

Literature Review in Chicago Format

1 inch on all sides

Introduction paragraph

Historical Memory And Silence In Postwar European Literature

Postwar European literature frequently engages with collective memory, especially the tension between public narratives and private silence. Literary scholars examine how novels written after World War II represent trauma through omission, fragmented recollection, and indirect testimony. Early criticism focuses on narrative restraint as an ethical response to historical violence. Wiesel argues that silence itself functions as a form of witness, shaping how absence communicates loss and responsibility.¹ Later studies expand this view, connecting narrative gaps to cultural efforts to process guilt and complicity.

Conclusion paragraph

Recent scholarship shifts attention toward form. LaCapra links disrupted narrative structure to unresolved historical mourning, suggesting that fragmented storytelling reflects ongoing struggles with remembrance rather than closure.² These interpretations position silence as an active literary strategy rather than a narrative limitation.

The literature consistently frames silence as central to postwar literary expression. Scholars continue to explore how restrained narration reshapes historical memory and reader engagement.

Bibliography

Bibliography – alphabetical order, full publication details

LaCapra, Dominick. *Writing History, Writing Trauma*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2006.

¹ Elie Wiesel, *Night* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006).

² Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).

Footnotes or endnotes