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An analysis of *Wende* memories through selected movies from Germany and Zimbabwe and the impact on the teaching of *Landeskunde* in foreign language learning.

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Degree of Master of Arts by research only:

A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in German.

Supervisor: Prof. Anette Horn

DECLARATION

I declare that this Dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Arts at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Signature of candidate

Date

Abstract

This study explores the revolutionary narratives as reflected through the four selected movies. These movies are *Das Leben der Anderen* and *Goodbye, Lenin* which reflect the *Wende* revolution in the German Democratic Republic and *Flame* and *Albino* which reflect and document the narratives of the *Second Chimurenga* in Zimbabwe. The study pursues a comparative approach which is championed by the theoretical concept of Localisation. This concept advocates for the teaching of the target language *Landeskunde* by comparing it to that of the learner. It, therefore, contributes to the important area of curriculum transformation. Furthermore, the narratives in the four selected movies are analysed through the use and guidance of theories of memories (as discussed by theorists such as Pierre Nora, Maurice Halbwachs, Aleida and Jan Assmann). The study is, therefore, able to establish interesting insights into the traditions of remembering and reinterpreting the past as portrayed through the four selected movies. It establishes for instance, that the two selected movies on the *Wende* revolution in Germany reflect the post-*Wende* memory culture (*Erinnerungskultur*) of the German society which is guided by a memory boom.

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
TL	Target Language
FL	Foreign Language
DaF	*Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (German as a Foreign Language) (GFL)
FDJ	*Freie Deutsche Jugend* (Free German Youth)
SED	*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (Socialist Unity Party of Germany)
GDR	German Democratic Republic (*Deutsche Demokratische Republik*) (DDR)
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany (*Bundesrepublik Deutschlands*) (BRD)
DWK	*Deutsche Wirtschaftskommission* (Germany Economic Commission)
MfS	Ministry for State Security (*Ministerium für Staatsicherheit*) (*Stasi*)
SBZ	Soviet Occupation Zone (SOZ) (*Sowjetische Besatzungszone*) (*Ostzone*)
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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CHAPTER I

I. Introduction

1.1 Scope and structure of the Study

The term *Wende* is usually used in relation to the "revolutionary" events of 1989 in East Germany (the GDR) which culminated in the collapse (or rather implosion) of the GDR government and the subsequent reunification of Germany. In its general usage, this term refers to "change" or "transformation". In a German as a Foreign Language (GFL) classroom, the topic of *Wende* addresses socio-political issues of Germany (as a Target Language country) and therefore, is taken as a cultural or rather *Landeskunde* topic. This study, therefore, intends to contribute to the discussions on curriculum transformation especially in the study area of teaching culture in GFL classes. In its use in the title of this thesis, the term *Wende* refers to a "revolution" which in a Marxist sense refers to a social change which comes because of a social conflict. This usage of the term *Wende*, therefore, encompasses both the *Second Chimurenga* revolution of Zimbabwe and the 1989 revolution of the GDR. However, in depth, these two revolutions are explored side by side to bring out a comparative approach, an approach which is proposed as a useful method of teaching culture in GFL classes. In this study, the concept of Localisation which will be discussed in detail in the second chapter, provides the theoretical framework and support of this comparative approach. Although these two revolutions overlap in terms of time, in a GFL cultural course, they offer valuable detail for a feasible comparative study, especially when explored through literary channels such as movies.

Four movies have been selected to provide literary content for the discussion. Two selected movies which represent the Target Language (TL) cultural content (or specifically the 1989 revolution in Germany) are *Das Leben der Anderen* (2006) and *Goodbye, Lenin!* (2004). In the context of teaching GFL in Zimbabwe, two "local" movies have been selected in accordance with the concept of Localization. These movies are *Flame* (1996) and *Albino* (1976). Together, these four movies represent movies produced between 1975 and 2006. Since the revolution in Zimbabwe reached its peak during the five years (between 1975 and 1980), movies produced after 1975 can therefore, be considered as capturing the turn of events in

the *Second Chimurenga* revolution in Zimbabwe. Hence, movies which were produced between 1975 and 2000 have been chosen, namely *Albino* (1976) and *Flame* (1996).

As a movie produced before independence in Zimbabwe, the inclusion of the movie *Albino* can be considered problematic. However, two important observations informed its inclusion in this study. Firstly, this movie was produced during the peak of the *Second Chimurenga*, and can, therefore, be considered as capturing the turn of the struggle for independence in Zimbabwe. Secondly, the movie *Albino* is considered important in this study since it captures a different viewpoint from *Flame* and other post independent movies such as *Neria* (1996) in terms of the recollections. The plot of the movie *Albino* and its depiction of the *Second Chimurenga* fighters as "terrorist" demonstrates elements of a "colonial" mindset and narrative. Compared to *Flame*, *Albino,* therefore, represents a different narrative of the *Second Chimurenga* revolution and thus broadens the discussion. Together these movies provide a wider platform for the discussion of the *Second Chimurenga* revolution and its memory.

In the case of the GDR, which achieved its *Wende* a little bit later compared to Zimbabwe, movies produced between the years 2000 and 2006 will be chosen. These are *Goodbye, Lenin!* (2004) and *Das Leben der Anderen* (2006). The main criteria informing the choice of these two movies is their suitability to be considered as *Erinnerungsfilme* (Remembrance films) (Erll and Wodianka, 2008), and *Wende* films since they explore the memory of the 1989 "turn" in the GDR. Furthermore, the observation that *Goodbye, Lenin!* and *Das Leben der Anderen* represent two different main categories and perspectives of remembering also influences the choice of these two movies. For instance, *Das Leben der Anderen* can be taken as a discussion on the GDR's apparatus of oppression, while *Goodbye, Lenin!* deals with the issue of nostalgia, together they sustain a broader discussion on the *Wende* and how it has been recalled by the post-unification German society.

Within the main topic of the *Wende* as represented in the title, the exploration of memory and various versions of remembering provides a crucial perspective for the discussion of the two revolutions as reflected in the four selected movies. The exploration of memory patterns of the two revolutions (as reflected in selected movies), therefore, provides material for a detailed comparative and "localized" study. To be able to explore (in detail) the narratives of the *Second Chimurenga* revolution of Zimbabwe and the 1989 revolution of Germany as reflected in the four selected movies, four *research questions* are used as a guideline. These are:

1. Whose memories are captured in the movies?
2. What do they remember? What is the focus of their narrative(s)?
3. How do they remember? What images do they relate to?
4. What might be the motives of the narrative(s)?

These research questions are, therefore, useful in the exploration of the patterns of remembering the *Second Chimurenga* revolution of Zimbabwe and the 1989 revolution of the GDR as reflected in *Das Leben der Anderen*, *Goodbye, Lenin, Albino* and *Flame.*

The study is made up of eight chapters. The first chapter which is an introduction begins with a discussion on the scope and structure of the study, where the study title, its main areas of concern as reflected in the title are unpacked. The first section also highlights the research questions and the structure of the study. Since this study falls within the paradigm of teaching culture in GFL, the second section introduces the study of culture and how it has developed over the years. This discussion is followed by an exploration of the culture of remembering both in Zimbabwe and in Germany. The chapter closes with a brief historical background of Zimbabwe and the GDR.

Chapter Two deals mainly with the theoretical perspectives which inform this study. The two theories which provide the theoretical framework of this research are the theory of localisation and theories of memory. Theories of memory include Nora's theory of sites/realms of memory (*Lieux de Mémoire*), and Halbwachs's theory of collective memory. The discussion also includes Aleida and Jan Assmann's conceptualisation of cultural and communicative memory.

In chapters three to six, the four selected movies are analyses in detail with the aid of the research questions outlined above. Chapter three provides an analysis of *Das Leben der Anderen*, followed by *Flame* in chapter four, *Goodbye, Lenin!* in chapter five, and *Albino* in chapter six.

Chapter seven provide a comparative exploration of other themes (beside the main theme of memory) which are identified in the four selected movies, and which may be useful in the teaching of these movies in GFL classes.

Chapter eight presents the main conclusions of the study. It begins with a summary of overall observations on revolutionary narratives as reflected through the selected movies. The chapter proceeds to provide a comparative discussion on the outcomes of the *Second*

Chimurenga revolution in Zimbabwe and the 1989 revolution in Germany and ends with a summary of the overall observations of the study.

1.2 Teaching Culture and *Landeskunde* in FL classes.

The study of culture has a very long history and background. It is a study area which developed in the early twentieth century mainly in the field of social and cultural anthropology and which later became a research interest in other academic areas such as the study of second and foreign languages. It is a construct that is not only (to use the words of Byram, and Grundy, 2003) "notoriously difficult to define" but also whose boundaries are difficult to establish. These problems associated with the study of culture are not only evident in its use by the sociologists but have also haunted second and foreign language (FL) scholars. However, despite the obvious concerns about the problems associated with defining culture, most second and foreign language scholars have acknowledged its importance within the foreign language class and curriculum. For instance, in her discussion of the ways in which FL curricula can be restructured to meet new challenges, Yueming (2008) observes that curriculum transformation (at least in the study of Chinese in United States of America) should emphasise the migration from the (near exclusive) study of literary texts to a communicative approach to foreign language learning.

Furthermore, scholars such as Michael Byram have written extensively on the role of culture in foreign language learning. Consequently, cultural studies is now an area that FL teachers can hardly ignore. However, it also needs to be noted that the problems associated with defining "culture" also extend to the identification of content and the material that can be used in FL classes. Over the years, this has been a cause for concern among language teachers and scholars. For instance, Schulz (2007) observed that, although numerous scholars and teachers support the idea of integrating cultural knowledge into FL learning, there is however, "no agreement on how culture can or should be defined operationally in the context of the foreign language in terms of concrete instructional objectives, and there is even less consensus on whether or how it should be formally assessed" (p. 13). Hence, although language teachers are now convinced that culture needs to be integrated into language teaching curricula, there is also a debate concerning which material can best represent a people's culture.

Efforts of defining culture can be traced back to scholars such as Taylor (1871) who saw it as the whole complex which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a society and later to Herskovits (1948) who understood it as the man-made part of the human environment. Hofstede (1991) thought of it in terms of civilisation and thus the "refinement of the mind". In the field of second and FL learning, several scholars have also tried to define and establish the role and characteristics of culture in language learning. This interest in the role of culture in language learning goes back to the 1920s when Edward Sapir (1884–1939) and his students observed that a language and the culture of its speakers cannot be taught in isolation. Sapir and his students established that culture represents the world views of the TL speakers. This ground-breaking study encouraged further investigations which resulted in the works of scholars such as Dell Hymes, Widdowson (1978), and later Canale and Swain (1980) among others which emphasized the importance of contextual meaning in language learning. These scholars argue that foreign language learning should go beyond the level of acquiring grammatical rules, and that language learners need to know how to use the target language in its situated context (Neuner, 1997). This "situated context" is therefore, considered as the culture of the TL community. These scholars indeed developed an important platform for discussing the relationship between language, culture, and communicative competence. However, considering the multiplicity of languages and their varying roles in various societies and cultures, reaching a universal consensus on the cultural content that relates to them is still an ongoing process.

In the twenty-first century, the problem of defining culture in language learning has been further intensified by the emergence of cultural globalisation, which has also significantly impacted on the cultural material which is used in foreign language classes. In view of the complications related to the definition of culture and cultural content, Brown's (2000) view of culture *as a way of life and a context within which people exist, think, feel, and relate to others* is taken as a working definition of culture in this study. Although this definition can be considered broad, it considers communication or rather how people "relate" to others an important aspect of culture. It, therefore, establishes not only the importance of culture within a community but also intercultural communication within different communities. Since this is a comparative study, it argues for an intercultural approach to the understanding of culture and how such an approach can be productively integrated into FL learning classes.

Due to the fact that in any given society and institution, there are many languages which can be taught as foreign languages, the problems of defining culture extend to the didactic methods which may vary according to a foreign language, institution, TL community or national curriculum. For instance, in the context of GFL, language teachers and learners talk of *Landeskunde* rather than the study of culture in general terms. *Landeskunde* (which in general can be defined as regional or background studies), therefore, is a term used to refer to "cultural" studies within GFL classes. However, as this discussion will elaborate, *Landeskunde* refers to more than just culture *as a way of life and a context within which people exist, think, feel, and relate to others*.

Although engagement with the concept of *Landeskunde* is a decades old process, prominent studies done by scholars such as Pauldrach (1992) and Zeuner (2009) (among others) have highlighted not only complications in defining it but also its vital characteristics. "*Es gibt die unterschiedlichsten Ansichten darüber, was Landeskunde ist oder nicht ist*" writes Zeuner (2009). Having made this clear, he provides an overview of some of the views on *Landeskunde* which (among others) include Gürttler und Steinfeld's (1990) understanding of *Landeskunde* as an *„unmögliches Fach aus Deutschland* ". Zeuner's discussion, therefore, demonstrates the complexities that are associated with the study of *Landeskunde*. This also brings to light the ever-burning question of whether *Landeskunde* should be an independent discipline or should remain a part of the GFL class. The description of *Landeskunde* by Gürttler und Steinfeld (1990) as "*ein „unmögliches Fach*" also demonstrate the problems associated with the study of *Landeskunde* during the 1990s. Interestingly, it was during this time that the outcome of the ABCD seminars (The ABCD Thesen) was released to the public. Three representatives of the four German-speaking countries had organised seminars in 1988 with the main goal of discussing the role of *Landeskunde* in German language classes. The cultural diversity of the four German-speaking countries (the GDR, FRG, Austria and Switzerland) had necessitated this engagement and attempts to find a common ground for the suitable didactic methods of GFL in respect to cultural studies. Their desire was to design a common framework of teaching *Landeskunde* in GFL and thus in a way, transform this "subject" into a "*mögliches Fach*".

Before elaborating further on the contribution of Pauldrach and Zeuner in unpacking the characteristics of *Landeskunde*, an overview of some of the definitions of the concept may be useful. Marnette (1989), observed that *Landeskunde* deals with the political, economic, and cultural development of the target language (TL) community. However, she did not end

there. She proceeded to mention a very important point in introducing the concept of Localisation. She suggests that the political, economic, and cultural development of the TL community should be taught in relation to the outside world such as the learner community itself. Though this observation was made a long time before the impact of globalisation, it acts as a perfect introduction to the views of teaching *Landeskunde* in the context of cultural globalisation which are offered by scholars of *Landeskunde* such as Altmayer (2017). Buttjes (1989) also provided similar sentiments by disputing the limitations provided by the clause "*Landeskunde*". According to Buttjes, in practice, the concept of *Landeskunde* goes beyond the clause "Land" (country). It offers much more than just a limited knowledge base, and more of linguistically transmitted intercultural competence.

In discussing the development of the concept of *Landeskunde*, there is no better beginning than the observation that what we now study as "*Landeskunde*" began as a study known as „*Realienkunde*"in the 1880s as shown in the historical outline done by Lüger (1991) and Zeuner (2009) However, Lüger's outline alone does not do justice to the concept of *Landeskunde* in its broader sense considering sub-categories such as "*interkulturelle Landeskunde*" (see for example, Mühlová's (2011) discussion of this concept). Furthermore, one needs to consider various approaches to *Landeskunde* such as the three listed by Pauldrach (1992) and reviewed by both Zeuner (2009) and Mühlová (2011). These are,

- The Cognitive Approach (*der kognitiver Ansatz*)
- The Communicative Approach (*der kommunikativer Ansatz*)
- The Intercultural Approach (*der interkultureller Ansatz*)

Didaktisch. Konzept	**Kognitiver Ansatz**	**Kommunikativ. Ansatz**	**Interkultureller Ansatz**
Didaktischer Ort	eigenes Fach/ selbständige Lerneinheit	im Fremdsprachenunterricht	im Fremdsprachenunterricht
Übergeordnetes Ziel	Wissen: Systemat. Kenntnisse über Kultur und Gesellschaft aufbauen	Kommunikative Kompetenz: In der Lage sein, sich ohne Missverständnisse zu verständigen	Kommunikative und kulturelle Kompetenz: sich und andere besser verstehen
Inhalte	Soziologie Politik Wirtschaft Kultur Geschichte LANDESBILD	Wie Leute wohnen Wie Leute sich erholen Wie Leute miteinander in Verbindung treten Wie Leute am Gemeinwesen teilnehmen Wie Leute sich versorgen Wie Leute arbeiten/ihren Lebensunterhalt sichern Wie Leute sich bilden (kulturelle Tradierung) ALLTAGSKULTUR/ GESPRÄCHSTHEMEN	Alle Repräsentationen der Zielkultur im Unterricht: Ihre Bedeutung innerhalb der Zielkultur und für den Lernenden FREMD-/KULTUR-VERSTEHEN

Table 1.1: An outline of the three approaches to *Landeskunde* (Pauldrach, 1992: 6)

Didactic Concept	**Cognitive Approach**	**Communicative Approach**	**Intercultural Approach**
Didactic Area	Independent Area/ own content	In the FL class	In the FL class
Main study goals	Knowledge: Systems. To acquire knowledge about culture and society	Communicative competence: to be able to communicate without misunderstanding each other	Communicative and cultural competence: understand yourself and others better
Content	Sociology Politics Economy Cultural History **National Image**	How people live How do people improve their lives How do people progress in solidarity with one another How do people participate in commonwealth How do people practice social welfare How do people work/ sustain their livelihoods How do people project themselves **Everyday culture/ Topics for daily conversations**	All representations of TL culture in the foreign language class: their meaning within the TL culture and to learners **Understanding foreign culture**

Table 1.1: An outline of the three approaches to *Landeskunde* (Pauldrach, 1992: 6) (Trans. AN)

The cognitive approach deals with the factual information about the TL country such as the political institutions in Germany, election system and history (e.g., the *Wende*). The important learning objective of this approach is that learners can acquire knowledge about the culture and the development of the TL society. What is also considered central in this approach is the world view or image of the TL community, for instance, the concern about which of the German speaking countries (as represented in the ABCD seminars) provide the *Landeskunde* world view for the learner.

The Communicative approach considers communicative competence as an important learning goal. It is based on the "*Alltagskultur*" (everyday culture) and everyday language use. This approach is drawn from the work of scholars such as Dell Hymes (1972), Widdowson (1978), who argued about the "appropriateness" (Hymes, 1972) of language use.

The intercultural approach seeks to establish a better understanding of other cultures. Saxer (2005) saw this approach as central in the learning of *Landeskunde* considering the

influence of globalisation. To Saxer „*die Landeskunde befindet sich heute in ihrer interkulturellen Phase. Die Menschen verschiedener Nationalitäten kommen sich immer näher und haben immer mehr miteinander zu tun.*" (p. 15). In the same light, the ABCD-seminars (1990) stated that the primary task of *Landeskunde* is not just information but rather making sense of the abilities, strategies, and progress on how to *deal with foreign cultures.*

Nowadays, the issue of globalisation is of interest in FL learning. According to Altmayer (2017), "*wir leben in unserem Alltag in einer Welt, die ihre Praktiken und ihre Sinnbildung längst nicht mehr ausschließlich über unsere eigenen nationalen oder lokalen Traditionen bezieht, sondern offen geworden ist für weltweite kulturelle Einflüsse.*" (p. 7). This view alone problematises the suggestions and guidelines (in their geographical and cultural sense) set by both the ABCD-Thesen and the DACH(L). It is because of these observations that Altmayer refers to a "dynamic shift" in the learning of *Landeskunde*. According to him, cultural globalisation is at the centre of this shift. This development problematises the whole concept of "German culture". Altmayer therefore, notes that *Landeskunde* (in this age of cultural globalisation) needs to be guided by discourses and imagination. He presents here a fluid aspect of the study of culture and *Landeskunde* which (more than ever) is now based on open global communication and imagination. In such a context, the internet becomes the leading source of *Landeskunde* and a major vehicle of cultural communication.

Considering that defining *Landeskunde* as "regional studies" or as a focus on the structure of a country and its geographical and political facts[1], oversimplifies didactic methods and approaches to this concept, Penning's (1995) definition of *Landeskunde* as a focus on non-linguistic elements, rules and ways of communication that are necessary to develop an understanding of a TL can be taken as a working definition. This definition focusses on communication and thus can accommodate the three approaches mentioned by Pauldrach and Zeuner and the global approach that is put forward by scholars such as Altmayer. However, considering the multiplicity of approaches and views of teaching *Landeskunde*, this definition also poses problems especially with its reference to "rules". In learning a language (grammar and vocabulary), one can talk of "rules" but in the study of culture (which is always in transformation and can be interpreted differently in various communities), it is difficult to establish rules but rather as mentioned by Altmayer, establish discourses. Meaning is established through discourses and communication.

[1] As suggested by Wolter (2011).

It is also important to note that the term *Landeskunde* does not only pose definition problems but also material complications. Firstly, the question; whose image or world views are considered important in the learning of *Landeskunde* leads one directly to this problem of "source material" and secondly, due to the broadness of *Landeskunde,* it is usually a challenge to establish a precise collection of material to be used in the foreign language classroom. *Landeskunde* content can, therefore, be classified as three areas or levels. These levels are:

Level I: Facts, factual data about a country such as statistics

Level II: Actual situations, practices, and communicative interactions.

Level III: Societal structures, ideological structures, and Models

Together, these three levels of *Landeskunde* content and the three didactic concepts outlined by Pauldrach and Zeuner (see **Table 1.1**) provide an outline of the "source material" for *Landeskunde* classes. The three levels expand on the background already provided by Pauldrach and Zeuner. Furthermore, one may also consider the importance of the "*Unterrichtsprojekt*" they use, whether the teaching approach is learner, or teacher-centered. For instance, in a learner-oriented teaching, the students and teacher discuss the content and scope of the project, and their needs while in a teacher-centered approach, the teacher compiles the material and presents it to learners.

A text edited by Hieronimus (2012) deals with various sources of *Landeskunde* within the subject of history which falls under the cognitive approach of *Landeskund*e (see **Table I.I**). In this text, various scholars discuss how learners obtain *Landeskund*e knowledge through historical sources such as the internet and films. For instance, Uwe Koreik (2012) discusses the special role of history as a source of *Landeskunde* information. This discussion begins with the observation that *Landeskunde* is "*auch Geschichte im Gegenwärtigen*". Hence, as contemporary history, it occupies a central role in a GFL classroom. Every TL country has a history, which becomes a valuable resource in a FL class. In the same context, *Erinnerungsorte* (places of remembrance) became vital carriers of this historical information and memory. Within the same context of discussing history as a source of *Landeskunde* information, Roth (2012) observes that the introduction of the internet (the World Wide Web, emails, chats etc.) has brought a dynamic change to the study of history in the context of *Landeskunde*. The main issue, however, is how to deal with the flood of information on the internet.

Koller (2012) discusses the use of films as a source of history. This is very important for this study since this research relies on movies as source of relaying historical information. According to Koller (quoting Heiss, 2006), the debates on the use of film as a source of history go back to the 1960s. He, therefore, proceeds to state that films can now be used as a reliable historical source due to their ability to record material from various real-life contexts and offer this information as didactic material. Koller also raises a concern on the didactic methods used when working with film scenes as historical sources in GFL classes. To him, most lectures on film do not follow a "language competence-oriented" approach, where historical knowledge is conveyed as a channel for acquiring (higher) language skills.

The importance of film as well as other forms of audio-visual sources as authentic sources of *Landeskunde* information is also acknowledged by Pleß (2017). However, Pleß also notes the limitations of this material, for instance that due to the length of most films (an hour or two long), it is mostly difficult to teach considering limitations of time. Following this observation, short films and adverts can be considered easy to manage in GFL classes as compared to long films. However, this study goes a step further to consider the *Landeskunde* material from the learner community as an important additional resource which may be utilised in teaching *Landeskunde* in GFL classes.

