AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

THE RISE OF THE STORYTELLER: HISTORIOGRAPHIC METAFICTION IN THREE CONTEMPORARY BRITISH NOVELS

by
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A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
to the Department of English
of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences
at the American University of Beirut

Beirut, Lebanon
March 2010

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Date of thesis/dissertation defense: March 26, 2010

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My gratitude goes first and foremost to my thesis advisor Dr. John Pedro Schwartz whose support, encouragement and faith in my capacities made achieving this project a reality.

I am grateful for my husband, Shadi Bakhour, who has motivated me throughout the research and writing processes. He has provided me, as always, with the substantial emotional support.

I have to admit that my yet-unborn child, Lara, has played a significant role in compelling me to write the thesis, redraft, and defend it before she is born.

Finally, I would like to express my utmost gratitude to my parents who were confident in my capabilities and remain a never ending source for my success.

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Huda Marwan Dimashkie for Master of Arts
Major: English Literature

Title: The Rise of the Storyteller: Historiographic Metafiction in Three Contemporary British Novels

This thesis adds a new dimension to the genre of historiographic metafictions by noting and raising awareness of the existence of a storyteller within, not a narrator. This storyteller's existence achieves historiographic metafictitious purposes in the characteristics of the storyteller, in the methods of storytelling, and in the themes that the storyteller explores. Thereafter, this study investigates the re-emergence of storytelling in historiographic metafictions and how it relates to imposing reconsiderations of history in the postmodernist age.

The study examines the debate that centered on historiography in the postmodernist age. It then looks critically at Irving Howe's "History and the Novel", Linda Hutcheon's A Poetics of Postmodernism, and Kevin Paul Smith's The Postmodern Fairytale: Folkloric Intertexts in Contemporary Fiction. Setting the framework thus, the study then looks at three novels separately, Graham Swift's Waterland, Julian Barnes's Flaubert's Parrot, and Jeanette Winterson's Sexing the Cherry, in order to investigate the presence of a storyteller within and how his/her presence adds a new dimension to historiographic metafictions.

Consequently, this study challenges Benjamin's claim, in his "The Storyteller", that "the art of storytelling is coming to an end" while it simultaneously proves that Barthes's declaration in "The Death of the Author" that "the modern scriptor [sic] [who] is born simultaneously with the text" (par 5) is the storyteller who emerges in the postmodern historiographic metafictions.

CONTENTS

Introduction

Framework

In the midst of what seems to be his awakening, one of the protagonists in the novel Chekhov's Journey proclaims that "Past events can be altered. History gets rewritten. Well, we've just found that this applies to the real world too… Maybe the real history of the world is changing constantly? And why? Because history is a fiction. It's a dream in the mind of humanity" (174). Proposing such an approach to history, the reader is intrigued to know whether this utterance forms the protagonist's beliefs solely or goes beyond this protagonist to embrace other protagonists' beliefs from other novels written at around the same time. A quick examination of the novels written as of the 1960s reveals that several of these novels have a resemblance with respect to their protagonists' treatment of history. Yet, this treatment of history is huddled with a rebirth of an interest in storytelling that might as well be accompanied with fairytales. These novels deal with issues about history while placing their novels within fairytale contexts and a storytelling atmosphere- a factor indicative of our ability to group them under one bundle, that of historiographic metafictions. This observation puts forward several questions: what are historiographic metafictions and how do they relate to postmodernism? What is characteristic of historiographic metafictions? What role does the fairytale play in historiographic metafictions and does the awareness of the storyteller within these historiographic metafictions change our understanding of historiographic metafictions? How is the storyteller in historiographic metafictions different from other storytellers? Finally, what implications does the consciousness of the storyteller within historiographic metafictions have towards the postmodernist age? To probe these questions, it would be

helpful to look at three novels: Graham Swift's Waterland, Julian Barnes's Flaubert's Parrot, and Jeanette Winterson's Sexing the Cherry.

Definition of Key Terms

Postmodernism

The aforementioned novels have been hailed postmodernist by most critics who are advocates of the postmodernist age and literature. Thereafter, it is logical to define postmodernism and then define and examine historiographic metafictions and how they relate to postmodernist literature. Postmodernism, the framework of this study, is itself a much debated concept. The debate-ability of postmodernism centers around whether the postmodern is a continuation of the modern or comes as a radical break from it (Harvey; Hutcheon; Smith; McHale). This controversy leads to three different views of postmodernism: the first refers "to the non-realist and non-traditional literature and art of the post-World War Two period". The second view perceives the postmodern as that which "takes certain modernist characteristics to an extreme stage". The third view refers

> to a more general human condition in the 'late-capitalist' world of the post 1950s, a period marked by the end of what Jean-François Lyotard calls the grand 'meta-narratives' of western culture. The myths by which we once legitimized knowledge and practice--Christianity, Science, Democracy, Communism, Progress, no longer have the unquestioning support necessary to sustain the projects which were undertaken in their name, resulting in a radical decentring of our cultural sphere (Keep, McLaughlin, and Parmar par 1).

Despite these different postmodernisms, advocates of postmodernism observe a defining characteristic of postmodernism: it does not credit *a* single truth or *an* absolute meaning; rather, truth and meaning are perceived as "historical constructs" and thereafter postmodernism seeks to expose the mechanisms by which this truth and meaning have become natural (Keep, Mc Laughlin, and Parmar par 2). In this respect, postmodernist fiction is often perceived as rebellious of prevailing ideologies or master-narratives (Lyotard; Hutcheon; Beebee). Postmodern fiction is often characterized by mixing of genres and awareness about genre conventions; intertexuality, often employed by rewriting previous texts; and metafictionality and authorial invasion with an analytical attitude as critic Gregory Rubinson explains in his introduction to The Fiction of Rushdie, Barnes, Winterson and Carter (12-13). Such techniques that characterize postmodernist fiction allow for the discrediting of the existence of *a* single truth or *an* absolute meaning. Posing such definitions, however, one understands why postmodernism is problematic as critics cannot agree whether it forms a radical break with modernism or is merely an extension of modernism – and hence, does not exist as an era in and of itself. Moreover, the techniques that postmodernist writers resort to problematize this age further as they seem to simply imitate previous literature without achieving solely creative outcomes.

Historiographic Metaficition

In this hubbub of postmodernist literature, theorist Linda Hutcheon identifies a genre within postmodernist literature which she labels as historiographic metafiction. This genre adds a layer to the postmodernist discrediting of the existence of *a* single truth or *an* absolute meaning. Historiography as historian Louis Gottschalk defines it in his book Understanding History is the "imaginative reconstruction" of the "process of

critically examining and analyzing the records and survivals of the past" (48). Metafiction is the characteristic of being self-reflexive and critical of one's style, methods, and techniques. Hence, historiographic metafiction, as Hutcheon explains, is a combination of these two concepts. This genre or phenomenon, she explains in her book A Poetics of Postmodernism, centers on these postmodern novels that have an element of metafiction in them, i.e. they reflect on the writing process and hence stress their "fictionality", yet, at the same time, "root themselves in the historical world" (x). Historiographic metafictions aim at recounting historical occurrences while simultaneously questioning anything that has been taken for granted vis-à-vis historiography. This genre reveals the manipulability of the past from the present's point of view as the past is accessible only through documents and archives that are prone to construction and misappropriation. Hutcheon explains that these historiographic metafictions manage to mingle the historical with the literary (a-once-forbidden and a move degrading-for-historians) by playing around with "narrative form, intertexuality, [and] strategies of representation" (xii). Such a concept proves problematic because of the mix between history and fiction and the distortion of the rigid boundaries between these "opposing" concepts. While postmodernist fiction is characterized by the discrediting of *a* single version of the truth, historiographic metafictions specifically discredit history's claims to offering the objective truth; thereafter, the assault in historiographic metafiction is pertinent exclusively to the truth of history.

Fairytales

In many instances, historiographic metafictions are laden with fairytale intertexuality, used and abused. Examining these intertexts shows that they are used

specifically for historiographic metafictitious purposes. Thereafter, it would be helpful to attempt to define the fairytale as it is a concept that has a problematic aspect. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) online defines it as "**a.** A tale about fairies. Also *gen.*, fairy legend, faerie. **b.** An unreal or incredible story. **c.** A falsehood" ("fairytale"). Merriam Webster's Dictionary (MWD) online also provides a similar definition: **1 a**: a story (as for children) involving fantastic forces and beings (as fairies, wizards, and goblins) —called also *fairy story* **b**: a story in which improbable events lead to a happy ending **2**: a made-up story usually designed to mislead" ("fairytale"). Beyond these simple definitions however, critic Frederic Jameson perceives the fairytale as "the irrepressible voice and expression of the under-classes of the great systems of domination" (qtd. in Sellers 10). Rosemary Jackson, yet another critic, claims that the fairytale is distinctive in the "authority of its omniscient narrative voice". She adds that the "formulaic 'once upon a time' and 'happily ever after'" move the story into a far-away past while imposing passivity on the reader's side (qtd. in Sellers 10). Knowing that Jameson is a Marxist critic, his perception of the fairytale enables him to study fairytales from a Marxist perspective. Similarly, posing the definition as such, Jackson, a feminist critic, is able to render these fairytales a feminist reading.

Beyond the aforementioned definitions, it would be helpful to resort to critics who are postmodern (or wrote in the postmodern age) but do not necessarily have a specific agenda beyond that. Writer J.R.R. Tolkien realizes the difficulty of defining fairytales as their definition does not "depend on any definition or historical account of elf or fairy, but upon the nature of Fairie: the Perilous Realm itself, and the air that blows in that country. [He] will not attempt to define that, nor to describe it directly. It cannot be done"

(Tree and Leaf 16). Similarly, folklorist Stith Thompson in his book The Folktale recognizes the lucid nature of fairytales- or "tales of the marvelous" as he would like to call them- as they hinder readers from discerning whether the events are magical or simply "exaggerations of actual qualities" (81). Bearing that in mind, Thompson defines the fairytale as "a tale of some length involving a succession of motifs or episodes. It moves in an unreal world without definite locality or definite creatures and is filled with the marvelous. In this never-never land humble heroes kill adversaries, succeed to kingdoms and marry princesses" (8). Placing these definitions against one another, one understands that the concept of the fairytale is problematic as it cannot be rigidly defined; it can only be identified by referring to certain elements like the "Perilous Realm" (Tolkien 16), magic realist constituents, and repetitive "motifs or episodes" (Thompson 8). Bearing the above in mind, one understands why postmodernism, historiographic metafiction and the fairytale are problematic concepts – and, indeed, why a mix of all three concepts makes everything even more problematic especially when history becomes involved therein.

Debate on Historiography

Theorist David Harvey while attempting to identify and define the postmodern in his book The Condition of Postmodernity realizes the surfacing of a "peculiar treatment of the past" whereby "postmodernism abandons all sense of historical continuity and memory, while simultaneously developing an incredible ability to plunder history and absorb whatever it finds there as some aspect of the present" (54). Harvey explains how postmodernism's approach to history makes the historian an "archeologist of the past" assembling the past into new histories. This is however, as Hutcheon notes, not only the

case of the historian but also of the character in the historiographic metafictitious postmodernist novel who ardently trespasses the historians' field and hails himself a true historian. In this respect, history becomes problematic in the postmodernist age which justifies the proliferation of historiographic metafictions. What further establishes the postmodern perception of history is that it becomes huddled with its antithesis: the story. This new perception of history originates from the realization that history, biography and documentary- the truthful stories that one confides in- share the same outburst of emotions that myth, legend, fairytales and fiction provoke. What is history but a tragedy of one person's downfall or comedy of another person's triumph? Hence, with the rise of historiographic metafictions, history becomes a subject of debate in the postmodernist age.

Lyotard in his The Postmodern Condition realizes that knowledge in the postmodern age has become a "question of government" (9). This realization is at the crux of the debate-ability of the subject of history as Lyotard asks: "who decides what knowledge [or rather history] is, and who knows what needs to be decided?" (9). Historian David Fischer explains in his book Historians' Fallacies, a historian would like to believe the following:

> to the truth of art, external reality is irrelevant. Art creates its own reality, within which truth and the perfection of beauty is the infinite refinement of the self. History is very different. It is an empirical search for external truths, and for the best, most complete, and most profound external truths, in a maximal corresponding relationship with the absolute reality of the past events.

Nonetheless, this perception is exactly what historiographic metafiction seeks to revolutionize, and Fischer is a proponent of such an endeavor because as he proclaims the above statement, it is not without being sarcastic.

Yet, history as a genre never laid claim to objectivity and absolute truth, so what makes historiographic metafiction innovative? How is it saying anything new? Historiographic metafictions, like the postmodern critiques of history more generally, take the fictional nature of historiography as their central subject, calling into question historiography's social exclusions in terms of subject matter, its political motivations, its ideological self-interest, its very audiences and authors, its complexity in sexism, racism, classism, its rhetoric, i.e. persuasive character, and its discursive texture, i.e. its assumptions as to what constitutes knowledge. The approach thereafter of these historiographic metafictions is what makes them innovative.

Because of the uncertainty that accompanies postmodernism, the postmodern, Hutcheon explains, is often perceived as "ahistorical […] by Marxists and traditionalists [-] from semiotics to deconstruction" (87). Hutcheon, along with critics who favor postmodernism, refutes such a misreading of the postmodern. It is not that the postmodern is "ahistorical"; rather, postmodernism questions the certainty with which historical 'facts' are absorbed since history is nothing but a human construct, like fiction (as this study aims to show). Yet, such an acknowledgment does not erase the existence of the reality of past time and prior events; on the contrary, it acknowledges its existence but questions our ability to grasp it through history. Andreas Huyssen, Hutcheon explains, sees that postmodernism places history in the "dustbin of an obsolete episteme, arguing gleefully that history does not exist except as a text" (qtd. in A Poetics of

Postmodernism 16). Hutcheon deems this view false as history is not marked as outdated as much as it is being reconsidered as a "human construct" (16). And the only accessibility to history is through the text (documents, evidence, eye-witness accounts) - not that history did not exist, Hutcheon continues. She also observes that theorist Frederic Jameson hopes that postmodern art offers a "genuine historicity" which is "social, historical and existential present and past as 'referent' or as 'ultimate objects" (qtd. in A Poetics of Postmodernism 24). Hutcheon refutes this view because postmodern art refuses to offer a genuine historicity as a means of challenging the very likelihood of being able to discern the "ultimate objects" of the past (24). Jameson's attack on postmodernism comes from his belief that history is diminished to mere nostalgia; the past is only related to with melancholy. Hutcheon's rebuttal does not perceive the postmodernist rethinking of history as nostalgic because postmodernists avoid the present while romanticizing a fantasy of the past and/or recuperating "that past as edenic" (39). Moreover, Jameson frowns upon the jumbling of history with fiction and the meddling with the facts of history; however, by thus doing, postmodernism alerts the reader to the "nature of the historical referent" (Hutcheon 89). Thus, raising the awareness about the whereabouts of history should not be considered as a crime against it.

Hutcheon continues that it is historian Hayden White who "feels" that "writing of history in the form of narrative representations of the past is a highly conventional and indeed literary endeavor" (96). In his Tropics of Discourse, White articulates his thoughts plainly about the new perception of history that historians should accept:

> Historians must be prepared to entertain the notion that history, as currently conceived, is a kind of historical accident, a product of a

> specific historical situation, and that, with the passing of the misunderstandings that produced that situation, history itself may lose its status as an autonomous and self-authenticating mode of thought. It may well be that the most difficult task which the current generation of historians will be called upon to perform is to expose the historically conditioned character of the historical discipline, to preside over the dissolution of history's claim to autonomy among the disciplines (29)

Similarly, scholar Michel de Certeau claims that writing history dislodges the events that took place in the past by offering a "limited and limiting attempt to understand the relations between a place, a discipline, and the construction of a text", Hutcheon notes (97). Thereafter, it is normal that postmodernists attack history for offering a "limited" account of the past. The tendency in postmodernism is to shift the focus of historiography to abandoned areas of study- social, cultural, and economic- in order to confront history's elimination of "ex-centric" individuals and events, Hutcheon illuminates (95). By thus doing, postmodernism does indeed, as critic Richard Martin notes in his essay "Clio Bemused", identify history "as public collective awareness of the past, or as private revisions of public experience, or even as the elevation of private experience to public consciousness" (24); yet, it does not contaminate or cause the "eruptions of contemporary fictional activity" (Martin 24). If it does so, it does so to raise people's awareness about the constructedness of history. Additionally, Martin's observation refutes his statement that postmodern fiction "decreates" history; this fiction problematizes history but does not and cannot "banish" history for it needs it for critical juxtaposition of past with the

present and present with the past for evaluative and analytical purposes. Hence, while a modernist agrees with James Joyce's famous quote: "history is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake" (Ulysses 31), postmodernists choose to confront history with all the risks involved. Postmodernists insist on standing "inside" history- not keep it as a phenomenal discourse and profession for historians only.

Critical Assessment

Considering the aforementioned, the postmodernist phenomenon of historiographic metafiction in which the novelist engages his characters in questioning and rewriting history while placing their stories and histories within a storytelling atmosphere provokes looking closely at the works of several critics. First, looking closely at Irving Howe's essay "History and the Novel" serves as a point of departure for this study as it foregrounds historiographic metafiction though it does not give it its name. Then, it is important to look at Linda Hutcheon's book A Poetics of Postmodernism as it coins the term historiographic metafiction and examines it through the lens of postmodernism. Next, looking at Kevin Paul Smith's The Postmodern Fairytale: Folkloric Intertexts in Contemporary Fiction allows for a reconceptualization of historiographic metafiction. Afterwards, looking at Walter Benjamin's essay "The Storyteller: Reflections on the Work of Nikolai Leskov" allows for reconfiguring historiographic metafiction. Finally, looking at Roland Barthes's essay "The Death of the Author" allows for a new interpretation of historiographic metafiction.

Irving Howe's "History and the Novel"

In his essay "History and the Novel", as the title suggests, Howe explores the relationship between history and the novel. He marvels at the potential of the novel to

assimilate history into its fictional setting while emphasizing its fictionality-historiographic metafiction unnamed. He highlights the inseparable nature of history vis-à-vis the novel as it is impossible to "separate ideological sentiments from literary judgments, for [we] read as whole persons, with a rush of feeling and idea that is stronger than any recognition of the book's local verisimilitude" (1536). Hence, his essay instigates the rise of a solid relationship between history and the novel – a point which Hutcheon notes, labels and takes to the extremes. Howe declares that "time crumbles that rock [of history] into grains of sand [, and the] circumstances forming the matrix of fiction soon turn out to be inaccessible, distant, perhaps no longer arresting" (1538). Despite the effects of time, history's presence within the novel prompts the questioning and doubt of once-fixed truths, not necessarily for the purpose of providing alternative histories (as many critics, like Hutcheon and Lyotard have suggested) but for questioning whether any sense of truth may be obtained.

On the one hand, Howe's position throughout the essay refrains from agreeing with the formalists who isolate literature from history, and, on the other hand, he resists cultural attitude that tends to over politicize literature and thus diminishes writers into advocates of ideology with which one either agrees or disagrees. Furthermore, he presents an interesting purpose for the history in the novel that several critics fail to recognize: he claims that the presence of history instigates in the readers' minds a sense of uncertainty

> Still, we ought not to think of history as a tyrant imposing itself, as if from necessity, upon every novel within reach. As history seeps into the novel, it becomes transformed into something else, into what might be called

> history-in-the-novel. Nor does history make itself felt simply as a reproduction of the familiar world. For many acceptable novels a sort of moderate mimesis is sufficient, the kind about which we say, "Well, it gives a pretty faithful picture of life in Oklahoma during the Depression years." Still, as modern readers we have come to expect more. Accurate representation seems no longer enough, if only because journalism claims--or pretends--to offer as much. At least since the late nineteenth century we have imposed an enormous cultural burden upon the novel, coming to think of it as an agency of moral criticism, and more remarkably as a creator of values. *How We Live becomes How Should We Live?--and then, Can We Live?* (1542, italics my emphasis)

So, instead of burdening history in historiographic metafictions with the sole purpose of questioning the accuracy of certain histories and presenting simultaneously alternative true histories (not one history), Howe suggests that the presence of history problematizes altogether history from its roots and leads to fundamental questioning: "Can we live?" Holding such a position that denies the possibility of a society and of living is an exaggeration from Howe's side. Although postmodernism intentionally creates a tension between the text and the outside-supposedly-real world, between culture and nature, the individual and the collective, it is this tension that makes society possible. The question of "To be or not to be" depends on the contradictions that hover around and with postmodernism and allows the postmodernist to survive.

