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Declaration of Authenticity

I hereby declare that the present paper was conceived and composed all by myself. Verbatim quotations as well as any ideas or passages borrowed and paraphrased from the works of other authors are truthfully acknowledged and identified in the paper. References to primary and secondary sources are all fully and clearly stated in the bibliographical section.

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Sabrina Riegler

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1. Introduction

Despite the Apartheid regime's official abolishment over twenty years ago in South Africa (Mengel, Borzaga, and Orantes vii; Sullivan 295), the horror and maltreatment experienced during these dark decades of the South African history still linger amongst the nation's population. As the "nation [...] is still struggling with the burden of the past" (Mengel, Borzaga, and Orantes vii), South Africa can be considered a traumatised nation. This collective South African trauma has left those affected with the need of coming to terms with this national trauma. According to Mengel, Borzaga and Orantes (vii), this special need of working through the trauma has manifested itself in the fact that "trauma literature has flourished in the last two decades" (Mengel, Borzaga, and Orantes vii) in South Africa. Analysing those trauma novels that have been published in the aftermath of the Apartheid regime, it becomes apparent that they frequently feature and centre on the relationship between trauma and art, pointing out the healing function that the active creation or passive consumption of pieces of art might have on traumatised individuals. Therefore, the present diploma thesis focuses on art's enabling function of coming to terms with the trauma experienced due to Apartheid, concentrating on four selected South African trauma novels that are pervaded by the theme of art as a means of coming to terms with trauma. Two of those four selected novels were written by the South African author Zakes Mda, namely *The Heart of Redness* and *Ways of Dying*. Furthermore, the novels *A Quilt of Dreams* by Patricia Schonstein and *The Dreamcloth* by Joanne Fedler function as a basis for discussion.

First of all, the thesis focuses on those theoretical concepts that are indispensable for the analysis of the four trauma novels, namely trauma and art theory. In terms of trauma theory, special focus is put on the South African collective trauma resulting from the segregational Apartheid ideology. Moreover, further attention is paid to the intergenerational trauma of the Jewish population due to the Holocaust, since two of the four selected trauma novels not only centre on the South African but also on the Jewish collective trauma. With regard to art theory, the nature of art in general, its various subcategories as well as its healing power in relation to trauma are thematised. Lastly, the analysis of the four trauma novels, which is based on those theoretical notions, constitutes the practical part of the thesis.

2. Trauma theory¹

2.1. Definition of the term *trauma*

In contrast to the term *trauma*'s original Greek signification, which would be described as "to physically wound, disturb or pierce the corporeal boundaries" (Garland and Leydesdorff et al. referred to in Denham 395) and therefore focused on the physical aspect of pain, the term's signification has shifted towards a more psychological meaning. Although Cox (65) believes that trauma implies both physical as well as psychological damage, her colleagues, like for example Stolorow and Caruth, no longer solely focus on physical pain, but rather concentrate on the human psyche and the emotional pain that originates from an extremely unbearable experience. In fact, Caruth (3) describes trauma as "a wound inflicted not upon the body but upon the mind" and Denham (395) outlines that "its meaning is expanded to incorporate the emotional insult or shock to the mind".

2.2. Traumatic events

Hirsch (9) outlines that the term trauma has been extensively used throughout the fields of psychoanalysis, psychotherapy as well as the field of social work and many other similar areas during almost the last three decades. Although the term has been used in these slightly different contexts and has been applied to varying settings, according to Hirsch (9), the term has always been understood as a strong, destructive force from the outside world that is capable of having a lasting negative impact on the human psyche, leaving the affected person unable to integrate the tremendous distress caused by the exterior event into the "self" of the person in question, as normal coping mechanisms cannot be applied successfully to the traumatic event (also see Huber 40).

2.2.1. Fight-or-flight-reflex versus freeze-and-fragment-reflex

Likewise Hirsch, Huber (40) characterises a traumatic event as an "extreme situation" for which the affected person is not prepared. Their coping mechanisms that would

¹ Cf. S. Riegler, pp. 4-11

normally help to avert danger do not longer work properly, as they are overwhelmed by aversive (hostile) stressors (Huber 40). One of those widely known coping mechanisms that have naturally developed in the history of humankind is the *fight-or-flight-reflex* (Huber 41). As its name already suggests, this human reflex dictates that one out of two reactions should follow a stressful event: As a response to this event the person in question should either fight the source of distress or flee the surrounding that produces or promotes the stressors (Huber 41). Riegler (4-5) summarises that although the stressful event might place a significant amount of negative arousal on the affected person for a shorter period, “this certain reflex may enable the person to avoid emotional reactions of its most extreme form, namely trauma” (see Huber 41).

In the case that this very basic human reflex does not automatically occur when confronted with a potentially endangering situation, another reflex takes the place of the *fight-or-flight-reflex*, namely the *freeze-and-fragment-reflex* (Huber 43). This second reflex can be observed with traumatised individuals and is in Huber’s (43) opinion the only other way to save the self from dissolution if the *fight-or-flight-reflex* fails. Instead of fighting or fleeing, the brain “freezes” and tries to numb the negative feelings and to neutralise mortal fear evoked by the stressor through the release of endorphins (Huber 43). Physiological reactions normally attributed to distressing occurrences like screaming or crying cannot be observed, as they are suppressed and numbed by the endorphins (Huber 43). Those reactions can only make their way back to the surface when the state of extreme alertness subsides (Huber 43). Besides this numbing of painful emotions through endogenous chemical substances, this reflex also aims at shielding the self via a tunnel vision that blends out the horrifying sensations – thus, an estrangement from the endangering event is sought (Huber 43). The fragmenting component characteristic of this reflex is closely connected to this estrangement: The traumatising experience is broken into many pieces and fragments (figuratively speaking) that all get pushed away by the traumatised individuals in order to distance themselves in a way from the – as Huber (43) would call it – “external incident” that prior connections between those single fragments can no longer be identified (Huber 43). In other words, the actual traumatising event (the *what*) can no longer be recalled but only the fact *that* something terrible has happened (Huber 43-44).

In summary, the *freeze-and-fragment-reflex* functions as a “defensive mechanism that is characterised by signs of mental paralysis and estrangement from the stressful situation” (Riegler 5) and can be identified as a reflex occurring in traumatised individuals.

2.2.2. Diversity of reactions to potential traumatic stressors

On basis of Waldram’s findings, Denham (395) concludes that traumatic experiences can be caused by an “accumulation of mild stressors over time, or as a single traumatic event”. Similarly, taking Lenore Terr as a basis, Allen (6) distinguishes between *single-blow trauma* and *repeated trauma*. Another special form of trauma is the condition of *collective trauma*, which will be discussed in great detail in subsequent sections of the thesis. Whereas a *single-blow trauma* is caused by an isolated, onetime traumatising event that “produce[s] enduring traumatic reactions in some individuals” (Allen 6), *repeated trauma* “can be characterised by a temporal repetition, not restricting itself to happen only once” (Riegler 6; see Allen 6).

Examples for the type of *single-blow trauma* are natural disasters like hurricanes, floods or earthquakes, technological disasters that encompass tragic incidents like “dam breaks, building collapses, plane crashes, chemical spills, and nuclear reactor failures” (Allen 6) as well as isolated, unrepeated acts of violent behaviour like sexual abuse, forceful robbery or homicide (Allen 6). With regard to criminal violence, Allen (6) states that this kind of *single-blow trauma* might not only negatively affect the victim of the crime, but might also have a traumatising impact on the eye-witnesses of the crime and on the next of kin.

If multiple occasions of traumatising situations can be identified, the trauma and psychological distress caused by these incidents would be classified as *repeated trauma* (Allen 6). *Repeated trauma* can typically be detected with those human beings who have experienced traumatising war, combat or imprisonment situations, or more general any other repeated acts of physical and mental violence over a longer period of time (Allen 6). Thus, without a doubt, the concentrations camps employed in the Holocaust have been one indisputable source of *repeated trauma* (Allen 6). Despite acknowledging the tremendous traumatising effect of single-blow events, Allen (6) concludes that “the traumatic experiences that result in the most serious psychiatric disorders” can be found with repeated trauma.

However, although there are single or repeated situations that will most likely result in an act of traumatisation, it has to be stressed that there is a diversity of reactions that can be observed with potentially traumatising stressors. According to Denham (395) “[i]t is important to recognize that traumatic events do not always result in psychiatric distress”. Based on Erikson and Garland, Denham (395) points out that a traumatic event on its own does not guarantee an act of traumatisation. Instead each affected individual’s “response attributed to, or meaning derived from the trauma experience” (Denham 395) decides if the potentially traumatising situation causes trauma in the person in question. Similarly, Allen (4) distinguishes between an objective and subjective side of trauma: he argues that “the *exposure* to potentially traumatic events” (the objective side) does not necessarily results in “*lasting adverse effects*” (subjective side) (Allen 4). Thus, Denham and Allen agree that “it is important to differentiate between an event that may potentially cause a trauma response and an individual’s actual response to trauma” (Denham 395). Although there are numerous dreadful incidents that have proven themselves to be traumatising with a high probability, they cannot be regarded as sure, irrefutable sources of traumatisation, as single individuals as well as whole societies possess their own resources and manners of how to “experience, process and remember events” (Denham 395). Therefore, Denham (395) reasons that “[i]t is impossible to predict and irresponsible to assume that a particular event, no matter how (in)significant, will affect two individuals or cultural groups in the same way”.

2.3. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Scott and Palmer (xiii) point out that “[m]uch of human distress is a reaction to extreme stress”. They differentiate between more “common” traumatic events such as divorce or the termination of employment that might lead to psychological distress or even depression, and those more “extreme” traumatising events that might lead to Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). However, likewise Allen (4) and Denham (395), Scott and Palmer (xiii) stress that, for both more “common” and more “extreme” events, the inherent “particular features of the individual” (Scott and Palmer xiii) are crucial for deciding if the stressors induce trauma at all.

2.3.1. A term lobbied into existence

The term PTSD can be considered the “primary psychiatric diagnostic category for pathological responses to trauma experiences” (Denham 395) and only entered the field of trauma theory in 1980 when the American Psychiatric Association decided to include the term in its third edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-III) (Denham 395; Scott and Palmer xiii). Young (referred to in Denham 395) explains that their decision was prompted by the continuing lobbying actions of the supporters of the Vietnam war veterans. Those lobbyists assisted the veterans, who returned home traumatised from the war, with gaining “recognition and compensation for their war-related trauma” (Denham 395). As a consequence, their psychological distress was no longer called “shell-shock” (Scott and Palmer xiii) – a term originating from the First World War context, describing “a range of physical and psychological symptoms” (Loughran 94) identified with soldiers returning from combat areas – and neither “combat fatigue” (Nevhutalu, Mudhovozi and Ramarumo 173) – like it was the case with soldiers who served during the Second World War – but PTSD. As proposed by Scott and Palmer (xiii), the inclusion of the diagnostic category PTSD in the DSM-III could be considered a “landmark”, as it led to the change in belief that those “debilitated by trauma were not simply ‘weak’ but that the nature of the event had been taken seriously into account” (Scott and Palmer xiii).

2.3.2. PTSD triggering stressors

After the first inclusion of PTSD in the DSM-III in 1980 (Denham 395), various revised descriptions of this psychiatric diagnostic category followed in consequent publications of the DSM. In 1987 the American Psychiatric Association published the DSM-III-R, a revised version of the seven years earlier released DSM-III, which specified that only those events could be considered stressors triggering PTSD that were “classifiable as ‘extreme’ and ‘outside the normal range of human experience’” (Scott 17). Hence, this very version of the DSM focused on the – what Allen (4) would also call – objective side of trauma (Scott 17). Again, seven years later in 1994 the DSM-IV was officially issued, not only putting particular emphasis on a more thorough specification of the potential PTSD inducing life events, but also stressing the subjective side of trauma, meaning that the “additional requirement was inserted that the person suffered subjective distress in the aftermath of the incident” (Scott

17). Thus, the formerly exclusive objective side attributed to PTSD terminology in the DSM-III-R was described in much greater and broader detail and was supplemented with a subjective side in the DSM-IV (Scott 17). The following extract taken from the DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association 424; cited in Scott 17) provides a detailed account on those outside stressors that most likely lead to PTSD in the affected individuals:

Traumatic events that are experienced directly include, but are not limited to, military combat, violent personal assault (sexual assault, physical assault, robbery, mugging), being kidnapped, being taken hostage, terrorist attack, torture, incarceration as a prisoner of war or in a concentration camp, natural or man-made disasters, severe automobile accidents or being diagnosed with a life-threatening illness. For children, sexually traumatic events may include developmentally inappropriate sexual experiences without threatened or actual violence or injury. Witnessed events include, but are not limited to, observing the serious injury or unnatural death of another person due to violent assault, accident, war, or disaster, or unexpectedly witnessing a dead body or body parts. Events experienced by others that are learned about include, but are not limited to, violent personal assault, serious accident, or serious injury experienced by a family member or close friend; learning about the sudden, unexpected death of a family member or close friend; or learning that one's child has a life-threatening disease.

In conclusion, the definition of PTSD inducing stressors is much more "broader" in the DSM-IV in contrast to the DSM-III-R (Scott 17). To Scott's (17) mind, this has as a consequence that a distinction between those events that might in fact cause traumatic reactions and those events that are "undesirable" but do not result in PTSD might get rather difficult. To illustrate his point, Scott (17) mentions the fictitious ambiguous case of a pregnant woman who trips and falls, leaving her anxious about the well-being of her unborn child. The question of if one could describe this unfortunate event as an event resulting in PTSD is not that straightforward according to Scott (17). Furthermore, this DSM-IV's broader definition of PTSD stressors encompasses that a traumatic event does not necessarily have to be witnessed first-hand, but PTSD reactions might also occur in those individuals that have "only" learned from a dreadful event (also see Waldram 213 and Denham 395). With regard to the relation between the nature of traumatic events and the severity of PTSD, Scott and Palmer (xiii) suggest that "traumas where there is no personal intent to harm produce less severe PTSD than events such as assaults where personal agency is involved".

2.3.3. PTSD symptomology

Amongst others, Nevhutalu, Mudhovozi and Ramarumo (173), Scott and Palmer (xiii) as well as Mengel, Borzaga and Orantes (x) draw attention to the symptoms that are typical of PTSD. Scott and Palmer (xiii) categorise the PTSD symptomology into the major “three symptom clusters of intrusion, avoidance and disordered arousal”.

The first symptom cluster of intrusion entails the intrusive recollection of those events and stressors that have originally been the trigger of the trauma (Mengel, Borzaga and Orantes x; Scott and Palmer xiii; Scott 18). These recollections might, for instance, be in the form of recurrent intrusive nightmares (Scott and Palmer xiii). In addition, the traumatising situations might be relived in the form of “illusions, pseudohallucination, and dissociative episodes (e.g., flashbacks)” (Scott 19). Taking Weiss as a basis, Scott (18) characterises these recollections as “spontaneous and uncontrollable, and [as] to have a ‘life of their own’”.

The second symptom cluster of avoidance is characterised by the avoidance of any thoughts, feelings, situations, geographical places, activities, as well as interactions with other people that would in some way trigger a recollection of the traumatic stressor (Scott 20). For example, in the case of those individuals whose trauma can be ascribed to war settings the avoidance behaviour manifests itself in the evasions of anything reminiscent of battle and fighting, like conflicts and arguments with other people (Scott and Palmer xiii). Another example provided by Scott (20) is that a certain bridge is no longer used by the traumatised individual, as this infrastructural entity was closely connected to the traumatic incident (for instance the bridge failed during a natural disaster like a flood). Closely connected this avoidance behaviour of anything that might trigger painful memories is the general “inability to recall an important aspect of the event” (Scott 20). This phenomenon is called *psychogenic amnesia* and means that there are gaps in the memory concerning the traumatic event (Scott 20).

The third and last PTSD symptom cluster proposed by Scott and Palmer (xiii) is concerned with disordered arousal. Hyper-arousal, heightened vigilance, extreme irritability, unexpected outbursts of aggressive behaviour, exaggerated startle response and other physiological reactions to certain trauma-related cues – like irregular breathing or a feeling of not being able to breathe properly –, difficulties with

concentrating and sleep disturbance – in the sense of having trouble staying asleep or not being able to fall asleep at all – can be situated within this category of disordered arousal (Scott and Palmer xiii; Scott 19-22; Mengel, Borzaga and Orantes x). Furthermore, it can be suggested that the symptom of psychic numbing and a restriction of range of affect should also be placed within the cluster of disordered arousal, as those symptoms can also be identified as diverging from a “normal” state of arousal (Scott 21).

Moreover, there are other PTSD symptoms that would probably require their own cluster. Amongst those, for instance, are feelings of detachment or estrangement from other human beings (Scott 21). However, if the estrangement from certain people is due to avoidance behaviour as stated in the section of the symptom cluster of avoidance, it could be argued to be included in the foresaid cluster. As far as children are concerned, it shall be stated that the assessment of PTSD symptoms might be more difficult as with adults, as they possess a different mindset than adults (Scott 23). In search for PTSD symptoms in children, professionals should also be aware of “developmentally appropriate manifestations of a symptom: for example intrusive recollections of a trauma might be expressed by the child playing out the incident” (Scott 23). Furthermore, another fact worth mentioning and which should be always kept in mind by mental-health professionals treating traumatised victims is that PTSD is “commonly comorbid with many other psychological problems, such as other anxiety disorders, mood disorders, and personality disorder traits” (Taylor, Asmundson and Carleton 459).

2.3.4. A construct with limitations

Although the terminology of PTSD has been updated and revised repeatedly over the years, the current knowledge concerning the topic of post-trauma issues still leaves room for improvement (Scott and Palmer xiv). Questions of why some witnesses of extreme trauma experience symptoms of PTSD whereas others are unaffected can still not be answered with complete certainty (Scott and Palmer xiii). Kessler and his colleagues’ (summarised by Scott and Palmer xiii) findings from 1995 even suggest that although 75% of the population have been subjects to extremely traumatic stressors, only a tenth of them, that is 7.5%, have shown symptoms of PTSD. According to Scott and Palmer (xiii), “the only clear vulnerability factor” that

influences the development of PTSD symptomology is the affected individual's psychiatric history, as those suffering from other psychiatric ailments are more prone to developing PTSD when encountering extremely traumatic stressors. However, this insight is not the outright answer to the question, as, in fact, the vast majority of people diagnosed with PTSD does not show any previous psychiatric history (Scott and Palmer xiii). Nevertheless, despite this current problematic nature of PTSD, Scott and Palmer (xiv) still insist that "the hard pressed mental health professional[s] [do] not have the luxury of waiting until there is a full understanding of the condition before offering help".

With reference to Kidron, Denham (395) concludes that PTSD can still frequently be "described as a contested diagnosis that is increasingly being used to describe a wide range of personal, social and political traumas". Despite all its possible debatable characteristics and limitations, Denham (395) as well as Mengel and his colleagues (x) point out that the condition of PTSD is frequently employed when analysing collective trauma. That is why "it would be inappropriate to dismiss it, since its symptoms [...] are very much part of the South African syndrome" (Mengel, Borzaga, and Orantes x).

2.4. Collective trauma

2.4.1. Definition of collective trauma and the entanglement of life narratives

In contrast to individual trauma that restricts itself to those people that are more or less directly suffering from the traumatic event and its causal PTSD symptoms, collective trauma can be considered an accumulation and merging of various connected individual traumas and is concerned with the kind of trauma that pervades generations or even whole nations (Erikson; Leydesdorff; Alexander 6). The term collective trauma could also be substituted by its synonyms "intergenerational PTSD, historical grief, an acute reaction to colonialism, intergenerational trauma and multigenerational trauma" (Denham 396), in each case signifying that "characteristics of trauma experiences [are transferred] to subsequent generations" (Denham 396). Similar to Denham (396), Yellow Horse Brave Heart (7) characterises this certain form of communal trauma as the "cumulative emotional and psychological wounding,

over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences". Thus, the experienced trauma affects the lives and psyches of the afflicted people in such a severe manner that it spreads like an epidemic to subsequent generations (Denham 396).

Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela (4) point out that the entanglement of life narratives is crucial when analysing collective trauma. In their opinion, it is not possible to write one's own narrative that is completely unaffected by the narratives of others (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 4). In fact, they suggest that "[t]he narrative of [one's] life is linked to a multitude of other narratives, and its interaction with these other narratives forms part of its total meaning" (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 4) – hence, an entanglement between the narratives is undisputable. To Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela's (4) mind, an individual inherits the "communal past" passed on from successive generations, and if this communal past is defined by trauma, the individual is also subject to this trauma.

2.4.2. How traumas become collective traumas

Traumas become collective traumas "if they are conceived as wounds to social identity" (Alexander 2) and if they "[leave] indelible marks upon [a collectivity's] group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways" (Alexander 6). Alexander (1) explains that social entity and group consciousness are nothing naturalistic, but something that is very much culturally constructed around the themes of "[r]eligion, nation, race, ethnicity, gender [and] class" (Alexander 1), all of which are especially susceptible to pain and discrimination. Although the collective trauma is culturally constructed by an accumulation of connected individual traumas, "it is the threat to collective rather than individual identity that defines the suffering at stake" (Alexander 2).

Alexander (3) identifies a clear distinction between the reactions of an individual versus those of a collective to a traumatic incident and: The treatment of traumatised individuals who experience PTSD symptoms like denial or repression is concerned with granting psychological relief and possibilities to mourn by unmasking the suppressed traumatic stressors (Alexander 3). As far as collective trauma is concerned, Alexander (3) argues that the focus does not lie on revealing what has been repressed, but on attributing meaning to the traumatic incident. This meaning

making process is a “matter of symbolic construction and framing, of creating stories and characters, and moving along from there. A “we” must be constructed via narrative and coding, and it is this collective identity that experiences and confronts the danger” (Alexander 3). This “we” is created through so-called cultural work that entails “speeches, rituals, marches, meeting, plays, movies, and storytelling of all kinds” (Alexander 4), which ultimately conclude in those scripts that define “who did what to whom, and how society must respond if a collective identity is to be sustained” (Alexander 4). In other words, Alexander (4) argues that collective trauma can neither be considered a mere reflection of individual trauma nor an unbiased portrayal of actual events, “but symbolic renderings that reconstruct and imagine them” (Alexander 4). In his view, “[f]or an audience to be traumatized by an experience that they themselves do not directly share, symbolic extension and psychological identification are required” (Alexander 33).

