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Still from the film *The Legacy* showing an elderly Jewish gentleman (archive footage: *Transport der Juden ins Krakauer Ghetto*) superimposed over running river water.
The Legacy (Das Vermächtnis):
the role of cultural production
in the reprocessing of collective experiences
that are equivalent to trauma.

by Stefanie Dinkelbach

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Practice based PhD project
Huston School of Film and Digital Media
NUI Galway

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Declaration

This thesis and the film ‘The Legacy’ (Das Vermächtnis) which is the practice-based component of this project is the result of research that I undertook between 2008 and 2013 at the Huston School of Film and Digital Media, National University of Ireland, Galway. The project was supervised and mentored by Professor Rod Stoneman and Professor Niamh Doheny (Department: Film and Digital Media) and Professor Sinisa Malesevic (Department: Political Science and Sociology).

I declare that the work presented herein is my own original production and that this thesis and film have not been submitted for degree, diploma or other qualification at any other University.
Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my supervisors, Niamh Doheny, Sinisa Malesevic and Rod Stoneman for their guidance, patience and support of my research and Rod Stoneman for his encouragement and advice concerning the film production.

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This project was supported by a NUIGalway Filmstudies Fellowship which enabled me to cover my study related travels as well as production and post-production related costs, for which I am grateful.

I thank my husband Brendan Roycroft for the technical supervision of the film’s production, my friend and colleague Norbert Hobrecht for his contribution in terms of camera work, preparation of archival research and digital transfer, my former drama teacher Bruno Plum for his assistance in organising the sample screenings, my friend Kerstin Walsh for advising me on my sociology related questions, my friend Ursula O’Donovan for the German proofreading, my singing teacher Rioghnagh Powell for guiding me through my quest for suitable songs and my friend and colleague Edith Pieperhoff for her hospitality, encouragement, advice and support throughout this project.

I also want to thank my daughter Paula Jungmann for singing the song: ‘Will ich in mein Gärtlein gehen’ and my son Mischa Jungmann for composing the sound for the credits, and I want to thank them both for inspiring me to approach this subject.

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I am particularly grateful to my brother-in-law Patrick Roycroft who advised me on the restructuring of the final version of the thesis.
Summary

This project attempts to address and raise awareness of a loss of social and emotional connection (Bezugsverlust) that has developed over time in German society and explains how this disconnection can, and has, led to collective violence. Cultural productions - works of art, music, literature, film, etc - have the potential to facilitate a mental and emotional reconnection and thereby contribute towards the need to ‘address and process the violent legacy of Germany's recent past’ (Vergangenheitsbewältigung). This thesis explores the role of cultural productions both theoretically and practically in this context.

A large proportion of German post-war cultural productions directly or indirectly relate to the collective violence of the National Socialist regime. However, a lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust has repeatedly been observed within German post-war literature and film (e.g., Schlant 2001, Hahn 2005). The theory-based part of this research attempts to explain this phenomenon, while the film The Legacy, as the practice-based element, addresses this lack of empathy by offering opportunities by which an emotional connection with the victims can be experienced.

An interdisciplinary approach was employed that integrated studies from neurobiology, psychotherapy and sociology to explain Bezugsverlust theoretically. Sample cultural productions that responded to various experiences of social crises from different periods of German history were subject to detailed analysis.

The lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust that can be found in post-war German cultural productions is read as a sign that Bezugsverlust developed in German society as a result of insufficiently processed experiences of social crises. Since society as a whole repeatedly experienced trauma-like events, that were not satisfactorily addressed and processed at the time, the experience of Bezugsverlust increased over time and led to the facilitation of extreme racist ideologies. The loss of social and emotional interconnection to those outsider groups that became the victims of the Holocaust persists to this day. The Legacy attempts to address this issue and to raise awareness of the connection between Bezugsverlust and violence and to offer opportunities for the viewer to re-establish the emotional bond to the victims of the Holocaust that was lost. The film uses a format that deconstructs existing conventions through form in which archive footage, documentary sequences, text and music are brought together. A survey of three small sample screenings assesses to what extent the film contributed to the process of Vergangenheitsbewältigung.

The findings of the survey confirmed that while the unconventional format of the film restricted its reception, it also encouraged an active mental and emotional response in which reprocessing could occur. The response of some viewers showed that empathy with the victims and a sense of mourning and loss was experienced. The potential of cultural productions to assist in what can be called ‘the reprocessing of collective experiences that are equivalent to trauma’ is thereby exemplified.
Reflective Analysis
Introduction

The amount of information that is available on the Holocaust today is extensive and increasing continuously. Yet studies by authors such as Schlant (1999), who analysed West German prose from the end of World War II to unification, and Hahn (2005), who examined West German non-Jewish literature and film from 1979 onwards, show that there still exists an inability to mourn for the victims of the Holocaust coupled with a lack of empathy for them.

This thesis will address two questions that derive from this observation:

1) How can the persistent lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust, which is apparent in post-war German literature and film, be explained?

2) Is it possible to at least partially redress this lack of empathy through the medium of film and thereby make a meaningful contribution to the culture of German post-war remembrance?

To answer the above questions, I will establish an understanding of trauma in which a personal traumatic experience causes a loss of mental and emotional connection, and, in an analogous manner, the macro-scale social effect of such trauma expressed collectively, thereby leading to a society that is, as a whole, experiencing something akin to trauma. This collective experience, essentially one of loss, is directly linked to the lack of empathy referred to by Hahn (2005) and Schlant (1999). In this context, I will explore how cultural productions - films, books, poems, sculptures, paintings, and so on - can contribute to a process that aims to redress this loss and can thereby facilitate feelings of empathy. My focus will be on artwork that specifically gives expression to traumatic experiences, as opposed to artwork that is employed in the context of individual therapy sessions.

Previous discourses on trauma, such as ‘Trauma and Screen Studies’ (Screen, 2001) and Caruth (1996) and Felman (2002), focus on the belatedness of trauma memory and its effect on narrative representation, an approach informed by psychoanalysis as developed by Freud (1920 in Strachey 1961) at the beginning of the 20th century.

This perspective is, however, unsuitable for this thesis due to the lack of in-depth enquiry into trauma memory formation that explains the loss of mental and emotional connections. The Freudian psychoanalytical perspective on trauma has also been criticised for its inappropriate direct transference of psychological concepts and terminology to the macro-social context (Burke and Faulkner 2010).

I will refer to recent studies in neurobiology that give a detailed account of the biochemical processes that are at work during trauma memory formation. These processes show a pattern in which a disconnection occurs, which explains the inability to mentally and emotionally relate after a traumatic event. This recognition also
facilitates a comparison with equivalent occurrences on the micro and macro social level. To avoid the transference of psychological terminology, I will use the German term Bezugswir.  

Furthermore, I will establish an interdisciplinary perspective by which studies from neurobiology and sociology can be brought together so that social/societal pattern formations can be linked to their underlying effect. My reference will include the research into memory formation by Kandel (2006); studies into the neurobiology of emotions by LeDoux (2002); the micro sociological model of ‘interaction ritual chains’, as developed by Collins (2004); and the concept that unacknowledged grief and shame will foster violence, as proposed by Scheff (2006). Reference to research in psychotherapy will include trauma therapy methods such as Somatic Experiencing (Levine 1997) and Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR) (Bergmann 2000) to establish an understanding of the basic principles involved in trauma reprocessing. Combining a sociological perspective, in particular the concept of ‘collective memory’ (Halbwachs 1925 in Coser 1992) and the concept of ‘cultural trauma’ (Alexander 2004) with contributions from film and cultural studies, including reviews by Esslin (1961), Orlando (2001), Walker (2003) and Curtis (2002), will provide a perspective within which the potential of cultural productions to redress trauma-like effects can be explored. References to German political, cultural and social history, which will include contributions by Mosse (1964), Pulzer (1997) and Giesen (2004), will be used to position the enquiry into its German context and will accompany an analysis of how cultural productions, in particular German post-WWII cultural productions, have attempted to reprocess collective experiences that were equivalent to trauma.

Based on, yet also in conjunction with, my theoretical research findings, I produced a film (The Legacy) that acknowledges the mental origins of the Holocaust, gives the viewer opportunities to re-establish the lost emotional bond to the victims and to mourn the occurrence of collective violence in this context. The film combines a variety of formats, including song, text, voice-over narration, documentary scenes, archive footage and still photography, in an audio-visual collage that aims to stimulate reflection. I will discuss the inspiration behind the film, the influences on the production process and the creative methods used and then position the film The Legacy in its wider cultural context.

Through an audience survey carried out after three small sample screenings, I will assess whether the film is able to facilitate mourning and encourage empathy with the victims of the Holocaust. The findings of the survey are, however, limited due to the small size of the samples taken; but audience feedback and post-screening discussion sessions are also analysed to give an indication of the film’s potential to encourage emotional processing.

By introducing the word Bezugswir to describe the loss of mental and emotional
connection that can be the effect of trauma, I will add a second German term to a
debate in which the word *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with the past)
has already been established. It is the aim of this project to highlight to which extent
an understanding and recognition of *Bezugsverlust* can play a key role in the process
of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*.

It is interesting to note that neither of those expressions have an equivalent in the
English language.
Chapter 1 - Trauma: its effect and reversal

1.1 Introduction

This Chapter will establish an understanding of trauma memory that will enable me to explain how trauma can cause a loss of mental and emotional connection (Bezugsverlust), how trauma-like experiences in a collective societal setting can cause macro-level experiences of loss, and how cultural productions can address and redress these experiences.

To contextualise my own enquiry, I will start by referring to the existing debate on trauma, memory and the cultural representation of trauma. I will then direct my focus to the context of German society and refer to the observations by Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967), who found an inability to mourn apparent among the German post-war population, and to studies of Schlant (1999) and Hahn (2005) who noted a lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust in post-war German literature and film.

I will refer to recent studies in neurobiology that show how traumatic experiences cause an anomaly within memory formation that explains this lack of empathy in the context of individual psychology and I will explore trauma therapy methods that aim to facilitate a mental and emotional reconnection.

To relate those findings to the collective setting, I will refer to studies in sociology that enable me to observe a pattern in the micro and macro social setting that is comparable to the effect of trauma.

This effect, which occurs in the form of a loss of a group’s sense of identity, can, according to Alexander (2004), be redressed in a process in which the traumatic status of the experience is claimed publicly through the establishment of a new narrative. This narrative needs to foster an awareness in which the lost sense of identity is re-established.

Since cultural productions are able to make such a claim, I will examine sample productions and define two approaches that are prominent in this context:

1) A response through content in which a counter narrative is established.
2) A response through form in which existing structures are deconstructed.

As it is the trauma memory that causes Bezugsverlust in the context of individual psychology, the phenomenon of memory needs to be further explored in the collective setting. I will refer to the concept of ‘collective memory’ that was developed by Halbwachs (1925 in Coser 1992) and further defined by Assman (2006) and to reviews by Walker (2003) and Curtis (2002) of the film History and Memory by Rea Tajiri (1991).
The understanding that is thereby established will be of a wider, general nature, both in relation to trauma and its effect and reversal and in how cultural productions address collective experiences that are comparable to trauma. A specific focus on German society will follow in Chapter 2.

### 1.2 The debate on trauma, memory and its cultural representation

To place this research project within its social and cultural context it is necessary to establish a historical appreciation of the debate on trauma, memory and of the cultural representation of trauma memory that traces its history and assesses its contemporary relevance.

Radstone (2000) traces the interest in memory from its early beginnings in Greek and Roman times to St. Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century, and to a revival of memory in the 19th century. While this revival was, according to Radstone, due to the experience of sudden cultural and social dislocation caused by industrialisation, the more recent resurgence of interest in memory can be linked to modern technology’s ability to merge past and present (Radstone 2000: 3). Radstone observes that the meaning of memory changes with a shift in contemporary perspective and that the current interest in memory, which since the two World Wars is intricately linked to an interest in trauma, reflects a need to work through the ambivalences of modernity (Radstone 2000: 4). According to Radstone, memory has become a central, as well as an organising, concept within research in the humanities and in certain branches of the social sciences, including philosophy, history, cultural studies, literature, film and media studies, psychology, as well as archaeology and architecture (Radstone 2000: 1). Radstone mentions seven conferences that were held in England between 1995 and 1999, and refers to the large number of articles that have been written on this subject and on the incorporation of memory research into university courses.

Closely related to the interest in memory is the development of the concept of trauma. Luckhurst (2008) traces the genealogy of this concept from its multidisciplinary origin in the 19th century through industrialisation and bureaucratisation, law and psychology, military and governmental welfare policies to the identity politics of the 1970s (Luckhurst 2008: 15). Luckhurst takes note of the transformation of the concept of trauma, which had initially emerged from a term for physical injury in the 17th century, developed through case laws to the notion of nervous shock and psychiatric harm in the 19th and 20th centuries and became instrumental in defining collective and individual identity since the 1970s. Like Radstone (2000), Luckhurst (2008) refers to the effect of modernity on the concept of trauma and to the experiences of shock and collision in relation to street transport, advertising, telephones, films and crowds but in particular to the railway and industrial accidents that overwhelmed the 19th century population in their transition from traditional rural to industrial urban society. Luckhurst highlights that those accidents, and the compensation claims that they engendered, were incidents in which
Chapter 1 – Trauma, effect and reversal

‘the social economic, political and bureaucratic elements of the state met to determine and contest the traumatic cost of industrialization… bringing together attorneys, judges, lawmakers, government officials, medical experts and the insurance specialists’ ( Luckhurst 2008: 25).

Luckhurst describes how, during World War I, shell-shock was perceived as a type of escalation in industrial and train accidents and compensation payments were claimed by psychiatric case war veterans, making the shell-shocked ‘one of the iconic trauma victims of the 20th century’ ( Luckhurst 2008: 51). During World War II, the term ‘shell shock’ was replaced by ‘battle fatigue’ and the confrontation with the death camps in 1945 was later to become instrumental in the establishment of trauma as a paradigm. Luckhurst (2008) argues that it was the Vietnam War and the lobbying of committed psychiatric advocates that affirmed this war's traumatic reality: which lead to the recognition of trauma as the cause of mental illness, to the official recognition of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as trauma symptoms in 1980, and raised public awareness of the Holocaust as the main trauma of modern Western civilisation. According to Luckhurst (2008), it was due to the fact that the focus of attention was not restricted to Vietnam veterans but extended to victims of other extreme experiences that the interest in and the awareness of trauma grew. These other extreme experiences included the Holocaust, the Hiroshima bombing, slavery and segregation of the African-American population and cases of incest and rape, which were addressed by the emerging feminist movement. The growing interest in, and awareness of, trauma that spread across the different social groups resulted in the concept of the survivor. This now linked trauma with the notion of identity politics (anti-Vietnam student protests, feminism, gay liberation and Black power movements) that arose in reaction to the perception of a patriarchal white society. Luckhurst (2008) accounts how the debate on trauma has spread among the humanities from the late 1980s on, extending the discourse to include philosophy, literature, history, anthropology, cultural studies as well as sociology.

This post-1980s wider discourse includes the debate on the cultural representation of trauma that had been initiated by the declaration that to write poetry after Auschwitz would be barbaric (Adorno 1949 in Weber and Weber 1967). Luckhurst (2008) describes how Cathy Caruth, Shoshanna Felman, Geoffrey H. Hartman, Jean-François Lyotard and Paul De Man, a group of theorists affiliated with Yale University and influenced by the philosophy of deconstruction (Derrida in Caputo 1997), engaged extensively with the debate. The theories they developed in this context are based on an understanding of trauma that was influenced by dynamic psychiatry, as developed by Janet (1925), and by psychoanalysis, as developed by Freud (Freud 1920 in Strachey 1961). The Holocaust was perceived in a variety of ways at the time. For Wiesel (1970), it was an incomprehensible event that defied literature (Wiesel in Luckhurst 2008: 69); Friedlander (1992) saw the extermination of the Jews of Europe as being ‘as accessible to both representation and interpretation as any other historical event’ but admitted that it is ‘an event at the limits’ that ‘tests our traditional conceptual and representational categories’ (Friedlander 1992: 3). Friedlander highlights the problem of transference that is, in relation to the Holocaust, more
complex and more widespread than for other historical events, and, in consideration of the ‘contradictory demands raised by the evocation of this past’, he calls for an openness towards a wide variety of approaches that make an attempt towards its representation (Friedlander 1992: 4,6). The problem of transference and the lack of awareness thereof is also relevant to the discourse on trauma, memory and its cultural representation itself, and becomes apparent in critical comments by Elsaesser (2001), Hodgkin and Radstone (2003) and Burke and Faulkner (2010). Elsaesser, while appreciating trauma theory as necessary, sees the danger in its becoming ‘too handy a catch all for resolving the aporias or lacunas of previous theoretical configurations in the field of film and television studies’ (Elsaesser 2001: 201). Hodgkin and Radstone (2003) refer to trauma theory as being the home of a politically and emotionally charged cluster of concepts in relation to witnessing, testimony, trauma, silence, memory, history, and denial in which the main focus is on the memorial afterlife of the Holocaust rather than on the event itself. Burke and Faulkner (2010) criticise what they call ‘the transference of psychological terminology, such as “trauma”, “loss” and “healing”, to the level of the macro-social’ and call for a clearer understanding on how personal and cultural memory are interconnected so that the potentially political nature of cultural memory becomes apparent (Burke and Faulkner 2010: 1). Burke and Faulkner see the Holocaust as a constructed object of cultural attention that has been given value and status since the 1960s with books, trials, films, television series, exhibitions, memorials, and memorial events being amongst those value-ascribing practices.

The history of the debate on trauma shows the influence of political and public interests on its development. While the statement by Adorno (Adorno 1949 in Weber and Weber 1967) triggered an enquiry into the limits of narrative representation in relation to trauma, particularly within philosophy, linguistics and literature studies, the loss of mental and emotional connection that can cause as well as be the effect of trauma has hardly been discussed. The observations by Schlant (1999) and Hahn (2005) in relation to German post-war literature and film that address the trauma of the Holocaust indicate that this loss is still of relevance.

1.3 The lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust in post-war German film and literature

Based on the debate on trauma, memory and cultural representation, scholars who have analysed the response of German post-war cultural productions to the Holocaust have found a lack of empathy with its victims that is striking. This observation includes contemporary cultural responses and shows the persistence of a phenomenon that relates to the findings by Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967) who noted an ‘inability to mourn’ when looking at the psychology of the post-war German population. I will start with a reference to the Mitscherlichs’ report before referring to research by Schlant (1999) and Hahn (2005) on post-war literature and film. My choice of authors gives me the ability to compare post-war observations with contemporary findings of authors who speak from personal experience. German post-war culture will be discussed further in Chapter 2.
Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967) give a social psychological analysis of the German population in the aftermath of World War II. The study was published in 1967 and is therefore limited in its focus to the pre-war, war and immediate post-war generation. The authors were both practicing psychoanalysts, which informed their perception. The study therefore endeavours to make the effect of unconscious group processes visible through the recognition of behaviour patterns in the collective that are compared to pathological patterns in the individual. Special emphasis is given to authority and to the way that it influences personal development (Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich 1967: 345, 346, 348).

The report addresses the lack of social and political engagement, the strong conservative tendencies, the avoidance of the National Socialist past as well as the narrow focus on economic recovery within the post-war German population that is seen as symptoms for a split consciousness (Bewußteinsspaltung). According to Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967), this split happened when a sudden transition needed to be made from a social consciousness that allowed for a measure as drastic as the ‘Final Solution’ into civilised everyday living (Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich 1967: 24). The authors hold that it was the sudden loss of identity that was experienced as traumatic. It was caused by both the loss of the idealised Führer with whom the German population identified itself, as well as the loss of the dream to belong to a ‘master race’, which had provided self identification to the collective (Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich 1967:34). The conscience of pre-Nazism had been replaced by a conscience in which the population’s only moral responsibility was to obey the Führer. When Hitler was defeated and exposed as a criminal, a sudden return to the conscience of pre-Nazism became necessary and a mechanism of denial had to be adopted to avoid the fear of revenge and the risk of losing one’s sense of self worth (Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich 1967: 30).

For Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967), the collective violence of the Nazi regime was facilitated by an incredible sense of duty and a character that developed under absolutist conditions, due to a tradition of patriarchal authority that was never challenged by a revolution. Reference to the religious wars, the German princes and Martin Luther is made in this context (Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich 1967: 32). The authors mention that while the relationship towards authority and the father figure had become ambivalent during the 19th century, the experience of World War I and the following economic crisis further weakened both state and paternal authority. As a result of a societal interaction based around orders and obedience, one that had become valued as traditional in German society, the urge to find an alternative, more potent authority arose. Hitler was seen by the majority of the German population as this alternative and it was part of the political practice of the Nazis to encourage hatred of the previous authority figures down to the level of family relations and to reflect any scepticism, doubt or disbelief that arose during Nazism onto those figures. The hatred that was initially directed against the fathers was later transferred onto the Jews, who had so far been experienced as threatening rivals. Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967) highlight that while this problematic and ambivalent relationship towards authority,
which had developed within the social structures of the German population, has hardly ever been mentioned, the strong urge of the Germans to idealise their leaders and their own national self image has often been noted (Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich 1967: 61,62).

The inability to mourn the loss of the idealised Führer is, according to Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967), caused by the extensive effort to deny shame, guilt and fear. This is achieved through a withdrawal of all emotional connections and through a de-realisation of the Nazi past. This denial, which was necessary to avoid the trauma of a sudden loss of self-identification, also caused the inability to mourn the victims of the Holocaust (Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich 1967: 34,35). While the study by Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967) has been criticised for being moralizing and inaccurate by contemporary psychoanalysts (Moser: 1992), it still provides valuable observations.

The inability to mourn and the post-war silence that ensued was also explored in post-war German literature by Schlant (1999) who interpreted this silence as a type of narrative strategy by which an awareness of the Holocaust could be expressed. The study by Schlant (1999) is confined to the prose fiction of West Germany that was written between the end of World War II and the unification in 1989 of East and West Germany.

Schlant (1999) refers to the fact that the German language had been corrupted by the National Socialist regime, having been dehumanized and infected with falsehood, a legacy that the German post-war writers had to face up to. Schlant observed how the study by Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967) had considerable influence on the discourse of German silence in relation to the Holocaust. Whereas this study referred to the generation of the perpetrators, Schlant (1999) sees the subsequent generation as equally burdened with the legacy of the past, and ‘unable to recoup the affective dimension required for genuine mourning’. She quotes Santner (1990) in this context who stated that ‘the second generation inherited not only the unmourned traumas of the parents but also the psychic structures that impeded mourning in the older generation in the first place’ (Santner 1990 in Schlant 1999: 14).

Schlant (1999) discusses the works of Heinrich Böll, Alexander Kluge, Günther Grass, Herman Lenz, Peter Härtling, Alfred Andersch, Gert Hofmann and W. G. Sebald as well as the large number of novels that focus on generational conflict and the parental role in the Nazi past (Väterliteratur). She observes how most authors struggled to develop a new language not infected by Nazi ideology and a format that appropriately reflected the post-war experience. While some of the literature describes the impact of the past on the present successfully, the Holocaust is often used only as a backdrop, the victims and their sufferings are not really the subject of attention and successful attempts to restitute personal identity to Jewish protagonists rarely occurs. According to Schlant (1999), a literature that introduces a dialogue between Jews and non-Jews emerges only after unification. In this context, she highlights the novel The
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*Emigrants* by W. G. Sebald (1992) in which the author looks for the common elements among the lives of uprooted and alienated people and begins to mourn the destruction of the Jews as well as giving a voice to both the culture and the lives that were destroyed. Schlant values this approach as a unique achievement in German literature and a sign of hope for the future, while the increasing institutionalisation of commemoration in relation to the Holocaust risks relieving the Germans as a group of the much needed personal memory work (Schlant 1999: 20). Schlant refers to the literary scholar Andreas Huyssen, who called for an ‘emotional identification with the victims as Jews’ that was to ‘elicit true mourning’ (Huyssen 1994 in Schlant 1999: 168). This call for emotional identification was reiterated by Santner (1990) who stated that ‘the capacity to feel grief for others and guilt for the suffering one has directly or indirectly caused depends on the capacity to experience empathy for the other as other’ (Santner 1990 in Schlant 1999: 168).

Schlant maintains that

‘despite increasingly available knowledge about the Holocaust, Germans individually and collectively have been unable to work through and to mourn the crimes perpetrated. … if not accompanied by affective mourning, public rituals will assuage the individual’s conscience without self-questioning and will foreclose any insight into the need for action in whatever mediated ways’ (Schlant 1999: 13).

Hahn (2005) looked at post-1979 German cultural productions that addressed the Holocaust from a perspective that takes their socio-political context into account. He focuses in particular on non-Jewish contributions to literature that reflect the problem of memory and remembering and that address the question of representability as well as of guilt and responsibility in relation to the Holocaust. He also includes one film sample. The date 1979 is chosen in relation to the screening of the television series ‘Holocaust’, which according to Hahn (2005), triggered a distinct change in perspective in relation to the national-socialist era among the German population.

The authors Anne Duden, Ulla Berkewicz, Bernhard Schlink, Martin Walser and the filmmaker Hans-Jürgen Syberberg, who are the focus of his study, come from the second generation. As the children of parents who lived through the Nazi regime, they are confronted with the social and cultural memory of the Holocaust, an event that they portray as a burdened and burdensome legacy of a past that was not addressed. The literary samples show that the establishment of a counter memory of the Holocaust was not successful and contains gaps. Hahn reads the defensive stance in relation to memory that these authors display, as well as their conscious omission of the Nazi past and their attempt to establish a universal rather than a specific understanding of the Holocaust, all as symptoms of an unprocessed traumatic experience. He notes that an inability to address the past has persisted over the last 25 years and he refers to ‘a damaged culture of remembrance’ in this context (Hahn 2005: 276). Hahn also refers to the conflicting discourses within the socio-political debate about the form and content of remembrance reflected in art and cultural productions.
He highlights the normative dimension that informs this debate as it questions and redefines social values and opportunities of identification (Hahn 2005: 279). Hahn (2005) agrees with Schlant (1999) that the German population has not, it would appear, been able to mourn and emotionally process the violence that was committed. He confirms Schlant's (1999) finding of a lack of empathy with the victims and an instrumentalisation of the debate on guilt and responsibility. Hahn observes that the reunification of Germany in 1989 renewed the need for an undisturbed national identity and he reads the lack of reference to and acknowledgment of the suffering of Jewish victims as being in part motivated by this need (Hahn 2005: 277). He recognises in his study that a timeless, general and positive knowing of the Holocaust does not exist and underlines the necessity of cultural productions to continuously recreate new reconstructions of the Holocaust to maintain its existence within cultural memory. Hahn (2005) also underlines the relevant contributions that can be made through literature and film, which are, being more independent then official memory rituals, in a position to criticise and to formulate a counter version of memory. It is also through cultural productions and their analysis that unconscious social positions and patterns of interpretation are being reflected. All these many and varying reflections together compose, according to Hahn, the German culture of remembrance which is like the knowledge of the Holocaust - diverse and continuously changing (Hahn: 2005: 279).

The observations of the four scholars referred to above are on many levels relevant for my enquiry. The viewpoint of Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967), in which society is examined from a psychological perspective and in which pathological patterns that occur in the individual, is compared to patterns in the social collective are found to be both useful and necessary in this context, as long as a direct transference of concepts is avoided. The observations on the development of the behaviour of the German population in particular in relation to authority are especially interesting, and I will return to these observations in the context of my enquiry into German history.

My criticism of the study by Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967), which in many ways stands out in its social critical awareness among the national literature of its time, is a criticism of its psychoanalytical perspective: the authors believe that a mastery and discipline of inner drives is necessary for a cultured, human behaviour, yet such a belief seems itself affected by an authoritarian world view3. I will in the following subchapters establish a perspective that identifies what is seen, psychoanalytically, as inner drives, as actually being caused by needs that have yet to be acknowledged and met rather than suppressed and mastered through discipline. In contrast to the psychoanalytical perspective based on concepts that are derived from psychopathological observations, I will establish an understanding of trauma through an exploration of the bio-chemical processes that are responsible for trauma memory formation and their effect on the individual. These observations will allow me to recognise a pattern that has an equivalent in the collective setting while being mindful of a direct transference of psychological concepts. This perspective will offer a new reading of the lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust that has been
recognised by Schlant (1999) and Hahn (2005) as being apparent in post-war German literature and film. Both Schlant (1999) and Hahn (2005) have emphasised the need for cultural productions that can facilitate emotional identification with the victims, a need that I address in the practice-based part of this project.

I will also refer further to the issues raised in the debate on trauma, memory and its cultural representation in the following subchapters.

1.4 Clinical trauma and the element of Bezugsverlust

Trauma on the level of individual psychology has an effect that can be recognised as a pattern in which a state of interconnectivity is disrupted and so causes an impression of separation, or Bezugsverlust.

Recent studies in neurobiology describe the brain in its plasticity and user adaptability and the processes at work during memory formation that show how an anomaly can be caused by an extreme and often fear based stimulus.

I will look at studies by Kandel (2006), LeDoux (1996), Scaer (2001) and Lisak (2002) in relation to neurobiological memory and trauma research. While my reading of the literature on trauma within neurobiology was extensive, I will restrict myself to a short summary and focus on the effect that traumatic experiences can have on the individual.

As mentioned in the genealogy of the concept of trauma in the preceding sub-chapters, it is only through the manifestation of symptoms that it becomes apparent that an individual has been impacted by an experience in a way that can be called traumatic. While those symptoms were recognised in the 19th century as shock related, they are, since 1980, defined as the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and include flashbacks and reactivation of traumatic memory, hysteria, compulsive re-enactment, depression and dissociative disorders. Kandel (2006) comments on the persistent nature of trauma memory, which causes the symptoms of PTSD:

‘Post-traumatic stress disorder occurs following an extremely stressful event, such as life-threatening combat, physical torture, rape, abuse or natural disasters. It is manifested as recurrent episodes of fear, often triggered by reminders of the initial trauma. One of the striking features of the disorder... is that the memory of the traumatic experience remains powerful for decades and is readily reactivated by a variety of stressful circumstances’ (Kandel 2006: 343).

Kandel explains that what we call memory can be seen as a synaptic connection between brain cells that is established and maintained by proteins according to user demand. Synaptic connections are formed in response to sensory stimuli, maintained by proteins if the stimuli persists, but pruned when no further stimulation is received as the protein decays naturally, which accounts for the process that we call forgetting (Kandel 2006: 275). This ‘synaptic plasticity’ (LeDoux 2002: 9) keeps the individual
connected to his or her present environment and able to adjust to changes. In the case of trauma, the stimulus that leads to the creation of a synaptic connection is so extreme that a prion-like protein is formed that has the ability to perpetuate itself and maintain the synaptic connection indefinitely (Kandel 2006: 273). According to Kandel (2006), trauma memory is therefore not user dependent and can persist, even if the information is no longer relevant. It can resurface suddenly and out of context and thereby create a rupture between the individual and his or her present life experience. It also causes behaviour that seems unrelated, disconnected and out of character.

One of the issues raised by the debate on trauma, memory and its cultural representation is the implicit nature of trauma memory, which directly affects the ability of its representation. Caruth (1996) describes trauma as an event that does not leave visible traces (Caruth in Elsaesser 2001: 196); Laub (1995) refers to trauma as involving ‘an event that precludes registration’ (Laub in Elsaesser 2001: 199). The implicit nature of trauma memory can be explained when the processes of trauma memory formation are examined. Lisak (2002) describes the difference between, on the one hand, a fear-based response under normal circumstances, which involves a complex array of neural pathways and includes the cortex, thereby allowing for conscious decision making and conscious memory, and, on the other hand, a response under extreme threat in which the cortex is bypassed and the fear-generating stimulus is processed by the amygdala, an ancient part of the brain that reacts to emotional stimuli and holds implicit memory. The amygdala activates the autonomous nervous system, which leads to the release of hormones (mainly adrenaline) which in turn initiates changes in the body that allow for fast and effective reactions (increased heart rate, blood pressure, respiration, a release of stored sugar, increase in muscle tone, and so on) to facilitate a fight, flight or freeze response in the struggle for survival (Lisak 2002: 1). The inability to represent neither the experience nor the memory of trauma is therefore connected to the fact that the sensory stimuli that are potentially traumatising are received and stored in the amygdala. The cortex, the brain centre that facilitates conscious decision making, is not involved in this process, and the stored memory cannot be brought into consciousness without mediation. Cultural productions can only come close to describing the unconscious autonomous body functions that are triggered by extreme threat in a retrospective account. The following passage from the novel ‘All Quiet on the Western Front’ by Remarque (1929 in Murdoch 1994), in which a World War I soldier reflects on his combat experience, is an example:

‘With the first rumble of shellfire, one part of our being hurls itself back a thousand years. An animal instinct awakens in us, and it directs and protects us. It is not conscious, it is far quicker, far more accurate and far more reliable than conscious thought. You can’t explain it. You are moving up, not thinking of anything, then suddenly you are in a hollow in the ground with shrapnel flying over your head, but you can’t remember having heard the shell coming or having thought about taking cover. If you had relied on thought you would have been so many pieces of meat by now. It was something else, some prescient, unconscious awareness inside us, that threw us down and saved us without our realizing’ (Remarque 1929 in Murdoch 1994: 39).
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The unconscious and autonomous responses that are triggered by serious threat are fast and highly effective, but, because of this, they may also put the organism at risk: the experience, being unmediated, can overwhelm the amygdala (Scaer 2001: 75). The extreme stimulus can create a persistent memory that contributes towards the symptoms of PTSD which include:

1) Flashbacks and reactivation of traumatic memory, which can occur due to the fact that the memory of a fearful event and its stimuli are stored as implicit memories in the amygdala from which they can be reactivated through stimuli that have a resemblance to the initial experience (LeDoux 1996: 257).
2) Hysteria, which relates to the fact that the amygdala in its over-stimulated state sends signals to a number of brain centres that mediate arousal. Those centres once activated, signal back to the amygdala and can thereby establish a self-sustaining cyclic reaction (LeDoux 1996: 290),
3) Compulsive trauma re-enactment, which may be due to some hormone release during a trauma response causing a short period of amnesia, to which the individual can develop an addictive behaviour (Scaer 2001: 77). According to Levine (2005) trauma re-enactment ‘is a major factor in the escalation and perpetuation of violent behaviour’ (Levine 2005: 4).
4) Dissociative disorders, which are related to the freeze reaction and are due to a withdrawal response of the individual in the face of the overwhelming nature of the experience (Scaer 2001: 73).

While the above listed symptoms of PTSD are caused by shock trauma, similar, but more varied and pervasive, symptoms can, according to van der Kolk (2005), occur as Developmental or Complex Trauma, which forms over time due to prolonged stress or repeated traumatisation, particularly during early childhood (van der Kolk 2005: 2-4).

The pattern that can be observed here is the fluent interconnectivity that exists in the healthy individual due to the synaptic plasticity of the brain and the interruption of this interconnectivity caused by a synaptic connection that no longer adapts to the demand of its user. The loss of connection that affects the individual on a mental, physical and emotional level in its ability to relate, which can be described as Bezugsverlust, is apparent in the symptoms of PTSD. It is a loss of connection to the self, which is particularly clear in all dissociative disorders, as well as a loss of connection to the environment. A further reference to dissociative disorders will be made in the context of the analysis of the film Germany Pale Mother in Chapter 2.

1.5 Reversal of Bezugsverlust through trauma therapy

Trauma memory can be reprocessed in a variety of ways, so that the memory of the experience is released, the synaptic connection can decay naturally and the block to interconnectivity be removed. As mentioned in the genealogy of the concept of trauma [see section 1.2], hysteria and dissociative disorders were already recognised in the 19th century and treated through therapy methods most of which, psychoanalysis
being the exception, included the use of hypnosis. During the 1980s and 1990s, additional methods were developed in which cognitive and non-cognitive elements are often used in conjunction. I will briefly refer to a number of therapy methods that promote a reprocessing of the traumatic experience. My focus will be restricted to those methods that can potentially be adapted to a collective setting.

For each method in trauma therapy a revisiting of the traumatic experience is necessary, the element of disconnection has to be identified, be it cognitive or implicit, before a reconnection can be established. The trauma therapy methods that are relevant in this context are as follows:

1) Traumatic Incident Reduction: a method that guides the client through a revision process back to the trauma-inducing experience and encourages a reprocessing through cognition.

2) Somatic Experiencing (Levine 1997): a method that restores the inherent capacity of the autonomic nervous system to self-regulate after it has been undermined by trauma. The therapy involves tracking the patient’s own felt-sense experience with a guided exploration of the nature and extent of the dis regulation that is harboured in the body as a result of trauma. Any changes in the body that appear in the tracking process are seen as clues and are attended to at depth. Resources are established that enable the patient’s Autonomic Nervous System to return to a regulated state. The patient is briefly brought back to the disregulated state and helped to return to a regulated state in repetition (pendulation) until discharge is facilitated and the patient’s inherent capacity to self-regulate is restored.

3) EMDR: Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing. While employing a variety of aspects of traditional psychological therapy methods as part of the treatment, EMDR uses alternating left-right attention during trauma recall, or regular sound beats, which stimulates reprocessing of stored trauma memory (Bergmann 2000).

It is also relevant to consider the potential of musical experiences for trauma resolution. Blood and Zatorre (2001) showed that there are neural mechanisms that correlate to an intensely pleasant emotional experience of music appreciation. The study shows that brain structures that relate to reward and positive emotions are activated when engaged in pleasant music appreciation, while activity in the amygdala (the brain structure that mediates fear and adverse emotions) decreases.

For each of the above methods the patient needs to be brought back to the original trauma memory. In relation to memory recall the following four observations need to be taken into account:

1) Memories are associative and mostly linked to spatial experiences.
2) Memories are mood congruent (LeDoux 2002) and therefore more easily remembered when the emotional state at the time of retrieval is similar to that at the time of memory formation.
3) Emotional arousal tends to strengthen memory formation.
4) Prolonged arousal and stress can have the opposite effect and impair the formation of memory (LeDoux 2002: 222-223).

Through the recall of the traumatic experience under non-threatening circumstances the patient is given the opportunity to process the event as a non-threatening experience using a complex array of pathways, which includes the cortex, and so release the stored up energy together with the trauma memory. The block to interconnectivity is thereby removed, so that a sense of relation (Bezug) should re-establish itself. The elements of trauma therapy that are particularly suitable for adaptation in a collective setting are an encouragement of the reprocessing of the traumatic experience through cognition, bringing the viewer back to the trauma-inducing event in alternation to moments in which a sense of safety is established (pendulation), the use of music to promote positive emotions, and a sense of fluent interconnectivity. An approach similar to EMDR can also be useful, one in which a form of hypnosis is achieved through eye movement or through the use of a pulsating rhythm.

1.6 Bezugsvverlust in a social context and its reversal

A loss of the sense of interconnectivity, comparable to the effect of trauma, can also be observed on the micro-social level. As with individual psychology, it is through awareness that a reversal can be achieved, and this can be facilitated by acknowledgment. I will look at observations by Lewis (1971), the concept of ‘interaction ritual chains’ as developed by Collins (2004) and further propositions by Scheff (2007) to recognise an equivalent pattern in the social context.

Lewis (1971) identifies the emotion of shame as an experience of disconnection that also results in an impression of separation and a sense of loss of emotional relation (Bezugsvverlust). According to Lewis (1971), shame, as an experience of loss of social bonds, signifies in the case of an infant a threat to survival and can be seen as an instinct that signals this threat. It is this biological background to the emotion of shame that links it with other threat-based experiences and therefore with trauma. Further micro-sociological studies confirm that the sense of loss of social bonds can be experienced as a threat. Collins (2004) describes how group members gain emotional energy through ‘interaction ritual chains’ an experience that creates an impression of social connectedness. On a physiological level, Collins sees this process as a mutual attuning to a specific micro-rhythm, or ‘rhythmic entrainment’ that produces a feeling of group solidarity. Collins refers to the action of neurotransmitters and the flow of hormones in the endocrine system in relation to the level of emotional energy that creates either a feeling of happiness/high level of endocrine release/high emotional energy, or a feeling of sadness/lack of endocrine release/low level of emotional energy. As endocrine release is necessary for active behaviour, the experience of social connectedness becomes a biological necessity. In this sense, the loss of social connection as experienced in the emotion of shame is a threat to the individual because it means loss of access to
interaction rituals through which emotional energy/an increase in endocrine release can be gained. Collins also looks at the interaction rituals that underlie conflict and violent action and finds that a considerable effort is necessary to overcome the common desire for ‘mutual emotional entrainment’ (Collins 2008: 27). This shows that there is a need for, as well as a natural inclination towards, social connectedness, which has to be overcome to allow for conflict and violent action. This inclination towards social connectedness can be seen as a pattern that is, in its interconnectivity, comparable to the user adaptability of the brain. In both cases, a natural inclination towards a fluent connection can be observed, though this connection can become disturbed.

Collins (2008) describes an alternative means of gaining emotional energy in the ‘dominant interaction ritual’ in which the aggressor struggles to establish an authoritative rhythm to which the victim responds thereby strengthening such a rhythm further. According to Collins, potential victims have a low level of emotional energy, which facilitates domination, while aggressors also have a need to improve their emotional energy but have learned to enhance it in an unequal interaction (Collins 2008: 189). The dominant and violent interaction can therefore offer an alternative means of gaining emotional energy, which becomes relevant when access to a gain of emotional energy through mutual attunement in interaction rituals is compromised through a sense of loss of social bonds (shame). The link between violence and an impression of social separation is in this way apparent. Lewis (1971) found that psychotherapy clients would express hostility after an experience of unacknowledged shame (Lewis 1971 in Scheff 2006: 5). Scheff (2006) looked at the shame of not belonging as the elemental source for hatred and studied unacknowledged shame and humiliation as the hidden component of rage and aggression. He describes the self-perpetuating nature of the shame/anger cycle (Scheff 2006: 6) and looks at the emotional/relational causes for violence finding a pattern of emotion management that he calls ‘hypermasculinity’ in which unacknowledged shame and alienation play a key role. Scheff (2007) points out that the silence/violence pattern that is characteristic for hypermasculinity is, from cultural conditioning, found mainly in men. This pattern is matched by a female equivalent that consists of obedience, blind loyalty and fearfulness. He describes women that adopt this pattern as hyperfeminine and shows that they are attracted to hypermasculine men. Scheff sees the two hyper-genders as mutually reinforcing each other thereby creating a social atmosphere that supports warfare (Scheff 2007:12).

Scheff (2007) proposes the acknowledgment of the feeling of threat of social disconnection as a remedy to a situation that holds the potential for violence. This is comparable to the processes of trauma therapy in which a new awareness of the traumatic incident and its effect is facilitated leading to a resolution of the trauma memory and a return to a state where the individual is connected to his or her reality. Scheff calls for collective rituals that acknowledge fear, shame and grief and he highlights the importance of the creation of secure social bonds in this context (Scheff 2007:13).

Social connectedness can therefore be seen as a vital need because it offers not only
safety and survival, in the case of the infant, but also access to emotional energy, something that can be seen as an important asset on a biological, psychological and social level. The emotion of shame, which arises due to the sense of broken social bonds (Scheff 2007:3), signifies a difficulty in accessing emotional energy through mutual attunement in interaction rituals, and the dominant and violent interaction might, in this case, be chosen as an alternative means of gaining emotional energy. Aggression, which is from a psychoanalytical perspective seen [by Freud 1920 translated by Strachey 1961] as an inner drive that is part of human nature and needs to be controlled by discipline, is here seen as arising out of a need for emotional energy and within a situation where access to mutual attunement through interaction rituals is not experienced as an option. A fostering or a reinstatement of a sense of social interconnectivity, as can be achieved through acknowledgement, can facilitate a reversal of Bezugsverlust. The pattern in which interconnectivity is disrupted through a sense of disconnection, one that can be reversed through heightened awareness, is in many ways similar to the pattern that can be observed in the context of trauma in individual psychology. Whereas interconnectivity is given through the plasticity of the brain, a comparable state of interconnectivity exists in the micro-social context through the sense of social interconnectivity which makes opportunities for mutual entrainment available. In the same way, the disruption of interconnectivity on the level of the traumatised individual, which appears in the form of a prion like protein maintaining the synaptic connection indefinitely, can be compared on the micro-social level to feelings of shame and grief that create an impression of separation. A reversal is achieved in both cases through awareness: for the traumatised individual, this requires a recall of the experience during which a sense of safety can be re-established and the memory released, leading to a decay of the synaptic connection; in the social context, it is the acknowledgement of the sense of loss that re-establishes the communicative link to the collective and a realisation that social interconnectivity remains available. I will return to the concept of ‘hypergenders’ (Scheff 2007) in the context of Chapter 2.

1.7 Bezugsverlust in the collective context and the potential of cultural productions in facilitating a reprocessing

A pattern in which a sense of interconnectivity is disrupted by an experience of separation can also be identified on the macro-social level. In this context, cultural productions can be instrumental in facilitating a sense of reconnection in a collective setting. I will look at the debate on nationalism and at the concept of ‘cultural trauma’ that was developed by Alexander (2004), taking into account the criticism of this concept by Burke and Faulkner (2010).

The experience of sudden change caused by the industrial revolution triggered an increased interest in the concept of trauma (Luckhurst 2008) and in the history of the interest in memory (Radstone 2001). According to Luckhurst (2008: 19), the concept of trauma emerged within modernity as an effect of the 19th century statistical and technological society that generated, multiplied and quantified the ‘shocks of modern
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life’. Luckhurst (2008) dates modernity loosely back to the rise of the nation state in the 18th century and sees trauma as ‘both a product of modernity and a description of what occurs when modern systems fail’ (Luckhurst 2008: 214).

In the debate on nationalism, we find among modernist theories a view that perceives modernity as a social crisis to which nationalism was a response (Smith 1998: 71). Giddens (1987: 34) sees ‘the formation of the nation state and the associated nation state system as an expression of the dislocations of modern history’, while Nairn (1977: 97-8) sees nationalism as a mirror image of the violent workings of the modern world political economy. The industrialisation, together with modern capitalism, is identified by both Nairn (1977) and Giddens (1987) as a social crisis as it contains elements of social disconnection, alienation and dislocation. According to Alexander (2004), it is the sense of collective identity that can be affected by unacknowledged social crises. Alexander (2004) describes a process in which crises and their effects on the collective are publicly acknowledged in such a way that an awareness is being fostered that allows for a revision of this effect. Alexander describes this undertaking as the social process of ‘cultural trauma’.

‘For traumas to emerge at the level of the collectivity, social crises must become cultural crises… the gap between event and representation can be conceived as the “trauma process”… Persons who compose collectivities broadcast symbolic representations of social events. These group representations can be seen as “claims” about the shape of social reality, its causes and the responsibilities for action such causes imply. The cultural construction of trauma begins with such a claim’ (Alexander 2004: 10, 11).

The claim to the traumatic nature of an event must be made through a new master narrative that is established by ‘carrier groups’ (Weber 1968: 468-517). This new narrative must, according to Alexander, address the following points: the nature of the pain, the nature of the victim, the relation of victim to audience, and the attribution of responsibilities. The institutional arenas can be aesthetic, legal, scientific, mass media or relating to state-bureaucracy (Alexander 2004: 10-24).

Burke and Faulkner (2010) criticise the use of psychological terminology by Alexander (2004) as it does not account for the political nature of cultural memory. The authors point out that cultural memory is ordinary rather than traumatic, as it

‘serves the day-to-day needs of the state, cultural and social institutions, and political movements, and because it is enmeshed with practices of identification developed by ordinary people in contexts that can rarely be defined as traumatic’ (Burke and Faulkner 2010: 5).

Burke and Faulkner question the ability of any cultural representation of traumatic experiences to ‘function within psychological processes of working through trauma’ (Burke and Faulkner 2010: 6) and prefer an understanding of cultural trauma as defined by Eyerman (2001): a dramatic loss of identity which affects a group of people in their sense of cohesion (Eyerman 2001: 2).
Taking this criticism into account I will therefore clarify in my reading of Alexander (2004) that I am referring to the effect of trauma rather than to trauma itself. It is these effects that can be compared to equivalent effects in the social setting and I will continue to use the more general term of Bezugsverlust to describe this effect.

The pattern that can be identified on the macro-social level is interconnectivity in the form of a collective’s sense of identity, or what Eyerman (2001) describes as a group’s sense of cohesion. Disruption and disconnection happens through experiences of alienation and dislocation, which create an impression of Bezugsverlust on the macro social level and are themselves caused by social crises. The industrial revolution, with its sudden change in working and living conditions, qualifies as a social crisis due to its alienating and dislocating effect. The model of the ‘trauma process’ (Alexander 2004) shows that the collective’s damaged sense of identity, can be addressed through public acknowledgement. What Alexander (2004) describes as the ‘processing of trauma’ on a collective level resembles in many ways the various methods of trauma therapy that can facilitate a trauma reprocessing for the individual. The recall of the traumatic event happens in the collective through a new narrative that claims that a specific event affected the collective, thereby calling for public recognition. This new narrative defines the nature of the pain, who the victims are, how they relate to the audience and who is seen as responsible, and it facilitates a collective awareness that allows for a redefinition of collective identity in which the initial impression of social alienation and dislocation is reversed and a feeling of interconnectivity is re-established.

1.8 Approaches by cultural productions in response to experiences that affected the collective in its sense of cohesion.

A variety of approaches have been used by cultural productions to address collective experiences that are equivalent in their effect to the effect of personal trauma.

In what Alexander (2004) calls ‘the trauma process’, it is the new narrative that makes the collective face and acknowledge the occurrence of a social crisis. This new narrative has to replace established accounts, which have in many cases been affected by the crises themselves and have emerged in response to the need for a divergence, or an escape into an imaginary safe reality. The replacement or deconstruction of these often-conventionalised narratives thereby becomes a precondition to the reprocessing of the collective experiences of Bezugsverlust. The space thus created provides a room in which the experience can be expressed, faced and collectively acknowledged.

I will examine two of the most relevant approaches that facilitate the establishment of a new narrative and I will evaluate their relevance in relation to my own arts-practice.
1.8.1 A response through content: the establishment of a counter narrative in film

The most commonly found approach of cultural productions that respond to experiences of crisis is the establishment of a counter-narrative that can replace existing conventionalised concepts. I will refer to authors that have discussed film samples that represent a specific national cinema, a context in which the establishment of a counter-narrative is frequently used\(^{13}\).

Kim (2002) looking at recent South Korean films talks about a post-traumatic national cinema which he compares in its function to the mission of psychoanalysis in ‘helping to remember what is too painful to recover’ (Kim 2002: 96). Kim (2002) examines how Korea’s post-traumatic cinema attempts to reconcile painful public history through a personalised perspective. He describes Korea as a country with a highly insecure national identity due to a history of violent Japanese and American colonialism that had threatened and invalidated its sovereignty. He investigates how the depiction of masculinity in Korean cinema mirrors the profound sociological changes in Korea, starting with masochistic and self-loathing male characters and developing towards angry young man and articulated intellectuals. Brutality and violence are seen as symptoms for modernity and a post-authoritarian identity. The particular focus is on how the cinematic depiction of traumas and crises manages to dismantle a conventional world-view, enabling a departure towards a new identity. The films discussed by Kim (2002) include *Peppermint Candy* by Yi Ch’ang-dong (1999), *A Single Spark* by Park Kwang-Su (1995) and *A Petal* by Chang Son-u (1996).

