



University of Tlemcen
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English

**From Narration to Narratology in the Western and
Postcolonial Literary Discourse: Flynn's *Gone Girl* and
Rushdie's *Midnight's Children***

Dissertation submitted to the Department of English as partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctorate in English Literature

Presented By:

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Supervised by:

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People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
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Statement of Originality

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a University or other institution.

I also certify that the present work contains no plagiarism and is the result of my own investigation, except where otherwise stated.

MESSAOUDI MERWAN

Signature

Date:/...../2020

Dedications



To my loved ones, 2.0



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Abstract

This research aims at identifying narrative structures and narratological concepts that link or separate the Western Narrative from the Postcolonial one. In narration, only the internal mechanisms have been dealt with whilst analysing. The core similarity between the two novels, *Gone Girl* - written by Gillian Flynn and *Midnight's Children* - written by Salman Rushdie - is that they ensue from oppression. Saleem, the unreliable narrator of *Midnight's Children* blends his individualistic narrative derived from his memory with a nationwide narrative of the birth of India, resulting in a historiographic metafictional narrative. Amy Elliot and Nick Dunne, the two narrators of *Gone Girl*, express the female-male power struggle analogised on the dominance over the narrator's position creating a triangular Meta-power struggle between the aforementioned narrator and the implied author, over who controls the narrative act. Having proved to be a metafictional unreliable narrator, Diary Amy was also employed as a narratological tool that helped Amy Elliot secure her narrative dominance. However, this research aimed to draw a narratological literary model of analysis and compare the Western and the Postcolonial discourses, having uncovered that they are far more similar than dissimilar. It is necessary to mention that the results obtained are based on the case studies but are not necessarily limited to them as this model could be used for multidisciplinary domains of literature far beyond postcolonial and western, feminine discourses.

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General Introduction

‘From the dawn of humanity’ is one of the introductions that could be generated to introduce this topic, yet in this work, this overused sentence is itself the purpose of this research. This sentence fragment is why human beings advanced as far as they have today. Why? Simply because it offered a chance to look back and reflect. This reflection came in many forms, and in order to hand them down from one generation to another, they have to be channelled into a particular medium.

Stories were the most widely used medium of passing down experience, wisdom and even expertise from a father to his son, from a mother to her daughter etc. Although most of those stories were told in an ancient oral form, which is obsolete nowadays, they carried the burden of civilisation through those stories. Hence, the birth of any civilisation relied on such stories. These small anecdotal representations of life offered humanity the passing down of core principles, both ethical and even mathematical; it offered human beings a sense of identity and belonging when sharing similar [hi]stories; it offered human beings a sense of interpersonal transformation.

With stories, humanity started to shape itself into a timeline and note down all the significant occurrences and happenings that were noticeable enough to be written down. Stories are a tool and technique of transformation and interpersonal coaxing. However, their actual functions lie not only in the collective sense but also in the personal sense.

Stories are similar to a cognitive technology by which they invade the mind and pattern the brain's ability to discern the senses' impression as they flow to it. They are a deciphering mechanism to extract meaningful patterns from the witnessed experiences of life. These meta patterns (or stories) are so powerful that they are played out in every single variation with every variable repeatedly to provide a map to explain that every experience is a meaningful experience.

Century after century and after the emergence of the written forms of languages, stories took a different and even more critical role. When stories started to be written, they were offered a higher chance of surviving to be passed down without any significant deviations, which helped hurt the advancement of humanity altogether. This new written form would be the starting point of an established domain known as Literature.

These stories came in many written forms and oral, such as drama, poems, novels etc. This opened a door for human beings to study closely every part and every aspect of stories. This was the birth of literary criticism, and one of its most important aspects is to dissect what those stories are in every possible dimension. Literary criticism helped make the clear distinctions between characters, narrators, plot, authors, and readers, yet it neglected (until the twentieth century) the most crucial aspect of any story, namely: narration.

No story could be carried out without narrating, which is axiomatically logical since any discourse would need to be told, and this act of telling is narration. At the start of this general introduction, the sentence fragment ‘from the dawn of humanity’ was employed to denote that this idea is a narrative act.

However, by the start of the sixties of the past century, a whole scientific domain was established to study narration and the act of narrating more accurately. This domain is entitled: Narratology. However, this rapid movement from simply calling a story a narrative to establishing a scientific field for it passed unseen from a diachronic point of view.

Moreover, as a consequence of the postmodern movement, which came about to remove binary opposition and altogether remove those binaries, stories and narratives linked to the creation of identity were put at the forefront of literary studies. These literary texts would be the core of a new literary genre that would help balance or tip the scale of a Eurocentric narrative of

history. This new genre would help give a voice to the voiceless and would, decentralise western narratives and allow marginalised narratives to be given equal referential importance. This newly established genre is entitled postcolonial literature.

It would be logical to assume that postcolonial literature would be the subject of interest in narrative criticism since postcolonial literature focuses on putting forward narratives written by the periphery (every nation except the occident). Nevertheless, the postcolonial genre has rarely been studied from a narratological perspective, and what is more, it has rarely been the subject of comparison within narratology. The main issue is that postcolonial narratives are usually examined only from the postcolonial literary criticism; meaning that the interest of postcolonial literary criticism is to figure out the binary oppositions between the self and the other and to find out whether the text describes accurately the colonised and the coloniser including all sorts of details that were necessary to deem a particular literary work as postcolonial.

In order to do so, two major novels have been chosen as the case study of this research. The first novel is written by the British-Indian, postcolonial author Salman Rushdie, entitled: *Midnight's Children*. This novel is considered a postcolonial chef-d'œuvre written back in 1981 when he travelled by train to India. This novel has been chosen explicitly since it dates back to the years that preceded the birth of Narratology and, therefore, would help establish a chronological order should there be any other attempt in the future to undertake a similar analysis.

The second novel is written by a western writer named Gillian Flynn. She is famous for her feminist novels, and she denotes that her writings are nothing short of being considered feminist works. However, this aspect of her novel shall be minimised since it is not the primary concern of this research. Her novel *Gone Girl* is still one of the most famous novels globally, and there

has even been a movie adaptation. This novel is chosen as a case study because it is an established western narrative with a particular narrative structure, which is the primary purpose of this research, mainly to analyse these narratives from a narratological scope. To do that, this research will be divided into three chapters in order to answer the three sub-questions through the previously mentioned novels.

However, according to the data that has been collected for this research it would seem that neither postcolonial nor western texts were compared within the scope of narratology. Hence, this research's problematic is based on the idea that both postcolonial and western texts were not compared in how they narrate their texts, regardless of their postcolonial or Eurocentric content. Not only that, but even the movement from narration to narratology has been ambiguous. As a result, the following research question has surfaced:

Do Postcolonial and Western discourses have similar or dissimilar narratives and narratological constituents?

The following sub-questions have been put forward in order to answer this research question:

- How did the movement from narration to narratology occur?
- What are the 'narrational' elements of both narrative texts that are usually addressed prior to the birth of Narratology?
- How can these two literary texts be studied under a narratological investigation?

By answering the above questions, this interdisciplinary research will attempt to draft a narratological and comparative model of analysis of the postcolonial and Western narratives.

Chapter one, entitled “From Narration to Narratology”, will be devoted to bringing forward the main literary theoretical concepts necessary for an understanding of the research in general. This chapter will also be allotted to the diachronic movement from narration to narratology. However, there will not be an analysis of it but only a provision of data put in chronological order from the emergence of the novel to the appearance of Narratology.

The second chapter will contain the narrative analysis usually done on any literary text to discern the narrator, plot, characters, and other literary constituents of any narrative. However, it will not deal with anything beyond the necessities of narration analysis. It shall deal with narrative structures, the narrator’s point of view, and the borders of analysis between narration and narratology, such as the narrator’s reliability in both novels and the concept of the return home narrative in *Midnight’s Children*. Hence, only the internal mechanisms of narration shall be dealt with in this chapter, dubbed: “From Narrative Analysis...”

Last but not least, the third chapter shall be devoted to the narratological analysis, with the title: “...to Narratological Conceptualisation”. This chapter shall deal with the external mechanisms that interfere with the narration of both novels; the metafictional and the Historiographic metafictional, the deconstruction of both narrations employing Derrida’s theory of deconstruction; the implications of History and (postcolonial) identity as well as History and (female) identity; the narrator’s rejection of narratives and the narrators as figures of their genre’s model narrators.

Additionally, since such type of analysis has not been dealt with before in previous studies, there are multiple limitations. The existing limitations of this research start with the employed methodology given its ambitious aim. Since it tries to deal with multiple dimensions of comparative

narratological analysis of two very different novels coming from two very different genres (Postcolonial and Western discourse), it would only be logical to assume that not all narrative dimensions of these genres will be present in the case studies that were chosen. Hence, there will be a clear separation between what could be implied as true to all narratives of the same genre and what could be true within the limitations of the picked literary narrative of *Gone Girl* and *Midnight's Children* of this research.

Chapter One: From Narration to Narratology

1.1. Introduction

The first act of any discourse is narration. It is the first action that occurs in any narrative. Even before narratives were written, stories were told and to tell a story the implication of narrating is always present. Children were taught morality through stories, and thus their lecturer, usually a parent, would rely on narrating such a story.

Prior to stories being written, the notion of narration was not and could not be separated from the notion of speaking since again, to narrate one must express his thoughts through a careful selection of arbitrary sounds into meaningful sentences. Yet once stories started being written in a discourse that is when things started to emerge in the in-between-ess of the wording and narrating.

Fast forward to the twentieth century, narration, story, plot were all distinguishable elements that constituted a narrative. These distinctions were a result of multiple variables surrounding the studies conducted on narration. As a result, a whole scientific domain was developed for that precise reason, namely: to study narration. This field was entitled Narratology.

This chapter will serve to clarify most of the concepts that will be dealt with in the two chapters that shall follow. Stretching from what is narration, to explaining all comprised components and types of narrators and narrative structures, as well as narratological concepts, which are mainly derived from Gerard Genette's work on narratology, is necessary for this study.

This chapter will also introduce the postcolonial domain, with a clear explanation of the necessary concepts needed in this research, such as hybridity and magic realism—moreover, a brief induction to how the postcolonial may have derived from the postmodern. However, none of this can be explained without a proper dissection of the emergence of the novel, to go back to where it all started.

1.2. The Emergence of the Novel

At the beginning of the eighteenth-century Europe and the western world in general, witnessed an extraordinary transformation. This fast-paced shift from handmade goods to large scale use of machines was named afterwards by historians as the industrial revolution.

In its wake, the industrial revolution drastically changed the way people lived and the way they viewed the world around them. Hence, it affected all aspects of life, from politics all the way to the arts as well as a catering for a stable economic growth which in turn led to the rise of a new and poised social class.

The bourgeoisie, as it was coined, was a large social class that would for the first time in human history care for mass scale production of goods. One of these goods would be books, which with the advantage of the printing machine was widely sold across Europe. At the time there were ‘relatively’ major sales of famous literary works. Ian Watt documents that “The sale of the most popular books in the period suggests a book-buying public that is still numbered ... in tens of thousands” (1957, p. 35) (mainly pamphlets and poems). It may seem small compared to nowadays but to an overall population of six -6- millions in Europe, it was actually a ground-breaking figure of readers to any prior period. Thus, reading developed to be part of everyday life for most people. It is in this environment that a new literary genre came to be.

The rise of the novel came as a natural cause of what the bourgeoisie/middle class stood for: a literature that the reading public could relate to; for the ordinary person, a literature for and about everyday life in contrast to what poetry and drama comprised. Hence, instead of stories about kings, princesses and knights in shiny armour, stories in this new genre, revolved around simple people with a peculiar focus on their simple lives.

The shift of the focus on who shall be considered a proper subject of any manufactured fiction at the time was the end result of a “society that was characterised by that vast complex of interdependent factors denoted by the term 'individualism'” (Watt, 1957, p. 60).

However, with a mass hunger for more readings of such sort the genre not only provided a more fitting content to its consumers but it also used a different hue of writing mode.

This new flanged genre was the first literary genre to break the traditions of poetry and drama. The novel, as it was named later on, used a considerably clearer and straight forward style of literary writing mode, namely: prose; A writing form that was as ordinary (or so it seemed back then) as its targeted reading public.

However, the novel is not limited to prose only, since it includes a wide range of literary modes. Terry Eagleton suggests that it “...cannibalizes other literary modes and mixes the bits and pieces promiscuously together. You can find poetry and dramatic dialogue in the novel, along with epic, pastoral, satire, history, elegy, tragedy and any number of other literary modes” (Eagleton, 2005, p. 1).

Hence the novel comprises and encompasses in its core not only prose but also poetry, dramatic dialogue history and much more. E.M Forster concurs in his work that “I do not wonder that the poets despise it, though they sometimes find themselves in it [the novel] by accident. And I am not surprised at the annoyance of the historians when by accident it [the novel] finds itself among them” (2002, p. 7).

This complex simplicity of the novel’s form would be one the main reasons of its major success from the 18th century and onwards, making it the most recognised literary genre which would only be natural that it had seized the attention of many researchers.

1.3. Deconstruction of the Novel

Due to the simple and yet complex nature of the novel, it has been thoroughly and meticulously studied. For decades, it has caught the interest of a great number of scholars and researchers who tried to dissect and discern the unique pieces that construct it. And it is for the same reason that the novel defies an established and clear-cut definition.

Sir Walter Scott tries to define it through a comparison of what came before it, *viz.* romance. He argues that the novel is “a fictitious narrative .. [in which] the events are accommodated to the ordinary train of human events and the modern state of society” (1847, p. 575). The Scottish historian-novelist suggests that the innovative aspect of the novel reclines on the fact that it mimics life, since life is not retold as a romance in a poem nor in a play. Therefore, the novel is the closest genre that bears any resemblance to real life. In using prose, the narrative seems to flow unencumbered by a ‘sophisticated’ (metric) structure.

According to Mikhail Bakhtin, the Russian philosopher and literary critic, a novel is “a diversity of social speech types..and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organized” (qtd. in Iser, 1976, p. 262). Bakhtin chose to approach the definition of the novel from the perspective of his concept of polyphony; the notion that there are multiple voices in a novel and that it is up to the author to construct them into a unique whole by stylistically arranging them together.

The French scholar, Abel Chevalley also attempted to give a definition to the novel. In his work *Le Roman Anglais de Notre Temps*, he mentions that¹ “on osait tenter une définition du roman, peut-être n'arriverait-on a rien de mieux qu'à dire que c'est une fiction en prose et d'une certaine étendue” (1921, p. 1). He implies that it is a fiction in prose to some extent. Chevalley simplistically inferred that there might not be a plainer and yet reasonable definition to this genre.

¹ The translation of this original quote is as follows: “we dared to attempt a definition of the novel, perhaps we would arrive at nothing better than to say that it is a fiction in prose and of a certain extent”

Forster infers that the source of the novel's complexity lies in the fact that it is a formidable amorphous mass (2002, p. 7). In other words, the novel as genre is *the* melting pot of literature within which its content (of the melting pot) is as formless and shapeless as water. Therefore, in the novel there is a touch of everything that might be linked to real life, with a certain prescribed norms and rules that are comprised in it by the author which are often times different from reality.

1.4. Aspects of the Novel

The modernist writer, E.M Forster endeavoured to study prose fiction in an attempt to probe the novel's form and extrude its fundamental building blocks. However, Forster successfully deconstructed the novel as a genre, instead of labelling it as a demarcated genre or even comparing it to previous ones.

Aspects of the Novel (1927) is a collection of lectures broadly referenced and a widely known oeuvre in the subject of literary criticism, given by E.M Forster in which he discerns mainly seven (7) essential components that construct the novel. Out of which only five (5) elements with ties to narration shall be accentuated.

a) Story

Logically, the first aspect of the novel would be the story, since, as Forster puts it, it is the "backbone" of every novel. Forster also implies that because curiosity is imbedded in human beings, ever since the Palaeolithic times, they are instinctively awaiting what happens next and therefore the suspense keeps the listener/reader intrigued and interested in hearing what happens next in the story.

Hence Story, as Forster suggests is "a narrative of events arranged in their time sequence" (2002, p. 22). In other words, it is an orchestrated, time-regulated recounting of events.

b) People (characters)

In his work, Forster dedicates two chapters to discuss extensively the aspect of characters where he refers to it as 'people' (2002, p. 33). Forster may have used the word 'people' to emphasise that he tried to link the concept of characters in the novel to living, breathing people in real life.

He probed the idea that characters in the novel have in fact deeper layers to them and often many facets. In the novel, unlike any other genre before it, the novelist could give the reader a close and thorough insight of the character's feelings, thoughts, and intentions etc. Forster denotes that "to express this side of human nature is one of the chief functions of the novel" (2002, p. 35).

However, the novelist is not expected to explore all the layers of all characters, unless that is his intention, and therefore Forster suggests that there are two types of characters based on how they are developed (by the author's intent) in the novel.

- Flat characters, on one hand, are characters that "are constructed round a single idea [action] or quality" (2002, p. 48). In other words characters that have one role [action] in the story and whose inner thoughts, feelings and lives are veiled from the reader.

- Round characters, on the other hand, are characters that have multiple actions, roles in the story. Characters that drive the story forward and whose lives, emotions and desires are accessible to the reader.

Forster implies that all characters are flat until "there is more than one factor in them, [that is when] we get the beginning of the curve towards the round"

(2002, p. 48). Meaning that the more the novelist hinges actions onto a character the rounder it becomes.

c) The Plot

At the beginning of his work Forster sets the prerequisites of the ideal reader; the reader that understands a novel. He must possess three crucial criteria “the novelist will be appealing to our intelligence and imagination, [as well as] curiosity” (Forster, 2002, p. 33). Thus, according to him these three standards have to be met in order to be able to appreciate and comprehend the true extents of a novel.

The aspect of plot is usually confused and sometimes even used interchangeably with the aspect of story; since both are logically intertwined in the novel. For, whence the story appeals to the reader’s curiosity to know what would happen next, the plot reaches out to his memory and intelligence to connect the dots of past and present events or ‘happenings’. In this sense the reader uses his imagination to anticipate the revelation of the novel’s mystery as designed by the author.

Hence, Forster defines the plot as “a narrative of events, the emphasis falling causality” (2002, p. 61). In other words, plot is the answer to the question ‘why?’ of the events that occur as the story unfolds.

Although the above mentioned aspects would be ‘adequate’ for a decent novel, Forster emphasises that a true novel demands “something extra” (2002, p. 75).

d) Fantasy

As most novels are oriented to mimic life and paint a detailed and akin picture of it, it only comes naturally for the reader to adjust to the norms of the novel as presented by the novelists. However, another aspect is introduced by some novelists which disturbs the reader and “compels us [him] to an adjustment that is different to

an adjustment required by a work of art, to an additional adjustment” (Forster, 2002, p. 75) this extra tuning is the aspect of fantasy.

Fantasy is where the author demands the reader to accept supernatural elements that might not occur to him in real life and coerces him to adapt to the ‘illogicality’ of this manufactured reality without actually explicitly expressing the fictitiousness of these supernatural elements.

e) Settings

In real life, as Forster claims “It is always possible for you or me in daily life to deny that time exists” (2002, p. 23) and we might ‘lose track’ of it. Hence, under some certain circumstances (the creative process or mental illnesses), setting and especially time could be altered according to what he referred to as ‘value’.

He suggests that in day-to-day life we do not narrate events in a chronological order or how they actually happened but we narrate them according to what was most interesting and emotionally intense to us, subjectively. Therefore an event that happened recently could be lost in oblivion because it was unimportant to us and yet an event that happened decades ago would seem so freshly preserved in our memory for its intensity, for its value.

In the novel the ‘where?’ and ‘when?’ are one of the most fundamental questions that the reader asks him/herself. Even if these two aspects are not real or unspecified, the sense of time and place is always present in any story be it in a novel, play, poem, movie or a videogame. Forster concurs by stating that “in the novel, the allegiance to time is imperative “no novel could be written without it” and that “it is never possible for a novelist to deny time inside the fabric of his novel” (2002, p. 23).

David Lodge, the English author and literary critic, takes a different approach to the idea of settings and mentions that even the sense of place is interwoven with the description that the writer paints in his novel, even if he does

not explicitly mention the place. He also makes note that even the words used, and oftentimes the slang of the narrator/characters could be an indication of where the action/event took place. (1993, p. 59).

Donald Maass, the agent and author of *The Breakout Novelist*, denotes that settings and especially places can become animate and therefore are transformed into independent characters in the narrative. He advocates that “in great fiction, the setting lives from the very first pages. Such places not only feel extremely real, they are dynamic. They change. They affect the characters in the story. They become metaphors, possibly even actors in the drama” (qtd. in (Column, 2013). Therefore, settings, be it time or place, are an inescapable verity, in any narrative.

1.5. Traditional Narrative Discourse

Human beings have made it this far because of their limitless potentials to imagine, to plan, to create even, but most importantly because of their ability to remember. We have been endowed with the capacity to recall past events, and gather those clumps of crude experience and pass it on to the generation that follows through series of stories.

These stories are the perfect example of what is referred to in literature as the act of narration. Narration of events is all around us and nearly everything that happens *is* and could be ‘narrated’. Even this short paragraph that is being written/read at this very moment and the research in itself is but a narrative to prove a previously mentioned hypothesis.

The prominent German researcher, Monica Fludernik concurs that narration is not limited to prose fiction or poetry or academia in general. She points out that narration:

...is all around us, not just in the novel or in historical writing. Narrative is [...] to be found wherever someone tells us about something: a newsreader on the radio, a teacher at school... fellow

passenger on a train, a newsagent, one's partner over the evening meal...or the narrator in the novel that we enjoy reading before going to bed. We are all narrators in our daily lives, in our conversations with others, and sometimes we are even professional narrators (should we happen to be, say, teachers, press officers or comedians) (2009, p. 1).

The German researcher similarly defines narration as "... cause-and-effect relationships that are applied to sequences of events" (2009, p. 2). Which bears a resemblance to the definition given formerly by the Russian scholar Boris Viktorovich Tomashevsky, in which he indicates that "narrative fiction represents a succession of events" (1965, p. 66). In other words, both definitions converge on the theory that narration is the structuring of events in itself in a certain order or succession.

Gerard Genette gives three distinctive definitions to narration/narrative which he believed are traditional definitions to the terms. The first, being most widely spread and used, as he suggests "narrative refers to the narrative statement, the oral or written discourse that undertakes to tell of an event or a series of events ... that purports to be the faithful transcription of [a certain] speech" (1980, p. 25). Hence the first definition he gives lines up with the notion of recounting of events be it oral or written, which must be an authentic and staunch record of the text itself.

Furthermore, he gives a second definition in which he comprises that "narrative refers to the succession of events, real or fictitious, that are the subjects of this discourse, and to their several relations of linking, opposition, repetition, etc" (1980, p. 25). In this definition there's the mentioning of events, fictitious or real, which are assembled through the creation of various sorts of relationships in between them. Thus, the focus is not on the events themselves but rather on the relationships that are formed in between them.

His third definition goes even further than the simplicity of structure and relationships of a narrative. Genette implies that it is the oldest one known in which “*narrative* refers once more to an event: not, however, the event that is recounted, but the event that consists of someone recounting something: the act of narrating taken in itself” (1980, p. 25). He delves into the idea that narrative is an event in itself. He exemplifies using books IX-XII of the ‘*Odyssey*’, stating that those books could be labelled as the narrative of Ulysses in the same way book XXII could be labelled as the slaughter of his wife’s suitors. Genette emphasises that Ulysses recounting his adventures is as much of an action (event) as killing his wife’s suitors. Thus, to Genette, narrative could be defined as an action that is continuously occurring throughout the unfolding of the story’s events.

From another perspective, a leading scholar of narrative poetics by the name Gerald Prince, defines narrative as “the recounting [...] of one or more real or fictitious events communicated by one, two, or several (more or less overt) narrators to one, two or several (more or less overt) narratees” (1987, p. 58); Shifting the focus from the act itself to the narrator and ‘narratee’.

Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, a well-known scholar in the field of comparative literature, suggests a revision of the term ‘narrative’ and implies instead that “the term narration suggests [first] a communication process in which the narrative as message is transmitted by addresser to addressee” (2005, p. 2). Thus, to her, the concept of a ‘narrative’ is a communicative act which includes two parts: an addresser and an addressee.

As a continuity of her previous definition, she infers that the term narrative is “[second] the verbal nature of the medium used to transmit the message” (Rimmon-Kenan, 2005, p. 2). In other words, narrative is the uttered nature of how that message is transmitted from addresser to addressee.

Chatman on his end, and from a structuralist perspective, argues that a narrative is formed of two parts. The first one being the story which according to

him is the chain of events or actions, and what he referred to as “the existents”; which are characters, items of settings, and second the discourse. Accordingly, to Chatman, the discourse is “the expression, the means by which the content is communicated” (1980, p. 19). Henceforth, the relationship that is formed between the discourse and the chain of events plus ‘the existents’, brings to birth the ‘narrative’.

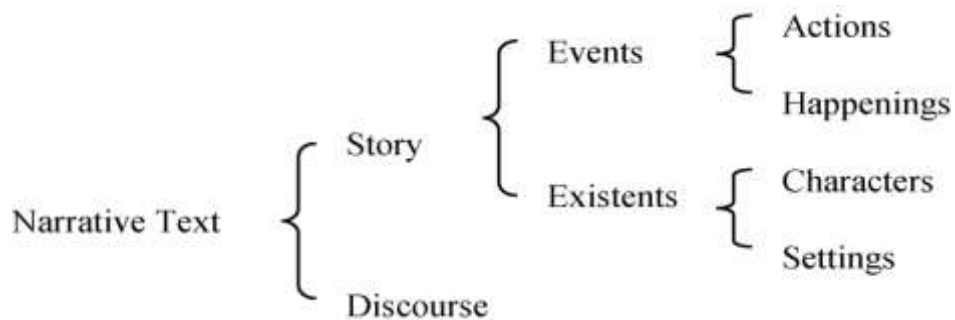


Figure 01: A representation of Chatman’s theory of narrative (Chatman, 1980, p. 19)

Chatman goes even further into defining the act of narration. The following figure (02) illustrates it as well as the different parts that construct it. He uses Wolfgang Iser’s diagram which subtracts ‘the real author’ and ‘the real reader’ out of the premise of the act of narration. Thus, to the implied author and the implied reader are the ‘hauiliers’ of the act of narration.

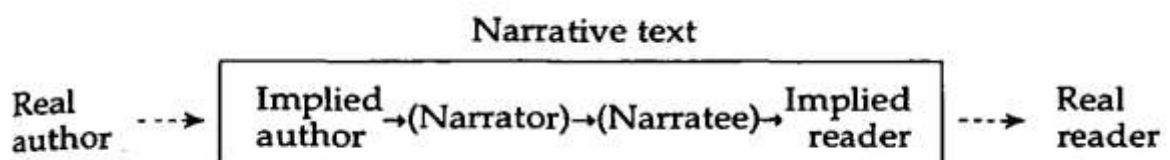


Figure 02: W. Iser’s illustration of the act of narration. (Chatman, 1980, p. 151)

Furthermore, many literary critics examined in depth the literary concept of narration or the act of narration. Roland Barthes in his widely esteemed work 'S/Z', makes note that narration occurs through the act of reading hence to him "whoever reads the text² amasses certain data under some generic titles for actions (stroll, murder, rendezvous), and this title embodies the sequence; the sequence exists when and because it can be given a name, it unfolds as this process of naming takes place" (1974, p. 19).

To Barthes the actions are in themselves linked conceptually to the terms that are found in a text and therefore they themselves form the sequencing of events. Consequently, a circle is formed; the labelling of actions into words (text) is in itself the recounting of those events.

David Lodge, in accordance with the notion of narrative structure, suggests that "The structure of a narrative is like the framework of girders that holds up a modern high-rise building you can't see it, but it determines the edifice's shape and character"³ (1993, p. 216). Lodge uses this metaphor to capture a tangible understanding of the importance of narrative structure. In other words, the structure of the narrative is not seen immediately nor without proper examination, yet it defines the whole ensemble of the narrative.

Since narrative is designed by authors and these latter usually experiment with form, especially modernist and postmodernist authors, narration or narrative structure comes in different varieties. These forms/structures naturally affect how the story, plot and characters 'behave' in a novel and therefore there are myriad types of narration, all in accordance with the author's intentions.

² In his work, Roland Barthes had an avant-gardist view on the meaning of the word 'text'. He did not put any limitations to the representation of 'text' and therefore it could vary from a play, a painting to actual words on paper and even nowadays as a movie or a videogame; the reason that makes his work relative until today.

³ By character, Lodge is not refereeing to the 'people' of the narrative. He is referring to the distinctive criteria that form a narrative.

1.5.1. Linear (Chronological) Narration

The first and most basic form of narrative structure would be the linear structure. It was the most common technique employed and favoured by poets, playwrights and novelists. Prior the modernist era, most stories were narrated in such a manner, going from point **A** to point **Z**, in one direction, with no disruption of the course of time as the story moves forward, because that is what authors thought was the ‘natural’ to narrate events.

Often times also referred to as simultaneous narration, Prof. Mouro, from the University of Tlemcen, defines it as when “the story and narration occur at the same time, without any temporal interference” (Mouro, 2014, p. 36). In other words, when there is no distance between the act of narration and the occurrence of the actions/happenings of the story.

Lodge comments on the matter by stating that “The simplest way to tell a story, equally favoured by tribal bards and parents at bedtime, is to begin at the beginning, and go on until you reach the end, or your audience falls asleep” (Lodge, 1993, p. 74). Which converges mainly on the same idea; the story and narration take place concurrently, starting from the beginning of the plot, going through the rising of events (actions), reaching a climax and ending after a denouement.

Lodge mentioning that linear narration was used to tell bedtime stories for kids. The deduced information from this phrase, although humorous, would suggest that it makes the story ‘simpler’ and easier to comprehend. Therefore, it is used for kids. This might also be the case for realist authors.

Since realist writers endlessly endeavoured on creating a fiction mimetic to reality, linear narration was the most ‘authentic’ means to recite stories. For the current of time for actual human beings flows like a river stream, narrating the same way they perceived reality was only a likely result.

Additionally, in both history and religious studies, linear narration is mostly employed to give a logical synchronicity of the events that happened since their order depends on the cause/consequence relationship and particular relationship can only be linear since cause always precedes consequence. Ari Helo from the University of Oulu notes that “In history, causation never goes backwards in time” (2016, p. 14). And that “From the historian's perspective to the past ... everything is linear. (2016, p. 8). Thus, linear narration precedes most narrative structures known in literary studies.

1.5.2. Parallel Narration (Multiperspectivity)

The famous saying that ‘each story has two sides’ invokes a sense of missing out on something crucial. As a specie that can live only in one physical form, we are limited to one perspective only, that which we experience through our senses. In fiction some authors endeavour to make up for that existential limitation and wind-up creating stories which are told from multiple perspectives.

Multiperspectivity is the term employed in literary studies as a narrative mode when the story is told from the perspective of two or more than one character. Although there is a slight distinction between parallel narration and multiperspectivity since the first is logically for only two stories and the latter for three or more.

Myriad of researchers have jabbed their teeth into defining parallel narration. Emily Layfield, an editor and researcher of narrative structure denotes that “Parallel structure refers to two distinctly different, yet closely related storylines that occur simultaneously” (Layfield, 2017). To Bridget Baudinet multiperspectivity is “a story structure in which the writer includes two or more separate narratives linked by a common character, event, or theme” (Baudinet, 2017).

Mikhail Bakhtin, the famous literary critic and theorist, would have been the first scholar to introduce the notion of multiperspectivity. Although he did not use

the term itself, he did use “polyphony”, a term that would completely change how a novel is perceived. In his world-renowned work *‘Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics’* the Russian scholar suggested that in each novel there are multiple voices that constitute the whole of it (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 12). Therefore, his term (polyphony). would lay the foundations for the notion of multiperspectivity, since different voices would also be considered different perspectives. (Hartner, 2012).

The term multiperspectivity was first coined yet vaguely defined by Volker Neuhaus, a German professor at the University of Koln (Neuhaus, 1971) and later on thoroughly studied by Ansgar and Vera Nunning. In their view multiperspectivity is “multiperspectivity is the result of the arrangement of discrepant figural standpoints—a perspective structure which is prototypically produced by successive portrayals of the same event from various points of view” (2000, p. 5) qtd. in Hartner, 2012).

The easiest way to illustrate parallel narration is to draw DNA strands. Although the two strands are not intercalated on one another, yet they meet at several points. Same for a storyline that uses parallel narration. The stories would need a meeting point in which an important mystery is about to be revealed or an important information that will shake the plot entirely will be unveiled.

1.6. The (Traditional) Narrator

Lodge states that “every novel must have a narrator, however impersonal” (1993, p. 80) with this quotation in mind, and this research having to undertake both narration and the science that deals with it -narratology-, the narrator is an important if not *the* important element of narration, and ultimately that of narratology. Lodge discloses that a narrator is a necessity, vital to the creation of a novel (story) however anonymous he/she/it might be.

