intended to promote new ways of interaction not only among antagonist parties but among different member of society from micro to macro levels: between neighbours; with former armed actors; intra and inter communities; between civil society and institutions; inter regions in the country; at national level. This would be related with the connection between pedagogies of reconciliation and peace social mobilizations but suggest also a need to materialise reconciliation not just in relation with armed actors, but

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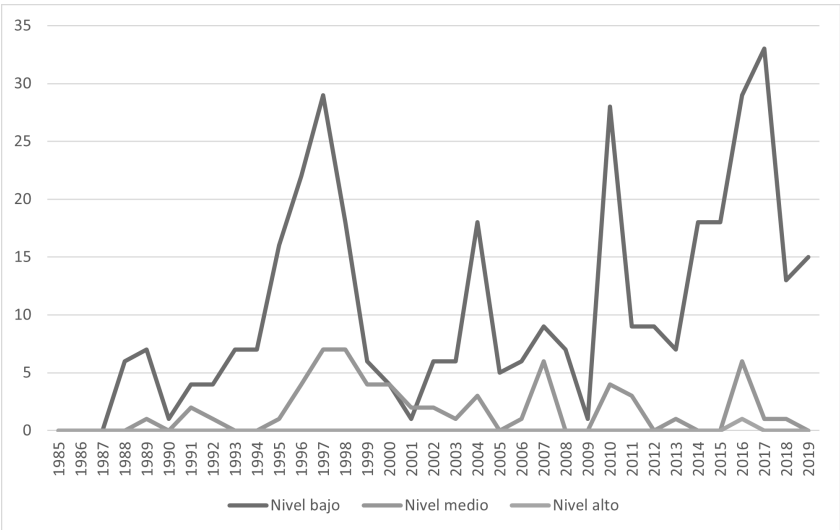
with most social actors. The pedagogies of reconciliation we found include political reconciliation but are not limited to it. From these results, the pedagogies for reconciliation are an intense project of social creativity.

Graphic 2: levels of confrontation in reconciliation pedagogies 1985-2019



The database we analysed classifies actions for peace according to its level of confrontation. High levels are those in which tension between antagonist parties is explicit and includes actions such as strikes, occupying roads or public spaces among other strategies. Medium levels could involve some level of tension, but without ending in violent actions. Low levels are given to actions that intend to produce change by consensus or by creating awareness on issues. Interestingly, most of the actions we classified as pedagogies for reconciliation were in the low level of confrontation, supporting the idea of their attempt to produce change by long term social pedagogies.

In terms of the pedagogies of reconciliation, Colombia exemplifies a model driven mostly by civil society initiatives with a broader agenda than often illustrated in political reconciliation between antagonist parties. It is not just dealing with a past signalled by conflict and violence, but a civil society enterprise to create a better present and future. On the other side, Australia represents a model in which long terms struggles for Indigenous

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communities' sovereignty was substituted by an agenda of state-controlled reconciliation.

Australia: reconciliation as a state driven project to deal with the past

In terms of the politics of reconciliation, Australia exemplifies a case of a state lead process in which reconciliation was used as national policy to deal with past and present injustices against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. From the perspective of the pedagogies of reconciliation, Australia exemplifies a case of how to teach about past wrongs and finding a frame for its teaching in curricula and social pedagogies. The overlapping of the teaching of reconciliation with the teaching of Aboriginal history and culture displaced the pedagogical responsibility to promote change to one sector and one topic of Australian society. Besides, reconciliation policies and pedagogies reflected contested ideas on how to address injustices between state and Indigenous Australians.

Reconciliation has been the key idea to manage the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians since late 1980s and early 1990s in pragmatic and restrictive ways (Burridge, 2007; Little & McMillan, 2016). Nina Burridge (2007), who has studied extensively the role of education in Australian reconciliation, argues that as a formal policy term, 'reconciliation' dates from the Federal Labour policies from the 1980s. She suggests that 'reconciliation', in terms of political relations, was a solution to the lack of support for a treaty with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As public rhetoric and as a public policy device, reconciliation has been deployed to deal with injustices of colonization and to create a narrative of building relationships, respect and trust. Its emergence in public and policy discourses is embodied in the creation of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation – CAR by the Hawke Labour government in 1991, after the publication of the report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. With the establishment of the CAR, reconciliation was an idea embraced by some Indigenous activists and different sectors of non-Indigenous Australians, but contested by others.

The creation of the CAR inaugurated what some have called the formal reconciliation process, a process led by government interference and connected with nationalist discourses around the call for a unified nation (Gunstone, 2007). According to this author, in early 1990s formal reconciliation was oriented by three goals: educating Australian society on Indigenous issues; addressing major socio-economic disadvantages that affect

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Indigenous communities; developing a framework document for reconciliation that could lead further legal and policy changes. The restrictive use of reconciliation in the 1990s by Labour government was continued and strengthened later by Liberal Prime Minister John Howard and his distinction between ´practical reconciliation´ and ´symbolic reconciliation´. For him, the first was related to addressing the economic and social causes of Indigenous disadvantage such health problems, lack of housing, under-education and unemployment; the second was associated with discussions on autonomy and sovereignty. Reconciliation, from opposite political parties regulated the management of Indigenous struggles amid a very unequal balance of power. Howard´s policies focused on the 'practical' dimensions of reconciliation, gave less attention to their 'symbolic' dimensions and reject any attempt to make an official apology to Indigenous Australians for past wrongs.

As result, the 2000s were marked with disputes on the intensity and reach of reconciliation as policy frame, represented in a variety of terms used to classify types of reconciliation: 'practical' and 'symbolic', 'hard' and 'soft', 'genuine' and 'substantial'. This use of reconciliation did not facilitate mutual engagement between contention sectors in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. It continued what Damien Short (2008) has called the 'colonial ceiling' in Australian reconciliation, a ceiling that controls and manages what is acceptable in terms of social demands for change. Adrian Little and Mark McMillan (2016) argue that while reconciliation addressed some past colonial injustices and dramatic events such as the Stolen Generation, it did not face core reasons for conflict, its permanency and contemporaneity in Australian society.

The official apology delivered by former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd on 13 February 2008 installed another moment in the politics of reconciliation. Rudd regretted the government policies that encouraged forced removal of Indigenous children from their families, widely known as the Stolen Generation. Rudd´s apology marked a clear difference with Howard´s refusal to apologise. It is still remembered as a pivotal moment in changing the path of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians interactions. Still, Rudd´s apology was also framed in limited terms. Reconciliation not only leaves violence as a matter of colonial past and pictures Indigenous subjects as passive victims, but also erases conflict as core topic in public narratives. Because of that, the possibilities of reconciliation as a public space to deal with conflicts were reduced. The result is a still unresolved agreement on the causes of the conflict and on the ways to deal with it that impedes the possibilities of reconciliation in terms of relational engagements.

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Since its early definition, reconciliation was connected with social pedagogies and formal education. Education was understood in terms of offering non-Indigenous Australians an understanding of Indigenous issues. One of the earliest attempts to give shape to the social pedagogies for reconciliation was a national strategy to increase awareness on Indigenous Australians history and culture. In collaboration with the Australian Association of Adult and Community Education the Study Circles Project developed a pedagogical strategy for small community groups of study in the early 1990s. The methodology intended to motivate neighbours, community-based interest groups and local actors in regular meetings to discuss a set of topics on Indigenous past and present issues. By 1994, around 2000 Study Circles emerged and by 1998 there were groups of Friends of Aboriginal Reconciliation in most large tows in the country (McCallum, 2003).

In the informal conversation I sustained in Sydney and in Darwin with academics who participated in the Study Circles, the activity was remembered with contradictory memories. On one hand, it was an excuse to join with friends and peers to create awareness on a known topic with limited discussion before. The dialogical methodology nurtured conversations, exchange of information and collective knowledge. Since the methodology also invited to meet regularly at the houses of participants, it was the opportunity to raise solidarity and join interests in support of Indigenous communities. Interests groups were not only formed due to community proximity but also for sharing common agendas. In Melbourne for example a Study Circle of lesbian women was formed. Still, the strategy seems to have attracted more publics with some kind of social and political involvement or intellectual interests, rather than general publics.

If Reconciliation Study Circles were targeting small groups of reflection at a micro level, other strategies intended to reach massive audiences. On 28 May 2000, 250.000 Australians walked across the iconic Sydney Bridge in the name of reconciliation. The walk was headed by several well-known Indigenous activists and some victims of the Stolen Generation. The walk was a display of national symbols with Australian and Aboriginal flags and key public figures walking together. The walk occurred a day after CAR presented in a ceremony at the Sydney Opera House a document with the key results of its ten years of work. The ceremony was a display of Indigenous Australian rituals and culture that closed CAR´s work. The walk was represented in the media as an intense moment of public celebration in which the writing in the sky of the word 'Sorry' was a key milestone. After Sydney´s walk, similar events occurred in other major and middle cities in Australia.

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Study Circles and Bridge Walks could be seen as strategies for social pedagogies since they intended to raise awareness, inform audiences and construct public opinion on Indigenous issues. While the first acted at a local level and through close relationships build upon several times, the second were specific short-term events with massive impact in public opinion. Still, they can be connected in the same narrative of reconciliation but were answers to quite different political contexts. Positive media coverage of the walks run in parallel with suspicions on the work of the CAR after the end of its period and permanent representations of reconciliation in association with Indigenous crime, violence and divisions (McCallum, 2003). This author also found that at local levels events were memorialised more in relation to issues such as the increasing awareness on the Stolen Generation or discussions against or in favour of public apologies rather than in the frame of reconciliation. In spite of its impact on collective imaginaries of the moment, walks were a collective performance that exposed several cultural negotiations under the umbrella of reconciliation with limited outcomes in terms of change due to its own nature as performative acts (Casey, 2006).

Going back to Nina Burridge's study, by the early 2000s reconciliation was still a vague concept in education policy documents in Australia with no clear unit of work in curricula. Yet, reconciliation was seen as an integral component in education policies and was an expected outcome of teaching. Since reconciliation was associated with past and present injustices against Indigenous Australians, it was located in the teaching of Aboriginal Studies and Aboriginal history and culture, an area that dated to early 1980s. As result of this, the educational outcomes of one area of teaching overlapped with another. In practice, the teaching of reconciliation became the teaching of Indigenous culture and history. Implicit was the idea that educating younger generations of mostly non-Indigenous Australians will provide the expected change in prejudice and attitudes.

As much as it is useful to give a place in formal education to reconciliation and Indigenous history, this idea is also problematic. Studies for Australia and Canada have found that knowing the causes of present conflict on colonization does not cause automatically changes in attitudes toward those in subordinated positions, nor transform power relations (Maddison, Clark, & de Costa, 2016). Neither does it motivate or involve those not affected by such colonial past to feel committed with change. At least in those cases, the use of education to promote social involvement and solidarity with those facing long term injustices proves to frequently fail.

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Reconciliation is still a contested idea in Australia. It has run in parallel with other Federal Government policies such as the Northern Territory National Emergency Response, popularised as "The Intervention". In 2007 after realising a report on child´s abuses in the Northern Territories, the Howard Government enacted a package of measures to restrict different aspects of Indigenous lives, such as alcohol or pornography consumption and to deploy armed forces and federal functionaries to take control of some managerial aspects of Territories. In spite of some adjustments in the governments after, the Intervention is still on as initially deployed. Up to now, there has not been yet a treaty between Australian Federal Government and Indigenous Australians authorities as in many other Commonwealth nations. While Indigenous Australians claim sovereignty and autonomy and have resisted colonisation policies, the government has answered with reconciliation policies.

Conclusion

Reconciliation is often pictured as key element of dealing with the past in personal and societal level, especially in association to forgiveness and healing wounds and harms. In the more sophisticated peacebuilding industries, reconciliation is the orientation point for transitional justice, memory work, compensation and some of its other key concepts. This underscores the importance of exploring reconciliation policies and practices as a mechanism to generate social change.

This chapter started calling attention to the problems of embracing the impossibility of a definition of reconciliation, its vagueness or emptiness. The two cases offered, showed that in spite of such problems reconciliation is not only an idea or value with a complex set of political practices with clear social pedagogy dimensions. They also illustrate different deployments of those practices useful for exploring in more detail the meanings of reconciliation as social pedagogy.

In Australia, reconciliation has been used in precise and restrictive ways as state strategy to manage the dealing with the past. Therefore, the path for reconciliation pedagogies overlapped with indigenous education. This makes sense if we agree with the idea of locating the pedagogies of reconciliation in the broader field of peace education. Peace education is a way to deal with a conflictive past and present. There are many elements of that dealing in indigenous education such as issues of access, quality, memory work, the teaching of histories of indigenous communities and exchanges of epistemologies. It is important what has been done in terms of teaching

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history and the presence of Aboriginal and Torres Islander people in Australian society. This is pedagogy in terms of knowledge. However, there is also a problem about for whom that dealing with the past is and who benefits from it. Many of those social pedagogies are about inclusion and addressing ignorance assuming that knowing about the past will change present attitudes but not changing structural power relations.

In Colombia, reconciliation has been part of the repertory of core ideas for social mobilizations for peace, intended not only to generate an impact on the state and illegal armed actors as main actors in dispute for political power, but also to articulate disparate publics for peace building. If in Renner´s analysis (2014) the empty signifier of reconciliation articulates antagonist parties, the analysis presented here suggests how the meanings given to reconciliation constituted social mobilisations as a third actor in struggles for negotiated peace. The pedagogies for reconciliation have taken shape in a diverse and rich set of social pedagogies. This has implied that most of the efforts have laid on the shoulders of civil society actors and organizations. The implementation of the Peace Agreement between the Colombian state and FARC has opened the space for a possible connection between the accumulated knowledge of social pedagogies for reconciliation and public policies. Current limitations in the implementation of the Agreement raise questions on the possibilities of such promise.

Reconciliation is also a field of contestations. Peace education has many examples of the conflicts faced when contentious narratives of past and present injustices enter in educational settings. Reconciliation, as a call for unity and harmony, imposes substantial demands on communities affected by long term injustices. The rational and legal language of state action that frames reconciliation as social policy says a lot about certain topics and imposes silence on others, as suggested in the two cases discussed here. With reconciliation, some racial issues stay unresolved or are displaced to other arenas as illustrated in the case of Australia and deserve to be more explored for Colombia. In spite of several differences between the two countries, their policies for reconciliation run in parallel with forms of state and para-state violence: reconciliation policies in Australia happen at the same time of criminalisation of Indigenous Australians; reconciliation policies in Colombia evolves at the same time of increasing prosecution of social leaders in Colombia.

In both cases, for a reconciliation process to have lasting effects, it must have a large presence in education systems. When connecting pedagogy and reconciliation, both at the formal or informal level of education, there is tendency to focus on the instrumental dimension of pedagogies: education as a tool to promote or obtain reconciliation. Another way to

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understand such connection is the assumption that education in itself will bring reconciliation. Therefore, if reconciliation is not yet obtained, education is to be blamed. In some of the practices of reconciliation mentioned above, particularly those lead by community-based actors, the pedagogical outcome is in the experience in itself. The educational outcomes of these experiences can be difficult to evaluate but are no less relevant to be considered as pedagogy.

This is difficult, partly because of continuing divisions in the society which cannot be removed in the short run by the peace-making efforts. And it is difficult to evaluate, because the wide range of topics and contexts for peace education and reconciliation makes it difficult to measure their contribution to social change. There is even a bigger question if in fact reconciliation can be teachable or it is the result of other accumulated processes. Especially if we consider reconciliation not just as about dealing with the past but as a clear commitment to make real present and future possible, it needs to be an enabling space for diverse and creative life project in dignity and social justice. This is at the end, what reconciliation should be about.

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No one can take away my living memory: Teaching about violent past in Colombia

Enrique Chaux / Alexander Ruiz / Maria Andrea Rocha / Juliana Machado / Juana Yunis / Laura Bastidas / Charlotte Greniez

Historical memory in the classroom: Challenges in a troubled country

Colombia has been immersed in an internal armed conflict dating back to the 1950s. This confrontation can be considered a war that is both old and new (Kaldor, 2012; Münkler, 2005): old in the sense that it coincides with and is framed within the Cold War, that global political moment in which socialism and capitalism were posed as diametrically opposed models of society and their main representatives as bitter enemies. And new, because it crosses the borders of politics and since the 1980s has drawn on resources from criminal economies, such as drug trafficking.

Beginning in the 1980s, a number of Colombian governments have pursued peace processes with some of the guerrilla organizations created in the 1960s and 70s. Most of these efforts failed for various reasons, instead giving rise to new cycles of violence (Sánchez, 2003). In 2016, the Colombian government signed a Peace Agreement with FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*) the largest and oldest guerrilla in the Western hemisphere. More than any previous agreement, this agreement was conceived to comprehensively respond to the basic pillars of transitional justice and, in particular, to the victims' right to truth, justice, comprehensive reparation, and the pursuit of non-repetition. However, the current government of President Iván Duque (2018-) has not fully upheld its side of the bargain. Moreover, some FARC leaders have reverted to armed struggle, and irregular armies have reassembled to continue to contest part of the national territory, operating under unlawful and violent conditions. Peace, therefore, remains an aspiration.