Collins and Davis (2004) document how the unresolved trauma of Australia’s colonial history became the focus of national cinema production after the landmark High Court case which granted land rights to Torres Strait Islander Eddie Mabo. This decision recognised prior landownership by the aboriginal population and is described as a rupture in the continuity of Australian history calling the established image of national identity into question as it exposed a collective trauma that had, thus far, not been recognized. National cinema after Mabo is seen as an arbiter of national identity, backtracking history, mediating historical memory and national self-recognition (Collins and Davis 2004). Film examples analysed by Collins and Davis (2004) include *Mabo-Life of an Island Man* (1997), by Trevor Graham; *Rabbit Proof Fence* (2002), by Phillip Noyce; *Japanese Story* (2003), by Sue Brooks; and *Dreaming in Motion* (2002), a compilation of 5 short films by indigenous filmmakers.

Murphy and Williams (2007) highlight the important role of national cinema in the maintenance and recovery of historical memory as a method of combating the effects of colonial oppression in postcolonial Africa. Nation building is defined as the most immediate task in the process of becoming post colonial, and any cultural production is seen as being necessarily devoted to this end. Murphy and Williams (2007) refer to Gabriel (1989) who developed the concept of the ‘Third cinema’ as the guardian of
popular memory and who stated that ‘between the popular memory of the Third World and the wilful forgetting of the West, the gatekeepers of the corridors of discourse cannot be but men and women of courage and conscience committed to an urgent activist cinema’ (Gabriel 1989 in Murphy and Williams 2007: 63). Murphy and Williams highlight how postcolonial African cinema plays a vital role in addressing questions of national and cultural identity by recording colonial atrocities and by recollecting and restoring collective memories, which can lead to a revised vision of national history. The authors refer to cases in which films that establish a new narrative aid in constructing a counter-memory. The issue of identity is critical and is seen in direct connection to collective memories. The impression of Bezugsverlust, which is in this case the loss of a sense of collective cohesion, has been addressed successfully by the new narrative through the representation and acknowledgement of the crisis and a contribution towards a reversal of this loss has been made. Murphy and Williams (2007) discuss a number of African films that have social crises like slavery, colonialism and anti-colonial struggle as their subject matter including Sankofa by Gerima (1993), Sarraounia by Hondo (1986) and Jamila the Algerian by Chahine (1958).

1.8.2 A response through form: Deconstruction of conventional structures

An approach that deconstructs existing conventions through form, rather than through content is an alternative that is well suited to give expression to the traumatic experience as it also reflects the state of broken and disrupted connections of the trauma-impaired memory. This approach developed first in response to an experience of major social crisis, caused by World War II.

I will examine the ‘Theatre of the Absurd’, Butoh dance and ‘trauma cinema’, as examples of this approach, referring to Esslin (1961), Orlando (2001) and Walker (2001) and mention the relevance of trauma theory for the development of trauma cinema in this context.

Emerging just after World War II, the ‘Theatre of the Absurd’ appeared as an ‘unmediated response of independent authors to a disintegrating world that had lost its unifying principle’ (Esslin 1961: 411, 419). According to Esslin (1961), this form of theatre developed as an art form with the sole intention of expressing the experience of trauma (Esslin 1961: 414). The sudden out-of-context occurrence of the trauma memory, the illogical and out-of-character behaviour of the traumatised person, the repetitive and cyclical nature of trauma re-enactments and the general unrelatedness between the individual, his or her actions and the social environment, contain elements of absurdity that are mirrored and expressed by the ‘Theatre of the Absurd’. Using poetic imagery rather than intellectual concepts, the impression of absurdity is created in a variety of ways and includes the use of disjoined clues that don’t fit into a meaningful pattern, action that is unmotivated and nonsensical, the use of a circular structure, the absence of any generally accepted value systems, and the devaluation
and disintegration of language (Esslin 1961: 402, 406, 412, 413, 415). As the reality of the crisis is faced, the dramatic performance can have a therapeutic effect, giving the spectator the opportunity to see his anxieties formulated and to produce a deliberating effect. At the same time psychological forces are activated, fears and repressed aggressions are released and, by being confronted with a picture of disintegration, the audience is asked to make an active effort towards integration (Esslin 1961: 412, 413).

As a format that developed in Japan in response to the collective trauma of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Butoh is a dance form that is inspired by the concept of the ‘Theatre of Cruelty’ (Artaud 1932 in Corti 1974) and German Expressionist theatre. According to Orlando (2001), Butoh is also rooted in Japanese cultural history and incorporates elements of Shintoism, Zen Buddhism and images of Japanese cultural life. Shattering the prior forms of Japanese traditional dance as well as classical western dance and thereby rejecting the imperialist structures that they reflected, Butoh explores the dark, primordial and subconscious part of the national psyche, giving it the ability to expresses the ‘awakening to mortality and human suffering’ (Orlando 2001: 309). Orlando describes how Butoh allows movements to emerge, trusting the body’s own visceral impulses, leading to the creation of ‘the new lyricism of gesture’ (Artaud 1932 in Corti 1974: 69) that reflects the displaced and traumatized self. Orlando sees the Butoh dancer as a metaphor for the survivor and describes his appearance without identity, disturbingly vulnerable, wearing only a loin cloth or being wrapped in bags or linen, the body covered in white body paint, the head shaved or topped with a wig, his movements being minute and slow, gestures spasmodic, face contorted while the sets are starkly illuminated and minimalist (Orlando 2001: 317). Orlando highlights the contrast to classical ballet, which expresses an upward movement while Butoh reflects a movement down, representing ‘the fall’ and thereby creating a ‘body metaphor’ for trauma (Orlando 2001: 317). The breaking up of established structures is here balanced through a rootedness in ancient cultural traditions, which gives Butoh its liberating, therapeutic and authentic character. The returning to primordial forms of gesture and movement reintegrates the identity of the traumatized self, creating a space that enables the expression of the traumatic experience. Due to its creatively liberating effect, the principles of Butoh dance are used in theatre, dance and movement-based therapy internationally (McLeod 2002).

Walker (2001) examined autobiographical documentary films of the 1980s and 1990s that dealt with world-shattering events of the past, whether public, personal or both, which she calls ‘trauma cinema’ (Walker 2001: 214). Those films are characterised by a non-realist non-linear approach. Fragmentation, non-synchronous sound, repetition, rapid editing and strange angles (Walker 2001: 214) are used to give expression to the distorted and fragmented nature of trauma memory, thereby addressing the ‘non-representational’ aspects of trauma through paralysis, repetition and circularity (Kaplan 2001: 204). According to Walker, ‘The catalogue of film topics encompassed by trauma cinema finds its best description… in the entry for ‘post traumatic stress disorder’ (PTSD) of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders’ (Walker 2001: 214). Walker sees ‘trauma cinema’ as an international and transnational phenomenon and sees contemporary women’s experimental autobiographical
documentary practice as the ‘vanguard of the trauma cinema form’ (Walker 2001: 215), with productions like *Daughter Rite* by Michelle Citron (1980), *Confessions of a Chameleon* (1985) and *First Person Plural* (1990) by Lynn Hershman, *Family Gathering* by Lise Yasui (1988) and *History and Memory* by Rea Tajiri (1991). The list of women’s experimental autobiographical documentaries that seek appropriate expression for catastrophic events in the possibilities of non-classical, non-fiction cinema is growing and ‘such works breach the standards of journalistic documentary filmmaking by incorporating fictive and personal elements into public historical topics’ thereby discovering ‘new truths about the correlation between the objective mode of documentary production and mainstream history, and about the potential of experimental documentary for historical understanding’ (Walker 2001: 216).

Elsaesser (2001) highlights the connection between films that portrayed trauma from a biographical perspective and trauma theory, the concept that developed in the debate on trauma, memory and its cultural representation in the 1990s. Trauma, according to Elsaesser, ‘potentially suspends the normal categories of story-telling, making it necessary that we revise our traditional accounts of narrative and narration’ (Elsaesser 2001: 199); trauma theory breaks ‘the traditional deadlock around the ‘limits of representation’ (Friedländer 1992) by ‘opening up a new space for theoretical displacement’ (Elsaesser 2001: 196). Elsaesser refers to Caruth (1996) who wanted to ‘integrate’ or ‘assimilate’ the experience of trauma through narration as a technique that can re-establish an element of subjectivity and make a claim to memory time, as opposed to historical time, taking into account the element of ‘belatedness’ in relation to trauma memory and its effects (Elsaesser 2001: 196, 197). According to Elsaesser, this focus ‘opens up trauma theory to the experience and memory of events other than public historical ones, as in personal memories, autobiography, testimony or family history’ (Elsaesser 2001: 196). Thus, the focus is not on the event itself nor its distortions, but on its structure (Elsaesser 2001: 200) and this offers an aesthetic that acknowledges the limitations of human memory (Curtis 2002: 42).

Especially in the case of Butoh and ‘the theatre of the absurd’, the close connection between an experience of crisis and a new cultural format that emerges in response to the need to reflect it, is apparent. Whereas for national cinema the experience of crisis is given expression through content, in the case of Butoh it is the format itself that responds to and reflects the ruptured nature of the effect of crisis. What Elsaesser described as ‘the traditional accounts of narrative and narration’ (Elsaesser 2001: 199) have, to a substantial extent, been subject to the process of deconstruction in the Butoh approach. The resulting format is unconventional and not easily accessible to a broader and more general audience. This limits the reception to the subset of viewers who have an open mind as well as a sufficient amount of cultural education to prepare for the active mental participation that is required.

An approach in which a new narrative is established through a form that deconstructs existing conventions is more appropriate for my own arts practice as my perspective is personal and, similar to trauma cinema, it includes autobiographical elements. It also suits my method of working in which I collect potentially suitable material, often
including a variety of media that I connect according to the observation of an emerging pattern. A further inspiration for my own arts practice is the inclusion of absurdity that can express the unrelated nature of trauma memory, as used in the theatre of the absurd, and the reconnection to still-existing and relevant cultural traditions that balances the deconstructive element, as is apparent in Butoh.

1.9 Collective memory and its cultural representation

The study of trauma is closely linked to the study of memory and, on the level of individual psychology, it is the memory of the trauma that causes the symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). While an understanding of the processes involved in memory formation was discussed in section 1.4, I will here establish an understanding of memory on the macro-social level and look at cultural productions that have addressed this issue. The concept of collective memory was first established by the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs in 1925 and has been the subject of debate ever since, with scholars critically reviewing and further expanding the initial idea. I will look at extracts from ‘Le Cadre Sociaux de la Memoire’ as translated by Coser (1992) and at a more recent contribution by Assman (2006) before referring to the film History and Memory by Rea Tajiri (1991) as discussed by Walker (2003) and Curtis (2002) as a cultural sample that addresses the loss of collective memory.

Halbwachs based his thoughts on collective memory on the concept of collective consciousness that had been developed by Durkheim in 1893. Halbwachs describes the relationship between individual memory and the memory of the group by stating:

‘Yet it is in society that people normally require their memories. It is also in society that they recall, recognize and localize their memories… It is in this sense that there exists a collective memory and social frameworks for memory: it is to the degree that our individual thought places itself in these frameworks and participates in this memory that it is capable of the act of recollection’ (Halbwachs 1925 in Coser 1992: 38).

Further clarifying the relationship between the individual and the group in this context he states:

‘One may say that the individual remembers by placing himself in the perspective of the group, but one may also affirm that the memory of the group realizes and manifests itself in individual memories’ (Halbwachs 1925 in Coser 1992: 40).

According to Halbwachs, forgetting occurs when the social framework for memory changes and in order to preserve a memory one has to establish an associative connection to the new framework (Halbwachs 1925 in Coser 1992: 172/173). Assmann (2006) proposes a further specification of the concept of collective memory and lists three dimensions of memory: neural, social and cultural (Assmann 2006: 31). She describes the neural/biological, or individual, memory as not being autonomous but dependent on the stimulation of both social as well as cultural interaction. The social memory is described as fluid, developing in interaction with individuals as well as with
cultural artefact and actions. The cultural memory is described as being stimulated by social and individual memory but being more stable because it is anchored through media that are institutionalised (Assmann 2006: 32). According to Assman (2006), social memory develops through interactions between individuals and is thereby limited in time to the duration of three generations, while cultural memory, consisting of signs and symbols and carried by material media, can be unlimited in time. She also mentions political or national memory as a form of collective memory that is similar to cultural memory but has taken on a more durable form, one which has only a single perspective of being dedicated to the promotion of national identity (Assmann 2006: 58). Like Halbwachs (1925 in Coser 1992), Assman (2006) highlights the interrelationship of identity and memory, and of individual and collective memory:

‘We are, in other words, to a significant part, what we remember and forget. Our memory is not only connected to the memory of others but also to the symbolic universe of cultural objectivation’ (Assmann 2006: 61).

Walker (2003) comments on the interaction between individual and collective memory that is facilitated by cultural representation and highlights the potential of individual memory to initiate a shift in historical perspective. She outlines that individual memories of traumatic events and experiences often include non-veridical fantasy constructions that still lead back to the historical truth that caused them (Walker 2003: 104). Walker (2003) discusses popular and legal discourses that reject reports of traumatic experiences that contain mistakes or amnesiac elements. Walker argues that these very elements are actually a feature, and thereby a proof, of the traumatic experience. She calls this the inherent contradiction or paradox of trauma memory. Contemporary psychological theories of memory, as well as the literature on cultural trauma studies, give, according to Walker (2003), a perspective in which witness testimony is seen in its complex and intricate relationship to historical reality and allows for the existence of inconsistencies. She refers to the film History and Memory (1991) by Rea Tajiri in which the filmmaker’s familial past is located in the context of public history. The film consists of a compilation of short sequences that have documentary as well as fictional characteristics and it reflects impressions not fully registered. The subject matter is the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II, an event that affected the filmmaker’s mother directly. The film was conceived as

‘an answer to the mother’s silence, forgetting, sadness and shame, as an image given to her mother to stand where she had none’ (Walker 2003: 111).

What is striking is the film’s ‘simultaneous insistence on an irrevocable truth’, which in this case is the fact that Japanese and Japanese-Americans were interned in camps during Work War II, and its ‘refusal of the realist mode’ (Walker 2003: 11). Walker highlights that History and Memory, by including repression, silence, ellipsis and elaboration and by breaking chronological linearity, becomes fragmented, marked by repetition and is centred on events that it simultaneously calls attention to and deflects attention from. The film becomes in this way
Chapter 1 – Trauma, effect and reversal

‘a film about silence: the paradoxical articulation of a loss of voice - and of remembrance, but for the self-negating, contradictory, conflictual remembrance of an amnesia…. History and Memory is concerned to constitute forgotten or denied history, but not to constitute it through realist assertions of past events, but through a fragmented structure that acknowledges as well the gaps and resistances to history and memory… While the film asserts that the mother’s memories are historically valid and true… it simultaneously writes into history what could not be grasped at the time… The pattern of the film, then, in response to a traumatic past, is to constitute itself as a work of double delayed historical understanding’ (Walker 2003: 113, 114).

The focus of the film is, according to Walker (2003), on the distracted experience and imperfect memory of the mother, rather than on the internment itself, as well as on the daughter’s non-realist attempt to create an image for the otherwise lost memory. History and Memory is concerned with history as well as with memory and fantasy and the fluid boundaries between all of them. According to Walker, the link between personal and collective memory and the connection to the imaginary components of history is thereby apparent. Walker (2003) highlights the need to reintroduce individual memory into the sphere of rational history and underlines the political aspect of this shift in perception as

‘women’s accusations of childhood incest and abuse have the ability to threaten male dominance and the subordination of women and children… while the memories of Holocaust and U.S. internment survivors help secure our toehold against the ethnic cleansing model of fascism’ (Walker 2003: 116).

Walker (2003) therefore advocates that the trauma memory in its possible distortions and fallacies is appreciated as an indirect indicator of a historical occurrence.

Curtis (2002) describes History and Memory as a film that contains a collection of politically diverse material that is affected by deconstruction and a multiplicity of perspectives to visualise the invisible versions of events that took place in America after Pearl Harbour (Curtis 2002: 51). Curtis sees the autobiographical documentary as belonging to a group of films that don't look for historical authenticity but that explore the somatic effects of historical events on victims and their offspring (Curtis 2002: 42). The relationship to the original historical event has thereby changed, and the focus is on the echoing structure of the repeatedly recurring memory. History and Memory portrays, according to Curtis (2002), the conflict between individual and collective memory by referring to events that were until 1970 not known to the public and excluded from official accounts. The film contrasts the invisibility of the internment within collective memory with the existing, but hard to define, affective traces among Japanese families because of both the internment itself and the denial of its history (Curtis 2002: 42, 43). Curtis (2002) refers to Halbwachs (1925 in Coser 1992) and his belief that the collective has a certain influence on the content of individual remembering and explains this in terms of a collective memory framework that organises those memories shared by the group. While impressions stay individual, being related to physical experiences, memories are seen by Halbwachs (1925 in Coser 1992) as connected to mental processes that are shared within a collective. Because communication is necessary to translate personal impressions into memories that are
shared by the group, it becomes the precondition for an inclusion into the framework of collective memory and has, in this way, a crucial function in preventing the process of forgetting. The film *History and Memory* reflects how forgetting was caused by a lack of communication, and Curtis (2002) enquires into the nature of such a forgetting that leaves empty spaces that refer back to the forgotten. According to Curtis (2002), the forgetting has not occurred because information was lost but because it was covered up. Curtis highlights the importance of memory for identity formation and stresses that this process is affected by the denial of access to events, places and experiences of the past, which is also an exclusion from the framework of collective memory (Curtis 2002: 47). While the film raises an awareness of this exclusion and its effect on the collective identity of those excluded, it encourages the viewer to be critical towards official discourse (Curtis 2002: 56).

The importance of collective memory and of access to this memory for the formation of a collective’s sense of identity, or for a group’s sense of cohesion (Eyerman 2001), is made very clear through the film *History and Memory*. For the concept of the ‘trauma process’ (Alexander 2004) it is the redefinition of this sense of identity that is achieved if a claim to the traumatic nature of the event is made successfully. Tajiri’s film makes a significant contribution to this process and can be seen as a ‘carrier group’ (Weber 1969 in Alexander 2004) that establishes a new narrative that claims both the internment and its official denial as an experience of social crisis that affected the group of American Japanese in their collective sense of identity. The nature of the pain is that of temporary oppression and lack of public and official acknowledgement thereof, the victims are the internees and their off-spring, the audience is the American public of which the victims are a minority subgroup. By establishing a new narrative and thereby reinstating the element of communication that was lost, the film claims re-inclusion into what Halbwachs calls the ‘collective framework of memory’ (Halbwachs 1925 in Coser 1992). The forgetting that seems to have occurred should, in this way, be reversed. *Bezugsverlust*, the loss of mental and emotional connection, is here the loss of identity, which is caused by the lack of access of the group to its own history. This loss is addressed, and the awareness that the film raises is the precondition for a mental and emotional reconnection. The sudden change in the framework of collective memory and the loss of a memory that was not transferred due to a lack of communication, which Curtis (2002) refers to in her discussion of the film *History and Memory*, can also be observed in the account by Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967) of the German population and its social psychological change from fascism to democracy. Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967) describe the sudden transition from a social consciousness that had allowed for a measure as drastic as the ‘Final Solution’ into one of civilised everyday living (Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich 1967: 24), a transition that included a change in moral and ethical values. This sudden transition was facilitated by a complete emotional detachment from the past; no communicative efforts were made to transfer information from one collective framework of memory to the next. Any memory that was connected to the war and pre-war years was not included and therefore collectively forgotten.

The lack of empathy to the victims of the Holocaust is connected to the collective
forgetting discussed above, and it is the aim of the film element of this thesis, The Legacy, to make a claim to this forgotten memory so that it can be reintroduced into the current collective framework. Since Maurice Halbwachs was himself a victim of the Nazi regime, it is important that he is included in this effort and reinstated to the collective framework of memory of the contemporary German population.

I will return to the idea of loss of access to memory in Chapter 3 in relation to my own family history.

1.10 Conclusion to Chapter 1

The observations of the above subchapters make a number of relevant contributions towards answering the initial research questions.

I can now define my position within the debate on trauma, memory and its cultural presentation as coming from a perspective in which an understanding of trauma is based on the latest neurobiological studies and in which the effect of trauma within individual psychology is compared to similar effects originating from experiences on the micro- and macro-social level. I have identified, at all levels, a pattern in which a pre-existing interconnectivity is disrupted thereby causing an experience of separation, or Bezugsverlust. Psychoanalytical observations from the level of the individual can be extended to make valuable contributions towards an understanding of experiences on the micro- and macro-social level. What is comparable, however, is the effect rather than the experience itself: a direct transference that does not take the difference between the level of individual psychology and the micro and macro-social context into account, needs to be avoided. A perspective in which I look for a pattern that shows the disruption of a pre-existing interconnectivity causing a sensation of Bezugsverlust enables me to address my first research question. The inability to have empathy with the victims of the Holocaust that was observed by Hahn (2005) and Schlant (1999) is read in this context as a symptom for a loss of mental and emotional connection on the micro- and macro-social level. To establish an understanding on how this loss may have occurred will be the focus of my investigation into German social and cultural history in Chapter 2.

In relation to my second research question in which I aim to explore how a cultural representation in the medium of film can address this lack of empathy I have identified strategies in which cultural productions can make a claim to the traumatic nature of collective experiences through the establishment of a narrative that aims to redefine the damaged sense of identity that the impression of crisis has caused for the collective. While this process has been described by Alexander (2004), a variety of methods have been used by cultural productions to publicly claim traumatic status for a collective experience of crisis. Among these methods an approach in which existing structures are deconstructed and the trauma-like experience is reflected through form rather than content is most suited for my own practice. This approach restricts a broad reception because it demands active audience participation, which is a precondition to the re-
establishment of the lost mental and emotional connection. Analysing samples of cultural productions that have addressed experiences of crisis and their effects has provided further inspiration for my own practice, such as the use of absurdity to reflect the displaced nature of the trauma memory and the reconnection to still-existing undistorted traditions to establish a balance with the element of deconstruction used in the format. Together with the trauma therapy methods that I identified as suitable for an adaptation to a collective setting, I compiled a range of suitable strategies and valuable ideas for the film-making process. The concept of collective memory and the influence of access or lack of access to collective memory on the sense of identity of a collective is particularly relevant for this project and I will return to this subject matter in the following Chapters.

Notes to Chapter 1

1 Like Luckhurst (2008), Fassin and Rechtman (2009) give a dual genealogy of the concept of trauma ‘rooted in psychiatry and law’ while distancing it from psychoanalysis (Stark 2011: 438). According to Stark (2011: 438), the genealogical approach adopted by Luckhurst (2008) and Fassin and Rechtman (2009) is a response to the demand for a history from within. The focus in both studies is on how trauma has created a new language of the event a ‘universal language of a new politics of the intolerable’ (Fassin and Rechtman 2009 in Stark 2011: 438).

2 According to Luckhurst (2008) it was a publication of the history of psychodynamic psychiatry in 1969 that led to the rediscovery of Pierre Janet and influenced the emerging trauma theories in the 1990s. Luckhurst describes how the psychodynamic model of mind developed at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, to which Jean-Martin Charcot, Hippolyte Bernheim, Pierre Janet and Sigmund Freud made relevant contributions in relation to the study of hysteria, multiple personality disorders and dissociation.

3 Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967) discuss what Freud (1920 in Strachey 1961) called “Kultureignung’, which can be explained as a mastering of inner psychological drives through awareness, a process that makes the individual able to live with others in a civilised way (Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich 1967: 88). This concept is based on an understanding of the constitution of human beings as having mostly unconscious inner drives, of which the drive to aggression and the sex drive are the most prominent.

4 To establish a synaptic connection between brain cells, a second stimulus has to join a first stimulus, which explains the associative nature of memory (Kandel 2006: 284-285), (LeDoux 2002:136) and is important for memory recall.

5 ‘prions (proteinaceous infectious agent) are a very small class of infectious proteins… and can cause degenerative diseases of the nervous system’ (Kandel 2006: 446). Prions differ from other proteins in the way that the dominant form is self-perpetuating: this explains the indefinite maintenance of synaptic connection despite protein degradation and turn-over (Kandel 2006: 273).
Lisak (2002) explains that the ability of the human nervous system to react instantly and effectively to sudden threat with a fight, flight or freeze response developed over a period of millions of years in response to the fact that humans and their ancestors were a prey species.

Developed by Frank A. Gerbode, M.D., TIR is a regressive desensitisation procedure for reducing or eliminating the negative residual impact of traumatic experience. As such it finds major application in cases of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). A one-on-one guided imagery process, TIR traces... conditioned responses back through the history of their occurrence in a client’s life to the stressful incident primarily responsible for their acquisition. The resolution of the primary incidents then reduces or eliminates the target stress response’ (Robert H. Moore 2005: 14).

EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing) is capable of turning on the brain’s REM sleep system, leading to the activation of specific areas of the anterior cortex of the cingulated gyrus, facilitating its function as a filter, thereby facilitating the integration of traumatic memory into general semantic networks... This integration is seen to lead to... the reduction of amygdaloid mediated negative affects of PTSD’ (Bergmann 2000: abstract).

According to Blood and Zatorre (2001: 2, 10), ‘intense pleasant emotional responses to music’ correlate with an increase in cerebral blood flow ‘in brain regions thought to be involved in reward/motivation, emotion and arousal... Activation of the reward system by music may maximise pleasure, not only by activating the reward system but also by simultaneously decreasing activity in brain structures associated with negative emotions’.

Referring to Durkheim (1912), who identified the mechanisms that produce moral solidarity as the glue to society, Collins (2004) proposes that emotions hold society together (Collins 2004: 103) and describes interaction rituals as mechanisms that occur within groups and in which, through the collective focus on mutual emotions, the impression of a shared reality is created. Collins calls this experience ‘the micro-situational production of moments of intersubjectivity’ (Collins 2004: 48). There are four outcomes of the interaction ritual according to Collins (2004): a feeling of group solidarity and membership; a surge of emotional energy in the individual participant; symbols that represent the group; and feelings of morality.

Stark (2011), in reference to Luckhurst (2008) and to Fassin and Rechtman (2009), talks about the transmissibility of trauma and highlights that this transmissibility is crucially linked to its status as an event or experience. The ‘claim to a cultural trauma’ (Alexander 2004) can therefore be seen as a claim in which the traumatic status of an event or experience is established to facilitate its transmission.

Eyerman (2001) states that ‘as opposed to psychological or physical trauma, which involves a wound and the experience of great emotional anguish by an individual, cultural trauma refers to a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people that has achieved a degree of cohesion’ (Eyerman
Although the concept of a national cinema has been questioned as a theoretical construction (Higson 1989), it has also been seen as a way of describing the relation of films to the topical and the specific of a nation’s culture. Kinder (1993) sees the concept of national cinema as an important vehicle for ‘constructing images of a unified national identity in a situation of regional and ethnic diversity that can be projected within and beyond the national border’ (Kinder 1993: 7, 8).


The idea of a collective consciousness as a unifying force between members of a group was first developed by Durkheim in his books The Division of Labour in Society (1893) and Suicide (1897). Durkheim saw the shared beliefs and ethics within society as a unifying force that he called ‘conscience collective’. He also recognised the importance of religion in this context.
Chapter 2 - The German Context

2.1 Introduction

The understanding of trauma, of collective experiences that are comparable in their effect to trauma and of the potential of cultural productions to address and redress those traumatic effects, established in Chapter 1, will now be applied to the specific context of German society.

The exploration will be based on an understanding of trauma as an experience that disrupts a previously existing sense of interconnectivity. This disruption has an equivalent on the macro-social level in the form of a social crisis that leaves impressions of social alienation and dislocation, thereby affecting a group in its sense of cohesion. Mosse (1964) highlights the importance of social cohesive loss by tracing the rise of fascism in Germany to a distorted ideology that developed in response to a sense of uprootedness that affected large parts of the German population since the early 19th century. The ability to acknowledge, and thereby reverse, the impression of a lost sense of identity through heightened awareness can, according to Alexander (2004), be achieved on the macro-social level in a process in which cultural productions can play a key role. The contributions of cultural productions in this process will be explored in the context of German history, and the connection between a persistent lack of acknowledgment, a growing need for a sense of group cohesion and an increasing potential for violence will be investigated.

I will focus on events that caused an experience of social crisis and the disruption of a sense of interconnectivity on the macro-social level and will select samples of cultural productions that have emerged in response to this experience. I will analyse these cultural productions as texts and situate them in their socio-political and cultural context. I will choose those productions that show that the collective was affected by a crisis and that an attempt was made to address and voice the experience. An application of the concept of ‘cultural trauma’ (sensu Alexander 2004) will be used to assess if the establishment of a narrative that claims the experience as trauma-like in its effect was successful and to what extent the loss of a sense of group cohesion was reversed on each occasion. A review on the literature of German post-war cultural productions, with a particular focus on film and literature, will be included to explore how the Holocaust and the loss of interconnectivity that facilitated its occurrence has so far been addressed.

These observations will help me identify how trauma-like experiences have affected the German population over time and what role cultural productions have played in this context. Together with the findings of Chapter 1, these observations provide answers to my research questions and explain the inspiration and guidelines behind the production of the film element of this thesis, The Legacy, a film that aims to facilitate empathy with the victims of the Holocaust and to raise awareness of the causal relationship between Bezugsverlust and the potential for collective violence.
2.2 The disruption of interconnectivity within German history

Evidence of disruptions of interconnectivity can be found throughout German history, leaving the impression that a lack of a sense of group cohesion has increased over time.

According to Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967), the collective violence of the Nazi regime was facilitated by an incredible sense of duty that had developed prior to Nazi ideology over the course of German history and that was supported by a character that had developed under absolutist conditions (Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich 1967: 32).

I will refer to quotations that allow me to trace this development closer to its origins and include observations by Haidu (1992) and Pecora (1992) who see a connection between the dualistic worldview on which Western European thought is based, the occurrences of social-political violence within its history, and the Holocaust.

In early European history, a statement by Aristotle (Aristotle 384-322BC in Isaac 2006) shows that three hundred years before the birth of Christ a concept of inequality that legitimised the use of violence had already been established.

‘From this it follows that even warfare is by nature a form of acquisition - for the art of hunting is part of it - which is applied against wild animals and against those men who are not prepared to be ruled, even though they are born to subjection, in so far as this war is just by nature’ (Aristotle 384-322 BC in Isaac 2006: 40).

The perspective that is expressed in this quote, in which mankind in its potential interconnectivity is split into two unequal and opposing groups, shows a loss of a sense of emotional and mental connection (Bezugsverlust). The state of inequality, which is here the disruption of interconnectivity, is perceived as a given, some men are ‘born to subjection’, others ‘to rule’, and violence as a means to uphold and impose this given state is thereby legitimised as ‘this war is just by nature’. Isaac (2006) describes how the ideas of inequality in Greek society were ‘a significant element in ancient concepts of imperialism’ and were later ‘taken over, suitably adapted by the Romans’ (Isaac 2006: 40). He mentions texts by Aristotle, Vitruvius and Vegetius in this context.

The impression that violence was legitimised and was promoted publicly within the German principalities by individuals that had considerable political and social influence is supported by quotations from Luther (1525)

‘Christians are rare people on Earth, therefore stern, hard, civil rule is necessary in the world, lest the world become wild, peace vanish and commerce and common interest be destroyed… No one need think that the world can be ruled without blood. The civil sword shall and must be red and bloody’ (Luther 1525 in Reinhardt 1950: 229)

and from Bismarck (1862)
‘The great decisions of our time will not be made by speeches and majority resolutions - that was the great mistake of 1848 and 1849 - but by iron and blood’ (Bismarck 1862 in Pulzer 1997: 3).

The call for a strong authority that is to be imposed rigorously and through the use of violence is particularly apparent in the statement by Luther. The formation of an ‘incredible sense of duty’ and a ‘problematic and ambivalent relationship towards authority’ (Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich 1967: 32) is traceable back from Bismarck to Luther to Aristotle and to the legitimisation of violence through the concept of inequality that Aristotle originally formulated.

Pecora (1992) links the notion and practice of imperialism that developed in Western Europe with anti-Semitism because both are based on a perspective in which the interconnectivity of humanity is not recognised, leading towards the facilitation of violence against those that are perceived as ‘others’. In his opinion, there is an urgent need to recognise ‘the West’s massive centuries-old, and increasingly effective persecution of its ‘others’ ’ (Pecora 1992: 161).

For Haidu (1992), a perspective in which the ‘other’ is perceived as alien, leads towards ‘desubjectivisation’ and is a precondition to violence. Haidu refers to Himmler’s speech that prepared the SS for the ‘Final Solution’ and points out that this perspective was the basic legitimising principle. Himmler’s main efforts were to prevent a possible identification with the other and to promote their desubjectivisation (Haidu 1992: 291).

2.3 Choice of cultural production samples and method of analysis

Having traced the establishment of a disrupted sense of interconnectivity as well as its lasting effect within the history of the population that was to become the German nation, I will herein further investigate the events that affected the collective in its sense of group cohesion, which led to a strengthening of the impression of Bezugsverlust on the macro-social level.

I will show how the original concept of inequality and legitimised violence facilitated further disruptions of interconnectivity and discuss attempts that cultural productions have made to address these experiences. The events that I have chosen are:

- The Peasant War 1524-25
- The Thirty Years War 1618-1648
- The Napoleonic invasion of German principalities 1797-1813
- The French Revolution and the rapid industrialisation since 1830
- World War I and the German defeat
- World War II, fascism and genocide
These events were chosen because each left traces that show their negative effects on the sense of group cohesion and the sense of uprootedness that Mosse (1964) observed. They also contributed towards the development of ‘a problematic relationship to authority’ (Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich 1967: 32). This list of events does not necessarily include all events that had a disruptive effect on the collective in its sense of group cohesion that occurred within German history, but represents a selection to show how a feeling of social alienation increased over time.

I have selected cultural productions that emerged in response to these events and that aimed to address the disruption caused. The particular samples were chosen on the basis that each of them reflects an awareness that a state of interconnectivity has been disturbed. Apart from the song ‘Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz’ by Mahler, all cultural productions struggle to establish a narrative in which the experience of crisis is reflected against an existing official account. This situation contributes to the formation of a counter-memory and makes a significant contribution to collective memory that is long term. The immediate effectiveness on the sense of group cohesion will be questioned in this context. The claim to a trauma-like experience in each case is made on behalf of the collective and in relation to a situation that affects the collective and is not a claim by an individual to gain trauma status for a personal experience of disruption. The groups within which the claim to a cultural trauma are made vary in size and range from the micro-social level of the family to the macro-social level of the population as a whole.

The samples are taken from a variety of sources: vocal music for the early part of German history; later, from fine art and film when the focus is on the 19th and 20th century. The reason for this choice is twofold. First, it reflects the accessibility of the cultural media both as a means for cultural expression and in terms of reception. Second, it relates to the relevance of vocal music for the practice-based part of this project. The changes that occurred during the 19th century affected vocal music and its ability to make a contribution to the ‘trauma process’ (Alexander 2004). At the same time the promotion of fine art and architecture as part of the nationalist propaganda movement (as will be referred to in sub-chapter 2.3) made art available to the emerging and steadily growing middle classes. Film, as a cultural medium that developed in the early 20th century, had an ability to reach large sections of the population and is particularly relevant in the context of this enquiry.

For the analysis of the cultural productions I have chosen a method that could be applied to all samples, thereby facilitating comparison. As all cultural productions contain some narrative element with which they aim to make a claim to the trauma-like effect of the experience, I will treat all samples as texts and use the following forms of narrative analysis:

1) An application of the concept of the basic narrative model as promoted by Greimas (1966) in which a subject (hero) strives to win over an object (object of desire) against the opposition of a villain but with the help of a friend or relative (helper) and the magic intervention of a sender (superhelper), who in fairytales is endowed with magic
powers.
2) A method that distinguishes between the three aspects of narrative time - order, duration, frequency - asking the questions, "When? For how long? And how often?", as developed by Genette (1980).
3) An analysis of the use of time in narrative fiction and the relations of chronology between story and text, referring to Rimmon-Kenan (1983).
4) An enquiry into the intentionality that underlies a text by asking the question, "Why is the story told?", looking for evaluative statements that might give clues according to a method developed by Toolan (1988).
5) An enquiry into character traits, using adjectives as clues according to a method developed by Todorov (1969).

While the concept of the basic narrative model (Greimas 1966) will be applied to the narrative aspect of all cultural samples, a combination of the methods developed by Rimmon-Kenan (1983), Genette (1980), Todorov (1969) and Toolan (1988) will be chosen depending on the suitability for each sample.

This approach is inspired by Barthes (1977) who emphasises the importance and omnipresence of the narrative element in human culture1, while the choice of methods is described by Franzosi (1998) as particularly suited to a sociological perspective2. The text based analysis is well suited to the lyrics of the songs and to the narrative elements of the film but less suited to the fine art examples like the woodcut by Käthe Kollwitz and the paintings by Anselm Kiefer. The method of text-based analysis has therefore been adapted to suit the fine art samples and was complemented by a formal analysis. To give an understanding of the historical setting and for the contextual analysis, which will enable an evaluation of the cultural product in its social, political and cultural setting, references will be made to existing research by various scholars. This format will change in the last sub-chapter where the focus is on World War II and genocide. As WWII is most relevant for my enquiry, the contextual analysis will be expanded to a more extensive revue on film and literature in relation to the Holocaust and will include the analysis of two cultural production samples: a set of paintings by Anselm Kiefer and a film by Helma Sanders-Brahms. The findings of text-based and contextual analysis will assist in evaluating the extent to which each cultural production was able to contribute towards the successful representation of cultural trauma. Observing how and to what extent social crises were addressed and to what degree the group’s sense of cohesion was affected will assist in further addressing both research questions.

Notes to 2.3

1 According to Barthes, 'Narrative is present in myth legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, mime, painting, ..., stained glass windows, cinema, comics, new items, conversations. Moreover, under this almost infinite diversity of forms, narrative is present in every age, in every place, in every society; it begins with the very history of mankind and there nowhere is nor has been a people without
narrative. All classes, all human groups, have their narratives… narrative is international, transhistorical, transcultural: It is simply there like life itself’ (Barthes 1977: 79).

Franzosi (1998), in his article ‘Narrative Analysis - or why (and how) Sociologists should be interested in narrative’, illustrates modes of analysis through which information can be obtained that is of sociological relevance.

2.4 Cultural production samples

2.4.1 ‘Das Bündische Lied’ and the Peasant War (1525)

2.4.1.1 Introduction
‘Das Bündische Lied’ is a song that appeared in pamphlet format and accompanied the peasant uprising, which had spread among the German principalities as a revolt against social, political and economic inequality between 1524 and 1526.

This song was chosen because it is one of few cultural productions that address and claim the social, political and economic oppression that was experienced as a social crisis by the majority of the population at the time, as a cultural trauma in the sense of Alexander (2004).

Having been disseminated as a pamphlet and a song facilitated its relatively widespread reception at a time of general illiteracy. Being part of Volksong archives and Volksong compilations, ‘Das Bündische Lied’ makes a contribution to collective memory that is of continuing relevance.

I will link the idea that violence was legitimised by the concept of inequality which facilitated the development of imperialism in the Greek and Roman empire (Isaac 2006) with an account of post-Roman European history by Smith (2005) and of late medieval German history by Reinhardt (1950) to show how the concept of inequality affected the population of the German principalities and caused the peasants to revolt. To position the song ‘Das Bündische Lied’ in its cultural context, I will refer to a study by Beutin (2008) on the history of late medieval German literature. I will then analyse the lyrics of the song as text using methods of narrative analysis as developed by Greimas (1966), Toolan (1988), Todorov (1981) and Genette (1980) before assessing to what extent the song was able to make a claim to a cultural trauma.

2.4.1.2 Socio-political background and cultural context

According to Isaac (2006), the notion of inequality that facilitated the legitimisation of violence that had developed in ancient Greece contributed significantly to the concept of imperialism (Isaac 2006: 40), a concept later adapted, promoted and disseminated by the Roman Empire during its more-than 400 year duration and which left a lasting
impression even after its demise. Smith (2005) gives a detailed account of the effect of Roman imperial culture on the population of Europe after 500 AD. She describes an early medieval European civilisation that had, during the 5th century, developed from western Roman imperial provinces into independent separate kingdoms in which regional diversity and localism were paired with many aspects of the Roman cultural, religious and political inheritance¹ (Smith 2005: 254, 296, 297). The concept of inequality that had lead to the development and legitimisation of imperialism affected early medieval European life on many levels, including gender relations. Smith refers to the implementation of Roman law that favoured adult men over minors and women in giving these men fuller legal rights in lawsuits and by promoting a hierarchical structure that was male centred (Smith 2005: 121):

‘As kings, magnates and bishops it was men who legislated, revised social norms, passed sentence. It was mostly they, or their subordinates, who copied charters, wrote histories and chronicles, composed moral treatises, delineated ideal social relationships. Legal, intellectual, and religious tradition inherited from the Roman world provided powerful justification for a world tilted in their favour’ (Smith 2005: 147).

There was a tendency to refer to an imagined and mythical past in order to legitimise privileged local, political and economic positions and restrictions of authority which ensured the transmission of power among the male ruling elite (Smith 2005: 261, 262). According to Smith, Christianity was most instrumental in transmitting Roman literary culture, which was then preserved by the churches. The concept of imperialism was enforced by the Latin bible and its references to many ancient empires of which Rome was portrayed as the most recent. The term ‘empire’ was used widely throughout early medieval Europe to describe various forms of military, political and cultural domination, and imperial practices were employed to display power and enhance legitimacy (Smith 2005: 262, 263, 273, 276). Smith describes a fundamental change starting in the 11th century and continuing into the 13th century with the installation of a papal monarchy that began to exercise a centralised judicial and administrative authority over Latin Christendom and eradicating all forms of local diversities:

‘the city of Rome functioned as the jurisdictional headquarters of an international ecclesiastical institution, regulating theological doctrines, social norms, political procedures and rituals of worship throughout the Latin West… (showing)... a striving towards a particular vision of conformity-expansion at the expense of Islam and Byzantium, elimination of Europe’s last pagans, intolerance of internal dissent, and persecution of Jews’… leading towards a… ‘loss—of diversity, local identities, customary habits, plural solutions to common problems…erosion of the varied complexities of early medieval Europe’s cultures… Local knowledge faded as aspirations towards uniformity grew… Local values and regional issues lost out to lay and ecclesiastical hierarchs whose centralizing ambitions became the main agents for change’ (Smith 2005: 293, 294).

Smith describes how the cultural hegemony of the Roman way of life was replaced by Christianity that had by then integrated many of the Roman cultural elements. The church required land, capital, treasures and ideological support to maintain its dominant position. According to Smith (2005), the hegemony of the church in
medieval Europe affected the social structure of European societies on many levels and furthered inequality in terms of gender relations, social status as well as political and economic power.

‘It (the church) called for reordering of daily life, sexual relationships, and family bonds. Its language, technologies of power, cosmology, and far-flung web of contacts together sharpened distinctions of status and gender to foster new, steeply graduated hierarchies of power, at whose apex were rulers who’s wealth, power, and prestige lacked precedent in those localities. It promoted the emergency of new imperial polities’ (Smith 2005: 295).

Reinhardt (1950) refers to the incorporation of a money economy that was based on Roman principles\(^2\) together with Roman law among the Germanic tribes after the 11th century, gradually replacing the traditional tribal laws. Reinhardt describes how this new legislation regulated the economy and led to city trade and capitalist enterprise and was used by those in political and economic power to their own advantage, making the peasantry financially dependent:

‘According to the damnable teaching of the new jurists, the prince is to be everything in the country, but the people nothing, the people having nothing to do but serve and pay taxes’ (Jacob Wimpheling 1450-1528 in Reinhardt 1950: 238).

Reinhardt describes how the Roman law and monetary system furthered social, political and economic injustice.

‘The peasantry at the end of the Middle Ages was becoming more and more dependent on city capital. This increasing indebtedness led to hatred and resentment against the professional money lenders, the Jews, usurers, merchants and quite generally against all the representatives of the new money economy, who dominated and cornered the markets, controlled the prices, and destroyed the bases of agrarian activity and economy. The great merchants and merchant-princes of the fifteenth century, such as the Medicis in Italy and the Fuggers, Welsers and Hochstetters in Germany, represented the growing power of international finance and were the powers behind the European thrones and the directors of the destinies of European states. They fixed the prices of commodities and necessities at their will and controlled the domestic and foreign markets’ (Reinhardt 1950: 238).

Reinhardt sees the uprising of the peasants in the German principalities as the struggle of the pre-existing agrarian society against the new capitalist system of economy that was to replace it (Reinhardt 1950: 239). He describes how the peasants had been inspired by the spirit of revolution that Martin Luther had fostered with his outspoken opposition against the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church. A list of moderate demands for reform (‘The Twelve Articles’) was put forward to which peasants in all parts of Germany subscribed. When these were rejected, the movement developed into a social revolution. Luther, rather than supporting the peasants, turned against them and urged the princes and lords to ‘strike them down, throttle and stab them in secret and in public’ (Luther 1525 in Reinhardt 1950: 228). Following Luther’s advice the revolt was violently crushed. According to Reinhardt (1950), one hundred thousand peasants were slain, thousands were wounded, tortured and
crippled and ten thousand were executed.

Beutin (2008) describes ‘Das Bündische Lied’ as one of few remaining songs that give evidence of the social-political uprising. A small number of symbols are used in the lyrics that need to be decoded in their contemporary context. The song starts with the symbolic description of a vulture that has come from the Black Forest and is rearing its many young among the peasants everywhere. According to Beutin (2008), the vulture was the symbol of the peasant revolution, which started in the region of the ‘Black Forest’ from where it spread to other German-speaking principalities. Monasteries and castles, mentioned in the last verse, were seen as a visual sign of oppression (Beutin 2008: 74), which the peasants had to endure from both the nobility and the clerical authorities. Beutin classifies ‘Das Bündische Lied’ as a representative of the ‘Volkslied’ that accompanied the peasant war in the form of a pamphlet and can therefore be seen as part of the literature of the Reformation (a movement that questioned the authority of the church and which had been initiated by the ideas of Renaissance-Humanism in Germany during the second part of the 15th century). According to Beutin, the translation of humanist writings into German and the further development of print technology in the middle of the 15th century lead to the dissemination of critical ideas and contributed towards the first form of social criticism, before the ‘Kommunistische Manifest’ in 1848 (Beutin 2008: 62). Ulrich von Hutten, Thomas Müntzer and Hans Sachs were the most influential voices in this context. The new format that enabled literature to play a key role in initiating the political and religious changes associated with the Reformation was the pamphlet, which appeared in the form of poems, songs, sermons, letters, chronicles, drama and dialogues. Together with public religious disputes that were held in front of large crowds, which could last days or even weeks, the dissemination of pamphlets contributed to the formation of what could be called public opinion at the time (Beutin 2008: 67, 68). Beutin highlights that in the nine years of this religious-political revolution, from Luther’s publication of the 95 theses in 1517 to the end of the peasant war in 1526, literature was not just illustrating and commentating the events of the time but played a relevant part in this historical movement. Reality was portrayed in a way that had up to this point been unfamiliar, as peasants and other members of the lower social classes who had thus far either not been part of any literary descriptions or had been featured as part of the background, now appeared as main characters, equal to nobles and clerics. Life was described in a way that made the need for change and reformation apparent, and all social classes were addressed (Beutin 2008: 67, 68). Beutin (2008) lists three characteristic elements of the pamphlets at this time that were meant to make the texts accessible and convincing:

1) The generous use of Bible quotations, showing that the content of the text is close to the scriptures.
2) The use of common expressions and phrases to show its connection to the general public.
3) The crude and polemical choice of expressions aimed at insulting an opponent.

Beutin points out that for this short time period the perspective of the lower classes
dominated over the opinion of the ruling classes and the simple people felt included in the religious and political controversy. The Emperor as well as the church reacted quickly by implementing censorship and forbid the print, sale and dissemination of any written material, that was critical towards the church and the princes. The consequences for printers, authors and booksellers were harsh: excommunication, loss of citizen’s rights, imprisonment, torture and execution (Beutin 2008: 73). Müntzer was among those executed in 1525 and some authors continued to work under the cover of anonymity. According to Beutin, the social crisis that the literature of the Reformation addressed was the oppression of the lower classes by both nobility and clerical authorities, which worsened with the growth of international markets, the formation of trading companies and the development of an interest-based money economy. Beutin (2008) states that a call for personal freedom was the main demand of the lower classes and brotherhood as an expression of equality was one of the most relevant visions of the peasants. This idea of freedom and equality had been initiated by the text ‘Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen’ (On the freedom of a Christian) publicised by Luther in 1520 which had made a deep impression on the peasants and inspired their uprising.

Beutin (2008) highlights that the song ‘Das Bündische Lied’ is one of a small number of surviving songs from the Peasant War and is rare also in its peasant-friendly perspective. Due to censorship by the sovereign after the defeat of the peasant army, the majority of songs of that period that have survived are hostile to peasants and represent the perspective of those that were in power at the time. The few peasant-friendly songs that have been preserved come from sources such as contemporary torture records.