Guillemette and Lévesque (2016) quoting from Genette suggest that “all narrative is necessarily “*diegesis*” (telling), in that it can attain no more than an illusion of “*mimesis*” (showing) by making the story real and alive. Thus, every

narrative implies a narrator” (Guillemette & Lévesque, 2016). Therefore, the narrator is “implied” of being a crucial element of the act of “diegesis” or reciting and his role in mimicking authentically life through fiction.

Marie-Laure Ryan takes it even further and suggests that “For the duration of the fictional experience, the realm of possibilities is [...] recentered around the sphere which the narrator presents as the actual world” (1991, p. 22). The narrator in this case is not only important and crucial to the narrative but he/she or even it, is the focal point, the mecca, from which the narrative world-making is spun around.

Following this chain of thought, Chatman (1980) emphasises that “It is a fundamental convention to ignore the author, but not the narrator” Focusing the importance lenses on the narrator and that this later is “the-someone-person or presence-actually telling the story to an audience, no matter how minimally evoked his voice or the audience's listening ear” (pp. 33-34). And once more the significance of the narrator is highlighted, hinting that even if his presence is minimalistic it is still of significant importance to the narrative.

In terms of minimalistic definitions Rimmon-Kenan implies that “the narrator can only be defined circularly as the ‘narrative voice’ or ‘speaker’ of a text,” as well as “the agent which at the very least narrates or engages in some activity serving the needs of narration” (2005, pp. 90-91). By serving the needs of narration she refers to the narrative act which is carried by the narrator which is oftentimes confused with the role of the author.

Using the terms author and narrator used to be commonplace before narratology came to be established. However, Chatman (1980) makes a separation line between the two concepts in terms of their ‘role’ in the narrative and even outside the narrative. He mentions that:

Even dialogue has to be invented by an author. But it is quite clear (well established in theory and criticism). that we must distinguish between the narrator, or speaker, the one currently ‘telling’ the

story, and the author, the ultimate designer of the fable, who also decides, for example, whether to have a narrator (p. 33).

He, therefore, clarifies the ambiguity and suggests that the narrator and author are not the same entity -as inferred to by Wolfgang Iser and Roland Barthes' work.

In his work, he also makes the distinction between two types of narrators. The first one being the "overt [narrator] -a real character or an intrusive outside party" implying that the narrator makes himself apparent to the (implied) reader; the second being the narrator who is "absent," or covert (Chatman, 1980, p. 33) who is usually more 'discreet' and in most cases harder to identify and made aware of.

Monika Fludernik and Lubbock's idea about the narrator revolve around basically the same aspects as Chatman's. On one hand, Lubbock's idea is that "The novelist...can either describe the characters from outside, as an impartial or partial onlooker; or he can assume omniscience and describe them from within; or he can place himself in the position of one of them and affect to be in the dark as to the motives of the rest" (qtd. in Mouro, 2014, p. 35).

And on the other hand, Monika Fludernik who's two types of narrators are: an overt narrator; "one that can be clearly seen to be telling the story – though not necessarily a first-person narrator – and to be articulating her/his own views and making her/his presence felt stylistically as well as on the metanarrative level" and a covert narrator who is "linguistically inconspicuous; s/he does not present him/herself (one could almost say: itself) as the articulator of the story or does so almost imperceptibly" (2009, p. 21).

Both Lubbock and Fludernik seem to converge with Chatman's distinction of the two types of narrators, with some minor differences. For whence Fludernik adds the dimension of metanarrative (which the narrative activity of linking together the different story and plot parts and binding them to move the story forward) which is a pure narrator-role, Lubbock instead focuses on the point of view of the narrator instead of the narrative level. He highlights the different positions the narrator can

be situated in order to either be aware of the whole narrative or veiled from different parts of it.

Through these various distinctions caused by the narrator's position and awareness of the narrative, there are five types of narrators in any traditional story/narrative.

1.6.1. First-Person Narrator

The role or function of the narrator is established, more or less, which is in simpler words: to 'narrate'; with every detailed meaning snared to that word. However the point of view that he is prescribed to be in seems to have a larger effect on 'how?' he/she/it carries out that task.

A first-person narrator according to Lodge is a "a character who refers to himself (or herself) as 'I'" (1993, p. 18). To Felluga Franco, author of 'Critical Theory Key Concepts', defines the first-person narrator as the type "who tells us what happens in his or her own voice" (2015, p. 78). Hence in epistolary novels, in which the narrator uses the pronoun 'I' or 'we' in some instances, by default, are generally first-person narratives

Moreover, autobiographies are also defined in the (Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory, 2005) edited by David Herman et.al, that "author renders the facts of her/his own life, usually in first-person form" In this entry it is clarified that since the author is making a rendering of personal life facts into a first-person narrative.

However, the narrator in first-person point of view might be, but not always necessarily, the protagonist but he/she "recollect[s] his or her own part in the events related, either as a witness of the action or as an important participant in it" (Baldick, 2008). Hence, the narrator could also be a sidekick or secondary character who was present during the story's unfolding events.

Furthermore, first-person narrative is frequently utilised in both interior and dramatic monologues as well as for recounting a story within the story (metadiegetic narrative) since it allows the narrator to reach a certain level of closeness with the audience. This technic allows the narrator to switch from character to narrator (Stanzel, 1986, p. 208). Hence, the confusion that most times even though the narrator might take a different point of view to address the characters for instance, which might be identified as a third person narrative, yet the narrative would still be considered a first-person narrative. As Fludernik suggests that the narrator in first-person might also be confused with the author himself. (2009, p. 13).

Additionally, in some cases the audience is presumed to exist in a form of a character usually listening to the narrator as he narrates, and sometimes the narrator merely hints vaguely and inexplicitly to a surrogate of an audience ‘listening ‘to his story. And in some cases, he carries on the narrative act as if there is none at all.

1.6.2. Second Person Narrator

Common sense dictates that if there is a mentioning of a ‘first’ then there should be at least a ‘second’ (even a third). Hence, the first-person narrative is logically followed by a second person narrative.

A second person narrative is one in which the reader is directly involved as a character-narrator. From Ginny Wiehardt’s perspective “Second-person point of view is a form of writing in which the point of view of a narrative work is told in the voice of the onlooker, which is you, the reader” (Wiehardt, 2019). Hence the reader is immersed as an essential element in the manufactured reality.

In counter point, although the reader is addressed as a character, he is not necessarily addressed as the implied reader⁴. It goes in one direction only. The

⁴ W. Iser’s Implied Reader.

implied reader is addressed as a character but not as an implied reader. Otherwise it would not be a second person narrative but rather a fourth wall breaking⁵.

Moreover, Irene Kacandes points out that there might be instances in which the use of the pronoun ‘you’ -which is the major cue in identifying first from second person narrative- is not always meant as a “pure address” but rather as a rhetorical or apostrophic [narrative] device” In pure address, the addressee (implied reader) is on the same communicative level as the narrator, whereas in rhetorical addressing he left noticeably on a different level of communication (qtd. in: Fludernik, 1993, p. 219) since the narrator is being rhetorical.

The pronoun ‘you’ however, is limited to the English language. In other languages even though the narrator might use ‘**Vous**’ in French or ‘**Sie**’ in German, which are third person pronouns grammatically, might still be a second person narrative. (Qtd. in Fludernik, 1993, p. 220) Therefore a major interest in understanding the second person narrator can be tied to semiotics. In this case it would seem difficult to swap these grammatical pronouns directly into the field of literary narrative since there is no ‘real’ connection between the grammatical person (you, vous, and sie). and the narrative person. (Landa, Structural Narratology: An Introduction, 2005).

Additionally, this point of view is rarely used in fiction (novel) since it is difficult to find a suitable and fitting ‘action’ that the reader would react or be interested in as he is being addressed. Fludernik Concurrs to this point and notes that in the second person narrative “the reader perceives her/himself as being urged to carry out the actions described” (2009, p. 31).

This type of narrative scope is therefore and usually embedded in videogames. Since most videogames although from the perspective of the player is

⁵ Fourth wall breaking is a postmodern narrative technic in which the narrator or character addresses directly the reader as *the implied reader*. it shall be discussed further in the title: “The ‘Western’ Unreliable Narrator”

played through the main character either through his eyes or as a third person player, he is addressed as an engaging character which effects and is affected by the events/happenings.

1.6.3. Third Person Narrator

As it was foreshadowed in the previous title, the third person narrator is the third, and up until now in traditional narrative discourse, the sole remaining scope of narration that has not yet been discussed.

Since the first-person narrator is used to create a sort of intimacy and second person to create a rapport with the ‘addressee’, the third person narrator, as Fludernik suggests “In literature, the world of the third person narrator is completely separate from that of the characters in the story” (2009, p. 31). Therefore the narrator is to preside, in a sense, over the characters’ narrative arches without having one.

To Steven Cohan and Linda M. Shires “when [...] the narrator is not a character in the story, the narration is anonymous, [then it is] told in the third person” (Cohan & Shires, 1988). Their definition solidifies the clear notion that the third person narrative point of view does not allow the narrator to have any agency inside the story itself.

David Herman et.al also note that the third person narrative point of view “is a story in which the narrator does not take part as an acting character” (2005). Therefore, the narrator cannot directly interfere in the story, in contrast to the first-person narrator who has the ability to switch between a character to narrator and vice versa.

F.K Stanzel refers to the narrator in third person point of view as the “authorial narrator” Although he makes the distinction between the author and narrator he negotiates the idea that since this type of narrator is external to the narrative itself, he seems to be in a similar or at least closer position to the author’s. (Stanzel, 1986).

Although first-person and third person narrative points of view seem to be in opposite or in contrast to one another, they are not necessarily binaries. Since there are other variables that apply to the narrator’s position/point of view vis-à-vis the story, the characters’ psyche and his knowledge of the world he is presenting and the events that are unfolding in it.

1.6.4. Limited Narrator

In the three previous titles, the narrator has been dealt with in terms of his/her position in terms of narrative positioning. However, there are two other variables that also affect the narrative which are embedded in the narrator, one of which is the narrator’s knowledge of the fictional world, including everything from characters’ traumas, thoughts and emotions all the way to reach his knowledge concerning knowing the future. Hence the narrator’s knowledge or lack of it has an effect on the narrative act.

In a narrative in which the narrator is a character (protagonist) telling his story (first-person narrator). in the present, most often the narrator/character would be limited, since he is narrating at the same time as the events are occurring. Therefore: “it can be assumed that first-person narrators are both inherently limited in their perspective” (Fludernik, 2009, p. 153).

The British author and literary critic, Marjorie Boulton concurs on the matter and emphasises most first-person narrators are limited since they “can tell the story from the point of view of one person” (Boulton, 1984, p. 30). Hence human –

spatiotemporal- restriction of having one body and only one perspective at a time barricades the narrator's insights beyond him/herself.

Moreover, a limited narrator is the narrator that has no prior awareness of other character's thoughts, and if the narrator is not a character (third person narrator). but acts as an objective bystander, he most probably has no idea of what the protagonist is even thinking or feeling. He logically "is limited to [his/her own] knowledge and perceptions (=internal perspective)" (Fludernik, 2009, p. 37). His role is to report the events as a bench-spectator of only what is visible to him/her.

In this sense the addressee/IMPLIED reader is attached and in a sense, 'stuck' to the character which is telling the story. Since the story is told through his eyes. However, this might not be the same case for a well-informed or an all-knowing narrator.

1.6.5. Omniscient Narrator

In binary opposition to the limited narrator, who has no vision of future event nor access to the characters' psyche, is a narrator who has a thorough knowledge of that fictitious world, inward and outward, as well as an immense awareness of what has, is and will happen to the characters. This narrator has omniscience of everything and is therefore termed the omniscient narrator.

Lodge refers to this kind of narrator similarly by stating that "an omniscient narrative method [is] reporting the action from a God-like altitude" (Lodge, 1993, p. 26). Thus, this narrator is defined and functions as a godlike story teller and the meaning of "altitude" is not just related to the distance effect of the narrator from the story but also of his/her awareness of the narrative.

Fludernik refers to the omniscient narrator as the authorial narrator who "is located, godlike, above and beyond the world of the story; s/he sees and knows everything even if s/he does not reveal all s/he knows— at least, this is how it seems

to the reader” (2009, p. 92). Here, she appends the variable of the narrator withholding information from the reader.

Forster also makes use the term author to refer to the narrator in his work and in terms of omniscience he suggests that the “[narrator] explains everything, he stands back, ‘he judges his characters’⁶” (Forster, 2002, p. 56) which might seem to stand in contrast to Fludernik’s definition, yet what he means is that he explains everything that *needs* to be explained to narrate the story in the manner it was designed to be narrated.

Furthermore, the narrator being omniscient usually comes with the combination of a third person point of view, hence being omniscient and uninvolved in the narrative, he can wonder off from one character to another, moving freely and as he wishes in giving the narratee whichever framed perspective of the presented fictitious world he sees fit. Therefore, “we are not necessarily bound to him [protagonist or any other character]; we may leave him and assume different spatial positions” (Uspensky, 1973, pp. 58-59). The narrator can explain the deep thoughts of one of the characters and then jump to describe the landscape that is evidently and by fictitious measures, far from that character.

The omniscient narrator is also known for being the most often used type of narrator. Boulton concurs and notes that “most mainstream novels are written from the point of view of an omniscient, or at least very well informed, narrator, who follows either one character or several” (Boulton, 1984, p. 31) meaning, to some extent that the omniscient narrator is impersonal and he does not implicate himself (directly). within the story but rather recounts it by following one or multiple characters.

The reason behind the frequent use of the omniscient narrator is that it “provides what each and every reader wants: insights into the motives behind the protagonists’ behaviour. This is why the development of the omniscient narrator...

⁶ The sentence “he judges his characters” is translated from the original sentence in French: “il juge ses personnages” (Forster, 2002, p. 56).

[is]... an ideal narrative technique whose inherently un-natural quality fails to be consciously noted by readers” (Fludernik, 2009, p. 112). In other words: it gives the narratee the ability to step inside the characters’ minds as well as bonding with the narrator who is (at least, seems) to know everything about what he is reciting. Therefore, the use of such narrator is due to the fact that it forms a trustful relationship between narrator and the narratee.

To round up, none of the previously mentioned types of narrators are used randomly in narratives nor are they used separately in one narrative but they could be employed all in one narrative if the author wishes it so. Thus, the choice of narrator could be an ensemble of two or more of these characteristics. However, these other characteristics would come to be ascribed to the narrator with the coming of an era that would make it its priority to deconstruct and experiment all that is traditional.

1.7. Postmodern (Western) Narrative Discourse

Literature itself can be recognised as the moderniser of genres and conventions inherent from past traditions, since it is an everlasting process of form experimentation with its own constituents. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise that at some point a movement would arise from that very same principle to solemnly uproot traditional conventions.

Herman et.al, on the idea of distrusting everything from religion all the way to the existence of literary movements, note that:

Nothing about postmodernism is uncontroversial. Whether it is a period, a movement, or a general ‘condition’ of culture, how broadly or narrowly it is distributed around the world, when it began and whether it has ended, even whether it happened at all, are all matters of dispute (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005, p. 601).

Postmodernism in literature is, therefore, the movement that questioned not only literary norms and traditions but also literary movements. It also came as a backlash and a continuity to its predecessor, modernism; a continuity because modernism had already been experimenting with form itself; and a backlash because it challenged everything that has been previously set in stones to be the norms, conventions and even belief systems.

It is therefore, primordial to perceive how postmodernism has affect literature and the craft of fiction writing. “In literature, postmodernism is agreed to be characterised by a disruption in the traditional techniques of the craft of fiction...Postmodern authors experiment with the basic elements of genre, plot, and narrator to concepts like order, linearity and continuity” (Medjahed & Messaoudi, 2018, p. 17).

Hence, the full-on wave of experimentation on genres, literary conventions and specifically elements of the novel, were the priority of postmodern writers. John Hawkes, an experimental postmodern novelist, denotes that “...the true enemies of the novel were plot, character, setting and theme” (Bradbury, 1977, p. 7).

Therefore, aspects of the novel were questioned and tampered within the postmodern novel. In terms of narrative, nothing has been left unturned or unspoiled. Postmodern authors experimented with most, if not all elements of narration. This resulted in the emergence of a number of new technics such as the disruption of narrative timing and events, meddling with the intentions of the narrator; allowing the fictitious work to comment on its own fictitious state and even breaking the illusive barriers between reality and fiction in

1.7.1. Metadiegetic Narrative (Frame Story)

The term ‘Metadiegetic’ was coined by Genette in his work *Narrative Discourse: an Essay in Method* where he defines it as “the events told in ...a narrative in a second degree” (1980, p. 228). In simpler words, a story that is narrated inside

another story. Herman et al. use the term ‘embedded’ instead of metadiegetic and give a clearer definition. They explain it is “the structure by which a character in a narrative becomes the narrator of a second narrative text framed by the first one” (2005, p. 134).

Historically speaking the technique of frame story or story within a story has been frequently used in literature by multiple authors throughout the ages; in ancient Indian literature such as *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* until it gradually made its way westward. Reaching Greece (Homer’s *Odyssey*) and Mesopotamia where the *Arabian nights*’ (*One Thousand and One Nights*) were originated. It reached Medieval English literature as well, since Geoffrey Chaucer’s *‘Canterbury Tales’* are nothing short of a metadiegetic narrative.

Genette attributes three particular usage of the metadiegetic narrative. First one being a “direct causality between the events” of the two narratives; when they there is a need for an explanation through another story. Second, metadiegetic narrative is employed for a “thematic relationship” where the link between the two stories lies in one of the themes discussed in the first story. And last, when the “act of narrating itself ... fulfils a function in the diegesis [narrative]”; meaning when the second story is narrated for the purpose of distraction such as Scheherazade when she distracts the sultan with new narratives, although they have no direct nor thematic relationship with her story (Genette, 1980, pp. 233-234).

This particular last one -when the frame story is used with a nonspecific function- is ascribed as a postmodern technique. Although its use is not cornered in purely postmodernist era, the postmodern author simply fills the story with nonrelated items and artefacts thrown randomly and haphazardly into the story. As Raymond Federman puts it “In those spaces where there is nothing to write, the [postmodern] fiction writer can, at any time, introduce material (quotations, pictures, diagrams, charts, designs, pieces of other discourses, etc.) totally unrelated to the story” (Federman, 1975, p. 12).

A metadiegetic narrative is not always overt where the narrator/character will mention that he will recount a story (as Scheherazade does). Most times, as Genette suggests “the second narrative can be handled as a nonverbal representation (most often visual), a sort of iconographic document, which the narrator converts into a narrative by describing it himself” (1980, p. 231). Therefore, a metadiegetic narrative could be narrated by the implied author’s narrator and not only through characters.

Furthermore, Garcia Landa infers to frame stories in terms of exteriority and interiority. He suggests that:

We may have internal narrators telling secondary narratives. These narratives are framed by a different narrative voice, by their own status of displacement from the spatio-temporal context in which they are told, often by their status or subject-matter (1991, p. 36).

Here we have the reference back to Genette’s notion of “thematized relationship” of the secondary narrative with the primary narrative.

He also illustrates metaphorically how metadiegetic stories are framed and asserts that “the structure of a work can be defined as a series of Chinese boxes” (Landa, 1991, p. 36) or even Russian dolls with one story being embedded into another.

These embedded stories, as it was previously mentioned, do have a certain function on the main story or the theme of the story, besides the breaking of traditional narrative techniques.

1.7.2. Nonlinear Narration

Aligning with the breaking of traditional narrative techniques, modernist/postmodernist authors such as Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner and Kurt Vonnegut experimented with the linearity of telling stories in their novels. The outcome was the offspring referred to in nowadays literature as nonlinear narration.

This technique although typically coupled with postmodernism, has been used thoroughly throughout the ages. Although back then it was not referred to as nonlinear narration but as “In Medias res” which is Latin for “Into the middle of things” Hence narratives back then used to be either framed within another main narrative - ‘*Arabian Nights*’ - or begun right in the middle of an event - Homer’s ‘*Odyssey*’ - as well as in a form of flashbacks – *Mahabharata*.

Moving freely and unencumbered in their stories, postmodern authors not only employed these techniques but they took them to a whole new intricate level in terms of narration. Lodge refers to nonlinear narration as “time-shifting” and suggests that “Through time-shift, narrative avoids presenting life as just one damn thing after another, and allows us to make connections of causality and irony between widely separated events” (Lodge, 1993, p. 75).

To him, nonlinear narration spices the narrative in the way it gives the reader a part to fulfil in order to reach a complete understanding of the narrative since he/she has to draw a line of causality in a plotline that has been cut off and fragmented in unexpected moments. Jeffrey Williams concurs that in a postmodern narrative “The plot, refusing to yield a simple, readily describable storyline, is troublesome” (2004, p. 24); Because this technic expects the reader to fulfil his part to comprehend the intentions of its usage. Herman et.al concur by stating that “When the reader reconstitutes the chronological sequence in which events supposedly occurred, differences often appear in the order of the discourse” (2005, p. 759).

Genette (1980) delves even deeper into the nonlinear narrative technique and recognises the responsibility that is focused on the reader to reconstitute the chronological sequences in the order of the occurred events. He suggests that:

To study the temporal order of a narrative is to compare the order in which events or temporal sections are arranged in the narrative discourse with the order of succession these same events or temporal segments have in the story, to the extent that story order is explicitly indicated by the narrative itself or infer-able from one or another indirect clue (1980, p. 35).

The French literary theorist gives a vital distinction and separation between the story's discourse and the narrative discourse. He also clarifies the relationship between the two in a manner that they are juxtaposed in the way that narrative discourse indirectly alludes or gives clues about the story's discourse. Genette takes it even further and categorises this anachronies into three broad types. (Analepsis, prolepsis, and co-occurrence).

Analepsis is traditionally referred to as the flashback technique. Genette (1980) brings a new perspective to the traditional idea in sense that he examined it with its psychological associations (1980, p. 79). He therefore implies that one of the reasons for its use is to portray human memory; since we do not remember events in a chronological order but depending on the importance of the events. So event **O** might precede event **A** and therefore it comes first in the narrative.

He also introduced analepsis with the framed story narrative. Since embedded stories (narratives) could be recounted in a form of flashbacks discerning its application would be therefore of great use to deduce the link between the main story and the embedded stories. Hence, Genette provided a tool with which the relationship between main narrative and embedded narratives are to be inferred.

Prolepsis is traditionally known as the flash-forward technique. This technique although similar in its use –in the way it fragments the main narrative- is

in contrast in terms of the story's discourse (Genette, 1980, p. 77). For whence the narrative was going back to events that happened in the past, prolepsis jumps to give glimpses of future events be it in a form of a prophecy, supernatural visions of the future or even "Prince's "hypothetical narrative" (Prince G. , 1982) when a narrator or character, as in the first (Victorian) ending to Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, imagines possible futures, which the novel does not actualise" (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005, p. 759).

Last but not least, Co-occurrence is similar to parallel narration and it is divided into two phases. First one, parallel phase is when events of two or more narratives occur in different setting but within the same fiction-world time. Hence the narrative unfolds events in setting **1** and follows it with events from setting **2** and the reader is assumed to recognise that these two events happened at the same time.

Second phase being the simultaneous phase. Although the same as the parallel phase in terms of having two or more distinct narratives happening in different setting at the same time, the narrative however itself does not present both narratives as if they are happening at the same time but rather it unfolds events in the way that it does not pick up where it left off from the first narrative. The reader will comprehend that the narrator not only is he jumping plotlines but he is also unaware of what happens when he leaves one plotline to another.

It is therefore clear that experimentation with plotlines, story's discourse as well as narrative discourse in the postmodern era has opened new doorways with which fiction writers would mimic life more 'realistically' –although the words 'realistically' and 'postmodernism' are a contradiction in terms. However, and by extension, if narrative discourse is to be affected it is logical to reach a point in which the narrator is to be affected as well.

1.7.3. The Postmodern Narrator

The narrator being one of the vital elements of narrative progression came to be defined traditionally as being one and the same as the author. However, with the coming of the remarkable works of renowned postmodern literary theorists such as Roland Barthes, Wolfgang Iser and Wayne C. Booth, the narrator and author were separated. Literary critics even replaced the actual author with a more inferred author and closely examined the relationship between the implied author and the narrator.

The result of this close examination led to the questioning of whether the narrator is really as objective and neutral in relaying the events to the narratee as it was conventionally thought. Since in the traditional sense, the narrator/author is only there to recount his story - if he is a character narrator- or to tell someone's story – if he is outside of the narrative. Hence, the narrator's reliability was a question of interest in narrative studies and from it came the term 'the unreliable narrator.'

The term unreliable narrator was first coined by Wayne C. Booth, in 1960. Booth (1983) notes that "unreliable narrators differ markedly depending on how far and in what direction they depart from their author's norms" (1983, p. 159). His examination of what is referred to as "ethical turn" (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005, p. 647) has led the researcher to deduce that if the ethical norms, in terms of telling the truth, being trustworthy etc. between the implied author and the narrator are very distant then the result would be an unreliable narrator. The scholar defines the unreliable narrator as thusly "I have called a narrator reliable when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say the implied author's norms), unreliable when he does not" (Booth, 1983, pp. 158-159).

Herman, Jahn and Ryan (2005) also concur to this notion and suggest that "a reliable narrator is one whose reports and judgments are endorsed by the implied author, and an unreliable narrator is one whose reports and judgements are not endorsed" (2005, p. 502). Hence, the narrator's reporting of events is tied with the

implied author's affirmation, and he is, in one way or another, identified based on this criterion.

Furthermore, Chatman (1980) takes a closer examination and suggests that if the "the norm of the work conflicts with the narrator's presentation, and we become suspicious of his sincerity or competence to tell the 'true version,' the unreliable narrator [would be] at virtual odds with the implied author" (1980, p. 149). Once again, the narrator's trustworthiness is questioned and boiled down to not just the ethical relationship between him/her and the implied author but also with the narratee's capacity to question the narrator. Chatman, on his side, has examined the other periphery of the spectrum: the narratee.

Additionally, the unreliable narrator also comes in both first-person narrator and third person narrator. Fludernik (2009) notes that a "First-person narration focalizes the narrative through the perspective of a single character. The question of motivation or psychology is therefore often raised: why is this narrator telling us this story in this way and can we trust him?" (p. 28). It becomes quite clear that the narrator in first-person point of view seems to draw from his motives and psyche to recount events and as Fludernik suggests, it could raise more questions on the authenticity of the narrative itself.

Lodge (1993) however seems to scale the notion of reliability in the sense that just because the narrator might have had some misleading judgement or opinion about a certain norm in the work *because* of his limited view does not mean he/she is completely unreliable. He suggests that "Even a character-narrator cannot be a hundred per cent unreliable" (p. 154).

Chatman concurs to this idea and even coins the narrator that does not have complete awareness about the narrative and seems to portray an inconsistent representation of the work with the term 'fallible narrator'. He suggests that "Bloom' in Joyce's *Ulysses* is not 'unreliable', but he is fallible as a result of his limited view of events: he is not able to comprehend the world of the novel in the

breadth and depth available to the omniscient narrator” (qtd. in (Fludernik, 2009, p. 28). Therefore, the fallible narrator is a narrator that has shortcomings and limitations in terms of representing his narrative to his audience.

As an omniscient third person narrator, the criteria of unreliability would be a contradiction in terms as lodge suggests “An unreliable ‘omniscient’ narrator is almost a contradiction in terms, and could only occur in a very deviant, experimental text” (Lodge, 1993, p. 154). By deviant and experimental he is referring to works that do not adhere to traditional literary norms and in other words, mostly postmodern. However, myriad of examples could be found of omniscient third person narrators with the criteria of unreliability.

In addition to the narrator’s reliability or fallibility, Wayne C. Booth (1983) suggests that “The narrator [can make] of himself a dramatized character to whom we react as we react to other characters... the telling itself is a dramatic rendering of a relationship with the [narrator] author’s second self” (1983, p. 212). even if the narrator is not an actual character within the story but as a third person narrator.

Booth is referring to the omniscient third person narrator and not to the first-person narrator who already has the ability to jump between narrator and character as he (rather the author) sees fit. Therefore, even a narrator whose identity is unknown and is in a third person point of view can filter events through his/her eyes and report them as he/she sees fit making of himself/herself a character; an impersonal narrator that the narratee feels his presence as a character that reacts to the narrative, he/she is recounting.

Aligning with the idea of booth, Lodge (1993) notes that “Unreliable narrators are invariably invented characters who are part of the stories they tell” But he seems to note that his unreliability is not always intentionally mischievous and that its use is not simply cornered to “reveal in an interesting way the gap between appearance and reality, and to show how human beings distort or conceal the latter”

but also to “tells us what we know already, namely that a novel is a work of fiction” (pp. 154-155).

In this sense, postmodernism has inserted an ethical approach to analysing the narrator in accordance to the implied author’s norms. It also added a new variable to the paradigm of the narrator, be it in terms of reliability or character dramatization. This was a major step towards what fiction stands for in the direction of trying to mimic life as closely as possible.

However, postmodernism only affected and for the most part, the western hemisphere (the occident). and everything that was not part of it was left on the side-lines, marginalised, be it in terms of narrative, narrative progression or narrator, or so it was thought.

1.8. Postcolonial Narrative Discourse

At the end of the fifteenth century, many Europeans started to venture forth unto uncharted territories of which they know only what was recounted to them in oral fairy tales and fables by merchants coming from those unknown lands. Those wild and random adventures would soon turn into written diary entries and travel logs that would serve immensely in the upcoming conquests that the kingdoms of Europe would launch.

These written journals would contain all details of the explorer’s adventures including his/her subjective point of view of almost everything their senses can take note of. Later on, western countries mobilised their forces and began their pretence of ‘civilising’ the less fortunate in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The result was a clash of not just military forces but also of identities and cultures.

After centuries of war and rebellion of the colonised against the exploitation and marginalisation of the coloniser, freedom was finally attained⁷ by the majority

⁷ It would be argued otherwise when there is a mentioning of neo-colonialism but for this research’s sake, those will not be discussed since this is purely from a literary perspective.

of those less fortunate countries. However, the effect of the coloniser did not leave when they left. A logical outcome was the merging of two and sometimes three identities in one confined geographical location. Thus the ‘pure’ identity of the local people (colonised) was to be forever altered.

During these times, bard, poets, novelists and playwrights demonstrated a fierce dedication to preserving that identity, but as it became clear further down the line of history, not only did the coloniser mould an ersatz image of those it colonised but it also managed to change the way they saw their own image. This steered a small group of writers and essayists to come forth and establish a “body of thought primarily concerned with accounting for the political, aesthetic, economic, historical, and social impact of European colonial rule around the world in the 18th through the 20th century” (Elam, 2019); namely: postcolonial discourse.

Although the term ‘postcolonial’ has been rigorously debated, since to some researchers colonialism is still on-going, the literary branch that seeped out of postcolonial theory is firmly established as a literary field. Postcolonial literature not only studies the literary writings during which colonisation was taking place but also before it took happened and the aftermath of when it was put to an end. Felluga suggests that “Postcolonial Studies is a critical theory that examines both colonial subjugation and the impact of that subjugation on ethnic identities even after previously colonized states have achieved national independence” (2015, p. 223).

In Mullaney’s words; “Postcolonial literatures encompass that complex and various body of writing produced by individuals, communities and nations with distinct histories of colonialism and which diversely treats its origins, impacts and effects in the past and the present” (Mullaney, 2010, p. 3). Hence, postcolonial literature is a lens through which the irrational and extravagant images that the coloniser was portraying were identified, culled yet still being rectified.

From its historical façade, Herman at al. tried to establish three (3) postcolonial narratives which occurred, are occurring and will probably occur in the

near future. The first one being that the postcolonial narrative is by and large the simple historical period during which there was the dissolution of the western colonial empires. Meaning, during the 1950's until the 1970's. However, this narrative still disregards any neo-colonial theory. (2005, p. 595).

The second narrative being more reasonable and probably achievable is the complete vaulting over any colonial narratives and ideologies. This is what most postcolonial scholars have done as it has been mentioned before by dissolving all binary opposition when it came to theorising their identity. So they broke free from the shackles of the colonial narrative over them to a certain extent.

The last and probably the least optimistic narrative that Herman et al. advocates for "the struggle to remove imperialist domination globally must continue" (2005, p. 596). Meaning that the postcolonial narrative is the continued value of resistance and in order to achieve postcolonialism there must be a universal economic and political liberation from the western domination.

Arif Dirlik on the other hand suggests a completely dim and an unachievable definition of the postcolonial narrative. He implied that until the effects of colonialism are forgotten that a postcolonial narrative cannot be achieved. Dirlik is hereby referring to historical amnesia which is a homogeneous state in which all the nation would be oblivious to the impact of the coloniser on their own identity. (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005, pp. 596 - 597)

Postcolonialism as a critical school has benefited from Jacques Derrida's deconstruction of binary oppositions in the sense that it "questions society's tendency to establish a privileged presence against which the **Other** of a binary opposition is defined" (Felluga, 2015, p. 31). In other words, how one defines himself to be more favoured through a presumptuous and misjudged labelling of the other. Therefore, postcolonial theory "seeks to make sense of the national and ethnic identity of previously subjugated peoples" (2015, p. 100).

