

Exploring Discursive Absence of Colonialities in German Pedagogies: A Sociological-Psychoanalytical Exploration

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Abstract

The relationship between affect, spatiality and pedagogical appropriation has in recent years received increased scholarly attention. In this article, a sociological-psychoanalytical exploration of historical praxis in German memory culture across pedagogical sites highlights the importance of absent historical discourses in determining collective understanding of memory, space, affect and subsequent ideation of empathy (or the lack of the same). Drawing primarily from Deleuzean and Lefebvrian premises, this brief reflection sheds light on the minutiae associated with selective remembrance and colonial amnesia. It examines how a fractured memory culture cross-pollinates with the inability to construct learning environments that draw upon collective mnemonic experience as multidirectional praxis, and is thus incapacitated of indulging in considerate treatment of traumatic memory as an advent point to move towards collectivised reparation.

Keywords: Pedagogy, Spatiality, Colonialism, German memory culture, Reparation

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Introduction. History as Memory, Memory as an Extension of Collectivised Affect

The German state has long been looked upon as a positive example in terms of incorporating the harrowing memories of its past, namely the *Shoah* (Holocaust) as a part of its pedagogical apparatus in terms of teaching or communicating history. This notion perhaps emerges from the dire portrayal of historical inconveniences such as colonial atrocities, fascisms and genocides in the global north in general, and the institutional standard practice of their non-portrayal in history education emergent from such traditions. This paper makes an argument regarding the proliferative capacity of absent discourses in memory making practice in contemporary German pedagogies. It highlights the case of German exceptionalism with the Holocaust, and compares and contrasts that with absent discourses in relation to other colonial and genocidal atrocities committed by the German state. Subsequently, the paper offers the theoretical foundations of a non-linear and multidirectional historiography as a possible advent point for progressive reparation of traumatic collective pasts.

Recent enquiries regarding the definitive absence of German colonialism in Africa highlights the preservation of a politics of convenient amnesia that has dominated education policy in Germany in the recent times (Unangst & Martínez Alemán, 2021; Makaza-Goede, 2024). German exceptionalism associated with the *Shoah* further translates into a hierarchical mode of historical interpretation that ranks other colonial atrocities as somehow less devious than the Holocaust (Melber, 2024a; Goldmann, 2024). Not only is this irrelevant from the perspectives of those who

have suffered the impact of these atrocities, it has significantly derogatory impact in terms of remaining possibilities of transformative and reparative justice.

In 2015, the German government attempted to establish bilateral negotiations for recognition of genocide committed in colonised South West Africa - what has become the present state of Namibia. The state of negotiations as well as Germany's overall relationship with Namibia further worsened when on 12 January, 2024, a 120 years after the advent of the Namibian-German war, Germany declared itself an ally to the state of Israel in support of its engagement with war crimes committed in Occupied Palestine whereas Namibia had supported South Africa's case against Israel in the International Court of Justice (Melber, 2024), which has now culminated into arrest warrants being issued against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his former defence minister Yoav Gallant. Namibia's President Hage Geingob condemned German allegiance to the state of Israel as an extension of the German state's continuity in aiding neo-colonial interventions. The situation possibly worsened when on the occasion of Holocaust Remembrance day on 27 January 2024, the German embassy officially commemorated "#Never Again" on social media, yet simultaneously exempting the fact that on the exact same date, the first concentration camps in South Africa were shut down (Ibid). Goldmann (2024, p. 606) makes an interesting case in regard to the analysis of war crimes committed by the German state alongside its other European neighbours in the late 19th and early 20th century as somehow being deemed legitimate on the basis of legal ambiguity, then allowing a moral catharsis by determining colonial atrocities to the category of "moral wrongdoing". This interpretation

transcends into an apparently “selfless” *Ver-gangenheitsbewältigung* (public remembrance and contestation of post-WWII German history and society) confirming moral, national and civilisational superiority. He remarks that by “juxtaposing past law with contemporary morality, amnesia goes full circle”.

