

Confronting the Burden of the Past through Fiction: A Subversive Narrative against the Meta- Narrative of Power

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Abstract

This thesis deals with the interplay between memory, history and power. It delineates and analyzes the totalizing dimension of power in constructing, circulating and legitimizing a certain historical discourse, a certain knowledge on the past suffocating other representations of the memory of the past. Focusing on the cases of a troubled past, the Vichy period in France, and the German Suffering case, the thesis besides analyzing the process of knowledge production by power and the appropriation of the memory of the past through commemorations in the public sphere, provides the narrative of the subversion of the meta-narrative enunciated by power, a subversion to be found in the works of fiction, namely, novels and movies. Aiming at unfolding the meaning of the established meta-narratives on the past events and narrating the subversion of the prevailing discourse through the works of fiction the methodology employed is Discourse Analysis. Ultimately, the thesis proves the rupture of the prevailing discourse disseminated by power on the disquieting memory of the past, rupture that is present in the text as well as in the public discourse.

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Introduction

The burden of the past has been silenced, refused to be dealt with for some time. Confronting the past appeared to be inevitable. The possibilities, the means and the time of coming to terms with a troubled, damned, and disconcerting past has been marked and delineated by power. This thesis aims to construct and provide meaning to a particular way of voicing the memory of the past, of confronting and challenging the meta-narrative espoused, and constructed by power with regard to the uneasy memory of the past. This particular possibility of unravelling, de-legitimizing, and subverting the enunciated prevailing discourse on the unsettling past, which is largely relegated to the margins in the prevailing literature due to a dominant paradigm that conceives of the ways of dealing the past primarily through the position of power, emerges through the work of fiction either in the form of the novel or of a movie. Henceforth, this thesis, besides the delineation of the totalizing power effects that the dominant narrative or official discourse of the past, as established by power, has on limiting, excluding and silencing certain memories of the past, provides the opportunity to narrate the subversive and opposing discourse enunciated through works of fiction seen as a possibility of transgressing the boundaries imposed by the official discourse on the past.

The context, within which this contestation between the meta-narrative and the subversive narratives happens, implies a certain conception of power. A totalizing concept and dimension of power predicated on the necessity to devise disseminate and inculcate a particular legitimizing discourse or knowledge. In particular, it also entails the rejection of considering the memory of the past as an event immune from becoming a constructed knowledge by power. As a consequence, stated differently, the topic of the thesis deals with the interplay between memory,

as a constructed discourse, the power effects that historical knowledge imposes, precluding and legitimizing certain memories and not others through the rituals of commemoration, the notion of power, and the possibility of transgressing and dismantling the prevailing narrative enunciated by power concerning a silenced or problematic past with the focus on the cases of German suffering and the Vichy “dark years” in France. The use of fiction (novels, and movies) appears to be the proper means to constitute a rupture with the dominant meta-narrative in the particular stages of memory production through the discourse enunciated by power, making them the proper locus of a *truth* not entangled within the power discourse.

The disseminated totalizing discourse of power on the troubled past makes it difficult or precludes deliberation in the public sphere quelling the conflicting narratives on the past by appropriating the memory of the past and producing a certain totalizing historical discourse. Thus, the narrative unfolded by works of fiction, despite being situated within the limits marked by power on the possibility of voicing in the public sphere the burdened and silenced pasts, and not being entangled in the “knowledge/power nexus” remain the proper means of transgressing, dismantling or questioning a meta-narrative of the past.

Ultimately, focusing the attention on the fictionalized narrative of the past, more than a peculiar, whimsical and optional way of recounting or retelling the past from a personal perspective of a writer or film director that needs to be taken into account as one of the many ways of dealing with the past, the fictionalized narrative seems to constitute a mechanism, a suitable means of disseminating a subversive narrative that opens up the possibility of reversing the existing narrative, the existing version of the truth in the public sphere.

It may seem as if the writer of the thesis is unaware of the normative and ethical implications while addressing the presence of a disquieting and burdened past. Recognizing that a normative approach to dealing with disputable, contested and disconcerting memories of the past

is quite legitimate the thesis does not intend to pursue that path. The reason for refraining from embarking on a normative path resides on the impossibility of a normative approach to account for the power effects that the knowledge and hence, the disseminated prevailing discourse has on limiting, devising, constructing a *truthful* representation of the memory of the past through official commemorations in the public sphere or the silencing of other collective memories of the society, having established thus a certain regime of truth.

Therefore, the mechanism through which power establishes the enunciated discourse on the troubled memory, legitimizing a particular version of the past would be missing in a normative perspective. As a consequence, the possibility of taking at face value the uttered discourse by power given its presumed acceptance in the public sphere would overlook that the historical discourse disseminated and the memory commemorated is a constructed one by power. Hence, resistance to the meta-narrative of power would not be conceived in such a perspective.

At the end of the day, the thesis aims to address, through the case-studies of the burdened pasts of France and Germany, within a broader theoretical context, the power relations and the possibility of resistance to the meta-narrative disseminated by power, a resistance coming from a marginalized almost ignored sphere, the literary artistic field. A further implication that stems from the thesis, which could be subject to an extended future research, relates to the closure of the public sphere. The choice of fiction instead of the spoken word, a phenomenon that I mention in the thesis, but which is not a primary focus of the research, testifies to the impossibility of a writer, author and film director, or for that matter of the intellectual to voice his opposing view in the public sphere through discussions and deliberations. The closure of the public sphere hence relegates resistance to power to the works of fiction. Thus, the thesis passes from the intention to construct a certain narrative of the subversion of the meta-narrative of the particular cases studied, to revealing a possibility of an area of investigation in which the interplay between

power, public sphere, the writer as an intellectual, articulating a marginalized, stifled narrative, and the practice of resisting to the discourse disseminated by power is present.

The structure of the thesis includes a first chapter that delineates the theoretical framework, the methodology and the relevant literature review pertaining to the case studies under investigation. Then, within two separate chapters, related to each of the case studies I describe and analyze the emergence, features and meaning of the prevailing meta-narratives constructed by power on the memory of the past and the subversive narrative uttered through the works of fiction.

The totalizing *consensus* created by power suffocates discussion or deliberation on the public sphere related to the issue of coming to terms with the past, and of representing different memories of the disquieting past. The chapters of the body part of the thesis are divided into sections, one section analyzing the meta-narrative(s) articulated by power and their effects, while the other section analyzes the subversive narratives of fiction.

The second chapter centres on interpreting the meta-narrative of Resistance constructed by power in the case of France, silencing the memory of the “dark years” of Vichy regime, and how this prevailing discourse is reversed through the narrative of works of fiction, which in this case are documentary and fictional movies of Marcel Ophuls and Louis Malle.

The third chapter of the thesis focusing on the German case analyzes and unfolds the meaning of the meta-narratives enunciated by power in different stages of memory production from the post war years to the late ‘60s and until the ‘90s. From a certain representation of the German Suffering and the urge for Reconstruction to the meta-narrative of ‘Germans as Perpetrators’ up to a more relative version of the ‘Germans as Perpetrators’ discourse. The subversive narrative that confronts the meta-narrative(s) articulated by power are represented through the novels of Heinrich Böll, W.G. Sebald and Günter Grass.

Hence, the thesis describes the production of a certain historical discourse and the appropriation of the memory of the past by power and narrates the rupture in discourse that works of fiction bring forth in the public sphere. The particularity of discourse and the world described in the works of fiction will amount to interpreting these works as loci of resistance to the meta-narrative. The concluding chapter addresses the implications of the thesis in a broader perspective, giving the areas and issues of further research.

Chapter 1

1.1 Theoretical Framework

The main concepts that I refer to in the thesis include the Foucauldian notion of power and discourse, its notion of truth, the meaning of fiction and narrative espoused by Tzvetan Todorov's structuralism and the hermeneutics of Paul Ricoeur, the autonomy of the literary field as explained by Pierre Bourdieu and the concept of collective memory elaborated by Maurice Halbwachs . Having established the rigor and the appropriateness of the primary concepts, I provide a terse and concise overview of how the interplay between memory and power, if at all, and in particular the contextualization and the place that fictionalized memory, namely novels and movies have been represented in the current literature regarding the cases of the Vichy "dark years" in France and German suffering. In a separate section, I explain briefly the choice of these two case studies.

The claim made throughout the thesis, that works of fiction provide the possibility of resistance to power and constitute a subversive narrative to the dominant discourse, demands considering a work of fiction as enunciating a particular reality, and a particular narrative. For the sake of clarity, when I refer to fiction I include not only written literary work but also movies. Tzvetan Todorov provides a proper definition of fiction linking it to the notion of discourse and genre from a structuralist and literary criticism perspective. According to Todorov, referring to Frege, he states that the literary text is neither true nor false but simply fictional¹. Hence, the possibility to dismiss works of fiction as merely false representations of reality or as untrue remains dubious.

¹ Tzvetan Todorov, *Genres in Discourse*. Cambridge University Press: 1990: (p.3)

Then Todorov introduces a more generic notion of literature, which he names discourse. The definition of discourse implies according to him the utterances made within a particular socio-cultural context in the form of sentences². Thus, literary texts like the novel have the attributes of enunciating a discourse. More precisely, the possibility of considering works of fiction as producing a discourse relies on Todorov understanding of the genre as the possibilities of the codification of discourse in a particular society³. He clarifies his notion of genres: “Genres communicate indirectly with the society where they are operative through their institutionalization⁴”. As a consequence, works of fiction, in this case, novels that will constitute the unit of analysis in the thesis are a possible codification of discourse communication in the society to use Todorov’s terms, not necessarily false or mythical. While concerning movies, Todorov states that movies can be seen on equal footing with novels as works of fiction: “It is given that the narrative that all society seems to need in order to live depend today not on literature, but on cinema: filmmakers tell us stories, whereas writers play with the words⁵”.

Another renowned author that deals extensively with narrative, fiction and history is Paul Ricoeur. His main concern being the endorsement and justification of a narrative form of history as a knowledge, elaborating a philosophy of history, Ricoeur could not avoid addressing the notion of fiction and how it relates to history which he call as “two large class of narrative discourse⁶”. Although he makes a distinction between the truths claim that history is entitled to as compared to the absence of truth claim in the case of fiction, Ricoeur recognizes the possibility of fiction to enunciate and represent a narrative on reality. “Only history can claim a reference inscribed in empirical reality, inasmuch as historical intentionality aims at events that have

² Tzvetan Todorov, *Genres in Discourse*. Cambridge University Press: 1990: (p. 9)

³ Tzvetan Todorov, *Genres in Discourse*. Cambridge University Press: 1990: (p. 10)

⁴ Tzvetan Todorov, *Genres in Discourse*. Cambridge University Press: 1990: (p.19)

⁵ Tzvetan Todorov, *Genres in Discourse*. Cambridge University Press: 1990: (p.38)

⁶ Ricoeur, Paul. *Time and Narrative* Vol. 1. University Chicago Press: 1983: (p.82)

actually occurred⁷". He later qualifies his statement interweaving history and fiction by saying:

"...We can say that fiction is quasi historical, just as much as history is quasi-fiction⁸".

Henceforth, fiction is in a sense a legitimized as a form of representing the reality.

A continuous concern for Ricoeur is that discourse is never an isolated fact: "Discourse in all its uses it seeks to bring into language an experience, a way of living and of Being-in the-World which precedes it and which demands to be said⁹". Put more strikingly: "Experience can be said, it demands to be said¹⁰". Hence, on this line of argument the experience narrated through novels as it is the case of the novels of Böll, Grass and Sebald, or the movies by Louis Malle and Marcel Ophüls in the French case implies a necessity to be revealed. Another concept that Ricoeur relates to the notion of fiction is that of the reference. "The reference is the truth value of the proposition, its claim to reach reality." "Only discourse, we shall say, intends things, applies itself to reality, and expresses the world.¹¹". Finally, he implies that the necessity to be told, and the possible appeal to truth, is a feature that it cannot be denied to the works of fiction: "Nevertheless, there is no discourse so fictional that does not connect up with reality¹²".

However, this notion of discourse as explained by Todorov and referred to by Ricoeur concerning the enunciated form of a narrative given through the text seems to contrast with the notion of discourse elaborated by Foucault which I utilize as a concept. Hence, I will refer in the thesis, for the sake of convenience, as narrative to the uttered discourse of the literary or fictional work and as discourse to the knowledge constructed and disseminated by power in a Foucauldian sense.

⁷ *ibid*, (p.82)

⁸ Ricoeur, Paul. *Time and Narrative*. Vol. 3 University Chicago Press, 1983: (p. 190)

⁹ Ricoeur, Paul. *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics II*. Athlone Press, 1991: (p. 19)

¹⁰ *ibid*, (p.40)

¹¹ *ibid*, (p.85)

¹² *ibid*, (p.85)

In a more comprehensive and solid argument when contrasting the features and the similarities between fictional narrative and historical narrative Ricoeur establishes rather convincingly the referential character of fictional narrative in relation to reality. Introducing concepts like the notion of “debt” or “standing for” he grounds the possibility of representation for the works of fiction as follows: “And their, [historians], relationship to the past is first of all that of someone with an unpaid debt, in which they represent each of us who are the readers of their work¹³”. While he defines the term “standing for” as pertaining not only to historical narrative but also to fictional narrative: “The function of standing for....is paralleled in fiction by the function it possesses....of being un-dividedly revealing”¹⁴. Hence, the duty of historians according to Ricoeur resides in representing the unsaid, the obligation to voice and narrate the past events. The same feature is acknowledged to works of fiction. “It must be stated, first of all, that the projection of a fictive world consists in a complex creative process, which may be no less marked by an awareness of a debt than is the historian’s work of reconstruction¹⁵”. As a consequence the fictionalized narrative elaborated in the novels of Grass, Böll and Sebald concerning the memory of the German suffering, the bombing of the cities during the war and the movies of Louis Malle and Ophüls subverting a dominant narrative of power in relation to the “dark years” of Vichy and the Second World War in the case of France, could be justified by the feeling of debt that these writers and film directors had towards the society.

Ricoeur later recognizes that being released from the burden of proof, fictional narrative can represent what the historians leave unsaid: “Free from the external constraints of documentary proof, fiction is bound internally by the very thing that it projects outside itself.

¹³ Ricoeur, Paul. *Time and Narrative* Vol. 3. University of Chicago Press, 1985: (p.152)

¹⁴ *ibid*, (p.158)

¹⁵ *ibid*, (p.176)

Free from...artists must make themselves free for¹⁶”. Despite this remark, acknowledging the possibility of fiction to unravel the silenced past, as it happened in the case of German authors and French movie directors that the thesis will explore, does not amount to a structural understanding of why this possibility arises which is addressed by Bourdieu, as it also leaves untouched the power relations and the resistance that the narrative constructed by fiction poses to the meta-narrative as it is explained by Foucault’s theory.

Although, Tzvetan Todorov’s theory of the discursive genres and Ricoeur’s hermeneutics of the text and his theory on the relation between fictionalized narrative and historical narrative as explained above, both establish and allow the possibility of the literary text or movies to establish a discourse in the public sphere, they do not account for structural reasons that permit the writer or the filmmaker to enunciate a subversive narrative to the meta-narrative devised by power. Hence, the notion of the discourse and the relation of fiction to reality are useful but rather generic in the works of Todorov and Ricoeur. Hence, a more specific notion and explanation is needed to foreground the possibility of authors, either writers or filmmakers, to construct a subversive discourse. Bourdieu’s theory of the genesis of the literary field provides the theoretical framework to explain the reason why particular authors can oppose the dominant meta-narrative. According to Bourdieu, the autonomy of the literary field is a necessary precondition for the possibility of contestation with the field of power. Stated more clearly: “It is only in a literary and artistic field which has achieved a high degree of autonomy, that all those who mean to assert themselves as fully fledged members of the world of art, and above all those who claim to occupy the dominant positions in it, will feel the need to manifest their

¹⁶ *ibid.*, (p.177)

independence with respect to external powers, political or economic¹⁷”. The notion of the field of power, an important concept, is defined by Bourdieu as: “The space of relations of force between agents and institutions having in common the possession of the capital necessary to occupy the dominant positions in the different fields; notably cultural and economic¹⁸”. Therefore, the possibility of contestation of the dominant meta-narrative devised by power institutions is implied since the authors are situated enunciating their narratives from the position of the autonomy of the literary field.