Howe ends his essay by lamenting the fact that the young generation reading these postmodern novels cannot relate with the history embedded therein. Mentioning

this point highlights, I believe, the importance of historiographic metafictions as they include not only history but also fairytales, both of which recount stories of the past (remote or recent) and have been told and retold (accurately or inaccurately) over the generations- a point that critics who have examined the relationship between historiographic metafiction and fairytales have missed out. Considering fairytales, along with history in historiographic metafictions, reveals a relationship between these once-perceived-as-conflicting genres. Thereafter, Howe's statement,

> [i]n the novel there is no 'once upon a time...' There is London in the 1840s, Moscow in the 1950s. The clock rules; place helps determine psychic formation; characters reach identity through social role. In the novel a complex of circumstances often emerges as a "slice" of time across the passage of history, since an illusion of historical stoppage is essential for that "thickness" of specification at which many novels aim: Chicago as it looked upon Sister Carrie's arrival, Paris seen through the eyes of Swann [,] (1544)

collapses in front of historiographic metafictions that blend history, fairytale, and novel conventions.

Linda Hutcheon's A Poetics of Postmodernism

While trying to "discuss the postmodern" in Poetics:

> its history in relation to modernism and the 1960s; its structural model derived from the architecture that first gave it its name; its challenge to the 'ex-centric' minoritarian discourses that shaped it; its challenges to those theories and practices that suppress the 'situating' of discourse[,] (xi)

Hutcheon coins the term historiographic metafiction. Her theory about this type of metafiction offers an excellent basis for those who are interested in learning about postmodernism and perceiving the postmodern parody, intertexuality, and lucidity of history and other such totalizing concepts as 'positive'. She tries to define and succeeds in defining the postmodern; she also successfully avoids major simplifications of the postmodern that other critics have fallen under which were in charge of misunderstanding and underestimating the density of postmodernism and its cultural practices (writing being one of these practices). Her book might as well have been called A Defense of Postmodernism as it validates all what postmodernism had been assailed for doing. She explains that historiographic metafiction poses questions about "history, the individual self, the relation of language to its referents and of texts to other texts" (xiii). It aims at redefining intellectual history as the study of social meaning as historically constituted (15). It achieves its aims by paradoxical "use and abuse [of] the conventions of both popular and elite literature, and do so in such a way that they can actually use the invasive culture industry to challenge its own commodification processes from within" (20). Historiographic metafiction uses a lot of parody but it is not the same parody of the 18th century that pertain to wit or the modernist parody used for elegiac and nostalgic purposes. Rather, parody used here, Hutcheon explains, serves as a "repetition with critical distance that allows ironic signalling [sic] of difference at the very heart of similarity [… It] paradoxically enacts both change and cultural continuity" (27). In fact, parody and irony seem to be the only gateway to seriousness. Despite the irony and parody that accompany historiographic metafiction, Hutcheon declares that this type of fiction "makes a claim to some kind of (newly problematized) historical reference.

Fiction becomes the arena and discourse through which different "versions of reality" are constructed (Hutcheon 40). "Historiographic metafiction asks both epistemological and ontological questions. How do we know the past (or the present)? What is the ontological question of the past? Of its documents? Of our narratives?" (Hutcheon 50).

An attack on historiographic metafiction is that it is not a novel genre in essence, just a novelty in the label because other fictions before were self reflexive; they reflected upon the nature and relationship of history to literature; they were ironic and parodic; and historiographic metafictions use conventions of fiction- that the experimentalist modernist fiction seems more atypical. So, what is ground-breaking about it? The aim behind the self-reflexivity of historiographic metafictions is not being self-reflexive; it allows the creation of an analytical ironic conversation and relationship of the past and the present. Moreover, while historiographic metafictions defy the dichotomies of fictive/historical, particular/general and present/past, like fictions of previous periods have done, historiographic metafictions are fresh in their refusal to incline to one side of the dichotomy while favoring one on the expense of the other. Nonetheless, historiographic metafiction enjoys abusing both sides. Historiographic metafictions do not favor one side of the dichotomy at the expense of the other; rather, it shows how both sides of the dichotomy are lacking and thereafter only problematizes them without hailing any side the 'better' choice. Although there was an interest in the outburst of lies and falsity in previous periods (i.e. in 18th century), this outburst becomes an interest in the diversity and dispersal of the truths in historiographic metafictions. Hence, historiographic metafiction works intentionally within the "rhetorical literary presentation[s] (omniscient narrator, coherent characterization, plot closure)" to

emphasize their constructedness (Hutcheon 45). What vindicates historiographic metafictions' plights is that fiction, like history, obtains its "force more from verisimilitude than from any objective truth"; both are constructed linguistically, abide by formal conventions, and are highly intertextual, Hutcheon continues (105). What supports the intertexuality proposed by historiographic metafiction is Michel Foucault's statement that "the frontiers of a 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" (qtd. in Hutcheon 127).

Noteworthy is that Hutcheon hints at a relationship between historiographic metafiction and fairytales and historiographic metafiction and storytelling but does not dwell deeply on the subject. This, I believe is a major shortcoming, which I aim to address in the chapters to come. She does mention, for instance, that historiographic metafiction achieves its aims by the "paradoxical use and abuse [of] the conventions of both popular and elite literature" (20) but does not offer further explanation. A scrutiny of historiographic metafictions shows their "use and abuse" of specifically fairytales and fairytale elements, a type of "popular" literature, for achieving particularly historiographic metafictitious ends. More importantly, however, is that a storyteller – not a narrator – lurks within all historiographic metafictions whose discovery and scrutiny prove his existence indispensable for achieving historiographic metafictitious ends. Hutcheon notes how in historiographic metafictions there has been an "overt textual emphasis on the narrating 'I' and the reading 'you' [whereby w]e are forced to see that language is given meaning by context, by who is speaking (and listening/reading), where,

when, and why" (Hutcheon 75-76). However, she does not consider this dialogue as one that takes place between an interactive storyteller and the reader. For her, it remains a "narrator's discourse" (Hutcheon 76). Does perceiving this voice as an interactive storyteller and not a simple narrator change or add anything to the literature?

Kevin Paul Smith's The Postmodern Fairytale

While trying to expose the importance of the use of fairytales in postmodernist fiction, critic Kevin Paul Smith in his book The Postmodern Fairytale notes the existence of a relationship between storytelling, fairytales and historiographic metafiction. His attitude to magic realism vis-à-vis the fairytale is innovative as Gemma Lopez in her review of Smith's book points out. She explains how Smith offers a new perception of fairytales as tales that are "grounded in the real and address the real concerns of their audiences" (par 5). Unfortunately, however, many of the reasons Smith provides for the use/abuse and presence of fairytales in the postmodernist texts can apply to any period other than postmodernism. Thus, in this respect, he fails to follow up with his thesis. What proves my claim is, for instance, when he says that "other uses of incorporating a fairytale, or a story, into a novel is to give an insight into the narrator's psychological state and the stories that influenced their expectations" (18). He does not at all mention why or how this is pertinent to postmodernist fiction. In fact, to provide an example, he gives one from the novel Jane Eyre, a 19th century novel—if his intention were to prove that Jane Eyre is an avant-garde, then using it as an example fits perfectly, but this is not his goal. Likewise, when he enlightens us about "fabulation" where a new fairytale is being written, he says that "for the purposes of this study, architextual intertexuality in the form of 'new' fairytales is only of interest if they fulfil [sic] the criterion of being

postmodern in some sense" (42). Two questions arise without being answered and they are: in what sense are they postmodern? And how can they be postmodern i.e. what will differentiate them from modern or pre-modern ones? When he undertakes to explain the importance of fairytales (his thesis), he ends up summarizing what other critics have said without adding a new dimension to the aforesaid; he simply summarizes instead of synthesizes. He says, "in the case of re-visions the question is always, *why*?" (36). Then, to provide the reasons he mentions what feminists/critics with feminist agendas (Jack Zipes and Maria Tatar) had to say about this and other critics as well (Still and Worton) without giving in his input (36-42). Moreover, Smith tends to take many things for granted about the readers' foreknowledge of techniques of postmodernism. Although he does mention in the introduction that he will base his "understanding of postmodernism […] primarily from 'historiographic metafiction', Linda Hutcheon's coinage in A Poetics" (1), he does not make any effort to either simply offer a definition of "historiographic metafiction" or explain what his "understanding of postmodernism" comprises of. For example, while explaining about the "character names, the proliferation of signifiers" as possible allusions to fairytale incorporation, he states that "it is perhaps because of the phenomenon of transworld characters, names that the reader recognizes from one discourse (history), that postmodernism has been so heavily linked with intertexuality" (22). He does not elaborate any further and just takes it for granted that the readers know what he is talking about.

Smith observes that the fairytale has been used massively in postmodern novels for purposes different than its use in earlier periods. He, therefore, sets out to examine the reasons behind the new interest in fairytales, not as "something that underlies a narrative

and informs its structure, or a handy metaphor, [but as something that] has become central to the work" (1). His conclusion is that the intertexuality of fairytales are specifically used for the purposes of the postmodern. Smith sees that the use of fairytales in postmodernist fiction is particularly "to create a metafictive effect" (86). His choice of postmodernist texts which use fairytales is limited to "those novels which highlight the process of storytelling and the way in which the fairytale provides a way to understand the narrator's own life. [They also] have magic realist effects [and] raise questions about the stories that we live by, especially that 'grand narrative', history" (86). Thereafter, in an attempt to discover the relationship between specifically historiographic metafictions and the fairytale, Smith notes the emergence of a "process of storytelling" (86). He, as Lopez explains, "proves how storytelling is an essential human activity, and evocatively highlights the importance of storytelling as a way of understanding one's life and place in the world" (par 6). Hence, his book seems to offer a new reconceptualization of historiographic metafiction – one that Hutcheon hints at but does not examine – albeit with limitations. Because his focus is on fairytale use in historiographic metafictions, unfortunately, he does not mull over his conclusions concerning the presence of the storytelling voice. He concludes that "Fantasy and imagination are important parts of being human, and we need stories to understand our place in the world" (165) but does not link this conclusion to historiographic metafictions specifically; i.e. he does not link or explain how this "need" for "stories" stems from the postmodernist call for "construct[ing] our versions of reality [that] are what are foregrounded in the postmodernist novel" (Hutcheon 40). Lopez notes how Smith "utilizes the frame story of the Thousand and One Nights to address a narrative situation that [he] terms 'the

storyteller' (par 6). She points out that Smith resorts to "define 'the storyteller' through examples of texts where one can find this storytelling frame, to conclude that 'the storyteller' is a postmodern trope" (par 6). Hence, Smith relies specifically on postmodernist novels in which the presence of the storyteller is apparent. He refrains from looking at any historiographic metafiction and examining if a storyteller exists therein. Therefore, Smith takes for granted the presence of a storyteller within these postmodernist novels which renders his conclusions feeble as he does not take the time to articulate the importance of perceiving this voice as a storyteller's – not a narrator's. Above all that, Smith does not link the presence of storyteller and fairytales to historiographic metafictions; rather, he focuses on novels that have fairytale elements (namely magic realist texts and "once upon a time"). His aim is to show "how some postmodern fictions that use the fairytale as an intertext do so in order to demonstrate the fundamental desire for stories" (165). I, on the other hand, want to link them necessarily to historiographic metafictions proving that these postmodernist novels have storytellers within them (not as apparent as his choice of novels) and use fairytale elements – if they do – specifically for historiographic metafiction purposes.

Walter Benjamin's "The Storyteller"

Consequently, for being able to identify the existence of a storyteller within the historiographic metafictions, it would be helpful to look at Benjamin's essay, "The Storyteller." Yet, it is important to note that Benjamin is a modernist critic and thus his perception of "the storyteller" differs from a postmodernist storyteller although both share Benjamin's basic characterizations (a point that will become clearer in the methodology). In his essay, Benjamin claims that with the approach of postmodernism,

the "art of storytelling is coming to an end" (1) - a false assertion as I shall prove in the pages to come. He bases his claim on the premises that "the ability to exchange experiences" has been eliminated from the people simply because the worth of "experience" itself has dropped, and "[e]xperience", continues Benjamin, "is the source [for] all storytellers" (1). Moreover, he adds that not only experience is dying out but also "the epic side of truth, wisdom is dying out" (3) hence also contributing to the annihilation of storytelling. Benjamin dedicates a section of the essay to elucidate how the novel as a genre has contributed majorly to the termination of storytelling: "What can be handed on orally, the wealth of the epic," he claims "is of a different kind from what constitutes the stock in trade of the novel" (3). The novel for him "neither comes from oral tradition nor goes into it [which] distinguishes it from storytelling" (3). On surface, these charges strike as true, but upon scrutiny they collapse: the historiographic metafictions are founded on storytelling basis and most of them include fairytale elements and stories- i.e. "oral tradition". In addition, Benjamin's statement that the novel is restricted to information (4) proves false when any novel is put under scrutiny. He supports his claim by stating that "no event any longer comes to us without being shot through with explanation"; yet, a survey of the different interpretations that spurt out when a novel is written proves this claim wrong. He continues that the storyteller is inspired by and is the teller of fairytales because these fairytales present "the earliest arrangement that mankind made to shake off the nightmare which the myth had placed upon its chest" (11). An examination of historiographic metafictions reveals that their use of fairytales is exactly for achieving this purpose. Thus the use of fairytales to "meet the

forces of the mythical world with cunning and high spirits" that Benjamin talks about only further supports postmodernists' perception of the uses of fairytales (11).

Roland Barthes's "The Death of the Author"

In this hubbub of the storyteller, fairytales and historiographic metafictions, Roland Barthes's declaration that "it is language which speaks, not the author" (par 4) in his essay "The Death of the Author", testifies for the existence of a storyteller (although not intended by Barthes). Barthes claims that the author, text, and reader represent an intertwined network of a universe of quotations that have no origin or end – an aspect important for identifying a storyteller within historiographic metafictions in which the "frontiers of [these fictions] 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" (qtd. in Hutcheon 127). This realization is important as the storyteller's figure borrows quotations and stories from different sources and assimilates them within his story. Making such a statement frees the reading process from the restrictions of loyalty to an origin, a cohesive meaning, and an identity, all of which are defied by historiographic metafictions and achieved by the figure of the storyteller specifically. Moreover, while introducing his notion about the "death of the author", Barthes mentions that "writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin" (par 1). Although this statement favors a linguistic approach, mentioning the depletion of "every point of origin" converges with fairytales as the fairytale has no fixed origin from which it definitely sprung up. What assures the correlativity between "the death of the author" and fairytales is the birth of the storyteller who becomes in charge of narrative: "responsibility for a narrative is never

assumed by a person but a mediator, shaman or relator whose 'performance' [is] the mastery of the narrative code" (par 2). The storyteller is no one else but this "mediator" between the text and the reader. It is indeed "language which speaks not the author" (par 4) and the storyteller is the one responsible for bringing forth this language.

Barthes continues that "Surrealism" found in postmodern texts has destroyed the "image of the Author [by] automatic writing" (par 4). Two things are important to note from the aforementioned statement: the first is the indication that "Surrealism" defined as the "practice of producing fantastic or incongruous imagery or effects in art, literature, film, or theater by means of unnatural or irrational juxtapositions and combinations" (MWD) is a technique used often in postmodernist texts. The use of a technique that benefits from the "fantastic" explains the abundance of fairytales in postmodernist texts. The second observation concerns the "automatic writing" that Barthes mentions but sadly does not elaborate on. One feature which makes the storyteller distinguished is his ability to interact with the audience and modify the story according to the reactions he gets; hence, the storyteller undertakes the mission of an "automatic" speaker. This being said, the storyteller in the postmodernist novel becomes the "automatic writer" who interacts with the characters in the novel and changes the novel depending on their preferences. Barthes names him the "modern scriptor" instead of the storyteller but the two are essentially the same: they are both "born simultaneously with the text, [are] in no way equipped with being preceding or exceeding the writing, [are] not the subject with the book as predicate" (par 5).

His statement that "the author is dead" is definitely not to be taken literally. His implication is that several factors affect the creation of a work of art- these factors range

from the author's personality to the editor's changes before publication. Yet, the very job of the writer betrays him/her as writing is not free; language predetermines meaning and imposes certain structures. His last statement "the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author" (par 8) might as well be, "the birth of the [storyteller] must be at the cost of the death of the Author". Although the storyteller is the Author's creation, the storyteller outlives the Author's life to have a life of his own. Finally, what helps in seeing the fairytale grow from Barthes's essay is his insistence that the "text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning […] but a multidimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash" (par 6). Moreover, while Barthes imposes the impossibility of an authoritative truth offered by the author, historiographic metafictions, likewise, make doubtful the possibility of any guarantee of meaning.

Methodology

Bearing all of the aforementioned in mind, several questions come to one's mind concerning the relationship between historiographic metafictions and storytelling and how they relate to the presence of fairytale elements in postmodernist fiction, if they do. Linda Hutcheon's theory, as mentioned previously, suggests the existence of a relationship between historiographic metafictions and storytelling but does not explore it. Kevin Paul Smith's model studies the relationship between fairytales and some historiographic metafictions and concludes with some findings and the conclusion that "some postmodern fictions that use the fairytale as an intertext do so in order to demonstrate the fundamental desire for stories" (165); nonetheless, Smith does not offer a further exploration of storytelling and how it relates particularly to historiographic

metafictions. Thereafter, I intend to fill these gaps by looking at three novels in particular: Waterland, Flaubert's Parrot and Sexing the Cherry.

First, it is important to identify what is meant by "the storyteller" to reveal how this storyteller figure is similar to and yet different from Benjamin's storyteller figure. Doing the above will facilitate the initiation of this study to answer some of the questions posed by Smith but not answered fully with respect to its relationship to historiographic metafictions in specific:

> What, then, are we to make of the subset of postmodern fiction that foregrounds the process of storytelling? If the novel has displaced the storyteller, what are we to make of the storytelling characters who question the primacy of the written discourse, and challenge the reader's expectations of generic forms? (87-8)

The methodology comprises of three stages: identifying the existence of the storyteller in each novel and noting how his existence achieves historiographic metafictitious ends; surveying the presence of fairytale elements and looking at how this presence also helps the storyteller achieve historiographic metafictitious ends; and finally looking at the themes explored by the storyteller figure and how these themes also achieve historiographic metafictitious ends. Doing this will allow investigating the re-emergence of storytelling in historiographic metafictions and how it relates to imposing reconsiderations of history. This research will be placed within the framework of postmodernism, i.e. how the figure of the storyteller molds postmodernism as Lyotard, Harvey and Hutcheon perceive it. In Hutcheon's words, I want to prove that "postmodernism is born at the moment when we discover that the world has no fixed

center and that power is not something unitary that exists outside us" (Poetics 86). By thus doing, I will have also challenged Benjamin's claim that "the art of storytelling is coming to an end" and proved that Barthes's "the modern scriptor [sic] [who] is born simultaneously with the text" (par 5) is the storyteller who emerges in the postmodern historiographic metafictitious novels.

