Chapter II

“Graphs, Maps and Trees”: Charting the Genealogies of Narrative and Inter-Art Theories

2.1 “Graphs, Maps and Trees”: Review of Methodology

In the seminal work of Franco Moretti titled *Graphs, Maps and Trees*, the author discusses the concept of ‘distance reading’ which is elaborated further in his essay “World Literature” written for the *New Left Review*. In contrast to the concept of close reading which focuses on an in-depth analysis of individual texts, Moretti views the positive benefits of distance where “distance is not an obstacle, but a specific form of knowledge: fewer elements, hence a sharper sense of their overall interconnection” (1). The focus on individual texts speaks to a focus of time periods and genres around certain iconic texts. This, in turn, moulds an entire era around popular publications leaving the rest of the works in the secondary circle with little or no attention paid towards it. Moretti, in his book, charts an approach of studying literary history which concentrates on that secondary circle, away from the canon and towards a ‘large mass of facts’. The fact that he uses three different methods from three different disciplines is a key point especially in context of this thesis which I shall explain later. The distant look espoused by Moretti is intended to look for hidden patterns beneath the surface. As he speaks of in relation to maps: “it offers a model of the narrative universe which re-arranges its components in a non – trivial way, and may bring some hidden patterns to the surface (54). He also refers to the maps as, “more than the sum of their parts: they will possess ‘emerging’ qualities, which were not visible at the lower level” (53).

The text is structured over three types of patterns – graphs, maps and trees. The first pattern established is graphs. This concept has been taken from quantitative history. Moretti,
in evaluating the publication of literature from the 1700s to 1900s has used the inking of graphs in order to chart the hidden pattern of the rise and fall of genres. He refers to this movement as “from individual cases to series; from series to cycles and then to genres as their morphological embodiment” (17). The genre is a ‘temporary structure’ which cyclically rises to its maximum potential only to be replaced by another and then again returning to take its position at the top once again. With the concept of maps, Moretti first asks the question ‘what exactly do they do?’ He answers this question by saying that it is “a good way to prepare a text for analysis”. The imagining and then construction of the spatiality of the text by mapping the paths taken by the characters brings out the elements which might have been hidden by the two-dimensionality of the textual reading and its temporality. Finally, he refers to the concept of ‘trees’. This is where Moretti brings forward his most complex postulation. The concept of trees is borrowed from evolutionary biology – especially, Darwin’s theory of evolution. The evolutionary tree is a morphological diagram where the vertical axis charts the passage of time and the horizontal axis shows formal diversification. The diversification shows the evolution of different species from common denominators over a period of time. However, what interests Moretti is the ‘perplexity of subject’ that is discussed by Darwin. Moretti analysis the historicity of forms through this ‘divergence of character’ propounded by Darwin “whereby forms don’t just change, but change by always diverging from each other” (69). Of course straightaway Moretti pinpoints the problem of such an appropriation through a distinction between Darwin’s tree of life and the tree of culture. Darwinian evolution speaks of a teleological change where there is an ‘irreversible proliferation’ and a clear demarcation of different species. In contrast to this concept, cultural change is porous and is comprised of ‘amalgamation and anastomoses’. According to the tenets of tree of culture, forms can be experimented upon, hybridized and interconnected.
The reason why I chose to begin with Moretti’s seminal work, is to outline the challenges of compiling a survey and analysis of the theory of narrative. Narrative has been referred to as the “most common hermeneutic grids of our times”. Ever since the coinage of the term ‘la narratologie’ by Tzvetan Todorov, the term has moved from one discipline to another, adapting and re-inventing itself in order to generate even more specialized disciplines. The formation of the field first problematizes the intended meaning of the names coined by early narratologists in order to frame their own structures of thought. The second problematic finds itself in the compilation of compendiums to chart the field of the study. While the structuralist framework makes it easier to chart the proto-roots and as well its linguistic influences, the various forces of postclassical approaches make it very difficult to find one timeline to survey. The third problematic is the various definitions and terms that have been interpreted by narratologists in their own way. Genette’s work on Marcel Proust *Remembrance of Things Past* uses grammatical tenses of ‘Order’, ‘Mood’ and ‘Voice’ in order to analyse the various anomalies prevalent in the text. F. K. Stanzel, on the other hand, in his *Theory of Narrative* focuses on narrative situations and three different forms of narratorial perspective. Mieke Bal takes the concept of Genette ‘focalization’ and classifies them in order to make room for the highly experimental postmodern novels. To attempt a comprehensive analysis of all these structures of definition and meaning would be far too ambitious for this particular thesis. The fourth problematic is the cognitive turn of narrative theory which for the last few years has begun to grapple with the original theories of Structuralist narratives and finding new ways of studying them. Hence, in order to form a suitable survey of the chapter, one must look from a distance and establish patterns of reference in relation to the field of narrative theory.

The pattern has established itself. The graphs, the maps and the trees have automatically aligned themselves as the problematics of the field start rearing their heads in
the discussion of narrative theory. The underlying thread that connects the distant approaches
taken is the spatial underpinnings of the theory itself. The advent of cognitive methodologies
in the theory of narrative has led to the re-evaluation of the concept of space in narrative
theory. David Herman in his Basic Elements of Narrative describes the concept of ‘qualia’ or
‘lived experience’ which is rooted in its ‘situatedness’. This ‘situatedness’ is the strategy of
the character to be rooted in fictional world – to be influenced by it and influence it in return.
In this light, he defines narrative as:

   a mode of representation that is situated in – must be interpreted in light of – a
   specific discourse context or occasion for telling. In addition, the events represented
   are iii) such that they introduce some sort of disruption of disequilibrium into a
   storyworld, whether that world is presented as actual or fictional, realistic or fantastic,
   remembered or dreamed etc. The representation also iv) conveys what it is like to live
   through this storyworld-in-flux, highlighting the pressure of events on real or
   imagined consciousness undergoing the disruptive experience at issue. (9)

The concept of space and spatiality in narrative theory which lay dormant during the
time of structuralist narratology becomes more prominent during the postclassical era of
narrative theory. During the structuralist timeline, narrative was interpreted in terms of
different levels in the text. The text again is another one of the problematics of the narrative
field. What constitutes the text? Is it solely based on the written word or does any other sign
system come to define the text? J. M. Lotman in his “The Structure of the Narrative Text”
questions this fundamental definition of the sign, “Can the sign which functions as the bearer
of meaning be anything other than the written word?” The analysis that he puts forward over
the course of his work seems to keep this question unanswered. He introduces the question
with a slight hint of angst but moves on to defining the narrative system of the text. Most
structuralist theorists follow the focus of the text in the explication of their theories of narrative.

The explosion of Postmodernism during the 1960s led to an inexplicable blurring of genres and traditional boundaries of literature. The remnants of the avant-garde movement in the ‘late logic’ of postmodernism made the experimentation in works of literature a norm rather than an exception. Every aberration was welcomed as something new. This movement in literature and the arts coincided with the postclassical approaches in narrative theory. Postclassical approaches quite simply refer to the interaction of narrative disciples with other disciplines of science and humanities. It presupposes the concept of interdisciplinary nature of narrative and contextualizes it in terms of any particular discipline. Speaking of Monica Fludernik observations of the field:

…during a time when the narrative turn has made stories a focal concern in many disciplines, conversely narrative specialists have added to their theoretical toolkits concepts and methods from research on conversational storytelling, feminist theory and gender studies, modes of ideology….as well as research on postcolonial literature, philosophical ethics, psychoanalysis, legal studies, and linguistics and cognitive science. (31)

The various approaches posit an idea of space which is labyrinthian in the Borgesian sense of the term. The fictional world represented in the text is just one aspect inhabiting this space. The spaces can be comprised of anything from possible worlds, to the physical book as a point in space, to the landscape of the mind of the character’s consciousness, to the storyworld created inside storyworlds, to the crossing of medial spaces within the narrative, to the intra-relations between the various novels. The sheer diversity in spaces that inhabit the textual and non-textual world seems to be a characteristic of postmodern fiction. The
interaction of concepts of postmodern theory with that the postclassical narratology brings about a more complex understanding of the concept of space. The space no longer stands an autonomous whole. Rather, it is metaleptic. Much like the interaction of disciplines, it is open to impact and to be impacted upon. The boundaries of forms and discipline no longer remain traditional. They have moved to an acceptance of divergence and a certain reconciliation of the divergent forces in order to form new forms and disciplines of thought.

The use of Moretti’s *Graphs, Maps and Trees* will be spread liberally through the course of the following survey as well as the chapters that follow. A first glance at the operation of the book reveals a very spatial understanding of the concepts of genres. The use of maps particularly speaks to the importance of the space in the charting of the events of the novel. The ‘material substratum of physical territory’ which refers to the physical world of the text represented provides a map of the internal consciousness (whether of character or narrator) which is also referred to as the ‘map of mentalite’ by Moretti. The third stage of this interpretation are the various ideological and socio-political frameworks espoused or betrayed by this internal consciousness that reside in a text. As Andre Gide asks, “Why should we slice ‘in the direction of length’, emphasizing the passage of time? Why not slice in the direction of width, and of the multiplicity of simultaneous events?” (26). This method aims at a divergent-convergence. It seeks to locate the various dissonances and then find points of stability before its inevitable wreckage for as Moretti notes, it is always the “variation in a conflict that remains constant” (69).

The spatiality exposed through the study of Moretti’s ‘distant reading’ allows us to understand the transgressive nature of narrative. Through its inter-disciplinary perspective, narrative has transcended from the confines of literary studies into the realms of other disciplines. A study of postclassical narratology confirms this fundamental nature of narrative. The structuralist framework exposed the chaotic potential that lies in the heart of
the narrative and the postclassical narratologies aimed at diversifying the field of narrative. This diversification was aimed at finding not what is universal but what is particular about the narrative in a certain contextual discipline. This contextualization is necessary to our understanding of the travelling characteristic of the narrative and its relation to the streams of postmodernism and inter-art representation. The nature of narrative lends itself very well to the convergence of the different art forms within its boundaries. This thesis seeks to study the historiography of the word and image debate in order to formulate a more definite idea of the travelling nature of narrative. The amalgamation of narrative and postmodernism is another line of study that this chapter will be undertaking. The necessary conditions for ‘possible stories’ cannot be studied only through narrative theory. It also needs to be contextualized in terms of its inter-disciplinary nature. The addition of the inter-art representation, postmodern theories and evolutionary biology provides us with a formidable background in which the idea of possible stories can germinate and flourish.

To that effect, the concept of distant reading will be employed in order to divide this thesis into three sections. The first section will address the theories of narrative in relation to the concept of possible stories. Through a discussion of travelling concept of narrative as well as its etymological roots the different turns of narrative will be discussed. The second section will discuss the different postmodern concepts of stories as well as possible worlds in order to add another dimension to the narrative theories. The final section will historicize the word and image debate and juxtapose it with the theories of evolutionary biology in order to provide a comprehensive amalgamation of the possible stories theory.

2.2 Genealogies of Narrative Theory

Matti Hyvarenin has described narrative as “one of the great academic travellers of the last forty years” (Hyvarenin 1) while Gerald Prince has talked of this concept as “one of
the most common hermeneutic grids of our times” (Prince 13). The study of narrative has been concerned with studying the mutability of the concept. It has travelled across disciplines, across media, across professions even across the narrativity itself into the realms of the un-narratable and non-narrative always adapting to the space that it finds itself in and altering its essential dimensions in order to generate more forms and applications. The word ‘narrative’ comes from the Latin adjective gnare\textsuperscript{10} which means “knowing”. This particular Latin word is derived from the Proto-Indo-European root of gneh which means “to know”. Its contemporaries include the Greek word gignosko, Celtic gni-na, Sanskrit janati, Germanic kneana to name a few which – linguistic pronunciation aside – all attest to the same meaning. This ancient origin of the word refers to the knowledge and subsequently to understanding.