There has been a marked polarization between those who defend the Peace Agreement and those who are against it. Indeed, on October 2, 2016, a plebiscite was held in Colombia for citizens to express their approval or rejection of the Agreement. The 'No' vote won by a narrow margin. One of the aspects that causes this separation is the memory that defenders and opponents have built of the recent past. For some, it is an armed conflict

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with political actors who can negotiate their agendas and reconcile; for others, the guerrillas represent illegality and terrorism, and should therefore be judged as mere criminals.

In many countries, educational policies refrain from opening up uncomfortable or difficult debates about opprobrious periods (Rousso, 2016), or from focusing on memories that extol some events and figures while censoring or hiding others. As a result, narratives may become official memories at the service of the most powerful sectors (Jelin, 2002). Although no censoring has occurred in Colombia and, in fact, many teachers have brought the history and memories of a violent past to school, this has not been a clear priority in educational policies. Much more could be done by the National Ministry of Education and local Secretaries of Education to promote the study of the recent history of violence in Colombia.

In this article, we present four initiatives developed by groups that we have been part of and that address different critical moments of Colombian violence: 1) Teaching about *La Violencia* between liberals and conservatives in the 40s and 50s, an initiative led by Universidad de los Andes; 2) A Toolkit called A Journey Through Colombia's Armed Conflict Historical Memory: Learning peace and unlearning war[1], developed by the *Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica*; 3) *Grabar en la memoria*, implemented by the *Universidad Pedagógica Nacional*, with mothers and sisters of young victims of extrajudicial executions and visual arts students; and 4) the E*scuelas de Palabra* program established by the Educapaz alliance of organizations for the Truth Commission created as part of the Peace Agreement with the FARC. Each of these initiatives focuses on different times and events in Colombian history; has worked with different groups and populations; includes specific pedagogical approaches; and has different perspectives on various dilemmas and challenges, which we present at the end of the chapter. However, they share an emphasis on using education about historical memory as an opportunity to contribute to peacebuilding in Colombia, and ensure that learning about this history serves to prevent future repetition of the country's violent past.

As classroom conversations about Colombia's recent history are held in a polarized country, meaning that teaching historical memory poses difficult challenges. The country's ongoing internal armed conflict through the restructuring of armed actors and the current upsurge of political violence, with its trail of massacres, attacks and assassinations of social

1 *Caja de Herramientas: Un viaje por la memoria histórica. Aprender la paz. Desaprender la Guerra.*

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leaders (Rettberg, 2020), means that educators have to deal with differing interpretations of a past that has not ended, and that has not yet been established as a historical milestone.

Notwithstanding the challenges, some researchers in the field of education highlight proposals that promote student and teacher participation in spaces for debate, inside and outside the classroom, based on their life stories and the recognition of those of others: their memories, narratives, needs and longings, and a historical analysis of contexts, sequences, and linkages (Arias, 2015, 2018; Herrera & Pertuz, 2018, 2016; García et al., 2015; Rodríguez, 2012, among others). Some of the initiatives focus on the multiple relationships between history, memory and peacebuilding and propose readings in two distinct but complementary spheres: 1) the intellectual sphere, focusing on knowledge of recent painful or traumatic events. The readings here would be based on questions such as: what happened, how, and why —investigating the causes, motives, interests, modes of action— and what characteristics of the social, political, and cultural context made such events possible; and 2) the ethical-emotional sphere, which places such questions in the minds of individuals, the groups concerned or affected, and society at large, but that also highlights the duty to remember. In other words, it emphasizes a sense of responsibility towards the victims and survivors of past injustices from perspectives that cultivate empathy (Ruiz et al., 2021).

Silencing this history and excluding it from formal education does not seem a reasonable alternative (see also the contribution by Peters to this volume). Teaching the recent past presents multiple challenges and remains the best option for dealing with a history of violence as it provides students with the opportunity to develop critical thinking, empathetic attitudes towards those who have suffered most from the effects of war, it offers a setting in which they can practice democratic debate on controversial issues, and promotes the reinforcement of historical awareness. This, of course, does not happen automatically, simply by including the violent past in teaching programs; it requires solid teacher training and constant pedagogical reflection.

Although some countries choose to exclude the history of their recent violent past from their curricula, arguing, among other things, that at least one generation needs to pass before such events can be discussed (Shaheed, 2013). This globally influential position, however, runs the risk of hindering a deep, critical, and structured elaboration of the events that took place, thus limiting the possibility of reconciliation. It also neglects the fact that new generations receive historical narratives from other sources (media, arts, etc.). It is not a matter of "establishing educational institutions as

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exclusive sources of knowledge. What we need is for schools to serve as a fixed point of reference among the whole spectrum of available sources of knowledge, and, at the same time, to favor a critical view of all the others" (Sánchez Meertens, 2017: 117).

In this article, we present different initiatives advocating teaching about the recent past, in this case, the internal armed conflict in Colombia, illustrating its scope and limitations. Finally, we present some dilemmas and tensions inherent to this decision, in a country where the violence of the conflict has not ceased, under the conviction that facing our own past —no matter how difficult or controversial— is a fundamental part of peacebuilding.

Peace Education Law and teaching about "La Violencia"

La Violencia was one of the worst periods of violence in Colombian history. It was a civil war between the two main political parties (liberals and conservatives) which lasted about 10 years between 1948 and 1958 (Bushnell, 1993). The violent confrontation between liberals and conservatives was greatly exacerbated when the progressive liberal presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, who was almost certainly going to be elected president, was killed on April 9th, 1948, in Bogotá. This ignited violent riots later called *El Bogotazo* which started in Bogotá and spread throughout the country. *La Violencia* is crucial to Colombian history, not only for the high number of victims (about 200,000 killed) and its cruelty, but also because it was the origin of the largest and longest guerrilla armed conflict in the continent. In fact, the largest rebel group in Colombian history, FARC, was born from a small group of liberal fighters which remained from *La Violencia* (Bushnell, 1993).

In 2014, while Peace Negotiations with FARC were still underway, Colombian Congress approved a Peace Education Law, which indicated that each school and university should include a peace education class in their curricula. Since the Colombian educational system is highly decentralized, the Ministry of Education does not define what each school needs to teach, but offers only general guidelines. Several of us helped the Ministry of Education create these guidelines and examples (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2017). For 10th grade, we included a sample of sessions adapted from our previous work about pedagogical interventions about *La Violencia* (Machado, Chaux & Ossa, 2012). Several schools throughout the country might have implemented these sessions since, although there is no formal tracing of this implementation.

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In order to identify how this pedagogical intervention works and is received by students and teachers, we have conducted qualitative evaluations in which we have implemented an expanded version of the intervention (Bastidas & Borrero, 2018; Greniez, 2019). Specifically, the intervention intends to teach 10th-graders about *La Violencia* while, at the same time promote critical thinking, empathy, and intergroup conflict resolution.

Inspired by the educational program *Facing History and Ourselves* (2019; see also: Stern Strom, 1994), this intervention seeks to help students understand the complexities of that critical period and connect that understanding to their own lives in the present. For instance, in one of its 10 one-hour sessions, students identify the positive or questionable characteristics of Gaitán as a leader, and compare them to current leaders in their own communities, and to the leaders they would like to be in the future. In another session, students are organized in pairs to participate in role plays in which one is to impersonate a liberal leader and the other impersonates a conservative leader in a town where La Violence has not arrived yet. During the role-play, each pair is asked to recreate an intergroup conflict that was occurring at the time, and improvise a negotiation in which they would try to reach an agreement to prevent their town from following the same path towards violence that neighbor towns have suffered. In that way, they understand better the complexities of the time, while at the same time, have the opportunity to practice socio-emotional competencies associated with conflict resolution such as perspective taking, active listening, or creative generation of alternatives.

In other sessions, students analyze social psychology dynamics involved in the liberal-conservative confrontation, such as identifying with one of the two political parties only because their families have always been part of one or the other group. They also analyze in-group and out-group biases such as blaming all the negative on the other group, and remembering only the positive actions of their own group. Furthermore, they identify similar social-psychology dynamics in intergroup conflicts occurring close to them in the present, such as violent conflicts between football fans or between youth gangs in their neighborhoods. Finally, they learn about peace initiatives that have been developed in the middle of violent contexts in Colombia, and reflect on possible peace initiatives that they could promote. Again, inspired on Facing History and Ourselves (Facing History and Ourselves, 2019; Stern Strom, 1994), they can even design specific initiatives and propose to implement them in their own contexts.

In our qualitative formative evaluations, we have found that students are greatly motivated by the activities, especially by those in which there is a clear and explicit connection with current contexts closer to their

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lives (Bastidas & Borrero, 2018; Greniez, 2019). We have also observed that, during the activities, students put into practice socio-emotional competencies such as perspective-taking, empathy, creative generation of alternatives, and critical thinking. Furthermore, we identified that intergroup conflict resolution is more complex and requires a higher level of development of socio-emotional competencies than interpersonal conflict resolution, and thus students should have learned to manage interpersonal conflicts before they are to be confronted with intergroup conflicts. Finally, we have found that teachers need much training and on-site support in order to implement the activities, especially if they are not used to active pedagogical strategies such as role-playing. Future studies could evaluate the impact of this and similar interventions, not only in terms of development of socio-emotional competencies that could promote peaceful interactions, but also in terms of historical understanding of complex periods such as *La Violencia*.

ToolKit: "A Journey Through Colombia's Armed Conflict Historical Memory: Learning peace and unlearning war"

The *Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica* (2012-2019) pedagogical team[2], joining efforts with a diverse group of teachers, created the Toolkit to teach about Colombia's armed conflict from a historical memory standpoint (CNMH, 2018: 16). This meant to respond to some of the challenges that arise from different territorial contexts, such as: 1) how to address this issue of the country's conflict-ridden past in regions still immersed in war, while prioritizing teacher's and their students' wellbeing and safety; and 2) how to do so in territories that have not been directly affected by violence and where indifference abounds. Between 2012 and 2018, more than 317 educational institutions in 49 municipalities in Colombia participated in building and implementing the Toolkit in classrooms (CNMH, 2018: 100).

2 From 2012 to 2017, the CNMH Pedagogy Team was led by María Emma Wills Obregón, former Advisor to the CNMH Directorate. It was she who conceived and led the pedagogy team made up of María Juliana Machado, Alejandra Londoño, Alejandra Romero, Nicolas Serrato, Laura Giraldo, Laura Rojas, Daniela Muñoz, Víctor Ávila, Tatiana Rojas and María Andrea Rocha, who coordinated the team between 2018 and 2019. The collective construction of these materials also involved the participation of teachers, CNMH officials, and academics from different schools of education around the country.

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The Toolkit is made up of a total of twelve books[3] for students in grades nine to eleven, as well as a storybook for elementary school. "*El Salado*" and "*Portete*" are student textbooks (with teachers' guides), dealing with the massacres of El Salado in the Department of Bolivar, in 2000, and Bahía Portete in the Department of La Guajira, in 2004, which aim to help students learn, through an inductive route, some of the factors that have originated and protracted war in Colombia. *El Salado* offers insight into the construction and consequences of *the* rural community's stigmatization in a war context fueled by an agrarian conflict; and Bahía Portete, which analyzes a massacre whose main victims were women of the Wayuu indigenous people, addresses how ethnic and gender discrimination have played a role in the armed conflict.

All these materials follow an inductive pedagogical path (CNMH, 2018: 44) that connects students' identities and everyday lives with broader social and political processes. The fundamental premise underlying this approach is that one cannot transform what one does not understand, which is why the CNMH team felt that avoiding a deep, meticulous, and democratic discussion of our recent history in the classroom is not an option. However, in order to decrease tensions and social divisions that often arise when revisiting the past, the Toolkit encourages students to question dogmas by being rigorous in their analysis, using empirical support, and comparing sources. Also, it promotes recognizing and celebrating collective and personal diversity in cultural and political spheres reflected in a diversity of interpretations of the past.

Students are asked to critically examine political discourses, in the context of the armed conflict, as well as structural or systemic discrimination, through an exhaustive review of the empirical support and being mindful of avoiding the reproduction of denialism or the justification of human rights violations. Accordingly, the pedagogical route proposes that students should recognize irrefutable facts surrounding atrocities and human rights violations perpetrated by armed actors, and differentiate them from justifying or denial-based interpretations of what happened that respond to the worldviews of those involved (CNMH, 2018: 72). In sum, the pedagogical route intends to "activate a process of teaching historical memory in the classroom that contributes to the formation of critical, empathetic

3 *Los Caminos* the theoretical and conceptual foundations of the ToolKit, and *Recorridos*, gathers activities proposed by teachers that showcase their creativity in adapting the materials to their own contexts. All tools can be accessed at: https://centrodememoriahistorica.gov.co/micrositios/un-viaje-por-la-memoria-historica/.

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citizens who are agents of peace and democracy in their environments" (CNMH, 2018: 45).

For example, the student book *El Salado* begins with a chapter on identity and territory, based on the rural community's attachment to the land, as well as the disputes that have surrounded the land's use, titling, and access throughout Colombia's history. Specifically, students are first asked to reflect on their own significant places. Then, they are asked to compare and contrast different sources of information, including traditional rural song lyrics and laws that promoted agrarian reform in the 1960s, in order attempt to grasp the conflict dynamics that surrounded the massacre, including the colonization practices that contributed to the inequality in land distribution, and the economic and political disputes over the development of rural plots. Finally, students are challenged to think about how they would distribute a set of hectares among 20 families, in order to develop a sense of the complexity of land reform in this context.

Subsequent to studying the political decisions about land use and distribution, as well as the arrival of the left-wing guerrillas, and the birth of right-wing paramilitary groups in the region, the massacre perpetrated by this last group in El Salado in 2000 is addressed. In this chapter, students are invited to ask themselves, *when do I use and apply stereotypes and when I have experienced situations in which others use them and reduce me to a stereotype*? Next, various sources are presented (press articles, court rulings, testimonies, among others) exposing the construction of stereotypes and the stigmatization of the rural community. Afterwards, students read stories told by the people from El Salado about those who were victims of the massacre, with emphasis on the contributions they made to their community when they were alive. Finally, students are invited to reflect on the following factors as a group: the historical sequence that led to the massacre, the perpetrators, and the memory of the communities. To close, they are asked: *How can you challenge everyday stereotypes and those that fuel and sustain armed conflict*?

In sum, students are invited to study the past from a structural perspective (i.e., the role of the land struggle in Colombia's armed conflict), and make political and emotional connections between these events and their own present, while promoting their capacity to construct their own political stance around them, and fostering their agency for change.

The Toolkit's pedagogy is rooted in the belief that the classroom should be a place for intergenerational communication, where students' memories and experiences have a fundamental role, and where everyday knowledge, popular and ancestral wisdom, and heritage-based traditions can be communicated and discussed. This, in turn, allows the inclusion of

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the students' identity, their memories, and their communities' history, as well as rigorous social science methods, in the exercise of learning about the country's past. This turns the educational process into a dialogue of co-construction that offers tools to explore and understand both the past and the present, to build bridges between the issues that concern young people and the contexts that their parents and grandparents lived in, and allows us to question deep-rooted notions, like the belief that Colombians are condemned to resolve our differences through violence. Such alternatives are based on the study of history and therefore indicate the steps to building a more democratic and fairer society.

An example of this intergenerational communication is the first activity suggested in the student book "*Portete"* in which they are asked to draw a map of their affective environment, including their relatives, communities, etc., and identify the links between them, as well as the roles and customs that develop within this network. To do so, students have to talk to and interview members of their families and community, not just to determine the links that have been established but also to understand and represent the roles and practices performed within these environments.[4]

The Toolkit's implementation monitoring strategy, which aimed to identify the way in which this approach was applied in the different territories, showed that the materials allowed teachers to awaken students' interest in the armed conflict history and, in turn, to promote the development of empathetic skills, critical thinking, and a sense of historical agency. These achievements are not homogeneous across the country and different variables moderate the results of implementation. However, it is worth highlighting, in the words of one of the teachers who took part in this initiative, the contributions that the Toolkit made to her teaching practice:

> *One of the great contributions that the Toolkit has made to my teaching practice is that it has made me more aware of the contrast of sources when teaching any subject. We know that textbooks and other sources of information report facts from different perspectives and under specific*

4 On the other hand, Edgardo Romero calls for the development of an "oral history research group" whose premise is "to use oral history as a methodological resource for the meaningful teaching of social sciences through the construction of research projects on local memory" (CNMH, 2018: 46). This strategy is developed in three phases: awareness-raising, fieldwork, and the writing and socialization of the results. To learn more, see: http://www.centrodememoriahistorica.gov.co/micrositios/un-viaje-por-la-memoria-historica/recorridos-de-la-memoria-historica-en-la-escuela.html.

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> *interests, but this is undervalued in everyday life, and limited sources of information tend to be used without comparing them* (Interview with political science teacher; Mondeyal Educational Institution, Isnos, Huila; CNMH, 2018: 70).

Throughout the implementation, the CNMH realized the arrival of the Toolkit served as an excuse for teachers to meet and discuss the challenges and opportunities regarding teaching our violent-ridden past historical memory in the classroom. As a result, and in order to strengthen the CNMH's support for the grassroots teacher's efforts to co-construct their own sequences, in 2017 the Network of Teachers for Memory and Peace was created. The Network provided a space for national dialogue intended to "leverage the efforts of a group of teachers in the field of historical memory and its teaching" (CNMH, 2018: 8). The strategies developed by the teachers were classified into three categories: didactic sequences, in-depth activities, and time and space activities, based on the cross-cutting themes concerning memory, democracy, citizenship, and human rights.