2.4.3. Prevention of collective trauma due to cultural interpretation

The fact that a high number of individuals who perceive themselves as belonging to a certain social entity have experienced extreme forms of trauma does not necessarily ensue that these individual traumas constitute a collective trauma shared by the entire social entity (Alexander 3). In order for the individual traumatising incidents to become a shared trauma, the social entity has to acknowledge it as a collective trauma via “processes of cultural interpretation” (Alexander 3). One example of such an occurrence where thousands of equally traumatised individuals did not result in a general collective trauma can be encountered in the military history of the United States of America (Alexander 3). Although thousands of American soldiers returned home traumatised from the First and Second World War, their psychological distress was perceived as sheer collateral damage – a “sacrific[e] for [the] noble cause” (Alexander 3) of war victory. The same is true for those German soldiers that were involved in the earlier Blitzkriegs (Alexander 3). For both the “American and German collective identities, these military confrontations actually seemed to reinforce” (Alexander 3) these identities instead of jeopardising them. Relying on the findings of Giesen, Heins and Eyerman et. al, Alexander (3) comes to the conclusion that the individual American and German war traumas may only result in a collective trauma if

they are no longer perceived as “sacrifices for a noble cause but as wasted victims of irresponsible chicanery” (Alexander 3).

2.4.4. Examples of collective trauma

In contrast to America’s and Germany’s resistance to national collective traumas, various other nations and ethnicities have experienced a formation of a shared collective trauma. Amongst those are the Aborigines in Australia who have experienced tremendously harsh treatment by colonialists (Denham 396). Aguiar and Halseth (18) state that “Aboriginal peoples have had vast social, environmental, cultural and political changes imposed on them by settler populations, and have endured widespread discrimination and incredible levels of trauma and losses”. Those traumas have had “intergenerational impacts on the health and well-being of subsequent generations of Aboriginal people” (Aguiar and Halseth 18), resulting in a shared and inherited collective trauma amongst people of Aboriginal descent.

Furthermore, Cambodia’s population has been subjected to the horrors of the “ultra-Maoist Khmer Rouge [...] government” (Alexander 27) from 1970 to 1979, when the regime was finally overthrown (see Denham 365). During these nine years the Khmer Rouge exterminated more than one third of Cambodia’s whole population (Alexander 27, 29). Becker (xi) and Stammel et al. (87) even suggest that almost one quarter of Cambodia’s population, namely between 1.5 and 2 million individuals, were killed at that time, “including an entire generation of political leaders, professionals, and religious figures” (Becker xi) and leaving the nation still traumatised to the present day.

According to Denham (396), another example of collective trauma can be identified in the Japanese-American history (also see J. Willard Marriott Library). Due to the infamous Japanese military strike on America’s Pearl Harbor in December 1941 that took America by surprise, American officials and war leaders feared for yet another Japanese unforeseen attack (see J. Willard Marriott Library). As a consequence, only two months after the attack important American leaders had succeeded in pressuring President Roosevelt to sign the Executive Order 9066, which resulted in the act of dislocating 120.000 residents of Japanese ancestry from their American homes in order to force them to live in internment camps (see J. Willard Marriott Library). Although “[m]ore than two thirds of those interned under the Executive Order were

citizens of the United States, and none had ever shown any disloyalty” (see J. Willard Marriott Library), they were nevertheless sent to the isolated internment camps, which were situated in “desert areas of Arizona, California, Utah, Idaho, Colorado, and Wyoming” (see J. Willard Marriott Library). Two years after the first relocations took place in 1942, President Roosevelt nullified the order in 1944, leaving the least fortunate incarcerated Japanese-Americans to live in those harsh surroundings for another two years until the last camp was finally shut down in 1946 (see J. Willard Marriott Library). These injustices and atrocities inflicted on the people of Japanese ancestry in the US have, without a doubt, left deep psychological wounds on the collectivity of Japanese-Americans.

Two of the best known and most infamous collective traumas, which will also form the basis for discussion in the present thesis, are the collective traumas resulting from the Holocaust and the Apartheid regime. Before elaborating on those two collective traumas in greater detail in the subsequent sections, it shall be stressed again that although “[c]ollective traumas have no geographical or cultural limitations” (Alexander 30), the cultural interpretation of events is crucial for deciding how events get memorised and evaluated (see Alexander). Therefore, this problematic nature of memorialisation in connection with trauma resulting from cultural hegemony, from the discrepancy and conflict between grand and small narratives should always be kept in mind when dealing with culturally transmitted forms of trauma. With regard to historical narratives, the cultural theorist Trouillot (6) argues that the construction of those narratives “involves the uneven contribution of competing groups and individuals who have unequal access to the means for such production” (also see Lê 307). Taking Trouillot as a reference point, Lê (307) asserts that “[h]egemonic history and social memory reflect power and the lack of power”. Depending on who upholds the social power with respect to narrative and discourse creation, some narratives of collective trauma are privileged and manage to become “main discourses”, “while others are erased” (Lê 307) and are considered as mere “footnotes” in history (see Joe Sacco’s graphic novel “Footnotes in Gaza”, in which Sacco aims at giving a voice to those affected by the large-scale killings of Khan Younis and Rafah, who have previously been restricted to a subordinate position in national and international history). In the case of the Jewish and South African grand collective trauma narratives, the cultural interpretation has been in their favour, making them main

discourses of exploitation and atrocities against humankind that have gained prominence and general awareness all over the world. In conclusion, cultural expert John Storey (234) reminds that “we need to see ourselves [...] as active participants in culture: selecting, rejecting, making meanings, attributing value, resisting and, yes, being duped and manipulated” by those in hegemonic superior positions, and therefore should stay critical of which narratives get told and which are forgotten.

2.4.5. The Holocaust – The collective trauma of the Jewish population

Due to the fact that in both South African trauma novels *A Quilt of Dreams* by Patricia Schonstein and *The Dreamcloth* by Joanne Fedler an entanglement of Jewish and South African trauma history can be detected, the collective trauma of the Jewish population induced by the Holocaust will be discussed in greater detail.

2.4.5.1. From one historical event to a matter of universal importance

Alexander (29) asserts that the “Nazi massacre of the Jews, [...] eventually branded Western modernity as the distinctive bearer of the collective trauma in the twentieth century”. In the second chapter called “Holocaust and Trauma: Moral Universalism in the West” of his book “Trauma: A Social Theory”, Alexander (31 ff.) focuses on the social construction of the Holocaust and on how one

specific and situated historical event, an event marked by ethnic and racial hatred, violence, and war, [could] become transformed into a generalized symbol of human suffering and moral evil, a universalized symbol whose very existence has created historically unprecedented opportunities for ethnic, racial and religious justice, for mutual recognition, and for global conflicts becoming regulated in a more civil way (Alexander 31).

Alexander (31) speaks of a “social creation of a cultural fact” and a “cultural transformation” of an isolated, particular traumatic historic event into a universal trauma experienced by all of humankind. The history of the Holocaust and its cultural transformation into an undisputable collective trauma will be described henceforth.

Before the Nazi concentration camps were finally liberated in 1945, their alleged existence proposed by reports from the late 1930s on was “greeted with widespread public doubt” (Alexander 33). Alexander (33) found that, only three months before the American soldiers discovered the first camps, the January edition of 1945’s magazine *Collier’s* said that a vast majority of Americans simply could not believe the

putative mass executions of Jews due to their sheer inhumanity and strangeness (see Alexander 33). In April 1945, when the first concentration camps operated by the German Nazi regime were discovered and liberated by American soldiers, these atrocities inflicted on people of Jewish descent were no longer regarded as myth or assumption, but “earlier reports were retrospectively accepted as facts” (Alexander 33). However, although since the liberation of the camps the traumatising cruelties against Jews were accepted as facts, these cruelties were not yet referred to as the *Holocaust* or perceived as a collective trauma resulting in moral obligations and lessons by all humankind (Alexander 30, 31). Contemporary reporters and officials considered those atrocities committed by the Nazis “to be the natural results of the ill wind of this second, very unnatural, and most inhuman world war” (Alexander 31) and titled them as “War Camp Horror” or “Enemy Atrocities” (see Alexander 32).

Alexander (33 ff.) explains why the horrors of the concentration camps initially “did not itself become a traumatic experience for the audience to which the mass media’s collective representations were transmitted” (Alexander 33) and why the collective trauma of the mass murders only developed via a change in “symbolic extension and psychological identification” (Alexander 33). First of all, Alexander (33) argues that the people involved in liberating and reporting about the Jewish concentration camp inmates, like soldiers, reporters and other influentials on-site, found it hard to identify with the inmates, as the “starving, depleted, often weird-looking and sometimes weird-acting Jewish camp survivors seemed like a foreign race” (Alexander 33). This inability to identify with the survivors was only reinforced by media representation, as they were not portrayed as individuals, but rather a smelly, unfortunate mass (Alexander 34). This depersonalisation of the victims contributed to the fact that “[p]ossibilities for universalizing the trauma were blocked” (Alexander 34).

However, these beliefs and behaviours were later changed through a cultural re-articulation of the trauma and resulted in the shared notion what we nowadays understand by *Holocaust*. In order for this re-articulation to take place and in order for these atrocities to be regarded as a collective trauma, “the nature of what was seen and discovered had to be coded, weighted, and narrated” (Alexander 37), namely in a way that allowed the traumatic incidents to become a “main discourse” of trauma. The Americans and the Allies can be considered the narrating powerful force of this particular discourse, as they “directed the organizational and cultural responses to

the mass murders and their survivors” (Alexander 37). As a consequence, Nazism has become a representation of pure evil that should be counteracted at all cost (Alexander 38 ff.) and the Holocaust has been acknowledged as one of the most severe collective traumas in the history of the human race.

2.4.6. Apartheid – The collective trauma of South Africa

Like the Holocaust, Apartheid in South Africa has managed to become a grand narrative of collective trauma through the process of cultural interpretation. As the South African “nation [...] is still struggling with the burden of the past” (Mengel, Borzaga and Orantes vii) and as the “past and present cannot be so easily disentangled[, but] are part of a remorseless continuum, a historical blur” (Sacco xi), it is of utmost importance to attempt to outline South Africa’s traumatic past in order to be able to understand the contemporary complexities within the nation. Although the vast majority of African countries has been subjected to traumas resulting from the continent’s widespread “troubled and violent colonial and postcolonial experience” (Bisschoff and Van de Peer 7), the thesis in general as well as the next sections in particular will focus on South Africa’s collective trauma and the resulting South African trauma novels.

2.4.6.1. General information on Apartheid

The term Apartheid originates from the orthographically and semantically identical Afrikaans term *apartheid*, literally meaning a state of separateness – a state of being apart (Battersby-Lennard 167; Online Etymology Dictionary on Apartheid). When consulting the Online Etymology Dictionary on the terminological origins of Apartheid, the merging of the Dutch word *apart*, meaning *separate*, and the suffix *-heid*, which can be compared to the English suffix *-hood* – which functions as a “word-forming element meaning ‘state or condition of being’” (Online Etymology Dictionary on -hood) –, is also mentioned. Thus, also in Dutch Apartheid signifies a state of separation. The nature of Apartheid as encountered in South Africa was, according to Battersby-Lennard (167), first summarised by the *United Nations International Convention Against Apartheid in Sport* in 1985, which defined Apartheid as

a system of institutionalized racial segregation and discrimination for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group of

persons over another racial group of persons and systematically oppressing them, such as that pursued by South Africa (International Convention Against Apartheid in Sports 179; see Battersby-Lennard 167).

In South Africa the one racial group that was eager to establish their supremacy and uphold their domination over other racial groups were the Whites (Battersby-Lennard 167). Besides the Whites, three other racial groups were introduced in South Africa, in one of which all of the nation's residents were categorised in (Battersby-Lennard 167). Those four categories were the Whites, the Coloured, the Indians and the Blacks, last of which were also called Bantus or Natives during the Apartheid regime (Battersby-Lennard 167). The apartheid, the state of separateness, of these racial groups was justified with the myth that this would “enable ‘separate development’” (Battersby-Lennard 167) of the four categories. However, in reality this racial hierarchy that was “reinforced through all spheres of state activity and at all spatial scales” (Battersby-Lennard 167) almost exclusively favoured the self-elected superior Whites in their pursuit of economic and political power.

With regard to the German oppression and mass destruction of the Jewish population during the Second World War, the white supremacy belief widely acknowledged in South Africa during Apartheid was often compared to the “‘master race’ ideology of Germany’s Nazi regime” (Mokoena 384). Mokoena (384-385) reviews that, with this context in mind, the Whites were often referred to as *herrenvolk* that believed in their clear superiority over other races. Closely connected to this set of belief that the white race could be considered the head of the racial hierarchy, was the propagation that a racial “mixture” and contact with people from other than the own race was utterly outrageous and therefore treated with scorn (Mokoena 389). Mokoena (389) refers to J.M. Coetzee’s characterisation of the “‘madness of apartheid’ which had at its core [this] fear of a *mengelmoes* (lit. mishmash) of racial mixture”.

Mokoena (389) categorises Apartheid into *Petty* and *Grand Apartheid*, both of which terms are concerned with how Apartheid “controlled the daily lives of Africans”. Whereas *Petty Apartheid* is characterised by being centred on the multitude of laws and regulations that were designated to govern the Blacks’ daily life, *Grand Apartheid* could be considered the “idealized version of apartheid” (Mokoena 389) according to the supporters of this strand of policy. To their mind, *Grand Apartheid* “was the final

destination that apartheid's ideologues hoped for, namely, a balkanized South Africa in which black South Africans shuttled back and forth between labor zones and [so-called] zones of independence" (Mokoena 389). This idealised balkanisation and separation into a "white" and a "black" part of the country, led Verwoerd, who is often referred to as the "creator" of South African's Apartheid, to promote "a policy of good neighborliness" (Mokoena 389) – an expression quite unsuitable, considering the harsh reality the native population had to endure due to the Apartheid regime. This idealised political situation was justified by the essentialism that all Blacks could be seen as "perpetual child[ren] who could not be entrusted with the burdens and obligations of 'civilization'" (Mokoena 389), and therefore the superior Whites' civilising mission inclined them to think that they were the ones in charge of deciding "when the 'black man' was ready for freedom and rights" (Mokoena 389). Mokoena (389) reports that as a consequence of this "infantilization", a multitude of Africans tried to counteract this prejudice "by displaying the kind of decorum and respectability that made them even more Western and bourgeois than their oppressors" (Mokoena 389).

As the main idea behind South Africa's Apartheid regime has been outlined in a more general way, a more precise account of the history as well as the pre- and post-history of the Apartheid era will be provided in the subsequent sections.

2.4.6.2. Pre-history of Apartheid

Battersby-Lennard (167) argues that although Apartheid is said to officially have existed between the years 1948 and 1994, from the National Party's election triumph to the official abolishment of the regime via the first democratic election, South Africa's national history proves that the most important notion underlying the regime of Apartheid, namely segregation, can be traced far further back in the nation's history (see Battersby-Lennard 167).

Numerous acts were not only introduced during but also before the Apartheid legacy, all of which were designed to facilitate white supremacy over the Natives. In 1910 "[t]he Union of South Africa was formed [...] from the British Colonies of Natal and the Cape, and the Boer Republics of Transvaal and the Orange Free State" (Battersby-Lennard 167) and the spatial segregation "along racial lines" (Battersby-

Lennard 167) had already been part of South Africa's reality. The following *Land Act* in 1913 and the *Native Trust and Land Act* in 1936 only "apportioned 13% of the land in the Union to the black African population, who constituted around 75% of the total population" (Battersby-Lennard 167). Besides their appointed land the black Natives were no longer allowed to access any other means of land, neither in the form of purchasing, "squattling, leasing, share cropping, [n]or labor tenancy" (Battersby-Lennard 167), "outside of the scheduled areas" (Battersby-Lennard 167). The spatial segregation could also be found within urban areas and larger cities, where political acts like the *Native Urban Areas Act* (1923) and the *Slums Act* (1934) were introduced in order to "manage" the population according to their race and descent (Battersby-Lennard 167). These acts led to the relocation and restriction of black African people from the centre to the periphery (Battersby-Lennard 167).

Besides these acts that induced the establishment of separate, abject locations, other acts and practices were called into existence that discriminated against the black population even before the official "start" of Apartheid in 1948 (Battersby-Lennard 167). Amongst those are laws that negated the right to vote and that managed education in a highly segregational mode, as well as acts that controlled the labour market, like the *Industrial Conciliation Act* (1924) and the *Wages Act* (1925), which restricted certain occupations to workers with a white complexion (Battersby-Lennard 167).

2.4.6.3. History of Apartheid

Likewise, the Apartheid legislation aimed at continuing the pre-Apartheid attempts to uphold and increase the racial inequalities (Battersby-Lennard 169). However, with the election victory of the National Party in 1948 "a far more comprehensive kind of segregation to what had gone before" (Battersby-Lennard 169) followed. Between 1948 and 1951 "five key policies" (Battersby-Lennard 169) were passed in order to "maintain[...] and extend[...] existing segregation" (Battersby-Lennard 169), all of which were interrelated and depended on each other (Battersby-Lennard 169).

Firstly, in 1949 the *Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act* was passed, which – as the name already suggest – prohibited marriage and sexual intercourse between people belonging to the different racial groups that would be depicted more precisely in the context of the following *Population Registration Act* (Battersby-Lennard 169).

Secondly, in 1950 the *Group Areas Act* was introduced that decided which areas of the country were allocated to which race, resulting in an even more rigorous spatial separation of ethnicities (Battersby-Lennard 169). People were not allowed to move to other areas than those “classified for their racial group” (Battersby-Lennard 169), as these areas were characterised by “the exclusive use of one particular racial group” (Battersby-Lennard 169). This special act was reminiscent of those pre-Apartheid acts in 1913 and 1936 that restricted the black population to designated exclusively “black” areas (Battersby-Lennard 169). However, the main reformation of the *Group Areas Act* could be found in the fact that it not only “proclaimed new areas for particular races [but] was also retrospective in its planning[, meaning that] [i]t allowed for the rezoning of existing residential and business areas for particular race groups” (Battersby-Lennard 169). In conclusion, the *Group Areas Act* aimed at “refining the ‘segregation city’ and reinforcing the racial hierarchy through spatial means” (Battersby-Lennard 169).

Thirdly, in the same year the *Population Registration Act* was called into existence – an act which, more or less, formed the basis of all the other Apartheid acts, as it obliged the whole South African population to register themselves as “belonging to one of four core racial groups: white, Coloured, Indian, Bantu (black African)” (Battersby-Lennard 169). This categorisation could be described as the underlying foundation of the Apartheid ideology, which insisted on the clear separation of the different races and therefore would “not allow these racial boundaries to blur” (Battersby-Lennard 169) through interracial sexual relations.

Fourthly, yet in the same year a third act was announced, namely the *Immorality Act*, which was similar to the *Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act*, as it “banned sexual contact between people of different races in an attempt to maintain these racial boundaries” (Battersby-Lennard 169). As already stated, the *Population Registration Act* constituted the basis for acts like these.

Fifthly, one year later in 1951 the *Bantu Authorities Act* followed (Battersby-Lennard 169). The Natives or Bantus were no longer perceived as South African citizens, but as belonging to a certain tribe, which they were assigned to due to their “record of origin” (Battersby-Lennard 169). These appointed “homelands were economically, and often agriculturally, marginal and overcrowded places” (Battersby-Lennard 169). Although the Bantus were denied South African citizenship, they still “remained

economically dependent on white capital as laborers, yet without the rights of citizens” (Battersby-Lennard 169). However, not only the Blacks depended on the Whites, but also the other way round. In this respect, Battersby-Lennard (169) refers to South Africa’s former Prime Minister Verwoerd, who argued against a “total segregation” within the South African nation on grounds of “the dependence of the white economy on black labor” (Battersby-Lennard 169). This notion could be compared to what Kristeva understands under the concept of *abjection*. Kristeva (4) considers the *object* as “something rejected from which one does not part”. In the case of South African Apartheid, although the Whites also rejected and banished the Blacks to the margins of society, they still could not completely banish them from their lives. Besides banishing the Bantus to designated areas, this act moreover dictated that the Bantus could only experience political involvement via their tribal chiefs of their assigned tribe (Battersby-Lennard 169). Thus, personal involvement in politics was made impossible.

In the following years, a series of further laws were introduced in South Africa, all of which were devised in order to reinforce the Apartheid ideology (Battersby-Lennard 169). Those laws affected every sphere of private and public life, and, in Battersby-Lennard’s (170) words, a “systematic web of oppression” was the result of the laws. The segregation of residents was represented in the existence of “[s]eparate benches, buses, hospitals, schools” (Battersby-Lennard 169) as well as in the fact that public buildings housed separate toilets and entrances for the distinctive races (Battersby-Lennard 170).

However, Battersby-Lennard (170) summarises that “despite the best efforts of the state, the system was neither watertight nor internally coherent. Throughout the apartheid era cracks appeared in the system, most obviously in the form of protest, but also through periodic economic crises”. National as well as international protests and political activism slowly but steadily managed to contest the ideologies behind the oppressive system (Battersby-Lennard 170). On a national level, the protests’ two key protagonists can be identified as Nelson Mandela and Frederik Willem de Klerk (Battersby-Lennard 170). Besides these protests, other factors contributed to the downfall of the Apartheid regime, namely a contradiction in the system itself (Battersby-Lennard 170). According to Battersby-Lennard (170), this contradicting nature of the ideology could be attributed to the fact that although the whole

Apartheid movement was constructed on “white fears of the emergent black middle and working classes” (Battersby-Lennard 170), the white people in charge were still dependent on black labour (see Kristeva’s concept of *abjection*). In conclusion, these counteracts in the form of protests and a general inherent contradictory struggle eventually led to the official abolishment of the Apartheid regime.