The German colonial regime in Rwanda systematically favoured the economically and socially privileged Tutsi elite legitimising a racial pedagogy that established them as being superior to the Hutu population. Although in case of Namibia and Rwanda, Germany has made attempts to offer compensatory justice in the form of financial aid, very little material effort has been taken to address the colonial atrocities committed in both spaces (see Scholz, 2015; Brockmeir-Large and Peez, 2024). The relationship between colonial Germany and Cameroon had been historiographically mislabelled to be a “peaceful pacification” while atrocious colonial practices such as human trafficking and flogging flourished under this regime (Melber, 2024b). The German colonial regimes that operated, albeit briefly, in Togo or erstwhile New Guinea were also subject to colonial degradation, humiliation and expropriation.

The racist, discriminatory epistemological and mnemonic practice of silent ranking of colonial atrocities committed by the German state is combined with what Özyürek (2023) and Rothberg (2009, 2019) highlight in what epistemically translates into a hyper-emphasis on Holocaust studies that is largely imbued with the coloniser’s interpretation of how coloniality affects the colonised. This practice translates semantically into an exclu-

sionary habit of affective interpretation of colonial horrors. Nazism/fascism, as a symbiotic entity to the colonial paradigm and the root cause of the Holocaust is further subject to a monolithic, non-relativist interpretation that is best described as a hyperscientificist hangover that continues to dominate German public discourse. This is most directly extended in the statist suppression and erasure of the degree and extent of war crimes committed by the state of Israel in Occupied Palestine. Such erasure is further aided by policing that is epistemic but policing that is simultaneously corporeally constraining and radically colonises all forms of democratic, individual autonomy over one’s body, space and time.

In his iconic documentary film on time, history and memory, ‘Sunless’ (1983), Chris Marker takes up the role of provocateur and philosopher to remark: “Memory is to one what history is to the other...We don’t remember. We rewrite memory much as history is rewritten.” He makes numerous other iterations regarding the persistence and perpetuation of memory, time, bodies and colonisation as he uses the islands of Japan and Guinea Bissau to shed light on the liminalities shared by them, while making simultaneous references to colonisation and proliferativity of spatialities.

Since the classroom setting acts as a space that allows history to be recreated and reiterated, both the static and performative aspects employed for recuperation of collective memories retain a dialectical position spatio-culturally. Keeping in mind that pedagogical spaces can reproduce fresh iterations of cultural spaces at what Walter Benjamin calls *jetztzeit*¹ (Redmond, 2005), it is important to

¹*Jetztzeit* can be directly translated into “time that is now” or “present time”. Redmond (2005) efficiently translates this as “here and now” in Walter Benjamin’s

interpretation of the density/multiplicity of present time as opposed to the positivist interpretation of empty time that is homogenous.

remember that such spaces are capable of producing memories that vary regionally and relationally alluding to the geopolitical specificity and history of said space.

While there has been a growing scholarly emphasis placed on the complex relationship shared between emotions and memory in the recent years (Zembylas et al., 2014), correlating memory studies with affect is a relatively fresh approach. It is a discipline in development, and strikingly under researched in the German institutional context. Cronin (2022) in their recent article on the German state's selective remembering sheds light on an emphasis on the Holocaust within German educational curricula, but barely enough context or subject matter to relate to the intricacies of Germany's colonial legacy that subsequently paves a praxis of non-addressal that fits the scope of its neo-colonial present. This entails a politics of selective amnesia further observable in the German state's relentless support towards the war crimes committed by the state of Israel and its discursive treatment of the genocide in Occupied Palestine and Israeli violence witnessed in its neighbouring states in the Middle East (Ibid.).

In a broader context, historical erasure and/or absence can be associated with a superficial, reductive understanding of the affective experience of colonialism (Özyürek, 2023) in the classroom setting. Since classroom pedagogies rudimentarily interact with public pedagogies that persist beyond institutional realms, absent historical discourses pervade both the dominant cultural matrix and the hegemonies that constitute them, creating a planar space that is mutative between classrooms as well as larger public pedagogies and vocabularies.