Chapter Summary

Thus, after dedicating a section to compare Benjamin's archetypal storyteller to the storyteller in the postmodernist novel, four chapters will follow. The first is dedicated to Graham Swift's Waterland; the second is dedicated to Julian Barnes's Flaubert's Parrot; the third is dedicated to Jeanette Winterson's Sexing the Cherry; and finally, the fourth is dedicated to wrap up the findings of the analysis of the three novels and place these findings within the broader context of postmodernism while talking about how this study added an insight to the literature.

Differentiating the Postmodernist Storyteller

Although Benjamin in his essay "The Storyteller" provides indispensible characteristics that characterize the figure of the storyteller, his reference to this figure is rather traditional. Hence, for detecting the presence of a storyteller, it is inevitable to look at Benjamin's essay for spotting the storyteller. Yet, Benjamin conceives of the storyteller "a Scheherazade who thinks of a fresh story whenever her tale comes to a stop" (Benjamin 9). Mentioning Scheherazade as a prototype of the storyteller, Benjamin thus envisions the storyteller as a character whose existence is only peripheral; i.e. Scheherazade's character forms the framework for the One Thousand and One Nights. Her character is not central to the stories that she narrates and thus removing her would not affect the structure and plot of her stories. The storyteller that I will inspect, however, is central to the stories he tells as he is himself the spokesperson and a character within the stories he recounts. Whenever I mention the term storyteller, I am referring to a character telling a story in the novel who forces the readers to ponder about the framework of the novel (Smith 92). Hence, the storyteller is not a figure inserted for merely being the spokesperson of the novel; his exclusion weakens the achievement of historiographic metafictitious ends and damages the integrity of the novel. Furthermore, the storyteller's presence forces the readers to think about the form of the novel and its contents, unlike, for example, Chaucer's storyteller in the Canterbury Tales whose exclusion would not affect the progress/telling of the stories.

Waterland Case Study

While recounting his hardships and life memories, Tom Crick declares that "old Cricky, your history teacher, had already in one sense, and of his own accord ceased to teach history […] he breaks off and starts telling – these stories" (5). From this declaration and upon quick reading of Waterland, the reader assumes the existence of a storyteller; yet, a thorough scrutiny shows that storyteller Tom Crick's voice fades away at several instances throughout the novel while another voice surfaces. Who is this voice? With the existence of such a voice, then, can we still assert that there is a storyteller in Waterland? And why do I insist on dubbing both the first and third person narrators storyteller Tom Crick? What is his importance and in what context can he be perceived? What effect does the presence of fairytale intertexts plays? Finally, how do the storyteller figure and fairytale intertexts mold a new perception of history? What other elements in the novel shape history as perceived by postmodernist thinkers?

To answer the above questions, I will first have to prove the existence of a storyteller in Waterland backed up by Benjamin's characterizations of the storyteller and other elements that characterize a storyteller. I will look at the dialogue directed towards the characters in the novels and the readers of the novels as well. A scrutiny of narrative voice and confidence in narrative tone, reflexive statements, form of the novel, a reading of characters' names, and their outfit emphasize their role as storytellers. Moreover, a scrutiny of the imagery and description of lips, ears, and eyes separately and simultaneously further instills the aforementioned hypothesis and reveals the existence of a complex relationship amongst these organs- all the while, explaining how all these characterizations of the storyteller shatter established pre-postmodern notions of history.

Then, I will show how the fairytale elements in the novel – whether in the title, epigraph, chapter titles, and the text (using Smith's elements of fairytale adaptations) – also destroy pre-postmodern notions of history. Finally, I will look at the themes explored within the novel that destroy the stability of history. Approached thus, Waterland is easily conceived as a historiographic metafiction and Tom Crick's perception as a storyteller is imperative for achieving historiographic metafictitious purposes. Before beginning the study, however, it would be helpful to evaluate the critical discussion of Waterland with reference to its treatment of history, its classification as historiographic metafiction, and its valuation of the storyteller figure, if any.

In her essay entitled "Cracked Voices", Champion studies the "double voices" present within Waterland to show how this "doubling" reveals the "divided tendencies of Waterland's fictional world" (par 1); she uses Bakhtin's dialogism as a framework for her essay. Her study enables her to prove "how the energies of the novel are dedicated to constructing an ideal model of communication in which duality or doubleness functions as the ruling mental category" (par 2). Glimpsing the different readings offered by critics about the "novel's dualistic tendencies", Champion notes that these readings render Waterland a novel that evaluates "institutions and mentalities, for instance, of patriarchy, education, traditional historiography, and hegemonic knowledge" (par 3); her realization allows her to agree with Linda Hutcheon's labeling of the novel as historiographic metafiction because it fits within the novels that "expose[…] the ideological nature of history and question[…] the habitual distinction between fiction and historical writing" (par 7). Champion concludes that her study of the "unorthodox construction of time and the creation of archaic images" in Waterland sheds light on its "divided utterance" which

shows how the narrative within has a force to narrate a surrogate "double-voiced history" to instruct about "the rightness of dialogic space, to challenge [the readers] to participate in it, and to become its creative developers" (par 22).

Russell, on the other hand, in his essay entitled "Embodiments of History" rejects the classification of Waterland as historiographic metafiction; he rather sees the novel as manifesting a type of trauma fiction that nonetheless resorts to history and personal history that lends it a "causally grounded ethical reading" (par 1). To support his claim about why Waterland should not be classified as historiographic metafiction, he cites critic Stef Craps:

> despite its obvious sympathy for the narrativist critique of traditional history, Waterland does not--as is often thought to be the case--reflect the extreme relativism and the radical skepticism in relation to the referentiality of language and narrative that are commonly imputed to post-modernist historiography. The novel insists on the possibility and necessity of maintaining some form of contact with the real, which it reconceptualizes in terms of trauma. (qtd. in Russell par 3)

Waterland does not explicitly "reflect the extreme relativism and the radical skepticism in relation to the referentiality of language and narrative", but at several moments in the novel, Tom questions the "referentiality of language and narrative". Besides, having the novel "insist[…] on the possibility and necessity of maintaining some form of contact with the real" does not contradict its classification as historiographic metafiction; for historiographic metafictions do not reject the "contact with the real" although they do question or problematize our capability of having an "authentic" contact. Furthermore,

Russell does not negate the actuality that Waterland is laden with historical events that Tom "criticizes" (par 15), and thus his claim that Waterland is not to be viewed as historiographic metafiction collapses.

Russell sees that Tom's resort to storytelling is grounded in his inability to "cope with the present" and therefore he begins the series of "re-remembering" as Russell labels it (par 3). The process of re-remembering, Russell explains, "refers to an almost inevitable recollection of events haunting persons involved in trauma who have forgotten what they originally remembered about the atrocities" (par 3). Russell contends that Tom "suppresses narrating two of the three crises of deaths for which he is at least partially responsible until late in the novel, while the majority of the novel relates how he coped with his 'correlative crisis of life' through his immersion in professional academic histories" (par 4). These deaths whom Tom played a role in are the death of Freddie, the abortion of Tom and Mary's child, and Dick's suicide (par 9). Tom approaches time in an "onrushing and infinitely postponed and present" manner because of his traumatic sentiments, Russell notes, yet Tom does not eliminate progress for it "occurs but not without extensive repetition" (par 5).

Critic Acheson in his essay "Historia and Guilt", in which he examines the relationship between historia and guilt, discusses how Waterland exemplifies Tom's guilty feelings in his alliance in the murders that he talks about. Thus, Acheson and Russell set off from the same premise, that Tom subconsciously knows yet avoids his involvement in the several murders he ends up talking about, they hold contradictory views with respect to the novel's status as historiographic metafiction. Whereas Russell deems it wrong to conceive the novel as historiographic metafiction, Acheson believes it

precise to do such a labeling. Acheson believes that Linda Hutcheon's labeling of Waterland as historiographic metafiction is an accurate description as it "makes clear the similarities between fiction and history and comments self-consciously on the impossibility of writing with absolute authority about the past, either as a historian or as a first-person narrator" (Acheson par 5). To confirm his stance, he quotes Hayden White who believes that "[e]very narrative, however seemingly 'full' […] is constructed on the basis of a set of events that might have been included but were left out; this is as true of imaginary narratives as it is of realistic ones" (qtd. in Acheson par 1).

Acheson asserts that the "only historian who could write history with absolute authority would be one possessed of the omniscience of God […] There are, however, no omniscient historians, omniscience being a quality no human being possesses" (par 1-2). Interestingly, however, he reflects that although omniscient authors do not 'exist', "there are omniscient narrators-ostensible analogues to God" (par 2). This omniscient narration that was a "well established technique […] has come under attack in our [postmodern] times by the novelist John Fowles, who argues that it is inappropriate to make use of a godlike narrator in an age in which the existence of God has fallen into doubt" (par 3). Thus, Fowles, writes Acheson, maintains that "present-day novelists ought not adopt the omniscient point of view. First-person narration […] is more appropriate to our time, for the first-person narrator is an ostensible human being, a man or woman who is unable to write with godlike authority" (par 3). From this declaration, it becomes comprehensible why the historiographic metafictions involve a first person narrator who does not have full knowledge of neither of his own life nor of historical incidents he describes.

Acheson initiates his study by examining the epigraphs documented at the beginning of the novel that define historia and quote a line from The Great Expectations. While examining the relationship between historia and guilt, Acheson observes that the "writer of factual history surveys an array of past events, selects those most relevant to his purposes, then forms them into a factual narrative" and thus he likens the historian to the fiction writer (par 1). Acheson continues, "[s]o large is the number of events available for discussion that no single account of what has happened over a given period can possibly be definitive" (par 1).

Cooper writes an essay entitled "Imperial Topographies" in which she identifies Waterland as a postcolonial text that uses geographical and spatial tropes to illuminate about sexuality and imperialism found within. While attempting to prove her argument, Cooper notes how Waterland serves as exemplary of historiographic metafiction because it "taps into scholarly debate on the ontology of history and the cognitive status of both fiction and historiography in the late twentieth century" (par 6). She continues that Waterland "[o]bfuscate[s] the line between an original and its duplicates [; it] both embraces and parodically rewrites its own past, seeking through such revisionism and generic subterfuge to open that past up to the present, 'to prevent it from being conclusive and teleological'" as Hutcheon tells of historiographic metafictions (par 7).

Landow, on the other hand, in his essay entitled "History, His Story and Stories" offers a new reading of Waterland as a "late-twentieth-century postmodernist rewriting" of Great Expectations and Absolom, Absolom! (par 3). Landow discusses how "[a]lthough Waterland does not confuse personal with public history, it intertwines them, making each part of the other" (par 1). Landow explains how Tom's efforts at digesting

his story force him to probe "the purpose, truthfulness, and limitations of stories while at the same time making clear that he believes history to be a form of story-telling. These questionings of narrative within its narrative make Waterland a self-reflexive text" (par 3). Thus, Landow's reading of Waterland makes it a metafictitious novel. His comment that the novel "examines various theories of history, such as that proposed by religion, progress, and hubris, and canvasses a wide range of subjects for history" yet "finds them wanting" enables its classification as an historiographic metafiction. Additionally, Landow suggests that the mode by which Waterland is written, i.e. "writing from within an ongoing crisis[,] may well be the postmodernist contribution to autobiography" (par 28). He justifies by stating that "[t]he approach autobiography undertaken by Tom Crick […] essentially deconstructs the potentially hopeful aspects of his narrative. By refusing the autobiographer's traditionally secure closing position, in other words, Swift's protagonist casts into doubt the world of the autobiographer, his autobiography, and narrative in general" (par 28).

Above and beyond, in his "Critical Essay on Waterland", Aubrey links the presence of the "story of murder, suicide, abortion, insanity, incest, and mental retardation" to a questioning of the fundamentals of "the nature history" (par 1). Aubrey notes that Tom "has clearly been influenced by the debate over the nature of history that swept through the intellectual community of historians during the 1960s and 1970s" which was specifically an aftermath of "postmodernism, which cast doubt on the reliability of the rational empirical method to interpret the meaning of the past" (par 5).

The above offers an insight on the critical debate concerning Waterland vis-à-vis its treatment of history and classification of historiographic metafiction. As this survey

shows, however, none of the reviewers studied specifically the status of Tom as a storyteller and how this status enables him to achieve historiographic metafictitious ends; some reviewers have mentioned it in passing, though they did not intend to make it a point which is evident in their discussions about Tom as simultaneously narrator and storyteller.

Several of the defining characteristics that Benjamin states that characterize a storyteller apply to the character of Tom Crick and enable us therefore to view him as a storyteller, not a narrator; accordingly, such a perception helps achieve historiographic metafictitious ends. Tom is described as the teacher of history who "has stayed at home, making an honest living, and who knows the local tales and traditions", and thereafter, fits within Benjamin's archetypal character of the storyteller (2). Additionally, Tom Crick is someone, as Benjamin says of the storyteller, who "does not aim to convey the pure essence of the thing, like information or a report [rather, he makes his storytelling] sink the thing into [his] life" (5). The storyteller, Benjamin claims, "embed[s] his report deeper in natural history" (7) - something Tom Crick does extensively; he dedicates an entire chapter to the scrutiny of natural history (Chapter 27) and ponders about the biological histories about the "eel". Tom explains his choice of telling all these non-historical facts because "there [cannot] be any true revolution till we know what we're made of" (206). In addition, Tom sympathizes with his brother Dick who is described as an abnormal being with a potato head. With this sympathy, Tom fits perfectly with the role of the storyteller who, as Benjamin explains, has "the traditional sympathy […] for rascals and crooks" (13).

Additionally, Benjamin argues that the novel tries to escape from any mentioning of death while the storyteller believes that "[d]eath is the sanction of everything that [he] can tell" (7); and thereafter Tom Crick should be perceived as a storyteller because of his reflections about death. Reading the first chapter of Waterland rips down Benjamin's argument as Tom Crick talks about the dead body of Freddie Parr. In the chapters that follow, several talks about death arise- the death of Freddie, Sarah Atkinson, Tom and Mary's unborn child. Moreover, death is not only discussed but also commemorated. Dick's reaction upon seeing Freddie Parr's dead body, Tom quotes, is a song of death: "Dead. D-dead. Freddie. Deddie" (27). Interestingly, Tom does not have a child of his own – which emphasizes how death looms over his life. Thereafter, his stories become an endeavor to shun away death; he teaches his students his personal history instead to leave something behind, i.e. to anchor himself in an authoritative form.

Also, Tom Crick, like Benjamin explains of the storyteller, "fashion[s] the raw material of experience, his own and that of others, in a solid, useful, and unique way" (14). He uses the bits and pieces of his life and that of his family members to enthrall his audience. He is after all distinguished with the ability "to tell his entire life" (Benjamin 14) to an audience who will listen to him. His status as a storyteller thus enables his audience to "witness someone attempting to make sense of their life through narrative [which allows] a metafictional [reading of the text]" (Smith 107). This "metafictional reading" foregrounds the notion of constructedness that goes into fiction and history writing. As Champion aptly puts it without consciously highlighting the importance of the rise of Tom Crick as storyteller, "[a]fter thirty-two years of teaching the narrative of conventional Western history, Crick, goaded by his personal and a professional crises,

throws away the history textbook and turns into a kind of postmodern bard, telling tales from his folk heritage and from his own recent experiences" (par 7). His classification as storyteller likens him to a "novelist" and enables him to "experiment[…] with techniques of time, plot, narration, character, and subject matter" (Champion par 7) – a status that endows him with the very tools of historiographic metafiction.

Moreover, since the beginning, Tom presents himself as a heavy reader and this is important as Ellen Greene in her book Storytelling: Art and Technique explains: she claims that the "storyteller is someone who appreciates literature as a whole and knows good language, form and substance" (57). Some of the books that Tom read are Hereward the Wake, The Black Arrow, With Clive in India. Tom uses these textbooks in his classes although, as Champion points out, they are "history textbooks [that] make no distinctions between discourse and story, between technical manipulation and nondiscursive space" (par 8). Therefore, even in his choice of textbooks, storyteller Tom Crick tries to achieve historiographic metafictitious purposes. His knowledge about the eels and the geography of the Fens, moreover, show his intellectualism, which is an important characteristic of a storyteller because he is knowledgeable in several disciplines, literature and history, art and science, i.e. he has the tendency to mingle these disciplines altogether.

The presence of a storyteller necessitates the presence of an audience and Tom Crick addresses two audiences while telling his tale: characters in his story and the readers of the novel. The awareness of the audience is important for historiographic metafictitious ends. Had Tom Crick been a traditional narrator, the presence of an audience would have been unimportant, but "storytelling at its best is mutual creation" as Greene explains (xviii) - a collaboration between the storyteller and the audience, a

phenomenon present in Waterland. Describing the flatness of the land they inhibited, Tom Crick addresses both audiences: "when you stood and looked at them, made you shut one eye and fall prey to fruitless meditations" (3). The pronoun "you" in this passage refers to both audiences. At the beginning of the second chapter, however, Tom starts his tale by addressing the "Children. Children who will inherit the world. Children (for always, even though you were fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, candidates for that appeasing term 'young adults', I addressed you, silently, as 'children')" (5). The reader might think that the "children" Tom addresses are his pupils, but being aware of the bracket "(" and the pronoun "you" within, changes such a perception; Tom Crick addresses here the audience outside the text- not those within. While a few lines afterwards, when Tom says "You should know, because it was you who were witness" (5), the pronoun refers specifically to the audience in the text, i.e. his students. It is noteworthy that his students' refusal to study "the official syllabus opens Crick's eyes to their need for a double-voiced model of identification, a model that represents both sides of identity, the finalized, centered definition as well as the indeterminate otherness that ruptures it" (Champion par 9). His students' challenge forces Tom to look for alternatives which in turn makes him "question history" and alienate "the former, single-voiced version of people, agency, and progress" (Champion par 9).

A survey and scrutiny of the pronouns "you/ your" and their respective audiences shows a consciousness from Tom Crick's side- an important constituent for being a storyteller. His narration is based on the audiences' reactions to know what to mention and what not to mention. Tom is aware that both his audiences in the text and those outside the text have different concerns and interests and tries to accommodate these

differences while telling his story. The general stories about the Fens and certain historical events are addressed to both audiences. They are addressed to both audiences as they carry general information that will not be questioned by anyone. When talking about the flatness of the Fens, for instance, Tom addresses both audiences (2-3). When he talks about the eels from a scientific point of view, he also addresses both audiences as he includes scientific facts and real names of biologists who have contributed to the study of eels' reproductive systems (196-205). The tales he recounts, however, which he knows will get his students' liking and acceptance, are addressed solely to them. For the audience in the text, Tom "emphasize[s] the aspects of the story that [he knows] will appeal most to" them (Greene 56). Tom addresses the story about how the eel was placed in and played in Mary's panties to his students only (206-8). He knows that this story will appeal to them and so he only addresses them.

Whereas those tales which Tom Crick believes might be rebutted with disbelief from his students are addressed solely to the audience outside the text. For those outside the text, there are a variety of things to look at. The young readers have a simple plot to deal with. Additionally, the "repetition" found in the novel "where familiarity is mixed with surprise" and the "satisfying ending" appeal to a young readership (Greene 51). For a more mature readership, Tom's tale appeals "to [teenage readers'] developing powers of reason and judgment and to their concern about competency" (Greene 52) by narrating incidents that compel them to question, think about, and evaluate certain issues like formulating an "understanding of the consequences of one's actions" (Greene 52) and the reliability of recorded history. It also addresses the critical readers and thinkers "who are ready to appreciate the plot, the beauty of the language, and the deeper meanings that lie

behind the words" (Greene 53) and thus go into an analysis of the text's structure, content, themes, and underlying messages.