Grabar en la memoria: Mothers of extrajudicial executions and peace education

Political violence in Colombia has occurred in different ways, although perhaps extrajudicial executions is one of the cruelest forms, and the one which has most questioned the legitimacy of state institutions. President Uribe's government (2002-2010) pressured senior military commanders to certify enemy casualties at all costs and created an incentive scheme for members of the army engaged in this task: financial bonuses, short holiday periods, recognitions and awards, among others. A significant group of high- and low-ranking military personnel misused the policy and killed innocent young men, falsely claiming they were guerrillas who had fallen in combat. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights estimated that around 5000 innocent people were killed in extrajudicial executions (Naciones Unidas, 2015), and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace created after the Peace Accords has identified more than 6400 extrajudicial executions between the years 2002 and 2008 (JEP, 2021).

As a result, hundreds of families in different parts of the country have been defrauded and sullied by the state that was supposed to protect them. There are few cases in which those most affected, especially the mothers of the murdered youths, have been able to join together to demand justice or defend their own violated or threatened rights (Ruiz et al., 2021). The organization *Madres de Falsos Positivos* (MAFAPO) provides a good example

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of the struggle against such extrajudicial executions. These women united in 2008 to make their voices heard and fight for the truth behind the disappearance and murder of their sons and brothers. These sons and brothers were nineteen innocent young men murdered by the Colombian National Army, under pressure from the executive branch, as propaganda to sustain the war, spread fear, and justify the supposed military defeat of the enemy.

In 2019 and early 2020, members of MAFAPO were involved in a course to learn about etching and memory, in the Bachelor's degree in visual arts at Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. In this *art training laboratory*, they were invited to create, work as a team, strengthen their personal and collective memory, and produce works based on the images and memories of their children and siblings. *Grabar en la memoria* was implemented with the active and constant participation of ten members of MAFAPO, together with eighteen students in their final semesters of the Bachelor's degree in visual arts at UPN, most of them members of the research group *Arbitrio: Gráfica y formación*. Each of the mothers always had one or two printmaking teachers (young teachers in training) available, who supported them throughout the process, teaching them how to use the materials and tools; they were taught to carve, engrave, and preliminary outlines; they planned, sketched and designed the works; printed in small, medium, and large formats, and produced the final works.[5]

The teachers who led this experience (Alexander Ruiz and Eduard Barrera) provided additional support at all stages of the project and were often invited to intervene on some of the surfaces being etched. It was a collective construction based on the joy of teaching, experimentation, play, and cooperation, in short, the creation of a new world.

Grabar en la memoria was conceived as a laboratory for artistic creation, as well as a space for training and research. This implied a kind of expansion of the field of action and the traditional practices of an art workshop towards new approaches to exploring and understanding society. The process thus combined individual forms of work and spaces for collective construction, while at the same time mobilizing disciplinary knowledge with political intentions, around the narrative of a collective that cries out and continues to demand justice. It was also about trying alternative forms

5 Dies are the rigid surfaces usually made of wood, linoleum or metal on which the incisions or carvings are made. To print from them, they are covered in ink and pressed onto paper, fabric or other surfaces.

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of teaching, and of giving personal and group meaning to the experience of exploring, imagining, inventing, constructing and sharing.

Since its inception in 2008, MAFAPO has resisted silence and oblivion, demanding justice for the perpetrators and vindication of the good name and honor of their children. This formative experience went beyond denouncing injustice. The mothers constructed alternative narratives to the painful story of the disappearance and death of their children, and have been able to reconstruct and recreate their life experiences. Thus, while in the courts what prevails is the memory of their dead children murdered by the state security forces, the etchings designed in the art lab focus on the memory of their living children, which appears with unusual force, while the women experience the joy brought on by combining remembrance and creation, at the same time as their demands for justice are upheld.

A broader and better understanding of the past is, of course, required if we are to counteract beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes that reproduce violence. From this perspective, the art lab has provided a universe of possibilities, in which the participants are conceived of as going far beyond merely being victims of war, generators of information or, perhaps, producers of expressive objects, and are assumed as creators, but also as active political subjects. It is about working with pain, and, at the same time, with desire and imagination. The following testimonies perhaps illustrate this idea:

> *It was a challenge for me to approach Doris' [MAFAPO member] story with the frankness and dignity of a mother who has not let herself be defeated by oblivion and so much impunity [...] Doris' story of resistance has marked my life. When we talk and hug, I feel an unusual affection for her, which is impossible not to reciprocate. Now, that feeling of emptiness and strangeness that marks the memory of this mother nestles in me. Her struggle became mine too (Karen, Visual arts undergraduate student).*

> *No one can rob me of what I learnt in the art lab, no one can take away my living memory, the memory that I put on a board. It is a memory that we can carry forever, a memory that I was able to carve with my own hands, a memory of which we should all be proud. This institution has opened the doors so that we could study, record, and tell our stories, our life experiences, and open the path to memory (Cecilia, MAFAPO member).*

It is worth highlighting the enormous power of education, whose resources —material and immaterial— convey messages, and constitute the axis of relationships and communication between educator, learner, creator, witness and spectator. This is, in short, an attempt to deal with

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conflicting pasts, based on the deployment of pedagogical, autobiographical and creative capacities and resources of a singular experience, rich in nuances. It is also, of course, the confluence of experiences, sensitivities, interests, commitments and affections.

Escuelas de Palabra (Schools speaking truth) : experiencing the importance of truth-seeking and telling for peacebuilding in schools in Colombia

One of the most complex and notorious aspects of the Peace Agreement signed between the Colombian government and the FARC guerrilla group in 2016 is the Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparation, and Non Repetition. At the core of this system are three autonomous institutions: the Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition Commission (hereafter Truth Commission); the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP); and the Unit for the Search for Persons Presumed Disappeared in the context and by reason of the armed conflict (UBPD). It also includes reparation measures for peacebuilding and guarantees of non-repetition. In this text, we will present an overview of the work that some of us have carried out in order to support the Truth Commission's pedagogical work in schools.

After six months of preparatory work, the Truth Commission has a three year extra-judicial mandate that began on November 28, 2018 and will end on the same day in 2021, a period during which it will build and deliver a final report. According to the Commission itself, its objectives are "to contribute to clarifying the truth of what happened in order to offer a broad explanation of the conflict's complexity; to encourage recognizing the severity of what happened to us as a society, victims' dignity and individual and collective responsibilities; to foster coexistence in territories; and to lay the foundations of non-repetition" (Comisión de la Verdad, 2018: 12).

The Truth Commission highlights the importance of working with new generations in order to help them learn about their history and reflect upon it. Moreover, in contrast with what has happened with other commissions around the world (Paulson, 2009), the Colombian Truth Commission has actively engaged children, young people, teachers, and decision-makers and influencers in the educational sector to identify strategies and tools to facilitate an understanding of why truth-seeking and truth-telling are important for peacebuilding in our society. In turn, although the impact of the armed conflict on the educational sector was unfortunately not prioritized in the Commission's research themes (an important issue for future research), some workgroups led by the Commis-

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sion's staff and allies are working on conducting public dialogues that can shed light on the kind of changes needed within the educational sector in order to strengthen its existing contributions to non-repetition.

In this context, in mid-2018, the civil society alliance EDUCAPAZ[6] was invited by the Truth Commission to design a pedagogical initiative to promote the importance of truth-seeking and truth-telling in schools. Specifically, our work has tried to respond to the Commission's innovative discourse: positioning truth as a public asset.

Based on the premises of building on lessons learned by teachers in their own practice and on the importance of embodied rather than rhetoric pedagogical experiences (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2010), EDUCAPAZ invited a group of 32 inspirational educators from throughout the country to collaborate on the design of this initiative. This dialogue, carried out in the second semester of 2018, resulted in the creation of *Escuelas de Palabra* (which could be translated as "Schools speaking truth"), a program based on participatory action research methodologies through which educators, students and other school community members can themselves experience the Truth Commission's four objectives: truth clarification, recognition, coexistence, and non-repetition of violence and its causes. Basically, *Escuelas de Palabra* translated the Truth Commission's methodology at the macro level into a didactical sequence that school communities can themselves experience at the micro level with regards to a specific conflict prioritized by each school.

Now, this implies assuming that truth-seeking and truth telling are important for peacebuilding not only with regards to the armed conflict, but also in regards to inter-personal and inter-group conflicts that affect schools and local communities in their everyday life. Therefore, *Escuelas de Palabra* posits that, if truth is indeed a right and a public asset, truth-seeking and truth-telling need to become part of our peace culture discourses and practices, and therefore, of peace education efforts in Colombia.

In a year-long process, inter-generational research teams[7] are encouraged to carry out their own truth clarification efforts vis-à-vis one of

6 EDUCAPAZ is the National Education for Peace Program, an alliance comprised of the following institutions with long trajectories in formal and non-formal education in Colombia, which have joined efforts since 2017 in order to enhance the education sector's contribution to peacebuilding: Fundación para la Reconciliación, Fe y Alegría Colombia, CINEP, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana de Cali, Fundación Escuela Nueva, Aulas en Paz, and Universidad de los Andes.

7 These inter-generational teams can range anywhere from 5 to 30 members and are composed by students, teachers, school leaders, and other school community

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the following four action-research lines: "Truth as a principle in school coexistence", "Finding the truths of our territory", "Bridges between memory and truth", and "Our school as an agent in the armed conflict and peacebuilding". In each of these research lines, selected by the schools in accordance to the characteristics, needs, interests, and possibilities of their communities, the inter-generational team has to carry out a process that emulates the Truth's Commission's work: 1) explore their imaginaries around truth and gain new understandings of truth-seeking and telling in peacebuilding; 2) select the specific conflict that they wish to elucidate; formulate a research question and a hypothesis; 3) identify and consult primary and secondary sources; 4) contrast and verify sources in order to discern "irrefutable facts" around which consensus can be built; 5) promote "truth meetings" in order to recognize victim's rights and efforts as well as individual, collective, and institutional responsibilities; 6) support strategies aimed at peaceful coexistence; 7) promote public dialogue and advocacy around the transformations needed to take place to guarantee the non-repetition of different forms of violence; 8) produce a final report based on their findings; 9) and create context-sensitive material in order to communicate their findings to diverse audiences.

All throughout the year-long process, school members position themselves not only as receptors of information produced by transitional justice institutions, but as active agents in truth-seeking and truth-telling processes who constantly reflect upon the connections and differences between their work and the Truth Commission's mission. Underpinning *Escuelas de Palabra's* approach is father Leonel Narváez's[8] idea that truth-seeking and truth-telling can be understood as an approach to conflict-transformation framed by "logics of truth" based on a reinterpretation of the "w" questions: What happened and who and how did it impact? Why did it happen? Who is responsible for what happened and whose rights and efforts need to be recognized? What needs to change and what needs to be

actors such as alumni, parents, other care-takers, and local community leaders who voluntarily decide to spearhead the *Escuelas de Palabra* process.

8 Father Leonel Narváez is the president of Fundación para la Reconciliación, and organization that is part of the EDUCAPAZ alliance and has more than 20 years of experience in forgiveness and reconciliations pedagogies in Colombia and other countries in Latin America and Africa. In 2021, the *Escuelas de Palabra* methodology will be strengthened with contributions from the Fundación para la Reconciliación's previous work on socio-emotional education, ethics of care, restorative practices and restorative justice, and forgiveness and reconciliation pedagogies.

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strengthened in order to contribute to the non-repetition of violence? How can we contribute to individual and collective healing?

In this way, *Escuelas de Palabra* features different kinds of truth-seeking and telling processes, such as primary school kids, teachers, and parents trying to clarify the truth around a certain conflict involving inter-personal relations in the classroom, an ethnic school community aspiring to seek and tell the truth about the impacts of a hydroelectric dam on its territory, or a group of leaders, teachers, and high school students working on directly contributing to the Commission's clarification objective through their own memories on how the armed conflict has affected their school and how they have resisted and contributed to peace. In any case, the initiative seeks to further the idea that *understanding* and *recognizing* the truth around different types of conflicts is important for peaceful coexistence and is necessary in order to identify what needs to be transformed and to mobilize support for the changes needed to build a society committed to the non-repetition of violence.

EDUCAPAZ piloted the *Escuelas de Palabra* methodology in 33 schools in Colombia's Caribbean region in 2019. Although a formal impact evaluation is upcoming, participants have reported that the initiative not only helped them understand the Truth Commission's role, but it also helped them strengthen inter-generational dialogue and democratic practices in their school communities, socioemotional competencies such as active listening, critical thinking, perspective taking, and empathy, and skills related to social science research, historical thinking, story-telling, and community work. Most importantly, *Escuelas de Palabra* has empowered school communities to understand themselves as active participants of Colombia's transitional justice process.

Conclusions: Dilemmas and challenges

The pedagogical experiences we presented here share the challenge of teaching about past violence in contexts where violence is still very much part of the present. This particular challenge creates several dilemmas, which the different experiences have managed in a range of ways. The following paragraphs summarize four of these dilemmas and provide examples of how we have dealt with them. We hope that this provides useful insights to others dealing with similar dilemmas in violent contexts around the globe:

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1) Distant vs. close violent situations

One of the tensions identified in our work is whether to teach about the past through distant or close situations to the students. Teaching about situations close in time and space to students' lives can be very relevant and meaningful to them as it allows them to easily connect with these moments. In addition, it gives students the opportunity to talk about recent experiences that they might need to process cognitively and emotionally, thus, helping to promote healing, or even forgiveness and reconciliation.

However, studying situations close to students' lives can also bring several difficulties. For example, it can open emotional wounds difficult to manage collectively in class, a situation that would require a therapeutic context and professionals. In addition, students might come from families of victims or victimizers, and talking explicitly about situations in which their families might have been involved could arise strong tensions and discomfort. Finally, these situations might imply current threats that are difficult or impossible to talk about it because it means a risk for the students and teachers.

An alternative option, inspired by the program Facing History and Ourselves (Facing History and Ourselves, 2019; Stern Strom, 1994), is to teach about events distant geographically or temporally, but making permanent connections to the students' present. These distant situations rarely awaken discomfort in the students, but become more meaningful when connected explicitly to their own lives. This helps them take the perspective and empathize with those of the past while, at the same time, understand how they can contribute to change their own present.

In this sense, some of the projects presented (e.g., *La Violencia*) have chosen to study a situation distant in the past (1940s and 1950s) but making connections to the present. Others (e.g., *Madres de Soacha*) deal with recent violent events for which wounds are still open, but to so in a very careful and caring environment. Others (e.g., Toolbox) analyze situations that, for most, occurred in a different region of the country, but are similar to what occurred to them. Still others (e.g., *Escuelas de Palabra*) share the pros and cons of different options with school leaders and teachers and support them in the process that they decide to embark on.

2) Cruel vs. optimistic perspectives

A second dilemma derives from the pessimism and hopelessness about human nature that can be generated among students when studying horrible

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events in history. Learning about a violent past can create much despair, can generate negative affective effects, and can promote a sense that there is not much that can be done to prevent similar violence from occurring in the future. However, terrible acts of violence have taken place many times in Colombia, and we consider ethical to present an unmasked and accurate account of what really occurred. Furthermore, being faithful with what really occurred seems to be an honest way to honor the victims.

The initiatives presented here, to a greater or lesser level, have dealt with this dilemma -of whether or not to include in class such terrible episodes of our history- by also studying positive experiences of resilience and peace initiatives that have taken place in the middle of horrible violence. For instance, the artistic project with Mothers of Soacha create the opportunity for university students to interact directly with victims of one of the cruelest crimes in Colombian history. It does not hide the painful experience they suffered. On the contrary, the close contact with the Mothers help promote empathy towards them. However, the experience also promotes hope by directly observing their resilience. Similarly, the materials developed by the CNMH seek to show the horror of the war and the suffering of the victims aiming to generate a feeling of indignation that leads to the opposition and decision-making against the continuity of the war, but also highlight the processes of resistance, social reconstruction and peace initiatives promoted by the victims and communities. Presenting peace initiatives helps create a sense that, in spite of all the suffering they have received, many are able to transform those experiences into their motivation to help create a better world, a world where others do not have to suffered what they did.

3) One truth vs. multiple perspectives

Understanding a recent past marked by profound social inequality and an armed conflict that reproduces and exacerbates it can make a conflict-ridden society feel like it has to make a choice between: a) a single, agreed account of this past based on "unobjectionable truths", and b) multiple perspectives based on particular interests or specific needs of various social actors, directly or indirectly affected by this past. Each of these options has advantages, but at the same time, marked disadvantages or risks.

