# MEMORY, FORGETTING AND INTERTEXTUALITY IN SALMAN RUSHDIE'S *MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN* AND *TWO YEARS EIGHT MONTHS TWENTY EIGHT NIGHTS*

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## ABSTRACT

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This study aims to explore the treatment of memory, forgetting and episodic remembering as productive act in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981) and *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights* (2015) in relation to Paul Ricoeur's and Astrid Erll's theories on memory. The thesis will examine, on the one hand, Rushdie's treatment of memory in order to critique dogmas about nation, belonging, and identity, and on the other, his use of intertextuality to create an alternative cultural narrative that contradicts the monologic view of reality. The thesis argues that both *Midnight's Children* and *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty Eight Nights* rely on and advocate the reconstruction and re-imagining of historically significant past events for an alternative world-making through various acts of memory. It also explores the divergent functions memory assumes in both novels in order to demonstrate their essential creative property. The thesis also looks at the formation of new memories and memory sites through the use of intertextuality. The study aims to contribute to an understanding of Rushdie's ouvre within the context of memory studies by analysing these two works which respectively belong to his early career and later work.



**Keywords**: memory, forgetting, episodic remembering, intertextuality, Rushdie,

# ÖZ

SALMAN RÜŞDİNİN *GECEYARISI ÇOCUKLARI* VE *İKİ YIL SEKİZ AY YİRMİ SEKİZ GECE* ROMANLARINDA BELLEK, UNUTMA VE METİNLER ARASILIK

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Bu çalışma, Salman Rüşdi'nin *Geceyarısı Çocukları* ve *İki Yıl Sekiz Ay Yirmi Sekiz Gece* romanlarında bellek, unutma ve epizodik hatırlamanın üretken bir eylem olarak ele alınışını Paul Ricoeur ve Astrid Erllün bellek teorileri üzerinden ele almayı amaçlamaktadır. Tez, Rüşdi'nin belleği ulus, aidiyet ve kimlik dogmaları gibi kavramların tek yönlü bakış açısıyla ele alınmasını eleştirmek ve alternatif bir kültürel anlatı yaratmak için metinlerarası gerçekliğin kullanımını ele almasını incelemektedir. Tez, hem *Geceyarısı Çocukları* hem de *İki Yıl Sekiz Ay Yirmi Sekiz Gece* romanlarındaki çeşitli bellek eylemleri yoluyla alternatif bir dünya inşası için tarihsel olarak önemli olayların yeniden tasavvuruna güvenilmesi gerektiğini savunmaktadır. Ayrıca, temel yaratıcı özelliklerini göstermek için her iki romanda da belleğin üstlendiği farklı işlevleri araştırılmaktadır. Bunun yanısıra, metinlerarasılığın kullanımı yoluyla yeni anıların ve bellek yerlerinin oluşumu da bu çalışmada incelenmektedir. Tez, Rüşdi'nin kariyerinin ilk dönemlerine ve sonraki dönemlerine ait bu iki eseri inceleyerek, bellek çalışmaları bağlamında Rüşdi'nin romanlarına bütünsel bakış sağlamak adına katkıda bulunmayı amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler**: bellek, unutuş, epizodik hatırlama, metinlerarasılık, Rüşdi

*To Mazez*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| *Midnight's Children* | *Midnight* |
| *Two Years Eight Months Twenty Eight Nights* | *Two Years* |

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This study aims to explore the treatment of memory, forgetting and episodic remembering as an imaginary and productive act in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981) and *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty Eight Nights* (2015) in relation to Paul Ricoeur's and Astrid Erll's theories on memory. The thesis will be looking at Rushdie's treatment of memory in order to criticize dogmas held about nation, belonging and identity, and his use of intertextuality to form an alternative cultural narrative that challenges the monologic view of reality. These novels have been selected for analysis because the narrative structure of Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty Eight Nights* depend on the reconstruction and re-imagination of the historically significant past events for an alternative world-making by using various forms of remembering and forgetting. *Midnight's Children* and *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty Eight Nights* demonstrate the creative power all memory acts. In *Midnight's Children* Rushdie celebrates the cultural and historical plurality and ambiguity sustained by memory and contends that there are no absolute truths or points of reference in the presence of different realities. In *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty Eight Nights* Rushdie's initial attitude displays an inclination in favour of the narratives of science and fiction and their authority in representing the multifarious fabric of reality. However, by bringing together opposing systems of knowledge through memory Rushdie challenges the dominance of one discourse in its claim to truth and proposes that the actualization of cultural, historical, philosophical, and humanitarian progress depends on the contemporaneity of clashing narratives.

The main theoretical base of this study consists of the definitions of memory, forgetting and episodic remembering in Paul Ricoeur's *History, Memory and*

