CHAPTER- 2

THEORY OF NARRATOLOGY: AN INTRODUCTION

A narrative means anything that tells a story- it can be a literary book, picture, ballet, newspaper or movie. “Newspaper, reports, history books, novels, films, comic strips, pantomime, dance, gossip, psychoanalytic sessions are only some of the narratives which permeate our lives” (Rimmon-Kenan 1). Narrative is omnipresent. It can be verbal or non-verbal, true or untrue, realistic or unrealistic, fictional or non-fictional, and literary or non-literary. Moreover, according to Doctorow, narratives eradicate the borderline between the two (fiction and nonfiction) by an admission of the fictionality of reality (qtd. in Telling the Truth: The theory and Practice of Documentary fiction 10).

Narrative can be studied from a variety of perspectives. The term ‘narratology’ was introduced in 1969 by Tzvetan Todorov (1977), originally in its French version ‘narratologie.’ In general, narrative theories are, after the World War II, divided into three main strands. According to the first strand, narrative is a sequence of events, and the theorists focus on the narrative itself independent of the medium used. These are followers of the formalist Vladimir Propp (1968) and the structuralists Claude Lévi-Strauss, Tzvetan Todorov (1977), and early Roland Barthes (1977). The second strand sees narrative as a discourse, its representatives being the successors of Gérard Genette, Mieke Bal (1985), and Seymour Chatman (1978). The final strand presents narrative as a complex artifact, the meaning of which is endowed by the receiver. It has been supported by the later Roland Barthes (2004), Umberto Eco (1979), and Jean Francois Lyotard (1991b), who used poststructuralist approach.

Mieke Bal has been listed amongst the most important theorists of narrative, through her work, Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative (1985). She defines a text as
finite, structured whole composed of language signs. A narrative text is a text in which an agent relates a narrative. A story is a fabula that is presented in a certain manner. A fabula is a series of logically and chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by actors…. (8)

Roland Barthes (1977), the French critic, is another significant narrative theorist, who broadens the realm of narrative theory by employing the methods of structural linguistics and anthropology, and moves from a structuralist approach towards post-structuralist understanding of narrative. Barthes recognizes the existence of narrative communication, claiming that there is no narrative without a narrator and a listener or reader (Barthes 1977: 84-96). According to Peter Barry’s perception of structuralist theory, “things cannot be understood in isolation – they have to be seen in the context of the larger structures they are a part of” (2002: 39). The selected authors’ views are not explicitly present in the texts. The narratological analysis is essential to look deeper into the texts for a content-based analysis.

As said earlier, the study of narrative has become institutionalized. Different theorists have attempted to define narrative in different ways. Gerald Prince defines narrative as “the recounting (as product and process, object and act, structure and structuration) 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” (1982: 58). According to this definition, narrative, being the process of recounting the events, intrinsically involves two subjects i.e. speaker or teller, and the listener. It can be told to a single person or a group of persons; or it can be told by a single person or a group of persons. Narrative can “exist for one person at a time”… it can also be “for a community” (Branigan 2). Narrative is a set of events told by a narrator or narrators to a narratee or more narratees.
Michael J. Toolan defines narrative as “a perceived sequence of non-randomly connected events” (2001: 7). The phrase “non-randomly connected events” means that narrative is not an amorphous amalgam of events but an organized set of events. For Gerald Prince it is “the study of form and functioning of narrative” (1983: 4). He also claims that to understand a narrative is not only to be able to answer questions on its contents, but to be able to understand its message, its point. He further adds that the term narratology may be new but not the discipline “and in the Western Tradition, it goes back at least to Plato and Aristotle” (qtd. in Barry 224). In his Poetics, Aristotle has stated that ‘character’ and ‘action’ are the major constituent elements of a tragedy and has also stated that ‘character’ is revealed through ‘action.’ He also identifies three key elements in a tragedy namely, *hamartia*, *anagnorisis*, *peripeteia*. *Hamartia* means a sin or fault, *anagnorisis* means recognition or realization or self-realization and *peripeteia* means a turn-round or a reversal of fortune’ (Ibid. 224). No doubt Aristotle spoke largely on drama, but all these elements can be found in any narrative form irrespective of its mode of communication.