This section highlighted problems associated with defining culture in general and defining *Landeskunde* in the context of teaching GFL. The discussion also selected two working definitions, one for culture (Brown's [2000] definition of culture) and one for *Landeskunde* (Penning's [1995] definition of *Landeskunde*). The section also explored various approaches to the teaching of *Landeskunde*, including intercultural perspectives, and implications for sources (material) such as films.

I.3 The Culture of Remembrance (*Erinnerungskultur*): Background

"Human memory is fragile and finite. We mentally store our experiences as memories. However, memories are easily forgotten, and the retrieval of memories, through the act of remembering, is inexact and faulty" writes Jones (2007: 1). Jones, therefore, provides us with definitions of memory and remembering. By a culture of remembering (or of remembrance) (*Erinnerungskultur*), we simply refer to the various ways of remembering or retrieving memory. Every nation has a culture of remembering its past. There are many forms of memory such as collective memory (propounded by Halbwachs) and communicative and

cultural memory (propounded by Aleida and Jan Assmann). All these memories make up the outlook and remembrance culture of a society. This multiplicity of memory and culture of remembering is evident in Cornelißen's definition of *Erinnerungskultur* as a:

> generic notion, including all conceivable manner of conscious memory of historical events, persons (humans) and processes, no matter whether they are aesthetic, political, or cognitive. Its impact consists of (. . .) collective memories, as well as other ways of representing the past, beginning from private memories, and extending to professional scientific discourses about history – assuming they indeed left their mark on the public. Mediums of these cultures of memory may be individuals, social groups or even nations, partly in accordance with, but also in conflict with each other (translated and reproduced by Krüger, 2014: 1425).

First, what we can deduce from this definition is that the *Erinnerungskultur* is a collective concept (generic). The process of remembering (when it becomes a culture or a well-structured pattern of storing past experiences) does not only apply to the collective experiences of remembering but also other forms such as individual and professional discourses about the past of a particular group. A group of people gather similar past experiences and conserve them as part of their culture and heritage. They then decide to celebrate or commemorate these experiences over and over for generations, making this habit a culture of remembrance. It is a conscious attempt by a group to preserve its image of the past and thus make it ever present. Hence, it becomes a "*Geschichte im Gedächtnis der Gegenwart*" (as noted by Aleida Assmann or as also noted by the German historian Winkler). It includes (among others) sites of memory (what Pierre Nora refers to as the *Lieux de memoire*), traditions (such as commemorating a day of independence), conserving certain images, writings, and archives for the access of the public in places such as museums and state libraries.

Having gone through two world wars and the experience of a divided nation, the German society has a rich history upon which its *Erinnerungskultur* is based; from the Holocaust to the *Wende*. The *Erinnerungskultur* therefore, does not only provide a self-image of a nation but more importantly its identity, without which it becomes nothing. In their processes of nationhood and nation building, both Zimbabwe and Germany have very long histories from which their memories can be drawn. These experiences can be put into two taxonomies; moments of madness or rather sad experiences which involved oppression, carnage, or "unnecessary" loss of lives and heroic experiences which make the group "proud" (such as the achievement of reunification in 1990). For each of these historical epochs, the German society has a particular culture of remembrance. It is interesting, for

instance, to discuss how the National socialist history (or the history of fascism) was handled by the two German states after 1945. The German literary historian Wolfgang Emmerich (2015) explores how this "ugly" past was dealt with by both the GDR and the FRG communities. Emmerich observes, for instance, that the GDR, was established on the "antifascist foundation myth" (p. 13). The socialist government wanted to be remembered as the "victors of history" and:

> That resistance to the Nazi regime was hardly the norm and in truth represented only a small minority was deliberately brushed aside. Indeed, this founding myth constituted itself only by insisting that the people had never really been Nazis at all. The mythical distortion of history even went so far as to suggest that any remaining Nazis were in the Federal Republic, while the whole GDR population were now 'Sieger der Geschichte' ('history's victors') (p. 14).

Interestingly, Emmerich further points out that this founding myth of anti-fascism which was fraudulently obtained by means of the selective adoption of desirable traditions served, partly, as an instrument of political power. It also "effected a comprehensive cleansing of the GDR population's collective memory, unburdening many people of feelings of guilt and was for that reason a myth that was willingly adopted" (here citing Münkler, see Emmerich, op. cit: 16). Until the last two decades, this therefore, became the backbone of cultural remembrance of the GDR. Emmerich concludes by noting how this memorial tradition differed from that of the FRG:

> So, a specific 'cultural memory', passed from one generation to the next, developed over the course of several decades. This memory differed significantly from that in the West with regard to central aspects of the Nazi dictatorship…the concentration camp at Auschwitz (as a main site of the Holocaust) had since the mid-1960s become for the West a historical sign (Geschichtszeichen) in the Kantian sense, a 'signum rememorativum, demonstrativum, prognosticon' (p. 16).

These observations, therefore, demonstrate how the Nazi history was remembered at least through the "national" memory of either the GDR or the FRG society. The history of the GDR is also subjected to various ways of remembering. The discussion by Saunders and Pinfold (2012) on how the GDR is remembered is enlightening in this regard. Saunders and Pinfold for instance, write about the totalitarian version of the GDR (synonymous with the government of the former Bonner Republic) which has been in contest with the "welfare dictatorship" narrative (synonymous with some of the former citizens of the Berlin Republic).

African nations are not spared of the problems of memory and history (as two enclaves of the past) experienced by most states. Although considered an ally, memory usually

competes for the right to interpret the past with history. History is usually a product of the state "memory" which is packaged in a way that serves the interest of the "nation" and the national ideology. In this light, historians are usually expected to the serve a national ideology. Triulzi (2006) puts this in vivid terms:

> As professional historians are relegated to a secondary role, or at times dismissed as public agitators, a forcefully shared vision of the nation's 'collective memory' is drafted in government offices by state intellectuals to settle accounts with the country's troubled past … (cited by Ranger, 2009: 62)

Ranger (2009) also observes that, "Africa is now in a new era of state produced nationalist history" (p. 62). These observations problematise the culture of remembrance. Citing Kantai (2006), Ranger provides an example of Kenya, which tried to tamper with people's memories and artificially fill a gap in the history of this nation. He observes that:

> The public were treated to a series of historical faux pas…Then a man was brought from Ethiopia and presented to the public as the disappeared Mau Mau hero, General Stanley Mathenge. This act itself, taking a survivor out of the national closet – with all his pent-up secrets, his 50 years of anonymity– seemed to confirm that NARC's victory over 40 years of KANU rule was the key to opening up the past. It was not to be. After a few nervous days in which he was presented to the public ... 'General Mathenge' couldn't take it anymore. He revealed that he was actually Lemma Ayanu, an Ethiopian peasant farmer ... He was dispatched to the national laboratory and DNA tested, then sent swiftly back to Ethopia'. (Kantai, 2006).

Ranger concludes that "state memorialisation does not always work. The Kenyan state has lost control of the past" (p. 63). He gives one more example of Namibia which failed to recreate what he terms as a "broad character of anti-colonial struggle" (p. 64). In the case of Namibia, the state narrative of the liberation war gives priority to the experience of northern Namibia, where the guerrilla war was fought, over the experiences of the rest of the country. Yet for most people in the central and southern parts of the country (e.g., the Herero, Nama, or German speakers), the German colonial genocide of 1904 is of more importance than the guerrilla war against South Africa. This has led to parallel cultures of memory and oppression; one centred on German colonial occupation and the other on South African apartheid control.

The culture of remembrance in Zimbabwe also needs to be discussed in view of the problems raised above. The movies selected for this dissertation extensively demonstrate the disparities between national memory (which usually informs national history) and other forms of memory such as cultural and communicative memory or what is sometimes referred to as "public memory". In the case of Zimbabwe, Ranger posits that in a nation very much less ethnically diverse than Kenya or Namibia, there have been few communal or local

commemorations to challenge the dominance of the state memory. However, one can argue that in the last two decades, more and more material such as biographies, autobiographies, and memoires (for instance, Fay Chung, 2006 and Tekere, 2007) have found their way into Zimbabwe's public memory and are thus competing with the state memory for public attention.

Like Germany, Zimbabwe has a rich history and heritage which needs to be conserved. This history stretches from the *pre-colonial*, going through the *colonial* period to the period of *Independence* and *post-independence*. The culture of remembrance in Zimbabwe is therefore drawn from these four major historical epochs. The pre-colonial era focuses on the activities of major ethnic groups within the geographical space of what is now known as Zimbabwe, the Shona, and the Ndebele tribes. For instance, the interest in conserving the Great Zimbabwe Ruins as part of the cultural heritage of Zimbabwean people falls into this epoch. The colonial period refers to the period when Zimbabwe was under the British colonial rule. The *First Chimurenga* war falls into this epoch. While drawing its background from the colonial history and experience, the *Second Chimurenga* revolution falls into the independence and partly into the post-independence epoch.

In the context of Zimbabwean history, Ranger provides three forms of historical narratives; the history of the nation, the Nationalist history, and the Patriotic history. The nationalist history traces the roots of African nationalism, and its connections with 'mass consciousness', while the patriotic history refers to the version of history offered by Zimbabwe's first president (Mugabe) and the regime intellectuals. Public memory, therefore, has its roots in the nationalist history while "national" memory has its roots in the patriotic history. What is central in the latter is the heroic deeds of those involved in the *Chimurenga* wars. This was questioned by the former prime minister of Zimbabwe, the late Morgan Tsvangirai who stated that "the history of a nation-in-the-making should not be reduced to a selective heroic tradition but should be a tolerant and continuing process of questioning and re-examination" (Ranger, 2009: 68).

Until recently (in the post-independence period), while contesting voices (memoires and biographies) have found their way into the public sphere, most historical events in Zimbabwe have largely been dominated by the "patriotic memory" rather than serving the interest of nationalist memory. Ranger (2009) raises concerns about the "plight of Zimbabwe's professional historians and civil society intellectuals in their unsuccessful attempts to counter 'patriotic' history" (p. 71). The challenges experienced during the

production of the movie *Flame* and measures by the government to censor it are evidence of the reluctance by the "patriotic national memory" to allow contesting memories into the sphere of public memory.

In the case of the *Wende* past in Germany, Hogwood (2013) provides an insightful exploration of common narratives of the *Wende* revolution. She identifies three main memory collectives and two passive memories. These are:

I. Memories and narratives of post GDR/east German citizens,

II. of West German citizens and

III. Memories of the post-1990 FRG state.

The two "silent players" (Hogwood, 2013: 37) are the GDR state and the Nationalist-Socialist state. It is understood that the narratives of West German citizens and those of the post-1990 FRG state (II and III) are usually similar and mutually reinforce each other, while those of post GDR/east German citizens (I) usually differ from the other two. Since the GDR state is no longer in existence, the memories of post GDR/East German citizens lack a supportive political voice or rather what Hogwood refers to as "an equivalent state partner" (p. 37). However, although the GDR state memory no longer provides support to the narratives of the former East German citizens, Hogwood concedes that the state of the GDR still exists albeit as a silent participant in the *Wende* memorial debate. According to her, "although now defunct, the varied forms of self-construction deployed by the GDR state during its lifetime are still drawn actively into the discourses and debates of the three 'active' memory collectives" (p. 37). If this is the case, one must be vigilant about narratives that are influenced by this 'silent' memory. The three main narratives contest for the right to interpret the *Wende* and the GDR past. In this contest, their shortcomings are revealed. For instance, the interpretations of the GDR government by the former GDR citizens can lack authenticity due to a "lack of objective distance", while those of former FRG citizens may be treated with scepticism due to their "presumed 'colonial' perspective" gained from experiences with national socialism and the conflicts of "negative remembrance" (Hogwood, 2013: 37). This, therefore, is the background against which the narratives of both *Das Leben der Anderen* and *Goodbye, Lenin!* can be analysed.

1.4 The *Wende* and the *Second Chimurenga*: Historical Background

Without referring to the events that led to a divided Germany, and what led to the *Second Chimurenga* war in Zimbabwe, one will always find it difficult to comparatively discuss the topic of *Wende* in a GFL classroom. A brief historical background is, therefore, necessary to be able to discuss how this topic is handled and explored in the selected films.

1.4.1 The *Wende*: Historical Background

The *Wende* revolution needs to be understood in the context of the post-World War II events. These events or rather historical developments began in September 1945, with the collapse of the *Third Reich* and the *Bedingungslose Kapitulation* (unconditional capitulation) of Germany, signalling the victory of the four allied powers (Great Britain, France, the United States of America, and the USSR). The end of the war was followed by the period of rebuilding (*Die Trümmerzeit*), which also included, among other activities, ensuring that the new Germany will never again be a threat to global peace. This was pursued under the programme of *Denazification*. The *Denazification* programme also involved dividing Germany into four administrative zones (*Besatzungszonen).* As political developments later demonstrated, with this action, the four allied powers were burying one dictatorial force while unwittingly creating another. In the words of Engelhard (2010), they ensured that while one dictator perished, another rose from its ashes.

The four allied powers shared among themselves not only the geopolitical responsibility but also the administrative rights over Germany. The administrative conditions were set at the Yalta and Potsdam conferences. However, mainly due to different socio-economic policies (such as the capitalist and communist policies), two blocks emerged with the communist Soviet administrative zone on one hand and the other three zones which were guided by a capitalist economic approach on the other. This division led to the formation of two states; West Germany and East Germany. Bound by common interests, France, Britain, and the USA formally declared West Germany as the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in May 1949. The Eastern zone (*Ostzone*) followed suit and declared East Germany as the German Democratic Republic (the GDR) in October 1949. Until the *Wende* of 1989, the GDR therefore existed for forty years (40 years). The celebrations of its fortieth anniversary which were characterised by military parades are briefly captured in the movie *Goodbye, Lenin*.

The GDR was modelled on a communist state and its leaders saw Stalin and the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) as their "great teacher" (Köhle, 1999). From the outset, the GDR became an opposite of its counterpart, the FRG. Guided by its open market policies, the FRG emerged as a social market state which (during the term of Ludwig Wilhelm Erhard as the minister of economic affairs) also experienced an economic boom (*Das Wirtschaftswunder*). As the literary historian Wolfgang Emmerich (2015) notes, the GDR in contrast became a worker state. This difference was partly responsible for the Cold War. The GDR relied heavily on the secret police to deal with protesting voices. Fuelled by the abuse of state resources to prosecute rebels against the state, confiscation of private property under the guise of dealing with perpetrators of economic crimes and the ruthless censorship of the press, this discontent grew steadily throughout the forty years of the existence of the GDR and showed itself through mass escapes and protests. These protests eventually reached their peak in the year 1989/90. These events, the protests, and the widespread discontent of the GDR citizens which contributed to the collapse of the GDR government and the second unification or rather the reunification are what is referred to as the *Wende*.

1.4.2 The *Second Chimurenga*: Historical Background

The *Second Chimurenga* revolution that brought about independence from colonial rule in Zimbabwe has a rich background. It cannot be told adequately without reference to the first attempts to gain independence, the *First Chimurenga* revolts or *Umvukela* of 1896-1897. The term *Chimurenga* and its application can, therefore, be traced back to these first attempts at breaking free from colonial rule. Furthermore, the *Second Chimurenga* is also referred to as the war of liberation in Zimbabwe. While texts which deal with the topic of the *Second Chimurenga Revolution* both as an object of literary criticism and as a historical event are available in abundance, very few works attempt to discuss the etymological meaning of the term *Second Chimurenga* in the way that Vambe (2004) does. To Vambe, the term *Chimurenga* comes from the name of a legendary *Shona* ancestor, *Murenga Sororenzou*. This ancestor, a huge man with a head (*soro*) the size of an elephant's (*renzou*), was well known for his fighting prowess, and the ability to instil the fighting spirit (probably as a leader) among his soldiers in pre-colonial Zimbabwe. During the struggle for liberation, freedom fighters drew inspiration from Murenga's heroic deeds and fighting spirit, so they composed liberation songs as part of a genre called *Chimurenga music*. In due course, the word *Chimurenga* came to refer to a struggle against any form of tyranny such as the *First* and the *Second Chimurenga*.

Songs that capture the sentiment of war and the longing for freedom became known as the *Chimurenga* music.

The background of the *Second Chimurenga* revolution in Zimbabwe can be traced back to as far as the Belgium Conference of 1884 to 1885, where European nations gathered to formalise colonial occupation. In its interests, the conference can be compared to the Yalta and Potsdam conferences. As a result of this conference, many African states including Zimbabwe were occupied. Occupation in Zimbabwe was spearheaded by Cecil Rhodes and his pioneer column. They established themselves as settlers in Zimbabwe in 1890. Land expropriation for mining, farming, and cattle ranching led to clashes between the settlers and the local communities of the Ndebele and Shona tribes. These clashes led to the *First Chimurenga* uprisings, which as Beach (1979) notes, were led by spirit mediums.

The *First Chimurenga* uprisings were suppressed. The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 passed by the colonial government further prolonged the land conflict and was one of the main reasons that motivated the *Second Chimurenga* which started in 1964 and was more combative in nature as compared to the *First Chimurenga.* The *Second Chimurenga* led to a protracted war that ended with the settler regime surrendering power to what was known as the majority rule.

CHAPTER II

II: Theoretical Reflections

The theoretical framework of this study is drawn from two concepts which are the concept of localisation and theories of memory. While the theory of localisation provides an important platform for a comparative approach, theories of memory as developed by scholars such as Pierre Nora, Maurice Halbwachs, Jan and Aleida Assmann provide an important theoretical platform for the interpretation of memories which are depicted in the four selected movies. It is from the theories of memory that the research questions of this study are drawn. The four movies are analysed using the guidelines of these questions.

2.1 Background

In its approach, this study advocates for a method of teaching foreign language culture and *Landeskunde* which considers the culture and *Landeskunde* of the learner as a valuable resource. This method endeavours to familiarise learners with the TL phenomena through referring to their local phenomena. It aims to "domesticate the foreign". The argument that is expressed here is that, if foreign language culture is presented to the learner as a "foreign" or rather an "alien" subject, it is likely to be stored in foreign spaces of their memory, where it is rarely retrieved and therefore, in the long run, learners become less motivated to learn it and are likely to struggle to understand it. Although it is common knowledge that "foreign languages" are referred to as such, because they play less significant roles in the communities where they are learnt, encouraging learners to relate their cultural life to that of the TL community can help them understand the TL cultural life better. A comparative approach of teaching culture is, therefore, likely to improve learners' "investment" in the TL culture and community.

2.2 Localisation

The concept of localisation is not new in the academic field or in FL learning. However, it has been used in a slightly different manner compared to the way in which it is suggested and implemented in relation to the teaching of *Landeskunde* as is done in this study. For instance, in most scholarly work, it has been mainly used in relation to translation and digitization as in Schäler (2010), who defines it as the linguistic and cultural adaptation of

digital content to the requirements and the locale of a foreign market. Hence, in its common usage, the term is used in relation to the interpretation of information, especially digital information. In this context, localisation is defined as a process of converting applications to operate in a specific cultural environment, which extends beyond the local language to aspects such as beliefs, customs, and ethics of a society (Soh et al., 2015). Soh et al. make an important observation that localisation happens at two levels; at a linguistic level, where translation plays a key role in ensuring that resources are translated to reflect the local language, and at a cultural level where resources are explained in a way that reflects local customs. However, unlike in the instances highlighted above, and since the focus is on teaching *Landeskunde*, in this study, localisation has more to do with the adaptation of cultural values than the interest in digitization. Localisation is therefore, defined as the adaptation of the TL cultural norms to local norms of foreign language learners.

During the process of localising foreign languages which takes place mainly within the FL classroom, the TL content which is mainly provided through two sources; the learning material and the teacher is taught with reference to the learners' cultural content. Issues of TL culture are taught side by side with those that reflect the learners' society. Patterns are identified, and differences are highlighted. The understanding is that, through reference to familiar issues and creating a connection between the TL and the learner's society, learners are not only likely to be motivated but are also likely to invest in their learning of a foreign language. What demonstrates this investment is the ability for learners to extend the use of the localised TL information into their society. Hence, as Kam et al. (2007) also observe, Localization of content is crucial to make the TL relevant to them and to encourage them to adopt it.

The understanding guiding this study is that teaching TL culture through making cross references with the local culture (Localization) has the potential to enable learners to view the TL as part of their society. Through localisation, and due to the close relationship that is developed between the TL culture and the learners' culture, learners can therefore make references to the TL cultural information even if they are outside the classroom. This is the main hypothesis which guides this comparative study of *Wende* films in a GFL class.

There are two critical issues which need to be highlighted as a way of providing a background to Localisation; the need to consider exchange and negotiation as crucial in the teaching of *Landeskunde* and the realisation that cultural globalisation has transformed the teaching of *Landeskunde*. Localisation is a concept which is usually discussed alongside that

of globalisation as reflected in a text by Ning and Yifeng (2008) titled *Translation, Globalisation and Localisation: A Chinese Perspective.* It is, therefore, a relevant strategy of teaching *Landeskunde* in this era of cultural globalisation.

Localisation is a concept which encourages a "double-view" approach to the study of culture in FL learning rather than the traditional approach which is based on the view that the learner must receive TL cultural information without *negotiating* how such knowledge is transferred. Like many other globalised linguistic concepts such as identity, localisation considers the learning process as fluid and negotiable rather than rigid and rule oriented (as is the case with language learning). This is the very same notion that is central not only in Altmayer's (2017) discussion of *Landeskunde* in the global context but also (within the same text) in Pfleger's (2017) discussion of identity construction in a foreign language class (taking a class in Mexico as a case study). Pfleger, for instance, begins her discussion by acknowledging the fact that learning a new language leads to a reconstruction or rather renegotiation of one's identity.

What defines Localisation as a strategy of teaching *Landeskunde* is therefore, negotiation and the "double view" approach. Furthermore, several studies on culture in language learning have shown an interest not only in the acquisition of the TL culture by the learner but more on the intercultural communication, a concern raised by scholars such as Heringer (2004) in his text titled "*Interkulturelle Kommunikation*". This interest is evident in Nguyen's analysis that:

> "Cultural knowledge, awareness and competence" is inspired by Fenner's (2000) idea that language education should be to give learners opportunities to develop cultural knowledge, competence and awareness of both the target culture and their own culture. (p. 147).

Klein's (2004) study on how US-high school foreign language teachers (two French and two German teachers) integrated culture in their classes demonstrated that an intercultural comparative approach which thrives on the "double-view" is employed by some FL teachers. Localisation is also related to what Nguyen terms a "process-oriented culture" approach. According to him, this "process-oriented culture" allows "students to see and experience another culture, to make comparisons with their own culture, and to develop an insider's view of the target language without actually travelling to the target culture" (p. 149). Learners' awareness of the TL culture and the source culture are also found in Brooks-Lewis' (2014) qualitative action-research study where she designed and applied a special

introductory English course based on inter-cultural communication and awareness for her adult learners in Mexico. The learner participants of the study believed that comparing the English culture with their own culture helped them to see "real" people speaking the TL and to be aware of how culture affected individuals' thinking. Hence, as Ahmed et al observe, inter-cultural competence has recently become one of the main components to be taken into consideration when we teach a foreign language. Drawing on and motivated by Heringer's (2004) concept of "rich points" of culture, Ahrens (2006) also outlines the importance of a situational and learner-oriented teaching of culture:

> I always draw a comparison with Zimbabwe, we refer to the Independence Bridge across the road to the airport, to the National Gallery in Julius Nyerere and to President Mugabe's visit to Malawi where a highway was called after him. This brings us to German Motorways that are numbered and headed with letters A and/ E. The E leads us the map of Europe. (sic). (p. 13).

In discussions on the impact of cultural globalisation in teaching *Landeskunde*, one can even talk of a "multi-view" approach, where multiple cultures around the globe now share more characteristics than before, thus making possible multiple cross referencing when teaching culture.