*Forgetting* (2004) and Astrid Erll's *Memory in Culture* (2011). Since the narrative in these two Rushdie novels is developed through the employment of fragmented remembering and the representation of forgetting, understanding the basis and development of these terms from a hermeneutical and cultural perspective provided by Ricoeur and Erll will be helpful in discussing their function within the novels. The concepts of forgetting and forgetfulness in relation to memory are taken mainly from Ricoeur's *Memory, History, Forgetting* while the concepts of cultural memory and remembering will be drawn from Astrid Erll's *Memory in Culture*. These studies divert from the existing memory studies, which often dismiss the validity of memory practices because of their weaknesses and unreliability. Diverting from the Greek tradition which criticizes memory because of its unreliability and from later notions of memory which follow the same tradition, Ricoeur and Erll argue that memory is the only device to understand and explore the past. Their studies go against the traditional opposition between memory and history by deconstructing the concept of unreliability in memory studies. Their claim is that memory is a viable method to analyse the multiplicity of perspectives excluded from history because memory can offer alternative explanations of historically significant events and catastrophes. Memory can produce more inclusive insight into history and give meaning to the comprehension of complex historical events. Thus, memory is acknowledged as history since without memory there is not any immediate access to the past. Ricoeur and Erll evaluate memory as a necessary and significant practice despite its frailties. They insist that what is named as the weakness or frailty of memory by other scholars is actually the strength of memory, which enables critical engagement with history and narrative. They claim that it is through its frailty that memory actualizes the accommodation of conflicting perspectives and alternative narratives together. They also argue that literary texts can be defined as memory sites because of their intertextual aspect, where they are in a constant relationship with their precursors and descendants. Literary texts make the processes of memory observable, but they can also become a space for containing and creating memories.

Although Paul Ricoeur and Astrid Erll have different intellectual backgrounds, they both agree on the imaginative and productive quality of memory in their studies. Paul Ricoeur is a specialist in philosophy and history. Therefore, his method of approach in looking at memory inclines towards the philosophical and hermeneutical function of

memory in history and politics. Astrid Erll, on the other hand, has a background in literature and literary history. Her work on memory takes an interdisciplinary approach and brings together cultural, historical, and literary approaches in analysing the importance of memory in all forms of art and literature. I have chosen to look at the studies of Ricoeur and Erll together because they complement each other by revealing how memory studies have become essential for understanding identity, society, culture, and historical temporality – issues which are also explored and critiqued in Rushdie's novels. Ricoeur's *History, Memory and Forgetting* includes his own critical approach to theories of memory from Plato to Halbwachs with the aim of clarifying terms such as forgetting and recalling through a hermeneutical approach. Ricoeur connects memory with the epistemology of history and "hermeneutics of the historical condition of the human beings that we are" (Ricoeur "Preface" xvi). For Ricoeur memory is necessary to develop an ethical understanding to analyse historical archives and events. In doing so, he argues for the existential, philosophical, and ethical power of forgetting and other memory practices. Forgetting also means preserving an alternative truth and helps to understand how different nations cope with traumatic events such as the Holocaust and war to build a newer narrative of nation and identity out of their traumatic past. Ricoeur's *History, Memory and Forgetting* provides a more focused reading on how forgetting is an integral part of memory and is significant for both the individual and the national, political understandings of identity.

In *Memory in Culture*, on the other hand, Astrid Erll makes a comprehensive discussion of the concept of memory by collecting and commenting on important works of memory and remembering. In fact, her analysis of episodic remembering and forgetting is developed in relation to Ricoeur's ideas on memory and forgetting. She even dedicates a chapter to Ricoeur's *Memory, History and Forgetting* in building her argument on fragmentary remembering and forgetting. Erll focuses on the cultural side of memory to show that as human beings much of our world-making depends on specific acts of memory. She contemplates upon different forms of remembering that affect the individual and society and its reflection within arts and literature. Erll also looks at the close connection between identity and memory, claiming that memory functions as the source of empirical knowledge that shapes the individual and collective identity. Ricoeur's hermeneutical re-evaluation of memory in the form of imaginative power combined with Erll's analysis of memory practices in connection

with art and literature prove very fruitful for reading Rushdie's novels that expand on different representations and renditions of memory.

The novels I have chosen specifically for this study are exemplary representations of Rushdie's exploration of the relation between memory and narration. Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981) and *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty Eight Nights* (2015) deal with the representation of memory and the vitality of all kinds of memory processes for making sense of the temporality the subject is situated in and its relation to historical facts. In these novels Rushdie provides dispersed moments of remembering and disconnected images from the past retold by the narrators to construct multi-layered narratives that lead to a celebration of simultaneity, multiplicity, and non-absolutism. Looking at these novels present an opportunity to understand why memory in many postmodern and postcolonial writings tends to carry a central importance. In many of his interviews Rushdie insists on what he calls the building of "fictional memory", a textual site where different histories are collated, with which he challenges the grand narratives. Remembering, Rushdie claims, "is better than averting your eyes" from what is terrible, traumatic, or simply unpleasant, and helps to face and re-build from devastation or what has been left out so that an alternative voice is born. Memory is an excellent tool for this because, as it will be explained, it is an active mechanism. Rushdie in order to emphasize this, juxtaposes fragments of memory, namely glimpses of the past events and experiences that might not always be very accurate or complete, with seemingly complete historical facts and knowledge. In doing so, he aims to show that these fragments of memory bring out a dynamism to question the past as a historical product. Rushdie's employment of acts of remembering produces new worlds and new realities that are opposed to the centralized versions of reality. Such a play with the (representation of and interpretation of) memory is most clearly observed in Rushdie's novels *Midnight's Children* and *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty Eight Nights*.

Salman Rushdie's most acclaimed novel *Midnight's Children*, which was written in 1981 and was the winner of the special Booker of the Booker prize of 1993, is a magical realist novel in which the protagonist, also the first-person narrator, Salem Sinai narrates his own life story. He thinks his life is entangled with the history of the Indian nation and to provide an "accurate" version of his own life, he must recount the

significant events of the nation, its people, and myriad cultures. Through the course of the novel, the reader follows Saleem Sinai's memories that are, most of the time, either fragmented or distorted or claimed to be lost. The intricately designed disjuncture of memories serves to bring up important questions about perception, identity, nationhood and belonging. Saleem, as the "juggler of facts" attempts to capture and "contain everything" that has happened before him and that is happening to and around him to create an alternative version of India which is different from the official records (Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* 452). Saleem calls his attempt to collect all these stories in his own work the "chutnification" of history where his own dispersed and diverse retelling of political, social, and personal occurrings in India forms a subverted narrative of plurality that is in contrast with the monolithic version of what is accepted to be historical fact (Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* 642).