In addition to Tom's awareness of the existence of an audience in the text and outside it, the narrative voice and confidence in narrative tone further emphasize his role as a storyteller while shrewdly challenging history. Tom tells his tale in the first person point of view. Although this might discredit his tale as being fairly subjective, this subjective narration makes it possible for Tom- the storyteller- to immerse deeply in the tale, interact with the events, re-experience them, and present them with an interactive, interesting storytelling experience. Tom's "charisma, greater command of language, good memory, and fine sense of timing" make him fit perfectly the role of a storyteller (Greene 2). In spite of that, Tom's figure, the only storyteller and narrator of the events in the novel, is constantly dislocated and detached which makes the search for unity almost impossible. At the level of the narrator/storyteller Tom, the harmony of the narrative is unattainable. At the level of what Tom represents, history, thus the harmony is inaccessible as well.

The third person voice that surfaces at several instances throughout the novel is the voice of storyteller Tom Crick talking about himself in third person, not a narrator's voice. Talking about himself in third person is important to challenge history. These instances are significant since they present moments of reflection from the storyteller, specifically stories in which Tom uses the third person instead of the first person to distance himself from the events, perhaps trying to understand and digest these events. These stories in which the shift to third person takes place concern the stories about Tom and Mary's relationship. Not all the stories about Tom and Mary are in third person

though; in Chapter 7, for instance, when Tom talks about discovering one another's "hole" and "thing" is in first person. Yet, the shift to third person occurs specifically when talking about Tom and Mary's miserable past events or description of other characters who have affected Tom and Mary's relationship negatively: Tom and Mary both shared the "absence of a mother" (47); young Tom believes he has to suffer because "he believes he is fated to yearn [for Mary] from afar" (47); when talking about Dick's "penis of fabulous dimensions" (50) that caused negative repercussions on Tom and Mary's relationship, Tom talks about himself in third person: "even his own brother was unable to refute it" (50). Chapter 12 begins with the first person narrative then shifts to third person right after Tom questions whether it was "the same God, looking down on us then, who spoke to you" (116). Interestingly, he continues then his story by the notorious "once upon a time" (116).

There are two moments in the novel that ascertain that this third person narrator is the voice of storyteller Tom Crick, not a narrator. While recounting Tom and Mary's story in third-person voice in Chapter 12, the narrator says that Tom tries to explain everything by "telling himself stories (How a girl and a boy once… How…)" (130). The style that this third person narrator uses to tell Tom's story is the same style which Tom, the storyteller, uses. Later, in Chapter 14, when Tom the storyteller talks about the revolution to his students (using first person narrator), he flips to third person to step back and reflect on his own words. Noteworthy is that all these reflections are within brackets:

> (Stop this waffle [Tom]. Price doesn't want a lecture – and he can see through your [Tom] smoke-screen.)

> […] (So is that your [Price] game? All it is? Just the old bash-the-teacher stuff? […] What all this clever-talk amounts to is that our Cricky's over the hill. Like all old fogies, he can only look backwards. He can't bear the notion of anything new…) (139-140)

Interestingly, this is followed by "I'm speculating, it's true, Price. But we're all free to interpret" (140). Although this quote is addressed to Price, its position right after the above quotation provides an angle for interpreting the above as Tom's speculations; thus, it is storyteller Tom who uses the third person to talk about himself- not another narrator. Later still, when Price replies to Tom's saying that Tom is "speculating", Tom says, again in brackets, "(But actually I do believe that. I believe it more and more. History: a lucky dip of meanings. Events elude meaning, but we look for meaning" (140). The third person narration allows storyteller Tom to reflect objectively on the events that occurred like the historian who sets everything in third person and reflects accordingly.

Imagery, description, and mentioning of lips, ears, and eyes are abundant implicitly and explicitly in the novel which assert Tom Crick as a storyteller and ruin the pre-postmodern image of history as a rigid discourse. Had the novel been of biological or physiological concern, finding lips, ears and eyes almost everywhere in the novel would have made perfect sense; nevertheless, the novel is far away from that realm. The storyteller's utensils are the lips, ears and eyes. The lips are the most important organs concerned in the role of a storyteller. They are the medium through which the storyteller communicates his story. They help propagate ideas and events to the audience. The lips in the novel become a metonymy for the mouth, the tongue, and most importantly, the verbalizing of Tom's thoughts and memories; they go beyond their 'typical' functions of

kissing, tasting, eating, uttering words. The lips are now important to experiment, ask and question, bewitch, and cater for the mind. A storyteller cannot succeed without a flowing tongue, and Tom is blessed with such a one. Being conscious of the importance of lips, Tom, the storyteller, pays a considerable amount of attention to other characters' lips: he notes how Price "with a trembling lip that was not just the result of uttering words that must have been […] carefully rehearsed [says to him]: 'The only important thing […] about history, I think, sir, is that it's got to the point where it's probably about to end'" (7). Noteworthy is Tom's association and mentioning of "lips" come with the "end of history". When Tom talks about Sarah Atkinson's story, he describes how her husband "must watch by the bedside, praying for those sublime eyes to open and those dear lips to move" (77). But "those lips" do not move and their immobility causes the miserable end of Thomas Atkinson's life- i.e. the end of the life of an important figure in the history of the Atkinson family.

The ears are also essential for the storyteller Tom especially that they negate established notions of history. Two pairs of ears are concerned in the storytelling process: those of the storyteller and those of the listeners. Ears are all over the novel with verbs synonymous to them like listening and hearing. Tom needs to listen to his audiences' words to know what to say. And conversely, his audience needs to listen to his tale to know what to say or how to react. As the novel progresses Tom barely mentions his ears but focuses on the characters' (audiences') ears. The shift to other characters' ears demonstrates the involvement of the listeners to Tom's tale:

> Children, who will inheret the world. Children to whom, throughout history, stories have been told, chiefly but not always at bedtime, in order

> to quell restless thoughts; whose need of stories is matched only by the need adults have to tell stories to, of receptacles for their stock of fairytales, of listening *ears* on which to unload those most unbelievable yet haunting of fairytales (7, italics my emphasis)

The ear, that hears the news and hears what people have to say about events that took place, is this self-same ear that hears stories. Hence, Tom's emphasis that those "ears" are now captivated by the "fairytales" likens the hearing of fairytales to the hearing about news that eventually becomes recorded history. Tom cunningly parallels hearing fairytales to hearing historical events, thus sinking history's aura to the level of storytelling.

The eye forms the third important element in the trilogy of storytelling and it also helps Tom in destabilizing history. The eye sees the events, interprets them and frames an answer on one hand and observes the reaction of the audience and shapes the story accordingly on the other. Tom Crick recounts several of his stories based on what he witnessed as a child, an adolescent, a husband, and a professor. These observations provide him with substance to share with his audience. Likewise, a journalist (who is a historian in a sense) writes down the stories from what he observes. Thereafter, the writing of history is juxtaposed with the writing of fiction. Hence, history is exposed as a construction, like fiction, and thus, becomes problematic. History no longer enjoys the once-unquestionable position it maintained.

Finally, there are several reflexive statements that assert that Tom Crick may and should be perceived as a storyteller. These statements also problematize history. Tom describes his father as someone who has "a knack for telling stories. Made-up stories;

true stories; soothing stories, warning stories [etc.]. It was a knack which ran in his family" (2) he continues. Thus, Tom himself may have inherited this "knack for telling stories" and may be seen accordingly as a storyteller. And these stories may be "[m]ade-up stories [or] true stories". So, professor Tom Crick who teaches history teaches stories that are either "made-up" or "true" – a commentary on all those who teach history as no one is sure whether the recorded history happened the way it is told. Moreover, had Tom been simply a narrator, he would have only concerned himself in recounting the stories of others or describing what happens around; yet, this is not the case. Talking about himself, Tom tells his students: "he breaks off and starts telling – these stories" (5). Additionally, Tom is not the only one who refers to his life as a tale, Lewis also refers to Tom's life as a tale which stresses Tom's role as a storyteller. Tom admits that "he ceased to teach history and started to offer you, instead, these fantastic-but-true, these believe-it-or-not-but-it-happened Tales of the Fens" (42). By making such a declaration, however, Tom offers an alternative understanding of history where it is no longer only the history of the Annaled or the canonized; rather, it consists of the histories of the marginalized, the unrecorded, and the unimportant.

Besides the awareness of and addressing the audience, narrative voice and confidence in narrative tone, and reflexive statements, the form of the novel allows for the emergence of Tom as a storyteller- an aspect that problematizes history. The novel can be easily broken down into different episodes relating to the different characters that emerge. The significance of this ability lies in the fact that the novel could be broken down into different episodes, and therefore, Tom, the storyteller, can choose to talk about an episode. Or, the novel can be approached chapter by chapter as each chapter has

beginning, middle and an end (though not a conclusive one). Then, Tom can use these chapters or episodes as "spells for binding the world together" (Greene 1). Thereafter, such a form allows the readers to view the constructedness of the process of coming up with stories which is very similar to the process of history writing. Hence, resorting to such an approach challenges the establishment of historical writing.

As Benjamin notes, the storyteller "is, and will continue to be, the teller of fairytales" (11), hence, it is normal that we find several fairytale elements in Tom Crick's story although these elements are used for different purposes than regular storytelling. The fairytale forms an integral part of Waterland serving as an intertext whether in "authorized", "writerly", "incorporation", "allusion", and "fabulation"(Smith) forms. Smith defines the "authorized" element as "explicit reference of fairytale in the title" (10). Reading chapter titles such as "About Beauty and the Beast" (242), "Unknown country" (264), "About the Witch" (298), "Goodnight" (328), and "And Adieu" clearly remind us of certain fairytales. As for the "writerly" element that occurs when there is an "implicit reference to a fairytale in the title" (10), no sooner is the title Waterland mentioned that 'Disneyland' comes into one's mind. Both words affirm a fairytale element to them. Not only does the title have a writerly feature to it but also the subtitles and the epigraph as Smith explains (15). "Child's play" (180), "About the Saviour of the world" (213), and "About Contemporary Nightmares" (296) are subtitles that have an embedded reference to fairytales.

The most striking example of "incorporation" in which there is an "explicit reference to a fairytale within the text" as Smith explains (10) is the use of "once upon a time" in Waterland. As soon as these three words are spelled out, the reader expects to

hear a fairytale. Yet, the use of these enchanting words here are not for the purpose of telling a fairytale, but of offering instead a different and unconventional way of understanding the world than historical approach. Stories, not histories, become the alternative for comprehending the world. As Tom states of "the stories which his mother told him […], they were running coded messages along his blood stream and performing non-stop variations of themselves inside his skull" (272). These stories allow him to view the world differently. They are the stories that resided in Tom's head and influenced his expectations; and thereafter, it is only normal for Tom to approach history from a fictitious angle. As Smith explains, "Once upon a time" becomes "an alternative way of understanding the world to historiography" (105).

The readers also encounter the "allusion" element in which there is an "implicit reference to a fairytale within the text" (Smith 10) while reading Waterland. The description of the Fens is full of "allusions" to fairytale elements like the description of the "smell which is half man and half fish" that reminds the readers of The Little Mermaid. When talking about Sarah Atkinson's state after her husband struck her, Tom describes how she sits "in an upper room [where] the servants will come, with meals on a tray, to comb her hair, light the fire, prepare their mistress for bed" (78) – a description that reminds the readers of the fairytale character Rapunzel.

Waterland is full of "fabulation" or as Smith defines it, the recognition "of a new fairytale precisely by these generic makers: 'Once upon a time' […] magical helpers and a happy ending […] There is another type of invented fairytale […] – the fairytale of someone's life" (42-44). Most of the stories that Tom Crick recounts begin with "once upon a time" thus fabulating a new fairytale. The main "fabulation", however, is the

"fairytale of [Tom's] life" (Smith 44). The importance of this fairytale resides in the foregrounding of the ways "in which humans understand the world through stories, and the need to make experience transmittable. The battle between language and experience is here played out, as the storyteller uses the well-worn words of the fairytale" (Smith 44). Hence, these fairytale intertexts are not used for the mere purpose of telling the story using fairytale elements; instead, they are used to subvert established notions of history. Besides the above, the readers are constantly bombarded with "architextual" elements in which there is a "fairytale setting/environment" to what they read (Smith 10). Moreover, the element of coincidence, which is always found in fairytales, forms an essential aspect of Tom's stories.

Despite these fairytale intertexts used exhaustively by Tom, the intertexts do not serve the usual ends that pre-postmodern storytellers have used fairytale intertexts for. While recounting his stories, Tom stresses their fairytale ambience yet simultaneously contradicts their fairytale-ness in several ways. One of the ways is juxtaposing historical and precise personal history alongside the fairytales. He begins his story by declaring that what he said has "Fairy-tale words; fairytale advice. But we lived in a fairytale place" (1). This is very soon contrasted with the preciseness of recounting what happened "one night, in midsummer, in 1937" (1). Even in his description of the French Revolution, Tom describes it as "that old and hackneyed fairy-tale with its Rights of Man, liberty caps, cockades" (7). Hence, the use of fairytale elements by storyteller Tom Crick is mainly to negate established conceptions of history. Tom says of the fairytales that they are myths: "A myth… Yet in every myth there is a grain of truth…" (215). Thereafter, these fairytales, likewise these stories, likewise these histories, have certain "myth[s]" but

have within them "a grain of truth". Smith sees the return to fairytales as helpful for postmodernist purposes because of "the formulaic nature of the fairytale, combined with the fact that it is so often the first and only experience of oral narrative that we have nowadays" (166). Moreover, it is the "awareness of the need for formulaic texts, the need for fantasy, that [Smith] sees characteristic of the postmodernist use of the fairytale" (169).

Another way in which these fairytale intertexts are countered is by subverting the events in a way that contradicts their nature as a fairytale- a feature that challenges history. When Tom Crick talks about how the Fens were a "fairytale place", the reader expects a nice atmosphere but faces instead a "hot and windless" one with "an unrelieved and monotonous flatness, enough of itself, […] to drive a man to unquiet and self-defeating thoughts" (1-2). Later still, "when God's withheld benedictions were shining in the sky" (a very fairytale-ish atmosphere), "something extraordinary and unprecedented" happened: a dead body was found (4). Tom even describes the notorious phrase "Once upon a time" as the "contagious symptoms of fear" (7). When he talks about himself and Mary, his story begins with "once upon a time the future Mrs Crick [marries] a prospective history teacher [but begins] this love-affair [with] God" (41). Tom is aware that by including and subverting the fairytales, he "allows the reader to see the events in more than one way: the boundaries of the possible and the impossible are shifted" (Smith 106). Hence, history, told as a fairytale, is subject to more than one interpretation.

The image of history is also negated and dubbed vulnerable by the choice of themes that Tom Crick discusses and the modes by which he discusses them. First, the choice of the "Fens" as the setting for the entire story is important as it helps chatter the

image of history. The Fens is in fact a geographical place that does exist; simultaneously, however, the writers who have chosen the Fens as the setting for their fiction blend the historical with the fantastic or are science fictional in nature- an aspect that blurs the historicity of the place. After all, as Tom puts it, "this Fenland, this palpable earth raised out of the flood by centuries of toil, is a magical, a miraculous land" (116). Moreover, Tom shapes the image of the Fenland, a geographical place, yet disputes its existence because of the constant flooding that takes over the land. Hence, the geographical place (that is found in history) chatters down, so does history. Moreover, when he talks about the Fens, Tom differentiates "between narrative representation and 'the nothing-landscape' of his birthplace" and therefore the storytelling "of whatever kind--bedtime stories, fairy tales, myths, yarns, moralities--functions, in Crick's estimation, as a human survival strategy, as a way to 'outwit reality'" (qtd. in Champion par 10). Champion sees this aspect as an instigator for the storytelling that takes place:

> Thus, the point from which the storytellers begin, the foundation for their speech in reality, is incorporated into the novel as enigmatic silence, which becomes the motivation for telling their stories. In fact, much of the metafictional thought in Waterland is concerned with the problematics of historical realism, the juxtaposition of the opaqueness of events in the real world and the desire of the human mind for meaning. Often, such speculation emerges with and supports crucial points of action in Crick's autobiographical account, as if to underline his own, intimate, personal experience of the disconnect between language and the real thing (par 10)

Likewise, as Cooper explains, "the interplay of fiction and fact as intellectual and linguistic constructs is deeply imbricated in a specific landscape: A liquid terrain, a featureless but fecund wasteland both seductive and devastating to the imagination, the Fens become an occasion for allegory in the novel, a catchment zone for its various epistemological riddles" (par 1). Thus, the Fenland becomes a geographical manifestation of the interaction between fiction and fact, i.e. between fiction and history. "The Fens", Cooper argues, "proclaim a blurring together at the very heart of separation; they locate the collapsing of boundaries at the precise point of primeval splitting, where difference and otherness emerge" (par 16).

Second, it is a common trend in Waterland that historical events are mixed with personal history, imagined and real, equating the two and thus problematizing history's authenticity. Did the personal history that Tom Crick talks about really happen? If not, then what does juxtaposing such imagined history with historical events implies? Does not this juxtaposition arouse questioning about the truthfulness of the events we read/ hear about from historical sources? Tom even talks about those "numberless non-participants" in historical events who though were not part of recorded history were participants within their "own personal stage" (41). So what takes place in the historical scene does take place "in miniature" in peoples' lives (41). Even more, when talking about William Atkinson's story, Tom mentions how the "War of American Independence" was simultaneously taking place (65). When Tom describes the events that take place in the courtroom due to Freddie's death, he includes the interrogation that took place making it difficult for the readers to know whether a Freddie Parr really drowned or not (110). Hence, by thus equating the two, the questioning that arises about

the truthfulness and falsehood of the personal history presented impels the readers to question alongside the truthfulness and falsehood of the recorded history as well, as both history and personal history are approached fictitiously. Furthermore, the imitation of the style of narrating historical events to tell other not-recorded-in-history events instigates a sense of uncertainty towards both the historical and the personal. As Tom declares at different instances of the novel, history is not different from fiction: "But all the stories were once real. And all the events of history, the battles and costume-pieces, once really happened" (297). He then asserts that "[f]irst it was a story – what our parents told us, at bedtime. Then it becomes real, then it becomes here and now. Then it becomes story again" (328).

Third, there are several reflections about "time" that problematize history besides Tom's approach to time. "And time blurs details" Tom reflects (35); hence, looking back into historical events while trying to configure what 'actually' took place is made difficult because of the time-passage factor. Such a reflection only raises the awareness of the readers about the correctness of recorded historical events that have been written down. A simple anecdote that proves this takes place within the novel when Tom sits with Price after school hours. The readers know what happened but the newspaper entries state another aspect of the story: "More shocks from South London's School for Scandal. Pupils encouraged in after-school drinking" (238). Hence, Tom does not negate the fact that what happened in the past did happen. The question however is our ability to know this past. This incident shows the novelist and journalist (different form of a historian) writing concurrently with one another. Subsequently, the narrator's and journalist's voices compete with one another highlighting their constructedness. Tom tells his stories

and history in an un-linear fashion which helps him alter views of history. "Time, the thread of history, flows like a river on a chronological line, from humble beginnings toward greener pastures and a more expansive future" (Champion par 8); yet, Tom does not narrate the stories chronologically and thereafter he challenges the chronological flow of historical events.

Fourth, knowledge of certain details that are not disclosed to the public also problematizes the preciseness of recorded history. "The preliminary verdict on Freddie Parr was that he died […] by drowning" is the announced story to the public (35). But Mary's confession to Tom that she "told [Dick] it was Freddie. Dick killed Freddie Parr because he thought it was him" challenges the recorded and announced history thus problematizing it (35). Does the recorded history bear such unknown and un-disclosed facts that might change the course of historical events? Related to this aspect is Tom's approach to telling these stories whereby he tries to give different accounts from different sources of the same events. When talking about the Atkinson family, he asks, "But what does Earnest say? We haven't heard his side of the story (we haven't heard Helen's either, but that will come out later, a little slowly and reluctantly perhaps)" (215).