Single versions of the recent past can allow a society to reach consensus on what its greatest threats are and trace, with relative precision, a way forward; for example, the rejection of the violent actions of illegal armed groups. However, the issue is enormously complex, since it is almost never

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a matter of simply choosing between violence and peace or between good and evil. On the one hand, a conflict like Colombia's has many actors involved: guerrillas, paramilitaries, criminal drug trafficking gangs, the State, victims, the media, academia, unions, empathetic citizens, indifferent citizens and civil society at large. All these actors could eventually come to reject armed violence, but most of them do not agree with each other when it comes to the interpretations of its causes and consequences, and the responsibilities implied. This means that the only possible way of putting forward a single narrative on the Colombian armed conflict would be by imposing it as an "official truth", which is clearly unacceptable.

On the other hand, although, in principle, it is plausible to make way for a plurality of interpretations and accounts of our traumatic recent past, this does not occur in a neutral way. Some versions of the past confront others and not all have the same validity or moral legitimacy. The narratives of a rural community, living peacefully in its territory, and that of a faction of the guerrillas or paramilitaries responsible for this community's forced displacement with the intention of producing narcotics to finance war and favor the patrimony of its leaders, are not at the same level, nor can they have the same social acceptance. The decision of a ruler to protect the life, honor and property of citizens cannot be equated with the decision of a leader who uses war to perpetuate himself in power. The version of a journalist or an academic who denies that there has been an internal armed conflict in Colombia, a conflict that has inflicted deep and unnecessary pain on a significant part of the population, cannot carry the same weight as the voices of those who recognize the injustices of war and shed light on how to overcome it.

Perhaps it is necessary to avoid both the imposition of a single "absolute truth", as well as the complete dissolution of irrefutable facts when the "multi-perspectives approach" leaves us with a dangerous relativism (Plessow, 2019, makes a similar point with respect to teaching about sexual violence in the war in former Yugoslavia). In fact, in this article we have highlighted the importance of helping students ask and answer questions about direct and indirect responsibilities in different violent situations, which involves engaging young people in the effort of contrasting different sources and narratives. Moreover, it is crucial for young people to acknowledge the importance of enhancing the voice of those who have suffered from political violence and to support their demands for justice. In this direction, truth is understood as a public good and as a right of victims. In this way, amongst other challenges, Colombia's education sector has the enormous task of designing and implementing pedagogical strategies that can help citizens of different generations to clarify the truths

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of our painful past, and, above all, to strengthen their commitment to a peaceful coexistence.

4) Victim vs. victimizer dichotomy

Teaching about violent pasts always involves the challenge of balancing the acknowledgement of victims' demands for truth, justice, and reparation, and the importance of making way for their memories in schools, on the one hand, and the need to contribute to reconciliation in highly polarized and fractured societies, on the other. This challenge becomes particularly complex in contexts like Colombia, where, in some, although not all cases, the "victim" vs. "victimizer" dichotomy does not reflect important nuances. According to Iván Orozco, victimization in Colombia is more "horizontal" than in other traumatized societies such as Nazi Germany, South Africa, Argentina, or Chile, where "vertical" lines between victims and perpetrator groups were very clear (Orozco, 2003). Orozco proposes that the concept of grey areas, "where the distinction between victims and perpetrators, best represented by certain kinds of 'collaborators' and 'avengers', lies at the heart of the logics of forgiveness and reconciliation" (Orozco, 2003: 3). For instance, in Colombia it is common to find members of illegal armed groups or of State forces that are both responsible for serious crimes, but who, in a previous moment of their lives, were also victims in the context of the armed conflict. At the same time, although it is very important to stress that this is usually not the case, some victims of the Colombian armed conflict have participated in acts of social and political violence. Speaking on the "peace vs. justice" dilemma that lies at the heart of transitional justice Orozco argues, "for a certain priority of punishment in contexts of vertical victimization and for a partial precedence of reconciliation in contexts of horizontal victimization" (Orozco, 2003: 3). In the case of Colombia, Orozco (2003) proposes a model of transitional justice based on "the primacy of truth and forgiveness for the inhabitants of grey zones and punishment for the engineers and managers of barbarism".

In our pedagogical interventions, we have found that in teaching about some situations (*e.g.* extrajudicial executions committed by the Colombian army against young people) the "victim vs "perpetrator" dichotomy is absolutely clear, while in others (*e.g.,* liberals vs. conservatives in *La Violencia*) it does not seem to be the most relevant category. In this way, without diluting the importance of recognizing the rights of the victims of each particular situation (rather than assuming that specific people or

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groups have a certain kind of monopoly over "victimhood"), our work has suggested an interesting approach: helping students reflect on the different kinds of individual, collective, and institutional responsibilities (both direct and indirect) that should be recognized in order to contribute to truth, justice, reparation, and the non-repetition of violence. For instance, in *Escuelas de Palabra*, students and teachers in a town highly affected by the armed conflict at the end of the 90s and the beginning of the 21st century were able to identify the different responsibilities of the guerrillas, paramilitaries and State armed forces in the history of the armed conflict in their town. Likewise, they engaged in interesting discussions around situations such as the following: the partial responsibility of their community, which normalized the fact that the Colombian army camped in their school and that soldiers engaged in personal relations with high school students, and the fact that their own community had reproduced discourses of stigmatization against particular groups (e.g.: urban groups stigmatizing rural groups) that contributed to the escalation of violence.

In this way, the pedagogical process allowed both for a human rights perspective in which different actors are held accountable for the violation of victims' rights, and for a more restorative approach centered not on disputes over finding the one to blame, but rather on the identification of partial responsibilities, that to different degrees, need to be recognized in order to restore trust and take the necessary actions to transform unfair and violent situations.

Teaching about a violent history is particularly challenging if violence is still common in the present. Furthermore, there are several dilemmas associated with teaching about a violent past, as we have discussed in this chapter. However, as we tried to showed here, there are also many ways in which history of violence can be taught while, at the same time, contributing to the construction of peace. Caring and creative pedagogical strategies can help students understand that they can make important contributions to avoid repeating terrible situations of the past, and to help construct more peaceful and just communities and societies in the present and future.

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War and Peace in Colombian History Schoolbooks

Tatjana Louis / Jennifer Cantillo

In 2018, a group of students of the Peacebuilding Masters' Programme at Universidad de los Andes was given in a seminar the following exercise: One group should elaborate a history of war in Colombia, the other group should prepare a history of peace. They had 15 minutes to finish the exercise.[1] During the next 15 minutes, the students of the war group were very busy drawing timelines and filling in the multiple violent events Colombian history has to offer, and the space on the piece of paper clearly was not enough. The students of the peace group on the contrary had to think for quite some time before they finally came up with a proposal. Their piece of paper, however, had a lot of empty space.

Colombian history is commonly seen as a history of war. In fact, multiple civil wars during the 19th century and, in spite of a peace agreement in 2016, the still ongoing internal armed conflict, that covered a large period of the 20th century, have shaped this impression. With this context, it was not that easy for the students to unthink this way of seeing their past and to find a different approach of telling the story.

It is not very difficult to find reasons for this perception. The ongoing violence is part of most Colombians' daily experience, and it has been like that for decades. Violence has become a circular memory where the present and the past merge into one reality (Sánchez, 2006). In addition to personal or family experiences, the topic of violence is omnipresent in the media, in art, in educational institutions and is thus produced and reproduced as a social discourse.

The school as a formal educational institution plays a central role in shaping world views and the perception of realities. What is taught and learned in school is the (minimal) consensus of a society on what the next generation, its future citizens, should know so that society can endure. It is primarily the so-called ideological subjects such as history, politics, ethics or social sciences in which social discourses and postures are taught (von Borries, 2008).

1 This exercise has been adapted from Seixas & Morton, 2013.

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The perception of Colombian history as primarily violent is a social discourse whose development is examined in this text. We analyze how the concept of peace and its opposite, war, have been defined within the framework of history teaching and how they have changed in the last 70 years, time that is contemplated when talking about the armed conflict. We review the objectives of the teaching of history in the respective laws and curricular guidelines as well as their translation into school reality. The basis for the analysis of this last aspect are school texts that we understand as sources of social historical consciousness at a given moment (Schönemann & Thünemann, 2010) and that enlighten us on how the concepts of peace and war have been understood and represented over time. With this analysis we want to make a contribution to the current debate around the teaching of history, its scope and its limits.

School history books as a research object

Textbooks still play a central role in teaching materials for classroom instruction and act as a mediator between the state curricular guidelines and their implementation in the classroom. In doing so, they not only convey knowledge to, but are themselves products of the society surrounding the education community. In this respect, textbooks can be analyzed in two directions: On the one hand, with regard to the knowledge offered to the next generation, and on the other hand, with regard to the social negotiation processes that preceded the production of the book and which led to the content being presented in a certain way (Fuchs, Niehaus & Stoletzki, 2014).

They are therefore excellent sources that provide a snapshot of the ideas, discourses, values and imaginaries that were dominant in society at the time of publication. Textbooks and the world views they convey have long been the focus of research. Already after World War I, inflammatory and prejudiced representations in textbooks were identified as drivers of nationalist tendencies and war propaganda. For this reason, textbook commissions were formed as early as in the interwar period to examine manuals in terms of the extent to which they contributed to the idea of an open, tolerant, and peaceful world (Korostelina, 2013). In 1932, the International Committee on Intellectual Co-Operation, founded in 1925 within the framework of the League of Nations, published for the first time the handbook “School Text-Book Revision and International Understanding”,

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which provided guidelines to the revision of schoolbooks (Pingel, 2010).[2] This practice, interrupted for several years by World War II, was resumed soon after the end of the war and has since become an integral part of reconciliation and history policies worldwide. The German-French as well as the German-Polish Textbook Commission can be mentioned as examples. In both cases, a bi-national history textbook was developed, in which the divided history is presented in a common narrative.[3] The Israeli-Palestinian efforts also produced a remarkable suggestion of how the past of this torn region could be presented in a way that takes into account the opposite perspectives.[4] In South Africa, within the framework of the Reconciliation and Truth Commission, the curricula for history lessons were subjected to a careful revision (Hues, 2014).

In Colombia too, history and what is to be learned about it has become the subject of discussion in the peace process. In September 2019, for example, a commission of historians was set up to advise the national Ministry of Education on issues relating to the teaching of history (Decree No. 1660 of 2019). Nevertheless, a comprehensive revision of history textbooks and curricula has not yet taken place.

The teaching of history in Colombia and the production of schoolbooks

Currently, in Colombia there is no subject History in school education. History is taught within the Social Sciences, a subject that also covers Geography, Economics and Civic Education. The specific content of the subject History is today little regulated. The curricular guidelines merely provide rough thematic lines, which can be filled in very differently from case to case.

During the first half of the 20th century until the 1970s, history teaching was primarily in the service of the unity of the nation and was taught in a subject called "Historia Patria", the contents of which were influenced by the Catholic Church on the one hand and the conservative Colombian Academy of History (*Academia Colombiana de Historia*, ACH) on the other (González 2014). Before the impression of the numerous civil wars of the 19th century, history lessons in the early 20th century were intended above

2 This handbook is now available in its second edition: Pingel, Falk (2010). UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision. Paris, Braunschweig: UNESCO.

3 Histoire / Geschichte, 2006ff., Europa – Unsere Geschichte, 2016ff.

4 Learning Each Other's Historical Narrative: Palestinians and Israelis, 2003.

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all to awaken and strengthen the love for the country and fill children with pride in the deeds of its important men (Decree No. 491 of 1904, Art. 57).

In this context, and also against the background of the upcoming celebrations of the 100th anniversary of Colombia's independence, in 1909 the conservative government launched a competition for a school history textbook that would contribute to the consolidation of the project of nation and hence for a peaceful coexistence. As a result of this competition, in 1910 (Decree No. 963), one of the most used texts of Colombian history during the 20th century to teach history, by the authors Jesús María Henao and Gerardo Arrubla, was approved by the archbishop of Bogotá and adopted for public schools (Melo, 2010).

Even if the language used in this book sounds patriotic-nationalistic from today's perspective, this book is perceived as a call for political moderation and defense of the public good (Melo, 2010). The fact that school education was considered to have a decisive influence on peaceful coexistence can also be seen in the fact that in 1936, within the framework of the VII International American Conference, Colombia signed an agreement on history education in which the country, along with other Latin American states, undertook to revise its school textbooks in the spirit of the League of Nations. In the same year, the Law No. 72 was enacted, which explicitly addresses the importance of textbooks for peace education.

This commitment to the importance of history teaching did not, however, change the view of history as *Historia Patria*. Any controversies that questioned the unity of state and nation were ignored. This even went so far that the subject of *Violencia*, the traumatic internal conflict of the late 1940s and 1950s, disappeared completely from the history books in the 1960s (Schuster, 2009).

A turning away from exemplary history lessons, in which loyalty to the state and nation is to be promoted primarily through examples that are worthy of imitation or deterrence, did not occur until the 1970s with the liberal governments and the end of the *Frente Nacional*[5] (Graffe & Orrego, 2013). The so-called New History (*Nueva Historia*) called for a problem-oriented approach to history that went beyond a primarily political history to include socioeconomic aspects. A series of decrees defined as new goals of civic education critical, analytical and methodological skills that students should acquire (Decree No. 1419 of 1978). Loyalty to the state to ensure

5 The *Frente Nacional* (1958-1974) was a political pact aimed at ending the violence of the 1940s and 1950s by alternating government between the conservative and liberal parties.

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the unity of the nation was not completely replaced, but it was described in a more contemporary way as *Education for democracy, peace and social life* (Decree No. 239 of 1983).

In this context, the influence of the church and the ACH on the narratives and content of history lessons diminished. On the one hand, this was due to the need to establish more public schools, especially in rural areas, as a result of population growth. On the other hand, the National Ministry of Education increasingly exercised its normative function with regard to curricula and schools. Although the schools continued to have a great deal of autonomy with respect to content, educational plans now had to be approved by the state.

To the extent that the Ministry emancipated itself from the concepts and ideas of the ACH, the generation of new publishing houses and textbooks was encouraged. An important example of this change in control over texts is reflected in Decree No. 1264 of 1981, through which the *Concurso Nacional de Obras Didácticas* (National Contest of Didactic Works) "Educador colombiano" was established. This contest sought to stimulate the production of pedagogical literature in different areas. Thus, began the generation that González (2014) would call Problematized History (approx. 1985 - 1994), probably the generation of school texts where history was taught with greater depth of social problems and better characterization of political actors and contexts. Finally, in 1987 the National Textbook Commission was established under Law No. 24.

This commission had an evaluative, but not a normative function. It was not an authorizing body. The decision on which books to use in the classroom depends on the school itself, in accordance with its Institutional Education Project (*Proyecto Educativo Institucional*, PEI) (Law No. 115 of 1994, Art. 102). Since 2003, the National Ministry of Education has maintained a textbook catalog[6] that includes evaluations (Uribe, 2005), but these often coincide with the descriptions provided by publishers. The normative functions of the ministry are therefore limited to the preparation of curricular guidelines and the approval of PEI. There is no approval of the specific content or the way it is presented in books.

Only recently has there been a renewed, more concrete official interest in the content of history education and its possible outcomes. Decree No. 1038 of 2015 established the Peace Lecture (*Cátedra de la Paz*), the mandatory teaching of peace culture, the teaching of historical memory being one of its strategies. Law No. 1874 of 2017 identified the teaching

6 www.colombiaaprende.edu.co.

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of history as a key element for peace education, and Decree No. 1660 of 2018 established a Commission of Historians, which has an advisory role regarding the revision of the guidelines for social sciences.

Even if textbooks in Colombia are little regulated, they are still a product of the surrounding society and its political constellations. One constant that can be observed across all changes is the goal of social cohesion. This can be expressed as a patriotic education, as well as an education to become a responsible citizen, goals that in the end do not differ much. How this goal is achieved discursively, however, varies.

In the following, school history textbooks from different moments will be analyzed with regard to how they semantically represent and discursively connect moments of social cohesion as well as threats to the same, i.e. "war" and "peace". For this purpose, a corpus of textbooks published in the period from 1951 to 2016 was created. Specialized corpora form an essential source base for the study of opinions, positions, and worldviews and their discursive implementation (Hunston, 2002). In a first step, terms that can be considered synonyms with war and peace were defined and the frequency of their occurrence was determined. In a second step, these terms were considered in their context under the following questions: What events are described? Who are the actors and what responsibility is attributed to them? How is a state of war or peace ended and by what semantic means is this expressed? Finally, how does this connect to the political context?

The Corpus

For the present analysis, four textbooks were considered, which are part of a larger corpus of 13 books in total.[7] On the one hand, the selection considered books from the different generations. On the other hand, the selection was made under the pragmatic criterion of availability. The use of textbooks in school was only a secondary criterion, as it is an information very difficult to get. Textbooks are not systematically collected in

7 Historia de Colombia (1951), Historia Socioeconómica de Colombia (1985), Historia de Colombia. Educación Básica y Secundaria (1986), Tempo 9 (2009), ZonActiva 9 (2009), Hipertexto Sociales (2010), Ejes Sociales (2012), Sociales 9 (2013), Proyecto Sé Ciencias Sociales 8 y 9 (2012), Enlace Sociales 10 (2014), Estrategias en Ciencias Sociales 9 (2010), Los Caminos del Saber 9 (2013), Proyecto Saberes Sociales Ser Hacer 10 (2016).