2.4.1.3 ‘Das Bündische Lied’ (1525)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ein Geier ist ausgeflogen</th>
<th>A vulture has flown out</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Im Hegau am Schwarzwald</td>
<td>In Hegau in the Black-forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Der hat viel Junge erzogen</td>
<td>It has brought up many young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bei den Bauern überall.</td>
<td>Everywhere where the peasants are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sie sind aufrührig geworden</td>
<td>They have become rebellious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In deutscher Nation</td>
<td>Within the German nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Und haben ein´ eignen Orden</td>
<td>And they have their own order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vielleicht wird´s gut ihnen gehn</td>
<td>Maybe they will do well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was mag sein ihr Begehren</td>
<td>What may be their concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>der brauen Biederleut?</td>
<td>Of those honest and simple people?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Es scheint der Wahrheit Stern</td>
<td>The star of truth is shining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Es ist reif jetzt die Zeit</td>
<td>The time has come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Es geschiccht mit Gottes Willen</td>
<td>It happens according to the will of God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ist unserer Sünden Schuld</td>
<td>It has been caused by our sins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Er kann und wird es stillen</td>
<td>He can and will release it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gott geb uns Gnad und Huld</td>
<td>May God give us grace and support us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jetzt sing ich von den Bauern</td>
<td>Now I am singing of the peasants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Und ihrem Regiment</td>
<td>And their army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manch einer nennt sie Lauren</td>
<td>Some make fun of them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Und weiss doch nicht das End</td>
<td>But they have not seen the end yet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Es tun´s Schinder und Schaber</td>
<td>It is done by the bold and wicked</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Chapter 2 - The German Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German Text</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Die treiben Übermut;</td>
<td>They are full of themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hü’t euch, ihr Wucherknaben</td>
<td>Beware you usurers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Es tut in der Läng’ nicht gut</td>
<td>It will not end well for you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niemand tut sich mehr schämen.</td>
<td>Nobody is in any way ashamed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Er sei jung oder alt</td>
<td>Be they young or old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Bosheit tut zunehmen</td>
<td>All evil is increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In mancherlei Gestalt</td>
<td>And takes on many forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man tut durcheinander laufen</td>
<td>One is running here and there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man wenig der Wahrheit acht</td>
<td>And one does not mind the truth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoffart, Geiz und Fürkaufen</td>
<td>Arrogance, Avarice and Usury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herscht in der Welt der Pracht.</td>
<td>Dominate the world of Splendour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zutrinken und Gottverschwören</td>
<td>To drink and to curse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hat genommen überhand.</td>
<td>Has taken over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man kann bald niemand wehren.</td>
<td>It is hard to defend oneself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Es ist fürwahr ein Schand.</td>
<td>It is a true shame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auf den anderen will man nichts geben</td>
<td>Nobody cares about the other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man sag gleich was man woll</td>
<td>Everyone makes their demands straight away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In aller Unzucht leben</td>
<td>To live without any morals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macht jetzt das Unglück voll.</td>
<td>Now makes the unhappiness complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Der Bund, der hat geraten</td>
<td>The federation has debated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jetzt eine sehr lange Zeit</td>
<td>Now for a very long time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Es will nicht gut geraten</td>
<td>It does not want to go well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Das Loch ist schon zu weit</td>
<td>The gap is already too wide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wer kann das jetzt zuflicken?</td>
<td>Who can repair this now?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Das kann ich nicht verstehn</td>
<td>It is beyond my understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sie müssen dran erstickten</td>
<td>They will have to choke on it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Es wird noch übel gehen</td>
<td>This will end badly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Die Herrschaff tun sie schrecken</td>
<td>They will frighten the nobles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dass sie kaum weiss wo ‘naus</td>
<td>So that they will not know what to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Die Bauern tun sie aufwecken</td>
<td>They will wake the peasants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Und setzen ihnen tüchtig zu</td>
<td>And put them under pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Es sind seltsame Kunden</td>
<td>They are strange fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sie wagen ihre Haut</td>
<td>They risk their own skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sie haben ein Sinn erfunden</td>
<td>They have found a meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wer hätt’ ihnen das zugetraut</td>
<td>Who would have thought that they were so able</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sie sind ins Feld gezogen</td>
<td>They have gone to battle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ihr keiner wollt’ lassen ab</td>
<td>No-one wanted to let go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ist wahr und nicht gelogen</td>
<td>It is true and not a lie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So mancher Bauernknab</td>
<td>Many of a peasant boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sie haben zusammen geschworen</td>
<td>Together they have sworn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem Adel leid zu tun</td>
<td>To do harm to the nobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sie haben ihn arg geschoren</td>
<td>They have treated them harshly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was wird ihnen werden zu Lohn?</td>
<td>What will be their reward?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Die Bauern sind einig geworden</td>
<td>The peasants have united</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Und kriegten mit Gewalt</td>
<td>And are war mongering with violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sie haben einen grossen Orden</td>
<td>They have a large community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sind aufständig mannigfalt</td>
<td>Are revolting everywhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Und tun die Schlösser zerreissen</td>
<td>And tear down castles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Und brennen Klöster aus</td>
<td>And burn out monasteries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So kann man uns nicht mehr bescheissen</td>
<td>Then they can’t treat us like shit anymore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was soll ein böös’ Raubhaus</td>
<td>What good is an evil Robbers house</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4.1.4 Text based analysis

The song is written in nine verses of eight lines each. A sense of rhythm and cohesion is achieved through the rhyming of alternate lines.

Looking at the lyrics in relation to the concept of the basic narrative model developed by Greimas (1966) - in which a ‘subject’ or ‘hero’ strives for an ‘object of desire’ against the opposition of a ‘villain’ but with the help of a ‘friend’ or ‘helper’ and the magic intervention of a ‘sender’ or ‘superhelper’ and taking into consideration that narrative sequences imply causal sequences (Todorov 1981) - the peasants are introduced as the subject in the first verse. The second verse enquires about the motivation of the ‘subject’s’ action, which is also an enquiry that stands in connection to the ‘object of desire’. The ‘object of desire’ itself is never named in the text but is implied. This happens via a description of the action of the ‘villain’, the oppressive ruling classes, in verses four and five, and the destructive effect of these actions on the ‘subject’ which are described as loss of moral standards, lack of happiness, lack of security, lack of honesty, lack of respect. The ‘object of desire’ implied as the opposite can thereby be identified as moral standards, security, happiness, honesty and respect. The fact that the ‘object of desire’ is mainly described as an opposition to a lack that the ‘subject’ experiences gives the impression that the peasants are rightfully reclaiming something that they have lost. That this object is only made known through implication but never named shows how far it is removed from the reach of the ‘subject’. The federation is introduced as an ‘actant’ in the verse that follows and the reunion of the peasants can thereby be read as a consequence of the nobility’s bad behaviour. The federation is identified as the ‘helper’ who guides the ‘subject’ (peasants) in their strife to oppose the ‘villain’ (nobility) and claim the ‘object of desire’ (happiness, respect, honesty, moral standards, security). In verse seven, it is unclear if the action described is that of the federation or the peasants, which shows that the federation is really just the peasants organising themselves, thereby working as a group and taking on a new role and becoming ‘helpers’ to themselves. The second part of verse two refers to God who, to comply with the Greimas model (1966), can be identified as the ‘superhelper’ and whose grace and support is expected and called for. The narrative of the lyrics comes to an end in the middle of the ‘subject’s’ quest. Because the opposition to the ‘villain’ is extreme, it becomes clear that the ‘object of desire’ can only be gained through the destruction of the ‘villain’. Having used the same structure as that of a fairy tale, the positive outcome of the narration in which the ‘subject’ wins the ‘object of desire’ with the help of both ‘helper’ and ‘superhelper’ against the ‘villain’ is implied while the narrative itself stays unconcluded.

According to Toolan (1988), adjectives provide information on character, which can also be implied from action. The character ‘traits’ that are given in the song always appear in a situation of opposition. In the song, the subject is described as angry and rebellious in the first verse but as well behaved, simple and God-loving in the second verse. The ‘character traiting’ of the ‘villain’ that follows in the third and fourth verse - bold, wicked, arrogant, unashamed, demanding and uncaring - stands in contrast to the previous description of the ‘subject’. In the fifth verse the opposition continues
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with a description of the action of the ‘villain’ as amoral and dishonest while causing the ‘subject’ to suffer from insecurity and unhappiness. The effect on the ‘subject’ is here implied, which highlights its passive nature and identifies the ‘subject’ as the victim. A change occurs from verse seven onwards. The ‘subject’ is now described as ready to surprise with unexpected courage, and is inspired, determined, united and even violent, in contrast to the ‘villain’ who is choking, frightened and harshly treated. The roles have reversed, the ‘subject’ has become active, the ‘villain’ has become the passive victim. This points to verse six in which the coming together of the peasants is described as the cause for the reversal of roles. An application of the concept of the three aspects of narrative time - order, duration and frequency (Genette 1980) - gives further information towards character traiting. The first characterisation in verse one is in past tense and implies that a change has happened. That it is a change in character becomes clear in the question that follows in the second verse. As this characterisation is through an adjective, it refers to a constant character trait: the peasants are always well behaved, this is their nature and contrasts with the characterisation in verse one that is connected to action, therefore not constant but sudden. The normally well-behaved peasants have become rebellious, how did this happen? As if in answer to this question, the characterisation of the oppressing ruling classes follows, first in adjectives that affirm constancy (they are always bold and wicked) and later through a description of various actions. This repetition implies constancy as does the present tense of the verbs used. There is some indication that the situation has worsened. We are thereby introduced to a situation of imbalance that is of long duration, containing repetitive actions of amorality that are increasing in intensity.

According to Toolan (1988) the identity and intentionality of the narrator can be established through the questions ‘Why is the story told?’ and ‘Who tells the story?’

The change in the use of personal pronouns as well as in the overall tone of the text through descriptive nouns and verbs can be read as an indication of a shift in narrative perspective. While the narration starts off in a factual tone, its confidence is undermined by a question. A further question in the next verse seems to reflect the impression of the general public and is followed by statements that have a religious, and in places prophetic, connotation, thereby showing one of the characteristics of the pamphlet at the time (Beutin 2008). In verse three, the narrator talks about himself as the singing commentator and addresses the oppressor in person. In verses four and five, which describe the attitude and actions of the nobility, the tone is constant, which makes this description most convincing. Verse six, which refers to the uniting of the peasants, contains the most inconsistencies, followed by a description of the action of the federation against the nobility in a focussed tone but with the inclusion of a surprised comment in the seventh verse. The account of the uprising that follows is in the past tense and appears confident, yet is undermined by a question that voices fear and uncertainty. Verse nine returns to a tone of confidence and determination, showing increasing anger. In the last two lines of verse nine, the third person plural, which has been used up to this point giving an impression of distance and objectivity, suddenly changes to the first person plural. This frequent shifting of narrative perspective gives the impression that there are many different voices and opinions.
that came together in this uprising, ranging from fear and uncertainty, to
determination, prophetic certainty, religious devotion, moral devotion, to anger,
violence and lust for revenge and destruction. Verse six, in which the confederation is
mentioned, contains particularly frequent shifts in tone and narrative perspectives,
likely representing the plurality of viewpoints that this union of people must have
contained. In contrast, verses four and five, in which the evil deeds of the oppressors
are described, are constant in tone and perspective. This can be interpreted as a
reflection of the uprising as a collective effort of people of diverse intentions,
motivations and backgrounds that were united in the understanding that the
oppressing ruling classes had to be opposed in their action and behaviour.

The story seems to be told by many and to represent a variety of perspectives. The
intentions can be listed as follows: to give an account of the peasant uprising from the
perspective of the common people, to prove the causal relationship between the
revolt and the amoral actions of the ruling classes, to express the extent of injustice felt
and hardship endured as a consequence of these actions, to justify the revolution as
being in accord with God’s will and for the general good of everyone, to threaten the
oppressing ruling classes and to strengthen the fighting peasants in their courage and
determination. Thus, the text is addressed to a number of recipients, which is indicated
by the change in personal pronouns. All passages in which the third person plural or
the general third person singular is used address the general public, the sentence that
contains the second person plural addresses the oppressing ruling classes, in this case
the merchants and money lenders, the last two sentences in first person plural address
the peasants. The three characteristic elements of the 16th century pamphlet that,
according to Beutin (2008), are meant to make the text accessible and convincing can
be identified in the song. While bible quotations aren’t used directly, the lyrics contain
lines that are taken from prayers. ‘It happens according to the will of God, It has been
caused by our sins, He can and will release it, May God give us grace and support us’.
Questions and inserted comments are used to reflect the perspective of the general
public and are meant to facilitate the connection with the audience: ‘What may be their
concern Of those honest and simple people? Who can repair this now? It is beyond
my understanding They will have to choke on it This will end badly. They have
treated them harshly What will be their reward?’. Crude and polemical expressions
appear that insult the opponent. ‘Then they can’t treat us like shit anymore… What
good is an evil Robbers house?’

2.4.1.5 Conclusion to subchapter 2.4.1

‘Cultural trauma occurs when members of a collective feel they have been subjected
to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness,
marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in irrevocable
ways’ (Alexander 2004: 1).

The experience that the song claims as a cultural trauma is in this case not a sudden
horrendous event but a slow development in which the pre-existing agrarian society
was replaced by the new capitalist money economy, a process in which the peasants
became deprived of all social, political and economic power and which challenged their sense of identity. According to Alexander (2004), for the collective representation to be successful, compelling answers to the following four questions must be provided:

1) What is the nature of the pain. What actually happened?
2) Who are the victims? What group of persons was affected by the traumatizing pain?
3) How does the trauma victim relate to the wider audience?
4) To whom can responsibility be attributed? Who is the perpetrator (Alexander 2004: 13-15).

In the song, the nature of the pain is described as that of social injustice and hardship (verses 4 and 5 in particular), the peasants are represented as the victims, and the responsibility is attributed to the oppressive ruling classes. The relationship between victims and audience is made clear and shifts as different potential recipients are addressed. It is direct when the song is addressed to the peasants themselves, close when it is addressed to the general/non-ruling class audience, or in opposition if it is addressed to members of the oppressive ruling classes.

‘Insofar as traumas are so experienced and thus imagined and represented, the collective identity will become significantly revised’ (Alexander 2004: 22).

The shift in the role of the ‘subject’ from victim to ‘villain’, which becomes clear in the sudden reversal of ‘character traiting’, can be seen as an indication of a change in the collective’s sense of identity. While the unification of the peasants seems to have caused this change, the voicing of their views and expressions, as facilitated by songs like ‘Das Bündische Lied’, would have contributed in this process. This shift can therefore be seen as an indication that the song had the potential to make a successful claim to a cultural trauma. According to Beutin (2008), those in power at the time reacted with severe measures to prevent the dissemination of pamphlets that made such claims. This strong reaction shows the potential of songs like ‘Das Bündische Lied’ to restore a sense of group cohesion and strength to the oppressed peasants. The successful establishment of censorship means that now the song is, according to Beutin (2008), only one of a few surviving peasant-friendly songs and was found among torture records. This later censorship severely restricted the song’s reception and its effectiveness. Since the song gives witness to a historic event from the perspective of a group that was victimised at the time and is now available to the general public, being part of Volkslied compilations, it is at last making a contribution towards collective memory now that is long-term.

Both textual and contextual analysis show that a potential claim to a cultural trauma was made by the song, while its restricted reception limited its effectiveness to a short duration. Although the song addresses an ongoing and increasing experience of oppression, it does, within its limitations, successfully restore a sense of interconnectivity among the peasants for a short time. The song, seen in its historical context today, also points towards the crushed uprising as an experience of social crisis that was not addressed. This experience of extreme violence would have, for the
peasants as a group, fitted the description of a ‘horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in irrevocable ways’ (Alexander 2004: 1). Being utterly defeated and oppressed and with all cultural productions that would have reflected their perspective severely censored, the peasants were no longer in the position to formulate their own narrative to claim this experience as traumatic. According to Beutin (2008), only songs that were written from the perspective of the perpetrators were disseminated, and this excluded the experience of the peasants from the memory of the collective at the time. As the experience of the violently crushed uprising stayed unaddressed, the negative effect on the collective in its sense of group cohesion was not reversed, leaving a sense of *Bezugsverlust* that persisted.

The connection between the concept of inequality and legitimisation of violence, as stated by Aristotle (Aristotle 384-322BC in Isaac 2006), and a political and economic development that was influenced by Roman law and furthered social, political and economic inequality, leading to the uprising of the oppressed peasants, is in this context clear. The demand of the peasants for personal freedom and brotherhood can be seen as a demand for equality, which would have restored the lost sense of social interconnectivity. This demand was denied, and the concept of inequality was defended violently by those who believed that they were born to rule. The use of violence in the war against the peasants was sanctioned as just by Martin Luther himself. Luther had been the inspiration for the uprising, and because the peasants were devoted to religion and saw their fight as just before God, Luther’s condemnation must have felt like a betrayal. The experience that the status quo, even if it is unjust, is not to be questioned and that demands for justice and equality are countered by utmost violence was an experience of extreme authority. The lack of revolutionary attempts that managed to challenge the status quo in German history might have been a result of this experience as well as the distorted relationship towards authority mentioned by Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich (1967).

An initial experience of *Bezugsverlust*, in the form of social injustice, had lead to the Peasant War. The violent defence of a situation of inequality furthered the loss of mental and emotional connection by leaving ‘indelible marks on the consciousness’ (Alexander 2004:1) of the peasants as a group. Their memories and their sense of identity was not addressed at the time. It becomes apparent how a lost sense of interconnectivity, derived from inequality as formulated by Aristotle (Aristotle 384-322BC in Isaac 2006), can cause a chain reaction that creates its own momentum.

**Notes to 2.4.1**

1 Smith (2005) describes the early Middle Ages as characterised by ‘..local economies combining low-output peasant agriculture and variable levels of urban activity with lavish conspicuous consumption by the elite, strongly gendered hierarchies of domination that commonly collated the familial and official; the heavy presence of the past as a source of authenticity, legitimization, and meaning… the role of Christianity
as a transmitter of many other aspects of Roman culture besides its normative creed, a cluster of dominant ideologies in which Rome held a central, inspirational place but no ascendant political role as it once had in antiquity’ (Smith 2005: 296, 297).

In ancient Rome, as stated by de Cecco (1985), the power to issue coins replaced the use of taxation, being limited and controlled by the *Comitia Tributa*. While the state took over the money supply function and money became a store of value as well as a means for payment, the system of over-evaluation and debasement of Roman currency developed as an instrument of ancient statecraft.

The Renaissance emerged in the second part of the 13th century as a new cultural development and departure from the Middle Ages and its scientific and artistic influences can still be felt today. Renaissance-Humanism started in Germany around 1400, and the humanist movement began to flourish in the second part of the 15th century. A critical stance towards the church and the old faith was greatly influenced by Italian and North-European humanists and was spread across Germany by travelling humanists. The humanist education focussed on the languages of the ancient Roman and Greek speech, poetry and history (Beutin 2008: 59-61).

Thomas Müntzer, a theologian like Martin Luther, called for a quest for truth on all levels. He was the first to make a demand for democratic rights and sovereignty of the people and promote the emancipation of the lower classes through education. Thomas Müntzer was executed in 1525 (Beutin 2008: 63-64, 74-76).

Hans Sachs was the greatest representative of the lower middle classes among the writers of his time. He criticised the economic oppression through merchants and trading companies and addressed his writing to the lower classes (Beutin 2008: 81).

Pulzer (1999) describes how the revolution of 1848 failed and the revolution of 1919 was crushed by ruthless military intervention during which its leaders were murdered and all participants massacred, stalling the revolution with again no social or political change having been achieved. The message that a revolution could only be conservative and was not to question the established authority as set by the example of Martin Luther was later to be embraced by the German Youth of the 1920s (Mosse 1964). Mosse highlights that in contrast to their counterparts in other European countries at the time, the German Youth directed their revolutionary urges to the extreme right rather than the left and understood the ‘German revolution… as an anti-Jewish revolution… by directing the revolution against the enemy within rather than against the existing class structure’ (Mosse 1964: 279).
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2.4.2 ‘Horch Kind horch wie der Sturmwind weht’ and the Thirty Years War (1618-1648)

2.4.2.1 Introduction

The lullaby ‘Horch Kind horch...’ can be seen as a response to the experience of the Thirty Years War from the region of the Niedersächsische Reichskreis (Lower Saxon Circle), which now belongs to Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony). The song was chosen as it is one of a small number of cultural productions that give expression to the experience of erratic violence and severe lack of safety that parts of the population of the German principalities endured at the time. Being a lullaby, it reflects the experience from the perspective of the family as the smallest part of the collective, and it shows how the war affected the population on the micro-social level, even penetrating the intimate relationship between mother and infant. The song has been transmitted through the generations to the present day; it makes an ongoing contribution towards collective memory that reaffirms its relevance.

I will set the song within its socio-political and cultural context and analyse its lyrics as text using methods of narrative analysis developed by Greimas (1966) and Toolan (1988) to assess its ability to claim traumatic status for the experience of the Thirty Years War.

2.4.2.2 Socio-political background and cultural context

The split of Europe’s religious unity initiated by Luther in 1517 lead in 1618 to a local uprising of Bohemian Calvinists against the Catholic Habsburgs which turned into a European war with religious as well as imperial motivations. Reinhardt (1950) describes how rivalling principalities of different denominations called for foreign support in their military campaign against each other, which lead to a war in Europe in which Spain-Austria and France-Sweden were the main opponents. The intervention of foreign powers prolonged the conflict considerably. The war ended in 1648, leaving Germany devastated and the central governmental power of the Holy Roman Empire destroyed. Germany lost its sovereignty as well as a considerable number of territories, including Alsace-Lorraine to France. According to Reinhardt, the Thirty Years War was a struggle for power and supremacy in Europe fought under the banner of religion, and it provided a further cause for conflict in the years that followed (Reinhardt 1950: 290). Reinhardt goes on to describe the imperialist endeavours of the Swedish King Gustavus Adolphus, of the German General von Wallenstein and of Cardinal Richelieu, the French prime minister. The extent of hardship that the population experienced in many areas comes across in the following writing, taken from a village cobbler’s diary in 1634:

‘Duke Bernhard’s troops broke into our land and plundered us completely of horses, cattle, bread, flour, salt, lard, cloth linen, clothes and everything we possessed. They maltreated the people, shooting, stabbing and beating a number of people to death... while we were holding out at the church, they set alight the village and burnt down five stables.... Because the troops were in pursuit
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of their enemies they laid waste to everything, plundering the little town of Giengen and burnt it down. The town of Geisslingen in Ulm territory weakly tried to defend itself. It was overrun and several hundred people were massacred. The pastor had his head cut off, and the place was devastated... Everyone had to flee to the city once more and we stayed the whole winter there. It was real hardship, famine and death. We were crowded together and lived in great want. Hunger and price increase came at the same time. And after that the evil disease, the pest. Many hundred people died of it in this year and also in the next' (Benecke 1978: 31, 33).

The cultural response to the extreme experience of hardship and violence during the Thirty Years War was limited. Benecke (1978) outlines how the population was, through religious indoctrination, discouraged from a perspective that would have valorised the challenging experience as a social crisis. Benecke highlights the importance of religion in all contexts of life and the influence of the parish priest on the community through his weekly sermons:

‘War and pestilence were interpreted from the pulpit as the wrath of God, righteously and inscrutably meted out to poor sinners who made up the Euro-Christian system of belief at the time, whether Tridentine Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist or Sectarian’ (Benecke 1978: 1).

In addition, a general attitude had prevailed since the Middle Ages whereby the focus was diverted from the present to the afterlife (Herzog 1976), further preventing a confrontation of crises. Events that were experienced as incongruent were commented on through satirical imagery that appeared within the context of political spreadsheets. This form of political satire developed during the 30 Years War as a variation of religious satire, which had emerged as part of the Reformation. Published at irregular intervals, the political satire gave expression to emotional tensions, and, through the satirical element, facilitated the confrontation of the ideal with the real (Coupe 1962: 80). A similar satirical element is contained in the picaresque novel of which Simplicius Simplicissimus by von Grimmelshausen (1668) is the most famous example. Set during the 30 Years War, the novel contains autobiographical elements, gives a narrative account of the War years written in the first person singular and creates an apocalyptic atmosphere in which the world is depicted as a mad house and violence appears as an erratic, every day occurrence. While the experience of war is given expression, the novel’s main intention is to instruct its readers in moral conduct. The lullaby ‘Horch Kind horch...’ in comparison has no didactical intentions. It is a rare example of a song that directly refers to the Thirty Years War, other songs of the time express a general sense of fatalism.
### 2.4.2.3 ‘Horch Kind horch wie der Sturmwind weht’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German Text</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horch Kind horch wie der Sturmwind weht und rüttelt am Erker</td>
<td>Listen child to the storm outside that shakes the house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wenn der Braunschweiger draußen steht der packt uns noch stärker</td>
<td>When the ‘Braunschweiger’ waits outside he will grab us even harder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lerne beten Kind und falten fromm die Händ’</td>
<td>Learn to pray child and fold your hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>damit Gott den tollen Christian von uns wend’</td>
<td>That God will turn the wild and insane Christian from us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schlaf Kind schlaf, es ist Schlafenszeit ist Zeit auch zum Sterben</td>
<td>Sleep child, sleep, it is time to sleep it is also time to die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bist du groß, wird dich weit und breit die Trommel anwerben</td>
<td>When you are grown, the drum will call you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauft ihr nach, mein Kind hör deiner Mutter Rat</td>
<td>Follow her my child listen to your mother’s advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fällst du in der Schlacht so würgt dich kein Soldat</td>
<td>When you fall in battle you will not be throttled by a soldier.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Herr Soldat, tu mir nichts zu leid und laß mir mein Leben!&quot;</td>
<td>“Mr. soldier, do me no harm, let me live!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Herzog Christian führt uns zum Streit kann kein Pardon uns geben</td>
<td>“Duke Christian leads us to battle and gave us no right for mercy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lassen muß der Bauer mir sein Gut und Hab</td>
<td>The peasant must let go of all his belongings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zahlen nicht mit Geld nur mit dem kühlen Grab&quot;</td>
<td>He won’t be paid with money but with his cooling grave”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schlaf, Kind, schlaf, werde stark und groß die Jahre, sie rollen</td>
<td>Sleep, child sleep become strong and big the years are rolling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folgt bald selber auf stolzem Roß Herzog Christian dem Tonnen</td>
<td>Soon you will yourself follow Duke Christian the insane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wie erschrickt der Pfaff und wirft sich auf die Knie</td>
<td>How the clergy will be shocked and fall unto his knees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;für den Bauer nicht Pardon dem Pfaffen aber nie!&quot;</td>
<td>“no mercy for the peasant, never any for the clergy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still, Kind, still, wenn Herr Christian kommt der lehrt dich zu schweigen!</td>
<td>Hush, child, hush Lord Christian comes and will teach you silence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sei fein still, bis dir selber frommt ein Roß zu besteigen</td>
<td>Be good and quiet, until you are yourself ready to mount a horse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sei fein still, dann bringt der Vater dir bald Brot</td>
<td>Be good and quiet then your father will bring you bread soon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wenn nach Rauch nicht schmeckt der Wind und nicht der Himmel rot</td>
<td>When the wind does not taste of smoke and the sky is not red</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4.2.4 Text based analysis

‘Horch Kind horch wie der Sturmwind weht’ has 5 verses containing 4 lines each. Every verse, apart from the third, middle, verse, contains elements that are typical of a lullaby. A mother addresses a child, the child is enticed to sleep, to be quiet, to grow up and be strong, to pray and be pious. Some of these enticements contain repetitions like: *Horch Kind horch* (listen, child, listen), *Schlaf Kind schlaf* (sleep, child, sleep) and *Still Kind still* (quiet, child, quiet). The address of the mother refers to the child’s immediate environment: to the stormy wind that shakes the house; to the time, which is the time to sleep; to the years that pass by. These references are connected through association and causal relation to projections of the future: the wind that shakes the house is like the intruder who will grab the family violently, the time to sleep is also the time to die, the years that roll by will bring the child closer to its own participation in the war. Verse 3 contains a dialogue between a victim of violence and a perpetrator, illustrating the lack of mercy and social justice that is taking place. Through the way in which one addresses the other it becomes clear that the victim is a peasant and the perpetrator is a soldier. While the victim only has one line in which he pleads for his life, showing his lack of power, the perpetrator explains in three lines that mercy is not part of his mission and that the peasant has to give him all he has for which he will be murdered in return.

The basic model that Greimas (1966) identified in narrative texts, as referred to in the previous subchapter, can be applied. In the lyrics of the lullaby, the ‘subject’ can be seen as the child, the ‘object of desire’ as its own safety, the ‘villain’ as the war mongering Duke Christian and his soldiers, the ‘helper’ as the mother and the ‘superhelper’ as God. The lullaby itself can be seen as part of the mother’s attempt to help by making the child aware of the dangerous and cruel reality that it is growing up into and by giving him advice on how to keep safe in the turmoil of war. According to Toolan (1988), ‘character traits’ can be inferred from action if they are not indicated by adjectives. The characters that are referred to in the narrative of the song are: the child that the song is sung to and which can be, through its anticipated action of riding a horse and joining the army, identified as a male child; the mother who describes herself in the third person singular in the third line of the second verse as the one who gives advice; the father who is mentioned towards the end of the song as the bringer of bread and thereby as the one who provides the basic necessities; God as the one who can shield and protect from harm; and Duke Christian who is described as being wild and insane by the adjective ‘toll’, as being proud and socially elevated through his position on horse back, and through his actions as merciless and cruel. It is the Duke’s war-mongering nature that has created two opposing groups: that of the victims to which the peasants and the clergy belong, and that of his soldiers. Peasants and clergy are, through their pleading and their kneeling, in shock and fear described as physically lowered, thereby degraded and helpless, in contrast to the proud soldiers who are physically elevated on the backs of horses. The cruel attitude of the soldiers comes across in their manner of speech and sarcasm: ‘the peasant’s pay for his goods is his cooling grave’, and ‘no pardon for the peasant, never any pardon for the clergy’. The fear that an intruder will grab the family, expressed in the second line of the first verse, gives an indication that the group to which the child belongs might easily be among the
victims. In this situation of violent oppression in which only victims and perpetrators exist, the choice is between dying as a soldier in battle or being murdered by a soldier at home. The mother’s advice to the child is to join the army. While it becomes clear that the ‘object of desire’, i.e., safety, cannot be obtained, the humiliation of being robbed and murdered at home is seen as worse than a death in battle. Fällt Du in der Schlacht so würgt dich kein Soldat (when you fall in battle then you can’t be throttled by a soldier). The lullaby starts with a reference to the stormy wind that shakes the house, thereby describing the forces of nature as powerful and violent just like the enemy. In the last line, even the forces of nature seem to have been affected by the war. The wind tastes of smoke and the sky is red. This close connection between the war and nature in its raw and forceful state creates an atmosphere of doom and gives an overpowering impression of helplessness.

2.4.2.5 Conclusion to subchapter 2.4.2

The lullaby ‘Horch Kind horch...’ is one of few cultural productions that clearly make a claim to an experience of injury to the collective in relation to the Thirty Years War. While the focus is on the small collective of the family, it represents the collective of the regional population. The nature of the pain is described as that of erratic and merciless violence. The complete lack of hope and the amount of fatalism expressed in the context of a lullaby, bears witness to the extent of hardship. The song also names the victims as the population in general, and peasants and clergy in particular; it addresses an audience that belongs to the victim group and it attributes responsibility to the war-mongering Duke Christian von Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel and his soldiers. The song can be seen as successfully claiming the experience of the Thirty Years War as a cultural trauma. Its regional focus, however, limited its effectiveness at the time to the Lower Saxon Circle. The lullaby also makes a belated contribution to collective memory that continues to be valuable because it is well known to this day and part of many folksong compilations and song archives. It still has a general social relevance.

The imperial motivations that fuelled the Thirty Years War illustrate the connection to the Graeco-Roman heritage and its concept of inequality that facilitated the legitimisation of violence. The extent of hardship that the population of the affected principalities had to endure comes across in the account by contemporaries as well as through the level of fatalism contained in those cultural productions that referred to the experience of war. Due to a perspective that focused on the afterlife, rather than on the present, and to religious indoctrination in which responsibility for any hardship was attributed to the sin of the individual, cultural responses that addressed the experience of crisis were reduced significantly. The few productions that did attempt to process the experience had their own limitations and were restricted in their reception: the political spreadsheet only gives expression to the experience of incongruence and does not address the injury to the collective, the novel Simplicius Simplicissimus was not fully making a claim to a cultural trauma due to its didactic intentions and was restricted to those social classes that were literate. The lullaby
'Horch Kind horch..' which comes closest to making a contribution towards what Alexander (2004) calls ‘the trauma process’ was restricted to a specific region. When social crises are experienced, imagined and represented as cultural traumas, ‘the collective identity will become significantly revised’ (Alexander 2004: 22). That the few contributions that were made to process the experience were not sufficient to facilitate such a revision becomes clear in a comment by Coupe (1962) who showed to what extent the Thirty Years War had affected collective identity at the time. Coupe points out that in countries like England and Holland, the iconographical tradition of the Middle Ages, from which the satire of the political spreadsheets had emerged, developed further into the medium of caricature, while satirical output stopped in Germany after the 30 Years War due to the ‘absence of any healthy political life or active and vocal political opinion in Germany for a century and a half’ (Coupe 1962: 86). This absence can be read as a collective response to the experience of the Thirty Years War, one which bears resemblance to the dissociative response to trauma on the level of individual psychology. In a social context, Scheff (2007: 8) observes two possible responses to unacknowledged experiences of grief, anger and shame:

1) Withdrawal and silence.
2) Anger, aggression and violence.

Because a focus on the afterlife, and therefore a withdrawal from present reality, was encouraged by the religious perspective at the time, the choice for a collective response of silence and dissociation is easily explained. The lack of collective identity that arose as a consequence among the population of the German principalities will become relevant for the proceeding sub-chapters.

Notes to 2.4.2

1 The effect of the war on the country as a whole is described in the writing of an English contemporary:

‘Germany… is now become a Golgotha, a place of dead men’s skulls and the Aceldama, a field of blood. Some nations are chastised with the sword, others with famine, others with the man-destroying plague. But poor Germany hath been sorely whipped with all three iron whips at the same time and that for over twenty years’ (Edmund Calamy 1641 in Benecke 1978).

2 The political spreadsheets were facilitated by the development of print during the Reformation. Illustrated sheets with woodcut or copper-plated engravings to detailed textual commentaries had appeared in the 16th century as religious satire promoting specific religious standpoints against others. The use of allegorical imagery goes back to a medieval tradition of devotional picture production by monks (Coupe 1962).

3 The novel as a genre originated in France in the Middle Ages as a tale told in verses and established itself slowly in the German-speaking regions. In the early 17th century, a number of German varieties had developed: the political novel, the shepherd’s novel, the gallant novel, the courtly-historical novel and the picaresque
novel. The latter is inspired by its Spanish counterpart and translates the satirical element of the medieval carnival into literature (Herzog 1976).

2.4.3 ‘Holde Nacht dein dunkler Schleier decket’ and the Prussian Wars of Liberation (1812-1814)

2.4.3.1 Introduction

The song ‘Holde Nacht...’ was in use among Prussian soldiers in the war against Napoleon and gives expression to the war-induced fear of death felt by the soldiers, as well as to the pain and loss experienced by the general population. The song is particularly suited to cultural trauma analysis because it claims an experience of war that was in opposition to the political propaganda of its time and because there is evidence of its emotional effectiveness.

I will position the song within its socio-political and cultural context referring mainly to studies by Hagemann (1997, 2006) and Lenman (1997), which I will view in relation to the sociological concepts that informed their perspective. I will then analyse the lyrics of the song using methods of narrative analysis as developed by Ricoeur (1984), Greimas (1966), Toolan (1988), and Genette (1980) and assess to what extent the song was able to make a claim to a cultural trauma.

2.4.3.2 Socio-political background and cultural context

The Thirty Years War had left Germany under the influence and control of France, which had furthered the sovereignty of the German princes and their establishment of autocratic regimes (Reinhardt 1950). The idea of princely absolutism, based on the concept of inequality formulated by Aristotle (Aristotle 384 BC – 322 BC in Isaac 2006) and expressed by the writings of Machiavelli (Machiavelli 1505 in Bull 1961), was exemplified by the French emperor Louis XIV (1638-1715). Based on the same concept of inequality, the social structure of the European population displayed many elements of ‘socio-legal inequality’ (Simms 1998: 20). Simms describes a social structure that was based on domination and obligation within the German principalities during the 18th century, where both rural and urban communities were stratified and polarized (Simms 1998: 19). The country was used as a battlefield on which political powers were struggling to establish hegemony in Europe (Simms 1998: 19, 1). Towards the end of the 18th century, the philosophies of the Enlightenment had continued to spread through Europe and beyond, kindling critical sentiments against absolutist state governments and their oppressive rule and finally contributing towards the French Revolution in 1789. According to Reinhardt (1950), the revolution that had been inspired by a call for equality and brotherhood turned into an imperialistic endeavour with Napoleon Bonaparte fighting to establish French hegemony in Europe. At the beginning of the 19th century, Napoleon defeated both the Prussian and Austrian army, which brought the Holy Roman Empire to its end (Reinhardt 1950: 323). Simms (1998: 197) states that ‘The experience of invasion,
partition and occupation at the hands of France traumatized a whole generation of Germans. Hagemann (2006) describes how Napoleon’s victory over the Prussian army in 1806 led to a social, political and economical crisis in Prussia that affected large sections of the population, causing an intense public debate among patriotic circles on the origin of the defeat (Hagemann 1997, 2006). The treachery of the German princes that had facilitated the disintegration of German unity was blamed together with a lack of national sentiment. It also became clear that the Prussian State and its military were in need of fundamental reform and that a general conscription akin to the French model was necessary to confront the foreign oppression. Hagemann (1997, 2006) highlights how the invocation of a national spirit and the construction of a German national myth became a necessity to stimulate the ‘patriotic willingness to sacrifice’ (Hagemann 1997: 192). The eagerness to take up arms was further increased by the hope of the middle classes for political emancipation (Hagemann 1997: 190).

While the French occupation lasted until 1808, the Prussian King entered into an alliance with Napoleon before the Grand Armee’s invasion of Russia in 1812 turning Prussia into a deployment area for the invading troops, which increased economic hardship further. When Napoleon was defeated in Russia in December 1812, censorship on nationalist propaganda was lifted and patriotic sentiments were disseminated in a wide range of media to mobilise the population for the war effort. According to Hagemann (1997), the role of lyric poetry in this context, which goes back to the tradition of the military song and the heroic epic as well as to its use as a propaganda medium during the French Revolution, was particularly significant because songs and poems were able to reach the less literate (Hagemann 1997: 190). Hagemann (1997) states that the most relevant function of the patriotic songs and poems appears to have been to give a historical and religious legitimisation for armed battle and to provide emotionally charged images and stereotypes that promoted collective self-understanding. The image of the nation as a ‘folk family’ and of the army as a ‘community of brothers’ falls under this category. Religious and popular language enabled patriotic songs and poems to address all classes by making use of collective knowledge and accepted norms (Hagemann 1997: 210, 211). According to Hagemann, the patriotic propaganda literature also promoted the concept of the German national character, which was constructed as a counter image to the hostile French neighbour: virtuous, sensitive, profound, loyal, upright and valorous. In opposition to patriotic songs that portrayed combat in arms as a joyous task were anti-patriotic and pacifist songs that show that the enthusiasm for war and the ‘fatherland’ was not evenly distributed among the population of the Prussian kingdom.

Language-based media played an important part in the promotion of patriotic sentiments, but so too did painting, sculpture and architecture and these forms were also employed to promote a sense of collective identity by constructing a national historical and mythological past (Lenman 1997: 2). Lenman (1997) describes how a market for contemporary art had begun to develop after the end of the Napoleonic wars with picture lotteries and touring exhibitions organised by art unions, leading to the foundation of art academies and national galleries and resulting in an increase in production, exhibition, discussion and sale of painted pictures. It was an effort to
overcome what was perceived as Germany’s cultural deficit, towards other European nations and its failure to ‘challenge the artistic hegemony of France’. Lenman (1997) highlights that since other European countries had been affected by the Napoleonic Wars in a similar way and were also using painting as a propaganda medium, international exhibitions of contemporary art turned into ‘virility contests between opposing cultures’ (Lenman 1997: 2). The interest in history as an academic discipline, which had started before the 18th century, was suddenly stimulated by the Napoleonic invasion, fuelled by the urge to focus on remote and more glorious times that could inspire patriotic sentiments and provide a feeling of collective identity. Historic societies and museums were founded and history became an important part in the debates between intellectuals, had a significant influence on architecture, became the main focus of literature, and was a subject matter in painting third only to Biblical and mythological themes. An investment into public art in the form of frescos, sculptures and monuments was to contribute further to the creation of and relation to history, with inaugurations and speech-making providing additional opportunities for patriotic propaganda. Lenman (1997) highlights that it was the men of the educated German middle classes who, although in the minority at the time, were the protagonists of this propaganda and were ‘increasingly representing themselves as Germany’s principal culture creating group and source of national values’ (Lenman 1997: 8). He points at the unequal participation of social groups in this process, the working classes being excluded from the enjoyment of fine art and invisible to fine artists, despite the fact that the visual arts were portrayed as representing the entire nation (Lenman 1997: 7).

An understanding of nationalism as a construct, on which the studies by Hagemann (1997, 2006) and Lenman (1997) are based, is shared by the historical sociologists Eric Hobsbawm (1983) and Benedict Anderson (1983). Hobsbawm (1983) sees national traditions, as well as beliefs and value systems, as inventions that are meant to instil values and norms of behaviour, and he looks at symbolically and emotionally charged signs as being created to induce a feeling of group membership. The importance of history in contributing towards a memory of having belonged to a lasting political community is seen as crucial. Elites are viewed as the protagonists, in this recent construction of the nation, in an attempt to preserve order in the turbulence of late capitalism (Hobsbawm 1983: 263). Anderson (1983) sees nations as imagined political communities conceived as a deep horizontal comradeship and traces the concept of the imagined community back to the great religious imagined communities of the Middle Ages, the nation being a modern secular equivalent (Anderson 1983 in Smith 1998: 131-133).

A sense of an imagined community is invoked in the song ‘Holde Nacht...’ in the first two lines of the second verse ‘Morgen gehen wir für unsre Brüder Und für unser Vaterland zum Streit’ (Tomorrow we go into battle for our brethren and for the fatherland). It was this sense of imagined community that was designed to stimulate a willingness to sacrifice one’s life.
2.4.3.3 ‘Holde Nacht dein dunkler Schleier decket’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| *Holde Nacht, dein dunkler Schleier decket*  
Mein Gesicht vielleicht zum letztenmal;  
Morgen schon lieg ich dahingestreckt,  
Ausgelöscht aus der Lebend’gen Zahl | Graceful night, your dark veil covers  
My face perhaps for the last time  
Tomorrow I will be laid low  
Struck from the list of the living |
| *Morgen gehen wir für unsre Brüder*  
Und für unser Vaterland zum Streit  
Aber ach! so mancher kommt nicht wieder,  
wo sich Freund an Freundesbusen freut. | *Tomorrow we go into battle*  
*For our brethren and for the fatherland*  
*But, oh dear not everybody returns*  
*To where friends find each other in joy.* |
| *Mancher Säugling lieget in den Armen seiner Mutter, fällt nicht an ihren Schmerz; sie schreit himmelan, ach! um Erbarmen und drückt hoffnungslos ihn an ihr Herz.* | *Many an infant lies in the arms*  
*Of its mother and does not feel her pain*  
*She cries to the heavens for mercy*  
*And hold him close to her heart without hope.* |
| *Freundlich hüpf und fragt ein muntrer Knabe:*  
*Mutter, kommt nicht unser Vater bald?*  
*Armes Kind, dein Vater liegt im Grabe,*  
*sein Auge sieht nicht mehr der Sonne Strahl!* | *A happy boy jumps about and asks*  
*Mother when is our father coming home?*  
*Poor child, your father lies in his grave,*  
*His eye does no longer see the rays of the sun* |
| *Dort liegt schon ein Held mit Sand bedecket,*  
*Waise ist das Mädchen, ist der Knab*  
*hier auch liegt ein Sohn dahingestreckt,*  
*der den Eltern Brot im Alter gab.* | *Here we see already a hero covered in sand*  
*The girl is an orphan, so is the boy*  
*There lies a son struck down,*  
*His parents breadwinner in old age.* |
| *Mädchen, denke nicht an holde Bande*  
*denke nicht an Freud und Hochzeitstanz*  
*denn die Liebe schlummert schon im Sande*  
*schwinget hoch empor den Totenkranz!* | *Young girl, don’t think about matrimony*  
*Don’t consider joy and the wedding dance*  
*Because love is already buried in the sand*  
*And swings high above the dead ring!* |
| *Traurig, traurig, daß wir unsre Brüder*  
*hier und dort als Krüppel wiedersehn*  
*aber heilge Pflicht ist’s dennoch wieder*  
*mutig seinem Feind entgegengeh’n* | *It is sad to see our brothers*  
*Here and there again in crippled state*  
*But it is still a holy duty*  
*To courageously confront our enemies in battle again* |
| *Reißt mich gleich des Feindes Kugel nieder*  
*schwingt mein Geist sich freudig hoch empor*  
*ach, wer weiß, seh’n wir uns jemals wieder?*  
*Darum, Freunde, lebt auf ewig wohl!* | *When the bullet of the enemy strikes me down*  
*My spirit will rise high with joy*  
*Oh, who knows if we will meet again?*  
*Therefore my friends, fare well!* |
2.4.3.4 Text based analysis

The lyrics to the song ‘Holde Nacht dein dunkler Schleier decket’ are limited in their narrative content. Human experience of temporal change is, according to Ricoeur (1984), the characteristic element of narrative texts and is here anticipated as the effect of war. By describing life during peacetime and contrasting it to life affected by violent combat the song gives expression to grief and loss both experienced and expected, in eight verses.

The ‘subject’ of the narration, being those individuals and groups that are the victims of war, changes in each verse, starting with the individual soldier in the first verse, expressed in first person singular ‘Morgen schon lieg ich dahin gestrecket…’ (tomorrow I will be laid low…). In the second verse, the subject is extended to a group of soldiers, expressed in the first person plural ‘Morgen gehen wir für unsre Brüder…’ (tomorrow we will go for our brothers…). In the following four verses, the ‘subject’ changes to the infant and its mother, the young boy and his mother, a boy and a girl who become orphans, parents who lose their son and to a young girl who loses her prospect of marriage. In all four verses the third person singular is used. Verse 5 returns to the group of soldiers in first person plural ‘Traurig, traurig, dass wir unsre Brüder…’ (it is sad to see our brothers…) and verse 6 to the single soldier, first person singular in the first half of the verse, finishing by addressing the group in the last half. The song thereby reflects the situation on the eve of battle in which the anticipation of combat and prospect of death and injury expressed first from the perspective of the individual soldier then from the perspective of the group of comrades, frames the verses that consider the effect of war on those that are at home. Looking at the three aspects of narrative time defined by Genette (1980) - order, duration, frequency - we can find repeated references to the future through the use of ‘Morgen’ (tomorrow), ‘Morgen schon’ (tomorrow already), ‘schon’ (already) and ‘gleich’, ‘bald’ (soon) in six of the eight verses. These uses extend the sense of anticipation to all the verses of the song. A reference to duration appears in the first verse: ‘zum letztenmal’ (for the last time) and in the last verse ‘jemals’ (ever) and ‘ewig’ (forever). The use of superlatives in relation to time creates an emotional charge and adds a sense of drama to a situation that carries an air of finality. The last line is a call of farewell and strengthens that impression of finality. Frequency in terms of repetition is referred to only once in verse 7, which mentions the soldier’s duty to confront the enemy ‘aber heilge Pflicht ist’s dennoch wieder mutig seinem Feind entgegengehn’ (but it is a holy duty to courageously confront our enemies in battle again).

Those two last lines of the 7th verse and the following two lines of the 8th verse stand in contrast to the main part of the song, which can be seen as a lament and as giving expression to the experience of loss and fear from a variety of perspectives. While the two last lines of the 7th verse promote the patriotic cause, portraying it as a ‘holy duty’ to confront the enemy in battle, the following two lines visualise death in combat as a heroic act, that is, while looking like a defeat, in reality a victory. The contrast between being struck down by the bullet of the enemy ‘Reisst mich gleich des
Feindes Kugel nieder’ and the rising high of the spirit with joy ‘schwingt mein Geist sich freudig hoch empor’ gives expression to this paradox. All four lines echo the political propaganda at the time by promoting the war effort as a heroic and worthy cause. Interestingly, there is a strong link to religion and matters of spirituality in those lines. The duty to go to battle is a holy duty (‘heilge Pflicht’), and after the soldier is struck down it is his spirit that rises with joy ‘schwingt mein Geist sich freudig hoch empor’.

No such reference to spirituality or religion is made in other parts of the song. It is also only in those lines that the enemy is named. In all other verses it seems to be the war itself that destroys lives and causes pain on many levels. The only other patriotic reference is at the beginning of verse two, ‘Morgen gehen wir für unsre Brüder und für unser Vaterland zum Streit’ (Tomorrow we will go to fight for our brothers and for our fatherland), which promotes the war effort as an altruistic endeavour and links to the lines of the 7th and 8th verse in its upbeat propaganda-like tone. Those particular lines probably made this song suitable as an official war song. In all other parts of the song, the lyrics are emotionally charged through the song’s focus on human relationships: the bond between friends, the relationship between infant and mother, between a child and his mother and father, a son and his ageing parents, a young girl and her lover. This charge is strengthened through the use of contrasts where positive emotions are negated by the destructive experiences of war: the young boy who jumps about happily and asks when his father will return, while the father is long buried; the young girl who instead of a wedding dance receives a dead ring; the young mother who holds her baby to her heart in hopelessness. Examples of Romantic metaphors that make reference to nature such as the graceful night that covers the face of the soldier with a dark veil, the eye that does no longer see the ray of the sun, the hero who is already covered with sand, the mother who calls to heaven for mercy, …, add further to the emotional content of the song and to its sense of drama.

That sadness and pain are prominent among those emotions is apparent through the repetition of the adjective traurig (sad) at the beginning of verse 7, the use of the adjective arm (poor), the noun Schmerz (pain), and the verb schreit (cries). According to Toolan (1988), adjectives as well as actions can give indications towards characterisation and help to distinguish between villain and victim. As the above mentioned adjective and action are used in connection with the subjects of the song - das ‘arme Kind’ (the poor child), ‘die Mutter… in ihrem Schmerz… schreit himmelan’ (the mother in her pain cries to the heavens) - they define the subjects as victims, which is confirmed by the repeated use of the verb dahingestreckt (struck down) and the verb ausgelöscht (put out). The overall tone of the lyrics is, despite its upbeat patriotic insertions, that of sorrow and foreboding.

2.4.3.5 Conclusion to subchapter 2.4.3

‘the trauma process… can be likened… to a speech act’ and ‘the goal of the speaker is persuasively to project the trauma claim to the audience- public… making use of the particularities of the historical situation, the symbolic resources at hand and the
The song ‘Holde Nacht…’ claims the experience of war as traumatic to the collective. It uses the symbolic resources of Romanticism and inserts patriotic propaganda to comply with the format of the war song, thereby making use of the opportunities that were provided by institutional structures at the time. Within these constraints, the song manages to establish a narrative that gives expression to the fear of death that soldiers felt on the eve of battle and to the loss and sorrow that the war inflicted on the population, due to general conscription. The population is described as the victim, responsibility is attributed to the war itself. According to Alexander (2004: 12), ‘the representation of trauma depends on constructing a compelling framework of cultural classification’ in which the wider audience becomes persuaded that they ‘have become traumatized by an experience or an event’. That the song ‘Holde Nacht…’ had an effect that can be called compelling becomes apparent in the following quotes:

‘I heard it sung by the soldiers and later by the young people; this song always made a deep impression on me as a child. And it affected others likewise’ (Kantor Jacob from Konradsdorf, Schlesien, 1840 in Steinnitz 1979).