The consequence of the successful movement of narrative has led to many critics and exponents of the theory to ask the fundamental question “What is Narrative?” When referred to its ancient roots, the answer certainly is a knowing. The later appropriation of the root gneh has also incorporated the meaning of ‘skilled’ along with the meaning of ‘knowing’\textsuperscript{11}. The combination of such a meaning of words then becomes a concrete definition of narrative – the skilful application of knowledge. Such a definition then corresponds to the minimal definition of narrative which Prince refers to as one event or “one change in a state of affairs” (Prince 14). In 1979, the University of Chicago hosted a symposium titled “Narrative: The Illusion of Sequence” which was attended by luminaries of narrative theory in particular and philosophy of general like Barbara Hernstein Smith, Jacques Derrida, Hayden White and W. J. T. Mitchell to name a few. The success of this symposium centred on its unique social design. Instead of categorized seminar sessions, there were tables set outdoors where

\textsuperscript{10} Plautus Mostelleria where Phiolaches addressing the audience recites simul gnaruris vos volo esse hanc rem mecum which translates to “I want you to be equally knowing with myself upon this matter” [Act I, Scene II, 15] The form of gnare used here is the word gnaruris. It is also subsequently found in Plautus’ Rudens

\textsuperscript{11} Latin words gnosco, naris, Gaelic aithnich, Persian xsnasatî, snaxtan and senaxtan, Spanish conocer, Tokarian kna
participants sat down to discuss the papers chosen in an informal round table manner. These papers would later go on to be published in a volume edited by Mitchell titled *On Narrative*. This social design is important because it reflects the most peculiar character of contemporary narrative theory that is its amorphous nature. Barbara Hernstein Smith in her paper “Narrative Versions, Narrative Theories” presented at this conference reflects on this nature of narrative:

> What narratologists refer to as the basic stories of deep plot structures of narratives are often not abstract, disembodied or subsumed entities but quite manifest, material, and particular retellings….and are constructed by someone in particular”. (99)

The structuralist origin of narrative is evident in the fundamental proposition of narrative theory that is the difference between *fabula* (story) and *sjuzet* (discourse). Smith uses Seymour Chatman’s *Story and Discourse* as a representative of this essential duality of narrative theory. She goes on to compare the threads of narrative as something akin to the knowledge of recollection which is “imprecise, scattered, inconsistent…. more or less in or out of focus”. The ‘transposability of the story’ as Chatman referred to it, reflects an ‘autonomous significance’ of narrative where the “same story may exist in many different versions and, indeed, in many different modes and media’. This definition of the underlying story belies the structuralist assertion of the static, unchanging and universal definition of narrative forms. The story is always the same, no matter what the context. Smith in outlining this definition then strives to move beyond it by positing a theory of narrative which is particular and interdisciplinary in scope. This motivation which is asserted in the opening lines of her chapter is in general the tone of the Chicago Symposium. Mitchell in his foreword to *On Narrative* encapsulates the theme of the symposium itself:
Reflecting the debates and collaboration of literary critics, philosophers, anthropologists, psychologists, theologians, art historians and novelists, the collection is intended to carry thinking about the problem of narrative well beyond the province of the ‘aesthetic’….and to explore the role of narrative in social and psychological formations, particularly in structures of value and cognition. (Mitchell vii)

The title of this symposium is a big giveaway – “illusion of sequence”. It reflects on the turn of the narrative field towards a more contextual turn of application – one that it particularized and one that renders a problematizing of the field itself.

Narrative in its most basic form is the structural part of the text subjected to certain universal rules. Narratology as a theory of logically interrelated laws gave it the connotations of objectivity. The goal of structurally minded narrative theorists was to find the ‘abstracted story’ and study it in terms of its universality. “Narrative is present in every age, in every place and in every society” as Barthes had pointed out in his “Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative” and the telos of the theory was to quantify and collate this sum total of archetypes. The second proposition of this school of thought was to take narrative beyond its literary frame and make it universally applicable.

Before beginning an in-depth analysis of the structural framework, it is essential to discuss the nature of the field itself. Mieke Bal in her preface to Narrative Theory titled “Preposterous Beginnings” both acknowledges and works in the paradigm of symposium mentioned earlier. The point, she says, “is to offer thoughts, perspectives and tools” (5). The compilations of narrative theory that have followed this volume show a similar approach to the field itself. They tend to show certain perspectives rather than providing comprehensive overviews. The four volumes of Narrative Theory while categorized under certain headings by no means strictly adhere to the themes connoted by these headings. The theories and
focuses move in and out of these volumes creating a chaotic compound involving a “widespread cultural phenomena”. This is again reflected in the volume *A Companion to Narrative Theory* edited by James Phelan and Peter. J. Rabinowitz where in the Introduction they reflect on the ‘vortex of narrative theory’ which comes from ‘the narrative turn, the tendency of the term ‘narrative’ to cover a wider and wider territory, taking in….an ever broadening range of subjects for inquiry” (2). This introduction is followed by David Herman’s survey of narrative theory titled “Histories of Narrative Theory”. In a marked circuitous fashion, Herman marks out ‘overlapping connections’ between a wide range of critics and concepts in order to map a “cluster of developments marked by family resemblances”. As Phelan reflects on Herman’s approach; “his history thus twists back on itself, as he demonstrates how “old” theoretical works in “new” contexts take on new resonances” (3):

…rather than unfolding along a single timeline, the history of narrative theory has acquired its structure from the distribution of research concerns across parallel developmental trajectories; genealogy allows these trajectories to be grouped together into a larger historical constellation. The student of narrative theory would thus do well to look for family resemblance. (Herman 22)

The uncoupling of narrative theory from literary studies gave the field a broader scope. Simultaneously it also opened the field to problems of collation. Narrative theory cannot be contained in a singular line of history; rather it can be comprised of different strands of this theory which overlap and juxtapose into a fluid context of interpretative approaches. Matti Hyvarenin in his *Travelling Concept of Narrative* takes a different, more ideological approach. Hyvarenin revaluates the concept of the “narrative turn” in the humanities as coined by Martin Kreiswirth (2005) in favour of “narrative turns”. As he points out early on in *The Travelling Concept of Narrative*: 


The term "narrative turn" may entice us to envisage a homogenous movement of thought with a distinct lineage of ideas and a shared canon of essential works. However, even a tentative and limited survey on the sources and inspirations of the early narrative-turn authors in social sciences confirms that no such homogeneity of heritage exists. There is hardly any text, discussion or discipline that has inspired all the authors. This apparent polyphony resists, of course, the idea of a concept travelling straightforwardly from literature to social sciences. (1)

The analysis of the four narrative turns would broadly run parallel to the histories of narrative theories as undertaken by David Herman or Monica Fludernik as referred in the above page. The classification of these turns can be divided into four categories:

- The narrative turn which originated in the French Structuralist theories of mid to late 1960s
- The narrativist turn which focused on narrative historiography following the publication of Hayden White’s *Metahistory*
- The scientific and philosophical turn where narrative to other branches of humanities like psychology, sociology, education, social work, theology as well as business and medicine. This turn focused on the interpretation of small and local narratives and can be synonymous with the postclassical narratologies as defined by Herman
- The fourth turn refers to narrative travelling outside its research framework into everyday media and technological innovations

While a cursory glance shows a form of reductionism to the prototype of narrative, Hyvarenin’s objective shows his approach as far from it. As he claims, “the final number of turns does not even matter as long as the diversity of turns is recognized” (11). The categorization of the four turns is an illustration of the various discontinuities that surround the history of this particular theory that he has chosen to specialize in. In deference to the
advice of Herman, this chapter will look for resemblances and familial connections in order to make some semblance of the gargantuan fields of narrative theory and in the process will hope to find its own space of appropriation.

Brian McHale in his *Postmodernist Fiction* discusses the content of Roman Jakobson’s lecture dating from 1935, “the dominant may be defined as the focusing component of a work of art: it rules, determines, and transforms the remaining components. It is the dominant which guarantees the integrity of the structure” (McHale 105-10). McHale eschews what he calls as ‘the overly deterministic implications of Jakobson’s language” (McHale 6) in favour of a more deconstructionist interpretation of the lines. However, this statement seems to be tailor – made for a structuralist origin theory. The thesis will return to McHale and his revaluation of the above lines but for the moment let’s focus on this content as noted by Jakobson. The roots of Contemporary Narrative Theory have been designed along the lines of Ferdinand de Sassure’s signifier and signified as well as the poetics of the Prague Linguistic Circle, Vladimir Propp’s *Morphology of Folktales* and German Morphological Poetics. This origin is then an attempt to provide ‘an optimal classification’ and to determine and study the pre – determined sequences in the story. The progress of the Structuralist Turn then has been the progress the ‘skilled’ dominant.

The meaning ‘skilled’ lies at the heart of the Structuralist narratology which has collated and quantified the ‘science of the narrative’. The concern of Structuralist narratologist influenced by Sassurean linguistics and Morphological strategies gleaned from Vladimir Propp has been to disengage narrative from its previous literary context and award is an autonomous significance. The definition of narrative as formulated at the origins of narrative theory rests on the dual identification of *fabula* (story) and *sjuzet* (discourse) with an emphasis on the discourse. Indeed, the paradigm of structuralist narratology has been to chart the morphology of narrative – to place the dominant of ‘knowing’ over ‘skilled’.
The thesis departs from this dualist interpretation of Structuralist in contending that the narrative force of ‘knowing’ – the force which resides at what Greimas refers to as the ‘deep level’ – has been there from the beginning as the chaotic compound that structures as well as de-structures the essential edifices built during this time frame. The thesis will use the concept of Narrativity in order to chart this central force at the heart of narrative theory in order to build the theory of the aspiration of the narrative – as narrative wanting to beyond itself, the narrative crossing the *aporia* of the skilled. As Derrida has said in his Force and Signification:

“…it is no way paradoxical that the structuralist consciousness is a catastrophic consciousness, simultaneously destroyed and destructive, *destructuring*, as is all consciousness, or at least the moment of decadence, which is the period proper to all movement of consciousness…. Structure can then be *methodically* threatened in order to be comprehended more clearly and to reveal not only its supports but also that secret place in which it is neither construction nor ruin but lability.” (364)

The structuralist methodology then is an illusion which Derrida refers to as an ‘illusion of technical liberty’. The structure stands and is reflected at the moment it is taken apart.

For a certain set of practices to be implemented, there an equal number of practices that has to be disavowed. Structuralism worked with language, seeking to create an order of the chaotic mess that the narrative resided in. The essential logic was looked for in a bid to achieve abstract objectivity. Isolation was the first step. One will remember Vladimir Propp’s *Morphology of Russian folk tales* and the list of tropes that he lists that form the basis of the
stories of the myths he has studied. The abstraction of meaning gives it a certain autonomous power, enabling it to be used in other discourses.

The Claude Levi Strauss’ structure of myth was founded on the concept of reconciliation between intellectual tensions caused by contradictions. As he reflects, “The proportional or analogic correspondence between these ideas is the solution found by the culture which creates the myth to the intellectual tensions caused by these contradictions” (29). This structure by developed by Maranda and Maranda who defined the “narrative centre of a myth as the act of mediation between contraries” (29). Greimas further articulated on this structure by formulating its ‘narrative and discursive semiotics’. He classified the fundamental structure of the myth as the ‘surface level’ where the conceptual meets the figural and the ‘deep level’ which constitutes a micro-semantic universe. He divides the universe along dual semantic features or Semes. These Semes are named as S1 and S2 and are separated by a Semantic Axis of Three Relations – contrariety, contradiction and complementarity. His logic is echoed by Claude Bremond who contends that “narrative obey as well as effect a progressive logic, along the axis of time” (33). Greimas however has also coined the level of intermediary which lies between the deep level and the surface level. This third site forms the site of encounter – the centre of gravity where antagonistic narrative doings can co-exist.