Discursive Absence and Selective Amnesia in German Pedagogical Spaces

Deleuze (1989, pp. 206-207) marks affect as “a passage or transition from one state to another” and memory as a “membrane which in the most varied ways, makes sheets of the past and layers of reality correspond, the first emanating from an inside which is always already there, the second arriving from an outside always to come, the two gnawing at the present which is now only their encounter”. The institutionalised pedagogical setting, i.e. the German classroom in this case, is a space that serves the purpose of cultivating and subsequently transmitting and embodying memories (see Zembylas et al., 2014). Since such memories are largely socially accomplished, so is the dialectical inculcation of the absence of the same.

The act of forgetting and remembering in the pedagogical setting is thus a bodily act. Memory, emotion and affect are inter-dependent, inter-relational (Curti, 2008) and cross-mutative agents, and it is both epistemically and corporeally impossible to extricate them as disjoint realities bereft of their correlational proclivities. This creates a body politics – in both its psychoanalytic and sociological functions that responds to stimuli drawn from the metaphorical, rhetorical and dialogical aspects of portrayal of histories and political spaces that interact in the classroom setting. The interrelationship between public pedagogies and institutional spaces such as classrooms renders the latter as spatial grounds that allow inculcation of meaning making and encourage the production of interactive semanticity through the means of embodied and/or performed memory.

German pedagogical memory in the recent past has been understudied critically. While the German pedagogical model is often

looked upon as one that acknowledges the Holocaust (albeit disregarding a nuanced and inclusive epistemic treatment of the subject matter), it barely manages to touch upon the topic of Germany's brief yet dense account of colonial violence. This reductive discursive accumulation aids in the pedagogical affirmation of selective amnesia. Part of this phenomenon can be traced back to the *gebildete* elite having exercised a hegemonic monopoly on greater cultural narrative (Langenbacher & Eigler, 2005) that transmits through to the body of German public discourse.

The German pedagogical body as a collective space is henceforth both unable and unwilling to cater to the necessities of delving into an anatomy of a cohesive, holistic past, and remains preoccupied with its deliberate dissociativity from its mnemonic wounds. The vehement denial of a colonial history and monolithic, non-nuanced portrayal of a fascist past coupled with the affinity towards sabotaging affective recognition of colonial discourses causes a disjunction between what is cognitively grasped – and as Curti (2008) analyses, such praxis is furthered in the affective inability to recognise in greater depth how bodies that interact within the pedagogical systems create inter-relational environments and interdependencies to (re)produce memories of their own.

These memories are consolidated through the means of interweaving past traumas that are individually as well as collectively constructed at a given time alluding to the specificities of the social setting. Since the dominant cultural matrix in Germany is ruled by a majoritarian, arguably Kantian (see Allen, 2017, pp. 69-71; Wittlinger & Boothroyd, 2010) reading of history, such a trend is adopted in the classroom setting as an embodiment and extension of greater hegemonic

practice. A further inability to identify with historical erasure (Özyürek, 2023; Rothberg, 2009, 2019; Younes & Al-Taher, 2024; Melber & Kössler, 2020; Mishra, 2024) in such a context proves counterintuitive (albeit unsurprising), leading to reductive understanding of concepts associated with social stratification and power hierarchies such as hegemonisation, colonisation, colonialism and occupation. This phenomenon both appropriates and reproduces a steady pattern of mnemonic dissonance through the hegemonic practice of fractured, selective remembering.

Michael Rothberg in his book 'The Implicated Subject' utilises Deleuzian interpretation of memory and power to highlight the (re)production of colonial spaces as configurations that maintain a contributive and constitutive function in terms of retaining control over absent pasts that culminate into convenient dislocation of presentist concerns. Recurring oblivion in discursive practice contributes to collective denial and has been noted to inculcate elements of manufactured apathy at a pedagogical level. Programmed oblivion synchronised as a non-realisation of affect is a relational entity that influences movement of one body to and through its relationship with other bodies. Özyürek (2023) observes that immigrant students in the German classroom setting generally share a complex relationship with the memory of the German role in the Holocaust as well as the impact that colonialism has had on their lives. Exercising a fractured memory culture that rampantly encourages historical erasure and selective amnesia is dually responsible for cultivating apathy amidst those who are unknowingly engaging in spatio-temporal, cognitive and affective obliviousness in terms of historiographical enmeshment (see McLaren, 1988). As a second-