M. H. Abrams defines narrative as “a story, whether told in prose or verse, involving events, characters, and what the characters say and do … are explicit narratives that are told by a narrator” (1999: 173). The modern theorist, Seymour Chatman has used a two-level model to study the relation between ‘what is told’ and ‘how it is told.’ He calls them ‘Story’ and ‘Discourse’ respectively. He opines that story and discourse constitute the ingredients of narrative. Story element constitutes ‘what’ is told and discourse constitutes ‘how’ the story is told. Narrative is all but a matter of ‘what’ (content) and ‘how’ (expression). As Porter H. Abbott points out, some require at least two events, one after the other, for example Barthes and Schlomith Rimmon- Kennan (2002: 12). Others, such as Mieke Bal, also insist that the events be
causally related (12). Still others call for a narrator (Gerald Prince 13). Abbott himself defines narrative rather broadly as “the representation of an event or a series of events” (12).

For Genette, a narrative is comprised of three basic components: the Story (the signified/the narrative content); the Narrative (the signifier, that is, the statements that comprise the discourse in the text itself); and Narrating (producing the narrative action/the entire real or fictional situation in which the action/plot of the narrative takes place) (1980: 27). Genette has concentrated on how and in which way, a textual matter is presented. He has further divided the aspect of narrative into three categories- Tense: the temporal relationships between narrative and story; Mood: the modalities of the narrative ‘representation’ in a given narrative; and Voice: the narrating – the relation with the subject of the enunciation. Tense has three sub-categories: 

Order, Duration, and Frequency. The second of these categories deals with the span of the whole of, as well as, parts of a narrative. The third category delineates how portions of a narrative are, or seem to be, unique, or iterative events in a narrative.

Order, in a narrative, or otherwise, is the chronology of its plot. The chronological order of real events, especially in journalistic fiction, is not generally like those of fictional events. The reader has no way of knowing if the events are in a chronological order, unless he has a source with the actual chronology of the events. If not, the reader has to take the writing as the correct order. Pace, both in fictional as well as factual narratives, is its speed of narration. It can be used for efficiency, in the form of pauses and ellipses. It is governed by the narrator’s judgments regarding the importance of events. For example, if one event in a story is more significant to the reader than other, the narrator will quickly describe the less significant event and slowly describe the more important event. When the narrator lets his presence appear in the story he is telling, this is known as voice. The narrator, because he is revealing his thoughts and opinions
throughout the story, may take on a particular status. This status may be *heterodiegetic*, if the narrator is absent from the story he is telling, and *homodiegetic*, if the narrator is present in the story as a character (Guillemette 3).

The use of different terms for almost similar concepts seems to be quite intricate and confusing. As Barthes also said, ‘narrative is international, transhistorical, transcultural: it is simply there, like life itself’ (qtd. in Bowman 2006). At the heart of narratology lies the assumption of a dualism within every text: that there is, on one hand, story and, on the other, plot. Before considering the implications of this division it is necessary briefly to define its two elements. The distinction between story and plot is fundamental to narratology. Barry explains that the ‘story’ is the actual sequence of events as they happen, whereas the ‘plot’ is those events as they are edited, ordered, packaged, and presented in what we recognize as a narrative (2002: 223). *Fabula* (story) also means ‘the raw material of narrative fiction,’ its underlying structure and *sjuzhet* (plot or discourse) means the aesthetic arrangement of that material, its ‘surface structure’ (Waugh 265).

Story is simply, ‘what happens.’ It is the sequence of events that lie somehow ‘behind’ the text, or rather it is the sequence of events that can be abstracted, or constructed, from the text. In this context an event can be defined as ‘something that happens’ (Rimmon-Kenan 1983: 2). Plot is the particular presentation of the story in the narrative, a sequence that need not parallel the temporal sequence of the story events, but that supplies information about the causal relations between them. Accordingly, plot introduces causality to what becomes a chain of events. In this scheme of things story corresponds to the actual or real story that is supposed to have happened and is told in the narrative in a certain way.
Presenting the story in a certain way is called text, and the act of narrating the story is called narration. It is implied that events in a narrative are not arranged the way they are supposed to have happened in the fabula. Events in a narrative are packed, arranged and presented in a particular way. This is one of the different ways of constructing different narratives from the same fabula, and in the case of real events, different facts to present different perspectives of the same incident. Gerard Genette, while studying the arrangement of the events, studies the sequential order, duration and frequency. Whereas, Mieke Bal, while studying story, besides looking at sequential ordering and frequency, also looks at rhythm, relation between place and space, and focalization.