Furthermore, Localisation can be considered as an appealing approach to teach *Landeskunde* especially considering that TL communities usually do not have a homogeneous cultural structure. If cultures of the TL communities were uniform, knowledge of these cultures would have been taught to foreign language learners without much complexity. However, the existence of subcultures and regional cultures (such as Bavarian culture in Germany) makes this transfer a complicated matter. Hence, a comparative approach based on a compromise (negotiation) might be a progressive approach to the teaching of *Landeskunde.* In the context of teaching culture in general, Nguyen (2017) notes the problems that may be created by the multiplicity of cultural categories:

> Language education researchers have classified different types of cultural contents in language lessons to suit the purposes of their study. Kramsch (1995), for example, discusses three different "links" between language and culture. Universal links imply the culture that can be shared by various language speakers across social and national boundaries. National links refer to the cultures separated by the national boundaries such as French "civilization", German "Landeskunde" or English "culture". (p.146).

In addition, Nguyen just like Altmayer (2017), adds another problematic category of "international or global culture" (p. 146). Quoting Matsuda (2012), Nguyeni defines international culture as including "various cultures from various parts of the world, or

cultural topics that are of concern to the global society" (p. 146). If cultures are becoming more globalised, more is now shared and negotiated than before. Hence there is a current interest in the concept of "cultural globalisation" (see Altmayer, 2017). This approach looks at what is shared and what remains unique to both the learner and the TL community is therefore appealing considering the global transformation of *Landeskunde*. The concept of Localisation can, therefore, be considered applicable in this regard.

In the context of teaching *Landeskunde* and basing her observations on the 1976 film "Shirins Hochzeit", Monika Albrecht (2016) has raised similar concerns, arguing that German culture is no longer a homogeneous society as in the 1950s (where foreigners accounted for only one percent of the population) but can be described as multicultural and complex. She argues against what she terms an "essentialist view of German culture" and harmonized narratives revolving around the central idea that German people assume and believe in the "cultural homogeneity" of their country. She argues that these narratives not only essentialize the very groups of people they criticize but also create a false construct of culture that inaccurately represents the intricate dynamics of German society. According to her, to claim an "essentialist view of German culture" evokes notions of a cultural essence within the German people and notions of permanence, motionlessness, and inalterability. At a time of cultural globalisation, a state of cultural "inalterability" is not sustainable.

Following this situation, where a "single-view" approach of teaching culture is losing ground, a strategy of teaching *Landeskunde* that thrives on a "double-view" or "multi-view" approach can be considered suitable for the GFL classes. After-all, such a strategy cannot only be considered learner-oriented but also as an appropriate platform of integrating a multicultural and intercultural understanding of *Landeskunde*. Localisation can also be an appropriate platform of (to use Simone Heine's [2017] terminology) "managing diversity". This diversity can be well documented by an extract taken (see **Diagram 2.1**) from a *Landeskunde* textbook by Luscher, (2009). It is as if Luscher is asking the question: how can you say you are German, when almost everything in your life is foreign?



Diagram 2.1: multiculturalism in Germany today (taken from Luscher, 2009: 7)

2.3 Theories of Memory

The interest in the art of remembering has preoccupied many scholars (from a wide spectrum of study fields) who are interested in an approach that not only re-looks at the past from a different perspective than that of history but also challenges history. The study of memory has therefore emerged as an interesting field of study, where the past is presented not only as dynamic but also (in some instances) as artificial. To historians such as Pierre Nora, this transformation has been necessitated by the need for history to study itself (Nora, 1989). In its interest of analysing various images, activities, rituals, traditions, and narratives of the past, memory has therefore attracted the attention of not only historians but also literary scholars, and linguists. Kuracan (2016) provides a befitting (for this introduction) surmise/summation and overview of how memory has emerged to be a subject of interest which cuts across various fields of study. He observes that:

> Memory is a phenomenon broadly studied by social scientists from various disciplines, such as history, political science, psychology, sociology, cultural studies, media studies, anthropology and linguistics, and it is obviously a subject of study of the cognitive sciences, neurosciences and genetics. Thinkers have been trying to understand the capacity of *individuals* and *societies* to conserve and preserve images, experiences and knowledge of things past since ancient times (p. 27).

To Nora (1989), this preoccupation with memory and with the *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory) can be viewed in negative terms as it suggests that memory itself has disappeared and this preoccupation is an attempt to pick up the remnants of it and reconstruct something that resembles it. In other words, to Nora, the present "memory

boom" (Winter, 2001) is evidence of a society that has lost its connection with the past, and with its traditions and rituals. In trying to make up for this loss, contemporary societies have resorted to re-creating or rather "cloning" their past.

While Nora's (as a historian) concern revolves around the relationship between history and memory and how the history of the French past can be reviewed in the light of concerns of memory, the immaterial and material forms of French sites of memory, Maurice Halbwachs' (as a sociologist) understands memory as a socially placed and determined phenomenon. To Halbwachs, though memory develops in an individual mind, it is given meaning by a collective which the individual belongs to. Other scholars such as Aleida and Jan Assmann have also made an important contribution to the study of memory by suggesting that, within the same social structure and grouping, one can talk of *cultural memory* or focus on the individual's everyday activities (*communicative memory).*

2.3.1 *Lieux de mémoire* (Sites of Memory): Nora

The issue of *lieux de mémoire* (as has already been highlighted above) has been popularised by a French historian and scholar named Pierre Nora. Nora is well known for his role in advocating for a re-conceptualisation of the study of history (especially the French history), where history studies itself and where history is viewed in relation to memory. His preoccupation has been with the significance of various sites of memory (material such as monuments and immaterial such as rituals) in French history. Nora has advocated for a transformation from a static, authoritative to what he calls "a history that is neither a resurrection nor a reconstitution nor even a representation but, in the strongest possible sense, a 'rememoration'- a history that is interested in memory not as remembrance but as the overall structure of the past within the present"[2] It is from this point of departure that Nora has observed that "memory and history, far from being synonymous, appear now to be in fundamental opposition"[3]. To Nora, *lieux de mémoire* refers to any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community (for instance, the French community)[4].

[2] Nora, 1996: xxiv.
[3] Nora, 1989: 8.
[4] Nora, 1996: xvii.

The central argument that underlies Nora's views on memory and sites of memory is the view that "we speak so much of memory because there is so little of it left"[5] His argument, therefore, is that the present preoccupation with memory or what has been referred to by other scholars as the "memory boom" (Winter, 2001, Simine and Radstone, 2013), has been necessitated by the realisation that memory is vanishing, and it comes as an attempt to salvage some of it. He further argues that sites of memories have become an integral part of contemporary societies mainly since "there is no longer *milieux de mémoire*, real environments of memory"[6] He cites the peasant culture in France as an example of a disappearing memory.

Nora is provocative and unapologetic in his critique of contemporary societies and their acts of "abandoning" memory. To him, *lieux de mémoire* can be referred to as:

> the ultimate embodiments of a memorial consciousness that has barely survived in a historical age that calls out for memory because it has abandoned it. They make their appearance by virtue of the deritualization of our world-producing, manifesting, establishing, constructing, decreeing, and maintaining by artifice and by will a society deeply absorbed in its own transformation and renewal, one that inherently values the new over the ancient, the young over the old, the future over the past. (1989: 12).

To Nora, sites of memory, therefore, emerge from this need to reconstruct the past. Their significance emerges after the disappearance of memory which now exists only as a restructured object beneath the gaze of critical history. Sites of memory are thus mere symbolic and artificial substitutes of memory.

In the context of the history of the GDR, several scholars have discussed the importance of sites of memory which gave this communist nation an identity. One of these scholars is Sabrow (2009) through his edited text titled *Erinnerungsorte der DDR*. Some of the common memorial symbols of the GDR include (*inter alia*) the Trabi (see **Figure.2.1**, left), the building that houses the *Stasi* files and the files themselves. Furthermore, the concerns raised by Nora, that contemporary society has abandoned memory are also relevant to the GDR and the *Wende* especially considering that some of the sites representing the past have been destroyed. In 2004, the *Palast der Republik* (palace of the republic), a building symbolising GDR architectural work, comprising of a congress hall, theatre halls and restaurants was demolished. **Figure.2.1** (right) shows the building during its functioning days, and **Figure.2.2** shows its stripped-down version. The demolition of the building was completed in 2009. This demonstrates the disappearance of memory. In addition, the disturbing result

[5] Nora, 1989: 7.
[6] Nora, 1989: 7.

of this withering away of pieces of memory is ignorance of the past. For instance, in his introduction to the discussion of the movie *Das Leben der Anderen*, Christopher Young observes that recent statistics have shown that fifty percent (50 percent) of current school children living in the former East Germany today are ignorant of the fact that the GDR was a dictatorship[7]. This is besides the fact that Germany has a vibrant system of political education and the fact that most of the *Zeitzeugen* (the witnesses) are still alive today. It therefore points to a problem of the availability of images of memory and perhaps deliberate ignorance by those who can still remember to pass that information forward. The role of witnesses in reconstructing past events and keeping them alive is well highlighted by Halbwachs who observes that elders of communities play an important role in recollecting and collectivising memories. They gather various forms of symbols and images of the past which they use to compile historical narratives of their communities. However, in the context of the *Wende*, such a compilation might prove (as also observed by Birthler) problematic due to conflicting narratives. To Saunders and Pinfold (2013) such a conflict can create different "*Erinnerungsgemeinschaften*" (memory communities) which may produce incompatible narratives and compete for funding, media attention and the endorsement by the public.



Figure.2.1: Some of the *Erinnerungsorte* of the GDR, left is the Trabi (image courtesy of Sabrow, 2009) and at the right is the *Palast der Republik* (a building housing the *Volkskammer*, the people's chamber. This photo was taken after the *Wende* and before demolition) (photo by Thorsten Klapsch).



Figure.2.2: Stripped; *Palast der Republik* during demolition.

[7] Christopher Young in Cooke (2013).

2.3.2 Collective Memory: Halbwachs

The view that memory is largely socially constructed is usually attributed to Maurice Halbwachs, a French sociologist who has argued that people acquire their memories from their societies. In other words, although individuals can have various choices which need their individual response, what is worth remembering is usually determined by their society. According to Halbwachs, "one may say that the individual remembers by placing himself in the perspective of the group, but one may also affirm that the memory of the group realizes and manifests itself in individual memories" (Halbwachs, 1992: 40). This view of memory is also echoed by Nora (1989) who summaries Halbwachs's standpoint by stating that "there are many memories as there are groups...memory is by nature multiple, yet specific, collective, plural yet individual" (p. 8). In addition, Halbwachs is of the view that it is only in dreams that the individual mind is free from remembering that it is socially determined.

Furthermore, as Christian (2012) observes, collective memory not only emerges from group identity but is also crucial in shaping it. Without the existence of collective creation and of collective memory, group identity and the generational existential memory that exists within that identity would not be feasible. One might, therefore, be tempted to link the identity problems of the *Zonenkinder* to the disappearance of a GDR collective memory and identity. It can thus be argued that since the post *Wende* period is a boiling-point of different narratives of the *Wende* past, the *Zonenkinder* are likely to be torn between these voices which are narrating and reconstructing the GDR past. When they search for their roots in these narratives and images of the past, they find them having been reconstituted and alien. This existence of different collective memories is probably the main reason that has led Birtler (2008) to raise concerns about which GDR past the younger generations of Germans are going to learn.

In Zimbabwe, though competing narratives and individual memoirs are finding their way into the public realm, the government has ensured that its narrative remains "a collective memory" of the *Second Chimurenga* revolution. A vigorous campaign based on manipulation of the state media and political education has ensured that the narrative of the government is taken as the public memory. Divergent memories have always been elbowed aside by the public mainly due to this campaign by the government and due to a lack of collective support. Such narratives have therefore, died a natural death of simply being dismissed as individual memories and opinions. Most of them, therefore, remain hidden stories, which are waiting to be integrated into the collective memory when its society ceases to be a one memory state. Christian (2012) has viewed this situation as a "socially imposed

silence" (p. 14) and has criticised Halbwachs for ignoring it and rather choosing to address the issue of those who are unable to contribute to a collective memory due to language disabilities such as aphasia (from a stroke).

Following these observations, it becomes imperative therefore, to classify divergent narratives about the *Second Chimurenga* revolution in Zimbabwe as narratives suffering from a "socially imposed silence". Hence (as alluded to by Coser, 1992) collective memory is not a given but rather a socially constructed phenomenon, which (depending on its nature) can either divide or unite a nation. Various narratives that compete for a voice in the German *Wende* history have created a problematic yet interesting and objective way of looking at the revolutionary past. It is problematic in the sense that it has created a situation of divided memories, divided voices, of "a divided German past" and therefore, divided convictions towards not only the *Wende* and its achievements but also the current FRG nation and the spirit of nationhood.

In the case of the revolutionary past of Zimbabwe, a less contested collective memory exists. Yet, though serving the purpose of unifying the nation, its construction is mainly the work of the government and individual experiences are censored to suit the common understanding of the collective memory. In other words, it is subjective in nature and thus, unlike in the case of Germany, this kind of memory fails not only to conform to Nora's understanding of history as a "rememoration" but also seems to suggest that there is only one history. In the case of Germany, Saunders, and Pinfold (2013) conclude that, due to the existence of multiple narratives, the place of the GDR within Germany collective memory is now a complex affair. This situation is described by Sabrow (2009) as a "battleground of memories" (p. 15).

2.3.3 Cultural and Communicative Memory: Jan and Aleida Assmann

The concepts of cultural and communicative memory have been attributed to both Aleida and Jan Assmann who (although Aleida is more an expert in communicative while Jan is more inclined towards cultural memory) have collaborated in most research projects to develop these concepts. The two concepts draw much of their influence from already existing theories which view memory as a social and collective notion such as Halbwachs's theory of collective memory and Warburg's (an art historian) theory of social memory. Hence, the connection between these two theories and communicative and cultural memory

is evident. For instance, to Aleida Assmann (2006), though they can be recognised as individuals, human beings usually belong to a grouping which gives them an identity, without which they cannot exist. Jan and Aleida Assmann therefore, define communicative memory as including varieties of collective memory that are based on everyday communication and which are:

> characterized by a high degree of non-specialization, *reciprocity of roles, thematic instability, and disorganization*. Typically, it takes place between partners who can change roles. Whoever relates a joke, a memory, a bit of gossip, or an experience becomes the listener in the next moment…Through this manner of communication, each individual composes a memory which, … is (a) socially mediated and (b) relates to a group. Every individual memory constitutes itself in communication with others. (Assmann and Czaplicka, 1995: 127).

Hence, in a way, communicative memory is a form of collective memory. The difference is that while collective memory concerns itself with a collective story which is significant to a particular group and may be collaborated by its members, communicative memory concerns itself with memories and activities of individuals who belong to a particular collective structure. Communicative memory is therefore based on their everyday life as they communicate among each other. This demonstrates the "reciprocity of roles, thematic instability, and disorganization" that are referred to in the above quotation.

In the context of the narratives of the *Wende* in Germany, it is understood that the state narrative (post *Wende* FRG) which emphasised the totalitarianism of the GDR have been prevalent. However, since the 1990s, narratives which challenged this narrative have begun to emerge (Saunders and Pinfold, 2013). Hence, the focus shifted towards narratives based on communicative memory, and on the everyday life experiences of witnesses. According to Saunders and Pinfold (2013), the growing importance of the everyday was also highlighted in the expert commission headed by Sabrow in 2005 and 2006, whose recommendations that the everyday and spheres of resistance should receive greater attention met with the criticism that the commission was promoting a homeopathic version of the GDR dictatorship.

Evidently, the criticism against the focus on narratives based on communicative memory was meant to conserve memories based on the state narrative. While in Zimbabwe such an attack succeeded (at least during the first decade after independence), judging from a plethora of other narratives that seek to retell the *Wende* past, in Germany, it failed. One can, therefore, observe that, in narratives based on communicative memory, there is no fine line between heroes and villains.

Societies which have succeeded to keep a national narrative unscathed by individual stories which might otherwise scandalise that narrative such as Zimbabwe, have elbowed aside or in some instances, selectively considered elements of communicative memory. German society on the other hand, has considered the significance of communicative memory based on everyday activities of the witnesses for the *Wende* experience. Such a stance has promoted a flood of memories, some which review the already existing national narrative (i.e., the FRG state narrative) and some which authenticate or are in conflict with one another. Communicative memory, therefore, can be taken as a concept that mainly creates a situation of disharmony rather than harmony in the study of memory and the reconstruction of the history of a society. It can also be described as an approach that encourages a "bottom up" rather than a "top down" way of reconstructing the past.

In their conceptualisation of cultural memory, Jan and Aleida Assmann point out that, while communicative memory is characterised by its proximity to the everyday, cultural memory is characterized by its distance from the everyday. Distance from the everyday (transcendence) marks its temporal horizon. Cultural memory has its fixed point; its horizon does not change with the passing of time. These fixed points are fateful events of the past, whose memory is maintained through cultural formation (texts, rites, monuments) and institutional communication (recitation, practice, observance).

Furthermore, just like communicative memory, cultural memory is also related to collective memory. It is understood as "a form of collective memory, in the sense that it is shared by a number of people and that it conveys to these people a collective, that is, cultural, identity"[8]. Cultural memory, therefore, intends to concern itself mainly with *traditions*, *transmissions*, and *transference*. Hence, cultural memory must be preserved across the generations by means of cultural activities.

[8] Assmann, J, 2008: 110.

CHAPTER III: *Das Leben der Anderen*

3.1 Background and Approach

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the movie *Das Leben der Anderen* in detail. Firstly, since the project is a contribution to the curriculum transformation of GFL, the study will begin by providing a sequence analysis of the movie. This method, which is motivated by Gugo's (2015) study of how *Das Leben der Anderen* can be taught in a GFL class, has several advantages. The sequence analysis can be considered handy in class activities (for instance, as class notes). The sequence analysis not only ensures a detailed coverage of the selected movies but may be useful in acting as reference information in discussions which follow.

The sequence analysis is followed by the exploration of how revolutionary memories are depicted in this movie. In the exploration of memory and representations of the past, as depicted in the selected movies, the study will rely on the research questions already outlined in Chapter One. The discussion will also expand to include other issues raised in theories of memories such as the concern over sites of memories (Nora) or how collective memory (Halbwachs) or communicative memory (Aleida Assmann) is portrayed in these movies. However, this does not mean that (as also observed by -de Simine and Radstone, 2013) there is always a fine line between various forms of memory; sometimes they overlap. "The range of lived experiences cannot be categorised in simple binaries: it proves to be much more complex and ambiguous" writes -de Simine and Radstone (2013: 29). Hence, the discussion of memories as collective, cultural, or communicative is important in as far as it provides guidelines rather than strict taxonomies of analysing memories.

The contribution of the movie *Das Leben der Anderen* to the *Wende* debate and the amount of critical attention that the movie attracted (and continues to attract) has been commendable. Alongside Wolfgang Becker's *Goodbye, Lenin*, the movie which was directed by Florian von Donnersmarck poses valuable questions and interjections to the post *Wende* FRG community. These two movies are among other literary material on 1989/90 *Wende* (*Wendeliteratur*) that has ensured the post *Wende* existence of the GDR not just as a "footnote" in the post WWII history of Germany but most importantly as part of vibrant debates. The literary debate and the issue of *Ostalgie* are among burning issues which have occupied scholars and ordinary people in the post *Wende* era.

Provided below is the sequence analysis of the movie. To allow for a wide coverage of the movie, the movie has been broken down into twenty sequences. The sequence analysis provided below is not only helpful in providing detail on the memory discussion but also in acting as a point of reference and useful material for class discussions. The analysis highlights important issues which will also be vital in the comparative discussion of all the four movies under study here.

3.2 Sequence Analysis

3.2.I *Das Leben der Anderen*: Sequence Analysis

Sequence I: Gerd Wiesler

The sequence begins with an interrogation of a prisoner. The information from this interrogation is used for a teaching class by a Stasi captain named Gerd Wiesler. The sequence, therefore, revolves around these two settings: the interrogation-room and the classroom. Since the movie, *Das Leben der Anderen* is based on the transformation of captain Wiesler from "Saulus" to "Paulus"[9], this sequence is therefore, important in introducing this "Sauline" version and background of Wiesler. If one misses this introduction, one will likely trivialise this transformation and thus fail to identify the core of the movie. In this sequence, we are presented with a hard-core Stasi officer. This "Sauline" character is revealed in both settings mentioned above, the interrogation room and the lecture room. The brutal or rather "*unmenschlich*" (inhuman) methods employed by Wiesler during the process of interrogating prisoner 227 demonstrates a character of a dedicated Stasi officer who will do anything to root out what he believes are "enemies of socialism". For example, he denies the prisoner a chance to sleep while ensuring that he maintains an uncomfortable sitting position (with his arms under his thighs). The same uncompromising character is evident during his lecture. When one of his students comments that his method of denying the prisoner sleep is inhuman, Wiesler puts a mark against his name. The sequence ends with the ending of the lecture and the arrival of Anton Grubitz, who invites him to attend a theatre presentation where the minister of culture Hempf will be in attendance. The sequence is, therefore, also important in discussions which deal with the issue of humane and inhumane elements in the movie.

[9] Based on the biblical transformation of the notorious Saul to the apostle Paul.

Sequence II: In the Theater

The sequence revolves around activities which take place in the theatre. It is a development from the previous sequence, where Wiesler is invited to a theatre presentation. This sequence is also important as it introduces the "subjects" or rather the "others". The setting of a theatre can help viewers to deduce that the subjects are artists. They may be actors, or dramatists. In this sequence therefore, the camera moves between those who are in control (being symbolised by Wiesler, Grubitz and Hempf) and the subjects (represented by Christa Maria Sieland whom we see among actors and her boyfriend Georg Dreyman). Furthermore, it is here in the theatre where the viewer firstly gets glimpses of surveillance activities. From above, we see Wiesler and Grubitz (with the aid of binoculars) monitoring activities below them (see Fig. 3.1). In this sequence, we are also introduced to the issue of corruption of the GDR government officials. From the first sequence, we have a glimpse of a corrupt society where individuals are promoted not based on merit but on social relationships and loyalty. Grubitz mentions to Wiesler that in the GDR, grades do not mean much.

Furthermore, in the closing scenes of the second sequence, Hempf promises Grubitz that if he succeeds in finding something against Georg Dreyman, he will always have a "good friend in the central committee". By alluding to this characteristic of the GDR system of governance, it is as if Von Donnersmarck is suggesting that the GDR can only be remembered as a corrupt society. This is one of the images of the GDR that the director maintains throughout the movie. In this sequence, we also see the development of the "Sauline" version of Wiesler as he is seen (over-zealously) suggesting that Georg Dreyman be monitored even before Hempf requests this activity.



Figure. 3.1: Captain Gerd Wiesler monitoring the actions of individuals rather than the theatre performance.

Sequence III: For Christa-Maria Sieland

The role played by Christa- Maria Sieland is central in this sequence as the contest between the "good" (which is represented by Georg Dreyman and his friends who are victims of the

system) and "bad" (which is represented by Hempf, Grubitz and Wiesler) is established. She brings out the best of these two contesting forces. The sequence begins with the premiere celebrations and ends with Wiesler and his colleagues planning to wire Georg Dreyman's apartment.

Interestingly, it is the contest between these two contesting forces (with Christa-Maria Sieland being the prize and Wiesler an important force), which forms the core of the action of the movie *Das Leben der Anderen*. Furthermore, by making these two opposing forces lose the prize to death, a competitor who was never involved in their contest, Von Donnersmarck ends his movie on a complex note. It is a very important ending as it suggests a third force determining the result of the revolution - the masses, not the government itself nor the intellectuals who are represented here by Georg Dreyman and his friends.