2.4.6.4. Post-Apartheid era

Although the first democratic elections in 1994 marked the official end of the Apartheid regime in South Africa and despite the fact that there have been “ongoing efforts to overcome the spatial, economic, social, and political legacy of apartheid” (Battersby-Lennard 167), extremely frequently the Apartheid ideology’s “historical reach can be traced considerably [...] forward into present lived experience” (Battersby-Lennard 167). Many times, the belief of white superiority still continues to underlie and contaminate political discourse and therefore can be perceived as a vestige of Apartheid ideology (Mokoena 386). Battersby-Lennard (172) concludes that

South Africa has undergone radical transformation in many spheres since the end of apartheid; however, given the continued impacts of many aspects of the system on the experiences of citizens today, it is not yet possible to conceive of the country without reflecting on apartheid. Apartheid and post-apartheid remain fundamentally linked.

Thus, due to this entanglement of South Africa’s past and present, any national political discourse ought to be analysed against the background of Apartheid. Furthermore, the boom of South African trauma literature during the Post-Apartheid era clearly indicates that the collective trauma resulting from the ideology’s oppressive nature still lingers amongst South Africa’s population (see Mengel, Borzaga, and Orantes vii).

2.4.6.5. Competing narratives and the white superiority myth

Although the factual reality of South Africa’s national history practically cannot be denied, it shall be mentioned that “different stories are made of the same historic material” (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 4). Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela (4) stress that collectivities create their own narratives featuring heroes and villains, which should help them “to make sense of their present and guide them

into the future” (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 4). Especially in split nations like South Africa, a co-existence of competing narratives is typical (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 4). While the opponents of Apartheid narrated a “liberation struggle” (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 4) against a racist ideology, the supporters of Apartheid and all its economical and political advantages “spread the narrative of a struggle to protect the country’s civilised, Christian values” (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 4).

Moreover, having argued that Apartheid’s whole ideology was based on the notion of white superiority, it shall be stressed that one should not restrict oneself to this kind of essentialist thinking that all white people represented and lived the Apartheid principles. In fact, Mokoena (385) asserts that not exclusively all Whites supported the oppressive regime, but instead publicly defied it. Although the ideology affirmed white privilege, not all Whites benefited from this privilege and remained economically disadvantaged (Mokoena 385) – in Mokoena’s (385) view a “proof of the ideological gaps that could not be filled by white supremacy”.

In summary, the analysis of South Africa’s Apartheid history is a complex endeavour. When approaching this special as well as any other topic, one should always keep the possible occurrence of competing narratives in mind. Additionally, one should never restrict oneself to essentialism, but instead consider the non-essentialist aspects of the issue in question.

3. Trauma and art

Kuban (18) suggests that “[t]he healing and therapeutic power of the arts has been known for centuries”. Already in ancient Greece, physicians were certain that a “close relationship between art, healing, and well-being” (Kuban 18) could be identified. This belief of art’s healing function concerning highly disturbing and traumatic experiences had its peak in the middle of the twentieth century “[w]ith the advent of the mental health movement” (Kuban 18), when art was increasingly perceived as a useful tool for trauma diagnosis as well as treatment (Kuban 18). Until present day, this idea of art serving as a means of coming to terms with trauma has been maintained.

In order to enable the analysis of the four selected South African trauma novels in terms of art's healing power, the next consequent sections will focus on theoretical notions concerning art and its healing function.

3.1. Definition of art²

Triggered by a particular historical discourse on the definition of art, Leslie Elizabeth Kreiner also entered the discussion and summarised her findings in her article *Toward a Definition of Art*. Before elaborating on Kreiner's conclusions concerning the definition of art, the historical incident that influenced her work on art will briefly be outlined.

3.1.1. The Mapplethorpe obscenity trial

This special discourse on art was set into motion due to the exhibition *The Perfect Moment* by the photographer Robert Mapplethorpe in Cincinnati's Arts Center in 1990, which featured photographs showing nude individuals, acts of masochism and other sexually explicit content (Kreiner 7; see Smithsonian.com). A heated national public debate was induced by the photographs, as adversaries of the exhibition claimed that the photographs could not be considered art, but "obscene material" (Kreiner 7; see Smithsonian.com), which was not worthy of being publicly displayed. As a consequence, these controversial public discussions were politicised and resulted in the fact that the Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center was the first museum to ever be "taken to court on criminal charges related to works on display" (see Smithsonian.com). The trial, which took place over two weeks in the late 1990s, went down in history as the "Mapplethorpe obscenity trial" and kindled a general discussion of the definition and perception of art (see Smithsonian.com).

As already stated, Kreiner was prompted by this special historical incident to ponder on the nature of art. In order to achieve a fully informed definition of art, Kreiner (7 ff.) reviews how other theorists, politicians and philosophers defined art over the course of history.

² Cf. S. Riegler, pp. 11-13

3.1.2. Comparison and conjunction of art definitions

Kreiner (8) argues that Plato already “accepts the powerful influence of art”. To his mind, art can be defined as “an imitation of an imitation” (Kreiner 8) and is not a truthful replica of reality, but instead “a long way off the truth” (Plato 381; see Kreiner 8). Although art itself is not a mere image of reality and truth according to Plato, it nevertheless can help with the search for the ultimate Truth (Kreiner 8). In Plato’s view, this search of the Truth “is the search for the transcendent meaning of life or God” (Kreiner 8). As a result, “only things which contribute to that lifestyle or search (including art objects) should be endorsed” (Kreiner 8). Thus, if art supports the achievement of this Truth in any way, it shall be made available for the public, regardless of its inability to imitate reality (Kreiner 8). When the contrary is true, namely the piece of art does not facilitate the search for Truth, this would entail the moral obligation to censor it (Kreiner 8). Hence, Plato insists on the moral obligation of art, and is “concerned with religious moral conservatism and the transcendence of the human soul to some higher plane (heaven)” (Kreiner 8). Kreiner (8) concludes that art in the Platonic sense is characterised as a political and moral weapon to “insure the moral efficacy of the government and its people”. However, in Kreiner’s (8) view, Plato’s moral, religious perspective of art is not suitable for a proper contemporary definition of art, as “government efficacy is not the most important thing to the human soul, which yearns to create and share its experiences, its condition” (Kreiner 8). To Kreiner’s (8) mind, this transcendental, moralistic notion of art is not capable of grasping the genuine nature of art, and therefore Plato’s considerations should be discarded for an adequate definition of art.

After having disregarded Plato’s notions for her definition of art, Kreiner (8) explores Leo Tolstoy’s description of art. Although Tolstoy shares Plato’s belief of art being a moral and religious vehicle – he thinks that art’s “aim is the production of a ‘Christian brotherhood’” (Kreiner 8) –, he does not focus on art’s transcendental but earthly purpose, which is the distribution and communicative exchange of human experience on earth (Kreiner 8). Gareth Williams (267) asserts that “art [...] (like religion) do not exist without communication” and that “[a]rt is a form of knowledge, [which] contributes to an understanding of the real world“. This artistic communication with the purpose of sharing human experience takes place when “one person consciously, by means of certain external signs, hands on to others feelings he or

she has lived through” (Kreiner 8 summarising Tolstoy 697). Both Kreiner (8) and Gareth Williams (267) speak of a consequent emotional “infection”, which is transmitted via art from the “sender” to the “recipient”, “caus[ing] the recipient to re-create in himself those feelings” (G. Williams 267; also see Tolstoy 697). In conclusion, through art a universal human experience is conveyed (Kreiner 8; Tolstoy 697). In order to enable this universal experience, Tolstoy “is willing to embrace the idea of artistic freedom” (Kreiner 8), which constitutes a clear contrast to Plato’s insistence on censorship (Kreiner 8): “Whereas Plato fears that uncensored art may lead one off the path of righteousness, Tolstoy ardently believes that art, whether it drags us through the best or worst in life, is a necessary catharsis” (Kreiner 8).

Likewise, Aristotle agrees with Tolstoy that “art is not a way to understand a higher universal reality but a way for one to understand the human condition” (Kreiner 9). For both Aristotle and Tolstoy, “the immediate social world” (Kreiner 9) is the true source of art. As this earthly world is characterised by upsides as well as downsides, both sides should be addressed and imitated by art in order to portray reality (Kreiner 9). After all, any form of shared reality, whether positive or negative, could be considered “beneficial [due to] its long-term effect [of] find[ing] the truth of our existence” (Kreiner 9). With regard to the imitation of reality, the term *mimesis* is crucial for Aristotle’s perception of art (Kreiner 9; see Aristotle’s Book IX of *Poetics*). To his mind, human experience and actions are imitated, mimed, by art and are characterised by “the intention of illuminating the universal quality of that action” (Kreiner 9; see Aristotle’s Book IX of *Poetics*). According to Aristotle (see Book IV of *Poetics*), all pieces of art should eventually evoke pleasure in the consumers. As, in the Aristotelian sense, the highest pleasure is learning, the ultimate goal of art is a didactic one, namely to instruct its spectators and result in “delight through instruction” (Kreiner 9; see Aristotle’s Book IV of *Poetics*).

For her own definition of art, Kreiner (8) further consults Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary and encounters, amongst others, the following definition of art: Art as “the conscious use of skill and creative imagination especially in the production of aesthetic objects” (Kreiner 8; also see Merriam-Webster.com). Thus, this special definition does not entail pieces of art that could be perceived as unaesthetic (at this point, Kreiner (8) refers to Mapplethorpe’s controversial photography exhibition). Kreiner (8, 10-11) insists on the separation of art and aesthetics – this will be

discussed in greater detail in the next section – and therefore only considers the first part of Merriam-Webster's Dictionary's definition of art.

Disregarding Plato's transcendental, moralistic notion of art and fusing elements of Tolstoy's, Aristotle's and Merriam-Webster's perceptions of art, Kreiner (7, 9) drafts her own definition of art: "Art is the human activity in which one, through the conscious use of skill and imagination, represents a particular action or experience with the intention of illuminating the universal quality of that action, producing delight through instruction" (Kreiner 7, 9).

3.1.3. The irrelevance of aesthetics

As already stated, Kreiner (8, 10-11) excludes aesthetics in her definition of art. To her mind, "[a]rt is not equatable with aesthetic value" (Kreiner 8). She therefore agrees with Tolstoy (679 summarised in Kreiner 8), who also believes "that aesthetic beauty is not an essential element in a work of art". Coming back to Merriam-Webster's Dictionary's second part of its art definition, which refers to the creation of aesthetic objects, Kreiner (8) explains that this certain "definition does not exclude those articles which are unaesthetic". However, she criticises the fact that unaesthetic pieces of art are often accredited an inferior position in the art scene (Kreiner 8). In Kreiner's (8) opinion, the judgement of art along postulated principles of aesthetics and the false interchangeability of art and aesthetics should be counteracted by establishing the separate category of aesthetics. The two separate categories of art and aesthetics would then allow the consumer to appreciate both or only one out of the two categories (Kreiner 10). For instance, someone might admire the artistic value and painting techniques – the "art" category – of a particular piece of art, whereas this same person is not fond of its aesthetic value and of how it makes them feel (Kreiner 10). After all, the category of aesthetics is only concerned with "the matter of taste and appreciation" (Kreiner 10), and if a person cannot appreciate a painting's or sculpture's aesthetics, they are simply not to this person's taste (Kreiner 10). The other way round, namely that someone is pleased by an object's aesthetics but does not recognise any major outstanding artistic skills behind it, is also possible due to this distinction of the categories art and aesthetics.

To illustrate her point more comprehensibly, Kreiner (10) refers to the artistic work of Piet Mondrian. Mondrian's art from his "neo-plastic period" (Kreiner 10) is often

perceived as nothing highly artistic that could be imitated quite easily, as it features geometric structures like lines and rectangles (Kreiner 10). However, after having studied Chipp's elaborations on Mondrian's art, Kreiner (10) points out that Mondrian's "shift from naturalism to abstraction is a progression in which art is realizing itself more and more and thus becoming more pure and complete" (see Chipp 362). What remains hidden from those uninformed about Mondrian's artistic development is that "[h]is black lines and primary colours represent a substructure or skeleton of the order and rationality he believed exists under all of the chaotic fervor of the universe" (Kreiner 10). Thus, to develop a fully informed opinion about a piece of art and in order to appreciate a work's artistic qualities, the concept and artistic story behind the work of art should be explored, instead of "the purely mechanical process" (Kreiner 10). In other words, "knowledge increases awareness and thus becomes the key to more profound appreciation" (Kreiner 11) of a work's artistic value. However, Kreiner (11) also refers to those instances when someone is "instantly struck by a quality of the work" despite being uninformed concerning the art's and its creator's artistic background. Kreiner (11) suggests that this person might not be aware of the fact that human beings "approach everything loaded: loaded with ideas, values, and opinions". Those opinions are consciously or unconsciously formed due to the exposure to influencing factors, like other people, school education or other more trivial forms of art education as television programmes (Kreiner 11). Artistic evaluation is influenced by this accumulated knowledge (Kreiner 11). Aesthetic taste, in contrast, is concerned with a personal matter of taste and is irrelevant for appreciating the artistic side of a piece of art (Kreiner 11). No matter how educated one is about the creator's artistic development and concept behind the piece of art, the consumer still might not perceive the object in question as aesthetically appealing.

3.2. Various types of art

Kreiner's (7, 9) universal definition of art suggests that there is a variety of created objects and practices that can be categorised as art. Munro (45) shares this belief that the umbrella term *art* refers to a wide range of skills, practices and created objects and can be considered "a main division of human culture and a group of social phenomena". To Munro's (44) mind, the traditional limitation of art to only

seven arts cannot hold true. Instead he insists on a broader conception of art, including many kinds of practices that would “not ordinarily find a place in conventional treatises on [...] art” (Munro 44). Based on his book *The Arts and Their Interrelations*, Munro compiled “a brief, systematic classification” (Munro 44) of arts. To his mind, the sense addressed by the varying artistic practices and products may function as a more general and broad distinction between the arts (Munro 44). In terms of addressed senses, he broadly distinguishes between visual and auditory arts, which might also be combined and might overlap in certain categories of art (Munro 46 ff.). Furthermore, Munro (44) categorises the possible forms of art according to the materials, instruments and techniques used for the creation as well as to the “nature of the product, as to form or mode of organization in space and time, and as to uses, functions, and modes of operation” (Munro 44). However, Munro (44) stresses that there are sometimes no clear boundaries and that there might be overlaps between certain types of art. This way, one and the same type of art might be localised in more than one category of his list “in regard to different traits’ [sic] and relations” (Munro 44). In his words, “there is no such thing as a single perfect, final, all-purpose classification of the arts[, as] [t]hey are constantly changing as well as overlapping, merging, and redividing, so that sharp and permanent divisions are impossible” (Munro 44-45).

In accordance with the types of arts found in the four analysed South African trauma, a selection of Munro’s art types will be presented in greater detail in the following sections.

3.2.1. Visual arts

As already stated, Munro (46) utilises the broad category of visual arts, which he subdivides into a quantity of more concrete categories. The primary sense addressed by the visual arts is the sense of sight and visual perception (Munro 46). Although certain forms of arts within this broader category might also appeal to other senses like auditory or tactile senses (Munro 46), “their visual qualities are ordinarily considered more important from the [artistic] point of view” (Munro 46). Most of the time, the products of visual arts are two-dimensional, “presented mostly as static forms [...] on flat surfaces”. However, Munro (46) points out that they might also be three-dimensional. Usually, visual arts do not entail any kind movement and change

in position, unless they are moved to other locations by “vehicles of transportation” (Munro 46). The consumption of these forms of art is usually characterised by its “temporal succession” (Munro 46), meaning that certain details cannot be grasped at the same time, but have to be beheld one after the other (Munro 46). Yet, “the exact order in which they are seen is usually not essential” (Munro 46).

3.2.1.1. Pictorial arts

The first subcategory of visual arts that functions as a basis for the discussion of the four novels is pictorial arts. The word *pictorial* can be seen as a variation of the word *picture*, the latter of which can be derived from the Latin word for *painting* (Munro 46). However, this does not automatically mean that a picture has to be painted, but that it can also be created through other techniques like “engraving and photography” (Munro 46). Although pictures most prominently feature concrete “representations of objects, persons, [and] scenes” (Munro 46), they might also depict “non-representative painting or design” (Munro 46). Besides the delighting function of art postulated by Kreiner (7, 9), Munro (46) also refers to religious and moral functions of pictorial art. While some pictures portray what they actually insist on portraying, others might be symbolic and might allude to certain abstract ideas like emotions or religious faith (Munro 46). A selection of types of pictorial art according to their employed process, techniques and instruments as categorised by Munro (47 ff.) will now be presented.

Although painting is not the only mode of pictorial art, it is a prominent one. Munro (47) characterises painting as “the arrangement of pigments on a surface so as to represent real or imaginary things or scenes, to make a design of lines, shapes, and colors, to symbolize some idea, or to suggest some abstract qualities or feelings in nature or in human life”. Thus, the artistic process of painting is concerned with the arrangement and application of colour onto a two- or three- dimensional surface.

Slightly more different and distinguished is the pictorial art of drawing. In Munro’s (47) own words, drawing can be seen as “the representation of objects or the making of decorative or symbolic forms, especially by lines, dark or light areas, and textures, and especially with a pencil, crayon, chalk, or brush”. The surface used most prominently for drawing is paper (Munro 47). The distinction between paintings and drawings might not be clear-cut in all instances, as the technique of drawing might

often be perceived “as a component in the art of painting” (Munro 47). However, Munro (47) suggests that pictorial art in which linear shapes and the composition of light and dark prevails instead of colourful elements should rather be labelled as drawing.

Besides paintings and drawings, the category of embroidery and other needlework can also be grouped into pictorial arts. However, as already stated, there is no ultimate clear-cut categorisation concerning types of art, but a great deal of overlaps and blurs (Munro 44-45). This holds true for the art of embroidery, as it cannot only be allocated to visual pictorial arts, but also to two other of Munro's (51, 64) categories of art, namely to the utilitarian and decorative arts, and to some extent to the arts of personal appearance. This will be further explained in the following respective sections.

Moreover, the creation of pictorial collages and montages out of paper cuts can also be grouped into the category of visual pictorial art (Munro 48). For example, this collage creation out of paper can be found in Zakes Mda's *Ways of Dying*, when Toloki and Noria decorate their shacks with pictures from magazines and newspapers (see Mda, *Ways* 119).

3.2.1.2. Sculptural arts

Sculptural arts are another subcategory of visual arts. Munro (49) stresses a sculpture is characterised by its three-dimensional shape, which is viewed from an exterior, outside position. Sculptures may represent a quantity of animate and inanimate subjects and objects, like human beings, animals, plants and inorganic entities, as well as abstract designs (Munro 49). Thus, “[s]culpture is representational and realistic [whereas] some [other is] highly stylized or abstract”. Munro (49-50) further subdivides the category of sculptural arts according to the material out of which the sculpture is created: Amongst others, sculptures can be made from stone, ceramic, metal like iron, bronze, gold or silver, ivory, bones, wood, paper as well as synthetic materials (Munro 49-50). The materials metal and wood shall be stressed at this point, as they constitute the basis for the sculpture-making process in two out of the four discussed novels: Firstly, Toloki's father Jwara creates figurines out of iron and brass in his workshop (see Mda, *Ways* 29), and secondly the little sculpture of a

bull carved out of wood functions as an important symbol in Patricia Schonstein's *A Quilt of Dreams*.

3.2.1.3. Utilitarian and decorative arts

According to Munro (51), yet another subcategory of visual arts can be labelled utilitarian and decorative arts. "These arts fulfill a great variety of functions which can be broadly classed as useful or practical" (Munro 51), hence the term "utilitarian". However, the utilitarian side must be complemented by a decorative, artistic side in order to be classified as this type of art (Munro 51). Additionally to "serv[ing] as means in many overt activities such as work, war, education, worship, and everyday living" (Munro 51), the objects also have to be visually appearing (Munro 51). Items belonging to this type of art are most frequently three-dimensional and can vary in terms of "form, size, and mode of operation" (Munro 51). Although utilitarian and decorative arts are grouped within the visual arts, it shall be highlighted that other senses might also be appealed, like, for example, music instruments appeal to the auditory sense (Munro 51).

The quilt in Schonstein's *A Quilt of Dreams* could be characterised as belonging to the pictorial as well as to utilitarian and decorative arts, depending on their function. Arguing from a solely artistically appealing position, the skilful needlework of the quilt could be seen as pictorial. However, this very quilt could not only function as a decorative but also useful, utilitarian object (like for example keeping dust of Reuben's bed or keeping him warm), and therefore could also be argued to be acknowledged as a utilitarian and decorative piece of art.

The design and realisation of garments and clothing can also be found in this special category of visual arts, as long as function of the piece of clothing is both utilitarian and decorative (Munro 52). The function of the garments might vary, on the one hand, being designed "or ordinary use or[, on the other hand] for theatre, dance, ritual, ceremonial, or other special occasions" (Munro 52).

3.2.2. Music and auditory arts

The main difference between the visual and auditory arts is that the former appeals to the sense of sight whereas the latter does so to the sense of hearing. Munro (55)

places music within the auditory arts, explaining that music is “concerned with arranging sounds simultaneously and in close succession, with some regularity and continuity of rhythm, and usually of changes in pitch” (Munro 55).

Music cannot only be divided into categories according to their medium and technique (there is vocal as well as instrumental music) (Munro 56), but also in terms of their intended purpose and function (Munro 56). Munro (56) states that the active use of music might vary in relation to its users, or in other words “[t]he same piece of music may be put to different uses” (Munro 56). Thus, one and the same musical piece might take up the form of religious music (serving as a means for ritual worship), of work-related music (like for war and marching), or of festive and playful music (being used for dances, games and festivities) (Munro 56-57). Besides the active use of music, a more passive and entertaining position towards music can be identified in occasions when consumers, more or less quietly, listen to music performances of vocal, instrumental as well as combined music (Munro 57).