Fifth, the several definitions that Tom uses to define and describe history alter old views and definitions of history. Tom describes history as "the fabrication, the diversion, the reality-obscuring drama" (40) – a description that associates history with stories because what are stories other than "fabrication[s]", "diversion[s]" and "reality-obscuring drama"? He emphasizes the limits that historians try to escape from: "history is that impossible thing: the attempt to give an account, with incomplete knowledge, of actions themselves undertaken with incomplete knowledge" (108). Hence, with time passage that

will even be able to discern what really took place- other than become a detective of the past, trying to figure out the story that took place? Does not such an action then liken the construction of history to that of fiction/storytelling? Hence, as Champion observes, history in Waterland becomes both a "scientific discipline as well as a myth; the world of nature is presented as wild and untamable as well as a cultivated landscape; human individuals are both praised for their enlightened progress and doubted for their dark and incomprehensible desires" (par 1). Listening to Tom's tale, one notices how he "reinterprets history as a ruptured, contradictory tale that hides its ignorance, doubt, and wonder beneath a smooth, rationalized surface" (Champion par 9).

Sixth, metanarratives of the pre-postmodern world prove fallible and incapable of explaining or solving the mysteries of the world which problematizes history. Talking about Sarah Atkinson's state of unconsciousness, Tom recounts how her husband "abandon[s] science [and] turn[s] to religion" instead (80). But, neither science nor religion is able to restore Sarah Atkinson back to her normal state. By recounting such an incident and thus reflecting, Tom reinforces the postmodern thought that the "metanarratives" like Religion and Science are incapable of solving the mysteries of the world: "The myths by which we once legitimized knowledge and practice--Christianity, Science, Democracy, Communism, Progress, no longer have the unquestioning support necessary to sustain the projects which were undertaken in their name" as critics Keep, McLaughlin, and Parmar in their essay about "Postmodernism and the Postmodern Novel" assert (par 1). Tom Crick himself tries to resort to history for an explanation of the events of his life or those of Mary but history does not help him; thereafter, he seeks telling stories instead. History, one of those "metanarratives", hence, becomes prone to

questioning and suspicion. Moreover, as Acheson points out, Tom likens Religion to Fairytales to History that "may serve to comfort us in times of distress, but the comfort it offers is for children, the naive, and the uneducated" ("Historia and Guilt" par 15). Tom says, "[God] doesn't [...] watch any more, up there in the sky […] We've grown up now, and we don't need him any more, our Father in Heaven. [...] God's for simple, backward people in God-forsaken places" (268). Thus, Tom refutes to resort to religion because it will not proffer the needed satisfaction. Likewise, however, history does not give him the satisfaction he needs, and thereafter, he ends up mixing these histories with personal history and stories in an attempt to reach some sort of satisfaction. Furthermore, as Cooper points out, "[c]aught up in the echoing returnings of history's repressed, Ernest Atkinson, Helen, and Dick play out an inverted family romance--an anti-narrative which disarticulates the oedipal story of differentiation from the progressive amplifications of empire" (par 20). This "anti-narrative" also helps ruin the belief in metanarratives of the past.

Seventh, the incessant trend of Tom trying to offer an explanation for the events dethrones history from its pedestal. As a history teacher, Tom is "hooked on explanation. Explain, explain. Everything's got to have an explanation" (166). Tom does not refute this claim but finds this explanation trend "a human instinct [that] goes with living" (166). Despite these explanations that Tom offers to himself first (to digest what happened with him and his life) and to the audience (within and outside the novel), no one ends up grasping the entire picture. The last chapters of the novel seem to offer an explanation of everything and a wrap up for the events, but in fact they do not. They present an "ending that has the aura of explanation but does not in fact explain anything"

(Smith 77). Paralleling history with explanation, thus, instills this sense of obscuring any sense of satisfaction. History no longer takes hold of the aura it once had in pre-postmodern times. Stories now have become alternatives for history for they explain better.

Eighth, the way Tom constructs his stories reveal the contructedness that goes into history writing. In the first chapter, Tom mentions swiftly how he and his father found the dead body of Freddie Parr floating in the river. Tom does not, however, mention Freddie Parr until two or three chapters later. As Tom's stories unfold, the reader grasps several "versions" of Freddie's death: Mary reveals her and Tom's involvement in his death; Dick's murder of Freddie; Tom's "memory of his unreliable friend, and the official view of the death as an accident" – these versions "cloud the purity of the corpse's existence" (Champion par 11). As a storyteller, Tom

> mixes historical precision with his own skeptical perspective: The chapter offers exact information about year, date, and even the clocktime of the rendezvouz plus details about the Hockwell Lode and about the young couple's conversation; on the other hand, it is by no means historical time that dominates this construction, but subjective memory and Crick's own personal time, as his mind moves in associative leaps, back and forth in complex linkings of retrospection (Champion par 11)

The construction of Freddie's murder shows how a "fact" (Freddie's death) becomes "obscured and questioned in the counterpoint of the desire to know it fully and its essential silence" (Champion par 11). Moreover, Tom's narrating that goes back and forth and jumps from one story to another is suggestive of Tom's view of history that

"goes in two directions at once. It goes backwards as it goes forward" (Waterland, 117); therefore, he poses a new conception of history; it "proceeds in a double movement, in the linear, rational time of conventional history, as well as in the different, other time that complicates it" (Champion par 12).

Even before the first chapter begins, the epigraph is responsible for destroying the notion of history as an untouchable discourse. First, Swift places several definitions of "Historia" as "1. inquiry, investigation, learning. 2. a) a narrative of past events, history. b) any kind of narrative: account, tale, story". Below it is a quote from the novel Great Expectations. Concerning the definition of Historia, juxtaposing definition 1 with definition 2 serves clearly to balance history which is a form of "inquiry, investigation, [and] learning" with its antithesis "account, tale, story". Moreover, the choice of a quote from Great Expectations- a bildungsroman- invokes a sense of reading a novel that also describes the development of the main character from his childhood till his adulthood- a sense of maturity, fulfillment and success. But, it is only reading a few pages into the novel that this image is distorted as the narrative is narrated in retrospect and there is a constant going back and forth from the present to the past to the more recent past etc. and the sense of maturity, fulfillment and success is totally destroyed. Reading the entire novel, the "great expectations" that the reader has at the beginning are totally turned down with the destruction of any sense of established rigid definitions of history.

Even beyond the text and the factors mentioned previously, a reading of Tom Crick and Mary's names suggests the breaking down of history. Tom's name may be seen as an abbreviation of tomorrow. His profession as a history teacher only accentuates how his new teaching style- telling stories instead of teaching history- will be the new

methodology of teaching history; he is the 'tomorrow's' status of history teaching. His family name, Crick, means a "turn or twist" (MWD) - a further accentuation of the 'change' that Tom brings to history teaching. His statement that "we are not masters of the present, but servants of the future" proves the aforementioned hypothesis (93). Mary's name, on the other hand, does not become significant until her story is entirely revealed. She, we come to learn, bears a child without her husband's or any man's assistance- an incident that likens her to Virgin Mary. She tells Tom that "I'm going to have a baby. Because God said I will" (130). This image, however, is shattered once she admits that she stole the child. Seen from this perspective, Mary's incident breaks apart a solid religious belief. Hence, her incident only reminds the readers of Lyotard's postmodernist "incredulity toward metanarratives" where religion is one of these "metanarratives".

Hence, the perception of Tom Crick as a storyteller mutilates the concept of history whether in his characteristics as storyteller, in his use of fairytale elements, and in the themes he discusses. Crick's approach to history, in the different modes I explored, places his story within the historiographic metafiction genre; this is achieved specifically because while he manifests and reflects on how he became a storyteller and explores the scopes available for him as a storyteller – accordingly metafictionalizing his stories – he conjoins these manifestations and reflections to the "historical world" that Hutcheon talks about (x). And yet, it is interesting to note that while the history teacher ceases to teach history but teaches stories instead (whether true or made up), the total negation of history comes not from the history teacher, but from his student, Price. Tom objects to Lewis's reasoning for firing him, he says: "Cutting back History? Cutting *History*? If you're

going to sack me, then sack *me*, don't dismiss what I stand for" (21). Tom's reason for not abandoning history but only changing its perception lies in his awareness that "the past clings, that we are always going back" (103). Even when he earlier decides to settle down with his wife, "they settle in Greenwich, a suburb of London noted for its historical features" (123). Tom asserts that "you cannot dispose of the past" because there is no escaping it; there will always be reminders of things that took place in the past (126). Instead, we should change our perception of the attainability and preciseness of records of the past. Thereafter, the past should not be reached only through history, as history might have missed several events, but also through stories, stories people have heard or experienced. After all, history "goes in two directions at once. It goes backwards as it goes forwards. It loops" (135).

Price, on the other hand, keeps interrupting Tom to ask about "the point, use, need, etc., of History" (6). He believes that history "got to the point where it's probably about to end" (7, 154). Price believes that "history was a fairytale" (154) and all what history does is "explain. Explain […] Because explaining's a way of avoiding the facts while you pretend to go near them […] And people only explain when things are wrong, don't they, not when they're right? So the more explaining you hear, the more you think things must be pretty bad that they need so much explaining" (166-167). Tom's reply, however, is a reflection he makes to himself later: "Ah the idols and icons, the emblems and totems of history. How we knock down one, another rises in its place. How we can't get away – even if you can, Price – from our fairytales" (179).

Seen in the light of the aforementioned, this scene highlights Tom's clinging to history though he problematizes its authenticity while Price abandons it totally. Tom, the

teacher, belongs to the "older generation" while Price, the student, belongs to the "younger" one. It might be a blasphemous remark to make, yet I believe it does have some roots: the total negation of history, coming from Price, may be suggestive of the thoughts of the works produced after historiographic metafictions. Though they problematize history, the postmodernists do not refute it which is apparent in Tom Crick's character. His student takes the attack on history a step further and negates it totally.

Flaubert's Parrot Case Study

Flaubert's Parrot is the story of Geoffrey Braithwaite told through the lens of Gustave Flaubert's stories. The story of the fictional character Braithwaite involves non-fictional characters, real episodes, and existent monuments. The amalgamation of fictional features with non fictional ones disables the readers from knowing whether the fictional events might have happened or not while also raising questions about the reliability of the non fictional ones. The narrator, Geoffrey Braithwaite, surpasses being simply and only a narrator while he assumes the role of a storyteller. Seen as a storyteller, the stories Braithwaite tells about himself and about Flaubert become subject to questioning about their reliability especially that he uses nonfictional elements; did the events that Braithwaite talk about concerning his search really happen? What about the truthfulness of the recorded-supposedly-true events of Flaubert's life juxtaposed with Louise Colet's version of the story, letters and journal entries that have been missed by autobiographers, evidence that once existed but were destroyed, and finally the existence of several parrots rather than one authentic parrot? Hence, what elements make Braithwaite a storyteller? What is the importance of Braithwaite, the storyteller, and in what context can he be perceived? Does he use fairytale intertexts? What does the minimal use of fairytale intertexts say about them vis-à-vis historiographic metafictions? Finally, how does the storyteller figure mold a new perception of history? What other elements in the novel shape history as perceived by postmodernist thinkers?

I will first prove that Braithwaite should be perceived as a storyteller backed up by Benjamin's characterizations of the storyteller while, explaining how these characterizations shatter established pre-postmodern notions of history. Then, I will

explore the fairytale elements in the novel and show how they also destroy pre-postmodern notions of history. Finally, I will look at the themes explored by storyteller Braithwaite within the novel that destroy the stability of history. Doing this will enable the classification of Flaubert's Parrot as a historiographic metafiction; but the minimal presence of fairytales therein will reveal that fairytales are subsidiary to achieving historiographic metafictitious ends unlike the presence of the storyteller.

Several of the defining characteristics that Benjamin states that make up a storyteller apply to the character of Geoffrey Braithwaite and enable us thus to view him as a storyteller, not a narrator. Seeing Braithwaite as a storyteller is significant for purposes of historiographic metafiction as I will later explain. First, Braithwaite, the Englishman, is depicted as both the man who has traveled from his hometown to France to learn more about Flaubert's life and who "has stayed at home, making an honest living [of being a doctor] and who knows the local tales and traditions" (Benjamin 2). He is, thereafter, apt to fit within Benjamin's characterization of a storyteller. Second, reading Braithwaite's account shows that he is, as Benjamin's storyteller-character, full of "worldly wisdom [and] knowledge of conditions" (2). Third, Braithwaite's interest in trying to identify the stuffed parrot which Flaubert possessed while writing Un Coeur Simple shows nothing but "[a]n orientation towards practical interests" that any storyteller has as Benjamin claims (2). Fourth, storyteller Braithwaite, like Benjamin's storyteller archetype, "does not aim to convey the pure essence of the thing, like information or report [rather, he] sinks the thing into [his] life [as a] storyteller" (Benjamin 5); he links his stories with those of Flaubert; his story with his wife keeps surfacing when talking about Flaubert and his sexual intimacies.

Fifth, Braithwaite mulls over death at several instances while recounting his stories which reinforces his role as storyteller, not narrator. He continuously talks about the several deaths that haunted Flaubert's life. He also hints at the story of the death of his wife until he describes it fully towards the end of his story. Sixth, Braithwaite's discussion of the Flaubert Bestiary and the focus on the parrot may be seen as "embed[ding] his report in natural history" which is characteristic of storytellers as Benjamin explains (7). Although Braithwaite agrees with Flaubert that having the stuffed parrot in front of him for three consecutive months is indeed annoying, they both keep faith with "the epoch in which man could believe himself to be in harmony with nature" and hence fit as storytellers (8). Braithwaite dedicates long sections of his story to talk about the animals with which Flaubert was associated. Had not Braithwaite believed in the "harmony with nature", he would have rejected those ideas and abstained from mentioning them.

Moreover, the storyteller, Benjamin explains, is gifted with the ability to "fashion the raw material of experience, his own and that of others, in a solid, useful, and unique way" (14) - a knack that Braithwaite possesses. Braithwaite is not an ordinary narrator who tells the story of Flaubert; neither is he a narrator who tells the story of his life; he is rather a storyteller who recounts Flaubert's stories with his in a distinctive way that raises questions about authenticity and history. Hence, the stories he tells "contain, openly [and] covertly, something useful" (Benjamin 2); Braithwaite's figure as a storyteller is not like that of Scheherazade- interested in telling stories to increase the time span of her life; rather, Braithwaite's stories entertain, provide insightful info, fill gaps, and more importantly, challenge established facts. Braithwaite is a character within the story he

recounts who forces his audience to think about the story's entire framework, and this is what a storyteller does primarily unlike the narrator.

It is only in two chapters that Braithwaite himself becomes the audience while other storytellers emerge- an occurrence significant for the purposes of defying established notions of history. In the third section of Chapter 2, Braithwaite's voice fades away in favor of Flaubert's voice (32-37). The chronology presented in this section becomes an assortment of Flaubert quotations from his diaries. This Flaubertian voice offers a new perspective that could not be established from the previous chronologies although they might have included some quotations from Flaubert's diaries. Later still, Chapter 11 paves the way for the voice of Braithwaite adopting Louise Colet's voice and personality. Braithwaite's justification for allowing her voice to surface is that "admittedly we hear only Gustave's side of the story. Perhaps someone should write her account: yes, why not reconstruct Loiuse Colet's Version? I might do that. Yes, I will" (135). Such an act of reconstruction shows two important things: one, that several histories written down are written down from one perspective only – marginalizing other not-so-powerful voices. The second aspect revealed from this quotation is the realization that history is an act of reconstruction; i.e. that the historians look at the 'facts' or what remains of them and accordingly reconstruct the history. Such an act only likens history writing then to fiction writing; hence, history's once-untouchable standing is shaken down fiercely in these historiographic metafictions.

Additionally, the presence of storyteller Braithwaite necessitates the presence of an audience (otherwise he would not be a storyteller); this audience comprises of characters in his story and the readers of the novel who play an important role in helping

Braithwaite confront established notions of history. Although he quotes what Flaubert once said, Braithwaite's decision to mention the following to his audience reveals an important aspect about storytelling: "He [Flaubert] said, If anyone ever asks you what my letters contained, or what my life was like, please lie to them. Or rather, since I cannot ask you of all people to lie, just tell them what it is you think they want to hear" (48). Quoting this, Braithwaite raises questions about his account of Flaubert and other biographers' accounts. After listening to such a confession, how are we to believe what Braithwaite or any biographer, for that matter, says of Flaubert is true? Why would not what we hear about Flaubert then be some facts molded into what biographers think the audience would like to hear? Similarly then, how is history, written in the same mode, different than the writing of Flaubert's biography?

As Benjamin notes, the storyteller "is, and will continue to be, the teller of fairytales", hence, it is normal that we find several fairytale elements in Braithwaite's story although these elements are used for different purposes than pre-postmodern storytelling (11). There are several fairytale intertexts found in Flaubert's Parrot in the different forms that Smith identifies. The first encounter with fairytale intertexts in "writerly" form is the title itself, Flaubert's Parrot; choosing the parrot, a talking animal, associates the novel with fables and fairytales in which it is a normal phenomenon for animals to talk. In his recount of Flaubert's life, Braithwaite quotes what Flaubert once wrote down about his perception of the parrots: "Parrots are human to begin with; etymologically, that is" (56). The un-authenticity of *a* parrot towards the end of the story shows the incapability of ever knowing which account really occurred. The fairytale

aspect of the parrot further supports this conclusion as the fairytale does not have *an* original source.

In one account of what influenced Flaubert's life, Braithwaite recounts the fable of "La Fontaine a fable of the Bear and the Man Who Delighted in Gardens" (53). By including this fable within the autobiography, Braithwaite resorts to the "incorporation" element identified by Smith in which a fairytale is used as an intertext to "give an insight into the narrator's psychological state and the stories that influenced their expectations" (17). The incorporation of this particular fable, however, in which the bear "beat the gardener's brains out" succeeds to go against the idea that there must be a happy ending to all fables and fairytales (54); i.e. it goes against the notion that life should be explained in one particular way. Instead, not every story that has the aura of a happy story has to have a happy ending; as such, the grand story collapses paving the way instead for "mini-narratives" (Lyotard).

Beyond the apparent fairytale intertexts, the readers come across the idea of "metamorphosis", an element of "magic realism", which serves as an "architextual" element in which there are "'fairytale-like' qualities in a fiction, without knowing a specific fairytale to which this text relates", as Smith explains (51-64). The "metamorphosis" takes place with the story of "Henry K" who "[g]radually […] began to believe that he himself had turned into a parrot" – a story that Flaubert read about in the newspaper and "was struck by" (58). When Braithwaite talks about "The Flaubert Bestiary", he describes how Flaubert himself is seen/ sees himself as a "bear" (47-54). These metamorphoses allow for the proliferation of possibilities though under magical/ unnatural terms. Seen as a historiographic metafiction, the metamorphoses that take place

in Flaubert's Parrot transcend the animals becoming human (both of which fall under the 'living species' category) to stories substituting histories (both of which fall under the 'genres' that attempt to talk about experience and events).

There are several statements that Braithwaite uses that have the aura of a fairytale, yet they do not relate necessarily to a specific fairytale; however, these statements are contrasted with their adversaries thus distorting their fairytale-ness for purposes of historiographic metafiction. Writing down the chronology of Flaubert's life, for example, Braithwaite quotes Flaubert talking about himself and his career:

> Amongst those who go to the sea there are the navigators who discover new worlds, adding continents to the earth and starts to the heavens: they are the masters, the great, the eternally splendid. Then there are those who spit terror from their gun-ports, who pillage, who grow rich and fat […] I am the obscure and patient pearl-fisherman who dives into the deepest waters and comes up with empty hands and blue face. (33)

In another instance still, Braithwaite quotes Flaubert saying "I have always tried to live in an ivory tower, but a tide of shit is beating at its walls, threatening to undermine it" (36). Both these quotes have the air of fairytales, yet their fairytale ambience is promptly distorted when the quotes do not end the way the reader expects them to end, i.e. end happily or have a happy implication. Although it is Flaubert who said these, Braithwaite's choice of recounting these quotes shows his consciousness about the disbelief that accompanied the postmodernist thought. There is no longer one way in which things have to happen or take place. The once expected route of events now has alternative routes. Thereafter, a single fixed explanation of things or way in which things

should be viewed is now open for several views and routes. Such a view enables opens up the subject of history to more than one interpretation.