Furthermore, Bourdieu delineates the practices through which certain writers or artists come to share certain viewpoints that are codified through the features of the genres utilized or through certain values. Thus, Bourdieu introduces terms like “space of possibles” and “position-takings”, which reflect the stance of certain authors or writers in the public sphere on certain issues, the mechanism of envisaging such positions. Bourdieu defines “space of possibles” as: “a system of different position taking in relation to which each must be defined”¹⁹. While the term position taking include schools, meaning certain schools of art, genres and forms²⁰. In this respect, the works of Louis Malle or Marcel Ophuls display through the “space of possibles” a certain genre like New Wave and Surrealism for Malle, and a genre of “bottom up” narrative in documentary films of Ophuls. Whereas, for writers like Grass and Böll, the codification of their position takings is manifested in the literary group, called Group 47, established after the war, of which they were members.

Ultimately, the works of Günter Grass, Heinrich Böll, or the movies of Luis Malle or Marcel Ophuls that constitute the bulk of my analysis as subversive forms of discourse against

¹⁷ Bourdieu, Pierre. *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field*. Stanford University Press, 1996: (p.61)

¹⁸ Bourdieu, Pierre. *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field*. Stanford University Press, 1996: (p.155)

¹⁹ *ibid*, (p.200)

²⁰ *ibid*, (p.200)

the dominant narrative are to be considered as locus of contestation not only due to the fact of the world that they unravel but due to the structural position that they inhabit making it possible to reveal the world that they articulate through written narrative given the closure of the public sphere that has limited the use of speech instead of the written word. Thus, the concept of autonomy of the literary, as a notion as well as an explanatory concept, establishes rather firmly the necessity to investigate the enunciated narratives through the works of fiction rather than simply treating them as personal narratives of past memory.

Hence, Bourdieu's notion of the autonomous structural position of the literary field completes and goes beyond the fact of grounding the possibility and legitimacy of enunciating the "yet untold", to use Ricoeur's term, of fiction in terms of debt or moral duty as Ricoeur claimed, within a more comprehensive theoretical framework. However, what Bourdieu's conceptual grid lacks is the interplay between the knowledge elaborated by power constituting a particular truth that is disseminated and totalizing and the possibility of resistance to that truth. This relation is better explained by Foucault's theory. For this reason, I utilize Bourdieu's notion of the autonomy of the literary and artistic field to ground the possibility of works of fiction to express a narrative other than, independent from the dominant narrative.

While Bourdieu appears to provide a proper and useful concept as the autonomy of the literary field, his notion of the field of power is constructed primarily as a field of contestation for the dominant position, allowing for the possibility of contestation and probable reversal but to a certain extent not accounting for the discursive dimension of power as it is explained and endorsed extensively in Foucault's works. Foucault's notion of discourse, the knowledge/power nexus and the notion of regime of truth are important to ground the features of the dominant meta-narrative that is constructed by power on certain objects of knowledge, which pertaining to the thesis, include the memory of the past and the historical discourse on it.

Foucault attributes to discourse the features of normalizing, classifying and disciplining knowledge. His main concern with the notion of discourse is the practices that are engendered by it, its power effects: “A task that consists of not- of no longer treating discourses as groups of signs but as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak²¹”. Hence, the discourse objectifies and delineates the knowledge of the objects under their inquiry. In relation to the thesis, the knowledge of the past is established, enunciated and legitimized through a historical discourse, the discourse of history that has as a power effect the limitation, control of a certain memory of the past within the public sphere and the silencing of another memory or memories or simply the exclusion of that memory establishing a particular truth.

With the construction of a certain discourse on a unit of inquiry a certain truth is proclaimed by power. Foucault, conceiving the power/knowledge nexus as interlinked, conceptualizes as a result a notion of truth as being necessitated by power, as intrinsic to it: “The important thing here, I believe, is that truth isn’t outside power or lacking in power”²². He asserts that truth is based on the construction of a scientific discourse that is then diffused²³. A more comprehensive definition of his notion of truth, how it is linked to power and how power effects are realized is given: “Truth is linked in a circular relation with systems of power that produces and sustains it, and to the effects of power which it induces and extends it-a regime of truth”²⁴. As a result, power disseminates a certain truth which is predicated on the elaboration of a certain scientific discourse that is circulated and strengthened by a regime of truth established in the public sphere. As a consequence, the ‘Resistancialist meta-narrative’ in the French case represents an enunciated truth by power, whereas the regime of truth established in the German

²¹ Foucault, Michel. *The Archeology of Knowledge*. New York: Pantheon, 1972 : (p.49)

²² Foucault, Michel. “Truth and Power” in *Power* edited by Faubian James (p.131)

²³ *ibid*, (p.131)

²⁴ *ibid*, (132)

case has disqualified the memory of the bombing of the cities as the regime of truth in the case of France has silenced the memory of the Vichy regime and the Occupation.

Another term that Foucault uses is *institutional sites*²⁵ that elaborate and are the source of the formation of particular discourses and hence particular domineering truths. In the case of Germany, such a discourse is elaborated by German historians working as advisors to power, or by certain institutions like archives and museums²⁶. Whereas, the prevailing discourse of *resistencialisme* in France during the de Gaulle years, which was legitimized through certain rituals of commemoration and silencing of certain memories of the past was elaborated by a committee of historians on the Second World War.

Since, the thesis deals with the history of the past, the history and the construction of the memory of the disquieting past it is important to refer to Foucault's concept of history as a discourse, and of conceiving in history as a discourse rather than a neutral truth-claiming knowledge having the obligation to uncover the unsaid, immune from being embedded in knowledge/power relations as Ricoeur claims. Thus, Foucault delineates the utilization and the continuous implication of power on the production of historical knowledge. Tracing the genealogy and practice of historical knowledge Foucault states: "...history had never been anything more than the history of power as told by power itself²⁷". Through the emergence of counter-history of the vanquished, history becoming as Foucault states a history of struggles, needs to be re-appropriated by power: "...at the very moment when history, or historical discourse, was entering a general field of conflict, history found itself, for different reasons, in the same position as the technical knowledge²⁸". Hence, this implies that historical discourse became

²⁵ Foucault, Michel. *The Archeology of Knowledge*. New York: Pantheon, 1972 (p.51).

²⁶ see *The Unresolved Past: A Debate in German History*. Edited by Gina Thomas, Wiedenfeld and Nicolson: 1990

²⁷ Foucault, Michel. *Society must be defended*. New York: Picador, 2003: (p. 133)

²⁸ *ibid*, (p. 185)

a disciplined knowledge enunciated by power to legitimize and produce a totalizing and limiting *truth*. Thus, the historical discourse articulates statements on the memory of the past.

Besides considering history a discourse that is encompassed in a knowledge produced and enunciated, the relation between power and knowledge as envisaged by Foucault needs to be mentioned to dispel the understanding of knowledge being outside, exterior to power, as being instrumentalized, manipulated by power, whose use of history is an aberration not a discursive practice. As he states, power has these attributes: “It always has to be considered in relation to a field of interactions, contemplated in a relationship that cannot be dissociated from forms of knowledge²⁹”. Thus, in the case of the meta-narrative of the past as devised by power, history becomes knowledge, a discourse enunciated by power as a truthful discourse that legitimizes a certain version of the memory of the past. As a consequence, the notion of power and discourse as understood by Foucault constitute the proper concepts to analyze and explain the dissemination and prevalence of certain meta-narratives as *resistencialisme* in France or the Germans as perpetrators in Western Germany.

The power effect of the dominant discourse constructed by power on past events after the Second World War in Europe in general, and in Germany and France in particular, through the elaboration of a historical discourse of the past, is the limitation, exclusion and legitimating of a certain memory of the past expressed in official commemoration and the imposing of silence in the public sphere concerning such matters. Being an object of discursive formation, memory is yet to be defined. I utilize the notion of collective memory as conceptualized by Maurice Halbwachs. As he defines collective memory: “Most of the time, when I remember, it is others who spur on me; their memory comes to the aid of mine and mine relies on theirs³⁰”. Hence, the

²⁹ Foucault, Michel. *The Politics of Truth*. New York: Semiotexte: (p. 59)

³⁰ Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective Memory*. University of Chicago Press, 1992: (p.38)

recollection of the past is done within a social framework, a social milieu. The memory of past events that are shared by individuals in a society although appearing to each individual's mind is still resuscitated through what Halbwachs calls collective frameworks. As he clearly claims: "No memory is possible outside frameworks used by people living in society to determine and retrieve their recollections³¹". Halbwachs also recognizes the scope of the memory, moving from the individual level, to family and to society at large. "Thus everything happened as in those cases where an event passes from an individual consciousness or from the narrow circle of a family into the thought of a more extended group and is defined in relation to the dominant representations of that group³²". Thus, the memory of the "Dark Years" of Vichy is hence a collective memory; German suffering incites also collective memories.

Besides the fact of recognizing the "social pressure" exerted on memory by the society as Halbwachs claims, he lacks the conceptualization of memory being constructed by power. A rather interesting position and conceptualization framed under the notion of manipulated memory, or blocked memory is given by Ricoeur. However, this conceptualization considers manipulation as an aberration of the truthful position of historical knowledge that of being objective, paying the debt and standing for the unsaid. Ricoeur sees manipulated memory and its relation to power as such: "The manipulation of memory... results from the intervention of a disturbing and multiform factor that insinuates itself between the demand for identity and the public expression of memory. This is the phenomenon of ideology³³". Hence, the objectivity of the historical discourse is disturbed and undermined by an attempt by ideology to manipulate the truth. Ricoeur explains that this process happens due to the need of legitimacy for power, having such features as: "Running from top to bottom, from surface to depth, these effects are, in

³¹ *ibid*, (p. 43)

³² *ibid*, (102)

³³ Ricoeur, Paul. *Memory, History, Forgetting*. University of Chicago Press, 2004: (p.82)

succession, distortions of reality, the legitimating of the system of power, and the integration of the common world by means of symbolic systems immanent in action³⁴”. This understanding of the relation between the knowledge of the past as represented by history and power relying on the notion of ideology runs the risk of not accounting for the necessity of power of producing knowledge and of knowledge of exerting power as Foucault states. Moreover, the notion of ideology as Foucault states in an interview³⁵ implies an existent truth out there and a certain conceptualization of human being. As Foucault points out, what the concept of ideology misconstrues is the problem as a dichotomy between truth and distortion whereas it should be rather different: “the problem consists in seeing historically how effects of truth are produced within discourses that in themselves are neither true nor false³⁶”. As a result, knowledge of the past, of the memory of the past is not a distorted truth, rather than an enunciated, constructed truth, elaborated not with the intention to manipulate rather than with the aim to represent and disseminate a particular legitimating discourse with certain particular statements. Concerning the thesis, the epitome of a constructed truth, of a historical knowledge in the case of the German past is revealed and implicated within the *Historikerstreit* (Historian’s dispute)³⁷, or with a non-coercive form of producing knowledge as it is the case with the Historian committee of Second World War in France³⁸.

Having established the possibility of a reference of the works of fiction to a reality, to a world that unfolds through fiction relying on the notion of fiction as conceptualized by Todorov and the hermeneutics of Ricoeur, I grant the possibility of fictionalized narrative of being legitimate to be the units of analysis. Bourdieu’s notion of the autonomy of the literary and

³⁴ *ibid.*, (p.82)

³⁵ Foucault, Michel, “Truth and Power” in *Power*, edited by James D. Faubion, New York Press: 2000

³⁶ Foucault, Michel. *Power*, edited by James D. Faubion. New York Press, 2002: (p. 119)

³⁷ see *The Unresolved Past: A Debate in German History*. Edited by Gina Thomas, Wiedenfeld and Nicolson: 1990

³⁸ see Rousso Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991

artistic field established the context within which the works of fiction ground the possibility of speaking to power under the position of independence. Whereas, Foucault's notion of discourse, power/knowledge nexus reveals the construction, dissemination and prevalence of a particular meta-narrative on the memories of the past as devised by power. What remains to be investigated and clarified is the interplay of dominant discourse, the proclaimed truth and the narrative that is enunciated through the works of fiction.

While, Bourdieu's notions helps to conceive of the literary and artistic field as a locus of contestation to power, as a struggle for domination within the political field, it does not include truth as a function of power or resistance as a practice to reject the prevailing articulated truth. Hence, the subversive effects of the narrative transmitted through fiction providing a rupture with the dominant discourse a reversal of the "regime of truth" rather than a contestation in the name of an absolute truth. Constructing a link between knowledge, power and the enunciated and disseminated truth Foucault sees as an imperative the necessity of *not to be governed*, what he calls a critique of power. He defines one dimension of such a critique of power as *not to be governed as such* or as like that: "And finally "to not want to be governed" is of course not accepting as true, here I will move along quickly, what an authority tells you is true³⁹". Given his understanding of power as being reversible when stating that: "One always has to think about it, [power], in such a way as to see how it is associated with a domain of possibility and consequently, of reversibility, of possible reversal⁴⁰" - and the practice of not accepting the dominant truth, the works of fiction created under conditions of autonomy become locus of resistance to power by providing a narrative that claims not to be governed by the prevailing narrative on the past established by power, a narrative that not merely contests the dominant

³⁹ Foucault, Michel. *The Politics of Truth*. New York, Semiotext(e), 1997: (p.31)

⁴⁰ *ibid*, (p.59)

⁴¹ see works of Ingle S. J., Northrop Frye and Laurence W. Hyman

discourse but reverses the regime of truth formed by power inciting a rupture in discourse. In particular to the thesis, I apply the notion of truth as an effect and result of the constructed discourse by power. The discourse of the myth of the Resistance in France, and the prevailing discourse of the Guilt as Perpetrators in Western Germany appear in the public sphere as the Truth. I claim that the works of Heinrich Boll, Grass, and of Luis Malle can be seen as a means of reversing the truth espoused by power prevailing in the public sphere.

1.2 Literature Review (Pertaining to the Case-Study)

I have to admit that the research questions and possible investigations done in the discipline of the political science are rather rare when it comes to the validity and the necessity to scrutinize works of fiction⁴¹. Even when the issue of memory, history and fiction has been a focus of research, it has been primarily a focus of the discipline of literature. In a study⁴² on the narrative fiction by Chilean authors during the period of Pinochet, Patrick O'Connell uses the term alternative history, or the need to re-write the past from a personal experience. Although, this study among few others can be credited with disclosing the possibility and the event of constructing a different narrative from the official discourse what it misses is a conception of power and the contextualization of the emergence of this counter-narrative as confronting the meta-narrative. The narrative constructed by Chilean authors, or of Spanish authors for that matter in during the reign of Franco is simply a silenced narrative a closed narrative, and not reversible. Part of the reason can be the context of the authoritarian types of regimes in which

⁴² O'Connell Patrick. "Narrating History through Memory in three Novels of Post-Pinochet Chile." *Hispania*. Vol. 84. No. 2 (May 2001)

they were written. However, a theoretical framework is still lacking in the above mentioned cases.

The choice of the cases on which, I intend to construct a theory of resistance to and rupture of the meta-narrative of power on the memory of the past are democracies not as the cases covered in the previous literature that of autocratic Spain or Chile. The choice of the cases will be explained in the methodology part of the research proposal. The current literature that focuses on the memory of the past, the instrumentalization of it by power comes from the discipline of historiography and sociology primarily.

Seminal works that deal with the memory of the past in the case of France, in particular with the Vichy past, include the works of Henry Rousso and Richard Golsan. The main argument and focus of inquiry for Rousso, concerning the Vichy past remains: “My working hypothesis is this: the civil war, and particularly the inception, influence and acts of the Vichy regime, played an essential if not primary role in the difficulties that people of France faced in reconciling themselves to their history⁴³”. Hence, it primarily traces the inability of the past to be dealt with, rather than the possibility of reversal of the dominant narratives and which are the proper mechanisms to do so. When it comes to the works of fiction, which in this case are movies, Rousso considers them important only as a means of shaping a common memory⁴⁴. Therefore, his investigation is rather restricted concerning the interplay between the meta-narrative of the moment and the subversive discourse through fiction bearing the responsibility of reversing the regime of truth constructed by power.

The other author, Golsan focuses much more on the effect that fictions have on the public life in relation to the memory of the past. The main thesis of the author is: “Is that each of these

⁴³ Rousso, Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: (p. 9)

⁴⁴ Rousso, Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: (p.11)

episodes, events, or scandals, constitutes a veritable crossroads where history and what I would describe as counter-history or different and competing versions of the past, encounter one another...”⁴⁵ When the author defines the notion counter-history it implies a different representation of the past. Hence, a representation, a conflicting representation among the many but one which is not in relation to and that does not have the intention of opposing the meta-narrative. This understanding of counter-history, found even in the works of fiction, becomes clearer in the following sentence: “Counter-history also means the deviation or misdirection of history⁴⁶”. Consequently, it can be understood that the author holds a notion of history not as a discourse that produces a regime of truth in relation to power but as a neutral and objective discipline with no intention of legitimizing the prevailing meta-narrative. Thus, the interplay between the discourse of power and the subversive discourse that establish a rupture is missing.