3.2.3. Literature as the art of verbal composition

As literature or, more concrete, poetry plays an important role in Joanne Fedler’s trauma novel *The Dreamcloth*, it seems necessary to define what can be understood by literature and the arts of verbal composition. Munro (57) describes literature as “an art or group of arts devoted to combining words and their meanings into forms which give or are intended to give a satisfactory [artistic] effect”. With regard to the appealed senses, it can be said that both the auditory as well as the visual sense might be affected by literature (Munro 57), as “[i]t can be heard when spoken aloud or silently read through visual or other symbols” (Munro 57). Munro (57) postulates that the literary arts can be distinguished with regard to their form and “development of word-sounds [...] with related characteristics of emotional intensity, [and] diction” (Munro 57). In this respect, he lists prose, poetry and poetic or lyrical prose, the last of which is and “intermediate” between the former types (Munro 57).

In *The Dreamcloth* both poetry as well as prose in the form of letters play an important role and, therefore, will be discussed in a more detailed manner in the section on this particular novel.

3.2.4. Arts of public performance

The arts of public performance can be listed as another type of art category. General speaking, the arts within this category “are mostly audio-visual, in that they present to the observer's eyes, ears, or both, an organized sequence of images or stimuli” (Munro 60). These stimuli are usually either provided by human beings and their “appearance, actions, spoken words, or musical performance” (Munro 60), or are the result of “changing designs on a screen with accompanying sound, as in marionettes, motion pictures, and television” (Munro 60). The subcategories of arts of public performance that will be discussed consequently are dance and religious ceremonies, as they can be found in trauma novels like *Ways of Dying* and *The Heart of Redness*.

3.2.4.1. Dance

Generally speaking, dance is the movement of the body in a rhythmic manner, which is usually characterised by “an orderly sequence” (Munro 60). According to Munro (60), the dance movements entail “postures and gestures [that] suggest feelings of tension and relaxation, and related moods and ideas”. Not all but some types of dances are aimed at telling a story (Munro 60). What most dances have in common is that they are usually induced and accompanied by music and other rhythmic melodies and can normally be enjoyed by both performers and observers (Munro 60).

3.2.4.2. Religious rituals and ceremonies

Although some critics might argue that religious rituals and ceremonies cannot be considered art, Munro (63) argues that they should very well be viewed as artistic. Assuming that religious rituals and ceremonies can in fact be considered manifestations of art, they are often described as “spectacular, with costumes, parades, and music” (Munro 63). “[I]n addition to verbal text, prescribed acts and gestures [as well as] sometimes also pantomime, dancing, incense, lights, ritual food and drink” (Munro 63) are characteristic of religious rituals. Munro (63) points out that each distinctive religion adheres to its own code of religious conduct. However, “[c]ertain types of ceremony are common to many religions” (Munro 63). Although the exact funeral and death ceremonies vary from culture to culture (see Walsh), the

general trend of overtly mourning for the diseased person is widespread across different cultures. Toloki takes the ritual of mourning at funerals to a next level, inventing the new occupation of the Professional Mourner (e.g. see Mda, *Ways* 22), entailing exaggerated movements of the body and ear-piercing wailing sounds. Hence, Toloki's efforts as Professional Mourner could also be considered as a form of an artistic religious ceremony, and therefore will be discussed in the section on Zakes Mda's *Ways of Dying*.

3.2.5. Arts of personal appearance

The arts of personal appearance may be characterised as "combined arts" (Munro 64), as they may appeal to various senses like visual, auditory, tactile and olfactory senses (Munro 64). This type of arts includes a person's bodily appearance, fragrance, speech behaviour, posture, way of moving and way of dressing (Munro 64).

The subcategory of bodily appearance is especially concerned with the beautification of an individual's body (Munro 64). This may be achieved via cosmetics like "soaps, powders, perfumes, creams, dentifrices, [and] coloring" (Munro 64), which function as a means of "artificial embellishment of skin" (Munro 64), hair and other bodily features like nails, teeth, eyes or lips (Munro 64). Through cosmetics the goal of reaching "desired visual, tactile, and[/or] olfactory qualities" (Munro 64) is pursued.

Costumes, garments, accessories and clothing in general can also be grouped in the category of arts of personal appearance, if they are worn for a visually and artistically appealing effect (Munro 64). These beautifying means are chosen and combined "in relation to requirements of use, function, durability, [...] to one's personal appearance, the occasion and conditions, as well as current taste and fashion" (Munro 64).

In *The Heart of Redness* the arts of personal appearance, and in particular the deliberate application of the colour red on one's skin, plays an important role in relation to South Africa's traumatising past. Furthermore, the wearing of traditional ethnic clothes in contrast to westernised robes, and the possible meaning behind it is addressed in the aforementioned trauma novel. Those notions will be further discussed in the novel's respective section.

3.3. Healing function of art³

Recalling once more one of the most prominent symptoms of PTSD, namely the intrusive recollection of the traumatic stressors in the form of nightmares or flashbacks, it becomes obvious that these “traumatic memories can never be completely suppressed by the traumatised person” (Riegler 13). Many affected individuals’ behaviour is characterised by an avoidance of stimuli that might trigger a traumatic recollection of the stressors. Many experts argue that this demeanour can not be considered healthy and hence encourage traumatised people to confront themselves with and work through the trauma in order to finally be able to come to terms with it. Frequently, the creation of art and the contact with objects of artistic value might facilitate the mental processing of trauma.

3.3.1. Expressing the inexpressible

Taylor (211) explains that traumatised individuals often perceive themselves as being unable to put their experienced trauma into language. Likewise, King (1) suggests that in traumatic situations “where emotion tends to overrule reason and vice versa, [...] the capacity for language and the ability to express oneself completely” is limited. Thus, Taylor and King agree concerning the “inability to integrate memories of the traumatic experience(s) with the verbal processing of such events” (King 6). The technical term for the inability of verbalising one’s emotions is called *alexithymia* (Taylor 212). *Alexithymia* “involves impaired ability to identify the somatic components of an emotion, to know what they mean, or to use them as a guide to appropriate actions” (Taylor 212). Taylor (212) tries to ascribe the occurrence of *alexithymia* to a neurobiological source, namely to “a brain structure called Broca’s area” (Taylor 212), which is “situated in the left cerebral cortex, [and] which is responsible for translating experience into language” (Taylor 212). When this special area is confronted with traumatic stressors, it becomes underactive and cannot function properly, resulting in the fact that the experienced trauma cannot be translated into verbal means of communication (Taylor 212). However, it has to be stressed that this does not necessarily mean that traumatised people do not feel, but they are simply unsuccessful concerning the processing and verbal expression of their “physiological arousal” (Taylor 212).

³ Cf. S. Riegler, pp. 13-15

Golub (333) is of the firm belief that no verbal language [has] been invented to describe adequately the horrors, thus making even more poignant the urgent and assiduous repeated attempts by survivors [of trauma] to clarify to themselves and communicate to others what ultimately can never be understood by outsiders". Based on Heitzler (178) and agreeing with Golub's (333) notion of verbal language's inability to express trauma, Taylor (212) concludes that the "speechless terror need to be met on a different level, corresponding to those levels of the brain that are functioning" on a non-verbal level. Many experts, including Golub, Threlkeld, Meichenbaum, Pollock and Kuban, argue that the creation of pieces of art might function as an non-verbal alternative of "externalising the implicit messages and meanings of traumatic experiences" (Kuban 18). King agrees with Meichenbaum's acknowledgement of the "therapeutic value of artistic expression" (Meichenbaum 111) and affirms that "the bilateral and multidirectional process of creativity is healing and life enhancing" (King 6). Likewise, Threlkeld (496) attributes a life enhancing and healing function to the non-verbal artistic expression of the traumatised self and to the "engag[ement of] the mind in a creative process", which ultimately might enable a certain relief of post-traumatic stress in the traumatised individuals.

Instead of suppressing the trauma, art may help with excavating the painful memories, with facing them in a healthy way and – in the most desirable case – with overcoming the trauma in a way that it no longer gravely affects a person's life. In Pollock's (14) words, art can be perceived as "a means of staging of encounter rather than the protected turning away from the fearful limit frontier". After all, the South African author Sindiwe Magona reckons that "[t]here is something soothing about taking an ache and bringing it under the light, holding it to the light, and seeing it for what it is. In a way, it's a form of letting go."

3.3.2. Creating new life narratives with the help of art

Besides art's enabling function of self-expression and bringing an individual's trauma to light in a non-verbal way, art might also empower traumatised individuals to create new life narratives.

Based on the psychiatrist Pierre Janet's findings, Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela (6) conclude that the "ability to construct meaning from our experiences – to narrate memory – is fundamental to psychological health". Whereas a non-

traumatised person's life narrative is most commonly marked by a kind of structure and coherence (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 6), the life narrative of a traumatised individual is governed by a shattering of structure (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 6). Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela (39) point out that the integration of "memories about normal experiences [...] into mental structures" can be considered an automatic process. However, if the memory is contaminated with traumatic stressors, this automatic integration does not take place (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 39). Instead "the basic organising principles necessary to construct meaningful narratives about ourselves, others, and our environment" (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 39) are shattered and the ability to remember and narrate the traumatic past is impaired (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 39).

Accordingly, the aim of trauma recovery can be described as the rebuilding and "unshattering" of narrative structures, through which the "lost plot" is regained (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 6). This rebuilding "of the narrative-building function of the self" (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 39) is achieved through the re-organisation of a traumatic experience into a new life narrative (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 6, 39) – a narrative "that is both more intelligible and more bearable" (Ricoeur 435). According to Van der Kolk and Van der Hart (176), through the creation of a new life narrative "the [traumatic] story can be told, [and] the person can look back at what happened[, ...] giv[ing] it a place in [their] life history, [their] autobiography, and thereby in the whole of [their] personality".

This "rewriting of one's life narrative to incorporate the traumatic loss in the new narrative" (Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela 6) can be achieved via the creation of art. Golub (333) is concerned with art's power to "make[...] whole what has been shattered by trauma". She insists that there is a strong relationship between "creative impulse, [...] trauma, memory, and grief" (Golub 331), and is of the firm belief that a mutual influence between memory and how this memory is symbolised through art can be detected (Golub 332). In fact, she thinks that "the act of symbolizing mitigates traumatic anxiety, expresses grief, and becomes part of the mourning process" (Golub 332). Golub (332) states that this need of symbolising the experienced trauma through art and thereby of "recompos[ing] the parts of their shattered selves" (Riegler 14) can be found both in adults and children. Although

these two age groups vary in terms of the consciousness found in the art process (adults are usually more consciously aware of their creative work) (Golub 332), “neither age nor the amount of time since trauma seems to diminish the survivor’s initial need to portray the events as remembered” (Golub 332). As postulated by Golub (332), “[t]he content of this portrayal may be repeated and revised as the survivor’s memory and his or her relationship to that memory change”.

Art’s capability of coming to terms with trauma through the creation of a new life narrative can be reviewed against the background of South Africa’s national history. The South African author Sindiwe Magona, who herself “suffered greatly under the injustices of [A]partheid” (Mengel, Borzaga and Orantes ix), stresses that artistic narrative form of autobiographies may obtain an “irreplaceable role [...] in the reconstruction of history” (Mengel, Borzaga and Orantes ix). In this regard, Mengel, Borzaga and Orantes (ix) refer to the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, or short TRC, which “encouraged people to write, especially about their own lives, since autobiography can play an important role in the examination and the healing of psychic wounds” (Mengel, Borzaga and Orantes ix).

In their book *Art and Trauma in Africa*, Lizelle Bisschoff and Stefanie Van de Peer focus on the representations of African reconciliation in various artistic genres, namely the genre music, visual arts, literature and film. Bisschoff and Van de Peer (6) agree with Magona’s notion that art work – in Magona’s case in particular autobiographies – might initiate the rewriting of history. To their mind, African artists, who scrutinise the predominant recounts of Africa’s history through “their own interpretations of their pasts and visions for the future” (Bisschoff and Van de Peer 6), should not be muted but encouraged. More precisely they state that

[f]or an international audience, such representations could lead to a more nuanced and complex view of this vast and diverse continent, as well as a deeper understanding of conflict and empathy with victims worldwide. For the African audience, these representations could contribute to working through trauma, ultimately enabling forgiveness, reconciliation and healing. [...] [W]e affirm the importance of and need for African agents and representatives to rewrite and revise official historical accounts and mainstream perspectives emanating from the West. African artists are filling in the gaps left by official histories through creating alternative representations that challenge the master narratives of international media and politics (Bisschoff and Van de Peer 6).

Through the consumption of art that features traumatic content, Bisschoff and Van de Peer (5) believe that the consumer of this art is “transform[ed] [...] into the position of being a witness, opening up space for emphatic identification without vicarious traumatising”. As claimed by Magona (referred to in Mengel, Borzaga and Orantes xi), this artistic “identification which allows the spectator to enter into the victim’s experience through a work’s narration” (Kaplan and Wang 10) should not be regarded as purely unproblematic, as one should not forget “the potential danger of (re)traumatization of painful stories of trauma and violence” as portrayed by works of art (Mengel, Borzaga and Orantes xi).

3.3.3. Attest of art’s healing function

3.3.3.1. Art therapy with veterans

In collaboration with the research psychologist Dr. Brandi Luedtke, Juliet L. King aimed at developing and consequently implementing “mindfulness-based art therapy groups (MBAT)” (King 6) at the Roudebush VA Medical Center situated in Indianapolis, which is concerned with treating traumatised OEF (Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan) and OIF (Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq) veterans of combat (King 6; see Wehonorveterans.org). Together, Luedtke, being an expert on the psychological processes involved in PTSD, and King, being an advocate of art’s therapeutic function (King 6), they developed “two successful pilot studies that provided services for veterans of combat, all of who were diagnosed with PTSD and in some cases traumatic brain injury (TBI)” (King 6-7).

Through one of their studies they “sought to show how participants exhibited a decrease in self-reported and clinician reported PTSD symptoms and depression pre- and post-treatment and an increase in self-reported mindfulness skills and higher levels of compassion” (King 7). Altogether eleven patients with PTSD participated in the study, which focused on the discussion and analysis of created pieces of art that featured pictorial expressions of combat- and war-related narratives (King 7). According to King (7), the “difficulty [of] piecing the shattered parts of their experiences together” was eased by the artistic expressions of their trauma, eventuating in “common themes of a changed identity” (King 7) within the patients. More precisely, King (7) summarises that “[t]he results revealed a statistically

significant improvement in total self-compassion and self-judgment and a trend improvement in the symptom of isolation". Moreover, the analysis of the PTSD scales (PCL) filled in by the patients suggests "a statistically significant improvement [...] in the reexperiencing [sic] of symptoms and a trend improvement in avoidance" (King 7) of possible trauma-related stimuli.

In conclusion, all of the eleven participants attributed a lasting positive influence to the MBAT programme, "on the average rat[ing] [its] importance [...] a 9.5 out of 10" (King 7). Many of them regarded the programme as "a new and creative way to talk about feelings associated with trauma" (patient quoted in King 7) and as a means that "helped to open new doors for me, identifying underlying issues that I need to address either individually or in other group sessions" (patient quoted in King 7). One patient explains that this addressing of underlying issues is facilitated by art, because "[m]aking art makes it easier to think [...] [, as i]t gives us something to do while we're trying to talk about things that are hard to talk about" (patient quoted in King 7). Another patient (quoted in King 7) more elaborately explains that "[t]here seems to be a language barrier we create when confronting issues of trauma. I think, through art, we basically are constructing a bridge to better understand our psychological wounds [...] I believe [art therapy] to be an excellent medium to reach intangible emotions". As a consequence of their positive feelings concerning the art therapy designed by Luedtke and King, without exception, all veterans expressed the wish to partake of MBAT treatments again in the future, if these were provided by the Medical Center (King 7).

3.3.3.2. Art therapy with children and adolescents

Art therapy might not only be employed when dealing with traumatised adults, but also with children having experienced extremely distressing situations. Threlkeld, who works as an art teacher of those children traumatised by their acute illnesses, assures that "[b]y interacting with paint and canvas the student expresses feelings and engages the mind in a creative process helping to relieve the pain" (Threlkeld 496). Kuban (18) agrees with Threlkeld (496) that through the creation of pieces of art the sorrow resulting from trauma can be eased, as the artistic process enables an "externalizing [of] the implicit messages and meaning of traumatic experiences", which ultimately helps to overcome the respective trauma (Kuban 18). Kuban (18)

opines that through the artistic genre of “drawing, children can portray the depth of their terror and loss” – she completely supports the saying that “a picture is worth a thousand words” (Kuban 19). However, Kuban (19) suggests that art, and drawing in particular, might not only help to express painful memory, but also “provides youth with a medium to express and explore images of self that are strength-based and resilience-focused” (Kuban 19; also see Steele and Kuban). Likewise, Golub (333) agrees that through the artistic process children might not only “protect themselves from potentially overwhelming feelings evoked by images while embodying the toxic memories” on canvas, but also “reveal their [internal] strength, resilience, and hope” (Golub 333). Through the active participation in the drawing process, children experience that they are not restricted to the solely passive role of the sufferer, but that they can very well obtain the active and empowering role of an artist who translates trauma into art (Kuban 19).

To underline her claim of art’s empowering function in therapy with children and adolescents, Kuban (19) refers to one adolescent who took part in a trauma treatment group, namely the 16-year-old Maria. Maria has suffered from a quantity of distinctive traumas, including her sexual abuse and neglect as well as the death of the young mother’s infant (Kuban 19). In art therapy, Maria was not only confronted with visual art in the form of colouring mandalas, but also with auditory art in the form of being accompanied by music during the colouring process (Kuban 19). Kuban (19) observed that Maria became “more self-regulated and focused” through this double-exposure to art. With this regard, Kuban (19) compares these observations to the findings of Wheeler, Malchiodi and Crenshaw, and consequently comes to the conclusion that both auditory and pictorial art therapy are characterised by “reductions in autonomic responses such as blood pressure, heart rate, and respiration” (Kuban 19).

3.3.3.3. Philomela’s tale

Despite the fact that Philomela’s tale cannot be regarded as empirical proof of art’s inherent healing power with regard to trauma, it shall also be mentioned as an example, where art could be considered as a means of coming to terms with the experienced distress.

Philomela is a figure found in Greek mythology that experienced severe trauma (Tischer 21). King Pandion of Athens is father to Philomela and her sister Procne, last of which he marries off to King Tereus of Thrace (Tischer 21). After a significant time being apart from her sister Philomela, Procne sends her husband to Athens in order to accompany Philomela back to Thrace (Tischer 21). Unfortunately, on their journey from Athens to Thrace Tereus sexually abuses Philomela, evoking extreme trauma in her (Tischer 21). Prompted by the fear that Philomela would verbally express her trauma, Tereus mutilates her by cutting out her tongue, ensuring that she would never be able to speak again (Tischer 21). Lacking the ability to express her violation verbally, Philomela tries to weave her trauma into an artistic tapestry that depicts the experienced horrible actions (Tischer 21). This way, she is able to recount the trauma to Procne, who then is able to act upon the newly gained knowledge (Tischer 21).

Although Philomela's traumatic tale is only a myth and does not depict a concrete and truthful historical event, it can be perceived as an allusion to art's empowering property. The art work of the tapestry can be regarded as the result of a painful and traumatic memory with the intention of retelling and, consequently, overcoming the trauma. Hence, Philomela's tale can also be viewed as an example of art functioning as a coping mechanism in response to traumatic experiences.

4. Analysis of South African trauma novels

4.1. *A Quilt of Dreams* by Patricia Schonstein⁴

4.1.1. Connection of traumas through two pieces of art

Patricia Schonstein's trauma novel *A Quilt of Dreams* is constructed around two pieces of art, namely Rosa's artistic needlework in the form of a quilt and the sculpture of a bull crafted from wood by Reuben's father. These two pieces of art function as the two major symbols that connect the individual as well as collective trauma of two distinctive South African families. On the one hand, the novel addresses the collective trauma of the Jewish population due to the Holocaust through the depiction of Reuben's white Jewish family and the hardships they are

⁴ Cf. S. Riegler, pp. 15-28

confronted with in their new homeland South Africa because of their skin colour and descent. On the other hand, Vita's immediate and precedent black Xhosa family that has suffered from, and still has to endure, the racial hierarchy postulated by colonists and the Apartheid regime is made the subject of Schonstein's novel. Although the two major plotlines found in the novel focus on the present time of Reuben's and Vita's generation, their ancestors' traumatic past is also outlined in order to be able to grasp the trauma they bequeathed to their descendents. The quilt and the bull being the source of connection between the traumas of the aforementioned families will form the basis of the subsequent discussion on how art might assist with coming to terms with one's traumatic past.

4.1.2. The quilt as healing piece of art

4.1.2.1. General information on quilting

The quilt enthusiast and author of various quilting manuals Diana Leone (2) defines the art work of the quilt as a kind of "cloth sandwich" (also see Quilting-in-America.com, *Folkart*), consisting of three different layers of cloth that are jointed by stitching (Leone 2). Usually, the top-layer is the most colourful and most artistically decorated part of the quilt, and together with a simpler backside it "envelops" the middle part of the padding (see Quilting-in-America.com, *Folkart*). Quilts can be categorised according to their decorative upper part, resulting in a general distinction between three types of quilts: the plain or whole cloth quilt, the appliqué quilt or "laid-on" quilt, and the pieced or patchwork quilt (see Quilting-in-America.com, *Applique, Folkart, and Patchwork*). Whereas the upper part of the first two types is a single piece of cloth that is decorated with distinctive techniques (for a more thorough account of the respective techniques see Quilting-in-America.com, *Applique and Folkart*), the top-layer of the patchwork quilt can be characterised as a combination of separate pieces of fabrics (see Quilting-in-America.com, *Folkart and Patchwork*). The quilt in *A Quilt of Dreams* can be identified as patchwork quilt, consisting of a quantity of distinctive fabrics that vary both in size and texture.

Comparing the artistic product of the quilt to Munro's categories of art, it can be argued that the quilt could be attributed to both the pictorial as well as to the utilitarian and decorative subcategory of visual art, depending on their ultimate

function. If the quilt is only produced in order to offer artistic pleasure via visual consumption, it could be defined as pictorial form of art. However, if this artistic pleasure is complemented by a utilitarian purpose, it could also be acknowledged as belonging to the second of the two subcategories aforementioned. Viewing Rosa's quilt against Munro's conception of art, without doubt, due to its artistic excellence it can be attributed to the pictorial category. If additionally being used as a practical object, like for example in order to protect Reuben's bed sheets from dust, the quilt qualifies as a utilitarian and decorative piece of art as well.