Later still, Braithwaite talks about the element of "coincidence" found in fiction raising two important issues that destabilize the status of history (67). Talking about "coincidence in books", Braithwaite reflects on their "cheap and sentimental" nature (67). Though it seems trivial, this comment bears an important inference: first, many events in history are full of coincidental occurrences, and second, history is, after all, recorded in a "book". Hence, Braithwaite's remark touches upon fiction as well as history. This equates history to fiction. Seen in this respect, history and fiction construction and writing are not so different - a point made and highlighted in historiographic metafictions such as this one.

Moreover, Braithwaite's role as a storyteller allows him to plagiarize several texts which help him to challenge history. Attempting to write down Flaubert's biography, Braithwaite plagiarizes several texts ranging from fables and stories to newspaper quotations to Flaubertian statements to rewritings of Flaubert's Dictionary of Accepted Ideas to historical events. At some instances Braithwaite does not mention the sources of his knowledge; at others he mentions the sources very quickly without giving a credible citation. By thus doing, Braithwaite raises two important points: given in the context of a story, the stories Braithwaite mentions and cites become subject to doubt about their authenticity while the status of history as a unique genre becomes astutely dubitable. The first point that Braithwaite's plagiarism brings one's attention to is the question of authenticity. By mixing non-fictional 'facts' and quotes with fictional events and characters, Braithwaite raises the mistrust of the readers about both the fictional and non-

fictional ones. The readers are unable to discern whether what they read is contrived from Braithwaite's imagination or not unless they turn to the encyclopedia to check out. When Braithwaite talks about how Flaubert "taught [his niece] history: the story of Pelopidas and Epaminondas", for instance, the reader wonders whether such a story really exists in history. Though it turns out that Epaminondas is indeed a "Theban general" as Braithwaite claims and Pelopidas, another Theban general, summarizing history with "the story of Pelopidas and Epaminondas" surpasses the 'traditional' views of history: history becomes more than just the story of what happened (104); it involves stories about friendship, camaraderie and the happy and miserable events people go through during their life journey. Such a perception, thus, likens history to fiction that talks about and harbors such relationships. Thereafter, a new perception of history arises.

Besides the aforementioned, a scrutiny of the "Note" at the beginning of the novel asserts history's susceptible position. The note is from the author Julian Barnes who is "grateful to James Fenton and the Salamander Press for permission to reprint the lines from 'A German Requiem' on page 115." Turning to that page, the reader encounters the following, "It is not what they built. It is what they knocked down. It is not the houses. It is the spaces between the houses. It is not the streets that exist. It is the streets that no longer exist" (Barnes 115). This quote stresses the importance of the things that are not there. Reading the novel within the framework of this quote surfaces a new understanding of biography/ history writing: "It is not the [biography/ history] that [is recorded]. It is the [biography/ history] that [they missed to write down]". Hence, the past took place, but it becomes a question of our ability to identify the past today. Thereafter, Braithwaite's construction of Flaubert's biography shows the constructive-ness necessitated by the act

of biography/ history writing. Braithwaite constructs, organizes, and chooses selectively what he wants to tell us about Flaubert (enabled to do so because of his status as storyteller), but by thus doing, also reveals the construction of history by historiographers. Then, the "Note" continues that "The translations in this book are by Geoffrey Braithwaite; though he would have been lost without the impeccable example of Francis Steegmuller". A simple research on Steegmuller reveals that he is in fact "an American biographer, translator and fiction writer, who was known chiefly as a Flaubert scholar" ("Francis Steegmuller"). Though Braithwaite then is a fictional character, his exemplar is a non-fictional one; thus, "the novelist [represented by Braithwaite] and the historian [or the biographer, in this respect,] are shown to write in tandem with others- and with each other" (Hutcheon 190) – a position that likens history writing to fiction writing and thus problematizes history's status.

The image of history is also negated and dubbed vulnerable by the choice of themes that Braithwaite discusses and the modes by which he discusses them. First, choosing Flaubert as his protagonist, storyteller Braithwaite sheds light on the delusional aspect of history. Gustave Flaubert is a writer who lived and died- no one can deny this 'fact'. Yet, Braithwaite explains why his choice of character is problematic because

> [n]othing much else to do with Flaubert has ever lasted. He died little more than a hundred years ago, and all that remains of him is paper. Paper, ideas, phrases, metaphors, structured prose which turns into sound […] The writer's house at Croisset was knocked down shortly after his death […] It wouldn't take much to get rid of his effigy either: if one statue-

> loving Mayor can put it up, another – perhaps a bookish party-liner who has half-read Sartre on Flaubert – might zealously take it down. (12)

Hence, our knowledge about Flaubert is nothing more than accounts of him from others in written and oral form. Likewise, any account of things that took place in the past is mainly through documents written down and stories heard. Consequently, storyteller Braithwaite's tale about Flaubert (written and heard) is as authentic as Sartre's account of Flaubert (written). Thus, history is nothing but a human construct like fiction.

In addition to the above, Braithwaite's discussion of the ending of Un Coeur Simple in which Felicite "wonders whether the Holy Ghost, conventionally represented as a dove, would not better be portrayed as a parrot" refutes metanarratives (17). Braithwaite seriously considers this ending and believes that "[l]ogic is certainly on [Felicite's] side: parrots and Holy Ghosts can speak, whereas doves cannot" (17). By agreeing to this heretic thought, Braithwaite refuses to conform to one interpretation of the episode; hence, he experiences what Lyotard labels as the "incredulity toward metanarratives" that attempt to offer an explanation of things without leaving space for alternative explanations. Religion and History are thereafter confronted.

Second, storyteller Braithwaite's focus on Madame Bovary further highlights the deceitful elements of history. The focus on an archetypical Realist novel that does not have a happy ending helps Braithwaite critique history. The failures that haunt the characters of the novel are akin to the failures that haunt historical figures. Emma Bovary is disillusioned with several of life's embellishments (marriage, motherhood, even adultery and suicide); likewise, Braithwaite is disillusioned with his life (his wife's infidelity, his wife's death/ murder) and resorts to Flaubert's biography (form of history)

and focuses on Emma Bovary (who is congruent in character to Braithwaite's wife) to rationalize what happened. His resort to Madame Bovary is a hunt for an explanation: "Books say: she did this because. Life says: she did this. Books are where things are explained to you; life is where things aren't" (168). Yet, even with the resort to this book and Flaubert's life to explain his, Braithwaite is incapable of achieving a soliciting answer; and this is where realism fails him; biography fails him; and history, in a more general sense, fails him.

Third, the chronology which Braithwaite presents, in which, Flaubert himself becomes storyteller, revolutionizes established views of history. The "chronology", used exhaustively by historians, aims to "assign to events their proper dates" as MWD defines it and hence, chronicle the exact date and time of the events that occurred. This chronicling process authenticates as it records the events. Hence, when we read the chapter entitled "Chronology" we expect to read about the events that Flaubert experienced. Yet, this is not the case; instead, we encounter three different versions of the chronology: the first one lists Flaubert's educational achievements, literary successes, active sexual life, and successful publications (23-27). This chronology is juxtaposed with another one reporting the deaths that haunted Flaubert's life, his expulsion from college, the sicknesses that attacked his health, the negative feedback he received for works he has written, and his financial problems (27-31). This chronology is also juxtaposed with a third one that comprises of quotations from Flaubert's journal entries. Although all three chronologies verify events that took place, juxtaposed as such, they reveal a significant fact about chronology/ history writing: they show the selectiveness that goes into writing a chronology/ history. The chronicler chooses the events that he

wants with the perspective he wants to impose and accordingly writes the chronology. And history, written with the same effervescence, entails a selective process. How then is the historian different than the storyteller who also selects the events he wants to report while choosing the atmosphere that he believes fits the events best? Do not both choose from the events what best suits their story?

Before giving us Flaubert's chronology, Braithwaite asks

> how do we seize the past? Can we ever do so? When I was a medical student some pranksters at an end-of-term dance released into the hall a piglet which had been smeared with grease. It squirmed between legs, evaded capture, squealed a lot. People fell over trying to grasp it, and were made to look ridiculous in the process. The past often seems to behave like that piglet. (14)

By thus asking and proclaiming, Braithwaite affirms our incapability of capturing the past; rather, we can only assort what we know of in the storyline that we believe best describes what really happened. For this reason, claims about history's authenticity are problematic. The question of our ability to "seize the past" recurs incessantly at several moments: "How do we seize the past? How do we seize the foreign past? We read, we learn, we ask, we remember, we are humble; and then a casual detail shifts everything" (90); "The past is a distant, receding coastline, and we are all in the same boat" (101). The interruption of these questions only highlights the inability to know what 'really' took place in the past. Braithwaite asks, "But what helps? What do we need to know?" yet concludes that we do not need to know "everything", "[n]ot everything. Everything confuses" (102). This conclusion asserts our incapability of knowing "everything" in the

past while it underscores historians' selectiveness involved in constructing and writing down history – which problematizes it additionally.

Fifth, talking about "The Flaubert Apocrypha", Braithwaite reassures the inconsistency of recorded history. At the beginning of his story, Braithwaite talks about the "unfinished books" that Flaubert was in the process of writing. Bouvard et Pecuchet is one such book. In this book, "Flaubert sought to enclose and subdue the whole world, the whole of human striving and human feeling" (13). Braithwaite's mentioning of the inability to complete this book is very significant as it calls attention to the inability to "enclose and subdue the whole world", i.e. the inability to resort to metanarratives whose purpose is nothing more than to "enclose and subdue the whole world". Hence, Braithwaite cleverly goes against the metanarratives, of which History is one. Moreover, Braithwaite also remarks that "these unwritten books tantalise. Yet, they can, to an extent, be filled out, ordered, reimagined" (121). This statement can apply to the unwritten histories that were marginalized and not recorded. They might as well, "to an extent, be filled out, ordered, reimagined". History, then, once again, is treated like fiction because of its constructed-ness.

Sixth, choosing "Pure Story" as the title for the episode about his wife's death, Braithwaite further problematizes history. Early in his story, Braithwaite tells his audience that

> Three stories contend within me. One about Flaubert, one about Ellen, one about myself. My own is the simplest of the three – it hardly amounts to more than a convincing proof of my existence – and yet I find it the hardest to begin. My wife's is more complicated, and more urgent […]

> But by the time I tell you her story I want you to be prepared: that's to say, I want you to have had enough of books, and parrots, and lost letters, and bears, and the opinions of Dr Enid Starkie, and even the opinions of Dr Geoffrey Braithwaite. Books are not life […] Ellen's is a true story; perhaps it is even the reason why I am telling you Flaubert's story instead. (85-6)

Knowing that Ellen, Braithwaite's wife, is a fictional character while Flaubert is a non-fictional one, Braithwaite swaps the long-established notions of story vs. history: Ellen's becomes a "true story" whereas Flaubert's is simple a "story"; consequently, on a larger scale, history and fiction alternate and become equivalent. Braithwaite carries on with shattering the image of history in his chapter "Pure Story" when he says, "I am telling you a pure story. She was born in 1920, married in 1940, gave birth in 1942 and 1946, died in 1975" (162). Then he decides that he wants to change perspective and elaborate on this "pure story" so he says, "I'll start again" and talks about how "small" she was and the effects of her "small[-ness]" (162). Still, not satisfied, he also says, "I'll start again" and talks about the "only child" and "only wife" effect (162). Such an endeavor shows the constructed-ness that goes into writing fiction, biography, and history for this matter.

Seventh, the examination paper which Braithwaite presents undermines the status of history. The last question in the examination paper concerning History is coupled with Astrology (179). Such a combination shakes the rigid status of History as a science that holds on to the facts; instead, now history becomes a matter of guessing and forecasting from certain elements what took place in the past. Hence, only reading the subtitle of the exam formulates a new perception of history that shows the construction that goes into

the process of history writing. Thereafter, history becomes like fiction – a reconstruction of the story based on minimal facts.

Eighth, Braithwaite's observation and conclusion about Flaubert's statues and the parrots very cleverly rip history down to pieces. Braithwaite begins his story with the description of Flaubert's statues. We learn that there are two statues: "the one above, the permanent, unstylish one […] isn't the original one [as t]he Germans took the first Flaubert away in 1941 (11). Since the beginning of the novel, hence, the issue of double-ness or the existence of more than an original haunts. Although both statues are Flaubert's, one gives the appeal of authenticity more than the other. The second 'un-original' statue, however, is based on a "rediscovered […] original plaster cast" (11). Thereafter, both statues have some authenticity clinging to them, but which one is the authentic cannot be known. Choosing a statue that is a form of historical monument to problematize its authenticity vigorously introduces the unreliability of history. Similarly, Braithwaite's conclusion at the end of his story that the stuffed parrot that inspired Un Coeur Simple could have been any parrot of the fifty ones at the museum shows the duplicity of an account that claims authenticity. Therefore, there is no one account of history that is authentic; rather, there are several accounts, which, taken all together, give an approximation of what really happened.

Furthermore, it is not only the statues and historical monuments that problematize history but also images and letters. Although the statues, historical monuments, images were believed to give evidence to things that took place, they become problematic in the postmodernist age. Braithwaite's discussion about the statues and the parrots asserts this

claim. His reflection about the photos reconfirms his views: talking about Flaubert, he says that

> [V]arious images of the writer confirmed the dire early shift he underwent from handsome youth to paunchy, balding burgher. Syphilis, some conclude. Normal nineteenth-century ageing, others reply. Perhaps it was merely that his body has a sense of decorum: when the mind inside declared itself prematurely old, the flesh did its best to conform. I kept reminding myself that he had fair hair. It's hard to remember: photographs make everyone seem dark. (15)

Hence, though the photograph presents an 'authentic' image of Flaubert, it "makes [him] seem dark" thus manipulating his real image. Noteworthy from the aforementioned quote also is the different interpretations that go into analyzing a piece of evidence. Hence, the story which offers an alternative interpretation of historical events is as authentic as history. The letters, similarly, trigger problems to the authenticity of the accounts although they should serve in doing the opposite. When he first enters the Museum of Rouen and finds the parrot, Braithwaite is sure that this is the authentic one because a "Xeroxed letter from Flaubert confirmed the fact" (16). But a few days later, he encounters another parrot at Bar Le Flaubert and this "fact" becomes unsettled. When Braithwaite meets Ed to know more about Juliet and Gustave, Braithwaite asks Ed about the source of all his knowledge to which Ed answers, "There was a letter attached in Mr Gosse's hand" (43). Yet, minutes later, Ed claims that he "burnt" the letters (46). Hence, the certainty of Ed's accounts becomes dubitable.

There are several statements as well within Braithwaite's account that problematize history's authenticity. When first doing his search about the parrots, Braithwaite contemplates whether Flaubert saw "another living parrot between 1853 and 1876" but he cannot answer his pondering and decides to "leave such matters to the professionals" (18). This questioning offers the possibility of Flaubert's encounter with "another" parrot that was not recorded down by the "professionals" which in turn raises the possibility of other events having taken place in the past without necessarily having been recorded. Braithwaite also declares to his audience that "You can define a net in one of two ways, depending on your point of view […] You can do the same with biography" (38). Since biography is a derivative of history, then the same applies to history writing- a phenomenon Braithwaite makes very clear in the chapter entitled "Chronology". Hence, Braithwaite reasserts the multiplicity of history and its likening to fiction writing. When talking about the Dogs, Braithwaite writes the following note: "Is it fair to add that Gustave's journal offers a different version of the story? […] Strangely, though, he doesn't mention reading Plutarch on the battlefield […] What happened to the truth is not recorded" (65). Braithwaite also declares that "[o]mniscience is impossible, man's knowledge is partial". Braithwaite also believes "that history is merely another literary genre: the past is autobiographical fiction pretending to be a parliamentary report" (90).

Talking about biography writing, Braithwaite raises important points that problematize its completeness and thus its authenticity- an issue that problematizes history as biography stems out from history. He points out the possibility of having missed out on information when writing one's biography: "think of everything that got away, that fled with the last deathbed exhalation of the biographee" (38). When talking

about Juliet Herbert, Braithwaite notes how the biographers are not in accord with one another: “For some, the shortage of evidence indicates that she was of small significance in Flaubert’s life; others conclude from this absence precisely the opposite […] Hypothesis is spun directly from the temperament of the biographer” (40). Hence, though the biography is supposed to be a “written history of a person's life”, as the MWD defines it, this “history” is problematic because of unknown facts. Braithwaite uses “perhaps” a lot as an answer to his inability to know the reality of things. Related to the aforementioned is Braithwaite’s discussion about “The Mistakes in Literature and Whether They Matter” (76). He agrees to Professor Rick who claims that “if the factual side of literature becomes unreliable, then ploys such as irony and fantasy become much harder to use. If you don’t know what’s true, or what’s meant to be true, then the value of what isn’t true, or isn’t meant to be true, becomes unreliable” (77).

Moreover, when Braithwaite reflects on the articles written at the back of the magazines, he highlights their constructed-ness – a point that also changes the perception of history. He declares that “in the back of magazines [… t]hey aren’t lying – indeed, they’re all trying to be utterly sincere – but they aren’t telling the truth. The column distorts the way advertisers describe themselves” (95). He criticizes how the magazine editors manipulate what gets published and what does not. He says how the editors demand that “this month, everyone must write about this; next month, everyone must write about that. So-and-so will not be reprinted until we say so” (98). Such reflections only show the restrictions that are huddled with publishing magazine and newspaper articles. Hence, this shows the selectiveness that goes into the publishing process.

Thereafter, although the magazines and newspapers are relatively authentic, after knowing the above, their authenticity becomes problematic.

Furthermore, a survey of "history" versus "story" heightens Braithwaite's undermining of history. When talking about Un Coeur Simple, Braithwaite makes the distinction between "tale" and "text" (19). On the surface, such a distinction seems unimportant, but, upon scrutiny, the distinction proves worthy. Whereas the tale is "a usually imaginative narrative of an event" (MWD), the text is "a passage from an authoritative source" (MWD). Un Coeur Simple is a work of fiction, a short story, and hence, a tale. Braithwaite's statement, however, that "whether you call it [Un Coeur Simple] a tale or a text" (19) blurs the short story's fixed positioning within the fiction genre to transcend it and become associated with the text genre. Hence, Braithwaite's statement distorts the clear distinction between "tale" and "text" that once existed, and likewise, at a more general level, blurs the distinction between history writing (text) and storytelling (tale). Not only do the phrases and sentences that Braithwaite uses depict the struggle between history and fiction (story), but also the words themselves and their recurrence. A survey of story and words synonymous with it (narrative, short story, tale) versus history and words synonymous with it (chronicle, record, text) within the novel gives the ratio of 15 to 9. Hence, though Braithwaite provides the biography (form of history) of Gustave Flaubert, he emphasizes the story attribute more than the historical one which problematizes further history's authenticity. A further support is the following observation by Braithwaite: he says, backed up by Flaubert, that "the most reliable form of pleasure [is] the pleasure of anticipation" (13). And the story offers "anticipation" while history does not.

Braithwaite even problematizes history indirectly by coming up with new definitions for words that have fixed meanings. Attempting to define "net", Braithwaite says that "[n]ormally, you would say that it is a meshed instrument designed to catch fish. But you could, with no great injury to logic, reverse the image and define a net as a jocular lexicographer once did: he called it a collection of holes tied together with string" (38). Still, two pages later, Braithwaite defines Juliet Herbert as "a great hole tied together with string" (40). Suddenly, net transcends being "a meshed instrument" to becoming "a hole tied together with string" to becoming synonymous with Juliet Herbert. Such a play with fixed definitions forces the readers to change their perception about terms that were fixed and defined to be viewed differently in the postmodernist age.

