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Dissertationsprojekt

Writing it Through: Psychological ‚Traumata‘ and Healing in Aboriginal Stolen Generations‘ Life Writing

I am planning to examine examples of Australian Aboriginal life-writing dealing with the fate of the so-called Stolen Generations, indigenous children who were forcibly removed from their parents to be reared in missions, orphanages or white foster families, a practice that continued to be used up until the 1970s. This policy of removal was part of an assimilationist approach especially relevant for ‘half-caste’ children, often controversially discussed as “breeding out the colour”.

In my dissertation project, I would like to focus on the psychological impact that forced removal had on its victims in their childhood and how many of them continue to suffer from identity and self-esteem problems and other long-term effects, but also on the question why the act of writing their stories down and relating to them publicly might be an important part of their healing process.