ary impact of such historiographical distortion, an inability to empathise with embodied memories of colonial repression as experienced and embodied by the colonised continues to dilute its impact. This further affects opportunities to understand the materialisation of privileging associated with the hierarchisation of experience that is all encompassing in the sense that it is simultaneously epistemic, ontological and yet corporeal and material.

Middleton (2010) argues, drawing from Lefebvrian theory of space and Bernstein's concept of pedagogical device that colonial spatialities are reproducible and proliferative in terms of spatial practice and pedagogical appropriation. Since the German school curricula is immersed in denial of colonial subjugation and repression, it regresses to create spaces that reappropriate production of neo-colonial identities allowing neo-colonial spaces to be microcosmised into pedagogical space(s).

Melber and Kössler (2020) reflect on the persistence of colonial amnesia as creating dialogical spaces that are representative of pre-existent colonial legacy. On the one hand, wielding the *Shoah* as the only war crime that Germany has committed relieves the German state of coming to terms with trauma inflicted in terms of the pre-Holocaust colonial legacy. On the other, it allows it the bewildering audacity of continuing to aid ethnocidal and genocidal war crimes in the Middle Eastern states, whereby epistemically, discursively and materially aiding Israeli occupation in Palestine would at the given moment serve as the most prominent example. This schizoid oscillation between dissociation from a history of repression to deliberate participation and overt sympathisation of neo-colonial sentiments partly fuels the necessity to sustain a fractured memory culture that acts as a production site

of neo-colonial sabotage. Such sabotage in the pedagogical realm translates into discursive absence and/or uncritical depiction of both its past and its present that has relegated to a discourse of abundant victimhood complex in the realisation of German national belonging (Lerner, 2020).

Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992 p. 257) refer to absence as being "the most radical form of censorship". The absence of portrayal of past trauma in a broader epistemological context leads to the construction of fractured knowledge systems that do not engage in supporting sustainable or reparative pedagogical environments. Colonial amnesia (Melber & Kössler, 2020) as well as an overemphasis on postcolonial exotics (Huggan, 2001) in the German pedagogical setting has led to a recurrent pattern of reductive understanding of transnational justice, identities and bodies in terms of pedagogical practice in present day Germany.

It has previously been pointed out that Germany's colonial trajectories have been portrayed to be less devious than their fellow European neighbours owing to the comparatively reduced longevity of the German colonial empire. However, several historical studies have highlighted links between the German colonial empire and Nazi policies and practices (Friedrichsmeyer et al. 1998, p. 5; Bachmann, 2018). Keeping this in mind, it might be important to enquire about the implications of fascism in terms of the increasingly symbiotic relationship it has shared through the course of history with colonialism. Gilroy (1996, p. 26) argues that it is essential to emphasise on defining *fascism* through their shared affection of "colonial adventures" instead of treating *Fascism* as a mere concept bound within the territory of Europe's "private, internal drama". Given that the memory

of war crimes and colonial crimes beyond the vicinity of the *Shoah* barely penetrate the body of German pedagogical discourse, it is not quite absurd to imagine the sustained mnemonic dissonance that the persistence of such a gap sustains nationally across institutionalised spaces that are hegemonically obsessed with *gebildete* values and bourgeois humanism (Langenbacher&Eigler, 2005, p. 9).

Exoticisation of historical spatialities and deliberate repression of co-production of affective empathy in the learning environment has long been observed to recreate patterns of repression that are sustained in an apathetic neoliberal information economy. Such repression is usually implicated on the most vulnerable people and communities, as is exemplified in the case of the non-recognition of the suffering of the Palestinian people in German pedagogical discourse. In contrast, and as a reparative advent point, critical memorialisation that allows coming to terms with difficult histories and historical conjectures might pose alternative opportunities. This involves allowing critical examination of existential and material identities in order to move towards a memory culture of co-existence forged through shared melancholia and reparative empathy.