Finally, considering the aforementioned and looking back at the quote that storyteller Braithwaite mentions before beginning the novel accentuate the challenge of history while attesting that Flaubert's Parrot is a historiographic metafiction par excellence despite the minimal presence of fairytale elements. Before beginning the novel, Braithwaite quotes from Flaubert's letter to Ernest Feydeau in 1872 the following: "When you write the biography of a friend, you must do it as if you were taking *revenge* for him". Reading this quote at first does not resonate anything beyond its literal meaning. Rereading this quote after having read the entire novel however changes perception of its simplicity and innocence; Braithwaite rewrites the biography of Gustave Flaubert, yet, in doing so, he condemns any form of history writing that uses the model that was used to construct Flaubert's biography. After all, biography is a derivative of history. Viewed as such, hence, Braithwaite is not only "taking revenge for [Flaubert]" but also and more accurately "taking revenge for [history]". He expects his audience to

question the authenticity of biography/ history writing. He impels his audience to ponder about biography/ history construction; when simple details have been missed out from Flaubert's biography (intentionally or unintentionally), then this suggests the possibility that historians might have missed out on minimal details that change the course of history, if discovered. Any assertion thus of recorded history becomes treacherous and harbors the possibility of being false and constructed. Nonetheless, the minimal presence of fairytales in this historiographic metafiction only show that fairytales are not an indispensable ingredient of historiographic metafictions; rather, the fairytale is one among other features of historiographic metafictions – but the presence of a storyteller is a requisite for historiographic metafictions. The storyteller may or may not resort to fairytales and fairytale elements within his historiographic metafiction. Not resorting to the fairytale does not diminish the storyteller's abilities to achieve historiographic metafictitious ends as this analysis shows. In Smith's own words in his conclusion about the fairytale intertexts, "it is not the fairytale, but storytelling itself that is universal", and thus, the minimal presence of fairytales does not affect negatively the storyteller from attaining historiographic metafictitious ends.

Sexing the Cherry Case Study

Sexing the Cherry is neither like Waterland nor like Flaubert's Parrot; it does not claim autobiographical / historical / biographical truthfulness – it does not seek them. Rather, it attempts to talk about the journeys "conceal[ed]" that lie within the journeys taken. These journeys, which Jordan and Dog-Woman talk about, constitute "the path not taken and the forgotten angle" (Winterson 2). Yet, Sexing the Cherry is as much a historiographic metafictitious novel as Waterland and Flaubert's Parrot are. As mentioned earlier, historiographic metafictitious novels reflect on the writing process and hence stress their "fictionality", yet, at the same time, "root themselves in the historical world" (Hutcheon x). Alternating between two storytellers with the interjection of different storytelling-voices at particular moments in the novel, Sexing the Cherry overtly displays its metafictionality. It resorts to fairytale elements and even includes a known fairytale, though a subverted version of it. A scrutiny of the novel's storytellers - their characteristics as storytellers, their modes of storytelling, the stories they tell, the discrepancies within their stories, the exploitation of fairytales and fairytale elements, and the playfulness with historical 'truths' – situates the novel perfectly within the historiographic metafiction genre because of its shrewd problematizing of history. Perceiving the novel as a historiographic metafiction will dub Winterson necessarily a postmodernist novelist – a claim she goes against.

Even before the novel begins, the epigraph, consisting of two remarks, problematizes history. The first remark states the following: "The Hopi, an Indian tribe, have a language as sophisticated as ours, but no tenses for past, present, and future. The division does not exist." The absence of a "division" that sets apart the "past" from the

"present" from the "future" necessitates a problematizing of the progress of time. "What does this say about time?" Winterson asks after writing down this observation. Indeed, when time, demarcated by the ability to set apart the past from the present from the future, becomes insignificant, what then are we to say about history that is defined by time: "history" after all is "[a] written narrative constituting a continuous methodical record, in order of time, of important or public events" (OED)? Posing such a problem, Winterson does not stop at this point. She further supports it by problematizing yet another relevant issue; she comments: "Matter, that thing the most solid and the well-known, which you are holding in your hands and which makes up your body, is now known to be mostly empty space. Empty space and points of light. What does this say about the reality of the world?" Juxtaposed after the remark about the Hopi, history may be easily substituted with "Matter" in the above quote to make the following: "[History], that thing the most solid and well-known, which you [read about and hold] in your hands and which makes up your [identity], is now known to be mostly empty space [different stories fabricated by historiographers]. What does this say about the reality of the world [of history]?"

For the purpose of answering her speculations about newly problematized concepts of "time" and "the reality of the world", Winterson allows for the rise of the voices of different storytellers, mainly Jordan and Dog-Woman. Neither Jordan nor Dog-Woman is to be viewed as a narrator simply; they should be rather perceived as storytellers because their status as such enables them to accentuate the fictionality of their stories while historicizing them (i.e. fitting and serving purposes of historiographic metafictions). First, Jordan's occupation as the "seaman" who visited several places and

is therefore able to recount stories makes him fit perfectly within Benjamin's typical storyteller (2). Dog-Woman, on the other hand, fits under Benjamin's other typical storyteller as the woman "who has stayed at home, making an honest living, and who knows the local tales and traditions" (2). Second, both storytellers are aware of the existence of an audience. They consciously address this audience and ask his participation and reflection. Third, Dog-Woman ceaselessly talks about the deaths that haunted her life: the death of King Charles I, of Tradescant, of Preacher Scroggs, etc. Thereafter, she, the storyteller, sees in "[d]eath [a] sanction of everything [she] can tell" (7). Her involvement towards the end of the novel in the fight against the pollution may be seen is an involvement in phenomenon that relates to natural history; hence, she does, then, "embed[… her] report deeper in natural history" (Benjamin 7). Fourth, Jordan's love and compassion for his mother whose physicality is 'abnormal' corresponds with Benjamin's characterization of the storyteller who "has traditional sympathy […] for rascals and crooks" (13). Finally, storytellers Dog-Woman and Jordan "fashion the raw material of experience, [their] own and that of others, in a solid, useful, and unique way" (Benjamin 14). They use the bits and pieces of their life and that of their family members to enthrall their audience.

Moreover, Dog-Woman insists on wearing very simple outfit which makes her fit perfectly within the role of a storyteller while simultaneously challenging the established perception of history. We come to know that she wears a "dress" that she "haven't had […] off in five years" (5). Once, a Puritan "passing by" sneers at her "cleanliness" but she answers that "God looks on the heart, not a poor woman's dress" (16). This simple outfit is important because storytellers should and tend to "dress comfortably and simply"

as Greene in her book Storytelling explains to avoid distracting their audience and shifting their focus to the teller instead of the tale (82). Storytellers should "beware of jangly [sic] bracelets, long beads, and other potential distractions" (Greene 82), which Dog-Woman is indeed away from. The 'fact' that she "haven't had that dress off in five years" (5) makes of her dress a historical relic, a witness of the past. Thereafter, though her account of history may not be written down in history books, her "dress" becomes an adequate evidence of her past and the stories she tells of that past.

Seeing Dog-Woman as a storyteller helps problematize history for several reasons. The stories she talks about are addressed from an angle of "marginalization" as "she is poor, female, large, and ugly" as critic Marie Smith explains in her essay, "Fiery Constellations" in which she juxtaposes Winterson's Sexing the Cherry alongside Benjamin's concept of materialist historiography (par 15). Offering an account from a "marginaliz[ed]" character contends previous histories recorded only by centralized figures. Dog-Woman's account of the women who try to reconstruct the splinters of the broken church windows (66) may be seen as a metaphor for "reconstruct[ing] histories shattered by dominant forces" (Marie Smith par 15). Later still, by burning the newspapers, Dog-Woman defies the transitory nature of the written versus the durable nature of memory; furthermore, such an act affirms the "existence of the stories of the marginalized" that were not recorded but persist in the memories and tongues of those who behold them (Marie Smith par 15). Similarly, Dog-Women and Jordan's burning of "all the copies of 'A Perfect Diurnal' and [making] a bonfire" shows their involvement in changing the routes of history (70). Dog-Woman's comment after the act of burning is important: "I fancied I had never been away and that all our adventures and troubles were

a dream […] And I thought, if only the fire could be kept burning, the future might be kept at bay and this moment would remain" (70). In this sense, the burning becomes a symbol for pausing time.

Likewise, perceiving Jordan as a storyteller also problematizes history. His stories are juxtaposed after Dog-Woman's accounts. This juxtaposition necessitates that the reader questions both their accounts as they both talk describe the same events yet have discrepancies within their stories. The accounts that Jordan talks about blend historical with non-historical/ fictitious stories. This mixture problematizes the authenticity of both accounts. Additionally, his storytelling challenges conventional views of history because of the stories he states but later refutes. Most importantly, Jordan's judgments of history reveal the postmodern doubt pertaining to master narratives and truth. Hence, his accounts, countered with those of Dog-Woman, avow the need for a continuous redisplaying of the past and past events using the lens of the present.

Besides storytellers Jordan and Dog-Woman, there arise voices of other storytellers whose interpositioning allows for further challenging of history. The first interpositioning comes from the voices of the eleven dancing princesses. Jordan meets these princesses and each starts telling her story. Yet, the stories they recount start at the end of the known fairytale of The Twelve Dancing Princesses: the fairytale ends when the soldier reveals the secret of the twelve princesses to the king, asks for the eldest princess's hand for marriage, marries her, and becomes the king's heir. The eldest princess recaps the known story about how "eventually a clever prince caught [them] flying" but she continues, unlike the original fairytale, that "he had eleven brothers and [they] were given in marriage, one to each brother, and as it says lived happily ever after.

[They] did, but not with [their] husbands" (48). She offers the framework for the stories of her other sisters as she explains that "for some years I did not hear from my sisters, and then, by strange eventuality, I discovered that we had all, in one way or another, parted from the glorious princes and were living scattered, according to our tastes" (48). When she finishes her story, we hear ten other stories from the other sisters. As Benjamin explains, the storytellers' resort to recounting fairytales is indeed a clever strategy as the "fairy tale tells us of the earliest arrangements that mankind made to shake off the nightmare which the myth had placed upon its chest" (11). Thereafter, the voices of these eleven princesses with their subverted stories only help devalue the supremacy of the "myth" about the progress of history and of time. Moreover, the recounting of the mutated fairytale "demythologizes power structures and dominant categorizations" (Marie Smith par 16). Their stories, with the embedded humorous "violence [,] demand[…] acknowledgement of what is at stake in narrative and historiography" (Marie Smith 18).

Shortly after the stories of the dancing princesses, while Dog-Woman describes how the civil war "touched" them (65-75), a new voice intervenes that talks about Fortunata and her pupils (76-77). This passage stands out first as it is italicized. It also stands out with the impersonal yet critical voice. The interposition of this voice is important as it shrewdly challenges history. It states, talking of Fortunata, that "[*s*]*he believes that we are fallen creatures who once knew how to fly She says that light burns in our bodies and threatens to dissolve us at any moment. How else can we account for so many of us who disappear?* " (76). Saying that "we are fallen creatures" does not go against the religious dogma of the heavenly religions, yet resuming with "who knew once

how to fly" defies the dogmas of these religions. Thereafter, such a proclamation goes against the "myths by which we once legitimized knowledge and practice--Christianity, Science, Democracy, Communism, Progress, no longer have the unquestioning support necessary to sustain the projects which were undertaken in their name" (Keep, McLaughlin, and Parmar par 1). Furthermore, the observation that this voice offers for the "disappear[ance]" of people offers an alternative for History that does not provide a sufficient answer for the disappearance of some people.

Later still, Fortunata's voice intervenes Jordan's account of herself (104-17); this intervention also confronts history. At first, Jordan tells us how he met Fortunata and she recounted part of her story (104-6). At this moment, Fortunata's voice surfaces and tells her story in detail. She describes to Jordan the "silver city of curious motion" and hails her description "the history of the city which is a logical one, each piece fitting into the other without strain. Sure you must believe something so credible I will continue with the story of our nightly arrival in that city and the sad means of our discovery" (107-9). Dubbing her account of the city a "history" is enough to problematize established notions of history. Furthermore, her insight that "each piece fit[s] into the other without strain" enables her to claim the "credibil[ity]" of her tale; an observation that changes the perception of history as it becomes any story that sounds "credible" enough.

The image of history is also negated and dubbed vulnerable by the choice of themes that both Dog-Woman and Jordan talk about and the modes by which they discuss them. First, Jordan's opening of the novel is problematic in several aspects. Describing the fog, he says how it "came […] with the force of a genie from a bottle […] the moat-light, like a lighthouse, appeared and vanished and vanished and appeared" (1). Jordan's

description makes the "fog"- a purely scientific phenomenon - a mysterious-witch-erous occurrence. This change in perception only deteriorates previous demarcations between what is scientific versus non-scientific, between what is historic and non-historic. Jordan continues that

> [e]very journey conceals another journey with its lines: the path not taken and the forgotten angle. These are the journeys I wish to record. Not the ones I made, but the ones I might have made, or perhaps did make in some other place or time. I could tell you the truth as you will find it in diaries and maps and log-books. I could faithfully describe all that I saw and heard and give you a travel book. (2)

And yet, when we read Jordan's account, many of the things he talks about are familiar and "true." Hence, this mix raises questions about the truthfulness of the recorded things. Talking about the Greeks, Jordan narrates how "[t]hey wrote an ordinary letter and in between the lines set out another letter, written in milk. The document looked innocent enough until one who had knew better sprinkled coal-dust over it" (2). This declaration is very important because it reflects on any "document" that "look[s] innocent enough" but proves to be malicious if scrutinized and/ or interpreted. History being nothing but a document thus becomes problematic.

Likewise, the first account with Dog-Woman is problematic. She begins her account by stating that "I had a name but I have forgotten it. They call me Dog-Woman and it will do. I call him Jordan and it will do. He has no other name before or after" (3). Forgetting one's name implies forgetting his/ her identity. Thereafter, when Dog-Woman says that "[t]hey call me Dog-Woman and it will do. I call him Jordan and it will do"

illustrates the reconstruction of her identity, her history. The "fact" that "[t]hey call her" - not she who calls herself- calls attention to the participation of others in confirming and reconstructing her identity and history. Hence, such a reflection shows two things: first that her identity and history is a matter of reconstruction- like any other history, and second it is not only herself who has reconstructed her history but others who have done so, thus giving credibility to her accounts- a reflection on how people give others credibility of written history.

Second, the mix of historical characters and events with personal history, imagined and real, equates the two while problematizing history's authenticity. In the beginning of the novel we learn of a John Tradescant who is "Gardener to the King" (17). A simple search on the internet shows indeed that was "Gardener to the King" and had inherited his job from his father ("John Tradescant"). Yet, Jordan and Dog-Woman, who interact with this character, are fictitious characters. Later, however, when the characters of Scroggs and Firebrace appear, the reader is not sure whether they really existed in reality or not. Thereafter, the mix of fictitious characters with non-fictitious ones eradicates the demarcation between what is real and what is fictitious. Likewise, though the novel is fictitious, its embedding within historical 'facts' problematizes the authenticity of these 'facts'. The reader feels impelled to refer back to sources to check whether the events and the dates mentioned in the novel match the ones recorded in history. It is not only the characters and the events but the novel "itself also revises conventional historical views of the Puritan Revolution" as Marie Smith explains (par 27). She claims that the "sympathy" for the King conflicts with the concept of the revolution (27) which enables Winterson to "brush[…] history against the grain" (par

27). By thus doing, the novel creates a counter-memory of the execution of the King – a construction that defies the recorded history of the English Civil war. Hence, talking about the war in such a way links the war with the rise of repressive principles about objective historicity.

Third, both Dog-Woman and Jordan refute stories that are taken for granted but have no substantial evidence for assuming that they are the way they are. Their refutations are problematic of some of history's established perceptions. When Dog-Woman is told that she "weigh[s] no more than an angel' [she answers] 'You know nothing of scriptures […] for nowhere in that Holy Book is there anything to be said about the weight of an angel" (20). The established perception of angels is indeed that they are not heavy though Dog-Woman explains that it is not mentioned in the "Holy Book". This incident raises the awareness of the readers about several ideas that they take for granted though they do not have sufficient reasons for taking them for granted. Thereafter, readers become more scrupulous about believing in things they have heard about if there is not enough evidence.

Fourth, both Dog-Woman and Jordan utter statements that problematize history's authenticity. Dog-Woman's statement, for instance, that "fate may hang on any moment and at any moment be changed. I should have killed her and found us a different story" (7) poses a problem. Her statement contemplates the 'road-not-taken' which historians are so often interested in. Thus, Dog-Woman is juxtaposed in parallel with the historian who is interested in knowing what would have been the course of history had 'X' gone this way instead of that. She questions whether "it matter[s] if the place cannot be mapped [though she] can still describe it" (8) problematizes history. What makes

something authentic - our ability to describe it as if it were there? The accounts of Troy make its existence early in history plausible. Do not the accounts of Dog-Woman then and Jordan make the places they describe places that once existed? Moreover, Dog-Woman wonders "[w]hat [the challenge with the Elephant] says of [her] size[. She] cannot tell, for an elephant looks big, but how [is she] to know what it weighs? A balloon looks big and weighs nothing" (21). This speculation highlights the illegitimacy of perception.

Jordan's reflection about the people's "words, rising up, from a thick cloud over the city, which every so often must be thoroughly cleansed of too much language […that] resist erasure" (11) also problematizes history. The stories, we understand, have to be erased, yet they "resist" this act. This incident may be viewed as an allegory to the written histories that are drenched with "too much language", and thereafter, the novel attempts to erase them by reconstructing the stories differently. Moreover, Jordan's remark that the museum "was a gloomy edifice, no one seemed to be looking after it […] It was a Museum of Love […] statue of Samson [and] Delilah (82-84) problematizes history in two ways. First, the museum is believed to be the place for history, for interacting with the past. Yet, seeing it as a "gloomy edifice" whom "no one seemed to be looking after" shows how the people lost interest in going to the museums to know about history. Rather, they now resort to other 'substantiation elements' like fictitious rewritings of historical events. Second, the remark that "It was a Museum of Love", not of history, further confirms the aforementioned change in the perception of the museum.

Furthermore, Jordan remarks that the "[m]aps are constantly being re-made as knowledge appears to increase. But is knowledge increasing or is detail accumulating?

[…] When I get there, following the map faithfully, the place is not the place of my imagination. Maps growing ever more real, are much less true" (88). Maps, like the museums, authenticate the existence of places and histories; yet, the maps constantly change as new places are discovered. However, as they are "growing ever more real, [they] are much less true" Jordan reflects. Similarly the history books that recount what took place in the past though are "growing ever more real, [they] are much less true".

At another moment still, Jordan remarks that "I've kept the log book for the ship. Meticulously. And I've kept a book of my own, and for every journey we have made together I've written down my own journey and drawn my own map […] I believe it to be a faithful account of what happened, at least, of what happened to me" (115). His proclamation consequently authenticates his account of things even though it might contradict recorded history. He wonders as soon as he says the aforementioned whether "we [are] all living like this[.] Two lives, the ideal outer life and the inner imaginative life where we keep our secrets?" (115). This speculation, as it authenticates his account, problematizes the accounts of others who give the "log book" of their outward lives but keep their inward lives to themselves. History, which records namely the outer lives of people, then, is incomplete as it misses on recording the inner lives. At a later moment in his account, Jordan announces that "the past is irredeemable […] Monuments and cities would fade away like the people who built them […] There was no history that would not be rewritten and the earliest days were already too far away to see" (152). Jordan, as a result, very transparently challenges any attempt to have an 'authentic' account of the past. Thereafter, his account, though fictitious, is not any different from a historian's reconstruction of the past.

