Haunted Narratives
Life Writing in an Age of Trauma

EDITED BY
GABRIELE RIPPL, PHILIPP SCHWEIGHAUSER, TIINA KIRSS, MARGIT SUTROP, AND THERESE STEFFEN

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS
Toronto Buffalo London
Contents

Introduction: Life Writing in an Age of Trauma 3
GABRIELE RIPPL, PHILIPP SCHWEIGHÄUSER, AND THERESE STEFFEN

Part One: Life Writing and Trauma: Theorizing the Vicissitudes of Representing Violence

1 Seeing Ghosts: Theorizing Haunting in Literary Texts 19
   TIINA KIRSS

2 Trauma and Utopia: Benjamin, Adorno, and Elie Wiesel’s Night 45
   PHILIPP SCHWEIGHÄUSER

Part Two: Auto/biographies as Trauma Narratives

3 Richard Wollheim’s Germs: Life Writing as Therapy, Despite Theory 85
   JULIA STRAUB

4 Writing Childhood, Writing Lack 101
   MAARJA HOLLO

5 Loquacious Silences: Vikram Seth’s Two Lives and the German Language 107
   NORA ANNA ESCHERLE

6 Unsayable or Merely Unsaid? 123
   ENEKEN LAANES
Contents

7 Voicing Trauma in the Deportation Narratives of Baltic Women 129
LEENA KURVET-KÄOSAAR

8 Trauma Narratives and National Identity 152
ANNIE COTTIER

Part Three: Limit-cases: Exploring the Limits of Telling Pain

9 "Metaphors for the Scots Today": History and National Identity in Scottish Drama after 1945 161
STEFANIE PREUSS

10 Aspects of Post-Imperial Constructions of Nationhood 179
EVA REIN

11 Anecdotalization of Memory in Jaan Kross’s Paigallend 187
ENEKEN LAANES

12 Meddling with Memory – Negating Grand Narratives 203
NORA ANNA ESCHERLE

13 Fighting Fear with Writing: Christa Wolf’s Kindheitsmuster and Ene Mihkelson’s Ahasveeruse uni (The Sleep of Ahasuerus) 211
AIJA SAKOVA

14 The Stigma of the Autobiographical 225
JULIA STRAUB

15 The Search for the Lost Parent in Joy Kogawa’s Obasan and Ene Mihkelson’s Ahasveeruse uni (The Sleep of Ahasuerus) 230
EVA REIN

16 Making the Silence Speak: A Critical Discussion of Trauma Transmission and Identity Formation 245
STEFANIE PREUSS
Part Four: Fictions of Loss and Trauma

17 (Re-)Visions of the Buried Self: Childhood Trauma and Self-Narration in Margaret Atwood’s Cat’s Eye  257
   CHRISTA SCHÖNFELDER

18 Grasping Patterns of Violence  275
   AIJA SAKOVA

19 Nostalgia and Redemption in Bernard Kangro’s Joonatan Novels  279
   MAARJA HOLLO

20 Renegotiations of Longing and Belonging: Exile, Memory, and Nostalgia  297
   CHRISTA SCHÖNFELDER

21 Haunted Whispers from the Footnotes: Life Writing in Raj Kamal Jha’s Fireproof  305
   ANNIE COTTIER

22 What Only Fiction Can Do  316
   LEENA KURVET-KÄOSÄÄR

Afterword: Ethical and Political Aspects of Life Writing and Remembering  321
   MARGIT SUTROP

Contributors  335

Index  339