Rushdie's 2015 novel, *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights* is quite similar to *Midnight's Children* in that it is a mixture of magical realism and mythmaking. The novel is set in present-day New York and recounts the invasion of the human world by dark spirits called jinns led by Zumurrud the Grand Ifrit as a result of the rift between the human world and the world of magic. The title of the novel alludes to the 1001-night length of the war of the worlds. To save humanity, the queen of the jinns, Lightning Princess Dunia, gathers her magical offspring in the human world to battle against the dark jinns. Dunia's children are a mixture of magic and non-magic as they are fathered by the philosopher Ibn-Rushd with whom Dunia falls in love much before the events that transpire in present-day New York. Much like the midnight children with magical powers in Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, the offspring of the queen of the jinns, Dunia, and the philosopher Ibn-Rushd gain magical powers with which they can save the world. The unlikely combination of magic and reason represented through these magic children reflects diversity, multiplicity and hope for a better future where there will be no need for dogmatism or homogeneity. They gain access to their magical powers through acknowledging their hybrid identities and multicultural histories through remembering. At the same time, the rivalry between virtue and evil is formed around the acts of remembering done by two oppositional figures: the rationalist thinker Ibn-Rushd and the devout theologian Gazhali. They hold contradictory opinions about belief and are presented to be in a

heated feud on the issue. Memory functions to connect the past philosophical approaches with the present flux of a postmodern understanding of the world.

Along with some of the memory studies that are mentioned above and that will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, there is a great number of studies devoted to Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and its relation to memory. A general survey on critical works that concentrate on Rushdie reveals that most of the scholarly works contemplate upon the resemblance of *Midnight's Children* to historiographic metafiction through Rushdie's utilization of memory and the significance of this for postcolonial thought and history making. Bran Nicol argues that despite his unreliability, Saleem's effort to "chutnify", in other words, narrativize the stories of India collectively and heterogeneously from his memory is a politically and historically significant act because "in the absence of reliable histories of an oppressed or colonized people, memory" even an "alternative, personalized, and fictionalized story like Saleem's nevertheless has historical validity" (Nicol 126). Nadia Butt also draws a parallelism between *Midnight's Children* and historiographic metafiction, claiming that Rushdie, through Saleem's fragmented retelling "creates a unique narrative that is meant to supersede a dominant, hegemonic conception of history" (Butt 41). The representation of an antilinear narrative is used to "deconstruct the monopoly of chronological history or even a notion of singular history" (ibid.). Butt also draws attention to Saleem's conscious play with historical facts, dates, and events, thinking what really happens is not actually the central concern in either autobiography or literature, but what the storyteller persuades the addressee to be real. Julian Droogan, too, follows a postmodern approach in looking at *Midnight's Children* but focuses more on the vital role of memory within the textual structure. Droogan notes that narrating through memory makes it possible "to subvert and destroy, rather than adequately reflect" historical and political systems (Droogan 213). Droogan argues that, in the post-traditional world of *Midnight's Children*, "with no recourse to any ultimate or essential notions or values, people can only ever be what it is their memories tell them they are, an accumulation of their past experience" (Droogan 208).

The second novel this study will analyse, *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty Eight Nights,* is a very recent work, and naturally, the literary-critical attention given to it is much more limited compared to *Midnight's Children*. Furthermore, the existing body

of research on the novel does not focus on aspects of memory. The book review by Ursula K. Le Guin in *The Guardian* offers a short synopsis of the complex plot structure of the novel and comments on the original and exciting way of storytelling through a seemingly "formless" and complex design embellished with magical realism that depicts the "colossal fragmentation of reality", which shows that "the slow processes of creation are less interesting, less real, than the cataclysmic dramas of destruction" (*The Guardian* 2015). On the other hand, Elena Crasovan, in her study of the novel, chooses to dwell upon the stylistic similarities between *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights* and Rushdie's earlier novels such as *The Satanic Verses* and *Midnight's Children* and addresses "the relation between fiction and reality, between faith and reason, the tension between good and evil" (Crasovan 31). Dana Craciun similarly focuses on the distinctive experimental style of the novel from the perspective of translation studies. She demonstrates that "the strategies used by Rushdie in his attempts to write about the importance of redressing the balance of power and of resisting Orientalising practices are similar to those used by translators of post-colonial literature" (Craciun 83) and traces Rushdie's "shift from an earlier post-colonial frame to a wider conversation on globalisation, power, submission, annihilation, etc." (Craciun 101). Tarık Ziyad Gülcü evaluates the novel in terms of ambivalence and claims that "Rushdie reflects his cultural identity conflict in terms of rationalism-mysticism dichotomy" through which Rushdie "justifies his cultural ambivalence in relation to the dynamism of contemporary world" (Gülcü 1). Patrycja Austin provides a spatial analysis of the novel by looking at transboundary and liminal spaces within the novel and their contribution to the emergence of complex hybrid forms that comment on "such issues as migration and belonging, colonialism and postcoloniality, the intermingling of cultures, ecological crisis or terrorism" (Austin 2017).