This antagonism is certainly how Jonathan Culler describes Gerald Genette’s pioneering work *Narrative Discourse* which till this day has been perceived as an amalgamation of the structuralist concepts and theories. As Culler says of Genette’s theory, “the theory is constantly confronted with anomalies and must show how they are anomalous” (Genette 9) and as one delves into this theory formulated by Genette, one gets to ‘experience the strangeness of the text’. Genette himself at the start of his work refers to the most obvious distinctions of general and particular:
“…always torn between two unavoidable commonplaces – that there are no objects except particular ones and no science except of the general…but always finding comfort in this other slightly less widespread truth, that the general is at the heart of the particular, and therefore (contrary to common preoccupation) the knowable is at the heart of the mysterious.” (23)

Genette’s magnum opus very often seems dismissed to an expression of reductive structuralist theory. However, when one looks closely, the various anomalies make themselves very clear. Consider the first concept of ‘Reach’ which is defined as the various discordances between the two orderings of story and narrative. Genette in the chapter “Order” has revaluated the German concept of erzählte Zeit (story time) and Erzahleit (narrative theme) by incorporating his own concept of anachronies. As Genette defines it, “an anachrony can reach into the past or the future, either more or less far from the ‘present’ moment…this temporal distance we will name anachrony’s reach” (9). The presence of anachrony leads to the creation of an alternate or a second narrative within the ‘first narrative’ which is the content that comes first in the text concerned. This creation is defined as ‘analepsis’ by Genette which can be external and internal. The creation of this alternate narrative forms the basis of more complex embedding in the texts which contain multiple first and second narratives. This is further by the concept of iterative ellipses which deals with multiple portions of time that are repetitive and as such emphasize on the gaps of narrative as well as by the concept of repeating analepsis or ‘recalls’ where the narrative retraces its own path. The study of narrative is a study of frustration which is captured expertly in Genette’s idea of Proustian believability:

Proustian believability, of course – based, as Jean-Pierre Richard puts it, on the “logic of inconsistency” – plays on (particularly in what concerns homosexuality and its subtle variant, heterosexuality) this complex system of frustrated expectations,
disappointed suspicions, surprises looked forward to and finally all the more
surprising in being looked forward to and occurring nonetheless…. (23)

Such discordances oppose the chronological order and emancipate the narrative from
its own temporality. Genette’s critique of the narrative tradition of the novel is an expression
of such a celebration of anomalies. This particular tradition with its emphasis on canonical
works and essential structures has reduced the possibilities of narrative into a few certain
elements. By comparing the classical study of novels to the study of forms of classical music,
Genette critiques the existing notions of rigid structures of succession and alternation. He
uses Proust formulation of the narrative across Recherché in order to demonstrate the
diffused and a perfectly unprecedented nature of narrative temporality.

The study of Narrative Discourse subsumes the narrative force under the paradigms
of narrative tools. Jonathan Culler remarks on the usefulness of such a study for future
students of narratology. F.K. Stanzel adapts this genesis theory of narrative temporality in
order to develop his own Theory of Narrative. He outlines his own formulation of a tripartite
narrative situations which are as follows:

- Authorial Situation which is omnisciently communicative
- Figural Situation which provides an illusion of unmediated access to the protagonist’s
  mind
- First person which is retrospective

Mieke Bal uses the constructs of narrative time as outlined by Genette as a departure
point for her own theory of focalization. Seymour Chatman has developed his own theory of
story and discourse which employs the use of a character related filter. J. M. Lotman in his
“The Structure of the Narrative Text” conceives the text as a narrative system with two
distinct elements:
• Verbal Narration which refers to the expansion of the text’s size through the addition of words. This is characteristic of an element of space

• Non-discrete Iconic Type which focuses on the internal transposition of elements or the successive combination of time. This type successful capacity to become a narrative text depends on the “mobility of its internal elements”

The essential direction of his essay works around the idea that the signs as a bearer of meaning can be something other than the written word. He discusses the idea of an Iconic Narrative Text which is more than a sum total of joined signs. He suggests a more complex relationship in the creation of an art form, “Freedom with respect to the material that makes both for retention of its structure and for violation of its structure by acts of conscious artistic choice” (23).

One of the most successful theorists of this frame of narratology is Roland Barthes. Roland Barthes in his “Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives” discusses the infiniteness of narrative that exists in the world. His model of study is two-fold. First, there should be formulation of a theory of narrative. Second, the analysis of particular narratives should be attempted either as confirmation or departure from this theory. The theory of narrative can be articulated in a series of three steps. The first step comprises of Homological Hypothesis which postulates the narrative as a secondary system. Barthes requisitions this idea from the anthropological concept of mankind’s ability to create secondary self-multiplying system. The second step involves a hierarchy of the levels of description. The third step discusses these levels which include Functions, Actions and Narration. The taxonomy of functions includes Cardinal Functions or Nuclei which refers to the hinge points of narrative, Catalyses which are functions that fill the narrative space and Indices which inform the reader about the circumstances of the story. David Herman in Basic Elements of Narrative writes this of the theory of Barthes:
Barthes’s larger point here is that narrative is not (or rather, not only) something in the text. To the contrary, stories are cognitive as well as textual in nature, structures of mind as well as constellations of verbal, cinematic, pictorial, or other signs produced and interpreted within particular communicative settings. (8)

Roland Barthes theory of narrative while valuable to the historiography of narrative certainly does not correspond to the later philosophy of the theorist. In his “Death of the Author” Barthes would sound the clarion call to the post-structuralist dissemination of the text. This will be discussed later but for now we shall discuss in a little more detail about Barthes emphasis on the “international, transhistorical, transcultural” nature of the narrative.

Finally, we shall discuss the classification of narrative semantics put forward by Lubomir Dolezel and Thomas Pavel. The theories of both these exponents focus on narrative motifs and the classification of these motifs into what Dolezel terms as Alethic, Deontic, Axiological and Epistemic and Pavel as Ontological, Epistemic, Axiological and Rules for Action. The terminology presented while discussing the semantic rules of the text also talks about the constraints of the narrative. For Dolezel, the classification presented are more like guidelines with their more important function being to make the reader aware of the force of narrative that resided under the layers of these upper level classification. The structural dissemination of the narrative and its re-integration forms the crux of the narrative analysis.

The Postclassical Turn of Narrative in a retrospective context is seen as the progression of the narrative field of studies. More importantly it is seen as a revival of the field of the narrative theory. We will refer back now to the Narrative Symposium titled “Illusion of Sequence”. This conference can be seen as a turning point where narrative theory moved beyond studying the essential grammar of narrative theory. The Narrative Turn in the
1960s marked the rise of the narrative where the essential transcendental nature of narrative was discovered. This turn in the style of Sassurean linguistics sought to study the different anachronies in the text and use them to chart an essential methodology for narrative studies. The flaw of structuralism is that it still adhered to the textual mode of knowledge gathering and dissemination of information. Where it succeeded was bringing forward the idea of storied forms of knowledge.

The aim of postclassical narratologies was to build on this idea of schism between language and the world as well as the idea of storied form of human communication. It expanded its horizons to explore the role of narrative in the different disciplines of the history, psychology, psychoanalysis, art, visual media, gender studies, cultural studies to name a few. For obvious purposes, this chapter cannot hope to engage with all these disciplines individually. What we shall be discussing is the different approaches, theories and ideas put forward by such an interdisciplinary approach adopted the postclassical narratology. Monica Fludernik in her attempt to chart the genealogy of the postclassical narrative theory writes this of the latter:

Out of the diversity of approaches and their exogamous unions with critical theory have now emerged several budding narratologies which betoken that the discipline is in the process of a major revival. (37)

The idea of fictionality became one of the major focus points under the aegis of postclassical narratology especially under the works of Paul Ricoeur’s *Time and Narrative*, Dorrit Cohn and Hayden White. The publication of Hayden White’s *Metahistory* signalled narrative theories entering the discipline of history. What White wanted to communicate was the essential narrativized nature of not only literary but also historiographic discourse. This study brought out the connection between literary and non-literary narratives and by doing so
“advances the issue of narrative strategies employed in different ways or combinations in either realm” (Fludernik 42).

Within the boundaries of postclassical narratology another movement was taking shape. This movement can be labelled as Contextual narratology. The field of contextual narratology gained its momentum from two different streams of narrative study. The first was the American tradition of narrative influenced by Henry James’s *The Art of the Novel*. Wayne C. Booth through his *The Rhetoric of Fiction* heralded this movement. The second stream is the field of linguistic pragmatics which introduced the concepts of ‘semantics’, ‘context-orientation’ and ‘textual issues’ and led to the creation of theories of speech acts, sociolinguistics, text linguistics etc.

Wayne C. Booth’s *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961) was written in reaction to the objectivity of the fiction. In his revised essay “Resurrection of the Implied Author: Why Bother?” the author in his words describes this essay as a refutation of “that absurd assassination attempt” of the author. Booth is trying to create the persona of the ‘implied author’ present in the texts. This idea of ‘implied author’ is an important distinction which will be applied to when discussing the fictional authorial self ever present in the novels of Orhan Pamuk. The creation of the ‘implied author’ contains in itself a distinction of categories. The implied author is the author’s own narrative conscious which is different from the narrator of the novel. Booth writes:

> In every corner of our lives whenever we speak or write, we imply a version of our character that we know is quite different from many other selves that are exhibited in our flesh-and-blood world. (77)

Booth refers to a conversation between himself and Saul Bellow in order to illustrate this idea of authorial flagging. On asking Bellow as to why the former would revise a novel for four
hours every day, Booth received this answer; “Oh, I’m just wiping out those parts of myself that I don’t like” (35-43). The idea of revision is important. In explaining the idea of revision, Booth opens up a debate on the idea of frames and models. We revise because we would like to delete or modify certain points of our lives and thoughts. And in doing so we create certain selves superior or inferior.

The creation of fictional selves speaks to the idea of authorial consciousness residing in the text. It is a subtle attempt of unreliable narration which leads to authorial flagging. Booth makes the distinction between the author’s true voice and implied voice. In Booth’s own words; “I have called the 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 158-9). This distinction is based on the distance between the implied author and the narrator. What Booth has brought forward is the idea of unreliable narration. This idea has been one of the fundamental concerns of postclassical and cognitive narrative theory with a rich body of work to survey. The different narratologists however agree on the vagueness of the definition of the ‘implied author’. The ‘implied author’ can be located not only in the structure of the text but also in the reader’s re-construction of the text. The implications of the ‘implied author’ are manifold which keeps this idea current in the theories of narrative. It not only is important in the understanding of the multi-faceted nature of authorial intention but also in the way the reader understands the idea of author in the text.

The failure of agreement between different turns of narrative betrays the amorphous and contradictory nature of the ‘implied author’. It stands within and apart from the theories in order to expose the different gaps in the narrative theory. The morass of theories leads to its constant appropriation and renewal. The spectrality of the theory is that it cannot undermine not delete the various traces of what came before. As Nunning points out, “most theories leave unclear what unreliability actually is” (93). He does point out though that the
‘unreliable narrator’ can be found in the suspicion of the reader. In discussing Susan Lanser conceptualization of unreliable narration, Nunning discusses the idea of reader judgement and its necessity in identifying the sites of unreliable narration and thus identifying the traces of the ‘implied author’.

The stream of linguistic pragmatics brought to light the ‘multiple relations between form and fiction’ (Fludernik 64). The notion of speech acts and context orientation provided narratology with expanded tools for literary appreciation. Conversational narrative developed by William Labov, Deborah Tannen and Wallace Chafe etc. discussed the idea of everyday storytelling which would become one of the crucial dimensions of postclassical narrative theory. William Labov and Joshua Waletzky in their article “The Transformation of Experience in Narrative Syntax” (1971) formulated a range of vocabulary in order to understand the different ‘personal-experience narratives’. Labov and Wazetzky through a sociolinguistic approach sought to understand the different motivations of everyday communication. It combined semantic aspects along with personal requirements of context in order to chart different evaluative strategies for everyday storytelling. There are however certain retrospective concerns which challenge these syntaxes put forward by Labov and Watezsky. The linearity of the ‘sequence of clauses’ representing the ‘sequence of events’ is the one of major flaws in this particular theory of ‘personal-experience narratives’. There are many modes of narration which can be employed in the telling of a certain story. Also, it fails to take an account of the postmodern narratives which seem to take pride in “their apparent pointlessness” and make use of deliberate obstacle strategies in order to confuse the reader and defer the resolution of the story.