‘The song originated from the war years 1813-1815. It made such a deep impression on the soldiers and made them sad that Blüchener and Gneisenau no longer allowed its singing, it was similar in Lützow’s corps. It was well disseminated in the form of pamphlets’ (Hoffman-Prahl in Steinnitz 1979).

While the song was successful in claiming traumatic status for the experience of war that affected everyone, its opposition to nationalistic propaganda, an opposition that had been covered up by patriotic insertions, became apparent through its effect on its audiences. It was the effect of the song that attracted censorship, and this limited its reception to a short time period. It was, however, able in its documentation of the experience of the wars of liberation in Prussia, to contribute towards collective memory, and in this way to long-term collective identity by having survived to the present day where it is still included in songbooks and archives.

It is important to note that the Prussian wars of liberation were a response to an Imperialist invasion and seemed to have affected the middle classes in particular who responded by constructing and invoking a sense of patriotism that was to mobilise the population for the war effort. Hagemann (1997) describes how the idea of nationalism, which the German middle classes were promoting at the time, was based on concepts that had developed during the middle of the 18th century. Hagemann highlights to what extent the construction of the concept of the nation was, like the construction of the concept of gender at the time, the direct expression of the anxiety felt by middle class men.

‘Gender is… like the nation, a constructed and contested system of cultural representation… The process of nation-building was from the beginning dominated by men. Men from the educated strata, particularly the educated bourgeoisie, (Bildungsbürgertum), were the protagonists of the cultural construction of the German nation… The fears and desires, needs, hopes and
visions of these men shaped the patriotic national discourse and the forms of representation of the nation as well as the praxis of the national movement. More than other groups they experienced the transformation in all areas of the economy, society, politics, and culture which were accelerated by revolution and war as mental disorientation and sociocultural insecurity’ (Hagemann 1997: 201, 202).

The relationship between gender issues and the experience of unacknowledged fear and shame, which bears the potential for collective violence, has been referred to in Chapter 1 under the concept of what Scheff (2006) called ‘hypergenders’. The characterisation of the German male as valorous and the German female character as domestic and religious that was promoted by German patriotic writing comes close to what Scheff (2006) calls hypermasculine and hyperfeminine types. Hagemann (1997) points out that the national myths, symbols and rituals that were created to stimulate the war effort in the wars of liberation are still relevant today.

Notes to 2.3

1 ‘The image of the nation as a folk family… performed a central function in the process of modern nation-building… the modern, originally bourgeois ideal of the family… was integrated into models of the nation. The accompanying emotionalisation of political concepts was intended to help overcome the duality of monarch and subjects mentally and to integrate them into the “monarchical nation” - not least in order to motivate them to make the necessary wartime “sacrifice for the fatherland” (Hagemann 1997: 207, 208).

2 ‘The topos of the army as a “community of brothers” i.e., of men of similar origins and culture and close emotional bonds, whose “equality” was embodied in their “equal freedom” to die “a sacrificial death for the fatherland” was of great significance throughout patriotic national lyrics, for it promised all soldiers a chance to die as heroes’ (Hagemann 1997: 212).

3 First verse of ‘Die Freischaar’ as an example of patriotic lyric and its upbeat character (Hagemann 1997: 213).

| Frisch auf, ihr Jager, frei und flink | Step lively riflemen, free and bold |
| Die Büchsen von der Wand! | Take down your rifles from the walls! |
| Der Mutige befreit die Welt, | The brave man frees the world |
| Frisch auf den Feind! Frisch in das Feld | On against the foe! On to the field |
| Für's deutsche Vaterland! | The German fatherland calls! |

4 The song ‘Ich bin Soldat’ (1800-1900) can be seen as an antidote to the patriotic war songs by unmasking the harsh reality of war:

| Ich bin Soldat doch bin ich es nicht gerne, als ich es ward, hat man mich nicht gefragt. Man riss mich fort, hinein in die Kaserne gefangen ward ich, wie ein Wild gejagt... | I am a soldier but against my will I was not asked if I wanted to join I was taken by force I was caught and chased like a deer... |

The song concludes with a call for pacifism
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German Text</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ihr Brüder all’, ob Deutsche, ob Franzosen ob Ungarn, Dünen, ob vom Niederland ob grün, ob rot, ob blau, ob weiß die Hosen geben euch statt Blei zum Gruß die Bruderhand! Auf, lasst zur Heimat uns zurück marschieren von den Tyrannen unser Volk befrei’n denn nur Tyrannen müssen Kriege führen Soldat der Freiheit will ich gerne sein</td>
<td>Oh Brothers all, Germans, French Hungarians, Danish or Dutch No matter if your trousers are green, red, blue or white Take each others hand and not your lives Come let us go back to our homelands And free our people from the tyrants As only tyrants need to wage wars A soldier to freedom I shall gladly be.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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5 Anthony D. Smith (1998) gives a summary of the debate on nationalism in which he mentions Hobsbawm (1983) and Anderson (1983) as representatives of the postmodernist approach that questions the original concept of classical modernism. Coming from a Marxist background that includes culture in its perspective, nations and nationalism are no longer seen as part of the nature of the modern world, but as invented cultural constructs that need to be unmasked (Smith 1998: 118-126)
2.4.4 ‘Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz’ (1883-1885) by Gustaf Mahler, the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution

2.4.4.1 Introduction

The song ‘Die zwei blauen Augen...’ completes the song-cycle ‘Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen’ (Songs of a Travelling Companion) by Gustav Mahler. Both lyrics and musical setting were created in the period 1883-1885 by Mahler and the song can be classified as a Kunstlied (art song) belonging to the period of late Romanticism. The song was chosen as a representation of late Romantic culture and its attempt to give expression to the experience of social dislocation felt by the male middle class population in Germany during the 19th century, which affected their sense of collective cohesion and can therefore be read as a social crisis. Mahler was a Jewish composer, therefore the experience of social dislocation would have been strengthened by the growing anti-Semitic climate in both Germany and Austria, which is of relevance to this enquiry. This example also connects the theoretical enquiry with the practice-based component in which a song by Mahler is used in the film The Legacy to mourn the Jewish victims.

I will set the song ‘Die zwei blauen Augen...’ into its socio-political context by referring to Pulzer (1997) and Mosse (1964) and describe its position within its wider cultural background in reference to studies by Stephan (2008), Jelavich (1979), Turchin (1987), Pfau (2003) and Schulte-Sasse (1983). I will analyse the lyrics of the song as text using methods of narrative analysis as developed by Ricoeur (1984), Rimmon-Kenan (1983), Todorov (1981), Genette (1980), Toolan (1988) and Greimas (1966) and complement this exploration with an analysis of Mahler's musical score. Viewing the findings of both analyses within the wider cultural context will assist me in my evaluation of the song’s ability to make a claim towards a cultural trauma (sensu Alexander 2004).

2.4.4.2 Socio-political background and cultural context

After the defeat of Napoleon in 1815 the German confederation was created which included 39 states that were loosely bound together, the Kingdom of Prussia and the Austrian Empire being the largest. According to Pulzer (1997), the emergence of an organised Liberal movement that demanded constitutional reform and greater national cohesion lead to the revolutions in 1848, which were triggered by revolutionary outbursts in Paris as well as by widespread economic distress. After barricades and street fights, the moderate Liberal movement, lead by the educated middle classes, gained the upper hand and sought reforms on the basis of radical democratisation which led to the creation of the National Assembly (Pulzer 1997: 5). This was the first German parliament, and the members of the Assembly tried to draw up a constitution for a democratic and united Germany and to nominate a provisional government. Due to the diverging understanding of democratic processes by its members and an inability to agree on the nature of German unity, the National
Assembly dispersed in humiliation in April 1849, the Confederation of 1815 was restored, and ‘the prospects of a national movement on a democratic basis were thereby diminished’ (Pulzer 1997: 8). According to Pulzer, the failed revolution of 1848/49 had brought the national unity of Germany onto the public agenda. In 1870, after a long period of political and diplomatic manoeuvres that included an invasion of Austria as well as a short and victorious war with France, Otto von Bismarck, Minister President of Prussia, succeeded in the Unification of the German principalities under Wilhelm I of Prussia, but with the exclusion of Austria. Bismarck had thereby proven that blood and iron was superior to parliamentary decision-making in causing a decisive change in history. But the unified Prussian Empire, which had been the hope of two generations of nationalist publicists, left many dissatisfied, as its structure was politically unclear and half-hearted, being made up of some elements of democracy, some limited monarchy, autocracy and a lack of symbols to reflect a unified collectivity (Pulzer 1997: 16). Bismarck fostered the fragmentation of parliament, which strengthened the autocratic power of the Emperor and led to the political frustration of the middle classes, while the Empire developed into an industrial giant, with an increase of 800% in its production capacity between the years 1870 and 1913. Mosse (1964) describes how the rapid industrialisation caused a social alienation and dislocation that affected a number of social groups directly, especially peasants, craftsmen and members of the lower middle classes who were threatened in their social status and livelihood:

‘surrounded by an encroaching industrial society, men and women looked for a deeper meaning in life than the transitory reality of their present condition. The rapid process of European industrialization was indeed bewildering to them, accompanied as it was by the dislocation of the population, by the sudden obsolescence of traditional tools, crafts and institutions and by social maladjustment and upheaval. The demands of an increasingly industrial society, with its new opportunities and restrictions tended to strengthen the individual’s feeling of isolation. This isolation, man’s alienation from both himself and his society, occupied men as divergent as Tocqueville and Karl Marx’ (Mosse 1964: 13-14).

The increasing sense of alienation and social displacement had started to affect cultural productions since the late 18th century. According to Stephan (2008), Romanticism, Classicism and Jacobinism developed in Germany in the wake of the French Revolution. Initially, Romanticism was a reaction to the rational focus of the enlightenment and emphasised emotion, intuition and the unconscious. Romanticism, like Classicism, took a critical stance towards German society at the time and aimed to initiate social improvement from within to avoid a violent political upheaval. The vision that art had a social function and a calling to improve society developed within the ideals of the enlightenment and became an important part of German Classicism. Schiller had in 1795 defined the social function of culture as the role of the artist to save humanity by reinstating balance and beauty within a social climate that had been affected by alienation and dislocation. In contrast to Classicism, Romanticism perceived art as autonomous and aimed to provide a fusion of art and life, present and past, time and eternity, in which life was supposed to become poetic rather than political (Stephan 2008: 186). In this fusion the experiences of alienation would be
overcome and a sense of harmony regained. Stephan describes how the initial optimism of early Romanticism developed towards a more gloomy outlook, as the idealism that had initiated the French Revolution became disappointed and as growing industrialisation increased the experience of alienation (Stephan 2008: 223).

Like Stephan (2008), Jelavich (1979) describes a general disenchantment in humanist values and a diffusion and appropriation of German classicist ideals during the second part of the 19th century due to the failure of the 1848/1849 revolution, and furthered by the commercialisation of culture (Jelavich 1979: 215). Jelavich describes how classical education was implemented by the Prussian state into its school system in such a way that it became divorced from its initial social and political concerns, while the commercialisation of culture fostered the writing of popular literature that catered for the entertainment needs of their audiences. The loss of enlightenment ideals and its ethical values reflected a separation from social reality, which was apparent in a variety of areas in German culture and affected in particular the aesthetics movements (Jelavich 1979: 205)². A change in the tradition of song-cycles to which Mahler’s composition belongs also reflects this loss of idealism. According to Turchin (1987), the tradition of Wanderlieder-cycles was initiated by the compositions of Kreutzer in 1818 and had subsequently informed the song-cycles of Beethoven, Schubert and Schumann. Initially performed during musical soirees in the settings of private middle class homes in the early 19th century, later song-cycles became part of concert programs and were therefore available to the wider public. The theme of the song-cycle, the quest of the lonesome wanderer, was central in German Romanticism and was used as a metaphor for mankind’s quest to recover its lost unity. According to Turchin (1987), the goal in this educational and psychological process is to reach a higher state of unity symbolised through scenes of recognition, reconciliation or by gaining union with a loved one. Changes in season and landscape symbolise the altered emotional states of the protagonist: the tree stands for comfort and spiritual renewal and the relationship to the beloved can be read as a metaphor for the connection to society. Turchin (1987) refers to the German Romantic poets Goethe, Hölderlin, and Eichendorf and their use of the Romantic quest and wandering theme. According to Turchin (1987), the original Wanderlieder cycles by Kreutzer depict the quest of the wanderer who progresses from high spirits through despair and alienation back to a hopeful sense of renewal. In their Romantic approach, which included the creation of an alternative reality of metaphorical meaning, the song-cycles were giving expression to the experience of alienation and, through its processing, restored the lost connection. This positive conclusion however is missing in late Romantic song cycles.

Pfau (2003) interprets the lyrics of late Romanticism as an attempt to mediate the experience of historical change from the perspective of the emerging middle classes in the 18th and 19th century. Pfau describes how the French Revolution, which had been caused by the failure of the central European aristocracy to fulfil their historical mission, lead to a sudden change in social order out of which the bourgeoisie emerged as a new class with no social or cultural points of reference (Pfau 2003: 75). This lack of social identity lead, according to Pfau, to a sense of longing for a lost past that fuelled the interest in history. Cultural productions responded to the need of their
middle class audiences by portraying an imaginary and idealised past that gave expression to their anti-modern sentiments as well as creating a sense of collective memory and cultural identity (Pfau 2003: 57).

Schulte-Sasse (1983) describes how popular literature, which had emerged suddenly due to improved education and to the further development of print technology, responded to the same need. Industrialisation had caused the collapse of traditional social stratification and a materialistic perspective that had led to the decline of clerical authority and the loss of moral standards. The educated middle classes responded by creating and communicating new moral standards through literature productions (Schulte-Sasse 1983: 96). According to Schulte-Sasse (1983), the ideology that was promoted by popular literature at the time was anti-modernist and anti-capitalist, criticising the increase of greed, egotism and moral decay that was seen as part of modern living while promoting a regressive utopia. The portrayal of landscape was ideologically and psychologically important because it represented the return to an agrarian setting and lifestyle that had been lost in the process of industrialisation. This "agrarian return" offered a reconnection to the known, so reinstating a sense of security against the experience of social dislocation caused by urban living (Schulte-Sasse 1983: 93). Mahler’s song cycle shares some of these characteristics. As with other late romantic productions, Mahler’s songs, while inspired by personal experience, responded to the need of its middle class audience for an alternative reality, set in the past, in the comforting security of a natural environment, away from the upheaval of modern life.

2.4.4.3 ‘Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz’ (The Two Blue Eyes of my Beloved)

From ‘Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen’ (Songs of a travelling companion) by Gustav Mahler 1883-1885. Translation copyright © by Emily Ezust, from The Lied, Art Song, and Choral Texts Archive -- http://www.lieder.net/

| Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz, | The two blue eyes of my darling-
| Die haben mich in die weite Welt geschickt. | They have sent me into the wide world.
| Da mußt ich Abschied nehmen vom allerliebsten Platz! | I had to take my leave of this well-beloved place!
| O Augen blau, warum habt ihr mich angeblickt? | O blue eyes, why did you gaze on me?
| Nun hab’ ich ewig Leid und Grämen! | Now I will have eternal sorrow and grief.
| Ich bin ausgegangen in stiller Nacht wohl über die dunkle Heide. | I went out into the quiet night
| Hat mir niemand Ade gesagt | Well across the dark heath.
| Ade! Mein Gesell’ war Lieb und Leide! | To me no one bade farewell.
| Auf der Straße stand ein Lindenbaum, | Farewell!
| | My companions are love and sorrow!
| | On the road there stands a linden tree,
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The song ‘Die zwei blauen Augen...’ is the last of four songs in this song cycle and is preceded by ‘Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht’ (When my Sweetheart is Getting Married), ‘Ging heut morgen übers Feld’ (I Went across the Field this Morning) and ‘Ich hab ein glühend Messer’ (I have a Gleaming Knife). While the first song explains the loss of the relationship, due to the marriage of the loved one to another, an experience that sends the protagonist out to wander the world in search for solace, the second song describes the feeling of separation that arises in confrontation with the joyous and life-affirming aspects of nature that the wanderer cannot join with, and the third song gives expression to the pain itself that is compared to a knife in the chest and can be described as self-destructive and life threatening. The concluding song of the song-cycle ‘Die zwei blauen Augen...’ mirrors the preceding songs in the first verses but comes to a conclusion in the last verse.

2.4.4.3.1 Text based analysis

According to Ricoeur (1984), narrative texts deal with the temporal character of human experience and reflect a change in situation (Ricoeur 1984: 52).

The lyrics of the song, though limited in their narrative content, can be recognised as a narrative text, as they feature change in the form of separation and departure.

According to Rimmon-Kenan (1983), time in a narrative fiction is defined as the relations of chronology between the sequence of events and the plot as narrated by the author. A text can thereby be split into narrative clauses that contain the action, and descriptive clauses that give an interpretative account.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause sequence</th>
<th>Event sequence</th>
<th>Narrative clause</th>
<th>Descriptive clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>T1</td>
<td>The two blue eyes of my darling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>T2 -T1</td>
<td>they sent me into the wide world.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>I had to take my leave of well-beloved place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>O blue eyes, why did you gaze on me?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>T3</td>
<td>I went out into the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>T4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Now I have eternal sorrow and grief.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T5</td>
<td>T6</td>
<td>T7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

quiet night
well across the dark
heath
To me no one bade
farewell.
Farewell

On the road there stands
a linden tree,
And there, for the first
time, I found rest in
sleep
Under the linden tree
that snowed its
blossoms onto me

My companions are
love and sorrow!

I did not know how life
went on,
and all was well again!
All! All, love and
sorrow
and world and dream!

The action in the narrative clauses from T1 to T7 describe separation, departure, quest for solace, lack of action of another, finding of solace, the snowing of the tree. The narrative sequence implies a causal relation (Todorov 1981) and can be seen as describing a chain of consequent reactions from the initial separating action, over departure and quest for solace to the finding of rest under the tree. Clause 3 refers to an action in the past and belongs to a time before the narration of the text. It is therefore marked as T-1. The experience of separation is reflected through the fact that the subject/hero, who is also the narrator of the text, is the only actual actant, who is as a human being fully present in the time of the narration. The first actant, the beloved who sent the subject into the wide world, is already removed from the narration and only represented through her eyes, which make her appear as a memory rather than a real and present character. Subsequently, the hero of the narration is left to act alone, experiencing the lack of action of another, until he finds a tree that seemingly restores the lost connection by its action of snowing blossom onto him while he rests in its shade. The descriptive clauses describe the yearning for the lost connection and the loneliness experienced. The descriptions of contrasting emotions in the first part of the lyrics reflect inner conflict and highlight the experience of loss. With the appearance of the tree a change is initiated. Here the conflict ends and the finding of rest is described as a state of wellness and connection, in which prior differences are reconciled.

Following the enquiry into the three aspects of narrative time - order, duration and frequency (Genette 1980) - the questions "When? For how long? And how often?" need to be asked. Applied to the lyrics of the song, no time indication is given for T1, the first action in which the beloved dismisses the hero. Only the order of events is given that links them in a way that indicates a causal connection. While the first chain of events T1-T5 describes a change from good to bad to worse, the second T5-T7 describes a change from bad to good. A time description is given in the descriptive clause: sorrow and grief are now ‘eternal’, and a later description of frequency is given in T6 indicating that the wanderer found sleep ‘for the first time’. Both indications are extremes and in opposition to each other, which contributes to the sense of drama that the narration conveys. The overall lack of time indication gives the feeling that the events are not connected to a concrete situation but have a rather timeless character,
indicating that they can be read as a metaphor. A general lack of specific description adds to this impression. Not only do we not know when this event happened, we also don’t know where it happened, to whom it happened or why.

Looking at the relationship between textural duration and temporal duration (Genette 1983), we find that a certain amount of textural duration is dedicated to two events: that of the departure at night and that of the finding solace in sleep under the tree. Both moments are described in detail while the act of wandering is not mentioned but presumed. Both events are thereby emphasised and highlighted as contrasting: the departure into the lonesome quest and the regaining of peace in nature.

Toolan (1988) inquires into the intention that inspired the narration. What is or what are the points of a text? The intention here seems to be the need to give expression to a feeling of loneliness and separation. The narrative context that is being used to convey this feeling is a situation in which a man is dismissed by the woman he loves and departs into the world in quest for solace that he eventually finds by sleeping under a tree. The dramatic personae are the woman that dismisses (represented by her blue eyes), the lonely wanderer, and the tree. Love and sorrow are named as imaginary personae.

In applying Greimas’ (1966) basic narrative model to the lyrics of the song we can clearly identify the lonesome wanderer as the ‘subject’ of the text. His ‘object of desire’ is the state of union and connectedness that he lost through the dismissal by his beloved. To define a ‘villain’ in this text is more difficult. It could be sorrow, which is mentioned three times and also described as an imaginary persona, but it could also be the wide world, the quiet night or the dark heath, as all are described as being in opposition to the hero’s quest for his ‘subject of desire’. It is even harder to identify the ‘helper’, which might be love, the other imaginary persona named, while the ‘superhelper’ is clearly the tree, because, like in a fairytale, it is endowed with magical power.

Very little information is given on the character of the ‘narrative personae’ through adjectives, which according to Todorov (1981) provide basic ‘character traiting’. Only the eyes that represent the beloved are described by the adjective ‘blue’, which can be read as an indication of beauty and purity and the ‘imaginary persona’ of sorrow is described through the adjective ‘eternal’. The protagonist is not described through adjectives, but his character can be inferred from action (Toolan 1988), which in this case is a reaction. The initial action is that of the dismissal by the beloved to which the protagonist reacts by departing. He is thereby characterised as a victim, being on the receiving end of an action by another. This also shows a reversal of gender roles: here the female ‘persona’ is active while the male protagonist is passive/reactive. The female persona’s active position is apparent in the fact that she is the initiator of the temporal sequence of clauses. Represented by her blue eyes, she is also the grammatical subject in clause 1 and 3.
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2.4.4.3.2 Musical analysis

An analysis of the musical score, in its orchestral version, in relation to the narrative content of the lyrics will provide further information towards the interpretation of the song. An audio-visual version of the song can be accessed using the following link:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VTyJ_kUyHGe

The music is set for an alto/tenor voice with orchestral accompaniment containing flutes, oboe, French horn, clarinets, bass clarinet, harp, violins, viola, cello, bass, horns and drum. Changes in orchestration and key signature suggests a separation into three parts:

1) The description of the pain of separation and the need to depart.
2) The departure and quest.
3) The finding of solace under the tree.

While parts 1 and 2 are similar in orchestration but different in key signature, starting in E-minor and continuing in C, the change to part 3 is more obvious with a change of rhythm, key signature to F and different application of instruments that clearly reflect the turn of events. What starts off as painful is seemingly resolved when peace is found. A change back to a minor key after the completion of the melody line questions this resolution and its positive outcome, particularly since this last musical segment contains the rhythmic theme with which the song starts and which reappears in variations throughout the piece, being played by a variety of instruments. This theme, slow and solemn in character, invokes the impression of a death march, not least since it bears close resemblance to the rhythmic theme of Chopin’s funeral march, which had appeared in 1839 fifty years before Mahler’s composition. While the song describes the pain of separation and the quest for solace, death seems to be the inescapable outcome from the very start and is omnipresent throughout. The song starts in E minor with a melodic segment in the voice line that contains the rhythmic theme as well as a slight up-down-up movement that rises increasingly thereby suggesting a growing sense of drama and highlighting those words that are at the end of each rise. The superlative ‘allerliebst’ (well-beloved) at the end of the last rise is thereby given special emphasis. The melody line is initially accompanied by the first flute, but it is later accompanied by the first violin, which increases its emotional impact. The accompaniment in the harp changes in harmony and includes dissonant chords that reflect the state of inner conflict that the text describes, while the accompaniment of the French horn is syncopated, thereby disturbing the pulse of the piece and adding to the impression of inner turmoil and giving expression to the feeling of ‘Romantic longing’ (Malin 2006). After a short change in time signature, the song continues in E-minor with a melodic segment similar to the one with which the song started, now rising in a wave-like motion towards the word ‘Leid’ (pain) and falling down to the word ‘Grämen’ (sorrow). Both words are thereby emphasised and connected through the rise and fall of the melody, suggesting a causal connection. The
time signature and key-signature changes in this section and the inclusion of discordant notes is again used to express inner conflict and turmoil. The first violin accompanies the melody line thereby highlighting the emotional content of this section. The rhythmical opening-theme is played by the flutes, after the completion of the voice line, reminding us that the protagonist is on his way to his grave.

The change to part 2 is marked by a change in key-signature to C and by a steady pulse provided by drum and bass that gives musical expression to the walking motion of the protagonist, who has set out on his quest. The melody line starts with the rhythmic theme as in the preceding verses but this time the accompaniment through flute or violin is missing, which reflects the lack of companionship that is described in the lyrics. The last part of the rhythmic theme is later played by the horns and then by the clarinets, giving the impression of an echo, thereby suggesting space. The melody line rises and then falls in wave-like downwards movements in chromatic scales. Discordant notes and changes of key-signature all contribute towards an impression of distress as the protagonist departs into the dark night. The pulse provided by drum and bass continues after the completion of the melody line while the rhythmical 'funeral march' theme appears played by different instruments in minor and major keys with decreasing volume, thereby suggesting a disappearing into the distance which gives the impression of an extension in space and time. The lonesome wanderer walks out into the wide world and roams for a long time. The description of the quest and time taken for the quest itself, which is missing in the lyrics, is thereby provided in the music.

A change in key signature and rhythm, and sudden offbeat single notes in the harp accompaniment signal the start of the third part and bring us to a new situation. The pulse provided by bass and drum stop, suggesting that the quest has come to an end. The harp accompaniment is now in initially uncompleted then completed harmonic broken chords, reflecting nature in its lush, flowing and balanced state, able to provide solace. The melody rises and falls repeatedly in a wave-like, rocking motion, creating a feeling of comfort that is strengthened by the violins that support the melody line, indicating the return of the companionship that had been missing previously. At the same time, the first horn plays a falling scale in repetition, illustrating the falling of the blossoms. The following voice line rises and descends but is in dissonance with all other instruments on the word 'leben' (life) thereby implicating an element of conflict in connection to life. The voice line continues with a rise and a chromatic fall on 'war… Alles wieder gut' (everything was well again) that finishes on a note that does not, as expected, resolve the harmony when it reaches the word 'gut' (well). While the lyrics tell us that all is well again, the musical impression being that of dramatic descent and unresolved ending undermines this statement. The melody line that follows falls three times, changing key signature in a variation that creates an A-B-A structure, which is circular and indicates that the circle of life is concluded. The remaining voice line over 'Alles! Alles! Lieb' und Leid! Und Welt und Traum!' (Everything! Everything! Love and pain! And world and dream) is slow, monotonous, repetitive and drawn out by rests in each bar as well as descending in steps. The broken chord accompaniment in the harp comes to an end in the last bar of the melody.
The music thereby clarifies the meaning of the otherwise ambiguous lyrics. The solace that the lonesome wanderer finds in the shadow of the tree is death.

2.4.4.5 Conclusion to subchapter 2.4.4

According to Alexander (2004: 10-15), for a wider audience to become persuaded that they have become traumatized by an experience or an event, social crises must become cultural crises through ‘the successful process of collective representation’. This process needs to provide ‘compelling answers’ to questions that address ‘The nature of the pain. What actually happened… The nature of the victim. What group of persons was affected by the traumatizing pain? … The relation of the trauma victim to the wider audience’ and the ‘attribution of responsibility… the identity of the perpetrator’.

The song ‘Die zwei blauen Augen…’ does provide a narrative in which pain is expressed through text and music, being particularly creative in inventing a musical format appropriate to the experience, but it fails to clearly communicate what the nature of the pain is, who the victims are, how the victims relate to the audience and in which way responsibility can be attributed. This leaves ‘the trauma process’ (Alexander 2004) uncompleted. The lack of both clarity and completion reflects a loss of connection to contemporary social reality. The song is set in a world that is removed from the alienating experiences of 19th century Europe. Due to this distance, a confrontation with an event that had been experienced as a crisis is not possible and the longing that is felt can only be given expression indirectly.

Schiller’s understanding of the social role of culture in German Classicism is particularly relevant in the context of this enquiry as it shares many aspects with the ‘social process of cultural trauma’ in which, in the aesthetic arena, cultural productions make a claim to a social crisis through symbolic representation (Alexander 2004: 10). In both cases, an attempt is made to address a state of separation. According to Jelavich (1979), art was seen in the German classical conception as ‘the factor which restores totality to individuals atomized by their political and socioeconomic relationships’ (Jelavich 1979: 204), while Alexander (2004) talks about the revision of a sense of collective identity that had been abruptly and harmfully affected by social crises, through a process in which cultural productions can play a key role. According to Jelavich ‘the 19th century witnessed, however, the perversion of the classical ideal’ (Jelavich 1979: 205), the connection between culture and social reality was thereby lost and cultural productions were no longer in a position to make effective claims in relation to social events. That a sense of separation in the form of
social alienation and dislocation had occurred and had started to affect cultural productions as well as their audiences since the late 18th century is apparent in the misreception of Goethe’s novel *Werther* (1774). This novel was inspired by German classicist idealism, with the intention to express experiences of alienation and anxiety and aiming to suggest remedies towards a restoration of balance (Renner 1985). The metaphor of unrequited love that Goethe had used in his novel was not decoded by the contemporary public, who used the content of the narrative to escape into an imaginative reality and identify with the protagonist to an extent that was often excessive. The German novelist and social critic Thomas Mann compares the reception of *Werther* to an emotional explosion on a collective scale. An entire young generation saw itself reflected by a novel that altered the collective imagination to such an extent that the wish to re-enact its content affected fashion, art, design and literature as well as the manner of speech and behaviour, in extreme cases leading to suicide due to a complete identification with its protagonist (Mann 1939, 1950, 1964 in Hermann 1994). While classical literature was still written with the intention of addressing and reversing the experience of separation that was being felt, its use of metaphors to do so can be read as reflecting a lack of connection to social reality that had started to affect the cultural production itself. With the audience being affected by the experience of separation in such a way that a strong emotional need arose to escape into the safe world of an imaginative reality and with its inability to decode the metaphorical imagery that had been created, an explanation can be suggested for the large scale miscommunication that occurred.

The use of metaphor, which in this case separated cultural productions from their audiences, was also a major element in Romantic cultural productions, where the initial intention to address social crisis in an attempt to revise the lost connection was lost towards late Romanticism. This lack of intention and inability to facilitate the ‘processing of cultural trauma’ (Alexander 2004) is apparent in the song ‘*Die zwei blauen Augen...*’, which can be seen as a representative of late Romanticism.

Kaplan (2001) talks about aesthetic forms that emerge at certain historical moments to accommodate fears and fantasies related to suppressed historical events, a phenomenon that she calls a ‘traumatic cultural symptom’ (Kaplan 2001: 203). According to a reading of late Romanticism by Pfau (2003), the song ‘*Die zwei blauen Augen...*’ by Mahler bears, like other late Romantic productions, the characteristics of such a symptom. The suppressed historical event is, according to Pfau (2003), the sense of social displacement that the middle classes experienced since the French Revolution. Fears and fantasies initiated by social dislocation are accommodated through the depiction of lost love and the identification with the lonesome wanderer. An escape into an alternative reality that is thereby facilitated can be compared to the dissociative response in clinical trauma. The impression of a loss of social connection can be read in the context of Interaction Ritual Chains (Collins 2004) as a lack of access to positive interaction rituals, and thereby as a lack of access to a gain of emotional energy. Sehnsucht, or Romantic longing, expressed in Romantic cultural productions can, in this way, be interpreted as a longing to regain the lost access and motivated by a drop in emotional energy. Thomas Scheff (2007) shows how
unacknowledged experiences of shame and alienation can affect gender relations, producing what Scheff calls ‘hypermasculine’ and ‘hyperfeminine’ behaviour. The fact that the gender roles are reversed in the narration of the song, a characteristic typical of Romantic cultural productions (which is in the song apparent in the character traiting of the textual analysis), reflects a state of imbalance that shows how much the crisis of social alienation had affected the middle class population. While those productions portray their male protagonists as physically and emotionally vulnerable, passive, often victimised and in an extreme state of longing (expressing an emotional lack), the narration is set outside of reality, thereby promoting dissociation, a reaction that in traumatic incidents is typical of women as opposed to the male fight or flight response.

While the song as a Kunstlied addressed the educated middle classes, popular literature was accessible to a wider middle class audience where the response to the emotional needs of the readership often resulted in the construction of a distorted world view (Schulte-Sasse 1983). Mosse (1964) describes how, driven by a persistent need for collective identification, a quest for lost roots was initiated that led to the development of a set of distorted ideas that he calls ‘Volkish ideology’ (Mosse 1964). Mosse highlights the importance of the link between the human soul and the essence of nature for this ideology, a perspective that was extended to perceive a relationship between the Volk and the native landscape. This affinity to nature, in particular to forests and trees, is the main theme in romantic cultural productions and is the setting of the Wanderlieder cycles. Mosse (1964) explains how the Volkish ideology developed over time to accommodate racist perspectives and became, after the defeat of World War I and the founding of the Weimar Republic, elaborated and diffused to then gain a political base supported by majorities. Mosse highlights the importance of youth groups that developed nationwide with a membership of 60,000 before the war and 100,000 after the war, promoting rambles in nature together with more ideologically driven activities.

Since Romantic cultural productions gave expression to the sense of alienation and dislocation felt by many, but without completing the processing of crisis in such a way that a collective sense of identity could be restored, the persisting emotional need was open to misuse and, as will be discussed in the following subchapter, facilitated the growth of racist thought and politics.

**Notes to 2.4.4**

1 Bismarck stated in 1862: ‘The great decisions of our time will not be made by speeches and majority resolutions - that was the great mistake of 1848 and 1849 - but by iron and blood’ (Bismarck 1862 in Pulzer 1997).

2 Jelavich (1979) describes the aesthetics movements as having developed from a form of sensual classicism that had been promoted by Heine, Wagner and Nietzsche as a weapon against bourgeois morality and ethics. These movements had initially retained
a social and democratic vision as well as reformist goals but became increasingly elitist and, as the rejected Christian and bourgeois morals were not substituted with humanist ethics, showed total loss of moral concerns. The focus on physical beauty combined with social Darwinism led to eugenics. As an extreme form of the aesthetics and vitalist movements, eugenics can be seen as the result of the separation of aesthetics from ethics and as the perversion of sensual classicism, which had the emancipation and liberation of humanity as its main goal (Jelavich 1979: 232).

Malin (2006) highlights the interrelationship between ‘syncopation–type’ dissonance and Romantic longing which evolved together over the course of the 19th century, showing that a syncopated pulse ‘generates a continued outward movement… analogous to the outward movement of longing’ thereby ‘creating a sense of separation or distance, as well as motion into the distance’ (Malin 2006: 251-252).

2.4.5 ‘Das Volk’ (1922) by Käthe Kollwitz, and World War I

2.4.5.1 Introduction

‘Das Volk’ (1922) is a woodcut by Käthe Kollwitz that portrays the trauma of war in its effect on the general population. It was made during the Weimar years and reflects the then recent experience of World War I in a hope to prevent further armed battle. The woodcut was chosen for analysis in this thesis because it opposes the National Socialist propaganda by claiming the experience of World War I as a cultural trauma. This opposition is even more pronounced as it comes from a female perspective. Unlike other cultural productions that made similar claims at the time, Kollwitz’s work is free of sarcasm, while being based on personal experiences.

I will give an indication of the socio-political background at the time of its production by referring to an account by Pulzer (1997), and position Kollwitz and her work within its contemporary cultural climate, referring to her own diary entries among other sources. I will apply observations by Greimas (1966), Toolan (1988) and Ricoeur (1984) to the Fine Art context to facilitate an adapted version of a narrative analysis, complement this approach by a formal analysis and discuss the way in which the woodcut aims to establish a new narrative that claims the experience of World War I as traumatic to the collective.

2.4.5.2 Socio-political background and cultural context

According to Pulzer (1997), the rapid growth of the German economy, the competition of the Empire with other European states for colonies, and the development of an aggressive program of military expansion had, together with a number of diplomatic crises, led to a tense international atmosphere in 1914. When Germany got drawn into a war between Austria, Hungary and Russia, the initial regional conflict escalated due to a complicated system of alliances into a world war. Pulzer describes how the war was heralded and seen by many as an opportunity to
realize their dreams and expectations. This enthusiasm was based on the understanding that Germany was fighting a defensive war and that victory would be quick and decisive. The reality of World War I, which due to the rapid development in technology and transportation had turned into an industrial war that affected the entire population and lasted for four years, had no resemblance to this vision (Maier 2001: 3). According to Reinhardt (1950), German casualties amounted to 1,600,000 dead, over 4 million wounded and over 200,000 missing with an additional 250,000 deaths attributable to malnutrition during the immediate aftermath (Reinhardt 1950: 644). Pulzer (1997) describes the humiliation and the collective outrage that followed when the Peace Treaty was made public – the treaty included substantial reparation payments, the loss of all colonies and of territories like Alsace-Lorraine, the reduction of the German army to 100,000 men, the occupation of the Rhineland by allied troops for 15 years, the surrender of the German battle fleet and the prohibition of the Austrian republic to join the Reich against the wish of its population. The end of the war had also been a time of intense social unrest that included revolutionary uprisings\(^1\). Pulzer (1997) states that since President Wilson insisted on the democratisation of Germany as a precondition to peace negotiations, public order had to be restored at all cost. To this end, a secret league with the army was formed and when a further revolution broke out in Berlin in January 1919, it was crushed by the regular officers, who captured and murdered its leaders Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. A communist government in Munich, that was established in February 1919, was also defeated by the army ‘in a massacre lasting several days’ (Pulzer 1997: 93). Pulzer accounts how the experience of the war, and the German defeat with its political, economical and social consequences led to a significant rise in tension, social unrest and violent tendencies that increased with the rise of inflation. Mosse (1964) describes how the distorted ideology of Volkish thought that had developed among the German middle classes and that was introduced into the Prussian school system in 1900 became widespread after the founding of the Weimar republic at the end of World War I. This distorted ideology was prevalent among all parts of society and gained a political base that was supported by majorities.

Käthe Kollwitz managed to escape the rigidity of the Prussian public school system. She was educated privately and was influenced by an unconventional family background that had links to both socialism and religion. Kollwitz decided to become an artist at a young age and was quickly drawn towards the social reality of the working classes and to an art that had a social calling. Due to the political controversies of her time, she was regarded as a socialist despite her outspoken apolitical position. The woodcut ‘Das Volk’ is part of a war cycle that was completed in February 1921 and issued in 1924. Kollwitz addressed the subject matter from her own personal perspective of the home front, having lost her youngest son, Peter, in battle in 1914. Having initially shared her son’s enthusiasm to volunteer, Kollwitz’ perspective on war changed gradually towards an outspoken and engaged opposition that is propagated in the cycle. Inspired by the work of Ernst Barlach, Kollwitz had turned towards woodcuts as a medium for this series and adopted a number of expressionist effects like simplification and distortion to facilitate a direct communication with the viewer. According to Prelinger (1992), the influence of the
expressionist movement in her work was limited to the war cycle and to political posters, where it was apparent in the intensity of emotional content that links this part of her work to early expressionism. Her engagement with social and political issues was a concern that she shared with the second generation of expressionists. Expressionism as an art movement that encompassed all cultural media arose as a reaction to established artistic conventions, which had been initiated and institutionalised by the German bourgeoisie to promote a feeling of national identity (Lenman 1997). Being part of a number of anti-capitalist avant-garde revolts in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century, the expressionists promoted a focus that was on the subjective experience and a drive towards social transformation while seeking to attack the established norm, values and institutions of the established artistic conventions (Kellner 1983). Kellner (1983) highlights that Expressionism had its greatest impact in Germany due to the fact that industrialisation and the spread of capitalism was particularly rapid and uneven, resulting in a social atmosphere that was filled with tensions. Kellner describes how Expressionists critically confronted modernity, featured the effect of the new means of transportation and urban living and explored the developing mass media, using film to reflect the pace and layered complexity of the modern experience. While the middle classes had established the narrative of the idealized nation as being rooted in a mythical past, the expressionists, in order to face the crises of industrial reality, had to oppose and deconstruct this idea by challenging the established norms and with it the Bourgeois society and its conservative, militaristic and nationalistic tendencies (Kellner 1983). What separated Kollwitz from other expressionist artists was her affinity to the naturalist tradition from which she emerged and the fact that she was integrated into the establishment by being a member of the secession and a professor at the Prussian Academy of Fine Art. Prelinger (1992) highlights that while many avant-garde artists like the expressionists had lost the connection to the general population, it was one of Kollwitz’ main concerns to be accessible to a large audience. Kollwitz was unlike other expressionist artists by being fully integrated into her social environment, and she was accepted by the public because her work fitted well into the mode of socially oriented imagery that had been promoted by artists of the previous generation like Menzel and Liebermann. While she pursued her own figurative style, her engagement with socially inspired themes was a result of both her upbringing and her later life experiences. Like her contemporaries, Kollwitz was not only sensitive to the tensions of her time, but often felt herself emotionally affected by what she called ‘political misery’. She talks in her diaries about gloomy moods and depression, recognises similar afflictions in her colleagues and gives witness to a social and political atmosphere that was disturbed and increasingly oppressive (Frank 1982: 51).

The woodcut ‘Das Volk’ is one of few German cultural productions that address the experience of World War I. Other works that refer to the war directly include the autobiographical account by Remarque, *Im Westen nichts Neues* (All Quiet on the Western Front) (1929), and the work of expressionist painters like George Grosz, Otto Dix and Max Beckmann who used a satirical approach. Expressionist films reflected the experience of war indirectly like *Der müde Tod* (Destiny) by Lang (1921), which focuses on the experience of loss, grief and fate; *Der letzte Mann* (The
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Last Laugh) by Murnau (1924), which addresses the feeling of shame and loss of social status; and Hamlet by Gade and Schall (1921), which gives expression to the experience of disillusion in regards to civilization and progress.

2.4.5.3 ‘Das Volk’ (1922) by Käthe Kollwitz
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2.4.5.4 Text based and formal analysis

The woodcut Das Volk is part of a series of woodcuts by Käthe Kollwitz under the heading Krieg (War). The application of a narrative analysis to the woodcut is limited because the work is of a non-time-based nature. But it does capture a moment in time and is narrative in character, therefore some of the methodology applied to earlier cultural examples can be used.

The subject of the narration of the woodcut is indicated by its title Das Volk (The People) and so refers to the collective. Being part of the Krieg (War) cycle, it is implied that war is also part of the narrative and indirectly present in the depiction through its effect on the subject. According to Ricoeur (1984), narrative texts deal with the temporal character of human experience and describe a change in situation. The effect of war onto the subject of the woodcut, the people, can be seen as this change. We don’t know what the situation of the subject was like before the change happened but must guess by the reaction of the depicted individuals to the experience of war: it is clearly a change for the worse. According to Toolan (1988), ‘character traiting’ can be through adjectives or inferred from action, which helps to identify the character either as a ‘victim’ or a ‘villain’. In this case, the character of the individuals that make up the collective of Das Volk is described in their reaction to the experience of war, shown through their posture and through the expression of their faces. We can identify 7 individuals in the woodcut, 6 of them being adults. One of the adults cloaked in black is in the centre of the frame with a child underneath half covered by the cloak. The other adults, which can be identified as males, surround the central character, their faces crowded into the upper part of the image. Their emotions portrayed through facial expression and body language range from pain and agony to fear and worry and show the extreme impact of a challenging experience. Being at the receiving end of an action, in this case the destructive actions of war, these adult characters can clearly be identified as ‘victims’. The child, alone in the lower half of the picture and partially covered by the cloak, appears vulnerable and can be seen as a ‘potential victim’. The cloaked figure, which seems to be the child’s mother, stands in contrast to the other adult figures. In order to protect the child she meets the destructive experience in the more active stance of a defensive opposition and cannot be seen as a direct ‘victim’. Her upright body, stiff hand and mask like face with an expression that is hardened by defiance appears in contrast to the other adults, whose faces, hands and posture are contorted in agony. To express the emotional turmoil of their experience, the wood is cut in such a way that the white lines of the surface appear as curves and zigzags that are multi-directional as well as disjointed and distorted. Waves and zigzagging lines in the corners of the background continue this motion. The cloaked figure is characterised by straight, slightly curved and mostly symmetrical lines on her face and hands that are clearly ordered giving her an appearance of resolute determination while standing in the midst of emotional turmoil. The child figure stands out through the round shapes of its peeping eyes and further curved regular lines of its curly hair and little nose. The child is thus made to appear innocent and is given emotional connotation. The collective of ‘the people’ that is depicted here is thereby split into 3 groups according to their different reaction to the
experience of war, expressed in the quality, treatment and composition of lines. The male adults are directly affected and victimised, experiencing pain, fear and agony; the cloaked female is indirectly affected, having become hardened and defensive; the child is still innocent and unharmed but in danger of becoming a ‘victim’. This impression of a split into 3 groups is further enhanced by the positioning of the characters within the frame. The men are in the upper half of the picture in the background and some are only partially visible, which gives an impression of lack of space that feels oppressive; the cloaked character is in the middle ground and fills the frame; the child is in the foreground and is surrounded by the mother’s hand and her cloak, both of which come from the middle- to the foreground to surround the child. Background, middle ground and foreground can thereby be read as representing the sequence of time in which war affects the collective, an effect that divides the group into gender and age groups. By a force that seems to come from behind the image, the men are affected first and in a way that is direct, the women later and indirect and the younger generation last. The hard and resolute expression on the face of the cloaked woman, her central upright and defiant position in the frame, the large black surface of her black cloak that is only interrupted by the partially visible face of the child, make her face the viewer in a way that is striking and seems to carry a message. Being the work of a female artist, who herself lost a son in the war, it can be read as a personal message from Kollwitz, who, through the example of the hooded figure, promotes a standpoint of active opposition in the face of war in order to protect that which is most precious to the collective, the younger generation⁵. The way in which the image is framed, cutting off some of the faces at the upper half, suggests that what is visible is only a small segment of a much larger picture, one that continues and extends to either side as well as to the top, thereby suggesting the large scale of the collective. Like in other expressionist woodcuts, the depiction is greatly reduced. Through this simplification, in which personal detail that could lead to individual identification is omitted as well as any reference to either place or time, the woodcut takes on an iconic character. It thereby represents an experience that is general and can, due to its simplicity, be read and understood by many. The stark black and white contrast, together with the reduction of means and the intensity of the content that is being expressed, facilitates a reception that is emotional as well as instant.

Other parts of the war cycle are Die Eltern (The Parents), Die Witwe (1+2) (The Widow), Die Mütter (The Mothers), Das Opfer (The Sacrifice) and Die Freiwilligen (The Volunteers).
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The Widow I

The Mothers

The Sacrifice

The Parents

The Widow II

The Volunteers
2.4.5.5 Conclusion to subchapter 2.4.5

‘Persons who compose collectivities broadcast symbolic representations of social events. These group representations can be seen as “claims” about the shape of social reality, its causes and the responsibilities for action such causes imply. The cultural construction of trauma begins with such a claim’ (Alexander 2004: 11).

Kollwitz as an artist speaks on behalf of her contemporaries and makes a claim in which the experience of World War I is represented as a trauma to the collective. The responsibility for action that she implies is an opposition to war and a critical confrontation towards National Socialist propaganda. The woodcut as a claim to the trauma of war gives a visual impression of a painful injury to the collective, it establishes the victims as being all members of society, represented by the men, the woman and the child in the woodcut. It attributes responsibility with the war itself and distributes the ideal and material consequences which is in this case a call to the collective to prevent a re-occurrence of the experience. As a fine art cultural production, the woodcut makes a claim in the aesthetic realm of the institutional arena where the claim needs to ‘be channelled by specific genres and narratives that aim to produce imaginative identification and emotional catharsis’ (Alexander 2004: 15).

Kollwitz chose the format of expressionism and a non-specific and simplified figurative depiction to enable all members of the population to engage with and to recognise themselves in the image. This format allows for direct communication of the highly charged emotional content giving expression to the feelings of fear, loss, injury and pain. While the woodcut had the potential to make a successful claim in the construction of cultural trauma, it does not seem to have had the expected effect. There are at least six significant reasons for this.

1) The narrative that Kollwitz was hoping to establish was in opposition to National Socialist propaganda. However, this propaganda itself had made a claim to trauma in relation to World War I, but had focussed on the shame that the defeat had caused and the way that this had affected the collective in its sense of identity. Alexander (2004) highlights the importance of this sense of identity, which he refers to as ‘patterned meanings of the collectivity’, in the context of cultural trauma construction and states that

‘traumatic status is attributed to real or imagined phenomena… because these phenomena are believed to have abruptly and harmfully affected collective identity… Only if the patterned meanings of the collectivity are abruptly dislodged, is traumatic status attributed to an event’ (Alexander 2004: 10).

Kollwitz made her claim from her own personal perspective as a woman addressing a female audience and by promoting, through the hooded figure in the centre of her woodcut, a stance of resistance and defiance. For a female audience, the human suffering and the potential loss of offspring portrayed in the woodcut would have had strong connotations. From the male perspective, however, it was the experience of shame, caused by previous defeat and the demands for reparation that was seen as traumatic because it was this that had affected the men in their sense of identity and
which outweighed the fear, loss and suffering of the war experience itself. As referred to in sub-chapter 2.3, large sections of the male population already felt alienated and socially dislocated and had become challenged in their sense of self within their social context (Hagemann 1997: 201, 202). The war propaganda that addressed this emotional need and promised a revision of identity through a redeeming victory was able to offer imaginative identification and emotional catharsis to the male population at the time and successfully claimed the defeat, not the war itself, as trauma.

2) The stance of active female defiance encouraged by the woodcut was clashing with the image of the passive and submissive woman that was promoted at the time due to a socio-political climate in which a tendency towards ‘hypergenders’ (Scheff 2007) was increasing.

3) The opposing narrative propagated by the Nazi party was better distributed: it was promoted through the institutional arena of mass media and state bureaucracy.

4) Kollwitz’ reception was biased because she was generally regarded as a socialist artist, which restricted her ability to communicate successfully.

5) The climate of socio-political controversies limited the political effectiveness of the cultural media in general.

6) The increase in censorship eventually inhibited a successful collective representation.

According to Alexander (2004: 8), ‘events are not inherently traumatic. Trauma is a socially mediated attribution’. The experience of World War I was not given traumatic status, although it had been extreme on the level of human loss and suffering, but the defeat and the humiliation that it caused was successfully represented and imagined as a collective trauma because, more than the war itself, this experience had ruptured the sense of identity of the collective. This perception reflected the perspective of German males, who were in a greater position of socio-political power than their female counterparts. In their eyes, war became a means to restore the lost honour and could not be imagined as negative.