These valuable scholarly works on Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty Eight Nights* display great concern over Rushdie's imaginative postmodern stylistics through the employment of fragmented memory. They all mention that memory works as a significant tool, but none goes so far as to analyse the deeper connection between memory, culture, identity and storytelling with a more critical engagement with Rushdie's oeuvre. I hope to contribute to the body of scholarly work on Rushdie with my analysis by showing the productive use of episodic

remembering, forgetting and intertextuality in the analysis of nation, history, and identity. This study aims to fill this gap, and by comparing two Rushdie novels, hopes to contribute to an understanding of Rushdie's ouvre as a continuing and evolving whole.

The next section in this study, Chapter 2, will provide a general overview of how memory studies have started and developed, after which the study-specific definitions and terms such as memory, remembering, forgetting and intertextuality will be introduced from Ricouer's and Erll's work. Chapter 3 will focus on *Midnight's Children*, making an analysis of the reconstruction of alternative narratives and complex identities through the acts of memory, which include episodic remembering and forgetting. It will also explore the employment of intertextuality in forming a cultural narrative of memory in *Midnight's Children*. Chapter 4 engages in a similar analysis of *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty Eight Nights* and explores how the novel makes use of memory to bring together conflicting realities and challenge essentialist notions of identity while at the same time looking at the relationship between intertextuality and memory. Finally, Chapter 5 concludes this study by summarizing the main arguments of the study and offering thoughts for further research on Rushdie's work and memory.

## CHAPTER 2

## PAUL RICOEUR AND ASTRID ERLL ON MEMORY, EPISODIC REMEMBERING AND FORGETTING

Robert Eaglestone comments on the increasing focus upon and interest in memory studies that has been developing since the 1990s by defining memory as the "rootedness which anchors humans to themselves, to others and to the world" with a sense of "obligation to the past" (Eaglestone 281). Eaglestone points out that memory is a significant tool that links our own sense of identity to the lived reality and temporality by enabling us to make sense of the past and its influence over and connection with the lived present. The aspect of movement and dynamism within memory is amongst the most prominent reasons why the 1990s experienced what Huyssen called a "memory boom", which refers to the rising academic, scientific, and social interest and research on memory as a moving concept. Kilby and Rowland suggest that the "turn to memory" was partly due to the "postmodern movement that saw the problematization of the idea of the grand narrative, of 'History' and its claims to universality, totality, objectivity, and its substitution by lived experience, the local, subjective and partial— embodied by memory" which combined with the rise in publication numbers of Holocaust and postcolonial studies, trauma studies, politics of identity, ethics studies, justice and politics (Alfaro and Ortin 1-2). Similarly, Astrid Erll in her *Memory in Culture* (2005) links the memory boom to three major transformations within the twenty-year span: historical transformations, transformations in media technologies, and transformations within academia. In terms of historical transformations Erll offers the loss of the direct witnesses to the Second World War and the Holocaust as a historical turning point that cuts a society's direct access to its traumatic past without dependence on "media supported forms of remembrance such as historiography, monuments or movies" (Erll 4). She adds that

the end of the Cold War and Soviet Union, and beginnings of decolonization and migration shifted the focus to ethnic and diasporic memories so that the minority groups attained a representative voice within history by foregrounding their memories as opposed to what is told by historical records. With the blow of 9/11, Erll argues, memory has entered the political arena "with strong ethical implications" (Erll 4). In terms of transformations in media technology Erll speaks of the rapidly developing technological devices that can store data to a great extent resulting in cultural amnesia since the knowledge is passively stored rather than learnt or remembered. In addition to this, the representation of the past in all media forms is problematic in the way they represent different race, age or gender groups which tend to define and control the way we think about the past. As the final impact, Erll talks about the changes in academia which include poststructuralist and postmodern movements of the 1980s. These movements marked historiography as a human construct which cannot have any claim for absolute objectivity and universality. According to Erll, memory studies insists on the evaluation of the past as a human construct instead of a naturally occurring phenomenon. This understanding foregrounds the "practices of cultural remembering (be they scholarly, political, or aesthetic)" and serve to "compare different memory cultures, and contribute to current public debates" (Erll 5). In the light of all these historical shifting points and rapidly cumulating data and research on memory, interdisciplinary and international journals were founded such as *Memory & History* (1989), *Rethinking History* (1997); *Studies in Memory and Narrative* (1998), *Cultural Memory in the Present* (1998), *Media and Cultural Memory* (2004), *Memory Studies* (2008) along with study centres and undergraduate and graduate programmes (Erll 2). While the presence of such organs is useful for following the multidisciplinary perspectives conceptualizing memory and the path in which memory studies evolve, they have the tendency to overgeneralize the term memory and its functions in the different areas of study by collecting it in what Astrid Erll calls an "umbrella term". Since memory studies are multidisciplinary, it is necessary to be aware of the specific meanings of the terms and titles while referring to components of memory such as forgetting and remembering by always considering that they might mean something very different in each field. Recognizing this difference, however, grants an "integrative power" to memory studies by acknowledging the "(sometimes functional, sometimes analogical, sometimes metaphorical) relationships between phenomena

which were formerly conceived of as distinct" (Erll 99). The effect of the dynamic relation between the past, the present and the future on changing sociocultural contexts is the focus of memory studies (Erll 173). Through the memory boom of the 1990s it has become possible to look at memory from a multidisciplinary and multidimensional perspective, which places memory at the centre of cultural, social, historical, psychological, and literary research.