4.1.2.2. Rosa's quilt as self-healing therapy

The patchwork quilt in Schonstein's novel is the result of Rosa's artistic expression, prompted by her longing for her dearly-loved daughter Lilianna, whom Rosa has to consign to her aunt Pearl Kulber when working long hours in her and her husband Gershon's small shop known as Cohen Trading Store or kwaBelungu – this translates to something like “at the White People” (Schonstein 81) – that is situated in the black area of racially segregated Grahamstown. As a result of the frequent ailing separation from her daughter, “in a fit of melancholy [...], Rosa decide[s] to make a quilt for her daughter, though she ha[s] never sewn before and [does] not know any of the intricate stitches required. She [thinks] that if with each stitch she whispered her daughter's name, the quilt would become imbued with her love and longing” (Schonstein 104). In a way, through the artistic creation of the quilt, Rosa aims at easing the pain originating from the separation from Lilianna.

Additionally, the process of quilting serves as a means of artistic therapy in relation to Rosa's other accumulated traumas: Rosa was “born with a deep cleft on her upper lip” (Schonstein 72) that became infected when aimed at closing through surgery, leaving her with a “raised scar” (Schonstein 72) on her lips. The harassment by other children due to her deformed lip has caused Rosa to believe “that she was ugly and horrible beyond words” (Schonstein 73). Furthermore, Rosa's father's death due to black water fever and the fact that her widowed mother commits Rosa to the care of Rosa's grandparents instead of raising her herself contribute even more to Rosa's insecurities (Schonstein 73). The traumatising act of sexual abuse in her early years also marks Rosa's life narrative, adding yet another distressing memory to her already troubled persona (Schonstein 77). The trauma attributed to Rosa's

postulated “deformity” (Schonstein 73) is closely connected to her consequent trauma of marrying Gershon, whom she does not consider the love of her life and whom she only marries because he does not seem to be repulsed by her disfigured lip (Schonstein 71). Moreover, the inherited collective trauma of the Holocaust might be argued to contribute to Rosa’s disturbed character. Living in Apartheid South Africa that is pervaded by racial hierarchy that very much resembles the political ideology demanded by the Nazi regime, Rosa is unconsciously reminded of the Jewish collective trauma resulting from the Holocaust. From a metaphorically artistic point of view, Rosa’s homeland South Africa could be considered “a monochrome work in which colours would never overlap or complement each other, but would remain in their own distinctive quarters” (Schonstein 65) – a piece of art that resembles the racial intolerance also postulated by the Nazis.

Therefore, through the process of quilting and the act of imbuing this piece of art with all the love that is left in Rosa, she initiates a self-healing process that not only entails coming to terms with the pain resulting from the regular separation from her beloved daughter, but also with the other traumas that have pervaded her childhood, adolescent as well as adult life. By assembling bits and pieces of wondrous fabrics into a beautiful piece of art, Rosa expresses her wish of coming to terms with the “ugliness” of her past. Analysing Rosa’s quilting against Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela’s as well as Golub’s conception of art’s healing power, it can be argued that Rosa unconsciously tries to make whole what has been shattered by her experienced traumas via incorporating the traumatic incidents of her past and present in the new narrative of the quilt. Through the artistic quilting process Rosa enables herself to “feel a sense of wholeness and beauty in her life” (Riegler 18) again.

4.1.2.3. Reuben’s trauma eased by his mother’s quilt⁵

Rosa’s grandson Reuben can be identified as yet another extremely traumatised individual, who has accumulated a quantity of individual traumas during his lifespan. Already in the womb of his mother Lilianna he is confronted with the trauma of death, when his twin gets aborted (Schonstein 269-270). Moreover, when Reuben is still a little boy, his mother deserts him by committing suicide (see Schonstein 273), leaving

⁵ Cf. S. Riegler, p. 9

him with his grandparents Rosa and Gershon, who forbid his biological father Jacobus van Tonder to see his son. Hence, Reuben is not only traumatised by the loss of his twin and his mother, but also by the disappearance of his father. Due to his grandparents' long working hours and their consequent inability to look after him, Reuben is sent to St. Michael's Orphanage, where he experiences verbal harassment and physical abuse by the fellow-orphans on grounds of his religious background (he is referred to as "Jew-scum" (Schonstein 52) by the other boys). These traumatic incidents in the orphanage prompt Reuben to change from the role of the victim to the role of the aggressive perpetrator ("Touch me again or insult me another time and I'll break every bone in your bodies! (Schonstein 52-53)) – a modification of behaviour that also manifests itself in the fact that Reuben enters the occupation of a soldier. Being shipped off to Angola with the command to fight against coloured and black people in the South African Border War, Reuben is traumatised even more by war-related atrocities.

Reuben's accumulated traumas reveal themselves through various behavioural patterns that can be considered typical of PTSD. All of the three major symptom clusters identified with regard to PTSD symptomology, namely the cluster of intrusion, avoidance and disordered arousal, can be encountered in Reuben. Reuben's intrusive recollections of the traumatic stressors manifest themselves in the form of inevitable nightmares. Through his extensive alcohol consumption – he himself regards his person as "a heavy drinker" (Schonstein 284) – Reuben aims at numbing and avoiding the distress resulting from his recurrent nightmares. The PTSD symptom cluster of disordered arousal, which entails heightened irritability and unexpected outbursts of aggressive behaviour, is observable in Reuben's abusive behaviour towards his wife Georgie.

After Reuben's mother's suicide, Rosa places the artistically crafted quilt on the bed in Lilianna's former room, which the Jewish grandparents still refer to as "Mamma's room" (Schonstein 168) when speaking about it with their grandson. Reuben worships this quilt, as the skilfully created bedspread is one of the last tangible mementos of his mother. Not having had the chance to get to know his mother because she drowned herself shortly after Reuben's death, he "channels all his affection for his dead mother on the quilt" (Riegler 19) and tries to imagine her with the help "of the adoring snippets his grandparents had given him" (Schonstein 45).

Whenever he is not able to suppress his negative feelings by acts of avoidance, he seeks mental relief by wrapping himself in the quilt (Schonstein 168), “indulging in the comforting sensation of the differing textures of the fabrics” (Riegler 20). Thus, his mother’s quilt can be analysed as a powerful tool that helps to ease Reuben’s trauma-related psychological pain.

4.1.2.4. The quilt as symbol of Apartheid’s abolishment

The quilt in *A Quilt of Dreams* can also be analysed against the historical background of South Africa’s Apartheid regime. The two entangled plotlines of Reuben’s white Jewish family and of Vita’s black Xhosa family take place towards the end of the Apartheid era, when South Africa’s reality is pervaded by ideology-opposing lethal protests. As the title of the novel already suggests, Rosa’s handwork can be considered a quilt of dreams, meaning that it functions as a symbol of hope – the hope that the spatial and cognitive segregation of people with differing skin colours typical of the discriminating Apartheid ideology would be abolished in favour of an open-minded and fair South Africa that provides equal opportunities for its citizens, regardless of their complexion and descent. The “bright colours of [the] quilt” (Schonstein 273) allude to this bright future of a new political system.

As already emphasised, Rosa’s quilt can be categorised as patchwork quilt, meaning that it is the result of the combination of various pieces of cloth. The salesman and fabric enthusiast Emmanuel Levy, who has worked in the textile industry and who is “very fond of fabrics” (Schonstein 104) himself, functions as Rosa’s source of materials. It is him whom Rosa instructs to travel to faraway regions in the search for the exquisite and “unique pieces” (Schonstein 104) of cloth that would constitute the components of her quilt. Analysing the fact that Rosa’s quilt is a patchwork quilt comprised by a quantity of pieces of cloth that are differentiated in terms of their size, shape, colour and texture, it can be suggested that her quilt counteracts the set of beliefs postulated by the supporters of Apartheid (cf. Mengel 243). Instead of favouring one type of fabric, diverse fabrics should be considered equally important in the creation of the quilt. According to Levy, “it would be truly sinful to cut up” (Schonstein 109) the fabrics that he delivers to Rosa, as each and every one of them is beautiful and valuable in their own way. Levy’s appreciation of any kind of fabric can be equated to the dream of abolishing the Apartheid regime once and for all, and

of establishing a new fair political system that is not dominated by racial hierarchies. Like the artistic product of the quilt, humanity cannot be considered a homogenous mass, but is characterised by its heterogeneity and diversity. Only if people from all walks of life – or, metaphorically speaking, all sorts of fabrics – are perceived as equals, “a solid new society, a solid piece of art” (Riegler 21) can be achieved.

When Rosa admits her concern regarding the arrangement of the precious materials into a “mere bedcover” (Schonstein 109) and the possibility that this could spoil them, Levy assures her that the opposite will be true: she will not spoil the pieces of cloth, but instead “enhanc[e] [their] beauty [...] by consolidating them into something exquisite” (Schonstein 109). According to Levy, the result would “not be a mere bedcover [...] [but] an epic record of [their] finest discovery – the capturing of fibre from whatever source, be it bark or spun filament, be it cotton boll or hemp” (Schonstein 109). Once again, Levy’s accounts of the fabrics stress that the desired political system in a new South Africa is considerate of all its inhabitants, whatever their “source”.

Rosa’s process of quilting can be analysed as a lengthy process requiring stamina – it takes her thirteen years to complete the creative needlework of her quilt. During this time, Rosa is continuously assisted and motivated by Levy, who repeatedly stresses that the act of quilting is marked by its “slow-growing” (Schonstein 105) quality. He advises her not be in a hurry, but to take her time to carefully join the separate pieces of cloth with the artistic and decorative herringbone stitch (Schonstein 106). The “organic [...] [and] slow-growing work” (Schonstein 105) of the quilt can be identified as alluding to the fact that it is not possible to abolish the Apartheid regime overnight. Like assembling the pieces of the quilt, political protest takes time to achieve the desired outcome. Only after years of meticulous and tender handiwork, Rosa’s quilt has “slowly grown towards harmony of types and unison of different colours” (Schonstein 112). However, at this certain point of the story there is still one last square missing before the quilting process is finished (Schonstein 112), which might be analysed as an allegory of the not yet but “soon to be reached goal of overthrowing [A]partheid” (Schonstein 21).

4.1.3. Sculptural art in the form of the wooden bull

Besides the artistic needlework of the quilt, another piece of art functions as a major symbol that conditions the entanglement of the two South African family sagas, namely the sculpture of a bull carved from wood by Reuben's father Jacobus van Tonder, who is also known as Jaco (Schonstein 267). As the significance of the animal of the bull can be considered crucial regarding Xhosa history and is essential for understanding the role of the wooden bull in *A Quilt of Dreams*, the next subsection will provide some background information on this importance.

4.1.3.1. The significance of the bull in Xhosa history and myth

In the preface of the novel, Schonstein points at the importance of cattle to South Africa's Xhosa population by quoting the officer Ludwig Alberti, who was deployed to South Africa in order to serve the Batavian Republic from there. Alberti (quoted in Schonstein *Preface*) states:

To a Xhosa, his cattle are the foremost and practically the only subject of his care and occupation, in the possession of which he finds complete happiness, The bellowing or mooing of a cow is so pleasing in the ear that it can enchant it to the point where he will pay greatly in excess of its worth, and cannot rest until he has acquired it.

Certainly, Alberti's conception of Xhosa people is an essentialist one, describing them as one undistinguished ethnicity and restricting their only joy to the possession of cattle. However, a fair bit of truth can be found in this quote. The appellation *Xhosa* can be analysed as a "generic name used for a number of related cultural groups in South Africa" (see *Countries and their Cultures*), which "share [the] common language [...] Isi[X]hosa" (see *Countries and their Cultures*). What many of those cultural groups categorised under the umbrella term *Xhosa* might be argued to have in common is that they traditionally, and to a great extent, focussed their life on the possession and preservation of their cattle (see *Countries and their Cultures*). Commonly, cows and bulls were not only regarded as practical tools for survival, supplying the Xhosa with milk, meat and leather for clothing and therefore functioning as symbols of "wealth and stability" (see *Countries and their Cultures*), but also as means of engaging with a transcendent realm when slaughtered in "sacrifice to the ancestral spirits (see *Countries and their Cultures*). Furthermore, the lobola that had to be paid to the bride's family as a kind of compensation could be in the form of cattle,

meaning that the precious animals were also considered as a way to “seal[...] the marriage bond” (see *Countries and their Cultures*). This way, having reviewed the cattle-adoring past of Xhosa ethnicities, South Africa’s infamous cattle-killing movement during 1856 and 1857, which was induced by Nongqawuse’s prophecies with the purpose of “stimulat[ing] a national rebirth” (Stapleton 346), can be assessed as even more absurd.

The tale of the Xhosa warrior Maqoma and his relation to his beloved bull Jingqi shall also be outlined at this point, as this tale is retold and related to the novel’s present plotline by Vita’s grandmother Makhulu. Makhulu describes Maqoma as one of the finest warriors in Xhosa history, whose roots could be traced back to those Xhosa leaders who have “fought against the British to keep their land” (Schonstein 236). Many people of Xhosa heritage agree with Vita’s grandmother’s view that his courage was second to none, resembling the accumulated bravery of ten tough men that enabled him to fight “like a wild cat” (Schonstein 236). However, historically speaking, those colonists in favour of a racial hierarchy that positioned people with white skin colour on the top attempted to harm Maqoma’s public image in order to undermine Xhosa leadership in South Africa (Stapleton 346). According to the colonial government, “the prophecies had been invented by the [Xhosa] chiefs as a plot to force their starving people into a war with the Europeans” (Stapleton 346). Those statements influenced many Xhosa people to doubt Maqoma’s character. As a consequence of the rumours – and with the colonialists’ intention to overcome yet another “obstacle to complete colonial dispossession” (Stapleton 369) – Maqoma was ultimately incarcerated in the prison on Robben Island (Stapleton 346).

The legend of Maqoma’s rescue from this special island by his beloved bull Jingqi is retold by Vita’s grandmother in *A Quilt of Dreams*. With the plan to free “the one he was loyal to” (Schonstein 236) and “carry him back to the lands of his fathers” (Schonstein *Preface*), Jingqi covers the distance between South Africa’s mainland and the island in the form of swimming. Having freed Maqoma by bursting his chains with his powerful bellowing, “the great Xhosa warrior” (Schonstein *Preface*) climbs on his bull’s back and the two attempt to make their way back to the mainland. Unfortunately, their escape is lethally terminated by the prison’s wardens, who kill the two refugees with their firearms (Schonstein *Preface*). In conclusion, the bull Jingqi sacrifices his life for his master and companion. Therefore, on a more general level,

the myth can be analysed as alluding to the close relationship between the Xhosa people and their cattle.

4.1.3.2. The wooden bull ending misfortune and trauma

The sculptural wooden piece of art of the bull is the artistic expression of Reuben's father Jaco, who is committed to the psychiatric hospital Fort England because of his mental breakdown when hearing about Lilianna's death (Schonstein 303-304). When Jaco finally gets better, he is "put in the black wards to teach handwork" (Schonstein 304), as he is able to speak Xhosa and hence is perceived as a medium of "pick[ing] up information from the political prisoners" (Schonstein 304). However, although Jacobus van Tonder is a white individual and most likely a Boer descending from South Africa's Dutch-speaking colonialists, he does not agree with the racial hierarchy demanded by Apartheid ideology, but instead has "decided to work with underground movements to overthrow the government" (Schonstein 276). When he is sent to work with the black prisoners, Jaco befriends Nicodemus' youngest son Pious (Schonstein 303), whom he teaches to carve sculptures from wood (Schonstein 305). Because Nicodemus is thankful that Reuben's father has been a kind friend to his son, he decides to deliver the wooden bull that Jaco carved during the times at Fort England, through which Jaco expressed his distress resulting from Lilianna's suicide, to his son Reuben (Schonstein 305). On condition that Reuben listens to "some bit of black history" (Schonstein 303) that stresses the importance of the bull to the Xhosa, Nicodemus hands him the wooden bull that is "[a]bout the size of [a] fist" (Schonstein 302), which Reuben comes to evaluate as "[q]uite a nice little thing" (Schonstein 302). Being overwhelmed by feelings of longing for his father, Reuben seeks his mother's quilt, on which he lies holding the sculpture of the bull in his hands: "On her quilt [...] [he] start[s] to cry. [He] crie[s] and crie[s] like a damn baby. Holding onto that bull. Fucking kissing the bull" (Schonstein 306). In this certain passage of the novel the two major pieces of art, the quilt and the bull, are firstly introduced to each other.

Reuben's father's wooden bull can be analysed as a piece of art that assists the process of overcoming trauma and making whole what has been left unfinished in the past. Not only Reuben's quantity of interrelated traumas seem to be eased by the sculpture, whose creation process functioned as a kind of artistic self-healing trauma

therapy for his father, but also Vita's and her ancestors' misfortune seems to finally come to an end thanks to the wooden bull. Their misfortune can be led back to Vita's great-great-grandfather Phathuxolo, who was the nephew of the Xhosa warrior Maqoma. When Phathuxolo fell in love with Vuyolwethu, her father demanded the Boer Isaac's favourite bull as lobola – lobola is the "payment for his bride by a Xhosa bridegroom to her parent or guardian" (Schonstein 358), which was traditionally in the form of cattle in the past (Schonstein 358) – from Vita's great-great-grandfather. The Boer Isaac's favourite bull was a very special bull, as it was blood-linked to Maqoma's favourite bull Jingqi (Schonstein 235). Although Phathuxolo never paid his father-in-law the dowry for his bride, he nevertheless married Vuyolwethu (Schonstein 242) – according to Vita's grandmother this could be considered the reason why their family has to suffer from bad luck (Schonstein 243).

Having heard about the unfinished business of Phathuxolo, Vita promises her grandmother that she would "repair this misfortune" (Schonstein 250) resulting from "their ancestor's unfinished business" (Schonstein 257). In order to achieve this, Vita makes up her mind to get hold of a bull that was just like the one once owned by the Boer Issac (Schonstein 259). In search of such a bull, Vita is caught up in an anti-Apartheid political protest and gets "drawn into [...] the pounding heartbeat of [the] marching army" (Schonstein 260). When Vita is shot during this march, Reuben saves her life by immediately rushing her to the hospital (Schonstein 329). Being amazed at his compassion for the little black girl – "What's the matter with me? I'm going mad [...] I've shot at blacks myself" (Schonstein 332) – Reuben leaves his precious "small, exquisitely carved wooden bull" (Schonstein 344) with Vita. This present of the bull is a symbolic act that hints at Reuben's change of belief concerning the injustices of the Apartheid regime. Giving his bull to a Xhosa family desperately in need of the animal in order to complete the unfinished business of the past that still haunts their present, Reuben symbolically repairs the oppression and dispossession inflicted on the Xhosa by his white settler descendents.

A hopeful outlook concerning South Africa's future is suggested towards the end of the novel, when Vita asserts that she has seen the Boer Isaac's bull after being shot during the march. Vita's hallucination can be regarded as a metaphor of coming to terms with the collective trauma resulting from Apartheid. Vita's grandmother Makhulu explains:

The spirit of that great bull came to you, from out of the shadows, from the life beyond, for he saw your earnestness. [...] When you are well, we will lead the spirit of that golden beast home, and stand this his likeness at our doorpost for the sun to touch and for all our ancestors to gaze upon. Great-great-grandfather will have peace now, for you have found the essence of what he left unfinished. Bad luck will never visit us again (Schonstein 347).

In conclusion, through taking the wooden bull home, the streak of bad luck of Vita's Xhosa family – and metaphorically speaking of all black South African families – is disrupted, making way for a brighter future.

4.2. *Ways Of Dying* by Zakes Mda

4.2.1. Death and Art

Like the three other selected South African trauma novels, *Ways of Dying* by Zakes Mda centres on the tragic reality induced by the Apartheid regime. In this particular novel, this reality is described as being pervaded by ideology-related deaths, making the topic of death and its connection with various types of art the focus of the story. Due to Apartheid ideology the classification of deaths as “normal” or “abnormal” has shifted, meaning that normal deaths are no longer perceived as dying from old age, but as “deaths that [the South African nation] ha[s] become accustomed to, deaths that happen everyday” (Mda, *Ways* 157). These South African “normal” deaths are depicted as “death[s] of the gun, and the knife, and torture and gore”, stressing the brutality against people of colour being the order of the day during Apartheid time. Speaking through the characters of his novel, Mda further educates his readers that on the verge of abolishing Apartheid policies the number of ideology-related deaths cannot be perceived as declining. Instead, Mda addresses a fact that he calls the government's “double agenda”, which is described as “negotiating for a new order with the leaders of the political movement, while destabilizing the communities by killing their residents, and by assassinating political leaders” (Mda, *Ways* 183).

Because of this predominance of death and dying due to Apartheid's racial injustices expressed in the novel, the following sub-sections will focus on the traumatic topic of death and how it is related to artistic expressions.

4.2.1.1. Funerals as art of public performance

Like described by Munro (63), religious rituals and ceremonies can be considered a form of artistic public performance that involves prescribed appropriate ways of conduct. The code of conduct, however, depends on the type of religious ritual and might vary from culture to culture (Munro 63). The artistic ritual of the South African funeral plays a significant role in *Ways of Dying*. In the novel, the ritual of the South African funeral is exemplified by the funeral of Noria's second son Vutha, who has died due to the atrocious act of necklacing (Mda, *Ways* 189) – a type of execution commonly found during Apartheid era. The verbal part of the funeral is provided by the Nurse, who typically recounts “the story of the death of the deceased” (Mda, *Ways* 9), and the church minister, whose job it is to speak prayers. After this initial verbal component of the funeral, the prescribed act of filling the grave with soil follows, which is often accompanied and followed by the auditory art of music (see Mda, *Ways* 9). Having filled the grave with spades and shovels, it usually gets adorned by wreaths being the carriers of last messages, which are read out to the public (see Mda, *Ways* 9). What follows next in many South African families is what Walsh calls the ritual custom of “home-going service”, meaning that the funeral party attends to the deceased person's home to share a meal. Munro (63) confirms that funerals as manifestations of art typically include the component of “ritual food and drink”. In the case of Vutha's funeral this home-going service can also be identified, when “a procession led by the can that had brought the coffin to the graveyard is formed, in preparation for the solemn march back to the home of the mother of the deceased in the squatter camp, where [the mourners] will wash [their] hands and feast on the food that has been prepared” (Mda, *Ways* 10). Although there are differences between funerals in the settlement and in townships concerning “ranked strata” (Mda, *Ways* 161), judging from the novel's descriptions, the adherence to prescribed funeral etiquette is crucial for all South African funerals.