Moran (2004), drawing from Lefebvrian praxis, suggests *Alltagsgeschichte*, i.e. the history of everyday life as a method of delving into vernacular historiographies that are better rooted in the struggles of those who have been written out of history. This might aid in the process of critically examining *gebildete* value systems that continue to dominate the majoritarian and populist memory culture in Germany. In contrast to *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* that has consistently cross pollinated with “völkisch-authoritarian racism” (Mishra, 2024), *Alltagsgeschichte* asserts

upon the importance of denaturalising everyday life and life histories in order to spontaneously historicise underlying memory culture.

The task of connecting absent presences, is undoubtedly, a time consuming and spatially non-linear process. However, overcoming hierarchical differentiation through the process of meaning making exercise is not inherently coincident with the idea of Cartesian geometric congruency. It is an endless task to allow inculcation of traumatic memories that have remained oblivious or subject to erasure for a long period of time. Wyatt, Tamas and Bondi (2016, p. 38) describe the process of rhizomatic, non-hierarchical memorialisation as using a sieve to compartmentalise newly gained knowledge into existent modes/containers of knowledge.

Turning Away from Hierarchical Idealism

Germany’s infamous obsession with hyperscientific thought process (Ignatieff, 2011; Dahlberg & Moss, 2005; Wittlinger & Boothroyd, 2010) rooted in a politics of racial otherisation does not particularly fall in line with the idea of decolonisation. Wildenthal (2003, p. 147) asserts that Germany’s “non-postcolonial postcolonial” identity and by extension, its performative historiographic self-reflexive enquiries dispassionately exclude people of colour and uphold selective amnesia as a source of appropriating völkisch-authoritarian racism and German nationalist pride. It is not difficult to observe that at the core of what völkisch authoritarianism represents continues to persist an undeterred form of white supremacist, nationalist pride (Gilroy, 1996; Wildenthal, 2003; Mishra, 2024).

Memory as Praxis and Incorporating the History of the Undocumented and Unheard

In contrast to what *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* has been capable of offering, a reparative *Alltagsgeschichte* has the capacity to demystify historiography, and by extension, latent undertones that shape memory culture through the process of recognising history as an everyday life process rather than a mere abstraction that persists as a parallel, lifeless discourse. Identifying with the Lefebvrian distinction between information (conceived) and thought (perceived) (Fuchs, 2019) as well as the Deleuzian distinction between knowledge as “recognition of existent facts” in contrast to thought signifying “life and the possibility of change” (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005), memory and meaning making exercise exceeds the neo-Kantian interpretation of thought as a machination that is mechanistically and systematically absorbed. Berardi (2009, p. 10) observes the proliferation of knowledge related labour under neoliberal information economies as “a mobilisation of a mood...a point of inflexion for an impersonal affect that circulates like a rumour. The cognitariat carries a virus.”

Rothberg (2009) calls for multidirectionality in terms of memorialisation deviating from the essentially Western practice of hierarchising the impact of trauma or legitimising competitive memorialisation wherein the impact of one inherently leads to the substitution of the other. Instead, following the Deleuzian mode of transgressing the Cartesian hierarchy of thinking, (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. 114) one can imagine accommodating the previously unknown and the unexpected (Ibid; Wyatt et al., 2016) as pluralistic, rhizomatic epicentres. By acknowledging the many absences that are present around us in

everyday life, we are offered the opportunity to digress from the idea of deterministic dogmatism that a *gebildete* monopoly over German memory subsumes. Furthermore, it is important to identify that the site of colonial horrors practised by the German state spatially extend beyond the territory of the German nation state. As such, a pluralistic interpretation of what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) refer to as “striated space” might allow a re-addressal of trauma and enrich the multidirectionality of mnemonic becoming.