Memory is a tool for both adaptation and survival as well as being a psychological experience that changes and transforms the impressions coming from our senses in line with our needs, expectations, and goals. Because of these two dimensions, memory is a subject that attracts the attention of disciplines such as neurology, psychiatry, biology, physiology, and genetics as well as psychology. Each field of study offers various explanations and definitions on the functions and limits of memory. In psychology, for example, memory is explained as a complex psychic phenomenon that includes primitive psychic events (sensation and the traces of sensations on the nervous tissue), and higher nervous activity that is responsible for establishing new neural connections with repetitions and conditioned reflexes concerning intelligence, such as learning, training and automatic habits. Psychologists such as Jean Laplanche, Jean- Bertrand Pontalis and Sigfried Kracauer point out that while memory acts like an archive and data storage organized chronologically, they also emphasize its tendency to "cut across time" because of its associative aspect (Laplanche, Pontalis and Kracauer qtd. in Butt 49-50). This means that sensory or psychic stimulants can trigger memory to make instant associations with what is stored as a past event. In doing so, the act of remembering can skip over dates, times and location and sometimes the accuracy of the real event. Neuroscientists state that memory forms behaviour, learning and thinking as a brain activity, stressing that memory is not just an archive of images but an ability to store and retrieve data. It is a process that takes place in the brain and works with consciousness. Gerald M. Edelman and Giulio Tononi claim that memory is not simply "a representation; it reflects how the brain has changed its dynamics in a way that allows the repetition of a performance' (Edelman and Tononi 95).

Memory, because of its dynamism, is also a widely researched topic in history and literature as much as in the social sciences. In fact, history as a bridge between past

and present depends on the "agency of memory" to become a medium of explanation for what happened in the past and how it affects the present as well as the future in terms of meaning-making because history "deals with the past qua experience" and the complex web of remembering (Erll 43). Crane claims that the representation of history in its textual dimension is filtered through memories when the memory of individual minds is externalized and used as historical (Crane qtd. in Erll 44). Where history and memory are concerned, the question of objectivity and reliability arises in recent debates of historiography as a form of cultural memory. According to Erll it is impossible to disassociate memory from history and individual remembering although many in the field of historical studies question the eligibility of the "individual mental processes, myths, memorials, debates about the past, autobiographies" and the like as historical sources (Erll 6-7). History, despite its apparent objectivity and transparency, is, nonetheless, a reconstruction of a past reality where historical production is closely tied up with historians' selection, and then, interpretation of the dispersed past events by inevitably excluding certain materials.

## 2.1 Ricoeur's Definition of Memory and Forgetting

Ricoeur, throughout his book *Memory, History, Forgetting,* demonstrates that human existence is marked by memory and therefore, history-making. He analyses the representation of the past and the understanding of the present through the connection between remembering and forgetting. Ricoeur's claim is that human existence and survival depend highly on remembering and forming memories. The most fundamental and primordial instinct of the human being is the survival instinct, which is the ability to "to survive, to persist, to remain, to endure" (Ricoeur 427). This instinct to endure is mirrored within the intellect in the form of remembering. Remembering can be defined as a performance of persistence and endurance to make sense of the self, the society, and the time we are placed in. The notion of existence is formed within and via memory to realize the most "original meaning of the verb "to remain," synonym of "to endure"" (Ricoeur 427). Ricoeur claims that all kinds of memorization practices in the maintenance of knowledge mirror the effort to minimize the deficiency of forgetting. Each successful attempt of recollection is therefore linked with positivity while forgetting is associated with failure and connotes death and decay. Ricoeur calls successful occasions of remembering "happy memory", which consists of "awakened

consciousness of an event recognized as having occurred before the moment when consciousness declares having experienced, perceived, learned it" that releases feeling of ease and safety in the success of immortalizing knowledge (Ricoeur 58). For Ricoeur, happy memory is directly linked with the ability to recognise and the moment of recollection and recognition. His notion of happy memory entails the process of active critical search in order to remember the appropriated and internalized information, which results in the recognition, discovery and finally the transformation of that information into a memory that is recognized and acknowledged. Happy memory is memory's cognitive claim to process experience and information to be recognized in the form of memory and regarded as the miracle of memory by Ricoeur:

> The experience princeps in this regard is recognition, that minor miracle of happy memory. An image comes back to me; and I say in my heart: that's really him, that's really her. I recognize him, I recognize her. This recognition can take different forms. It takes place already in the course of perception: a being was presented once; it went away; it came back. Appearing, disappearing, reappearing. In this case the recognition adjusts—fits—the reappearing to the appearing across the disappearing. (Ricoeur 429).

Happy memory constitutes the recognition of the flickering information that is both present and un-present. The actualization of happy memory is not always possible as memories reflect a disconnection from the immediacy of the action and are always marked with a sense of absence and distance. When individuals think about a past event and its image, they can only think about the visual or auditory image of this image, or what Ricoeur calls the "imprint". Ricoeur formulates this quality of memory by referring to Socrates's notion of eikon which refers to images or mental images in his cave allegory. In doing so, Ricoeur acknowledges the philosophical understanding of memory that defines it as "an image of something that "has been" but "is not" now (Lythgoe 36). This notion is represented by the eikon that represents the absence of the platonic idea of "the original", may it be knowledge or being, in the moment of thinking and remembering. Memory is inevitably tied up with faults and mistakes because the act of remembering or recalling means bringing forward only an imprint of either the knowledge, thought or image that is not present and not the recollection of the original thing itself. Instead, the subject who does the remembering is "affected by something in the past and retains a trace of this event in the present" (Lythgoe 36). The recollection solely depends on the absence of the so-called original image and its