However, the already mentioned re-connotation of “normal” deaths during Apartheid era had as a result that these initially religious rituals became arenas for the expression of political protest. Mokoena (390-391) confirms this transition of funerals from initially solely religious to political ceremonies, stressing that this kind of politicisation would most commonly take place, if the funerals were “funerals of activists who were slain by the police or who died in detention” (Mokoena 391). Major

political organisations opposed to the Apartheid ideology and their public assemblies being banned, funerals “became the new public assembly in which mourners, sympathizers, and religious leaders” (Mokoena 391) could express their political opposition via dissident clothing, speeches, political songs and dances like the *toyitoyi* (Mokoena 391).

Thus, generally speaking, the art form of the funeral can be classified as a means of overtly opposing the Apartheid regime and addressing the trauma it inflicts on South Africa’s nation. As the Nurse is described as an important part of the funeral ritual, this occupation will be made the subject of discussion in the consequent section.

4.2.1.2. The Nurse as artist

As already postulated, the role of the Nurse is described as a crucial component of the funerals presented in the novel. The occupation of the Nurse normally involves the verbal recounting of “the exact details of what ailed [the deceased ones], of how [the Nurse] had a premonition of this death, of how [they] died, and of what last words [they] uttered before [their] spirit left the body” (Mda, *Ways* 18). Toloki admires the profession of the Nurse and their role at funeral rituals, as “[t]hey are the fortunate ones, those who were the last to see the deceased alive” (Mda, *Ways* 7). To his mind, a Nurse is “a fountain of fascinating information about ways of dying” (Mda, *Ways* 7). The public performance of the Nurse is portrayed as artistic retelling of death-related trauma that allocates the witnesses of this performance a silent observer role (see Mda, *Ways* 7). Besides the importance of the vocal component, mimic expressions and body posture are described as powerful tools for conveying the trauma to the mourners – “Pain is etched in [the Nurse’s] voice, and rage has mapped his face” (Mda, *Ways* 7).

It might be argued that through the artistic recount of the circumstances of the death of the beloved person the mourners might be assisted with coming to terms with the trauma the experienced loss has caused. Through the Nurse’s enlightenment of the death-related details that might not yet be known to the deceased person’s family and friends, the mourners might be enabled to make sense of the beloved person’s death. Thus, the Nurse’s report might help with unravelling possible uncertainties that might have prevented the bereaved people from healing.

Assessing the artistic profession of the Nurse from a political point of view, the verbal composition of the Nurse can be perceived as a carrier of anti-Apartheid meanings, pointing out the miscarriages in politics and the casualties resulting from South Africa's power struggles between ethnicities. Toloki remembers that he has been to a number of funerals, where the Nurses have functioned as carriers of messages concerning the exploitation of ethnicity employed by the tribal chief (Mda, *Ways* 55). Through the speeches of Nurses people are educated about the tribal chief's misdeeds of using "ethnicity as an excuse for his own hunger for power" (Mda, *Ways* 55): The tribal chief is exposed as having

concocted a non-existent threat to his people, telling them that they are at risk from other ethnic groups in the country. Whereas other leaders are trying very hard to build one free and united nation out of the various ethnic groups and races, he thinks he will reach a position of national importance by exploiting ethnicity, and by telling people of his ethnic group that if they don't fight they will be overwhelmed by other groups which are bent on dominating them, or even exterminating them. Their very existence is at stake. [...] The rotten tribal chief is exploiting ethnicity in order to solidify his power base" (Mda, *Ways* 55).

Besides pointing out the tribal chief's exploitation of ethnicity, Nurses also use their funeral performances to reveal South Africa's undemocratic, corrupt public structures. They explain that in some occasions police and so-called "security forces assist [the tribal chief's devotees] in their raids of death and destruction, because this helps to divide the people so they remain weak and ineffective when they fight for their freedom" (Mda, *Ways* 56). Therefore, it can be argued that by pointing out the injustices and power mechanisms behind Apartheid, Nurses play an important role in creating awareness among South African's population. Additionally, they might not only stimulate the mental processing of the wrongdoings, but also encourage an active fight against Apartheid policies, a "war [...] of freedom" (Mda, *Ways* 65), through the propagation of protests and demonstrations that have already taken place. Instead of fighting each other, the "various ethnic groups [...] should unite in their struggle for freedom" (Mda, *Ways* 56).

4.2.1.3. The Professional Mourner as an artistic occupation

Due to the increasing anti-Apartheid rebellion and wars of freedom like reported by the Nurses, protest-related "[d]eaths and funerals continue[...] to dog [Toloki's] way throughout" (Mda, *Ways* 66), leaving him busy in his self-invented occupation as a

Professional Mourner. Having “mourned at many [...] funeral[s] of war casualties” (Mda, *Ways* 56), it almost seems as if he would never run out of work. After all, according to Toloki, “[d]eath lives with [South Africa’s population] everyday” (Mda, *Ways* 98), resulting in his opinion that the “ways of dying are [the] ways of living” (Mda, *Ways* 98).

Although at first Toloki is introduced to death-related profit by the coffin manufacturer Nefolovhodwe and “engage[s] in this unique profession [of mourning] solely for its material rewards” (Mda, *Ways* 134), he soon changes his set of beliefs. He no longer regards the mourning for deceased individuals as a mere mean of making ends meet, but has come to regard his practices as an artistic endeavour, as “a spiritual vocation” (Mda, *Ways* 134). The artistic and religious character of his mourning is stressed when Toloki reminds himself that he should not “intervene in any of the proceedings of the funeral[, as] [i]t would lower the dignity of the profession to be involved in human quarrels” (Mda, *Ways* 24). Thus, he views his ceremony of mourning as being situated above humanity and as being characterised by its religious undertone.

Toloki’s funeral proceedings involve various components that together amount to the artistic ritual of mourning. Although “people are not yet used to the concept of a Professional Mourner” (Mda, *Ways* 17) and Toloki is still the only person to occupy this job, Toloki is hired by more and more bereaved ones to mourn their beloved deceased (Mda, *Ways* 16). During the proceedings of the funeral Toloki performs his ritualised posture and gestures while sitting on the mound of soil “that will ultimately fill the grave” (Mda, *Ways* 16) of the dead. Besides his idiosyncratic way of moving, his mourning ritual also entails agonising weeping sounds that are aimed at “shar[ing] his sorrow with the world” (Mda, *Ways* 17). At one point in the novel, the auditory component of his ritual is described as consisting of “moaning sounds of agony that [are] so harrowing that they affect[...] all those who [are] within earshot, filling their eyes with tears” (Mda, *Ways* 17). The auditory interplay of the verbal performance of the Nurse and Toloki’s mourning sounds is described as typical of Toloki’s ritual. Toloki accompanies and supports the speech of the Nurse via “punctuating each painful segment of [the] speech with an excruciating groan that sent the relatives into a frenzy of wailing” (Mda, *Ways* 17).

Besides the auditory component, Toloki's mourning ritual is also supported by his personal appearance. The significance of clothing in religious rituals that is proposed by Munro (63) can also be found in *Ways of Dying* when analysing Toloki's professional clothes. Toloki considers his black mourning costume as "a hallmark of his profession" (Mda, *Ways* 8). Toloki received this originally very expensive costume from a theatre shop – a fact that is reflected in the unusual, extraordinary elements of the costume: it consists of a "tall shiny top hat, lustrous tight-fitting pants, [...] and a knee-length velvety black cape buckled with a hand-sized gold-coloured brooch with tassels of yellow, red and green" (Mda, *Ways* 26). The very expensive materials utilised for the costume, namely silk and velvet (Mda, *Ways* 27), contribute to Toloki's worship of the costume. Only owning two sets of clothes, one being his professional costume and the other being his home clothes, Toloki venerates his costume even more intensely, prompting him to change from one set of clothes into the other regarding the occasion, and in order to protect his already worn out precious costume from further straining (Mda, *Ways* 16).

Additionally to the costume, Toloki's bodily features play a crucial role for conveying his heart-wrenching mourning ritual. His stocky and broad figure is described as facilitating the mourning process, as "his shoulders are wide enough to comfortably bear all the woes of bereavement" (Mda, *Ways* 11). Moreover, Toloki's facial features and especially his small, "permanently sorrowful" (Mda, *Ways* 11) eyes reflect and support the grieving atmosphere at funerals. In this respect, Nefolovhodwe comments on the suitability of Toloki's physical appearance for his sadness-evoking profession, as his face could be considered "a constant reminder that [they] are all going to die one day" (Mda, *Ways* 133). In addition to addressing the visual sense, Toloki's art of personal appearance also involves olfactory senses (also see Munro 64). Toloki's odour is described as an unpleasant and pungent smell, resulting from the mixture of his own personal stench – he only infrequently pays attention to bodily hygiene (Mda, *Ways* 8) – and "the perfume that he splashes all over his body as part of the ritual of his profession before he goes to a funeral" (Mda, *Ways* 8). Despite Toloki's conception that his fragrance should not be despised due to its sacredness and importance in the mourning ritual (Mda, *Ways* 8), many mourners react with disgust when confronted with the smell (Mda, *Ways* 8). In Shadrack's words, Toloki

“smells like death” (Mda, *Ways* 57) – a comparison not completely unsuitable, recalling that Toloki’s profession evolves around death.

The politicisation of funerals commonly found during the Apartheid time is also exemplified by Toloki’s public performances at “funerals with political overtones” (Mda, *Ways* 108). For those funerals Toloki modifies his auditory component of the mourning ritual, inventing new sounds, “groans, and wails” (Mda, *Ways* 108) that “are loosely based on chants that youths utter during political rallies” (Mda, *Ways* 108). Hence, those funerals function as sites of political challenge, and Toloki’s modified art of auditory performance can be regarded as closely connected to the political discourse on Apartheid ideology. Through the assimilation of his sounds, Toloki expresses identification with those political formations that favour an anti-Apartheid mindset.

Besides addressing the racial injustices due to Apartheid ideology and consequently aiming at creating awareness and encouraging protest against it, the ritual of the Professional Mourner as well as the profession of the Nurse also assist the mourning people on an individual level of coming to terms with the experienced trauma of death. Allegra explains that due to the continuous confrontation with death in Apartheid and post-Apartheid South Africa, “when death is no longer the exception, but the rule” (see Allegra), desensitisation and a feeling of numbness is not uncommon in the traumatised South African population. It might be argued that the artistic interplay of the ritual of the Professional Mourner and the verbal recounts of the Nurse counteract the deadening of grieving feelings. On the one hand, through the detailed retelling of the story how the deceased person came to see death, the Nurse prevents the individual’s death to become part of a faceless mass and “separates what is becoming a constant line of death into individuality” (see Allegra). On the other hand, Toloki assists those who have been sensitised by the Nurse with their grieving, accompanying and exemplifying the mourning process and offering “a should[er] against which one can lean when the pain finally gets to be too much” (see Allegra). This interplay of Toloki and the Nurse can be regarded as important part in the mourning process and with coming to terms with the beloved person’s death.

However, the occupation of the Professional Mourner might not only be argued to help other people with their processing of trauma, but assist Toloki himself with dealing with his own personal trauma. Toloki’s own trauma has developed due to the

fact that he has been referred to as ugly by his fellow-citizens and even by his father his whole life (see Mda, *Ways* 50). Although Toloki “had a number of intimate friendships with many women” (Mda, *Ways* 52) before he devoted his life to his invented profession, these relations were soon forgotten, as the women would not remember him because “the salty winds have ravaged his face, leaving deep gullies” (Mda, *Ways* 52), worsening his looks even more. In order to no longer be vulnerable and avert disappointment originating from relationships and feelings, Toloki devotes his life to his occupation. Toloki justifies this restraining from amorous feelings with the religious character of his mourning profession: He insists that feelings of love are “common feelings for common people[, and thus a] taboo in his vocation” (Mda, *Ways* 51), as he compares himself to holy men. Only when being confronted with Noria’s view that he should not be considered ugly, Toloki re-experiences and allows romantic feelings. Thus, in a way, Noria as a person functions as a means of overcoming Toloki’s personal trauma.

4.2.2. Jwara’s sculptures as the result of Noria’s song

One of Munro’s (49) classified subcategories of visual art, namely the three-dimensional art form of sculptural design, obtains a crucial role in *Ways of Dying* and is closely connected to the auditory art of music.

One day, Toloki’s father Jwara, originally being a blacksmith and making a living by shoeing horses (Mda, *Ways* 29), finds “himself overwhelmed by a great creative urge” (Mda, *Ways* 30) when confronted with Noria’s childish, monotonous singing (Mda, *Ways* 31). Prompted and accompanied by Noria’s meaningless and “never-changing song” (Mda, *Ways* 29), Jwara restrains himself from producing horseshoes, and instead “shape[s] the red-hot iron and brass into images of strange people and animals that he had seen in his dreams” (Mda, *Ways* 29). Engrossed in his and Noria’s creative partnership, the “sounds of beating iron fill [...] the air with monotonous rhythms” (Mda, *Ways* 29) and Jwara is “unable to stop until he ha[s] reproduced all the strange creatures with which he had interacted in his sleep” (Mda, *Ways* 31). Not uncommonly, as if “they [are] possessed by [...] powerful spirits” (Mda, *Ways* 30), Jwara and Noria spend several hours at a time together like in a trance expressing their artistic urges. However, their creative partnership cannot be described as mutually dependent or without hierarchy, as Jwara’s creation is

conditioned by Noria's singing, but not the other way round. This fact of Noria's "power to give or withhold pleasure" (Mda, *Ways* 73) has led her to perceive herself as very special and has been the ultimate reason for "Jwara's downfall" (Mda, *Ways* 101). Being deprived of her powerful song, Jwara is no longer able to process his dreams in the form of sculptures and falls into deep depression (Mda, *Ways* 101). Hence, this might be analysed as a symbol of art's consoling power of easing a troubled mind. The case of Jwara exemplifies that if creativity and self-expression through art are hindered, mental well-being might not be guaranteed.

Moreover, the role of aesthetics is highly debated in relation to Jwara's sculptures. When thieves break into Jwara's workshop, where he keeps his sculptures, and they leave them untouched, at first Jwara is proud that "[t]he spirits that made [him] create these wonderful works are too strong for thieves" (Mda, *Ways* 207). Opposing Jwara's pride, Toloki's mother contends that his "iron monsters" (Mda, *Ways* 208) are too ugly and useless to be stolen. Likewise, when Toloki is bequeathed with all of Jwara's sculptures, he judges his father's creations as aesthetically unpleasing (Mda, *Ways* 208), prompting him not wishing to accept them in the first place (Mda, *Ways* 205). However, Noria, having come to understand that "Jwara was a great man, a great creator who was misunderstood" (Mda, *Ways* 164), very much agrees with Kreiner's definition of art that excludes aesthetics when assessing pieces of art. To Noria's mind, the irrelevance of aesthetics should also be kept in mind when contemplating Jwara's sculptures. Thus, she cautions Toloki to refrain from assessing art on the superficial level of aesthetics (she advises him to "never use that painful word [...] ugly" (Mda, *Ways* 208)), but instead see the artistic spirit behind each individual piece of art. The fact that the two art specialists consulted by Nefolovhodwe agree that Jwara's figurines are indeed valuable – despite or even because of their grotesque design (Mda, *Ways* 209) – reinforces Noria's opinion.

Being enlightened by the invalidity of aesthetics by Noria, Toloki finally accepts his father's grotesque figurines. Barnard (*Apartheid and Beyond* 157) argues that through the acceptance of the sculptures, "Toloki is in effect [sic] learning to view his rural past in a more positive way" and a reconnection "with his artistic heritage in both generational and in a more broadly cultural sense" is stimulated. Toloki's change of assessment of art is even strengthened when he observes the amazement with the figures of the children as well as adults in Noria's squatter camp (Mda, *Ways* 210).

He would never have thought that his father's iron monsters could make people happy (Mda, *Ways* 212). Against the background of South Africa's Apartheid regime, this distancing of aesthetics in the field of art, like proposed in *Ways of Dying*, can be viewed as suggesting that the racial aesthetics maintained by Apartheid ideology – namely the assertion that being black is ugly and being white is desirable – should also be disregarded.

4.2.3. Music as auditory art form and medium of protest

A prominent theme found in *Ways of Dying* is music's power of functioning as medium of protest against Apartheid ideology.

When Toloki is musically ridiculed by the children living in Noria's squatter camp on grounds of his looks and Noria consequently urges the children to stop their hurtful songs, Toloki advises Noria to "[n]ever stifle the creativity of children" (Mda, *Ways* 69). Although Toloki does not mind being the subject of the children's songs, the children do not dare to continue commenting on Toloki's appearance through their singing, but instead "sing other songs, some of which they have heard their parents, and their brothers and sisters, sing at demonstrations, and at political rallies and funerals" (Mda, *Ways* 69). Hence, influenced by their social surroundings, the increasing anti-Apartheid resistance reflects itself in the children's vocal music.

Music in general and its more specialised versions of chanting or ululating (see Mda, *Ways* 172-173) obtains a crucial role concerning the voicing of political opinions during the Apartheid era. On the one hand, the auditory art form of music can be regarded as a means of voicing the malfunctions of South Africa's political system and as a medium serving the recount of "sad things that have happened to [the] people" (Mda, *Ways* 170) discriminated against by the postulated ideology. On the other hand, almost exclusively all of the anti-Apartheid songs can be identified as songs of freedom that are characterised by a happy and hopeful tone (Mda, *Ways* 170). It might seem morbid to join in cheerful singing at occasions like funerals. However, "the jubilation is due to the fact that part of the message of the songs is that the [disadvantaged] people shall be victorious in the end" (Mda, *Ways* 170). Eventually, this positive outlook and the hopeful wishes for the future might ease the pain of the past and therefore might assist with coming to terms with the experienced trauma.

Returning to the children's change in songs when being criticised by Noria, the fact that their rebellious "song becomes stronger, with the voices of adults joining in" (Mda, *Ways* 69) points at the increasing unification of South Africa's citizens in the fight against Apartheid's discriminating ideology. Besides this increasing musical expression of protest, the public performance of dance, which frequently accompanies the musical contest, can also be identified as reoccurring type of art in the abolishment movement. As "dancing the freedom dance" (Mda, *Ways* 179) is even more prominently featured in Mda's other trauma novel *The Heart of Redness*, it will be approached more thoroughly in the thesis' respective section.

4.2.4. Noria's squatter camp shack

The disunity of the South African nation during the Apartheid regime and even after its official abolishment is symbolised by the opposition of living spaces – by juxtaposing the city with the "shanty towns that were mushrooming on the outskirts of the city" (Mda, *Ways* 120). These squatter camps, or more politely called informal settlements (Mda, *Ways* 48), can be considered sites of political struggle and symbols of the country's split and corrupt character. As a consequence of South Africa's power struggles and in order to undermine the black population's spirit, the shacks situated in the squatter camps, which are described as "makeshift shelter[s] of newspapers, plastic, canvas and corrugated iron sheets" (Mda, *Ways* 53), are repeatedly and openly destroyed by bulldozers and deliberately ignited fires (Mda, *Ways* 121).

Noria too suffers from the government's voluntary petrol-bombing of her shack after her second son's death (Mda, *Ways* 51), leaving her a traumatised and "broken woman who had lost everything that meant something in her life" (Mda, *Ways* 95). Although Toloki initially attributes all of his troubles to the origin of Noria's artistic relationship with his father (Mda, *Ways* 104), he is able to leave behind his aversion when learning about the horrors of her traumatic past. As a means of reconciliation, Toloki assists Noria with the reconstruction of her shack – a shack that "would certainly be at home in any museum of modern art" (Mda, *Ways* 67). For their artistic creation of the shack, Toloki and Noria make use of a quantity of distinctive structural components like iron and plastic sheets (Mda, *Ways* 67-68), the result of the shack comparing to "a collage [of] bright sunny colours" (Mda, *Ways* 67). Their assembling

of new and shiny as well as rust-laden pieces of iron (Mda, *Ways* 67) might be perceived as a metaphor of South Africa's process of gradually developing Apartheid-opposing political views: Something old and rusty, which can be argued to be the unjust policy of Apartheid, is complemented with something new and shiny, namely a new, indiscriminating political system. However, the fact that the shack still comprises old pieces of iron hints at the notion that South African has not yet fully reached the desired outcome of race-independent politics. This ongoing change in political standpoint is illustrated by Noria's fellow-squatters' admiration of Toloki's and Noria's wondrous shack (Mda, *Ways* 68). Her neighbours "marvel at the workmanship, and at how the plastic and canvas of different colours have been woven together to form patterns that seem to say something to the viewer" (Mda, *Ways* 68). The fact that none of her neighbours "can really say what [the shack's] message is" (Mda, *Ways* 68) but that they still feel "that it is a very profound one" (Mda, *Ways* 68), alludes to South Africa's population still familiarising with and subconsciously endorsing the thought of the union of different (skin) colours. This way, the "two creators" (Mda, *Ways* 69) Toloki and Noria are portrayed as revolutionary artists who attribute the creation of a new nation to the people's own active agency (Mda, *Ways* 67).

Munro's (48) subcategory of visual art that is concerned with the creation of pictorial collages and montages out of pieces of paper can also be encountered when analysing the artistic creation of Noria's shack. For beautifying the interior of the shack, Toloki suggests decorating the walls with pictures from magazines and catalogues, like he did in his old shack (Mda, *Ways* 111, 119). Whereas Toloki's shack was adorned with mostly black and white pictures from print media (Mda, *Ways* 119), Noria's wall collage shines in full colour (Mda, *Ways* 119). This might be argued to resemble the ongoing change in belief among South Africa's population that a strict opposition of black and white should be substituted by the inclusion of all types of bright colours and nuances in-between black and white. The circumstance that the two artists cover "every inch of [her] walls [...] with bright pictures" (Mda, *Ways* 111) of ideal kitchens, dining rooms, bedrooms and gardens, together resembling a wishful "wallpaper of sheer luxury" (Mda, *Ways* 111), can be assessed as their artistic expression of their hope for a better future. Eventually, through their art they empower themselves to create new life narratives, which help them to make

whole what has been shattered by their traumatised past (compare with Van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela; Van der Kolk and Van der Hart).