Although postcolonial theory had its roots in previous writings, such as the writings of Frantz Fanon, “it achieved structure and importance during the ascent of poststructuralism; without a doubt, the most compelling scholars of the last recent 50 years, Edward Said, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Homi Bhabha, and Mary Louise Pratt, all embraced principles of poststructuralism” (Felluga, 2015, pp. 223-224).

In other words, these scholars and researchers stepped from the binary opposition, as imposed by the western intellectual mainstream school of thought before the 50’s and 60’s, and moved towards a more unattached definition of how they sought to theorise their own identities away from the self and the other. This could only lead to the creation of a new ideological narrative.

This ideological narrative or as it is referred to now, the postcolonial discourse would have its own set of literary concepts. However, since this research focuses more on the narrative discourse rather than the economic or political discourses the concepts that shall be dealt with are evidently related to narration in general.

1.8.1. Magic Realism

One of the most important aspects that the western world had to deal whilst trying to deal with the colonised parts of their empires is the religious and mystical aspects. These aspects were for the most part very unreasonable and incomprehensible to the western world and therefore trying to label such of features was an arduous task for all western domains (poets, scientists, travellers etc.). None could understand the core essence of the religious and the mystical and therefore one way to deal with it is to either ignore and disregard it or try to uproot it completely.

The coloniser in this respect, if he does not understand a particular aspect of a narrative that has been written or even orally passed on from generation to generation, would simply marginalise it and enforce his narrative being seen as the

only valid representation of what is real and authentic. Herman et al. note down why they were seen as such by stating that:

Post-colonial theorists are devoting much effort to recuperating the authentic narratives of historically disenfranchised ethnic groups, rather than reading theory through the lens of the master narratives developed by the colonisers, which impose their representation of reality, often figuring the ‘native’ as primitive, irrational, evil (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005, p. 337).

Therefore, the representations brought forward by any natives (the colonised) were irradiated and dismissed under the false pretext that they are illogical, ill-intended and barbaric depictions of reality. That is why postcolonial scholars are nowadays trying to recover the actual narratives before they were affected by the coloniser.

When it came to writing, authors often saw that including the mystical and the religious as a necessity as well as an act of rebellion and resistance to what the western world deems to be an acceptable explanation and illustration of reality. That is why most writers include in their writings what is referred to in the postcolonial literary discourse as Magic Realism.

Magic realism being primarily a Latin American narrative tool, was used frequently in that society’s oral traditions as well as their writings prior to the period when it was actually coined. The scientific community is still split to this day on whether it was coined by Jacques Stephen Alexis in his ground breaking essay entitled ‘Of the Magical Realism of the Haitians’ (Alexis, 1956) or by Alejo Carpentier (Augustyn, 2021) who had established the basis of this term which aided Alexis greatly in making it more of a narrative strategy.

Regardless of who coined the term magic realism, this narrative tool has been used by some of the most prominent figures of Latin American literature such as Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Jorge Amado, Jorge Luis Borges and Julio Cortazar as well as Isabel Allende. This narrative strategy has been used and adopted as a

postcolonial aspect since it allows the postcolonial author able to “make sense of at least two separate realities—the reality of the conquerors as well as that of the conquered” (Augustyn, 2021).

Duncan noted that magical realist writers “resort to religious iconography, language, and allusion in their texts. The language of religion allows [them] to infuse a sense of wonder and mystery into the narrative” (2015, p. 1) as illustrated above, it is always about the establishment of the narrative not as it is imposed and narrated by the coloniser but also about the colonised.

Irene Guenther, in order to separate it from the notions of the ‘marvellous’ in the western tradition, defines magic realism as the “international genre of literature in which the everyday, prosaic world contains elements of unexplainable, or magical, qualities whose origin or cause does not concern the characters within the fictional world” (Guenther, 1995, p. 61). The most important addition is the fact that characters inside the narrative do not or are not aware of the magical elements and see them as part of a mundane everyday life which in turn is supposed to paint a picture for how the colonised see themselves through their own cultural lenses and not the lenses of the coloniser.

Within a narrative there has to be at least five (5) elements for it to be labelled as magical realist. The elements might vary in their degree of use and there might be some slight changes concerning what is considered magical in a certain culture or not but these five elements form a solid ground on which the label ‘magical realism’ can be implied on any particular narrative containing them.

The first element would be the realistic settings. Just because it is magical and in order to separate it from the fairy tales of the western tradition, magic realist narratives contain realistic settings within which the story happens.

The second element is the infusion of the magical elements. It is self-explanatory since the whole concept relies on the magical. And it could be from religious iconography all the way to the mystical and the mythical.

Limiting the information given about the magical is the third element. Magic realist writers are very careful in how much information they give about the magical element in order not to spoil it otherwise what is seen as mysterious to someone who is not from that culture would no longer think it is mysterious if it was explained in details.

As a fourth element that is to be added on top of the above mentioned, the abundant use of criticism in these texts. Usually, the criticism that is employed can span from the economic, social and political landscape of the realistic settings of the novel itself in order to push their perspective on matters of their own society.

The last and most crucial element of all is the exceptional plot structure. Postcolonial magic realist writers do not put their narrative in a simple begin to end structure. Their plots are usually put in a non-linear narrative. They also make sure that the reader does not anticipate when events will occur. That is why endings can seem sudden and denouements can seem all too simplistic. Regardless, this keeps the reader on his toes with anticipation and suspense.

1.8.2. Hybridity

Since postcolonial theory stemmed from the poststructural school of thought, a lot of the concepts that sprung into existence by postcolonial scholars, always challenge the binary opposition imposed by the western narrative. To a very large extent, any of the key terms that were brought up were either on the spectrum of the self and the other or they completely remove this theory and go beyond it.

Hybridity as a dictionary definition is “something heterogeneous in origin or composition” (Webster, 2020) as a postcolonial concept is links the idea of heterogeneousness with the notions of two clear identities; namely: the identity of the colonised and the coloniser, whereas a whole new identity emerged in between the two already existing ones.

Edward Said (1999) although not being the originator of this concept, lays the foreground of its makings by stating that:

Identity – who we are, where we come from, what we are _ is difficult to maintain in exile ... we are the other, an opposite, a flaw in the geometry or resettlement, an exodus. Silence and discretion veil the hurt, slow the body searches, sooth the sting of loss (pp. 16-17).

From what Said mentions there can be an extraction of the notions of the self and the other. Shown in clear and distinct features as would the western narrative suggest, being a rigid definition of identity since one can only be one thing at a time so the coloniser is the self and colonised is the other. However, the self and the other can only exist in binary opposition; the ‘self’ being on one end of the spectrum and the ‘other’ being on the other end of that same spectrum.

Hybridity as a poststructural-postcolonial concept comes in and removes the veil of clear-cut line of what the self and the other are constituted off. Hybridity adapted the definition of identity on a spectrum instead of two binary oppositions in which one can only be one thing. Hence, this concept reflects the heterogeneous identity of the colonised. It is a mixture of the original identity prior to colonisation and the forced or embraced identity of the colonised. This postcolonial concept only asserts that identity itself is not as rigid as the coloniser would have the colonised believe.

Although the term ‘hybridity’ has been coined by Charles Darwin in his experiments in cross-fertilisation, it has been coined as a postcolonial concept in the literary field by Homi Bhabha. He defines it as such:

Hybridity is the perplexity of the living as it interrupts the representation of the fullness of life; it is an instance of iteration, in the minority discourse, of the time of the arbitrary sign— ‘the minus in the origin’—through which all forms of cultural meaning

are open to translation because their enunciation resists totalization (Bhabha, 1990, p. 314).

Hence as explained before, Bhabha has managed to loosen the definition of what constitutes the self and the other and therefore making way for what could be philosophised as a third identity or a middle ground for both identities that exist.

Ashcroft & Ahluwalia have on the other hand tried to showcase the paradoxical nature of identity through a formal and academic criticism of Edward Said's in his previous works in which he firmly states that understanding identity or one's own identity should be risked for knowledge. That being in academia (meaning when doing postcolonial studies). should allow one's self to examine their fixation about his own identity in order to allow himself to maybe infuse another identity or at least parts of another one. (Said, 1994, p. 16) qtd. in Ashcroft & Ahluwalia, 1999, p. 17).

That is why in Said's view; the pureness of identity cannot be achieved since no identity is free from the impact of another on it and *it* on other identities. To Said and Bhabha equally, there will always be a larger narrative that overlaps somewhere between identities which also blends histories and cultures alike, "so the very forms in which such a narrative might be constituted are subject to the mixing and hybridising which is the global destiny of the post-colonial world" (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005, p. 599).

Therefore, hybridity as a postcolonial concept is seen as the inevitable fate of any postcolonial context. Since this term explains a general phenomenon that occurs whenever the context of two or more identities come into contact with one another. It is for this reason that it a tool that is used frequently in any postcolonial discourse to showcase that identity is more flexible than what is expected and affects and is affected by other identities.

1.9. Narratology

Many scholars have had their hands in the discussion of narratives and what it consists of; How it is formed, structured; What should be in it and what shall not; How should it be outlined and what are its major characteristics; and most importantly, how to differentiate between other types of narratives. However, never before has there been a specific scientific branch that was concerned with the academic study of narrative.

Tzvetan Todorov, a Bulgarian literary critic, came along in 1969 and coined the term ‘narratology’ to establish a specific branch of literary studies as the “academic study of narrative” (Fludernik, 2009, p. 158). Hence making a clear case that narratives are structures within any story.

1.9.1. The Emergence of Narratology

Prior to the emergence of narratology as the academic study of narrative, many critics did undertake the study of narrative structure itself. Critics such as Roland Barthes, Joseph Campbell, and Wolfgang Iser etc. pioneered, all in their respective perceptions, to define what they thought of as a narrative.

Many critics would also claim that “narrative theory first arose from a comparison of the novel with the epic and drama” (Fludernik, 2003, p. 406) as it is defended by the scholar David Darby in his essay ‘Form and Context: An Essay in the History of Narratology’ which is published in the journal *Poetics Today*, Vol. 22, no 4 (2001). Hence the start of narratology had its roots in the comparison of the elements of the novel and the elements of plays and poems.

Monika Fludernik suggests that in its early days, and just after it was coined, narratology adopted a structuralist approach and therefore it was used interchangeably with the terms of narrative research, narrative theory and narrative studies. (2009, p. 158). This changed as with the coming of post-structural theory.

Todorov, for example, saw that within narratology there should be story, narrative and narration. In his narrative structure theory, he denotes that “there are 5 stages that a character should go through in a story; those are Equilibrium, Disruption, Recognition Repair the Damage and Equilibrium again” (1969, p. 5). Albeit the fact that these are the stages that most stories structure their narratives, it does not encompass all narrative structures.

With the establishment of the French poststructural school of thought, narratology witnessed a major change in the way it approached the concept of text. Hence the study of narrative in any story would also shift from a structural approach to a poststructural one. What could this mean can only be explained in the approach that Gerard Genette took to try and define narratology as a poststructural study of narrative.

1.9.2.G. Genette’s Aspects of Narratology

As it was mentioned before, narratology being part of the branch of humanities undertakes the study of logic, principles and practices of narrative structure. It also comprises the comparison between multiple narrative structures in different stories to formulate the aspects that are different and the aspects are common in between them.

Under the influence of structuralism, narratology encompassed only the simplistic structure of a narrative within the framework of any story. It did not go beyond it. However, narratology quickly moved beyond the text and above it under the poststructuralist school of thought, more precisely under the French poststructural school of thought.

The French literary critic and theorist, Gerard Genette develops a particular set of influential concepts for analysing narrative technique. In his widely known essay ‘Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method’ published in (1980) denotes all of the important key concepts that he was working on which are: Order, Duration, Frequency, Voice and last but not least mood (or focalisation).

Genette from a poststructural standpoint and making use of Derrida's notion of deconstruction, deconstructs narrative and moves beyond the previously affiliated characteristics of any narrative theory, structure or strategy. For instance, "he notes that previous studies of 'point of view' have conflated two distinct concepts, voice (who speaks) and vision (who sees or perceives) and he proposes new ways of understanding each" (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005, p. 502).

He also introduces the term "focalisation" which is "a restriction of 'field' – actually, that is, a selection of narrative information with respect to what was traditionally called omniscience" (Genette, 1980, p. 74) with this concept he makes a clear separation between Voice (who narrates) and the one who perceives. Therefore, according to Genette who narrates and who perceives cannot sometimes be different entities.

The term focalisation itself has generated a lot of discussions within the scientific community since the concept challenges, as Chatman comments, the already blurred line between discourse and story since it takes the element of vision and places it as a characteristic of both narrator and character. Whereas Bal sees that the term focalisation should add the concept of 'layers of focalisation' in order to highlight that it is one focalizing agent within the perspective of another. (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005, p. 503).

Genette therefore goes beyond the constraints of the text and focuses on the relationship that each element has with all the other elements to constitute a unique narrative structure. This would become, indeed, helpful to the postmodern narrative structures that would arise side by side with such theories.

Genette's work on 'voice', 'focalisation' and 'mood' within narrative structure, has helped in establishing narratology as a separate literary branch. He has also changed of the fundamental understanding of spatiotemporal narrative elements by discussing order, frequency and duration.

1.9.2.1. Order

The concept of order in Genette's work is "the relation between chronological sequence and discourse sequence" Meaning that the chronological sequence of the narrative can go hand in hand with the discourse of the story or it can deviate from it. (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005). A story for instance that is experienced in a flashback or flash-forward would mean that the chronological sequences of the narrative do not align with the discourse that is why there is this to and fro in the narrative.

Hence, Order is the positioning of the occurrences in accordance with both the discourse of the story and the narrative of the story. Genette is criticised for this point since Order gives room for it to be mixed with the notion of E.M Forster's definition of plot.

However, the slight distinction that could be drawn here is that plot does not play any role in pushing the narrative since a narrative could exist without a plot, whereas Order would exist regardless of the existence of a plot or not. That is why Order is a more comfortable tool to use when analysing a postmodern text. Instead of stating that the story has no plot, using Genette's work we would still need to analyse the Order of the narrative.

1.9.2.2. Frequency

Not to be confused with the notion of time, but the actual regularity of the telling of an event happens, "[it] refers to the relation between the number of times events occur and the number of times they are recounted" (2005, p. 503).

Continuing this chain of thought, the result would suggest that the more regular the occurrences or events happen the more it must have been narrated,

which is in fact not necessarily true. Genette's made a clear three (3) distinctions of the types of Frequency. The first one being "Singulative narration narrates once what occurs once; [second one] iterative narration narrates once an event that occurs many times. [Third one] Repeating narration recounts multiple times an event that happens once" (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005, p. 503).

Therefore, these three distinguishable types of frequency were a better and more adaptive tool when it came to analysing postmodern narrative especially psychological and detective thrillers since they relied on the frequency of the happening and narrating of an event in order to demonstrate its importance or to reach a logical conclusion and the denouement of a narrative.

1.9.2.3. Duration

One of the important key elements of Genette's concept of narratology is what could be explained as the relationship between the extent of time taken by the discourse vis-à-vis to the amount of time taken by its narration. This element is labelled as duration.

When it comes to Duration, Herman et al. comment on Genette's work by stating that "[it] refers to the relations between the length of story time and the length of discourse time" (2005, p. 503). From this analytical element numerous distinctions could be drawn between discourse, narrative and their temporal division. This has not been done in any narrative study before which clearly set Genette's work apart from all the work that came before him.

To Genette, the time taken by the discourse could be distinguished from that taken by its narration. In simpler words, a small written passage (discourse) could narrate a very long period of time (long narrative period) and vice versa. A long passage in a story (discourse) could take a small narrative period.

1.9.2.4. Voice

For the most part, the element of Voice is usually intertwined with the narrator's position in the narrative (focalisation). However, Genette does not focus solely on the actual position but also on the persona so to say of the narrator and therefore distinguishes between "who is speaking by reference to grammatical person is inadequate because any narrator can say 'I'" (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005, p. 504).

Genette therefore offers an alternate manner of how to label the narrator in accordance with his modes of participation in the narrative. The narrator is:

- 1- Extradiegetic: The narrator is not part of the narrative, and whose only job is to narrate without any other clear traits.
- 2- Intradiegetic: The narrator is inside the narrative and therefore he both narrates and is involved.
- 3- Homodiegetic: The narrator being the protagonist of the narrative.
- 4- Heterodiegetic: The narrator being outside the narrative he tells, yet he is a distinguished character. (Genette, 1980, pp. 244-245).

Genette has therefore laid the ground for a very particular and much more detailed analysis by providing narratologists the capacity to distinguish between four types of modes in which the narrator could be located in accordance with his focalised distance to the narrative.

1.9.2.5. Mood

Before Genette's work there were two types of Moods when it came to the analysis of a narrative; Mimesis which is the showing of a narrative and diegesis which is the telling of that narrative. Both of these concepts could be found in any narrative without them overlapping. However, these two moods would imply that a narrative can represent reality.

The last but not least of the elements of Genette's work on narrative theory in narratology is what he calls Mood. According to him, Mood is the set of regulations and technical preferences which are employed within a 'diegesis' (narrative) to

mimic real life. He refers to it as “the regulation of narrative information provided to the reader” (1980, p. 41) to, again, try and mimic reality.

In his work, he denotes that all narrative is necessarily ‘diegesis’ and therefore “it can attain no more than an illusion of mimesis (showing) by making the story real and alive. Thus, every narrative implies a narrator” (Guillemette & Lévesque, 2016). Furthermore, he makes a case that narrative can never imitate reality no matter how realistic it might be. He states that “Narrative does not ‘represent’ a story (be it real or fictitious), it recounts it – that is, it signifies it by means of language [...]. There is no place for imitation in narrative” (1980, p. 43).

Hence Mood is the regulation that are used in the narrative to allow the narrator to move either closer to the narrative or further away from it allowing him to also step aside for any narrative act. Regardless, no narrative is free from the mood and the narrator.

1.9.3. The Narrator in Narratology

Playing the most vital role of the narrative, the narrator has been the least studied part of narration prior to the establishment of narratology. The narrator as defined previously in this chapter is regarded in the traditional sense as a clear entity that tells the story. Nevertheless, all of this changed with the flourishing of the concepts of duration, focalisation and voice as derived from Genette’s work on narrative theory.

Monika Fludernik (2009) in her work, *Introduction to Narratology*, she brought up the concept of the reflector narrator, which is “narratives in which the story is filtered through the consciousness of a character” (p. 37). This type of narrator would link both psychology and narrative and could be a subdivision of the unreliable narrator. However, in order to clarify the narrator’s role and function in a narrative one would need to rely on what the French poststructuralist theorist has concocted as narrator’s functions.

In Genette's work he devised a set of modes and position to distinguish, as discussed in the title preceding to this one, between who perceives and who 'voices' the narrative. As it was made clear, who perceives and who narrates are not necessarily the same entity. He also introduces the term focalisation to "refer to the angle of perception," Which is the restrictive field that the narrator is bound to (not always though) (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005, p. 502). Therefore, creating the intra/extradiegetic narrator as well as the hetero/homodiegetic narrator.

However, the most important aspects of the narrator in Gerard Genette's work are not simply the position and the modes of narrative. That is why he has distinguished four important key functions that the narrator acts out during any narrative.

The first function, being the most basic one of them all, is the narrative function. Whenever there is a narrative there is definitely and undoubtedly a narrator. Whether his presence is felt in the discourse or not is irrelevant since he carries the diegetic (narrative act of telling) throughout the discourse itself.

The second function is the directing function. This function permits the narrator to interrupt the narrative and comment on the story itself. It is usually reserved for criticism, and could sometimes be used as metafiction, since he would be making statements, sometimes overt and sometimes covert, about the process of fictive composition.

Third function being the communication function is when the narrator speaks overtly to the implied reader, in order to keep and maintain contact with him/her. This function can usually be seen when the narrator makes what is now referred to in cinematography as a fourth wall breaking in which he addresses the potential reader either for criticism or for simple humorous intent.

Testimonial function would be the fourth on the list, which is in itself separated into multiple parts. The first one is when the narrator either affirms or denies the truthfulness of his story. The second one is when he verifies the degree of

precision in his narration; and the third one when he states his certainty about the occurrence of the events. The last part of this function is when he shares his emotions with the potential reader regarding the narrative he is telling. (Guillemette & Lévesque, 2016).

The last function that the narrator executes is the ideological function. The narrator would intrude the narrative to spread his own ideas (not to be confused with the ideas of the author). The narrator could also interrupt the whole narrative in some cases to share ideas of morality or a few words of wisdom that he sees befitting his narrative.

In this case, W.C. Booth and G. Genette seem to converge on the same definition; that a narrative is an action in itself which is happening on a different level than the actions done by the characters, regardless of the narrator's position as a character or as an impersonal entity. In some other cases, the narrator might take it even further and cross the boundaries of fiction and reality and reach out for more than just a locus of a quasi-character in his narrative.

1.10. Conclusion

The bulk of the subjects covered in the two subsequent chapters was explained in this chapter. Using the definition of narrative as a starting point, to characterize all the components and variations of narrators and narrative structures, as well as narratological conceptions derived mostly from Gerard Genette's narratology work, which are essential for this research.

This chapter has served as an introduction to the postcolonial sphere, including definitions of essential terminology such as hybridity and magical realism. Also included is a brief discussion of how the postmodern developed into the postcolonial.

Reaching a logical conclusion to what the narrator is as well as his characteristics (point of view, awareness, and position in the narrative) through the

traditional sense: the existence of the narrator is primordial as a basis for any narrative. The narrator is also identified according to the relationship that he has with the story as part character part narrator or as a bystander reporting a narrative.

Narration, narrative, and plot were all different elements of a story throughout the twentieth century. Many conditions underlying the narrating experiments contributed to these disparities. As a result, a whole scientific domain has been dedicated to the study of storytelling. This discipline was given the name of Narratology.

Narrative structures were also thoroughly discussed encompassing all varying types and situations that were preestablished at the start of the 20th century all the way to the beginning of the 21st century. Hence, this chapter helped in moving in a chronological order from what is narration and what is narratology.

Chapter Two: From a Narrative Analysis...

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to the narrative analysis of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*. The analysis shall be constricted to the internal mechanisms of each narrative. However, this does not mean that there will be no foreshadowing of any external elements that are beyond the two narratives.

In order to understand the narratological analysis, which will be the focal point of the chapter to come, a thorough narrative analysis has to be carried out prior to it. Therefore, how *Gone Girl* and *Midnight's Children* are constructed in terms of narrative structure, and identification of the different types of narrator's present in each narrative, how these narrators operate and what types of narrative structures are in place.

After that, the literary concepts that have been brought forward in the previous chapter shall also be employed to carry out this analysis such as types of narrators and their narrative positions, narrative structures and levels (non-linearity, multiperspectivity and parallel narration).

Ending this chapter with both an analysis of Saleem's Sinai's Narrative and how it is linked to the concept of the return home novel and by Amy and Nick Dunne's novel type of unreliability as narrators. But prior to that, the analysis the plot of both novels is introduced in a brief manner in order to give the reader a proper idea of the story's internal narrative events and conflicts.

2.2 Plot

E.M Forster being one of the most important literary figures of the 20th century has defined plot as "a narrative of events, the emphasis falling causality" (2002, p. 61). This has been discussed in detail in the first chapter. However, this brief restatement of Forster's definition is a shortcut to establishing a summarised version of that explanation.

In the subtitles that follow, a brief explanation is necessary to be commented on in order to discuss the narrative aspects of both novels. Therefore, both novels shall be deconstructed on such a level that it allows the clear separation between narrative action and plot.

2.2.1. *Gone Girl*

The plot of the story of *Gone Girl* is very simplistic in its nature, yet finding causality in it is the difficult part since the story's events are always snowballing, and since the novel is a thriller, there are new events popping up in every chapter of the story.

The story unfolds in a small village as Nick Dunne, a writing teacher, is taking a small jog way too early in the morning. After his usual morning routine, he returns home to find that his wife, Amy Dunne, has been missing.

Nick Dunne, a writing instructor, returns home on their fifth wedding anniversary to find his wife Amy abducted. Amy was the inspiration for her parents' popular *Amazing Amy* children's novels; therefore, her disappearance garners media attention. In the residence, Detective Rhonda Boney discovers badly concealed evidence of a struggle. Nick is suspected by the media because of his indifference to Amy's absence.

Amy previously explained to Nick that *Amazing Amy* was a perfected version of the real Amy, made up of her failures. Their marriage deteriorated over time, and they both lost employment during the recession, so they went from New York City to Nick's hometown of North Carthage, Missouri, to care for his dying mother. Nick grew estranged from Amy and began cheating on her with one of his students, Andie, while Amy resented Nick for relocating her to Missouri.

The house's forensic study reveals cleaned bloodstains, implying a homicide. Amy's recent proclivity for acquiring a gun is discovered by Boney, who discovers evidence of financial troubles, domestic disagreements, and Amy's recent proclivity

for acquiring a gun. Amy was pregnant, according to medical papers, which Nick denies knowing about.

Every wedding anniversary, Amy and Nick would play a treasure hunt game. Amy had stuff purchased with Nick's credit card stashed in the shed this year, as well as a notebook that depicted Amy's rising anxiety and ended with the worry that Nick would murder her.

Amy travels to an Ozarks camping. She devised a scheme to blame Nick for her death after learning about his affair. By misrepresenting accounts in a diary, she misrepresented herself and Nick's connection. Nick had no idea that she had befriended her neighbour in order to tell her stories about Nick's rage and steal her urine in order to tamper with her pregnancy test results. She hid supporting proof of Nick's guilt in the "treasure hunt" clue areas so the cops might discover them. She also splashed her own blood all over the kitchen, which she hurriedly cleaned. She intended to drown herself since she felt Nick would be executed for her murder.

Nick figures out Amy's scheme and persuades Margot of his innocence. He takes a flight to New York City and engages Tanner Bolt, a lawyer who specialises in defending men accused of murdering their spouses. Nick also runs with Amy's ex-boyfriend Tommy O'Hara, whom Amy had falsely accused of rape based on ostensible "rape scars" on her vagina and evidence of O'Hara's sperm. Nick contacts another ex-boyfriend, Desi Collings, whom Amy had sought a restraining order against for stalking her, but Desi turns him down.

When Amy's campsite neighbours steal her, she appeals to Desi for assistance, persuading him that she was fleeing Nick's assault. Desi promises to take her to his lake estate and conceal her. Nick comes on a talk program after Andie confesses their affair in a press conference, announcing his innocence and apologising for his shortcomings as a spouse in order to entice Amy out of hiding. Boney thinks she has enough evidence to charge Nick with murder, but Bolt bails

him out. Amy realises after Nick's performance that he will not be found guilty, and Desi plans to keep her in the home to forcefully renew their relationship.

Amy uses Desi's surveillance cameras to make it look as though he abducted and raped her, then slices his neck while they have sex and goes home covered in Desi's blood, clearing Nick's suspicions and portraying Desi as the kidnapper after telling a fictitious narrative of their dispute.

When Boney points out Amy's account's contradictions, she retaliates by labelling her inept. Amy tells Nick the truth about Desi's death and tells him that the man she saw on TV screaming for her return is the one she wants. Nick tells Boney, Bolt, and Margot about it, but there's no proof of her culpability.

Nick plans to leave Amy, but she discloses that she is expecting a child after inseminating herself with Nick's sperm kept at a fertility facility. Nick is enraged by Amy's insistence on remaining married, yet he feels responsible for the kid. Despite his reservations, Margot grudgingly agrees to remain with Amy. On television, the couple reveals that they are expecting a kid.

2.2.2. Midnight's Children

The narrator of *Midnight's Children*, Saleem Sinai, begins the story by stating that he was born at midnight on August 15, 1947, the same moment India earned freedom from British control. Saleem, who is approaching his thirty-first birthday, feels his body is beginning to fracture and dissolve. Fearing that he may die soon, he becomes increasingly insistent on telling his life narrative. Padma, his steadfast and loving girlfriend, plays the role of his afflicted, often suspicious audience.

Saleem's tale begins in Kashmir in 1915, thirty-two years before his birth. Saleem's grandpa, Aadam Aziz, a health practitioner, begins treating Naseem, the woman who will become Saleem's grandma, there. Naseem is constantly shielded

by a sheet with a small hole in it that is lifted to disclose the portion of her that has been ailing for the first three years Aadam Aziz treats her.

On the same day that World War I ended in 1918, Aadam Azis saw his future wife for the first time. Aadam Aziz and Naseem marry, and the pair relocates to Agra, where Aadam, a health practitioner whose lack of spiritual faith has had a profound impact on him, witnesses the brutal repression of pro-independence rallies.

Alia, Mumtaz, and Emerald are Aadam and Naseem's three daughters, while Mustapha and Hanif are their sons. Aadam becomes a supporter of Mian Abdullah, a good activist whose anti-Partition attitude leads to his killing. Despite his wife's objections, Aadam shelters Abdullah's scared assistant, Nadir Khan, after Abdullah's death. Nadir Khan falls in love with Mumtaz while living in the basement, and the two secretly marry. Aadam discovers that his daughter is still a virgin after two years of marriage since Nadir and Mumtaz have not begun to consummate their marriage. Mumtaz's sister, Emerald, tells dominant Zulfikar—an officer in the Pakistani navy who soon becomes Emerald's husband—about his hiding place in the home, while Nadir Khan is sent jogging for his life.

Mumtaz, who has been abandoned by her husband, has decided to marry Ahmed Sinai, a young businessman who was wooing her sister, Alia, at the time. Mumtaz changes her name to Amina and, with her new husband, relocates to Delhi. She visits a fortune-teller while pregnant and receives a cryptic prognosis about her unborn kid, stating that the boy would never be older or younger than his age and that he sees heads, knees, and a nose. Ahmed and Amina travel to Bombay when a terrorist organisation burns down Ahmed's workplace. They purchase a home from William Methwold, a leaving Englishman who owns a property on the crest of a hill.

Wee Willie Winky, a wicked person who entertains the residents of Methwold's estate, claims that his wife, Vanita, is also expecting a child soon.

Vanita had an affair with William Methwold, and he is the proper father of her unborn child, unbeknownst to Wee Willie Winky. Amina and Vanita both go into labour at the same time, and each female gives you a boy at exactly midnight. Meanwhile, Mary Pereira, a midwife at the nursing home, is distracted by the thoughts of her radical socialist boyfriend, Joseph D'Costa. She changes the nametags of the two new-born toddlers, giving the kid a life of riches and the affluent infant a life of poverty in an attempt to make him proud. Later on, she becomes Saleem's nanny or what is referred to as Ayah.

The press hails Saleem's speech as monumental, considering it happened at the very moment India gained freedom. Saleem, the younger, has a large cucumber-like nose and blue eyes similar to his grandpa, Aadam Aziz. A few years later, his naughty sister, the Brass Monkey, is born. Saleem hides in a bathing box, depressed by the prophecy's expectations and teased by other children for his large nostril. While hiding, he sees his mother sitting on the toilet; when Amina catches him, she punishes Saleem by forcing him to remain silent. He is unable to talk, and for the first time in his life, he hears a cacophony of voices in his thoughts. He finds he has telepathic abilities and can read all of our minds.

Finally, Saleem begins to develop an interest in the ideas of many children born in the first hour of independence. The 1,001 *Midnight children*—whose number has been reduced to 581 by their tenth birthday—all have magical abilities that vary depending on how near tonight time they were born. Saleem learns that Shiva, the child with whom he was switched at birth, was born with a set of large, powerful knees and a natural talent for battle.

Saleem loses a finger in an accident and is brought to the sanatorium, where his mother and father determine that, based on Saleem's blood type, he is unlikely to be their biological son. Saleem is sent to be with his Uncle Hanif and Aunt Pia for some time after he leaves the hospital. Hanif kills suicide shortly after Saleem comes home to his parents.

Mary admits to switching Saleem and Shiva at the outset, even as their own family mourns Hanif's death. Ahmed, now an alcoholic, becomes aggressive with Amina, causing her to flee to Pakistan with Saleem and the Brass Monkey, where she stays with Emerald.

Amina and the children return to Bombay four years later, as Ahmed suffers from coronary heart failure. Even as Saleem's usually clogged nose undergoes a surgical procedure, India goes to war with China. As a result, he loses his telepathic abilities, but he gains a superior sense of smell, which allows him to discover emotions.

When India's army was defeated by China, Saleem's whole family relocated to Pakistan. His younger sister, Jamila Vocalist, will go on to become Pakistan's most famous singer. Saleem's entire family, including his business Jamila and himself, perishes in a single day during the Indian-Pakistani conflict. During one of the air attacks, Saleem is hit in the head with his grandfather's silver spittoon, and his memories are erased.