In the German pedagogical context, one is aware of the existence of what is either partially or wholly absent from history curricula: the case of other genocides beyond the *Shoah* (Holocaust). It is futile to doubt the importance of the emphasis on the Holocaust and “Never Again” campaigns. What is disturbing in this context is instead the active suppression of other traumatic memories associated with either the German colonial empire or the more recent and hence active memories of Germany’s complicity in aiding Israel in committing war crimes in the Middle East is a problem of rather serious nature. Bachmann (2018) highlights in depth the dense institutional continuities between the German colonies and the Nazi regime – the former having been, as both a discourse and discipline, largely subject to populist erasure in Germany. Furthermore, Melber (2024a) efficiently points out the deliberate weaponisation of generational guilt subsequently cultivated to deny the proliferation of the German state’s failures in terms of recognition, realisation and reparation of its mnemonic becoming. Moran (2004) challenges uncritical sentimentalisation of memory that is popularly manufactured by the likes of heritage industries and is practised across wider populist cultures as is the case in context of the German

nation. Instead, he advises denaturalisation of the apparently banal, unromantic and often uninteresting phenomena as deserving of mnemonic constitution. The dialectical relationship shared between deconstruction, forgetting and affective remembrance is at least in a philosophical sense, juxtapositional.

One of the first questions that then arise associated with the selective amnesia surrounding Germany's past is that of deliberation. Given that this is a particularly tricky question to answer considering that it is difficult to draw a line of precision in terms of amnesia (also a practice that the article advocates deviating from) that takes place in a disordered, fractured memory culture that has long been conditioned in a monolithic, homogenous fashion to sabotage its own self into oblivion. The relationship between forgetting and/or deconstructing memory, as Game (1991) observes drawing from Walter Benjamin, is dialectically associated with spaces that allow cultivation of affective remembrance. Since memory culture is constructed of collectivised memories that are individuated at the advent point but then perpetuated through dialogue within one's material environment, it is an impossible task to precisely declare which part of Germany's colonial amnesia is a result of deliberate repression and what part of it is denial laden with conscious intent.

Game (1991) asserts that the distance between deconstruction and inculcation of memories are interconnected, and as Chris Marker in 'Sunless' remarks - "the function of remembering is not the opposite of forgetting but rather its inner lining", it might make sense to allow spontaneous memory formation through deliberate, conscious association between the various modes of what Wal-

ter Benjamin calls involuntary memory making. The *jetztzeit(ist)* concern, one that takes into account both the causality and implications of historical intent might prove necessary in this context as a part of pedagogical realisation. This could possibly allow translation of institutional pedagogical curricula into meaning making exercise amidst a pandemic of informational overload by resisting mechanistic accumulation and instead advocating creative thought.

As observed above, in both its Deleuzian and Lefebvrian interpretations, "thought" contains a humane input that exceeds the capacity of hyperscientificated, functionalist machinations that Kantian discourses have long advocated in the majoritarian interpretations of *gebildete* discourses in Germany. Creating avenues of cognitive remembrance that adhere to a holistic understanding of both colonial occupation and decoloniality might allow for an initial inculcation of pluralised epicentres of memory making associated with reparative mnemonic pedagogies. A rhizomatic, non-hierarchical interpretation of traumatic memory allows one to grasp time as dense (Rothberg, 2009, p. 80) and involuntarily associate with the complexity and multidirectionality of memory making exercise. Contrasted to what Benjamin defines as "homogenous and empty time" (Redmond, 2020) as being a positivist and reductive analysis of spatiality, he offers an alternative in terms of realisation of time in the "*Jetztzeit*" (here and now) to cater to presentist concerns and to enact implication of such realisation as being motivation behind engaging in the act of memory making. In inculcating a nationalist hegemonic culture by extending uncritical support to the war crimes committed by the state of Israel, and simultaneously using the *Shoah* as both a buffering agent and a

weaponised mnemonic device, German authorities have been failing their responsibility to aid the task of reparative memorialisation both within and beyond the classroom setting.