However, Genette opines that the rise of different types of experimental texts, which began to occur from the 1960s onwards, gave rise to a confrontation with this relation especially in journalistic fiction. In such texts the author often goes to great lengths to sabotage the relationship between story and discourse. So the relation between story and plot in terms of time cannot be ignored. In respect of time, Genette’s actual terminology on anachrony, includes two concepts: **Analepsis** and **Prolepsis**. The prefix of the term analepsis is derived from the Greek ‘ana’ which means through, back, over, or again. The prefix of prolepsis is the exact antithesis of analepsis. The Greek root of the word ‘pro’ means to be ahead of, or be in front of. Genette notes that the final part of the word, ‘lepsis,’ is a play on two different Greek words: ‘lepse,’ which Greek root refers to the fact of taking, taking responsibility for, and taking on; and ‘lipse,’ where the root refers to the act of leaving out or passing by without any mention (Genette 1980: 40). Toolan defines analepsis as “an anchronological movement back in time, so that a chronologically earlier incident is related later in the text; a prolepsis is anchronological
movement forward in time, so that a future event is related textually ‘before its time,’ before the presentation of chronologically intermediate events” (2001: 50).

The second type of anachrony is ‘prolepsis’ or flash-forward which Mieke Bal calls “anticipation.” Prolepsis is a treatment of anachrony which tells about an event or events that will happen in future of time of fabula from the point of intervention. It has been observed that anticipation, or temporal prolepsis is clearly much less frequent than the analepsis. Conversely, proleptic statements are generally made by an omniscient narrator who, in a small phrase, tells us about an event that will happen later in the narrative. Such statements play a major role in what Barthes calls “weaving” of a narrative. Through such canonical phrases like “one will see later” or “we shall find,” an expectation is created in the mind of the reader. The expectation created thus may be fulfilled sooner or later. The possibility of prolepsis provides a useful insight into narrative structure, laying bare the assumption that an end will be reached, and that the sequence of events moves towards an end point.

Joe Rhodes in his book, *Rhetoric and Civilization*, puts forth a collection of definitions of rhetoric given by critics. In the Classical age Aristotle defined rhetoric as “the faculty of discovering in any particular case all of the available means of persuasion” (2011: 5). For Plato, rhetoric is the “art of enchanting the soul” (Joe Rhodes 5). In the Medieval age, the definition given by Boethius is that “By genius, rhetoric is a faculty; by species, it can be one of three: judicial, demonstrative, deliberative …. These species of rhetoric depend upon the circumstances in which they are used.”

Moving further, in the Enlightenment age, Campbell says that “[Rhetoric] is that art or talent by which discourse is adapted to its end. The four ends of discourse are to enlighten the understanding, please the imagination, move the passion, and influence the will” (Joe Rhodes 6).
Erasmus states that “Elegance depends partly on the use of words established in suitable authors, partly on their right application, partly on their right combination in phrases … style is to thought as clothes are to the body. Just as dress and outward appearance can enhance or disfigure the beauty and dignity of the body, so words can enhance or disfigure thought.” Finally, in the Modern and Postmodern age, Corbett defines rhetoric to be “The art of the discipline that deals with the use of discourse, either spoken or written, to inform or persuade or motivate an audience.” Knoblauch argues that “Rhetoric is the process of using language to organize experience and communicate it to others. It is also the study of how people use language to organize and communicate experience. The word denotes … both distinctive human activity and the “science” concerned with understanding that activity” (Joe Rhodes 7).

Aristotle suggests in *Rhetoric* that the most famous of these theories are the artistic proofs: speaker credibility (ethos), the use of reason (logos), and the manipulation of emotion (pathos). Ethos is described as those proofs that depend on the speakers’ ability to be believable. Pathos is designed to affect listeners’ feelings. And logos proofs “demonstrate that a thing is so.” In fact, Aristotle defines rhetoric as “the faculty of discovering the possible means of persuasion in reference to any subject whatever” (Honeycutt). It’s important to ask here- How is an audience influenced by a means of persuasion? The answer is that it is persuaded by means of arguments that they are familiar within everyday thinking and discourse.