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Colombia, nor is the extent to which they are actually used in schools recorded.[8]

The discursive changes are hence explored in greater depth with the help of the following books: *Historia de Colombia*, by Rafael Granandos (RG), *Historia Socioecónomica de Colombia*, by Carlos Alberto Mora and Margarita Peña (HSC), *Ejes Sociales* by Mireya Díaz, Germán Antonio Granada Osorio and Luis Fernando Ortiz (ES) and *Proyecto Saberes ser hacer Sociales 10*, by Iván Parra and Mauricio Riveros (PS). It is important to note that the first two books focus primarily on the history of Colombia, while the last two books cover not only topics of world history, but also other areas of the subject of Social Sciences, such as economics, geography and civics. The chapters related to Colombian history make up only a smaller part of the books.

Historia de Colombia, published in 1951, was written by the Jesuit father and teacher of the Jesuit school San Bartolomé la Merced in Bogotá, Rafael Granados. It can be counted among the books that were strongly influenced by the *Historia Patria* and ecclesiastical positions. *Historia Socioeconómica de Colombia*, published in 1985, is a well-known text of the *Nueva Historia*, with a strong emphasis on social movements and conditions.[9] The difference between the two more recent books, *Ejes Sociales* (published in 2012) and *Proyecto Saberes* (published in 2016) lies in the fact that *Ejes Sociales* is influenced by the administration of Álvaro Uribe, who was Colombian president between 2002 and 2010. *Proyecto Saberes* was published during the administration of Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018) in a moment where the peace negotiations of Havanna already were taking place, but had not yet concluded. Both administrations have a fundamentally different approach to the armed conflict which is reflected in the narration of the respective books (Jaramillo, 2017).

An initial selection of keywords was created after a first, unsystematic review of the books. Around 40 terms were determined, which were then systematically checked, revised and supplemented using the program AntConc. On the one hand, words were taken into account that have a

8 The Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in Braunschweig also does not have a systematic collection of Colombian textbooks. Historical textbooks are accessible at the Biblioteca Luis Angel Arango; the more recent ones are from the collection of the authors of this article.

9 It is true that the distribution of the book cannot be substantiated with concrete figures for the reasons mentioned above. However, this book has a high recognition value due to its characteristic cover, and many people who went to school in the 1980s and 1990s remember it according to the authors' own survey.

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direct semantic connection with the central terms "war" and "peace", such as *batalla* (battle), *combate* (combat) and *insurgencia* (insurgency) for war and *pacto* (agreement), *acuerdo* (agreement) and *compromiso* (compromise) for peace.

On the other hand, terms that can be related to war and peace in a broader sense were also reviewed, such as *orden / desorden* (order / disorder), *catástrofe* (catastrophe), *restablecimiento* (reestablishing), *reconciliación* (reconciliation). Finally, actors of the conflict were searched, such as *ejército* (army), *guerrilla*, *grupos al márgen de la ley* (illegal groups), *paramilitares* (paramilitary).[10] In general, the lemmata were checked with all their word-forms.

This exercise finally resulted in the following list with 31 key words:

guerra	war
paz	peace
acuerdos	agreement
amnistía	amnesty
conflicto	conflict
conflicto armado	armed conflict
desorden	disorder
diálogo	dialogue
fin	end
negociaciones	negotiations
insurrección	uprising
orden público	public order
perturbación	disruption
terrorismo/terrorista	terrorism
tratado	treaty
reconciliación	reconciliation
revolución	revolution

10 Not considered were *narcotráfico / narcotraficantes*, which, although an important actor in the more recent stages of the conflict, play little role in the ideological discourse around the cohesion of the state and are more likely to be classified as organized crime.

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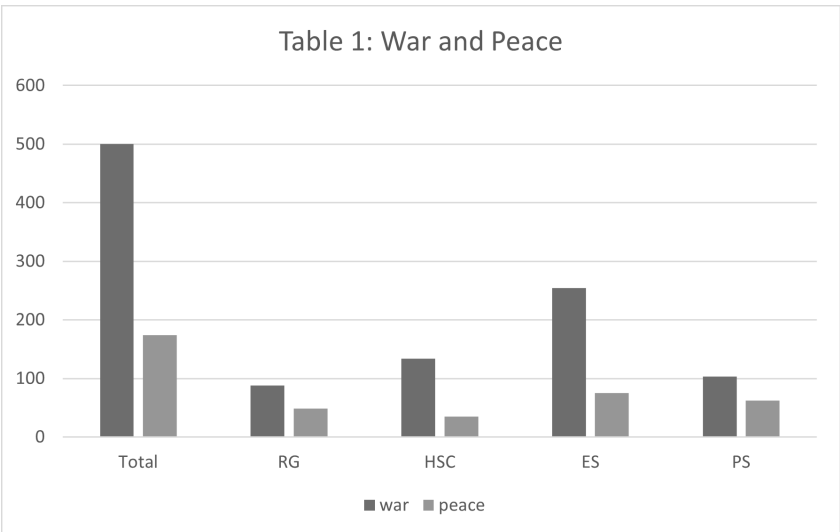
ejército	army
FARC	FARC guerrilla
fuerzas armadas	armed forces
guerrilla	guerrilla
guerrillero/a/s	related to the guerrilla
al margen de la ley	on the fringes of the law
paramilitar/ismo	paramilitary
rebelde	rebel
revolucionario	revolutionary
víctima/s	victim
victimario	murderer

In a first step, the frequency of occurrence of the keywords was checked. In a second step, the entries were reviewed individually in terms of their relevance, context, and the narratives within which they were used.



The first thing to note is that the key word "war" appears more than twice as often as "peace". However, it must be taken into account that in ES and PS in particular, the word war is associated with Colombia only to a

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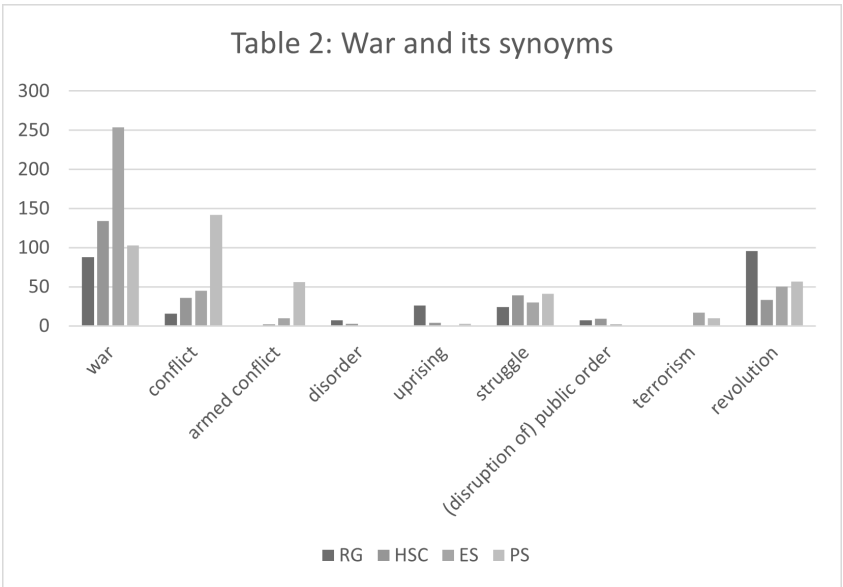
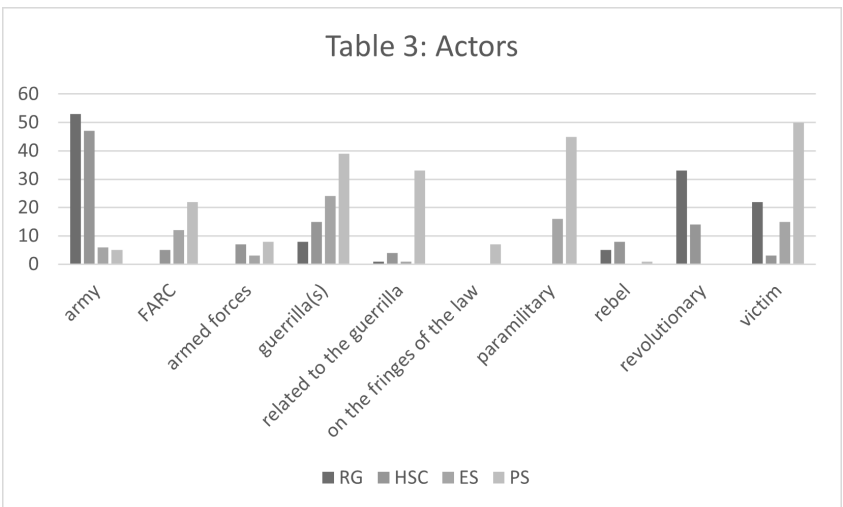
small extent: In ES, only about 18 of 254 appearances explicitly refer to Colombia, in PS it is 10 of 103.





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For RG, it can be noted that the term "war" is used primarily for conflicts with other states. This is the case with the wars of independence against Spain at the beginning of the 19th century or the war against Peru in 1932. On the other hand, when it comes to internal conflicts such as the numerous civil wars of the 19th century, these are primarily referred to with the term "revolution": *Revolución de 1859*, *Revolución conservadora*, *Revolución de los Mil Días* (today *Guerra de los Mil Días*, Thousand Days War). The term "war" is used in this context at most as a synonym in descriptions of fighting, along with "combat" or "battle" or to describe the consequences of the conflicts (*consecuencias de la guerra*, p. 244, 265). Accordingly, "war" is a justified external action in the sense of self-defense, whereas "revolution" describes the unlawful uprising against a lawful government. This corresponds to the general usage of the time. Especially in rural regions, uprisings were referred to as revolutions, actually until the 1950s (Sánchez, 2006).

The *Revolución de los Mil Días* (1899-1903) is the last conflict to be depicted in this way. With the turn of the 20th century, internal conflicts such as social tensions in the 1920s are presented mainly as disturbances of public order, but no longer revolutionary in character. The last major conflict covered in this book is the assassination of liberal presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán on April 9, 1948, an event that drew an uprising in Bogotá called the *Bogotazo* and is generally perceived as the beginning of the *Violencia*. These events are introduced as *hechos espantosos* (gruesome events, p. 289), which provoked those responsible with the goal of a revolution or coup d'état. However, the reaction from the state side is again described with the terminology of public order that is consolidated through military intervention (*consolidaron el orden*, p. 291).

The army and its generals, who appear often with their names, are here an important actor in enforcing state interests, such as controlling territory or maintaining security and order. The armed supporters of the various parties during the civil wars are referred to as *guerrillas*. However, this term is not yet to be seen in today's ideological context, but merely describes armed groups. Faceless, on the other hand, are the victims of the conflicts; if they are considered at all, they remain a group, at best a number. The population, too, appears only as an indirect actor, for example in social protests. Their actions are mostly hidden behind the terms that describe the events: *Hubo terribles agitaciones comunistas* (there were terrible communist agitations, p. 276), it says in connection with the 1928 strikes in the banana-growing areas, an event that went down in Colombian history as the *masacre de las bananeras* (masacre of the banana plantations).The aforementioned *espantosos hechos* (gruesome events, p. 289) cover not only

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the assassination of Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, but also the subsequent uprising in 1948.

For HSC, the picture is somewhat different. The term "war" is used, at least in the 19th century, not only for conflicts with other states, but also for internal struggles, which here, in contrast to RG, are called "civil war" without exception. In fact, RG uses the term "civil war" only in the context of internal struggles during the wars of independence, that is at a time when the final form of state and government had not yet been negotiated (Armitage, 2017). In HSC, "war" as a term for internal conflict does not disappear until the turn of the 20th century. The *Guerra de los Mil Días* is the last conflict to be so designated.

Instead, the word "conflict" is increasingly used to describe internal tensions, such as when the social movements of the 1920s are referred to as an *agudización de los conflictos sociales* (intensification of social conflicts, p. 217). *Lucha social* (social struggle) or *huelga* (strike) are also used. For the disputes over political participation in the 1970s, *protesta* (p. 251) is the common word.

The term *revolution* is hardly considered anymore. It is found in two contexts: First, to describe the political program of President Alfonso López Pumarejo, which he himself called *Revolución en Marcha* (Revolution on the Move, p. 229), and second, when referring to the founding of various guerrilla organizations bearing the word in their names, as did the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia).

What is striking, is the the very neutral language that is used to describe the armed conflict that has marked Colombia's history since the mid-20th century. For example, no term from the field of war/conflict is used for the events that followed Gaitán's assassination. Instead, the *Bogotazo* is described as a *reacción popular* (popular reaction, p. 237) or simply as an *acontecimiento* (event, p. 237). In many cases, it is simply the term *violencia* that refers to the events of the late 1940s and 1950s, a term which ultimately gave this first phase of the conflict its name.[11] That is also true for the situation of the 1960s and 1970s which were marked by strong social tensions. "Crisis" or even just "complicated situation" are used to describe the protests during the presidencies of López Michelsen (1974-1978) and Turbay (1978-1982).

In the context of the narrative of social tensions and social struggle that HSC develops, the portrayal of the army is more critical than in RG.

11 For a periodization of the conflict, see Safford & Palacios, 2002.

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Although it is, of course, the legitimate actor for asserting state interests here as well, it appears more frequently as a factor that exacerbates tensions or creates them in the first place. The military intervention during the *masacre de las bananeras*, described in RG as "energetic intervention" (p. 77) is detailed in HSC, from the militarization of the area, General Carlos Cortés Vargas' order to shoot at the strikers, to the persecution of the workers in the plantations (p. 200).

The ambiguous role that the army can play as an armed actor in the conflict-ridden country is also elaborated in other examples, such as the attacks on the so-called independent republics[12] (p. 248), areas of peasant self-defense that ultimately gave rise to the FARC, or during the Turbay government in the 1970s (p. 255, 257).

In ES, the conflict is mostly referred to as *conflicto armado* (armed conflict). In 2012, when ES was published, this term is broadly used for quite some time already. In HSC, the term does not appear at all in the context of Colombia's internal situation in the 20th century. *Lucha campesina* (rural struggle) or *lucha armada* (armed struggle) shift the perspective to the social and ideological reasons of the difficult situation. The caracterization of the conflict primarily as armed takes it out of the context of social tensions in which it is embedded in HSC. Overall, social movements play a rather subordinate role in the narrative of the book. Although the topic is present as background noise, it is not a primary narrative thread as it is in HSC. Social tensions are discussed in more detail only in two places: once in connection with the social protests in the 1920s, which are here called *agitación* (agitation) or *conflicto agrario* (agricultural conflict) (p. 62), and once as a consequence of the two-party system of the *Frente Nacional* (p. 143f.). There, *movimientos sociales* (social movements) stand in a row with *movimientos armados* (armed movements) and *violencia* (violence), just being one more cause for the country's difficult internal situation.

Although the term "war" occurs most often in ES, it usually refers, as said, to events in world history. The term "world war" alone occurs 66 times. The earlier observation that the term "war" is no longer used for internal Colombian affairs, also applies here, but there are two exceptions. One is the *Guerra de los Mil Días* (p. 60), that is, as in HSC, referred to as civil war. The other event that is called a civil war, is the *Violencia* (p. 139). This epoch is therefore provided with another name than the conflict from the 1960s onward. The short periodization expressed through the category

12 The independent republics were areas of peasant self-defense where parts of the rural population sought refuge from the ongoing violence and persecution.

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creates a discontinuity in which the character of the current conflict is presented as a different one (Jaramillo, 2017; Sánchez, 2006). ES still presents the *Violencia* in the tradition of the bipartidist conflicts of the 19th century and basically reduces it to that. The social tensions and the conflict over land ownership, which have repeatedly led to outbreaks of violence since the early 1940s, are disregarded in the narrative of the book or are only presented indirectly. Thus, the *Violencia* appears above all as a problem of public order, as a situation that must and can be controlled by the state above all (p. 138, 139).

In ES, however, with few exceptions the army almost disappears as the executing agent of state power. Its intervention is mostly expressed impersonally as it is the case for example with the military intervention during the *masacre de las bananeras*: The order to shoot is described as *se ordenó abrir fuego* (It was ordered to shoot, p. 62). Rather, a possibility to act is attributed to the crowd of strikers who were ordered - again impersonally: *se les ordenó* (they were orderd) - to disperse and did not do so.

An entirely new conceptual field used in ES to describe Colombia's internal situation is terrorism. For example, the activities of the so-called *chulavitas*[13] during the *Violencia* are referred to as state terrorism (p. 138). Above all, however, the term is used in the current context: The acts of violence perpetrated by the guerrillas and paramilitaries are described as terrorism (p. 144). The Uribe government's policy of strength toward the armed groups is also called *lucha anti-terrorista* (anti-terrorist struggle, p. 149). Even if ES is rather critical of Uribe's policies overall, the influence of political discourse on the book's narratives is quite evident here. In 2005, the Uribe government declared that there was no armed conflict in Colombia, but a terrorist threat, causing a still ongoing, increasingly polarized discussion on the existence of such conflict and its interpretation (Betancur, 2010; Jefferson, 2017).

In this sense, the main actors in the conflict are the guerrillas and the paramilitaries. These two terms not only appear much more frequently than, say, the army. Clear responsibilities are also attributed to these two groups, as well as to the criminal violence of drug trafficking.

Increasingly, the victims are also considered, resulting in a shift of focus away from the dynamics of war to its consequences. In the process, continuities are established, for example when the situation of today's *desplazados* (displaced persons) is compared with the refugees of the *Violencia* era

13 During the *Violencia*, the *chulavitas* were a kind of secret police that persecuted and terrorized government opponents.