David Herman continuing with the tradition of Conversation Analysis draws from the works of Schegloff and Georgakopoulou in order to define narrative which do “different things, and assume different forms, in different communicative environments” (Herman 34).
In defining this quantitative nature of narrative, Herman expands the horizons of information gathering from solely interviews to other storytelling situations such as informal conversations, gossip etc. The basic formulation behind his formulation is the performance of the storyteller. As he explains:

Such competition for the floor will drastically alter the shape of the stories participants (try to) tell … storytellers are likely to truncate or omit all but the most essential orienting information and conversely to bolster their efforts to signal the point of their narrative … (34)

In order to understand this variability of storytelling Herman charts five different concepts of the telling of the story:

- **Tellability**: Where the teller provides an increased rhetorical effect to a story of low tellability
- **Tellership**: Which defines the number of narrators required to tell a story
- **Embeddedness**: Where the teller detaches the story from its original environment and includes in the flow of another discourse
- **Linearity**: which defines the depiction of events either in a single linear path or a multiple, uncertain paths
- **Moral Stance**: Where the teller decides whether to include “an explicit judgement of self and other” or not

Herman in charting the different dimension of conversational storytelling is attempting to establish a prototypical narrative with a more ‘planned narrative discourse’ (Ochs 3). The idea of everyday conversational storytelling forms the necessary bridge between the multiple postclassical narratologies with the current context of cognitive narratology.
Another stream of postclassical narratology is Feminist literary criticism. Susan Lanser in an attempt to redeem the ‘gender blindness’ of previous narrative theory discusses the gender specifications of narrator figures. Through an analysis of the implicit naming, actions, behavioural patterns and narrative cues, it seeks to debate on the issue of sex and narrative. Robyn Warhol in distinguishing between the different narrator figures attempts to discuss “different types of narratorial discourse in male and female-authored texts” (Warhol 203). This line of discourse also seeks to undertake a revision of the history of narrative in order to accommodate the feminine perspective as well.

The expansion of postclassical narratology into the realm of feminist literary studies signalled the movement of narratology into the realms of ideological thought. Narrative studies were appropriated into the theories of postcolonial, new historicism and cultural criticism in order to understand the hegemony of discourse better. Through the employment of narrative strategies like focalization, plot structure, indirect discourse, the different fields of post colonialism and feminism seek to understand the patriarchal as well as colonial discourse. It also employs different experimental narrative techniques like hybridity in order to provide a voice to the subaltern. Monica Fludernik in explaining these strategies writes:

… critical discussion of texts and genres attempt to locate textual strategies that signal unconscious or repressed psychological or ideological “drives” which the critic uncovers, reading “against the grain” of the text. This disclosure of the text’s secret motivations, of which the author may be entirely unaware, tends to change the pattern of interpretation of narrative techniques as well. (45-6)

The narrative turns in their turn opened out different horizons of negotiations and appropriation. While the first few turns converged into conventional disciplines of history, psychology or theory, a significant paradigm shift towards the 1990s turned the attention of
narrative theory into such different disciplines are legal, medical, anthropological, economic etc. This turn in retrospective can be studied in terms of call for the ‘death of the narrative’. The profusion of the narrative studies waned for a while in the early 1990s leading many of the leading narratologists and other theoreticians to debate the utility of the theory itself. This shift can also be accounted for in the movement of the discipline of narratology into the realms of nonnarrative and nonliterary discourses the likes of which have been mentioned before. The methodology in these disciplines differs a little from the traditional forms of narrative application.

Peter Brooks and Ross Chambers in appropriating narrative strategies in a psychoanalytic framework sought to utilize the concepts of author analysis, reader’s relation to the text in order to frame clinical methods of treatment. In current medical sciences, patient history has been studied through narrative patterns of analysis in order to chart of narrative of sickness and perform a differential diagnosis accordingly. In Law, narrative theories are employed in an attempt to establish credibility. Narratives of ‘guilt and innocence are frequently based on the interpretation of evidence” (47).

The final turn of narrative theory is the Cognitivist Turn. This turn was coined by Manfred Jahn in 1997. The different postclassical approaches have already established the solid foundation for the arrival of the cognitive revolution in the narrative. Through the movement from external examination of the narrative to understanding it hidden motivations, its lapses and unreliability the narrative field of theory was moving solidly into the realms of the mind and its perception of the world. Monice Fludernik, one of the pioneers in Cognitive Narrative Theory has put forward the two fundamental concerns of the cognitive turn of narratology – i) a cognitive analysis of human perception of actions and events and ii) how narrative structures correspond to essential cognitive preferences. The cognitive turn of narrative seeks to establish the oral functions of storytelling as well bring forward a more
innovative theory of reader-text-author relations. David Herman’s *Storytelling and the Sciences of the Mind* as well as *Story Logic* discusses the idea of conversation narrative and its necessity in understanding the cognitive parameters of the teller as well as the reader’s ability to construct a storyworld out of his/her reading of the text. In his *Basic Elements of Narrative*, Herman identifies the one of the crucial aspects of the narrative as concerned with *qualia* or “what it is like” for a reader or a human being to experience a certain event. Herman argues that “narrative as a mode of representation if tailor-made for gauging the felt quality of lived experience” (138). In discussing his theory of conversational or everyday storytelling, Herman has put forward a cognitive paradigm of narrative theory. He discusses elements of narrative like ‘situatedness’, ‘event sequencing’, ‘worldmaking/world disruption’ in connection to this phenomenon of *qualia*. It is the experience of *qualia* that differentiates the narrative from being another report of events. Herman rest the idea of *qualia* as connected to the type of narrative genres. These two different factors are in constant negotiation with each other and a successful narrative of *qualia* is insistent upon the extent to which they ‘foreground the consciousness’ (Herman 139). Herman positing an idea of *qualia* is also to reframe the ideas of structural and postclassical narratologies into the cognitive framework. In discussing Fludernik, Herman seeks to embed his theory in the larger theories of the cognitive paradigm. Fludernik’s idea of experientiality can be likened to the Herman’s idea of *qualia* in the sense that it seeks to vest in the narrative a vivid recapitulation of not just the characters’ own experience but also of the reader as well. The foregrounding the consciousness is an important caveat in order to achieve classification of different narratives into the category of cognitive narratology.

The cognitive explication of narratives rests in a half-fictional, half-real experience of the world. Human beings are conscious thinking beings and cognitive narratology stretches this maxim into the realms of fiction as well. Ansgar Nunning discusses the different textual
cues in the text as well as the reader’s reconstruction of the text in order to engage with the different aspects of unreliable narration. The coming of the cognitive turn in narratology brought back linguistic models of analysis in a more successful way than structuralist narratology. It also brought about a construction of a labyrinthian space laying bare the different theories of narrative, overlapping and negotiating, sometimes in tension sometimes in harmony but also moving towards a certain attempt at meaning.

The uncoupling of narrative theory from literary studies gave the field a broader scope. Simultaneously it also opened the field to problems of collation. Narrative theory cannot be contained in a singular line of history; rather it can be comprised of different strands of this theory which overlap and juxtapose into a fluid context of interpretative approaches. Brian McHale in his “Ghosts and Monsters: On the (Im)Possibility of Narrating the History of Narrative Theory” uses the figure of Mikhail Bakhtin as symptomatic of this tension within the field of narrative theory. As he points out, “Bakhtin, it seems to me, has slipped through the cracks between two approaches to narrating the history of narrative theory” (60). These two approaches as he terms them correspond to “system of ideas” and “institutional existence”. The “system of ideas” refer to the origins of concepts and their appropriations and refinements by theorists at different points of history. “Institutional existence” refers to as McHale puts it “the whole social life of ideas” which comprises of the connections between various academic circuits, publication dates, research collaborations etc. In the course of the paper, McHale terms Bakhtin as ‘wandering Jew or hungry ghost’ dehistoricized and decontextualized; “Bakhtin, a contemporary of the Formalists, has become everybody’s contemporary, unmoored in time and space, available for assimilation (or so it sometimes seems) to anyone’s system of ideas” (63).
Bakhtin idea of Heteroglossia has been discussed in Chapter I. In this chapter, we shall attempt a review of the work. Bakhtin’s history of ideas has been so versatile that it has been appropriated by almost every contemporary theoretical discipline. For the purposes of this thesis, we shall examine his ideas concerning the novel. Bakhtin’s idea of the novel is an important turning point in the discussion of narrative theory. It provides the necessary inroads into a necessary harmony between postmodern theories of fiction. In quoting Bakhtin, Eric Woehrling, discuss the idea of citational language. The novel relates to the epic by citing it and in doing so it breaks the very context that the epic was conceived in.

In discussing the novel, Bakhtin in his *The Dialogic Imagination* names it as one of aberrant genres in the history of literature. The novel “inserts itself into these other genres an indeterminacy, a certain semantic open-endedness, a living contact with unfinished, still-evolving contemporary reality” (Bakhtin 8). Bakhtin characterizes the novel in three different ways:

- The novel is a stylistic genre which is three-dimensional and linked with multi-language consciousness
- It radically changes the image of the literary
- It opens a new zone of contact with the present

In discussing the ‘peculiarity’ of the novel, Bakhtin discusses the genre of epic. The epic is a sacred form from the past which forms the basis of a national tradition. Through his languages and established image, it seeks to create an image of the past. In the words of Bakhtin:

In the world of memory, a phenomenon exists in its own peculiar context, with its own special rules, subject to conditions quite different from those we meet in the world we see with our own eyes, the world of practice and familiar contact. (18)
Through the idea of time, Bakhtin brings out the first difference between the epic and the novel. The epic exists ‘within itself’. Its connection with the past makes it a static form of art aimed at preservation of history and memory. The novel on the other hand is new and exists in contemporary reality which is transitory. The second point of difference is the point of laughter. The valorised nature of epic and therefore it cannot be touched. The novel however breaks any such barriers and parodies the ‘high genres’. The hand of ‘laugher delivers the object into the fearless hands of investigative experiment’ (Bakhtin 23). The novel brings the epic into the present through its characteristic of dismemberment and experimentation and in doing so celebrates its own plural and open identity.

The examination of novel also presents a certain world view along with it. It revolutionizes the human experience in terms of the present and not the past. In doing so it also exposes the human experience to inconclusiveness and uncertainty. This acceptance – according to Bakhtin – of the transitory nature of the novel brought with a constant re-thinking and re-evaluation of categories of experience:

The absence of distance and of a zone of contact are utilized her in a different way: in place of our tedious lives we are offered a surrogate, true, but it is a surrogate of a fascinating and brilliant life. (32)

Thus the novel seeks to provide a different experience of literariness different from the past. In this break away from the past it seeks to bring about a revolutionary uncertainty. This uncertainty is different from the postmodern theories of fiction in the sense it is hopeful. The uncertainty is a broadening of horizons, a redeeming of the past in order to create a hybrid mix of ‘extra literary’, ‘everyday’ and ‘ideological’ genres. Another point of difference is the position of the hero in both the epic and the novel. The hero of the epic is complete with a fixed goal of realization. The hero of the novel is a hero of ‘free
improvisation’ constantly questioning his own motives and ‘renewing himself’ in order to achieve maximum characterization. This renewing of the hero also leads to the disintegration of the individual as the different parts of the hero’s motives and consciousness are disseminated and studied for the purposes of the narrative of the novel.