Moreover, Gerard A. Hauser’s definition of rhetoric is much more closely aligned to the way we use rhetoric in argumentation or a debate class. He states that rhetoric is an instrumental use of language. One person engages another person in an exchange of symbols to accomplish some goal. It is not communication for communication’s sake. Rhetoric is communication that attempts to coordinate
social action. For this reason, rhetorical communication is explicitly pragmatic.

It’s goal is to influence human choices on specific matters that require immediate attention. (qtd. in Argumentation, Logic and Debate)

This can be correlated with the authors dealing with social reality and issues, whose aim is to share the experiences, and make aware the readers. Rhetoric has enjoyed many definitions over the centuries, but there are a couple of key traits consistently found in those definitions; first, it concerns not only what is being said, but also how it is being said; second, it is persuasive in nature.

Aristotle also contributed to what is now termed as the five canons of rhetoric: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. Rhetoric was divided into these categories, and it is currently the most accepted template for rhetorical education and pedagogy. Invention is concerned with what is said rather than how it is said, thus invention is associated closely with the rhetorical appeal of logos. Invention comes from the Latin word “invenire” which means, “to find,” because the first step in the rhetorical process is to find the persuasive argument.

Arrangement dictates how a speech or writing should be organized i.e., introduction, statement of facts, division, the proof, refutation, and conclusion. Further, style is the artful expression of ideas. There are seven pure types of style: clarity, grandeur, beauty, rapidity, character, sincerity, and force. It is concerned with how something is said. Style is meant to align the appropriate verbal expression to the orators’ given intentions. ‘Memory’ implies the degree to which a writer remembers his/her speech, and the methods used to ensure that the audience retains the speech and persuasion. Delivery is essential for appealing to the audience’s emotions (pathos), and is critical in establishing a speaker’s credibility (ethos). It also deals with body language, gestures,
and tonal fluctuations. Aristotle wrote that delivery “is of the greatest importance … it is a manner of voice … used for each emotion” (*Rhetoric* 1403b 20).

Thus rhetoric is a persuasive language which is honed and crafted to accomplish a purpose for a specific occasion and audience. Historically, philosophers, rhetoricians, and educators alike have argued the relevance of rhetoric and its relationship with logic. Many argue that rhetoric is more concerned with the stylistic devices, the *how* of the communication. Rhetoric does attend to style and delivery, but it also considers other important elements. Rhetoric also deals with meaning and symbols, persuasion and argumentation, which means it is also about truth. Peter Ramus (1986) redefined rhetoric: he transferred invention and arrangement to dialectics. Invention and arrangement were the first two “cannons of rhetoric,” more simply understood as the first key elements of rhetoric. Invention was the persuasive core of rhetoric, the stage where the rhetor finds something to say on a given topic, nowadays known as brainstorming. Arrangement is the basic organization of a given speech, where a rhetor strategically places arguments in order to have the greatest effect.

Rhetoric is basically the art of verbal influence, for Aristotle this art is “the counterpart of dialectic” (Roberts 1996). But this act has been, in this century, meant to be for persuasion and manipulation (xi). Rhetoric can be oral or in written form. The efforts of rhetoric are visible in the tropes and figures used in describing anything in a text, characterization, and any kind of emotional outburst. It is more visible in the fictional style of the text. A rhetorical perspective implies a concern with communicative acts, which in Booth’s terms meant the “glorious meeting” of authors and readers in texts (403).

Rhetorical discourse was defined by Aristotle in his *Poetics* as the art of “discovering all the available means of persuasion in any given case,” and he further discussed the means and
devices that an orator uses in order to achieve the intellectual and emotional effects on an audience that will persuade them to accede to the orator’s point of view (M. H. Abrams 268). It can also be said that the concern of rhetoric is with the type of discourse whose chief aim is to persuade the audience to think and feel or act in a particular way. Rhetoric is the study of language in its practical uses, focusing on the persuasive and other effects of language, and on the means to achieve those effects on readers.

Later classical theorists categorize rhetorical discourse into three components: invention (the finding of arguments or proofs), disposition (the arrangements of such materials), and style (the choice of words, verbal patterns, and rhythms that will most effectively express and convey these materials). For rhetoricians, there are three kinds of oratory: (1) Deliberate- which persuades the audience to approve or disapprove of a matter of public policy, and to act accordingly, (2) Forensic- which means to achieve either the condemnation or approval of some person’s actions, (3) Epideitic- “display rhetoric,” used on same appropriate occasions to praise a person, or a group of persons through the orator’s own talents and skill in rising to the demand of the occasion.