As referred to in the previous sub-chapter, the sense of identity of German middle class men had already been affected by the rapid industrialisation that had been an experience of alienation for many and left ‘ideologically destabilised classes’ with ‘crumbling identities’ (Schulte-Sasse 1983: 93). That this sense of alienation was close to the experience of shame and already bore the potential for violence becomes apparent in a quote by Karl Marx, who stated in a letter to Ruge, while discussing German nationalism:

‘Shame is a kind of anger turned in on itself. And if a whole nation were to feel ashamed it would be like a lion recoiling to spring’ (Marx 1843 in Scheff 2007: 2).

Mosse describes how the defeat of World War I further undermined what he calls ‘the prestige of the nation’ (Mosse 1964: 237). This loss of prestige describes the collective experience of shame. That the National Socialist propaganda, which promoted war to restore the lost honour, was appealing to many confirms the theory by Scheff (2006) that unacknowledged shame or humiliation is ‘the hidden component
of rage and aggression’ and furthers outsider antagonism (Scheff 2006: 4). This tendency appeared in the form of racism and anti-Semitism, which according to Mosse (1964) had by then infiltrated Volkish ideology. Mosse states that ‘the war marks a crucial period in the history of Volkish thought’ while it was ‘widely disseminated before the war… it suddenly transformed into a politically effective system of thought’ and ‘acquired a mass base’ (Mosse 1964: 237). Kollwitz’ attempt to establish a counter-narrative in opposition to the National Socialist war propaganda could not be effective because it did not address the experience of shame and humiliation that had affected German men in their sense of identity more than war-afflicted loss and human suffering had done. Her claim therefore did not have the same emotional appeal. While Kollwitz’ attempt to make a counter-claim to cultural trauma in relation to World War I was unsuccessful during her lifetime, it is making a relevant contribution to collective memory today.

Notes to 2.5

1 When the German fleet was ordered to retrieve its honour in a final battle a mutiny broke out in Kiel that spread from the naval soldiers to the workers of the dockyard to the shop stewards, sending the spirit of revolution to every major city in an aim to establish a Socialist Republic (Pulzer 1997).

2 In the film Der Müde Tod (Destiny), a young woman finds Death in person who gives her the opportunity to win back the life of her beloved. According to Kaes (1993), this film, while in the format of a fairytale, through the connection of its subject matter - death, love, fate, sacrifice - can be read as referring to the experience of World War I (Kaes 1993: 50).

3 The film Der letzte Mann (The Last Laugh) describes the fate of a doorman of an upper class city hotel who, due to old age, loses his job and with it his uniform and social status and is given the duty of a washroom attendant. The film can be seen as a reflection of ‘Germany’s loss of pride and authority’ in World War I in which ‘the character becomes a representative of Wilhelmine Germany itself and his humiliation is the humiliation of that former Germany’ (Brockmann 2010: 78).

4 In the film Hamlet, produced by Asta Nielson in 1921, the protagonist is a woman who is dressed in men’s cloths and whose gender identity is revealed to the other characters only at the end of the film. According to Starks (2002), the film signalled the end of romantic notions of civilisations and progress that was caused by the experience of World War I and manifests the duality between the achievements of Western technology and its horrific potential. ‘The film is at once a testament to the memory of war, the shock of modern times, and the shattering of identity in the wake of modernity’ (Starks 2002: 200).

5 Kollwitz’ reaction to the news of her son’s death in battle is summed up in her diary in the quotation from Goethe ‘Saatfrüchte sollen nicht vermahlen werden’ (Seeds that
are meant for sowing are not to be ground) (Kollwitz in Frank 1982: 23). This line reappears frequently in her diary and shows her belief in the young generation as being the precious key for future creativity that needs to be safe-guarded at all cost.

6 An example of National Socialist propaganda that refers to World War I can be accessed using the following link:

http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/posters/niemals.jpg


2.4.6.1 Introduction

As the time period around World War II is most relevant for this research project, it is necessary to expand the format of enquiry to the analysis of two cultural production samples that make a claim to a cultural trauma and to include an extensive reference to the socio-political as well as cultural background. A literature review in relation to film and literature is therefore included, in addition to references that set the productions within their cultural context.

I will give a brief overview of the pre-war and war period according to Pulzer (1997) before referring to a study by Frei (2003) and to an article by Giesen (2004) in relation to Post-Second World War German politics and society. I will refer to Stephan (2008), Schnell (2008), Schlant (1999), Hahn (2005) and Santner (1990) in relation to Post-Second World War German literature and film and then look at the more immediate cultural context of each of the two cultural samples. This contextual perspective complemented by the findings of the textual analysis of both samples will enable me to assess to what extent each production was successful in its claim to a cultural trauma in this context. Further detailed reference to the methods used for the textual analysis of each of the cultural productions will be supplied prior to each analysis.

2.4.6.2 World War II

In the spring of 1933, Hitler and his National Socialist Party gained political legitimacy by winning 44% of the votes in the March elections and virtually unlimited power through the *Notstandsgesetze* (emergency decrees)\(^1\). According to Pulzer (1997), the triumph of the Nazis was related to their use and exploitation of sentiments that had grown among the population since 1800 and that had been strengthened by the education system. Those sentiments included a feeling of national solidarity, a yearning for a strong government, a dislike of urban industrial civilisation and anti-semitism\(^2\). Further contributing factors were the depression, which caused
economic hardship as well as social unrest, the fear of a Bolshevik revolution, the disregard of parliamentary democracy, which had been imposed on Germany from the outside, the resentment of defeat, and the lack of experience of the parliamentary leaders (Pulzer 1997: 128). According to Pulzer, the exclusion of Jews from state employment and the boycott of Jewish shops began after 1933 and culminated in the November pogrom in 1938 in which 96 Jews were killed, 20,000 arrested and many ill-treated in concentration camps. Repressive measures were implemented to control the German population, which increased further during 1942-43 leading to a total of about 16,000 civilian death sentences (Pulzer 1997: 147,155). Hitler, in disregard of the military clauses of the Versailles treaty, had reinstated conscription, had fully rearmed the country in 1935 and had started his politics of aggressive expansion which was to lead to the outbreak of war in September 1939 (Pulzer 1997: 147). According to Pulzer (1997), a state of war facilitated the implementation of racial policies starting with the euthanasia programme and leading to the order to exterminate all European Jews in 1942. In June 1944, after 5 years of conflict involving nations inside and outside of Europe, British, American and Canadian troops landed in Normandy, the Russian army launched their final offensive in January 1945, and, in April, Hitler and his closest associates, who had retreated into Bavaria, had to surrender to the allied forces unconditionally in May 1945. The country was in ruins, it had lost its army, and was without political authority. Pulzer (1997) states that

‘the German people found themselves without an answer to any of the questions that they had grappled with for the previous century and a half- their status as a nation, the form of their state or states, their place in the power structure of European states, their claim to the respect of their neighbours’ (Pulzer 1997: 162).

2.4.6.3 The social-political climate in Post-Second World War Germany

The German post-war population was also faced with the violent legacy of the National Socialist regime. Frei (2003) describes how political decisions affected the mental and emotional response of the general public towards the crimes against humanity that had been committed. Frei distinguishes three political approaches towards the Nazi past:

1) The politics of purge, which had lasted from 1945 to 1949 during the Allied occupation.
2) The period of Vergangenheitspolitik (politics of the past), as implemented by Adenauer.
3) The period of Vergangenheitsbewältigung (coming to terms with the past), as the critical approach in regards to the impact of Vergangenheitspolitik starting in the late 1950s and intensifying in the 1960s.

Frei (2003) describes the initial politics of post-war purges in which Nazi officials, bystanders and Nazi party members were confronted with their political guilt, resulting in the arrest of 100,000 Germans by the end of 1945 and the loss of a few hundred thousand civil servants. He refers to Adenauer’s implementation of
Vergangenheitspolitik, which completely abolished de-Nazification and granted amnesty and integration to former Nazi perpetrators (Frei 2003: 28, 29). Frei lists a series of political debates and decisions on the amnesty laws, starting with the debate on federal guidelines on what was called ‘the liquidation of de-Nazification’, and a further law in 1951 that reintegrated all civil servants that had lost their jobs in 1945, to a second amnesty law in 1954 that extended the offer to perpetrators who had permitted crimes from October 1944 to July 1945, thereby excluding the Endphase-Verbrechen from judicial investigation, to the release of leaders of SS Special Forces in 1958. According to Frei, those lenient and generous political measures affected the German public in its moral relation towards the legacy of its violent past, and promoted the idea of a new beginning (Schlußstrich) in which the collective, as well as individuals, were relieved from all responsibilities in this respect (Frei 2003: 30-33).

Adenauer’s Vergangenheitspolitik was in itself a response to public pressure; the general population, military circles and politicians lobbyist for war criminals, supported in their efforts by the Catholic and Protestant churches. Giesen (2004) comments on the collective silence and on the unusual absence of mourning that he sees as being caused by the sudden loss of self-respect and moral integrity that the disclosure of the Nazi atrocities had caused immediately after the war (Giesen 2004: 116). Giesen describes the two generations over which this silence extended as having been entangled in the Nazi regime in their own different ways. The first being born between the turn of the century and World War I, had experienced the economic crisis of 1929 in their youth and had voted for Hitler hoping for an economic and moral redemption of Germany after the ‘shame of Versailles’. Their background was not influenced by Nazi ideas and they had memories of the social and cultural world of their parents, the Weimar republic, which some had regarded as decadent and against which they had reacted with radical racism in a mission to save the world from the Jews. The second generation, born between 1920 and 1933, grew up in a world that was shaped by Nazism with few other alternatives on offer. Being part of Hitler Youth organisations they were educated in a radical militaristic system and saw themselves as the charismatic carriers of the National Socialist future of Germany. For this second generation the defeat of 1945 was even more traumatic as it destroyed both their world-view and their identity, leaving them for the first time faced with a public opinion in which Nazi ideologies were disregarded and rejected as criminal. Both generations reacted with collective silence for different reasons: the first because they had chosen to support the Nazi regime against their better knowledge; the second because they had not been given a choice and now felt betrayed and abused. Obvious facts were denied by both groups, and both maintained that they had not known about the mass murders. According to Giesen (2204), it had been fear, negligence and resentment that had kept Germans from focussing their attention on the disappearance of the Jews, and the ignorance and disregard before 1945 now turned into the silence of the post-war years. This silence was not only limited to informal communication but was also present in political rhetoric. The focus in the media was on the fate of prisoners of war rather than on concentration camps. Giesen (2004) describes how the formation of a new collective identity followed, that first saw the German nation as the victim of a demonised Hitler and then as a third party in the demarcation of
individual perpetrators. In a need to further reconstruct collective identity, the traumatized collective focussed on the timeless German virtues of discipline, sacrifice, honesty, reliability and industriousness. A continuation of that part of the Nazi ideology that was rooted in work and discipline was thereby made possible, which facilitated the post-war economic miracle (Giesen 2004: 125). Frei (2003) recounts that from the mid 1950s onwards, Vergangenheitspolitik was questioned by young people, liberal students and leftist politicians leading towards the development of the concept of Vergangenheitsbewältigung. The East German government provided and fostered the impetus for a critical analysis of the Nazi past in West-Germany and used the opportunity to discredit the Bonn Republic politically. Intellectuals such as Theodor Adorno and Karl Jaspers advocated education on the recent past in both the media and in schools, perpetrators were looked at more closely and a small but active network of politicians, lawyers, artists and intellectuals openly opposed the idea of a Schlußstrich (final stroke). The critical attitude of the children of the war towards their parents changed the social climate, culminating in the student revolt in 1968. Giesen (2004) describes how the 1960 Generation of young Germans who broke the coalition of silence by questioning their parents about the past, started to identify with the victims in an attempt to distance themselves from the German nation of perpetrators. Aiming to include the previously excluded, Jewish names became fashionable and socialist ideas were embraced enthusiastically. The anger of the 1968 student rebellion was aimed at the traumatic origins of German identity in an attempt to deconstruct it. Crushing the myth of a democratic start and that of the victimised German nation, a new narrative was constructed that charged the generation of their fathers with overt collaboration and stated the collective guilt of the German nation. The tension between generations developed into strong political conflicts with the conservative right insisting on the economic miracle as the new point of reference for collective identification while the new left and extra-parliamentary opposition referred directly to the crimes of the past (Giesen 2004: 127-129).

2.4.6.4 Film and literature in response to the Nazi past

‘The end of World War II… signified the end of an entire people’s understanding of themselves. So bitter was the defeat, so devastating the losses, so violent the reprisal, so one-sided the responsibility, so complete the stripping of the community’s ideals that there was little upon which its members could call in order to organize the complex set of emotions, pathologies, and desires that accompanied the loss’ (Shandley 2001: 1).

While German film had developed its own distinctive style during the Weimar period⁴, which had been influenced by the expressionist movement in the visual arts as well as by the development of psychoanalysis (Starks 2002: 190), it was compromised as a propaganda medium during the Third Reich. Using the background of destroyed and defeated Germany, a group of films now called Trümmerfilme (Rubble Films) portrayed the numerous social crises of the aftermath using the format of the romance, family melodrama, gangster and detective film, indirectly facing the problem of the ‘long shadow cast by the legacy of the Third Reich’ (Shandley 2001: 1). Shandley
states that while the Nazi past is mentioned in Rubble Films, the confrontation with personal and collective responsibility is omitted due to a climate of severe censorship, to the collective need for silence and because most filmmakers had their own share in the moral responsibility of having cooperated with the Nazi regime. Being part of the short transition period between the end of the war and the establishment of the two German states, Rubble Films were soon replaced by popular genre productions that reflected the values of German conservative consumer society (Hake 2008: 90). This transition resulted in a dramatic change in cinematic scenery moving from the destroyed urban landscape of the ‘Rubble Films’ into the imaginary rural setting of the *Heimatfilm* (homeland films). Avoiding a confrontation with reality, these films facilitated the long period of collective amnesia that followed. Rentschler (1985) describes how Hollywood productions, being part of the American occupation, established a hegemony in German cinemas and, as a consequence, in the imagination of the German population. This, together with the development of television, contributed further to the decline of German film. The situation was addressed at the Oberhausen Filmfestival in 1962 when a group of film enthusiasts called for a radical restructuring and redefinition of German filmmaking through the Oberhausen Manifesto (Silbermann 1995: 181). This call had been inspired by the New Wave movement in other European countries and was a reaction against inner political corruption, the Vietnam war, as well as the decline of the German film industry. In response to the demands of the manifesto, indigenous film schools were established out of which a new generation of German filmmakers emerged who questioned the established media and its representation of history (Rentschler 1985: 69), initiated a quest for alternative images and counter-representation (Rentschler 1985: 4) and raised socio-political issues while using artisanal forms of production (Knight 1992: 1). The writings of Adorno and other members of the Frankfurt School provided the theoretical base and were the foundation for discussions on the relationship between state apparatus, film form and mental structures (Trumpener 1990: 300).

Post-war German literature was similarly affected by the socio-political climate of the 1950s and 1960s. Schnell (2008) examined West German post-war lyrics and describes how the immediate aftermath of the war, in which the economy developed from reconstruction to the boom of the economic miracle, was experienced by German intellectuals as increasingly threatening. The communist party was banned, the working classes were demoralised, a confrontation with the fascist past was avoided, the army was reinstated, nuclear armament and industrialisation increased rapidly, all of which led towards a stabilisation of capitalism in Germany and the country’s integration into the Western nations and creating a socio-political climate that allowed no room for critical self-reflection. German writers distanced themselves from politics while the omnipresence of the memory of a violent past could be felt even in the forms of aesthetic escapism (Schnell 2008: 592). Schnell refers to nature-inspired poetry (*Naturlyrik*) that had developed in the pre-war years, continued to exist in the 1950s and was characterised by a perspective that furthered a retreat into the realm of flora and fauna and was often obsessed with details. It was this kind of literature that did not seem to have been affected by the war crimes, that Adorno criticised when he stated that it would be barbaric to write poetry after Auschwitz (Adorno 1949 in
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Weber and Weber (1967). Schnell (2008) names Gottfried Benn as one of the most prominent writers of Naturlyrik. Benn insists on a dualism between art and life in which poetry can exist unaffected by political occurrences. While Benn had stopped publishing during World War II, his work was rediscovered and was well received by a post-war audience that was eager to forget its recent past. Schnell (2008) names Peter Ruemkorf, Ilse Aichinger, Ingeborg Bachmann and Hans Magnus Enzensberger as young emerging writers that started to address and criticise the political reality of both past and present. Enzensberger’s poetry goes so far as to make the social-politics of post-war Germany the main focus of his writing, questioning and provoking the status quo and demanding answers to unpleasant questions. In this way, German poetry of the late 1950s had become, according to Schnell (2008), inspired by Brecht politically while maintaining a poetic outlook.

The considerable influence of Brecht on post-war theatre and literature makes a brief discussion of his work necessary. According to Stefan (2008), Brecht was initially influenced by expressionism and experimented with alternative forms of expression that contained anarchic and nihilistic undertones. From 1926/27 onwards, he became dedicated to Marxism, which inspired his entire artistic production (Stefan 2008: 431, 432). Like many other intellectuals that were outspoken in their critique of National Socialism, Brecht had to leave Germany in the 1940s. But during his time in exile he was at his most productive. Stefan (2008) describes Brecht’s creative approach, one in which he saw himself more as a producer than as an author, and in which he made use of the works from previous literary traditions as well as of the talents of the men and women who surrounded him. This included Helene Weigel, Elisabeth Hauptmann, Margarete Steffin, Ruth Berlau as well as Lion Feuchtwanger, George Grosz, Carl Zuckmayer, Paul Hindemith, Kurt Weil, Walter Benjamin and Paul Dessau, among many others. All of Brecht’s exile productions were aimed at fighting fascism and to stir the German population out of their apathetic stance towards political violence. Brecht believed in the dialectical materialism on which the Marxist perspective is based and understood fascism as the most degenerated form of capitalism. He further developed the concept of didactic drama and created a form of epic theatre that teaches new ideas and political insights while being entertaining. Forms of alienation were introduced to create a distance that further critical awareness rather than emotional identification and to promote a learning that would lead to social and political change. His plays, of which The Three Penny Opera (1928), Mother Courage (1939), The Caucasian Chalk Circle (1944), The Good Person of Szechwan (1943) and Life of Galileo (1947) are among the most known, not only lay bare the connection between economic, political and historical events but also address the social psychology of fascism in which a distorted perception of reality affects all relations (Stefan 2008: 471-476). Brecht returned in 1948 to what was then East Berlin where he continued to stage, against much resistance, his productions of epic theatre (Schnell 2008: 507, 509).

Schlant (1999) examined West-German post-war prose and describes how Trümmerliteratur (Rubble literature), like Trümmerfilme (Rubble Films), developed after 1945 and how this literature attempted to articulate the experiences of the
German population during and after the war. As a result of the German language having been compromised by ideological distortions during the Nazi regime, writers who were trying to make their literary debut after 1945 returned to the literature of the Weimar Republic and Expressionism and used American writers like William Faulkner and Ernst Hemingway for inspiration. In their search for a new language, emerging writers like Heinrich Böll and Wolfgang Borchert developed a spare colloquial style. The struggle for an uncompromised narrative representation was, according to Schlant (1999), not always successful. Schlant refers to Böll’s early work and his first novel *Where were you Adam?* (1951) in this context. She criticised that while the title of the novel calls for individual accountability, the war is used as an excuse for the lack of personal responsibility, and the common soldier is protected by a dualistic and simplistic conception that insists on his non-involvement in crimes against humanity. Also, Böll’s description of Jewish protagonists echoes an indoctrinated stereotypical perspective. According to Schlant (1999), it was Böll’s view that the emphasis was on the ill-fated victims. Questions about the past remained unaddressed. This reflected the stance of the general public and made Böll a successful writer. In his later career, Böll became an outspoken activist, sympathised with the student rebellion and criticised post-war consumer society (Schlant 1999: 25-36).

Schlant (1999) contrasts Böll with Wolfgang Koeppen who had started writing before the war and was able to draw on an uncompromised literary heritage. His reintroduction of avant-garde writing to the German public, through which he presented a highly critical view of German post-war society, gave his work a negative reception. Koeppen portrays the atmosphere of the 1950s in his novel *Death in Rome* in which Adenauer’s *Vergangenheitspolitik*, with the political reinstatement of former Nazis and the anaesthetic effect of the economic miracle on the general population, prepares for the generational conflict of the student movement. His writing reflects the past as an enormous burden, causing a sense of destitution and the meaninglessness in Koeppen’s work. Koeppen’s style appears as the only response possible in the face of a violent past and a corrupted present and can be read as a severe criticism of Adenauer’s politics of restoration (Schlant 1999: 46-50).

Koeppen’s criticism was, according to Schlant (1999), echoed five years after the publication of *Death in Rome* by several novels, including *Marriages in Philippsburg* by Martin Walser (1957) which gives a morbid and cynical account of German post-war society and *The Tin Drum* by Günther Grass (1959), the first post-war West German novel to win international acclaim. Both novels share the criticism of German society as it evolves from the Nazi to the post-war period (Schlant 1999: 52). Schlant describes Grass as a politically engaged writer who, after taking part in the political activities of the student movement started to campaign for the Social Democrats in the 1970s. His novel *The Tin Drum* had gained him immediate national and international literary success. Grass had developed a new style of writing that was rooted in medieval literary traditions while seeking original modes of expression to reflect the experience of Nazism and genocide. His literary techniques include inversion, indirection, parody and irony as well as the use of the grotesque as a metaphor.
Despite the fact that Grass committed himself entirely to speaking out about and condemning Nazi genocide, Schlant perceives a lack of sensitivity towards the victims in the creative exuberance of his language, which she sees as evidence for an underlying lack of empathy (Schlant 1999: 69-71).

Schlant highlights that both the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem in 1961 and the Auschwitz trials in Frankfurt provided a new documentary language in which to speak about the Holocaust; this had a great impact on drama as well as literature, leading to the integration of documents and documentary elements into prose throughout the 1970s.

Schlant (1999) also discusses Alexander Kluge as the West German writer who pursued the most radical position in the field of documentary literature. Coming from the political left, Kluge built on Brecht and on his belief in the didactic power in art but goes beyond Brecht’s modernist aesthetics by the radical development of techniques of distancing. His film and prose share, according to Schlant (1999), an element of decenteredness: the lack of principal characters or plots brings together a collection of seemingly unrelated discourses, images and sounds ranging from theoretical texts, fairy tales, philosophical statements to prose in an endeavour to abolish narrative boundaries. Schlant highlights that all of Kluge’s narratives focus on the Nazi era and the post-war period and see the Holocaust as a result of the social alienation and isolation caused by an inhuman imperialist structure and rapid industrialisation. Using a format in which differences between literary and documentary materials are dismissed and special attention is paid to the gaps within the elements of his collages, Kluge demonstrates the subjective nature of all discourse. He thereby reflects the un-narratability of events and the disruptive effect of the Holocaust on narrative traditions leading to the deconstruction of language in which ruptures, gaps and fragmentations become central features (Schlant 1999: 57, 58). Despite his political engagement, Kluge's perspective is criticised by Schlant for its emotional distance in which he avoids a direct confrontation with the Holocaust and a clear ethical position towards that event and the racist ideology that made its occurrence possible.

Schlant (1999) mentions Rolf Hochhuth, who contributed towards the development of documentary prose with his novels A German Love Story (1978) and his play Jurists (1979), in which he uses documents to accuse post-war society of glossing over Nazi crimes (Schlant 1999: 56). Hochhuth’s accusation had political consequences and led to the resignation of the Minister President of Baden-Württemberg, Hans Karl Filbinger. Hochhuth’s writing is concerned with the practice of denunciation, which made a substantial contribution to the implementation of fascist practices in Nazi Germany. While denouncers were not tried or held responsible for their deeds in the post-war years, Hochhuth in his novel A German Love Story (1978) reconstructs in documentary style the effects of denunciation on the lives of the victims and describes a social climate of repression, amnesia and denial in which the eagerness to execute orders lead to the disregard of any human concerns (Schlant 1999: 150).
Like Hochhuth, Gert Hofmann's writing focuses on the practice of denunciation and on the consequences for both the victims and the social climate as the concept of a common humanity is lost. Several of Hofmann’s narratives are either set in or recall the years of the Hitler regime and render a portrayal of deeply traumatised characters. Hofmann uses multiple perspectives, ellipses and ruptured sentences to portray the fragmented nature of memory and to reflect a sense of disorientation. Accidents are characterised by repetition and synchronicity and are only registered as effects to which the cause is not accessible, thereby reflecting the power of anonymity and the impossibility of tracing the denunciators in a world that has ceased to be human (Schlant 1999: 151-153, 163, 165).

Schlant describes the German students of the 1960s as the first post-war generation not to have been implicated in the crimes of the Nazi regime. Being in this way protected from fully confronting the Holocaust, this generation worked, according to Schlant, through the legacy of the Nazi past from the perspective of their leftist orientation, seeing fascism as the most reactionary and imperialistic development of capitalism (Schlant 1999: 54). According to Schlant, it was by attacking the parents that the student protests created a distance in which the confrontation with the suffering of the victims was avoided. In the climate of introspection that followed, attacks were replaced by a quest for self-identity that led towards the development of a literature of self-exploration. The awareness that emerged at this point saw, according to Schlant, a connection between the individual, the subjective and the collective historical experience as leading to a form of ‘individual historiography’ in which the individual subject reflects the experience of its society (Schlant 1999: 58). Novels about fathers and mothers (Väterliteratur) emerged that expressed the rage of the authors against the personally sustained injuries of their authoritarian upbringing that was experienced as connected to the fascist past. While psychopathological family interactions are laid bare, the critical awareness of the way in which authoritarian family structure and fascist political practices are interlinked is, according to Schlant (1999), in most cases missing.

Schlant refers to Hermann Lenz whose novels did not initially find a wide audience but were discovered and promoted by the Austrian writer Peter Handke in 1973 at a time when his rigorous subjective style suited a climate within German literature where the focus was on the personal experience. In distinction to other autobiographical writers of the 1980s, Lenz’s self-exploration is motivated by an examination of his own experiential faculties rather than by a search for a social and personal identity (Schlant 1999: 125). Born in 1913, Lenz spent his youth as a soldier in World War II. Withdrawn into his own personal reality and absent-minded towards his social and political environment, he displays, according to Schlant, the characteristics of the apolitical German that goes back to the mid-19th century. His writing is autobiographical, mostly based on his own diaries that he transformed into a narrative using a third person perspective, and is at times broken by a dialoguing second person. For Lenz, writing is a way of processing his personal experiences, and it is through close observation and attention to detail that his working through the Nazi past is facilitated. His work portrays the workings of memory and records
silences, so demonstrating the processes that were used to avoid the confrontation with the knowledge of a deeply disturbing reality (Schlant 1999: 129).

Schlant refers to the reception of the American TV series *Holocaust* (1979), which coincided with the emergence of autobiographical novels and was, despite the fact that it was a foreign commercial and sentimentalised production, able to touch and move German audiences and to engender the sense of empathy that all other indigenous cultural productions had failed to create (Schlant 1999: 97). For Hahn (2005), the television series triggered a distinct change in perspective in what can be called the ‘culture of remembrance’ among the post-war population, making a valuable contribution in facilitating collective learning because it redresses German family history in which references to the Judeocide had been omitted (Hahn 2005: 281).

Hahn refers in his study to Non-Jewish German literature and film since the appearance of the series. He mentions the novel *Das Judasschaf* (1985) by Anne Duden as an example of gender-specific writing from a ‘female subject position’ in which German post-fascist society and hegemonic discourses are reflected through a deconstructive form of writing that is close to an autobiographical account. It is the personal trauma of growing up in post-war Germany, rather than the experience of the Holocaust victims, that is the subject of the novel. The suffering of the victims is excluded, and the knowing of the Holocaust is portrayed as part of the more general catastrophic history of mankind, a perspective from which, according to Hahn, the question of guilt and responsibility cannot be addressed (Hahn 2005: 157,184). Hahn refers to the work of Martin Walser and describes how Walser had attained the public image of an expert in relation to the Holocaust since he had written a commentary to the Auschwitz trials at Frankfurt in 1965. According to Hahn (2005), it is towards the end of the 1970s that his speeches and essays, and even the texture of his novellas, started to contain nationalistic undertones and reflected his attempts to de-realise German collective guilt and to portray the national collective as victimised by its own notion.

Hahn (2005) recognises a similarly distorted perspective in the film *Our Hitler* (1977) by Hans-Jürgen Syberberg. Syberberg works through the theme of National Socialism and Hitler using musical, visual and textual impressions that occur simultaneously and are inspired by a Wagnerian aesthetic, creating a mythical and multidimensional art piece that reflects the kind of fascination that National Socialism might have had for the German population. Hahn (2005) misses the lack of critical analysis on the way in which National Socialism politicised aesthetics. He sees in Syberberg’s film an arrangement of an abundance of images that portray a lack of critical awareness on the way in which National Socialism politicised aesthetics and in which the victims of the Holocaust have no voice. He criticises Syberberg’s use of antidemocratic, nationalistic and anti-Semitic patterns of interpretation and sees therefore the film as belonging to a nationalist discourse that was always part of the confrontation with the National Socialist heritage and its violent legacy (Hahn 2005: 39). For Santner (1990), *Our Hitler* is a ‘grandiose refusal to mourn’ (Santner 1990: 147). Santner sees Syberberg’s film as a representation of the ideas, discourses and phantasms of the German collective psyche during Nazism, as rendered through iconographic composition,
emblematic objects and music, to facilitate the mourning of the loss of the idealised Hitler. Syberberg’s strategy of trying to repair the damaged identity of German culture is, according to Santner (1990), more akin to exorcism and neither facilitates heightened awareness nor emotional engagement.

Santner (1990) discusses the 16-hour television series Heimat (1984) by Edgar Reitz, which was conceived as a German antidote to the American television series Holocaust and promotes a film aesthetic that is based on authentic recollections in contrast to the commercial and industrial production that referred to stereotypes. The series was initially received enthusiastically by television audiences and did well at national and international festivals. According to Reitz (1983), the film is meant to tell a story rather than to moralise, and aims to give the audience the opportunity to recognise its own numbness to the experience of loss that Reitz sees as the main source of violence in history (Reitz 1983 in Santner 1990: 96). Reitz belongs to the generation of New German filmmakers, he was one of the signatories of the Oberhausen Manifesto and he collaborated in various projects with Kluge. His focus is on the local and micro-sociological situation as a reflection of the larger workings of history (Santner 1990: 58). In Heimat, a small village in the Hunsrück is portrayed in its changes over an extensive period of time (1919-1982), so providing a view of history from below. The film reflects an approach of decentralisation that is congruent with tendencies of the political, aesthetical and academic practices of the 1970s and 1980s in which grand narratives were called into question by a perspective in which the local, regional and subjective experiences were privileged, paying attention to oral history and personal documentation. Two archetypal protagonists are portrayed in succession: Maria, who carries the values of a past folkloric time; and Hermann, who leaves the villages to enter the city and its modern living. Experiences of separation from the village and its idyllic microcosm are portrayed as traumatic and the effect of modern life style and technology as alienating. Santner (1990) sees Reitz’s effort to facilitate the mourning of experiences of separation undermined by a dualistic perspective that sets American culture against the idealised memory of an authentic rural German setting (Santner 1990: 89). Santner (1990: 91) misses the absence of a vision in which local structures can empower and play an active part in the production of history rather than being at the receiving end as passive victims, and misses the rendering of an autonomous array of viewpoints that would have suited an approach that favours oral history. Santner criticises the film’s narrative discourse for being complicit with the blind spots of oral history by assigning a subordinate and marginal position to the Holocaust. In some scenes, Reitz portrays the existence of these blind spots to show how experiences construct themselves around them; in other scenes, he plays down the extent of suffering that is connected to the event by equating it to other suffering that is caused by the war. According to Santner (1990), Heimat tries to restore the damaged collective identity using a discourse of denial, thereby omitting to explore and raise an awareness of the cause of rupture.
2.4.6.5 Germany Pale Mother (1980) by H. Sanders-Brahms

2.4.6.5.1 Introduction

The film Germany Pale Mother was chosen as a further example in which a claim to a cultural trauma is made from a female perspective, this time in relation to the experience of fascism and World War II. This film is particularly relevant in the context of this thesis because it portrays the post-traumatic symptom of dissociation in its relationship to violence and promotes association, compassion and empathy.

2.4.6.5.2 Contextual analysis

The film Germany Pale Mother by Helma Sanders-Brahms (1981) reflects, like some of the post-war West German literature with which it was contemporary, a collective experience through a subjective account. The film can be seen as part of the New German Women’s cinema, which was inspired by the woman’s liberation movement and developed out of New German Cinema during the late 1970s and 1980s. Anton Kaes (1989) identifies two central thematics of New German Women’s Cinema:

1) A search for female identity, separation from mother, settling of accounts with the father, gender-specific historiography and the perspective of memory in the late 1970s.
2) A search for identity as a way back to one’s own mother, the gesture of memory and a coming to terms with a national past that is reflected and inscribed in personal biography in the 1980s.

The film Germany Pale Mother by Sanders-Brahms fits into the second group of productions. The immediate reception of the film at its premier at the 30th Berlin Film Festival was, according to Möhrmann (1995), scandalous, while the response of the general public was in many cases highly critical. Möhrmann relates the reason for this extreme reaction to the fact that the film breaks a number of taboos. For example, the graphic depiction of childbirth and the rape of the mother by allied soldiers. The film also challenges current perspectives by creating a mother paradigm that calls a male-dominated world into question, and the film mixes two conflicting discourses: the private and the political. A further misreading of the film can be attributed to it being perceived as a feminist film. This misperception was facilitated by a number of factors of which the three most relevant are as follows:

1) The film establishes the relationship between the personal and the political, a perspective that had previously been promoted by the women’s liberation movement.
2) Sanders-Brahms was one of the emerging women filmmakers, many of whom, like Heike Sanders, were feminists.
3) The film portrays a mother-daughter relationship from the perspective of the daughter.
In a conversation with the American journalist Peter Brunette (1990), Sanders-Brahms states that she does not see herself as a feminist filmmaker and that she sees true artistic emancipation as being above the gender divide. She also criticises feminists for being limited to their own middle class, childless perspective, one that lacks appreciation of the life circumstances of average women and mothers (Sanders-Brahms in Brunette 1990: 39). Möhrmann (1995) explains that feminist critics who expected a portrayal of female characters that supported the emergence of a new female self-confidence were dismayed by the fact that the film’s female protagonist appears as weak and victimised. The perspective promoted by Sanders-Brahms in her film facilitates understanding and compassion rather than accusation. She was, however, reproached for being compliant with the denial of the fascist legacy, especially by non-German critics. Sanders-Brahms was further criticised for her use of melodramatic codes, as New German cinema was expected to question the conventional media and its established formats.

2.4.6.5.3 Text-based analysis of Germany Pale Mother

The film Germany Pale Mother consists of a number of texts that have to be analysed in conjunction. The film itself is the main text and contains two complete, what I will refer to as ‘minor texts’: the poem ‘Germany’ by Bertolt Brecht, and the fairytale ‘The Robber Bridegroom’ from the Brothers Grimm collection. The film also contains text fragments: the exercises in handwriting by Anna, the daughter. I will give a short summary of the film’s plot, briefly refer to the poem by Brecht and mainly focus on the fairytale ‘The Robber Bridegroom’ because this contains the key to the analysis of the film’s narration. For the fairytale, I will use a method of narrative analysis developed by Greimas (1966) and an interpretation of its motifs based on the concept of archetypes and symbols by C. G. Jung (1959, 1964) before establishing a relationship to the narrative element of the film and the fragmented writing.

The film Germany Pale Mother gives a narrative account of the filmmaker’s mother Lene’s striving for happiness in an environment of violence and oppression before, during and after World War II as seen through the eyes of her daughter and accompanied by her voice-over. The narrative shows how Lene meets her husband Hans, gets married, experiences her husband’s conscription and departure, gives birth to her daughter Anna during air raids, loses their home during a bomb attack, wanders through Germany with her young daughter during which Lene is raped by Allied soldiers, sees her father’s return, experiences the social tensions and emotional violence in both family and society after the War, falls ill and attempts suicide.

The poem ‘Germany’ by Bertolt Brecht (1933) which, read by Brecht’s daughter, introduces the film and from which the title derives, refers to the collective violence of the Nazi regime and describes the German nation through the metaphorical image of a mother and the different social groups as her sons.
Germany, Bertolt Brecht
Translation John Willett (1987) (first 3 verses only)

Let others speak of their disgrace,
I am speaking of my own.

O Germany, pale mother!
How you sit defiled
Among the peoples.
Among the besmirched
You stand out

Of your sons the poorest
Lies struck down.
When his hunger was great
Your other sons
Raised their hands against him.
This is now notorious.

This poem raises awareness of the shame that has come over the mother as the brothers have murdered the most vulnerable among them. The poem thereby sets the film in time and relates it to the Holocaust, introducing a perspective in which the Jewish population is portrayed as one of many sons of the nation. The murder of the Jews is in this way seen like an injury that the collective inflicted on itself. The metaphorical image of the mother, which represents the nation, links the poem to the narrative of the film where the focus is on the mother of the filmmaker.

The fairytale ‘The Robber Bridegroom’ is told in the film by Lene to Anna, who is about four years old, while both are wandering through Germany after the war.

In the tale, a miller’s beautiful daughter is promised in marriage to a wealthy suitor who turns out to be a murderer in disguise, from whom she has to flee and whose identity she has to expose at her wedding celebration. This tale can be examined using the model of Greimas (1966) in which a ‘subject’, an ‘object of desire’, a ‘villain’, a ‘helper’ and a ‘superhelper’ can be identified. According to Ricoeur (1984), narrative texts deal with the temporal character of human experience and describe a change in situation. The change in circumstances described in the fairytale can be identified as the moment when the miller agrees to give his daughter in marriage to the suitor: this introduces happiness as the ‘object of desire’. The suitor who enters into the narrative, introduces change by offering happiness in a deceitful manner, which marks him as the ‘villain’. While the father believes that he is doing well to marry his daughter to an apparently wealthy man, the daughter cannot relate to or trust the suitor and feels horror when she is in his presence. It becomes clear that the daughter is the ‘subject’ of the narrative, that the change that occurred is a change for the worse and that her strife is to regain her lost happiness. This strife takes her to the root of the deceit: the bridegroom's house to which he invites her and that she has to find in the middle of a dark forest. While the bridegroom has strewn ashes to guide her to his abode, the girl drops peas and lentils on her way to ensure that she can retrieve her way home. When she finds the dark and solitary house, a caged bird that hangs at its
entrance warns her and urges her to turn back. The bird, being non-human, can be seen as the ‘superhelper’, and its magical powers are its ability to speak. The girl disregards the warning and enters the house, which she finds empty, and continues her search down into the cellar. There she comes across an old woman, who reveals to her the true nature of her deceitful betrothed. The girl learns that the bridegroom is at the head of a gang of men that murder, dissect and eat women and that she is about to become one of their victims. The old woman who not only explains the situation to the girl but also sides with her and promises to protect and save her, can be identified as the ‘helper’ who will assist the girl/subject in regaining her lost happiness/object of desire’. When the gang of men enter, the girl, who has been hidden by the old woman, witnesses the murder of another young woman. When a finger with a golden ring of the murdered woman falls into the girl’s bosom, she keeps it as evidence. Once the gang is sleeping deeply, the old woman and the girl manage to leave the house and follow the path of sprouted peas and lentils through the dark forest and home to the mill. On her arrival the girl tells her father everything. The wedding is celebrated shortly afterwards and each guest is asked to relate a story as part of the celebration. The bride’s turn comes and she tells of her visit to the house in the forest, as if it was a dream. When she comes to the point of the story when the ring is cut off the murdered woman and falls into her bosom, she presents the finger to the wedding guests, thereby proving that she had been the witness of a real event. The bridegroom leaps up and tries to escape and so reveals himself as the murderer of the story. His deceit having been exposed, he and his gang are brought to justice and the initial happiness is restored, the ‘object of desire’ found.

According to C. G. Jung, ‘archetypes appear in myths and fairytales just as they do in dreams’ (Jung 1959: 153), ‘an archetypal content expresses itself, first and foremost in metaphors’ (Jung 1959: 157) and ‘all mythical figures correspond to inner psychic experiences’ (Jung 1959: 256). The three most important archetypal figures that the fairytale uses are the following:

1) The girl or maiden, which Jung describes as the counterpart to the mother archetype, who can appear under a variety of aspects including positive meanings like fertility, wisdom and female authority (Jung 1959: 185).
2) The old woman, who can be seen as belonging to the archetype of the old man/old woman and representing ‘knowledge, reflection, insight, wisdom, cleverness and intuition… and… moral qualities such as goodwill and readiness to help’ (Jung 1959: 222). The old woman can also be seen as representing the mother archetype, and the meeting of the maiden and the old woman can be seen as part of what Jung calls the ‘individuation process’ in which the individual is formed as a whole in the harmonizing encounter of unconsciousness and consciousness (Jung 1959: 288, 289). Jung states that in the interconnection between daughter and mother, the daughter ‘experiences a place and a meaning in the life of the generations’ and is ‘rescued from her isolation and restored to wholeness’ (Jung 1959: 188).
3) The Robber Bridegroom, who can be seen as representing the archetype of the trickster, which Jung describes as ‘a collective shadow figure, a summation of all the inferior traits of character in individuals’ (Jung 1959: 270).
Further relevant symbols are the house of the Robber Bridegroom and its being situated in the middle of a dark forest. According to Jung’s own dream analysis, the house can be seen as the representation of the psyche, in which the different floors stand for the different levels of consciousness (Jung 1964: 42-44). Being the house of the Robber Bridegroom, who as a trickster represents the negative character traits of the group, the house represents the collective psyche. Places of darkness in Jung’s interpretation can be seen as sources of life and of death (Jung 1959: 140, 147), while the woods can be seen as a place that inspires awe and devotion and can therefore be a mother symbol (Jung 1959: 81).

Synthesising the symbolic and archetypal meaning of the fairytale’s main narrative elements, an interpretation can now be made. What has significantly changed is that the fairytale’s characters no longer stand for individuals. The maiden is only one part of the mother archetype, and her meeting and siding with the old woman is part of the individuation process in which wholeness is restored. The trickster represents the collective of the German nation, with all its inferior character traits. The fact that the trickster is male and dissects and eats women in the company of other males shows that the negative character traits of the collective have affected gender relations and are also in opposition to the ‘individuation process’ by destroying wholeness through the act of dissection. We are, therefore, looking at two opposing forces. A force that destroys and divides and a force that restores wholeness and leads back to happiness.

Combining the narrative analysis of Greimas’ (1966) model and the interpretation of symbols and archetypes of Jung (1959, 1964), the fairytale can now be read and formulated like a set of instructions. A loss of happiness has occurred due to collective character traits that divide and destroy. To restore the lost happiness it is necessary to venture to the collective psyche and into the depth of its unconsciousness. The steps that are being taken to facilitate this exploration need to be recorded with care so that they can be retraced to ensure a safe return. Having reached the unconscious of the psyche, one needs to find and unify with the complementary part of one’s self. Through the restoration of one’s wholeness one gains a position of strength, which enables the facing and witnessing of the destructive forces of the collective and includes the collection of evidence. Then one needs to return to the collective and bear witness to the destructive and dividing actions that are taking place. Witnessing happens through account and through the presentation of evidence. In this way, the awareness of the collective is raised and the deceit is exposed. The ongoing action of division and destruction is brought to an end and wholeness and happiness are restored.

In the series of actions that eventually facilitate the girl’s retrieving happiness, her narration plays a role that is central and reveals how the fairytale relates to the film as text. The narration of the girl at the wedding celebration can itself be seen as a ‘minor text’ to the ‘minor text’ of the fairytale, which reflects the film as text. Likewise, the girl’s telling of her story is a reflection of the director’s account of her experience through the medium of the film. Sanders-Brahms is making herself the ‘hero/subject’
of the film’s narration and is, like the girl in the fairytale, striving to restore her lost happiness by revealing the deceit that has occurred through raising awareness of the divisive collective character traits that cause destruction. The ‘object of desire’ in the film is like happiness in the fairytale and deceit, the divisive collective character traits, is an occurrence that leads to the loss of happiness. While deceit appears in the fairytale personified in the Robber Bridegroom, who is thereby clearly identified as the ‘villain’, the divisive collective character traits also appear as deceit in the film on a variety of levels, as a distortion of reality that has lead the German nation into Fascism, through the voice of Hitler and through Ulrich, a friend of the father who behaves and acts in a deceitful manner. The ‘villain’ in the film is thereby not only one person but the collective character traits that have a deceiving and destructive effect. The girl’s quest into the dark forest, mirrors the film-maker’s exploration of the German past through the medium of the film. The girl’s finding and exploring the house reflects the film-maker’s exploration of the national psyche, the girl’s finding and connecting with the old woman in the cellar mirrors Sanders-Brahms’ own attempted individuation process in the connection with her mother that she tries to establish through the film by focusing on her mother as the main character and by addressing and talking to her continuously through the voice-over narration. Lene, the mother in the film, is identifiable as the helper. It is this close personal connection to her mother that gives the film-maker a position of strength out of which she can face the destructive nature of the collective violence of the German past. The link between the violence of the Nazi regime and the fairytale is established in the film by the fact that Anna and Lene are walking through a derelict brick factory while Lene is narrating the tale to her daughter. As brick factories were used as crematoria in concentration camps and Lene’s accounts of the story has reached the point when the maiden is in the murderer’s house, the association to the collective violence of the German past is made. The connection between the fairytale and the social violence of Lene’s reality is established by the fact that her narration is interrupted by her being raped by two passing Allied soldiers. The format of the film itself reflects the narration of the maiden, who on the one hand declares that her account is only a dream, on the other presents evidence that proves that it was indeed a real occurrence. Sanders-Brahms’ use of an epic narrative structure in which she includes at times melodramatic elements, gives the impression that the content of the narration is imaginative. The intersection of documentary footage, the autobiographical nature of the narration and her own presence in the voice-over are however, like the finger in the fairytale, evidence that proves that what has been accounted has really happened.

In this way Sanders-Brahms reveals the deceit/the occurrence of collective divisive and destructive action and she attempts to restore wholeness through the very fact that she has made the film, which mirrors the narration of the girl on her return home, and through her approach used, which mirrors the quest of the girl into the dark forest, the finding and exploring of the house, the finding and siding with the old woman.

The quest to restore wholeness can also be described as a quest to confront and remedy the effects of dissociation, one of the post-traumatic symptoms discussed in Chapter 1. The pathological consequences of dissociation include hysteria,
depression, neglect and affect withdrawal, substance abuse, and a variety of physical side effects. The film depicts the mother’s traumatisation and her response through dissociation, the pathological effects of dissociation on her physical and emotional well-being as well as on her relationship to her social environment and later to her daughter. The daughter/the film-maker, in contrast to her mother, reacts to the experience of trauma through processing by writing/film-making. The daughter counters her mother’s dissociation through association, which is apparent in the film in a number of ways of which I will list the five most prominent:

1) The use of her own voice as voice over.
2) Her focus on her mother’s history.
3) The inclusion of the poem ‘Germany’ by Brecht (1933), which calls for an associative perspective in relation to the former German Jewish population.
4) The use of her own daughter as actress for her young self.
5) The making of the film itself.

As Sanders-Brahms counters her mother’s dissociation with association, she attempts to restore the connection that was lost on a personal as well as on a wider social level.

The film also portrays what Scheff (2007) calls ‘hypermasculine’ behaviour through the action of the father Hans and ‘hyperfeminine’ behaviour through the attitude of Lene, the mother. According to Scheff (2007), unacknowledged grief and shame can either lead to withdrawal and silence, the ‘hyperfeminine’ version, or to anger and violence, the ‘hypermasculine’ version of behaviour. The relationship between the ‘hypergenders’ and violence is given expression in a number of scenes but is particularly clear in the scene in which Hans, who is helping to clear rubble with his daughter, meets his friend Ulrich after the war and ends up beating Anna for no apparent reason.

2.4.6.5.4 Conclusion to 2.4.6.5

The film Germany Pale Mother claims traumatic status for the experience of fascism and war by portraying how a political situation that engendered fear and oppression affected individuals on a personal level and caused traumatic symptoms such as dissociation and compulsive re-enactment. The film clearly shows how these symptoms engender and facilitate further violence on the social and the individual level. Responsibility for the crisis is therefore attributed to a situation of social and political violence that caused individuals to lose the connection to themselves as well as to others (Bezugverlust). The victims are the broader German population for which the family stands as an example, and the outsider groups that became the victims of collective violence. The film aims to further an awareness of trauma and violence, one that promotes a change in perception of collective identity for German audiences. The spectators/audience are meant to understand how the generation that lived through fascism and war became both victims and perpetrators. Unfortunately, a successful communication was limited at its reception in the 1990s due to the fact that the socio-political context had raised expectations that led to a misreading of the film.
According to Caruth (1996), ‘overcoming or mastery of trauma must involve processes of ‘integration’ and ‘assimilation’. Foremost among these processes of integration must be the narrative and the ability to tell a (one’s) story, where the narrator is fully present to him- or herself in the act of telling’ (Caruth 1996 in Elsaesser 2001: 196). The film Germany Pale Mother exemplifies how the ability to tell one’s story through writing or film-making can be a means of integration and facilitate ‘the overcoming or mastery of trauma’. The importance of writing as a tool to face the fragmentary potential of traumatic experiences is apparent through the writing exercises of the daughter Anna, which are always preceded by traumatic experiences and can be seen as early beginnings of a personal testimony, of which the film is the late product. Sanders-Brahms promotes language as a tool that has the potential to facilitate the bearing of witness, which is apparent in the following ways:

1) In the line of the voice-over in the opening scene in which the film-maker responds to Lene’s dissociative reaction with ‘I have learned to speak through you, the language of the mother’. 

2) Through the role of narration in the fairytale as a key to freedom and happiness. Association/‘Bezugsaufbau’ (emotional engagement), in this case through the act of giving witness through narration, is thereby promoted as an antidote to dissociation/Bezugsverlust. Dissociation itself is portrayed throughout the film as both the result as well as the cause and facilitator of violence with ‘hypermasculine’ and ‘hyperfeminine’ behaviour (Scheff: 2007) being exemplified through the main protagonists, Hans and Lene.

By giving literature, which is here represented through text and film, a role to restore balance and humanity in a situation of alienation and distortion, Sanders-Brahms goes back to the tradition of German Classicism. A further reference to the German cultural heritage, in this case to Romanticism, is made through the use of the fairytale that belongs to the Brothers Grimm collection and the tale’s important role in the film as a key text to the main narration.

The film also attempts to revert to a perspective in which the lost social connection to the Jewish ‘other’ is re-established through the use of the poem ‘Germany’ by Brecht, in which the Jewish population is portrayed as one of the sons of mother Germany.