When it comes to the case of Germany, the dealing with the memory and the use and framing of memory by power appears to be researched properly and extensively by sociology scholars of memory like Jeffrey Olick⁴⁷. The focus of his research in the case of German past is primarily on the depiction and explanation of the changes that memory has experienced through time in different historic periods after the World War II. The memory that Olick investigates is the memory as constructed by power. The discourse of power is present only not the subversive discourse of fiction. Authors in the existing field that have written later than Olick, and in particular in relation to German suffering, which is an issue of my investigation, dealing more extensively with fictions as a way of retelling the past, aim primarily to explain the emergence of the works of fiction, try to answer the question why now, rather than to consider them as a locus

⁴⁵ Golsan, Richard. *History and Counter-History in Postwar France*. University of Nebraska Press, 2000 (p.18)

⁴⁶ Golsan, Richard. *History and Counter-History in Postwar France*. University of Nebraska Press, 2000 (p.20)

⁴⁷ Olick, Jeffrey. “Genre Memories and Memory Genres: A Dialogical Analysis of May 8, 1945 Commemorations in the Federal Republic of Germany

of a subversive discourse to the meta-narrative. Certain reasons of the emergence and the necessity to address the issue of German suffering appear plausible as it is the necessity of the left for not allowing the far-right to appropriate the memory of German suffering or as a *mea culpa* of the generation of Grass⁴⁸. Although this explanation is not dismissed as invalid, my concern remains not a presumed intention of the author rather than the discourse that is produced by the text itself, which appears as subversive to the prevailing narrative.

Another issue that is addressed by the current literature concerning the memory of German suffering is the existence of conflicting and politicized narrative that claim to be dominant. These interpretations of the facts might seem to dismiss the prevalence of a single and dominant meta-narrative of the memory of the past and relegate the discourse created by fiction as a discourse among the many conflicting ones, and not that subversive as I claim. However, the discourse established by Neo-Nazis for example appear to be a politicized narrative, and intentional narrative that does not come from the position of autonomy as it is the case of the discourse established by the literary field. It is a narrative that can make no claim to non-being totalizing a form of an undisputable meta-narrative, since it does not constitute a rupture with the dominant discourse rather a reverse mirror image of the prevailing discourse.

As Andreas Michel states: “The breaking of the taboo by Schneider and Grass, and I submit the texts that addresses the Allied Air war against German cities as well- are performed in the spirit of reaching a more complex understanding of what happened during the war⁴⁹”. Although, Michel recognizes the necessity to reckon with the intentions of the novels, and acknowledges the non-politicized feature of the novels written by German authors, still for him

⁴⁸ Lagenbacher, Eric. “The Return of Memory” *German Politics and Society* (p.9)

⁴⁹ Michel, Andreas. “Heroes and Taboos: The Expansion of Memory in Contemporary Germany” *War Literature and Arts* (p.15)

these novels do not constitute a discourse that is addressed to the continuing prevalence of the meta-narrative of the memory of the past, the silenced past of the German suffering. The focus in the dominant literature when referring to the works of fiction in the case of German suffering is primarily to account for the reasons of the emergence and for the struggle within the field of power for the appropriation of the dominant position in construction of the memory of the past. At the end of the day, what I intend to do, while acknowledging the plausibility of these explanations, is focusing on the text as a place of resistance to the discourse of power, as a means of transgressing the accepted version of the past.

1.3 Methodology

Since I am dealing with the notion of power and the assumed discourse that power enunciates on the societal level, including the memory of the past, and espousing an anti-foundational ontology and epistemology the theoretical approach that I use in the thesis is Discourse Analysis. This methodological approach appears to be the proper theoretical approach since it focuses on revealing the meaning attached to certain practices, and to the meaning that is constructed or that can be implied in the text. In particular to the thesis, a Discourse Analysis approach will bring to the limelight the meaning and the particularities of the discourses and narratives elaborated by power concerning the past. Rather than a mere delineation and exposition of the discourses constructed by power on the troubled past, I intend to disentangle the meaning and the basic features of the particular discourse established by power.

The two cases chosen, that of the Vichy past and German suffering have the features of particular periods of time in which a certain discourse has dominated as *resistencialisme* of the de

Gaulle's era and a certain representation of German Suffering leaving aside the experience of the destroyed cities to be replaced by the discourse of Germans as Perpetrators. Although, the meta-narratives constructed have their own particularities they share the characteristic of being a totalizing, limit-setting, pervasive and taboo-inciting meta-narratives, clearly reflecting a certain form of truth. The two cases share also the emergence of conflicting narratives as mentioned by authors like Rouso, Golsan, Olick and Michel. Another similar feature of the two cases is the use of fiction by certain renowned writers and filmmakers to address the issue of the memory of the past. In both cases, fiction appears to be the possibility of transgressing the prevailing meta-narrative, or unravelling the taboo, of provoking a rupture in the public discourse.

The sources I refer to in order to delineate and construct the features and the meaning of the meta-narrative of power include certain excerpts from the speeches of main political leaders that relate to the rituals of commemoration of the accepted memory of the past. In the absence of obtaining the primary sources of the discursive works of certain agencies that elaborated a particular discourse on the memory of the past as it was the case of CHDGM (Comite d'Histoire de la Deuxieme Guerre Mondiale), I rely on historical accounts and facts given by historians on the role that such *institutional sites* has performed on the construction of the historical discourse and the features of the knowledge produced by them. While the historian delineates and provides the basic features of that particular meta-narrative, I aim to situate it as a particular discourse, and contextualizing the meta-narrative in the power effects it produces in the public discourse.

Whereas, the subversive fictional narratives established by the works of fiction implies that the texts become the main units of analysis. In this case, in order to establish the meaning of the work of fiction and detect the subversive discourse it produces not only after the written work or the movie is made public, but revealing the subversive discourse in the text itself, I utilize a hermeneutic notion of the text and of interpretation as elaborated by Ricoeur. "What is to be

understood as a narrative is not first of all the one who is speaking behind the text, but what is being talked about, the thing of the text, namely the kind of the world the works unfolds, as it were before the text⁵⁰”. Hence, I aim to reveal the world that the text makes a claim to reality rather than who was the person that established that discourse. I admit that who the author is, who speaks for the truth has implications for the acceptance of the work in the public sphere, but this method does not say much about the meaning of the discourse enunciated by the works of fiction.

Since the underlying assumptions of my methodology are anti-foundational, I use qualitative methods, and textual analysis when dealing with primary sources like novels, movies and political speeches. The primary sources I use include the fictional novels of abovementioned German writers and the texts of the scripts of the movies by French film directors like Luis Malle and Marcel Ophuls. As secondary sources I utilize analysis or interpretations of movies done by other scholars of the field. Concerning the fictionalized narrative I employ the novels by renowned authors like *Crabwalk* by Günter Grass, *Silent Angel* by Heinrich Böll and *On the Natural History of Destruction* by W.G. Sebald, whereas the movies under scrutiny include *Le Chagrin et la Pitie* (The Sorrow and the Pity) of Marcel Ophuls and *Lacombe Lucien* of Luis Malle.

⁵⁰ Ricoeur, Paul. *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics II*, Athlone Press, 1991: (p.131)

Chapter 2

Section 2.1

A Suffocating Heroism

The period of the Vichy regime of Marshal Petain, established in a province named Vichy in France, that lasted from 1940 till 1944, damned and marred with allegations of collaboration, and treason with the Nazi occupiers, was coined as *les annees noires* (dark years) of the French history. After the Liberation of France, the remaining disciples of the Vichy period, those not affected by the purges, will attempt to resuscitate the memories of those years providing their account of the truth in the public sphere through memories, publishing articles and re-establishing journals. Meanwhile, the process of *epuration*, or the purges would start during the Resistance years and after the Liberation with the intention of doing justice to the tarnished image of the country by a minor group of collaborators and traitors. An incipient meta-narrative would emerge the following days after the Liberation that regards the Vichy period as a mere incident in the French history, that needs to be silenced by a widespread boisterous *suffocating* heroism of the French people. The totalizing effect of the meta-narrative on the years between 1940 and 1944 constructed by the winning side of the Resistance takes hold not before the year 1958 with the second return to power of General de Gaulle.

Mainly referred to in the literature as the “Resistancialist myth” and closely linked with the charismatic persona of de Gaulle, the meta-narrative of the past, in the thesis, is analyzed as a discourse enunciated by power, which having established a *scientific* and *objective* knowledge on this particular past, a knowledge being classified, assembled and normalized by certain agencies, what Foucault terms *institutional* sites, is later proclaimed in the public sphere as the

undisputable, and reigning truth. Hence, it is a constructed truth, a totalizing truth on the memory of the past that relegates to the margins the other possible alternative narratives of the past. It is a discourse, a meta-narrative that censures, that disqualifies. The process of elaborating a particular discourse on the memory of the past is overlooked if the focus remains on the individuals that simply misinterpret or distort the facts or the truth of the past events.

Therefore, prioritizing the role of de Gaulle in the construction of a “certain vision of France”, to use his words, besides running the risk of oversimplification misses the whole process of the interplay between knowledge and power and the legitimizing effect of knowledge in the form of a constructed historical discourse that limits the possibility for voicing the already disqualified narratives of the same past. Ultimately, without raising normative concerns regarding the proper process of coming to terms with the past, this chapter delineates and analyzes the process of the construction of an encompassing, almost totalizing discourse on the recent past including the years 1940-1945, constructed after the Liberation that silences, prohibits inquiry on the Vichy regime and encourages a historical discourse to be established primarily on Resistance. The power effects of the meta-narrative enunciated on the past are dealt with the analyses of the processes of commemoration and the non-presence of certain issues and event of the past from the public sphere. The issues that are subject to debate in the public sphere through the intervention of certain intellectuals like Camus, Mauriac, Sartre and Aron remain a telling example of the impossibility of questioning the prevailing meta-narrative or reversing the regime of truth established by power. This is due either the position of certain intellectuals like Sartre as “engaged intellectuals” or even those speaking from a position of autonomy like Camus and Aron still share the meta-narrative enunciated by power on the memory of the past.

Hence, the closure of the public sphere awaits the rupture, which was made possible by the events of May ’68, in the dominant discourse that was brought to the fore through the work of

directors, more particularly, Marcel Ophuls with his documentary film “The Sorrow and the Pity” and a few years later by Louis Malle with the movie “Lacombe Lucien”. The analysis of the subverting narrative disseminated through these works of fiction, these works of art is part of the second half of this chapter having analyzed first the conditions and the features of the emergent meta-narrative constructed and enunciated by power.

The power in post war period in Europe required a founding legitimacy, not simply based on sheer victory, or accepting humbly the loss. The grounding of the new legitimacy to power could not be based on a mere act of an authoritative decision that promulgates the break with the past. It required a meta-narrative, an encompassing discourse of the past to lay down its foundations. It needed the objectification of the past, of the memory of the past putting it under scrutiny, making it an object of inquiry. As Muller rightfully points out the post war period saw the emergence of “myths which served to legitimate and stabilize the political order after 1945”⁵¹. Hence, legitimizing power remained a priority. Expounding his thoughts on post war Europe Tony Judt shares this concern of legitimizing power by delineating the ways in which it was attempted in Western Europe. He refers to a need “to forget the recent past, and forge a new continent”⁵², and whose effects in the public sphere were indicated by what Judt refers to as “a future-oriented vocabulary of social harmony and material improvement”⁵³. It cannot be negated that this was the case in France and West Germany also. However, the necessity for silencing the past, or what Muller coins as “forced forgetting”, collective amnesia aiming at constructing a stable future oriented society does not reveal much of the process of constructing a meta-narrative, a historical discourse of the past classified, limited, included and marginalized certain representations of the past to the expense of others. Therefore, the process of enunciating a

⁵¹ Muller, W. Jan. *Memory and Power in Post war Europe*, Cambridge University Press 2002 : (p.12)

⁵² Muller, W. Jan. *Memory and Power in Post war Europe*, Cambridge University Press 2002 : (p.157)

⁵³ Muller, W. Jan. *Memory and Power in Post war Europe*, Cambridge University Press 2002 : (p.157)

certain knowledge and a prevailing discourse on the past gets blurred if the phenomenon is framed in terms of collective amnesia or forced forgetting, which are at the end of the day the power effects of the establishment of a meta-narrative of the past.

In the aftermath of the war and the dawn of the Liberation in France, besides the purges that started during the Resistance, there was an attempt by the Resistance movement to establish *the true* narrative of the events. Although, the main features of the dominant discourse in becoming were present, and the particular specialized *institutional sites* that were required to produce a legitimizing knowledge for power, a certain objective historical discourse were in place as CHDGM (The Committee for the History of the Second World War), which was established in 1945, the power effects on the memory of the past in the public sphere through the process of commemoration, the disqualification of conflicting narratives, the dissemination and ritualization of the dominant discourse enunciated by power did not happen immediately. Although Judt, explains the main characteristics of the narrative that the Resistance was proclaiming in the end of the war, based mostly on the image that “the sufferings had been the work of the Germans and a handful of traitorous collaborators⁵⁴”, while the French “had suffered and struggled heroically⁵⁵”, the public sphere was impregnate with conflicting narratives.

The end of the Occupation brought the end of the Vichy regime, but the memories and the testimonies of this past were present in the public sphere either to contest the appearing meta-narrative of the winning side of the Resistance once in power, or to downplay, minimise the guilt and blame for collaborating with the Nazi regime relying on a narrative of the Vichy regime as a protective shield against further suffering and persecutions by the Nazis. A distinction need to be borne in mind between the narratives appearing after the war by sympathizers or defenders of the

⁵⁴ Muller, W. Jan. *Memory and Power in Post war Europe*, Cambridge University Press 2002 : p163

⁵⁵ Muller, W. Jan. *Memory and Power in Post war Europe*, Cambridge University Press 2002 : p.163

Vichy regime, which I call conflicting alternative narratives that represent another version of the past without intending to subvert, question, or provide a rupture in the discourse, compared to the narratives appeared in the public sphere through the works of fiction. Henry Rousso delineates the context of conflicting narratives characterizing the immediate post war years: “From the Liberation until 1954 the leading figures of the Franco-French civil war dominated the public scene with their cacophonous voices⁵⁶”. The emergence of conflicting representations and narratives of the past was due also to the context of the process of *epuration*, the French word for the purges. The sentences were given to those individuals, collaborators during the Vichy regime that were deemed as having committed crimes and torture, while as Rousso points out the majority of the individuals punished or purged were “prosecuted under article 75...which made the intelligence with the enemy a crime⁵⁷”. Hence, referring to Rousso’s statement the immediate years of the post war Liberation was characterized by: “The first generation of memories reflected contemporary political battles, the elimination of the vestiges of the resistance movements and the revival of the Vichyte sentiment⁵⁸”.

Besides the “exculpating narratives” as Jackson calls most of the writings on the Vichy regime written by Vichy sympathizers the narrative enunciated by the Resistance was not a unitary, encompassing narrative for some time. Henceforth, the existence of conflicting narratives in the *agora*, with conflicting rituals of commemoration. The Communist attempted to appropriate the representation of the Resistance to the Occupation. The French historian, Rousso mentions the main features of the Left discourse on the past and primarily of the Communist representation of the past: “It therefore developed its own version of the “Resistancialist myth”, which differed from the Gaullist version in that it incorporated political parties and movements”

⁵⁶ Rousso , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: ⁶ (p.241)

⁵⁷ Rousso , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: p.20

⁵⁸ Rousso , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991 : p..242

with the Communists self named as “the party of the 75,000 fusilles⁵⁹”. The commemoration rituals were also different. As Rouso testifies: “The Communists commemorated “the victims of the clandestine war in ceremonies⁶⁰” and “on 12 of February 1945 the left celebrated the anti fascist strike of 1934⁶¹” while the Gaullist resistance commemorated the Flag Day on the 2 of April⁶². The epitome of the lack of a prevailing meta-narrative, of a dominant discourse in the public sphere and its power effects on the memory of the past through the ritual of commemoration is the different renowned names proposed to be consecrated in the Pantheon: “In January 1945, a dispute erupted over which of the three men would be added to the Pantheon: Romain Rolland supported by the Communists; Charles Peguy backed by Le Figaro, or Henri Bergson favoured by MPR. As it happens none of the three was admitted⁶³.” However, the presence of conflicting narratives and rituals of commemoration would not last long.