After the 1950s came Rhetorical criticism, according to which, there has been a revival of interest in literature as a mode of communication from author to reader. Moreover, a number of recent critics of prose fiction, and of narrative and non-narrative poems have emphasized the author’s use of a variety of means- including the authorial presence or voice that he or she projects- in order to engage the interest and guide the imaginative and emotional responses of the readers to whom, whether consciously or not, the literary work is addressed.

The means of communicating, expressing, and influencing have changed with time. Earlier people used to gain information through newspapers, listened to radio, but now they
search for video as well as literature for information and entertainment. In time and space, the
distinction between a public’s significant rhetorical event and its other activities seem to be
blurring. Booth argues that ‘through rhetoric the reader learns to know where, in the world of
possible values, he stands- that is, to know “where the author wants him to stand”’ (73). David
Lodge says that for Booth “rhetoric is a means by which the writer makes known his vision to
the reader and persuades him of its validity” (1990: 147). It can be interpreted that Booth’s
“communicate to impose” becomes Lodge’s more specifically rhetorical “persuades,” and
Booth’s “fictional world” becomes Lodge’s “vision” (James Phelan, Reading Narrative 45).

Similarly in Journalistic fiction, which is based on real events and their narration, authors
are more concerned with stressing upon the truthfulness of the content represented and the
techniques used in doing so. For instance, the story of Oswald as narrated by DeLillo in Libra, is
real because the author’s use of language, details, scenes, are those that aim to reflect the truth
and culture of that time. So the rhetoric actually is the use of stylistic techniques to depict the
expected effect of a narrative’s end. Similarly, in the case of The Executioner’s Song, Mailer,
while narrating the story of Gary Gilmore, effectively uses Gilmore’s dialect to show that he is a
‘mormon,’ has spent most of his life behind the bars, and has not lived in a cultured atmosphere.
It has also been observed that though both the rhetoric of fiction and the rhetoric of history
(dealing with real events) use narration, but only the latter make us believe that its stories are
true.

Moving further, the word narration implies not only the act of narrating, but also the
presence of one or more narrator(s) and one or more narratee(s). In every narrative we find one,
or more than one narrator who tells the story. As Mieke Bal says, ‘As soon as there is language,
there is a speaker who utters it; as soon as those linguistic utterances constitute a narrative text,
there is a narrator, a narrating subject’ (1985: 121-2). If a narrator tells us the story, the second obvious question that comes to our mind is from whose point of view the story is being told.

By making a distinction between who sees and who speaks Genette opens the debate of focalization in the narrative. ‘Rather than being added as an appendage that will transmit the plot to an audience, narrative point of view creates the interest, the conflicts, the suspense, and the plot itself in most modern narratives’ (Martin 1986: 131). Genette decides to use a more abstract term *focalization* “which corresponds, to Brooks and Warren’s expression, “focus of narration” (Genette 189). Prince defines focalization as “the perspective in terms of which the narrated situations and events are presented” (31). Depending upon the position of the focalizer and its relation with the focalized objects, broadly three types of focalizations have been classified — zero focalization, external focalization, and internal focalization. Narratives with zero focalization are also called “nonfocalized” (Genette 189). Gerald Prince describes zero focalization as a type of focalization whereby “the narrated is presented in terms of a non-locatable, indeterminate perceptual or conceptual position” (103). It is associated with omniscient narrators. It is written in the third person.

External focalization is when the focalizing position is outside the fabula and cannot be associated with any character. Mieke Bal uses the abbreviation of EF for “external and non-character bound focalization” (148). “External focalization is felt to be close to the narrating agent,” (Rimmon-Kenan 74) and the agent is also called narrator-focalizer. In such cases, the distinction between narrator and focalizer tends to dissolve. In external focalization what characters do and say are narrated. It can be found in first-person narration, “either when the temporal and psychological distance between narrator and character is minimal (as in Camus's *L’Etranger*, 1957) or when the perception through which the story is rendered is that of the
narrating self rather than that of experiencing self” (Rimmon-Kenan 74). In the opposite, internal focalization focuses on what the characters think or feel. It reveals unspoken thoughts and feelings of the characters. Internal focalizers appear, as characters in the story displaying partial knowledge of the story, which can be written in either the third, or the first form (‘I said’). In the English novel, James Joyce made use of unreliable first person narrators (in The Turn of the Screw) or sustained focalization of the narrative through the perspective of characters whose perceptions are narrowly limited, with minimal authorial comment and interpretation (Henry James’ novella ‘In the Cage’ and novel The Ambassadors); Conrad used a multiple framing via multiple narrators, none of whom is invested with ultimate interpretive authority as in Lord Jim and Nostromo (qtd in David Lodge, After Bakhtin 33).