Saleem is reduced to an animalistic kingdom after losing his memories. He admits that he was forced into the military because of his keen sense of olfactory, which makes him an excellent tracker. Despite the fact that he has no idea how he ended himself in the navy, he believes Jamila put him there as a punishment for falling in love with her. While in the military, Saleem aids in the suppression of Bangladesh's independence movement. He retreats into the forest with three of his fellow troops after seeing some of the horrors. He regains all of his memories, save for the knowledge of his name, in the Sundarbans forest.

Saleem discovers Parvati-the-witch, one of the *Midnight Children*, after leaving the forest, who reminds him of his mission and permits him to return to India. He shares the magician's slum with her, along with a snake charmer named Picture Singh. Parvati-the-witch begins an affair with Shiva, who is now a well-known battle hero since she is dissatisfied with Saleem's refusal to marry her.

Things suddenly turn sour between Parvati and Shiva, and she or he returns to the magicians' ghetto pregnant and unmarried.

Parvati is shunned by the slum residents until Saleem decides to marry her. Meanwhile, India's Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, begins a sterilisation program. The government eliminates the magician's ghetto shortly after Parvati's son begins. Shiva arrests Saleem and takes him to a forced sterilisation camp while Parvati dies. There, Saleem reveals the identities of the youngsters from the night before. The children of the night are collected up and sterilised one by one, thereby extinguishing the forces that threaten the prime minister. Indira Gandhi, on the other hand, loses her first election.

The children of the night-time, including Saleem, are prepared for free. Saleem is on his way to find Parvati's kid, Aadam, who is staying with picture Singh. The three travel to Bombay so that picture Singh can assign a task to someone who claims to be the best snake charmer in the industry. Saleem consumes a couple of chutneys in Bombay that taste just like the ones his Ayah, Mary, used to cook.

He discovers Mary's new chutney production plant, where Padma is stationed at the gate. Saleem's story comes full circle with this encounter. Saleem resolves to marry Padma, his persistent lover and listener, on his thirty-first birthday, which falls on the thirty-first anniversary of India's independence, according to his eventual historical narrative. Saleem predicts that he will die on that day, dissolving into hundreds of thousands of dirt grains.

2.3 Narrative Point of View

Before discussing in detail each point of view of each narrator in both novels, it is important to state that both narratives are nonlinear and, therefore, throughout the analysis, most of the events might seem in disorder. However, when each element of the narrative is dissected, it will make for a better image of the overall work. It is

also important to note that the narrative point of view is not to be confused with the narrator himself, but only the position he is taking to narrate.

Hence, in the coming titles, the narrative point of view shall be discussed in order to showcase the position of each narrator in both novels. In *Gone Girl*, there are two (2) narrators that interchange positions as well as narrative charge. In *Midnight's Children*, there is only one (1) narrator.

2.3.2. Amy Dunne

The character of Amy Dunne is what appears to be, at first glance, the protagonist of the story, the victim of domestic abuse; the angelic wife that wants to do everything for her husband even though he cheated on her, as well as the object of a failed marriage. However, Amy is none of the above-mentioned personas. Amy Dunne is, in fact, and as the story unfolds, the antagonist of the story since all of what would happen in the story is of her malicious planning.

Amy Dunne plots to have her husband executed for her own self staged murder. She, therefore, spares no expense of creating havoc after she leaves him one early morning after he went on his usual morning routine. Her reasoning was to make him pay for how he dragged her across the country to a small village in Missouri, consumed all of her passion and energy as well drowned her in a persona she would never have been happy, to begin with, and of course, her husband Nick Dunne topped everything off by having an affair with one of his students.

Therefore, Amy's purpose was clear to her. Amy was, after all, an object of a very popular book that was created by her parents, which was entitled 'Amazing Amy'. The book was very famous, yet it was a parallel narrative of what her parents would have wanted her to be. In other words, whenever Amy, the character in *Gone Girl*, would screw up in her life, 'Amazing Amy' would do, 'amazingly'.

This would hold Amy to very high standards in her life. She expected herself to be the best and to always HAVE the best. This bipolar state of mind has not allowed her to acclimate herself in the small village of North Carthage, Missouri, being a woman that was born and bred in New York City.

However, Gillian Flynn, in this particular work, challenges the concepts of hero and antihero since the denouement of the whole plot could not have been done if it was not for Amy Dunne when she devised another plan to blame everything on her ex-boyfriend whom she convicted of false rape and kidnapping and therefore saves Nick Dunne who was certainly going for the death row if she had not stepped in.

Hence, as a character, it is very tricky to label Amy Dunne in all of the narrative. She might be the antagonist of the first part of the narrative when she was the root of all the issues that had to befall the narrative, and then the protagonist of the second part of it, when she saves her husband. However, as a narrator, this character might be tackled altogether differently.

2.3.2.1. First-Person Limited

The narrative of *Gone Girl* is multi-layered; there are narratives within narratives and narratives in parallel with other narratives. Trying to pick a single narrative point of view would be a grotesque mistake. Therefore, for every narrative action in the novel, there is a narrator.

Since the story is comprised of sixty-four (64) chapters, devised in three (3) parts, each chapter has a different narrator. Amy Dunne, as the character-narrator, does not step in until the second part of the story (Part Two: Boy Meets Girl) of the narrative.

Amy Dunne, in this part of the story, is in first-person point of view. The narrative that she is conveying to the implied reader is from her own limited gaze on

the events. She starts that part of the story by stating “I’m so much happier now that I’m dead” (Flynn, 2012, p. 247). The use of the pronoun “I” is a dead giveaway to the narrator’s first-person narrative point of view.

This narrator, in this instance, is also limited since everything starting Part two of Amy’s narrative discourse is purely constrained to only her field of view and senses. A big example of this was in the very same situation when she was blindsided by her campmates in the motel that she was staying in. She got robbed by the characters of Greta and Jeff. (Flynn, 2012, p. 341). Any omniscient narrator would have at least foreshadowed such an event since Amy could not afford to pretend to be dead without money. Yet, the event happens quickly, and Amy the narrator is just as baffled with it as the implied reader is expected to be.

There is also a part in which the narrator, Amy, admits that “... there is still so much I don’t know... spoiling my vision of how this [narrative] should go” (Flynn, 2012, p. 293) whilst following the investigation carried out by the police concerning her husband’s involvement in her disappearance/murder. These internal monologues that are carried by the character narrator Amy Dunne can only be translated into a limited first-person narrator as far as narrative theory is concerned.

2.3.2.2. First-Person Omniscient

Amy Dunne as a narrator can also be found in the first-person point of view. However, this time, it is from an omniscient standpoint. It might seem very contradictory since the first-person is usually limited by the field of view that they have on the narrative. Yet, in *Gone Girl*, a different set of techniques is used to put a first-person narrator as an omniscient one.

The actual character of Amy Dunne is finally revealed to the implied reader after the second part of the story. During this revelation, the character herself already knows what was happening to her husband since she is the one who framed

him for her own disappearance. In this situation, she was part of the creation of the narrative as much as the implied author was.

At the start of the second part of the story, in a particular passage, Amy Dunne, as the narrator, checks a list of items that she has planned all along. The list contains in great detail what she has done in the first part of the story that was narrated by Nick Dunne. (Flynn, 2012, p. 248). Therefore, she appears as the omniscient first-person narrator of the parts that were left out by Nick since he was oblivious to them.

Therefore, although the narrator is in the first-person position, the technique of revelation that Gillian Flynn has employed in this narrative has allowed a character narrator to become an omniscient narrator.

2.3.2.3. Second Person

Although the second person point of view is rarely ever used and usually confused with the intrusive narrator, in this narrative, this technique is plainly noticeable. By definition, the second person point of view “is a form of writing in which the point of view of a narrative work is told in the voice of the onlooker, which is you, the reader” (Wiehardt, 2019).

In more than one passage, Amy Dunne either questions herself or her abilities to go through something, or she makes a cheeky comment that would halt the narrative activity. These situations are marked in the discourse of the narrative as italicised sentences in order for them to be distinguished.

On many occasions, she would allow the implied reader to insert himself and make some sort of choice or give him the illusion of free choice. In a simple yet very cunning technique, the narrator, Amy, tries to state the thoughts that might spring up inside the implied reader’s mind and state them instead of him.

In this passage, for instance, Amy is retelling the details of her husband's affair whilst sharing the emotional turmoil that she was feeling as she is narrating. Yet all of a sudden, the narrative stops, and she says "*She should have just left, bundled up what remained of her dignity. Take the high road! Two wrongs don't make it right!*" (Flynn, 2012, p. 263). This sentence is italicised and, as it could be noticed, is a reflection of what the narrator thought the implied reader would be thinking. The Narrator, Amy Dunne, has therefore put her narrative activity on hold and allowed the implied reader (YOU) to be involved and carry out his narrative.

There are many instances in which Amy, the narrator, uses this technique to drag the narrative of the implied reader within her own since the persona of Amy, the narrator can also be categorised as a very paranoid character. After all, she does state it herself "you always take the extra step. That's who you are" (Flynn, 2012, p. 249). It is clear in black and white that the narrator here knows that she is paranoid. That is why; most of the thoughts that are italicised in the discourse are her paranoid thoughts of what she thinks the implied reader is thinking of her.

2.3.3. Nick Dunne

Gone Girl is a narrative that revolves around two major characters; the first one is Amy Elliott Dunne, and the second one is Nick Dunne. Therefore, all of the narratives are carried by the two of them. Each narrative act of their side of the story is carried out by themselves. Having discussed Amy's narrative point of view, it only seems fitting to discuss Nick's narrative point of view.

Since the aspect of who is the hero and who is the villain is completely thrown out of the window by the implied author, Nick as a character cannot be identified within the whole narrative to be neither the protagonist nor the antagonist. In the first part of the narrative, entitled "PART ONE: Boy Loses Girl" He seems to be this normal, stereotypical, run to the mill, small-town boy who went to New York, married a successful woman and went back to his home town. There was

nothing particularly exceptional or extravagant about this character, neither physical nor personality-wise. However, he seems to be the focal point of the whole narrative.

Yet, after a multitude of scandalous revelations that were set up by his missing wife, Amy, his character starts to really show. He is depicted as a man who simply failed in life, who lost all sorts of ambition and returned defeated to his home town, North Carthage, with his tail between his legs. But not only managed to let himself go down a spiral but also dragged his wife, Amy, with him after he had all but consumed her both financially and emotionally.

To top it all off, after the police investigation to find his lost wife, Nick, the writing teacher, is also revealed to be having an affair with a girl named Andie, who is a student in his class. His poor choices in life left him jobless, and therefore started taking money from his wife's trust fund. This has made him lazy and weakened his character as a man and, by extension, as a husband. He became very distant from Amy, and at one incident, he also became very violent and prone to daytime drinking.

Amy felt like it was her moral obligation to teach him that he cannot consume her and then start a new life with a new girl and simply "win". Therefore, his character seems to be moved through a long a line of getting him back to what he was when she agreed to marry him. In this narrative, Nick seems to be the product of Amy Elliott Dunne. However, this does not stop him from narrating his side of the story.

2.3.3.1. First-Person Limited

As it was mentioned above, Amy was responsible for meticulously everything that was happening to Nick in the first part of the story. Therefore, all of the events that were happening to him were sudden and unexpected as the plot kept getting thicker

and thicker. Nick felt bushwhacked by everything she had done to punish him for becoming what he had become.

Nick, in the first part of the story, is, therefore, a limited narrator. He does not know anything about what was happening around him. He did not know what Amy had in store for him, and as he narrated, the implied reader would get the sense that whoever was narrating was at the same time puzzled and perplexed, as well as he did not know where this narrative was going to lead or end.

Nick is also constricted to his own personal field of view, his senses and, obviously, his thoughts. The narrator employs the pronoun “I” in pretty much all the sentences to carry out the narrative, which is a clear indicator that the narrator is from the first-person narrative point of view.

In this passage, for instance, indications of the limited first-person point of view can be drawn. He says:

I waited for the police in the kitchen, but the acrid smell of the burnt teakettle was hurling up in the back of my throat, underscoring my need to retch, so I drifted out on the front porch, sat on top stair, and willed myself to be calm. I kept trying Amy’s cell, and it kept going to voicemail, that quick-clip cadence swearing she’d phone right back (Flynn, 2012, p. 35).

As stated before, the heavy use of the ‘I’ pronoun, the narrator’s limited field of view, which is restricted to what he could see, smell and feel at the point of narration, his complete and utter obliviousness to his current situation. All of these elements round up to position the narrator as a character narrator, also referred to as the limited first-person point of view

2.3.3.2. First-person Omniscient

Although, Nick, in his own story, is both narrator and character and can only narrate his own narrative point of view. There are some aspects that could lead to the idea in some parts of the story. He becomes omniscient to a certain extent, especially when he imagines narratives about his wife, Amy Dunne.

Having a father that infused Nick's childhood with blame trauma has left adult Nick, as he puts it "a knee-jerk suck up to authority" (Flynn, 2012, p. 49). For this particular reason, his personality craves a constant stream of approval. Therefore, his wife became a source of approval as well. So, whenever he is narrating a particular occurrence, he would allow his wife's expectations or reactions about him to float in the discourse of the narrative.

In several passages, Nick tries to imagine what his wife, Amy, would be thinking in different situations. In one passage, for instance, he says:

[Referring to Amy] She'd clearly been practicing the speech; she smiled proudly as she said it. And even as my wife was offering me this I was thinking: *of course she has to stage manage this. She wants the image of me and the wild running river, my hair ruffling in the breeze as I look out onto the horizon and ponder our life together. I can't just go to Dunkin' Donuts.* (Flynn, 2012, p. 84).

In this particular passage, although Nick does not know everything about the story or the events that will follow, in this particular passage precisely, he knows his wife Amy, and he knows what her expectations are and what her reaction will be like. This small yet intense passage helps consolidate that even though Nick is limited to his field of view, his knowledge about his wife allows him to anticipate certain actions and therefore stands as an omniscient first-person narrator.

2.3.4. Saleem Sinai

Saleem Sinai is the centre of the narrative of *Midnight's Children*, and therefore, he is the protagonist of the story. He is born at the precise second of India's freedom, along with another child. His identity, on the other hand, is exchanged from the start. As a result, he is reared in Bombay by a wealthy family, whilst Shiva, his equal and eventual competitor, is nurtured in poverty.

Saleem possesses telepathy and a heightened sense of smell, allowing him to identify the other children of midnight and convene the midnight children's meeting. He claims he's on the verge of dying as he approaches his thirty-first birthday. His body is physically crumbling, and it'll only be a matter of time until he turns to dust.

Saleem relates his life story to Padma, his dedicated and devoted nanny, motivated by a desire to beat his biological clock. His tale, which begins with his grandpa Aadam and is at times false and manufactured, depicts not just his character's life story but also postcolonial India as a whole. All of his major endeavours in life coincide with pivotal political events in Indian history.

As a result, he began to relate his story to religious writings. Given his magnificent beginning and extraordinary powers, India's high minister, Indira Gandhi, wants to eliminate him with the help of the opposite midnight's children.

However, when it comes to the narrative point of view of the narrator, Saleem is narrating his own life's story to Padma; therefore, he is the narrator of the story. Presumably, the narrative point of view can only be first-person narrative. However, he himself calls it an autobiography, meaning that he knows things that a character narrator would not know. Or does he?

The narrative of *Midnight's Children* starts with the sentence "I was born in the city of Bombay..." (Rushdie, 2008, p. 3). This alone makes it clear that the entity that is narrating is the protagonist of the story, who, in this case, is Saleem

Sinai. However, he is not narrating his tale at the time of it happening, but everything that is narrated is a recollection of Saleem's past, and therefore, he is not within the narrative, although it is *his* narrative.

Saleem Sinai is, therefore, the narrator of the story, yet he stands outside of it. He even compares himself to Scheherazade from the fables of '*One Thousand and One Night*'. He states that he "must work fast, faster than Scheherazade if I am to end up meaning –Yes meaning- something" (Rushdie, 2008, p. 4) and Scheherazade is known for being the narrator of the stories she was telling in order to keep herself alive, she was not in them but simply narrating them, Saleem can only be in the first-person narrative point of view. Yet the narrator himself seems to be self-centred and arrogant and even pretends to know things that are beyond his knowledge until he confesses them in the 3rd and last part of the narrative.

It could be debated, however, that the narrative point of view is the third person point of view since the narrator is telling a story that he is no longer part of. In other words, the timing of the events and the timing of the narrative happen on two different levels. However, this cannot be discussed in detail until the establishment of narratology.

2.4 Narrator Reliability

Before the postmodern literary era, novels were constructed in a way that allowed the implied author to relay a story, a tale or a fable in a manner that the implied reader could understand and trust every word in the discourse of that tale. However, that quickly changed when the narrator's intention in the novel started to veer along with his personal likings instead of them converging on the same norms of the implied author.

This is how the unreliable narrator originated. This narrative technique was thus defined as when the "the norm of the work conflicts with the narrator's

presentation, and we become suspicious of his sincerity or competence to tell the ‘true version;’” (Chatman, 1980, p. 149).

In both narratives, *Gone Girl* and *Midnight’s Children*, all narrators, without exception, are unreliable narrators. However, they vary in the reasons for their unreliability; some are simply limited and naive, some are too self-obsessed, and others are pathological liars.

Therefore, each of the narrators in both novels shall be discussed in detail as to the reasons for their unreliability and why such techniques were employed in the first place in regards to the narrative itself.

2.4.2. Nick Dunne, the Lie of Omission Narrator

The narrative of *Gone Girl* is shared in narrative activity between Nick Dunne and Amy Elliott Dunne. Some parts are narrated by Nick and some parts by Amy, and others by an imaginative Amy. Nick Dunne being a first-person narrator in his own side of the narrative, seems to be one type of an unreliable narrator.

As it has been discussed in the first chapter, there are different reasons why a narrator could be called unreliable. Nick Dunne could be labelled as an unreliable narrator for his limited knowledge of the story.

The first reason for his limitation is his being restrained by the implied author to only function within the narrative he is in. He had no prior knowledge of the events that were happening to him and was witnessing them and narrating them at the same time that they were happening. Therefore, Nick knows only what is in his view. This limitation itself is reason enough for a narrator to be called unreliable.

However, that is not the only reason for his unreliability. Nick Dunne is also unreliable for hiding certain elements of the narrative. In many situations, within Nick’s narrative, the implied reader would be shocked at the discovery of something

about Nick himself that the narrator (Nick) would not have shared with the implied reader had it not been forced by the narrative on him as a character narrator.

Nick, as a narrator, does not lie, to be precise, but he does not share all of the truth that is related to his narrative. He simply keeps it to himself. The biggest example of this is when the narrative reveals that Nick had an affair with his student Andie, from his writing class. Nick never discloses this information at the beginning of the narrative and even though he knows that his wife was plotting to frame him for her murder. The implied reader would definitely feel betrayed since him having an affair would make a lot more sense since the implied reader would know at least the reason behind his wife's actions.

He even admits to being someone who is “a big fan of the lie of omission” (Flynn, 2012, p. 150) which is the intentional exclusion of important information. This is something that Nick, the narrator, does whilst narrating his side of the story. He also confesses how Amy wanted to talk about things upfront. He states, and in her defence:

That she's asked me twice if I wanted to talk, if I was sure I wanted to do this. I sometimes leave out details like that. It's more convenient for me. In truth, I wanted her to read my mind so I wouldn't have to stoop to the womanly art of articulation. I was sometimes as guilty of playing the figure-me-out game as Amy was. I've left that bit of information out, too (Flynn, 2012, p. 150).

It is clear that the narrator is confessing that he cannot help himself in omitting or not including certain bits of information that could otherwise be crucial to understanding all of the narratives. This is proof that his unreliability stems from him wanting to maintain either a stoic figure which the character of Nick seems to portray in the narrative or to sustain his psychological and constant need to be an agreeable person.

Whatever the motives that are lodged deeply inside Nick's mind, the fact that he is an unreliable narrator is clear. He is limited in his narrative because he does not know anything beyond his field of view. And he admits the omission and exclusion of certain key narrative segments that could alter the view of the narrative itself. As such, he is labelled as the lie of omission narrator.

2.4.3. Amy Dunne as an Unreliable Narrator

Amy Dunne, who is the narrator for most of the narrative of *Gone Girl*, is undoubtedly an unreliable narrator. However, there are different reasons as to why she is labelled as such, and there are also different layers to her narrative; the narrative of Amy Elliott Dunne as a character from her own perspective, and Amy Dunne in her short diary that intrudes on Nick Dunne's narrative.

On the one hand, Amy, in the first part of the narrative, is altogether absent from it as a character and as a narrator; since the narrator is her husband Nick Dunne, has only small parts in which she steps in as a narrator. These narrative parts are in the form of diary entries with dates and timings that matches her relationship with Nick. These diary entries are narrated by her, but the diary itself is in the hands of Nick.

On the other hand, Amy is revealed to be manipulative, deceiving and even insane for stage-managing Nick and trying to frame him for her murder. The reason being that she had no other option but to be an unreliable entity to narrate her tell or even Nick's tale. Therefore, the two types of narrators shall be discussed in what follows.

2.4.3.1. Amy, the Pathological Lying Unreliable Narrator

It is clear that Amy is an unreliable narrator starting from the second part of the story. Amy admits that everything that has been done or will be done to her husband and his fate is of her own doing. She confesses that because he got lazy, too

comfortable, stopped caring and started cheating on her that he deserved the fate that she had plotted for him.

The narrative that she tells does not match the narrative that the police were digging out or even the narrative that Nick was aware of. Amy had concocted a villainous plan to frame her husband for murder but kept all of this information hidden from the implied reader until the second part of the story. In the first part of the story, she only shows the angelic wife side that she wanted to show in order to have the police believe that she was a victim of abuse and cheating.

In her own words, she admits in multiple instances that she was dishonest or telling half-truths. “Don’t fret, we’ll sort this out: the true, the not true, and the might as well be true” (Flynn, 2012, p. 247). In this small monologue, she is making it clear that she was definitely deceitful and mendacious about certain aspects of her narrative.

Amy Dunne, as a character, seems to be more of an independent, rebellious woman, with her own ambitions and her ability to even kill for the person she loves; one would expect her not to care about anyone’s opinion. However, she does want the support and approval of the implied reader. She wants him/her to be on her side and not Nick’s. This is made obvious since she is on a constant uphill battle to prove that what she has done and she is doing is justifiable through her motives. This can be noticed when she mentions “Can you imagine finally showing your true self to your spouse, your soul mate, and having him *not like you*?” (Flynn, 2012, p. 254).

Although she was very careful in revealing herself to her own spouse on who she really was, she was ready, willing and able to show herself to the implied reader without any complications. This proves that she is seeking the implied reader’s approval, accord and maybe even endorsement for her actions. She even supports this claim by stating “I can tell you more about how I did everything, but I’d like you to know me first... Actual Amy” It is abundantly clear now that Amy wants the

agreement of the implied reader of her. And since her skill to manipulate the truth is beyond measure, she will do whatever she can in order to gain the implied reader's support. Hence, her narrative cannot be trusted nor relied on.

The second part of the story is when Amy becomes honest or at least tries to separate the truth from the lies. Because at this point, she had to reveal who she really is, and she also expects the implied reader to see the end justifies the means. In one passage, she mentions:

You know how I found out? I *saw* them. That's how stupid my husband is. One snowy April night, I felt so lonely. I was drinking warm amaretto with Bleecker and reading, lying on the floor as the snow came down. Listening to old scratchy albums, like Nick and I used to (that entry is true) (Flynn, 2012, p. 262).

In this passage, she recounts how Amy found out about her husband's affair with his student, Andie. The noticeable part of this passage is the fragment sentence which is at the end and between parentheses. This afterthought is how she started straightening out the truthful parts in which she was lying when she was narrating through her diary.

Amy Dunne, as the character narrator, is therefore unreliable because of her pathological need to lie and alter the truth. Wayne C. Booth sees that this is reason enough to be called unreliable since Amy's motives in the narrative (which are to pull the implied reader to her side) are not the motives of the implied author (whose sole purpose is to convey this story to the implied reader) (1983, p. 159).

But Amy does not only narrate in the second part of the narrative, where she tries to clear things out with the implied reader. She is also unreliable because after her list of items was almost over, and the remaining item was for her to jump off a cliff and forever condemn Nick to a life sentence or even death row, she had a

change of heart and wanted life since, according to her, if she dies he wins and he does not get to win (Flynn, 2012, p. 263).

Therefore, she continued to live and narrate her story the way Nick was narrating his, from the limited first-person narrative. In other words, Amy is once again unreliable, not because she is lying, but because she does not know anything about the narrative except what she can feel and see through her own senses. That is when she was robbed by Greta and Jeff. She could not foresee and prevent it from happening.

2.4.3.2. ‘Diary Amy’, the Fictitious Narrator

Whenever there is a study about *Gone Girl* and its narrator, usually the focus is solely on Amy Elliott Dunne and Nick Dunne, but never on one of the most important narrators in the story; Diary Amy. The novel *Gone Girl* is split into multiple chapters, and each chapter is either narrated by Amy or Nick. But in the first part of the story, which is halfway through the narrative, there are diary entries that date back to January 8, 2005. These entries are supposed to be the recollection of the relationship of both Amy and Nick.

As the story progresses on the other end, from Nick’s side, these entries would get gloomier and murkier in how their relationship moved from being the happiest couple to one of the saddest stories of how badly a relationship can deteriorate. These entries are all marked with precise dates and are found by the police, which helped to carry out their investigation. This has put Nick in a very bad place since he was painted for what he was; lying, cheating, lazy, and beatdown partner who failed himself and his wife, and the narrative of the diary even pushed the possibility that Amy started to feel scared for her life since it was later

discovered and as she had disclosed in her diary that she bought a gun to protect herself from her husband.

All of this information was narrated by Amy in her diary in the first-person and limited narrative point of view. Diary Amy did not know what would happen next, nor could she anticipate anything that would occur to her; therefore, she was limited and in first-person point of view. However, this is not the most important aspect of Diary Amy.

Diary Amy is revealed to the implied reader that she was a figment of the real Amy Elliott Dunne's imagination. As she states it "I hope you liked Diary Amy. She was meant to be likeable. Meant for someone like you [the implied reader] to like her" (Flynn, 2012, p. 266). This discloses that Amy in her diaries was but a mere fictitious character. However, this fictitious character is also the narrator of those narrative diary entries.

Amy Elliott Dunne took great care and effort into constructing such a likeable personality and put it into words herself in order to frame her husband. She mentions:

I had to maintain an affable if somewhat naïve persona, a woman who loved her husband and could see some of his flaws (otherwise she's be too much of a sap) but was sincerely devoted to him – all the while leading the reader (in this case the cops...) towards the conclusion that Nick was indeed planning to kill me (Flynn, 2012, p. 266).

It is therefore clear in black and white that Amy Elliot Dunne created this narrator to lead the investigation into believing that her husband was willing to murder her. Diary Amy is, therefore, a fake and constructed character by Amy. Therefore, her narrative is untrustworthy, which makes her an unreliable narrator on a second narrative level.

2.4.4. Saleem Sinai as a Naïve Unreliable Narrator

Having seen the three variations of the unreliable narrator in the western discourse, it is only natural that it shall be followed by the unreliable narrator in the postcolonial discourse. In *Midnight's Children*, there is only one narrator in the story. The narrator is, as was mentioned before, the protagonist Saleem Sinai. The wunderkind was born with his uncanny nose that detected all sorts of magic and smalls alike and his supernatural powers with which he could mediate the network of all the magical midnight children who, just like him, were born at precisely the same time when India got its independence.

Saleem Sinai, throughout the discourse of the story, is setting the scene of what he refers to as his autobiography. He states that:

for the first time, I fell victim to the temptations of every autobiographer, to the illusion that since the past exists only in one's memories and the words which strive vainly to encapsulate them, it is possible to create past events simply by saying they occurred...in short, the memory of one of my earliest crimes created the (fictitious) circumstances of my last" (Rushdie, 2008, p. 620).

In this brief passage, he is clearly stating that his word, as a narrator, cannot be taken seriously nor can it be trusted since he bluntly confesses that he might have been creating fictitious events within the tale he is telling about his life because he felt like he simply had the capacity to. In simpler words, the narrator has altered the reality of the tale to what he thought was best for him to narrate.

In another passage, Padma, his present audience and to whom his narrative is addressed primarily, including his son, starts to mistrust his words. Her faith in what Saleem was narrating about the *Midnight's Children* narrative was shaken, and she

could not hide it from him. In order to persuade her that his narrative was, in fact, true, he uses as he puts it “by talking about my son, who needed to know my story, by shedding light on the workings of memory; and by other devices, some naively honest” (Rushdie, 2008, p. 293).

Hence although Saleem seems to have faith in his words and tries to convince the implied reader that what he is saying is the truth, he also mentions that this truth is a mere:

Memory’s truth, because memory has its own special kind. It selects, eliminates, alters, exaggerates, minimises, glorifies, and vilifies also; but in the end it creates its own reality, its heterogeneous but usually coherent version of events; and no same human being ever trusts someone else’s version more than his own (Rushdie, 2008, p. 292).

He, therefore, testifies that his own memory can be flawed and might add or omit certain elements of the narrative, but it is *his* narrative and, therefore, it is his truth. This is a typical technique used precisely in the postcolonial field in order to decentralise the idea of truth only existing in the coloniser’s manner of narrating stories.

Although Saleem’s intentions about the narrative are not mischievous and out of the pure intent to simply narrate *his* version of the story of his life, he leaves a big gap between a trusted narrator and himself. His narrative seems to be littered with marvellous and sometimes even miraculous events that could be interpreted as a figment of his imagination, yet he still insists they are true.

That is why he is labelled as the naïve unreliable narrator because he is in a very brittle position in which he knows he is close to his demise and wants nothing but to narrate his life’s story so that his son might be more equipped and more prudent than he was; in order for his son to not stumble haphazardly in life the way

he did; in order for his son to be the one who takes charge instead of letting the world around him dictate his life the way he did.

His tale is fictitious as far as reality is concerned, yet he has managed to “reveal, in an interesting way, the gap between appearance and reality, and to show how human beings distort or conceal the latter” but also to “tells us what we know already, namely that a novel is a work of fiction” (Lodge, 1993, pp. 154-155).

However, these are not the only characteristics that can be said about these narrators in both novels. All of these narrators share one common criterion, beyond unreliability; it is the criterion of intrusion. All of the said narrators are also characters in their own narratives. They syphon the whole narrative through their consciousness, and therefore they cannot help the fact that they can intrude on the narrative simply because they also have their own agenda of the narrative.

Each narrator, however, has his own way of intruding into the narrative. Some use interactivity, some call for the compassion of the implied reader and others try to lure the implied reader to their own interpretations of the world.

2.5 Narrative Activity

The first action that occurs within a story is the narrative action. One might ask why? Simply because it all starts with the title of the story; The title is the first narrative act. Any story needs to have a title, and the title itself is, albeit small, the first narrative activity in any narrative.

Since the two novels, *Midnight's Children* and *Gone Girl*, are narratives, it is crucial to analyse the narrative activity of both stories. And although both are narratives about the oppressed and the dominated in their themes, it is also important to note how each novel managed to portray through the narrative techniques employed their own struggles and their own forms of rebellious acts.

Through the analysis, the distinction between what was commonly used between the two novels in terms of narrative techniques and what is dissimilar should be made abundantly clear and evident.

2.5.2. *Gone Girl*

As stated above, the first narrative act of any narrative starts with the title itself. In the novel *Gone Girl*, the title is a dead giveaway that the narrative is mainly about a female who, according to its cultural context means: a girl that is perceived in her society to be very innocent in every sense of the word. Yet this fragment of a sentence would also convey the notion of a female who is ‘Gone’.

Whether the choice of the title is a deliberate double entendre by the implied author is an altogether different story. Regardless of the intentions, it is the first narrative act in the novel. As the meaning-making process of this narrative starts to be revealed to the implied reader, it is made clear that the narrative contains multiple narrative techniques.

These narrative tools intertwine and sometimes overlap in order to convey the story in a manner that implies that the implied author did not have much say but rather gave the reigns to both narrators. The most important techniques employed are nonlinear narration and multiperspectivity.

2.5.2.1. Narrative Multiperspectivity

The term itself originated from the works of Volker Neuhaus, a German professor at the University of Koln and later on was improved on by Ansgar and Nunning. They both agree on the definition of this narrative technique which is “the result of the arrangement of discrepant figural standpoints—a perspective structure which is prototypically produced by successive portrayals of the same event from various points of view” (2000, p. 5) qtd. in Hartner, 2012).

In the narrative of *Gone Girl*, there are multiple narrators, all from their own narrative first-person limited standing points. All the narrators are also characters, and therefore they only know their version of the narrative. Hence, the novel is split into multiple chapters, 64 to be precise, and narrators take turns in narrating their own version of the story.

This technique is employed to convey that the same event or narrative act can happen once, yet it can be told from many different perspectives, depending all on the psyche and the situation of the entity (be it a character or an anonymous entity) that narrates.