Bakhtin also discusses the idea of novelistic image. The use of a novelistic image shifts the focus from the authorial position in the text as “he is no longer outside it but in it as well”. The text becomes the site of the dialogic contact between the author and the hero. The novel contains within itself the image of the other in that other’s language or image. This typicality of the novel creates a plasticity which in turn creates a space of multiple representations and voices in constant contact with each other. The entry of the author into the text also polemicizes the language itself. The novelistic image then is an “internally dialogized image”. The final concept discussed in terms of Bakhtinian theory is the idea of Chronotope. Bakhtin describes the Chronotope as a space where the “spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole” (89). The chronotopicity of the novel resides in the inseparability of the time and space. Bakhtin historicizes the theory of genres through its chronotopicity.

The appropriation of the figure of Bakhtin by McHale shows the complex tensions in the field between the creationist structural approach and its later contextual tendencies. McHale in his conclusion disavows any reconciliation between structure and history. In his analysis of Samuli Hagg’s work on Thomas Pynchon’s The Gravity’s Rainbow, McHale ponders on the anomalies that are constantly encountered in the practice of the narrative theories that is the idiosyncrasies and the particularities that resist a trans historical and general system of narrative discourse. The attempt to reconcile or to allow one form to dominate will only result in a “monstrous narratology crudely stitched together”. As he concludes:
If this is true, and every narrative theory is monstrous, then a history of narrative theory…. could only be an account of how the monster got stitched together from a little of this and a little of that, here a little structure and there a little history (68)

Whether McHale’s assertion that the history of narrative theory is a “retelling of Frankenstein” or not is open to debate. However, in a discussion of the different concepts of Bakhtin one can open a passageway into the other theories that are relevant to this thesis. The genealogies of narrative contain within themselves the infinite potential of the transgressive boundaries. This chapter has provided the readers with ample proof of the versatility of the parent field of narrative theory. The field of narrative theory has a particular affinity to the field of postmodernism with relation to the study of the form. Postmodern theory with its emphasis on the frame of the book more so than the book itself can find a valuable ally in the theory of narrative. The strategies of Genette’s ‘anachronies’, Stanzel’s third-person narrative, the different theories of focalization, possible worlds etc. lends itself very amenably to the postmodern study of blurred genres.

2.3 The “Ontological Dominant”: Perspectives on Postmodern Fiction Theories

A cursory glance at the field of postmodern theory will reveal a certain retrospective style of analysis. The works of great Postmodern writers and theorists came at a time when the movement itself had run its course. This flashback perspective lends itself to the self-reflexivity of the movement itself. Postmodernism is always concerned with a critique of itself in a deconstructive effort to the defer its own meaning. Nash reflects on this state of postmodernism:
...Yet ‘postmodern-ism’, the gnarled body of theories that offered that poignant liberation a generation ago, is in mid-life crisis. While its prime creators are either deceased or in their closing years, we intone the theories ... and postmodernity – a clamouring culture now – rolls on, half mindless of theory, gathering pace as it goes... (1)

The study of the postmodernism reflects on this necessary gap between the perception and actuality of postmodern thought. In the historiography of the movement there is usually that one seminal moment – that zero point by way of one can pinpoint the origin of the new form of thought. New criticism began with John Crowe Ransom’s publication; Structuralism took point from Sassure’s theory of signs. Postmodernism on the other hand seems to be a work in progress. With the term being in use as early as 1930s by Federico de Onis, the consequence of the movement being an end in itself or being an extension of the work already espoused in the modernist avant-garde is thrown into question. Ihab Hassan in The Dismemberment of Orpheus attempts to answer the question. Using the mythic figure of Orpheus and the fatal death by the Maenads and his formulations of a literature of silence, he explores the negative aspect to living and life itself in the hope to understand the motives behind this façade that seems to unravel itself at every turn. Hassan states that “clearly, then the time has come to theorize the term (postmodernism)” (Hassan 2). This simple point becomes one of the fundamental problematic of the postmodern oeuvre. The origin point might have made the movement more structured but then it would challenge the basic disruptive nature of this field. Hutcheon remarks that the ‘vagueness associated with the term itself’ is a testament to its contradictory nature. She writes that “postmodernism is a contradictory phenomenon, one that uses and abuses, installs and subverts, the very concepts it challenges” (Hutcheon 3). Like narrative theory it a gargantuan space containing a vast morass of theories which are sometimes in negotiations and sometimes in complete
contradiction with each other. For the requirements of the thesis we will discuss the idea of postmodernism and its relation to fiction.

The coming of postmodernism heralded the idea of fictionality. We have discussed earlier the Structuralist notion of the different between language and the world. This divide is crucial to the understanding of fictionality. The purpose of this section will be to understand the basic tenets of fictionality as discussed by the postmodern theoretical frameworks in order to advance a more complex definition of possible stories. However, before we delve into this specialized matter of postmodernism a brief overview is necessary.

One of the beginnings of postmodernism has been attributed to Paolo Portoghesi’s analysis of the ‘Strada Novissima’ in 1983 which was labelled as the ‘presence of the past’. This critique of the structure showed the fundamental nature of postmodernism as not a ‘nostalgic return’ but a revising of the past tenets in the form of parody. Another beginning that can be attributed to postmodernism is the recognition of the proliferation of capitalism. Frederic Jameson in his iconic text discussed the idea of Postmodernism and the ‘late capitalism’. The contemporary world is saturated with technology and technology driven products and the individual connection to the world is filtered through these products. The consequence of this form of living is that “we have become alienated from those aspects of life we might consider authentic or real” (Nicol 4). The idea of real is important to the idea of fictionality. Jean Baudrillard by coining the term ‘simulation’ has given voice to this idea of virtual reality. His study is important in the sense that instead of projecting an idea which might hold relevance in the future he instead makes us aware of the plurality of human existence. A human being does not live in one world but in countless worlds. In our engagement with technology, social media and the internet we inhabit different selves which are projections of our own selves and can very easily become strange selves different to the private individual self. The system of values that forms the cognitive dimensions of our
existence is actually the one which ‘produces reality’. The idea of behind Baudrillard’s simulation is the idea of representation replacing the real where “we engage somehow with a representation rather than the real thing” (Nicol 6). Slavoj Zizek builds on this idea of fictional reality in his formulation of the everyday reality where our perceptions of reality, identity and external environment are designed to keep ‘our real selves’ at bay (Zizek 1991). This idea of fictionality supposes the real world as a ‘necessary fiction’ which is a deterrent to the true expression of our actual or unconscious self. This is echoed in Peter L. Burger and Thomas Luckmann’s idea that “reality is not ‘given’ but is a fiction that we collectively subscribe to” (Berger and Luckman 1991). Our realities have been manufactured through our interaction with external world as well as social convention. These realities are plural and are constantly subject to being ‘reimagined and reshaped’.

The idea of postmodern fictionality presupposes an incredulity towards nineteenth century realism. The mimetic characteristic of nineteenth century fiction behoved the author to take great pains in making his text represent the real world as faithfully as possible. This idea of mimesis was based on providing a certain truthful competence to the genre of novel. The different theories of twentieth literature dealt with a disavowal of this form of realism. Modernism through its emphasis on stream of consciousness, subjective perceptions and experimentation began the charge against the realist novel. Postmodernism carried this further in its attempts of introducing ostranenie or strange newness into the different works perceived under its aegis. What Postmodernism sought to create was a new novel or a new sensibility disengaging from the boundaries of traditional literature. The ideal of realism was regarded with scepticism as extreme forms of subjective discourses came to being in contemporary theory and fiction. The postmodern fictionality then challenges the caveat of realism regarding the point of selfless narration. The world cannot be depicted objectively but
rather it is beholden to the author’s unconscious and conscious desires and omissions as well as the reader’s reconstruction which bring with it the reader’s own cognitive markers.

By challenging realism, fictionality creates its own space of discourse. What it is trying to do is bring forward a different world – an ontological space which resides outside the real world and does not ‘necessarily correspond to it’ (Robbe-Grillet 160). This idea of fictional semantics is also discussed by Dolezel who uses this idea of fictionality to postulate the idea of possible worlds. Dolezel challenges the traditional mimetic models which are based on the truth principle. This truth principle is based on the fundamental real nature of the world and correspondingly the fictional world as untrue. What Dolezel proposes which is echoed in not only Robbe-Grillet, but also Hutcheon, Waugh and others is that the fictional world is a separate reality which is even more real because it is imaginary (Robbe-Grillet 162). Through this idea as Robbe-Grillet points out, postmodernism is trying to define the function of the novel:

Postmodernism rests on the assumption that fiction – no matter how realist or experimental – is always, a matter of ‘constructing’ rather than ‘transcribing’. Transcription is in fact impossible because the act of representing something external to the text actually ensures that a separate, aesthetic version of it is created. (43)

In opposing realism, postmodernism is pointing out the constructed nature of the fictional world. This fictional world is a ‘world in itself, independent, complete, autonomous’ (Bradley 5). However, this world cannot exist without the reader and must rely on the reader’s reconstruction of the fictional world. Thus, even its own construction postmodernism belies its inherent contradictions.

The second idea of fictionality rests on the idea of narrative. As we have discussed in the previous section, narrative while discussing certain fundamental principles also discusses
its own contradiction. As Bran Nicol points out, ‘nothing is natural in a narrative’. Every event of the narrative is vested with a certain meaning. The analysis of Genette has exposed the different ‘anachronies’ of the text. Stanzel, Bal and others through an analysis of focalization have shown us what how a certain event is constructed through a certain perspective in order to present a certain meaning. Nothing is natural in narrative because it has been pre-arranged and constructed and a closer analysis will reveal hidden motivations and latent desires. This leads us to the idea that the events occurring take place within the dimensions of the text have not actually taken place but through their construction, they celebrate the multiplicity of language itself.

William Gass writes that, “It might at first seem difficult – to make a world of words – but actually nothing is easier” (Gass 308). The postmodernism shift into the dominant of ontology has focused the issues into the text and the worlds it generates. Bran Nicol claims that “writing fiction…is by definition an act of creating a world” (Nicol 25). The oeuvre of postmodern fiction has determinedly followed this pursuit into the realms of all possible worlds that it could generate. Brian Mchale in his Postmodernist Fiction charted the foundational concept of ontology and its relevance in fiction. He posited the idea of the “heterocosm” which defines the text as so much more than a few scripted pages bound inside a tight cover. The “heterocosm” makes the book as the site from where possible worlds can be generated. The postmodern fiction theories have a number of names for this term – “sub-universes”, “anti-world”, mise-en-abyme, enframing, “ontic spheres” to name a few. These terms form the genre of thought under which the novels have inked ‘the book’ in order to create a gap in the narrative in order to form an event that “neither the language nor the meaning can quite exhaust”. The postmodern field of literary thought has brought about and accomplished “vicious circles” where the “text and the world are permeable” to each other. It is radical, shocking and takes a great delight in the anti – real. The postmodern is pre-
supposed to genre bending and finding those gaps where it forms its site of creation. Jacques Derrida works the term *Aporia* in terms of boundaries that have to be crossed:

“‘My thoughts were soon crippled if I tried to force them on in any single direction against their natural inclinations…. For this compels us to travel over a wide field of thought criss-cross in every direction.” (10)

The presence of *aporia* forms an obstacle that has to be either disintegrated or crossed over. This negative needs to be used as a step to traverse the limits. He traces the Aristotelian notion of *aporei* explained in his *Metaphysics* where he lists the perplexities that one should know before attempting to attain the knowledge of things. These perplexities then become signposts which one must overcome in order to achieve a certainty of being. This state he describes as, “the crossing of borders always unannounces itself according to the movement of a certain step (pas) – and of the step that crosses a line” (11). This indeterminable space forms a “harrowing state” that needs to be overcome. Comparing it with borders of a property to that of death, he speaks of a completely annihilated self-divested of its prior identities and ripe to the formation of the new one that transcends. It is a negative turn that affirms. *Aporia* becomes for Derrida a state where the person achieves a sense of over-duty where he does his duty for the sake of duty and not for any self-interested goals.