The selected authors in this study use both techniques in their books with varying effects. As a literary journalist, Capote uses both forms of focalization in In Cold Blood. On one hand, he has the ability to write what the characters have said and done, and also about how they feel, on the other. It is thus often through Perry, that the views and intentions of Capote, the author, come through, and a sense of shared identity with Capote is revealed. Genette would also classify Capote as an effaced narrator in one sense due to the fact that he does not reveal his presence as a “true voice,” or distinct character in the book (qtd. in Bjärstorp 8). Nevertheless, as previously stated, due to the nature of Capote’s narration, there is indeed a very strong ghost-like presence of what Genette calls an “authorial persona” exposed in the text. Finally, Capote chooses to use to great effect, the range of “representations of speech in [his] narrative” between adding and omitting, as a signification of his movement in and out of the narrative. Free indirect speech and direct speech are also definitely favorites of speech representation for Capote (Ibid. 9).
Further in narratology, besides understanding the nature of a character’s existence, what interests a narratologist more, is how the characterization has been done. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan and Jacob Lothe both seem to agree on the issue, asserting that the primary ways of characterization are two-direct definition and indirect presentation. The direct presentation of characters involves use of adjectives or abstract nouns which can be found only in a narrative with “most authoritative voice” (Rimmon-Kenan 60). Such overt technique of characterization hardly leaves anything for the reader to decipher; but in case of narrative with unreliable narrator, it can be an interesting phenomenon to trust the narrator for the characterization. In case of indirect presentation, characterization is done through action, speeches, external appearance, environment, and analogy. These are different character-indicators through which various traits of characters can be indicated.

Our need for narrative structuring is based on our need for order and linking events in temporal sequences as well as through cause and effect, which are the two kinds of ordering techniques. In *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*, Abbott expresses, “We are made in such a way that we continually look for the causes of things. The inevitable linearity of story makes narrative a powerful means of gratifying this need” (37). Furthermore, Kermode has noted in *The Sense of an Ending* (1966) that we long for the sense of an ending. Since the world does not have beginnings and endings the way, for example, novels do, we use narrative techniques to create the sense of it.

According to Abbott, closure is the narrative effect which ‘has to do with a broad range of expectations and uncertainties that arise during the course of a narrative and that part of us, at least, hopes to resolve, or close’ (2002: 53). While closure is not obligatory to a narrative, and certainly many well-known narratives end without it, closure is an important part of the
satisfaction of literature and the way in which individuals are able to organize stories as coherent and meaningful. In classical terms, closure creates the narrative text as a self-contained unit (Barthes 33). Because the narrative must end, the narrativization of events allow them to become ‘endurable because finite’ (Herman 173), enabling the ‘desire to have real events display the coherence, integrity, fullness, and closure of an image of life that is and can only be imaginary’ (White 1996: 284). By creating the illusion that any event, no matter how traumatic, has a definitive end, narrative becomes a means for individuals to quickly process, and progress from the past and its disturbances. Since we long for closure, which fiction often provides, we structure our world through narrative, leading to satisfaction and consolation.

It is assumed that a literary narrative necessarily has the classic structure of beginning, middle, and end. It does not necessarily order events in chronological order, and while it moves towards closure, it does not necessarily provide it. A narrative carries the “sense” of, or longing for, an ending, but some literature, especially postmodern literature, often refuses to provide a clear sense of closure. ‘We end a story when something has finished happening, when a new condition prevails and is, for the moment at least, stable’ (Brooks 192). An end may be the reconciliation of forces, or the fusion of previously opposing forces to create a new force. As a matter of fact, the end of an action may simply be a new awareness on the part of a person involved, directly or indirectly, in the action. It is the point at which the reader is willing to say, “Oh, yes, I see what it is all about” (Ibid. 200). The technical term for the end of a narrative is denouement which means an “untying,” and that the complications are finally untangled and resolved (Ibid. 201).