Jordan observes after recounting his encounter with Fortunata that "The scene I have just described to you may lie in the future or the past. Either I have found Fortunata or I will find her. I cannot be sure. Either I am remembering her or I am still imagining her. But she is somewhere in the grid of time, a co-ordinate, as I am" (104). His observation poses a different understanding of time and its progress which in itself poses a different understanding of history that is defined by time. To verify his observation, Jordan ceases using the past tense towards the end of his story with Fortunata and shifts instead to the present tense: "I have packed my striped bag and taken my coat from the hook where Fortunata put it. She has come to see me off and we are standing together by my boat, which is still staggered with rocks […] I always will" (116-7).

The multiplicity of the characters of Jordan and Dog-Woman– their adult ones, and their futuristic ones – taken altogether problematize time and history. Jordan, the adult, declares: "My own life is like this, or I should say, my own lives" (102). He continues, "I must believe [that my childhood] did [happen], but I do not have any proof. My mother says it did, but she is a fantasist, a liar […] I remember things, but I too am a fantasist and a liar" (102). Such proclamations makes both their accounts of their childhood and adulthood dubitable. He considers asking others to verify but realizes that "[e]veryone remembers things which never happened. And it is common knowledge that people often forget things which did. Either we are all fantasists and liars or the past has nothing definite in it" (102). These statements challenge both linearity of time and any claim to historical truth. Consequently, the past did happen but the ability to capture what happened is the problematic aspect of it. Thereafter, resorting to memory and storytelling

to recapitulate the past are equally alike and share the same level of credibility as does historicism.

The futuristic Jordan and Dog-Woman's voices are problematic because while they are congruent with what has been said by the voices of their adult characters, they offer a different angle to some of the stories. The futuristic young Nicolas Jordan, like the adult Jordan, we learn, has a knack for sailing and cruising because he constantly "[made] model boats and sail[ed] them at the weekend" (128). In adult Dog-Woman's account, we learn that "from Jordan's voyage to Barbados the first pineapple had come to England" (118). But futuristic young Jordan's account tells a different story: "Where had that pineapple come from? Barbados was easy to find out, but who had brought it, and under what circumstances, and why?" (127). Juxtaposed next to one another, the young Nicolas Jordan questions what the adult Jordan recounted. Dog-Woman, in her description of herself, talks about how "hideous" she is (19). The description of the un-named woman of the present is congruous with Dog-Woman's account of herself: she too is "a woman going mad. [She is] a woman hallucinating. [She] imagine[s she] is huge, raw, a giant" (138). Later still, Nicolas Jordan says of that unnamed woman that "[he] felt [he] knew her"– a declaration which enables us to view this unnamed woman as Dog-Woman (159). The congruency of the characters of the futuristic Jordan and the unnamed woman with those of Jordan and Dog-Woman juxtapose their accounts parallel to one another and offer thus a different angle for the events they describe. The unnamed woman of the present tells us about her wish to "escape" from the "present":

> Yes, from this foreground that blinds me to whatever may be happening in the distance. If I have a spirit, a soul, any name will do, then it won't be

> single, it will be multiple. Its dimension will not be one of confinement but one of space. It may inhabit numerous changing decaying bodies in the future and in the past. (144)

Her remark that "[i]t may inhabit numerous changing decaying bodies in the future and in the past" ascertains her perception as Dog-Woman. Additionally, this remark echoes what Jordan said before while reflecting about time: "we do not move through time," he claims, "time moves through us. I say this because our physical bodies have a natural decay span, they are one-use-only units that crumble around us" (100). Accordingly, viewed in tandem with one another, the characters of the past versus the future Jordan and Dog-Woman problematize a progressive sense of time which is a defining characteristic for an understanding of history. Jordan concludes the novel with a remark about "the future" which problematizes all progress, linearity and thus history: "The future lies ahead like a glittering city, but like the cities of the desert disappears when approached […] The future and the present and the past exist only in our minds" (167).

Not only do the themes discussed problematize time and history, but also the form of the novel. The sketches of the bananas and the pineapples denote the beginning of a new mini story. Thus, with each new sketch, there is a new story that took place either before, after, or during the mini story that was told before. Thereafter, there is no linearity of time in the entire novel which collapses the linearity of history. Linearity is defied and challenged, and history, which is based on this concept, thus shatters down. Although the novel is structured as such, it does not offer an alternative for linearity. Jordan discredits his own accounts while he dubs Dog-Woman "a fantasist, a liar" (Winterson 102). Hence, Jordan, Dog-Woman and others who have written history are to be viewed with a critical

and misbelieving lens. This observation is ascertained with Jordan's statement and reflection. The novel begins with Jordan's account that "This is the first thing I saw" (1). Then, when Fortunata tells her story, she echoes "This is the first thing I saw" (106). But Jordan reflects, under the subtitle "LIES" that "It was not the first thing she saw, how could it have been? Nor was the night in the fog-covered field the first thing I saw. But before then we were like those who dream and pass through life as a series of shadows. And so what we have told you is true, although it is not" (106). With linearity thus problematized, history is problematized. The novel highlights the impossibility of a 'true' recapturing account of history.

Finally, contemplating on the sketches of the pineapples and the bananas in the light of all of the aforementioned additionally challenges the established views of history. First, whenever Jordan presents his account, the sketch of a pineapple before his part; whereas, when Dog-Woman presents her account, the sketch of a banana appears. These seemingly innocent sketches subvert the common perceptions: when talking about how Johnson first introduced the banana to England, Dog-Woman likens it to a male's member; she says, it "resembled nothing more than the private parts of an Oriental. It was yellow and livid and long" (5). Viewed as such, the banana becomes a metonymy for the male. However, it is Dog-Woman's anecdotes that are denoted by the sketch of the banana while Jordan's are denoted by the pineapple. Such an observation shows how even at the level of the sketches, the conventional perceptions are contested. Moreover, in the entire novel, the sketches of the banana and the pineapple are complete; it is only when talking about the future characters, those of Nicolas Jordan and the unnamed woman, that the sketches are those of sliced pineapples and sliced bananas. Instead of

sketching them as having ripened, they are sliced which challenges shrewdly the notion of progress (since with time they will rot, not be sliced).

Analyzed as such, Sexing the Cherry is categorized as an historiographic metafiction that foregrounds the notion that its present-day reality may be under the influence of former documented clichés, yet these clichés may be annexed and rewritten for critical purposes. This novel refuses that these clichés be passively accepted; it acknowledges that its resort to storytelling, rewritings of history and fairytales and self-reflexive nature do not eradicate the problems of subjectivity that it broaches. Rather, it foregrounds them. As Marie Smith explains in the conclusion to her essay "Fiery Constellations", "storytelling cannot flourish in, and is not adequate to, the shocks of modern existence. Just as botanical grafting produces the stronger, hybridic cherry, so the artistic grafting of fairytales and historical narrative produce postmodern historical fiction, an artistically and blasphemously created form" (par 41). Thereafter, though Sexing the Cherry has an offensive characteristic, it is this provoking feature that raises the awareness of the readers about established notions of subjectivity, history, truth and meaning. For this reason, it is only normal that its conclusion is problematic; it do not offer conclusive, resolving results. It enjoys abusing the established notions of history without wanting to offer an alternative. Its attempts, thereafter, nurture Hutcheon's idea that "postmodernism is born at the moment when we discover that the world has no fixed center and that power is not something unitary that exists outside us" (86).

Taking the above into consideration consequently shows that Sexing the Cherry is a historiographic metafiction in specific and a postmodernist novel in general. Thereafter Winterson's "claims" that she is "a modernist" as Merja Makinen in her essay

"Theorizing Fairy-Tale Fiction, Reading Jeanette Winterson" points out fall short (161). Winterson's refutation to be labeled as a postmodernist novelist but rather a modernist one verifies that she, as a fairly contemporary writer, believes in the distinction between a "modernist" and a "postmodernist" era. Thus, the newly rising contentions that try to argue against the existence of a postmodern age altogether are rebutted from the writers of this age themselves who see a distinction between "modernist" and "postmodernist" writers and writings.

Conclusion

A scrutiny of the three novels, Waterland, Flaubert's Parrot and Sexing the Cherry, in the light of the problematized postmodernist lens while attending to their treatment of time and history, allows for their classification as historiographic metafictions. These novels do not eliminate the existence of the past, or the truth about the past, yet, they problematize our ability to know the past as it really happened. They expose the construction that goes into the writing of history. Thereafter, a single truth of what took place in the past shatters down in favor of the dispersion of multiple truths and narratives. Hence, historiographic metafictions, beyond their thematic assaults on established notions of progress, linearity, time, and history, particularly resort to an interactive storyteller within them who might use fairytale elements to achieve their historiographic metafictitious purposes. Namely, these storytellers imagine, investigate, and recount alternative perceptions of history to counterbalance for the gaps in historical narratives. While talking about the importance of extending art and theory beyond their realms as simply art and theory, Hutcheon explains that achieving such a step necessitates that they "be situated first, within the enunciative act itself, and second, within the broader historical, social, and political (as well as intertexual) context" (75). Noting the existence of a storyteller within historiographic metafictions, as proved in the chapters before, shows how the figure of the storyteller "situates" art "within the enunciative act." Yet, Hutcheon's remark that "[i]n fiction [there is an] emphasis on the narrating "I" and the reading "you" […] the narrator works to make us aware of the usual conventions of third-person narrative which, in fact, condition the context of our understanding as readers" (76) is a passing one; she does not consider this narration to be particularly

pertaining to a storytelling hub that accompanied these historiographic metafictions.

More importantly, however, is that Hutcheon does not make any distinction between the figure of the "narrator" and that of the "storyteller" – she mixes both concepts without offering a distinction between the two. Smith, on the other hand, recognizes the existence of a "storyteller" and not a regular narrator in the postmodernist novels he examines and concludes that going back to storytelling and the storyteller figure are important for achieving postmodernist ends. This is evident when Smith observes that the storyteller's existence is there to "question the narrator" (98).Yet, his choice of postmodernist novels comprises of those with an overtly identifiable storyteller, and so he takes for granted the existence of a storyteller within the novels he analyzes. I, on the other hand, focused solely on historiographic metafictions, not postmodernist novels in general, and proved the existence of a storyteller not a narrator amongst them. I showed how noting the existence a storyteller within these metafictions challenges history whether in the storyteller's appearance, body language, characteristics, and themes he discusses. Therefore, this study extends Smith's argument and elaborates on his findings. When Smith, for instance, concludes that there is a "need" for "stories" in the postmodernist age, I would rather say that this "need" stems from the historiographic metafictitious call for "construct[ing] our versions of reality" (Hutcheon 40).

How then is the storyteller different than the narrator and what ends does his existence serve? The figure of the storyteller in historiographic metafictions is significant because it eliminates the narrator's existence, an effect helpful for purposes of historiographic metafiction. Once identified, the narrator does not defy the boundaries within which he fits; i.e. if the narrator is identified as offering an objective point of view,

then his narration is limited to solely and impersonally to stating the events without talking about the characters' thoughts and feelings. Likewise, if the narration is identified as told from the third person point of view, "the narrator does not participate in the action of the story as one of the characters, but lets us know exactly how the characters feel" (Exploring Point of View). Even when identified as a first person narrator in which he "does participate in the action of the story [and therefore], we need to realize that what the narrator is recounting might not be the objective truth [i.e. w]e should question the trustworthiness of the accounting" (Exploring Point of View) we are aware that the narrator is not telling the "objective truth." The storyteller, on the other hand, "causes metafictive effects" as Smith points out which a normal narrator cannot do (88). The storyteller mixes truthful events with none truthful ones. He has the option of being silent at times, excluding and absenting certain events, or people, setting lights on events that he wants to emphasize and so on. In this respect, historians are not very different because they might as well have done the same: marginalized people they did not want to direct the lights at; publicized one side of the story etc. Thereafter, having a storyteller instead of a narrator in historiographic metafictions allows for the parallel juxtapostioning of the figures of the storyteller and the historian. The storyteller opens "up the text to a variety of possible readings and interpretations, for if the storyteller's narrative is questioned within the text then the reader already has two alternative ready-made viewpoints on 'what actually happened' to choose from, and can decide which, if any, of the versions they believe" (Smith 101). Therefore, the storyteller problematizes the historians' accounts of past events.

Moreover discovering the existence of a storyteller within the historiographic metafictions is important as it "presentizes" the events which help achieve historiographic metafictitious purposes. His existence as Smith concludes is used to "motivate this narrative (provide a reason for the telling) or to expedite it" (99); yet, this motivation comes in the form of the present tense, a point that Smith does not attend to. Narrative is normally told in the past tense, and hence, there is incongruity between the remote past that the narrative describes and the open ended "now" of the reader. The storyteller's character triggers the readers to transpose those events into the present, thus making readers relate more with the events of the novel, not see the events in the remote past as Howe suggests.

In addition, the figure of the storyteller allows him to either conform to the perceptions shaped and conditioned by society or to totally go against them. The conventional narrator however does not have this option; he has to conform to society's conceptions, and if there were any rebellions and contradictions to be found then they would be found in one of the characters of the novel, definitely not the narrator. Thus, using a storyteller instead of a narrator enables this new narrator to carry out tasks the community and conventional narrators cannot accomplish. This storyteller-narrator, though alienated, may now enumerate atypical and bizarre encounters (encounters with the unknown, mysterious, mischievous etc.) without being criticized or misbelieved and misjudged. Hence, recounting while modifying and playing around with fairytales and recorded histories cannot be condemned by critics and historians alike. Furthermore, the storyteller is able to modify any event, history, and old story into a game, and hence, terminate any feeling of devastation by them. Characters and typical narrators, on the

contrary, cannot risk doing this for fear of deeming them reckless, escapist, or illusionist, and thus losing their credibility. The storyteller, however, masters the game of transformation without any risk involved because of his/her status as storyteller.

Finally, the discovery of the storyteller within the historiographic metafictions avoids the absurdity of postmodernism. In his afterword for The Postmodern Condition entitled "What is Postmodernism", Lyotard remarks that

> As for the artists and writers who question the rules of plastic and narrative arts and possibly share their suspicions by circulating their work, they are destined to have little credibility in the eyes of those concerned with "reality" and "identity"; they have no guarantee of an audience (75)

He implies or we can deduce that, these novels have a storyteller and an audience for their stories to ensure the existence of someone who will listen to them. Smith echoes Lyotard's thoughts by stating that "What hurts in these circumstances is the alienation of the subject in postmodern society, where the individual's relationship to the world is uncertain" (104). Hence, the storyteller figure knows that there is an audience whether in his story or outside it who is willing to listen to him and therefore addresses his stories accordingly to those.

It is noteworthy that the storytellers' resort to fairytale elements within their accounts helps them also achieve historiographic metafictitious ends. Yet, the fairytale is not an indispensable feature of historiographic metafiction as the analysis of Flaubert's Parrot has shown. Using the fairytale is one among many tools that the storyteller might use to achieve his historiographic metafictitious ends. Several critics surveyed the abundance of fairytales in postmodern novels, yet although they might have used Hutcheon's term, they

used this abundance for feminist ends/agendas. They have seen the interest in fairytales and storytelling accordingly as tactics of breaking the silence of the silenced women voices. Hutcheon does not in fact elaborate much on the abundance of fairytales in these historiographic metafictions. Her theory allows or rather has allowed several critics to extend her theory further. Kevin Paul Smith, the writer of The Postmodern Fairytale, and Stephen Benson, editor of Contemporary Fiction and the Fairytale, are two such critics. Smith sees the return to fairytales is helpful for postmodernist purposes because of "the formulaic nature of the fairytale, combined with the fact that it is so often the first and only experience of oral narrative that we have nowadays" (166). Moreover, it is the "awareness of the need for formulaic texts, the need for fantasy, that [Smith] sees characteristic of the postmodernist use of the fairytale" (169). He adds that the "incorporation of fairytale narrative allows the reader to see the events in more than one way: the boundaries of the possible and the impossible are shifted" (106).

Because postmodernism is all about "installing and then subverting familiar conventions of [popular and academic] kinds of art" (Hutcheon 44), the fairytale proves to be a good candidate of the "popular" art to be used for these purposes. Also, because postmodernism goes against the idea that there is one official version of the story, fairytales prove to be one of the best devices to implement this rebuttal: the nature of fairytales makes them liable to being told, retold, translated, adapted, and reiterated. Hence, these fairytales may be turned into infinite reworkings while nevertheless maintaining a compelling impression of familiarity. Another characteristic of fairytale makes it perfect for postmodernist use: postmodernists acknowledge that the interchange between form, interpretation and content creates meaning- consequently, the fairytale,

with its somewhat fixed form and openness to interpretation serves as a perfect apparatus for postmodernists.

The theorist Stephen Benson as the editor of Contemporary Fiction and the Fairytale provides in the introduction an insightful explanation for the abundance of the fairytale in postmodernist novels. Knowing that the fairytale has "the aura of a genuinely popular", he claims that it is extensively used in novels after the 1970s because the novel at that time was "newly preoccupied with the pervasive influence and aesthetic potential of modern day popular cultural forms" (4). Moreover, the fairytale, with its "ready-made store of images and plots of gender relations, class conflicts, scenarios of sexuality, and dramas of ethnicity" proves to be a good choice for postmodernist novel as it provides a space for inquiry and revamping within a novel dedicated to invalidating conventions (Benson 12-13). Furthermore, the verbal nature of the fairytale favors "intertexuality, rescription, and cultural boundary crossing" (Benson 13) - the very techniques and elements of postmodernist novels, especially, historiographic metafictions.

Yet in another book for Benson, entitled Cycles of Influence, he argues that premises about fiction and folktale are the seeds of the relationship between the folktale and its resemblance to language; he adds that several fictions that are perceived as experimental/ postmodernist are in fact the influence of such grammars: "it is precisely the figural repertoire utilized in the process of the abstraction of a structure and grammar of narrative that has fed back into many of the narrative fictions under consideration" (14).

Though the argument of his book diverges from my topic of interest, Benson mentions useful points for my inquiry. He contends that explaining the surfacing of

storytelling in postmodernist novels is an "ostensibly circular" argument. He relates the "return to storytelling" and "revived enthusiasm for story" in postmodernist novels to the observation that postmodernist writers are dissatisfied with narrative as it was handed over to them: i.e. the "linear, teleological narrative conceived as a vehicle for the putatively realistic representation of human dramas" (116). These aforementioned characteristics of narrative have to compete with their adversaries: "discontinuity, stasis, repetition, 'spiraling,' and uncertainty" (116). Benson does not elaborate more on why the argument is "ostensibly circular"; nevertheless, my interest lies in having mentioned that storytelling is abundant in the postmodernist fictions. Moreover, I would argue that this storytelling is not inserted for the mere inclusion of a storyteller (for example the storytellers in Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales are there to work as a framework for the entire novel- they might work as a critique for the classes they represent, yet their purpose does not extend beyond extraneous storytellers; the same may be said about Scheherazade in Arabian Nights); rather, the storyteller characters found in postmodernist historiographic metafictions are indeed different: their presence is essential to the entire novel's structure. It is undeniably impractical to talk about these storytellers without raising the issue of fictional context. And most importantly, these storytellers foreground historiographic metafiction genre and help it achieve its purposes.

Consequently, the rise of the figure of the storyteller is imperative for achieving historiographic metafictitious ends. His rise allows further entrenching historiographic metafictions within the postmodernist roots. His discovery refutes Benjamin's claims that with the "rise of the novel" and the delving deeper into "modern" time "the art of storytelling is coming to an end" as the historiographic metafictitious novel embeds a

storyteller within for achieving its purposes. In this respect, Barthes's "the modern scriptor [sic] [who] is born simultaneously with the text" is conceived as the storyteller who emerges from the historiographic metafictions (par 5). The storyteller's existence then complements postmodernism as the latter "is born at the moment when we discover that the world has no fixed center and that power is not something unitary that exists outside us" (Hutcheon 86) – which is a realization that the former knows and lives upon.

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