Michel Foucault posits the idea of “the book” and the “statement” that forms the “the expression of the thought, the experience, the imagination, or the unconscious of the author” (5). The book is “a node within the network” which forms the site of disruption where there is a rupture of unities. The overall systems of thought depend on the ‘rupture’, the discontinuity that transform the field of discourses. As Foucault writes:

What, do you imagine that I would take so much trouble and so much pleasure in writing, do you think that I would so persistently to my task, if I were not preparing –
with a rather shaky hand – a labyrinth into which I can venture, in which I can move my discourse, opening up underground passages, forcing it to go far from itself. (13)

The rhythms of stability require that ‘irruption’ in order that “an entire field can be set free” (14). These irruptions hinge on the terms of the document, the book and the statement. They form the site of discontinuity that the discourse seeks to dislocate and yet at the same time locate in order to validate its own identity. In formulating the discontinuity, the historian constructs the methodology around it. The discontinuity informs the notion of the decentred self. The series of history was the continuous correlative of the sovereignty of the subject. It disruption opposes “the search for an original foundation that would make rationality the telos of mankind”. In reference to the book, Foucault writes:

The frontiers of the book are never clear-cut: beyond the title, the first lines, and the last full stop, beyond its internal configuration and its autonomous form, it is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network. (20)

This statement is in line with the concept of exhaustion as delineated by John Barth in his The Literature of Exhaustion. Barth supposes one of the foundational ideas of postmodernism that “certain forms or…. certain possibilities” in fiction “are used up. This idea flows into the idea of Pastiche where “all writing is in fact cut-ups. A collage of words read, heard and overheard” (19). The Pastiche also converges with what Patricia Waugh calls ‘meta-fiction’ which is self-conscious, self-reflexive, and self-referential. The meta-fiction in a text not only parodies the conventions of the novel and the earlier literature but also creates alternate structures through evoking and breaking established frames of thought and forms. This conscious mode of textual reflection turns the study of postmodernism inward – into the textual reality instead of the outside reality. Though according to McHale these two worlds
reflect a “dual referential allegiance” (29), the text also looks towards creating possible worlds in its ontological self thus making it ‘plural’ and shifting its existence into those “planes of fictive spaces” (30) which is liminal in character.

The book then is a ‘strange event’ which “opens up to itself a residual existence in the field of memory, or in the materiality of manuscripts” and “is unique, yet subject to repetition, transformation, and reactivation”. The book as a trope refers to a concept in postmodern fiction as that of ‘baring the device’. This terms defines the devices, the machinery in the work of fiction “which perpetuates the illusion of fiction”. James Wood in *How Fiction Works* also refers to a similar concept, that of “authorial flagging” where the “novel teaches us how to read its narrator” and in the process expose the construct of the narrative and its narrator. The work of fiction is used “to reflect on the responsibilities and limitations of the fiction itself, and indeed on the difficulties and limitations of all fiction making” (Wood 117). The narrative turns in 1960s established the need for narrative competence in order to form the credibility of the text that it is a part of. The postmodern narrative does not lay claim to credibility. In the simplest words, the narrative seeks to disturb and to shock. Victor Caston talks of mental states that “eventually diverge from all that is actually in the world” (Caston 4) and the narrative as a representation of that mental state – a phantasm that brings over a “temporary eclipse of thought” (Caston 4).

Jorge Luis Borges’ *Labyrinths* is a collection of short stories which posit the idea of narrative as a labyrinth. Every short story has its own version of the labyrinth which is simultaneously same and different. Indeed, the stories in *Labyrinths* can be charted under what Umberto Eco refers to as the ‘impossible text’, a text which reaches that ‘limit-point of the Avant-garde cancellation of the past”. James Phelan in considering the stories and theory that they convey writes that:
Borges’s story actually closes emphatically, but the theory it conveys – that from one moment to the next any person inhabits an infinitude of potential stories, any one of which may or may not intersect with any of the infinitude inhabited by anyone else – can be actualized in the complex lexical webs…. attention is redirected from a linear chain of suspense and surprise to the frisson of gathering indeterminacies. (530)

In his “Tlon, Uqbar, Orbus Tertius” Borges writes, “I owe discovery of the Uqbar to the conjunction of a mirror and an encyclopaedia” (1). The short story is the narrator’s quest to find the reference to this land after given the proof by his friend Bioy Cesares who shows him the article in *The Anglo-American Cyclopaedia*. The initial doubt of its existence is dismissed a conjecture; “that this undocumented country and its anonymous heresiarch were a fiction devised by Bioy’s modesty in order to justify a statement” (2). The book sets the tone of ‘discomfort’ which is followed by a fruitless search for the actual location of such a world. A couple of months later the narrator finally finds a detailed tome on Uqbar which is named as *A First Encyclopaedia of Tlon. Vol IX. Hlaer to Jangr*. The encyclopaedia leads the narrator to discuss the literary practices of this world where “the idea of the single subject is all-powerful” and “works of fiction contain a single plot, with all its imaginable permutations” (37). The more the narrator delves into the workings of this world, the more he gets entangled by the world. In the end he claims that “Tlon is surely a labyrinth, but it is a labyrinth devised by men, a labyrinth destined to be deciphered by men” (42).

The invention of the apocryphal forms another tenet of postmodernism. Brian McHale in relation to the ‘apocryphal history writes that the “apocryphal history contradicts the official version in one of two ways: either it supplements the historical record, claiming to restore what has been lost of suppressed; or it displaces official history altogether” (90). Barry Lewis calls this vicious circles in his study of “Postmodernism and Literature” and notes that this concept can imagined in two ways: one as short circuits where the author steps
into the text (the way Orhan Pamuk steps into the narrative at the end of his novels *Snow* and *Museum of Innocence* where he has been given the responsibility of depicting these stories by the characters themselves) and two as double binds where the text is invaded by historical or real-life figures (the way Rossetti appears as a persona in John Fowles’ *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*). Borges himself remarks in his introduction to “The Garden of Forking Paths” that is a ‘laborious madness’ to sit and compile five-hundred pages in order to compose a ‘vast book’. The much easier thing would be to “go about it is to pretend that those books already exist; and offer a summary, a commentary on them”. Finally, he remarks that “I have chosen to write notes on *imaginary* books” (41).

“The Garden of Forking Paths” in *Labyrinths* posits the idea of temporal and spatial disorder. Stephen Albert studying the works of Ts’ui Pen claims that the ‘garden of forking paths’ is “an infinite series of time, in a growing, dizzying net of divergent, convergent and parallel times. Through these conjecture of sentences the labyrinth becomes symptomatic of the ‘rhizomatic maze’ of Deleuze and Guattari where “any point…can be connected to anything other, and must be…it has no centre, no periphery, no exit, because it is potentially infinite” (Nicol 7). The point of being ‘lost in a maze’ corresponds to the narrative keeping ‘possibilities open’ and interpretative action moves in circles as if in a labyrinth. Finally, Stephen Albert concludes at the end of the story that for Ts’ui Pen “time forks perpetually towards innumerable futures” (53). In “The Zahir” Borges mentions the many incarnations of ‘the zahir’. The book as a trope can be seen in many different incarnations in the ontological discourses of postmodernism fiction. From metafiction to heterocosm to impossible text to vicious circles – it finds itself vested in many strands of thought. The various formations of different labyrinths are synonymous with the fluidity of this image. In “Death and the Compass” Lonnrot tells Scarlach that “In your labyrinths there are three lines too many” stating that in the construction of the labyrinth “many philosophers have lost themselves”. To
this statement Scarlach replies that the next time he devises to kill him the labyrinth will consist of “a single line which is invisible and unceasing” (117).

A confirmation of the various heterogeneous aspects of postmodernist fiction reveals the worlds constructed through the fictional text. McHale described the characteristic of the postmodern fiction as being fundamentally ontological. Thomas Pavel describes ontology as ‘a theoretical description of a universe’ (33). Brian McHale in adapting this description further adds that postmodernism concerns itself with ‘any universe’ and potentially an infinite number of universes. In his discussion of the idea of heterocosm, McHale charts the idea of different world residing in fiction which is different to the external, real world. This idea of heterocosm and infinite number of universes is important because it provides another foundational background to the idea of possible stories. Moreover, a study of the different worlds that abound in postmodern fiction shall provide us with the proto-roots of the possible worlds theory that is the basis for the possible stories contained in the works of Orhan Pamuk.

The discussion of ‘heterocosmica’ entails a discussion between fiction and reality. As we have discussed earlier the idea of postmodern fictionality rests on the incredulity towards realism. While postmodern fiction allows for a certain connection with the real, where it departs it its own propensity for discord and uneasiness. As McHale writes:

The problem is not “forms such as never were in nature” which the theory of heterocosm handles quite easily. Rather, it is the appearance in fictional worlds of individuals who have existed in the real world … these are not reflected in fiction so much as incorporated; they constitute enclaves of ontological difference. (28)

This feature of incorporation of artist-figure or the author-figure will be analysed further in Chapter IV with regards to authorial inclusion into the fictional text. In this chapter,
we shall discuss this merely as a characteristic of the ontological world. This idea of constituting real life characters corresponds to the idea of the actual world or the rigid designator in the possible worlds theory.

Lubomir Dolezel in his theory of possible worlds takes from the tradition of Leibniz and Kripke and then formulates a literary formulation of the possible worlds. The possible worlds are subject to the act of construction. It also signifies a multiple profusion of worlds that can be created out of the actual world. Umberto Eco on the other hand discusses the rule of necessity concerning the validity of the possible worlds and in doing so creates an anti-world. These are the worlds that reside in the contradictory and excluded middle. These are the worlds that do not correspond to the truth validity of the possible world. Eco describes these worlds as subversive critique of world building.

The genealogies of postmodern fiction posit an understanding of the ‘schizoid text’ that needs the possibility of the open ending in order to satiate its paranoid self. The postmodern questioning of its self in light of the “spray of phenomenon” that has hit the credibility of the self has led to its fiction becoming as an infinite ‘writerly text’ with an endless possibility of interpretation. Foucault’s book becomes one of the fundamental texts of “dispersed and heterogeneous” statements where the significations of meaning are charted. The texts of fiction – Pamuk’s *The Black Book* or Borges *Labyrinths* can be situated in the lexicon of works like William S. Burroughs *The Naked Lunch*, Muriel Sparks *the Comforters*, Margaret Atwood’s “Historical Notes” in *The Handmaid’s Tale* where the trope of the book shows a construction of the narrative where the character is aware and paranoid of the ‘authorial omniscience’ where the “ending is not an exit because we cannot get outside the book: the book is the world”. The past few decades have broadened our horizons. The old world nativism has been interpreted and critically examined in order to make room for literature that was previously foreign to the canon as it stands. The “aesthetic practices open
up ways of feeling that are heterogeneous” (116). This heterogeneity forms varied contexts that conceptualizes and formulates unprecedented possibilities. This radical interrogation while bringing about a plethora of conceptual and discursive questions nevertheless leaves them open-ended. For as James Phelan says that this field is still in its “incunabular phase” and any form of prediction will be indeterminate and lacking the whole story.

2.4 Aesthetic Entanglements: Heterotopic Spaces and Sister Arts

The formulation of the Cartesian dualism by Rene Descartes was the foundation of the enlightenment theories which brought about, to quote Kant, man’s liberation from his “self-incurred tutelage”. It vaunted the man as an individual, a human being with a functional intelligence system and capable of taking rational decisions. Descartes’ theory of mind postulated elaborate descriptions of bodily functions and the “animal spirits” working through them to produce thoughts that would make an individual a thinking, rational being. He names the pineal gland as the “principal seat of soul, and the place in which all our thoughts are formed.” In the naming of the parts of the body and its functioning, Descartes made the body essential to the creation of thoughts. The eyes instead of looking heavenward and ears waiting for the whispering of gods turned their attention towards the world around them. The senses as propounded by Hobbes and Locke became essential to our knowing and analysis of the world.