According to many psychoanalysts, we not only use narrative to make sense of our world but also to form an identity. In an attempt to explain who we are, we need to tell our own story,
our experiences, by selecting key events which characterize us, and organize them according to the formal principles of narrative. Like a literary writer, we use narrative techniques to shape memories into narratives that define our identity. We select events to remember, and facts about them, to include. We exclude certain facts and events, but we also fill in gaps where information is missing by speculating about how events must have happened. We then arrange the facts into a sequence of events in order to create a coherent structure. In short, we interpret our experiences, analyzing causes and effects, and write a story that fits into an overall idea of who we think we are. It is similar in the case of a literary journalist, who represents real events in such a manner to make them plausible and credible.

For instance, the inability to create narrative seems to lead to an inadequate sense of identity, which has been portrayed by Oswald (the main protagonist) in Don DeLillo’s *Libra*. Though he tries to create narrative by writing a diary, he fails because his split personality denies him a stable voice, and his dyslexia complicates his ability to use language. Oswald’s inability to form a coherent narrative of his life and his subsequent lack of a sense of identity compel him to join Everett’s assassination plot, a structured narrative with a clear role for him to play.

Hayden White takes the argument a step further by maintaining that the work of a historian is similar to that of a literary writer. Like the literary writer, the historian must fashion the “facts” in such a manner as to create a narrative, and only then will it make sense. Similar is the way of expression by the literary journalists in the works of nonfiction, where often the famous real events are depicted. The historian, Nicholas Branch, in *Libra* refuses to apply any narrative technique to the data he has collected, and, therefore, he is unable to make sense of what might have happened when Kennedy was assassinated.
Branch’s main problem in *Libra* is that he refuses to be selective. Since the historical record, according to White is “both too full and too sparse,” the historian must exclude certain facts that are not relevant to his or her story, and must also fill in gaps where information is missing in the record by deducing what must have occurred (*Libra* 1978: 51, 60). Just like the reader of fiction, the historian must search for clues in the text and form hypotheses for filling in the gaps in order to make sense of the events represented, which are otherwise chaotic and seem uncertain.

When the historian has selected which facts to include in his or her narrative, he must arrange them in such a manner so as to create logical meaning using the techniques discussed above. The order of presentation need not be the chronological order in which the events originally occurred. As narratologist Seymour Chatman explains, referring to a narrative in literature, the purpose of the order of presentation “is to emphasize or de-emphasize certain story-events, to interpret some and to leave others to inference, to show or to tell, to comment or to remain silent, to focus on this or that aspect of an event or character” (1980: 43).

In journalistic fiction, where the real events are depicted, the “truth” value of any historical account depends upon our belief that an account is plausible if it is coherent in its structure. As White points out, since we assume that reality is coherent, if an account is not coherent, we consider it implausible or inaccurate (*Tropics* 122). Abbott in, *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*, calls these cases “masterplots,” stories that are told over and over again to such an extent that our values and identities as individuals and cultures become connected to them, and are formed by them. For this reason, we tend to find credibility in narratives that contain such “masterplots” (42), like the masterplot of the selected texts in this study depict that there are a couple of petty criminals in the plot, who commit crimes, are caught
and punished at the end. In addition to being journalistic fiction, the selected literary works are also narratives, as they contain both storytellers and stories.

Important for this study is the work of the Russian formalist Vladimir Propp, who developed a list of thirty-one constants that are detected in folktales, and form the structure of the narrative. Propp published his findings in his book, *the Morphology of the Folktale*, in which he states: “[t]he word ‘morphology’ means the study of forms” (1928: 1). Propp calls these constants ‘narratemes’ which are narrative functions necessary for all narratives and form the building blocks of stories; for example, as a result of realizing a ‘lack,’ or as the result of misfortune (step 8), the hero has to leave home (step 11). Then, obstacles are placed before the hero as he struggles to obtain his goal (step 12). Fortunately, a magical agent is obtained or a helper appears (step 14). The initial lack is resolved (step 19). The hero returns home (step 20), and marries, ascends the throne or publishes his new book (step 31). The steps are not precise; however, they have the feel of consistent points. Many of these steps have also been found in the journalistic fictions written by John Hersey, Truman Capote, Norman Mailer, and Don DeLillo. These authors’ main concern is with literature and its evident abandonment of what they see as the novel’s role in providing understanding of their chaotic and rapidly changing world.