4.3. *The Heart of Redness* by Zakes Mda

4.3.1. The fight between Believers and Unbelievers

Alongside quotes from other reviews published in print media, in the preface of the trauma novel *The Heart of Redness* by Zakes Mda an extract from the American magazine *Entertainment Weekly* is provided which summarises the novel's nature: "Jumping handily between past and present, Mda deftly renders the tensions between maintaining an indigenous culture and altering it in the name of progress" (Entertainment Weekly quoted in Mda, *Heart Preface*). In the novel, both past as well as the present are portrayed as being pervaded by the fight between Believers and Unbelievers. Those two categories originate from teenage prophetess Nongqawuse's prophecy, which – as a historical fact – eventually lead to the infamous Xhosa cattle-killing movement (for example see Stapleton 346). This piece of actual South African history is blended with myth and realist fiction in *The Heart of Redness*, presenting the readers with the opportunity to familiarise and immerse themselves within "the black experience" (Booklist quoted in Mda, *Heart Preface*).

Throughout the novel, Nongqawuse is more and more portrayed as serving as a mouthpiece for a transcendent force that aims at instructing the Xhosa nation how to evoke a national rebirth. Spoken to by the spirits, which are also called "the Strangers" (Mda, *Heart* 54), Nongqawuse consequently spreads their words:

I must tell the nation that all cattle now living must be slaughtered. They have been reared by contaminated hands because there are people who deal in witchcraft. The fields must not be cultivated, but great new grain pits must be dug, new houses must be built, and great strong cattle kraals must be erected. [...] [T]he whole community of the dead will arise. When the time is ripe they will arise from the [sea], and new cattle will fill the kraals (Mda, *Heart* 54).

Whereas Nongqawuse's coeval Believers, including Twin, follow her orders to kill all the cattle and to cease cultivating their lands, which should ultimately pave the way for the diseased ancestors' arrival and the banishment of "the cursed white conquerors" (Mda, *Heart* 77), the Unbelievers, like Twin's brother Twin-Twin, refuse to destroy their earthly possessions, as this would mean suicide. This ancient fight

between the Believers and Unbelievers carries on into the present plotline of the novel, which centres on the fight between Twin and Twin-Twin's descendents Zim and Bhonco, the former of which taking the side of the Believers while the latter perceives himself as an Unbeliever.

Not only Zim and Bhonco find themselves in a seemingly endless feud, but the whole village experiences a split in opinion, when they find out about the plans "to build a casino on the Gxarha River mouth" (Mda, *Heart* 66). Barnard (*Place of Beauty* 110) summarises that this "dispute over [the] proposed hotel and casino development on the Wild Coast of the Transkei (KwaXhosa) [...] pits village modernist against village conservationists in an urgent debate about cultural heritage and ecological preservation". Like many other involved people, John Dalton, who owns the trading store in the village, finds it difficult to decide "which side to take" (Mda, *Heart* 91). When the South African native Camagu returns from exile and visits the village in search for NomaRussia, he is confronted with the feud between the Believers and Unbelievers, which unleashes an inner struggle in Camagu regarding which side to support. Camagu's inner struggle between the modernist and the conservationist position is also reflected in the fact that he is torn between two women, namely the radically modern Xoliswa Ximiya, who opposes a multitude of traditional Xhosa practices because she considers them uncivilised and barbaric, and Qukezwa, who "is the best antidote to Xoliswa" (Mda, *Heart* 169).

The fight between Believers and Unbelievers as well as the process of working through South Africa's collective trauma are reflected in differing forms of art in *The Heart of Redness*. Amongst those are the auditory art of music – in particular split-tone singing – and the arts of personal appearance. Furthermore, dance as a hopeful art of public performance can be encountered in the novel. Therefore, these three types of artistic expression will be analysed in the following sections.

4.3.2. Expressing hope through the auditory art of music

The auditory art of music, and in particular vocal music, is prominently featured in the novel. It is through music that repressed South African natives like Twin are enabled to express their hope for a brighter future.

Twin's Khoikhoi wife Qukezwa introduces her husband to "the song of Heitsi Eibib, the earliest prophet of the Khoikhoi" (Mda, *Heart* 23). This special song tells the story of how Heitsi saved his people from their enemies: In flight from their persecutors, Heitsi and his followers find themselves at the Great River, which they cannot pass, "for the river [is] overflowing" (Mda, *Heart* 23). When Heitsi prays to Tsiqwa, the divine creator of the Khoikhoi, the river suddenly parts for Heitsi's people to pass, only to close again when their enemies try to cross it as well, swallowing every single one of them (Mda, *Heart* 23). Twin is fascinated by Qukezwa's hopeful song, and "whenever they s[i]ng this song, Twin wishe[s] the same thing could happen to the British" (Mda, *Heart* 23) oppressors. Therefore, Twin encounters a gleam of hope through the artistic practice of singing. Likewise, his fellow-Believers transform their hope of salvation from the colonial forces into "joyous sounds" (Mda, *Heart* 130), which echo through Qolorha's valleys when anticipating the arrival of the new people from the sea. Those joyous sounds result from "triumphal unison" (Mda, *Heart* 155) of men singing war songs, which is frequently accompanied by the wailing ululating sounds produced by the Xhosa women, who aim at "ululat[ing] their men to victory" (Mda, *Heart* 155). Besides this vocal expression of hope through singing and ululating, the isiXhosa music instrument umrhubhe, which is "made of a wooden bow and a single string" (Mda, *Heart* 151) and which is typically played by females through "stroking and sometimes plucking the string, using their mouths as an acoustic box" (Mda, *Heart* 151), also occupies a crucial role concerning the encouragement of hope. When waiting for the new people, Qukezwa feels that through the sounds of the umrhubhe, which resemble "the lonely voice of mountain spirits" (Mda, *Heart* 154), she can see "the new people riding on the waves" (Mda, *Heart* 154). Hence, "the song of the umrhubhe creates a world of dreams" (Mda, *Heart* 154) in those being confronted with its magical sounds. The mighty power of the described vocal and instrumental sounds is expressed by their effect of sending "shivers down the spines of the colonists" (Mda, *Heart* 131).

A special variant of vocal music that obtains a major symbolic meaning in the novel is split-tone singing, "a skill that is mastered by both the Qukezwa of the nineteenth century and her descendant of the same name in the twentieth century" (Schatterman 289). Camagu is confronted with contemporary Qukezwa's split-tone song and experiences first-hand the power of the "dying tradition" (Mda, *Heart* 152), as

Qukezwa manages to sing him into an orgasm (“[H]is pants are wet. It is not from sweat” (Mda, *Heart* 152)). Camagu describes her pleasure-evoking musical ritual the following colourful way:

She bursts into a song and plays her umrhubhe musical instrument. She whistles and sings all at the same time. Many voices come out of her mouth. Deep sounds that echo like the night. Sounds that have the heaviness of a steamy summer night. Flaming sounds that crackle like a veld fire. Light sounds that float like flakes of snow on top of the Amathole Mountains. Hollow sounds like laughing mountains. Coming out all at once. As if a whole choir lives in her mouth (Mda, *Heart* 152).

Both ancient and contemporary Qukezwa’s split-tone singing is characterised by combining a quantity of distinctive and diverse sounds (see Mda, *Heart* 152, 271). Their singing is described as allowing the simultaneous presentation of “many voices” (Mda, *Heart* 193), and therefore functions as a metaphor of the abolishment of the hierarchical Apartheid regime. Instead of silencing those voices that are perceived as inferior according to the Apartheid ideology, Qukezwa’s split-tone singing suggests that all voices are equally important and, thus, should all be incorporated into a greater “whole”. The symbolic function of this special type of vocal singing becomes even more apparent when the reader is confronted with the description that the two Qukezwas sing in many beautiful colours at the same time. They sing “[s]oft colors like the ochre of yellow gullies. Reassuring colors of the earth. Red. Hot colors like blazing fire. Deep blue. Deep green [...] All at the same time” (Mda, *Heart* 193). Hence, the union of different colours in the split-tone singing symbolises the desired goal of denouncing the segregating character of the Apartheid regime in favour of a political system that involves all people regardless of their skin colour. In this respect, Schatterman (289) concludes that through the encouragement of and emphasis on “multi-voicedness” via the motif of split-tone singing, Mda proposes that the involvement of people from all walks of life and all kinds of ethnicities can be considered “the way forward” (Schatterman 289) in a new, post-Apartheid South Africa.

4.3.3. The art of personal appearance

Barnard (*Place of Beauty* 110) concludes that South Africa’s present reality is pervaded by opposing opinions concerning the notions of “place, belonging and cultural heritage”, and explains that those controversies can be led back to South

Africa's traumatising colonial past as well as to contemporary international influences. In Mda's *The Heart of Redness* the art of personal appearance and beautification can be considered an artistic means of self-expression that enables the positioning of oneself within these discussions concerning cultural heritage. The self-expression through clothes, ornaments and decorative cosmetics can be encountered in the past plotline, featuring the brothers Twin and Twin-Twin, as well as in the present plotline, which focuses on the bitter enmity between Zim and Bhonco. In both plotlines the Believers and the Unbelievers vehemently attempt to distinguish themselves from each other, which they frequently try to achieve on the level of personal appearance.

When comparing two distinctive meetings of Unbelievers, one taking place in Nongqawuse's time and the other in contemporary South Africa in Zim's and Bhonco's village, it can be detected that both in the past and the present the Unbelievers' way of clothing is characterised by a mixture of influences.

In the past plotline, five distinguished Unbelievers gather in order "to see what [they] can do to save the people from [Nongqawuse's] false prophecies" (Mda, *Heart* 83). Two of them, namely Maqoma's son Ned and Nxele's son Mjuza, are entirely dressed in European clothes, whereas the others are either dressed in "a mixture of European and isiXhosa attire" (Mda, *Heart* 81) or fully dressed in typical ethnic clothes (Twin-Twin wears an "isiXhosa tanned-hide skirt, a zebra-skin cape, and beads of different types" (Mda, *Heart* 81)). The fact that Twin-Twin feels "small and shabby" (Mda, *Heart* 81-82) when comparing his traditional Xhosa clothing to the westernised robes of his fellow-Unbelievers points at the inner struggle many people of Xhosa descent of past and modern times have in common with Twin-Twin: being confronted with the constant insistence that their traditional gear is an expression of an uncivilised, barbaric culture and, therefore, being shamed into believing that their clothes are embarrassing, those originally fond of the ethnic clothes feel unsure about their appearance. They are torn between the wish to carry on traditions opposed to the desire to be accepted as civilised individuals. Thus, it could be argued that the incorporation of "civilised" westernised robes in their mode of dressing, to some extent, distances themselves from this picture of the savage.

The diverse way of dressing amongst the Unbelievers can also be encountered in the present plotline at a meeting of the Unbelievers, where "[s]ome are wearing

traditional isiXhosa clothes while others are in various western gear ranging from blue denim overalls and gumboots to Bhonco's crinkled suit and tie" (Mda, *Heart* 72). Bhonco has not always been a wearer of such westernised clothes. In order to prevent her parents from wearing the traditional Xhosa clothes, Bhonco's and NoPetticoat's daughter Xoliswa, who considers herself a highly civilised and modern woman, has bought them "dresses and suits in the latest European styles" (Mda, *Heart* 44). To Xoliswa's mind, the "isiXhosa costume is an embarrassment" (Mda, *Heart* 44) and "it is high time her parents changed from *ubuqaba* – backwardness and heathenism. They must become *amagqobhoka* – enlightened ones – like her" (Mda, *Heart* 44). Although her father does not wear the received clothes at first, he more and more agrees with his daughter, asserting that "[t]he Unbelievers stand for progress" (Mda, *Heart* 92), and consequently should dress accordingly. Proud of her father for supporting the construction of the casino and, therefore, modernity, Xoliswa turns a blind eye on the condition of her father's clothes: "[E]ven a wrinkled suit is better than no suit at all. Far better than beads and traditional isiXhosa costume, even though a rock-rabbit-skin bag hangs over [Bhonco's] off-white shirt and twisted tie" (Mda, *Heart* 92).

Contrary, Xoliswa is outraged concerning her mother's way of dressing. Although NoPetticoat "is a strong Unbeliever like her husband, she is sold on the traditional fashions of the amaXhosa" (Mda, *Heart* 71) and decides that "she [is] no longer going to stifle herself with soulless European clothes" (Mda, *Heart* 260). NoPetticoat is described as belonging to the *amahomba*, who are "those who look beautiful and pride themselves in fashion" (Mda, *Heart* 43). Her everyday outward appearance is described the following way:

She is wearing her red-ochred *isikhakha* dress. Her neck is weighted with beadwork of many kinds. There are the square *amatikiti* beads and the multicolored *uphalaza* and *icangci*. Her face is white with calamine lotion, and on her head she wears a big iqhiya turban which is broader than her shoulders. It is decorated with beads which match her *amacici* beaded earrings (Mda, *Heart* 43-44).

The amahomba, including NoPetticoat, are portrayed as regarding the beautification through fashion and cosmetics as a mode of self-expression. To their mind, "clothes are an art form. They talk. They say something about the wearer" (Mda, *Heart* 44). This way, the character of NoPetticoat alludes to the fact that the ostensibly strict

contradiction between “unbelieving” and wearing ethnic clothes does not hold true. In other words, NoPetticoat does not consider the act of wearing traditional Xhosa fashion as pointing to the respective wearer’s uncivilised character.

In contrast, Xoliswa’s opinion is the extreme opposite. To her mind, wearing traditional Xhosa clothes constitutes the wish to “preserve an outdated culture” (Mda, *Heart* 88). Xoliswa associates this outdated, barbaric culture with the colour red, as her ancestors used to apply red ochre to their bodies in order to beautify themselves (Mda, *Heart* 80). She agrees with the foreign missionaries of former times that only “those who have not seen the light [...] still smear themselves with red ochre” (Mda, *Heart* 55). Consequently, Xoliswa especially criticises her mother’s red *isikhakha* skirt, as the dressing in such traditional red clothes equals “a backward movement” (Mda, *Heart* 160) due to its reference to their uncivilised “history of redness” (Mda, *Heart* 160).

Camagu, who is portrayed as a sophisticated and educated individual of South African descent returning to his place of birth from years of exile (or in Barnard’s (*Apartheid and Beyond* 136) words he is described as a “cosmopolitan umXhosa exile”), criticises Xoliswa for her mindset that “the isikhakha skirt represents backwardness” (Mda, *Heart* 160). He has come to understand that “to other people it represents a beautiful artistic cultural heritage” (Mda, *Heart* 160). Therefore, it can be concluded that the character of Camagu shares similar beliefs like NoPetticoat concerning the mode of dressing as expression of cultural belonging.

4.3.4. Dance as hopeful art of public performance

Besides the auditory art of music and the art of personal appearance, the artistic public performance of dance also plays a crucial role in *The Heart of Redness* with regard to self-expression and overcoming trauma.

Throughout the novel, the readers are provided with a quantity of instances that feature the act of dancing. In the past plotline, after exterminating their cattle and burning down their crops, the Believers not only experience hope for the future through singing, but also through dancing (Mda, *Heart* 107). It is through the rhythmic movements of their bodies they “forget about the troubles of the outside world” (Mda, *Heart* 107), which alludes to this special type of art’s power of easing the distress

resulting from exterior stressors. Furthermore, during the Apartheid years, which “Mda decisively brackets off [...] as the “struggles of the middle generations” (Barnard, *Apartheid and Beyond* 24; also see Mda, *Heart* 3) and which he never describes in greater detail in the novel, and also in the present plotline the hopeful act of dancing can also be encountered. When Camagu returns from exile and accidentally attends the funeral of Zim’s diseased son Twin, he is confronted with the toyi-toyi, a freedom dance frequently danced at anti-Apartheid rallies as an expression of political protest (“the youth used to dance [it] when [they] were fighting for liberation” (Mda, *Heart* 28)). With regard to the nature of the toyi-toyi, Simpson (507) explains that it can be led back to the “ANC[’s] [...] military wing Umkonoto we Sizwe ([or short] MK), as it is characterised as “a muscular march mimicking the movements of MK guerrillas in training” (Simpson 512).

The fact that Camagu’s “steps are rather awkward” (Mda, *Heart* 28) when he joins the mourners at the funeral in their freedom dance is the result of never being properly introduced to the toyi-toyi because of his exile during the Apartheid years (Mda, *Heart* 28). Camagu slowly comes to comprehend the importance the freedom dance has had in the anti-Apartheid movement and still has in post-Apartheid South Africa. After all, the ones who danced the freedom dance “were the ones who bore the brunt of the bullets” (Mda, *Heart* 32), ultimately being responsible for “the fruits of liberation” (Mda, *Heart* 32) that are so commonly “enjoyed [...] by those from exile [...] [who] were having a good time overseas [while the dancers] were dying here” (Mda, *Heart* 32) in South Africa. Being rejected in about twenty job interviews for an occupation in South Africa’s public sector (Mda, *Heart* 30), Camagu regrets that he “never learned the freedom dance” (Mda, *Heart* 29) because “one needed to dance the freedom dance [...] [o]r at least to know some prominent dancers” (Mda, *Heart* 31) in order to network oneself up the ladder of success in South Africa (Mda, *Heart* 32).

In conclusion, the public performance of the freedom dance called toyi-toyi, which reminds one of the fighting movements of the MK soldiers opposing the Apartheid regime, obtains a crucial symbolic function in the novel, as it is closely connected to the abolishment of those repressing forces responsible of South Africa’s collective trauma in the first place.

4.4. *The Dreamcloth* by Joanne Fedler

4.4.1. Exile and trauma related nomadic lifestyle

Reviewing the rise and fall of the Apartheid regime, Hlonipha Mokoena comes to the conclusion that “the history of [A]partheid is also the ‘history of forced migration’” (Mokoena 388 quoting Bester 509). The motif of exile and migration pervades the trauma novel *The Dreamcloth* by Joanne Fedler, which not only depicts the collective South African trauma due to Apartheid, but also the Jewish collective trauma and forced migration resulting from the Holocaust. In the novel, these two historical collective traumas are connected through the family saga of a white Jewish family fleeing Nazi-ruled Europe in search for a “shelter from extinction” (Fedler 31), for a new home, which they encounter in South Africa. In fact, Yankel suggests that the Jews and the Blacks are not too dissimilar, both being suppressed and killed off by ruling forces (see Fedler 230).

Mia, one of the novel’s main protagonists and descendent of her Jewish migrating ancestors, is closely connected to the motif of migration. From early childhood on, Mia suffers from nightmares and feels urged by a transcendental force to write about horrible things, like “houses burning, babies dying, [...] hearts tearing” (Fedler 116). Mia’s decision to become a journalist might result from this special transcendental force, which she refers to as “her gypsy ghost” (Fedler 25) and which can be traced to her ancestors. Her inherent, never-resting ghost orders her to “flit [...] from country to country, [...] looking for somewhere to leave” (Fedler 83) it behind. Mia is drawn “from one disaster to the next, [where she] witness[es], listen[s], writ[es] fiercely, document[s] other people’s pain” (Fedler 24). It almost seems as if Mia subconsciously searches the world for trauma. Mia’s father Issey believes that this trauma-seeking behaviour is “connected with something broader, a kind of collective unconscious” (Fedler 132). In the course of the novel, it becomes apparent that Mia has inherited the Jewish collective trauma of her ancestors and especially of her diseased grandmother Maya. There is one situation when even Mia’s own mother Fran characterises her daughter “as unstable as Sylvia Plath, [...] [t]hanks to all the meshugenah [(mad)] genes she inherited from [Issey’s] side of the family” (Fedler 115). The family’s trusted Rabbi confirms that there might be a special entanglement between Mia and her grandmother Maya. He suggests that “[w]hen a child bears the

name of an ancestor, there is a link, a very important bond that is created between the two souls” (Fedler 134). As Mia was named after Maya, the Rabbi concludes that some “spiritual residue” (Fedler 135) of Maya can be found in her granddaughter, causing her to experience a great deal of disturbance.

The trauma of forced migration and the effects it has on the affected individuals can also be found in the novel’s character Asher. His mother Rochel is emotionally wrecked when being separated from Maya, the love of her life, due to her forced relocation to South Africa. Not being able to stand life without Maya any longer, Rochel commits suicide and consequently leaves behind her son Moshe, who later changes his name to Asher (Fedler 224). Asher, who is haunted by “[t]he vacuum inside him that ha[s] been created by the early loss of his mother” (Fedler 204), seeks Mia’s family in South Africa in order to look “for the pieces of the past” (Fedler 204). With Asher’s arrival, once again, the two Jewish families are connected. However, Asher sneaking his way into Mia’s family only temporarily influences the family life in a positive way – for some time Mia feels as if “the pieces she had always felt were lost or missing inside her were all gathered together” (Fedler 211) –, but ultimately results in complete chaos: “Asher was happiness and sadness all knotted into one person” (Fedler 217).

4.4.2. Literary art in relation to trauma

4.4.2.1. Maya expressing distress and longing through her poetry

Maya herself is amazed at her eagerness to write, at “this madness to scrounge for paper, [...] the ache under her ribs, the pressure in her fingertips” (Fedler 73). Whenever she is haunted by a “swirl of darkness in the belly” (Fedler 157), she finds herself longing for a piece of paper, on which she expresses her most intimate feelings:

[B]etween her and the paper, words appear[...], rendering a life within her – not the one she manifest[s] in the company of others, but a hidden life that rumble[s] in the margins of her self. [...] [She is] speaking from that untouched unchecked voice in her [...], not taking others’ needs into account, not calculating, modifying or holding back. Here alone [is] her sacred place [...], where she walk[s] the unfootprinted paths of imaginings (Fedler 74).