The vanquished part voices its representation of the past and the claims it has on the past through memoirs, polemical articles in journals like *Les Documents Nationaux*, *Rivarol*, and *Aspects de la France*, an organ of Action Francaise⁶⁴. The Communists, the leading force in the French Left, attempted to contextualize their narratives through commemorating rituals. The victors embarked on the construction of the proper historical discourse with the establishment of the CHDGM in 1944. Hence, referring to Foucault’s understanding of the context in which the state, power interferes to appropriate the representation of the past, of the memory of the past, by establishing and later disseminating knowledge on it, appears to be elucidating: “at the very moment when history, or historical discourse, was entering a general field of conflict, history found itself in the same position as the technical knowledge”; namely disciplinarized

⁵⁹ Rouso , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: p.20

⁶⁰ Rouso , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991⁰: p.24

⁶¹ Rouso , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991 p.25

⁶² Rouso , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: p.25

⁶³ Rouso , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991p.24

⁶⁴ Rouso , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991p.24

knowledge⁶⁵. Foucault explicates further his understanding of the contextualized appropriation of the historical discourse saying that once: “the historical knowledge was enucleated from power and became an instrument in the political struggle...the State attempted in some way and for the same reason, to take it in hand and disciplinarize it⁶⁶”. Therefore, in case of France, as it can be realized from the depiction and analysis in the above paragraphs, the presence of conflicting narratives of the past, of opposing representation of the events, one from the Vichy supporters and the other narratives of the Resistance was done outside the reach of power, its practices of classification, normalization and disciplinarization of the knowledge of the past and the memory related with it. As a consequence, the establishment of what Foucault names *institutional sites* like the CHDGM and other “knowledge apparatuses” by power, driven by the necessity to legitimate the rupture with the recent past, the Vichy regime, leaving certain issues untouched.

Since, the focus of the thesis is the process of the elaboration of a historical discourse on the past and its power effects on the memory of the past, and not the *who* of power, namely the role of the agency, in this case the acclaimed General de Gaulle, is relegated to the discourse enunciated in his speeches and the focus is placed on the practices of constructing the Resistancialist meta-narrative and its ritualization in the public sphere. As Foucault states while elaborating a distinctive dimension of the concept of power, dismissing the notion of ideology, he sees at the base of power: “It is the actual instruments that form and accumulate knowledge, the observational methods, the recoding techniques, the investigative research procedures⁶⁷”. This appears to be central to the construction of knowledge and as Foucault reveals the power/knowledge nexus: “the delicate mechanisms of power cannot function unless

⁶⁵ Foucault, Michel. *Society must be defended*. Picador, 2003: (p.185)

⁶⁶ Foucault, Michel. *Society must be defended*. Picador, 2003: p.185

⁶⁷ Foucault, Michel *Society must be defended*, edited by Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana. Picador, 2004:: (p.33)

knowledge...are formed, organized and put into circulation⁶⁸”. Precisely, this is what happens in the production of the legitimizing meta-narrative of Resistance, how certain power apparatuses of knowledge production classify, limit and discipline the historical discourse of the event of the Occupation and Resistance, engendering a particular memory of the past and silencing the rest through the ritual of commemoration.

The construction of the prevailing discourse to be enunciated by power started with the establishment of the CHDGM (La Commission d’Histoire de L’Occupation et de la Liberation de la France), an institutional site in Foucault’s terms, which as Rousso states was under the supervision the Ministry of National Education including historians like Lefebvre, Henri Michel and the director of the Archives, including the minister himself⁶⁹. Meanwhile, the object of inquiry of this knowledge apparatus remained the Resistance only, leaving aside the Vichy regime, with another committee called The Committee for the History of the War which classified, assembled the documents from archives and other ministries⁷⁰. Hence, what Foucault coins as the knowledge/power nexus is evident in the establishment of institutional sites like the above committees that produce the proper knowledge necessary in legitimizing power.

The process of knowledge production, that provides the grounds for the meta-narrative of Resistance, exhibits the power practices of “selection, normalization and centralization⁷¹”, practices that Foucault considers important to obtain the disciplinarization of knowledge. As Henry Rousso testifies the meticulous centralization of historical discourse, the scientificity of the prevalent discourse becomes evident: “The CHDGM was responsible for producing a chronology of the Resistance...a catalogue, department by department, of all acts of resistance,

⁶⁸ Foucault, Michel *Society must be defended*, edited by Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana. Picador, 2004: (p.34)

⁶⁹ Rousso, Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: (p.242)

⁷⁰ Rousso, Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991 : (p.242)

⁷¹ Foucault, Michel. *Society must be defended*. Picador, 2003: p.181

from sabotage to intelligence...Recorded on cards, these thousand items were to be gathered at a central location for use in constructing a comprehensive portrait of the struggle against the occupying forces⁷²”. An aura of an unquestionable objectivity dispels any naïve, un-scientific narrative of the events under scrutiny, as detrimental to the sound truthful meta-narrative of the past, henceforth detrimental to power itself. The other narratives are quelled or marginalized. It appears stupefying to Roussio the absence of historical research on the Vichy regime given that, the regime bequeathed a wide range of documents and sources⁷³. His statement is simply an indication of the disciplinarization of historical knowledge by power, the construction of a regime of truth, which was not questioned in the *agora* for some time.

The polemics in the public sphere between different prominent intellectuals and writers after the Liberation is an indication of the absence of bringing to the fore issues that relate to the Vichy regime. Hence, the production of the Resistancialist meta-narrative remained unquestioned. Tony Judt provides a convincing account of the atmosphere of debates between certain writers like Camus and Mauriac, pinpointing also the features of the dominant intellectual discourse. Judt characterizes this period as “hyper-politicized culture of post war Paris” where only few intellectuals like Mauriac and Camus could address certain issues with courage like the “excesses of the purges” or admit the failure of the epuration as a process to do justice⁷⁴. Having been part of the Resistance as Judt explains: “the intellectual community in post war France remained unhealthy fixated upon its war time experience⁷⁵”. The main characteristics of the dominant intellectual discourse that Judt delineates include the trope of collaboration seen as a

⁷² Roussio , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991² : (p.248)

⁷³ Roussio , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: (p. 263)

⁷⁴ Judt, Tony *The Burden of Responsibility*.. P.111

⁷⁵ Judt Tony. *Past Imperfect: French Intellectuals 44-56*.. P.44

weakness, as “a state of mind” non-masculine as Sartre typifies it in “What is a Collaborator”⁷⁶ and resistance as a condition of being “against”. Therefore, the public sphere of the post-war, while the construction of a Resistancialist meta-narrative was on the way, did not challenge the historical discourse to be enunciated by power. Even “un-political” non-engage intellectuals like Camus did not and could not contest the emerging prevailing discourse.

Besides the categorization, classification and normalization of the historical discourse by the institutional sites, which testifies to the deliberate process of constructing a legitimizing knowledge, the articulation of the prevailing meta-narrative in the public sphere through speeches of de Gaulle, or other agents of power, and the historical interpretation of those, reveals the main features of the narrative of Resistance. In his speech on 25 August 1944, de Gaulle claimed the heroic, courageous, glorious resistance of the French against the Occupation: “Paris broken! Paris martyred! But Paris liberated! Liberated by itself, by its own people...with the support and aid of ...the fighting France, of the only France, the true France!”⁷⁸. Henceforth, sanctifying Resistance as a wide spread movement for freedom against the Occupying forces says nothing about the Vichy regime, making it vanish by the overwhelming eternal France. As Rousso explains the features of the Resistancialist meta-narrative that took firm hold in the early 60s: “... A version most comforting to French sensibilities achieved its definite form: France was now cast as a nation “that forever and always resists the invader”⁷⁹. Whereas, referring to the Vichy regime, the public discourse of power as enunciated by de Gaulle is best epitomized by the refusal of de Gaulle to re-proclaim the French Republic, saying that: “The Republic has never ceased to exist. Free France, fighting France...have by turns embodied it. Vichy was and is null

⁷⁶ Judt Tony. *Past Imperfect: French Intellectuals 44-56*. p. 52

⁷⁸ Rousso, Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: (p.16)

⁷⁹ Rousso, Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: (p.82)

and void⁸⁰”. Thus, the suffocating heroism and the “obliteration of Vichy” were the present features of the Resistancialist meta-narrative.

The prevailing discourse on the memory of the past was manifested in the limitation, appropriation of the collective memory of the Occupation and Resistance period prior to Liberation. After a certain period of conflicting rituals of commemoration of the past, the power effects of the meta-narrative of Resistance become apparent. A feature of the construction of the memory by power is the inclusion of the dark years (1940-1944) within the “thirty years war” which entails, as Rousso notices, the lumping together of the two World Wars⁸¹. Framing the memory of the two wars indicates the obliteration of the Vichy period in the rituals of commemoration. No apparent conflicting rituals of commemoration were present in the public sphere. More importance was put on commemorating the Flag Day on 2 of April than the Victory Day in Europe. Lastly, the dispute of whom of the main figures of the Republic to honour, either Bergson, Peguy or Rolland was resolved by putting to the Pantheon of France, the Vichy prefect turned Resister, Jean Moulin. As Henry Rousso puts it, commenting on the act of sanctifying Moulin and Resistance in the Pantheon: “The French, yesterday a people of the night, had survived a long and overcast dawn and now at last could see the light⁸²”.

The power effects of the dominant discourse, besides the appropriation of the historical inquiry through the elaboration of a historical discourse that objectifies the Resistance silencing the Vichy era, besides the ritualization of a single memory of the pre-Liberation years through commemorations, are manifest in seemingly trivial practices as it is described: “Since 1964 a prize has been awarded each year in every school in France for the best essay on “The Resistance

⁸⁰ Rousso , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: (p. 17)

⁸¹ Rousso , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: (p. 17)

⁸² Rousso , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: (p.92)

and deportation⁸³”. However benign a practice it may look like, this practice in schools is an indication of the need for ritualization, circulation, and routinization and as a consequence of non-questioning the Resistancialist meta-narrative. The regime of truth established by the knowledge/power link disseminated for some time the meta-narrative of Resistance, this only truth in the public sphere without being contested, de-legitimized and subverted. What remained outside the enunciated discourse is succinctly mentioned by Julian Jackson: “How did 1, 5 million of prisoners of war fit into the heroic vision? What about the 65,000 workers who were forced to work in German factories? What about the Jews? What about the people who supported the Vichy and were not ashamed of it?”⁸⁴. The following section of the chapter deals with the representation of the marginalized, stifled narratives that are recounted and brought to the public sphere through documentary films and movies. The narratives enunciated by the works of fiction question, challenge, and subvert the meta-narrative discourse of Resistance in the *text* itself, through the event that they recount, going even further by inciting a rupture in the prevailing discourse beyond the confines of the *text* disclosing the debate in the public sphere thereafter.

⁸³ Rousso, Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: (p.83)

⁸⁴ Jackson, Julian. *The Dark Years: 40-44*. Oxford University Press, p.605

Section 2.2

Disconcerting Narratives The Reversal of the Meta-narrative

The disseminated and prevailing meta-narrative enunciated by power depicting the events of the Occupation as of continuous heroic resistance of the French people, besides a few treacherous collaborators was not to dominate the public sphere for long. The possible disruption and de-legitimation of the widespread discourse was triggered off by the structural changes in the French society by the emergence of new generation questioning power and its effects. The events of May '68 stand as the landmark of such a structural change of values in the French society in particular, as of a particular bent in the German case. It appears to be a broad understanding of the influence that these events had on inciting a change in addressing the past. Naomi Greene provides her account of the impact of May '68 generation: "Its suspicion of all certainties, all orthodoxies, had helped fuel the events May '68; now, les evenements in turn, opened the floodgates to a period of national soul searching in which past and present alike came under renewed scrutiny⁸⁵". Hence, the structural conditions for questioning the constructed memory of the dark years were present. However, the possibility to challenge the regime of truth concerning the disseminated historical discourse on the memory of the Occupation and Resistance did not come through the spoken word, the polemics or deliberations in the public sphere rather than through words of fiction. As Henry Rousso testifies of the absence of addressing directly the silenced issues of the past during the eruption of events in May '68: "In May '68 crisis, however, reference to the past did not play so large a role as in other conflicts⁸⁶". Therefore it was left not to the students, and intellectuals in the public sphere to address and challenge the prevailing meta-narrative of Resistance but to quote Rousso again: "These new images of the past, the work

⁸⁵ Greene, Naomi. *Landscapes of Loss*. Princeton University Press, 1999: (p. 68)

⁸⁶ Rousso, Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: (p. 99)

of a handful of writers and film makers, marked a fundamental break with what had gone before⁸⁷”.

The movies under scrutiny that provided disconcerting, and subverting narratives of the representation of the Occupation and the Resistance include the documentary film of Marcel Ophuls, *The Sorrow and the Pity*, which was based on interviews with marginalized individuals, famous and laymen, and the movie of Louis Malle, *Lacombe Lucien*, that recounts the story of a young apolitical, adventurous collaborator in a small province in South-west of France. Before grounding and analyzing the autonomous structural position of the two film directors, the notion of fiction, fictional narrative, or uttered discourse as explained in Ricoeur and Todorov’s theory provide the reader understand the representative feature of works of fiction concerning the reality, in this case the reality of the past events prior to the Liberation. Todorov states that “films tell us stories⁸⁸”, henceforth uttering a certain narrative. Ricoeur’s notion of discourse is linked with the representation of experience “that demands to be said⁸⁹”. While as for him: “There is no discourse so fictional that does not connect up with the reality⁹⁰”, as a consequence the documentary film of Ophuls and the movie of Malle provide a narrative of representation of the past that makes a claim on reality. Although Ophuls’s documentary film is not a fictional work of art, being based on the collection of the narration of the past by people interviewed it enunciates a certain narrative and representation of the past, as Malle’s movie does.

The narrative of the works of Ophuls and Malle, besides being contextualized in the event of May ’68, is uttered in the position of autonomy from what Bourdieu calls “temporal powers”, which include political and economic power. Hence, the features of an autonomous literary field

⁸⁷ Rousso, Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: (p.99)

⁸⁸ Tzvetan Todorov, *Genres in Discourse*. Cambridge University Press: 1990: p.38

⁸⁹ Ricoeur, Paul. *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics II*. Athlone Press, 1991 : (p.40)

⁹⁰ Ricoeur, Paul. *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics II*. Athlone Press, 1991:(p.85)

allow the writers and film directors to utter a narrative that is not dependent on power, which allows for the possibility to contest it. Louis Malle, being from a noble family as Hugo Frey indicates: “More importantly, financial security shaped Malle’s early career⁹¹”. The evidence of him being under positions of independence is given further: “...the Malle family created their own independent production company, the Nouvelle Editions de Films (NEF) that served Malle’s career from that point onwards⁹²”. Whereas Marcel Ophuls, son of a film director, being dismissed, after May ‘68 by the ORTF (French Television Network), Rouusso testifies that for his project *The Sorrow and the Pity*: “Their project was revived by new financing, this time from the video department of the Swiss publishing house Recontre de Lausanne⁹³”. Henceforth, both film directors were independent financially before embarking in their projects that would in the end reverse the meta-narrative of Resistance, and uncover the marginalized voices concerning the Vichy period.

Meanwhile, their relation to power manifested a position of autonomy. An analysis of how these film directors came to express positions that indicate independence from power, the ability to oppose its power effects is necessary as it is the analysis of the shared values and practices that relate to features of their genres appears to be necessary. Bourdieu claims that the notion of the “space of possibles” which implies the range of “different positions taken” is conditioned by: “sharing the same meeting places or being exposed to the same cultural messages...key events⁹⁴”. Both directors were part of the May ’68 events, not as passive citizens but active citizens in the events. Marcel Ophuls as the evidence goes: “as employees of the state owned network of French television, Ophuls and his collaborators had participated in a

⁹¹ Frey, Hugo. *Louis Malle*. Manchester University Press, 2004: p.6

⁹² Frey, Hugo. *Louis Malle*. Manchester University Press, 2004: p.7

⁹³ Rouusso, Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991 : (p.110)

⁹⁴ Bourdieu, Pierre. *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field*. Stanford University Press, 1996: p.200

paralyzing strike against the network and were among those dismissed as a consequence⁹⁵”.