Furthermore, journalism alone does not have the power or scope to bring meaning to people, although it is good at providing information at times. As stated earlier in Chapter I, it is a novelist who arranges information so that the reader can see patterns and shapes in the chaos of life. Through the use of language, symbols, narrative, metaphor, character and all the other literary tools, he allows the reader access to meaning and truth. Discussing the role of the novel, Philip Roth said in a recent interview:
It is the form that allows a writer the greatest opportunity to explore human experience …. For that reason, reading a novel is potentially a significant act. Because there are so many varieties of human experience, so many kinds of interaction between humans, and so many ways of creating patterns in the novel that can’t be created in a short story, a play, a poem or a movie. The novel, simply, offers more opportunities for a reader to understand the world better, including the world of artistic creation. That sounds pretty grand, but I think it’s true. (Caesar)

Mailer puts it in this way “the novel […] is, when it is good, the personification of a vision which enables one to comprehend other visions; a microscope- if one is exploring a pond; a telescope upon a tower if you are scrutinizing the forest” (AN 219).

So it is narrative, either as a novel or reporting or a seamless combination of both, that gives moments their meaning and allows one to comprehend what has happened. In an attempt to find a way to work through what had happened, the individuals, for instance in Falling Man, turn to others who have undergone the same experience. FM is a narrative centered around 9/11, and concerned with how to narrate this traumatic experience. The communities try to heal themselves through the narratives. They tell each other of what had happened and how the collapse of the towers affected the community, not the individual alone. Similarly in In Cold Blood, the inhabitants of Kansas are sensitized due to the murders of the Clutters, which is inconceivable to them. This study aims to find a better understanding of how fiction and fact combine to form the narratives of trauma, shock and other emotions, and what there is to learn from these occurrences.
It is not the historical account to which we turn to verify what has happened but rather to the recreation of the event, no matter how second-hand and fictitious it is. When we read a true account or journalistic fiction, we have a different approach towards its comprehension and we tend to generalize the experience, and gain knowledge of the mindset of someone who has become a part of the trauma. The distinction between reality and fiction can easily be collapsed in such a reading, and thus the totalizing narrative becomes not only more believable, but also real. Fiction is an important word to use. It invokes literature, and especially the novel, as a tool used for creating belief and knowledge.

It can be concluded that different theorists and their theories direct our attention towards how the story is told, how it sets about achieving its designs. We have also discovered that in a narrative, different elements are too closely associated to be studied in isolation. It has been found that by introducing a character-narrator in a narrative that begins with third person narration, not only the status of character can be changed; it also changes the temporal arrangement of events and at the same time, also changes the overall structure of the narrative which, eventually, changes the discourse and rhetoric. Thus, to study a narrative is to study all parts of narrative in relation with each other. The motivating factors in the worlds depicted, like the famous social, political events and their direct or indirect effects on the authors as well as the readers after reading these literary works of art, are revealed in an artistic sequence and climaxing. The forthcoming chapters show how this has been achieved by the selected authors in the texts under study.

The chapters III, IV, and V of this thesis provide a detailed analysis of these authors’ journalistic fiction applying Genette’s and other major theorists’ narrative functions. In Chapter III, I would take into consideration the two popular examples of journalistic fiction written by
Norman Mailer, namely, *The Armies of the Night* and *Of a Fire on the Moon*. These were written in third person narration keeping the author at the centre of the texts, and the background to be the real events of the time, like the March to the Pentagon and the Moon landing by Apollo 11, respectively. Chapter IV further unfolds the narratological strategies applied by John Hersey in *Hiroshima*, and Don DeLillo in *Falling Man* and *Underworld*. *Hiroshima* was written heralding the beginning of the nuclear age during the World War II, and DeLillo’s texts were written when this particular age was at full swing. Chapter V examines the theme of crime and lives of criminals with special attention to the visible narratological aspects in the journalistic fictions like Truman Capote’s *In Cold Blood*, Norman Mailer’s *The Executioner’s Song*, and DeLillo’s *Libra*. Lastly, Chapter VI aims to put together the ideas learnt from this study.