The narrative competition, if it might be put as such, between Nick Dunne and Amy Elliott Dunne is obvious in the narrative since both of them are trying to push their own version of the narrative to be the truest and the one that should be valued over the other. It is as if they can tell when their significant other will comment differently on whatever they are narrating.

This is displayed in multiple instances, one of which is when Amy writes her first clue for her husband and the police to find the treasure hunt that she and Nick do as their own marriage anniversary tradition. Nick automatically starts to interpret what she meant by that clue and how she would try to narrate things from her side. He says:

It was an itinerary for an alternate life. If things had gone according to my wife's vision, yesterday she would have hovered near me as I read this poem. Watching me expectantly, the hope emanating from her like a fever: *please get this. Please get me.* And she could finally say: *So?* (Flynn, 2012, p. 82).

This demonstrates that Nick anticipates his wife's reactions and her own narrative on the same event. On the other hand, Amy also anticipates Nick's reactions and even his gestures and comments about her actions.

Amy would make snarky comments about how he would see things. In one passage in which Amy is on the run and trying to hide her identity, she tries to apply a new colour to her hair in a random family gas station and waits for it to be done. She makes a vaguely bad joke and then says “(Nick would hate that joke. Derivative! And then he’d add ‘although the word derivative as a criticism is itself derivative.’ I have got to get him out of my mind - He still steps on my lines a hundred miles away” (Flynn, 2012, p. 265). This is exactly how multiperspectivity is used in this narrative: Two different narrators telling the same story from their own perspectives. Conversely, multiperspectivity is not always the same as parallel narration.

In *Gone Girl*, each narrator has a different agenda of the narrative he tells. Therefore, each narrative is dissimilar to the narrative that the other narrators make, except in a few cases during which all narrators agree on the occurrence of a particular event. However, to draw a small yet very crucial difference between parallel narration and multiperspectivity, one has to look at the different narrators and their level of narrative acts: In other words: the narrators’ plain of existence.

Accordingly, the competitive narrative activity that goes between Nick Dunne and Amy Elliot Dunne is one that can be labelled to be multiperspectivity narration. In contrast, the narrative activity that goes between Amy Elliot Dunne and her own fictional character-narrator, Diary Amy is one that can be labelled to be parallel narration.

2.5.2.2. Nonlinear Narration

The novel *Gone Girl* is divided into sixty-four (64) chapters. Each chapter is a piece of the narrative as told by either Nick Dunne, Amy Elliott Dunne or Diary Amy. The novel offers a very interesting take on how these narrators try to sway the implied reader in their direction. However, the structure of the said narrative is not necessarily a structure that can be coined to be straightforward and effortlessly followed.

The narrative structure seems to be drawn on multiple levels and on both narrative degrees and their temporal narrative progression. The novel is split into three major parts, with each part containing a number of chapters.

The first part is entitled “Part One: Boy Loses Girl”. In this part of the novel, the narrative action is pulled by both Nick Dunne and Diary Amy, although in very separate chapters. Nick Dunne’s part starts on the day of his wife’s disappearance, which is referred to in the novel as “the day of” (Flynn, 2012, p. 3), and by the end of the first part, Nick’s temporal narrative progression stops on the seventh day of his wife’s disappearance. Hence, his narrative in the first part of the novel is a 7-day long stretch.

Nick’s narrative, in Part One of the novel, is mixed with Diary Amy’s entries. These entries are the recollections, albeit fake ones, of his actual wife, yet they are from the day they met, meaning way before they were married and even in his hometown North Carthage. The diary dates to January 8, 2005. According to Diary Amy, that was the first day she started writing down her day-to-day journey with Nick.

By the end of the first part, Diary Amy would have narrated all the major events that have happened between her and Nick up until a couple of days before her disappearance. The date of her last entry was June 26, 2012. Hence the diary, if to be believed, was the culmination of 7 years of having a relationship/ marriage between Nick and Amy. The reason that this is important to mention is that each diary entry would interrupt Nick’s narration of his events; Each of the first 29 chapters that are included in Part One of the story is a patchwork of a nonlinear narrative structure that could be explained in the graph below.

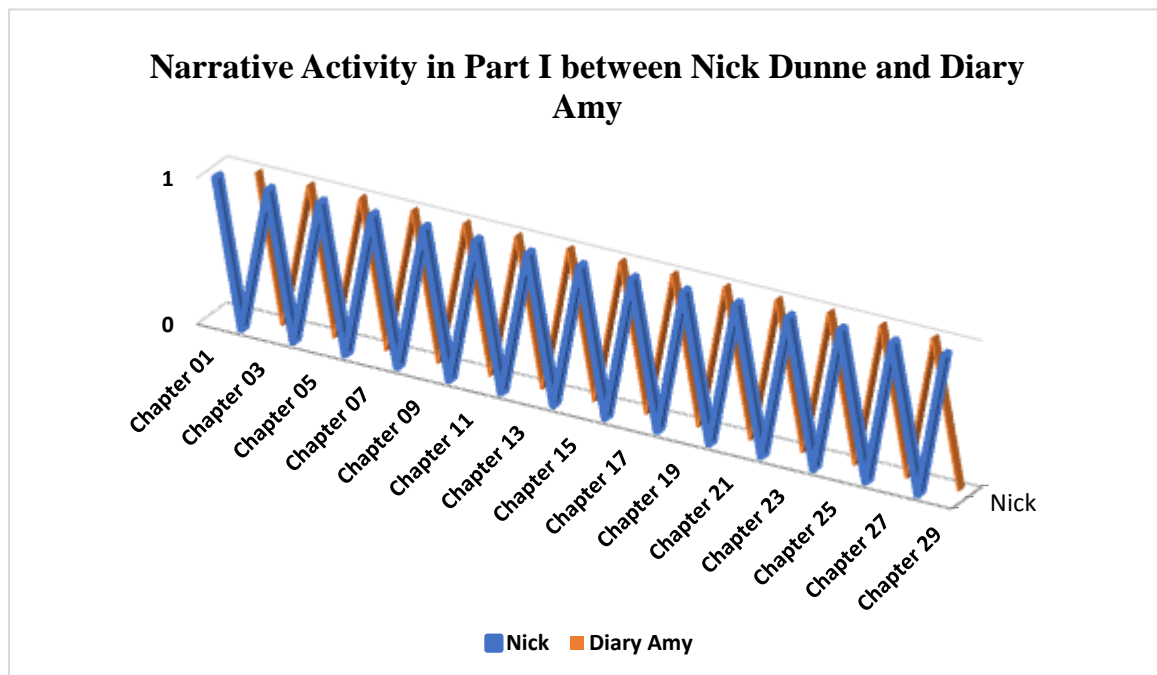


Figure 03: Narrative Activity in Part I between Nick Dunne and Diary Amy

As it can be noticed in the graphs, the narrative curves of the first part, although the narrative action progresses in a linear manner if every narrator were to tell his tale, that the nonlinearity is employed by the implied author. There could be many reasons why the implied author chose to blend these two narratives and stitch them together; to imply that Nick is a liar; to imply that Amy was a good and decent wife; to infer that this story needed some background information as to how this couple came to be. There could be myriads of reasons, and most of them would be valid.

In the second part of the novel, which is entitled “Part Two: Boy Meets Girl” Diary Amy is completely removed from the narrative and instead is replaced by the ‘real’ Amy Elliott Dunne. Once again, the implied author has made a patchwork of the narrative structure of the novel by interchanging narrators and narratives in each chapter of the novel until the end of this part of the novel.

In Part Two, Nick is already on the seventh day of his wife’s disappearance and his neck is starting to feel the noose around it since he is starting to draw more press coverage and his deepest and most shameful secrets are starting to be revealed to the public, and this did not help his case. Amy Elliott Dunne’s narrative, however, goes back to day one of her own disappearance. Amy starts the narrative of the second part of the novel by clarifying that it was nothing but a ruse to punish her husband for reasons, which are in her opinion valid reasons that fit the crime that he has committed; namely cheating on her.

Hence, the implied reader might experience a temporal dissonance of the narrative but the narrative goes back and forth between Nick’s part and Amy’s part until they reach the end of the second part during which both narratives converge on the same timeline at least, as it might be noticed in the graph below.

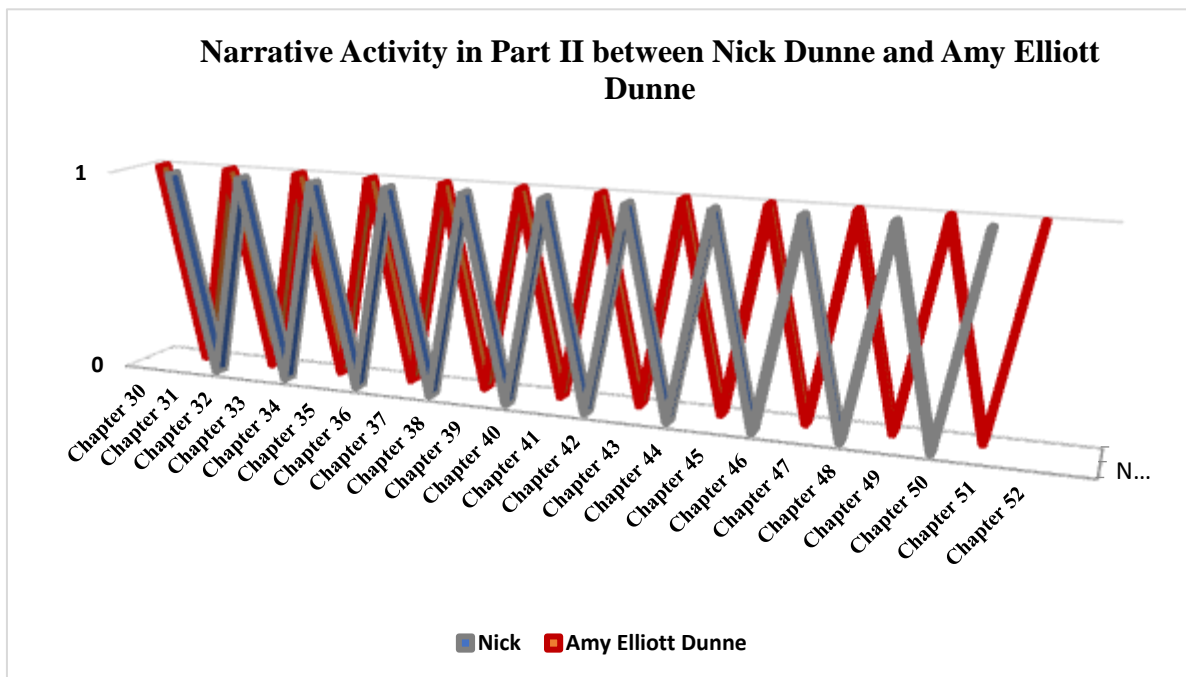


Figure04: Narrative Activity in Part II between Nick Dunne and Amy Elliott Dunne

It is clear that by the end of the second part, the implied author would try to fill the gaps of each narrative with the narrative of the other narrator. If Nick's narrative is to be taken as the overarching narrative then Amy's narrative would fill the non-narrated parts in Nick's narrative, and vice versa.

On the last part of the narrative, which is entitled "Part Three: Boy Gets Girl Back (or Vice Versa)" the narrative structure becomes more and more linear as the narratives converge on one single linear timeline, although predominated mostly by the narrative of Amy Elliott Dunne.

The last part of the story begins with Nick's narrative when Amy was gone for forty 40 days and end with Amy's narrative with her being back with Nick for the past ten months, two weeks and six days. The narrative structure once again seems like a mosaic of patched timeline that all lead to the ending that Amy had the last word, as she has mentioned "I don't have anything else to add, I just wanted to make sure I had the last word. I think I have earned that" (Flynn, 2012, p. 463).

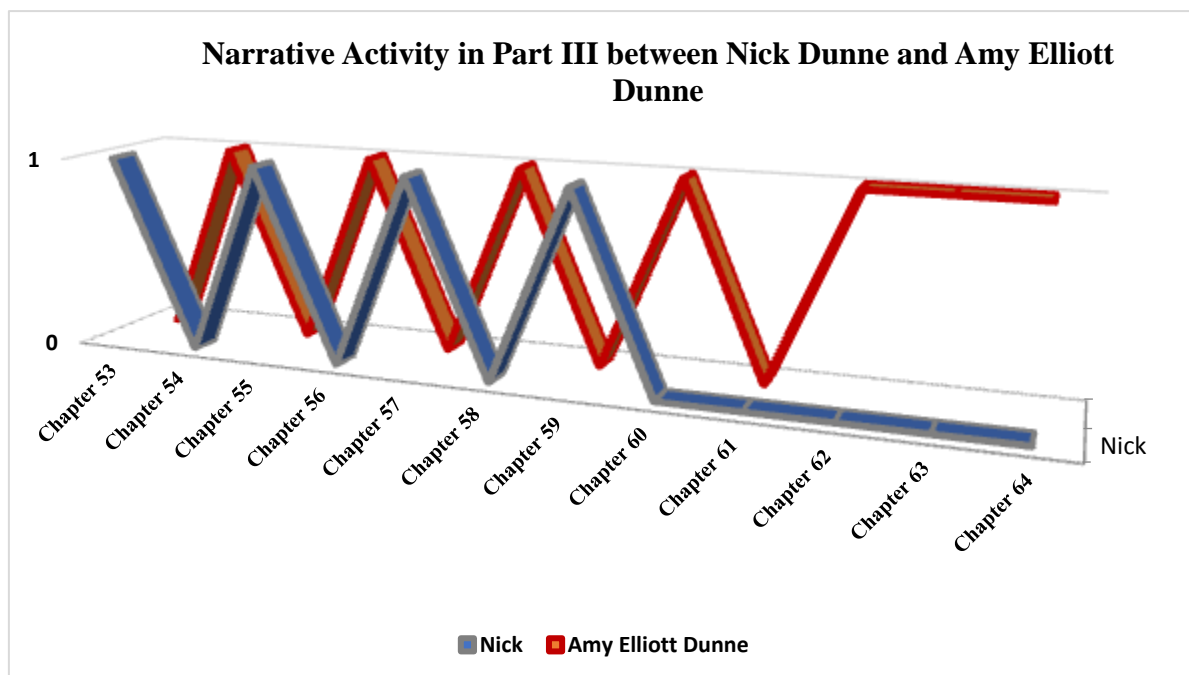


Figure05: Narrative Activity in Part III between Nick Dunne and Amy Elliott Dunne

With this the narrative comes to an end with Diary Amy being completely removed from the narrative and Nick being dismissed the same way Amy herself was dismissed in his narrative. The narrative structure of the novel *Gone Girl* is not only nonlinear but also contains some twists and turns when it comes to putting an emphasis on who controls the narrative.

2.5.3. *Midnight's Children*

Selma Rushdie published his first novel 'Grimus' in 1975, and decided to spend the 700-pound advance to travel across India as inexpensively as possible for as long as he could make the money last, and *Midnight's Children* was created on that odyssey of fifteen-hour bus rides and modest hostelries. (Rushdie, 2008, p. xi).

The novel, *Midnight's Children*, is comprised of thirty-three parts that Rushdie refers to them as books. Each part, or book, contains a set of chapters. When all chapters are combined, they make for a thirty-chapter long narrative. The first part of the novel contains eight chapters; the second part fifteen chapters and the third and last part contains seven chapters. However, in terms of narration, the first narrative act is always the title of the narrative itself.

The two words that comprise the title of the narrative suggest that the narrative is going to have 'children' who are either born at 'midnight' or have some sort of relationship with that specific time of the night. It also indicates that the narrative connects these two very strange words that are usually not put together in terms of colloquial and culture meaning. Yet when reading the title, it is clear that the first act of narration starts from that timing and having children as vague first impression character.

Moreover, and moving further into the actual discourse of the narrative, there are two major narrative techniques that have been employed by the narrator/ implied author; Mainly, Magic realism that has been adopted from the literary

identity of the Latin American postcolonial literature and the postmodern nonlinear narrative technique.

2.5.3.1. Magic Realism

One of the most intriguing and fascinating elements that sprung into the literary domain in the post imperialist era was the deviation from the literary identity of the western world. Postcolonial writers, as they are referred to, started to infuse their narratives with notions of the mystic, the religious and the mythical. They blended their narratives in a colourful collage of both the conventionally consent real and the jaw dropping magical.

This narrative technique was later on dubbed as Magic Realism. It has been a cornerstone of the Latin American postcolonial literary identity ever since. However, its use has not been restricted only on that literary geographical area. Other writers, mostly categorised as postcolonial writers, have employed it in their narratives. Salman Rushdie, originating from India, has made use of it in his novel, *Midnight's Children*.

The narrator in *Midnight's Children*, namely Saleem Sinai, has been established of being an unreliable narrator because of two simple reasons. The first reason is that he admits that his recount of events is not accurate to what anyone else might consider authentic; and the second reason is that his narrative contains a lot of elements that would cause the implied reader to pause and reassess the validity of the narrative in accordance to reality.

In Saleem's narrative there are a number of elements that suggest a strong presence of the technique of magic realism. These elements are based on Wendy B. Faris's work, entitled 'Scheherazade's Children'. According to Faris "Magic realism combines realism and the fantastic in such a way that magical elements grow organically out of the reality portrayed" (1995, p. 163).

This definition befits Saleem Sinai's autobiographical narrative like a glove. In the novel, Saleem mingles the magical and the mundane in a canny manner. He would every now and then make a reference an element that is supernatural and yet shapes into his everyday life as if it a normal part of it. Most commonly he would refer to himself having magical powers of telepathy that could bring about all of the other midnight children (kids that were born in the first hour, after midnight, of India's independence) that were only unlocked by the clearing of snot from his nose. In this particular instance, Saleem has made use of something so mundane as to clear his nose from snot to allowing him to have the ability to summon, at will, the presence of all of his similarly afflicted companions and rivals alike. This

Saleem also includes in his narrative an inescapable element of the magical that cannot be explained in by our social or even scientific norms. For instance, Saleem mentions that he travelled from Bangladesh all the way to India via an airplane. However, he adds that he managed to escape any inspection in a simple basket that his soon to be wife, Parvati the witch, has made him disappear once he stepped inside of it.

Although this might seem unreasonable to any person hearing this narrative, Saleem plays it off as if it were a normal phenomenon to disappear and travel around the world in a disappearing basket. Nevertheless, Saleem Sinai takes it even a small step further. He also challenges the logical relationships between cause and effect.

For instance, Saleem once he was exiled to Pakistan to live with his aunt and Uncle Zulfikar, he mentions that he could no longer get in touch, with his birth right powers of telepathy, with the other midnight's children but was only limited to almost half the quota they were when he was in India. (Rushdie, 2008, p. 394). Saleem has managed to knot the mechanisms of telecommunication and his magical telepathic powers in an elegant bow of a narrative, therefore disrupting the logical relationships between causes and consequences as it is known in the real world.

Saleem can also be perceived to be an egocentric, self-centred narrator and therefore he wants to draw all of the attention to himself. From the start of his tale, he relates every event that occurs, historically, in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh as events that were caused by himself and his ragtag band of misfits which are referred to as midnight's children. Although the actual reasons for such historical events to happen would need to be fact checked and verified. And even if his tale was to be believed, it would still not be the only reason for such events to occur. That is where the transformation of realism into magic realism occurs, in the fact that he tried to

The technique of magic realism also contains within it some elements of realism. One of such elements is the strong manifestation of the world that is described by the narrator. In *Midnight's Children*, the amount of effort that is spent on the description of the world around him can be noticed. Saleem for instance goes to such great lengths to describe the spread of chutney that his Ayah, Padma, used to make for him. The description is vivid to the point that it leaves the reader with the taste of it even if he/she has never eaten it before. He mentions:

To pickle is to give immortality, after all: fish, vegetables, fruit hang embalmed in spice-and-vinegar; a certain alteration, a slight intensification of taste, is a small matter, surely? The art is to change the flavour in degree, but not in kind; and above all (in my thirty jars and a jar). to give it shape and form –that is to say- to give it meaning (I have mentioned my fear of absurdity). (Rushdie, 2008, p. 644).

The only difference in magic realism is that the world sometimes is allowed to take a life of its own. The green chutney that Saleem adores so much seems to be his lifelong companion. He would order it at times and even find it out there in the world as if it was following him to help him overcome some worldly problems. The green chutney would find textual life that outweighs the referential function in the narrative. In other words, the object comes to life in the narrator's perspective and

in Saleem's case it would carry his memories (Rushdie, 2008, p. 643) to everyone who eats from the chutney that he makes by the end of the story.

Throughout all the narrative, the narrator carries an immense temperament for allowing the implied reader to be very doubtful about his narrative, this doubt leaves the reader in an unsettling position. The implied reader would need to come to terms with the idea that for instance although Saleem could use telepathy to talk to these people, how could he then actually see them? Since telepathy's definition is "communication from one mind to another by extrasensory means" (Merriam-Webster, 2021). Yet his definition of telepathy would allow him to see and feel his midnight's children. Hence the implied reader has to reconcile between the notions of the real world and notions disguised by the implied author in the narrative.

One of the major elements of magic realism is the merging of the two realms. The implied reader would experience an imminence of the magical realm with the real world. It is in that in-between space that magic realism surfaces and stands out. This is where hybridity joins with magical realism to create a narrative that is both coherent yet at the same time it gives the implied reader pause.

The last element that stands out in the narrative of Saleem Sinai is that the fictitious and magical always comes in odds with the oppressing forces in his narrative. For instance, Parvati seems to make use of her powers only when she or Saleem are in danger, not from other midnight's children such as Shiva, but from forces that are more realistic than magical. She used her powers to spirit Saleem away to India in a basket in order for him not to be captured by Bangladeshis forces. She also hides her baby in the same basket in order for him not to be eaten by the fires that were started by the Indian inquisition that sought to eradicate the midnight's children. Yet she could not use her powers to save herself. When it came to it, she died in those fires although she possessed witch-like powers.

This collision of the magical and the governmental forces seems to be present throughout the narrative only emphasis even more the presence of magical

realist elements. However, magic realism is not the only narrative technique employed in *Midnight's Children*, another technique that is more postmodern than anything else is also present in the narrative.

2.5.3.2. Nonlinear Narration

Midnight's Children comprises 3 parts with each part contains a total of thirty chapters. The three major parts are a separation of his life stages until he reaches 30. It could be said that he has a chapter for each year Saleem has lived, but there is no evidence of that since he has not made any mentions of it.

In the first part of the narrative Saleem Sinai narrates the events that led to his birth. He starts with how his grandfather, Doctor Aadam Aziz met his grandmother, Naseem Ghani. He ends this first part by his birth; meaning at the stroke of midnight of the 15th day of August 1947.

In this first part, and although the narrative of the novel as stated by Saleem starts with him born, which is the same date he ends the first part of the book, August 15, 1947. (Rushdie, 2008, p. 161). Yet, Saleem takes the implied reader on a journey through his memory back to his roots in order to tell him/her about the circumstances that he was born in. These preborn narratives are told by Saleem in the form of flashbacks. Yet there is no saying to whether these events occurred or are simply another well-constructed web of falsehoods that Saleem has conjured up from his mind.

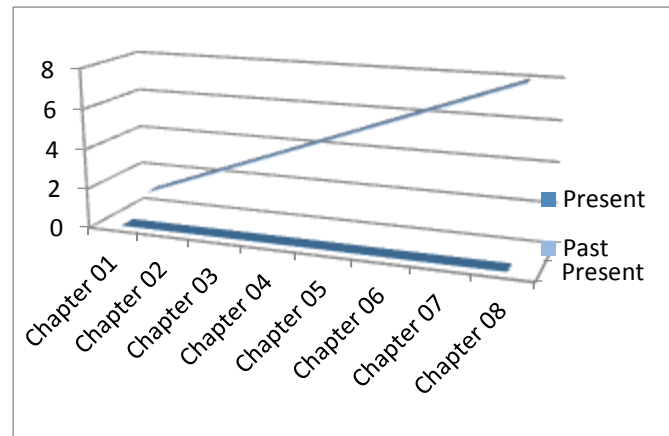


Figure06: Narrative Activity of Book One of *Midnight's Children*

The sole reason for being sceptical about Saleem is because such events happened two generations before he was born and therefore he cannot be recalling them from his memory since he did not attend their happenings.

In the second part which is entitled “Book Two” contains most of the chapters; (15) fifteen to be precise. In this part, Saleem narrates his life from his blue crib that he was put in Buckingham Villa; through his childhood with his sister Jamila; all the way until the war between Pakistan and India started. The same war that obliterated Saleem’s whole family members and he was left with a severe amnesia that would last for the next six (6) years.

In this part of the story, and in terms of narrative, the narrative progression moves across what might seem as a linear timeline. Yet if it were not for Saleem and Padma’s regular interferences of the narrative to pull the implied reader back into the present moment during which Saleem is actually doing the narrating and writing with Padma being present.

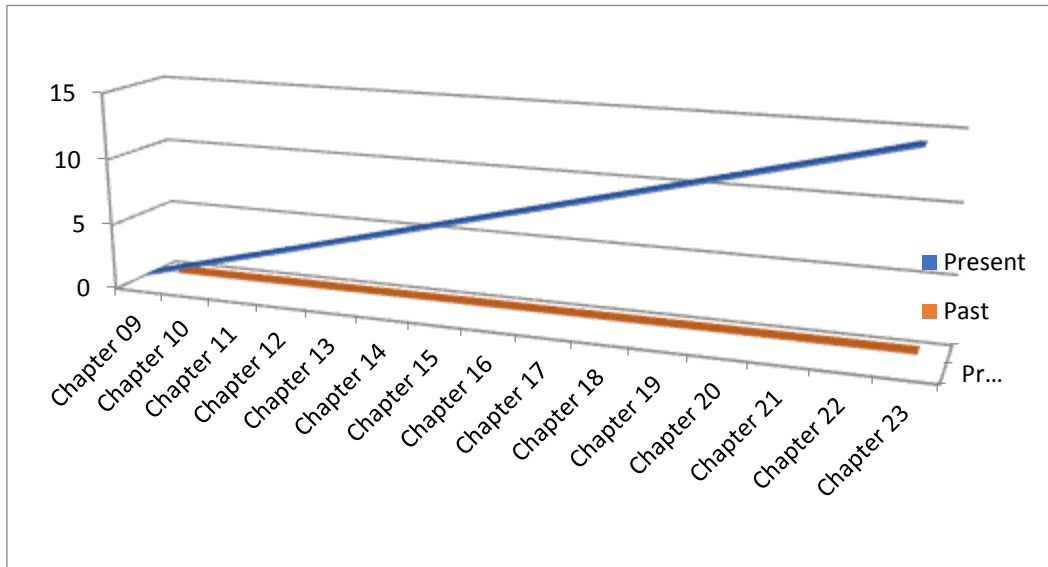


Figure07: Narrative Activity of Book Two of *Midnight's Children*

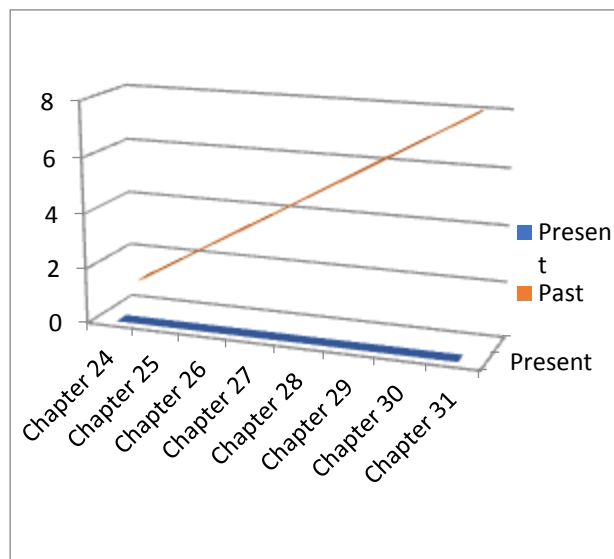


Figure08: Narrative Activity in Book Three of *Midnight's Children*

The last part of the narrative, entitled “Book Three” is composed of eight (8) chapters. In this part of the narrative the narrator recounts the events that followed his six years long amnesia and him being drafted into the civil war in Pakistan between its eastern parts and their western neighbours, which resulted in the birth of

Bangladesh. The narrative is followed by a series of events some misfortunate but all ending with Saleem finding his son, Adam Sinai.



Figure09: Narrative Timeline Diagram of *Midnight's Children*

The story's narrative progression is, once again, distorted by Saleem and Padma, by this time however the story reaches the present time of the narrative. In this narrative period, Saleem is the manager of Mary's chutney factory. The nonlinearity of the narrative is halted at the very last few pages of the story during which Saleem no longer recounts the past, but as he puts it "I shall have to write the future as I have written the past, to set it down with absolute certainty of a prophet" (Rushdie, 2008, p. 645). According to the graph, the narrative starts with the narrator recounting his birth, just after he pulls the timeline back to his present moment of his narration when he closes to celebrating or even lamenting his thirty-first birthday. He then goes into the past prior to his birth recounting the events and circumstances of his birth; his grandparents and then his parents and coming back to his birth once again.

Saleem then narrates his childhood in India; how he was swapped and then raised by his parents unbeknownst to them that he was not their biological son. Afterwards, he recites how he was sent to his aunt after the affair of his mother and how he spent most of his teen years there. Later on, Saleem refocuses the narrative on how he lost and regained his memory after six years. Once back in India, the narrative inches closer and closer to the present time of the narrative.

Once he reaches the last part of the story he starts narrating his present life; how he is the manager of the chutney factory that was founded by his Ayah Mary; how he accepted Padma's proposal to be married. His last and parting words, since he believes that he will die when he celebrates his thirty-first birthday, were concerning the future. He uses the jars of chutney that he manufactures as a metaphor for the past chapters that he has written. He says:

I, however, have pickled chapters [referring to his 30 chapters of the book]. Tonight, by screwing the lid firmly on to a jar bearing the legend special formula No. 30: 'Abracadabra' [which is the

same title of the chapter of the novel itself], I reach the end of my long-winded autobiography. (Rushdie, 2008, p. 642).

He later on suggests leaving one particular pickle jar without a name neither to it nor by putting inside it. (Rushdie, 2008, p. 644). Suggesting that the last empty pickle jar is concerning the future and that he shall only seal it once he has reached it. His narrative therefore goes back in forth on the narrative timeline that can only be regarded as the nonlinear narrative technique.

2.6 Narrative Levels

The most famous and presumably the oldest narrative that was layered in narratives is entitled *The Arabian Nights*’ or sometimes even referred to as *The Thousand and One Nights*. This particular narrative is a huge collection of Arabian, Persian and Indian folktales all framed one story inside the other by the famous narrator, Scheherazade to her husband, Shahryar the sultan. Scheherazade in order to escape her death every night had to keep the suspense of her story by imbedding each story with another story for exactly one thousand and one nights. She used what is now referred to as narrative levels.

Narrative levels or as Genette calls it “metadiegetic” narratives (1980, p. 228) is the layering of narrative acts in all sorts of manners. Some narratives might be in parallel, others might be framed -a narrative inside another narrative- and others might even be metafictional. However, employing said narrative layering differs depending on the needs of the narrator for narrative progression.

Having dealt with the narrator’s unreliability and their adjacent narrative points of view as well as the techniques that each narrator employs in their narrative to recount it, in both *Gone Girl* and *Midnight’s Children* respectively, it is only fitting to discuss and analyse the narrative layers that are stacked inside each narrative.

2.6.2. Parallel Narrativity in *Gone Girl*

In the second part of the novel, Amy Elliott Dunne starts to clarify that whatever Diary Amy was narrating was complete and utter nonsense. She even admits that it was mostly a lie by stating “Don’t fret, we’ll sort this out: the true, the not true and the might as well be true” (Flynn, 2012, p. 247).

Knowing that both Amy and Diary Amy are narrators would imply that this is multiperspectivity. However, since Amy Elliot Dunne is the creator and constructor of Diary Amy, both as a fictitious character and narrator, it is clear that there are two plains of existence; two narrative levels. With that in mind, Diary Amy is not within the narrative of Amy Elliott Dunne, but is standing on a very different narrative level. This narrative level could be labelled as the parallel narrative.

Albeit that the narrative of Diary Amy is a very untrustworthy testimony on her part concerning the narrative, yet she is the narrator and there is a narrative happening, even if it was all a constructed lie by Amy Elliott Dunne. Hence, and if the analogy fits, Amy and Diary Amy exist in different universes. Both are the narrators of their own manufactured universe, which also happens to coincide with the existence of very similar narrative occurrences.

These similar narrative events although they might be similar in their narrative value, their phenomenological experience is very different since the events narrated by Diary Amy are a lie, whereas the events told by Amy Elliott Dunne are a clarification and confession of Diary Amy’s lies.