For Maya the act of writing creates “a place for gratitude, loneliness, [and] longing” (Fedler 138). The artistic expression of her innermost pain as well as wishes through the process of writing helps Maya with coming to terms with the trauma resulting from her practical liaison with her husband Yankel, whom she only “married for survival and not for love” (Fedler 138). Being trapped in the loveless marriage with Yankel, Maya never expresses her dissatisfaction and unhappiness to anyone, but instead seeks the comforting sensation of paper and a pen, which allows “every [of her] longing[s] to unfurl and breathe and stretch and pulse” (Fedler 75). Only through the process of writing Maya can “approach something clear and right” (Fedler 76). For her, creating poetry can be compared to “the fading of the mists, the lifting of the veils” (Fedler 76) that cover up the true essence of things. Besides this “mercurial lucidity that comes from scripture” (Fedler 76), Maya also treasures the art of literature due to its capability of preserving what she calls her “hidden life” (Fedler 76): “As long as she put ink to the page, her hidden life was not forgotten, not wiped out in a pogrom, not buried in an unmarked grave” (Fedler 76). This certain passage in the novel constitutes a straightforward reference to the Jewish collective trauma of the Holocaust, which, without the least doubt, also haunts Jewish Maya. Therefore, in a way, Maya “wrote so that her life might go on” (Fedler 76).

Although Maya initially solely writes for herself in order to transform her pain and longing into words and in order to live on despite the hardships she has to face, Rochel and the affection she manages to arouse in Maya, which Maya has never thought possible, prompt Maya’s wish to share the “private world” (Fedler 75) that she expresses through her literary art (Fedler 105) with Rochel. Their relationship is a mutually dependent and comforting one, as they provide each other with their own individual pieces of art – Maya introduces Rochel to her poetry whereas the seamstress Rochel teaches Maya to sew and familiarises her with the art work of the dreamcloth (see Fedler 105, 138) – that provide some relief concerning their individual and collective traumas.

Pressured by her husband Yankel, Maya has to leave her beloved seamstress behind and has to travel to South Africa. When Maya arrives in her new home country, she is not the least familiar with the English language. To her, the foreign language is a “mirage of sounds, indecipherable with meanings she could not reach” (Fedler 241). Maya, always having found hope and relief through her writing, finds

herself desperate due to this loss of “a world of meaning, where words, [were] her most beloved treasures” (Fedler 241). Additionally, the emerging feeling that she only dreamt of the love between her and the seamstress (“Pain was the birthright of her people. So how to explain such happiness? Surely it had only been a dream” (Fedler 285)) contribute to the fact that Maya turns away from her precious world of language (Fedler 284), “[f]or even *it* failed her, unable to hold the heart still” (Fedler 285). Turning away from the one thing that has always been necessary for her survival, Maya falls in deep depression, which finally conditions her slow demise.

4.4.2.2. Yankel finding consolation in Maya’s poems

“Widowed as a young man with [his] two small sons” (Fedler 60), Zaide Yankel experiences severe mental distress due to his wife’s death. Likewise, his sons Issey and Shmooley are traumatised by their mother’s premature death. As a consequence of their grief, and as a means of coming to terms with it, each of the three bereaved pursue their own mourning “ritual [...] of remembrance” (Fedler 61). Although Yankel is confronted with the harsh reality that the subject of Maya’s affection in her poetry is not him but Rochel, he nevertheless finds comfort in Maya’s literary pieces of art. He “learn[s] every one of her poems by heart” (Fedler 61), reciting them “whenever the shadow of her memory passe[s] over him” (Fedler 61). In addition to memorising Maya’s words, Yankel also finds relief when engaging in his own artistic process of editing his wife’s works through the revision and “adding [of] grammar, form, capital letters and headings to the handwritten scrawl of paper mass” (Fedler 61). His editing process is compared to a kind of meditation that should not be interrupted by any exterior influences (Fedler 61). When being disturbed by his sons during his artistic rearrangement of Maya’s poetry, Yankel would warn them not to bother him, as he was “with [their] mama” (Fedler 61) during this process.

4.4.2.3. Mia inheriting Maya’s urge to write

When Mia is still a child, her father Issey already notices the resemblance between Mia and his mother – “she’s just like Ma” (Fedler 44) with regard to the close connection to literature. The fact that Mia finds relaxation in literature manifests itself for the first time when Issey is able to stop his baby daughter’s “frenzied cries” (Fedler 45) through reciting poems from *The Oxford Book of English Verse*. Those

poems seem to “h[o]ld breezes and the calmness of underwater” (Fedler 45) in Mia’s ears. At the age of four, Mia has taught herself to read (Fedler 52, 63), which prompts her father even more to regard her as “a natural with language” (Fedler 63) like his deceased mother. To his mind, Mia is the embodiment of literary “passion passed on from one generation to the next” (Fedler 63).

Through Mia’s emerging competence of writing she is enabled to bring her nightmares and hallucinations to paper. In the course of the novel, it becomes apparent that Mia’s nightmares can be led back to the collective trauma of the Jewish population and that Mia has inherited the eagerness to write from her grandmother, who herself was a first-hand witness of the Holocaust. The reason why Maya’s ghost “slid [...] into [Mia’s] life and ma[d]e it her own” (Fedler 329) could result from Maya’s premature passing. Maya’s ghost recognises that her original “thought [that] dying was a way to find [Rochel] again” (Fedler 330) was wrong. “[I]n death she was no closer to what she had lost” (Fedler 330). Triggered by the revelation that “there was still so much that had to be written” (Fedler 330) and due to dispossession of a physical body that could produce written pieces of art, Maya’s spirit decides to haunt her granddaughter in order to complete her unfinished business.

Towards the end of the novel when Yankel hands Maya’s carefully preserved letters to Mia (Fedler 310), an atmosphere of reconciliation between past and present can be perceived. The first confrontation with Maya’s letters is described the following way:

The words felt strange and familiar all at once. [...] Dejavu spun Mia’s head in a spiral of giddy circles. [...] For years she had swirled restlessly from place to place, searching for what might make sense of it all. But right here, right in front of this old man, the rage that had coiled in her for decades slowly furled up, smaller and smaller winding into itself and making space for something new. [...] The riddle righted itself (Fedler 311).

Thus, Mia’s restless character, which feels the need to travel from one traumatic situation to the next, finally feels a sense of wholeness due to Maya’s writing. Although Mia’s nightmares and the urge to write them down can be traced back to the inherited trauma from her ancestors, and, therefore, the process of writing itself can – to a certain extent – be characterised as the source of Mia’s traumatised character, it is also the literary art of writing that rids Mia of her distress in the end.

4.4.3. Mia's winged figures

Mia not only suffers from the inherited collective trauma of the Holocaust, but also from a quantity of individual traumas that have accumulated during her lifespan (cf. Mengel 238). From early childhood on, Mia witnesses her mother Fran emotionally distancing herself from her family. Furthermore, another traumatic incident is implied to have taken place, when Mia was still a little girl, namely her sexual abuse by Asher. When her father asks Mia whether Asher has ever laid hands on her, Mia denies it, although she still feels “the memory of Asher’s fingers in her hair, on her face, on her lips” (Fedler 279). Mia’s father’s suicide constitutes yet another deeply traumatising event in Mia’s life. In her adult life, Mia is also regularly confronted with the atrocities of humankind because of her occupation as a journalist. Unfortunately, “[p]ain [takes] up more place in the world than happiness” (Fedler 25) and it is a journalist’s duty to provide objective accounts of reality.

Munro’s subcategory sculptural art plays an important role in *The Dreamcloth* with regard to Mia’s individual and collective traumas. Already as a child, Mia pursues the habit of creating small flying figures out of the most distinctive materials and continues her creative work as an adult. Although “[n]ot one [her] figure[s] [is] identical to any other” (Fedler 25) and although they are all created from different substances – there are figures created from “plasticine” and “folded paper” (Fedler 95) as well as “from driftwood, bequests from the ocean, others from scrap metal” (Fedler 25) – they all have one thing in common: they possess wings. Whenever Mia carves a figure without wings, she immediately feels uncomfortable because “[o]nly things with wings made her happy” (Fedler 120). Therefore, in such instances she “searche[s] for triangles of paper or tinfoil” (Fedler 20) that she could shape into tiny wings, enabling her figures to fly. The fact that “[t]hings with wings ha[ve] always forced their way into her fingertips, demanding creation” (Fedler 95) points at Mia’s restless gypsy personality and her wish to fly away from the traumas that haunt her. Regardless of her location, Mia proceeds with this habit of creating sculptures with wings (Fedler 25), leaving them behind as “a token that she once was there” (Fedler 25) when she continues her travels. Hence, Mia scatters her gypsy ghost, her accumulated traumas, all over the globe by leaving behind her figures.

4.4.4. Drawing as exhaled pain

Issey is another Jewish protagonist of the present plotline that suffers from a multitude of traumas. Like Mia, he experiences the collective trauma due to the mass extinction of Jews. Furthermore, he is not only troubled by his mother's death, but also by the stillbirth of his first born child, who he would have named Mark (Fedler 41). Haunted by those traumas, Issey finds his safe haven in his art studio, where the talented portraitist creates wondrous pieces of art with the help of his brushes (Fedler 93), each of which "has its own way of speaking to the paint and whispering the stories in [Issey's] hands onto the canvas" (Fedler 181).

Mia is a regular attendee of his drawing sessions. In one of their frequent and lengthy sessions in the art studio, Issey enlightens Mia about the nature of art. He explains that in order "[t]o produce great art, sacrifice [is] inevitable" (Fedler 182) on the artist's part. According to Issey, art is the result of suffering (Fedler 183). To his mind, art in general, and its subcategory drawing in particular, can be described as "exhaled pain" (Fedler 182), in the case of drawing, captured on canvas. Issey asserts that it is the artist's duty "to share the suffering with others" (Fedler 183). That is also why Mia, whom Issey regards as a true artist, cannot stop herself from writing: there is pain in her that demands to be made the subject of art, pain that demands to be made accessible to the outside world (Fedler 183).

4.4.5. The dreamcloth's healing powers

The major symbol of the novel, which even gives it its name, is the dreamcloth that is created by the Jewish woman Rochel. Rochel is a seamstress who "sew[s] for living – jackets, dresses, trousers. Anything people asked for" (Fedler 102). Due to her profession, Rochel's "hands [are] familiar with the inside of garments" (Fedler 102) and the various techniques required for sewing. Like her contemporary fellow-Jews, Rochel suffers from the hatred of those in favour of the Nazi's promoted anti-Semitism. Additionally to her trauma originating from the Holocaust, Rochel is also confronted with her husband's death, leaving her a widow and her small son Moshe, alias Asher, a half-orphan (Fedler 102).

Prompted by her traumatic past and present, whenever Rochel finds time, she channels her trauma into the artistic joining of the most distinctive types of fabrics

(those fabrics are leftovers from her orders (Fedler 103)) and materials into colourful pieces of art, which she calls her dreamcloths. As the name already suggests, Rochel stitches her dreams and longings into those dreamcloths (Fedler 103, 158). It is almost as if “Rochel’s [trained] fingers sp[ea]k to her” (Fedler 154), urging her to create a “deeper world, her own secret Garden of Eden” (Fedler 104) through the sewing of her dreamcloths. Rochel treasures her artistic cloths, which are compared to “little prayers and fantasies” (Fedler 154), and keeps “them hidden [...] under the mattress, so that sometimes at night, she could curve her arm under the bed, and through the springs, feel their pulsing texture” (Fedler 154).

However, when Rochel gets to know Maya, in whom she finds a soulmate, she no longer feels the need to hide her dreamcloths, but instead presents one of them to Maya and consequently introduces Maya to her secret:

From the dark seam between her bosoms, she drew out a piece of cloth, no bigger than a small handkerchief, and held it flat in the palm of her hand. Maya did not know where to look first or longest – into her palm or her eyes, for in both she saw tricks of light and sleights of wonder, a glimmer of blue silk, a copper sequin, a moon of filigree lace, a rosebud of buttons, woven cobblestones of amber and jade. Maya was made to think of meadows in starlight and rainbows after thunder, things unseen by her eyes, but suggested by her heart. That cloth whispered stories, its promises made her weak with longing (Fedler 104).

Maya is struck by the dreamcloth’s beauty and its power of evoking pleasant and happy feelings deep inside her. With Maya’s help, Rochel creates a new dreamcloth, which not only eases Maya’s and Rochel’s pain resulting from the need to keep their love hidden, but which also provides relief of post-traumatic stress for their generations to follow. The creative process behind the new dreamcloth is a joint one, as Maya provides Rochel with all the materials – “[b]uttons, bits of straw, old coins, feathers, threads (she even snipped one of Yankel’s talit), and all the bits and lost edges she could find” (Fedler 139) – and as Rochel transforms them into the dreamcloth. The result of their combined artistic effort is a new dreamcloth that is “sadder than the rest, for now it spoke of hope, and joy and love” (Fedler 139). “For [Rochel] had ceased to hold onto anything anymore” (Fedler 139), she gives the dreamcloth to Maya, who takes it with her on the sorrowful journey to South Africa.

As already mentioned, the healing powers of the dreamcloth also affect Maya’s descendants. On her deathbed, Maya bequeaths her son Issey with her treasured

last remaining memento of Rochel (Fedler 62). Issey is aware that “there was nothing [...] that meant more to his mama than the little square of patchwork detail” (Fedler 62), and therefore regards the transmission of the dreamcloth as a sign of his mother’s endless love for him. He feels that through the dreamcloth he will forever be connected to his mother – he “love[s] her blindly through it and let her love him back” (Fedler 62). Similar to Maya, in his darkest hours, Issey finds comfort in the dreamcloth: “he would open it to its full shape, touching sequin, button, the patch of velvet, the fringe of lace, the corner of satin, reading its beauty through his fingertips” (Fedler 62). However, Issey does not keep the healing power of the artistic patchwork piece to himself, but also introduces his daughter Mia to it. Whenever Mia’s sleep is disrupted by her harrowing nightmares, Issey “let[s] her hold the cloth” (Fedler 55), for “only it could shake the horror of all that was terribly wrong with the world” (Fedler 56) and ease Mia’s haunting ghosts.

Due to the confrontation with her grandmother’s letters, Mia feels a kind of wholeness that she has never felt before. She no longer needs the dreamcloth to fill the hole that has been torn in her body by her traumas, and therefore feels the need to hand the trauma averting cloth to someone in need. Grace, Mia’s childhood friend who used to sing for her when the nightmares haunted her (Fedler 121), seems to be the perfect fit, as the horrible incident of Asher sexually abusing her as a child has resulted in Grace’s own individual trauma (Fedler 235, 343). It was Asher who “snuffed out the voice that sang to take nightmares away” (Fedler 343). Thus, in order to assist Grace with the process of working through her trauma, Mia gives the dreamcloth to her. Towards the end of the novel, a hopeful outlook for the future is conveyed to the readers, when “Grace lay[s] the cloth over the hillock of her knee, her fingers moving over the patterns, the labyrinth of loops and stitches, the ridges of buttons, the Braille of lace. She beg[ins] to smile” (Fedler 348).

In sum, the piece of art of the dreamcloth in *The Dreamcloth* and the artistic needlework of the quilt in *A Quilt of Dreams* have a lot in common. Both pieces of art are characterised by their healing powers and their capability of assisting the process of coming to terms with trauma. They not only offer psychological peace to their creators, who stitch and sew their trauma into them, but also to their ancestors like Reuben, Mia and Issey, who all experience comfort when touching them. Similarly to the quilt, the dreamcloth is “beauty wrought from nothing” (Fedler 105) and a unison

of the most distinctive materials. From a historical point of view, both art works can be argued to function as metaphors for mindsets that oppose the segregational ideologies of the Apartheid regime and the Holocaust. They allude to the dream of a future that is not pervaded by discrimination on grounds of skin colour or religious beliefs – a future that allows people from all walks of life to join in a greater “whole”.

5. Conclusion

Although South Africa’s democratic elections in 1994 are said to mark the official abolishment of the Apartheid regime and should have ridden the South African population of their Apartheid-related trauma, the lives of many South Africans are still burdened with the traumatic past. The collective South African trauma has left those affected with the need of coming to terms with it. The wish and need to work through their trauma manifests itself in the fact that South African trauma literature has flourished and still continues to prosper in post-Apartheid times.

The analysis of the four selected trauma novels reveals that the topic of art in relation to trauma is frequently featured in South African post-Apartheid literature. All of them suggest that art possesses an inherent healing function for both the artist and the consumers of the pieces of art. Not only the active creation of art, which helps the traumatised artist with expressing the inexpressible and with creating new life narratives in which the shattered pieces of the past are reassembled in a more bearable way, but also the passive consumption of art works – this is exemplified by the novels’ characters Reuben, Issey and Mia, who consume the artistic craftwork of their ancestors and consequently find relief in this consumption – might enable the process of coming to terms with the individual and inherited traumas.

The traumatised protagonists of the novels experience relief of post-traumatic stress through a variety of artistic practices and their products. The healing power of the auditory art of music and singing is a frequent motif in the reviewed novels. For example, the split-tone singing by the two Qukezwas in *The Heart of Redness* has a major symbolic meaning with regard to Apartheid ideology, as it stresses the unison of the most distinctive voices and colours, which points at the dream that all people, regardless of their skin colour, are respected in a new South African political discourse. In the same novel, the art of personal appearance and beautification

through clothes, ornaments and colours plays an important role, as this special type of art functions as a means of self-expression that helps people of South African descent to position themselves within the discussions concerning cultural heritage. Furthermore, various manifestations of artistic public performances, including dancing and religious rituals like the mourning ritual of Toloki, offer comfort for the traumatised individuals. In *A Quilt of Dreams* and in *The Dreamcloth* the most important healing pieces of art, namely Rosa's quilt and Rochel's dreamcloth, can be attributed to the pictorial category of art. In both of these novels, the family sagas of two Jewish families living in South Africa are depicted. Thus, the quilt and the dreamcloth cannot only be analysed against the background of Apartheid, but also with regard to the Holocaust. Moreover, the category of sculptural art can be encountered when analysing Jwara's figures and Mia's winged sculptures. In conclusion, all these distinctive manifestations of art assist the traumatised characters with their processing of their individual as well as collective traumas, and, in the most fortunate case, help them with overcoming their traumas.

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7. Appendix

7.1. English abstract

Despite the Apartheid regime's official abolishment in 1994 when the first democratic elections took place in South Africa, the trauma resulting from the segregational and discriminating character of the ideology still lingers amongst the nation's population. This collective South African trauma can be identified as a frequent topic in South Africa's literary industry. Analysing those post-Apartheid trauma novels, it becomes apparent that they frequently centre on the relationship between trauma and art. The present diploma thesis analyses and compares four selected South African trauma novels in terms of how art is portrayed in relation to trauma. Those four novels are *The Heart of Redness* and *Ways of Dying* by Zakes Mda, *A Quilt of Dreams* by Patricia Schonstein and *The Dreamcloth* by Joanne Fedler, all of which are pervaded by the theme art. In order to enable the discussion of the aforementioned trauma novels, the thesis summarises theoretical background information on the topics of trauma and art that are indispensable for the analysis. Besides providing a detailed account on South Africa's collective trauma due to Apartheid, the thesis also thematises the collective trauma of the Jewish population due to the Holocaust, since two of the four selected trauma novels additionally feature the Jewish collective trauma.

The analysis of the four selected trauma novels reveals art's enabling function to overcome trauma. All of them suggest that art possesses an inherent healing function for both the traumatised artist as well as for the psychologically distressed consumers of the pieces of art. Not only the active process of creating art – which helps the traumatised artist to express something seemingly inexpressible and functions as a way of transforming the shattered pieces of the past into a new, more bearable life narrative – but also the passive consumption of art might assist the traumatised human beings with overcoming their individual and inherited traumas.

7.2. German abstract

Obwohl die ersten demokratischen Wahlen in Südafrika im Jahre 1994 das Ende des Apartheidregimes bedeuten sollten, ist das Leben vieler SüdafrikanerInnen immer noch von der diskriminierenden Ideologie gezeichnet und äußert sich darin, dass die Mehrheit der Population an einem sogenannten kollektiven Trauma leidet, welches auf die Apartheidzeit zurückgeführt werden kann. Dieses kollektive Trauma kann als eine häufige Thematik in Südafrikanischen Traumaromanen identifiziert werden. Bei der Analyse jener Romane kann oftmals ein Zusammenhang zwischen Trauma und Kunst festgestellt werden. Die vorliegende Diplomarbeit analysiert und vergleicht vier ausgewählte Südafrikanische Traumaromane im Hinblick auf diesen Zusammenhang. Jene sind die zwei von Zakes Mda verfassten Romane *The Heart of Redness* und *Ways of Dying*, *A Quilt of Dreams* von Patricia Schonstein und *The Dreamcloth* von Joanne Fedler. Um eine fundierte Analyse dieser Romane zu ermöglichen, widmet sich der erste Teil der Arbeit einer Darbietung und Diskussion von relevanten theoretischen Konzepten in Bezug auf Kunst und Trauma. Es wird nicht nur das kollektive Trauma ausgelöst vom Apartheidregime dargeboten, sondern auch das Jüdische kollektive Trauma, welches auf den Holocaust zurückgeführt werden kann, behandelt, da zwei der vier Romane auch das kollektive Trauma der Jüdinnen und Juden thematisieren.

Die Analyse der Romane zeigt, dass die heilende Wirkung von Kunst in Bezug auf Trauma ein verbreitetes Motiv in Südafrikanischen Traumaromanen darstellt. Jeder der vier Romane deutet darauf hin, dass der Kunst eine inhärente beruhigende und heilende Funktion zugeschrieben kann, die sowohl den Künstler oder die Künstlerin selbst als auch die KonsumentInnen der Kunst bei der Verarbeitung von individuellen und vererbten Traumata unterstützt. Der aktive Schaffungsprozess von Kunst hilft dem oder der traumatisierten Künstler/in dabei, etwas augenscheinlich Unausdrückbares in etwas Ausdrückbares zu verwandeln, und hilft somit die widerfahrenen Traumata mental zu verarbeiten.