Sequence IV: The Stasi/ Enemies of Socialism

What is central in this sequence is Wiesler's apartment. This sequence also includes the initial monitoring of the Dreyman residence and ends with the bugging of the apartment. In this sequence, Wiesler's life is juxtaposed to that of the Dreymans. His apartment speaks volumes about his life. It is a spotlessly clean and barely furnished apartment with only a small television as the only gadget suggesting entertainment. Unlike the Dreyman apartment, there is no evidence of a music player or any reading material (it justifies Wiesler's action of "stealing" Georg Dreyman's collection of poems by Brecht later in the movie). The camera moves around showing us the nature of the apartment. Most importantly, Wiesler is presented as a wretchedly lonely figure as juxtaposed to Georg Dreyman. We see Wiesler sitting in his apartment alone and no one is even giving him a social phone call. Hence, he is portrayed as a man devoid of contact with the social world. This is something that his career denies him. As we shall discover later in the movie, his contact (through surveillance) with the Dreymans makes him realise this yawning void in his life. It makes him realise what the regime has done to him (to convert him into an emotionless gadget). He, therefore, acts to prevent the same system from destroying the Dreymans the same way it ruined him.

The next scene in this sequence shows us Georg Dreyman playing soccer with local children, a presentation of an individual who has a social life and contact with others in his community. This sequence, therefore, presents Georg Dreyman as a sociable character who

is always surrounded by other people either celebrating some occasion or writing something. He is the opposite of what Wiesler is.



Figure. 3.2: A scene (**Seq. VI**) showing Georg Dreyman playing soccer with local children.

Sequence V: In the attic

The sequence begins with Georg Dreyman's visit to Jerska's apartment where they discuss his case of being blacklisted by the government. The sequence also includes the beginning of the surveillance from the attic above Georg Dreyman's apartment, the birthday party celebrations and ends with Wiesler's departure at the end of his surveillance shift. One of the significant and outstanding scenes in this sequence is the confrontation between Georg Dreyman and his friend Paul Hauser. Paul quarrels with Georg Dreyman over his passive stance towards the abuse and persecution of fellow artists by the state. He encourages him to take a stand, otherwise he cannot be considered a human being. Hence, this becomes the first attempt to stir up the dormant artist (who in this case is represented by Dreyman.

Sequence VI: For socialism?

The title of this sequence underscores Wiesler's enlightenment and transformation. It is in this sequence where Wiesler begins to be conscious of the hidden personal objectives of individuals who masquerade as loyalists of the socialist government. The sequence begins at the Stasi headquarters where see Wiesler searching for the documents with the information on Albert Jerska. It is, however, the scene where Wiesler and Grubitz are having lunch that is central in this sequence. From their conversation (while having lunch), we establish that the car that brought Christa-Maria Sieland home belongs to Minister Hempf. Wiesler is thus ordered to remove this record from his report since bosses "cannot be monitored". This further reflects the GDR regime as a corrupt regime and as a society where law is applied selectively. We also establish that Wiesler is now questioning the objectives and reasons behind the operation Lazlo. He reminds Grubitz that they took an oath to uphold socialism

rather than help central committee members get rid of their rivals. It is therefore, from this sequence where we begin to see the bend of the parabola in as far as Wiesler's character is concerned.

Sequence VII: The abuse of power

The title of this sequence underscores the corrupt and manipulative nature of the GDR "regime" as represented by Hempf and Grubitz. In this sequence, minister Hempf is seen using state resources and his influence to manipulate and molest vulnerable citizens such as women who are represented by Christa-Maria Sieland. The sequence opens with Georg Dreyman relaxing in his apartment. Meanwhile, we witness Hempf following and pestering Christa-Maria Sieland until he manages to subdue and ravish her. This sequence is very significant to those who discuss the issue of what I would call here the "demonization" of women in this movie. Just as in the film *Flame*, where women must endure the triple torment of fighting during the war, offering sexual gratification to their male counterparts and taking care of household chores, women represent the vulnerable in society.

In this same sequence we witness another form of "manipulation" of women by men who use them to quench their physical desires. We witness Wiesler "hiring" a woman to take care of his sexual needs. At another level of analysis, the incident of hiring a prostitute to satisfy his sexual needs, further portrays him as an "Oliver Twist" of love and affection. He envies Georg Dreyman and his girlfriend who (to use Leye's terms) are "always at it". To Wiesler, that kind of life is a luxury. Every time the Dreymans are intimate, he desperately clutches at his headphones and listens with an expression of someone listening to good music.

Sequence VIII: Love and Affection

The sequence is centred on Wiesler's continuing discovery of the world of love and affection. The sequence begins with Wiesler exploring the Dreyman apartment and picking up a book by Brecht. This is the book we witness him reading later in the movie. By reading poems by Brecht, we begin to see an image of a compromised Stasi agent. An agent who has been attracted by the exploration of life and affection outside the rigid demands of his job.

Sequence IX: *Sonate vom gutem Menschen*

In this sequence, Georg Dreyman receives a telephone call informing him about Jerska's suicide. Upon receiving this sad piece of news, Dreyman decides to play some notes as a farewell to his friend and colleague. With a funereal silence and concern, Wiesler listens to the music below him. Although his character has already been transformed, it is this sequence that is usually taken as the turning-point of this transformation. His solemn expression demonstrates that he grieves with Dreyman and indeed the whole of the GDR, which has lost an artist. The music plays an important part in making Wiesler realise, how sad the GDR government is, indirectly sending its artists to their deaths.

Sequence X: "Is he still with the Stasi?"

Since the foregoing sequence is taken as the turning-point of Wiesler's transformation, this sequence seeks to evaluate his crossover. In other words, it seeks to establish whether he is now a changed person or not. The core of this sequence is the conversation that Wiesler has with a small boy in a lift. At this point, perhaps the viewer still has a question regarding Wiesler's loyalty. The director takes this opportunity to use a small boy to put this question to rest. There might be a special reason for this. Firstly, children are an embodiment of innocence; hence a perfect bait to test Wiesler's sense of humanity and social care. Secondly, by being oblivious of the implications of what they say, children can ask direct and personal questions. In other words, no adult (unless perhaps drunk) would confront a Stasi officer with such questions as the boy does in this sequence. The boy casually describes the Stasi as bad men who put (innocent) people in prison. What, therefore, confirms Wiesler's complete transformation is his self-control and disregard of what the boy says. However, he initially displays some remnants of the attitude of a member of the Stasi, when he is about to ask the name of the boy's father. He is, however, able to exercise self-control and ask the name of the boy's ball instead and thus spicing the movie with a comic feature. This is a feature it was devoid of all this time.

The sequence is also significant as it establishes the awakening of the puffadder. Through Wiesler's intervention, Georg Dreyman becomes aware of Christa-Maria Sieland's compromise with the state and thus urges her to stop seeing Hempf. He tries to convince her that she can only succeed due to her talent alone. This is evidence of his ignorance of the grip the state has on the success of artists. However, this confrontation with Christa-Maria

Sieland over the relationship with Hempf leads to a new chapter in Georg Dreyman's stance as a GDR artist.

Sequence XI: The artist awakens

The sequence is a development from the previous and it is centred on the conversation between the two lovers Georg Dreyman and Christa-Maria Sieland, as they not only "kiss and make up", but also make new promises including forging ways of resisting the GDR's brutal system of governance. From Sergeant Leye's report of the previous night, we deduce that Christa-Maria Sieland did not proceed with her intended rendezvous with her "classmate" (minister Hempf). She promises Georg Dreyman never to leave him again and in turn Georg Dreyman promises her that from now on, he will gather all his strength to act against the system of oppression. This, therefore, becomes a turning-point for this character who for the greater part of the movie has shown little resistance against the system of oppression in the GDR. It is at this point that the puff-adder stirs and promises to bite those who for a long period of time have stepped on it. One therefore needs to notice that it is not Wiesler only who is enlivened by love and has a change of heart. Georg Dreyman also has this kind of a turnaround - a *Wende*.

The sequence also covers Jerska's funeral and the plans to write an article on the suicides of artists in the GDR. This article which Georg Dreyman plans to write, therefore, provides further evidence of his awakening. The sequence ends with the Pankow Memorial rendezvous where Georg Dreyman and his friends discuss on how to proceed with the suicide article.

Sequence XII: "The Play"

The sequence is centred on the "play" which Georg Dreyman and his friends are planning to write for the 40th anniversary of the GDR. The sequence opens with Wiesler beginning a new shift. Upon entry, he is alerted to the conversation between Georg Dreyman and his friends (including Paul Hauser whom he thought was smuggled out of the GDR) about writing an article. Although Wiesler tries to convince Leye that the "gang" is writing a "*Theaterstück*"(a play), his junior does not buy this story. The interesting part of this sequence and perhaps the great irony of the movie, however, is the confidence and exuberant behaviour of the artists while within the walls of the apartment, unbeknown to the fact that the flat is not

"safe". The flat therefore, absorbs a new symbolic meaning as a place of refuge (within the GDR) where they can be themselves. It carries the same significance as the "church" during the *Wende*.

During the *Wende*, churches (as Loest [1990] demonstrates in his *Nikolaikirche*) became rallying points of resistance. Georg Dreyman's flat therefore, absorbs this new meaning and significance. Paul Hauser retorts that it is the only place left in the GDR where he can say what he wants. However, even though this can be considered irony, one also wonders whether Wiesler (who is listening to their conversations from the attic above) can still be considered part of the system. If the answer is "No", then the artists are indeed correct to consider themselves alone. There is no sign of the "*Horch und Guck*", as the Stasi were sometimes called, only an individual who used to be a member of the Stasi.

Sequence XIII: Making a cross over

The title of this sequence underscores the crossover that Wiesler eventually makes. All along, as discussed in Sequence X (Is he really with the Stasi?), the viewer has not been sure of where Wiesler stands in terms of his loyalty. It is in this sequence, where he demonstrates this crossover. The sequence opens with Wiesler's visit to Grubitz's office to hand over a report on the "Operation Lazlo". However, upon hearing the brutal punishment that awaits "guilty" artists, he decides against handing the report to Grubitz. This also suggests that all this time, Wiesler had an intention of handing over Georg Dreyman and his friends for persecution. The report he meant to hand in was to ensure this. Furthermore, Wiesler decides to remove the suspicious Leye from the equation and thus ensure the safety of the artists. Hence, while Sequence IX (*Sonate vom Gutem Menschen*) demonstrates Wiesler's turn around, this sequence demonstrates his crossover to the other side. It is at this stage where he takes the primary risk and sacrifice that will likely ruin his career. It is this sacrifice that draws the sympathy of viewers. The sequence ends with Georg Dreyman's confession to Christa-Maria Sieland that they are not writing a play.

Sequence XIV: The state strikes

What is central in this sequence is the covering of the suicide article by the *Spiegel* which is also aired on television. The state is infuriated by this article and orders Grubitz to investigate and find the author of this article which was published anonymously in the FRG.

As Grubitz demands answers, the net closes closer for Wiesler. However, this does not seem to deter him from continuing his own project, "Operation Save Lazlo".

Sequence XV: Informant Marta

The sequence is a development from the previous sequence "The state strikes". This time it decides to strike Christa-Maria Sieland and convert her into a collaborator. The sequence opens with the meeting between Grubitz and minister Hempf, where Hempf reveals information on Christa-Maria Sieland's dependence on drugs for her performances and that they should use this information to arrest her. Christa-Maria Sieland is intercepted while buying her drugs, and to save herself, she strikes a deal with the state which involves providing information on the activities of Georg Dreyman and his artist friends. This sequence is, therefore, important as it establishes, how some individuals were "blackmailed" into becoming informants. It raises questions on some of the prominent figures who became informants such as Christa Wolf, whether they had dark secrets which were used against them or they voluntarily became informants.

The literary debate which was provoked by Wolf's *Was Bleibt?*, where Wolf portrayed herself as a victim of the system questioned the role of the artist who was supposed to be the engineer of the soul and the society. From a historical point of view, Meier (2006) posits that intellectuals were not free from the regulation of the GDR regime, a point well hypothesized by Christa-Maria Sieland, where (in Sequence XI: The artist awakens) she tells Georg Dreyman that the system decides what is played, who is to act and who directs. Meier mentions that East German university professors, for example, were induced to report on the political inclination of their students. We see this behaviour in the first sequence of *Das Leben der Anderen*, where Wiesler puts a mark against the name of a student who comments that denying prisoners sleep was inhuman.

Sequence XVI: The portable Typewriter

The sequence is a development from the previous sequence "Informant Marta". The sequence begins with Georg Dreyman relaxed in his apartment. Meanwhile, we see a group of Stasi officers including Anton Grubitz approaching the apartment. The men search the apartment probably for the small typewriter or any evidence linking Georg Dreyman and his friends to the suicide article. Upon failing to get this evidence, the men leave. Meanwhile,

Georg Dreyman and his friends discuss the probability that Christa-Maria Sieland might be the informer who led the Stasi to the apartment. Convinced that it cannot be Christa-Maria Sieland, since she knew the location of the typewriter, Georg Dreyman defends her. This is the first irony of this sequence. The second irony is that it is Wiesler (the dissident Stasi officer) who is called to interrogate Christa- Maria Sieland and find out about the information of the typewriter. Furthermore, this sequence asserts an already established character of the GDR government as a corrupt institution. Upon getting the information that he wants, Grubitz releases Christa- Maria Sieland as a privileged informer who can continue with her illegal habits with the blessing of the system. This development invokes the view that by relying heavily on compromised informants, the GDR regime might have compromised and corrupted its justice system.

The socialist law became "selective" and applied only to those who were "enemies of socialism". It has also come to light that although the GDR system of governance claimed to combat fascism in public, in reality former Nazi officers were integrated into the party structures.

Sequence XVII: "The Actress!"

This sequence opens with Georg Dreyman taking a stroll with Hauser who tries to comfort him on the search incident. As Georg Dreyman enters his apartment, Wiesler is seen leaving with the typewriter. Before long, a second search team arrives and searches the location of the typewriter but does not find it. Immediately, Grubitz suspects "the actress" of betrayal. Christa-Maria Sieland who sees her boyfriend's look of reproach does not wait for the result of the search; she runs outside where an approaching car knocks her down. This sequence is also very important to feminist critics who see her death as a tragedy and the highest price she pays for collaborating with the system. However, her death may be stretched a little bit further. For instance, to symbolise the death of the system itself. With her death, the operation "Lazlo" comes to an abrupt end, Grubitz informs his men that the "mission" is over. Also, with her death, Wiesler gets his sentence of betraying the system and perhaps failing to uphold the Stasi objective of maintaining the "*hohes Niveau der öffentlichen Ordnung und Sicherheit*". Grubitz informs him that his career is over. Furthermore, with Christa-Maria Sieland's death, we begin to see the signs of the *Wende*. We see, for example a newspaper article announcing the election of Gorbachev as his party's general secretary. His policies of

glasnost (openness) and *perestroika* (restructuring or rebuilding) were instrumental in bringing about the 1989/90 revolution in the GDR.

Sequence XVIII: "Beyond the Wall"

The title of this sequence underscores not only the physical removal of the wall but also the movement in time. For instance, we are informed that the events in this sequence take pace after four years and seven months. Wiesler is busy sorting and delivering letters with the same diligence he deployed during his term as a top Stasi officer. One of his colleagues breaks the news that the wall has fallen. The sequence also covers the reaction of the artist, following the fall of the wall and the GDR socialist government. Georg Dreyman and Hempf meet on the backstage of a theatre performance. From their conversation, we learn that Georg Dreyman has not published anything new since the fall of the wall. According to former minister Hempf, this is because the collapse of the system has taken away the substance and material that the writer depended on. In other words, there is nothing to believe in and nothing to rebel against anymore. This analysis brings up the debate on who was the victor or the victim in the 1989/90 *Wende* in the GDR. Can those who protested against the system be considered "victors" or those who collaborated with it be considered "victims" or West Germany as the real victor? These questions provide a very fertile background for a movie such as *Goodbye, Lenin*, which deals with the element of nostalgia, thus further problematising the "victor/victim" labels. In this sequence, Hempf also confirms that Georg Dreyman was under surveillance all this time.

Sequence XIX: "Beyond the Wall"

The sequence opens with Georg Dreyman checking his apartment of any evidence of bugging. In his research to understand his position in the GDR society, Georg Dreyman also visits the *Forschungs und Gedenkstätte in der Normannenstrasse* to look for his files. The existence of his files confirms that he was indeed under surveillance. However, what he finds disturbing is that the information does not reflect the "truth" and the reality of what really happened. To arrive at a clear picture of the events, he must use this provided material, his individual memory and intuition. This presentation of the archived material is worrying, as it suggests that it may be compromised by individual sentiments and objectives and thus fail to carry reliable memories without the support of other supporting input from

witnesses. It leaves the question; are *lieux de memoire* reliable carriers of collective memory? It also creates the view that certain images of the past might have varying meanings (be it political, social, or economic) to different members of society. For instance, the image of the freedom fighter might draw different reactions from the citizens of Zimbabwe, not only among the "blacks" as reflected in the movie *Flame* (as having a genuine cause but were also rogue sometimes), but also among the "whites" as reflected in the movie *Albino* (as terrorists). Hence, a reliable restructuring of the past needs to take into consideration these issues.

Various forms of memorial images are not supposed to be imposed on the collective as usually done by many governments. Individuals need to be given a chance to express their relationship with the nationalised images of the past. The problems associated with the nationalised *lieux de memoire* in Africa are well discussed by Ranger (2009). Ranger presents a case of Kenya as an example, where a man was brought from Ethiopia and presented to the public as the disappeared Mau Mau hero General Stanley Mathenge, only to be confirmed later as Lemma Ayanu, an Ethiopian peasant farmer. The archives are not to be considered useless as a whole, but consulted in tandem with other sources, because they also carry valuable information which can also *contribute* to creating a complete picture of the past. For instance, Georg Dreyman establishes the fact that Christa-Maria Sieland was an informer and that agent 27 was responsible for the operation. From this information, he however deduces the fact that (with the evidence of red ink on the files) it was this agent who acted as his saviour.

Sequence XX: "It is mine/ dedicated to me"

The sequence opens with Georg Dreyman driving around. In this process, he notices the former agent 27 delivering mail. Two years down the line, Wiesler is busy delivering mail when he stumbles upon an advert for a new book by Dreyman. Upon entering to buy the book in the bookshop, he rejects the offer of a gift wrapper by saying "*Es ist für mich*" (it is for me/it is mine). This epilogue seems to suggest that there were brave Stasi officers (among the rotten apples), who stood against a brutal system deserve gratitude.

3.3 The *Wende* memory as depicted in *Das Leben der Anderen*

3.3.1 Whose memories are captured in *Das Leben der Anderen*?

Since Florian von Donnersmarck, the director of the movie *Das Leben der Anderen*, does not hail from East Germany and neither does he have first-hand experience of life in the GDR, the narrative of the movie can be considered as lacking first-hand experience synonymous with the recollections by former GDR citizens. This fact has been the major shortcoming of the movie and the question related to von Donnersmarck's GDR experience has always been an issue which demands of him to validate his narrative. According to him, one of journalists' favourite questions is usually an enquiry about his experience of the GDR. He concedes that he does not have much experience of the GDR, he just "researched this and looked into that" (2013: 23). Hence, due to its reliance on research rather than on lived experiences, the movie's authenticity has been under the spotlight.

The question that remains to be answered is, as a work of art, which of the three main narratives mentioned above does it seek to retell? Does it seek to reconstruct the memories of the former GDR citizens, former citizens of the Bonner Republic or the FRG state? Are the voices of the two other silent participants in the memory debate evident in the movie? Based on the plot of the movie, and on the criticism of the movie as trivialising the misdeeds of the *Stasi* (as observed by Gerhard Ehrlicher, 2006), the movie defies attempts to neatly (and without question) consider it as part of any one of the three main narratives. In its depiction of the memories of the GDR and the SED dictatorship, the film seems to defy the common expectations and understanding of the *Stasi*. For instance, when analysed in the context of the former GDR citizens, it can be argued that those who have been considered as having fond memories of the GDR do not usually cite the operatives of the *Stasi* as their focus of a “silver lining” of the GDR regime but rather draw closely on the cultural identity provided by the state and its social welfare system.

The presentation of a "Saul who turned Paul" within the *Stasi* narrative can hardly be considered as a collective narrative, nor can it be fathomed as a memory of former GDR citizens. Neither can it be categorised (satisfactorily) as a memory of former citizens of the Bonner Republic nor that of the FRG state (which usually manifests itself through an unwavering attack on the dictatorial measures of the GDR regime (see Hogwood, 2013). Since the movie is based on the dictatorial tendencies of the GDR government, it can be considered as possessing a background that appeals to all the three narratives. Yet, as it

plays, its plot meanders in and out of these narratives. On the one hand, this lack of allegiance to a popular collective memory might be taken as the attraction of the movie as it presents an unusual story, while on the other hand, it becomes its undoing, as it struggles to lure support from the three collective memories. Perhaps, this explains why its success is largely international (rather than local) as compared to other movies on the GDR past such as *Goodbye, Lenin* (see Cooke, 2013).

Since film directors are artists, who seek to present in vivid and imaginative terms issues and stories of different kinds of societies, most of which they might not have a first-hand experience of, there is a need therefore, to consider the following questions.

- Whose narrative does the movie purport to represent?
- Does the movie succeed (at least at an artistic level) to reflect the intended memories?
- What are the collective memories of the director's society?
- Is the Director of the movie able to break away from the memory collective of his/her society to explore a different memory path?

While discussing the nature of the narrative in *Das Leben der Anderen*, it is therefore, imperative to attempt to provide answers to the questions above. Firstly, as a movie about life in the GDR, about the *Stasi*, and about the survival of the GDR citizens under the watchful eye of the *Stasi* agents, the movie attempts to tell the story from the point of view of former GDR citizens. Georg Dreyman is a GDR playwright and Gerd Wiesler is a GDR *Stasi* agent. The desire of the director, therefore, was to tell a "fictitious story about SED state, narrated in the style of a thriller, but based on historical material. He wanted his film to be both truly authentic and touching" (Rinke, 2013: 54). The movie, therefore, seeks to rely on the memories of the former GDR citizens. Whether he succeeds or fails becomes a matter for the second question.

While the success of the movie is partly based on how entertaining it is, most importantly, as a film based on historical events, its success is also based on how realistic it appears. In other words, the success of the movie also depends on whether (or not) it succeeds in reflecting in convincing details, the purported story. Judging from its overall success, the movie and the narrative can be taken as legitimate. In addition, the movie also received necessary support and appraisal within Germany, for instance, by public figures such as Wolf Biermann, a prominent GDR dissident singer, federal commissioners of *Stasi* archives such as Joachim Gauck and Marianne Birtler and experts on the history of the GDR

such as Manfred Wilke (see for example, von Donnersmarck, 2013 and Wilke, 2013). However, concerns have been raised in relation to failing to achieve the same success in Germany (in terms of revenue) as compared to its counterparts such as Goodbye, Lenin! (See for instance, Cooke, 2013). This may reflect a degree of failure to represent the reality of the GDR state as seen by certain members of the German society. After all, some members have expressed displeasure about the narrative of the movie. For instance, Gerhard Ehrlicher (2006) viewed the movie as not only misrepresenting the reality as "*Die Realität war eine andere*" but also trivialising notorious activities of the *Stasi.*

In addressing the third question, one would note that since Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck hails from the former Bonner Republic, the memory collective of former citizens of the Bonner Republic and the FRG state revolves around the disgust towards the GDR dictatorship. Hence, partly, the movie depicts elements of this understanding. For instance, through focusing on the abuse of office by GDR state officials (such as Minister Bruno Hempf) who used state resources for personal agendas, the film is able to depict the memory of GDR as corrupt and deplorable. The focus on the office of the *Stasi* to portray a rigid and ruthless system also aligns with this memory of the GDR as a system of dictatorship. However, by moving on to focus on individuals (among state officials) who can see good in others (*Die Sonate vom Guten Menschen*), the movie moves away from this memory collective.