Louis Malle, as Frey says: ...Malle signed petitions in support for the reinstatement of Langois, [director of National Cinematheque fired by Minister of Culture]⁹⁶”. Malle and Ophuls were concerned with the censorship exerted on works of art by the state. Ophuls commented the absence of support for his project and the following ban on showing his documentary film in French television as “censorship by inertia⁹⁷”. Whereas, Malle participated in the campaign for ending the continuation of censorship in French art: “Malle now joined the new post May ’68 film union, La Societe des Realisateurs du Film⁹⁸”. “...its program called for the protection of a director’s moral rights of authorship and was strongly opposed to state censorship⁹⁹”. Hence, these facts testify to the autonomous positions taken in the public sphere by both directors confronting power.

What Bourdieu calls the “space of possibles” meaning the range of possible “position takings” that are manifested through the choice and endorsement of certain “works, schools ...available genres¹⁰⁰”, within the literary and artistic field is a crucial indication of the autonomy of the field. This feature is more evident in Malle’s case. Hugo Frey points out that the main features of Malle’s aesthetic vision include surrealism’s characteristic of revolt¹⁰¹ and the attachment to the real events present in the genre of documentary movies called *cinema direct*. “This is the form of documentary that emphasizes its proximity to real life, exploring human experiences as directly as possible through the lens of a camera...¹⁰²”. His fictional works as Frey states are interlinked with the experience of cinema direct: “The most obvious link between

⁹⁵ Greene, Naomi. *Landscapes of Loss*. Princeton University Press. 1999: (p. 69)

⁹⁶ Frey, Hugo. *Louis Malle*. Manchester University Press, 2004: (p.12)

⁹⁷ Rouso, Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991 : p.80

⁹⁸ Frey, Hugo. *Louis Malle*. Manchester University Press, 2004: (p.14)

⁹⁹ Frey, Hugo. *Louis Malle*. Manchester University Press, 2004: p.14)

¹⁰⁰ Bourdieu, Pierre. *The genesis of the literary* : (p200)

¹⁰¹ Frey, Hugo. *Louis Malle*. Manchester University Press, 2004: (p.51)

¹⁰² Frey, Hugo. *Louis Malle* Manchester University Press, 2004:(p.51)

Mallean classicism and the techniques of cinema direct is their shared emphasis on the real¹⁰³.”

Hence, Malle intends to provoke the audience and to represent the reality, the world of the speechless, and the voiceless laymen as true as possible. Whereas comments made on the genre of the work of Ophüls reveal the emphasis on representing the marginalized. Roussio says about the artistic features of the documentary film: “For the first time, eyewitness testimony is given precedence over archival footage¹⁰⁴”. “A second point worth mentioning is that the testimony by prominent figures is far outweighed by testimony given by unknown or merely local personalities¹⁰⁵”. Ultimately, both works narrate the events by relying on dispositions of their genre that enable the voiceless to find representation.

The dominant meta-narrative of Resistance, that was constructed, circulated by power was enunciated as the truth of the events of the past. As Foucault conceives of the relation between truth and power he claims that: “Truth isn’t outside power or lacking in power¹⁰⁶”. The features of the produced truth, in this case the meta-narrative of Resistance, as Foucault explains is “subject to constant ...demand for truth, centred on a scientific discourse and the institutions that produce it, object of immense diffusion and consumption¹⁰⁷”. Hence, as it was explained in the above section, the emergent power in need of legitimization established the *Truth* on the past events after the Liberation, on a scientific historical discourse that was produced by institutional sites and circulated by the education system and ritualized at the end of the day. The lack of deliberations in the public sphere on the issues of the past and the absence of a challenge of the meta-narrative of the Resistance relegates, after the structural change of May ’68, the locus of resistance to the prevailing discourse in the works of the above mentioned film directors. As it

¹⁰³ Frey, Hugo. *Louis Malle*. Manchester University Press, 2004: (p. 58)

¹⁰⁴ Roussio , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: (p.101)

¹⁰⁵ Roussio , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: p.102)

¹⁰⁶ Foucault, Michel. *Power*. Edited by James D. Faubion. New York Press, 2000 : (p.131)

¹⁰⁷ Foucault, Michel. *Power*. Edited by James D. Faubion. New York Press, 2000:(p.131)

was analyzed in the first part of the chapter, with the vanishing from the public sphere of the conflicting narratives and commemorations of the past, power established its regime of truth, which as Foucault states is predicated on the “types of discourses it accepts and makes function as true¹⁰⁸”, constructing a single discourse on the memory of the past, that of a heroic Resistance silencing and dismissing all the other possible representations of the past.

This regime of truth is challenged and reversed by the narrative uttered through the works of Ophuls and Malle. As it will be analyzed below, what Foucault names as resistance to power, or a critique of power, manifested through the rejection of *not to be governed as such*, including also not accepting “what an authority tells you is true¹⁰⁹” is a predominant feature of these works of fiction. The Resistance of the “eternal France”, the widespread Resistance of the French people, the few traitorous Collaborators, the reasons for Collaboration, the absence of addressing the Prosecution of the Jews were all subverted in the narrative constructed by *The Sorrow and the Pity* and *Lacombe Lucien*. Ultimately, a subversion that happens first within the text, namely, in the script of the movies, through the narratives recounted by the interviews and it is thereafter reflected in the rupture of the prevailing discourse in the public sphere. Hence, an analysis of the text itself, of the script of the movies reveals the disruption provoked by the narratives of the movies.

Regarding the life under the Occupation, *The Sorrow and the Pity*, unravels Resistancialist meta-narrative and questions its suffocating heroism. Resisters themselves like the pharmacist of Clermont-Ferrand when asked if there was only courage in the Resistance replies: “Well, there certainly was that. But personally what I felt most often in those years was a sense of

¹⁰⁸ Foucault, Michel. *Power*. Edited by James D. Faubion. New York Press, 2000:(p.131

¹⁰⁹ Foucault, Michel. *The Politics of Truth*. Semiotexte 1997:(p.59)

sorrow and pity¹¹⁰”. Whereas, another Resister, the farmer Louis Grave, responding to the question whether people knew why they were resisting, replies: “I don’t believe so, some fanatics, a few know why maybe¹¹¹”. These quelled voices by the dominance of the heroic Resistancialist meta-narrative testify to the absence of an image of a convinced courageous resister. Another voice, Mon. Leris provides a disconcerting narrative to the official discourse on Resistance: “And lots of them [French officers mainly called by de Gaulle to engage in resistance] stayed quietly at home. “I did not know where to go to join the Resistance¹¹².”- is their answer when confronted with the fact of not participating in Resistance. As a consequence, the narrative that all the French citizens resisted the Occupation is reversed, is dismissed is questioned by such accounts of the past. Even the heroic character of each and every resister is disputed. A resister with non-Communist leanings narrates: “I think you could only have joined the Resistance if you were maladjusted¹¹³”. It appears disturbing to say that the alienated citizens were among the many that joined the Resistance or that it was not so pervasive a movement or a movement made of heroic citizens. Jackson, a historian of Vichy France and Resistance indicates the breadth of the Resistance: “The Resistance did not suddenly emerge fully formed to challenge the Vichy regime¹¹⁴”. “Resistance never became a mass movement...¹¹⁵”. Therefore, a historical inquiry not embedded in power/knowledge nexus affirms the challenge made by the narrative of the marginalized voices to the overwhelming heroic Resistance enunciated by the Resistancialist meta-narrative.

The truth proclaimed by power on the Vichy years had it that few upper-middle class citizens collaborated with the Nazis. The reasons for collaboration were simple treason to the

¹¹⁰ Ophuls Marcel . *The Sorrow and the Pity*. A Berkley Windhover Book, 1975p.5

¹¹¹ Ophuls Marcel . *The Sorrow and the Pity*. A Berkley Windhover Book, 1975,p.9

¹¹² Ophuls Marcel . *The Sorrow and the Pity*. A Berkley Windhover Book, 1975,

¹¹³ Ophuls Marcel . *The Sorrow and the Pity*. A Berkley Windhover Book, 1975p.118

¹¹⁴ Jackson Julian. *The Dark Years 1940-1944* , Oxford University Press, 2001: p.388

¹¹⁵ Jackson Julian. *The Dark Years 1940-1944* , Oxford University Press, 2001: p. 475

country. The Vichy regime was equated with the Nazi Occupation. The roots of French fascism were not investigated. When power remained silent on the Vichy regime and its relation to the citizens, the documentary film of Ophuls speaks up. The dialogue between two resisters is revealing concerning the questioning of considering Vichy simply a cog of the Nazi Occupation. Leris: “There is one thing too often forgotten. The Germans, the Nazis, it’s all very well to talk about them, but what about the French? Are any of them better than the Nazis?”¹¹⁶. Gaspar [defending the official narrative]: Stop it¹¹⁷. Thus, so unsettling is such a claim that the supporter of the official discourse utters nothing than the words to stop starting a discussion on the issue. The testimony of Christian de la Maziere, a soldier of Waffen SS French unit *Charlemagne*, which according to his testimony included 7,000 French citizens from different strata¹¹⁸ gives reasons for collaboration: “In order to understand various people’s sense of commitment during the war, one must go back at least to 1934¹¹⁹”. As he explains being afraid of Communism: “We had to choose the other party of revolution. And what was that? Fascism”¹²⁰. Henceforth, the collaboration with the Nazi regime had legitimate reasons based on a “certain idea of France” having roots in French fascism of the 30s. Julian Jackson, delineating the different reasons for collaborations mentions among the many the conviction of being a fascist: “Fanaticism was present in the case of the historian Bernard Fay, a professor at the College de France...”¹²¹. Thus, collaboration was not a work of a few traitors, but of men of convictions also, of normal individuals selling out their neighbours to the Nazis as it was about to happen to Mr. Leris.

¹¹⁶ Ophuls Marcel . *The Sorrow and the Pity*. A Berkley Windhover Book, 1975p. 113

¹¹⁷ Ophuls Marcel . *The Sorrow and the Pity*. A Berkley Windhover Book, 1975 p.113

¹¹⁸ Ophuls Marcel . *The Sorrow and the Pity*. A Berkley Windhover Book, 1975p. 145

¹¹⁹ Ophuls Marcel . *The Sorrow and the Pity*. A Berkley Windhover Book, 1975 p. 147

¹²⁰ Ophuls Marcel . *The Sorrow and the Pity*. A Berkley Windhover Book, 1975p.147

¹²¹ Jackson Julian. *The Dark Years 1940-1944* , Oxford University Press, 2001: ¹ p.190

Another important feature that the narrative of the documentary film reveals is the prosecution of the Jewish during the Vichy era, which the meta-narrative of Resistance left aside. Claude Levy tells the situation of the Jews during that period: “France collaborated. It is the only country in Europe which collaborated...A government which introduced laws on the racist level that went even further than the Nuremberg Laws¹²²”. He also talks about the presence of the concentration camps: “France was covered with concentration camps: Lurs, Argeles, Rivesaltes, Drancy, at any rate, there were lots of them¹²³”. French anti-Semite laws and measures as Levy testifies were not simply done on the orders of the Germans. The account of Julian Jackson on this issue corroborates the facts recounted by Levy: “The first law aimed specifically aimed at Jews was the Jewish statute of 3 October 1940. “Despite what Vichy apologists later claimed, the Statute was not imposed by the Germans¹²⁴”. Hence, the silenced, tabooed area of the dark years resurfaced in *The Sorrow and the Pity*.

The proclaimed support that de Gaulle claimed to have obtained for the Resistance is questioned by the accounts of certain resisters themselves. A teacher in the towns narrates: “Listen, I have a distinct impression that there were quite a few young people in our classes who were eager to support de Gaulle¹²⁵”. Another resister recounts, when asked about the support of de Gaulle after his call to resist the Occupation, of de Gaulle of a leader “whose subjects did not exist¹²⁶”. Ultimately, not only this single detail, but the whole narrative that is enunciated through the collection of memories of the interviewed people, shattered the meta-narrative of Resistance elaborated by power, questioned the appropriation of the collective memory through the rituals of

¹²² Ophuls Marcel . *The Sorrow and the Pity*. A Berkley Windhover Book, 1975p.140

¹²³ Ophuls Marcel . *The Sorrow and the Pity*. A Berkley Windhover Book, 1975p. 141

¹²⁴ Jackson Julian. *The Dark Years 1940-1944* , Oxford University Press, 2001: p. 355

¹²⁵ Ophuls Marcel . *The Sorrow and the Pity*. A Berkley Windhover Book, 1975 p. 86

¹²⁶ Ophuls Marcel . *The Sorrow and the Pity*. A Berkley Windhover Book, 1975 p.127

commemoration of an eternal France resisting in the image of Jean Moulin. The documentary film provoked reaction in the public sphere, which later amounted to a rupture in discourse.

The reaction of power to *the Sorrow and the Pity* was immediate censorship. The reasons given for this decision are best epitomized by the words of the head of the ORTF: “Destroys myths that the people of France still need¹²⁷”. As this institutional site of power admits, before the emergence of the documentary film, power has been constructing, circulating its *truth* on the past events and their memory. More than a necessary truth of France, it was a legitimizing discourse for power itself. Whereas, in the public sphere the documentary film caused dismay, rejection, and condemnation. Jean Paul Sartre commented on the movie: “speaks neither political truth, nor life in the concrete. This is a film that makes you smile constantly, but the Occupation was by no means all laughs¹²⁸”. It is not the truth for Sartre if it is not a constructed political truth. Neither can we reach a representation of the past even if we ask citizens themselves to tell their stories of the years under Occupation, according to Sartre. The other reaction came from Fabre- Luce on *Le Monde* accusing the movie of: “gimmicks, omissions and deliberate falsifications¹²⁸”. While a Resister depicted the narrative uttered through the documentary movie as: “a profile of a hideous country¹²⁹”. This was the reaction in the public sphere of a movie director who rejected to accept the truth enunciated by power.

While, the fictionalized narrative elaborated in *Lacombe Lucien*, the movie of Louis Malle, shown a few years after Ophuls documentary further shatters and subverts the Resistancialist meta-narrative. The plot of the movie centres on the actions Lucien, a young teenager who was willing to go as a resister but being turned down by the Resistance unit, ends

¹²⁷ Rouso , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: p. 110

¹²⁸ Golsan, Richard. *History and Counter-History in Postwar France*. University of Nebraska Press, 2000 (p. 74)

¹²⁸ Golsan, Richard. *History and Counter-History in Postwar France*. University of Nebraska Press, 2000p. 74

¹²⁹ Golsan, Richard. *History and Counter-History in Postwar France*. University of Nebraska Press, 2000 p.74

up due to circumstances working for the Nazi police. It is a story of a guy who behaves arrogantly but who is in love with a Jewish girl whom he saves from being sent to the concentration camps.

The meta-narrative has it that the Collaborators are traitors. It is so simple. It cannot and could not have been otherwise. The story of Lucien subverts this. Lucien has no political convictions, although he requires to be enlisted in the Resistance just for the sake of adventure and as the movie indicates he finds pleasure when killing birds or rabbits: “Lucien starts shooting: with two, one rabbit. It is felt that he gets a physical pleasure on what he is doing¹³¹”. Then he goes to the Resistance leader asking him to get involved. Monsieur Peyssac rejects him saying that: “First of all you are too young. After all it is a serious business¹³²”. Lucien gives no reason for joining the Resistance. Nor does the leader asks why he wants to do that. While, Ophuls documentary revealed a dimension of collaboration based on ideological fascist convictions, Malle provides a different reason for collaborating, that of having a feeling of adventure and of happenstance. Lucien as the movies says is: “Always on the bicycle¹³³”. But an unexpected accident with the bicycle makes him get acquainted to people working for the German police. He chooses to accept their offer, without any enthusiasm. When asked if he wants to join he replies: “I do not know¹³⁴”. In the end he finds himself working for them. Even as an enlisted young men collaborating with the Nazis he still shows no desire to become a convict fascist, relying on what others say. When talking to Mon. Horn, a Jew, he says: “M. Faure says that the Jews are the enemies of France¹³⁵”. When delineating different cases and reasons for collaboration, Jackson provides the example of a French writer: “Naivety and adventure were

¹³¹ *Lacombe Lucien*. Edition Gallimard, 1974 : (Lucien commence a tirer: deux coups, un lapin . On sent qu’il prend un plaisir physique intense a ce qu’il fait), p. 8

¹³² *Lacombe Lucien*. Edition Gallimard, 1974 : (D’abord tu es trop jeune. Et puis c’est sérieux !) (p.13)

¹³³ *Lacombe Lucien*. Edition Gallimard, 1974 : (Toujours sur la byciclette) p. 9

¹³⁴ *Lacombe Lucien*. Edition Gallimard, 1974 : (Je ne sais pas) p. 36

¹³⁵ *Lacombe Lucien*. Edition Gallimard, 1974 : (M. Faure dit que les Juifs sont les ennemies de la France) p.70

certainly present in the case of Marc Augier, a former pacifist who ended up fighting for Germany on the eastern front¹³⁶”. Henceforth, the narrative of a few traitors collaborating is reversed in the case of Lacombe Lucien.