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(p. 148). Another continuity, in which victims even appear as active agents, is the comparison between the United Fruit Company's alliance with the army in 1928 and the association of its successor, Chiquita Brands, with the paramilitaries (p. 63).

In PS, talking about conflicts finds an interesting twist. The different Colombian conflicts do not appear as the book advances chronologically, but are covered in one chapter called “Armed conflict and violence in Colombia” (p. 186ff.). It begins with the conquest and colonization of South America and ends with the peace process in 2016. Where in ES it is opted for a discontinuity in the representation of the different phases of the conflict, as it is presented in two different chapters, in this book the conflict is established as a central element of Colombian history.

In the narrative that proposes *ciclos de violencia* (cycles of violence, p. 190), the following terms are used: *Guerra* for the wars of independence and the civil wars of the 19th century, *ola de violencia* (wave of violence) for the Bogotazo, *conflicto bipartidista* (two party conflict) for the *Violencia*, *conflicto social* (social conflict) in the context of the emergence of the guerrilla, *narcoterrorismo* (Terrorism related to drug trafficking) for the third phase of conflict in the 1980s and early 1990s, and *conflicto armado* (armed conflict) for conflict in general. This essentially coincides with the trends also observed for HSC and ES. “Revolution” is a term that has disappeared completely in the description. The same is true for expressions that have to do with public order.

War is the term that is used to describe interstate conflicts (such as independence) or the civil wars of the 19th century. The appearance of the guerrilla, although very short in the text, is clearly set again in the context of social tensions and inequalities. The US American war on drugs and terror is even more obvious here by using the term “narcoterrorism” to describe the increasing violence during the 1980s and 1990s. For the post-2000 period, guerrillas are discursively removed from their social-struggle context and attributed to global terrorism: "Guerrilla y paramilitares comienzan a ser denominados terroristas." (Guerrillas and paramilitaries are now referred to as terrorists, p. 197).

What is new in this book, and here the influence of the new political context of the Santos government's peace negotiations is clearly seen, is the fact that “war” is discussed in detail in the context of international humanitarian law. Numerous examples from Colombia are used for this purpose when it comes to victims' rights or war crimes, such as sexual violence as a means of warfare (p. 93ff.). In doing so, the Colombian conflict is placed in an international context in which ideological questions recede into the

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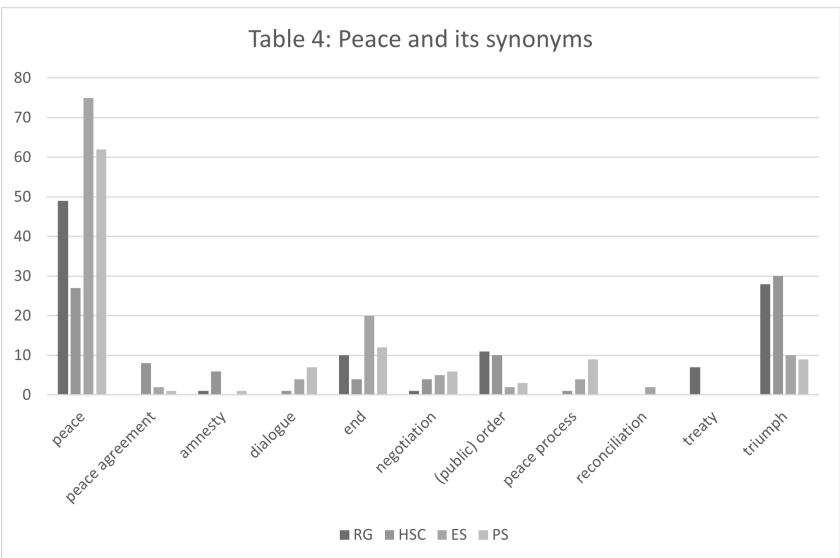
background and the main issues are legal questions and the protection of human rights.

In this sense, victims gain great weight as a social group. The frequency of the term is by far the highest. Thus, different groups of victims are presented in detail (p. 100, 199). It is explained how they are recorded (p. 202-203), what rights they have and how they are protected (p. 101-102). However, they do not appear as actors. They are talked about, but they have no voice of their own.

The main actors are the illegal armed actors, guerrillas, paramilitaries and, as a new group, the so-called Bacrim, criminal gangs of organized crime. The army, on the other hand, is not an actor and is mainly present in the imagery (p. 186-187, 197), an aspect that is not present in the other books.



The term “peace” occurs much less frequently than war. The terms used in connection with the end of a conflict are also not so much synonyms of the word “peace”, but rather refer to the way in which peace was achieved, such as through a treaty, negotiations, or a victory (triumph) over the opposing side. The concept “reconciliation”, that is an explicit part of the current discourse of peace and a learning goal (Decree No. 1874 of 2017), however, appears only in one of the revised books.

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In RG, Colombia's history since independence is presented as an interplay of war and peace, with peace, of course, being the desired state and the shining contrast to war. In the text, peace often experiences an exaltation; verbs such as such as *reinar* (reign, p. 246), *florecer* (flourish, p. 194), or *brillar* (shine, p. 254) underscore this impression.

The ending of a conflict is often described in the book simply as a *fin* (end), but more often as a *triunfo* (triumph) over the rebellious group. Peace can also be set in a *tratado de paz* (peace treaty), though the term *tratado* refers primarily to the final outcome rather than the negotiations leading up to the treaty. What follows next is the restoration of public order (p. 244, 265) that had been threatened or disrupted by the war (p. 242, 244, 261). The peace that follows the end of hostilities hardly depends on people, but is God-sent. In two places the *paz cristiana* (Christian peace, p. 9, 300) is mentioned, which is necessary for Colombia to thrive: "Todos nuestros progresos se han ido llevando a cabo a la sombra de la paz cristiana. Si Dios nos sigue otorgando ese don, Colombia será grande. Sin él, la patria irá al abismo de la disolución." (All our progress has been made in the shadow of Christian peace. If God continues to give us that gift, Colombia will be great. Without it, the country will go to the abyss of dissolution. RG, p. 300).

Interestingly, according to the autor, peace has prevailed in Colombia since the end of the *Guerra de los Mil Días*, an impression that hardly corresponded to reality, since the country has been marked by social tensions and recurrent violence since the early 1940s. As mentioned above, with the turn to the 20th century, inner conflicts are mostly presented as disruptions of the public order. In this logic, there is no war, and therefore, disturbances are not ended by peace but by the re-establishing of the public order, as for example after the riots following the assassination of Gaitán (p. 292). At a moment when it was not yet clear where the events of 1948 would ultimately lead - the text was published in 1951 - such a perception was still quite possible.

In HSC, the understanding of peace and how it can be achieved undergoes a fundamental transformation. The restoration of public order as an end in itself disappears completely from the language of the book. "Public order" only appears combined with problems or perturbation of public order, indicating that the situation is difficult, but in combination with for example "restoration" or "control" it does not exist. Peace is no longer God-sent, but man-made. Instead of the term *tratado de paz* (peace treaty), *acuerdo(s) de paz* (peace agreement) is used much more frequently here, an expression that refers to prior negotiation and compromise. In fact,

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the term *negociaciones* (negotiations) is a new addition, as is *proceso de paz* (peace process).

Although the term *proceso de paz* appears only once, it deserves a closer look. This expression implies that peace cannot simply be decided, for example through a treaty, but rather means a piece of work that takes place over a longer period of time. In addition, the term is used as a title for a chapter (p. 260) and is part of a *política de paz* (peace policy, p. 258) of Belisario Betancur's government. Negotiations and dialogues as a way to peace are a new strategy to overcome the conflict in the mid-1980s. When Betancur took over the government in 1982, his peace policy marked a significant change in direction in dealing with the conflict (Villarraga, 2015). A conclusive assessment of this policy, which ultimately failed, was not yet possible at the time of this book's publication, but the peace policy with negotiation as its central element is described as outstanding (p. 258).

It turns out that the discourse of peace depends more on the political circumstances at the time of publication than it is the case for the representation of war. While no major changes can be observed for the representation of war since the 1980s, fewer continuities can be identified for peace.

The first thing to note for ES is that the *Guerra de los Mil Días*, as well as the *Violencia*, which the book places in the context of the civil wars of the 19th century, as mentioned, are also presented with their respective endings accordingly. Thus, the *Guerra de los Mil Días* ends with a "triumph" of the conservatives (p. 60), the *Violencia* initially with the control of the situation thanks to the fact that General Rojas Pinilla took over the government by coup d'état in 1953 (p. 140). The continuing difficult situation in terms of public order is used as justification for his remaining in power beyond the year initially agreed on.[14]

The terms *proceso de paz* (peace process) and *negociaciones de paz* (peace negotiations) are used in the book primarily in connection with the Pastrana (1998-2002) and Uribe administrations. The peace policy of Belisario Betancur, presented in detail in HSC, is only briefly discussed here; however, Betancur, together with his successor Virgilio Barco, is credited with founding the peace processes of recent times (p. 147).

Thus, the focus in ES is also on the processual nature of peacebuilding. This is, of course, due to the fact that peace efforts since Betancur have been characterized by dialogue and negotiations, which were only ended

14 It is important to point out that the book does not justify Rojas Pinilla's military dictatorship as a whole. However, the way it is worded makes it difficult for a student to distinguish between the individual situation and the overall judgement.

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by Uribe's policy of strength aiming at the defeat of the opponent. It is noteworthy, however, that although the text adopts the Uribe government's discourse of the anti-terrorist struggle, for example, it simultaneously distances itself from it: Thus, the demobilization of paramilitary groups is also referred to as a peace process, although it was never driven by the idea of recognizing the opponent as a political actor, but rather sought to emphasize the non-political nature of the disputes (Villarraga, 2015). The *Ley de Justicia y Paz*, (Law No. 975 of 2005, Law of Justice and Peace) which created the legal framework for demobilization and reintegration into civilian life in 2005, is explicitly not a peace treaty, but was only intended to create the conditions for a future peace process (Law No. 975 of 2005, Art. 1; Valencia & Mejía, 2010).

However, although the process that began with Law No. 975 was highly controversial and also incomplete in many aspects, developments were nevertheless set in motion that led to the social perception of a transition to post-conflict (Villarraga, 2015). This might explain why the book, published seven years later, classifies the demobilization process of the paramilitaries as a peace process and thus places it in the tradition of peace processes since the 1980s.

PS, published a few years later, is clearly influenced by the peace negotiations in Havana. The aforementioned chapter on violence and conflict in Colombia presents the peace processes of the 1980s (p. 193) and since 2000 (p. 196) in two subchapters. The central terms used to describe these developments are dialogue and process. This applies to Betancur's peace policy as well as to the demobilization of paramilitary groups under Uribe and, of course, to the peace talks in Havana (since 2012). An entire section is even devoted to dialogue (p. 204), which clearly rejects the policy of strength and presents dialogue as the central strategy for achieving peace.

Similar to the topic of war, peace in PS also undergoes a broadening of perspective. Violence is understood not only as the armed confrontations between the various actors of the conflict, as it is presented for example in ES (p. 138, 144, 147) but also as everyday violence, for example in families or in the schoolyard. This broadening of the concept of violence then makes it possible to identify new forms of agency for peacebuilding.

While in RG a lasting peace could only succeed with divine support, in HSC and also in ES the responsibility for peace lies primarily with the governments, which take the appropriate initiatives, be it dialogue or the policy of strength. The ability of society to act in this regard does not go beyond indirect influence: the individual can lead a godly life or vote for those politicians who promise to achieve peace. In fact, civil society as an actor plays no role at all in RG and only a subordinate role in HSC as well

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as ES. In PS, on the other hand, the individual is given a central responsibility: "No podemos exigirle a las autoridades alcanzar la paz cuando en nuestro contexto más cercano no generamos hechos de paz." (We cannot demand that the authorities achieve peace when in our closest context we do not generate acts of peace. P. 204) says the text, combined with very concrete instructions for action on how to overcome everyday violence (p. 207). Peace is thus not a state, but rather an attitude, a *cultura de paz* (peace culture, p. 207).

Conclusions

Colombia's history has been marked by numerous conflicts, so it is not surprising that war and violence are often enough the leitmotif of historical narratives. In the school history textbooks analyzed here, conflicts are also the background noise against which history develops. However, the way in which this background noise is referred to, how it finds its way into the narratives in a meaningful way, varies.

In RG, war is primarily associated with the emergence of the state. The wars of independence, the civil wars of the 19th century consolidate modern Colombia. However, once the state is a stable construct – and the moment seems to be around the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries (Melo, 2010) – internal unrest, such as the labor struggles of the 1920s and 1930s, is seen primarily as a problem of public order, the control of which falls to the state. Peace as a concept remains above all a divine concept, which people can influence only insofar as they lead a Christian life.

In the mid-1980s, conflicts are embedded in a socially critical discourse. Civil unrest is primarily an expression of social inequality and lack of participation to which different internal problems can be traced back, as for example the founding of the guerrilla groups. Nevertheless, the increasing violence is also in itself a problem that requires a separate solution in the form of a peace policy in which the opponent is recognized on a political level and peace is a matter of negotiation.

The discourse of terrorism at the beginning of the new millennium can be noted in both ES and PS. The classification of the guerrillas as a terrorist group and of the conflict as a terrorist act justifies the breaking off of peace dialogues in ES. Peace can thus only be the result of a military victory. Nevertheless, the rejection of negotiations is not complete, since the paramilitaries' demobilization process is presented as a peace negotiation.

Finally, the social causes of the conflict are again the focus in PS. The violent background noise is particularly evident here, since an entire chapter

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is devoted to the topic of conflict. At the same time, however, a change in perspective takes place, as the conflict, its consequences and its resolution are presented primarily as a human rights issue. What is quite new in this context is that the responsibility for peace does not lie solely with those in power, but is located as individual action in the social context.

The categorization of the conflict and thus the assignment of meaning is the subject of heated debate in Colombia. This discussion, as part of a longer-term memory process, will probably continue for some time. As long as the social meaning of this past, which for many is still a present, has not been negotiated, the reverberations will be found in history books. Apart from that, the fact that peace is also an individual responsibility, as presented in PS in rudimentary form, is a learning objective that will certainly become established, not least because there are concrete guidelines for this, in contrast to learning about history in general.

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Reading The Diary of Anne Frank: Historical-political Education as a Cross-sectional Task

Nico Weinmann

Before class starts, learning groups in their early adolescence are usually buzzing with boisterous laughter, wild chases, scuffles, passionate conversations about console games, fashion and music trends. As an integral part of this age-appropriate confusion, historical-political questions 'pop up' again and again: “Why was I insulted in the streetcar? Was it because of the color of my skin?”, “Will the EU shut down Youtube?”, “What is a concentration camp?”, “Why is this summer so hot?”, “Why do refugees want to come to Germany?” In all these questions there are problems that are important and instructive subjects for historical-political lessons. If they seem urgent, questions of this kind are likely to be addressed by teachers on an ad hoc basis at the expense of planned subject lessons. Often enough, however, students’ questions are answered with: “You don't have any social science or history lessons this year. We're going to start with math.”

With this everyday description, a fundamental practical problem of the implementation of historical-political school education is made obvious.[1] It is considered one of the top learning goals (not only) in German schools. In the overwhelming majority of the federal states[2], historical-political education even has explicit constitutional status (Detjen, 2016). Along with religion, the social sciences are the only fields that are obliged to be taught. However, the constitutional mandate proves difficult to implement in everyday school life. This is mainly due to the fact that little time is allotted for politics and history lessons in the students' timetable. Historical and political education is far from accompanying students throughout their entire school career.[3]

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1 The article will discuss this topic based on the case of Germany.

2 In the Federal Republic of Germany, the administration as well as the formulation of educational goals in schools and universities are essentially made at the state level by the federal Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs.

3 A study by the University of Bielefeld has calculated for the content areas of civic education that German students in lower secondary schools (grades 5-10) have an

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It is therefore not possible to regularly arrange adequate learning opportunities, which is a particular loss for younger age groups, who are often curious and have a great desire to deal with historical-political issues. For this reason, didactics and political education initiatives have long called for educational reform initiatives to expand the teaching of social sciences in German schools (Albrecht et al., 2020). Teachers who want to conscientiously implement the historical-political constitutional mandate can hope for this educational offensive, however, if they want to do historical-political educational work in the here and now, they cannot afford to wait for it.

One current way of strengthening historical-political education in classroom practice is to more frequently open up historical and political learning paths beyond the actual history and social science lessons. From my perspective as a German teacher, I would like to contribute suggestions for the revival of historical-political education as the cross-sectional task of all school subjects. I will begin by outlining practical problems and the potential of historical-political education beyond history and political education. Thereafter I will describe a German lesson in which students are introduced to aspects of the national socialist dictatorship for the first time in school by reading *The Diary of Anne Frank*. To do this, I will address the learning situation of students in early adolescence as they encounter topics related to National Socialism, World War II, and the Holocaust. In the further course of the article, I will show that literary learning in German lessons does not have to suffer while the historical educational mission is being fulfilled. Conversely, the example even shows that simultaneous historical and literary learning can positively reinforce each other. I argue that a new self-understanding of historical-political education as a cross-sectional task of all school subjects should be based on 'synergetic learning arrangements'.