3.3.2 What do they remember? What is the focus of their narrative(s)?

As the title of the movie also highlights, the focus of the narrative in *Das Leben der Anderen* is on the *Stasi*; the German secret police. Perhaps the reason for this engagement with the topic of the *Stasi* stems from the reliance of the GDR on the *Stasi* ministry to enforce its dictatorial tendencies. In other words, the *Stasi* features strongly in discussions about the GDR's dictatorship. Hence, since von Donnersmarck himself observed that he considered the injustice in the GDR as a rich ground for a film story (von Donnersmarck, 2013: 24), one is therefore, not surprised by the fact that the *Stasi* (as a feature of the SED dictatorship) is a central feature in the film.

3.3.3 How do they remember? What images do they relate to?

Das Leben der Anderen depicts the *Stasi* past. However, how the narrative engages this past is unusual and very interesting. Privvy to the historical details of the *Stasi*, one would have expected a movie to focus mainly on spineless acts of the *Stasi* agents such as bugging, arresting, interrogation and torturing of the GDR citizens. Yet, though it displays a fair amount of these notorious activities, its focus is somewhat unusual, an exploration of a silver lining within the *Stasi*. It is through Gerd Wiesler, the main character of the narrative and a *Stasi* agent that Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck explores this silver lining. This "silver lining" however, has been an object of investigation by scholars such as Wolle (2006) who have questioned the depiction of a "*Stasi* with a human(e) face" and questions have been raised as to how members of an authoritarian and brutal organisation like the *Stasi* can be diverted from the interest of the organisation by humanitarian concerns or affection or compassion.

3.3.4 What might be the motives of the narrative(s)?

While this movie can be described as performing the same task of "looking back and forth" as Wolfgang Staudte's *Die Mörder sind unter uns* (The murderers are Among us, 1946), the narrative of *Das Leben der Anderen* seems to carry an opposite objective. Rather than pointing fingers and identifying the villains and victims of the past (as is the case in *Die Mörder sind unter uns), Das Leben der Anderen* seems to be reconciliatory in nature. It seems to manoeuvre between victims and villains as if to suggest that the GDR past cannot be seen only in black and white, but that a lot of information is in the grey area. This grey area can be best discovered when these discussions of the GDR past are approached from a bottom-up analysis, thus discovering communicative memory through discourses of characters, for instance, conversations and relationships between the characters of Dreyman and his wife and friends, Wiesler and Christa-Maria Sieland. The "unusual" lies in these relationships (formal and informal). This "unusual" story of Saul who becomes a Paul is the core of the narrative. This unusual conversion becomes the grey area of the *Wende* past.

In *Das Leben der Anderen*, it is as if von Donnersmarck is seeing that in the history of the GDR, everyone is a victim in one way or the other. The movie discourages pointing fingers. It considers a revisionist image of the GDR past. The image of an officer of the *Stasi* (the most feared organisation), who himself is coldly presented as seldomly smiling, and

having no family or friends, and dedicated to his work as having a soft side encourages one to revise their knowledge of the *Stasi*. The story can encourage one to say; "perhaps they were not as bad as we have depicted them, perhaps some of them were indeed humane after all". This observation can be discussed in relation to Hannah Arendt's concept of the banality of evil. Having closely witnessed Eichmann on the stand in his trial for participating in the Holocaust, and noticing him as a normal human being, Arendt reviewed her understanding of the "evil". She began to explore other factors (such as following orders) which might have made a normal person to behave in an unfathomably evil way. Hence, *Das Leben der Anderen* shares the same revisionist stance with *Flame*, in the sense that while *Das Leben der Anderen* revises the image of the *Stasi* from a negative to a neutral position, *Flame* revises the image of the liberation fighter from a heroic to a neutral position. By doing this, both movies shift away from collective memories of their societies. This stance also attracts fierce criticism from those who had hoped these movies would stick to clearly defined collective narratives. *Das Leben der Anderen* can be considered as too nuanced in its portrayal of the *Stasi*, while *Flame* is considered as full of lies and pornographic by those who participated in the revolution (the war veterans, see Rwafa, 2012).

CHAPTER IV: *Flame*

4.1 Background and Approach

Flame is a movie by Ingrid Sinclair which depicts the *Second Chimurenga* revolution in Zimbabwe. The movie captures mainly the role of women in the revolution and the challenges they faced. The title of the movie, which is also the combat name of the main character of the movie, underscores the central role played by women in the *Second Chimurenga* revolution. If one can analyse it deeper, the metaphor of a flame or heat reflects a state of being active and making an impact on society. Through the title (one may argue), women are portrayed as challenging the peripheral roles given to them by a patriarchal society. They are therefore, portrayed as fiery "flames", whose role and impact cannot be ignored by Zimbabwean society.

For the purposes of a detailed sequence analysis, the movie has been broken down into ten sequences. What follows is the analysis of these sequences and how they contribute to the main narrative of the movie. Even though the movie has received a fair amount of critical attention, the analysis provided here may be useful in highlighting a plethora of overlooked issues. This analysis is also critical as a background and a point of reference for the discussion of revolutionary memories as reflected in this movie.

4.2 Flame: Sequence Analysis

Sequence I: Historical Background

The sequence begins with the voice of a female narrator introducing the story. According to this narrator, the story is about two female friends. The narrator begins by providing a brief historical background of the *Second Chimurenga* revolution, which begins with the arrival of settlers in the "land which lies between two great rivers, Limpopo and Zambezi" in 1890 and ends with the declaration of independence in 1980. As the narrator is giving us a summary of the struggle for Independence in Zimbabwe, we see historical images depicting the struggle against colonialism. These are images which are common in historical documents on colonialism in Zimbabwe. The summary identifies the source of the quarrel between the coloniser and the colonised as land. The first sequence is, therefore, non-fictional as it provides the authentic historical information on the *Second Chimurenga* revolution.



Figure. 4.1: Historical Images depicting the *Chimurenga* revolution (**Seq. I**), from left; settlers crossing a river and right; Second *Chimurenga* fighters celebrating the declaration of independence.

Although the other three movies under study here have (within their plots) authentic historical information, they do not have a clear historical outline of the revolutions as presented in the movie *Flame*.

Sequence II: Florence

The fictional narrative of *Flame* begins in this sequence with a *Second Chimurenga* war song "*Zimbabwe nyika yedu yababa*". Meanwhile, we see a woman named Florence perusing *Second Chimurenga* photos. Her attention is caught by a photo of two women brandishing guns. Behind this photo is Nyasha's address. From the outset, we can tell that the story uses the flashback technique, as we are introduced to a full-grown Florence in post-independence Zimbabwe. As Florence begins her journey in search of both Nyasha (her "lost" friend) and employment, our narrator sets in, giving us the background of their friendship (how they left home together and were trained as freedom fighters). This sequence is important as it opens at least two areas of concern: the importance of songs in the *Second Chimurenga* revolution (especially as reflected through the African narratives) and the discussion on the gains of the *Second Chimurenga* revolution in Zimbabwe.

In this sequence, the gains of the liberation struggle are also questioned. For instance, our narrator laments that "when we won the war, we thought we were free", but life did not go according to their expectations. In post-independence Zimbabwe, uneducated men and women as embodied by the characters of Florence and her husband are struggling to make ends meet. To them, the struggle against poverty continues. In the post-independence Zimbabwe of *Flame*, the same old binaries of the have and the have-nots, the educated elite and illiterate poor continue unabated. Because of this, relationships are compromised. For instance, Florence is forced by this situation to abandon her marriage. Furthermore, the

friendship of Nyasha and Florence is presented as rickety. Florence finds it difficult to see Nyasha and ends up sticking their photo on her door. The flashback of their *Second Chimurenga* war experience is rekindled by this photo.

Sequence III: 1975

This sequence is centred on Nyasha's (the narrator´s) memories of the *Second Chimurenga* revolution which has been simplified (in the first sequence) as a story about two friends. As highlighted by the title of this sequence, 1975 is the year when two young girls, Nyasha and Florence, decide to be involved in the fight for a "free" Zimbabwe. From the outset, we are introduced to two friends with totally different ambitions and interests. Nyasha, the "mission girl", is portrayed as an upcoming intellectual who dreams of a city life and of a white-collar job. Florence is portrayed as a simple rural girl whose ambition is to get married and have children. One therefore wonders what the colonial Rhodesia has to offer to these ambitious young women, or what the vision of a free Zimbabwe would do for them. These questions are already answered in the analysis of the second sequence of the movie. In this sequence (through flashback), we are presented with an employed Nyasha who is viciously typing behind a desk and a Florence who is languishing in a rural area which has nothing to offer to her and her unemployed husband. On one hand, the free Zimbabwe has therefore provided avenues for the achievement of their ambitions, Florence is married and celebrated as new *mroora* (a daughter in law), while Nyasha is now working as a secretary. However, Florence's struggles confirm that only the path taken by Nyasha can sustain livelihood. The new Zimbabwe has no kind words nor place for an uneducated woman. On the other hand, these two young ladies are sceptical about what colonial Rhodesia can offer. They have heard at *pungwes* that the coloniser has disposed the African not only of land but also of resources and means of livelihood. For instance, in one of the vigils captured in this sequence, Comrade Danger informs the participants that the coloniser has taken "everything, our land, our water, our animals" and these participants are in agreement that colonial Rhodesia has no future for young Africans such as Nyasha and Florence.

The sequence also demonstrates the role of songs in the *Second Chimurenga* as the *pungwes* were enlivened by singing *Second Chimurenga* songs and sloganeering. The sequence ends with Florence's father having been arrested by the Rhodesian police after being sold out by a local shop owner (Chiwara) whom he owed some money. This therefore

raises the issue of spying and selling out, an issue which is also relevant to *Das Leben der Anderen*.

Sequence IV: The journey Begins

The sequence is significant to the movie as it shows how Nyasha and Florence join the *Second Chimurenga* liberation struggle. The sequence begins with these two young girls fetching water from a well where they begin to discuss their intentions of joining the struggle. Just like Christa-Maria Sieland in *Das Leben der Anderen*, Florence is portrayed as a realist and a practical woman, an individual who is not guided by abstract ideas like her friend Nyasha. Like Georg Dreyman in *Das Leben der Anderen*, Nyasha is sceptical about joining the struggle, as she still believes she can carve a life and a career for herself in colonial Rhodesia. However, as they undertake their journey to Mozambique and encounter scenes of colonial cruelty (such as a razed down village and a notice offering a reward of a thousand dollars for capturing a "terrorist"), Nyasha begins to accept the decision they have taken. Further evidence of the central role played by songs during the *Second Chimurenga* is witnessed in this sequence as the two girls motivate their tired legs with *Second Chimurenga* songs such as "*Tauya muZimbabwe*" (we have arrived in Zimbabwe). As they travel, we are also entertained by *mbira* music playing in the background.

Sequence V: Flame and Liberty: Naming

The sequence begins with the arrival of Nyasha and Florence at a *Second Chimurenga* training camp in Mozambique. The atmosphere of the camp is lively and full of songs and other activities. The girls are overwhelmed by the new expressions of freedom as displayed by women wearing trousers. However, they also witness the ugly part of the struggle such as the brutal way of disciplining those found transgressing the code of conduct of the camp and the struggle as a whole.

The most important contribution of this sequence, however, is the introduction of the naming process. As presented in this sequence, *nom de guerre*s (combat names) were preferred for the sole reason of trying to avoid leading the coloniser to one's family and thus putting their life in danger. Nyasha and Florence, therefore, receive their *Second Chimurenga* "baptism" names as Liberty and Flame, respectively. The issue of using names so as to avoid revealing one´s true identity is also in evidence in *Das Leben der Anderen* where Stasi

informants were given reference names such as "Informant Marta" (Christa-Maria Sieland, "Lazlo" (Georg Dreyman) and "Agent 27" (Wiesler).

Sequence VI: Women in training camps

This sequence details the role and status of women in *Second Chimurenga* training camps. The sequence begins with a lesson in political education. In this sequence, women are seen complaining about several issues. Their training is delayed, the leadership does not let them fight while also struggling to feed them. One of them even complains that her periods have stopped, raising concerns of abuse. Meanwhile, their male counterparts are presented as controlling everything and entertaining themselves with not only alcohol but also women who are forced to take care of their intimate needs. In one of these incidences, Flame is abused by the new camp commander, comrade Che. Due to these violations, normal relationships are compromised (such as Flame and Danger's relationship). Just as in the case of Christa-Maria Sieland in *Das Leben der Anderen* who suffers at the hands of the powerful and controlling Hempf, women (as represented here by Flame) suffer from emotional abuse.

Sequence VII: Sell-outs and Spies

This sequence begins with the arrival of new comrades from Zimbabwe where Flame is informed about the death of her father who was killed by Rhodesian forces. This sequence, therefore, acts as a continuation of the foregoing sequence which touches on the role of women in the *Second Chimurenga.* From this sequence, we learn that women did not only suffer physical abuse in camps, but also had to bear issues affecting their unprotected families back home.

The sequence also covers Comrade Che's apology to Flame for abusing her. The apology seems to shift the blame of men's abusive behaviour to the war itself, an issue which has sparked debates in the post-independence era. According to Che, "war changes everything, sometimes we forget that we are human-beings". Although Flame ends up sympathising with Che, some women might find this act as a display of weakness.

Sequence VIII: *Tauya muZimbabwe*

As the title suggests, the sequence covers the return of Flame and other "freedom fighters" to Zimbabwe. In this sequence, we continue to see the widening differences in terms of ambitions between Liberty and Flame. Liberty spends most of her time behind a desk doing secretarial duties while Flame spends most of her time on the front-line fighting. Upon returning to the front-line, Flame decides to settle a score with the man who sold-out his father to the settlers. What is interesting about Flame is that she decides to spare the sell-out, as if to suggest that the future is about forgiving those who "lost themselves" in the war and ended up betraying the cause of the struggle. Furthermore, her actions clearly show an aversion to the excuses used by men who blame the war for their transgressions.

Sequence IX: Giving birth to Zimbabwe

It is in this sequence where Flame discovers that she is pregnant and later gives birth to *Hondo* (war). The name of the child suggests that just like the free Zimbabwe, he is a product of war, and suffering. Soon after meeting his son, comrade Che is killed in an air strike, leaving Flame to look after the child alone, an added burden for liberation-war women. After the death of her child's father, Flame laments that "there is nothing left". This sequence also continues the already established exploration of two types of the *Second Chimurenga* female soldiers: the one on the front-line of the struggle (represented by Flame) and the other who is studying behind the scenes of the struggle and in most cases, away from the danger and hazards of the liberation war (represented by Liberty). Liberty is chosen for college training while Flame becomes a legendary soldier and a detachment commander. At this stage, we see both thriving at what they do best. It is as if both *Flame* and *Das Leben der Anderen* are trying to draw attention to the importance of literature or art in a revolution. Art can aid not only in the struggle for revolution as demonstrated by the role of writers in *Das Leben der Anderen*, but can also be instrumental in keeping the memory of the struggle alive. Through the character of Flame and Liberty, one can analyse not only the role of women in the struggle, but also its pitfalls and outcomes; that is what has been achieved and what is yet to be achieved. Through these characters, the film (as art) therefore can document and keep the memory of the revolution alive. Similarly, one can also assert that through the coverage of the struggles of artists such as Georg Dreyman, Christa-Maria Sieland and others, the film *Das Leben der Anderen* makes an important contribution in the role of the artist in the *Wende*.

Sequence X: *Pamberi nehondo*!

Sequence ten captures the achievement of independence for a new Zimbabwe. The sequence begins with gathered soldiers who are informed that the war has been won. They celebrate through singing *Second Chimurenga* songs. At this event, the role played by women is appreciated and celebrated. One of the speakers mentions that women fought alongside men and they also sheltered them. The sequence also offers us a glimpse of post-independence Zimbabwe, where Comrade Danger marries Flame and they settle at his rural home. However, when Danger is unceremoniously dismissed from his work, he becomes abusive towards his wife. Suffering under an abusive husband and lack of means of livelihood, Flame is forced to rethink her options and thus consider the city as a better place to live. Hence, a woman whom we have seen as a realist during colonial Zimbabwe is now seen as not only a "victim" of her choices but also a dreamer who is rudely awoken from her slumber by the realities of post-independence Zimbabwe. By choosing to fight instead of studying, it is as if she was doomed to fail in her future. However, Flame remembers and saves what she did for independence and liberation. In fact, the ending of the movie sees a reversal in the portrayal of the two characters, as it is Liberty who is now presented as a realist who has been able to correctly predict post-Zimbabwean society.

In the closing scenes of the movie, when Flame expresses her desire to participate in the heroes-day celebrations, saying "It's for us. Are we not heroes?", Liberty shakes her head in disagreement and responds, "We are just women". This analysis of post-independence Zimbabwe, therefore, confirms the reversal of roles and shows Liberty as a realist and Flame an idealist. In a nutshell, considering the closing portrayal of the character of Flame, it is as if Sinclair is saying women like Flame, uneducated but determined to be at the front-line of the struggle, fighting alongside men, find themselves disadvantaged in post-Independence Zimbabwe, and thus have to continue the struggle. For women like Flame, the fight does not end with the hoisting of the new Zimbabwean flag but calls for one to say "*pamberi nehondo*!" (Forward with the struggle". In this instance, literature therefore, plays an important role of preserving the memory of the struggle and enables one to assess the gains of the struggle against its goals.

4.3 The memory of the *Second Chimurenga* revolution as depicted in *Flame*

In Zimbabwe the film *Flame*, which was produced in 1996, appeared during the country's second decade of independence and at a time when the new administration was still trying to implement its revolutionary reforms. During this time, not much time was left for the engagement with the past. Very few voices therefore, as compared to the post 2000 era emerged to question the revolutionary path to independence let alone encourage debates on the memories of the *Second Chimurenga*. During the production of *Flame*, the post-independence state revolutionary narrative was the unchallenged version of remembering the *Second Chimurenga* revolution. By manipulating the available state resources and infrastructure, the new administration ensured that this narrative enjoyed much publicity such as being taught in school as "Zimbabwean history". This narrative does not only justify the use of war to bring about the revolution, but also considers those involved in the revolutionary war as "heroes". As a result of a campaign by the state to instil this narrative in the public memory, most Zimbabweans have taken this narrative as the national memory and challenging it is usually considered as lack of patriotism.

However, since the year 2000, as the general dissatisfaction towards the state grows, various narratives which seek to retell the story of the Zimbabwean revolution have emerged. Most of these memories do not demonstrate intentions of romanticising the revolution. There are two main narratives of this nature; the first one is the narrative of the post-independent revisionist Africans, who present divergent views of the revolutionary past and the narrative of the former settlers (and their descendants) who express a different understanding of the revolution. Though emanating from different poles, these two narratives concur on certain aspects while disagreeing on some aspects of the revolution. For instance, while revisionist African narratives still go along with the state narrative on the justification of a gun for independence, the narratives of the former settlers view the war as an unjustified act of terror. These two narratives which seek to challenge the state narrative are well reflected in the two movies *Flame* and *Albino,* respectively. The collective memories in these two movies will, therefore, be explored in view of these observations.

4.3.1 Whose memories are captured in *Flame*?

As has already been highlighted above, the revolutionary past of Zimbabwe is usually also captured in three collective narratives. These are the state memory which has assumed the status of the dominant public memory, the narrative of the post-independence revisionist Africans, and the narrative of the former settlers (and their descendants). The state narrative is usually supported by revolutionary war veterans' organisations.

The first two narratives usually have a mutual understanding when it comes to their criticism of the colonial government. However, their point of difference is that the state narrative romanticises the role of the liberation-war fighters, portraying them as heroes. The post-independence African narrative is sceptical about the deeds of the liberation-war fighters and usually cites some of their scandalous activities during the *Second Chimurenga* as a cause for concern. The plot of the movie *Flame* sets it apart from the dominant state narrative (though both narratives justify the necessity of the war in order to achieve a revolution). The story is told from the point of view of African women who participated in the struggle for independence in Zimbabwe. However, due to its identification of the male guerrilla as not always heroic but sometimes abusive towards the female guerrilla, the movie therefore, becomes a representation of the post-independence revisionist African narrative. By virtue of trying to maintain an African perspective of remembering the Zimbabwean revolution, while at the same reviewing if not downgrading the state collective memory, the narrative of the movie renders itself as the post-independence revisionist African narrative.

Furthermore, though having a settler background and thus expected to champion memories of the former settlers such as those captured in *Albino*, the director of the movie Ingrid Sinclair captures the story in a vivid and convincing manner. First, her story stems from direct interviews with former female guerrillas (California Newsreel) and thus positions itself as re-telling their story and their memories of the Zimbabwean revolution. Secondly, she involves among her cast, former liberation fighters such as the late Dick Chingaira (as Comrade Rapo), a revolutionary musician well known as "Comrade Chinx". This adds value to its legitimacy. Hence, the story is told in a convincing manner. However, due to its revisionist stance towards the state memory collective, the film was subjected to censorship. It was confiscated by the government following the protests by war veteran organisations which described it as a misinterpretation of history. The background of the director also added doubt about the authenticity of the story. Having been born and bred in Great Britain

and directing a movie which portrays the "heroes" of the revolution as villains may present a leeway for some to question her agenda. Indeed, as noted by Rwafa (2012) this movie was subjected to censorship by the Zimbabwean government. However, since Tsitsi Dangarembga, one of Zimbabwe's prominent writers and film makers, also contributed to the writing of the script of this movie, the significance of the director's background in the narrative of the movie becomes debatable.

4.3.2 What do they remember? What is the focus of their narrative(s)?

The central focus of the movie is to review the role of women in the *Second Chimurenga* revolution. Considering the understanding of Zimbabwe as a patriarchal society, little attention has been directed towards the role of female guerrillas in the *Second Chimurenga* revolution. To demonstrate this engagement with a controversial topic, the movie was the outcome of a seven-year process of assembling stories from female participants.

4.3.3 How do they remember? What images do they relate to?

As a product of interviews held with former liberation-war female fighters, the movie purports to tell their story and experience of the revolutionary war. In the movie, women are depicted as equal participants (together with their male counterparts) in the struggle for independence. Just like their male counterparts, they make sacrifices in order to join the struggle. When both Flame and Liberty decide to go for training in Mozambique, they sacrifice their personal interests such as receiving an education. Furthermore, one can observe that during the war, women carry a double burden, of fighting, taking care of the sexual needs of their male counterparts and the societal duty of being mothers.

When these observations are taken into consideration, then one can compare the role of women in *Flame* with for example, the image of women in *Das Leben der Anderen*. For instance, Rinke (2013) argues that the role and status of women in *Das Leben der Anderen* as embodied by Christa-Maria Sieland is the focal point of the melodrama of the film. She argues that "a primary characteristic of melodrama is its appeal to pathos through the emotions of a suffering female character" (p. 102). This is mainly the case not only in *Das Leben der Anderen*, which is addressed by Rinke, but also in *Flame*. In fact, one can even argue

that the torment of the female character and the desire by the director to turn the attention of the viewer towards her is more vivid in *Flame* than in *Das Leben der Anderen*.

Interestingly, in all four films under investigation in this study, there is evidence of melodrama and pathos around female characters. In *Goodbye, Lenin!* Christiane carries the burden of the *Wende* and the transition from one political system to another. She becomes the embodiment of most former GDR citizens and of the communist rule itself. Her collapse can be taken as symbolising the collapse of the communist regime, and hence her suffering draws much empathy from most viewers. In *Albino*, the feud between Terrick (representing the coloniser) and "Whispering Death" (also known as the Albino, representing the colonised African who is also fighting for his independence) is centred on a woman named Sally, who is allegedly raped and murdered by the Albino. This act and violation of Sally, therefore, determines where the viewer's empathy lies. The viewer is likely to pity Sally for being a political victim of the two warring sides. They may forgive Terrick for being vengeful and despise the Albino for his "terrorist" actions. This analysis, however, will be subject to the narratives and the memories these movies attempt to depict.