The representation of a historical social crisis through a personal perspective while being part of an approach that promotes association further enables the audience to personally relate to the subject matter and gives the film its authentic character.
Chapter 2 - The German Context

2.4.6.6 ‘Dein Goldenes Haar Margarete’, ‘Dein Ashenes Haar Sulamith’
Anselm Kiefer (1981)

2.4.6.6.1 Introduction

Anselm Kiefer’s long-standing, in-depth emotional engagement with the legacy of fascism and genocide is singular among German artists. This makes the inclusion of his work among the examples of cultural productions analysed in this thesis a necessity. The landscape paintings are particularly relevant in the context of this enquiry as they acknowledge and mourn the loss of Jewish culture, a loss that is hereby claimed as a cultural trauma for the German collective. By referring to and visually representing a poem by Paul Celan, the landscapes actively contribute towards a reintegration of the Jewish ‘other’.

2.4.6.6.2 Contextual analysis

The paintings Dein Goldenes Haar Margarete and Dein Ashenes Haar Sulamith by Kiefer were executed 2 years after the transmission of the American television series The Holocaust and fall, like the film Germany Pale Mother, into a period that saw the promotion of a subjective perspective within German literature that lead to an increase in autobiographical novels. Born in 1945 in Donauschwingen, Kiefer belonged to the generation that grew up in the post-war climate of amnesia and guilt while having no personal experience of the Nazi regime (Lauterwein 2007: 23). As the son of an art educator, Kiefer had, after initial studies of law, joined the Freiburg Art Academy in the late 1960s and became part of a group of artists that stood up in opposition to the American cultural hegemony (Rosenthal 1987). This group claimed back their national identity at a time when abstractionism, which had been imported by the Allied forces to replace the monumental figurative art of the Nazi era, had ‘stripped art both of subjectivity and of history’ (Lauterwein 2007: 24). Rosenthal (1987) accounts how, like the emerging post-war poets and writers, the young generation of German artists returned to early 20th century German Art and Expressionism for inspiration, which included painters like Otto Dix and George Grosz, as well as to Dada and European forms of Primitivism. Joseph Beuys, who was developing a unique voice in contemporary German art at the time by bringing together elements of primitivism, process, conceptual and performance art, was a further major influence. For Kiefer, it was particularly Beuys’ sense of mission, his conscience and integrity as well as his vision that art can contribute to the healing of society that impressed. From 1969 onwards, Kiefer started to explore the collective German psyche in his work, using historical and mythical events as signposts to introduce a spiritual perspective while highlighting their often ambiguous nature. In exploring the recent German past, Kiefer went back to the myths, symbols and cultural artefacts of the Nazi era and exposed misuse and distortion of meaning by placing them into a new context. Uncovering the taboos of his contemporaries, he went so far as to take on the identity of a Nazi to explore spiritual darkness and the character of evil in an ultimate quest for redemption in which he tried to ‘make certain that half-buried memories are not left peacefully at
rest’ (Rosenthal 1987: 17). According to Rosenthal (1987), Kiefer’s use of landscape, which is part of his very own iconography, links his art in which certain motifs and symbols repeat. While the transformation of the land becomes a metaphor for human suffering, Kiefer sees it without romanticism and accepts what has happened to it. Focussing in alternation on the elements water/ice, earth/sand and fire he mixes and integrates the materials straw, lead or sand into his work, mindful of their symbolic meanings and giving his work alchemical connotations. Kiefer has a close affinity to literature and frequently integrates literary elements into his work. Among the many writers and philosophers that he refers to, Paul Celan is the most prominent (Rosenthal 1987) and Kiefer’s dialogue with this poet is a leitmotif throughout his work since the early 1980s (Lauterwein 2007: 17).

According to Rosenthal (1987), Kiefer understands German and Jewish culture as intricately linked and regards the loss of the Jewish community to German society as an injury that German civilisation inflicted on itself. Metaphorically representing and unifying both cultures in his work, he attempts to restore this loss (Rosenthal 1987). Kiefer’s reception in the 1970s and 1980s was politically controversial (Andreotti 2007) and, according to Kiefer, ‘very negative’, only changing after his success in the United States. Today Kiefer is among the world’s best known modern artists. Haxthausen (2002) describes Kiefer’s career in 1993 as ‘even if measured only in terms of market success’ as being ‘one of the most remarkable in contemporary art’ (Haxthausen 2002: 304). The paintings Dein goldenes Haar Margarete and Dein aschenes Haar Sulamith are part of a cycle of landscapes that are dedicated to Celan’s poem ‘Die Todesfuge’ (Deathfugue) in which Kiefer developed characterisations of the two subject women. Sulamith’s black hair is painted, while Margarete’s hair is represented by straw. The connection of both women in the paintings is made through the adding of straw to a painting of Sulamith and painted black hair to the painting of Margarete (Rosenthal 1987: 96).

2.4.6.6.3 Text based analysis

Like in the woodcut by Kollwitz, the two landscape paintings Dein goldenes Haar Margarete and Dein aschenes Haar Sulamith contain a narrative element through their titles, which refers to the poem ‘Die Todesfuge’ (Death Fugue) by Paul Celan.

The poem, written by Celan in 1945 in a Hungarian labour camp, must therefore also be included in the analysis. I will use a form of narrative analysis in which I will refer to methods developed by Greimas (1966) and Toolan (1988) for the poem and connect the findings with a formal analysis of the paintings.

‘Deathfugue’ Paul Celan (1945)

Black milk of daybreak we drink it at evening
we drink it at midday and morning we drink it at night
we drink and we drink
we shovel a grave in the air where you won't lie too cramped
A man lives in the house he plays with his vipers he writes
he writes when it grows dark to Deutschland
your golden hair Margarete
he writes it and steps out of doors and the stars are all sparkling
he whistles his hounds to stay close he whistles his Jews into rows
has them shovel a grave in the ground
he commands us play up for the dance
Black milk of daybreak we drink you at night
we drink you at morning and midday we drink you at evening
we drink and we drink
A man lives in the house he plays with his vipers he writes
he writes when it grows dark to Deutschland
your golden hair Margarete
Your ashen hair Sulamith
we shovel a grave in the air where you won't lie too cramped
He shouts dig this earth deeper you lot there you others sing up and play
he grabs for the rod in his belt he swings it his eyes are so blue
stick your spades deeper you lot there you others play on for the dancing
Black milk of daybreak we drink you at night
we drink you at midday and morning we drink you at evening
we drink and we drink
a man lives in the house your goldenes Haar Margarete
you aschenes Haar Sulamith he plays with his vipers
He shouts play death more sweetly this Death is a master from Deutschland
he shouts scrape your strings darker you'll rise up as smoke to the sky
you'll then have a grave in the clouds where you won't lie too cramped
Black milk of daybreak we drink you at night
we drink you at evening and morning we drink and we drink
this Death is ein Meister aus Deutschland his eye it is blue
he shoots you with shot made of lead shoots you level and true
a man lives in the house your goldenes Haar Margarete
he looses his hounds on us grants us a grave in the air
he plays with his vipers and daydreams
der Tod ist ein Meister aus Deutschland
dein goldenes Haar Margarete
dein aschenes Haar Sulamith
Written in five verses, the poem reflects Celan’s experience of the labour camp and
gives lyrical expression to a situation in which Jewish prisoners are ordered to dig
their own graves by a German prison guard. The all-male protagonists of the poem’s
narration, though sharply divided by the fact that one is the perpetrator and the others
are the victims in a relationship of oppression and fatal violence, share the yearning
for a female presence. In the case of the German prison guard, this yearning is directed
towards the golden hair of Margarete, in the case of the Jewish prisoners it is directed
towards the ashen hair of Sulamith. (I will hereby refer to Margarete and Sulamith by
their original spelling as used by Celan.) The two women, named together in two of
the verses and at the end of the poem, appear in this way united, which highlights the
separation of the male protagonists. Margarete and Sulamith can also be identified as the absent ‘objects of desire’ (in the sense of Greimas 1966), which later become the ‘subject’ in Kiefer’s paintings. Other elements of the basic narrative model of Greimas (1966) are harder to define. There are two ‘subjects’ who are yearning for their ‘object of desire’: the German prison guard and the Jewish prisoners as a group. The main action that the poem describes, the digging of the grave by the prisoners and the commanding action of the prison guard, do not contribute to the effort to win the ‘object of desire’. Only the prison guard who has the opportunity to engage in other activities writes letters to Germany, an occupation that is connected to this effort but stands in stark contrast to all other actions described in the poem. The Jewish prisoners don’t have the option to engage in other activities other than to follow orders, and their yearning for their ‘object of desire’ is evoked by the more real and active effort of the German prison guard. This difference is highlighted by the fact that the line ‘Your golden hair Margarete’ appears first and is either connected to the action of the prison guard who writes letters to Germany in the evening or to his living in a house, while the line ‘Your ashen hair Sulamith’ follows in two out of five cases like an echo and stands in no relation to any action of the prisoners. The striving for the ‘object of desire’ in the case of the prison guard is direct and in the case of the prisoners indirect, neither being related to the other activities in which they engage. It is through these other activities that the two ‘subjects’ are clearly identifiable as ‘villain’ and ‘victim’.

While the verbs used don’t directly convey the ‘villain’ and ‘victim’ divide, it is the context that gives them their unmistakable connotation. The prisoners ‘drink black milk’ and ‘shovel their own grave’, the prison guard ‘plays with snakes’, ‘calls out cruel orders’, ‘swings a metal weapon’, and ‘dreams that death is a German master’. Rather than having one ‘subject’ who strives to win his ‘object of desire’ against a ‘villain’, the poem portrays two ‘subjects’ - one being a group of ‘victims’, one being a ‘villain’ - who both have their respective ‘object of desire’, but instead of striving to win it, engage in activities that are entirely unconnected. In the absence of a proper quest, ‘helper’ and ‘superhelper’ are not needed and don’t feature in the narration. The fact that the basic narrative model is invoked by the presence of the ‘object of desire’ but is incomplete and not operational shows that an element of displacement is at work. Things are not as they should be, something that is also apparent in the combination of nouns and adjectives: milk should not be black; a grave cannot be shovelled in the sky. This element of apparent absurdity reflects the displaced nature of post-traumatic symptoms, particularly the compulsive re-enactment (as discussed in Chapter 1) in which the compulsive action triggered by the traumatic memory has no apparent connection to the current live context. The repetition of shorter and longer sequences that appear and reappear throughout the poem seem to mirror the repetitive nature of compulsion and further strengthen this impression. The sequences that are repeated particularly often highlight certain actions: the prisoners drink the ‘black milk of dawn’, which does not seem like an action of choice but something that they have been forced to do like all the other activities that they engage in; also, the statement that ‘death is a master from Germany’. Clear reference is made to German culture and ideology. The eyes of the prison guard are blue while the hair of Margarete
is blond, referring to the fact that both belong to what was then defined as the ‘Aryan’ race in contrast to the dark hair of Sulamith, the Jewish woman. The reference to death as a master stands in connection to the German medieval guild system that was operational at the time. Romantic culture is invoked through the poem’s use of metaphor, the fact that the prison guard dreams, writes when dusk comes and requests music. According to Roos (2006), the names ‘Margarete’ and ‘Sulamith’ can be read as metaphors for German and Jewish culture respectively, Margarete being the female protagonist in Goethe’s Faust and Sulamith a Jewish Princess from the Biblical ‘Song of Songs’ (Roos 2006: 28). The yearning for the objects of desire thus reflects the emotional bond to the respective culture and the combined naming of Margarete and Sulamith represents the close connection between both.

The line ‘your golden hair Margarete your ashen hair Sulamith’, appears first as part of the fourth verse and then at the end of the poem after the fifth verse therefore falling out of the poem’s over-all structure.

It is this line that, when split in two, becomes the title of each of Kiefer’s paintings. The two landscapes are, when displayed side by side, mirror images of each other: a horizon line at the top part of the image divides a large field from a small strip of sky in both paintings and an impression of perspective is created by various lines, which remind us of furrows converging from the lower left corner to a vanishing point in the upper right hand corner of the painting Dein goldenes Haar Margarete. This direction is reversed in the painting Dein aschenes Haar Sulamith, where the furrows run from the lower left hand corner to converge in the upper right hand corner. As the names ‘Margarete’ and ‘Sulamith’ are integrated into each painting respectively, the landscapes can be read as representing German and Jewish culture and the symmetry that is visible when both paintings are exhibited together reflects their close and complementary relationship. Further elements that both paintings have in common include the impression of a large field that stretches far into the distance. In the upper half of the paintings, a sketchy suggestion of a distant village or settlement is given: in the ‘Margarete painting’, the red roofs of some houses or buildings are indicated; whereas in the ‘Sulamith painting’, a church, a house and some trees can be seen on
the horizon. The idea that the field represents the national culture is thereby strengthened, foreground and background of the image seeming to represent present and past and the buildings at the horizon standing for the history of the different cultures’ civilisation.

The colours that are used in both paintings are of the same natural and earthy nature: black, white, blue, green, beige with patches of rusty red. But their distribution differs. The ‘Margarete painting’ is lighter in colour with a predominance of beige and blue-green, while the black in the ‘Sulamith painting’ is clearly dominant, which gives the impression of a burnt wheat field after harvest and so connects to the ‘ashen hair of Sulamith’. The titles are written with black paint and in joined-up writing across the image in both paintings, which integrates them into the landscapes. In *Dein goldenes Haar Margarete*, an arch of straw is added in the very centre of the image. The connection between the hair, which is as golden as straw, and the field, which is in this way defined as a wheat field, is hereby established. The curved shape of the straw arch stands out among otherwise horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines and is repeated by a black painted arch which appears like a shadow behind it and reminds us of the way in which the line ‘*Dein aschenes Haar Sulamith*’ appears like an echo of the more prominent line ‘*Dein goldenes Haar Margarete*’ in the poem. In the painting, the prominence of Margarete’s hair is emphasised by the protruding 3-D character of the added straw. Lauterwein (2007) looks at Kiefer’s use of materials like straw and ash and states that ‘the introductions of these material substances coupled with the reference to Celan expands the Beuysian concept of matter as the seat of consciousness into a new form of memory matter’ (Lauterwein 2007: 18). The painting *Dein aschenes Haar Sulamith* has, instead of straw, lines of white paint that go up into a diagonal to the sky indicating smoke rising from the burnt field. While the mark-making in both paintings is rather free, it is more clearly structured in the ‘Sulamith painting’ and more chaotic and multidirectional in particular in the foreground of the ‘Margarete painting’. The materials used also reflect the interplay of differences and commonalities that the paintings share. The landscape of *Dein goldenes Haar Margarete* is painted in oil and emulsion on canvas, whereas oil on burlap is used for *Dein aschenes Haar Sulamith*. This interplay of differences and commonalities in the two paintings reflects what Lauterwein (2007: 12) calls the differences, interdependences and reciprocities of the German and the Jewish culture.

### 2.4.6.6.4 Conclusion to 2.4.6.6

That Kiefer in all his work actively engages with ‘the cultural construction of trauma’ (sensu Alexander 2004: 11) becomes apparent in the comments of his critics who describe his art as ‘a theoretical antidote for the terror of human history’ (Rosenthal 1987: 56) and who call Kiefer an artist who is able to ‘address German guilt and its equally dreadful repression - by injecting it into his works in homeopathic doses’ (Andreotti 2007: 404). Lauterwein (2007) talks about ‘a memory-based course of therapy’ that illustrates
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‘the different phases of grief outlined by Freud: the refusal to accept reality, the flood of emotions, separation, and finally the discovery of a new relationship with oneself and the world - a discovery which in Kiefer’s case was linked to the poetry of Paul Celan from 1981 onwards’ (Lauterwein 2007: 29).

What Lauterwein describes is close to the ‘trauma process’ as defined by Alexander (2004) in which the occurrence of a crisis needs to be acknowledged, the victims named and their relationship to the audience made clear, and where responsibilities need to be attributed. This then can lead to a revised collective identity, or, as Lauterwein (2007) words it, to the discovery of ‘a new relationship with one’s self and the world’. The paintings *Dein goldenes Haar Margarete* and *Dein aschernes Haar Sulamith* through their connection to the poem by Celan, state the crisis as that of a violent past in which the connection between the German and the Jewish culture was lost, a situation that Kiefer’s paintings aim to acknowledge, to bring into awareness and to mourn. This process facilitates the establishment of a new collective identity that now includes the, until then, excluded Jewish other. Giesen (2004) describes the effect of the crisis on the post-war German population as one that resulted in a variety of responses all of which ensured that a direct confrontation with the reality of the recent German history was avoided. Kiefer’s work was therefore experienced as disturbing and caused a certain amount of negative reaction and controversy, which was furthered by his passionate engagement with Jewish culture. This negative response however had to be reviewed when the artist gained international recognition. While it is hard to assess to what extent collective identity was affected by a single artist’s work, Kiefer’s art, together with that of other artists, writers and film-makers, made a certain contribution by demanding an active engagement with the memory of a violent past. While Celan mourned the fact that his connection to German culture had been distorted by his experience of institutionalised violence, Kiefer responds by mourning the loss of the Jewish component that used to be part of German culture. By acknowledging this loss he reinstates the Jewish community to the collective memory of the German population, thereby initiating an adjustment of collective identity that is significant. Due to Kiefer’s international success, his work has to be taken seriously in Germany and because his art is widely exhibited and often published the message that it contains is well distributed. His appreciation abroad also makes an important contribution to the way that the international community perceives the confrontation of German artists with their own violent past. As an ambassador for his countrymen, Kiefer’s relentless quest and memory work has contributed towards reinstating respect and integrity to German culture.

Anselm Kiefer’s paintings *Dein goldenes Haar Margarete* and ‘Dein aschernes Haar Sulamith’ as well as the poem ‘Die Todesfuge’ to which they refer and which they illustrate and materialise are particularly relevant to this dissertation for two key reasons. First, the poem ‘Die Todesfuge’ through both its structure and poetic content gives expression to the experience of violence caused by compulsive re-enactment and exemplifies, like the film *Germany Pale Mother*, the destructive nature of post-traumatic symptoms referred to in Chapter 1. Second, the poem and paintings acknowledge and mourn the loss of connection between the German and the Jewish
culture, a loss that is directly linked to the Holocaust and that has, to date, not sufficiently been addressed by other artists. In relation to the violence of the recent German past, Kiefer’s acknowledgment makes a much needed contribution, and it facilitates a mental engagement through which the lost connection to Jewish culture can be re-established. It is in this way particularly relevant to my own arts-practice in which I hope to acknowledge and raise awareness of the loss of social and mental connection to those groups that later became the victims of the Holocaust with an aim to facilitate a mental and emotional reconnection. Kiefer uses an approach in which he deconceptualises the existing format of the landscape painting, a format that was particularly relevant in the context of German culture during the period of Romanticism, to communicate a message that is confrontational and disturbing. This approach affects the reception of his work and restricts it to an educated and open-minded audience that is ready to go beyond the familiar and conventional. Furthermore, by demanding a change in perspective, this approach encourages an active engagement in the formulation of a new narrative in what Alexander calls ‘meaning making - in the public sphere’ (Alexander 2004: 11).

2.4.6.7 Conclusion to subchapter 2.4.6

Artists and intellectuals have struggled to adequately respond to and express the experiences of war, fascism and genocide. Faced with collective denial and amnesia that was enforced by the political and economic climate and with the fact that most cultural means of expressions had been corrupted during the third Reich, post-war German artists had to review and restructure their own cultural heritage to develop a voice that was authentic and to be able to address the legacy of the violent past against the resistance of the general public. The latency in finding an adequate response shows the extent of this struggle. Productions like Germany Pale Mother and the work by Kiefer were misread and ill-received by German audiences in the early 1990s, showing that this struggle is still ongoing. Both Sanders-Brahms and Kiefer integrated literature as a key element into their work and included a reference to Romanticism to connect with the German cultural heritage. Both artists promote an emotional engagement in relation to memory work and so encourage association as an antidote to dissociation the post-traumatic symptom, that is most closely related to Bezugsverlust. This perspective differs from the Brechtian approach in which forms of alienation are used to prevent personal identification and further critical awareness, a method that was also used and further developed by Kluge whose understanding of history and deconstructive approach is close to my own. As Schlant (1999) observed in relation to Kluge and his work, it is the use of forms of alienation that can prevent feelings of empathy with the victims. Taking note of this observation and inspired by the way in which both Kiefer and Sanders-Brahms facilitate an emotional engagement, I have in my own arts practice combined an approach that deconstructs existing formats with elements that encourage personal identification and association.
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Notes to 2.4.6

1 The Reichstag fire on the 27th of February 1933 made Hindenburg sign article 48 (Decree for the Protection of the People and the State) thereby suspending freedom of the press and of assembly, allowing for search and imprisonment without warrant as well as interception of mail and reinstating the death penalty for sabotage. The Reichstag then passed what is known as the Enabling Law, giving those in Government unrestricted power (Pulzer 1997: 127).

2 Mosse describes how an increasingly stereotypical image of the Jew developed within ‘New Romantic thought’ which depicted the Jew as ‘alien in the land of the Germanic people’, without soul, uprooted and malevolent. This was furthered by religious prejudices looking at Judaism as a ‘fossilized religion’ (Mosse 1964: 126-129). These ideas were later strengthened within science by various racial theories.

3 After the invasion of Poland in September 1939, anti-Jewish policy escalated towards the murder of European Jewry starting with the establishment of ghettos in Poland in which the Jewish population was forced to live in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions with inadequate food. In June 1941, after the German invasion of the Soviet Union, SS and police units began massive killing operations, introducing mobile gas vans by autumn 1941. The establishment of three extermination camps in Poland - Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka - followed in addition to the many already existing forced labour and concentration camps. Other extermination camps like Majdanek, Chelmno and Auschwitz-Birkenau were established, killing close to 2,700,000 Jews. Approximately six million Jewish men, women, and children, two-thirds of the Jews living in Europe before World War II, were killed during the Holocaust as part of the ‘Final Solution’, a policy that called for the murder of all European Jews by gassing, shooting, and other means (Götz 1999).

4 In relation to Weimar cinema, Brockmann (2010) states, ‘Germany’s cultural strength in the 1920s stood in marked contrast to its political and military weakness’ and when ‘Germany as a whole descended into turmoil and crisis… the German film industry tended to prosper’ (Brockmann 2010: 43, 44). The films of the Weimar cinema ‘gave expression to the very real sense of change and insecurity that persisted throughout the Weimar Republic’.

5 Dissociation is a post-traumatic disorder related to the freeze response to acute threat, which is an alternative to the fight or flight response. An individual will, when severely threatened, react with dissociation when neither flight nor fight are options and when the traumatic content of the experience is overwhelming. It is a way to withdraw and is a response that is more likely to occur in females rather than males. It is likely to reoccur if there is a prior history of trauma and dissociation (Scaer 2001).

6 The scene is set after the war. Hans has returned and is outside with Anna taking part in a group effort to shift debris when Ulrich appears. The two men embrace and exchange a few words in which it becomes clear that Ulrich, a former Nazi is now critical of National Socialism while Hans had never joined the party due to his lack of
interest in politics. Hans introduces his daughter and returns to his occupation. Ulrich talks to Anna and asks her to call her father a *Waldheini* (jerk). Anna obeys and Hans, who feels insulted and challenged in his male status, beats her up in an inappropriate fit of rage. Anna whimpering and crying remains unconsolled while the two men walk off together.

7 Kiefer states in an interview with Andreotti in relation to the early reception of his work in Germany, ‘I think that at that point so much time had gone by in Germany that my art could no longer be “dangerous”. At the beginning I was viewed as someone who “dirtied his own nest” ’ (Andreotti 2007: 408).

8 Paul Celan was born in Romania in 1920 and grew up in the old Austro-Hungarian Empire in a sheltered Jewish community. He embraced German literature in a surrounding that fostered an appreciation of German culture. During the occupation, Celan was put into a Hungarian labour camp while his parents died in a German concentration camp. Lauterwein (2007) points out that the first-hand experience of Nazi atrocities destroyed Celan’s pre-war emotional and intellectual world and created a situation in which he, as a young Jewish poet, found himself simultaneously repelled and attracted by what he considered his mother tongue. Through his poetry, Celan managed to translate the memory of the conflict and give witness to the experience of the Holocaust. Celan lived and worked in Paris until he committed suicide in 1970 at the age of 49.
2.5 Conclusion to Chapter 2

The examples of cultural productions discussed and analysed in this chapter show that representations in the form of song, fine art and film from 1525 to 1981 focus on a number of events in German history that had the effect of a social crisis and portray the response by cultural media through a variety of approaches and formats.

My understanding of social crisis is based on the research findings of Chapter 1 where I identified an element of separation that occurs, caused by trauma, in the context of individual psychology. An equivalent sense of separation can be identified in a societal setting in the form of shame or loss of social bonds and as a feeling of social alienation and dislocation in the collective setting. A social crisis can thereby be seen as an event that caused this sense of separation and that had an adverse effect on the collective’s sense of identity. In the context of German history I have identified a sense of separation that was apparent in the concept of inequality, as formulated by Aristotle, which was used to legitimise violence. The events that occurred in German history that had the effect of social crises can be seen directly or indirectly linked to this notion, which was ‘a significant element in ancient concepts of imperialism’ (Isaac 2006: 40). Observations by Haidu (1992) and by Pecora (1992) both strengthen the perception of a causal connection between a dualistic perspective in which some are perceived as ‘others’, between the practice of imperialism in Western Europe and between the Holocaust.

As discussed in Chapter 1, cultural productions can respond to social crises by making a claim that establishes the experience as a ‘cultural trauma’ (sensu Alexander 2004) and attempting, through acknowledgment and awareness, to revise and restore any resultant lost sense of identity. Applying this understanding to German history, the social, political and economical injustice and oppression that led to the peasant war in 1525 is read as a social crisis to which the song ‘Das Bündische Lied’ is seen as a response. While the song constructs ‘a compelling framework of cultural classification’ (Alexander 2004: 12) the claim that it makes to a cultural trauma could only be upheld for a short time due to censorship. The experience of the violently crushed revolution that followed, which for the peasants would have qualified as a ‘horrendous event’ that left ‘indelible marks upon their group consciousness’ (Alexander 2004: 1), was not addressed by cultural productions. The negative effect on the group’s sense of cohesion was therefore not redressed and continued to persist. The extreme and erratic violence that affected various pockets of the German population during the 30 Years War (1618-1648) is seen as a social crisis to which the lullaby ‘Horch Kind horch...’ makes a successful claim. Being limited in its reception to the region of Lower Saxony, this contribution to the ‘processing of trauma’ (Alexander 2004) was insufficient to reverse the adverse effect on the collective’s sense of identity. The experience of war in relation to the Prussian war of liberation 1812-14, which affected the population as a whole due to general conscription, is claimed as traumatic to the collective in the song ‘Holde Nacht...’, but this claim was limited in duration due to censorship. The social unease caused by the French Revolution (1789) and the social dislocation brought about by the Industrial Revolution...
Revolution (since 1830) is identified as an experience of crisis that particularly affected German middle class men, a crisis to which the late Romantic song ‘Die zwei blauen Augen...’ by Gustaf Mahler is seen as a response. The cultural production in this case is not able to make a ‘successful representation of cultural trauma because it is itself affected by the crisis, as shown in its accommodation of fears and fantasies that themselves are the characteristics of a ‘traumatic cultural symptom’ (Kaplan 2001: 203). The experience of World War I (1914-18) is claimed as a cultural trauma in the woodcut Das Volk by Käthe Kollwitz. Although meeting all the criteria of a ‘successful cultural representation’, Kollwitz’ work was outweighed by political propaganda that claimed the defeat as the trauma and promoted war as a means to restore the lost sense of national identity. The experience of war and fascism in relation to World War II is claimed as a cultural trauma by Sanders-Brahms in her film Germany Pale Mother, but the effectiveness of this claim was restricted due to the film’s misinterpretation. The paintings by Kiefer claim the loss of Jewish culture in relation to the Holocaust as traumatic but Kiefer’s work was ill-received by the German public at the time, which affected its ability to communicate successfully. As is now apparent, the limitations that the cultural productions faced in making an effective contribution to the processing of trauma were varied and included censorship, a limitation by region, misinterpretation and misreception, competition with political propaganda, and the inability of the cultural production itself to face and address the crisis in question.

That the adverse effect on the collective’s sense of identity was therefore not adequately processed becomes apparent in the following statements and observations. Coupe (1962) talks about an ‘absence of any healthy political life or active and vocal political opinion in Germany for a century and a half’ (Coupe 1962: 86) following the Thirty Years War. Hagemann (1997) states that in 1800, after the Napoleonic invasion, the concept of the German national character had to be constructed as a counter image to the hostile French neighbour because it could not be defined otherwise. The misreception of the novel Werther by Goethe (1774) shows a strong tendency to escape into an alternative reality, an urge that increased with time and to which late Romantic cultural productions responded. Mosse (1964) describes how, driven by a persistent need for collective identification, a quest for lost roots was initiated that lead to the development of a distorted ideology. Pulzer (1997) describes the defeat after World War I and the conditions of the Peace Treaty as an experience of humiliation. The impression arises that due to a succession of insufficiently processed social crises, there was a lack of a sense of identity that increased in the collective over time, making the population vulnerable towards political propaganda that promoted nationalistic sentiments. It is this lack of a sense of group identity that inhibits feelings of compassion for others. This may explain the persistent lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust that is apparent in post-war literature and film. The above observations thereby contribute towards an answer of my first research question: How can the persistent lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust that is apparent in post-war German literature and film be explained?
In Chapter 1, I identified dissociation as one of a variety of possible responses to extreme threat in the context of individual psychology, in which the individual distances him or herself from the experience in an attempt to survive an otherwise overpowering sensation. The analysis of the late Romantic song ‘Die zwei blauen Augen...’ by Gustaf Mahler shows a response by German middle class men to the experience of social unease and dislocation caused by the French and by the Industrial Revolution, comparable to dissociation in the context of individual psychology. The film Germany Pale Mother portrays a similar response to the experience of war and fascist oppression by the German population as a collective and by Lene the mother as an individual response. Both song and film use a conventionalised format that facilitates an escape into an alternative reality; but in the film, the format of the melodrama is decontextualised. While dissociation is portrayed in all its negative effects in the narration of the film, it is also confronted and reversed by a variety of methods that call for association.

Kiefer’s use of the landscape painting also shows a deconceptualisation of its Romantic convention, replacing an image that would have facilitated dissociation with one that makes the viewer face up to an unacknowledged aspect of reality. By portraying Jewish culture as an important and complementing part of the German cultural heritage and referring to its loss in the context of a format that would have been popular in Romanticism, Kiefer exposes, like Sanders-Brahms, the effect of dissociation and promotes association as its antidote.

The relation between shame, the sense of loss of social connection and violence as described by Scheff and the formation of a social climate in which ‘hypergenders’ (Scheff 2007) develop, as discussed in Chapter 1, becomes clear in the analysis of the song ‘Holde Nacht...’, which addresses the period after the Napoleonic invasion, and in the discussion of the woodcut Das Volk by Käthe Kollwitz, which responds to the experience of World War I. The collective experience of shame lead in both cases to an increase in nationalist sentiments and to the propagation of armed combat, which exemplifies its connection to violence.

The observations made in this Chapter enable me to list four requirements in relation to my second research question: How can the lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust be addressed through the production of a film in a way that facilitates a meaningful contribution to the culture of remembrance?

1) The contemporary social crisis needs to be represented in such a way that its connection to preceding unacknowledged social crises is brought to awareness, thereby tracing the trauma to its source.
2) Incidents of collective shame need to be acknowledged in retrospect.
3) A collective tendency towards a dissociative response to crisis and the consequences of such a response needs to be brought to awareness, while association needs to be fostered.
4) The loss of a sense of collective identity has to be addressed and a reversal needs to be encouraged.
From the perspective of format, the examples of cultural productions that are analysed here show that in early German history, music in the form of the song made a significant contribution to the ‘processing of trauma’ as defined by Alexander (2004) due to its ability to be received by many at a time of widespread illiteracy and through its emotive effect. In the later part of German history, the relevance of Romanticism as a cultural movement, to which both Kiefer and Sanders-Brahms refer, is evident, as well as the persistence of the ideals of German classicism in which art and literature have the potential to restore humanity to a state of balance and connection. Chapter 1 illustrated a number of approaches that can facilitate the ‘cultural representation of trauma’ (Alexander 2004), and the productions analysed above do illustrate a variety of methods. They include the establishment of a new narrative through content and form, if the format has already been established to counter the conventional narrative, as in the song ‘Das Bündische Lied’ and in the woodcut Das Volk. And the establishment of a new narrative through content by deconceptualising an existing conventional format, as in Kiefer’s paintings and Sanders-Brahms’ film.

In terms of format the above analysis provided the following three conclusions for the production of the film:

1) A reference to existing formats is advisable even if the overall approach is unconventional. These existing formats should include songs and lullabies, considering the early responses to cultural crisis in Germany.

2) Reference to Romanticism should be made, but its distortions have to be exposed.

3) Literature should be integrated into the film in some form, to reflect the cultural tradition of German Classicism (but a reference to Roman and Greek culture should be of a critical nature).

The answers to my second research question, which draw on the above analysis of German cultural productions, gave me the parameters within which I was able to creatively develop a film as the main part of my own arts practice. The following chapter will discuss this development in greater detail.
Still from the film *The Legacy*, showing a young Roma child (footage from the documentary *Großstadtzigeuner* by László Moholy-Nagy 1932).
Critical Review
Chapter 3 - Creative Practice

3.1 Introduction

In this part of my research project I will address the lack of empathy for the victims of the Holocaust, which both Hahn (2005) and Schlant (1999) have remarked on in their study of post-war German literature, through the making of the film *The Legacy* (Das Vermächtnis).

I will explain my personal motivation to the project by referring to my own micro- and macro-social background, summarise the way in which the research of the reflective analysis influenced the making of the film, outline my approach to the production process, discuss the choice of visual material and audio material, and extend the literature review to refer to the cultural context that is of relevance to the production.

Having outlined which elements have contributed towards the creative process, Chapter 4 will then analyse the reception of the film by German audiences at three small sample screenings to assess to what extent the film has the potential to promote an experience of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust and to address the loss of a sense of group cohesion that facilitated the Holocaust.

3.2 Personal background and motivation

My motivation to engage with this research project developed over an extended period of time. It was triggered by personal experiences within my family and influenced by the social environment of Germany in the 1970s and 1980s that I grew up in.

I will describe my personal impressions that prompted my motivation, outline the connection between family and social history and briefly refer to the way in which my professional development made an engagement with this project possible.

Growing up in post-war Germany at the time of the economic boom, I often experienced what can be described as a feeling of social and cultural unease. It was caused by an impression that the image that society presented of itself was incomplete and that something was left unmentioned. A certain silence and bleak emptiness could be felt, particularly at those times and in those places where an engagement with the consumer-based aspect of society was not an option. This impression was not dissimilar to the silences that Schlant (1999) describes in her study as being contoured by language, indicating the awareness of the Holocaust in West German post-war literature (Schlant 1999: 1, 10).

My sensitivity towards this occurrence was heightened by the fact that there was a similar silence in my family, which also indicated an awareness of something that was
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not mentioned. In addition, the sudden, at times violent, repetitive and out of character behaviour of family members that I experienced as frightening seemed to indicate the presence of a disturbing reality that was not acknowledged. I have, during this research project and through my investigations into trauma, been able to identify the out-of-character behaviour as a form of compulsive trauma re-enactment that was related to this silence and needed to be read as a symptom of an initial traumatic event.

Additional to experiences that caused a feeling of social unease was a sense of cultural unease, which was prompted by the impression that some cultural productions contained elements of distortion. I first became aware of this sense of cultural unease when I became a parent in 1989 and felt a strong sense of reluctance towards passing on my cultural heritage when I was singing a German lullaby to my son. It was then that I realised that I needed to investigate into the cause of what I experienced as a distortion before I could safely hand down my own culture to the next generation. This experience was repeated 10 years later when I had my second child. I had by then left Germany, had learned to express myself as an artist and had made the transition from the medium of sculptural ceramics into film. In the years that followed, my work developed towards experimental film-making and event-based productions that included the use of live music. It was at this point that I felt I had found an approach and a medium that enabled me to address those experiences that had been caused by the traumatic and trauma-like symptoms in my social and cultural environment.

3.3 Family History

I have, in parallel to my academic enquiry, undertaken research into the history of my family, which enabled me to trace traumatic events through the observation of post-traumatic symptoms in family members. These insights provided me with examples for my theoretical enquiry. The research into family history also influenced the making of The Legacy and informed the section that is dedicated to the memory of the family. In this section events are referred to that had a traumatic effect on family members and had thus far not, or not sufficiently, been acknowledged. I will in the context of this enquiry limit my reference to those occurrences that affected the family in its wider social and social political context and will include information that enables a decoding of some of the scenes included in the family section of the film.

I have compiled the account on family history using information that was passed on to me by other family members, in particular by my mother’s sister and my mother’s cousin. The history of my family has, to my knowledge, no direct connection to the Holocaust, and there is no family relation to any of the three groups of victims that are mentioned in this project that I am aware of. There is, however, a link to Bismarck and the xenophobia between the French and German population at the time, which affected my family on my mother’s side.

My maternal great-grandfather, Johann Schönhofen (b. January 28, 1876; d. February
20, 1928), moved to Alsace-Lorraine when the region became German after the Prussian victory over France at Sedan (1870). When Alsace-Lorraine, after the defeat of Germany in World War I, again became French, my great-grandparents were faced with the choice to either change nationality or to emigrate. It was also a choice between fighting friends and neighbours or family members, should there be another war. My great-grandfather chose to emigrate and moved with his young family to Hetzerath, a small town on the river Mosel where other relatives lived. When World War II started he and his two sons were called up to fight. His youngest son Jacob (b. June 13, 1913; d. April 23, 1945) was sent to France where he met a young French woman, Yvonne Dos Santos (b. December 12, 1920; d. December 7, 2011), who became his fiancée. He returned to Hetzerath in early 1945 with Yvonne to get married. The war was not quite over and his early return with a young French woman was frowned upon. When he was asked to walk over a mine field with a group of other man to fetch firewood, the man who walked next to him stepped on a mine and was severely injured while Jacob received a head injury and was brought to a hospital in Trier, 40 km from Hetzerath. Yvonne cycled daily to the hospital to visit Jacob. One day she found his bed empty and was told by the staff to look in the bathroom, where she found his corpse laid out in a bathtub. The shock of Jacob’s unexpected death and the cruel way in which she was made to confront it nearly caused her to lose her mind. Since the war was not over and my great-grandparents were not able to protect her, as the marriage had not been legalised, Yvonne was imprisoned in Trier where her hair was shaved off. On her return to France she was further penalized and ostracised for her attempt to marry a German soldier.

I have included a dedication to Yvonne in the film as my contribution to the restoration of her honour and memory and reunited her visually with Jacob.

Further scenes refer to unacknowledged events and suppressed memories within the family that have through several generations led to oppressed personal feelings and distorted perspectives and caused pain to many family members. The visual representation of that which had previously been unacknowledged is meant to break this negative chain reaction and to restore the suppressed information to the collective memory of the family.

I am aware that the general audience will not be able to decode these scenes. It was however for the completion of the section on family history necessary to include this information, which is in keeping with the overall composition of The Legacy for which communication happens on a number of levels and not all information is clear and accessible to rational analysis.

3.4 Findings of the reflective analysis

The theoretical research that ran parallel to the pre-production, production and post-production process has influenced the making of The Legacy on many levels.
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I will here refer to the way in which the format, intentionality, the choice of components, the structure, and the choice of some of the vocal music for The Legacy was informed by the findings of the reflective analysis.

Having looked at the different approaches that have been used by cultural productions to establish a new narrative that makes a claim to a ‘cultural trauma’ (sensu Alexander 2004) in Chapter 1, I decided to use a format in which the experience of separation and dislocation is reflected through the deconstruction of form. This choice does restrict the reception of the film, but I believe that the active participation that is required by the viewer in this format is a precondition to the mental and emotional engagement that the film aims to encourage. Through an approach that deconstructs existing conventional structures I was also able to reflect the erratic and layered nature of trauma memory and to integrate a variety of cultural media and formats, such as songs and text.

My literature review into West German post-war cultural responses to the Holocaust indicated that most productions show a lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust. To promote and facilitate this empathy is the main intention of the film.

Chapter 1 identified social dislocation and alienation as being trauma-like effects on the macro social level and that these conditions are caused by social crises. Chapter 2 found that social crises were, over the course of German history, often not processed sufficiently. With further social crises adding to previous experiences of crises, there was an experience of social alienation that increased over time. This developing social climate eventually affected nearly all groups in society that were vulnerable and easily victimised. George Mosse (1964) considered the origins of the Holocaust to be a distortion of ideology that developed among the German population from the beginning of the 19th century. The collective violence of the Nazi past is thereby seen as having started in the mind of the population. It is therefore necessary that this occurrence is addressed by a process that aims to reverse the element of social alienation through a mental and emotional reintegration of those groups that had been excluded at the time.

The lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust that was observed by Schlant (1999) and Hahn (2005) in West German post-war cultural productions shows that a loss of interconnectivity on an emotional level still persists and indicates that the social alienation that caused this loss has so far not been sufficiently addressed. To acknowledge and raise awareness of the process of social alienation and to provide opportunities for emotional reintegration that facilitate empathy I have used archive footage that shows the victims of the Holocaust often in sequences in which an eye contact with the viewer is established. I have included a reference to the unprocessed social crises that had the potential to contribute to what Mosse (1964) refers to as a ‘crisis of ideology’ through archive footage, in case of the more recent events like the industrial revolution and World War I, and through quotes in relation to events in the more distant past.
The decision to use archive material was based on my research in Chapter I in relation to trauma therapy methods in which an integration of trauma memory is promoted through processes that include memory recall. The archive footage appears in the film at times superimposed over contemporary footage to reflect traumatic flashbacks, one of the post-traumatic symptoms.

A simulation of the trauma therapy method EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitisation Reprocessing) is included in one scene of the film through a moving light source that stimulates alternating left-right eye movement.

I decided to use musical pieces that stimulate an emotional response as well as a feeling of safety. This was prompted by Blood and Zatorre (2001) who showed that experiencing pleasurable music inhibits experiences of fear while at the same time stimulating hormones that give the feeling of gratification. Related to this are the trauma therapy method of somatic experiencing, which emphasises the importance of an environment in which the patient feels emotionally safe during memory recall. In this way, music fulfils a number of functions in the film. It is meant to further the emotional connection that the film aims to establish, and its fluid nature also helps to generate a motion that can free the trauma memory out of its own repetitive cycles, thereby further enhancing reprocessing.

I decided to use quotations by the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs on collective memory as signposts into the collective past by which to initiate remembering. The reflections by Halbwachs (1925 in Coser 1992) explore the notion of collective forgetting and preserving of past experiences in relation to its placement in what he calls ‘the collective frameworks of memory’. The reflective tone of writing invites a meditation on the concept in a way that allows for individual experiencing. Halbwachs is himself connected to the trauma of the Holocaust, having died in Buchenwald, in 1945, so it was appropriate to use extracts of his writing and to include a dedication in the film as an effort to restore Maurice Halbwachs to the collective memory of the German people. The chosen quotations by Halbwachs (1925 in Coser 1992) focus on collective forgetting and remembering and explore how social constraints as well as current concerns and interests affect and influence the nature of collective memory. These quotations are used in the film in the form of a male voice-over by a narrator with a French accent and are used over documentary footage of crowd scenes set in a contemporary German urban inner city environment. The reflections on collective memory are thereby addressed towards a contemporary German audience. Used throughout the film in alternation to scenes in which archive imagery appears superimposed on urban settings, the quotations are meant to link past and present and provide the film with an overall structure. Inspired by the tone of Halbwachs’ writing in which a new concept is established through reflective exploration, the film can be seen as a cinematic reflection in which past and present alternate, at times linking.

The findings of Chapter 2 that show the importance of song as a cultural medium in early German history and that show the relevance of literature and the influence of Romanticism for later cultural productions have further informed the choice of
components to the film during the pre-production process. Songs are a key element of communication in the film and are used to reach the viewer on an emotional level. The inclusion of texts reflects the relevance of literature while facilitating the communication of concepts. Three of the songs represent the Romantic movement, of which the lullaby ‘Die Blümelein sie schlafen’ is used as an example because the romantic longing facilitates an escape from reality. This intention is exposed through the super projection of footage that depicts the threatening aspects of contemporary life - such as heavy industry, transport and war - thereby confronting the viewer with the reality that the song tries to divert from. In contrast to the lullaby, the song ‘Will ich in mein Gärtlein gehen’ confronts and exposes the mental process that facilitates alienation and outsider antagonism. It contains the main message of the film and is audible over archive footage showing those social groups that became the victims of the Holocaust, so pointing towards the mental origins of genocide.

It is anticipated to use the film as part of an event in which music as a key element in the reprocessing will be performed live. Studies in sociology (Giesen 2004, Scheff 2007) highlight the importance of a ritual element in the process of collective trauma reprocessing. To facilitate audience participation and thereby create a ritual element, an event format that includes the performance of media other than film was considered, and a collaboration with Katarina Veldhues and Gottfried Schumacher who work with large scale slide and light projections is planned. Stills from the film can be used for the projection, the screen can be constructed of items that are brought and held by the audience, and light projections can bring elements of the film out into a medium in which active audience participation becomes possible.

3.5 Creative approach and production process

The methods used for the production of the film The Legacy were varied, and the overall approach was informed by the ideas on lateral thinking as developed by the physician and consultant Edward de Bono and inspired by the philosophy of the anthropologist and social scientist Gregory Bateson.

I will briefly discuss the theoretical background that informed the creative approach, refer to the methods that were used and situate their application within the context of the film.

Edward de Bono (1982) proposed what he calls an ‘exlectic’ mode in the context of group-based discussions and idea development, which he describes as an alternative to the dialectic approach. Dialectic thinking developed in Western civilization as a method in which opposing views confront each other in an adversarial mode in the form of arguments and debates. This approach can be, according to de Bono (1982), inefficient because valuable ideas that are embedded in a larger context can be easily dismissed, and harsh controversies often create a situation in which both opponents lose. The exlectic approach, however, is based on joint listening and joint exploration in a situation in which views and ideas start to emerge at a later stage. Possibilities are
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laid out in parallel while the material is further explored and patterns are allowed to emerge (de Bono 1982: 77-80)\(^1\). The exlectic approach is also conducive to what de Bono calls lateral thinking, which describes thought processes outside of established patterns and conventions that promote the emergence of creative ideas (de Bono 1982: 51).

My approach to the film production process was in many ways similar to what de Bono (1982) calls an ‘exlectic’ mode. I have collected material without initial critical analysis, using a variety of methods of which the four most important can be listed as:

1) Conscious choice based on initial ideas or in keeping with developing patterns.
2) Conscious choice based on the findings of the Reflective Analysis
3) Unconscious choice based on intuition.
4) Unconscious choice based on chance occurrences.

The material collected in this way was allowed to co-exist in what could be described as a ‘creative chaos’ in which the formation of patterns was observed. De Bono (1982) describes this process as similar to map reading. The patterns observed were encouraged to progress further, unsuitable material that did not fit the pattern was eventually removed, leading to a final state in which clarity was established.

Methods that were not based on conscious decision making and that often favoured chance were particularly important in the process of production. The approach that values chance occurrences and intuitive decision making is based on a systemic perspective developed by Gregory Bateson (1972) in which man develops the humble awareness that he is only one expression of a larger immanent existence\(^2\). According to Bateson (1972), a purposeful, conscious approach needs to be balanced by unconscious activities that restore the individual to his/her interconnectedness with the larger existence of which (s)he is a part. Chance occurrences are, in this context, valued as expressions of this immanent larger existence and its many forms. I was at the beginning of the production process not consciously using this method but the presence of chance occurrences themselves and the key role that they started to play during the production process made me take note of this process and its relevance.

The editing of the film was guided by a combination of audience feedback from four small private screening sessions, which included a survey, a general discussion, and feedback by single viewers, as well as the critique of the rough cut by my supervisor Rod Stoneman.

Three initial ideas informed the making of the film:

1) To bring the suppressed memory of the past visually together with the present through the superimposition of archive material that would show the victims of the Holocaust over documentary footage of everyday contemporary German urban environments.
2) To include the lullaby ‘Die Blümelein sie schlafen’, which had initiated my enquiry.
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3) To give music a key role in the facilitation of emotional responses.

It was a chance occurrence that made me aware that there was a need to include the section on personal family history in which I would refer to those that needed to be honoured or that were missing from the collective memory of my family.

The theoretical enquiry gave me an understanding of the collective trauma that the film addresses and gave me further text- and idea-based material that I included in the production. This material includes the dedication to Maurice Halbwachs and the use of his reflections on collective memory as voice-over narration, the text inserts, and the reference to the industrialisation and World War I as causes for collective experiences of alienation.

This material, as well as other related and unrelated material, was found through various processes of research. Some material was found during a restricted ten-day period of shooting documentary footage in Düsseldorf and Dortmund; others during a three-day period of research in the Berlin Film archive. Other research processes were ongoing like my singing lessons, my engagement in choir work and my research into family history. While I consciously looked for specific material, I was open to chance occurrences: I found the ‘Kindertotenlieder cycle’ by Mahler when I was looking for a version of the German lullaby in a music shop. I also used material that I did not consciously choose: for example, the extra film sequences showing victims, which my colleague Norbert Hobrecht felt ‘compelled’ to include when he digitised the archive footage.

Having collected a large amount of both audio and visual material, I started to combine the different elements. I intentionally layered the archive footage over the urban documentary scenes. While I consciously picked the background footage, the choice and scale of archive imagery was left to chance because I often picked the first images that I could find and picked a random scaled-up version that occurred when I layered the image. While this method was initially intended to quickly give me some material to work with for a first rough impression, I was surprised to find that the composite images that occurred seemed to have a very strong presence and were always more convincing than later compositions in which I used conscious decision-making.

I started the compilation of text and audio-visual material by making use of the early reflections on collective memory by Halbwachs (1925 in Coser 1992) that I had found through my theoretical enquiry; this I used as narration over scenes that showed pedestrians. At this point, I could observe the formation of a pattern in which the scenes of archive footage over urban landscapes alternated well with pedestrian scenes that contained voice-over narration. I used a succession of those sequences at the beginning of the film to refer to the re-occurrence of the repressed memory. Repeating the first pedestrian scene towards the end gave the impression that the reflection had come full circle. I then used further voice-over narration in the section that deals with family history, but here it is over the image of sunlight breaking through the branches of a tree, a scene that alternates with family photographs. (The tree is a 400-year old
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oak tree that grows in Hetzerath and used to be part of my great-grandparents property). The voice-over narration of Halbwachs quotations had by then started to form a grid-like structure into which further elements of the film could be fitted. Pieces of music, some vocal and some instrumental, were chosen to provide opportunities for emotional processing by which to guide the audience from shame (‘Flow Down Tears’ by John Dowland 1600), to mourning (‘Nun will die Sonn so früh aufgehn’ by Mahler 1901), to relief (‘Dance of the Blessed Spirits’ by Gluck 1762), to compassion and empathy with the victims (‘Esurientes’ by Bach 1731), and to a spiritual perspective (‘Ave Crux’ by Franz Liszt 1879). While I chose most of the pieces from the musical repertoire that I was familiar with from my singing lessons and from my choral engagements, I verified, through research into the composer and the background to the composition, that the music was indeed suitable for the scenes chosen.