Diary Amy mentions in her last diary entry “I was suddenly running along the summer lawn and down the street, banging on Noelle’s door, and when she opened it, I burst into tears and showed her the stick and yelled, ‘I’m pregnant!’ (Flynn, 2012, p. 230). Yet Amy in her narrative explains how this was all a scheme. She divulges how she managed to fake her pregnancy in several steps:

A search online: how to drain your toilet for repair.
 Noelle invited over for lemonade. Lots of lemonade.
 Noelle peeing in my drained, unflushed toilet, each of us so terribly embarrassed.
 Me, a small glass jar, the pee in my toilet going into the glass jar.
 Me, a well-laid history of needle/blood phobia.
 Me, the glass jar hidden in my purse, a doctor's appointment.
 Me, a pregnancy on my medical record.
 Me, running to Noelle with the good news (Flynn, 2012, p. 291).

Amy therefore narrates an altogether different event from that of Diary Amy by stating that her pregnancy was nothing but a ruse to draw even more attention and press coverage on her husband. This situation and many similar situations where Amy had to explain the narrative of Diary Amy, is the only narrative space in which both narratives could converge in. Together they form a parallel narrative. In order to give the implied reader, the impression that she was in control of the narrative of the entire story.

Given that there are two very different narrative on very different plains of existence –within the manufactured world of *Gone Girl*- it only seems fitting to label the narrative activity between Amy and Diary Amy as parallel narration. In this sense the narrative of Diary Amy is not embedded inside the narrative of Amy Elliot Dunne, but rather stands on the same phenomenological narrative experience. In other words, the two narratives are

2.6.3. Saleem Sinai's Hybrid Narrative

Drawing from Homi Bhabha's work on the postcolonial identity, hybridity has been an established postcolonial literary concept. Hybridity as he would define it as that small space in between two identities that is neither holistically part of neither of them. (Bhabha, 1990, p. 314). Bhabha himself draws from the poststructuralist school of thought that suggests that the world is built in binaries and that as human

beings there should always be the constant evaluation of what those binaries are and whether there is something in the spectrum of those binaries.

In terms of narration, hybridity, as a concept, suggests that the narrative and most times even its discourse showcase a doubling of intentions, ideas, and even identities. It is often times mistaken for the psychological illness of bipolar disorder but nevertheless, hybridity as a mode of narration is more subtle than a complex mental disorder.

Midnight's Children as a narrative can be felt and noticed to contain numerous instances during which the hybridity of the narrative leaps forward. Although before these are mentioned it is necessary to explain the difference between Hybrid Narration and what was referred to in *Gone Girl* as Parallel Narration.

Parallel narration is the change that occurs when there is a shift of who narrates. In other words, a particular story would be narrated from different narrators. However, hybrid narration is having the same narrator act in different positions of the narrative. In simpler words, it is when the narrator changes his narrative point of view. For example, when an omniscient narrator becomes limited or vice versa.

In many instances Saleem pretends to know what was happening around him, or at least, give the implied reader the impression that he was all-knowing of the whole narrative. It can be noticed from the very first pages of the story. He says:

I, Saleem Sinai, later variously called Snotnose, Stainface, Baldy, Sniffer, Buddha and even Piece-of-the-Moon had become heavily embroiled in fate –at the best of times a dangerous sort of involvement. And I couldn't even wipe my own nose at the time (Rushdie, 2008, p. 3).

It can be noticed that even at the beginning of the narrative he already knows what the kids, teachers and even his military comrades would refer to him before the narrative has even started. However, his lack of coherence in the narrative leaves a lot to be said on such self-proclaimed omniscience.

Saleem himself would later on mention that because of his decaying physical body he is pressured to write the narrative which will inevitably increase the risk of making mistakes and alteration in the narrative. He says:

Because I'm rushing ahead at breakneck speed, errors are possible, and overstatements, and jarring alterations in tone; I'm racing the cracks but I remain conscious that errors [in the narrative] have already been made, and that, as my decay accelerates (my writing speed is having trouble keeping up), the risk of unreliability grows... (Rushdie, 2008, p. 376).

Therefore the disillusionment of his omniscience is uplifted and Saleem steps once again from the omniscient function of the narrator to the limited narrator. This action is done in multiple instances throughout the narrative. Such fluidity, in moving from one narrator's function to another, heralds a hybridity in the narrative. It is as if the narrator wants to be at both positions and occupy both functions.

Another sign of narrative hybridity is the incoherent narrative that mixes between the real and the magical in such way that conveys a close merging of those two separate realms. In *Midnight's Children* the narrator would often time overlapping the magical and the real and offer it to the reader. Although he is aware of his actions, he admits "the midnight's children shook even Padma's faith in my narrative" (Rushdie, 2008, p. 292) meaning he even anticipates the implied reader's trust in his own narrative. His only reply is that "if you are a little uncertain of my reliability, well, a little uncertainty is no bad thing. Cocksure men do terrible deeds. Women, too" (Rushdie, 2008, p. 294).

He uses such rhetorical and tautological reasoning to evade, often times, the fact that his narrative is incoherent. However, the real answer that Saleem seems to evade, concerning his incoherent narrative is his hybrid identity. Saleem is neither the biological son of Sinai, nor is he the grandson of Aadam Aziz; nor is he the biological father of Aadam Sinai. Saleem was raised by a family that is not his own blood, even after he knew he was William Methwold's son. Hence he is the offspring of two worlds in both geographical and cultural sense of the world. Saleem's hybrid identity perforates the narrative creating a split of both his position as the narrator and his function as well.

Saleem also makes use of one of the most fundamental aspects of magic realism –which in itself is a sign of hybrid narration since it combines the magical and the realist in one narrative- which is to create a world that is neither imaginary to the point it becomes a fairy-tale, nor is it so realistic to be accepted by the implied reader without any unsettling doubts. Therefore, his vision exists in the intersection of two worlds; it is as Wendy B. Faris would suggest the “the imaginary point inside a double-sided mirror that reflects in both directions” (Faris W. B., 1995, p. 172).

In *Midnight's Children* the narrator, Saleem Sinai is without any doubt a first-person limited narrator. However, this does not stop him from pretending to be omniscient and with the addition of the technique of magic realism and his constant fabrication of the real and surreal, he alternates and manipulates both time and stand points and manages to even unclench the boundaries of his limitations as a narrator, making his narrative a hybrid narrative that stands in the inconclusive space between two identities (his Indian origins and his Pakistani upbringing). Saleem Sinai' hybrid narrative is therefore an amalgam of identities, beliefs and even cultures.

2.6.4. Saleem's Return Home Narration

The notion of going back home is an archetypal, Jungian instinct. In both the animalistic and the humanitarian world, returning to the place of one's nurturing as a child is an intrinsic urge for it promises safety and comfort from the trials and tribulations of the world. Every human being, by instinct and endowed with a sense of reason will at some point feel the need to trace back his steps and head back home. However, home can mean a myriad of things and to each person their likings and predispositions of what they define as home. However, the basis of what home could be seen as is the promise of relief and respite.

This endless search for this place of peace and reprieve has been at the core of most, if not all, people's itinerary in life. Some people found it in a person, others in a small cabin in the woods; others on the eighth floor of a Manhattan apartment; some were lucky enough to find it close to them; others were not as lucky and had to move across the globe to find a place that could be called 'Home'. However, many people were not lucky at all as to have a chance to search for such an abstract notion.

Historically speaking, people were uprooted from their homes, in masses, both physically and mentally, by the beginning of the industrial age in Europe for the simple reason that Europe had to expand its reach beyond its geographical frontiers and needed free labour. People from Asia, Africa were shipped to the colonies of Britain in America of those of the Spanish empire in both the Caribbean and Latin America to work in the cottons, sugar and tobacco fields. These people were not given the choice in the matter. To put it simply, they were enslaved.

As a result, these people integrated into themselves the dream of going back to their own homes. They helped keep, generation after generation, that dream of finding peace and respite into the bosom of their roots. Consequently, the domain of literature, being the eternal memory of humanity and identity itself, helped encompass such a notion by the rise of a whole postcolonial generation of writers.

The Return Home narrative is defined as a narrative that starts from one's home in search for truth, honour, financial success etc. The reason for leaving home being almost unimportant to the whole narrative, yet it is for the sake of the journey that the protagonist sets out. Jerome Stern defines the journey as "the oldest, truest, most inescapable shape for a story. From nursery story to biblical narrative to contemporary novel, someone is always setting out from home" He also points out that the journey itself does not have to be a literal. "It can be physical or mental, deliberate or accidental, voluntary or forced, a quest or a flight" (Stern, 1991, p. 33).

The author of the narrative of *Midnight's Children*, Salman Rushdie being Indian of origin and raised in England can be categorised with the same generation of writers that rose in the 'inbetweenness' of two distinctive identities each pulling him in oftentimes opposing directions. In his narrative he does try to reconcile both of his identities, yet he does so only by returning to his roots, namely, to India. Saleem Sinai, the protagonist and the narrator of the narrative can therefore, be seen as a projection of Rushdie's own hybrid identity.

Saleem in his narrative, he starts from the day of his birth in Bombay at the stroke of midnight. Afterwards he is sent to his aunt's in Pakistan, then back to Kashmiri region, all the way to what is now Bangladesh. After this long and arduous journey, Saleem finds himself back in his beloved India. He says concerning his return:

A sense of unfairness turned into anger; and something else besides –transformed by rage, I had also been overwhelmed by an agonising feeling of sympathy for the country which was not only my twin-in birth but also joined to me (so to speak) at the hip, so that what happened to either of us, happened to us both. If snott-nosed stain-faced etcetera, had had a hard time of it, then so had she, my subcontinental twin sister (Rushdie, 2008, p. 538).

In this short passage, Saleem refers to India as his twin sister, making it clear that his return is seen as a family reunion. As if the relationship he and his beloved home share is what can be implied to be the most intimate platonic relationship a person can have, which is sharing the exact origin. He, therefore, feels that his return is a triumph since he also imbued his physical comeback as something magical.

After suffering amnesia for six years, Saleem was accidentally found by Parvati, the witch in Dacca. His return back to India would not have been made possible if it were not for the magical powers of Parvati. Saleem would not have been allowed back to India had he been caught by the Bangladeshi forces. So Parvati whisked him to India in a magical wicker basket that made him invisible. The narrator not only wants the implied reader to see his return as a triumph but also as something extraordinary and sublime.

The second aspect of the concept of ‘return home’ in *Midnight’s Children* is the fact that Saleem returned to not only his home country India but also to his birthplace, to the only living person that remained of his nostalgic home, which is his Ayah, Mary Pareira. Mary represents Saleem’s emotional and abstract understanding of what was left of his home, and the narrative would not have been complete for Saleem had he not returned and made peace with her (with his past).

Saleem seems to also be in a continuous passive conflict that stems from him observing and negotiating every change that has occurred along his journey compared to his departure. Throughout the narrative, he can compare where he is and how he was back at his original starting point. An extensive illustration of his passive conflict is when he comes back to India and notices that significant elements of what he thought was home have been completely and irrevocably altered.

Once Saleem settles in the slums of India, the turmoil of his birthplace starts to resurface again. He mentions “On December 16, 1971, I stumbled out of a basket into an India in which Mrs Gandhi’s New Congress Party held a more-than-two-

thirds majority in the National Assembly” (Rushdie, 2008, p. 538). In this short passage, Saleem notes the political environment where he found his beloved India when he tumbled out of Parvati’s basket. Saleem learnt, in the harshest manner, that returning home often does not mean returning *home*. In *Midnight’s Children*, Saleem seeks to return to his home yet “To return may be to go back but it may equally be to start again: to seek but also to lose. Return has both a temporal and a spatial dimension. (White, 1995, p. 14).

Although Saleem had actualised the notion of returning back home, he could not will his country back to the state he left it in, or maybe even in a better state. His narrative shows that his return home was not simply the physical return home since he had already achieved that. Nevertheless, his return for him was more of a reboot of his own narrative; Saleem, in his return, felt no satisfaction and had to start over again. Return home narratives are usually carried out in this manner since, as Paul White suggests “For the individual returning to their ‘own’ past and place it is rarely fully satisfying: circumstances change, borders in all senses are altered, and identities change too” (White, 1995, p. 14). It is for this reason that Saleem resumes his continued quest to *truly* return home.

Saleem only finds satisfaction after he has returned to his Ayah and not only that but only when his son, Aadam Sinai, is dubbed as the second generation. The first generation of a thousand and one midnight’s children that had Saleem Sinai at the centre of its narrative came to an end with the birth of the second generation of midnight’s children; namely the generation that started with his son, Aadam Sinai. So not only did Saleem return back home, but so did the narrative itself as it came to a circular ending which is also the start of a similar narrative.

2.7 Conclusion

The narrative analysis of Selman Rushdie's *Midnight’s Children* and Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl* was the focus of this chapter. The examination was limited to each

narrative's underlying narrative mechanics. The literary notions introduced in the preceding chapter, such as kinds of narrators, their narrative positions, narrative structures, and levels, were the primary focus of this analysis.

A thorough narrative analysis was carried out prior to the narratological analysis, which will be the primary topic of the next chapter. As a result, how *Gone Girl* and *Midnight's Children* are structured in terms of narrative structure, as well as identification of the many sorts of narrators present in each story, how these narrators act, and what kinds of narrative structures are in existence.

To conclude this chapter, an examination of Saleem's Sinai's Narrative and how it relates to the notion of the return home book and Amy and Nick Dunne's novel type of narrator unreliability. However, prior to that, a short analysis of both books' plots was included to provide the reader with a thorough understanding of the story's internal narrative events and conflicts.

Reaching this conclusion, both narratives, *Midnight's Children* and *Gone Girl* are narrated by an unreliable narrator. Amy Elliott Dunne being a pathological liar and therefore cannot be trusted; Diary Amy being a fictitious character narrator made by Amy Elliott Dunne to concoct the perfect wife in order to dupe and frame her husband for murder; Nick Dunne who is completely oblivious to what was going around him yet he also employs the lie of omission in his narrative; and last but not least Saleem Sinai who is neither psychologically troubled nor a fan of the lie of omission, but rather someone who seems to be simply a naïve character wanting to leave an extraordinary tale for his son yet he manages to convince the implied reader that his narrative is trustworthy.

Chapter Three: ...to Narratological Conceptualisation

3.1 Introduction

The most straightforward assumption that could be drawn from the analysis that has been conducted in the previous chapter is that there is a strong link between the rise of the poststructural school of thought and the postcolonial literary field. Since both rely on the concept of decentralising (removing the concept of centre and periphery) and removing binary oppositions, they are grounds for a formal comparison based on the two novels.

Selma Rushdie, author of *Midnight's Children* and one of the most influential postcolonial writers, has often infused his narrative with postcolonial literary concepts that stem from the basic notions of what could be the poststructural school of thought. Postcolonial literature itself comes from the removal of binaries. As mentioned before, the removal of the 'self' and the 'other' as Edward W. Said has declared.

It could be even declared that postcolonialism rose as a branch of poststructuralism as a philosophy back in the 1960s. The postcolonial discourse is adopted from the roots and pillars of poststructuralism. The most superficial notions used in postcolonial discourse are directly or indirectly derived from the poststructural/postmodern school of thought.

However, some notions are beyond these two discourses. When it comes to narratology, some concepts have seeped through to affect even the narrative techniques, and others have not been able to do so for multiple reasons.

This chapter helps to undertake the narratological conceptualisation of the narrative analysis carried out in the previous chapter. Hence, the inclusion of both metafiction –feminine metafiction and Historiographic Metafiction- the use of magic realism, deconstructive narration, and narrative impositions shall be

discussed in detail as to how they are related and separate between what is western and what is postcolonial.

3.2 Deconstructive Narration/ Narratological Analysis

The end of the second world war marked the end of the modern era and the beginning of an era that would change and have one of the most straightforward and yet complex philosophical concepts, alter the face of the world; politically, socially and even economically. As it is referred to, the postmodern era strikes at the heart of any prior philosophical school of thought. It goes as the definition of " post" suggests beyond modernism/ structuralism.

By the beginning of the 1960s, a group of French thinkers and scholars brought forward a theory to revolutionise how text and literature are perceived. The theory of 'Deconstruction' being the motherlode and the basis of the postmodern era came about as a theory that has the removal of binary oppositions as a goal. According to Jacques Derrida, one of the most recognised French literary critics of the postmodern era, Deconstruction "is not a dismantling of the structure of a text but a demonstration that it has already dismantled itself. Its apparently solid ground is no rock but thin air" (Hills, 1976, p. 341). Derrida suggests that the text is its own 'deconstructor'. The critic would only need to find how and where it has been done in the text.

Derrida also claims that Deconstruction is not a literary tool for criticism. He refused to label it anything specific in order not to make the mistake, as we would suggest, that any school of thought prior to postmodernism centralises a theory above all theories or a logical philosophical notion above all the others. However, he suggests that it is a mode of seeing that the text does not need anything else

except itself and that the literary critic only needs to feel his way through to notice it.

In other words, it is in one or another how the text takes itself apart. Derrida would suggest that Deconstruction:

As a mode of interpretation works by a careful and circumspect entering of each textual labyrinth. The critic feels his way from figure to figure, from concept to concept, from mythical motif to mythical motif, in a repetition which is in no sense a parody. It employs, nevertheless, the subversive power present in even the most exact and unironical doubling. The deconstructive critic seeks to find, by this process of re-tracing, the element in the system studied which is a logical, the thread in the text in question which will unravel it all, or the loose stone which will pull down the whole building. The Deconstruction, rather, annihilates the ground on which the building stands by showing that the text has already annihilated that ground, knowingly or unknowingly (Hills, 1976, p. 341).

With this mode or theory, the foundation of postmodern literary criticism rose to the state it is in today. To elucidate the primary mechanism of Deconstruction, a simple game of 'lost in the sea' would be enough to explain it. The game is simple; someone is shipwrecked on an island in the middle of the ocean. With no hope of finding anyone else on the island, and albeit it might not be realistic, this person is given a list of items that he could choose and pick from only three items for his survival. The list may contain a lighter, flashlight, clean water, a gun, ammunition and many other items that could prove to be useful or not at all.

He would automatically categorise this as ‘useful’ and ‘not useful’ in this person's mind. In philosophy, this is called binary opposition (useful / not useful).. For the most of sane human being, this would be inclined to think to make a decision. However, with Deconstruction, these binaries should not exist. Deconstruction itself is a way of dismantling thought itself. The notion of ‘thinking that you are thinking’; this metacognition is dismantling the binary oppositions themselves. With Deconstruction, the stranded person on the island needs to remove his binary thinking. Simply the fact that he is thinking in binaries is already deconstructive.

This exact mechanism is employed in literature. In *Midnight's Children*, the narrator himself seems aware of the narrative. Hence narrative is deconstructed simply because the narrator, Saleem Sinai, is aware that he is narrating. Not only that, but he also includes that the implied reader is an audience he is conversing with.

Saleem also includes his thoughts about him not being authentic and shares this after inserting some very farfetched events. Nevertheless, he claims that such events took place and were as real as *he* was (ironically). Saleem also unintentionally reveals the thread of the Deconstruction of his narrative by using magic realism. His use of the magical realist element in his narrative has rendered the discourse implausible and therefore has set out to deconstruct itself.

Not only that, but Saleem is therefore labelled as an unreliable narrator, and the narrator's unreliability causes the implied reader to submerge from the flow of the narrative and its discourse and float in the realm of doubt and uncertainty. This self-awareness that the implied reader's experiences are deconstructive. The implied reader would step out of the narrative to question certain elements that the narrative itself has put forward. He, therefore, moves from the narrative act to a more reflexive act since the act of narrating is halted by the doubts of the reader.

In *Gone Girl*, the narrative is deconstructive as well. Since the narrative is a significant scheme planned by Amy to frame her husband for her murder, the narrative undoes itself by reaching the second part. In a way, as if the narrative prior to it did not matter or exist, which is indeed the case since it was all lies and deceptions by creating the sub-fictional character/narrator Diary Amy.

There is also the fact that in *Gone Girl*, there seems to be a quarrel on the validity of certain occurrences, and even if they happened, they would be seen and narrated to the implied reader from different perspectives, hence creating this double voicedness in the narrative that would undo itself through each step of the narrative.

The deconstructive analysis or mode is crucial to understanding that both narratives are poststructural/postmodern narratives. Both narratives are constructed so that they cause their own frailty, and their narrative acts are deconstructive. The implied reader would halt and pause the narrative to reconsider some aspects in those narratives. However, he/she would accept the narrative, albeit knowing that it is not reliable nor coherent.

This constant negotiation between acceptance and refusal of the narrative is the implicit purpose behind the deconstructive narration. It allows the implied reader to step outside of the binary opposition, in this situation, the binary opposition between the clear-cut lines of what is fictional and what is not fictional. The implied reader would need to be always on his/her toes throughout the narrative to separate the fictional from the magical to the almost or in similar lines with the real.

For example, in *Midnight's Children*, the implied reader would need to sift through a multitude of religious metaphors, mythical analogies and references, as well as the narrator's fallibility even to relay events as they happened, considering

that he is a narrator that is both naïve and full of himself at the same time. Therefore, he is on a constant uphill battle to keep the narrative coherent on his/her own so that it would make sense.

Another example in *Gone Girl* implies that the reader has to scrutinise everything Nick Dunne says by the beginning of the narrative since he would seem like a logical suspect and compare it with the parallel narrative that Diary Amy provides her diary entries. After it is revealed throughout the narrative that Diary Amy is nothing but hogwash and her narrative cannot be trusted, the implied has to once again dissect all of the narratives together in order to try and get the truth behind it all, and even then the narrative would still seem like it would not simply serve the truth on a silver platter to the implied reader. This constant negotiation with the narrative that the implied reader maintains reveals that the narrative act itself is deconstructive and shall be labelled deconstructive narration.

Therefore, deconstructive narration is the constant effort done by the implied reader to maintain a coherent and reliable narrative during which all of the elements used to construct it do their fair share of deconstructing themselves. However, deconstructive narration stands at the end of the narrative act (the implied reader's end), and narration must have a narrator. However, in both novels, the narrators are in constant rejection of their narrative.

3.3 Narrators as Rejecters of Narrative Impositions

In any narrative, the narrator plays one of the most vital roles; simply to narrate. In any narrative, the narrator also relays the events and occurrences of the tale he is putting forward to suggest that this narrative is his, even if he is in a third-person point of view. The implied reader would know that the events are told by an unknown narrator but would still link the narrative act to this narrating entity.

However, not all narrators occupy the role of a simple narrator when it comes to moderating how much of the narrative this narrator wants to share with the implied reader. In other words, not all narrators accept the narrative they are narrating. Not all occurrences or events happen by the will of the narrator, especially the characters' narrators. Hence, not all narrators accept the narrative imposition that restrains them.

Narrative constraints or imposition are the intentions that the implied author has given in order to frame this fictitious world. The implied author would push a whole narrative forward and even create the narrator, yet he does not narrate; he creates the narrator for that purpose. Now, the creation of the narrator, this action itself, is a narrative, yet it is not mentioned in the story's discourse. Hence, the narrator's creation is the first narrative act that occurs without a narrator.

The narrator afterwards carries all the narrative until the end. However, with the coming of the postmodern era and the emergence of the unreliable narrator, the creation of the implied author of the narrator does not necessarily suggest that the implied author controls the narrative act. The only thing he/she (the implied author) does is restrain as much as possible of the narrator's function. In many narratives, the narrator would step outside of the implied author's intentions and make himself an unreliable narrator. These intentions are one of the impositions that the implied author puts in order to govern the narrative without being present in it.

Nevertheless, once again, postmodernism and its fundamental pillar of going against traditions have affected the impositions that the implied author has shaped on the narrator. Therefore, the narrator wanting to shake off those impositions uses different narratological techniques.

3.3.1. Saleem Sinai

In *Midnight's Children*, Saleem refuses to have his fate linked to that of his country, yet he acknowledges it as a narrator. Nevertheless, he does not intend to have the implied author's intentions shape his narrative. He mentions that:

A few seconds later [his birth] my father broke his toe; but his accident was a mere trifle when set beside what had befallen me in that benighted moment, because thanks to the occult tyrannies of those blandly saluting clocks I had been mysteriously handcuffed to history, my destiny indissolubly chained to those of my country (Rushdie, 2008, p. 3).

Therefore, it is clear that his narrative has been set up and attached to that of his country, which is not his intention but the intention of the implied author. Furthermore, as mentioned before, although he acknowledges it, he does not seem to accept it as he narrates.

Saleem also employs the embedded narrative techniques since, through Genette's work, he would be seen as both an intradiegetic narrator and a homodiegetic narrator since he is telling his autobiography. For the implied author, keeping the narrator on a straight path in telling his story would be tricky since the narrator can at any point switch from intradiegetic to homodiegetic, moving from two different narrative levels: Saleem being the narrator and interacting with Padma and Saleem being a character narrator in his story, causing the narrative mood to flow in the uncertainty of the *memetic* effect that the implied author wanted to showcase. In simpler terms, Saleem moves from one narrative level to another to create the illusion that his narrative is the imitation of reality and that when he is interacting with Padma as the actual reality, whereas both narrative levels are an imitation of reality.

Saleem is, therefore, an intradiegetic narrator when narrating the events that occurred to him in the past as if he is separated from them and a homodiegetic narrator when he has multiple dialogues with Padma as a character narrator. This fluid movement from intradiegetic to homodiegetic creates the illusion of a narrator in complete charge of his narrative. He also supports this control by saying that even if he has misrepresented the truth, it is because it is his narrative and stems from his memory and perception; therefore, he would not trust anyone else with his narrative. Saleem, therefore, aspires to remove the mood or at least shift the mood that the implied author has imposed.

All these techniques that the narrator uses, Saleem, help him free himself from the shackles of the implied author. He does not want the narrative to constrain him. He even steps out from narrating to prove that he is not only a narrator but also the author of his narrative (when addressing Padma).

Saleem moves against the intentions of the implied author in both authenticity and narrative acts. He stops and starts the narrative at his pace, whereas there should have been no interventions, and he moves along multiple narrative layers. This struggle of the narrator wanting to be the author so severely that he rebels against the implied author's restrictions creates a narrator that can only be labelled as a rejector of narrative impositions.

3.3.2. Nick Dunne and Amy Elliott Dunne

In *Midnight Children*, the basis of the narrative rejection was centred on the struggle between the implied author and the narrator Saleem. However, although the struggle is still there in *Gone Girl*, it is more of a triangular struggle. The reason is that the implied author must deal with multiple narrators, namely Amy Elliott Dunne and Nick Dunne.

The focus is put on Amy Elliott Dunne, wherein multiple instances, she tries to shake off the narrative impositions set by the implied author and Nick Dunne. Amy, throughout the narrative, is fighting for dominance in the narrative activity. In her first attempt and act of defiance to the implied author and as a narrator, she tries to create a narrative that would be implausible (Diary Amy's journal entries) for several reasons that could be interpreted through the analysis done in the previous chapter. However, this false narrative that she creates disturbs the implied author's impositions and that of Nick Dunne.

Nick Dunne, on his end, narrates his side of the story, yet because he is constrained, his only act of defiance is to omit certain aspects from his narrative. Nick is unaware that he is in a fight for dominance over the narrative act with Amy Elliott Dunne, his wife. On the other hand, Amy makes it clear after the second part of the story that she is in a fight to brand her narrative of the story as the truth or as the implied author's truth.

Throughout the discourse of the story, the chapters alternate between a narrative conducted by Nick and the one after it by Amy until we reach the third part of the story. In this part, although he has some chapters to narrate, Nick feels like a narrator that has been silenced, as if his version of the story no longer matters. In this part, the chapters that Nick narrates feel like a mental note that he is saying.

Amy makes it clear that she has won the fight over the narrative dominance of both the Nick and the implied author by stating in the last sentence of the novel "I don't have anything else to add. I just wanted to make sure I had the last word. I think I have earned that" (Flynn, 2012, p. 463). Therefore, she is making it clear that she has taken over the overarching narrative. Amy has also managed to make her truth the narrative's truth since the story ended, albeit in a bit of a spontaneous mood, how she wanted it to end, with her being in control of everything.

Considering the narrative mood and focalisation of Amy and Nick, it can be noticed that Amy's narrative always seems to be surreal in her diaries. That is why the level of intimacy (mood) that she has as a narrator with the narrative is exceptionally close and produces a mimetic effect. She not only reflects the real world, but she also manages to tell the implied reader about the real world without a break in the fictionality of it all. However, once she reveals her true self, the level of intimacy drops and the implied reader could feel his way through the cracks of her narrative. Amy no longer considers the narrative to be honest at all, and not only that, but she also clarifies that all of this is a fictional narrative when she starts addressing the implied reader and including him/her in her comments. Hence, she manipulated the narrative's mood in the beginning and broke the fictionality of her narrative as the narrative progressed.

However, when it comes to Nick, he does not have the slightest clue that he is in a narrative because he does not address the reader. Although he might be an unreliable narrator through the lie of omission, he does not manipulate the narrative's mood but seems to uphold the same level of intimacy between what he considers his reality and what the implied reader considers fictional.

Hence Nick Dunne as the narrator, although rejecting the narrative impositions that have been imposed on him, he does not squirm himself out of them and by the end of the narrative, he accepts them. However, for Amy, she rejects them from the start as she has created a fictional narrative of her own that is beside the narrative of the implied author, which is in her fake diaries and has also managed to silence Nick's side of the narrative making clear that she has rejected the narrative impositions and has in one sense, or another imposed her own on Nick's narrative.

3.4 Metafiction

As Genette claims, a narrative can never imitate reality; however, it can come close to telling us about that reality (1980, p. 43). Fiction, at this point, being considered the fabrication of occurrences that bear plausibility to what is considered authentic, would suggest that it is a narrative of occurrences that conveys a reporting of reality. However, Metafiction deals with what is beyond fiction; what is beyond the simple reporting of reality.

Metafiction, as defined by Linda Hutcheon, “in overtly or covertly baring its fictional and linguistic systems, narcissistic narrative (metafiction) transforms the authorial process of shaping, of making, into part of the pleasure and challenge of reading as a co-operative, interpretative experience” (1980, p. 159). Similarly, Metafiction can be defined as “where the text is aware of itself as being an artefact, a mere creation in which the author constantly calls attention to this fact reminding the reader that it is mere fiction, not real” (Medjahed & Messaoudi, 2018, p. 20).

Numerous methods are also employed to assemble a metafictional narrative “creating biographies of imaginary writers; presenting and discussing fictional works of an imaginary character” (Orlowski, 1996). In addition, when “interrupting the narrative to address the reader and make comments about the act of writing” (Medjahed & Messaoudi, 2018, p. 20). This is also referred to as the fourth wall breaking.

Additionally, Faris Wendy claims that “Metafictional dimensions are common...the texts provide commentaries on themselves.... Thus, the magical power of fiction itself, the capacities of mind that make it possible, and the elements out of which it is made —signs, images, metaphors, narrators, narrates—may be foregrounded” (1995, p. 175). She, therefore, suggests that Metafiction is the text’s annotations about its fictionality.

David Lodge explains that Metafiction “is a device much favoured by postmodern writers, who disown a naive faith in traditional realism by exposing the nuts and bolts of their fictional constructs” (Lodge, 1993, p. 11). The nuts and bolts are the underlying mechanisms in a fictional narrative. He suggests that postmodern writers specifically allow themselves to unearth those underlying mechanisms and expose them to the implied reader within their narrative, making abundantly clear that fiction can only report reality but never imitate it.

Both *Gone Girl* and *Midnight’s Children* contain metafictional elements. However, each narrative has a distinct type of Metafiction or at least a distinct manner of constructing its idiosyncratic Metafiction.

3.5 Historiographic Metafiction and *Midnight’s Children*

Postmodernism as a movement altered what was seen as objective and factual; It changed the basic notion of accepting things simply because they are common traditions and deconstructed the concepts of hierarchies and binaries in general. In this environment, History began to gain less and less belief in its sources and validity. As a fundamental part of any civilisation, history began to find it hard to claim that what it deals with is purely objective and factual.

What caused this disbelief is that The winner wrote history. Hence whoever wins gets to tell his tale and make that narrative his truth. That is why History as a discourse had to be reconsidered and as a science had to be reshaped. Therefore, postmodernism considers fiction and History to have way more similarities rather than differences if fiction is to be defined as a narrative of reporting what reality is. Consequently, History and fiction align on more than one criterion. This has allowed authors and critics to have their way with both.

Historiographic Metafiction came as a logical reaction to the surrounding circumstances of that period. It was coined by the Canadian literary theorist Linda Hutcheon in 1987 in an essay entitled “Beginning to Theorise the Postmodern”. This literary device would be a combination between literary fiction and historical fiction. Hutcheon defines historiographic metafictional texts as “those well-known and popular novels which are both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages” (1988, p. 5). By reflexive, Hutcheon refers to the self-aware text -fiction that knows it is fiction. Moreover, by laying claim to a historical event is presumably History as a discipline.