4.3.4 What might be the motives of the narrative(s)?

When the background of the director is not taken into consideration, the motive of the movie can be taken as to "recover and reinterpret history" (California Newsreel). It can, therefore, be considered as intending to produce reviewed images of the liberation war and the revolution in Zimbabwe. In this light, the movie can be taken as performing what Nora refers to as "rememoration" (Nora, 1996: xxiv) or reconstruction of the narrative of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. When understood from this perspective, the movie does not seek to replace available memory collectives (such as the state memory collective) but rather to retell the story of the revolution with certain emphasis which might have been omitted by the popular memory collectives such as the state narrative.

However, when the director's background as an English woman retelling the story of Zimbabwean former female guerrillas is taken into consideration, the narrative *can* be taken as simply attempting to tarnish the revolution by perhaps discrediting or rather challenging the state memory collective. Hence, in this light it can be taken as presenting a counter-history, which suggests that there is not just one history but histories and herstories. For instance, this is what war veterans' organisations in Zimbabwe believed to be the motive of

this counter-narrative of the revolution in Zimbabwe and this is demonstrated in their protests. Richard Chirongwe, Deputy Secretary General of the War Veterans Association of Zimbabwe protested that "If this film is not stopped, it will give the wrong picture to people. The rape scene detracts from the lofty goals of the struggle for independence. *What should have been emphasized was the rape and torture of civilians by the white Rhodesian soldiers*." (California Newsreel). Chirongwe seemed to imply that the narrative of the movie trivialised the inhumane activities of the coloniser.

CHAPTER V: *Goodbye Lenin*

5.1 Background and Approach

Goodbye, Lenin is a 2003 tragicomedy which was directed by Wolfgang Becker. This film is usually cited in discussions of the *Wende* and *Ostalgie* phenomena related to the GDR. As Finger (2005) puts it "The German public's reception of G*ood Bye Lenin*! has mostly focused on the film's rendering of the *Wende*, its expression of ostalgia, and on its fairytale vision of a unified future within socialist political parameters" (p. 41). Following this view, *Good Bye Lenin!* therefore can be understood as presenting a wealth of information on the *Wende* past which is valuable for this study project. By providing a sequence analysis and a discussion on how the memory of the *Wende* is handled in *Goodbye Lenin!*, this chapter is able to explore the contribution of this movie in rekindling and reliving the memory of the GDR. In order to provide a detailed sequence analysis, this movie has been broken down into twenty sequences.

5.2 *Goodbye Lenin*: Sequence Analysis

The tragicomedy *Goodbye, Lenin*, which was directed by Wolfgang Becker, has been broken down into twenty sequences. What follows is the analysis of these sequences and their significance in the movie.

Sequence I: Summer, 1978

The sequence begins with a display of the Kellner family videos. From these videos we see for instance, their summer 1978 experiences. From these videos, we can also tell that this family was still united, we can hear children (Alex and Ariane) calling their father. Strangely, this model of a proper family with both parents taking care of their children, is merely a video recording. The reality, which is revealed in the second sequence, shows a different picture. This sequence also succeeds in providing a convincing setting of the GDR. For instance, we see Trabis with GDR number plates (see **fig. 5.1**). These images, which also include the socialist party emblem and the dominant red colour, reflect the historical GDR society. Besides Wiesler's Stasi uniform, *Das Leben der Anderen* fails to provide such a colourful and vivid opening background of communist Germany.



Figure. 5.1: Images depicting the GDR, on the left are Trabis with the GDR number plates and, on the right, the emblem of the socialist unity party of Germany.

In this sequence, we are also introduced to the televised space travel by an East Germann Sigmund Jähn, which took place on the 26th of August 1978. Meanwhile, while the children are watching this event on television, their mother is being grilled by a Stasi official on "*Republikflucht*". As we no longer see Alex and Ariane's father, we can assume that Robert has fled the republic. These skirmishes with the government officials emotionally affect Christiane and the Kerner family. Alex who takes the role of being our narrator notes that his mother hardly spoke any longer, not with her children and not with other people. Due to these emotionally taxing developments, Christiane disappears from the scene only to resurface eight weeks later as a changed individual.

Sequence II: A passionate socialist

The sequence begins with Christiane's return after eight weeks of absence and shock following her torment at the hands of Stasi officers. From this sequence, we witness a "reborn" Christiane who, unlike her husband Robert who escapes to FRG, decides to "marry" her socialist fatherland. From this sequence, therefore, we see a passionate socialist who campaigns for the betterment of the citizens of the socialist GDR. Rather than argue with the GDR government officials, Christiane is now an important tool and mouthpiece of the party. Besides leading socialist youth singing "*Unsere Heimat*", she now attends important governmental functions.



Figure. 5.2: Christiane appearing on a televised governmental function.

Sequence III: Ten years later

As the title suggests, this sequence captures events which happen ten years later after Christiane's rebirth. Alex is now a grown-up young man. We can tell from the decorations and colourful military parades that the GDR is celebrating its 40th anniversary as a socialist state. While on the one hand, Christiane still expresses her commitment to the socialist government, Alex, on the other hand has grown to be a cynical young man who is sceptical about what the socialist government can offer to ordinary citizens and the GDR youths. Meanwhile, while Christiane is dictating words of praise for the socialist government, protesters are gathering outside. One can, therefore, argue that the presentation of these dual worlds - Christiane's utopian socialist world and the "real" world (where socialist rule is beginning to crumble) - demonstrates that Christiane is already "*im Koma*" (in a coma). As early as sequence III, Christiane is already living in a make-believe socialist fantasy.

Sequence IV: Evening walk

What is central in this sequence are the protests which occur at the same time as the GDR is celebrating its forty years of existence. As the sequence begins, we see Alex (after failing to awaken his mother from her socialist slumber or rather symbolic coma) joining the protesters. Immediately, we foresee a conflict brewing between the utopian world (as represented by Christiane and the GDR government) and real world (as represented by the protesters including Alex). The first evidence of this conflict is the brutal thwarting of the demonstration by the police. The second evidence is Christiane's collapse after realising that her son is not part of the world she has passionately tried to maintain and sustain. Her experience of coming face to face with reality drives her from a symbolic coma to a "real" Physical coma. Simply put, this sequence is all about this conflict. The sequence ends with

the arrest of the protesters including Alex, who (as the police truck drives away with the protesters) sees the fading image of her mother, a lifeless bundle on the ground.

Sequence V: In a coma

The sequence begins with Alex's release from a cell on the account of his mother who is in hospital. Christiane is in a coma and this is central in this sequence as it is in this sequence where we see Christiane's children trying to achieve a compromise between the past, the present and the future. Furthermore, Christiane's experience of going into a coma can be symbolically equated to the GDR's implosion. In other words, the GDR is slowly entering into a coma. The events captured in sequence six, including the fall of the wall, demonstrate this development.

Sequence VI: The wall is gone!

The title of this sequence underscores the fall of the socialist government as the wall was considered (by the GDR regime) as an antifascist protection barrier and a symbol of retaining communist values. Honecker's resignation becomes the epitome of the fall of the GDR. We witness Alex discarding a now considered useless picture of the former GDR leader on the roadside.



Figure. 5.3: Symbols of the end of socialist GDR. From left to right, the fall of the wall and surveillance towers.



Figure. 5.4: Symbols of the spread of capitalism to East Germany. From left to right, Ariane now working at Burger King and Coca-Cola is now in the East ("*Sozialistische Cola*").

Sequence VII: Prosperity in the East

Sequence seven continues to capture the Westernisation or "Macdonaldisation" (the adoption of a fast-food culture) of the former GDR territory from the opening of Burger King and Coca Cola outlets to the reshuffling of workers to enhance the former GDR workforce with FRG expertise. We see such reshuffling at the company, where Alex works as a television technician, where Alex (East) is paired with Denis (West).

Sequence VIII: Trainee nurse Lara

This sequence captures the development of the romantic element in this comedy, a unique aspect of the movie as it diverts from its comic trend to social realism. The sequence captures the development of a love relationship between Alex and Lara, the girl he met at a demonstration who is also a trainee nurse. This sequence is also significant in this movie as it demonstrates the newfound artistic freedom. Alex and Lara's love rendezvous in a club gives us a chance to see colourful Punk entertainment. Note that in the GDR, Punk music was understood as protest music, since it sought to break away from state control in terms of lyrics and appearance. As captured by Tim Mohr (2018) in his text titled *Burning Down the Haus: Punk Rock, Revolution and the Fall of the Berlin Wall*, Punk persecution was common during the existence of the GDR. Since Punks always rebel against social limits, they were bound to clash with any repressive form of governance.

**Figure. 5.5**: A Punk show in the post-*Wende* East Germany.

Sequence IX: entertainment from the west

The sequence begins with Alex and his new colleague Denis, marketing and installing cable television. This activity is also evidence of the spread of "western" freedom which included being able to view a wide range of non-state-controlled television-stations. An aerial view of newly installed satellites shows how fashionable satellite television is becoming in the former GDR.

Sequence X: the 79 square metre GDR

The sequence opens with Christiane's awakening. She awakens in a new world; the post *Wende* world where the GDR is now only a "footnote" in the history of Germany. Following her doctor's warning that any emotional disturbance or excitement may result in her relapse, Alex sees the post *Wende* developments as hazardous to his mother's health. Hence, for the love of his mother, and with the help of his new colleague, Denis, Alex tries to recreate the GDR Christiane knew before she went into a coma. The comic feature of the movie is therefore, centred on his attempt to recreate a world he did not believe in, but is now a "prerequisite" for Christiane's survival. In a world that has embraced change, Christiane's room becomes an island, a seventy-nine square meter GDR. Alex and Denis do a good job since Christiane herself cannot help but mention that nothing has changed in her room. In a comic yet emotional way, this sequence also captures Alex's struggles to get GDR products such as the *Mocca* coffee (which has been replaced by *Jacobs Krönung*) which are now scarce or relegated into dustbins. This complication is only alleviated later when Alex and Lara stumble upon an abandoned apartment (*Schloss mit Balkon*) with some former GDR supplies such as *Tempobohnen*.



Figure. 5.6: Alex and Denis preparing Christiane's room (the 79 square metre GDR).

Sequence XI: The power of attorney

The sequence is centred on the currency reforms and the struggle by the Kerners to keep up with these reforms. This sequence begins with Christiane informing her children that she cannot remember where she kept her savings. With limited time left to exchange old GDR currency for the new FRG currency, Alex and Ariane are worried. When Christiane finally recalls where she hid her savings, the exchange deadline has expired, and the savings become worthless. This can be considered symbolic of the fading memory of the GDR among citizens who are eager to get Western money and thus buy Western goods and services. From the top of a building, an incidence which coincides with football celebrations, Alex throws away useless notes and the memory of the GDR.

Sequence XII: *Mother wants to watch television*

This sequence introduces a new problem and a challenge to Alex: Christine's desire to have a television. Having been bored of playing cassettes on a wireless radio with no antennae, Christiane is eager to know the "current affairs'' of her fatherland. However, outside her seventy-eight square metre GDR, Germany is celebrating unity. Germans are finding other activities which now unite them such as football.



Figure. 5.7: Alex and his colleagues enjoying a game of football oblivious of the past demarcations of East and West.

Sequence XIII: Birthday celebrations

The sequence can be considered the apex of the comic display in the movie *Goodbye, Lenin* as Alex goes to extreme ends in ensuring that his mother's birthday celebration is a success. The sequence is packed with hilarious scenes as our main character runs up and down and plays the role of not only an event-organiser but also a time-traveller. The comic scenes include the hiring of two lads to sing "*Unsere Heimat*" for Christiane, and Alex's action of bathing, dressing, and transporting a drunken Herr Klapprath on the back of his scooter to the Kerner apartment. One may also notice the efforts made by the ladies (Lara and Ariane) to dress properly (according to what was acceptable in the GDR).

Sequence XIV: Learning to walk

In this sequence, Christiane gets a glimpse of reality. Motivated by Paula, Christiane decides to stretch her legs and what begins as a simple exercise ends up on a disturbing note as she ends up going into a "foreign world" outside her apartment. Outside her flat, she sees a compromised "GDR". Everywhere, she sees evidence of Western (capitalist) encroachment, from the BMW cars to new neighbours from the West.

Sequence XV: Goodbye, Lenin!

Central in this sequence is Lenin's statue which Christiane sees as a helicopter is removing it and Alex's attempt to appease a worried Christiane. While other evidence of capitalist encroachment can be dismissed as some form of socialist welfare and care which has been extended to the "economically struggling" fellow German state of the FRG, the removal of Lenin's statue is not only hard to explain but also symbolically important. This event can be taken as a symbol of the collapse of socialist rule in East Germany. Furthermore, it is important to note that in his explanation of the "Macdonaldization"[10] of East Germany as the most successful of the two German states, Alex is (as he also confirms this) able to create a model of the GDR he wished for. This sequence, therefore, presents details of this "fictional" or rather "counter-factual" image of the GDR. The GDR had a not so appealing foreign policy and international appeal. Throughout its existence, the state struggled with regime legitimacy. Due to the cold-war politics, it would be counter-factual to imagine FRG

[10] The adoption of the fast-food culture.

citizens flocking into the GDR due to problems of "*Arbeitslosigkeit*", and the GDR government extending its social welfare care to them.

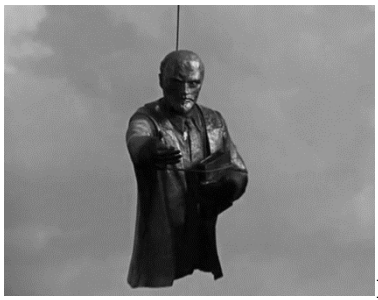
Figure. 5.8: Lenin's stature as it carried away by a helicopter.

Sequence XVI: To the holiday home

Ariane is pregnant against the wish of her West German boyfriend. Alex is visibly disturbed by this development, especially as it happens at a time of transition and thus complicates relationships. When one can read beyond this seemingly simple relationship, more can be unravelled. For instance, the relationship can be taken as a symbol of German unity. However, the pregnancy can mean much more. It might mean that with the growth of the Kerner household, the new German community is flourishing and gaining a new identity that is neither East nor West but something in-between. This sequence also covers the Kerners' travel to their holiday home.

Sequence XVII: Lies and Secrets

The sequence is a development from the previous sequence and is centred on the activities which take place at the Kerner's holiday home where Christiane decides to revisit the past and open up to her children about what really happened between her and Robert. The revelation that (by not following him to the FRG), she is the one who betrayed Robert due to fear of the socialist regime is important as it realigns Christiane's character. It becomes clear, therefore, that she was never a socialist enthusiast. Just like Christa-Maria Sieland (in *Das Leben der Anderen*) who compromises her relationship to save her career, to ensure the safety of her children, Christiane serves as a slave of the GDR regime. This revelation continues the narrative that is common to all the four movies under study here, the representation of women as suffering more than their male counterparts and being the ones who go the extra mile to make sacrifices for a greater cause. We see both Flame (in *Flame*) and Sally (in *Albino*) being candidates of pathos. Furthermore, most of these women (except Flame), after enduring gruelling experiences of both physical and emotional torture, succumb to the

assault by either the system of governance, corruption, male opportunism, or war. As I have already mentioned in my sequence analysis of *Flame*, due to the sacrifices she makes during the war, such as not furthering her education, Flame's survival in post-independence Zimbabwe poses a challenge to her. In this sequence, the revelation by Christiane can also be taken to represent a microcosm of the macrocosm. On a bigger scale, it can be taken as a question on the legitimacy of the state of the GDR, as a land which did not actually exist except in people's mind. At this point, Alex and Ariane now know that all this time, their mother was acting. Their own acting was even closer to reality than the one that they endured all the years, since they were kids. They are, therefore, infuriated by their wasted effort to save and maintain something that did not actually exist.

Sequence XVIII: The fading hope

The revelation of the years of lying and deceit and the subsequent deterioration of Christiane's health following this revelation is central in this sequence. On the same evening as she comes clean and knocks down her own mental Lenin, her health gives in, as if allowing her to rest since she has unlocked the puzzle of years. It is ironic that it is not actually the present (the *Wende*) nor the fear of the future that triggers her relapse but the need to come to terms with her past. One therefore, notices that all this time, it was not the unified Germany which was a threat to Christiane but the fading GDR system. This becomes an important revelation in the closing presentation of Christiane's character.

Sequence XIX: Back in the GDR

The movie continues to maintain its humorous attributes, for instance when Alex is convinced that his taxi driver is the famous GDR astronomer Sigmund Jähn and asks how it is "above there". This sequence is important as it allows characters to attempt to mend relationship cracks which were caused by years of cold war. In other words, this sequence begins the "operation restore normal relationships" in the former GDR. With the system and its wall gone, and its grip on his mother released, Alex can now attempt to mend not only his relationship with his father but his parents' "relationship". Whether he succeeds or not becomes a question for another day and sequence. Alex's determination to find Robert transgresses his earlier analysis of the man. Earlier in the movie, when Ariane mentions that

she thinks she saw her father at her workplace, Alex is dismayed by the thought of a fat father who thinks of nothing else but his burgers. He retorts that the father has nothing to do with him and he does not have anything to do with his father. This is the background which we have of the relationship between the father and the son. Fortunately, Alex and Robert can find a connection. However, the father-daughter relationship between Ariane and Robert does not recover from the ruin of time. At least here, the GDR regime kills a social relationship forever.

Sequence XX: Somewhere up there

The sequence presents the closing scenes of the movie. In this sequence, we go through Christiane's final hours. Even though as a viewer one notices that after her revelation, nothing matters now for Christiane, her dedicated Alex continues with his enactment work. At this point, he cooks the final present for his mother, a *Wende* news videos which shows a Sigmund Jähn look-alike, a cab driver, acting out the hero whom history could have celebrated as a new leader in the wake of Honecker. This becomes the last Christiane sees of "her GDR". With her, dies the memory of this GDR as no-one among those who attend her funeral holds the memory of the GDR so "dearly". As if to concur with the unrealistic nature of her existence (and perhaps that of the GDR), only those who "acted", attend her funeral. It is a gathering of actors and one may be inclined into thinking that even her "death" is not real. The movie, therefore, closes in the subjunctive mood. A mood that represents an act or state (not as a fact but) as contingent or possible. In simple terms, *Goodbye Lenin* can be considered as a movie within a movie.

5.3 The *Wende* memory as depicted in *Goodbye Lenin*

5.3.1 Whose memories are captured in *Goodbye, Lenin!*?

When the director's background is not taken into consideration, the narrative of the movie *Goodbye, Lenin* purports to represent the memories of former citizens of the GDR. The memories of the former GDR citizens can be analysed in two taxonomies. The first taxonomy is of those who remember the GDR as a dictatorship and who usually cite the

state's reliance on the *Stasi* to control its citizens as the defining characteristic of life in the GDR. This collective memory portrays the GDR in sad terms, as a period when the GDR citizens underwent a second gruesome experience of dictatorship after their endurance during the Third Reich. Drawing similarities between the GDR regime and national socialist dictatorship is indeed common in many texts, especially in relation to coming to terms with the past (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*). For instance, Silbermann (2000) observes that:

> Coming to terms with the past is a process that appropriately acknowledges rifts as well as continuities and that offers counter narratives for what retrospectively came to be seen as world-political events and representative traditions. That these specific German phrases are already associated with a rich, complex historicization of the Third Reich and the Holocaust gives me pause when they are applied to the GDR as a new object of attention, especially when their persistent repetition seems to be more a ritualistic gesture than a serious engagement with the resistances or ruptures that individual memory opposes to public images and discourses (Silbermann, 2000: 28).

Silbermann's observations, therefore, demonstrate the tendency of some scholars (be it in history or literature) to equate the memories of the GDR to those of the Third Reich and thus painting the GDR regime with the same brush of the notorious national socialists. Birtler's (2008) recollections are perhaps a perfect summary of such memories. For instance, she relates how the FRG radio stations which GDR citizens listened to in secret provided them with an aura of freedom. Through listening to West German radio, the GDR citizens were able to "escape" the GDR every night (2008: 44). Such a view remembers the GDR as a giant prison from which most citizens wished to escape.

The second taxonomy is usually considered as expressing itself through fond memories of the positive sides of the GDR. Memorable experiences (positive) of the GDR usually revolve around cultural life or the significance of the GDR as a home. These memories focus more on the remembrance of the GDR as a home which provided a sense of belonging to many East Germans rather than on its political system of administration. *Goodbye, Lenin* depicts characters (such as Alex's mother, Christiane) who are fond of the GDR both as a home to them, and as a nation with sound political and economic policies compared to its Western counterpart. These memories have been described as nostalgic; or rather relaying feelings of what has been known as *Ostalgie* which means good memories about East Germany.

This ideology of the dual memory collective of the former GDR citizens is perhaps well captured by Saunders and Pinfold (2013) in their analysis of an event that was held on the 14th of January 2012 to commemorate life during the GDR. Around five thousand (5000) formed a throng at the former *Stasi* headquarters. A group of five cabaret singers (four of them born in the GDR) known as the *Chansonwerkstatt* performed a live show they titled *Ostpaket: Wendekinder packen aus!* (Package from the GDR: children of the *Wende* unpack). According to Saunders and Pinfold (2013: 1), the show evoked different memories in its audience. Some were left in tears overwhelmed by memories of a happy childhood, while others found the show deeply provocative due to the much less pleasant memories the songs evoked in them. Having identified the two taxonomies that make up the memories of the former GDR citizens, it needs to be pointed out however, that there is no rigid fine line between these two taxonomies; since characters might display both memory collectives, although one is likely to be more dominant than the other. The development of the character of Christiane demonstrates this. The last sequences of the movie display Christiane in a new light, for instance that her loyalty to the SED party was a strategy of protecting her family and therefore, not sincere. However, during the movie, we see her craving for East German food such as *Spreewald* Pickles. This demonstrates that, although questioning the political system of the GDR, and besides considering the GDR as home, there was always something Christiane was fond of in the GDR.

However, though several writers have identified the dual memory structure in their analysis of the memories of former GDR citizens, some scholars have refuted the existence of *Ostalgie*. For instance, based on his interviews with former GDR citizens, Boyer (2006) has dismissed the concept as a reality of the memory collective of the former GDR citizens. He argues that in hundreds of the interviews he conducted with the former citizens of the GDR, none (regardless of age) expressed the desire or fantasized about the return of the GDR (2006: 373). Boyer links the *Ostalgie* concept with the memory collective of the FRG state. According to him, "the discourse on *Ostalgie* is itself symptomatic of the post-unification West German utopia of West Germany's natural affinity to the past, thus indicating the still animate logic of Cold war identifications" (p. 373). If this is the case, then the narrative of *Goodbye, Lenin!* (though it purports to represent or depict memories of former GDR citizens) represents the narrative of the former citizens of the Bonner Republic and the memory collective of the pre-unification FRG state.

Furthermore, the discussions related to *Ostalgie* among former GDR citizens have been complicated by the identification of two forms of nostalgias: the restorative nostalgia and the reflective nostalgia (Saunders and Pinfold, 2013: 4). Restorative nostalgia seeks to establish a truth while reflective nostalgia focuses on the meditation of history and the passage of time and is flexible. For instance, in *Goodbye, Lenin*, Alex's mother (Christiane) can be described as reflective. However, a very important point is that, since the final sequences of the movie demonstrate that Christiane's memory of the GDR is not completely sincere, to describe her as nostalgic is indeed problematic. After all, the restorative efforts of the GDR memory conducted by Alex are self-initiated. While disturbed by the evidence of change, Christiane herself does not demand the return of the GDR she knew.

It might also be insightful to discuss the narrative(s) of *Goodbye, Lenin!* considering the questions raised under the discussion of *Das Leben der Anderen.* These questions are: Whose narrative does the movie *Goodbye, Lenin!* purport to represent? Does the movie succeed (at least at an artistic level) to reflect the intended memories? What are the memories of their societies? Is the director of the movie able to break away from the memory collective of his society in order to explore a different memory path?