Meanwhile, on the background of the plot centred on the young Lucien, the director reveals the presence of Anti-Semitism in the province. Marie, a servant in the house of the “collaborators”, which was trying to convince Lucien not to get involved in the Militia¹³⁷, when gets to know that Lucien is sleeping with a Jewish girl expresses her anti-Semitism calling him scum and the Jewish girl, a dirty Jew¹³⁸. Marie hence epitomizes the anti-Semitism of the ordinary people. The fictional narrative of *Lacombe Lucien* unravels this feature of the “dark years” as the narrative of the *Sorrow and the Pity* has done. More is revealed about the dimension of collaboration and its spread, than the salient case of Lucien. While reading the letters sent by different individuals informing about “dangerous individuals”, the pro-Nazi characters say: “It’s like a disease¹³⁹”. Thus, here again is it shown that collaboration was not a work of a bunch of traitors.

The effect of the fictionalized narrative, once disseminated in the public sphere provoked controversy and dismissal. The defenders of the Resistancialist meta-narrative lament the demystification effect of the movie: “The moral of this view was that there were ultimately no heroes or villains, only everyday human beings who were the victims of circumstances¹⁴⁰”. Whereas an ex-Resister, writing on *L’Humanite*, argued: “...the film’s lack of verisimilitude was confirmation of a reactionary apologetics¹⁴¹”. Concerning the lack of convictions in Lucien and

¹³⁶ Jackson Julian. *The Dark Years 1940-1944*, Oxford University Press, 2001: (p.190)

¹³⁷ *Lacombe Lucien* Editions Gallimard, 1974 :, p.57

¹³⁸ *Lacombe Lucien*, Editions Gallimard, 1974 : p. 98

¹³⁹ *Lacombe Lucien* . Editions Gallimard, 1974 :(p. 36) C’est comme une maladie

¹⁴⁰ Golsan. J. Richard. *History and Counter-history in Post war France: Vichy’s Afterlife*. University of Nebraska Press, 2000: .(p.59)

¹⁴¹ *ibid*, p.62

his ending up in the Nazi police, Malle responds: “There is a part of the population which does not have a political conscience¹⁴². “...a lot of people found themselves in the Militia because they had nothing to eat. “...there was a little of everything in the Militia...minor provincial noblemen, workers as well as former members of the fascist leagues¹⁴³”. Jackson confirms the scope of the collaboration, the absence of clear convictions when joining: “The collaborationists’ world was not homogenous- it contained pacifists and fascists, Socialists and Catholics- and the choice of collaborationism was not predetermined¹⁴⁴”.

Ultimately, both the narratives of *The Sorrow and the Pity*, and of *Lacombe Lucien* delegitimize, disrupt and reverse the prevailing discourse enunciated by power, represented as the *truth* in the public sphere, disseminated through different agencies. The narratives that they express in the script of the movies subvert the meta-narrative centred on a heroic, engulfing Resistance and on a Collaboration of few disgraceful traitors. The marginalized and quelled voices of laymen resisters who adhered to Resistance not out of courage, of convinced French fascists who had a different “certain idea of France”, of Jews being prosecuted, of Resisters who had not heard de Gaulle’s calling speech, of collaborators like Lucien that because of happenstance are in the side of the Nazis, all these voices uttered a narrative that resisted to the truth proclaimed by power by subverting its meta-narrative. Hence, the regime of truth was reversed, with the rupture in discourse. Henry Rousso illustrates best this reversal: “Once the mirror was cracked, Vichy became the first focus of new research and revisionist interpretations¹⁴⁵”.

¹⁴² *ibid.*, p.62

¹⁴³ *ibid.*, p.62

¹⁴⁴ Jackson Julian. *The Dark Years 1940-1944*, Oxford University Press, 2001: (p. 92)

¹⁴⁵ ,Rousso , Henry. *The Vichy Syndrome*. Harvard University Press, 1991: (p.260)

Chapter 3

Section 3.1

When Power Enunciates What the Past is

The end of the Second World War appears to be a burdensome and disquieting past for the new German state. Not least of its aftermath accompanied with millions of Germans being expelled by neighbouring countries like Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the destruction wrought by the Allies bombing over large and small cities in Germany, but most importantly an unsettling past whose origin goes back on the 30th of January 1933 Nazis takeover of power to end with a horrendous crime like the Final Solution and a total war. There were victims of the war as there were victims of the Nazi regime. Expellees, inhabitants of the distraught cities, and soldiers held in captivity by the Allies or the Soviets were victims of the war. Jews, Sinti, Roma, homosexuals, social delinquents, the crippled were victims of the Nazi regime. The end of the war was liberating to them. The perpetrators, the guilty remained a few. The Nazi leaders tried at Nuremberg and Hitler. Karl Jaspers and Theodore Adorno were urging the society to embark on a process of coming to terms with the past. Renowned personalities were marginalized in the public sphere. The need for a new founding legitimacy of the emerging Federal Republic, while the Soviet occupied zone of Germany was on the way to become a totalitarian Communist state, was unavoidable. Beyond any normative or ethical concern the chapter traces and analyzes the process of the production of knowledge, more precisely of a certain historical discourse on the recent past, a meta-narrative or a prevailing discourse enunciated by power. A regime of truth is established in particular stages of the construction of the memory of the past, whose power effects are manifested in the silencing of certain collective memories and in appropriation of others through the rituals of commemoration.

During the '50s the dominant meta-narrative to become a reigning discourse on the past elaborated by power did not confront the Nazi past thoroughly and properly, focusing primarily in the aftermath of the war, the suffering of the Germans by the war and on reconstruction. As Jan Werner Muller points out, what followed was: "At the same time, the flip side of mythmaking and nation-building remains a process of more or less forced forgetting"¹⁴⁶."

However, the representation of the Nazi regime was framed based on the intentionalist discourse of history and totalitarianism as discourse. Adenauer's depiction of the Nazi regime and the reasons for it taking root in the German society, which reflects the prevalence of anti-totalitarian discourse, have been succinctly summarized: "Adenauer believed that Nazism was the result of deep ills in German history and society: above all Prussian authoritarianism, the weakness of individualism, the materialist world view of Marxism"¹⁴⁷". The context of the emergence of anti-totalitarian discourse as Moeller maintains is related to the Cold War context, in which "Anti-Communism in the 50s drew in part on established modes of thought that had existed in Germany since the Russian Revolution"¹⁴⁸". While Evans testifies to the dominance position of intentionalist understanding of the Nazi regime in the historical discourse: "Up to the early 1960s, the old school of historians....continued to dominate the academic scene in the Federal Republic...They perpetuated the tradition of German historicism, with its claim to understand the past on its own terms, its concentration on high politics..."¹⁴⁹. Therefore, the presence of intentionalist conservative school of analyzing the Nazi regime, the Cold War, a totalitarian German state at the border, the overwhelming human flood of expellees proved to be the context that facilitated the emergence of meta-narrative dominant till the late '60s. Besides the facilitating

¹⁴⁶ Moeller. Robert G. *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (p. 12)

¹⁴⁷ Moeller. Robert G. *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (p.188)

¹⁴⁸ Moeller. Robert G. *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (p.5)

¹⁴⁹ Evans Richard, *In Hitler's Shadow*. London, 1989: (p.113)

background on which the meta-narrative emerged, that could be coined as a meta-narrative of Silence on the Nazi Regime rather than the meta-narrative of Suffering, since as it is explained later a selective representation of the sufferings of the war left out the events of the bombing of the cities and attempted to erase the ruins from the collective memory, a process of knowledge production as conceptualized by Foucault through the notions of power/knowledge nexus, and disciplinarization of discourse constructed by certain institutional sites, following its dynamic emerged.

Prior to the elaboration and dissemination of the prevailing discourse, conflicting narratives were present in the public sphere regarding the Nazi regime. Certain well-known politicians like Kurt Schumacher and Theodor Heuss, together with German philosophers like Adorno and Jaspers demanded an immediate confrontation with the burden of the Nazi past. The conflicting representation and the alternative way to deal with the past were insistently advocated by Social Democratic leader Kurt Schumacher. The historian Jeffrey Herf indicates such a continues attempt: “From 6 May 1945, two days before the Nazi surrender, until his death at the age of 57 on August 1952, Kurt Schumacher urged his fellow Germans to face the Nazi past, including the mass murder of European Jewry¹⁵⁰”. His speech in Bundestag in 1949 urged for a cathartic dealing with the past: “...he called on Adenauer to make explicit- “the horrible tragedy of the Jews in the Third Reich¹⁵¹”. While Jaspers intervened to rectify the attempt to equalize the sufferings of the victims of the War, and the victims of the Nazi regime: “virtually everyone had lost close relatives and friends, but how he lost them-in front line combat, in bombings, in concentration camps or in the mass murders of the regime-results in greatly divergent inner

¹⁵⁰ Muller, W. Jan. *Memory and Power in Post war Europe*, Cambridge University Press 2002 ,(p.187)

¹⁵¹ Moeller. Robert G. *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (p. 23)

attitudes¹⁵²”. This representation of the past, focused on shared responsibility and guilt remained marginalized. The other conflicting narrative that would become the prevailing discourse on the Nazi regime is best epitomized by Adenauer’s words in his speech in the Parliament:

“Unspeakable crimes have been committed in the name of the German people, calling for moral and material indemnity”. “...the overwhelming majority of the German people abominated the crimes committed against the Jews, and did not participate in them...”¹⁵³. Hence, the Germans

are absolved from being guilty of the crimes committed in their name. Adenauer’s discourse reflects, or incorporates the features of the intentionalist discourse in history when analyzing the Nazi regime. Moeller indicates the presence of “conflicting memories of the Second World War”

as voiced by German victims of war and Jewish victims of the Nazi regime, which as Moeller says: “often seemed to hover simultaneously in the halls of parliament vying for recognition¹⁵⁴”.

Faced with conflicting narratives of the past, and conflicting memories in the public sphere power intervenes to appropriate the *proper* discourse that would ground its legitimacy. Thus, the collective memory of the victims of the Nazi regime is silenced, the Nazi past is not confronted and the collective memory of the sufferings of the war is focused on the victimization of the expellees mainly rather than the dwellers of ruined cities.

The process of knowledge production remains crucial for legitimating power. More than a phenomenon of instrumentalization, as Foucault states “the delicate mechanisms of power cannot function unless knowledge, knowledge apparatuses are formed¹⁵⁵”. Thus, the intrinsic link between knowledge and power. The instruments that are “at base of power” to use Foucault’s

¹⁵² Moeller. Robert G. *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* :p.4

¹⁵³ (Moeller. Robert G. *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* p.25”

¹⁵⁴ Moeller. Robert G. *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (p. 22)

¹⁵⁵ Foucault Michel, *Society must be defended*, edited by Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, New York: Picador, 2003 (p. 34)

words remain the “recording techniques” and “investigative research procedures”¹⁵⁶. Having intervened to disciplinarise the historical discourse on the past, and the collective memory of the past, the emergent power establishes institutional sites that through meticulous techniques of inquiry and assemblage of *facts* produce certain *truth* that is enunciated on the recent past of the Nazi regime and the Second World War, establishing a regime of truth that remains to be challenged by the events of ’68 regarding the quelling of the Nazi past, not on the memory of the bombing of the cities. An important part of the meta-narrative of German suffering was the narrative on the expellees: “Expellees comprised the largest and most important group around which this discourse of suffering and victimhood was constructed, mostly in reference to the often violent mass expulsion from Eastern Europe”¹⁵⁷. This knowledge production is best described by Moeller, delineating the *institutional sites* responsible, the objectification, collection and centralization of historical discourse to become an undisputed truth in the public sphere.

A Ministry of Expellees, Refugees, and the War Damaged was established, which became one of the institutional sites of knowledge production and accumulation, as The Institute for Contemporary History in Munich was. “Not content to leave the production of memory to the local pub, meeting of regional expellee interest groups, and the literary marketplace, the West German state, with the enthusiastic cooperation of some of the most accomplished best known historians in the Federal Republic, set out to record a chronicle of the expulsion”¹⁵⁸. Hence, the appropriation of a particular memory as central to the meta-narrative elaborated by power by leaving out of inquiry the memory of the destroyed cities by the Allied strategy of carpet bombing, let alone the victims of the Holocaust. A scientific historical discourse emerges that amasses volumes of *direct testimonies* which were to be contextualized. No investigation was

¹⁵⁶ *ibid*, p. 34

¹⁵⁷ Muller, W. Jan. *Memory and Power in Post war Europe*, Cambridge University Press 2002 (p.255)

¹⁵⁸ Moeller. Robert G. *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* p. 55

held on understanding the Nazi regime, or on the victims of the Holocaust. The testimonies of the survivals were not collected and required, since they could not justify the legitimacy the emerging state. Nor were the testimonies of individuals living in midst of rubble and ruin collected. As Koshar states there was an “allergy to the ruins¹⁵⁹”. Henceforth, during the ‘50s and the early ’60 the meta-narrative of German suffering based on anti-totalitarian discourse, intentionalist historical discourse and the representation of the expellees and POWs, war veterans legitimized the founding of the Federal Republic.

The power effects of this prevailing historical discourse articulated by institutional sites satisfying the demand for truth by power, a legitimizing truth, are manifested through the commemorations in the public sphere. The absence of certain historical dates in the commemorative rituals or the presence of others gives an indication of the predominance of the meta-narrative in the public sphere. The capitulation of the Nazi Germany, on the 8 of May 1945, did not become a cornerstone of commemorative rituals in the Federal Republic during the Adenauer years. As Bill Niven mentions instead of the 8th of May, the 7th of September became a commemorating day: “Instead, the 7th of September was chosen as national day of commemoration; this was the day in 1949 on which the Federal Parliament and Federal Council had come together for the first time¹⁶⁰”. Hence, power did not proclaim the 8th of May either as a date of Liberation or as a date of Defeat. The Victory day of Europe could not be seen as liberating for the Victims of Nazism in the Federal Republic. Then, due to the predominance of the anti-totalitarian discourse, Niven testifies that the 7th of September was substituted to commemorate the first uprising against a totalitarian regime, the one happened in 17th of June in

¹⁵⁹ Koshar. *From Monuments to Traces*. University California Press, 2000: (p. 155)

¹⁶⁰ Niven Bill. *Facing the Nazi Past* Routledge, 2002 (p. 120)

the bordering GDR¹⁶¹. What occupied the public sphere through processions of commemorations was the collective memory of the expellees or POWs, not yet the collective memories of the Jews and not of the homeless inhabitants of destroyed cities like Frankfurt, or Hamburg. An example of such a commemoration was as Moeller states: “The federally financed travelling exhibition “We admonish”, visited by tens of thousands of West Germans in the spring of 1953, presented the world of the German POW in Soviet captivity¹⁶²”. Therefore, power not only elaborated and disseminated a certain discourse; a particular meta-narrative on the Second World War, but it also quelled the representation of collective memories ritualized in the public sphere targeting only particular groups.

The silence imposed on the victims of the Nazi regime, on the Holocaust starts to vanish away in the mid ‘60s, becoming a totalizing meta-narrative for more than a decade. The prevailing discourse of the post war years is subverted to be replaced by the meta-narrative of Germans as Perpetrators. The sparking point of a disbelief, of not accepting the truth enunciated and disseminated by power, the refusal *not to be governed as such*, to use Foucault’s term of conceptualizing the critique or resistance to power, came from the trials against Auschwitz guards in Frankfurt¹⁶³ and the trial of Eichmann in Jerusalem. The context under which such a reversal happened is summarized clearly by Ruth Wittlinger: “In terms of domestic politics, the post-1960 period saw the final years of Adenauer chancellorship...the first left-of centre coalitions led by Brandt and Schmidt, the movement of 1968¹⁶⁴”. Then the context becomes clearer: “...the political culture of West Germany started to become more democratic, more

¹⁶¹ Niven Bill. *Facing the Nazi Past* Routledge, 2002 (p. 102)

¹⁶²¹ Moeller. Robert G. *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* p. 39

¹⁶³ Moeller. Robert G. *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* . p.176

¹⁶⁴ Wittlinger, Ruth. “Taboo or Tradition? The Germans as Victims Theme in the West Germany until the early 1990s”. in *German as Victims*, edited by Bill Niven, Palgrave 2006:p. 65

liberal and more pluralistic in nature with a ‘critical public’ emerging¹⁶⁵”. Thus, the deliberations in the public sphere, due to the structural changes brought about by the 68’ generational change and social movement questioning the silenced past of the Nazi regime and the Holocaust delegitimized the prevailing discourse of the ‘50s. However, still the memory of the bombing of the cities during the war, the ruins remained unaddressed.