reimagination into presence in the form of memory. Ricoeur explains that the memory remembered in the present is of the absent past. In addressing this issue, he claims that memories and the object of memories are tied to the temporal duration and experience of the lived present. The immediacy of the moment where the so-called original image is being perceived is marked by a temporality that is immediately replaced by what Ricoeur calls an "ever new now" (Ricoeur 428). The continuation of this moment of perception is always surpassed by the idea that "a new now is always entering on the scene, the now changes into a past; and as it does so the whole running-off continuity of pasts belonging to the preceding points moves 'downwards' uniformly into the depths of the past" (Ricoeur 434-5). Therefore, the thing that persists and endures is not the image but its imprint within the limits of this small temporality. Memory is "treated as the recognition of an imprint" where there is distance from the original image and absence of the past moment that is to be recalled. Happy memory occurs when that recollection is successful and accurate in the recognition of the imprint in its closest possible resemblance to the "image" or the original experience. The accuracy of the recognition, however, can be misleading or wrong since memory is prone to errors and mistakes, and becoming "the victims of a false recognition" is another possibility of happy memory since recognition is only speculative (Ricoeur 430). Ricoeur ties the ability to recognize this imprint in the form of memory to the human capacity of persistence and survival, claiming that "what we have once seen, heard, experienced, or learned is not definitely lost, but survives since we can recall it and recognize it" (Ricoeur 434). The original moment of experience or as Ricoeur puts it, pure memory, is present in the form of an imprint and its lingering presence is supported by other cumulating memories and memory practices. This is explained in Memory, History and Forgetting by the metaphor of a moving and growing cone:

> The base of the cone represents all the memories accumulated in memory. The summit opposite it represents the pinpoint contact with the plane of action, at the point of the acting body. This center is in its own manner a place of memory, but this quasi-instantaneous memory is nothing but habit-memory. It is a moving point, the point of the present that constantly passes, in opposition to "true memory" (151) represented by the vast base of the cone. This schema is meant to illustrate both the heterogeneity of different memories and the manner in which they mutually lend support to one another […] The nonnumerical multiplicity of memories lends itself, in this way, to incorporation into the simplified schema of the cone […] But it is nevertheless in the very movement of

> recollection, and so in the movement of the "pure memory" in the direction of the memory-image, that reflection strives to undo what recognition has done, namely, to grasp the past again in the present, absence in presence (Ricoeur 436).

The distance of the summit of the cone from its base represents the distance between the lived experience and the memory. Because of that distance, however, pure memory is associated with absence since the distance from the original moment of experience constantly grows and changes. Recognition requires an active selection process from the cumulation of other memories and their reproduction in the present moment of thinking and remembering. This moment of recognition is made possible, in a sense, by the correlation and connection of the intended memory with other memories that point towards the object of the search. The recognized or "happy memory" is different from pure memory, but it still shares the condition of belonging to the past. Therefore, the precondition of "happy" memory is to "dream" and "think" (ibid.). Recognition depends on critical thinking and the reformulation of the imprint. This is the main reason Ricoeur stresses the close relationship between memory and imagination. Ricoeur associates imagination with the idea of recognition. Recognition includes the rising of the knowledge of a lived experience that is being understood and diagnosed within the current present moment of experience. This moment of recognitions marks "an intermediary form of imagination, half-way between fiction and hallucination, namely, the 'image' component of the memory-image" (Ricoeur 54). The overlapping of past with present produces a new perspective of reality where it becomes possible to re-evaluate the memory that is responsible for such connection. Ricoeur calls this "the new reference effect" that makes it possible to "redescribe reality" through the "free play of possibilities" (Ricoeur 124). Memory is a reference point for the recollection of an absence that possesses an ever-growing distance and at the same time closeness to the moment of lived experience. What we think we remember as the original moment of experience has disappeared and is replaced with its representation via memory. Ricoeur, at this point, also emphasizes the importance of distinguishing imagination from memory. For him, imagination contributes to the realization of happy memory without completely replacing the lived experience memory refers to. Ricoeur, differing from other scholars of memory, links memory with truthfulness stating that there is "no other resource, concerning our reference to the past, except memory itself" while recognizing its ambivalence (Ricoeur 21). Memory can be

considered as a form of knowledge constituted by a productive reimagining of what is misremembered or forgotten, namely the imaginative transformation of what is fragmentary and distorted. While memory stands for endurance and survival as a form of precaution for forgetting, the experience of forgetting is inevitable and is the main drive of remembering.

Memory is bound up with forgetting and it is not possible to "simply classify forgetting through the effacement of traces among the dysfunctions of memory alongside amnesia, nor among the distortions of memory affecting its reliability" (Ricoeur 426). Looking at forgetting as an integral drive of remembering and memory formation elicits a "new meaning for the idea of depth" and distance to the memory image instead of total erasure or destruction (Ricoeur 124). Forgetting is both a physical and a philosophical phenomenon that is not a threat for memory and reliability of any end-product derived from memory but a constructive path for new depths and meanings as well as for a new understanding of the epistemology of history and narrative. Ricoeur mentions that falsehood as the result of forgetting is inscribed too quickly as a weakness of the mind that renders every object of memory unreliable. However, the complete eradication of forgetting seems equally monstrous. Ricoeur expands on this duality of never wanting to forget and being able to forget as the balancing of "the renunciation of total reflection" (Ricoeur 413). He further mentions that forgetting actually "designates the unperceived character of the perseverance of memories, their removal from the vigilance of consciousness" (Ricoeur 440). Ricoeur mentions different forms of forgetting which includes the "forgetting through the effacing of traces and a backup forgetting, a sort of forgetting kept in reserve" or namely, "the persistence of traces". In explaining forgetting through the effacing of traces Ricoeur looks at the dualism between the body and the mind. Ricoeur mentions that "mental" or the mind does not simply refer to the "immaterial" but to the conscious body that perceives its surroundings and processes these perceptions. The dualism is then both between the "lived body of one's own" and the "body objects", namely the other living perceiving bodies, and the body of one's own as the lived body and the body as object:

> In fact, the distance is great between the body as lived and the body as object. To travel it, one must take the detour by way of the idea of a common nature and, to do that, pass by way of the idea of an intersubjectivity founding a common knowledge, and move all the way

> back to the attribution of comparable and concordant mental states among a plurality of embodied subjects … Indeed, in what sense are the lived body and the body as object the same body? The problem is difficult inasmuch as we do not, at first glance, see any passage from one discourse to the other: either I speak of neurons and so forth, and I confine myself to a certain language, or else I talk about thoughts, actions, feelings, and I tie them to my body, with which I am in a relation of possession, of belonging (Ricoeur 420).

The distinction between "the body as lived" and "body as object" is oversimplified according to Ricoeur in the natural sciences while in philosophy and phenomenology the problem of the border between the lived body and the body as object remains unstable as the body of one's own might be the sight of pluralities or perceive itself as a part of the other bodies that is supposedly "other" to him/her. Furthermore, Ricoeur problematizes the naturalistic distinction between neural activities that enable thinking and perception and the feelings, which are tied to the body, and the emotions, thoughts, and actions, which are tied to the mind. Ricoeur claims that it is not possible to attribute either of these functions strictly to the mind or the body, hence the problem of body and mind dichotomy. Instead Ricoeur mentions that while sensory and motor organs such as our hands and eyes enable immediate perception with an observable sense of connectivity in the sense that we feel with our hands and see with our eyes, the brain cannot be seen or felt and the thinking and remembering activity cannot therefore be immediately grasped as an activity of the brain. It is only through outside knowledge that we attribute all our bodily activities to the healthy functioning of the brain. Ricoeur mentions for the scientist the brain is the organ that makes the thinking and remembering possible through "cerebral organization" while for the philosopher this notion is too holistic, and the relationship is not that direct. In fact, Ricoeur claims that when an illness occurs concerning the brain, which causes forgetting or similar damages, the immediate concern of the neurosciences is with the behavioral effects of the illness rather than what happens to the brain itself, which shows that "the neurosciences in no way contribute directly to the conduct of life" and why it is necessary to develop "an ethical and political discourse on memory—and conduct cutting-edge scientific activities in many human sciences—without ever mentioning the brain" (Ricoeur 423). The neurosciences offer useful guidance and instruction to comprehend brain patterns, but they are concerned with categorizing memory according to the tasks performed and parts of the brain responsible for these tasks in

an isolated and unrealistic experimental environment which does not reflect the "concrete situations of life" (Ricoeur 424). In the neurosciences the more accurate discourse in comprehending and observing memory should not only be concerned with the act of thinking and behaviour itself but also the taxonomy of the brain and the condition of neural patterns and structures. This critical approach to the scientific data of these paths and patterns can provide explanations for the effects of forgetting.

Ricoeur's analysis of forgetting through the effacing of traces explains that memory traces are never actually erased and stay present through their semiotic imprints. In this criticism Ricoeur adopts a Bergsonian understanding of the body/mind dualism. According to Bergson, "The brain is the limb of neither thought, emotion, nor consciousness. We can say that the brain is the organ of paying attention to life" (Bergson 58-59). The brain enables the individual to act consciously. Bergson compares consciousness with the soul, the brain with the body; stating that the body decays and disintegrates while the soul somehow remains. For Ricoeur memory works similarly. While the memory traces seem to eradicate because of brain injuries or old age, forgetting occurs on the surface level and somehow the traces manage to survive. These memory traces are correlated to the Platonic analysis of the imprint mentioned above and their persistence is stressed despite the illusive absence or disappearance. Ricoeur divides these traces into three groups. The first one is the written or documentary trace that denotes that it is obtained through historiographical processes; the second is the physical trace that denotes all kinds of physical, sensual or affection imprints that leave a significant mark on the individual, and the third is the cerebral or cortical trace that includes the connection between "the impressions stemming from the world of experience" and "the material imprints in the brain" responsible for the neurobiological transmission of information and its storage and transformation into new data (Ricoeur 15). Forgetting through effacing denotes, at first, a definitive and irreversible type of forgetting because it implies the deterioration and the destruction of these different kinds of traces. However, Ricoeur stresses that this kind of forgetting can occur mostly through cortical traces which are on the neurobiological level, which does not extend over the archive of memory established through other traces. For the phenomena experienced in the past to be recognized, a trace of that moment must be archived through different traces and then recognized. This shows that the imprint becomes permanent in the memory. In *What Makes Us Think* (2002) Changeux and

Ricoeur argue that the effacing of traces is linked with elapsed time. Changeux and Ricoeur claim that "All traces are present to our minds. There is no hint of something that is absent. It is necessary then to endow the trace with a semiotic dimension, so that it functions as a sign, and to regard the trace as a sign-effect, a sign of the action of the seal in creating the impression" (Changeux 149). Effaced traces signify a gap or distance from a meaningful semiotic representation that is not readily available in the moment of recall. The effacing of traces, therefore, refers to the elapsed time in which there is an ongoing search for semiotic appropriation. Both Changeux and Ricoeur liken this process to hieroglyphs that are decoded for comprehension where only a trace meaning is necessary to decipher the whole. Similarly, in forgetting thorugh effacing traces, there is always a trace to be "conceived at once as a present effect and as the sign of its absent cause" that denotes "positivity and presence" (Changeux 150). Ricoeur draws attention to the permanence of the trace and emphasizes the "close connection between the 'continuity of the image' that is "inevitably etched into the memory" (Bergson 60) and the key phenomenon of recognition" (Ricoeur 473-4).