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average of only one and a half years of 90-minute politics lessons per week during their school career until the end of compulsory education (Gökbudak & Hedtke, 2019). Moreover, contrary to what the label of politics instruction suggests, the amount of political topics covered in this instructional time is small. It is only a little over one-third, whereas more instructional time is allotted especially for content areas in business administration and economics. A similar study on the proportion of historical education has yet to be conducted. The Association of Historians in Germany (VGD) has come to similar conclusions for the subject of history with regard to compulsory lessons (Droste & Bongertmann, 2017).

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Historical-political Education as a Cross-sectional Task

In a joint declaration in 2018, the federal state ministries of education and cultural affairs underlined that the historical-political educational mandate must be represented in the entire school day routine and, moreover, must be perceived in an interdisciplinary manner: "Strengthening young people in their commitment to the democratic constitutional state and their resolute stand against anti-democratic and anti-human attitudes and developments is the task of school and lesson development and the task of *all subjects* [...]" (KMK, 2018: 7, author's emphasis). The potential of cross-curricular historical-political educational work is obvious. For example, good math instruction is able to convey the persuasive power of evidence-based science. In the wake of the current corona pandemic, for example, math lessons could incorporate educational work against diverse conspiracy myths by examining statistics of incidence or hospital utilization. The corona pandemic also reveals the importance of science subjects for political education issues. For example, understanding and advocating for policy measures to combat the pandemic requires biological knowledge of the threat posed by the virus. Natural science lessons can also provide important approaches to the political issues of the future, such as the climate crisis or the ethical problems of new (bio)technologies. Religious education or ethics classes can help to raise fundamental ethical and moral issues in a democratic society, while any language class could teach key competencies of a democratic culture of debate and controversy along historical and political lines.

In theory, the concept of historical-political education that impacts all school subjects sounds coherent. In practice, however, it is accompanied by implementation challenges. Whether the historical-political education mandate is perceived outside of history and social science lessons and how depends in many cases on whether or not the teachers personally consider it important. There are no obligatory interdisciplinary curricula or generally applicable standards for social science content areas for the teaching of all subjects at German schools. The perception and also the quality of the interdisciplinary educational mission is therefore left to a large extent to chance. In addition, compulsory subject-specific performance and examination requirements take up so much space in everyday teaching that teachers often have the feeling that they simply do not have enough time for historical-political contextualization or problematization. Above all, linking the historical-political constitutional mandate to the concrete teaching practice of individual school subjects is inadequately dealt with in teacher training. At universities and in the second phase of teacher train-

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ing[4], didactics of history and politics are strongly attached to their own academic disciplines or to the original school subject of social science or history. Instructive incorporation of other school subjects is recommended but in everyday school life this is extensive and time-consuming. However, conceptualization of cross-curricular teaching always starts with teaching the actual historical-political subject (Mögling, 2010, Arand, 2017). In the relevant subject didactic handbooks and journals, there are hardly any low-threshold and practical inter- or transdisciplinary incentives for historical-political education in German, math or physics lessons. From the studies and practical teacher training, across the levels of school development, into the practice of teaching a subject in the classroom, there is a lack of self-evidence to live up to the constitutional mandate of historical-political education as a cross-cutting task of all subjects (similar: Overwien, 2020). With this article, I would like to contribute suggestions for the vitalization of historical-political education beyond history and political education. This will be done by providing insights into a lesson in which students in German classes deal with topics of the national socialist dictatorship for the first time in school.

Memory Culture: A Challenge in Historical School Education

German society is at the brink of a fundamental change in memory culture with regard to how the national socialist dictatorship, the Holocaust and the Second World War are being addressed. This impending upheaval can be understood as a "double generational change" (Assmann, 2013: 13). Part of this caesura is that the current generation of schoolchildren will no longer have any direct contact with witnesses of that historical period. Encounters with Holocaust survivors have "built an important bridge between history as personal experience and mere learning material" (ibid.). Meetings of this kind have always had the potential to make a far deeper impression on adolescents than, for example, commemorative ceremonies, schoolbooks, memorials, or media representation of remembrance culture. In addition, a generational change amongst the representatives of the German memory culture is taking place. Parts of the "68 gener-

4 In Germany, teachers go through two phases of education. The first phase takes place in universities. Here, teachers receive academic training and pass the first state examination. This is followed by a second phase of training, which prepares them primarily for teaching practice, where they pass their second state examination.

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ation" and the generation of war children contributed significantly to breaking away from the concealment of national socialist atrocities (German: "*Schlussstrichmentalität*") in the course of the 1960s. Confrontation of the crimes of the national socialist dictatorship was established as an integral part of the culture of remembrance in the Federal Republic. These generations are currently losing their interpretive sovereignty. In just a few years, they too will no longer be a vital part of the social memory of the German remembrance community (ibid.: 13pp.).

In schools, this "double generation change" has already taken place. The fifth generation post national socialist dictatorship is sitting in classrooms today, taught by the third and fourth generations. Thus, incorporating aspects of National Socialism in historical-political school education is particularly important. At present, school contributes to the decision on which parts of historical contextual knowledge about the national socialist dictatorship and the Holocaust will be transferred across generational thresholds into the long-term cultural memory of German society and which parts will be forgotten. In general, school has the task of providing students with historical orientation through time and space. Children and adolescents should develop the competencies to participate independently and maturely in debates about the present and the future by using the power of historical argument (Brauch, 2015: 33, classic: Adorno, 1971). Awareness of and reflection on the national socialist dictatorship is important not only because it makes students knowledgeable about the past, sometimes providing them with arguments that justify their own political actions in the present, but also because it enables them to imagine historically-informed scenarios of how the world might develop in the future (general: Jordan, 2010: 17). German history between 1933 and 1945 can be regarded as a very brutal scenario – a materialized one. With the fall of the Weimar Republic, the national socialists' seizure of power, the Second World War, and the Holocaust, it becomes clear that democracy and the preservation of human rights are not guaranteed to last forever. In order for a democratic society to be robust and sustainable, it needs critical, curious citizens who are capable of dealing with conflicts in a peaceful manner. They should be capable of renewing and, if necessary, defending democratic order. School plays a prominent role in equipping the citizens of tomorrow with the necessary key competencies of historically informed, responsible political judgment and action. This acquisition of competencies is also relevant for the upcoming redefinition of the German culture of remembrance in its confrontation with the national socialist dictatorship. After all, today's students will decide how civil society initiatives will look in the future, how exhibitions will be curated, and how archives

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will be re-canonized. The extent to which scientific research will take place in the future and how films, books or blogs/vlogs of remembrance will be created is in their hands. In this way, the generation that is currently growing up will soon be wrestling with standards of the basic ethical and moral understanding of our democratic society and ultimately having to choreograph the self-evident aspects of historical-political memory anew.

The learning situation: Dealing with the national socialist dictatorship

Against this backdrop, the education ministries of the German states agree that students must learn about aspects of the national socialist dictatorship in school. A recent study by the Scientific Service of the German Bundestag (Deutscher Bundestag, 2018) outlined at what point in the curriculum and to what extent this is currently being done. Normally, the aforementioned subject areas are included in 9th or 10th grade history lessons, thus only at the end of general compulsory education. There are various reasons for dealing with National Socialism, World War II, or the Holocaust at this point in the school career. The majority of history curricula proceeds chronologically. History lessons begin in antiquity and end in contemporary history. It is therefore often for pragmatic reasons that the study of National Socialism is scheduled for the end of the curriculum. In addition, there is a widespread assumption in historical-political didactics that confronting 'big and difficult' topics should only be expected of older children and adolescents. This assumption is based on cognitive psychology: Young people are only cognitively capable of differentiated and complex judgments at a certain age (e.g. Grammes & Welniak, 2008). This curricular pragmatism and the cognitive-psychological assumption are contrary to the interests and motivations of children and adolescents. My own teaching experience shows that children and adolescents on the verge of becoming adults have a pronounced desire to explore large and 'adult' historical and political problems. The curricula of historical-political education regularly miss this 'window of opportunity' in early adolescence by not attributing adolescents the maturity to deal with 'adult' topics. This also affects questions about the national socialist dictatorship, which are already an integral part of adolescents' thoughts and conversations at an age before the topic is scheduled in school. My personal impressions can be generally substantiated by an empirical survey done by the Forsa Institute, according to which the majority of adolescents in the said age group were rated as being between rather and greatly interested in historical topics (Forsa, 2017). The aforementioned report of

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the Scientific Service of the German Bundestag also problematizes the late thematization of National Socialism in schools. In the spirit of including historical-political education in all subjects, the authors suggest that other subjects should create access to this topic before it becomes compulsory in history lessons. This applies in particular to German lessons (Deutscher Bundestag, 2018: 7).

When teachers of German undertake the task of dealing with the national socialist dictatorship or the Holocaust in their lessons, they are regularly confronted with didactic treatises in which they are warned of a particularly challenging learning situation. Thus, "resistance" and "defensive attitudes" on the students' part are to be expected (Wrobel & von Brand, 2012: 4). Learners may often "block" or "refuse". For example, the "time gap is too great" for them to comprehend the necessity of an intensive examination of National Socialism. Another challenge is that children and adolescents with migration experience lack the family connection to the German past as an important form of access to the subject area (ibid.). Learning obstacles of the kind mentioned certainly occur among the current generation of students. It also makes sense to anticipate difficulties in the learning situation from a didactic point of view in order to take them into account in lesson planning. However, it is noticeable that – as in the case cited – the subject didactic processing of student motivation while dealing with aspects of National Socialism in German lessons is often limited to problems in a one-sided way. From the teacher's perspective, reading these didactic treatises is demotivating as they give the impression that an extremely arduous course of instruction lies ahead.

Dealing with students' desire and unwillingness to engage in lessons is part of the daily bread in the teaching profession. This is not a unique feature of the subject areas of the national socialist dictatorship. Just as at the beginning of each teaching unit, open-ended learning status diagnoses should take place here as well, which inquire about motivational situations in order to arrange learning that is tailored to fit and close to the students (Scholz, 2014). My own evaluation of students' motivation in the run-up to discussing The Diary of Anne Frank in German lessons contradicts the often used image of students who are unwilling to learn. I have not had the impression that the unwillingness to deal with this topic is causally related to temporal or migration-related distance from the subject matter. In the context of my learning level diagnoses, students whose family roots lie in Germany indicate that they have a great interest in tracing their own, often unknown, family history. Jewish children report on antisemitic everyday experiences, which they can address throughout the lesson. Children and adolescents with a migration background have

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the opportunity to address their own experiences of discrimination and racism in Germany when they deal with the topic of National Socialism. Some of these students have also had very direct experiences with war, dictatorships, political persecution, expulsion and flight. It is often motivating for them to participate in a lesson in which they can relate their own experiences to historical events in the country where they are currently growing up. In general, however, my students state in advance that they are looking forward to "finally being able to deal with an important and serious topic" (student quote) in German class. They feel taken seriously when they are trusted with this 'adult' topic in school. These impressions correspond more to the image in the empirical survey done by the Forsa Institute of adolescents who are interested in history for the first time (Forsa, 2017). However, these motivational situations are not synonymous with a great wealth of knowledge. In Germany, for example, only 59 percent of students over (!) 14 years of age know that Auschwitz-Birkenau was a Nazi concentration and extermination camp during World War II (ibid.).[5] My students also have little historical contextual knowledge about National Socialism prior to this series of lessons. They often reduce the national socialist rule down to Hitler and tend towards simple, black-and-white moral schemes ("Nazis against Jews").[6] If first contact with National Socialism is established at school, the lesson planning should cater for a learning group of adolescents with diverse motivational situations and low-level prior historical knowledge. In this regard, The Diary of Anne Frank is particularly suitable as a learning object.

The Diary of Anne Frank in German Lessons

This diary has long been one of the most widely read set works in Germany. There is a flood of handouts and teaching materials on its use in

5 The exact validity of studies of this kind can certainly be doubted if generalized conclusions are drawn about historical contextual knowledge on the basis of knowledge queries. I understand the findings rather as a tendency, which corresponds to my diagnosis of the learning situation.

6 These explanatory figures of my learning level diagnoses thus largely correspond to the results of a study by Meik Zülsdorf-Kersting, who compared current surveys with findings from the 1960s and 1980s under the title "Youth and the Holocaust" (Zülsdorf-Kersting, 2007). Throughout time, young people tended to "Hitlerize" the historical context of the national socialist dictatorship and to adopt morally simplistic black-and-white schemes.

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German lessons (e.g. Diekhans, 2003). In addition to the relevant textbook publishers, numerous civil society organizations offer learning materials.[7] They all emphasize the didactic potential of The Diary of Anne Frank in school lessons. In the following remarks, I will concentrate on the aspect that it is a particularly useful object for simultaneous literary and historical learning. I will elaborate on this idea on the basis of the peculiarity that this diary crosses between text types. It is a historical source or, more precisely, the self-witness ("ego-document") (Schulze, 1996) of a witness of that period. At the same time, it is world literature by a young female writer (Pressler, 2013). Characteristics of both types of texts are already inherent in the genesis of the work. Anne Frank wrote diaries from June 12, 1942 to August 1, 1944. In her notes, she offers deep insights into the world of thoughts and feelings of a young girl who spends her formative adolescent years hiding in a space of just a few square meters. She thus vividly documents the persecution of the Jews during the national socialist dictatorship. Until the spring of 1944, she wrote the diary only for herself. However, she changed her mind after listening to the radio and hearing the Dutch Minister of Education, who was in London in exile, talk about publishing diaries that dealt with the suffering of the Dutch during German occupation as soon as the war was over. She decided she would publish a book after the war, for which her diary would provide the basis. From then on, Anne Frank began to rewrite her notes for a broader audience. She shortened, supplemented, gave her housemates new identities, and was inspired by literary models of her time. As a result, four editions of the diary coexist today, each with a stronger emphasis on either the personal or the literary segments intended for publication (ibid.: 11pp.).

Based on the ambiguity of the diary as a text type – as a personal document of a time witness and as a literary work – the basic potential of a course of instruction can be outlined, which simultaneously paves historical learning paths in German lessons out of an arrangement of literary learning. In the following section, I will show that literary and historical learning do not compete with each other, nor do they simply complement each other. Rather, they can mutually reinforce each other: Literary learning competencies are more profoundly initiated by supplying simultaneous historical learning input while German teaching methods conversely enable historical learning. An essential prerequisite for success

7 The city of Amsterdam should certainly be highlighted here. The city provides a rich digital educational offering, https://www.annefrank.org.

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is that German lessons not only make use of the special literary quality of the diary, they also systematically integrate its characteristics as a contemporary witness document into the lessons. In doing so, German teachers should orient themselves on the didactic principles of history teaching in order to arrange a synergy between literary and historical learning.

Literary Learning with The Diary of Anne Frank

One of the main reasons for the recurring use of The Diary of Anne Frank in German classes lies in the literary quality of particular closeness. As an author, Anne Frank had a remarkable ability to speak and write, which she uses to create a strong closeness to the reader. This already happens through the form of her diary. She addresses her entries to 'Kitty', a fictitious pen pal. Her recurring form of address and letter – "Dear Kitty..." – invites the reader to assume the role of the pen pal throughout. In this way, the diary offers the reader a constant dialogue with an adolescent and a writer. Readers are invited to answer Anne Frank, to ask her questions, to confirm or contradict what she says. Above all, however, Anne Frank presents the most intimate type of text imaginable in the form of a diary through which she provides deep insights into the world of thoughts and feelings of an adolescent. In doing so, she deals with content that makes thinking and feeling empathetically possible, especially among those of her age – even 75 years after the diary was written. For example, Anne repeatedly argues with her parents and the people living in the back of the house. She lives out her anger, reports deep grievances, and expresses forgiveness. In this way, the author not only shows early adolescent readers her own culture of debate, she caricatures how adolescents sometimes still argue and sulk in adulthood. In many other places, Anne Frank shares with her readers the timeless experience of growing up. In the course of time, for example, she falls in love with Peter, a roommate at the back of the house. She plays the 'game of first love' from close and afar, from first kiss to first disappointment, from infatuation to rationalization, resembling the rules of a love game that people of the same age still play today when they lose their hearts for the first time while reading Anne Frank's diary. Last but not least, Anne dreams the dreams of young people who still have their lives ahead of them right up to the end of her notes. She harbors the desire to become a writer without anticipating the cruel end of her dream: At the moment of her recording, she is in the process of creating world literature without ever being able to experience the fulfillment of her dreams. The abrupt end of the diary allows the reader

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to participate in the story of an adolescent whose dreams of life, love of life, humor and infatuation are extinguished along with her life in the concentration camp of Bergen-Belsen. With her diary, Anne Frank gives the anonymous number of many millions of victims a tangible face and an accessible voice decades after the Holocaust.

The literary quality of proximity holds the potential to initiate certain competencies of literary learning in a special way. First of all, this concerns the ability to unfold imaginative sensual perceptions from reading a literary text (Spinner, 2006: 8). Reading literature requires the basic competence of assuming the "role of a director" for whom the literary text serves as the script of a film. Practiced readers succeed in bringing what they have read to life on the basis of their own imagination, in their mind's eye like a film (ibid.). German lessons want to create learning opportunities to develop this competence. The diary presents an ideal tool for this project because Anne Frank awakens the senses linguistically when she attempts, passage after passage, almost pedantically to describe the life and routine in hiding without leaving anything out. The reader sees, hears, smells and feels with her the life in the annex.