The enlightenment as entailed by this schism caused for the world to be categorized and then integrated into a larger synesthetic\textsuperscript{12} structure. The discovery of mind and the reason that it propagated enabled the academics to work out specializations of knowledge systems that they came across in “clear and distinct ideas”. The Arts was one of the categories that received this new varnished treatment as the republic founded its pride on the civilized

\textsuperscript{12} From Locke’s synesthesia which means sensed with.
pursuits of beauty, science and educations despite Rousseau’s claim that “necessity raised up thrones; arts and sciences have made them strong”. The contemporary art scenario is one where one faction moves as far away from these principles as one can (Abstract, pop art, media) and the other which subsumes and reconciles these practices. Ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny. Michel Foucault in his essay “Nietzsche, Genealogy and History” states the importance of the past in the creation of the present and in that vein charts the genealogy of the events that ultimately lead to that zero point. In the re-integration or synthesis of the arts that exist in thought today, one must look at the original ideas of synthesis that existed in order to look for that thread of commonality and while doing so trace the diverse tertiary roots entwined with the mother thread so that the current trans-substantiation of the preliminary ideas can be understood better.

The distinctions between the fields of painting, sculpture and architecture has been around for centuries. These definitions though were implicit and clubbed under the categories of craft. Arts of the Egyptian and Greek civilizations were bound by their signification necessities. That is to say that the inking of the painting or the sculpting of a marble figure was necessitated by divine or monetary purposes. The making of likeness of the pharaoh’s face was essential to the pharaoh’s recognition of his own face in the afterlife and hence makes his journey to the underworld easier. In the Greek art, painting was relegated to the decorations of pottery. Sculpture on the other hand was based on the Greek ideal of the body – a physicality that could stand the test of time. The artist was not the artist then – he was a craftsman and what he produced was a craft for the families that would commission him. The work created was the extended substance that was secondary to the need, ideal, or value that it signified. Art as a force by itself was invented in the Renaissance age when the painting became a window to the world and the artist the keeper of higher transcendental truth. Leonardo da Vinci in *Paragone* argued in favour of painting by vaunting the eye as the
“noblest sense, the window of the soul” and “less deceived in its functioning than any other sense”. In a very real sense, it is in the Renaissance works like da Vinci’s *Paragone* and Alberti’s *On Painting* that a rudimentary theory of art begins to emerge. This particular theory works on the demarcation of the painting and poetry. This delineation forms the basis of the later categories of definitions of fields of art and still remains the most basic form of binary denominations in the theories surrounding the works of art. Similarly, music was incorporated into the *Republic of letters*13 through the works of Charles Burney and Subetnik. The works of music tended to reflect on the western history of music and the compositions tended to revolve around the works of old masters. One must in this sense talk of Beethoven’s polyphony in the later ages. Beethoven attempted to echo the history of western music in his symphonies. Thus the music played on in fugue state infusing tradition and thought of mind in order to play the perfect, harmonious tune. Schoenberg and Stravinsky later would follow in those paths where they would manage to find it in their symphonies the entire western tradition of music.

Thomas Hobbes in his *Leviathan* formulates the terms of sense, imagination and speech as they pertain to the rational human body in possession of wit and judgment. The sense forms the original perception. Through the eyes, ears, nose, skin and mouth it absorbs the experiences of the external world. In doing so it lists the different sense perceptions that flit around the body and reports to the brain. The Imagination on the other hand is the “decaying sense”. It forms the memories, the obscure visions and motions that the sense has perceived first hand. In contrast to sense which is immediate; the imagination was defined as “that is raised in man….by words, or other voluntary signs, is that we generally call understanding.” The Hobbesian dialectic is a distinction of the necessary parts of the body

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13 Pierre Bayle in his *Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres* published in 1664 referring the 17th century intellectual community that spanned the continent of Europe.
that have a certain function in understanding. These different parts perceive a diverse range of perceptions and are ultimately united in the amorphous brain matter that is according to him inhabited by Reason. Reason, as he calls it, is “the pace: increase of science, the way; and the benefit of mankind, the end”. It is the ultimate function that separates the man from the world around him, makes him capable, it unites and makes it possible to move in a teleological movement towards a certain eschaton.

The sense and imagination in Lockean theory become wit and judgment. In his Essay on Human Understanding, he states:

Wit lying most in the assemblage of ideas, and putting those together with quickness and variety wherein can be found any resemblance or congruity…. judgment, on the contrary, lies quite on the other side, in separating carefully one from another wherein can be found most difference. (Essay BkII chap XI par2)

The realm of judgment forms the arbitrator that reflects on the senses perceived and decides the various alignments and curtailments. Locke appoints philosophy as the guardian of consciousness that in effect produces distinct roles for language and poetry as well as creating referents for the images received by the mind.

Edmund Burke in contrast to John Locke looks for similarities between the images stating that the “mind of man has naturally a far greater alacrity and satisfaction of tracing resemblances than in searching for differences”. The idea needs to made clear first, before moving into the realm of the sublime. Burke uses the metaphor of pleasure and pain to denote the sensations of the beautiful and the sublime. The obscure in words, the “frustration of the power of vision” on account of a verbocentric thesis creates a lack in comprehension. While we can see, we have easier power of navigating through its meaning. However, once it affects the imagination we work, we are at pains to arrive at that final comprehension. Burke attacks
Locke’s judgment as offering “no food for the imagination”. The clear representation produces pleasure in its apprehension but it is the ‘confused’ which by virtue of its pain of perception and the terror it induces through that process which gives rise to the feeling of the sublime.

The notion of the senses and the judgment that moves behind them forms the various process of cognition. These ideas form the basis of the Age of Enlightenment. Its need for order, clarity and precision forms the basis of distinctions of the world around them. The normative functions assigned to the various modes of sensation became the referent points for the fields of thought that inherited them. Thus we see science branching away from philosophy and the arts demarcating among themselves to formulate a historiography and theory of their own. Much of the basic categories in fields of study trace back their origins to these fundamental demarcations. Thus the study of art becomes divided into painting, sculpture, architecture, crafts, music, performance arts. Within these arts are various subdivisions, movements and their own terminologies. It is easy to look of diversity because they stretch out in front of our comprehensible minds. And in light of the countless distinctions it becomes increasingly difficult to find a common synthesis of these various diversities.

The enlightenment theories while looked for schism and the orders of thought also looked for an amalgamation so as to produce a unified thought system. The reason and judgment formulated by Hobbes and Locke both form that central brain wave that can analyse and unite the “assemblage of ideas” received into a single coherent thought. The monism of thought while integrating the various separate strands of comprehension was the prevalent notion of the times. This thought – or in Descartes’ term – doubt denominated the external world of nature, the human being that inhabited this sphere and the world systems generated by human interaction. All these systems were integrated in the human mind which
appropriated the world of nature for its own experience and through this experience navigated through the institutions that it moved through.

We must return then to Descartes’ notion of the body again. The body in that it houses the mind forms the crux of the thought of the enlightenment. Its parts become the progenitors of corresponding thoughts – the various processes of sense-making begin from them. Rene Descartes states in his *Passions of the Soul*:

For the body is a unity which is in a sense indivisible because of the arrangement of its organs, these being so related to one another that the removal of anyone of them renders the whole body defective. (21)

The various interactions of the parts of the body make it possible for the mind to form the necessary doubt required to create his/her own consciousness. The pineal gland according to Descartes forms the seat of this consciousness. It hangs in between the two hemispheres of the brain and because of that position it becomes central to enabling perception. The denoting of such a function to the pineal gland is nothing new. Galen in ancient Greece labelled the various organs of the bodies and hypothesized on the importance of the pineal gland to cognition. Descartes takes the function one step further and makes its small, innocuous organ vital to his Cartesian theories. As he says, “things cannot be in the soul without the soul being aware of them through the inner sensation it has of itself”. The body has to be aware of itself, of its functions in order to achieve the “mark of the mental” or levels of consciousness.

In the postmodern tradition one cannot but help but be confronted by the body. The alarm of schizophrenia, simulacra and the post-traumatic stress disorder are but a few in the long list of afflictions of the body. The neuralgia of the body makes the responses one generates of being highly aware of the bodily function behind it. Cristopher Nash in his *The Unravelling of the Postmodern Mind* talks of a new ‘praxis’:
A praxis may be cultivated for the disintegration of the illusions of so-called ‘natural verities and the false lifestyles they had enforced, and a release of the individual human ‘subject’ from the specious constraints of fixed normative notions of identity.

(2)

The “natural verities” as Nash calls them in the contemporary day and age has moved to the site of the mind. Descartes in his works had referred to the wonders of how “technicolour phenomenology (can) arise from soggy grey matter”. The philosophies of enlightenment in general and Descartes in particular seem to find a strange symphony in the contemporary debates of the functioning the senses and the mind. The updated body matter forms the aspects of consciousness. The functions of the body become essential in the realization of the full extent of the mind’s psychological and physiological awareness. This definition is known as mental causation. Descartes forms the foundational hypothesis of this interaction and the recent branches of neurophilosophy and embedded cognition are in the process of figuring out the principles behind these statements.

The beginning problem of contention for this philosophy is the hard problem of consciousness. This term supposes the question of sensations acquiring certain characteristics. David Chalmers points out:

Why is it that when our cognitive systems engage in visual and auditory information-processing we have visual or auditory experience: the quality of deep blue, the sensation of middle C? (9)

Joseph Levine formulates the same problem in his “explanatory gap” which talks about the difficulty of understanding how physical properties give rise to certain feelings. What was taken for granted in the theories of enlightenment is now being questioned and contested in the contemporary. The brain has been opened and its various parts have been labelled.
Cognitive functions have been traced to specific brain regions which are defined as neural correlates. As Georg Goldenberg states in his essay, “How the Mind Moves the Body: Lessons from Apraxia”:

Interest has shifted to interactions between the material human body and its surroundings and to the way in which such interactions shape the mind. Proponents of this approach have expressed the hope that it will ultimately dissolve the Cartesian divide between the immaterial mind and the material existence of human beings. (98)

The fields of cognition are increasingly focusing on the underlying scientific explanations to the questions of consciousness. The vaunted ideas that formed the teleological progress of the civilization is now brought to the roots of its existence. The body forms the axis around which such explanations are studied and debated. The connectivity of the cells of the brain and the resulting thoughts that they portray forms the foundation of neurophilosophy. The interaction of the mind and the body forms at its most basic level. While the enlightenment ideas sought to move forward from the initial foundations, these philosophies of the mind enquire within. The actual matter of the brain forms the object of study and through this cognitive module are formed.

The first term of interest in these cognitive modules is Dissociation which means that the functions of the mind are arranged according to specific functions. This basic term supposes the neurological term to the external categorization of the sense functions. This term entails into sub terms which are Association, Single Dissociation and Double Dissociation. The term Association pre-supposes a deficit in the functioning of certain neural functions. It postulates that the deficits in the regions of the brain occur in pairs. Single Dissociation, on the other hand, formulates the loss of one cognitive faculty while the other is spared. Double Dissociation forms the pinnacle of relative cognitive function as it works as a loss of a certain
cognitive function in one case while the same cognitive function can be retained in the other. These modules of dissociation form the basis of the theory of neurophilosophy where the inter-connectedness of these modules systems form the basis of language and interpretive skills in the human being. The neural processing of these modules then becomes important to the cognitive theory of the mind that can formulate such a synthesis that we are searching for.

The final postulate in the field of neurophilosophy is the theory of embodied cognition. This theory postulates that all aspects of cognition have been shaped by the aspects of the human body. The mind that constructs various functions and assumptions of the world is dependent on the knowledge that has come from the body. “The brain exercises the greatest power in man” and the brain’s functioning comes from the sensations that have been transmitted by the body via neurons into the cortices of the brain. As Margaret Wilson says, “the thinnest veneer of human thought is effective only because it is supported by this much older and much powerful, though usually unconscious sensorimotor knowledge” (Wilson 300). This embodied cognition is situated in the context of the environment outside it. It moves in interaction with the world outside it, its body evolving for the kind of information flow that is necessary between the mind and the world.