The children’s song ‘Will ich in mein Gärtlein gehen’ and the lullaby ‘Die Blümelein sie schlafen’ are both positioned in the middle of the film because they contain key messages. The children’s song was included to raise awareness of the process of social exclusion, and the lullaby was used to expose the tendency of romantic productions to divert from experiences of crisis. The theoretical enquiry provided the link to industrialisation (Mosse 1964) as a main source of alienation during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The theoretical enquiry also provided the quotations to the textual inserts that precedes the lullaby through which the link is made between the concepts of inequality and violence and their continued relevance throughout German history.

A longer text insert before the quotes and at the beginning of the film was also derived from the findings of the theoretical enquiry and summarises its findings. The text was inserted into the final version of the film in response to audience feedback that criticised as out of context the reference to industrialisation and World War I in the lullaby. The text insertions were tested and adjusted according to the critical comments of my supervisor Rod Stoneman and further audience feedback.

The inclusion of the painting White Crucifixion by Marc Chagall (1938) at the end of the film was due to chance. This painting was mentioned in a different context at a time when I was looking for a suitable visual for the last scene. Camera drives over the painting in close-up before showing the full image was a suggestion that was made at an audience feedback session.

The inclusion of the scene in which a light source swings over a view of a river by night was in response to audience feedback where the need for a scene that provides emotional relief was expressed. The scene was inspired by the theoretical enquiry into trauma therapy methods, specifically into the process of Eye Movement Desensitisation Reprocessing (EMDR). The scene was adjusted in discussion with an EMDR practitioner and was shortened following further audience feedback. The song ‘Flow Down Tears’ by Dowland, which was initially three verses long, was also shortened following audience feedback.

The result of this production process is an audio-visual collage that aims to stimulate
reflection. The film is best read and appreciated by an audience aware of taking an exlectic approach to the viewing process and who can read the audiovisual impressions like a map, thereby allowing associations and patterns to emerge.

Due to the use of methods that were not controlled by conscious decision-making, The Legacy developed in ways that had not been completely pre-conceived. The archive footage that Norbert Hobrecht had felt compelled to include consisted mainly of shots in which the victims established eye contact with the camera. This eye contact became a re-occurring feature in the film and one of the main elements to facilitate an emotional connection with the victims of the Holocaust.

The exlectic approach included methods that encouraged chance occurrences and non-conscious decision-making and allowed for a production situation in which the film could grow in parallel to the theoretical enquiry. It also gave the audio and visual material the space in which the material itself could unfold its own potential. The resulting film is, therefore structurally unusual and requires an open-minded viewer who is able to appreciate an unconventional format.

A detailed description of the film in the form of a detailed sequence analysis, as well as the film credits list, can be found in the booklet that accompanies the DVD.

3.6 Production values and the choice of visual material

‘The image helps us to remember the subject and preserve him from a second spiritual death’ (Bazin, Gray 1960: 6).

The use of archive material played a critical role in the production of the film, enabling a representation of the outsider groups that had been the subject of social alienation. Gypsies, Jewish citizens and disabled patients were chosen as being visually distinguishable and representing all the groups that had become the victims of the Holocaust. I searched the Berlin film archive for representations of members of the three groups hoping to find scenes that would show them as part of everyday life. This I could then superimpose onto contemporary documentary footage, thereby connecting past and present and facilitating a visual reintegration of those that had been physically eliminated. In my search, I initially looked at documentaries, home movie footage and weekly newsreels, of which the latter would have been the most widely distributed format. I was surprised to find that none of the weekly newsreels contained a visual representation of the members of the groups that I was looking for, and I only found one single reference showing that Jewish citizens had existed and been persecuted in Germany. This reference was very short and showed in a few frames a schoolboy painting the star of David onto a shop front. From the November pogrom in 1938, which changed German society irrevocably, this very short sequence was the only surviving visual documentation that was included in this relevant format.

Searching within documentaries and home movie footage I found only one short art film, by the Bauhaus teacher Lázló Moholy-Nagy, in which the life of a group of
gypsies living in Berlin was documented. This film would not have been accessible to a wider audience at the time. I took this lack of representation as evidence that the social groups that later became the victims of collective and institutionalised violence had been excluded from what Assman (2006) defined as the cultural aspect of collective memory before they were physically eliminated. This conclusion was strengthened when I extended my search to political propaganda films where I found the victimised social groups included in a context that gave them sub-human status. While I was able to use the documentary by Moholy-Nagy for footage that represented members of the Romani and Sinti, I had to use Nazi propaganda films for scenes that showed Jewish citizens and disabled patients in asylums. While these films were produced to defame their subjects, I found that this intention was mainly realised in the editing process - through the insertion of captions - and that most scenes had an authentic quality once they had been edited out of their original context. I therefore decided to use these scenes, being fully aware of the fact that this approach might be seen as questionable, but motivated by the need to reinstate a representation of those social groups that later became persecuted, to the cultural aspect of collective memory.

The footage representing Jewish citizens is mainly taken from documentaries of the Warsaw Ghetto and from the transport to the Krakow Ghetto. The footage showing disabled patients seems to have been recorded in a number of mental institutions. Sequences that depict early industry are from the experimental documentary *Im Schatten der Maschine* by A.V. Blum and Leo Lania; scenes from World War I are taken from the French documentary footage ‘Kämpfe vor Verdun’; and English documentary footage was taken from ‘Die Schlacht von Arras’. No German footage that depicted World War I in a way that seemed authentic was available. The contemporary documentary footage showing crowds of people walking was filmed in Berlin and in Düsseldorf, the footage showing urban landscape scenes was shot in Düsseldorf and in Dortmund. The image of the river is that of the Lee in the grounds of UCC in Cork. The photo of Maurice Halbwachs was used courtesy of Lise Halbwachs-Mecarelli; family photographs were taken from my father’s and my grandmother’s collections.

In my choice of both family photographs and archive footage I have looked for imagery in which the presence of the subject had been captured, thereby giving the material authenticity and enabling the portrayed to establish a personal relationship with the viewer.

### 3.7 Choice of music and audio material

It was a song ‘*Die Blümelein sie schlafen*’ (The little flowers they are sleeping) that led me to investigate into my own national and cultural heritage. A further musical experience made me aware that music had the potential to play an important role in the context of trauma reprocessing. Entering an environment that had stayed unchanged since my youth brought up the unpleasant memory of a time that I had experienced as oppressive. Yet this memory was, to my surprise, released when a
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A vocal piece of music ‘In Trutina’ from the Carmina Burana by Carl Orff was performed spontaneously. This incident inspired my enquiry into the potential of music-experiencing in the context of trauma reprocessing. The study by Blood and Zatorre (2001) confirmed my impression that music has the potential to inhibit fear and encourage pleasant emotions. Being aware of the key role of music for this thesis, I took up singing lessons additional to my involvement with a local Choral Society, to compile a suitable repertoire of vocal pieces for the soundtrack of the film considering singing the pieces for the soundtrack myself. I pre-selected songs in relation to their emotional connotation and suitability of lyrics, bearing in mind that the music needed to at least partly reflect the German cultural heritage and the periods in German history that I had defined in Chapter 2 as relevant for this project. After a rough choice had been made, I confirmed the suitability of the music through further research into the background of both the pieces and their composers. This research is not included here due to space constraints.

The nine pieces of music chosen for the film are, in order of appearance:

1) ‘Lachrymae pavane’ (Flow down tears) (1600) by John Dowland
2) ‘Das Bucklig Männle in’ (1808) by Clemens Brentano (ed.)
3) ‘Nun will die Sonn so früh aufgehn’ (1901) by Gustaf Mahler
4) ‘Die Blümelein sie schlafen’ (1840) by Anthon Wilhelm Zuccalmaglio
5) ‘Dance of the blessed spirits’ (1762) by Gluck
6) ‘Ombra mai fu’ (1738) by Georg Friedrich Handel
7) ‘Von fremden Ländern und Städten’ (1838) by Robert Schumann
8) ‘Esurientes’ (1728-31) by Johann Sebastian Bach
9) ‘Vexilla Regis’ (1878-79) by Franz Liszt

The choice of music ranges from late medieval to baroque to romantic. While the medieval (Dowland) and the romantic music (Mahler, Schumann) is used to facilitate the expression of loss, shame and grief, the baroque pieces (Handel, Gluck) aim to provide relief and a sense of harmony, as well as a spiritual element that can facilitate a reconnection. The song ‘Vexilla Regis’, by Franz Liszt (1879), can also be placed into this latter category due to its religious orientation.

Sound effects are used in the film to increase the impression of threat, particularly in relation to archive material that shows early industry and World War I footage.

3.8 The Legacy in its wider cultural context

3.8.1 Introduction

Despite there being a large number of cultural productions that have some connection to the subject of the Holocaust, I will focus here on work that is particularly relevant to the practice-based part of this project. I will also make reference to cultural productions that are similar to The Legacy in terms of genre and approach.
Still from the film *The Legacy* showing two girls in a home (archive footage: *Erbkranz 1936*) superimposed over a derelict industrial building.
3.8.2 Film and collective memory in post-war Germany

‘in a single society, several memories coexist and can even oppose each other, memories that are the object of struggles, strategies and power relations: sometimes official, dominant memories upheld by institutions: sometimes latent, secret recollections, those of the dominated groups for instance.’ (Wachtel in Hoerschelmann 2001: 95)

The Legacy addresses a lack in ‘collective memory’ (sensu Halbwachs 1925), therefore, it is relevant to review the way in which film has contributed towards memory formation and challenged mainstream perceptions of history and politics in post-war Germany. I will analyse a study by Hoerschelmann (2001), which examined the different voices within film culture that questioned ‘public memory' at the time. These observations will enable me to explore how the film The Legacy relates to other productions that challenge existing memory perceptions in terms of method and intentionality.

Hoerschelmann (2001) highlights the importance of public memory for the construction of collective identity and describes its formation as a process of contestation that, within the area of film, takes place between the dominant mass media and alternative film cultures. This debate is ongoing, and the sense of collective identity that it gives rise to, according to Hoerschelmann, subject to continuous change.

Hoerschelmann describes the substantial break with the immediate past that characterised the post-war era in Germany due to the need to fundamentally reconstruct institutions as well as the political system. While change was imposed on Germany from the outside, it was implemented on a superficial level only, which did not allow for a serious engagement with the fascist legacy and its crimes against humanity. Hoerschelmann suggests that the need for social cohesion and stability made the resistance to fundamental change a necessity and furthered the ‘formation of collective amnesia as a dominant form of public memory in post-war Germany.’ (Hoerschelmann 2001:79)

Hoerschelmann refers to the problem of creating a visible collective identity in Germany after the war as being caused to the sudden absence of national symbolism, in contrast to the highly emblematic and ritualised nationalism of the fascist period. After the war, German national identity was, as it had been during the 19th and 20th centuries, defined by being in opposition to its political enemies. Due to the influence of the Cold War, these were the Eastern European communist countries. In the 1950s, the economic miracle became the strongest element of West German collective identity. Hoerschelmann (2001) mentions the many levels on which Germany’s fascist past had not been dealt with, including the survival of Nazi elites in education, administration, research and politics; the reinstatement of patriarchal ideologies and family structures; and the continuity of most institutions in public life. This degree of continuity between the National Socialist past and the Federal German Republik was,
according to Hoerschelmann, problematic and let forms of residual fascism reappear. In opposition to the general mood of complacency and inertia of the post war years, a youth culture developed that showed various forms of resistance. The rebellion of the *Halbstarke* derived from the working class but expressed an opposition that was unspecific. The students of the 1960s voiced, so Hoerschelmann claims, a radical criticism of West German culture and its fascist legacy.

Hoerschelmann looks at the way in which film culture facilitated the formation of counter-histories and counter-memories and in this way opposed the silence of post-war Germany. He mentions two early short films by the experimental film-makers Danielle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub: *Machorka-Muff* (1963) and *Not reconciled* (1965), both based on the writing of Heinrich Böll. *Machorka-Muff* portrays the survival of Nazi elites in the military, critiques the construction of official memories and shows that ‘the rebuilding of the German economy went hand in hand with the uncritical rebuilding of political structures derived from fascism.’ (Hoerschelmann 2001: 83) *Not reconciled* focuses on how the continuity of fascist ideologies triggered an active act of rebellion in the film’s protagonist. The film thereby aims to establish a counter-memory that undermines the publicly promoted idea of social cohesion in post-war West Germany.

Hoerschelmann (2001) describes *The Marriage of Maria Braun* by Rainer-Werner Fassbinder (1978) as a film that critiques the consumer society of the 1950s - a society of increasing affluence, rigid social structure, and moral corruption - through the portrayal of its main protagonist Maria and her economic and social rise to power. Maria’s personal development exemplifies West Germany’s economic miracle, but her triumph leads to destruction and so calls into question the idea of national redemption through economic growth.

The film *Marianne and Julianne* by Margarethe von Trotta (1981) goes a step further, according to Hoerschelmann, in its critique of 1950s culture and draws a clear connection between German post-war consumer society, with its collective amnesia and fascist legacy, and the student protests that culminated in terrorist activities. In this context, it is the reactionary character of family structures and the education system that are seen to trigger the protest that, represented through the portrayal of two sisters and their engagement in acts of rebellion, leads to terrorism.

Hoerschelmann mentions *The Nasty Girl* (1989) by Michael Verhoeven in which the protagonist Sonja uncovers repressed memories when she researches the history of her hometown as part of a school project. The emphasis in the film is on what Hoerschelmann calls ‘popular memory’ and its reliance on a tradition of oral culture that is used to oppose the dominant, official version of memory. Hoerschelmann criticises the film for not fully addressing the underlying ideological implications of the events. He nevertheless values its portrayal of the persistence of fascist structures, its portrayal of private and repressed memories, and the film’s ability to communicate to a wider audience due to its personalised perspective. Hoerschelmann sees *The Nasty Girl* as a film that exemplifies how counter-memories develop, starting with the
individual and local and expanding to challenge dominant versions of memory and historical narratives.

Hoerschelmann (2001) points out that the German official media, especially the newspaper *Die Zeit*, portrayed terrorism in such a way that it became defined as the internal enemy and could, therefore, be used to stimulate an experience of cohesive national identity, united in an ethical counter stance. The tendency towards collective amnesia that the terrorists had hoped to expose was, through this misrepresentation, strengthened further (Hoerschelmann 2001: 89). The films *The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum* (1975), by Volker Schlöndorf and Margarethe von Trotta, and *Germany in Autumn* (1978), a collaboration lead by Alexander Kluge, can be seen as attempts to oppose the dominant discourse on terrorism. *The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum*, based on a novel by Heinrich Böll, portrays a tense social climate in which the popular conservative press through biased and inflammatory practices promotes the projection of animosity towards those that have been labelled and stigmatised as the enemies of the state. The protagonist, Katharina Blum, is falsely accused of being connected to terrorism and drawn into criminal action by the malicious co-operation of police and press. The film thereby holds the media, the social climate as well the police responsible for the escalation of violence and the development of terrorism in the early 1970s. *Germany in Autumn*, a collaborative effort of New German film-makers, is a response to the assassination of Hans-Martin Schleyer and the alleged suicide of the three terrorists Gudrun Ensslin, Andreas Baader and Jan-Carl Raspe. The film questions the dominant discourse on terrorism by showing the two funerals in contrast to each other in the opening scene: the Schleyer funeral is a pompous state event at which the police force, numerous industrial and political leaders as well as the official media were present; the funeral of the terrorists is an event that is disrupted by a heavy police force. While the film raises doubts about the deaths of the terrorists, it highlights the close connection between the Federal Republic and its fascist past, in which the military, the police, industry and the media are seen as collaborators attempting to ensure continuity and to suppress any form of criticism. According to Hoerschelmann (2001: 94), the film is successful in exposing the ‘shortcomings of West Germany’s politics and its official memory’ but it is due to its commitment to the New German Left not being able to give an objective account of events.

Hoerschelmann (2001) presents films that have been instrumental in the formation of counter-memories, opposing and contesting dominant narratives of German history in post-war Germany. These counter-memories provide alternative memories, and, through these, a more complete representation of historical experiences. Hoerschelmann concludes that public memory is always contested and never neutral. He sees public memory as being composed of collective memories that are ‘inserted into the power relations of the dominant culture, which tends to structure representational techniques in its favor’ (Hoerschelmann 2001:95). The political nature of what Hoerschelmann calls public memory was apparent in the lack of visual representation of Holocaust victims that I found at the Berlin Film archive. In this case, representation had been omitted to suit the collective identity that was
propagated by the dominant culture.

The films discussed by Hoerschelmann mostly establish a new narrative through content using conventional linear narration. *Germany in Autumn* comes closest to *The Legacy* in terms of method. Like in *The Legacy*, a less conventional format demands a mental participation from its viewers and restricts reception. It shares with *The Legacy* a segmented nature, the use of voice-over, the insertion of documentary material and the use of song.

The film *The Legacy* shares to some extent the intentionality of the films that Hoerschelmann (2001) discusses because it opposes the existing version of collective memory. While the productions mentioned by Hoerschelmann criticise the then-contemporary political climate and its influence on collective identity formation, the film *The Legacy* refers to and opposes a manipulation of what Hoerschelmann (2001) calls ‘public memory’ that has happened in the past. This manipulation has to date not been addressed. It still contributes to a distortion of collective memory and towards an inability to empathise with those that were excluded.

Although the productions by the alternative film culture to which Hoerschelmann (2001) refers are marginal in their struggle against official dominant memory and collective amnesia, they exemplify, in his view, that ‘official history can never exhaust the possibilities for representation leaving openings for counter-memories to exist within a given culture’ (Hoerschelmann 2001: 96). This is a view that is encouraging.

### 3.8.3 Contemporary German cultural productions that are of relevance to the film and event *The Legacy*

Anselm Kiefer’s work, as noted in Chapter 2, subchapter 2.4.6.6, makes an important contribution to reworking and confronting the legacy of Germany's violent national past. Kiefer’s work stands out as highlighting and mourning the loss of the Jewish community to German culture and shares with the film *The Legacy* the aim to acknowledge and in some way mentally re-establish the lost communality.

Though different in format and approach, the live action drama *Germany Pale Mother*, as analyzed in Chapter 2, subchapter 2.4.6.5, is particularly relevant in its portrayal of dissociation as a post-traumatic symptom because dissociation can facilitate further violent behaviour. Sanders-Brahms not only portrays her mother’s dissociation but also confronts it with active association in a variety of ways, in which the making of the film is included as one. The film and the event *The Legacy* share the same aim and hope not only to raise awareness of the loss of communality through dissociation but also to reverse this occurrence. Through the use of music, the super-projection of archive footage over contemporary documentary scenes, and the voice-over narration using quotes from Halbwachs' writings, the viewer should be able to stimulate a receptiveness towards repressed memory and, through a given victim's gaze, encourage an association with the victims. A more active association through audience
participation in the holding of the victims’ images would be facilitated by the event.

The _Aktion Stolpersteine_ (The Stumbling-Stone Project) is an ongoing project by the artist Günter Demnig that commemorates the victims of the Nazi regime through brass-plated concrete paving stones inscribed with the victim’s name, birth and death date as well as their cause of death. The stones are integrated into the pavement in front of the victim’s last place of residence. The project started in Cologne in 1993, and Demnig has to date laid around 30,000 stones in over 650 German municipalities. A local organisation has to take the initiative, undertake the research and contact the artist who will make the stone and integrate it into the pavement. This memory work is growing steadily and has now taken on a European dimension with stones being set in Hungary, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Ukraine, Norway and Belgium. The Stumbling-Stones acknowledge the loss of communality and, to some extent, reverses it. The project successfully reinstates the victims of collective violence into the life and collective memory of the community from which they were eliminated through the use of an artefact that is of long duration and that becomes part of urban architecture and of everyday life.

Assmann (2006) mentions an installation by the artist Horst Hoheisel who, on the night of the 27th of January 2000, projected for a few minutes the gate of the Auschwitz Concentration camp onto the Brandenburg Gate, one year after the introduction of the Auschwitz Remembrance day in Germany. This short-lived installation was recorded and materialised through photography. It has now become part of what Assman (2006) describes as the cultural aspect of collective memory and can be read as an image that calls for reflection and allows for a deeper insight into the German politics of remembrance (Assmann 2006: 14). Assmann (2006) points out that the Brandenburg Gate is a symbol for the trauma and triumph of German history: it was initially erected to celebrate victory over France, it was subsequently 'captured' by Napoleon, and it was finally reclaimed and reinstated after Napoleon’s defeat. Hitler’s rise to power, then seen as a triumph but now perceived as a trauma, was also celebrated at the Brandenburg Gate. According to Assmann (2006), the light projection by Hoheisel in the centre of Berlin has connected a national place of triumph with a national place of trauma and thereby visualised the connection between triumph and trauma in their relevance for national identity construction, as highlighted by Giesen (2004) ³. It is the use of large-scale light projection that makes Hoheisel’s work relevant for the event of which the film _The Legacy_ is conceived as a part, since stills from the film are meant to be projected in large scale onto surfaces. Hoheisel's connection of past and present through super-projection is also comparable to the way in which archive material is superimposed over present day documentary footage in _The Legacy_.

Assmann (2006) refers to novels like _Am Beispiel meine Bruders (In my brother’s shadow)_ by Uwe Timm (2005) and films like Malte Ludin’s _2 oder 3 Dinge, die ich von ihm weiss (2 or 3 things that I know about him)_ (2005) because both productions focus on family secrets and their negative effects on family members and both productions facilitate relief through forms of emotive and cognitive confrontation as
well as distancing. According to Assmann (2006), art is not only a means of representation of memory but also ‘a social impulse to free previously blocked memories’ (Assmann 2006: 216). Likewise, the section of the film *The Legacy* that refers to memory within the family and to unprocessed family history has been inserted not only to include the personal perspective but also to break, through presentation, what Assmann (2006) refers to as ‘the negative chain of transgenerational transmission’ (Assmann 2006: 216) Unlike in the above-mentioned productions, the family history referred to in the film *The Legacy*, does not directly relate to Nazism and the Holocaust.

### 3.8.4 Holocaust films

Attempts to represent the Holocaust can be controversial and can raise ethical issues. This becomes apparent through reactions by intellectuals, filmmakers and audiences. I will here mention three examples:

2) The objection by the filmmaker Claude Lanzmann to the use of archive images for his 9.5 hour documentary *Shoah* (1985).
3) The critical reception of the live action drama *Schindler’s List* (Spielberg 1993) by the community of Holocaust survivors.

According to Delage (2005) it was the French documentary *Nuit et Brouillard* (*Night and Fog*) by Alain Resnais (1955) that marked a turning point in the history and memory of the Holocaust and coincided with the beginning of scholarly writing on the history of the Jewish genocide. Using ‘liberation footage’ and documentary scenes showing concentration camp sites and a poetic voice-over, the film aims to disseminate knowledge of everyday life experience in the camps. Due to its short running time, the film was shown in art house cinemas as well as on commercial screens, to students in schools, and programmed on all French television channels following the desecration of a Jewish cemetery in 1990. Received well by critics, *Nuit et Brouillard* was often met with criticism and its 'reputation remains complicated half a century later' (Delage 2005: 127). Delage (2005) explains that the film’s message was to portray the horrors of war as a ‘warning’ at a time when France was engaged in the Algerian conflict. He states that it was the main mission of the film to relate, via image and commentary, a sociological explanation for the Nazi atrocities (Delage 2005: 129). This sociological perspective and the aim of explaining the occurrence of genocide make *Nuit et Brouillard* particularly relevant to the practice-based part of this project in which the connection between collective violence and an experience of social dislocation is emphasised.

*Nuit et Brouillard* and the many films that followed have made an important contribution in creating a wider awareness of the Holocaust. According to Assmann
Holocaust films have not only become successful in the media world but have also become an important part of our cultural memory (Assmann 2006: 213). It is this awareness that the film *The Legacy* is able to build upon. Since it is no longer necessary to state that the Holocaust has happened nor to attempt to represent the experience, an enquiry into its mental origins can now follow.

According to Haggith and Newman (2005):

‘the ethical and philosophical issues concerning the representation of the Holocaust have led to two quite distinct traditions in filmmaking that can be recognised in both the non-fiction or documentary fields and in dramatised feature production. Firstly a realist tradition, best illustrated in feature films by the classical narrative cinema of Hollywood… the non-fiction version of the realist tradition can be illustrated by a didactic, chronological documentary treatment such as the Holocaust episode in *The World at War* series. The second tradition is the non-linear or non-chronological, poetical and occasionally reflexive approach, in which there is particular concern and often experimentation with the cinematic form of language’ (Haggith & Newman 2005: 9).

Hirsch (2004) explains the non-realist approach as a ‘kind of cultural manifestation of post-traumatic stress disorder’ through which ‘artists have responded to the trauma of the Holocaust and exposure to the atrocity footage that documented it… by developing a form of filmmaking that conceded the impossibility of representing the event through realism’ (Hirsch 2004: 245). The film *The Legacy* is an audio-visual reflection that comes close to what Haggith & Newman described as ‘the second tradition’ of Holocaust films or what Hirsch describes as the ‘the cultural manifestation of post-traumatic stress disorder’. But *The Legacy* is one step further removed from the event than the Holocaust films discussed by Hirsch (2004) and by Haggith and Newman (2005). A representation of the Holocaust is no longer the aim of the film; rather, it is the representation of a repressed memory that stands in connection to the Holocaust and points to its mental origins.

### 3.8.5 The film *The Legacy* in terms of format and genre


*Koyaanisqatsi* has been described by Dempsey (1989) as a feature documentary without plot, characters, dialogue and narration but comprising a series of musically accompanied images. A ‘feature-length montage juxtaposing the pristine beauty of unspoiled nature with the more ambiguous “terrible” beauty of humanity and its creations. Scored by the rhythmic and choral pulsations… of composer Philip Glass’ the film portrays ‘earth as a living creature slowly being poisoned by its perversely suicidal passengers’ (Dempsey 1989: 2). The words of *Ko, yaa, nis, qatsi* are from the
Hopi Language and can be translated as ‘life out of balance’. The film was initially thought to be unreleasable, but the promotion by Francis Ford Coppola facilitated its wide distribution and a surprising critical and commercial success (Dempsey 1989: 2)⁷. According to Dempsey (1989), Reggio, who had been a Calvinist monk, a devoted social worker and a political activist, had no ambitions to be a filmmaker, but, due to the positive response to Koyaanisqatsi, subsequently perceived the film as part of a trilogy and continued on to make Powaqqatsi in 1988. While the format of the second film is similar, the focus is here on the Third World, offering a meditation on people⁸. The film Naqoyqatsi (Life at War) was completed in 2002. As the third part of the trilogy, the film hopes to ‘offer as a point of view… that the very foundation of civilized life is war. That war is the thing that motivates our society. That the military is only one part of war life. And that without war, there’d be no modernity’ (Reggio 1988 in Dempsey 1989: 11, 12).

In this comment by the film-maker it becomes clear that the film The Legacy is not only close in its format to the ‘Qatsi-Trilogy’, in its combined use of documentary footage and music, but also in its aim to convey a deeper sociological understanding of the human condition. This aim is also shared by Fricke and expressed in his films Chronos, Baraka and Samsara. Similar in format and approach to the ‘Qatsi-Trilogy’, the focus here is on mythology, anthropology and theology⁹.

Staples (1994) describes the ‘non-verbal’ feature films as explorations of the planet as well as of visual perception and experience. He states that:

> ‘The roving camera eye/I in these films is the ideal observer/traveller whose passage through anthropological, biological, geographical, and historical space is made possible through astounding technological effects… leading to the creation of “a world beyond words” (as advertised on the movie poster), a visual and aural experience that speaks directly to the soul of the viewer… an experience that Fricke calls ‘guided meditation’ (Staples 1994: 662, 663).

This concept of an audio-visual ‘guided meditation’ resonates to some extent with the audience feedback for The Legacy, in which the meditative quality of the film was commented on (see Chapter 4).

A further similarity between The Legacy and the ‘Non-Verbal Films’ by Reggio and Fricke is the use of the ‘gaze’ of the individuals that the films at times portray. In The Legacy this gaze is crucial in establishing a relationship with the viewer and is, therefore, a key-element in contributing towards a restoration of the lost social connection. Reggio commented on his use of individual faces that appear at times as close-up portraits: ‘I wanted very much to have people view the audience and - through their eyes, through their faces, through their souls - be able to make contact with the viewer, the contact being a highly personal thing. I could decide whether we would put a face in or not, but I couldn’t control the emotional response to it.’” (Dempsey 1989: 7). Staples commented on the use of the gaze in Baraka: ‘The return of the gaze by the film’s human and animal subjects serve as punctuation marks in the visual text, creating suspended moments that underscore particular passages within
the film’s often breathless and frenetic pace’ (Staples 1994: 667).

The film *The Legacy* also shares with the ‘Non-Verbal Films’ by Reggio and Fricke the use of slow-motion in both archive and contemporary documentary sequences, which is juxtaposed with or superimposed over scenes in real time. According to Reggio, the slow-motion effect leads to the monumentalisation of a scene. ‘In freezing a moment, you create a monument, and that’s what we tried to do with the film, to have it become a monument of 100 minutes’ (Reggio 1988 in Dempsey 1989: 8,9). As in the films by Reggio and Fricke, the slow-motion effect is used in *The Legacy* to highlight film sequences that become deliberately taken out of the context of the ordinary, so allowing time for increased attention and giving the film a meditative quality.

This effect was also achieved by the Austrian documentary filmmaker Manfred Neuwirth who used footage that was slowed down to a ratio of 1:4, but overlaid with a sound recording in real-time, in his trilogy of *Tibetische Erinnerungen (Tibetan Recollections)* (1995), *Manga Train* (1998) and *Magic Hour* (1999). These films portray sequences of everyday life that have not been chosen intentionally; the sequences remain unstructured and untreated but are nevertheless dense and able to communicate a message (Cork Film Festival Brochure 2000: 103). Inspired by the meditative quality of the films by Neuwirth, the scenes of walking pedestrians at the beginning of the film *The Legacy* were slowed down to a quarter of the original speed.

The films *Tibetische Erinnerungen (Tibetan Recollections), Manga Train* and *Magic Hour* by Neuwirth also fall into the category of Non-Verbal Films. However, the film *The Legacy* is not strictly a non-verbal film because language, in the form of inserted texts, lyrics to the music and voice-over narration, plays an important role in communicating the message of the film on a rational plane.

### 3.8.6 The event *The Legacy* in relation to other cultural productions

Other cultural productions that are of relevance to the event of which the film *The Legacy* is conceived as a part are *Black Box/Chambre Noir*, by the South African artist William Kentridge, and the multi-media art installations of *Obsessive Becoming* and *The hand that holds up all this falling* by the American born artist Daniel Reeves. Both productions share a number of aspects with *The Legacy* as a film and as a film event: in terms of format it is by engaging with a variety of media; and in terms of content it is through their reference to collective experiences that were trauma-like in their effect.

According to Villasenor (2005), *Black Box/Chambre Noir* is centred on the genocide of the Herero population under German colonialism and ‘explores constructions of history and meaning while examining the process of grief, guilt, culpability and expiation and the shifting vintage points of political engagement and responsibility’ (Villasenor 2005: 2). The work consists of a mechanised miniature theatre in which drawings and kinetic sculptural objects appear together with superprojected animation.
footage to an orchestrated experimental soundtrack. This combination of visual and audio-visual media creates a layered impression, through which the violent history of German colonialism can be traced through its connection to technological advancement and so to Enlightenment idealism. The traumatic event that is portrayed is thereby reconnected to its source, and it is this connection that makes Kentridge’s work particularly relevant to my own enquiry. Kentridge uses the existing formats of miniature theatre, shadow puppetry, animation and classical music that he decontextualises through their combination. The aesthetics that is thereby created suits the traumatic experience because violent scenes are integrated into an otherwise familiar context, leaving a disturbing impression. In a similar way, existing formats like song, classical music, text, documentary footage and photography are combined in the film and film event *The Legacy* to reflect mental distortions and unprocessed repressed memories. In contrast to *Black Box/Chambre Noir*, violence is not portrayed directly in the film *The Legacy*.

Zimmermann (1998) discusses the installations *Obsessive Becoming* (1995) and *The Hand That Holds Up All This Falling* (1998) in which artist Daniel Reeves includes live-projection, photography and performance art to rework the public and private traumatic experiences of the Vietnam war, the Spanish Civil War and family violence. Reeves facilitates the transcoding and re-signing of imagery that was suppressed by the public media by using processed video footage. Zimmermann (1998) highlights how this process uses technology as a tool for exorcism, one that enables the recovery of fractured memories and warped identities and allows for the release of pain. Zimmermann describes Reeves’ approach as one in which he connects the personal with collective and political trauma through a layering, shredding and decomposition of discordant images, using frequent dissolves, rotoscoping, composite imaging, digital morphing and the inclusion of language. The personal and the historic imagery are, through this process, released from their indexicality and so gain mobility, while the psychic traumas are disentangled from their former designs. In this way, Reeves provides a new way of experiencing, one that leaves room for active spectator participation in the decoding of meaning. Although not aiming to resist the norm but rather to resist the traumatic repetition, he creates a non-linear structure in which images do not represent but become ‘fluid parts of an image ecosystem’ (Zimmermann 1998: 4). A sense of interconnectedness is created as the work flows between the private and the public, the real and the virtual, nature and technology, in and out of different historical periods and geographical areas. As Reeves invites the public to take part in constructing installations and to interact with live projections he facilitates the creation of a collective ritual and reclaims a public space.

The installations by Reeves are relevant to the event *The Legacy* for three main reasons:

1) For the decomposition and shredding of imagery through which Reeves creates a non-linear structure of fluid parts as an antidote to traumatic repetition. The impression of movement and fluidity is meant to facilitate the processing of trauma and counteract the motion of stuck or repetitive trauma memory. Reeves himself talks
about ‘therapeutic intervention into traumatic repetition’ (Reeves in Zimmermann 1998: 5). In the film *The Legacy*, this type of therapy is created through the repeated use of the image of the river, walking pedestrians, by the movement of leaves and branches and through the use of music. Audience members have commented in the aural feedback session on the impression of fluidity that the film *The Legacy* created for them, stating that it had a comforting effect and facilitated the processing of loss and grief (see Chapter 4). As in Reeves’ work, images often appear superimposed, reflecting the layered nature of the conscious and unconscious mind.

2) For the ritual element that Reeves created in facilitating physical audience participation. In the event *The Legacy*, stills of the film that show victims in portrait shots are intended to be projected onto large scale screens that are to be held by audience members. Because the historical loss of mental, emotional and social connection resulted in a form of passivity that later manifested as collective violence, it is a collective action that needs to counter this former lack of action. An action that contributes to the process of reinstating the lost community member into the memory of the group.

3) For the creation of an impression of interconnectedness in which the private and the public, the real and the virtual, nature and technology, different historical periods and geographical areas are brought together in layers and in specific contexts. To achieve this experience of interconnectedness as a remedy for the experience of separation to which violence can be traced is also the aim of the event *The Legacy*. The flowing motion and the layering of imagery and sound contribute to this impression. It is mainly the music that is meant to facilitate this experience.

### 3.8.7 Conclusion of subchapter 3.8

This subchapter shows that while the film/the event *The Legacy* shares many of its aspects with other cultural productions, it stands alone in its attempt to refer to the Holocaust in such a way that an acknowledgement and awareness of its mental origins is facilitated while a sense of empathy with its victims is encouraged, thereby promoting the reinstatement of the victims to the ‘framework of collective memory’ (Halbwachs 1925 in Coser 1992).

The work by Anselm Kiefer mourns the loss of Jewish culture to German society; Demnig’s project *Stolpersteine* helps to reinstate the victims of the Holocaust to the collective memory of the German public. The occurrence of collective violence is mourned in both cases but is not traced to its source. The connection between violence and its mental origins is made by Kentridge in his installation *Black Box/Chambre Noire* but the focus is on colonialism rather than on the Holocaust. The film *Germany Pale Mother* exemplifies the connection between trauma/post-traumatic symptoms and violence. This film also promotes association and processing through narration. Due to the autobiographical perspective of the film *Germany Pale Mother*, the empathy that is facilitated through association is here limited to family members and does not
include the victims of the Holocaust.

Like the films discussed by Hoerschelmann (2001), the film The Legacy challenges existing perceptions of memory but addresses an omission that happened in the past that still affects the present.

In terms of approach, the film The Legacy can be counted among what Haggith & Newman (2005) have called ‘the second tradition’ of Holocaust films, which can be described as a ‘kind of cultural manifestation of post-traumatic stress disorder’ that concedes ‘the impossibility of representing the event through realism’ (Hirsch 2004: 245). It shares with the ‘non-verbal’ films by Reggio and Fricke its meditative outlook and hopes to facilitate an experience of fluid interconnectivity as achieved in the multi-media installations Obsessive Becoming (1995) and The Hand that Holds up all this Falling (1998) by Reeves.

3.9 Conclusion to Chapter 3

The influence of research in the context of film production has been substantial and has happened on many levels. While the more direct connections have been pointed out in this chapter, a general understanding of the subject matter has informed the developmental process of the project throughout. Research into film and media studies, in relation to the Holocaust, provided an overview of the work that has already been done in this area. Documentaries and dramas, dance, theatre, works of literature, music and fine art productions have dealt with the Holocaust as a historic occurrence in a way that has facilitated its acknowledgment by the collective. Audiences have thereby gained a certain knowledge and awareness of the subject matter, and this project is able to build on this understanding and can attempt to take the processing further into a quest that explores the mental and social crisis that preceded and facilitated the occurrence of collective violence. To address the loss of mental and emotional connection to those who became the victims in this process is an important part of this quest. The next chapter will assess to what extent the film The Legacy facilitates this extended awareness.
Notes to Chapter 3

1 Edward de Bono describes exlectics as an alternative to dialectics and as an approach that has to do with map reading as well as with creative design. It is based on joint listening and joint exploration in such a way that ideas emerge at a later stage. The emphasis in exlectics is on ‘designing forward’ rather than on judgement at every stage. Possibilities are accepted and laid out in parallel before decisions are made (de Bono 1982: 80).

2 The cultural anthropologist Gregory Bateson proposed a new way of thinking about ideas and how ideas interact in what he perceived as an ecological system. Bateson proposed that in addition to a familiar physical universe there exists a mental universe which is not transcendent but immanent and finds its most evident expression in living things. The individual mind is one of these expressions and is, in its immanence, not restricted to the body but is a part of a larger mind that can be compared to what has been called God. ‘God’ is itself immanent in what Bateson calls ‘the interconnected social system and planetary ecology’ (Bateson 1972: 467).

3 Assmann (2006) refers to Giesen’s (2004) idea that both trauma and triumph are necessary for the construction of national collective identity, as they form the poles of extreme historical experiences that allow for orientation in the process of collective identity formation (Assmann 2006: 14).

4 The term ‘liberation footage’ refers to the reels of film that recorded sites of atrocities and concentration camps discovered by the liberating Soviet and Western Allied armies towards the end of the war.

5 The film Nuit et Brouillard was part of a political controversy shortly after its release, as the German Embassy objected to its screening at Cannes, and a censorship of a scene that portrays French police cooperation was imposed by the French government. Later criticism objected to the insufficient mention of the Judeocide.

6 The television drama series Holocaust (1978) and the live action drama Schindler’s List (1993) though having caused much pain and anger among the community of Holocaust survivors created a mass awareness internationally, in particular among American audiences (Haggith & Newman 2005: 8).

7 The reception of Koyaanisqatsi was generally positive because many critics were moved by the film’s environmental call. It was, however, criticised as being too simplistic, preachy and condescending, with shots that have been described as impactful but too easily readable, turning the soullessness of high technology into a cliché (Dempsey 1989: 2). Dempsey also describes Koyaanisqatsi’s influence on mass culture in terms of its style of imagery, particularly that of pixelation and slow motion effects, later to become popular in music videos and commercials (Dempsey 1989: 6).

8 In the film Powaqqatsi, meaning ‘life in transformation’, the nature-city dichotomy
of Koyaanisqatsi remains but both worlds are full of people. According to Dempsey (1989), the film is richer, moodier, more stirring and ‘fosters a poetic sense of manifold forces at work in the world’ and ‘conveys a view of human beings merged with rather than seeking to subdue nature’. The film ‘elides national and regional differences into a global perspective yet still conveys the diversity of customs and people’ and shows ‘a willingness… to hold contradictions in suspension without resolving them’ (Dempsey 1989: 9). The critical reception was less favourable.

9 Baraka is an ancient Sufi word and means ‘a blessing’ or ‘essence of life’ from which the evolutionary process unfolds. According to Staples (1994), Baraka constructs a global vision that provides access to the hidden, the remote, the sacred, the destitute and the trivial, turning ordinary and not-so-ordinary encounters into archetypal events. Filmed on 6 continents and in 24 countries over a 14-month period, the film represents a timeless odyssey of creation, evolution, destruction and transcendence’ (Staples 1994: 663).

10 Villasenor (2005) refers to the German massacre of the Herero Tribe in South West Africa in 1904. Southwest Africa had become a German protectorate in 1885 but German settlers exploited and mistreated the indigenous population who launched an attack, causing the German Kaiser to send General von Trotha, who was known for his ruthlessness, to lead a counter strike. Seventy-five percent of the Herero population were killed in massacres or by fleeing into the desert.
Chapter 4 - Survey of film reception

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 analyses the reception of the film *The Legacy* at three small sample screenings and uses the results to assess the film’s potential to make a claim to a ‘cultural trauma’ (sensu Alexander: 2004) in relation to the legacy of Germany's violent past and to see if a feeling of empathy with the victims was encouraged in the viewer. It also explores which elements of the film contributed towards this potential. The first, and main, event was at a programme cinema in Trier, a university city with around 100,000 inhabitants in the middle of Germany close to the French border. A screen had been rented for an evening performance at 7 pm and close to 100 people had been invited, including members of the German-Jewish society, members of a local peace organisation, students of Dr. Thomas Grotum (University of Trier) who had attended a seminar on the Holocaust, as well as friends and acquaintances. A sense of resistance to the subject matter of the film was observed during the promotion of the film, which was confirmed by the small number of participants that attended the screening (17) and by the comments of audience members who admitted that they had come despite the fact that they were tired of this subject. Most participants at this screening had been motivated by the fact that they knew the film-maker. The cinema event was complemented by two further screenings to include a wider variety of ages, interests, and motivations to participate. The second screening was to a class of secondary school students at the Humboldt Gymnasium in Trier. The students did not choose to take part in the screening (the film was shown during class time), did not know the film-maker and did not have a specific interest in the subject matter. The third screening was to members of a peace organisation in the Schwarzwald, most of whom were attending a small science conference. This group included an older age bracket and members who were related to the subject matter by personal experience. None of these members knew the film-maker personally.

Due to the fact that the number of participants was small, ranging from 9-17 per group, and that audience members did not constitute a broad cross-section of the population, the findings of this survey are not representative and not suitable for generalisation. This considerable limitation, which affects in particular the quantitative part of the enquiry, needs to be taken into account. The small scale of the screenings did however, due to the more personal setting, facilitate post-screening question-and-answer sessions in which all audience members were included. Subsequent one-to-one discussions and aural feedback provided valuable information in terms of emotional audience response, and this made a considerable contribution towards the qualitative part of the enquiry.

The film was screened in DVD format at all events. Audience members were handed a questionnaire that was to be in part filled out before and in part immediately after the screening. The film was discussed after the questionnaires were completed.
A copy of the English translation of the questionnaire, which includes coding, can be found in Appendix 3.1.

4.2 Research method

The survey comprised quantitative components that were complemented by qualitative elements.

The quantitative components consist of the closed questions of the questionnaire, which aimed to establish if and how the film was successful in making a ‘cultural representation of trauma’ (Alexander 2004). The descriptive research question - Research Question 1 - in this context is: To what extent was the film *The Legacy* able to establish a new narrative that makes a claim to a cultural trauma and to contribute towards a revision of a sense of collective identity that enables a feeling of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust in the viewer? The relationship-based research question - Research Question 2 - aims to establish if effective communication had been achieved and is: What is the relationship between this element of the film (to be applied to the various elements one at a time) and a successful claim to a cultural trauma?

The qualitative components include open questions and an assessment of verbal audience feedback and participant observation, which are used to facilitate an evaluation of the emotional response to the film. The question here is: What was the overall impact that the film had on the audience member and how was this impact achieved?

The survey is composed of quantitative components that are complemented by qualitative elements.

The quantitative components consist of the closed questions of the questionnaire that aim to establish if and how the film was successful in making a ‘cultural representation of trauma’ (sensu Alexander 2004). The descriptive research question in this context is:
- To what extent was the film *The Legacy* able to establish a new narrative that makes a claim to a cultural trauma and contributes towards a revision of a sense of collective identity that enables a feeling of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust in the viewer?

The relationship-based research question, which aims to establish how an effective communication was achieved, is: What is the relationship between this element of the film (to be applied to the various elements one at a time) and a successful claim to a cultural trauma.

The qualitative components include the open questions of the questionnaire as well as an assessment of verbal audience feedback and participant observation which are used to facilitate an evaluation of the emotional response to the film. The question here is: What was the overall impact that the film had on the audience member and how was this impact achieved?
4.3 Variables to be tested

Through the questionnaire the following variables were tested:

Response to Research Question 1

a) Have the points that are listed by Alexander (2004) as requirements for a successful claim to a cultural trauma been addressed by the film? Q12
The points that Alexander (2004) lists as the nature of the pain, the nature of the victim, the relation of trauma victim to audience, the attribution of responsibilities, were translated into:

- was the pain that was caused by the collective violence of the recent German past expressed?
- were the victims of this violence adequately identified?
- did the film show in what relation the victims stand to the audience?
- was a sense of responsibility established?

As it is crucial that the audience member sees the relation between the loss of social connection and collective violence, the following questions were added:

- was the connection between the loss of social connection and the collective violence of the recent German past made clear?
- has the definition of collective identity been revised as a consequence? Q13
- is a response apparent that is interpretable as evidence of a form of emotional engagement that could contribute towards a reprocessing of the experience? Q6 and Q15

Response to Research Question 2

a) Which elements of the respondent’s personal background have facilitated a successful communication of ideas?
- age Q2
- gender Q3
- religious affiliation Q4
- personal interest/occupation Q5
b) Which elements of personal perspective have facilitated a successful communication of ideas?
- relation to the subject matter Q1
- ability to relate to the past through the reflections on collective memory by Maurice Halbwachs (1925) Q7
- relationship to the power of the elements when controlled by men in industry Q9
- ability to relate to a collective Q11
c) Which elements of the film have facilitated a successful communication of ideas?
- archive footage Q8
- underlying concept Q10
- music Q15
4.4 Pattern coding, memos and assessment

The questions of the survey were grouped in the following way: questions to the person, looking at general information Q2-5 and personal perspective Q1, 7, 9, 11; questions in relation to the reception of the film, looking at the appreciation of particular components Q8, 10, 14; questions concerning the successful claim to a cultural trauma and the ability to further a feeling of empathy with the victims Q12 and 13; questions that give an indication of a constructive emotional response, Q6 and 15; a question that invites general feedback to the film, Q16; and a question in relation to the survey, Q17.

Coding Q12 and Q13 was in percent (%); all other questions were coded from 0 to 1.

In order to assess the results of the survey in relation to the descriptive research question (‘To what extent was the film The Legacy able to establish a new narrative that claims a cultural trauma and contributes towards a revision of a sense of collective identity that enables a feeling of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust in the viewer?’), the questionnaires were compared to an ideal type (Weber 1968) (see Appendix 4.3). This ideal type provides evidence of a successful claim to a cultural trauma and the facilitation of a feeling of empathy in the viewer through a 100% score for questions 12 and 13 and a score of 1 for questions 6 and 15.

To find answers to the relationship-based research questions, trying to establish which elements of the film made a contribution towards the successful communication of ideas, the results of Q1-5, Q7-11, Q14 and Q15 were analysed in their relationship to an overall positive or negative score for the descriptive research question.

The questionnaires were initially analysed and assessed within their groups. The results and conclusions were then brought together in an overall assessment and a conclusion that took account of the variations in screening conditions and group composition. For more detailed information on coding, memos and assessment see Appendix 3.2.

4.5 Questionnaire result analysis

The graphs used in this context should be seen as an indication of tendencies within each sample group and are not in any way meant to be interpreted as representative of audience reaction in general.

Respondents were split into 10 age groups: 1 representing 10-19 years of age, 2 representing 20-29 years of age, etc. The groups were also divided into the gender of the respondent: W for women, and M for men.
4.5.1 Screening at Humboldt Gymnasium, Trier

4.5.1.1 Participants

The participants of this screening were a group of secondary school students and one history teacher from the Humboldt Gymnasium, Trier. Students were in 12th class (about 16-17 years old). Eleven students were present: 7 male students, 4 female students. The students would have been familiar with the National Socialist era of German history as part of the school curriculum and from annual events organised in every secondary school for Holocaust Remembrance day.

4.5.1.2 Conditions and observations

The film was screened on the second-last day before the Easter break in the morning during a history class (2 periods @ 45 minutes each). The teacher briefly introduced the screening, was present throughout the screening and took part in the survey. The DVD copy of the film was screened via a projector onto a screen in the classroom. The room was not fully dark, a class playing a ball game in the courtyard was audible.

Some students showed signs of a lack of interest/attention from the very start of the session through chatting, laughing and watching of mobile phones, which might have been related to the proximity of the holidays.

The content of the critical comments to question 16, which is open and invites feedback to the film, shows that the students were under the impression that the film was to be analysed and interpreted like class material and that a certain amount of frustration arose due to this expectation not being met. In the discussion after the screening this impression was further strengthened. The overall response by many students also showed evidence of a kind of criticism that the students themselves would have experienced in a school-related assessment of their own work.

4.5.1.3 Analysis

In relation to the film’s ability to make a successful claim to a cultural trauma and to facilitate an ability to feel empathy with the victims of the Holocaust, one student had an overall positive score, 5 students had mixed scores, and 6 students had negative scores. It can therefore be concluded that the film, in this context, was able to communicate successfully at age group 1 (ages 10-19) but that its ability to do so was very limited.

Q8, which enquires about the relation to archive footage, was scored by all students at 0-0.5 points. Student 1, who had the overall positive score, also remarked, ‘the film had a somewhat confusing effect on me, as I am not accustomed to the images of this past time, unlike perhaps an older person, who has experienced it in person’. This comment is particularly valuable as the student’s feedback on the film was otherwise
positive. The conclusion can be extended to say that successful communication of ideas was possible, but that it was more difficult for members of age group 1 because the imagery of the archive footage was not familiar. This conclusion is further strengthened by the comment of another student who misread the archive image showing a Jewish man in a ghetto as representing a German prisoner of war in the Soviet Union.