Furthermore, reading can be used to train "involved reading" (Spinner, 2006: 8p.) in a special way. Anne Frank keeps holding up a literary mirror for the reader by dealing with the timeless everyday questions of an adolescent: Looking into it presents an opportunity for identification. While reading, one sees oneself and one's own life-world experiences. The view can also be unsettling. Through confrontation with the otherness of the fates, experiences, feelings or ways in which Anne Frank and the other protagonists act as part of a group of Jewish persecutees, the diary simultaneously makes experiences of alterity and difference possible. Literary learning then transcends the process level of text comprehension and necessitates readers to develop the willingness to invest existing knowledge, emotional engagement, and self-reflection in reading processes by linking what they read back to their own experiences and life-world and, based on the reading experience, begin to reflect on themselves (Rosenbrock & Nix, 2017). Such reading experiences of identification, alterity/difference, and self-reflection ultimately enable moments of literary follow-up communication as exchange and debate about the literary experience in German class, but also with peers or family after actual class time. Thus, the literary experience enters the realm of social interaction.

In order to develop these competencies at a literary learning level, reception-aesthetically inspired action-and-production oriented methods play a key role (Spinner, 2011). In this case, the reader in the role of co-author is placed at the center of the learning arrangement. Action-and-production

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oriented German language teaching acknowledges that literature sometimes has ambiguous voids of meaning formation, which mature readers plausibly fill with meaning that is fed by their own worlds, imagined and existing. Teaching literature aims to enable processes of meaning construction, for example, by having students add to passages in the text, rewrite them or transfer them into other media formats (Spinner, 2006: 9). The Diary of Anne Frank offers a number of opportunities for this. For example, the author mentions dialogues that were not written down in the diary itself, such as when Anne Frank's sister, Margot, tells her that the Gestapo wants to arrest her. Anne Frank also refers to conversations of this kind when debating war events at the dinner table in the annex and arguing about everyday life in hiding or when Peter and Anne exchange ideas about their relationship after their time in hiding. In their role as co-authors, students can fill in these missing dialogues, act them out or film them. Comparing the different versions then creates further opportunities for communication.

Following action-and-production oriented procedures, students can, for example, be confronted with "cultural patterns of feeling" (Ulrich & Ulrich, 1994) that tie in with their power of imagination and world of experience through tasks such as: *You have reflected on the relationship between Anne and her mother. In comparison to Anne, what is love between parents and their children for you?* Other models of feeling might be: *What does friendship, fear of death, the loss of a loved one or imprisonment feel like?* German lessons can also address students' "moral judgment" based on the diary (Spinner, 2001): "*Anne calls the helpers "heroes". What is a hero to you? Do you think that the helpers of the people in the secret annex were heroes? Would you have helped the people in hiding?*". As illustrated, literature classes can take advantage of the diary's proximity in language, form, and content and open learning paths to develop sensory perceptual power among students, encourage involved reading, stimulate experiences of identification and difference/age, initiate processes of self-reflection, and provide opportunities for literary follow-up communication that links to cultural patterns of feeling and moral judgment.

Synergies of Historical and Literary Learning with The Diary of Anne Frank

In addition to these learning opportunities, this diary offers further didactic potential as a historical contemporary witness document. Literature always consists of a weave of fiction and reality. In The Diary of Anne Frank, the elements of reality are more tangible than in conventional

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fiction. The author regularly and explicitly refers to past reality in her notes. As a contemporary witness document, her individual narrative is consistently linked to historical macro events. When readers without a pronounced historical background encounter such links, they are inevitably confronted with the limits of their ability to make sense of them. They lack knowledge of historical contexts that cannot be filled with meaning simply by drawing on their own experiences and lifeworld. In a lively classroom atmosphere, the limits of meaning construction are usually expressed in comprehension questions put forward by the students. Examples of this are: *Why were Anne and her family persecuted? Why were the people living in the secret annex helped even though it was so dangerous? Who did the people living in hiding have to fear and who betrayed them? Why did the annex residents hope for an Allied victory? What happened to Anne, other Jews and victims of the Holocaust in Auschwitz? etc.* Didactic manuals for teaching German tend to anticipate student questions of this kind. Common teaching models include basal textbook texts, timelines, or references to documentaries that summarize historical background information in a condensed form (e.g. Fenske, Schurf & Wagner, 2011). This is based on the well-intended thinking around wanting to contribute towards the prereading plan for the students. The students should be prevented from crossing their limits of meaning construction, so that the actual agenda of literary learning is not lost sight of. I argue that this common practice contributes both to missing out on opportunities for historical learning and leaving untapped potential within literary learning.

In place of the prereading plan, I propose a problem oriented and problem-solving approach in German lessons, which would normally be the starting point of competence-oriented history lessons in teaching models (Hensel-Grobe, 2017). A history lesson of this kind takes up students' questions, reformulates them into "historical guiding questions" (Thünemann, 2013: 146), the investigative and exploratory clarification of which supports and drives the instruction during the course of the lesson. Such a procedure can certainly be integrated into arrangements of literary learning, which can be illustrated using early passages of the diary.

At the beginning of her diary, Anne Frank vividly recounts the tightening of Jewish policy in the Netherlands, the obligation to wear the Jewish star, the ban on driving, the restriction of shopping to certain times, a curfew, the compulsion only to go to Jewish hairdressers or schools, or the prohibition on engaging in leisure activities. When the Nazis began deportations in Holland as well, Anne Frank and her family were eventually forced to flee to the hiding place at the back of her father's factory. At this point, German lessons can take up Anne Frank's narrative of the

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tightening of racial laws under the national socialist dictatorship. The subject of the lesson sequence becomes the leading historical question of why and in what ways Jews like Anne were persecuted by Nazis. Dealing with this question makes it necessary to reconstruct the story of Anne Frank historically. In this endeavor, German lessons can adopt moments of the history didactic principle of "multiperspectivity" (Lücke, 2017). This is based on the assumption that history is always told and judged from different perspectives. Historical learning aims to develop the students' ability to understand and judge such multi-perspective views on history independently.

Anne Frank's descriptions of the intensification of racial policy can be complemented by the perpetrator's perspective in order to make the national socialist crimes comprehensible "as cases in history of human deeds" in the sense of a "Holocaust education", which were not perpetrated by "demonic bloodthirsty maniacs" (Mounajed, 2017: 287). In this sense, the systematics of discrimination, isolation, deprivation of rights, torment, and the eventual extermination of Jews from 1933 onwards can be elaborated on beyond contextual knowledge with the use of examples. It makes sense to focus on one of the peaks of the intensification of national socialist racial policy in order to relate it to the story of Anne Frank. This could be the Nuremberg Laws (1935), the November pogroms (1938), the introduction of the Jewish star (1941) or the Wannsee Conference (1941), in which the extermination of the Jews was decided and coordinated. The historical learning path can then make use of further moments of the multi-perspective principle. Anne Frank describes her everyday life before going into hiding – as a student at a Jewish school and as a teenager who experiences torment and discrimination by racial politics. This perspective can be contrasted with the everyday life of other young people of her time. Thus, a learning assignment might be: *Write a diary entry from the perspective of a student at your school during the time of the national socialist dictatorship. Explore what everyday life was like at your school in Anne Frank's time.* School archives often house instructive contemporary documents that can be used for the learning task. Anne Frank's documentation can not only be compared with everyday experiences of her time but dealing with it also creates the opportunity to compare the everyday life of that time with the life of today's students, keeping the present and living environment in mind (Lücke, 2017).

Numerous other opportunities for creating a lesson topic by linking the narrative of the individual with macro events in history present themselves throughout the diary in the manner described. For example, Anne writes large parts of the diary as a member of a community of hiders. At this

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point in the diary, German lessons can show the possibilities and limits of escaping persecution by fleeing into exile or going into hiding through comparisons of the lives of the people living in the secret annex with descriptions of the fates of others persecuted under National Socialism. Later, Anne Frank reports from the annex about the mortal fear of being discovered, about the promise of defeating the Nazis in the war as being the annex residents' only chance of survival, about hope-inciting English radio reports on Italy's surrender or the Allied landings in Normandy. At the same time, she writes of traumatizing bomb-filled nights. At these points, the diary makes it possible to reconstruct Anne Frank's perspective on the events of the war. The diary also tells the story of helpers who put their own lives in danger in order to save those in the secret annex. Mirroring the story of the helpers, Anne Frank documents the collaboration in the Netherlands with the Nazis and the spread of antisemitism among Dutch people as well. The diary shows that even under Nazi rule there were opportunities for personal decision making and chances to take different courses of action, resisting or collaborating, which can be used to explore the question of guilt in depth.

If German lessons succeed in reconstructing the individual narration of Anne Frank within the events of macro-history and/or in comparing it with other perspectives of her time, historical learning paths will be taken that also benefit the return on literary learning. By answering leading historical questions, the students work out how macro-historical puzzle pieces such as the intensification of racial politics, the war, deportation, the Holocaust, forms of resistance or collaboration fit into the individual narrative of the diary and Anne Frank's fate. This way students can experience that, for Anne Frank as well as for other contemporaries, one's own life is attached to institutions, structures, policies, and events of general historical significance (Brauch, 2016: 13). Moreover, in the diary, in addition to the inhabitants of the annex, such as the helpers or the collaborating Dutch, Hitler and "the Jews" are joined by other groups of people who went their specific way through the period of the early 1940s. When students independently explore and reflect on this via historical learning paths, it also benefits the development of their competency in literary learning. Their literary meaning construction is then not only linked to individual imagination and personal experience but also to new historical knowledge, which in turn helps to compensate for the gaps in the diary and its lack of closure. In this way, students develop literary skills that will also help them in later readings. The historical learning paths enable them to decipher the diary's web of fiction and historical reality independently. This also offers new opportunities for follow-up communication as, during the

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course of reading, the students are enabled to judge and reflect on the historical content, beyond cultural patterns of feeling and morality. The individual narrative of Anne Frank is cause for the evaluation of morality, attitude, responsibility and guilt during the national socialist dictatorship. German lessons then simultaneously initiate moments of competence in historical orientation and judgment in an arrangement of literary learning (Becker, 2017). Overall, this synergetic interweaving of literary and historical learning makes a more complex literary experience possible in German lessons than if the paths of historical learning are abbreviated by fleeting prereading plans. In teaching practice, the historical learning paths should be integrated into complex, problem-solving learning tasks or the creation of large learning products of literary learning, as is customary in contemporary and competence-oriented literature teaching (Köster, 2016). For example, they can be task components of reading portfolios/diaries or can be integrated into the production of podcasts, video clips, theater productions, or exhibitions.

Showing the Unshowable?

In the above explanations, the focus was on the aspect of how literature lessons can benefit from historical learning paths. Furthermore, a final in-depth look at the lesson shows how a subject-specific contribution of German lessons to historical-political education can look. With an abrupt end to the diary entries, students inevitably ask the question: *What happened to Anne Frank and the people living in the secret annex?* Linked to this is the thematization of the deportation and murder of over six million people in the concentration and extermination camps under national socialist dictatorship. Dealing with the Holocaust in the school classroom is fundamentally extremely emotionally challenging for both teachers and learners (Mounajed, 2017: 266). It is difficult to deal appropriately with the mass extermination of human beings within the frame of physical education and math classes. For good reasons, learning about the Holocaust therefore often takes place at extracurricular learning sites over the course of full-day or multi-day excursions. If the subject is dealt with in class, children and teenagers should not be left alone with their emotions. The lesson design should be situationally flexible in order to relieve emotions, to reflect on them and, if necessary, to adapt lesson plans in consultation with the students (ibid.).

One possibility for dealing with the Holocaust in the context of the lesson is to deal with the literary adaptation of the diary by director Hans

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Steinbichler released in 2016. The film is a useful learning tool for German lessons. In principle, working with it enables a comparison between the students' imaginative conception and Steinbichler's film adaptation and fictionalization. In dealing with the film adaptation, it becomes clear that Steinbichler has chosen to tell Anne Frank's story beyond the notes of the diary by tracing the deportation and arrival at Auschwitz in two final scenes. During the deportation, Anne gazes into the camera in an extreme close-up shot. Shadows cast around her eyes suggest a crack of light in a freight car. Like a diary entry, she reports on the horrible conditions in the wagon and on her fear and despair in the face of approaching death. In this deportation scene, the view exceeds Anne Frank's boundaries of intimacy and uses the medium of film to establish closeness in the conceivably brutal moment of impending death (Haag, 2016). The following scene shows the arrival of Anne Frank, her mother, and her sister in Auschwitz as they are tattooed with prisoner numbers and have their hair shaved off. The tattooing and the violently exposed scalp are symbolic of the excessive degradation and dehumanization in the camp (ibid.). This fictionalization of Anne Frank's development through the cinematic tools of visual language and alienation make it possible to address the Holocaust during class time as well. Since both scenes refrain from the direct depiction of violence, mountains of corpses, gassing and crematoria, it is left to the imagination, emotional readiness and cognitive development of the individual students which images are evoked and which feelings are set in motion. At this point, fictionality provides emotional relief.

Furthermore, German lessons are able to problematize the cinematic representation of the deportation and the arrival in Auschwitz. For as long as there have been films about the Holocaust, filmmakers, critics, and above all Holocaust survivors have debated the ethically justifiable and culturally appropriate aesthetics of the depiction of industrial mass murder (for more details, see Schultz, 2012). Students can be familiarized with the different positions within this debate and find answers to the controversies in class in conjunction with the literary adaptation of the diary: *Is Auschwitz unrepresentable? Can the traumatic experiences of the survivors be conveyed on film at all? What forms of representation would have been alternatives to Steinbichler's realization? Does omitting the extreme violence of mass extermination amount to trivialization? Conversely, does showing depictions of violence run the risk of putting viewers in a voyeuristic perspective, scaring them off, or even triggering a habituation effect?* Students can evaluate and discuss questions of this kind by taking on the role of film critics with which they are partly familiar (Petrik, 2016). This way of problematizing the fictionalization of the Holocaust also presents the opportunity to bring indi-

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viduals' emotions into the classroom and to reflect on them when students share what moved them emotionally about Steinbichler's filmic portrayal. That way, it is not only competency in film analysis that is initiated by addressing the aesthetic effect of camera angles and perspectives, visual language and alienation. Historical-political judgment skills develop at the same time as students learn to evaluate the difficulties of fictionalizing the Holocaust according to ethical-moral standards. Thus, German lessons provide them with the capacity for historical-political action, which is particularly important for the generation currently growing up. The students practice the skill of discussing ethically and morally appropriate medialization, sometimes also fictionalization of the memory of the Holocaust. The critical examination of this adaptation of literature for screen thus becomes a way of assessing action alternatives hypothetically, thus being part of the memory culture of the future without having been a contemporary witness.

Synergetic Learning Arrangements as Part of a Strengthening of Historical-political School Education

Using examples, my insights into the course of instruction have shown that the learning outcome of subject instruction can benefit from the integration of historical-political learning paths. Synergetic learning arrangements of the kind described can help to make historical-political school education more immediate as a cross-sectional task of all subjects. In the future, this will require a change in thinking at many levels of school life: Teachers should explore how historical-political learning paths can be integrated into the curricula of their lessons. At the level of school development, individual initiatives of this kind can lead to interdisciplinary curricula or generally applicable standards for social science content areas for the teaching of all subjects. Most importantly, rethinking subject didactics at universities and the second phase of teacher training is needed.[8] So far, the chairs of history and political didactics as well as the teacher training colleges have not provided enough impetus to perceive historical-political education as a cross-sectional task beyond the boundaries of the subjects. Interdisciplinary exchange at specialist conferences and in subject didactic publications would be necessary. This would provide the basis for interdisciplinary or interconnecting teacher training programmes or

8 See footnote 3.

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practical teaching materials – in the sense of historical-political education in German, maths or biology lessons.

However, if the constitutional mandate of historical-political education is to be implemented in schools on a permanent, reliable basis and in accordance with robust quality standards, fundamental changes are required. The small number of weekly hours that is allocated to the study of social science and history by the educational policy and school system administrative control is evidence of the relatively low value placed on democracy education. The constitutional mandate thus remains a well-intended appeal that repeatedly puts teachers in the position of having to confront practical problems and challenges regarding its conscientious implementation. In the long run, there is no way around a reform initiative to expand the number of weekly hours of social studies. At a few schools, mostly in comprehensive schools with a model character, it has now been proven for decades that the combination of social science subjects (history, politics, geography) is taught throughout – with main subject status and a weekly share of up to four hours. If historical and political education were given the same space as the humanities and mathematics/science subjects, this would not only create more learning time. After all, timetables are the 'hard currency' of the education system. Various financial flows from the education budget depend on them. This affects not only the funding of new teaching positions but also that of study places, professorships and staff at universities, as well as teacher training. Strengthening the subject teaching would benefit the qualification and professionalization of historical-political school education as a whole, both in its perception as a cross-sectional task of all subjects and in the socio-scientific subject network.

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