The localization of function informs the theories of representation of art which is codified through various eras and movements throughout the history of western thought. Art presupposes the body. It is the likeness of it and its complete distortion. The body represented in art from the ancient times to the medieval was secondary to its own identity and more of a secondary entity “in constant touch with the signifying forms outside it”. The Egyptian art worked in – what Ernst Gombrich called – the mode of conceptual representation. It chiselled into representation the essential human features and perfected those basic forms. The eye was fixed more on the conceptual nature of human representation rather than the actual form of the human body – its unique subjectivity. It did not see body as it should be seen. And so
later in the medieval age, art became a tool of spreading the message of the messiah. The commission of art was done in direct proportion to its divine significance. The body became even less an object of representation. It was flattened and disfigured in relation to its real existence. The iconological decoding the body’s postures, the adoration of the saviour and his flock – they all stood in paramount importance. The complete aesthetic realization of the body began in the age of Renaissance though perhaps not achieved in its entirety. Alberti in his *On Painting* introduces this term called “subsignare” which means moving beneath the surface to its true signification which he denotes as the *animus* or the soul. The work of art formed the rung through which one can move forward to divine contemplation. It formed the window to the soul.

In the contemporary world there the ultimate confrontation as Kundera points out is the “physiological materiality of man”. The body in its flesh and blood existence has shifted from being represented in to becoming a mode of representation. Samuel Taylor’s *Brontosaurus* video shows a naked man dancing in front of a huge wall and reflecting his shadow onto it. The music we cannot hear; however, he goes on dancing regardless. This video can be taken as a case study for the body as a terrain for the synthesis of various arts. The shadow on the wall, the music, the man dancing – they correspond to various strands that exist in the field of arts that is painting, music and dance. The body becomes the site for the coming together of all these genres of performance. Bruce Nauman’s human fountain is another representation of this mode of thought. Michel Foucault focuses on the idea of bodily inscriptions where the body is constituted within specific nexus of culture and power regimes. These discourses act upon and inform the construction of the body. Mary Douglas describes the body as a “powerful symbolic form, a surface on which the central rules, hierarchies, and even metaphysical commitments of a culture are inscribed”. The body since the development of man has formed the object of his imprinting. The representation of the body is emblematic
of the era to which it belongs. Thus in the era of Renaissance it had a different function. In the contemporary age it has a different function. From being thoroughly abstracted in Picasso’s works to the above mentioned vehicle of the same art – the body in the current age carries not only its own signification but also the echoes the inscriptions of the generations that have come before it.

There is a profound crisis in the attempt to achieve a synthesis of arts that would not be transient, and incumbent on a certain point of time but rather a normalized and steady mode of representation. The synthesis of arts forms a fundamental question of how many arts that can be re-integrated to the medium of choosing. In the criteria of performance art – the body becomes the site of representation of music, dance and the undertones of narration. In an ekphrastic tradition, the text can constitute of the image, the music, the rhythmic beats of dancing, architectural principles etc. through the power of description. Perfection of a method of representation entails an “organizing” of a certain “iconography of norms and resolving the disconcerting mutability of flesh and blood”. The body becoming the site of synthesis carries with it the threat of grotesque disfiguration. As Butler has stated, there is something not the same about the body after it has undergone this level of synthesis. While certain forms of art can co-exist harmoniously it can only sustain such a co-existence for a certain period of time. This space in which arts intersect exists in the state of transition. There is a certain nostalgia involved as well a sense of urgency in which the body wants to remember its original state and yet at the same time waits impatiently for the next state of integration.

At this juncture, one needs to compare the other possible space where a synthesis of art can be achieved. The narrative is perhaps one of the oldest forms of communication and transmission of ideas. In the textual form, it supposes a more stable form in which the intersection of arts can be made and at the same time has failures in representation in which the body can soar like in the representation of music and performance arts. Narrative is
derived from the Latin word *narrativus* which means something that recounts or narrates. In the contemporary scenario, the narrative turn has led its exponents to look for the underlying narrative in diverse disciplines.

The textual word ever since the formulation of the theory of painting and as such fine arts has been in confrontation with the ‘painted strangeness’. While da Vinci spoke for the eye and the visual greatness of the painting and the perspectival annunciation that it offers, Alberti wrote of terms like *inventio* (the idea), *composito* (fitting together) and *historia* (the chief narrative point). In his treatise he writes, “the first parts of a work are planes, because from these (come) members, from members’ bodies, (and) from these the historia, indeed the final and absolute thing” (Grayson 72). The narrative for Alberti should be focus, the meaning that resides when you unravel the painting. Reynolds concept of Intellectual dignity in painting arises from Alberti’s notions of *historia* where the painting deserves the status of liberal art which it can achieve through the narration of history and poetry through its canvas. The debate still ranges on the necessity of using narration in the creation of the painted world or whether the canvas should represent the interplay of light and colour.

The clear demarcation on the fields of word and image is informed by Lessing’s “Laocoon”. This seminal text in the field of art theory forms the binary oppositions which still form the rather hazy boundaries of the genres today. The foundations of the distinction of poetry and painting are founded on the concepts of space and time. Lessing writes:

The one using forms and colours in space, the other articulates sounds in time…and if signs must unquestionably stand in convenient relation with the thing signified, then signs arranged side by side can represent only objects existing side by side, or whose parts exist, while consecutive signs can express only objects which succeed each other….in time. (30)
Joseph Frank claims the deviant nature of literary space which seems to be a “denial of history and the escape into irrational reverence for mythic space” (97). The claim to spatiality for literature can only be via its written nature. In the same way a painting can attain temporality through the process of the depiction of the body. While imitating the body, the painting can depict action hence achieving this other quality. The principles laid down by Lessing suggest an indirectness in which a certain kind of transference can happen. Mostly however they form “value judgments, canons of acceptable works and formulations of the ideological significance of styles, movements, and genres” (103) which ultimately aims at the segregation of two genres and their varied functions.

The words bring the images into the mind through its descriptions. The term *Ekphrasis* forms the stepping stone to the understanding of the narrative as a medium which can possibly achieve a certain synthesis of the arts. The narrative works on description, on filling the aporetic gap of metonymic understanding. In these “ontic spheres” or gaps of thought, there is a possibility for the entry of such arts in order to create a homogeneous rendering of their various facets. In the postmodern scenario where the lines of categories are becoming blurred increasingly, there are non-critical spaces that contain an affinity to the inclusion of such non-narrative elements in order to complete the process of interpretation of narratives.

This liminal zone forms the first of the levels of intentionality in narration. Lisa Zunshine in her *Why We Read Fiction: Theory of the Mind and Novel* refers to this concept. The narrative becomes the site which can allow the reader to access the different levels of intentional meaning. Through the textual interplay, the narrative can be privy to as much as ten levels of intentionality if the reader has the resolve to comb through it. Zunshine adapts Daniel Dennett’s three levels of intentionality hypothesizing that these three levels can in effect be stretched into the realm of infinity. The infinite levels however remain a utopian
concept because the cognitive apparatus of a human being can only reach till the fifth level of intentionality. What Zunshine brings out is the difficulty of moving below the various layers of embedded cognition and still hold on to the threads of comprehension that we had earlier. There will be a point where “the agglomeration of multiply embedded minds proves too much of a cognitive load” (31). The binaries explicated in Lessing’s work correspond to our need for straight-laced understanding of the world around us. The neat compartmentalization of the various works of art gives a safety net much like labelling our drawers or incorporating a proper filing system. Through the medium of narrative, however, we can open the mind to multiple possibilities, inciting the various levels of cognition lying dormant into action.

The levels of intentionality as Dennett described begin from simple states of cognition and then moves on to more nested forms of embedment. The level of attribution works in the binary logistics or the categories where the physicality and the individuality of the forms of art are laid out. A painting like *Mona Lisa* differs from Beethoven’s symphony which differs from Michelangelo’s *David* which differs from a dancer performing ballet or Odissi. The arts are secluded in relation to their medium of expression and for the sheer necessity to avoid confusion one has to categorize them. The mind however needs a challenge that helps it move beyond the ordinary into the realms of complex forms of cognition. The synthesis of arts poses such a challenge. To embed it in a narrative stance would require more than just incorporating attributes into the textual space. What it requires is what Zunshine calls the ‘writer’s manipulation’ that operates on the reader’s need to acquire a sophisticated level of interpretation of the text that moves beyond the surface physical or biological features to the level of abstraction that can plays out in levels beyond the fourth or the fifth levels of intentionality. This level of interpretation is particular to the written culture which can bring about such an embedded nature of thinking. Zunshine favours the written culture which by
virtue of its ability to achieve this level of thinking forms an especially fertile ground for the creation of such multiple possible of narration. As Zunshine states:

    The availability of the means of written transmission, such as print, enables the writer “to carry the incommensurable to extremes in representations of human life” and, by so doing, explore [or develop] the hitherto-quiescent cognitive spaces. (38)

The space of narrative is the forms the relevant ground for the creation of possible worlds. The term possible world was used by Leibniz to the describe the world we inhabit as the “best of all possible worlds”. This term is used in contemporary narrative theory as multiple world that the narrative can create and sustain. The mimetic representation of the actual world forms the central world which the referent to the other worlds that have been created and that feed from this central world. Lubomir Dolezel describes this phenomenon as “heterocosm”. A “heterocosm” is a connected multiverse that exists in the fictional world and which depends on the consciousness of the reader. This possible world is amphibious in the sense that it is “suspended between belief and disbelief”. It forms the most complex levels of interpretation and compels the reader by its strange newness.

The level of narrative functions differently from the body in the sense that it is a more encompassing form. As the terms of Heteroglossia, heterotopia and possible worlds suggest, the narrative forms the space where an interplay of various senses and their corresponding art can happen. The body is constrained by its own mortality; the narrative is only limited by what kind of direction the mind can take. However, we can establish that these two mediums form the spaces necessary to an integration of the various genres of art. The world views move between the abstract objectification and the increasing paranoia of such objectification. The world is a signification of forces generated by man and the sphere that he inhabits. The body as a microcosm of that world is a materiality that is always been acted upon by separate
points of view at a certain point of time. For a synthesis one needs to see the entirety of its existence, as a holonic unification of the most diverse strands that the eye perceives.

The theory of gestalt in cognitive psychology pre-supposes such an awareness. This term was introduced by Christian von Ehrenfels as the perception of an “essence or shape of an entity’s complete form”. Ehrenfels propounded that the human eye perceives the object in its complete appearance before it has been broken down into parts inside the brain matter. This concept therefore works towards an achievement of stable principles by the human mind. This stability of forms enables the human mind to achieve a holonic understanding.

Holon is a term coined by Arthur Koestler in his *The Ghost in the Machine* which means being a part and a whole at the same time. Holons exist as self-contained, individual wholes while at the same time they are sub-nodes in a complex, inter-connected system. The workings of arts within such a medium would engineer such a synthesis. The narrative and the body both are such systems where the arts can be integrated and performed. The boundaries of genres are being blurred increasingly in this day and age. One field feeds from the other field and in this mutual symbiosis an inter-disciplinary integration of the fields of study can be posited. The next step of the perceptions of various medias in symbiosis can be done in awareness of the step that has been taken. In the contemporary situation the interdisciplinary approach to the various fields of thought speaks of a need to find something new under the sun. The mutation of fields stimulates man’s desire to break new paths of discovery and interpretation. The re-integration of arts works with this desire. In this scenario one needs to move beyond what Kundera’s calls misomusy or detestation of muses and focus increasingly on the arts that feed the wellspring of human thought. This holarchic incorporation of parts into wholes which again form various parts in larger wholes will bring about a certain kind of change in man’s thought process calling for a new study of the fields and their categories creating spaces of thought that are innovative and new. The possibilities
of the synthesis of arts works in those spaces of thought which can not only bring about new ways of defining them but also change the perspectives of the mediums that have been chosen for them to reside. The dated systems of enlightenment thought formulated the categories for the human mind to grow in. These theories empowered the individual and that individual thought has now been updated and renovated so much so that the mind, body and the world around them comes together to formulate a totality in diversity that can shed new light on what we perceive and create.
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