In this group, a strong connection between appreciation of music (Q15 = 1) and a positive score in relation to a successful claim to cultural trauma became apparent. Only one student, the one with the positive score, had scored 1 for question 15. Therefore, the type of music that the film used was not easily appreciated by this age group, and this strongly affected the film’s ability to communicate. Some connection between an openness to the past through the reflections on collective memory by Maurice Halbwachs (Q7 = 1) and evidence of a successful claim to a cultural trauma/positive score are also apparent, as well as a link between an appreciation of the underlying concept (Q10 = 1) and evidence of trauma processing/positive score.

In relation to question 1, which inquired into the way in which the respondent relates to the subject matter of the film, 7 students stated that they related indirectly to the subject matter as German citizens, 2 stated that they were not German citizens, 1 had a mixed response, and 2 stated that they were not sure how they related to the subject matter of the film (the collective violence of the German past). The two students also showed an overall negative response. Due to this connection, it can be concluded that to have an initial relation to the subject matter was a precondition to a successful claim to a cultural trauma in this context.
The comments to Q16 show that the format of the film was difficult to appreciate by this young age group. This was apparent in comments that scenes were too long, the film was confusing, a connection to the theme was not apparent and that the film was an incoherent collection of images, music and film footage. Example reactions were:

'It did not really become clear to me what the film was all about’ from respondent 4, school screening, age group 1W.
'I thought the film was average, as it did not show the subject matter enough. Apart from that, more explanation would have been necessary to make the film better understandable’ from respondent 2, school, 1W.
'I think the film was too long and also too boring’ respondent 3, school, 1W.
'The film was overall too long winded’ respondent 5, school, 1W.
'A collection of images, scenes, quotes and music alone does not make a good film’ respondent 6, school, 1M.

Some students also criticised the inclusion of personal/family history into the film:

'Too many personal elements (family) which is not fitting in this context’ respondent 7, 1M.
'What is the connection between the subject matter and personal interests?’ respondent 11, school, 1M.

It is interesting to note that the response by the student who had an overall positive score shows that this student did not share any of the above criticism but was able to appreciate those elements that his classmates criticised, so making successful communication possible.

‘… the film was very comprehensive in its visual explanations and technically well executed. It initiated thinking/reflection and awoke in me a feeling of empathy for the victims. The reflection was initiated well through the visuals in the film, many little details contributed towards a better understanding’ respondent 1, school, 1M.

The scores to Q17, which invited feedback to the survey, reflect a very critical perspective by the majority of the student group. Most students scored 0 thereby giving a negative response to the survey, in particular those students who had a
negative score.

![Figure 3. Relation to survey.](image)

Other personal information, such as gender Q3, religious affiliation Q4, profession/personal interests Q5 and relationship towards the power of the elements when controlled by men in industry Q9 did not seem to affect the scoring. The majority of students were Roman Catholic, some were Protestant or had no religious affiliation, and one student was Russian Orthodox. Personal interests ranged from art to social work, education, maths and science, to commerce.

A comparison between the scores of Q6 and Q16 (which reflect the emotional response to the film once asked at the beginning and once at the end of the survey) shows that the scores improved in 5 cases and disimproved in 3 cases. Thus, the filling out of the survey made an overall positive contribution towards the processing of the experience.

The teacher belonged to age-group 4, male, no religious affiliation, and showed a mixed score which was close to being a positive score. He scored 1 for Q7 (question on openness towards the past), 1 for Q11 (question on collectivity), 0.8 for Q15 (music) and 0.75 for Q10 (concept). He stands out as the only audience member of the group having score 1 for Q8 (relation to archive imagery), which strengthens the observation that the ability to relate to the archive footage was age related for this group.

### 4.5.2 Screening at Broadway Cinema, Trier

#### 4.5.2.1 Participants

The audience consisted of seventeen members, ranging from 30s to 70s in age and with a gender divide of 5 men (1 in his 30s, 1 in his 40s, 2 in their 60s, 1 in his 70s) to 12 women (1 in her 30s, 5 in their 40s, 2 in their 50s, 2 in their 60s, 2 in their 70s). Audience members were either involved in education, art, therapy, social work or memory work. The majority of audience members were Roman Catholic, 3 audience members had no religious affiliation. Audience members were either personal friends/former classmates/former teachers, or students of Dr. Grotum, University of Trier.
Chapter 4 – Survey of film reception

4.5.2.2 Conditions

The film was screened to invited guests in a small art-house cinema in Trier city centre at 7 pm. The film was projected in DVD format onto a big cinema screen, sound and picture quality were very high. All audience members stayed on after the screening for an in-depth discussion.

4.5.2.3 Analysis

A strong connection between an appreciation of the music (Q15 = 1) and a positive score was apparent. Nine out of 16 respondents could relate well to the archive footage and the way in which it appeared superimposed over documentary scenes (Q8 = 1) while 7 audience members felt haunted by the imagery (Q8 = 0). A connection to age was not apparent, but to relate to the archive footage was for this group a precondition to scoring positive.

Some connection between a positive score and score 1 for Q7 (relation to past), Q10 (relation to the concept) and Q11 (relation to a sense of collectivity) can be observed but it is less clear.

Critical points that were raised in relation to Q16 were only concerned with clarity and approach ‘I am of the opinion that many images/collages and so on of a certain emotional intensity together with expressive music have been brought together in the film in such a way that the meaning of the visuals in the overall context was unclear. At times strong contrasting emotions were expressed in one scene. It was often difficult to understand, if the images were supposed to be decoded or if they were supposed to be taken at face value’ respondent 16, Broadway, age group 4W.
'A few things stay unclear: is this about missing memory, about the source of the Holocaust, the source of collective violence in general?’ respondent 13, Broadway, 4W. While the respondents only raised critical points rather than giving a negative feedback to the film the majority of respondents showed appreciation and commented positively on the approach used. ‘The film is mostly meditative. It uses techniques that render the image of the perfect world diffuse and touch on the deeper levels of humanity in history, thereby raising awareness. The connection between a present reality that is experienced consciously and an often suppressed past is being established…. A film that in a subtle way enquires into the sense of human existence in history: sensitive and flexible’ respondent 10, Broadway, 6M. ‘… a very personal, quiet, reserved and also poetic film with a variety of connections to different themes, ideas and truths about the German/human past. I very much enjoyed that violence was not portrayed as upfront and brutal but rather in a subtle way as subliminal. I also enjoyed the layering of nature, reality, memory and suppressed memory’ respondent 5, Broadway, 5W.

A comparison between the scores of Q6 and Q15 shows that the scores improved in 6 cases and disimproved in 3 cases. Therefore, the filling out of the survey made an overall positive contribution towards the processing of the experience for this group.

All respondents scored 1 for Q1 by stating that they related to the subject matter of the film indirectly as German citizens.

Personal information (age Q2, gender Q3, religious affiliation Q4, occupation/personal interests Q5 and relationship towards the power of the elements when controlled by men in industry Q9) did not show any connection to specific scoring results.

4.5.3 Screening at Königsfeld-Burgberg, Schwarzwald

4.5.3.1 Participants

The screening was organised by a peace organisation prior to a seminar on physics. Many audience members were scientists or engineers. The nine audience members were divided into 4 men and 5 women. The age range was as follows: 1 respondent in his 40s, 3 respondents in their 50s, 3 respondents in their 70s and 2 respondents in their 80s. Four audience members stated for question 1 that they related to the subject matter of the film directly due to a family relation being a victim. In the discussion that followed, some audience members spoke of themselves as ‘Zeitzeugen’ (contemporary witnesses). Religious affiliation ranged from Roman Catholic to Protestant to no religious affiliation. Occupation ranged from science, to therapy/social work/education/art, to history, and engineering.
4.5.3.2 Conditions

The film was screened in a hotel conference room on a Saturday afternoon. Sound and light conditions were not ideal. The audience stayed for an in-depth discussion of the film after the screening. The discussion continued over the following 5 days.

4.5.3.3 Analysis

The over-all score was positive for 4 respondents, mixed for 4 respondents and negative for 1 respondent.

Only one audience member could not relate to the image from the archive footage. This respondent was in her 80s and had an overall mixed score. The difficulty in relating to the image might in this case have been in connection with the way it was used and layered over documentary footage. Her comment on Q16 was, ‘the film is very unusual and in part difficult to understand for those who don’t think like artists’, which strengthens this assumption. Two audience members had mixed scores for Q8, whereas all other respondents scored 1.

A connection between the appreciation of music (Q15 = 1) and a positive score was again apparent. The one audience member who did not appreciate the music had a mixed score. An appreciation of the music was a precondition to an overall positive score; a further precondition to a positive score for this group was a score of at least 0.75 for Q10 (concept). A connection between a score of 1 for Q7 (relation to past) and a positive score was also apparent.

![Figure 6. a) Relation to music b) relation to concept c) relation to past](image)

4.6 Verbal audience feedback and post screening discussions

After each screening, audience members were asked to give verbal feedback before the film was discussed. While the student feedback was negative and contained only criticism, the feedback at the Broadway and the Schwarzwald screening was overall positive.

The main criticism from the student group was connected to the misconception that they were to analyse the film. The lack of clear information and familiar structure had led to frustration and confusion, which was voiced in the discussion.
The feedback at the two other screenings was positive and came from members of the audience who had been moved by the film through the music and had appreciated the visuals as flowing and in harmony with the sound. Two audience members from the Broadway screening who are teachers at secondary level said that they would love to show the film to their students.

In the discussions that followed, the underlying research to the film and the concepts on which the film is based were explained and discussed in detail. After the feedback session a number of audience members stated that the discussion had helped them to process their emotional experience and had furthered a better understanding of both the film and the subject matter. For most students the gap between their own misreading of the film and the explanation given was too wide to establish an understanding. In the other screenings a tendency could be observed by those members of the audience who had a prior knowledge of the subject matter to engage in a heated debate over concept related issues. Long discussions were necessary to clarify misunderstandings. In those debates it became clear that while it was very difficult to communicate the message of the film on a conceptual level, it could be communicated directly and easily on an emotional level through the music of the film.

Q11, which questioned the relationship to a sense of collectivity, and Q9, which questioned the respondent’s relationship to the power of the elements when controlled by men in industry, showed no link to positive scores. And neither positive scores nor overall results were linked to a person’s age, gender, religious affiliation or occupation/personal interests.

A comparison between Q6 and Q15 showed that the scores improved for three respondents and disimproved for two respondents, showing that the filling out of the survey had made a slight positive overall contribution.

The response to Q16 shows critical comments in relation to clarity and approach; other audience members showed an appreciation of those same points:

‘The film is a bit too unclear but through its general atmosphere manages to be effective’ respondent 1, Schwarzwald screening, age group 7W. ‘Deeply impressive/moving particularly through the relationship between visuals and music, between clear and diffuse representation’ respondent 4, Schwarzwald, 7W. ‘Interesting due to unusual approach’ respondent 7, Schwarzwald, 4M.

Further critical points that were raised under Q16 showed that members of this group had prior knowledge of this subject matter and a different understanding of certain concepts.

‘Only one critical comment comes up spontaneously: ‘Collective Memory’ was applied to a nation rather than to single possibly bigger groups. This perspective does not take the pluralistic character of society into account but instead promotes, without realising, a nationalism of the late 19th century’ respondent 7, Schwarzwald, 4M.
This impression that audience members had a different conceptual understanding in relation to the subject matter was strengthened through the discussions that followed the screening.

The feedback for Q17 was, in general, mixed to positive, ranging from ‘unusual’ to ‘helpful’.

4.7 Overall assessment

The overall assessment of the results from the questionnaire are restricted by the following two limitations:

1) The sum of all respondents cannot be seen as representative of a German cinema-going audience and a balanced cross section of age and interest groups cannot be given (age group 2 - the 20-29 year old participants - was missing and the groups were too small).

2) The difference in conditions influenced the overall result and must be taken into account. The results of group 1 were affected negatively by the fact that audience members were not participating by choice, they had entered the screening with certain expectations due to their conditioning to secondary education and its materials and processes, and they were distracted by adverse screening conditions, a lack of concentration and a proximity of holidays. The results of group 2 were affected positively by the fact that audience members were either relating to the subject matter or to the director in a way that encouraged an overall positive reception.

The two restrictions above don’t allow for a conclusion expressible in quantitative terms. Nevertheless, eight general observations can be made.

1) A positive score, indicating that the film had the potential to make a claim to a cultural trauma in such a way that empathy with the victims of the Holocaust is encouraged, was achieved in nearly each age group tested. The missing group 2 occurs between two age groups that were represented, therefore it can be presumed that a positive result could have been reached in this age group as well.
The feedback on the film from Q16 suggests that the film was appreciated by at least one respondent from each age group, as shown by the following comments:

‘But the film was very comprehensive in its visual explanations and technically well executed… The reflection was initiated well through the visuals in the film’ respondent 1, student, age group 1M.
‘I feel that the film communicates its message very well’ respondent 1, Broadway, age group 3W.
‘Very moving’ respondent 4, Broadway, age group 4W.
‘Very sensitive, empathetic, moving. Very good, Thank you’ respondent 6, Broadway, age group 5W.
‘Very impressive’ respondent 11, Broadway, age group 6M.
‘This film should be shown in schools! Absolutely!’ respondent 3, Schwarzwald, age group 7W.
‘I was particularly impressed by the artistic quality of the film and the way in which the film woke my own/personal memories’ respondent 6, Schwarzwald, age group 8M.

2) Archive footage, concept and music all made significant contributions towards the overall reception of the film, as is apparent in the score to Q8, Q10 and Q15. But music seemed to be the most relevant component among the three sample audience groups. Comments in relation to music, critical as well as positive, were frequent, such as:

‘I like the music a lot and it helped me to understand the images’ respondent 2, Broadway, age group 4W.
‘I did enjoy the combination of sound/image/music especially the very German themes: nature and music in contrast to history’ respondent 13, Broadway, age group 4W.

3) Under openness to the past (Q7) and relation to the subject matter (Q1), there was a certain connection between a high score and an overall positive score across all age groups. In relation to an ability to connect to a sense of collectivity (Q11), this
connection was only apparent for the student group and the Broadway audience. While all respondents of the Broadway and the Schwarzwald screenings stated that they related to the subject matter, scoring 1 for Q1, not all respondents of the student group showed such a high score. This may be related to their age but can also be related to the fact that this group had not participated by choice.

4) By comparing the scores for Q8 among the audience groups, the earlier observation that the younger age groups has particular difficulties in relating to the archive footage is strengthened.

5) A comparison of critical comments under Q16 also shows that while all audience groups shared criticism towards lack of clarity and overall approach, the students also had difficulties with the slow pace of the film, apparent in frequent comments that the film was too long, that scenes were too slow moving and that the film was not able to hold their attention. This difference in appreciation of pace is strengthened by comments from the other two audience groups that describe the film as meditative and point out that they enjoyed the extra time to reflect.

‘It is good that the images stand/stay moving for a long time and allow time for meditation’ respondent 8, Broadway, age group 6W.

6) In all three audience groups, the scores under gender Q3, religious affiliation Q4, occupation and personal interests Q5, and response to the image that depicts heavy industry Q9, showed no link to overall scores.

7) A comparison across all age groups of scores for Q6 and Q15 showed that filling out of the survey had, overall, contributed towards a better understanding of the film. Audience members had also commented after the feedback session that the discussion had helped them to understand the film better. The impression arises that, because the film offers a different perspective on the subject matter and introduces a variety of unusual concepts in this context, elements such as the survey or the discussion were able to make a constructive contribution towards a successful communication in relation to the ideas and concepts.

8) The average score of above 0.5 for Q6 and Q15 by half of the audience members (19 out of 38) can be read as evidence for some emotional engagement. This observation is strengthened by the following comments that show that the film was in some cases clearly able to establish the emotional bond with the victims of the Holocaust as intended: ‘It (the film) initiated thinking/reflection and awoke in me a feeling of empathy for the victims’ respondent 1, student, 1M.
‘That the honour of the victims has been restored through the film moves me deeply’ respondent 1, Broadway, age group 3W.
‘A collective and at the same time individual/personal legacy. The film is an ‘homage’ to the victims’ respondent 3, Broadway, age group 4W.
4.8 Conclusion to Chapter 4

The answer to the quantitative enquiry, ‘Is the film *The Legacy* able to establish a new narrative that claims a cultural trauma and encourage a sense of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust in the viewer?’ is, within the limitations of this survey, positive. The film managed, within the particular circumstances of the three screenings, to make a successful claim and to engender empathy across all ages that were tested. Looking at the age groups in relation to the variables it becomes clear that the younger age groups were restricted in their engagement with the film mostly by their inability to relate to the archive footage and to the music. The comments for Q16 showed that the slow pace of the film was a further hindrance to appreciation for this age group.

The relationship-based research questions that inquired how the processing of trauma was achieved indicate that while the elements of the film (archive footage, concept and music) were expected to make a positive contribution towards successful communication, music had the greatest impact in all three groups and can be seen as the most relevant precondition for successful trauma processing in this context. Frequent comments on music during aural feedback and group discussions strengthened this finding. A certain amount of openness to the past, a relation to the subject matter, and an ability to connect to a sense of collectivity, were further contributing factors as well as to belong to a more advanced age-group. Gender, religious affiliation, occupation and personal interests, as well as a relationship to elements manipulated by men in industry did not seem to have any influence on the audience in this context.

It was also interesting to observe that the film could be appreciated and understood even if it was only partially viewed, as one audience member from the Schwarzwald screening who had arrived in the last third of the film was close to the ideal type in the overall score.

Comments on the film given for Q16 such as, ‘a film that will not please the masses’ (respondent 10, Broadway, 6M) - this from a respondent with an overall positive score - as well as the overall negative response of the students and the critical comments from other audience members show that the film's format, where existing conventional structures are deconstructed through form, is not easily accessible. A screening of the film as part of a live music event, including light projections and an opportunity for audience participation, could address this issue and improve the reception of the film considerably. Such an event is being planned. Being part of an event, the audience would have the opportunity to engage in the viewing with different expectations and a greater openness towards a format that is outside of genres. The music as the key to the message of the film would more clearly be in the foreground, the scenes and images that were criticised as too long will become the background to a concert and the audience participation could further enhance the emotional connection to the victims, thereby contributing towards a redefinition of collective identity that is more active and tangible. A further point of criticism that
was raised within all 3 groups was the difficulty in understanding the narration or the lyrics of songs. These issues can be addressed by the inclusion of texts into a programme that can be handed out before the screening. Alternatively, or in addition, texts could be printed large and framed to hang in the auditorium, or appear as an additional projection.

‘I am glad that I took the time tonight to distance myself from action and to descend a little deeper into the past’ respondent 3, Broadway, 4W.
Final Conclusion

To sum up the findings of this enquiry I will return to my initial research questions.

1) How can the persistent lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust that is apparent in post-war literature and film be explained? and
2) How can this lack of empathy be addressed through the production of a film in a way that facilitates a meaningful contribution to the culture of remembrance?

To explain the lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust that, according to Schlant (1999) and Hahn (2005), is apparent in post-war German film and literature I needed to establish an understanding of trauma in the context of individual psychology and show how the erratic, recurring and unconnected nature of trauma memory causes a loss of connection (Bezugsverlust) in the sufferer to him-or herself as well as to others. This loss of connection is particularly clear in the post-traumatic symptom of dissociation. Dissociation, its effects and the way in which it allows, facilitates and promotes violent action has been illustrated in the film Germany Pale Mother, as discussed in Chapter 2. I have in Chapter 1 established a perspective through which effects similar to the effect of trauma in the context of individual psychology can be recognised on the micro- and macro-social level, where events that are experienced as disruptive to the collective can ‘cause a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people that has achieved a degree of cohesion (Eyerman 2001: 2)’. This loss of identity and meaning in the collective is experienced as social dislocation and alienation, and this leads to an inability to relate to others in the social context (sozialer Bezugsverlust). This collective loss can therefore be seen as equivalent in its effect to the post-traumatic symptom of dissociation in individual psychology. Analysing cultural samples that have been produced at different times in German history (Chapter 2) gave the impression that a sense of a loss of identity had been increasing over time in a social collective that was later to become the German nation. According to Mosse (1964), it was this loss that fostered the emergence of a distorted ideology, one that later facilitated and included racist concepts. The observations by Mosse (1964) show that a lack of identity does not only lead to an inability to have empathy but that this sense of social disconnect can develop into hatred of those that are perceived as ‘others’. The lack of empathy that Hahn (2005) and Schlant (1999) observed in the context of post-war German film and literature can therefore be read as an indication that the mental origins of the Holocaust have so far not sufficiently been addressed and that a lack of identity still persists. Although this lack of identity no longer openly fosters outsider antagonism, it is still inhibiting an emotional connection to groups that had previously been ostracised.

A further reason for the lack of empathy for the victim groups that is apparent in post-war German film and literature is the extreme extent to which these groups had been mentally and emotionally disconnected from the collective. My research at the Berlin Filmarchiv showed that those who had become victims of the Holocaust had been
excluded visually and thereby eliminated from what Assman (2006) called the ‘cultural dimension of collective memory’ many years before their persecution.

Haidu (1992), referring to Himmler’s speech in which he prepared the SS for the ‘Final Solution’, highlights Himmler’s efforts to prevent a possible identification with the ‘other’ and to promote their ‘desubjectivisation’ (Haidu 1992). This ‘desubjectivisation’ would have been promoted among the general population through many years of political propaganda. The resistance that Kiefer experienced when he actively and passionately referred to and included Jewish culture in his work shows that the mental and emotional disconnection that had been caused was still very effective.

Bringing these observation together, I conclude that the lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust that can be found in post-war German literature and film is connected to the fact that these victims had been desubjectivised and excluded from cultural memory, and that the post-war German population, after a history that had increasingly affected the collective’s sense of identity, had been affected in their ability to relate emotionally to themselves or to others, a phenomenon that might explain the emergence of the word Bezugsverlust in the German language.

Tracing how a sense of social interconnectivity has been repeatedly disrupted over time, I argue (in Chapter 2) that it is the dualistic world view on which Western European culture is based that causes this loss of connection. When Aristotle advocated a view in which some are meant to rule and others are ‘born to subjection’ (Aristotle 384-322BC in Isaac 2006) he also promoted what Haidu (1992) called ‘the ‘desubjectivisation’ of those ‘others’ and so removed them from the realm of personal feelings such as sympathy and empathy.

A further contribution towards the lack of empathy apparent in post-war cultural productions of literature, drama and film is related to the choice of artistic approach. Many cultural productions took a critical stance towards post-war German society and the National Socialist past. For example, the work of Alexander Kluge was influenced by Brecht, who promoted an approach in which forms of alienation are used to prevent and disrupt personal identification thereby fostering critical awareness. The emotional distance that was thereby achieved did not facilitate the development of empathy.

A film that would address the lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust, to answer my second research question, needed to address and take into account the causes that facilitated this lack. It must attempt to:

1) Resubjectivise the victims of the Holocaust
2) Reintegrate those victims into the cultural memory
3) Address those events that had an adverse effect on the collective’s sense of identity, as well as raise an awareness of and give expression to the loss that was experienced.
Final Conclusion

4) Address the conceptual bases of a perspective in which human beings can be defined as ‘other’ and to show how this perspective can and has facilitated violence within the context of Western European history.

5) Use an approach that is non-Brehtian in its way of promoting emotional engagement.

Alexander (2004) describes how cultural productions can make a claim to what he calls a cultural trauma through a form of representation that promotes an awareness in which the ruptured sense of identity of a collective is revised. This concept provided me with a structured approach for the making of the film *The Legacy* as the practice-based part of this enquiry, within which I responded to the above 5 demands. I have also taken the requirements in terms of format into account, which I have observed through the analysis of cultural sample productions in Chapter 2. To facilitate a reception by a German audience, I have therefore included references to Romanticism, images of nature (in particular of an oak tree), and I have used text as well as songs. To foster an active mental engagement by the audience as a precondition to association and an antidote to dissociation, an approach was chosen in which conventions were deconstructed through form while emotional engagement was promoted through music and through footage in which the subject makes eye contact with the audience. Though non-Brehtian in its encouragement of emotional engagement, the film still intends to be educational and to raise critical awareness: to this end, text inserts were used as well as the deconstruction of a Romantic song.

To reach the audience on an emotional level, music became a key element in the production and was, according to the survey, in many cases the facilitator of a successful communication. While the survey is not representative due to the small scale of the audiences sampled, it did show that the film has the potential to facilitate a feeling of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust. This suggests that the sense of collective identity had been revised as a result of the film and that cultural productions have the potential to contribute towards the reprocessing of collective experiences that are equivalent to trauma. The survey also made clear that the film *The Legacy* is not easily accessible to general audiences due to its unconventional format.

I have in this enquiry shown the importance of *Bezugsverlust* in relation to *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*: it is the loss of emotional relationship that needs to be addressed in order to facilitate a coming to terms with the violence of the recent German past. The perspective that I have established sees the Holocaust not as a unique occurrence but as an event that needs to be understood in connection to and in relation with Western European history and thought. This view does by no means want to relativise the suffering that was caused and endured by listing it among the many other occurrences of collective violence. Rather, it is the broad Western European historical context that provides the means by which to understand history and contemporary society but, importantly, in a way that contributes towards a sense of interconnectedness and that promotes peace rather than an impression of separation, which might lead to further conflict. Haidu (1992) calls for an ethics in which the ‘other’ is encountered and recognised in its presence in a way that calls for
unlimited responsibility that could be ‘the ironclad guarantee for non-recurrence’ of the Holocaust (Haidu 1992: 282). Pecora (1992) demands that the Holocaust needs to be understood in its historical context to provoke a change in perspective that prevents further violence.

‘If the specific and terrifying suffering endured by the victims of Nazi persecution is not mobilized to remind the West of the barbarity folded into even its most admirable traditions, but instead serves to obscure it, and perhaps to foster surreptitiously a smug sense of political complacency and assuredness, than that suffering will end up serving barbaric purposes all over again’ (Pecora 1992: 163).

The film *The Legacy* has the potential to address the lack of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust. However, I have not yet been able to answer a question connected to my second research question: How can a German audience be reached in a way that is meaningful and that can contribute to a culture of remembrance? The many attempts to stage the film as an event or to have the film included in Human Rights Film Festivals have so far been without success. There is still a considerable amount of resistance to the subject matter. And this is something I hope to continue to challenge in the future.

Late dedication

I want to dedicate this thesis to the memory of my father Ludwig Dinkelbach (b. July, 29. 1921; d. November, 16. 2012) who in the last days of his life faced and processed the memory of a trauma that he had carried with him since his youth. Being present to this process gave me a deeper understanding of trauma memory and a further appreciation for the importance of trauma reprocessing.
Works consulted
with subheadings in relation to the various categories of critical work

**Category A: Biological and media sciences**


**Category B: Sociology, history and cultural criticism**


Category C: Literature, linguistics and philosophy


Kohlhammer.

Category D: Film studies and the arts


Cultural media referred to in order of appearance

1 Songs


‘Lachrymae Pavane’ by Dowland, J. (1600).


Cultural media referred to in order of appearance

2 Literature

The Emigrants by Winfried Georg Sebald (1992)
Simplicius Simplicissimus by Hans Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen (1669)
Die Leiden des jungen Werther by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1774)
In my brother’s shadow (Am Beispiel meines Bruders) by Uwe Timm (2003)
Where were you Adam? (Wo warst Du Adam?) by Heinrich Böll (1951)
Death in Rome (Tod in Rom) by Wolfgang Koeppen (1954)
Marriages in Philippsburg (Ehen in Philippsburg) by Martin Walser (1957)
The Tin Drum (Die Blechtrommel) by Günter Grass (1959)
A German Love Story (Eine Deutsche Liebesgeschichte) by Rolf Hochhuth (1978)
Das Judasschaf by Anne Duden (1985)

‘Deathfugue’ (Todesfuge) by Paul Celan (1945)

3 Drama

The Three Penny Opera (Die drei Groschen Oper) by Bertolt Brecht (1928)
Mother Courage (Mutter Courage) by Bertolt Brecht (1939)
The Caucasian Chalk Circle (Der kaukasische Kreidekreis) by Bertolt Brecht (1944)
The Good Person of Szechwan (Der gute Mensch von Sezuan) by Bertolt Brecht (1943)
The Life of Galileo (Das Leben des Galileo) by Bertolt Brecht (1947)
Jurists (Juristen) by Rolf Hochhut (1979)

4 Art

The People (Das Volk), plate 7 from War (Krieg), woodcut by http://moma.org/collection/artist.php?artist_id=3201.
(1922 published 1923). Available at:
The Widow I (Die Witwe I), The Mothers (Die Mütter), The Sacrifice (Das Opfer),
The Parents (Die Eltern), The Widow II (Die Witwe II), The Volunteers (Die Freiwilligen), from War (Krieg) woodcuts by
Available at: http://moma.org/collection/browse_results.php?object_id=69688
Cultural media referred to in order of appearance


*White Crucifixion* by Marc Chagall (1933), oil on canvas.


*Black Box/Chambre Noir* by William Kentridge (2005).


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**5 Music**

‘Dance of the Blessed Spirits’ from Orfeo ed Euridice by Christoph Willibald Gluck (1762).

‘Ombra mai fu’ from *Xerxes* by George Friedrich Handel (1738).

‘Von fremden Ländern und Städten’ from *Kinderszenen* by Robert Schumann (1838).

‘Esurientes’ from *The Magnificat* by Johann Sebastian Bach (1728-31).

‘Vexilla Regis’ from *Via Crucis* Franz Liszt (1878-79).

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**6 Film**


*Peppermint Candy* by Yi Ch’ang-dong (1999).


*A petal* by Chang Son-u (1996).


*Rabbit proof fence* by Phillip Noyce (2002).


*Sankofa* by Haile Gerima (1993).

*Sarraounia* by Med Hondo (1986).

*Jamila the Algerian* by Youssef Chahine (1958).

*Daughter Rite* by Michelle Citron (1980).


*First Person Plural* by Lise Yasui’s (1990).

*Family Gathering* by Lise Yasui’s (1988).
Cultural media referred to in order of appearance

*Der müde Tod* (Destiny) by Fritz Lang (1921).
*Der letzte Mann* (The Last Laugh) by Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau (1924).
*Hamlet* by Svend Gade and Heinz Schall (1921).

*Holocaust* by Marvin Chomsky (1979).

*Not reconciled* by Danielle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub (1965).
*The Marriage of Maria Braun* by Rainer-Werner Fassbinder (1978).
*The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum* by Volker Schlöndorf and Margarethe von Trotta (1975).

*2 oder 3 Dinge, die ich von ihm weiss* by Malte Ludin (2005).
*Shoah* by Claude Lanzmann (1985).
*Nuit et Brouillard (Night and Fog)* by Alain Resnais (1955).


*Naqoyqatsi* by Godfrey Reggio (2002).
*Chronos* by Ron Fricke (1985).
*Baraka* by Ron Fricke (1993).
*Samsara* by Ron Fricke (2011).
*Magic Hour* by Manfred Neuwirth (1999).
Appendix 1 - Research method

In this research project I will use a combination of research methodologies as well as a variety of methods. The debate on trauma and its cultural presentation is, to date, mainly based on a psychoanalytical paradigm in which an understanding of trauma and its symptoms is directly transferred from the level of personal psychology to the macro-social scale. This practice has been criticised in a recent study by Burke and Faulkner (2010) because it does not sufficiently acknowledge the political nature of cultural memory.1

Taking this criticism into account and making use of the more recent neuroscientific findings, I will establish a research perspective that diverges from the psychoanalytical paradigm by establishing an understanding of trauma and its effect on the individual that is based on neurobiology. The in-depth and detailed information of the neurobiological perspective allows me to observe a pattern by which I can compare the effects of personal trauma with the effects of trauma-like characteristics felt by society on the micro- and macro-social level. To avoid the direct transference of individual psychological terminology to the collective and to direct the focus to the pattern observed, I will initially describe the effect of trauma by using the German word Bezugsverlust (loss of emotional relationship). I will show that Bezugsverlust is most clearly expressed in the post-traumatic symptom of dissociation on the level of individual psychology which can be compared to forms of social alienation (‘sozialer Bezugsverlust’) within the macro-social context.

I will refer to existing studies from a variety of disciplines in order to develop an understanding of trauma as a phenomenon, to look at techniques that facilitate trauma reprocessing, to identify experiences on a micro- and macro-social level that have effects that are equivalent to the effect of trauma, and to look at the potential of cultural representation to address and facilitate a reprocessing of those effects. The need for an interdisciplinary approach and the challenge of such a strategy in the context of trauma-related research has been highlighted by Luckhurst (2008) who stated that

‘given the specialization of knowledge and the sheer volume of discipline specific scholarship, it is a severe stretch to acquire this range of expertise, with almost inevitable lapses of knowledge and understanding… Trauma is also always a breaching of disciplines…. Without an interdisciplinary knowledge, there can only be unappetizing competition between disciplines to impose their specific conception of trauma’ (Luckhurst 2008: 4, 14).

My approach towards methodology is pragmatic, and I will, for the written part of this research project, use quantitative and qualitative methods as appropriate. The main emphasis will be on an inductive approach based on the observation and recognition of patterns from which conclusions are drawn. I will bring together existing studies in neuroscience, psychotherapy and sociology to observe a pattern that will enable me to compare the psychological effects at the individual, micro- and macro-social levels in relation to the effect of trauma.1 I will then investigate in what way
Appendix 1 – Research method

cultural representation can make a contribution to addressing and reversing these trauma effects through an application of the concept of ‘cultural trauma’, as developed by the sociologist Jeffrey C. Alexander (2004), and I will discuss a variety of approaches within cultural representation in this context.

Looking for events that caused Bezugsverlust in a collective context and for cultural productions that have responded to these events, I will attempt to observe similar patterns in the context of German history. I will examine samples of cultural productions through textual and contextual analysis. For the textual investigation, I will use methods of narrative analysis as developed by Todorov (1969), Ricoeur (1984), Rimmon-Kenan (1983), Greimas (1966), Genette (1980) and Toolan (1988) as appropriate. Complementing this initial inductive approach with a deductive method, I will use the concept of the ‘trauma process’ (Alexander 2004) to assess to what extent the cultural production had been able to claim what he calls a cultural trauma.

My approach towards my own arts-practice is clearly qualitative. I will create a space that is defined by my theoretical knowledge in which I will observe the formation of the film developing as a pattern. The process is multilayered and on many levels incomplete, leaving space for the viewer to continue the observation and so to facilitate an increase in awareness. In this context, I have adapted methods used in psychotherapy such as EMDR and applied them to a collective setting.

To assess whether, how and to what extent the film The Legacy contributes towards facilitating an experience of empathy with the victims of the Holocaust, I have surveyed its reception at three small sample screenings. For the survey, I used a quantitative approach through closed research questions, which was complemented by qualitative methods using open research questions, audience feedback and participant observation. (I have referred to Sarantakos (1998) for my understanding of sociological research methods). Due to the small number of audience members sampled, the data obtained through the quantitative part of the survey cannot be deemed generalisable from a statistical perspective, and greater emphasis will be given to the observations gained through the qualitative methods.

In order to address the many aspects of the subject matter I adopted a research perspective that diverts from the existing paradigm of psychoanalysis and uses a combination of methodologies and research methods. Radstone (2000) comments on the need for what she defines as ‘liminal practice’ and ‘hybridised methods’ in relation to research into memory by stating that

‘Memory work often demands liminal practices’ as it is ‘situated between disciplines and deploys not just combinations of, but more accurately, hybridized methods’ (Radstone 2000: 13).

The value of an interdisciplinary perspective in which science and history are inextricably connected to culture, politics and society and in which comparable patterns can thereby be observed has been highlighted by Latour (2008)
Appendix 1 – Research method

‘Latour’s theory does not put knowledge into hierarchies but sees knowledges and practices as forming complicated networks. A successful statement can be measured by how many links or associations it makes, not only within the rigours of its own discipline but far beyond it too, as it loops through different knowledges, institutions, practices, social, political and cultural forums. A scientific concept therefore succeeds through its heterogeneity rather than its purity’ (Latour 1999: 201 in Luckhurst 2008:14).

The interdisciplinary perspective which was both useful and necessary accounts for the extensive nature of this project.

Notes

1Burke and Faulkner (2010) recommend that the ‘representations of trauma’ are studied ‘outside of the conceptual framework of psychological trauma’ to avoid the impression of authenticity that is otherwise required and to highlight the potential for political manipulation that can occur due to the ‘contextual, generic and rhetorical dimensions’ by this ‘consciously articulated discourse’ (Burke and Faulkner 2010: 2).

2This choice of methods was inspired by the articles ‘Structures of Narrativity in Fritz Lang’s Metropolis’ by Williams (1974) and ‘Narrative Analysis - Or Why (and How) Sociologists Should be Interested in Narrative’ by Franzosi (1998).
Appendix 2 - The Survey

Appendix 2.1 Coding of the Survey

The coding of the survey is printed in red type.

Survey to the screening ‘Das Vermächtnis’
This survey is anonymous and will only be used for educational purposes

To be filled out before the screening:
The subject matter of this film is the collective violence of the recent German past.
The film wants to show that this violence was facilitated by a loss of social connection.

1. I have a connection to the subject matter:
   - directly as a relative/distant relative of someone who was affected by this event □ 3
   - indirectly as a German citizen □ 2 - I am not a German citizen □ 0
   - I am not sure how I relate to the subject matter □ 1
   - I have no connection to the subject matter □ 0 - no comment □ 0

Sense of connection to the subject matter:
strong=1.5, existent=1, unsure=0.5, not existent=0

Information on the person

2. Age: under 20 □ 1, 20-29 □ 2, 30-39 □ 3, 40-49 □ 4, 50-59 □ 5, 60-69 □ 6, 70-79 □ 7, 80-89 □ 8, 90 and over □ 9, I would rather not answer this question □

Age groups: under 20=1, 20-29=2, 30-39=3, 40-49=4, 50-59=5, 60-69=6, 70-79=7, 80-89=8, 90 and over=9

3. Gender: male □ M, female □ W, I would rather not answer this question □

Gender: female=W, male =M

4. Religious affiliation: Christian Catholic □, Christian Protestant □, Jewish □, Muslim □, Buddhist □, Hindu □, Other ________, No Religious affiliation □, I would rather not answer this question □

5. My professional occupation /my personal interests relate to: healing/therapy □, social work □, education □, art □, other □, no comment □

Part 1, to be filled out after the screening
Describe your immediate emotional experience of the film by choosing from the list below. Please grade from 1-5 in order of relevance. (1 being most relevant) Please feel free to add words to the list and to cross out words that you find inappropriate.

6. After watching this film my immediate response is:
   - confusion □ 0.25, a sense of disturbance □ 0.25, a sense of grief □ 0.75,
     compassion □ 1, a sense of forgiveness □ 1, shame □ 0.75, anger □ 0, distance □ 0,
     helplessness □ 0.5, a sense of being comforted □ 1, other □, I rather not comment □ 0.

Audience member had an emotional response that shows that the processing of the experience is evident. Yes=1, probably=0.75, not sure=0.5 probably not=0.25, No=0
Appendix 2 - The Survey

7. Please read this quotation by Maurice Halbwachs and choose those words next to the text, that describe the feelings that the text invokes for you. Please feel free to cross out words that you feel inappropriate and add your own words.

Ability to face the past. able=1, not able=0

‘When we turn away from activities and descend deeper and deeper into the past, we will find a vast space, in which our memories can detach from our action, in the same way that we can see an ever increasing number of stars at night fall.’

(Halbwachs 1925)

Openness □ 1
Fear □ 0
Allowing □ 1
Disturbance □ 0
Courage □ 1
Uncertainty □ 0
Confusion □ 0
Void □ 0

8. Please look at the still from the film and choose from those statements that resonate with the feelings that come up for you. Please feel free to add your own.

Ability to relate and connect to the imagery of the archive footage that showed members of the groups that were victimised: able=1, not able=0

I feel called □ 1
I feel confused □ 0
I feel responsible □ 1
I feel haunted □ 0
I feel disturbed □ 0
I don’t know what this is all about □ 0

9. Please look at the still from the film choose those words that resonate with the feelings that come up for you. Please feel free to add your own.

Relationship to the power of the elements when controlled by men in industry positive=1, negative=0

Power □ 1
Fear □ 0
Fascination □ 1
Threat □ 0
__________ □
Appendix 2 - The Survey

10. Please look at the quote by Aristotle choose from the statements that best describe how you feel about this quote. Please feel free to cross out words that you find inappropriate and to add your own.

- Ability to understand the conceptual element of the film: able=1, maybe=0.5, not able=0
- This quotation makes me think differently about Aristotle ☑ 1
- ‘…warfare… which is applied against those men who are not prepared to be ruled, even though they are born to subjection… is just by nature’
- I agree with Aristotle, violence is at times justified ☑ 0
- Aristotle 384 BC – 322 BC
- I can see the connection between this quote and the Holocaust ☑ 1
- I cannot see the connection between this quote and the Holocaust ☑ 0
- This quote has to be interpreted in the context of its time. ☑ 0.5

11. The following image shows pedestrians in a German city. Please choose statements that you associate with this image. Please feel free to cross out words that you find inappropriate and to add your own statements.

- Sense of collectivity: present=1, limited=0.5, not present=0
- We are all in this together ☑ 1
- I don’t feel part of this group ☑ 0
- So many people so many stories ☑ 1
- Life goes on, we have left the past behind ☑ 0.5

Part 2

12. The ‘trauma process’ (Alexander 2004)

- To what extent has the trauma been ‘processed’ : fully=100 %, not at all=0%
- Do you feel that the connection between the loss of social connection and the collective violence of the recent German past has been made clear.
  - Yes ☑ 20%  No ☑ 0%  Not sure ☑ 10%

- Do you feel that the pain that was caused by the collective violence of the recent German past has been given expression ?
  - Yes ☑ 20%  No ☑ 0%  Not sure ☑ 10%

- Do you feel that the film adequately identified the victims of this violence?
  - Yes ☑ 20%  No ☑ 0%  Not sure ☑ 10%
Appendix 2 - The Survey

d) Do you feel that the film shows in what relationship the victims stand to the audience?
Yes ☐20%  No ☐0%  Not sure ☐10%

e) Do you feel that a sense of responsibility was established?
Yes ☐20%  No ☐0%  Not sure ☐10%

13 The film tries to show that those groups that became victims of collective violence were first mentally excluded from society before they were physically eliminated. Are you after the viewing of this film able to mentally re-include those that had become victims? To what extend has the trauma been ‘processed’ (Alexander2004): fully=100 %, not at all=0%
Yes ☐100 %  No ☐0%  Not sure ☐50%

14 Please describe your emotional response to the music of the film choosing from the list below grading from 1-5 in order of relevance. Ability to relate to the music: able=1, limited ability=0.5, not able=0

The music of the film: did nothing for me ☐0, made me feel safe ☐1, enabled me to connect to the visual ☐1, confused me ☐0, expressed a sense of loss and grief ☐1, was out of place ☐0, made me feel unsafe ☐0, gave me a feeling of comfort ☐1, __________ ☐

15 Please describe your emotional experience of the film again by choosing from the list below. Please grade from 1-5 in order of relevance.

After watching this film my response now is:
- confusion ☐0.25, a sense of disturbance ☐0.25, a sense of grief ☐0.75, compassion ☐1, a sense of forgiveness ☐1, shame ☐0.75, anger ☐0, distance ☐0, helplessness ☐0.5, a sense of being comforted ☐1, other_________ ☐0
I’d rather not comment ☐0.
Audience member had an emotional response that shows that the processing of the experience is evident. Yes=1, probably=0.75, not sure=0.5 probably not=0.25, No=0
Appendix 2 - The Survey

16 Your own comments on the film (please continue on the back of this page if needed)
The overall feedback is positive=1, the feedback is positive but contains some criticism=0.75, the feedback contains appreciation and criticism=0.5, the feedback contains criticism=0.25, the overall feedback is negative=0

17 Please indicate how you experienced the filling out of the survey by ticking the appropriate box and/or adding your own comment:
The feedback on the survey is: positive=1, some criticism=0.5, negative=0

I found this survey -helpful as it made me process the emotional experience of the screening □1, too long □0, too demanding □0, confusing □0, unusual □maybe1,0.5 or 0, misleading□0

Own comment:____________________________________________________________

Thank you very much for your contribution!
Appendix 2.2 Pattern coding, memos and assessment of results

The questions of the survey address the following areas and can be grouped accordingly.

**Questions to the person (Research question 2)**

**General information**
Q 2-5 are concerned with age, gender, religious affiliation, professional occupation/interest.
Coding is from 1-9 in relation to the age-groups through the first digit of the age, followed by M for man and W for woman.

**Personal perspective**
Q 1, 7, 9, 11 establishes how the audience member relates to:
- Q1: the subject matter
- Q7: the past through the reflections on collective memory by Maurice Halbwachs (1925)
- Q9: the power of the elements when controlled by men in industry
- Q11: a feeling of collectivity
Coding expresses the ability to relate and is from 1-0.5-0 (1+ expresses a particularly strong relationship)

**Questions in relation to the reception of the film (Research question 2)**

**Appreciation of particular components**
- Q14: music
- Q10: the underlying concept
- Q8: the visuals, in particularly the archive footage
Coding expresses the amount of appreciation and is from 1-0.5-0 (1+ expresses a particularly strong appreciation)

**Questions concerning ‘the processing of trauma’ Research question 1**
Q12 with its 4 subcomponents b)- e) represents the elements that Jeffrey C. Alexander (2004) lists as necessary for the successful ‘trauma process’, a question that inquires into the respondent's ability to see the connection between loss of social connection and collective violence is added as subcomponent a)
Coding is in %, allocating 20% to a ‘Yes’ and 10% to a ‘Not sure answer’ a total of 100% representing completion of the ‘trauma process’.
Q13 According to Alexander (2004) the successful processing of a trauma should lead to a redefinition of collective identity. In the context of the film it is a collective identity into which the previously excluded victims of collective violence are in retrospect included. Q13 wants to establish if the audience member is after the viewing of the film able to make this adjustment.
Coding is in % with: yes=100%, maybe=50%, no=0%.
Q6 enquires into the emotional response to the film which gives an indication to what extent a processing of the trauma is evident. Audience members were asked to rank their responses with numbers from 1-4. Not all audience members did rank, but the responses have been weighted according to the ranking if and when it was applied. The sum of the responses was divided by their amount thereby defining the average. (When the responses were ranked an average was established for each rank. The
average of the lowest rank was added to the average of the next higher rank which had been multiplied by 2, the result was divided by 3 and added to the next higher average which had been multiplied by 2, the result was divided by 3, the process was continued until the highest rank was reached.) Coding ranges from 1 = completed process to 0 = not processed.

Q15 repeats the same question at the end of the survey. In this way the initial response can be confirmed or adjusted, it also gives an indication if the filling out of the survey contributed to further processing.

**Question allowing for general feedback to the film**

Q16 is open and invites the audience member to comment on the film. Coding is from 1 = comments that are overall positive to 0 = comments that show that the audience member did not in any way relate to and appreciate the film.

**Question in relation to the survey.**

Q17 enquires into the reception of the survey. Coding is from 1 = positive to 0.5 = some criticism to 0 = negative. The answer ‘unusual’ has to be assessed in context as it can be either positive, negative or neutral in meaning.

**Assessment of results**

To assess the results of the survey in relation to the research question 1: to what extent has the film contributed to what Alexander (2004) calls ‘the trauma process’? the questionnaires are compared to an ideal type (Max Weber) (see Appendix 3.3) which shows evidence of successful and completed ‘processing of trauma’ through a 100% score in questions 12 and 13 and a score of 1 in Question 6+15.

To achieve this score all sub-questions of Q12 need to be answered with yes and Q13 needs to be answered with yes. The emotional response to the film Q6+15 needs to be one or several of the following: compassion, a sense of forgiveness, a sense of being comforted. (An achievement of score 1 in Q6/15 through one or several of the responses: compassion, a sense of forgiveness, a sense of being comforted is seen as evidence that ‘the trauma process’ has been completed, a score of 0.75 through one or several of the responses: a sense of grief, shame is seen as evidence that ‘the trauma is being processed’, a score of 0.5 through the response: helplessness is seen as a mixed response, a score of 0.25 through the response: confusion, a sense of disturbance is seen as an indication that the processing of trauma may become initiated, a score of 0 through the response: anger, distance and no comment is seen as evidence that a processing of trauma did not take place. A mixture of responses from the various categories is assessed by dividing the sum of the scores by the amount of responses. The analysis is done in the understanding that the interpretation of the words used might slightly vary among respondents and must be validated with care.)

Compared to the ideal type the overall result for research question 1 was assessed for the following range of scores:

Q12: 70-100%, Q13: 100% and Q6 or 16: 0.6-1 = positive +
Q12: 30-69%, Q13: 50% and Q6 or 16: 0.5-6 = partly processed +/-
Q12: 0-29%, Q13: 0% and Q6 or 16: 0-0.5 = negative –

To assess the result of research question 1 in relation to research question 2: How was a processing of trauma achieved or which were the elements that contributed towards
Appendix 2 - The Survey

trauma processing? the results of Q1-5, Q7-11, Q14 and Q15 were analysed in their relationship to an overall positive or negative score for Research question 1. Answers to the questions Q2-Q5 show the effect of the personal background Q1, Q7, Q9 and Q11 show the influence of the respondent’s perspective and answers, Q8, Q10 and Q14 indicate how the elements of the film affected what Alexander (2004) calls ‘the trauma process’.
Q16 which invites comments and overall feedback from the respondent gives an opportunity to affirm and/or complement the results of Q8, Q10 and Q14.
Appendix 2.3 Ideal type 1

The ideal type of the questionnaire in relation to the research question: Has the film contributed to what Alexander (2004) calls ‘the trauma process’ is expressed by the writing in italic print:

12. The ‘trauma process’ (Alexander 2004)
   a) Do you feel that the connection between the loss of social connection and the collective violence of the recent German past has been made clear. Yes ☑
   b) Do you feel that the pain that was caused by the collective violence of the recent German past has been given expression? Yes ☑
   c) Do you feel that the film adequately identified the victims of this violence? Yes ☑
   d) Do you feel that the film shows in what relationship the victims stand to the audience? Yes ☑
   e) Do you feel that a sense of responsibility was established? Yes ☑

13 The film tries to show that those groups that became victims of collective violence were first mentally excluded from society before they were physically eliminated. Are you after the viewing of this film able to mentally re-include those that had become victims? Yes ☑

6/15 After watching this film my (immediate) response is (now)
- confusion ☐, a sense of disturbance ☐, a sense of grief ☐,
  compassion ☑, a sense of forgiveness ☑, shame ☐, anger ☐, distance ☐,
  helplessness ☐, a sense of being comforted ☑, other (if it is a positive response like hope ☑), I’d rather not comment ☐.
“warfare... against those men that are not prepared to be ruled, even though they are born to subjection, ..is just by nature.”
(Aristotle, Politica 125b:23-6)