After the reversal of the previous reigning discourse came the ritualization of the meta-narrative of ‘Germans as Perpetrators’ through dismissing of certain historical discourse as not appropriate by supporting new areas of historical research, and through a ritualization of certain commemorations in the public sphere. The historian Wittlinger succinctly observes the totalizing effect of the new meta-narrative: “Whereas the 1960s largely served to establish the discourse on German guilt, the period from 1970s onwards saw an increasing institutionalisation of it¹⁶⁷”. The speeches pronounced by Willy Brand and the Federal Republic President of that time Walter Scheel on the day of commemorating the 8th of May 1945 reveal the features of the dominant meta-narrative: “...the war started by Hitler made victims of millions of people, children, women and men, prisoners and soldiers of many nations... The agony of their deaths and their sufferings which resulted from the war compel us not to forget the lessons of the past¹⁶⁸”,.... Whereas Scheel’s speech was more lucid considering the 8th of May only as a day of being liberated from: “the terrible yoke of war, murder, slavery and barbarism¹⁶⁹”. Henceforth, it is the suffering caused by the Nazi regime to all its victims. The primacy of the victims of the Nazi totalitarian regime takes hold over the sufferings of the Germans during the war. The 8th of May besides becoming a day of Liberation, remains a day of Remembrance for all the inflicted pain by the

¹⁶⁵ Wittlinger, Ruth. “Taboo or Tradition? The Germans as Victims Theme in the West Germany until the early 1990s”. in *German as Victims*, edited by Bill Niven, Palgrave 2006: (p.65)

¹⁶⁷ Wittlinger, Ruth. “Taboo or Tradition? The Germans as Victims Theme in the West Germany until the early 1990s”. in *German as Victims*, edited by Bill Niven, Palgrave 2006: p.67

¹⁶⁸ Niven Bill. *Facing the Nazi Past* Routledge, 2002 p. 104

¹⁶⁹ Niven Bill. *Facing the Nazi Past* Routledge, 2002 (p.104)

Germans to all the victims of the Nazi regime. The power effects of this meta-narrative were felt in the public sphere through commemorative processes. Wittlinger delineates these rituals of commemoration: “A very clear and unambiguous acknowledgment set the tone at the beginning of the decade when, in 1970, Chancellor Willy Brandt fell to his knees before the monument of the Ghetto uprising. In the same year, 8 May was for the first time commemorated in the Bundestag¹⁷⁰”. While, as she testifies “a big commemoration of the Shoah and of 9 November 1938 (Kristallnacht) took place...¹⁷¹”. The reversal and replacement of the previous meta-narrative with the discourse of ‘Germans as Perpetrators’ is best epitomized by the abolishment of such an institutional site that collected and produced knowledge related to the sufferings of the Germans like the Ministry of Expellees, Refugees and the War Damaged¹⁷². A new regime of truth was established re-enforcing its power effects.

With the advent to power of the Christian Democrats in the 1980s and with the process of unification of Germany the meta-narrative of ‘Germans as Perpetrators’ begins to wane and questioned in the public sphere through the Historian’s Dispute (*Historikerstreit*) and the Walser-Bubis debate. The main feature of the emerging meta-narrative of the ‘80s, that strived for normalization are summarized by Bill Niven: “Kohl’s [discourse] was based on an erasure of the difference between Germans and their victims, or, in other words, the exculpation of Germans under Hitler¹⁷³”. This was reflected in the commemoration practices epitomized by the visit of Reagan and Kohl at the Bitburg cemetery on the 5th of May 1985. There laid the graves of

¹⁷⁰ Wittlinger, Ruth. “Taboo or Tradition? The Germans as Victims Theme in the West Germany until the early 1990s”. in *German as Victims*, edited by Bill Niven, Palgrave 2006: p. 67

¹⁷¹ Wittlinger, Ruth. “Taboo or Tradition? The Germans as Victims Theme in the West Germany until the early 1990s”. in *German as Victims*, edited by Bill Niven, Palgrave 2006: p.67

¹⁷² Wittlinger, Ruth. “Taboo or Tradition? The Germans as Victims Theme in the West Germany until the early 1990s”. in *German as Victims*, edited by Bill Niven, Palgrave 2006: (p. 71)

¹⁷³ Niven Bill. *Facing the Nazi Past* Routledge, 2002 p. 106

Wermacht soldiers mostly, but also “a handful of Waffen SS¹⁷⁴”. After this “un-thoughtful” commemoration Chancellor Kohl and President Reagan had to pay a visit to the concentration camp at Berger -Belsen. Meanwhile, the Federal Republic President Weizsacker in his speech on the 8th of May 1985 reflects not the exculpation aimed by Kohl but the inclusiveness of the memory of the past that would become a dominant feature of the meta-narrative after the unification. “Nobody will, because of that liberation, forget the great suffering that only started for many people on May 8^{th175}”. Despite this appearing relativisation of the meta-narrative of ‘Germans as Perpetrators’, the Federal Republic President adds as Olick indicates his rebuking remarks on centring on German suffering: “The cause,[for expulsion, flight and suffering], goes way back to the start of the tyranny that brought about the war. We must not separate May 8th, 1945, from January 30th, 1933¹⁷⁶”. Thus, the process of normalization initiated in the 80s to continue after the unification, predicated on inclusiveness of victims rather than a prioritization of the Holocaust victims, and the 8th of May as a day of Liberation, was rather ambivalent. The suffering of the Germans due to the bombing of the cities was not addressed as such, as a separate memory. The inclusiveness feature of the prevailing discourse was evident in the commemoration after the unification, when Beattie gives the example of New Guardhouse (*Neue Wache*) as a memorial cite for all the victim of war and totalitarian regimes¹⁷⁷. Ultimately, the memory of the rubbles and ruins of German cities remained marginalized, silenced in the commemorative practices of the German state. As Niven summarizes: ‘...the consensus in 1995 attributed less

¹⁷⁴*ibid*, p. 106

¹⁷⁵ Olick, Jeffrey. “Genres Memories and Memory Genres: A Dialogical Analysis of May 8, 1945 Commemorations in Federal Republic of Germany” *The American Sociology Review* Vol. 64, No. 3: 1999 p.395

¹⁷⁶ Olick, Jeffrey. “Genres Memories and Memory Genres: A Dialogical Analysis of May 8, 1945 Commemorations in Federal Republic of Germany” *The American Sociology Review* Vol. 64, No. 3: 1999 (p.17).

¹⁷⁷ Beattier, Andrew. “The Victims of Totalitarianism and the Centrality of the Nazi Genocide: Continuity and Change in German Commemorative Politics” in *German as Victims* edited by Bill Niven, Palgrave 2006: (p.155)

political relevance to the experience of bombing, rape, expulsion, and socialist injustice than to those of liberation, democratization, unification and conciliation¹⁷⁸”.

The deliberations in the public sphere, especially the Historian’s dispute and Walser-Bubis debate reveal the absence of the narrative of the memory of the destroyed and ruined cities during 1943-1945. Both of the events question the Holocaust- centred meta-narrative without bringing to the fore the memory of the bombing. Christian Meier, one of the historians engaged in the debate indicates: “It is well known that the debate centred largely on the theory of singularity of the German crimes¹⁷⁹”. More than a scholarly debate, the Historian’s Dispute reveals the closure of the public sphere, the dominance of the *agora* by the suffocating meta-narrative of ‘Germans as Perpetrators’, the link between knowledge and power. The historian Meier urges: “...as Germans we must state that these German crimes were perpetrated by us and not by anybody else¹⁸⁰”. Whereas Michael Sturmer replies: “If our German history were merely regarded as one single chain of crimes and failure, our nation would be shaken and its future would be at stake¹⁸¹”. Thus, polemics in the public space has challenged the continuation of the meta-narrative of ‘Germans as Perpetrators’ without going further. No discussion is broached on the experience of the bombing of the cities. The Walser-Bubis dispute, between Martin Walser, German writer, and Ignatz Bubis, a renowned Jewish representative, focuses on the instrumentalization and the burden of the memory of the Holocaust in German society. As Schmitz indicates: “Walser argues in favour of the privacy of consciousness¹⁸²”, whereas Bubis accused Walser for ‘intellectual arson’. Ultimately, the discussions in the public sphere epitomized by the Historian’s Debate in the late ‘80s and the Walser-Bubis debate after the

¹⁷⁸ Niven Bill. *Facing the Nazi Past* Routledge, 2002 (p.116)

¹⁷⁹ *The Unresolved Past: A Debate in German History*. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991: (p.8)

¹⁸⁰ *The Unresolved Past: A Debate in German History*. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991 (p.8)

¹⁸¹ *The Unresolved Past: A Debate in German History*. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991(p.16)

¹⁸² Schmitz Helmut. “The Birth of the Collective from the Spirit of Empathy: From the Historians’ Dispute to German Suffering. In *Germans as Victims* . Palgrave 2006: (p.101)

unification, in 1998, are an indication of impossibility to successfully reverse the meta-narrative of ‘Germans as Perpetrators’, causing a small fissure in the discourse not a rupture.

Section 3.2

Ruins and Rubble

The aerial bombing by the Allies over 131 cities causing 600,000 civilian victims, leaving millions of people without shelter resulted in ruins and rubble in Dresden, Hamburg, and Frankfurt am Main among many others. As it was shown in the above section the memory of this event remained confined within the consciousness of the individual citizens, without becoming part of the historical discourse or the rituals of commemoration envisaged by power. The meta-narrative of the ‘50s enunciated a discourse on the suffering of Germans due to the war, not uttering a word on, not initiating a single investigation, and collection of stories of the aerial bombing. Whereas the meta-narrative dominant in the ‘60s, ‘Germans as Perpetrators’, silenced any memory of the Suffering. The process of normalization, based on the inclusiveness of the victims brought the focus again on the experience and memory of the expellees rather than the wretched inhabitants of the bombed cities. Hence, any period and stage of the construction of meta-narratives had its regime of truth, which had dismissed, and disqualified any memory, or narrative of the bombing of the cities. As W.G. Sebald, a renowned German writer in his published lectures in 1999, typifies the taboo present since the post war years oriented through reconstruction: “...has its source in the well kept secret of the corpses built into the foundations of our state, a secret that bound all Germans together in the post war years, and indeed still binds them¹⁸³”. The following part analyzes how the fictional narratives of authors like Heinrich Böll, Günter Grass, and W.G. Sebald subvert within the text, through the narrative uttered by the text,

¹⁸³ Sebald, W.G. *On the Natural History of Destruction*. New York, 2004: p. 13

the absence of the destroyed cities during the bombing in the discourse of the post war years, as well as subverting the meta-narrative of ‘Germans as Perpetrators’. Beyond a textual subversion, an indication of the impact of works of fiction in the public sphere is the reaction that followed afterwards, providing a rupture in the public discourse.

Relying on Ricoeur’s conceptualization of discourse which compared to language, remains the only that “intends things, applies itself to reality, expresses the world¹⁸⁴,” and the representation character of fictional narrative according to Ricoeur, which unfolds “a-Being-in-the World” and “re-describes the reality¹⁸⁵”, through the text, the works of fiction of Heinrich Böll, W.G.Seald and Gunter Grass enunciate the narrative of the bombing of the cities and its aftermath. Beyond the representation of such an experience within the text that has not been addressed in the public space, and not appropriated by the dominant discourse constructed by power, Ricoeur’s notion of debt or “standing for” confirms the representation dimension of fictional narrative regarding the reality. Henceforth, all these writers reveal the “untold” narrative, the “unexpressed” experience of Germans suffering during the war. Their work stands for the memory of the bombing of the cities or the sinking of hospital ships with innocent civilians during the war. Given the dissemination and routinisation of the prevailing meta-narrative of the past constructed by power the narrative represented through the works of fiction goes beyond a mere representation. The novels, facing the dominant narrative espoused by power, utter a narrative in positions of autonomy as conceived by Bourdieu.

The novels are structurally situated within the autonomy of the literary field from which, having ensured an independence from “external powers”, namely economic and political, have the possibility to contest power, and present an opposing narrative to the one represented by

¹⁸⁴ Ricoeur, Paul. *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics II*. Althone Press, 1991: (p.85)

¹⁸⁵ Ricoeur Paul. *Time and Narrative*. Vol. 3, University of Chicago Press, 1985 (p.175),

power within the field of power, which is conceived of by Bourdieu as a site of struggle between different agents or institutions possessing a symbolic capital for a dominant position¹⁸⁶. Features of a structurally autonomous position of the literary field and the writers according to Bourdieu include not only economic independence of the author but also his ability to occupy a dominant position in the literary field¹⁸⁷. All the authors, but more so, writers like Heinrich Böll, and Günter Grass have manifested their autonomy versus power through occupying a dominant position in the field and through their actions regarding certain contentious issues in the public sphere. Böll and Grass were members of a literary group, called Group 47, which as Habermas confesses was part of the intellectual atmosphere of the post war years espousing a discourse different from that of reconstruction and recovery utilized by power (92). Group 47, is characterized by John Gimbel as: "...a loose union of artists, writers, and intellectuals¹⁸⁸". As a consequence, these writers shared the same outlook, gathered around the same literary institution as Group 47, which according to Bourdieu influenced the "position-taking" within the "space of possible", to use Bourdieu's terms. Ultimately, giving shape to their autonomous stances in the public sphere. Telling examples of independence within the public sphere include what Habermas mentions as the German autumn of 1977, when a number of writers among them Boll initiated a petition named "Letters in the Defence of the Republic" to object to the "pogrom against left-wing intellectuals¹⁸⁹". Another example of independent stance confronting power was the manifesto proclaimed by Group 47 on the "Spiegel Affair"¹⁹⁰. Günter Grass, no doubt about it,

¹⁸⁶ Bourdieu, Pierre. *The Rules of Art: The Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field*, Stanford University Press, 1996 (p. 155)

¹⁸⁷ *ibid*, p. 61

¹⁸⁸ Gimbel John. "The Spiegel Affair in Perspective". *Midwest Journal of Political Science*. Vol. 9 No. 3, August 1965 p.283

¹⁸⁹ Habermas Jurgen. *The New Conservatism: Cultural Criticism and the Historians' Debate*. MIT Press: 1990:(p.95)

¹⁹⁰ see Gimbel John. "The Spiegel Affair in Perspective". *Midwest Journal of Political Science*. Vol. 9 No. 3, August 1965

remained the leading writer and intellectual in Federal Republic of Germany. Sebald, being a writer in exile in the UK, spoke from a status of autonomy to his fellow Germans, although not part of Group 47.

However, the subversion of the meta-narrative(s) enunciated by power, and the truth proclaimed by it happened through the works of fiction not through the spoken word, and public deliberations. Despite the similarities between the three texts, they are written at different times and present different dimensions of coping with an “untold” past. Böll’s novel subverts the meta-narrative of “Reconstruction”, or a particular representation of German suffering, while Grass subverts the meta-narrative of “Germans as Perpetrators”, providing also an account of the inability to speak about German suffering previous decades. Sebald, on the other side, gives an impressive account of the absence of the narrative of German suffering in the German literature and in discussions, with few exceptions, together with his story of the bombing of the cities. The texts become sites of resistance to the meta-narrative(s), not accepting the truth disseminated by power and institutional sites. The representation of the memory of the German suffering, of the bombing of the cities in these works of fiction amounts to a claim *not to be governed as such*, to use Foucault’s terms, not to accept the truth espoused by power; as a result challenging, delegitimising, and subverting the disseminated meta-narrative.

Sebald typifies the post war situation, and its emphasis on reconstruction as a second liquidation: “From the outset, the now legendary and in some respect genuinely admirable reconstruction of the country...a reconstruction tantamount to a second liquidation in successive phases of the nation’s own past history prohibited any look backward¹⁹¹”. Furthermore, he indicates the absence of a historical research, or historical discourse on the event of the destruction of the cities: “It seems to me remarkable that the guild of German historians...has not

¹⁹¹ Sebald, W.G *On the Natural History of Destruction*. New York, 2004: (p. 7)

yet so far as I am aware, produced a comprehensive or even an explanatory study of the subject¹⁹²”. Therefore, these remarks reveal the prevailing regime of truth, that has disqualified and considered as not appropriate any historical discourse, or narrative on the bombing of the cities. It testifies to the suffocating presence of the meta-narrative(s) disseminated in the public sphere, as well as it proves the intrinsic link between truth and power conceived of by Foucault.