To address the first question, *Goodbye, Lenin!* purports to portray the narrative of the former citizens of the GDR. The movie's main concern is to review the relationship that exists between the former GDR citizens and the state of the GDR. It breaks away from the generality of the FRG understanding of the GDR as an undesirable state despised even by its own citizens. Yet, due to its revelation of a deep connection between the GDR and its citizens, the bemoaning of a lost "home", the narrative makes a provocative statement in relation to unification. By revealing their "nostalgic" ties to a dictatorial state, it seems to question their conviction and active involvement in the unified state of the FRG. Such questions can be linked directly or indirectly to the description of the former GDR citizens as *Jammerossis* (complaining East Germans). In addition, as has already been highlighted above, if the concept of "*Ostalgie" (*nostalgia of the GDR*)* is considered (as observed by Boyer, 2006) as a figment of the former Bonner Republic and the FRG state collective memory, then the movie represents memories of the former Bonner Republic and the FRG state. However, considering the movie's success in the domestic market, one can argue that it succeeds to represent the collective memory it purports to depict.

Considering whether the director succeeds to break away from the memory collective of his society (FRG) is a debatable matter. For instance, if *Ostalgie* is viewed in

"positive" terms such as reflective, then one can argue that the movie succeeds to break away from the FRG memory and interpretation. However, if *Ostalgie* is viewed in "negative" terms such as restorative, then the movie will be depicting former GDR citizens as stuck in the past. Such a view can be linked to the *Jammerossi* criticism of the former GDR citizens. In this light, the dismissal of *Ostalgie* sentiments by scholars such as Boyer (2006) will be understandable.

5.3.2 What do they remember? What is the focus of their narrative(s)?

The movie *Goodbye, Lenin* deals with the memories of the former GDR and how they related to the state of the GDR and to its collapse (the *Wende*). To Kapczynski (2007), the movie focuses on the demise of the GDR and the transition to a united Germany. The success of the narrative is derived from a reconstruction of the history of the GDR (which is mainly based on research than first-hand experience. This is evidenced through a historical timeline of political events and the background of historical places of memory such as streets and the statue of Lenin being airlifted away) on one hand and the counterfactual (this is a fictional construction of events in order to encourage debate on a particular theme, in this case the plot of the movie which is based on fiction).

The interplay of the two, the historical and the counterfactual provides a "convincing" narrative, without which the story would have hardly succeeded. Added to these two, is the element of satire, a rarely used technique in post *Wende* movies. This third element places *Goodbye, Lenin* in juxtaposition to *Das Leben der Anderen*. The latter deals with the *Wende* in sober terms (as embodied by the character of Gerd Wiesler), while the former presents such a serious matter with a humorous, light exposition (which is embodied in a hilarious reconstruction of the GDR past by Alex). Both films however, through these different strategies, succeed in re-memorising the GDR and the *Wende*. In determining the focus of the narrative in *Goodbye, Lenin,* one can perhaps borrow Saunders and Pinfold's (2013) terminology by saying, the movie seeks to establish "*Wie es war*" (how it was). In order to discuss this question, the narrative subjects itself to three versions of the GDR; the GDR as known and remembered through the memory of Christiane (faulty but ideal), the GDR that is reconstructed by Alex (a transformed version) and the GDR in its actual historical context (where just like Christiane's health) it is going through a review and is quickly fading away. To one who is less interested in the narrative than the performance of the movie, these three

versions of remembering GDR might not be obvious. These multiple perspectives of remembering reflect the memory boom which goes back to the post Second World War era.

5.3.3 How do they remember? What images do they relate to?

In order to determine how the narrative(s) (established above) of the movie *Goodbye, Lenin* remember GDR and the *Wende*, there is need to discuss the enactment of these three narratives of the GDR past.

I. *The GDR as known and remembered through the eyes of Christiane (faulty but ideal)*

Discussions of the post *Wende* phenomena of *Ostalgie* usually draw closely on this narrative to support their description of the movie as nostalgic of the East or presenting another "Sun-Alley-ization" (Handke, in Cooke, 2013: 7) of the GDR past. Christiane is a dedicated communist and therefore, is expected to be comfortable in the GDR or at least pretend to be. Yet, a lot is hidden. First of all, Christiane later reveals her secret to the family that her husband who escaped to the FRG in 1978 did not elope with a woman, but rather that he was being tormented by the government, and that there had made arrangement for her and the children to join him later. It is also revealed that she decided to stay to protect her children from the party. Therefore, it becomes clear that she joined the party to protect her family rather as an ardent follower. Hence, understanding Christiane as a character who embodies nostalgia becomes questionable. For example, she is terrified (and falls into a coma) to see Alex going against her lifetime effort of ensuring that the family is safe when she sees him taking part in a protest against the government and subsequently getting arrested. This view of the character of Christiane and her narrative of the GDR, therefore, brings forth the theme of the "artificial" or "counterfactual" that is evident throughout the movie.

Christiane's support of the party and government can be considered as artificial. The GDR she knows is the home to her family, it provides political, economic, and cultural means of survival (although these may not be the best as compared to what the FRG can provide to its own citizens). It is a home which can still provide something to yearn for such as GDR specialities *Spreewald* Pickles and Globus Peas. Hence, to keep this "home", she needs to create an artificial fondness of the party and the government. She knows that this same "home" is also home to political tyrants such as Honecker, to ruthless *Stasi* agents. These are the unwanted elements of her home, of the GDR. It is as if, through her, Becker is

describing *Ostalgie* as an "artificial" feeling which can be used to cover up a lot of insecurities.

II. *The GDR as reconstructed by Alex (an improved or transformed version of it)*

Through his recreations of the past, Alex creates his own version of the GDR. Alex creates his version of the GDR through his inept but effective ways of explaining reality to his ailing and fragile mother. For instance, when Christiane manages to take a stroll out of the apartment in which she is recovering from her illness, she is surprised to come across a large group of West Germans in East Berlin. Alex (being assisted by Denis) gets the idea to explain that the party has allowed thousands of West Germans into the GDR. This can also be considered as counterfactual, since in history and reality, the opposite happened. East Germans flocked out of the GDR to the FRG (just like his father, Robert). It is, however, what Alex would have wished to happen. This, therefore, entices one to stretch the debate further and ask if it had happened this way, would there be a unification, or a united nation known as the FRG today? Alex does the same with the Coca Cola banner which is explained as an invention of the GDR. This is Alex's version of the GDR, a GDR that never was, a GDR created out of reality and the imagination. It is a GDR were Honecker would not be rigid to allow thousands of FRG tourists into the GDR and where the GDR would be economically competitive to attract *Besserwessi* (better West Germans) to visit. As Mattias Frey (2013) observes, in this alternative history, "the fall of the Berlin wall becomes socialism's final victory rather than its demise" (p. 111). One needs therefore, to be wary of discussing *Ostalgie* in the context of this narrative of the GDR past since it is based more on imagination and wishful thinking than on historical accounts.

III. *The GDR in actual historical context*

It has already been established that in its narratives, the movie relies on artificial/counterfactual images of the GDR and the *Wende* period. The movie portrays this narrative using *Erinnerungsorte*. For instance, just as in *Das Leben der Anderen*, the *Kahl Marx Buchhandlung* situated in the (popular during the GDR) *Karl Marx Allee* is a feature in *Goodbye, Lenin*. This site, therefore, helps to reconstruct the GDR past as a site that outlived the GDR (see **Fig. 5.9**, left**)**. Though the reconstruction is artificial, the dismantling of Lenin's stature also provides another historical touch to the movie. Christiane witnesses it being

flown away after being dismantled. This symbolises the collapse of communism in East Germany. The title of the movie is drawn from this incident. The statue of Lenin stood on a nine-meter platform at the *Leninplatz*. The statue was dismantled on the 8th of November 1991, under the directive of the post *Wende* mayor of Berlin, Eberhard Diepgen. It is understood that the rubble was buried in the Köpenicker forest. Interestingly, the head of the stature reappeared in 2015, and **Figure. 5.9** (centre) demonstrates this re-emergence of Lenin's statue.

The *Trabant* (which is also a prominent feature in *Das Leben der Anderen*) is another *lieux de mémoire* captured in *Goodbye, Lenin*. The *Trabi*, a "small, boxy car made of fiberglass and pressed cotton … with its two-stroke engine" and which "contrasted sharply with the fast West German Mercedes, Porsches, and BMWs" (Berdahl, 1999: 195), was an image of the struggling economy of the GDR. According to Berdahl (1999), it became a "key symbol not only of the GDR, but of socialist inefficiency, backwardness, and inferiority" (p. 195). Hence, in the post *Wende* period, the *Trabi* became part of the Cold War politics and culture, where it was used by ex-FRG citizens as a weapon of ridicule against their eastern counterparts. In the movie *Goodbye Lenin*, the Kerner family drive in their refurbished *Trabi* to their vacation home (**Figure. 5.9**, right). Furthermore, the movie also connects with the past through capturing historical activities such as the 40th anniversary of the GDR. It is during this anniversary (a reconstructed version of it) that Alex is arrested while protesting with other GDR citizens. In history, this event took place during the climax of the unrest in the GDR. It took place on the 7th of October 1989, and was attended by the Soviet leader Gorbachev, whose policies of *perestoika* (restructuring) and *glasnost* (transparency) were already favouring the revolutionaries.



Figure. 5.9: Shows some of the *Erinnerungsorte* captured in *Goodbye, Lenin*. From the left is *Karl Marx Buchhandlung*, followed by the head of Lenin's statue after being dug out in 2015 (Nick Enoch Dailymail, 24 Jul 2015) and lastly, the Kerner family in a *Trabi* heading for their vacation home.

5.3.4 What might be the motives of the narrative(s)?

Goodbye, Lenin can be considered as a contribution in the post *Wende* debate. It reviews the GDR past in the emergence of post-unification debates which are centred on Germany's dual history. By exploring how this past is reconstructed and how it relates to the issues of "loss" or rather the "collapse" of the GDR regime, it seeks to establish the "post-Wall identity" of the former GDR citizens in the wake of the role that is expected of them in the post-unification FRG society. This identity is mostly understood as nostalgic for the GDR or *Ostalgie. Ostalgie* has been understood as a counter-memory for re-unification memorials and is part of the continuation of cold war politics in the post-*Wende* era (Berdahl, 1999). In elucidating this view, Berdahl refers to the date of October 3, 1997, which was a national holiday in remembrance of the re-unification of Germany in 1990. According to Berdahl, while national programmes in celebration of re-unification were under way throughout Germany, some of the former GDR citizens were busy organising their own counter-commemorations in form of "GDR weekends" at local pubs in the East where East German beer was served at GDR prices to guests dressed in the regalia of the socialist youth group (FDJ), also in form of *Ossipartys*, *Ostivals*, and *Ossidiscos* (Berdahl, 1999). Hence, in this light, *Ostalgie c*an be viewed as a cultural memory of the former citizens of the GDR. Enns (2007) for instance, argues that *Ostalgie* is a result of the government's failure to ensure a smooth economic integration of the new states and its failure to deal with post-*Wende* cultural challenges. However, most discussions on *Ostalgie* do not attempt to determine the form of nostalgia they will be referring to; whether it is restorative or reflective nostalgia as determined by Boym (2001). Furthermore, one can also consider another form of nostalgia "conservative nostalgia".

Conservative nostalgia happens as a reaction to change, characters desire to cling to what is left of their valuable memory rather than completely forsake the past or embrace it in its entirety. They will have an understanding that going back is no longer possible as they cannot restore what is gone, yet they can only attempt to conserve what is left out of the rubble of that past. Conservative nostalgia can, therefore, be viewed as the power behind the contemporary engagement with *Erinnerungsorte/lieux de mémoire.* The memorial sites cannot restore the past because it is already "past", yet they can be useful in conserving certain images of that past using what is left of it such as dilapidated buildings, battle sites (the battle is no longer a reality and only the battered battle site remains) and other memorial ruins. Hence, as Nora observes that we become conscious of the need to conserve memory

when it is no longer there, there is no chance of restoring the past but only conserve (with the help of memory rubble and sites) what is left of it. One can, therefore, argue that what is evident in *Goodbye, Lenin* is not "restorative" nostalgia as described by Boym (2001). It is rather related to "conservative" nostalgia and perhaps to what he refers to as "reflective" nostalgia.

One is likely to be enticed to describe Christiane's desire of everything GDR as "restorative", yet she herself not only understands that change is upon the land she knew as her home, but she is also aware that there is no going back, except to cherish what is left of it before it also turns into the dust like her ashes that are scattered in all directions after her time is up. In this light, her life is much more a symbolic image of the GDR rather than a mere character. The state of the GDR is aware that it can no longer stop nor delay the *Wende*, what can only be conserved are its scattered memories represented by Christiane's ashes. If analysed this way, one can say the former citizens of the GDR have a right to reflect upon their past which they understand cannot be restored, but that only the remnants of its memory can be "conserved". Afterall, even a not so jovial past needs to be remembered to prevent history from repeating itself. Hence, this suggests that, when discussing motives and objectives of the movie *Goodbye, Lenin*, one needs to look beyond the movie as just nostalgic.

CHAPTER VI: *Albino*

6.1 Background and Approach

Albino is a thriller which is based on the struggle for independence in Zimbabwe. It presents a fictional narrative of the events which led to a new Zimbabwe, a country which emerged from the ruins of Southern Rhodesia, just as the Federal Republic of Germany arose from the ruins of the GDR and the unity with the former FRG. The movie has been broken down into ten sequences whose analysis is presented below. The analysis will highlight areas of concern and at times draw comparison with the other three movies under study here; that is *Flame*, *Das Leben der Anderen* and *Goodbye, Lenin*. Since there is a dearth of literature and criticism on the film *Albino*, the analysis provided here can be useful when used as class notes.

6.2 Albino: Sequence Analysis

Sequence I: The terrorists

The sequence opens with a presentation of a peaceful, harmonious African village, where women are doing their household chores, men are gathered for discussions and children are playing. It is a perfect atmosphere of effectively presenting a spoiler, and something acrimonious, a brilliant technique by Goslar. This harmonious state of affairs is shattered not only by the arrival of gun-carrying men, but also by their acts of tossing and kicking items around, raping of women while also eating their food and above all, the sound of the gun and the crimson scene. Goslar presents a perfect platform for portraying the *Second Chimurenga* liberation war fighters as rogue and thus fitting the description of "terrorists". In this first sequence, we see them distributing terror with impunity.

Furthermore, by attacking fellow Africans, Goslar is portraying these men as unprincipled and rogue. This portrayal of the "freedom fighter" can be considered radical and "colonial" especially when compared to the portrayal of the same historical figures not only by Sinclair in her movie *Flame*, but also in other historical texts such as in writings and documents from ZANU and the ZANU Women's League (see **figure**. 6.1). In fig. 6.1, we see liberation-war fighters participating in the preparation of their food in a harmonious environment.



Figure. 6.1: A Zanla fighter helps girls prepare a meal. This is taken from the writings and documents from ZANU and the ZANU Women's League (1979).

Sequence II: The settler community

The second sequence introduces us to the settler community which is centred on and governed by colonial law and is also well resourced as compared to the African community presented in the first sequence. We see for instance, a white lady named Sally driving a luxurious car. Furthermore, as in *Flame* and *Das Leben der Anderen*, we see the growing trend in *nom de guerres* as Terrick is called by the name *Hondo.*

In this sequence, we also witness the same discussion of the terrorist as "ruthless and cunning", which is a consequence of the first sequence. Sally's family is, therefore, an epitome of a settler family, not only in terms of resource accumulation but also in terms of "black-white" relationships that we observe in this family and the colonial mentality displayed by Johannes (Sally's father). For instance, Johannes claims that forty years of his life are on the farm and therefore, no-one can uproot his family from it. Yet, such a statement overlooks the fact that colonial occupation violated, and subverted land rights and that this very same violation was the source of problems between the settler and African communities. However, in this case, Goslar seems to present the colonialist as hard working and having a right over land through sweat and blood. This, therefore, becomes the main theme or motif of his narrative. This narrative begins by remembering the settlers as hard-working landowners who were terrorised by the unprincipled thieving groups of African terrorists who did not have the support of most Africans. Furthermore, the relationship between Johannes and his servant posits that Africans are content and grateful for the "master-servant" relationship with the coloniser. This, therefore, complicates the justification of those claiming to fight for the rights of Africans.

Sequence III: Terror

This sequence is centred on the brutal acts of the *Second Chimurenga* fighters. First of all, in this sequence we see two forms of gatherings: One where normal African villagers gather around a bonfire to sing, dance and drink African beer and where settlers gather to enjoy music and alcohol as witnessed by Terrick and other policemen. One may notice the spirituality which defines African gatherings as presented by Goslar. This is an element which is not evident in Sinclair's *Flame*. Terrick's servant gyrates until he is in a state of ecstasy. Though the *Second Chimurenga* revolution involved spirit mediums, such a portrayal of an African community as "voodoo" is problematic especially since most leaders of the *Second Chimurenga* had a Christian background. For instance, Robert Mugabe, the first president of Zimbabwe was a staunch catholic. We see the same trend as the Albino portrays himself as a spiritual leader. On the other hand, the gathering of the settlers is presented as "civilised" and devoid of any ritualistic acts. Central in this sequence, is the ambush and raping of Sally (a young "innocent" white lady) by the Albino who is also the leader of the "terrorist" in this narrative.

Sequence IV: The Rain

The sequence opens with a false alarm which rings as the colonial men are busy enjoying themselves. News reach Terrick that Sally is missing. The search party finally locates Sally's lifeless body. The characterisation of the freedom fighter as ruthless is pursued further in this sequence as Terrick is devastated by the loss of a loved one due to a senseless unprovoked attack by the "terrorists". Rain falls to symbolise some form of cleansing. The Albino does not only kill an "innocent white blood" but also defiles it by raping Sally. The ideology of white women who are also taken to represent innocence and are not only "defiled" by African "savages" but also murdered has been explored by a number of writers from Richard Wright's Afro-American text *Native Son* (1940) to Dorris Lessing's *The Grass in Singing* (1950).

One can also argue further that in the movie *Das Leben der Anderen*, women, whiteness, and innocence seem to be bundled together. Christa-Maria Sieland reaches her end (indirectly, in the hands of a brutal and exploitative regime) while wearing a white bathrobe. This white bathrobe, therefore, can be taken as a symbol of not only innocence but also purity. Hence, an act of victimising what stands for innocence and purity attracts

condemnation from viewers. In Wright's *Native Son* and Lessing's, *The Grass Is Singing*, the African "monsters" who are taken to have victimised white innocence are condemned by the majority of the colonial communities.

Sequence V: The "savage"

Surprisingly, even after the ruthless act of rape and murder, this sequence opens with the member in charge urging his men not to attack the terrorists but rather to uphold law and order. Hence, the film continues the characterisation of the settler as not only civilised but also having the blessing of the Africans to rule. This binary of the civilised versus the barbaric is also evident in Johannes's (Sally's father) reference to Terrick's servant as a "savage". For the first time in this movie, we are introduced to a gathering of "terrorists". Several issues arise from this gathering. First, the concerns of these "*Second Chimurenga* fighters" or rather "terrorists" are not humanitarian such as those raised in *Flame* (for instance, right to land, water, and education). The main question raised by the leader of the "terrorists" is "who shall we kill?" and the answer to this question is "The white men". Hence, their actions seem to be motivated by hatred and the desire to kill rather than humanitarian matters. One might notice the difference between the speech made by the Albino (as the leader of the terrorists in *Albino*) and that made by comrade Danger in *Flame* (seq. III). Danger does not motivate people to kill but rather to reverse the injustices of the colonial system such as unfair land distribution. Hence, to Sinclair's freedom fighters, death is an unfortunate means to an end, but to Goslar's "terrorists", death itself is a valuable end. In this sequence, we also witness the presentation of the terrorists as spiritually motivated.

The binary presentation of the terrorist as ruthless and unethical on one hand and spiritual on the other, problematises the revolution itself. It is as if Goslar is asking the question; what kind of spirituality thrives on the abuse of women and murder of the innocent? The Albino who is the leader of this spiritual movement (see **figure**. 6.2) is the perpetrator of these heinous crimes against humanity. At a different level he can be taken as a figment of the coloniser´s imagination and narrative.

**Figure. 6.2**: The Albino as a spiritual leader (**seq**. v)

Sequence VI: The colonial Law

This sequence is centred on the colonial reaction towards the incidences of violence and murder which have been committed by the "terrorists". The colonial law as represented by the member in charge and his men is presented as just and transparent. While the humanitarian offences committed by the "terrorists" are considered despicable and punishable. The system favours the root of law rather than vigilantism. The colonial government is therefore, presented not only as non-racial but also as civil and civilised. When Terrick decides to take the law into his hands and punish "the monster", the colonial rule applies to him too. He is hunted down like a dangerous animal by his own people and eventually killed. However, we see some loopholes within this system of governance as some colonialists are in favour of dealing with the African "monster" in whatever way is necessary. This is the group which abandons the chase to capture Terrick.

Sequence VII: African brutality

The sequence begins with the arrival of the new reinforcements to help with capturing Terrick. It is, however, the brutal killing of the captured terrorist by a fellow African which attracts comments in this sequence. The captured man is tortured and killed by another fellow African (Terrick's servant). Terrick's reaction towards this act as "brutal" continues Goslar's presentation of the coloniser as civilised and humane as compared to the savage character of the African. Noticing a silent reaction of disgust, the servant asks, "You think I am a savage Mambo?" In this sequence, the servant is presented as not being different from the terrorist in terms of savage terror and brutality.

Sequence VIII: The search continues.

In this sequence, the quest to bring Terrick to book intensifies and the action of the movie is invested in this activity. We are introduced to the intervention of an element of nature, rain, which complicates the pursuit as if allowing Terrick to fulfil the task at hand of getting rid of the community evil. We, therefore, see the character of Terrick developing into an uncelebrated hero. A group of settlers including Sally's father see him as a brave man who does what his government is afraid to do, that is condemn savage "terrorists" to justice.

Sequence IX: Face to face with the Albino

It is in this sequence where Terrick finally meets the savage Albino. From their engagement, we learn a few things. For instance, we learn that the Albino is educated and went to a good university. This engagement also continues to present the "terrorist" as barbaric and sadistic. The Albino describes his "adventure" of raping Sally as "wonderful and stimulating". When Terrick is saved by his servant from being killed by the Albino, this can be taken as symbolising the African support of the colonial system of governance. It is as if Goslar is saying, while a few barbaric Africans are trying to do away with colonial rule, some Africans are ready to risk their life to sustain it.

Sequence X: It is done!

Sequence ten completes the portrayal of Terrick as a hero. His killing of the Albino is presented as the prime achievement of the man who dares to correct the ills of his society. For doing this, he is sacrificed by this very community. He, therefore, dies as a martyr.

6.3 The memory of the *Second Chimurenga* revolution as depicted in *Albino*

6.3.1 Whose memories are captured in *Albino*?

Unlike the narrative of *Flame*, the movie *Albino* is told from the point of view of the former colonialist. Though the movie seeks to depict events that take place during the liberation war in Zimbabwe (then known as Rhodesia) and its central antagonist, the Albino is purported to be an African, the cast of the movie is hardly African. The movie is even

described by some critics as a "German thriller" (for instance, Mboti, 2017). This is one element that distinguishes *Albino* from *Flame*. From the outset therefore, one wonders whether it relates "real" memories of the *Second Chimurenga* liberation struggle in Zimbabwe or otherwise. By portraying liberation war fighters as villains bent on raping women and murdering civilians, the movie cannot be described as representing the state narrative. Furthermore, by portraying them as "terrorists", it cannot be described as relating memories of post-independence revisionist Africans such as those reflected in *Flame* and in novels such as *Harvest of Thorns* (1989) by Chinodya. Simply put, mainly due to its portrayal of the *Second Chimurenga* fighter as a terrorist, the movie can be described as pursuing a colonialist memory. The movie *Flame* (which pursues a revisionist approach and narrative) does not recollect the *Second Chimurenga* fighter as a hero, yet its narrative is not radical to the point of calling these fighters "terrorists". The two radical narratives of the *Second Chimurenga* therefore, remember the guerrilla fighters as terrorists (the colonial narrative) on one hand and heroes (the state narrative) on the other hand. While *Albino* falls into the first radical end, the movie *Flame* falls into the centre of these two narratives.