Ignatieff (2011) and Dalhberg and Moss (2005) point out a hyperscientific historiography as being a part of dominant German memory culture. On the one hand, the *gebildete* value system has perennially expressed a disinterest in asking even metaphysical questions beyond the hierarchical modes of philosophical praxis. On the other, logical positivism that dominated German public discourse as a result wanted to separate itself from most elements of *Lebensphilosophie* (Ibid.). While the manifestation of such rigidity has been found to have materialised as the dominant colonial, racist and white version of populist German nationalism (see Bachmann, 2018; Curti, 2008; Atshan & Galor, 2020; Gilroy, 1996; Melber, 2024; Mishra, 2024), it is also representative of a way of life (Ignatieff, 2011) that then extends into a way of mechanistic knowledge production (see Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. 114). As an alternative to homogenisation of knowledge production in everyday life, Middleton (2010) advocates building participatory pedagogies that allow for the recognition of systematic colonisation that allows mobility towards decolonial praxis while engaging in reparative memory making exercise. For pedagogical praxis to evolve from one's material conditions, it is also necessary to move towards a "pedagogy of listening". Such a pedagogy, abiding by the Deleuzian-Lefebvrian idea of thought vs. knowledge/information, sets to incorporate a spontaneous recognition and acceptance of otherness (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, pp. 97-120) as both conscious pedagogical input and subconscious involuntary attachment.

Drawing from Melanie Klein's idea of encouraging love at the point of separation (Zembylas, 2016), recognition of otherness is a critical approach that resists the idea of a pre-deterministic positivist notion of empty time. Given that the dominant versions of German memory culture is saturated with uncritical deniability encouraged by *völkisch authoritarianism* proliferated by its rigid institutional metamorphosis of such values as a majoritarian, racist, populist national culture, it might be a good idea to identify the value of experiential trauma as means to divest from such malpractice. Recognising trauma associated with violent otherisation of Middle Eastern and African immigrants and incorporating an understanding of such trauma in terms of classroom praxis might (Özyürek 2023) allow one to engage in building reparative pedagogical praxis. By engaging in historical conscientisation comes the opportunity to recognise spatial practices that allow one to collectively grieve loss, and utilise the trauma built in the process to overcome political depression and cruel optimism (Bennington, 2010; Zembylas, 2016). In the German classroom setting, this will allow students to rethink and challenge the microfascist tendencies (Zembylas, 2016) that a crossfire of majoritarian nationalist value systems and institutional denial of histories of repression proliferatively manufacture.

While it remains an impeccably challenging task to curate reparative mnemonics without reproducing the very rigidity that is subject to critique in this context, presentist concerns associated with encouraging a pluralistic interpretation of "thought" set against the backdrop of a technocratic and apathetic information economy in itself makes fresh enquiries about the nature and shape of historiographical readings. In terms of German

memory culture, there is a bright possibility of recognising völkisch authoritarianism for what it has been translating to in pedagogical terms: namely, Islamophobia, anti-Arab, anti-Semitic and white supremacist sentiments subsequently institutionally manifested to proliferate in the lack of understanding of a repressive past, and henceforth arguably an equally vicious and traumatic present. The idea is to recognise colonial amnesia in an attempt long overdue to come to terms with white supremacy, white saviour complex and a facade of plausible white deniability as exemplified in the case of German advocacy of the state of Israel in the blatant massacre of the Palestinian people. It is in recognising these failures that critical historiographical and mnemonic pedagogies can be built. In so doing, it would allow the recognition and realisation of primal mnemonic wounds and trauma stemming from pedagogical erasures to resist participation in further colonial amnesia with an added advantage to critically resist the institutionally crafted weapon of plausible deniability.

Reparative mnemonic practice and pedagogisation is possible through the means of non-hierarchical engagement with meaning and memory making. Such practice should be guided by a rhizomatic and multidirectional approach to recognising past atrocities that subsequently open up possibilities of nomadic engagement with semantic becoming. Embodying the practice of mnemonic/semantic becoming allows wider scope of recognition of the complex bodies that constitute the affective alignment of history that otherwise faces the risk of being overwritten in everyday life.

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