The subversive fictional narrative that Sebald provides, breaking the silence on the destroyed cities, recounts the “untold” experience: “Horribly disfigured corpses lay everywhere. Bluish little phosphorous flames still flickered around them; others had been roasted brown or purple and reduced to a third of their normal size. Other victims had been so badly charred and reduced to ashes by heat...¹⁹³”. While the meta-narrative dominant in the ‘50s focused on the memory of the expellees, POWs, and war veterans, and the meta-narrative of the late ‘60 banished any memory of the German suffering, the narrative described in Sebald’s text represents a *truth* that has been neglected, or dismissed. The memory of the burned bodies, of the flames in the cities, which by speaking about them, Sebald has already, de-legitimised the prevailing discourse. Thus, given the unbearable burden of the meta-narratives(s), the circulation of a proclaimed *truth* by power, Sebald’s narrative subverts this truth. To use Foucault’s notion of critique or resistance to power, Sebald does not accept *to be governed as such*, to accept *this truth*. The reaction provoked in the public sphere, upon the publication of his book, give an indication of the reversal in the predominant discourse that had marginalised, and neglected the air war. Andreas Huyssen characterizes appearance of Sebald’s book as: “...which first broke through the public silence about the air war¹⁹⁴”. Another author asserts that Sebald’s work

¹⁹² *ibid*, p. 70

¹⁹³ *ibid*, p. 28

¹⁹⁴ Huyssen, Andreas. “Air War Legacies: From Dresden to Baghdad” in *Germans as Victims*. Edited by Bill Niven, Palgrave, 2006, p. 184

unleashed public debate on the issue: “Wide spread interest in the issue of German suffering in WWII took centre stage in the wake of publication by W.G. Sebald¹⁹⁵”. As a consequence, besides the text subverting the dominant narrative, the appearance of the book provoked a rupture in the public sphere inciting deliberations and polemics.

Heinrich Böll’s novel, *The Silent angel*, written in the aftermath of the war, was denied publication in the ‘50s. It was published finally in 1992. The censorship exerted by the publishing house indicates the subversive effect that the text contains confronting the meta-narrative of Reconstruction and a certain representation of German suffering, which has silenced the experience of the air war. It shows the suffocating presence of the met-narrative, and the circulation of certain *truth*, which is kept from being challenged through acts of censorship. Throughout the text, besides the plot of the novel centring on the life after the war of Hans, the main character, Böll narrates the destruction of the cities and the aftermath. “...fallen plaster lay everywhere, chunks of masonry, and the unidentifiable debris always littered the floor after the air raids¹⁹⁶”. Then in another passage he says: “The pile of debris towering over it collapsed at his push. It smelled of sand and dry mud¹⁹⁷”. The effects of the destruction become more evident: “Most of the streets were impassable. Debris and rubble piled up to the first floors of the burned out facades...¹⁹⁸”. In any of the chapters, the description of the debris is present. The “unspeakable” and silenced memory of the past is recounted. There is no reference in the text to the enthusiasm of Reconstruction, or the memory of the expellees. The debris, the ruins and the feeling of nausea dominate. Henceforth, the fictional narrative questions, de-mystifies and

¹⁹⁵ Michel, Andreas “Heroes and Taboos: The Expansion of Memory in Contemporary Germany” *War, Literature and Art* p.3

¹⁹⁶ Boll Heinrich, *The Silent Angel*, Picador, 1995: (p.3)

¹⁹⁷ *ibid*, p. 15

¹⁹⁸ *ibid*, p. 37

subverts the meta-narrative constructed and disseminated by power and institutional sites in the public sphere.

Another facet of silenced memory of the past that is narrated in Boll's novel is the destruction of the buildings and churches. "It had been a beautifully state building. He looked at the right where the custodian's door had been, and saw a huge pile of masonry...¹⁹⁹". He describes later the destruction of a church: "The high, grey flank of the church had crumbled between two supporting pillars...chunks of stone lay at the base like blasted rock²⁰⁰". On the background of such a ruin certain dialogues between characters regarding the end of the war on the 8th of May: "Don't you know we are at peace now?" "Peace-he said, since when?"-"We have been at peace since this morning...the war is over²⁰¹". Hans, the main character and the narrator of the text remains surprised. Boll does express neither regret nor exclamation for the end of the war. He keeps describing the ruins of the buildings, the rubble in the streets. Ultimately, the narrative provided by Boll, besides recounting the "unsaid", reverses the prevailing discourse that appropriated a certain memory of the German suffering, which produced a single historical discourse on the expellees, and not on the wretched inhabitants of the destroyed cities, a meta-narrative that was predicated on reconstruction. Given the totalizing discourse enunciated by power, the novel by Boll became a site of resistance, a renunciation of the proclaimed *truth*, henceforth bearing the stigma of censorship for many years.

The case of Gunter Grass addressing an event linked to German suffering, a left-liberal intellectual and a fervent defender of the memory of the Holocaust as constitutive to German identity, is more complex than the previous authors. The publication of *Crabwalk*, which besides recounting the story of the sinking of the hospital ship *Gustloff* in the war and in some parts the

¹⁹⁹ *ibid*, p. 19

²⁰⁰ *ibid*, p.118

²⁰¹ *ibid*, p. 48

destruction of the cities, provides an account of the impossibility to address the memory of the German suffering in previous decades. Grass's narrative is a testimony of the suffocating presence of the meta-narrative of 'Germans as Perpetrators', which became ritualized and routinised. Grass, through the voice of the narrator says: "No one wanted to hear the story, [Gustloff sinking], not here in the West and certainly not in the East"²⁰². He confesses what he was doing most of the time before telling a memory of German suffering: "...writing long pieces for nature publications, on organic vegetables and effects of acid rain"²⁰³. Thus, he was indulging in trivial publications and issues. Then, Grass admits through the words of the narrator, himself a writer and a journalist, the inability to address a certain memory of German suffering due to the totalizing meta-narrative of 'Germans as Perpetrators' centred on the memory of the Holocaust: "...also breast beating stuff along the lines "Auschwitz: Never Again"²⁰⁴. The reigning discourse disqualified any memory of the German suffering, any historical investigation. It became routinised once it was part of the rituals of commemoration as it was shown in the previous section, although a legitimate moral imperative for Holocaust not to be repeated. As a result, there were no discussions about the issue of German suffering, besides the Historian's Dispute or the Walser-Bubis polemic. In the text itself, Grass includes the impossibility of bringing to the fore, a discussion of German suffering when Konrad, the son of the narrator, attempts to present a speech on the sinking of Gustloff in school but is refused to do so²⁰⁵. Hence, the only possibility of reversing, disturbing, molesting the widespread meta-narrative and the truth uttered, remains the representation of the quelled memory of the past in the fictional narrative.

²⁰² Grass Gunter. *Crabwalk*. Harvest Edition, 2004: (p. 29)

²⁰³ *ibid*, p. 28

²⁰⁴ *ibid*, p. 29

²⁰⁵ *ibid*, p. 86

A subtle indication of the impossibility of articulating such a memory of the past in the public, through deliberations is given through the virtual discussions in the cyber-space between Konrad, the guy defending the memory of the suffering through the story of Gustloff, named after a German Nazi assassinated by a Jew citizen in Davos called David Frankfurter, and another youngster claiming to be a Jew, defending the ‘Germans as Perpetrators’ narrative. An evidence of such conflicting narratives and positions is the following: “If Wilhelm posted quotations from Fuhrer’s *Mein Kampf*, on his site to support the thesis of the necessity of preserving the purity of the Aryan race...David replied with passages from *The Moor Soldiers*, a report by a former concentration camp inmate...²⁰⁶”. Therefore, even in this example, it is evident that the memory of the suffering is not addressed as such, as a memory that needs to be represented as the others, but it is entangled in conflicting narratives.

The other part of the narrative describes the events of the bombing of the cities and the sinking of Gustloff hospital ship causing the death of thousands of innocent citizens. “...Jenny had been a ballerina, and quite well known, but then, during one of the many air raids that were reducing the Reich capital to rubble, both her feet were crushed²⁰⁷”. With a clear, concise style, Grass continues narrating: “The hospital ship burned. The submarine escort vessel Eupen was sunk. The large cities were crumbling under the impact of carpet bombing²⁰⁸”. The sunken ship Gustloff, which sparked the narrator to write the novel, is described as having on board: “...yet another captain was unaware of the ship carrying children and soldiers, mothers and naval women’s auxiliaries²⁰⁹”. The moment of sinking is given: “Only two or three girls from the naval auxiliary survived. Later they spoke of smelling gas, and of seeing girls cut to pieces...As the

²⁰⁶ *ibid*, p.48

²⁰⁷ *ibid*, p. 14

²⁰⁸ *ibid*, p. 89

²⁰⁹ *ibid*, p.117

water rushed in, one could see corpses and body parts floating²¹⁰”. Thus, Grass’s fictional narrative describing the bombing of the cities and the sinking of the hospital ship *Gustloff* breaks the silence upon this banned memory of the past. The meta-narrative, which prioritized the memory of the victims of the Nazi regime and ritualized this discourse through process of commemorations, has been challenged by Grass fictional narrative. The intention to give voice to a banished memory of the past, which was represented by the story of *Gustloff*, was followed by the renunciation of the meta-narrative of ‘Germans as Perpetrators’ and its reigning truth in the *agora*, not only by such a representation but also by the words said by Grass’s alter ego, the narrator who blamed on the memory of Auschwitz that suffocated any possibility to talk about innocent German victims.

Besides the subversive effect of the texts confronting the domineering discourse and the established regime of truth, the novels have also provoked a rupture in the public sphere inciting discussions about the memory of the German suffering. As Wittlinger says about the features of the discourse of German suffering: “Rather than restricting victimhood to family memory and particular groups, the new discourse has entered the mainstream²¹¹”. She later mentions Gunter Grass as one of the main contributors for the reversal of the dominant discourse²¹². Not long after the publication of Grass’s novel, as Andreas Michel indicates, there was controversy in the press: “By the spring 2002 critics employed by well-regarded German and Swiss newspapers such as FAZ, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, accused Grass...of participating in what the German news magazine ‘Der Spiegel’ summarized as a creeping “transformation of a perpetrator society into a society of

²¹⁰ *ibid*, p.140

²¹¹ Wittlinger, Ruth. “Collective Memory and National Identity in the Berlin Republic: The Emergence of a New Consensus”, *Debate*, Vol. 13 No. 3: December 2006: (p. 205)

²¹² Wittlinger, p. 205

victims²¹³”. Henceforth, this indicates the resistance to a subversive narrative, the insistence to cling to the sacred undisputable truth that was produced. However, the impact of these novels in the public sphere is manifested through a series of issues of *Der Spiegel* recounting the events of the air bombing entitled “This is what the hell must be like²¹⁴”.

²¹³ Michel Andreas. “Heroes and Taboos: The Expansion of Memory in Contemporary Germany” *War, Literature and Arts*, p. 59

²¹⁴ *ibid*, p.206

Conclusion

The memory of the past as this thesis has shown is not an area confined within the boundaries of the individual consciousness or within the space of the community being impervious of being appropriated and shaped by power, more so when this memory is of a troubled, disquieting or burdened past. As I have indicated and analyzed throughout the thesis, the memory of the past becomes objectified through the production of a certain historical discourse that establishes a legitimizing truth to power, that is ritualized by the process of commemoration in the public sphere.

As the cases studied indicate the meta-narrative of Resistance, or the meta-narrative(s) of Germans as Perpetrators and a certain representation of the German Suffering entailed a knowledge, a certain historical discourse to be elaborated, to be scientifically grounded testifying to the knowledge/power nexus as conceptualized by Foucault. A whole process of objectifying, collecting, centralizing and producing knowledge on the past was initiated by *institutional sites* of power that dismissed and sidelined all the other possible representations of the past and its memory as inappropriate, and as untruthful. The power effects of the enunciated meta-narratives on the both cases studied, in the public sphere were manifested in the presence of a single official ritual of commemoration marginalising and quelling other conflicting commemorations of the memory of the past. Furthermore, as the thesis has shown, the deliberations or polemics in the public sphere do not challenge, question and disrupt the prevailing discourse. Although certain structural changes incited by the events of '68 have provided the context of the contestation to the dominant meta-narrative.

Hence, the totalizing meta-narratives articulated by power, by its *institutional sites* of knowledge production creating a regime of truth were not contested, de-legitimized and

subverted through deliberations of discussions in the public sphere but by an often neglected and marginalized field as the literary field is. The works of fiction of well-known authors and film directors in the cases studied became the loci of resistance to the disseminated meta-narratives and the truth uttered by power on the past events. The narrative unfolded in these works, given the reigning presence of a prevailing discourse on the past, gave voice to the marginalized and silenced experiences of the Second World War and its aftermath.

The movies of Louis Malle and Marcel Ophüls proved to be so disconcerting to the meta-narrative of Resistance, in the French case, such that were either stigmatised or under censorship. The same happened with the novel of Heinrich Böll in the German case. The movies of the French directors shattered the Resistancialist meta-narrative, the suffocating heroism that it proclaimed, voicing the narrative of collaboration with the Nazis because of another “certain vision” of France, the narrative of the prosecution of the Jewish citizens, the absence of heroes in the Resistance, the presence of collaborators because of the mere sense of adventure. The novels of Grass and Böll and the lectures of Sebald questioned the ritualized meta-narrative of Germans as Perpetrators revealing the narrative of the bombing of the German cities and its aftermath, a memory of the past that has been silenced, a memory of the past on which no historical investigation had been undertaken by the institutional sites of knowledge production. Therefore, in this case, the works of fiction through the medium of the text have subverted the meta-narratives uttered by power. Ultimately, beyond a mere representation of the silenced past, and the subversive dimension of the works of fiction, as I analyzed in this thesis, these works of fiction provoked a rupture in the discourse opening up the possibility for deliberations on the quelled past in the public sphere.

Power remains an enthralling concept and phenomenon to be investigated, scrutinized and expanded beyond a legalistic normative understanding that foregrounds its legitimacy.

Throughout the thesis I intended to indicate and reveal power as the main concern and the resistance to it, by indicating the processes through which it delineates certain boundaries, confines a certain space of appropriate representations in the public sphere. A power that marginalizes that silences different narratives, a power that appropriates certain memories of the past. At the end of the day, a power that affects and dictates the possibility of coming to terms with the past, limiting the process of unravelling disconcerting memories of the past that do not appear to be legitimising to power. As a result, events that are part of the private memories of individuals cannot be articulated and become present in the public sphere given the appropriation of memory by power. Henceforth, the silencing of certain memories that have to be voiced and expressed.

Ultimately, within a broader perspective, the thesis brought to the fore, relying on a Foucauldian conceptualization of power, the totalizing character of power in those areas of social life that are least expected by political scientists either because of taking a normative and ethical stance concerning burdened memories, overlooking the process through which power constructs and circulates a certain representation of the memories of the past up to a point of routinization of such a memory, or because of considering the memory a domain of research of history and sociology mainly. The thesis has also indicated the possibility of resistance to the enunciated truth by power on the disconcerting past, a resistance to be found in the works of fiction given the closure of the public sphere. Hence, the thesis has expanded the realm of locating resistance or contestation to the prevailing discourse within the boundaries of a concerted action of individuals or through articulation of opinions in the *agora*.

Eventually, the thesis besides giving voice and narrating the quelled memories of the past has contributed, within the discipline of political science, in revealing the limit -setting effects of power in such practices related to collective memory, disquieting events of the past, that have

been always seen as immune from power effects, or as a legitimate right of power to enunciate or utter its word and leave its mark, without analyzing the process through which a discourse on the past is established, without even questioning such a right. The thesis has helped to understand the scope of the power effects, which would be overlooked under a normative perspective. It has also grounded theoretically the possibility of not accepting the truth enunciated by power, of resisting to the prevailing meta-narrative, to be found in the works of fiction. The theoretical framework of the thesis can be applied in other cases where power attempts to construct and appropriate a legitimising knowledge of a disquieting past silencing other narratives and events, prompting a refusal to accept the proclaimed truth, which will amount to resistance within the text unless it cannot be manifested in the public sphere.

In the end, a puzzling issue that has been revealed in the thesis, which constitutes an area of research in the future, remains the impossibility of the author, the writer, to be perceived as in a position of an intellectual to use the *spoken word* in the public sphere as a possibility of confronting the truth established by power, choosing instead the world of fiction. To what extent the closure of the public sphere, beyond the mere indication as it is used in the thesis, namely as a lack of public discussions, can be seen as a direct effect of power, remains to be investigated.

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