She explains the type of interaction that both Metafiction and History have by stating “The interaction of the historiographic and the metafictional foregrounds the rejection of the claims of both “authentic” representation and “inauthentic” copy alike, and the very meaning of artistic originality is as forcefully challenged as is the transparency of historical referentiality” (Hutcheon, 1989, p. 110). Therefore, the primary purpose of historiographic Metafiction is to challenge the blurry line between fiction and history in terms of their authenticity. She, therefore, concurs with Genette’s idea that fiction can never imitate reality but can only report it. Hence the link between History relies heavily on documenting events in discourse and fiction that relies on the same principle, documenting events in a discourse. The only difference is that one is done by an author and the other by a historian. Historiographic Metafiction renders both mechanisms obsolete since it is a postmodern literary device by undermining the authorial voice and the proclaimed objectivity in both discourses.

By challenging both disciplines, Historiographic Metafiction is purposefully used to seek out the truth or at least make it clear that truth is not easily attained and, therefore, knowledge itself is not easily attained, hence deconstructing the whole narrative. However, what ‘truth’ really is, is tricky to pin down since both are

linguistic reports of events. Albeit History claims to be more authentic than fiction, its referentiality is still an issue since History is written by the victor, making it a very subjective narrative of events. This lays the ground for understanding that the truth is, in fact, in such texts linguistically constructed and that historiographic metafiction problematises the entire question of historical accuracy, objectivity and knowledge.

Linda Hutcheon concurs further that historiographic Metafiction “...offers a sense of the presence of the past, but this is a past that can only be known from its texts, its traces-be they literary or historical” (Hutcheon, 1989, p. 4). Hence, the historiographic text allows for only a sense of the past, it is not an actual past, and this sense can only be attained through the discourse itself.

She also states that authors that employ historiographic Metafiction tend to “rewrite history, taking considerable liberty sometimes inventing characters and events, sometimes parodically inverting the tone and mode of his intertexts, sometimes offering connections where gaps occur in the historical record” (1989, p. 15). Linda Hutcheon insists on the fact that the mechanisms of a historic non-fictional discourse are the same of that of a fictional one. They both work on reporting events through a linguistic medium.

Cohan and Shires concur by stating that:

History and discourse, moreover, differentiate not between texts but between the narrational registers of a single text. A text narrates as both History and discourse, regardless of whether or not the narrator is also a character. Whenever a discursive narrator summarises events matter-of-factly or recounts them scenically, signs of agency disappear from the text and this portion of the story is narrated as History. Similarly, a pause or slowdown in historical

narration inscribes signs of agency, shifting the narration into discourse (Cohan & M. Shires, 1998).

Furthermore, the structure of *Midnight's Children* is no less different than that of a historical text. Several arguments shall support this claim to showcase that History and fiction both collide in Salman Rushdie's Novel in a way that would suggest the narrative of India and the narrative of Saleem and his one thousand midnight children is identical.

The novel's first-person autobiographical narrator is "handcuffed to history" (Rushdie, 2008, p. 3) by his birth, which occurred at the stroke of midnight on August 15th, 1947, coinciding with the liberation of the nation of India. As a result, he becomes fascinated with the concept of reflecting on his own life in connection to that of the nation. Because their lives are so entwined, the personal has become political, and vice versa. As a result, through Saleem, Rushdie participates in historical representation questioning by emphasising the underlying narrativity of historical knowledge. Saleem raises concerns and challenges, if not outright refutes, historiographic claims of accurate portrayal of the past. Rushdie accomplishes a "chutnification of history" via Saleem by blurring the lines between fiction and History. These two parallel narratives seem to be cohesive enough to create a patchwork of History.

There are mainly two characteristics that have been employed in *Midnight's Children* that paved the way for such a historiographic metafictional narrative: magic realism and Metafiction. At the same time, Metafiction could be easily identified since it is part of historiographic Metafiction; however, magic realism is the prime postcolonial aspect that was not used in any historiographic metafictional narrative prior to *Midnight's Children*.

3.5.1. The Metafictitious Element in *Midnight's Children*

It is important to note that the magical elements of the narrative of *Midnight's Children* supersedes the historiographical one, since Rushdie, as the implied author, finds refuge from history accounts by fabricating a supernatural event or occurrence that would cover up for his historical inaccuracy.

On the one hand, Rushdie is well aware of this technique and he employs it often in order to assemble Saleem narrative as his personal narrative. On the other hand, Rushdie seems to be blindsided the fact that the involvement of metafiction would produce a similar effect of binding the magical and the historical in a postmodern manner.

Therefore the two major parts of the use of metafiction in on both ends of the narrative conceptualisation, giving way to a postcolonial, hybrid narratological identity to the narrative. Rushdie employs metafiction in order to bind together western historiographic discourse with the postcolonial magically-infused-historical discourse. As such, each shall be segmented to extract how metafiction affected each side of this hybrid narratological

3.5.1.1. As Part of Historiographic Metafiction

In order to further understand the conceptualisation of the term metafiction within historiographic Metafiction, it is crucial to point out the intertextual and self-reflexivity of the narrative that Saleem has put forward. Hence, the metafictional elements of the discourse are as equally essential as the discursive historiographic ones.

Saleem's historiographic attempts are egotistical at numerous points in the story, when he attempts to adapt historical events to his purposes—delaying his

corporeal dissolution. His self-reflexive transformation of History into a tale demonstrates to readers how histories are constructed through event selection and representation in a way that cannot stay unmediated, unmodified, or undistorted. It raises the topic of historical representation's narrativity, emphasising that “we can know reality as it is formed and perpetuated by cultural representations of it” (Hutcheon, 1988, p. 121). Saleem is aware of his storytelling abilities, and he lets the audience know that:

There are so many stories to tell, too many, such an excess of intertwined lives, events miracles places rumours, so dense a commingling of the improbable and the mundane! I have been a swallower of lives; and to know me, just the one of me, you'll have to swallow the lot as well (Rushdie, 2008, p. 04)

Furthermore, he informs the readers about the changes in the past, its discursivity, and “modes of mediating the world for the goal of adding meaning, as do many other historiographic metafictional narrators” (Hutcheon, 1988, p. 112). To emphasise this point, he purposefully includes historical narration flaws, informing readers of his mistakes in rewriting History to foreground the conceivable mnemonic failures of recorded History and the continual possibility for both deliberate and unintended error. (Hutcheon, 1988, p. 114).

Saleem's story raises similar problems, such as why he plans to build an intentional deception of his parentage—the reader learns only in the middle of the novel that Saleem is the bastard child of a leaving Englishman, Metwold, born to a Hindu couple, Wee Willi Winkie and Vanita and was switched with Shiva, the genuine blood heir of Ahmad and Amina Sinnai—or why, In reality, his critical failures refer to paradoxical questioning tactics that focus on the ambiguity of how we understand the past as well as the status of what we know about the past. His

metafictional self-reflexivity is evident throughout the work, which he frequently asks Padma and the reader to rethink even accepted historical accounts. He says:

The process of revision should be constant and endless; don't think I'm satisfied with what I've done! Among my unhappiness; an overly-harsh taste from those jars containing memories of my father; a certain ambiguity in the love-flavour of 'Jamila Singer' (Special Formula No. 22 [...]) - the pickles raises questions which are not fully answered, such as: Why did Saleem need an accident to acquire his powers? Most of other children didn't... would Mary's confession have come as a shock to a true telepath? Sometimes, in the pickles' version of History, Saleem appears to have known too little; at other times, too much... yes, I should revise, improve and improve; but there is neither the time nor the energy. I am obliged to offer no more than this stubborn sentence: It happened that way because that's how it happened (Rushdie, 2008, pp. 643-644).

Saleem can narrate events intradiegetically while having the kind of omniscient knowledge typical of extradiegetic narration, also referred to as Zero focalisation, thanks to his telepathy and clairvoyance. The narratological metaphor of omniscience is literalised by Saleem's telepathy. Because of his magical telepathy, the narrator can critique and comment on the politico-historical events of collective importance that are taking place throughout India while experiencing them firsthand as a character within the story world. Furthermore, Saleem's connection to History becomes more nuanced and is discussed later.

The text's deconstructive nature is highlighted by the metafictional foregrounding of the act of narration – including alternative explanations for such events in rational and magical terms – which disrupts mimesis and engages the reader at the metafictional level of storytelling. Such metanarration strategies

highlight the constructivism of historical narration in the context of postcolonial India.

The narrator also prolongs his discussions about the fact that he knows that the text is fictional. He comments in multiple instances on this matter comparing himself to the one of the most famous narrators in literature; namely Scheherazade. He says:

In the renewed silence, I return to sheets of paper [...], ready and willing to put out of its misery a narrative which I left yesterday hanging in mid-air – just as Scheherazade, depending for her very survival on leaving Prince Shahryar eaten up by curiosity, used to do night after night! (Rushdie, 2008, pp. 24-25).

This link between the narrative of *Midnight's Children* and *A Thousand and One Nights* falls nothing short of being an intertextual connection between the two tales. Saleem seems to compare himself to a narrator, thus creating a web of multiple narratives in which his narrative is nothing but a knot in it.

Another important metafictional element in Saleem's narrative is that Saleem, being a narrator, refers to himself as the author of the narrative. He would describe in multiple instances to Padma that he is writing his narrative for his son (primarily) whilst addressing the implied reader himself, hence creating something of a fourth-wall-breaking or what is referred to in literary criticism as the self-aware or self-reflexive text.

This self-reflexiveness is also mirrored when the narrator consciously compares himself to Scheherazade multiple times, as he knows his role in the narrator and is aware of it to the extent that he is comparing himself. The narrative is also aware that it is nothing short of being fictional since, in multiple instances, the narrator would be questioned for authenticity for his constant use of the sublime

and magical realist elements in his narrative by Padma. This questioning is always met with a defensive manoeuvre done by the narrator in order to sway Padma – and the implied reader- to believe his narrative, although he makes it clear that his narrative is a narrative of the memory and that any sane man would never trust the narrative of someone else above his own.

Patricia Waugh defines texts as metafictional when such texts “explore a theory of writing fiction through the practice of writing fiction” (Waugh, 1984, p. 3). In *Midnight's Children*, Saleem refers to the ‘chutnification’ of his narrative. Saleem has written thirty chapters which are the chapters of the novel themselves, naming each chapter a specific chutney flavour. He uses this metaphor of ‘chutnifying’ his narrative as a tool to project his awareness that this is actually a narrative and nothing more or less than that, and he wants to make it clear to the implied reader (or Padma) that he is aware that he is writing this narrative (which can be defined as fictitious) and at the same time comments on its making. Hence the ‘chutnification’ is the textualisation of the metafictionalness of the narrative; it is the double voiced (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005) and layered narration of the fictionality of the narrative as well the criticism of its own fictionality.

Saleem’s constant referral to the act of narration also draws most of the attention away from the narrative itself. He would at times point that Padma is not listening to his narrative or that he was narrating because he wanted his son to hear his narrative. Many examples could be found here and there in the narrative that disrupt the narrative’s progression and calls for the implied reader’s attention to be taken elsewhere. Saleem is therefore expressing his narrative capabilities to the implied reader and according to Herman et al.:

Narration can also be a formal attribute of augmented reflexive attention in fiction, particularly as thematised in modernist and post-modernist fiction. A considerable body of later-twentieth-

century commentary on narrative has drawn attention to the ways in which, in certain texts, narration can absorb a great deal of the [implied] reader's or audience's attention, often at the expense of the story itself (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2005).

Therefore, even Saleem's awareness that he is a narrator and expressing it explicitly to the implied reader would suggest that the text is selfreflexive and by extension, metafictional and definitely deconstructive.

Midnight's Children offers a splendid mixture of both Metafiction and how it is employed within the framework of the historiographic Metafiction. Saleem moves from twisting historical accounts to his pursuits to claiming that they are actual falsified historical accounts all the way to commenting that the narrative itself is nothing but a 'chutnification' – Metafiction- of the narrative.

3.5.1.2. Magic Realism and Metafiction in *Midnight's Children*

The postcolonial literary device, magic realism, is reasonably utilised in *Midnight's Children*. It has been exemplified and analysed in the previous chapter. Hence, that analysis is necessary when closely related to a narratological, metafictional and historiographic metafictional is crucial to understand how these three elements bind each other in this Saleem's narrative.

Saleem, the first-person narrator, engages in his tale by claiming that his destiny is chained to that of the History of a newly nascent India, setting the ground for what could only be a mixture of his personal narrative and that of historical events. However, the most intriguing literary artefact in his narrative is neither his narrative on its own nor the narrative of History. Nevertheless, instead, it is how Rushdie used a postcolonial literary device that has allowed for a cohesive blend of both narratives, namely: magic realism.

It is helpful to trace back what made Saleem's narrative a magical realist in the first place. According to Wendy B. Faris, the most crucial component is the postcolonial conceptualisation of what magic is? cannot even begin to be understood by the western world and that it is allowed to grow organically in the narrative. (1995, pp. 7-8). Additionally, in more than one occasion, Saleem has allowed such occurrences to slip without even a hint of wonderment in his narrative. The events that he has mentioned would have caught any reader off-guard and put him in a doubtful situation vis a vis the narrative. However, Saleem does not seem to be moved or dislodged by the events. Events such as the magical basket that allowed him to go back to India without being caught; the implications that he could read and assemble a whole meeting with a thousand other kids without them being physically there; he could smell feelings after his nose was cleared. There are myriads of examples of the employment of magic realism in *Midnight's Children*. However, the main concern is how magic realism helped shape the historiographic metafictional appearance of the narrative.

In *Midnight's Children*, Rushdie employs not a simple turn of the wand to make it magical but instead sees that History and fiction could be blurred together not because it was simply possible but because it undermines the western approach to accumulating historical data and recounting acclaimed and objective events, which he would assume to be discursively and subjectively structured. Therefore, Rushdie lays much emphasis on the process of curating historical events and puts Saleem, the narcissistic naïve and simply unreliable narrator, in charge of his narrative. Hence, the nature of History lies “not in the events, but in the systems which make those past ‘events’ into present historical ‘facts’” (Hutcheon, 1989, p. 89).

Saleem makes it clear from the beginning of the narrative and would often point to it that his narrative is a narrative derived from his memory, and hence he

cannot separate the real from the magical nor from his interest in changing or even tweaking and twisting some events and outcomes of such events here and there in his narrative. He points to his process since, presumably, it is the same process that historians employ to collect, document and narrate historical 'non-fictitious' events.

Furthermore, Rushdie employs historical intertexts and rewrites many significant events in Indian History to examine them from a new perspective. He attempts to dismantle the cornerstones of indisputable historical realities in this way. In order to entice the reader, he combines several real-life historical events as well as real-life personalities. However, after the reader is immersed in the novel's universe, the events are narrated in a not expected style. The historical has been mixed with the fictive and is now subject to interpretation. Furthermore, some historical data is purposefully faked to demonstrate the possibility for recorded History to collapse. (Hutcheon, 1988, p. 114).

Personal experience is raised to public consciousness in historiographic Metafiction, as Hutcheon says, to highlight how the public and history are inextricably linked to the private and biographical. (Hutcheon, 1988, p. 94). Hence Saleem is put at the centre of the narrative. The historical information in the narrative is converted into a biography due to his key role as he takes responsibility for everything that makes up History, and it appears that History revolves around him.

Saleem, Shiva, and India's emergence as an independent nation are also marked by the Partition massacres, which Saleem barely gets a glimpse of. Although the killings of Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs are among many awful incidents in Indian History, Saleem decides to exclude them from his report since they do not fit into the narrative. These atrocities detract from Saleem's and his country's auspicious beginnings, highlighting the horrors of the widening divide between Muslims and Hindus. Saleem's History parallels benign imperialist

historiography in this regard. Saleem, like every other historian, has biases. He manipulates History to suit his needs.

Drawing from Rushdie's personal life, for example, he was inspired by his aunt's acquaintance, Urdu poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz, for the character of Nadir Khan. Rushdie identifies the Congress Party's authoritarian nationalist impulses early on, despite the party's ostensible support for social democracy. The Communist Party can only fight such a trend for a limited period. Nadir Khan's meek and helpless persona reflects communism's eventual inability to confront such a rising nationalist force. On the other hand, Faiz's character is merely used as a metaphor to demonstrate how communism served as the antithesis to the Congress Party's increasing nationalism at the time.

Throughout the novel, magical realism is used to create what Homi Bhabha has described as “a place of hybridity”, and Faris has described it as “the indeterminate zone of the colonial encounter”. In this place, newly independent India struggles against the colonial legacy left behind by the British after nearly 200 years of colonisation. As such, Rushdie's depiction of a postcolonial India is aided by the narrative mode of magical realism, which creates possible worlds within which several possibilities are stretched and exploited to critique India's government's actual neocolonial policies and practices.

The narrator gets a view of the past through involvement with his ancestors' recollections of the past rather than through written narratives. Saleem describes how his grandfather was swept up in the Jalianwalabag massacre. The narrative fumbles when providing an eyewitness description of the carnage. In this environment, the historical date, the event narration, and the oral accounts are merged in a polyphonic historical discourse. He says:

The fifty-one men enter in the compound and take positions.... As Brigadier Dyre issues a command, the sneeze hits my grandfather fall in the face. ‘Yaaaakh—thooo’ he sneezes and falls forward, loosing his balance, following his nose and thereby saving his life (Rushdie 41).

Specific facts have no provenance in history. Likewise, the narrator's knowledge of the atrocity is supplemented with fictitious improvisations. When realism and history fall short, the narrator turns to the mystical for comfort. This toll collapses or deconstructs the hierarchy of meaning. The narrator describes events he has not witnessed in the first chapters of the book. In the second segment, the narrator can view his crime-stained birth, which is also the birth of the nation, thanks to a perforated bed sheet.

The narrator also tries to negotiate the personal with the national in his narrative. India's quest for destiny has begun to bury the country's tainted history in the same manner that Saleem was born in since he was swapped with Shiva and since India's Independence started with multiple massacres (crimes). Such a balancing of the personal and the national appears to be an attempt to erase history. The narrator references history and culture, as well as popular perception and belief. He utilises many terms that make the audience doubt the reliability of the narrative.

3.6.3. Saleem Sinai as the Representation of the Postcolonial Narrator

It goes without saying that throughout the discourse of the novel *Midnight's Children*, it is clear that Saleem Sinai's narrative is postcolonial. It is written by Salman Rushdie, one of the most known figures of postcolonial literature, and it deals with the period of post-independent India. It draws from the postcolonial

literary theory of hybridity, ambivalence and the notions of the self and the other, and it is a representation of Indian life both before and after the wars of India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. It is therefore acclaimed to be a postcolonial narrative, without a doubt.

When discussing the reliability of the narrator and the deconstructive elements of this narrative, it can be made clear that Saleem occupies a whole different role than the simple narrator of a postcolonial narrative. Saleem can be argued to be the narrator of the postcolonial narrative. Ronan McFadden refers to Saleem's narrative and compares him to the author Gabriel Garcia Márquez. He says:

[Saleem and Márquez] are warning the reader to be wary of the 'truth-bearing' claims of other types of texts, which, in reality, can be as fictitious, inaccurate and unreliable as the narratives of these two novels. More so, even, in that at least Saleem's narrative is a recording of his 'memory's truth', coming from a place of honesty – the only form of honesty that he believes it is sane to rely on. Just as Saleem hopes, it is a respect for 'memory's truth' that the reader takes from *Midnight's Children* (McFadden, 2022).

He suggests that Saleem is a narrator who cannot narrate otherwise. His technique of using memory as a trusted source of the narrative is nothing short of what every postcolonial narrative does and, by extension, what every postcolonial narrator does. Since all postcolonial narratives rely heavily on the use of memory and not accurate history (or in their view the western narrative that is also derived from their memory), the reason is that for the colonised, the only way to maintain his identity is through his memory and how he passes those memories on to his descendants. Postcolonial narratives that are constructed in this manner -drawing from memory- rely heavily on the "manifestations of memory represent[ed] a

subjective representation or reconstruction of the past. (Swoboda & Wiersma, 2009, p. 18).

Saleem's blurred and self-confessed statement that he draws his narrative from memory places a considerable emphasis on the idea of 'memory' here. The conception of memory is crucial to understanding why he is seen a representation of the postcolonial narrator since "common memory is the basis for a sense of shared identity" (Swoboda & Wiersma, 2009, p. 38). Yet since memory and history operate more or less in the same manner within the same framework and for a similar aim a clear definition as well as a distinction shall be made in order to understand Saleem's, and by extension, Rushdie's work.

Dirk Göttsche suggests that if history is seen as abstract, totalising, and 'dead', while memory is viewed as specific, meaningful, and 'lived', the difference may be obsolete. On the other hand, history is defined by the German historian Heinrich August Winkler as the argument over the interpretation of history, that "All history is a history of conflicts over the interpretation of history" (2004, p. 7). Then history and memory may be seen as two distinct but complementary approaches to the same task of transforming disparate facts and experiences into the sort of narrative that we term a history or historical experience: one method (history) that focuses on the past; the other (memory) that focuses on the present (Göttsche, 1988, pp. 45-46).

Therefore, memory and history have a correlation that binds postcolonial narratives together. It could even be drawn that memory serves a concept better than history when dealing with a postcolonial narrative since the narrator draws from it his narrative and trusts memory rather than what Dirk referred to as the argument over which history to trust.

With that being said, Saleem derives all of his narratives from his memory and argues and defends his position that he only trusts his narrative and admits that he would not trust another man's narrative over his since his is memory's truth. The implied idea behind another men's truth could be argued to be the coloniser's truth which he would deem as the only valid and viable source of reliable information over past events or occurrences of what has happened not just to themselves but also the colonised. In other words, if Saleem did not state that he would not accept another men's narrative over his memory's truth, he would have accepted a narrative that has been written, backed and imposed about his own life and, by extension, his beloved India.

In addition, Swoboda and Wiersma argue that "Collective memory gives people a sense of belonging. History helps to explain the world... History is subjective and open to different interpretations" (2009, p. 7). Therefore, history and collective memory do have a meet on the same ground by providing its owners -if they may be termed as such- a narrative that brings them together and similarly to memory, history is idiosyncratic and could, consequently, be seen from different perspectives making it exposed to embellishments or exclusions in its narrative of past occurrences. By stating that his narrative is a narrative of memory, Saleem makes a clear case that both history and memory serve him (humanity in general) to feel a sense of belonging and to put his narrative on the same pedestal as the western (coloniser's narrative).

However, when it comes to the distinction between what is memory and what is history, the parting glass is the scope of analysis. Swoboda and Wiersma denote that: "one has to make a distinction between memory and history. The first is based on identification with the past, the second, on the contrary, is based on distance with respect to the past, on the treatment of it as an external object and

not as a part of the self, as Krzysztof Pomian describes it. Memory helps us to remember what went wrong and what is worth repeating (Swoboda & Wiersma, 2009, p. 12)

The role of the historian is to treat past events as a subjective narrative of the nation in which those past events happened without merging them into his narrative, and the role of the postmodern narrator is to treat those events as part of his identity only with an unspoken implication that it is also the narrative of the nation he comes from. To put it simply, the historian takes on the events and narrates them as part of the nation's identity, whereas the postcolonial narrator draws from memory and claims that because of his identity, he narrates the way he narrates.

In addition, since western narratives are made to represent the western world and its previous colonies, through their own lenses, they do not portray an accurate illustration of the history of the Indian nation. Swoboda and Wiersma concur on this point, arguing that “national history – or, for that matter, European history – is inherently selective and one-sided” (Swoboda & Wiersma, 2009, p. 20). Nor is the narrative of India's nation as accurate as it claims to be since it is the same nation that was suffering from a crisis of identity. However, Salman Rushdie, having established himself in a position of inbetweenness –neither Indian nor English, but both at the same time- is able to provide a narrative that does not side with any of the two identities but remains relatively objective (if that could be entitled as such).

Saleem as a postcolonial narrator, or the archetype of the postcolonial narrator, and drawing from postmodernism as well, not only does he reject the enforced western narrative of India's independence and most of the events that happened post-independence -which is the first binary- but also rejects the collective narrative that Indians themselves believe in, -which is the second binary. An excellent example of this is the interjections of Padma being both a representation of the Indian nation in Salman Rushdie's work and the target

audience of Saleem Sinai's narrative. Padma would more times than not disagree on the reliability of Saleem's narrative and question his intentions and authenticity regarding the inclusion of magic realism in it. Being the manifestation of the Indian nation in *Midnight's Children*, Padma disagrees with Saleem's narrative. Hence Saleem's narrative is hybridised in the sense that he neither accepted the full-on narrative imposed by western historians nor does he accept the full-on narrative of the Indian nation but others, a narrative that affirms Salman Rushdie's hybridised identity.

Saleem, therefore, narrates from what Bhabha referred to as the third space of denunciation. "This third space can neither be reduced to the self nor the other, neither to the First nor the Third World, neither to the master nor the slave" (Wolf, 2022). Typical of the postmodern narrator, Saleem rejects both binaries; the narrative that is imposed by the "master" and the narrative imposed by the "slave" and escapes this binary opposition by creating, technically, a different binary which is either one of the binaries mentioned above or the third space. Through a postmodern manoeuvre, The narrator of *Midnight's Children* reinforces his position as a representation of the postcolonial narrator.

In more political and economical terms concerning both the occident (the West) and the previously-colonised parts of the world (the East), Bronisław Geremek wrote that:

While enormous progress has been made in unifying East and West in institutional and economic terms, the unification of memory still has to happen. This problem cannot just be treated as an element of our cultural diversity because common memory is the foundation of a feeling of shared identity (Swoboda & Wiersma, 2009, p. 24).

To put it simply, although considerable progress has been achieved in integrating East and West in institutional and economic dimensions, the unification of memory still needs to happen. This issue cannot only be considered as a feature of our cultural variety since collective memory is the basis of a sense of shared identity. This shared identity is what Salman Rushdie might have done in his work by projecting his hybrid identity onto Saleem and allowing to establish himself as a postcolonial narrator in the way he dismantles the binary opposition between the narrative of the West and the narrative of the East. Through Saleem, Rushdie was able to both apart the spectrum of two contrasting narratives with each its own 'memory' and creating a "shared memory".

Saleem as a narrator also makes note that he also forgot his 'memory' at some point when the Indian forces bombed his entire family in Karachi in front of his very eyes. The only thing that was left for that tragic event was his famous spittoon. He says:

Obviously enough (because otherwise I should have to introduce at this point some fantastic explanation of my continued presence in this 'mortal coil'), you may number me amongst those whom the war of '65 failed to obliterate. Spittoon-brained, Saleem suffered a merely partial erasure, and was only wiped clean whilst others, less fortunate, were wiped out; unconscious in the night-shadow of a mosque, I was saved by the exhaustion of ammunition dumps (Rushdie, 2008, p. 481).

Although Saleem got unconscious after witnessing the explosion of his entire clan, he seems highly confident that he knew exactly what caused his amnesia. There are multiple reasons as to why he could have suffered an injury on his head and lost his memory, yet he seems to stick with the narrative that it was a whirling spittoon that caused the injury and made him lose his memory. With Saleem being linked to the

unreliable narrator, once again, Selman's intentions about the certainty of the cause of amnesia could be a metafictional illustration that would suggest that even if he, the oppressed and colonised, had lost his memory (his identity) he would still be able to determine the cause of his loss of identity (memory). Otherwise, the complete discourse of Saleem narrating events even when he was not present or conscious, such as the circumstances of his birth, would have a nonsensical purpose in the narrative other than simply implying that Saleem is an unreliable narrator.

Yet he still narrates events that occurred during that period in his narrative. He narrated how he was brought to a hospital and how he spent the next 6 years sleeping and even the events of him becoming "the man dog" (Rushdie, 2008, p. 482). His unreliability at this point is firmly established, however, the focus on this specific example is the spittoon that was claimed by Saleem to have erased his memory and how still managed to hold onto it for those 6 long years, even after being shipped back to the war between East Pakistan and West Pakistan. The spittoon is therefore a representation of his lost identity, however revolting and insignificant it might seem. Yet that spittoon was the only piece of identity that he had and he held onto it like it was physically part of his being.

It is made abundantly clear that through his narrative, Saleem rejects the two opposing narratives which are placed in binary opposition of both Eastern (Indian-the other) and Western (British- the Self) identity and, and through him, Rushdie designs his own hybridised narrative but also makes sure that Saleem could also be seen as unreliable since he admitted that he draws his narrative from memory and memory can be deceiving sometimes. Yet for this very reason, Saleem represents the basic definition of the postmodern/ postcolonial narrator, since memory intertwines with history to forge both the individual and national identity.

3.7 Metafiction in *Gone Girl*

Patricia Waugh, one of the most influential and pioneering researchers in Metafiction, has defined metafictional works as those that “explore a theory of writing fiction through the practice of writing fiction” (Waugh, 1984, p. 3). This definition is one of the crudest and yet most grounded definitions given to Metafiction. It explains how Metafiction is spotted in the most practical manner possible. Therefore, Metafiction is when fiction is conscious that it is fiction by discussing its own fictitiousness.

In *Gone Girl*, the first indication that the novel is a metafictional novel would be the multiple instances during which both narrators –Amy Elliot Dunne and Nick Dunne– would address the reader directly. This literary fourth-wall breaking can be found in the novel's discourse when the narrator would elevate from the discourse a text with multiple decisions or outcomes of such decisions.

Amy uses this modus operandi to involve the reader, in one way or another, and implicitly draws attention to the fact that she knows that she is in a reality that is not the same as the reality of the implied reader. Technically, she knows she is in a fictitious world. She says:

At a party you find yourself surrounded by genuine talented writers, employed at high-profile, respected newspapers and magazines.

You merely write quizzes for women's rags. When someone asks what you do for a living, you:

- a). Get embarrassed and say, ‘I'm just a quiz writer, it's silly stuff!’
- b). Go on the offense: ‘I'm a writer now, but I'm considering something more challenging and worthwhile – why, what do you do?’

c). Take pride in your accomplishments: ‘I write personality quizzes using the knowledge gleaned from my master’s degree in psychology – oh, and fun fact: I am the inspiration for a beloved children’s-book series, I’m sure you know it, *Amazing Amy*? Yeah, so suck it, snobdouche!

Answer: C, totally C (Flynn, 2012, p. 12).

She also points out that this includes the implied reader or whomever she thinks is listening/reading her narrative. Such examples occur on multiple occasions throughout the narrative, but mainly in the diary entries. However, Amy intently uses this mode of the fourth-wall-breaking outside of the diary to mock that the implied reader would still think she is diary Amy.

On the other end, Nick also has his moments of breaking the fourth wall. It is not always evident to the reader, but most time than not, Nick would ask what could be either rhetorical questions or actual questions that are put forward to the implied. To firmly confirm that Nick does break the fourth wall, the following passage has to be considered. He says “I have a mistress. Now is the part where I have to tell you I have a mistress and you stop liking me” (Flynn, 2012, p. 161).

In these two sentences lies the core of the fourth wall breaking. Nick not only addresses the implied reader alone, but he manages to make sure to create an emotionally manipulative statement that would undoubtedly lure the implied reader into his drama. As discussed before, such instances are employed by both Nick Dunne and Amy Elliot Dunne (the two narrators) to pull the implied reader to their side of the story and have the implied reader team up against the other narrator.

Moreover, *Gone Girl* contains multiple metafictional rudiments, one of which is the multiple fictitious letters and notes left for Nick to find in the treasure hunt that Amy customarily prepares for their wedding anniversary. These texts are

not part of the narrative's discourse and stand out whenever narrator Nick reads them since Amy writes them. This small intertextual⁸ liaison -between Amy's narrative and Nick's narrative- would cause the implied reader to switch the narrative voice from Nick's to Amy's narrative voice. This would result in Amy stepping inside the narrative as the narrator for that short metafictional narrative time.

Victoria Orlowski denotes that there are other methods to create a metafictional narrative. She states that "creating biographies of imaginary writers; presenting and discussing fictional works of an imaginary character" (Orlowski, 1996) is one way to structure a metafictional novel. Gillian Flynn does precisely that in her novel.

Amy Elliot, and before becoming Amy Elliott Dunne, mentions that her parents had created a version that would make her seem like a complete failure. Her parallel version would succeed and conquer whenever Amy Elliott messed up as a child. This version of her failures existed in a series of books entitled "The Amazing Amy," written by Rand Elliott and Marybeth Elliott before Amy got married.

The Amazing Amy would feature all of Amy's most important life events and be a different narrative than that of actual Amy. This series of books is a layer of fiction within the already existing layer of fiction that Amy Elliott exists on. Hence, the self-referential noun Meta would make a perfect fit for the word fiction and constructing Metafiction; layer upon layer of fiction.

Last but not least of the constituents of the metafictionalness of *Gone Girl* is that Amy and Nick are both writers in the novel. They are well aware that narratives can be employed to alter what is considered authentic, and both use their narrator's

⁸"Intertextuality is a concept that informs structuralist poststructuralist deliberations in its contention that individual texts are inescapably related to other texts in a matrix of irreducible plural and provisional meanings" **Invalid source specified.**

terms of reference and manipulate their narrative to draw the implied reader to their side or to foretell that they are right and the other is wrong.