6.3.2 What do they remember? What is the focus of their narrative(s)?

Central in the movie *Albino* is the issue of terrorism, and the disruption of what is understood as a peaceful existence by the liberation fighters. On one hand, we are presented with an antagonistic force that instils terror in the lives of civilians and is represented by the Albino and other "terrorists" who are fighting against the colonial rule, on the other hand, we are presented with a different force which positions itself as the protector of civilian peace and life (represented by the colonial police). This latter force is represented by Trellis and other settlers who present themselves as the "good guys" of the liberation war. In between these two forces is a woman (Sally), who just like Christa-Maria Sieland in *Das Leben der Anderen,* represents the vulnerable, the virtuous and the civilian.

6.3.3 How do they remember? What images do they relate to?

The narrative and plot of the movie can be considered to be influenced by the experiences of the novelist Daniel Carney as a member of the British South African Police. In this light and considering the fact that the movie was in produced in 1976, at a time when the war of liberation was at its height, the prevailing image of an African revolutionary was that of an

ungrateful and violent villain who needs to be hunted down like an animal. Since it was produced during the war, the movie can also be considered as propagandistic in nature. It intended to convince the viewers to support the war against "terrorism". However, its impact in a post-colonial society can be a debatable issue which perhaps needs to be discussed in relation to the issue of nostalgia.

6.3.4 What might be the motives of the narrative(s)?

According to Mboti (2017), *Albino* is part of the settler movies which *glorified* "boys" fighting the "terrs" in the "bush" (Mboti, 2017: 7). Viewed in this light, the movie presents a counter revolutionary narrative of the *Second Chimurenga* revolution in Zimbabwe. Unlike the post-independence state narrative which glorifies the freedom fighter, *Albino* glorifies the coloniser. Unlike *Flame*, which only questions the "national" revolutionary account, *Albino* presents a rival account.

Both *Albino* and *Flame* seem to cross paths in several ways. However, just as the two movies differ in terms of narratives, so is their motives. Unlike *Albino*, *Flame* is not vengeful, there is no declaration of war between the victims (for instance, Flame is raped and violated, yet she considers having a proper relationship with her violator Comrade Che) but forgiveness and reconciliation. This is what makes *Flame* less "sinister'' in its motives. *Albino* on the other hand, appears to be driven by vengeance and the desire to combat and punish "terrorism" in any means necessary. What partly explains this stance is that this movie was set during the war and thus acts as a source of inspiration in the fight against "terrorism" and the execution of the war.

CHAPTER VII: A comparative thematic exploration

7. Revolutionary movies: A comparative thematic exploration

A detailed sequence analysis of the four movies under study in this research project is a perfect platform for a comparative exploration of the issues that arise in these movies. The issues raised here do not necessarily represent all that is worth discussing in these four revolutionary movies; namely *Das Leben der Anderen*, *Goodbye*, *Lenin*, *Flame* and *Albino* but rather issues that have been identified as significant not only for this research project but most importantly for a GFL *Landeskunde* class.

7.1 The role of love

Prominent in these four movies is the role of love. Human beings are by nature social creatures, and thus one can even argue beforehand that in all the four movies under study in this research, love is presented as something special. Hence, one can argue that in these movies, love relationships provide the glue which binds characters together, and tensions which push them to their limits.

It is important to clarify that in these movies, love manifests itself in more forms than just common romantic love. In *Das Leben der Anderen,* for instance, we can cite the triangular romantic love affair which involves Georg Dreyman, Christa-Maria Sieland and minister Hempf (some scholars dare to throw Wiesler's name into this hat). Wiesler's transformation and sacrifice can be understood as a sacrifice for humanity, another form of love. Although, unlike the Christian saviour, Jesus, Wiesler can hardly be considered as "without sin", but just like Christ, who is believed to have died for the sins of the humanity, Wiesler, sacrifices his career for the greater good and potential he sees in others. Even when his sentence is dictated to him by Anton Grubitz, he shows little regret for sacrificing his career for the greater good. This principle of sacrificial love is also found in *Second Chimurenga* movies such as *Flame* and *Albino*. First, the act of joining the *Second Chimurenga* was considered a

patriotic duty, an act performed for the love of one's community. *Second Chimurenga* fighters were thus considered as "sacrificial lambs" for all those who might have wished to fight, but for various reasons could not join the war. Flame and others, therefore extended this love for their country. Secondly, disrupted love relationships also motivated those who were involved in the *Second Chimurenga* war to fight. For instance, in *Albino*, Terrick is motivated by the loss of a loved one (Sally) to launch a vengeful assault on "terrorists" especially their leader the "Whispering Death"".

7.2 Colour as a narrative aide

The colour of images seems to play an important role in the revolutionary narratives of these movies. In her discussion of the colour element in the movie *Das Leben der Anderen,* Dueck (2008) points out that the director was particularly careful with colour. He excluded red or bright blue colours. The main reason is that these colours where not present in the films which were produced at the time which the movie depicts. Hence, colour plays an important role for the authenticity of the movie. In contrast, *Goodbye, Lenin* begins in a very colourful red and blue, depicting socialist colours (see seq. II). This representation of the GDR in conspicuous red and blue colours can be taken as an evidence of a Western perspective of the GDR as a socialist nation, a depiction which can also raise authenticity problems. On the other hand, due to their "bush war" and sometimes rural settings, in most sequences, *Chimurenga* movies maintain dull grey and brown colours.

7.3 The centrality of freedom

Freedom and what it embodies is also an important issue which is relevant to all the four movies under study here. First, one needs not to forget that the study is about revolution and the *Wende*. *Freiheit (freedom),* therefore, becomes the primary need in circumstances, where citizens are revolting against repressive, corrupt, or racist regimes. In the former GDR, most of the citizens sought various ways of showing their disgruntlement against the repressive socialist regime, including engaging in what is now known as the "revolution by feet" or "*Republikflucht*". Koehler (1999) provides a vivid summary of repressive activities of the socialist rule. He states that:

> Using trumped-up charges of economic crimes or "political offenses" (such as listening to a western radio station, with "evidence" supplied by Stasi informers),

> the regime ordered the confiscation of middle-class commercial properties throughout the DDR. Along the Baltic coast more than six hundred hotels, boarding houses, and restaurants became the property of the state. More than four hundred homeowners were arrested and sentenced to prison terms. Hundreds fled to the West. These government-sanctioned robberies were followed by the collectivization of all farms, a move enforced by officers of the Ministry for State Security. As a result, farmers joined the tens of thousands who fled the "workers and peasants state," as the Party called its realm (p. 374).

In the selected *Wende* movies, we see evidence of these dissenting voices. In the movie *Das Leben der Anderen*, these voices are mainly represented by the artists who seek freedom of expression. Georg Dreyman and his friends can hardly write or produce any piece of art without the meddling activities of the government through its weapon of repression - the *Stasi*. I covered this in detail in my sequence analysis. Albert Jerska is blacklisted and eventually commits suicide. Georg Dreyman himself cannot air his views freely on this incident, and as a result he publishes his article anonymously in the FRG. All this is clear evidence of the efforts of the regime to control the material produced by the artists. In the GDR, efforts by the SED government to muzzle the artist are well documented. A good example is that of the expatriation of Wolf Biermann. I have already highlighted in my sequence analysis of the movie *Goodbye, Lenin* (see Sequence VIII: Trainee nurse Lara), the persecution of punks and other Rock musicians which was another form of repression.

In *Goodbye, Lenin*, we first see glimpses of the efforts by the regime to subdue freedom in the second sequence, where we witness Christiane being interrogated by two Stasi officers in relation to Robert's escape to the FRG. In other words, with the "*Republikflucht*" being considered a serious crime against socialism, the GDR became a giant prison, where even "thinking of escaping" would lead one into serious trouble. Freedom of expression is seriously compromised when police brutally descend on peaceful protesters, arresting Alex together with other demonstrators. We see the same trend and behaviour in the case of the Second *Chimurenga* movies.

In *Second Chimurenga* movies, freedom to self-govern and control of resources is of paramount importance, especially as depicted in African narratives such as in *Flame*. In colonial narratives such as in *Albino*, this issue is over simplified. In *Flame*, for instance, we learn from the *pungwes* (night vigils) that the settlers came and dispossessed Africans of their land and other critical resources such as water.

7.4 The status of women

In my sequence analysis of the four movies which are objects of the study in this project, I have highlighted sequences which are significant when it comes to the status and role of women in revolutionary narratives presented in these movies. In all the four movies, women carry a special role and characteristics. I reiterate (as argued earlier), that it is women who carry the pathos and empathy of these revolutionary narratives. In other words, women carry the emotional charge of these movies. For instance, in *Flame*, the experiences of women (including Flame) in the fight for freedom, are the main highlights of this movie. Its success, therefore, depended (and still depends) on the prevailing ideologies about women. For instance, in a patriarchal society such as post-independence Zimbabwe (at the time of the film's release), promoting the welfare and voice of women was considered a non-critical matter as the nation was still newly independent. Yet, for the very same reason, the movie was able to arouse controversy, mainly among non-governmental organisations and war veteran organisations. By drawing attention to a vulnerable female soldier who wishes (just like her male counterparts) to fight for freedom but is compromised and abused by male fellow soldiers, one might argue that Sinclair attempted to bundle emotions of her narrative in the character of Flame. In the same fashion, by bundling the pathos of the movie *Albino* in Sally's gruesome violation and murder, Goslar places emphasis on this character. It is mainly what is done to Sally, which determines whether one sees the Albino and his "gang" of "*Second Chimurenga* fighters" as "terrorists" and loose cannons or fighters for a just cause such as those in Flame.

The *Wende* movies portray women in a similar fashion. Christa-Maria Sieland's violation and abuse seems to be the main ingredient in Wiesler's transformation. Though fallible herself, her violation (which ends in her death) becomes the most despicable act of the corrupt SED regime. Her death (while wearing a white bath robe), therefore, can be taken as a symbol of not only her vulnerability but a violation of innocence. Georg Dreyman is not free from guilt. He, just like the regime has pushed her over her limits, especially through expecting her to be perfect in an imperfect or rather corrupt society. She is therefore squeezed between two pressure points and she succumbs to the pressure of society. One can also argue that Christa- Maria Sieland carries a burden which Georg Dreyman himself cannot withstand; to be expected to have a successful and honest career in a corrupt state such as the GDR and at the same time show unshaken love to your boyfriend. Just like Christiane in *Goodbye, Lenin*, Christa-Maria Sieland dies with regrets of a compromised life.

In *Goodbye, Lenin*, Christiane carries the burden of the socialist regime. The regime intimidates her into readjusting her lifestyle and live a borrowed life. She lives her life as an "actress" of the socialist regime. Her being an actress reflects the way some citizens had to compromise their identities under the SED dictatorship. In *Das Leben der Anderen*, we see a similar trend of compromised identities, for example, Christa-Maria Sieland oscillates between two identities: a public identity as an actress and a government identity as "Informant Marta". In the case of Christiane, it is only on her deathbed that she chooses to close the curtain and disclose to her family her relationship with the regime.

7.5 The role of music

In all the four movies under study here, music plays a very important role. In *Second Chimurenga* movies, music is considered as the "spirit" of the revolution. For instance, the *pungwes* (night vigils) were enlivened by singing *Second Chimurenga* songs and sloganeering. However, as highlighted in my sequence analysis, I reiterate that I consider *Chimurenga* songs in *Flame* different from those captured in *Albino*. Spirituality and ritual activities play a much bigger role in "*Second Chimurenga* songs" as displayed in *Albino* as compared to those of *Flame* which can be considered purely combative. This is perhaps due to the different revolutionary narratives and paths of remembering taken by these two movies: one "African" and the other colonial.

In *Das Leben der Anderen*, music also plays an important role, for instance in Wiesler's transformation. As reflected in my sequence analysis (Sequence IX: *Sonate vom gutem Menschen*), the notes played by Georg Dreyman have a deep emotional effect on Wiesler. Georg Dreyman himself retorts that what kind of a person would remain the same after listening to such music.



Figure. 7.1: Wiesler listening to music that is played by Georg Dreyman (seq. IX)

In *Goodbye, Lenin*, socialist songs are an important element that helps Christiane "act" as a staunch socialist follower. Soon after her rebirth and "marriage" to her fatherland, we see

her conducting youth choirs who sing "*Unsere Heimat*". Later in the movie, Alex pays two lads to sing for her in celebration for her birthday.

Chapter VIII: Conclusion

This chapter provides the conclusion of the study. As a summation of the revolutions both in Zimbabwe, and in GDR, the chapter begins by providing an overview of the revolutionary narratives which are reflected in the selected four movies. This chapter proceeds to explore the outcomes of the *Second Chimurenga* and the *Wende* revolutions and how these outcomes contribute to the post-revolutionary debates in both contexts. In Germany, for instance, the *Wende* revolution culminated in the demise of the GDR and the subsequent re-unification of the GDR and FRG to form a country named the FRG. It, therefore, remains a subject of interest whether this outcome is what was expected by most of the revolutionaries. Furthermore, it is also interesting how the movies under study here, through their narratives, deal with these outcomes (the expected and the unexpected).

8.1 Overall Observations: Revolutionary narratives through movies

It might be interesting to note that due to the memory boom in Germany and indeed Europe following various political developments such as the Second World War (where scholars are engaged with reconstructing the traumatic past of the war, and the post WWII Cold War in Germany, movies which deal with these events exhibit an interplay of various memories and narratives seeking to re-memorate these events. This is an unusual trend in not only the history of Zimbabwe, but also in movies that seek to reinterpret the revolutionary past of Zimbabwe. To show this engagement with the past and re-memoration, movies which deal with the *Wende* past in Germany such as *Das Leben der Anderen* and *Goodbye, Lenin* rely much on places of memory unlike their Zimbabwean counterparts such as *Flame* and *Albino*, which hardly capture known places of the *Chimurenga* revolution memory such as Nyadzonia and Chimoio. After all, beside the national and provincial Heroes Acres, Zimbabwean society does not offer much in terms of sites of memory. Perhaps, this is due to the tight control of the interpretation of the past by the state, which ensures that its narrative dominates the public sphere and the collective memory. Counter-memories are, therefore, usually submerged, or subdued.

The movies that deal with the *Wend*e in Germany are highly flexible and objective when it comes to memory interpretation as compared to the two movies which deal with the revolution in Zimbabwe, which offer little room for a memorial debate. For instance, the

movie *Albino* cannot be interpreted in any other way than its intended narrative and focus, which is a colonial narrative bent on mauling the image of the "liberation fighter". From its cast to its language and imagery, the movie does little to disguise itself as possibly exploring a different narrative. However, this cannot be said of the narratives presented in both *Das Leben der Anderen* and *Goodbye, Lenin*. Both movies offer explosive narratives which touch on unusual areas of the *Wende* (as experienced by individuals in the GDR) which can be explored and argued about from many perspectives. Both these movies, therefore, draw their narratives from communicative memory which is based on the individual perspectives of the past (based on their everyday experiences). However, it is interesting to explore various ways of remembering that are offered by all the four movies under study.

8.2 Outcomes of the revolutions

As part of the conclusion to this discussion, there is a need to reflect (with the aid of the selected movies) on the achievements of the revolutions in both Germany and Zimbabwe and making comparisons where possible.

8.2.1 In the GDR

The *Wende* in Germany achieved a lot from the first "free" elections to the collapse of the GDR government and the reunification of both German states (the FRG and the GDR). However, how various individuals in Germany view these as "real achievements" remains debatable. First, in the wake of discussions of *Ostalgie*, it is now debatable whether indeed the socialist state of the GDR is dead and buried. It appears as if the ghost of the GDR still haunts the nation of Germany, decades after its presumed demise. For instance, what is the symbolic meaning of excavating Lenin's statue that has been resting in the woods for almost two and half decades? "Welcome back, Lenin"? This may be a symbolic action related to the achievements of the *Wende*, which disowned the very same statue (as demonstrated in the movie *Goodbye Lenin!*). What is the symbolic meaning of organising *Ossipartys* (parties held to commemorate the GDR), *Ostivals* (festivals held to commemorate the GDR), and *Ossidiscos* (discos held to commemorate the GDR), when the nation is celebrating re-unification? This can be considered as a dissident stance towards not only the post *Wende* FRG state but also towards the gains of the *Wende*. Although the socialist GDR is supposedly

no more, the cold war between the *Besserwessis* and *Jammerossis* can be considered as still existing.

As noted by Doughty (2005), the integration of former GDR citizens into the united post-*Wende* FRG had its challenges since:

> Once the initial euphoria of the *Wende* faded… and former Easterners began to feel the full impact of the extensiveness of change brought about by the dissolution of their state, it became clear that support of unification did not amount to a wholesale acceptance of Western values and ways of life" (p. 3).

The whole package of the re-unification as the price of the revolution has divided Germans in the post *Wende* period. Jana Hensel's texts *Achtung Zone. Warum wir Ostdeutschen anders bleiben sollten* (2009) and *Zonenkinder* (2002) have brought attention to the problems of identity that have cropped up as part of the *Wende* parcel.

The divided reactions towards the "achievements" of the *Wende* or prospects of these "achievements are observable in the two movies under discussion in this study: *Das Leben der Anderen* and *Goodbye, Lenin!* For instance, in *Goodbye, Lenin*, there is an expansive gap between the young generation (which is epitomised by Alex, his girlfriend Lara and his sister Ariane) which is eager for change and something new and the older generation of former GDR citizens who are sceptical of change (these are epitomised by Alex's mother Christiane). The older generation is aware that change is knocking at the door of East Germany, yet they are not sure what the future holds for them outside the oppressive yet caring arms of their socialist state. The new generation is eager to experiment with Western products and life: Ariane works at a burger outlet and Alex later also gets a job at a West German firm. Ironically, it is the past of the GDR (and the preoccupation with it) that still hold the two generations together. With Christiane dead, there is no more reason for Alex and his sister to pretend to hold on to the past of GDR. Afterall, to Alex, the GDR he cares about is not the GDR that "was" but rather the GDR that "would have been" according to his imagination.

Furthermore, there has been a problem with the term "reunification" itself as prominent politicians have avoided using the term preferring to use less controversial terms instead such as the term *Wende* itself. This is due to debates about the process of "reunification" which has been seen by some as a mere expansion of the FRG to include East Germans rather than the unity of two nations. Those who pursue these views usually argue that one state was vanquished and the other stretched its borders and influence. Hence, to

some, reunification has been the process of substituting everything Eastern with something Western; food, currency, politics, and culture. Hence, as an outcome of the *Wende*, reunification presents more challenges than solutions to the question of the national German identity which has been saggy since the demise of the *Third Reich*. These issues are also related to the question of "victors" and "losers" in the *Wende.* Since unification meant the extension of socio-political policies of the former FRG and the new nation was named the FRG, the revolution has been mainly viewed as the victory of the capitalist FRG over the communist GDR. Former citizens of the GDR who have raised questions about the conditions of "reunification" have been viewed by some (such as Sarrazin, 2010) as ungrateful (*Jammerossi*) for what the post-Wende government has provided for them. Furthermore, by expressing feelings of *Ostalgie*, some of the former GDR citizens have been depicted as losers of the 1989/1990 revolution.

8.2.2 In Zimbabwe

In the case of Zimbabwe, the ultimate goals of the revolution were "self-rule" and the re-distribution of national resources to benefit the majority rather than the minority (as enshrined in Marxist-Leninist principles). Today, Zimbabwe is considered a sovereign nation. Yet, there are some who have voiced the manipulation of the revolution by groups such as the freedom fighters. In the post-independence era, the "heroes" of the liberation war were compensated for their efforts despite the hurdle that this "payment" presented to the economy that was still trying to find its feet. Furthermore, the independence itself as a process has been questioned and re-examined by revisionist voices who sought to retell the story of the struggle in a non-utopian manner. In literature, novels such as Alexander Kanengoni's *Echoing silences* (1997) and Shimmer Chinodya's *Harvest of Thorns* (1989) seek to retell the experiences of the story of the struggle including its horrible experiences such as the experiences of sell-outs and cases of rape. In the media, *Flame* can be taken as a good example of a revisionist voice.

Together, literature and media play the role of challenging the portrayal of the struggle in utopian terms by the state narrative. *Flame* proceeds to question the position of women in the post-independence era. The movie provides a peep into the future which (through the struggles of Flame to get work to support her family after her husband is sacked) is presented as not so rosy. The movie echoes the concerns that have been raised by scholars such as Moyo (2004) who through his text titled *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe: Change without*

change? Broadcasting, Policy Reform and Political Control is sceptical about the "achievements" of the 1980 revolution in Zimbabwe. There are therefore two main issues which arise in relation to the "achievements" of the *Second Chimurenga* revolution: that the revolutionary path itself had elements of treachery and that the revolution might not have made a difference to most participants who fought to bring about the change. The movie *Flame* demonstrates these concerns in a better light. Treachery is brought up by the abuse of women and the emptiness of the revolution is demonstrated by the post-independence struggles of characters such as Flame and her husband (both who were effective participants in the struggle for revolution). In this study, the localisation method encourages the teaching of the four movies through cross referencing. GFL teachers should therefore endeavour to compare social and historical content that is transferred through movies such as how particular topics are handled in both the TL film and the local film. This study demonstrated how the revolutionary narratives are explored in two *Second Chimurenga* movies and two *Wende* movies. This study also (comparatively) explored other themes that are evident in the four selected movies such as love, music, and the role and status of women in the revolutions and societies that are depicted in the selected movies.

8.3 Conclusion

In concluding this study, the objectives of the study and how the study tackled them need to be revisited. The study is anchored in two areas: localisation and interpreting the selected movies through the theories of memory. These two areas therefore, ensured that the study addressed its main concerns, namely, to establish who does the remembering in the selected movies. In order to keep in alignment with the goals of localisation, goals of utilising what learners of German as a foreign language already know in order to use it as a platform for teaching *Landeskunde*, the study ensured that two of the selected movies represent revolutionary experiences in Zimbabwe. The study was therefore in a position to compare the narrative perspectives of the revolution in Zimbabwe (as depicted in both *Flame* and *Albino*) with those of the *Wende* in Germany (as depicted in *Das Leben der Anderen* and *Goodbye, Lenin*). The study established for instance, that due to a strict tradition of public opinion based on the control of the national memory by the state, there is no memory boom in Zimbabwe. While actions of engaging and challenging state collective memory have improved as shown by the popping up of individual memoirs by *Second Chimurenga* participants such as Chung (2012), a lot of ground is still yet to be covered.

On the contrary, the German society seems to be a beehive of memory reconstruction. This engagement with memory debates is evident in the two movies which represent the *Wende* past in Germany. Memories reflected in these movies cannot simply be analysed in black and white. There are a lot of grey areas between narratives and counter-narratives. Hence, the two movies that deal with the *Wende* past in Germany can be considered as more academically engaging. This is perhaps demonstrated by the amount of criticism they have drawn from all sectors of the German society and from international scholars as compared to the two movies which represent the revolutionary past of Zimbabwe. However, despite this observation, the study of all the four movies (representing both the German and Zimbabwean contexts) revealed diverse and interesting perspectives of remembering the past. Furthermore, the movies under study have been analysed in detail following a sequence structure to encourage a deeper in-class understanding of the issues which arise from them. A thematic comparison (see chapter VII) has established that these movies have a lot in common. For instance, the role of women in the revolution is a source of a vibrant discussion as reflected in the characters of Christa-Maria Sieland in *Das Leben der Anderen*, Flame (in *Flame*), Sally (in *Albino*) and Christiane in *Goodbye, Lenin!*. I have maintained the view that though sometimes given less prominent roles (such as Sally in *Albino*), it is mainly women who carry the pathos and empathy of these revolutionary narratives.

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