However, an essential aspect of Metafiction in *Gone Girl* is the diary entries set up by Amy Elliott Dunne to frame Nick. These entries are nothing short of being one of the most innovative techniques employed to demonstrate that narratives are simply that: narratives. In addition, they can never replace truth, however pleasing or likeable they might seem. However, before things get ahead of themselves, this shall be discussed in the following title.

3.8 Diary Amy as the Unreliable Metafictitious Narrator

In addition to the most prominent elements that could be extracted from *Gone Girl*, the most impressive metafictional constituent of the narrative is Gillian Flynn's oeuvre. It is probably the segment that has rendered the whole narrative nothing short of a thrilling narrative spectacle; Diary Amy is the unreliable metafictional narrator.

Diary Amy is referred to in such a label, is caused by the coherent use of multiple literary narrative techniques, namely, unreliability, Metafiction and occupying the position of a narrator. Diary Amy not only occupies this latter position, but she is also considered unreliable, and at the same time, her narrative is embedded between Amy Elliott Dunne and Nick Dunne's narrative. Nevertheless, before discussing this in detail, the narrative framework of both Amy and Nick needs to be established.

Both Nick and Amy are authors and writers by profession. Hence, they are well aware of narratives, narrative structures, and how to manipulate the reader through either omission or a straight lie. Hence as they narrate, their apparent

knowledge of the fact that they are narrating is inescapable. They often address the reader and try to lure him to their side. Hence their intention on this end is clear. However, the difference between Nick and Amy as narrators is that Amy has the upper hand over the overarching narrative because she is well aware of everything fake and everything real (in the fictionality of the world). Nick can only withhold information from the reader whilst Amy has created her reality.

What qualifies Diary Amy to be a metafictional narrator is that her narrative is embedded within diary entries written by Amy Elliott Dunne. Not only that, but Amy Elliott Dunne herself is a writer, and she knows that what she was writing was fictional or at least simply reflective of reality. She says:

I can tell you more about how I did everything, but I'd like you to know me first. Not Diary Amy, who is a work of fiction (and Nick said I wasn't really a writer, and why did I ever listen to him?), but me, Actual Amy. What kind of woman would do such a thing? Let me tell you a story, a true story, so you can begin to understand (Flynn, 2012, pp. 248-249).

She clarifies that she knows what she has produced was nothing short of fiction. She also elucidates that she addresses the implied reader directly, hinting at a fourth-wall-breaking. Hence, two narrative techniques in one short sample of the narrative.

On the other hand, Diary Amy starts her entry by stating "Tra and la! I'm smiling a big adopted-orphan smile as I write this" (Flynn, 2012, p. 11). At first glance, this sentence seems completely normal, however realising that she is deconstructing the fictitiousness of the text by showing that she is aware of the act of writing (fiction), Diary Amy is deemed metafictional.

The diary entries are also considered to be metafictional since when Amy reveals her scheme to frame Nick, she says, "I hope you liked Diary Amy. She was

meant to be likeable. Meant for someone like you to like her” (Flynn, 2012, p. 266). This statement clarifies that Amy Elliott Dunne has created Diary Amy and her narrative. Hence, she would be qualified to be the author of her diaries, creating a framed narrative. That is why Diary Amy and her narrative are metafictional due to breaking the fourth wall and making metanarrative comments on the act of writing.

A more peculiar metafictional commenting also occurs a few paragraphs within the same page as she refers back to this very sentence. She says “I’m using this journal to get better [at writing]: to hone my skills, to collect details and observations... (Adopted-orphan smile, I mean, that’s not bad, come on)” (Flynn, 2012, p. 11). She makes a meta-comment over her own written narrative. This self-reflexivity of the text falls nothing short of being metafictional. Patricia Waugh views this as a clear indication of Metafiction. She argues that:

Metafictional novels tend to be constructed on the principle of a fundamental and sustained opposition: the construction of a fictional illusion (as in traditional realism) and the laying bare of that illusion. In other words, the lowest common denominator of Metafiction is simultaneously to create a fiction and to make a statement about the creation of that fiction. The two processes are held together in a formal tension which breaks down the distinctions between ‘creation’ and ‘criticism’ and merges them into the concepts of ‘interpretation’ and ‘deconstruction (Waugh, 1984, p. 6).

What is more, Amy, not only does she break the fourth wall in her own narrative, but as Diary Amy, she breaks the fourth wall within, what Genette refers to as framed narrative. Diary Amy manages to address the implied reader within her diary entries. To clarify this idea, Amy Elliot Dunne has created a narrator and named her Diary Amy. These diary entries are a supposedly veritable, day-to-day

log of her relationship with Nick. She empowers Diary Amy to narrate such diaries and step outside of those diaries and seep into the world that Amy exists in but to the reality of the implied reader.

The following illustration explains the narrative structuring of *Gone Girl* with its embedded narrative of Diary Amy.

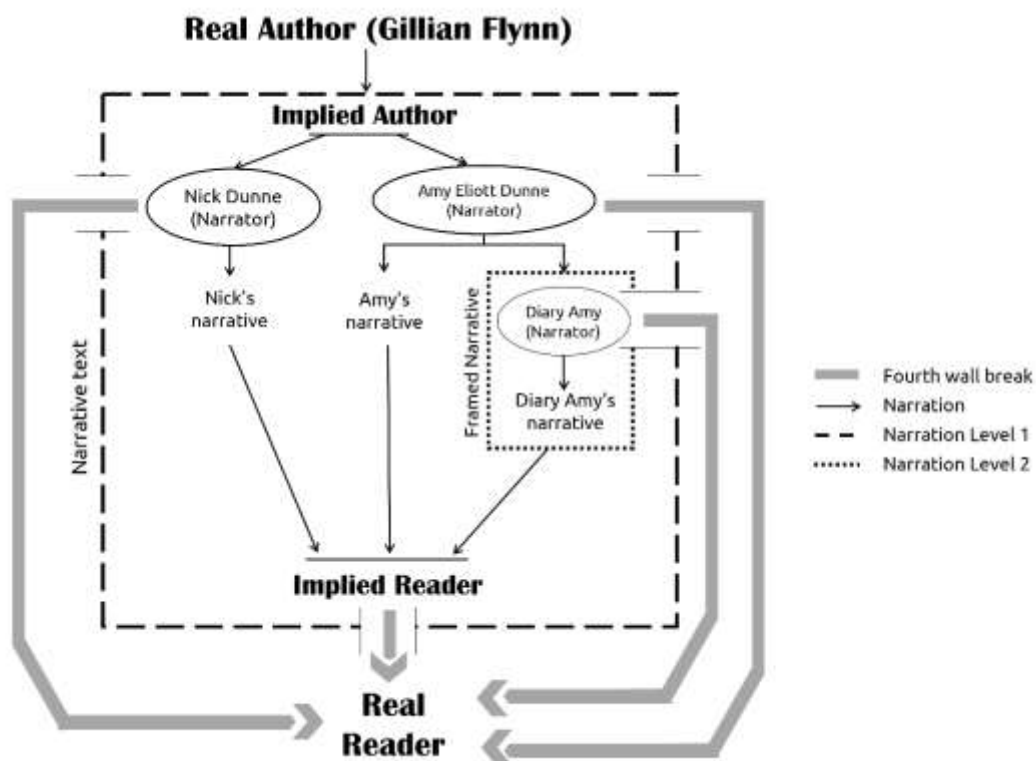


Figure10: An illustration of the narrative structure of *Gone Girl*

It is not typical for a framed story's narrator to break the fourth wall within his embedded narrative, let alone break the fourth wall of two narratives. Diary Amy does precisely that as she tries to address, firstly, the police –since Amy Elliot expressed that her target audience, as an author, was the police- and through the police, the implied reader. In all of the diary entries, the use of the pronoun 'you' is heavily used, which solidifies that she is in a constant narrative discussion with the implied reader –be it the police or even the real reader- Diary Amy makes sure to

include the reader in her drama, which is a technique often used by authors to allow the reader to have a sort of over-the-shoulder look of her narrative.

To take it even further, Diary Amy resorts to drawing attention to the act of writing in her diary entries. Hence, Amy Elliot Dunne, the writer/author of Diary Amy's log entries, which are already metafictional, has another layer below it. Diary Amy breaks the fourth wall to address the reader and has multiple instances during which she makes metanarrative commentaries.

In one stance, Amy had not heard from Nick since they first met in eight months, and they met by accident in the street as she was going for a lunchtime walk. She was walking alongside Seventh Avenue and spotted him making his way towards her. She says:

I didn't break my stride, just turned to him and said:

- a). 'Do I know you?' (*Manipulative, challenging*).
- b). 'Oh, wow, I'm so happy to see you!' (*Eager, doormatlike*).
- c). 'Go fuck yourself.' (*Aggressive, bitter*).
- d). 'Well, you certainly take your time about it, don't you, Nick?' (*Light, playful, laid-back*).

Answer: D (Flynn, 2012, pp. 28-29).

In this internal dialogue with herself, Diary Amy explained her choices of reply before answering Nick. Regardless of the monologue, Diary Amy also comments on the act of writing whilst being inside a narrative created by a fictitious narrator – Amy Elliot Dunne. This description would be fitting if there were a better way to describe Metafiction within Metafiction.

The result of both Diary Amy and her diary entries is a comprehensively layer metafictional narrative with an unreliable narrator since Diary Amy is

revealed to be a false narrative by Amy Elliott Dunne and most of what she said is a fabricated reality. Moreover, a metafictional narrator, since Diary Amy is a narrator embedded in a narrative within a narrative. This unreliable metafictional narrator not only breaks the fourth wall to address the implied reader and pull him into the midst of the ongoing narrative struggle between Amy Elliott Dunne and Nick Dunne's struggle for narrative dominance but also makes sure to be self-reflexive and embed her narrative with another layer of metanarrative comments (metacommentary) on the act of writing.

3.9 The Unreliable Metafictional Narrator as a Narratological Tool of Western Feminist Discourse

Reaching a crucial point of the narratological conceptualisation in *Gone Girl's* narrative, it is essential to note that the use of such narrative strategies is not employed arbitrarily, but rather, their use not only does it offer a chance to create novel ways to narrate a story but to also allow the implied reader to experience its meta-literary nuances. In this narrative –*Gone Girl*– how an unreliable metafictional narrator –Amy– is employed as a narratological tool for western feminine discourse. Hence a brief taster of what feminine Metafiction is, remains necessary to continue in the narratological analysis.

On the one hand, irony in postmodernist literature, according to Hutcheon, alternately inscribes and subverts the parody's topic, resulting in a compromised point of view since outside critique is impossible because Metafiction is already incorporated into the discourse. The parody's subject is usually a crucial plot point, which is patriarchy in the case of feminism. According to Hutcheon, the difference between postmodernism and feminism lies in their political perspectives, which may be undermined by postmodernism's double standards or compromised worldview. (Hutcheon, 1994, pp. 186-189).

Feminism, on the other hand, does not highlight the link between social actions and culture (Hutcheon, 1994, pp. 189-190). Literary traditions, female representation, and writer subjectivity are all questioned in feminist Metafiction. The divide between public and private works, the historical narrative's context, and the politics of representation and self-representation are the outcomes of these issues.

Hutcheon, according to Molly Hite, is part of a tradition that aims to “politicise experimental writing” by marrying Metafiction with feminism, but that doing so is also a manner of seeking a critical practice that moves away from culture's essentialist idea of “female experience” (Hite, 1988, p. 482). Metafiction is an excellent tool for this, on the one hand, because of its subversive nature. On the other hand, because it challenges the boundaries between categories like frame and embedded narrative, and by doing so, it may reveal the instability of other dichotomies like feminine and masculine gender identity, and thus feminine and masculine writing. (Szarvas, 2018, p. 1). As a result, the presence of a female protagonist who confronts current literary traditions and the fact that women write these metanarratives about women characterises them as feminists. The portrayal of women in literature is highlighted, as is the breakdown of the genre hierarchy and the characters' subjectivity and agency.

Hite also believes that metafictional books written by women writers violate the core fabric of metafictional writing, and she challenges the ideological engendering of cultural objects and literary works. These writings depart from the literary tradition of early metanarratives (Szarvas, 2018, p. 1) at postmodernist levels in that gender difference is considered in the problematisation of the possibility of mimetic representation, which is a significant component of metanarratives “the author's experience as a gendered subject [may have] some influence on her production” (Hite, 1988, p. 483).

When including the notion of history into the metafictional element, Hutcheon mentions another type of Metafiction that is inherently postmodernist and comments on subjectivity and sexuality, especially that of women. She coined “historiographic metafiction” as a result, which is the same concept Salman Rushdie used to author Saleem’s narrative.

The most crucial feature of feminine metafiction is the undermining of different narrative points of view via the use of multiperspectivity, manipulating narrators, or questioning subjectivity (Hutcheon, 1988, p. 80). Hence, where one is employed to tip the balance between the two existing binary oppositions—coloniser and colonised—the other is employed to deconstruct the sexual binary oppositions between male and female.

These characteristics, however, may be linked to feminist Metafiction, which, according to Greene, brings attention to the structures of fiction and the conventionality of the laws that regulate human behavior; to explain how such norms have been established and, as a result, how they might be modified (1991, pp. 1-2); and, in the process, to challenge the very foundations of the social order. In this sense, Metafiction can be seen as a form of resistance to the dominant ideology.

If feminist themes are taken into account, the same description may also be applied to the *Midnight’s Children* narrative. Greene also points out that a writer’s work might be categorized as feminist Metafiction without the author being a feminist. This is because Metafiction is a literary genre concerned with the relationship between the text and the reader and not necessarily the author’s personal beliefs. According to Greene, Margaret Atwood, for example, has managed to show women’s aspirations at freedom in connection to challenges of narrative form, fiction that destabilizes reality in a project of mental and social change, according to Greene (1991, p. 1).

Hence, although Atwood never claimed her works to be feminist, especially ‘The Handmaid’s Tale’ (Dessas, 2022), the Metafiction employed in her narratives are categorised as feminine Metafiction. This brings back the narrative of *Gone Girl*. Gillian Flynn, and through Amy, has managed to create not only a feminine metafiction –by creating a female central character that portrays women’s efforts for liberation from the male and female binaries but also manages to pull what can only be referred to as a literary stunt.

As a narratological element, Diary Amy is a female narrator, a female focal character, and the fictitious work of a fictitious female character/narrator. She carries multiple dimensions all within a single narrative, so she is employed as a tool for female Metafiction and as a narratological tool to represent the unreliable-female-metafictitious-narrator.

Diary Amy represents the capability of not only actual female capacity for creating narratives and writings since Amy Elliott notes that in her own words by stating that Nick always thought and even said to her that she is not a writer. Hence, Gillian uses Diary Amy to prove through her narrative prowess that she is more than capable of overturning a narrative upside down with a simple diary.

In discussing Diary Amy, there are two things to note. The first one is that She has narrative dimensions, and the second one is narratological dimensions. Starting with each dimension in its respective order, Amy has the role of a narrator. Her diary entries make sure that the police reach the same conclusion that she was stating in those entries: Nick was trying to kill her. Her diaries are later revealed to be nothing but a figment of Amy Elliot Dunne’s imagination, and therefore, she is rendered as an unreliable narrator.

Diary Amy’s narratological dimensions are how she is seen as unreliable not only to the police but also to the implied reader. This is when what is narration

becomes narratological, stepping from the internal mechanisms of the narrative to the external elements that surround the narrative. She also makes meta-narrative comments on her narrative and even comments on the act of writing and hence deconstructing her whole narrative by addressing the implied reader implicitly. She is therefore rendered on a narratological level, an unreliable metafictional narrator.

Diary Amy is, therefore, a narratological tool for the western feminine discourse as it represents and portrays through narration the female struggle to reach equilibrium and to frame a narrative that represents western feminine fiction.

3.10 Historiographic Metafiction as a Narratological Tool to Identify the Postcolonial ‘Self’

The concept of historiographic Metafiction is usually employed to showcase the fragility of the historical documenting of real-life events and its authenticity because of the issue of referentiality since it demonstrates that fiction is one thin line apart from it. However, Historiographic metafiction in *Midnight’s Children* would find a new and ethical purpose.

Since the concept itself stems from the postmodern era, it would be safe to assume that not only does it break from tradition and flip the hierarchies and binaries alike, but it also deconstructs the concepts of binary oppositions and hierarchical dominance all together. Historiographic Metafiction would be used in this postcolonial narrative to usurp the western, Eurocentric ‘historical’ narrative about India’s identity from the night of its ‘birth’.

Rushdie makes use of this narrative technique in order to tell his own tale in his own manner and through the eyes of someone who is both English and Indian at the same time. *Midnight’s Children* would be a narrative that would impose its historical account regardless how Indian’s narrated their history or how the English

narrated the Indian's history. Rushdie stands in the middle and both rejects and accepts both side of his identity, and so does his narrative about Saleem Sinai's life.

In the third part of the narrative of *Midnight's Children*, Saleem describes the Sundarbans jungle. He makes a recounting of legendary fighters that resemble the Spanish conquistadors and Christopher Columbus, which were heavily Eurocentric and similar to Joseph Conrad's description of the jungle in '*Heart of Darkness*.' Rushdie's use of such intertextual texts and dialogic representations is for the sole purpose of decrowning the western narrative and putting more of a hybrid narrative.

Rushdie reconstructs India's postcolonial History through critical, thematic engagement with Indian politics, as well as Deconstruction of that History through structural, narratological tactics, such as the juxtaposition of realism and magical potential worlds, which destabilises the whole book and erodes the notion of any hierarchy between the twin codes and their possible worlds since they are given the same ontological value in the text. Nonetheless, the structural destabilisation that results from the clash of two opposing codes – realist and magical – not only conveys the political message that no narrative can claim exclusive, all-encompassing access to truth by problematising narration but also personalises that message through Saleem's personal views and meta-commentary.

Ambivalence in *Midnight's Children* manifests itself by blurring the lines between what is real and what is considered unreal or magical. Deconstruction is accomplished by weakening and compressing the binary oppositional words' contradiction and how narrative parts go from one end of the spectrum – the realism – to the other end – the magical. *Midnight's Children* covers the whole spectrum between the realism and conceivable magical worlds by emphasising how distance is covered when an event or character swings from one end to the other.

Rushdie, in his work and by making use of historiographic Metafiction wanted to showcase that history the way it was presented and fiction the way it is constructed are similar in more ways than they are different. He blurred the lines between the two making use of magical realism as well as metafictional links and self-reflexive links that allowed him to recount history the way he perceived it.

Although Rushdie himself claims that his narrative is not free from misconceptions and falsified historical accounts, his postcolonial proclivity did not allow him to simply allow the victors narrate history the way that they saw fit. The way that western historians usually would collect necessary data from historical records is the way an Indian living in the depths of the Bombay would collect data about his autobiography. He makes it clear that in order to create a feasible distinction between the ‘self’ and ‘other’ is only by accepting both. Hence Rushdie does not reject the imposed western narrative about the historical accounts of his country but instead he takes them in, reworks them into himself, his identity –‘self’- and produces them into a historiographical metafictional narrative that merges his identity of including culture with all its component (religion, mythology, traditions) and even the socio-economic and political landscape in order to create an Indian-English narrative of the birth of his home country, India.

Historiographic Metafiction would be referred to as part of Postcolonial Narratology, which according to Gilligan is “a field similarly concerned with formal manifestations of identity, power, and control—still in its nascent stages” (2016, p. 109). Through the use of Historiographic Metafiction, Rushdie managed not only to decentralise the western narrative, but he actually deconstructs all historical narratives (be it Indian, English or otherwise) and manipulates the definitions of power between nation (the Indian government) and the individual (Saleem); of identity between the English and the Indian.

To Rushdie, the third space of denunciation is his use of magic realistic elements since whenever he tried to reconcile the English with the Indian inside his novel, he would find refuge only in the mystical and the supernatural. Hence, his hybridity is glued only through the use of magic realism; His accounts that are projected on Saleem Sinai's narrative are only the manifestation of what Rushdie assumed would be his way of identifying himself and his new hybrid identity.

3.11 Conclusion

Gone Girl and *Midnight's Children* serve a particular purpose on a narratological level, with the narrative analysis level being handled first. This chapter makes evident that the internal narrative mechanisms that govern the narrative differ from the narratological elements that surround it. As it has been discussed, the internal narrative analysis of *Midnight's Children* differs significantly from that of *Gone Girl*, yet the narratological one brings both narratives closely together.

When the narrators of both narratives are highly aware of the fictitiousness they construct in their own novels, it opens up space for self-reflexivity. In the case of the narrators, the self-reflection is not only about the fictional nature of the novel but also about the fictional character they are creating. In reaching such a conclusion, both narratives can only be deduced to be metafictional since self-reflexivity would suggest that the narrative is either addressing the implied reader through a fourth-wall breaking or commenting on the act of narrating/writing by addressing the elephant in the room and making it clear that they are aware that they are in fiction, or in this case, all of the above mentioned were employed.

Both narratives are, therefore, metafictional, self-reflexive, and carry a deconstructive temperament. Both narratives consider historical narratives and therefore clash with the notion of how history is and could be fabricated according

to the will of whoever is narrating it. They both employ narratological techniques in order to put forward this problem as a narrative theme. In this sense, both narratives are metafictional and deconstructive in the sense that they deconstruct and question the notion of history as a narrative, as well as the notion of historiography.

In *Midnight's Children*, it was proved that the use of magic realism helped in escaping from the coloniser's narrative but ultimately changed the way even the colonised narrated their history. In the novel, the colonised narrate the story of their history. The coloniser narrates the history of the colonised. Through the use of magic realism, Salman Rushdie managed to not only escape the narrative binary opposition of the 'self' and the 'other' but to break free from such a spectrum and create a hybrid narrative style which includes both Metafiction, history, and magic realism, which Linda Hutcheon coined as "historiographic metafiction" This hybrid narrative style is used in the novel to create a narrative which is not only about the colonised and the coloniser but also about everyone in between.

In *Gone Girl*, the only difference from what was mentioned in Rushdie's novel is the use of magic realism. Although Gillian Flynn does not employ magic realism, she uses another narratological element, namely: the unreliable metafictional narrator. This type of narrator helps create, similarly to magic realism in only one aspect, a parallel fictitious narrative by breaking the fourth wall on a metadiegetic narrative and commenting on the act of writing by making meta-narrative comments implicitly intended for the implied reader.

Both narratives carry narrative and narratological dimensions, with each having its own proponents in place to represent a particular literary category (mainly western feminine and postcolonial). However, the narratological dimensions seem to draw both narratives into the same category. The use of an unreliable narrator, the use of history and Metafiction, the escape from narrative imposition by all three narrators in both novels, and the deconstructive elements.

General Conclusion

As a result of the postmodern movement, which sought to eliminate binary opposition and those binaries, tales and narratives tied to identity construction were elevated to the forefront of literary studies. These literary works would form the foundation of a new literary genre that would assist in balancing or tilting the scales of a Eurocentric historical narrative. This new genre would give a voice to the voiceless, as well as decentralize western narratives and offer marginalized tales of equal referential weight. Postcolonial literature is the name given to this newly developed genre.

It would seem evident that narrative critique would be interested in postcolonial literature since, once again, it focuses on presenting tales created by the periphery (every nation except the occident). However, the postcolonial genre has seldom been researched from a narratological standpoint and even less often has it been compared within narratology. The problem is that postcolonial narratives are usually examined solely through the lens of postcolonial literary criticism; that is, postcolonial literary criticism's primary goal is to figure out the binary oppositions between the self and the other, as well as to determine whether the text accurately depicts the colonised and the coloniser, including all the details required to label a literary work as postcolonial.

However, within the scope of narratology, neither postcolonial nor western works were compared. None of the texts were compared in terms of narrative power. As a result, the difficulty with this study is that both postcolonial and western literature, regardless of their postcolonial or Eurocentric content, were not compared in terms of how they narrate their texts. Furthermore, the transition from narrative to narratology has been unclear.

Moreover, the rupture in the titles of chapters two and three is made to clarify that the analysis that was made starting from chapter two is necessary and

that the narratological analysis of chapter three is an extensive continuation of that analysis. In narratology, these analysis levels are included; the analysis of narration as a rudimental analysis for any literary text as a first level and the methodical, scrupulous and detailed narratological analysis, hence the division of the chapters' titles into two parts. However, both of these levels of analysis are essential to reach an all-embracing understanding of the narrative activity that happened in both novels.

This research aims to identify narrative structures and narratological concepts that either link or separate the western narrative from the postcolonial narrative. It is cemented now in black and white that the two selected novels, *Gone Girl* and *Midnight's Children* written by Gillian Flynn and Salman Rushdie, have in common in this respective order narratological elements than it was expected.

Since Rushdie's work is considered a postcolonial chef's oeuvre, it contains a myriad of narrative and narratological elements that could be labelled specific to the postcolonial, out of which there is the historiographic metafictional entangled with the established postcolonial concept of magic realism. In his work, Rushdie also mingles his understanding of hybrid identity within the narrative as he suggests a narrative that would be neither fitting for the coloniser nor the colonised. He breaks from these postcolonial binaries and helps establish on a narratological level a postmodern-postcolonial narrative that would be inclusive of the Indian and British Identities.

This scientific undertaking has resulted in answering, in part, the sub-questions that have been advanced at the general introduction of this research. From the first chapter, a chronological order of the movement from narration to narratology has been established, taking into account the variables that come along with the limitations of this research which is constrained between the western and the postcolonial discourse. However, ever since the emergence of the novel and

onwards, the spark of interest in the concept of narration began to materialize. Going through the various literary eras, some added and some removed a notion or two until the postmodern era. With the emergence of this poststructural era, narration changed in its use and its purpose hence creating a novel domain of scientific research; this domain is narratology.

In the second chapter, both novels were analysed on a narrative level since it is a fundamental analysis required for any literary text. At first glance, both novels on this first step of analysis seemed quite different. Nevertheless, they still had a few notions, such as nonlinearity in their narratives which were displayed in various graphs to illustrate narration through a visual tool.

Saleem Sinai proved to be a naïve narrator in this analysis, and both Amy Elliot and Nick Dunne proved to be pathological and lie of omission narrators, in this respective order. This made all three narrators of both novels unreliable by default. Saleem also seemed to concur on his nostalgia to return home and has firmly created a return home novel that is very dissimilar to the western narrative since when dealing with Gillian Flynn's narrative, it was clear that returning home was nothing but a plan B and should not have happened if things went the way they were planned.

The narrative structure of the narrative analysis also showed that both *Gone Girl* and *Midnight's Children* differ in how they place narrative branching. Gillian Flynn places narration sections with Amy on the one hand and Nick on the other - which is referred to as Multiperspectivity- whilst *Midnight's Children* uses double-voiced narration as a result of the postcolonial concept of hybridity that is intermingled with its narrative element creating what is referred to as parallel narration. These results would help answer how these varying texts would be analysed, as it is customarily done with any narrative.

Under the umbrella of narratology, these narratives take on a different shape as they are analysed in correlation with external elements that affect the narrative act within them, contrasting what has been dealt with in the narrative analyses, which only deals with the internal elements of narration.

The term Metafictional unreliable narrator has emerged from this narratological analysis which is a fictional narrator created by another fictional narrator, making him/her a narrator of an embedded narrative who does not mind addressing the implied reader and breaking the fourth wall as well as making note that she/he is a narrator and that her/his narrative is fictional by making metanarrative comments about the act of writing that fiction. Both novels have also been recognised to be self-reflexive and carry a deconstructive narration that dismantles itself.

All narrators, Amy Elliott Dunne, Nick Dunne, Diary Amy and Saleem Sinai seem to also be rejectors of narrative restrictions. In other words, the narrative constraints imposed by the implied authors of both narratives (implying Gillian Flynn and Salman Rushdie) do not restrain them; instead, they fight those restrictions through metanarrative comments about the act of narrative or even writing the discourse of the narrative.

Through this narratological analysis, Salman Rushdie uses the problem of the referentiality of History and blends his individualistic narrative with the typical nationwide narrative of the birth of India. This blend is also deemed to be what narratology has coined to be historiographic metafiction since it mixes both the fickle authenticity of historical narratives with what Saleem Sinai referred to as memory's truth and made sure to point out that in the postmodern age, both narratives are of equal importance since both rely heavily on writing a narrative from a personal perspective with only memory as a tool of reference.

However, both novels have been found to be similar on the techniques of expressing a narrative of the oppressed when pushing the western discourse towards a feminist western discourse. *Gone Girl*, if seen from this scope, proves to employ the same narratological narrative techniques used in *Midnight's Children* of metafiction, nonlinearity and historiographic metafiction and the unreliable narrator with varying degrees in accordance with the genres that these narratives drop from.

Gone Girl presents the Metafictitious Unreliable Narrator, and *Midnight's Children* brings forward Historiographic Metafiction, both are unexpendable narrative elements that are employed to identify the postcolonial Self and the Western Feminist struggle within a narrative.

The core similarity between the narratological elements of both narratives is that both narratives are a result of attempting to give voice to the voiceless and express a struggle either from the periphery or that of the female gender. Whilst this is only the first attempt at a narratological analysis, further research could try to employ this humble research schematic of dealing with the internal and then the external elements that control the narrative and attempt to do a cross-examination between two or possibly three narratives from the same genre which could help in creating a more practical narratological analysis of literary texts.

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المخلص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى التعرف على الهياكل السردية والمفاهيم السردية التي تربط أو تفصل بين الرواية الغربية وما بعد الاستعمار . في السرد ، تم التعامل مع الآليات الداخلية فقط أثناء التحليل . التشابه الأساسي بين الروايتين ، - *Gone Girl* التي كتبها جيليان فليين و - *Midnight's Children* كتبها سلمان رشدي - هو أنهما نتجت عن الاضطهاد . يمزج سليم ، الراوي غير الموثوق به *Midnight's Children* ، روايته الفردية المستمدة من ذاكرته مع السرد الوطني لميلاد الهند ، مما أدى إلى سرد تاريخي ما وراء الخيال . إيمي إليوت ونيك دن ، الراويان لـ *Gone Girl* ، يعبران عن صراع القوة بين الإناث والذكور مقارنة بالهيمنة على موقف الراوي . بعد أن أثبتت كونها رواية ما وراء القص لا يمكن الاعتماد عليها ، تم استخدام يوميات إيمي أيضًا كأداة سردية ساعدت إيمي إليوت على تأمين هيمنتها السردية . ومع ذلك ، يهدف هذا البحث إلى رسم تحليل أدبي تخطيطي ومقارنة الخطاب الغربي وما بعد الاستعمار ، بعد أن كشف أنهما متشابهان أكثر من اختلافهما .

الكلمات المفتاحية: السرد ، السرد ، الراوي غير المعتمد ، الخطاب ما بعد الاستعمار ، ما وراء القص .

Résumé

Cette recherche vise à identifier les structures narratives et les concepts narratologiques qui relient ou séparent le récit occidental du récit postcolonial. Dans la narration, seuls les mécanismes internes ont été traités dans l'analyse. La similitude fondamentale entre les deux romans, *Gone Girl* - écrit par Gillian Flynn et *Midnight's Children* - écrit par Selman Rushdie - est qu'ils découlent de l'oppression. Saleem, le narrateur peu fiable de *Midnight's Children* mélange son récit individualiste dérivé de sa mémoire avec un récit national de la naissance de l'Inde, résultant en un récit métaphictif historiographique. Amy Elliot et Nick Dunne, les deux narrateurs de *Gone Girl*, expriment la lutte de pouvoir femme-homme analogue à la domination sur la position du narrateur. S'étant avéré être un narrateur métaphictif peu fiable, Diary Amy a également été utilisé comme outil narratologique qui a aidé Amy Elliot à assurer sa domination narrative. Cependant, cette recherche visait à dresser une analyse littéraire narratologique schématique et à comparer les discours occidental et postcolonial, ayant découvert qu'ils sont beaucoup plus similaires que dissemblables.

Mots-clés : Narration, Narratologie, Narrateur peu fiable, Discours postcolonial, Métaphiction.

Abstract

This research aims at identifying narrative structures and narratological concepts that link or separate the Western Narrative from the Postcolonial one. In narration, only the internal mechanisms have been dealt with whilst analysing. The core similarity between the two novels, *Gone Girl* - written by Gillian Flynn and *Midnight's Children* - written by Selman Rushdie - is that they ensue from oppression. Saleem, the unreliable narrator of *Midnight's Children* blends his individualistic narrative derived from his memory with a nationwide narrative of the birth of India, resulting in a historiographic metafictional narrative. Amy Elliot and Nick Dunne, the two narrators of *Gone Girl*, express the female-male power struggle analogised on the dominance over the narrator's position. Having proved to be a metafictional unreliable narrator, Diary Amy was also employed as a narratological tool that helped Amy Elliot secure her narrative dominance. However, this research aimed to draw a schematic narratological literary analysis and compare the Western and the Postcolonial discourses, having uncovered that they are far more similar than dissimilar.

Keywords: Narration, Narratology, Unreliable Narrator, Postcolonial Discourse, Metafiction.