The second type of forgetting is the "reversible or back up forgetting" or "persistence of traces", which denotes the "the passive persistence of first impressions: an event has struck us, touched us, affected us, and the affective mark remains in our mind" (Ricoeur 427). Human nature, because of the survival instinct, aims to reverse any type of forgetting by constant internalizing of objective knowledge and sustain developed recognition and retrospection in evaluating the lived experience while on certain occasions forgetting provides moments of euphoria and satisfaction through the relinquishing of responsibility and moral sense. The absence of a memory in the moment of recollection indicates the presence of "obstacles" during the process of remembering. This is due to another dualism inherent in the individual perception of memory. On the one hand, there is an inherent trust towards happy memory because it is accepted that important events and information can be remembered, but, on the other hand, there is an underlying suspicion towards the functioning of memory due to moments of forgetting or misremembering. We have no choice but to depend on the memory since there is no other way to gain first- hand access to any kind of knowledge or information external to the perception of lived experience. Ricoeur resolves this dichotomy of trust and suspicion in the exercise of memory by looking at forgetting as a temporary obstacle that initiates the reawakening of the memory in reserve forgetting

(Ricoeur 31). In fact, the recognition of the obstacle can possibly give rise to the reversal of forgetting. The recognition according to Ricoeur also includes the imprint of the lived experience to be distinguished as the memory belonging to the past, whether it is fully remembered or not. This recognition shows that memory despite being forgotten is available, if not accessible. According to this, forgetting might be attributed to the repression or unconscious fears and traumas that block the body of memory, which eventually prevent remembering. Ricoeur defines this as "blocked memory", which is on a pathological therapeutic level and constitutes all forms of injured or sick memory. Ricoeur describes in Freudian terminology how blocked memory leads to traumatic situations such as repeating the internalized memory through action without realization. The repeated action replaces the forgotten memory and prevents the memory from recognizing it and reviving it. In Freud's words, this type of memory closes in by pathologically repeating the past. Ricoeur refers to Sigmund Freud's works where Freud describes patients who forget certain key events are disturbed by ticks and bodily ailments, or what is forgotten is substituted with slips and speech defects or with continuous repetitions. Ricoeur refers to Freud's studies to show that what cannot be remembered is not simply erased and forgotten but is blocked and avoided. Ricoeur denotes that the repetition therapy Freud offers is an explanation for memory blockage and for why forgetting occurs:

> We recall Freud's remark at the start of the first text: the patient repeats instead of remembering. "Instead of ": repetition amounts to forgetting. And forgetting is itself termed a work to the extent that it is the work of the compulsion to repeat, which prevents the traumatic event from becoming conscious. Here, the first lesson of psychoanalysis is that the trauma remains even though it is inaccessible, unavailable. In its place arise phenomena of substitution, symptoms, which mask the return of the repressed under the various guises offered to the deciphering engaged in together by the analyst and the analysand. The second lesson is that, in particular circumstances, entire sections of the reputedly forgotten past can return. For the philosopher, psychoanalysis is therefore the most trustworthy ally in support of the thesis of the unforgettable (Ricoeur 445).

Freud's work according Ricoeur suggests that the seemingly lost connection between the past and present can be restored through forgetting that triggers physical and bodily symptoms that allocate for what should be remembered, confronted, and possibly overcome. Forgetting acts, in that sense, as a dual mechanism. It provides preservation

and a temporal space for contemplation without the burden of the past. In this way, a necessary act of repetition, which will enable the present to reconcile with the past, suppresses and replaces the real memory, Forgetting, in this regard, is not destructive. The inability to remember assumes a protective mission for memory-preserving and is the cultivator and indispensable part of memory. The return of memory also depends on the recalling or the return of the image and its recognition even if the original impression is lost. The recognition of the forgotten object prompts the memory to recognize the existence of a trace that is not yet deciphered within the existential plane of memory which is like an "endless abyss" (Ricoeur 448-49). What is forgotten settles in the depths of retained memories which are processed and then resurface under this recognition. Forgetting, in that sense, displays the "immemorial resource" instead of erasure or destruction (Ricoeur 444). Ricoeur hypothesizes that forgetting denotes the continuity of the act of retrieving and anticipating. Forgetting is not simply the "effacement of traces among the dysfunctions of memory alongside amnesia, nor among the distortions of memory affecting its reliability". On the contrary, its positive and recreative effects should be reconsidered (Ricoeur 426-7). Ricoeur provides the metaphor of the archaeological excavations of Pompeii visited by Freud in order to show the possible protective effects of forgetting. Freud in his visit to Pompeii in 1902 compares the tracing of traumatic memories to the excavations of Pompeii, which was buried under a five-meter-thick layer of ash in 79 BC and was meticulously uncovered in the second half of the 18th century. The real extinction of Pompeii, Freud claims, began when the protective layers disappeared with the excavations. The repressed memories resurfacing during the therapy resemble the layer of untouched and hidden part of Pompeii before the excavations that are covered by the protective layer of earth. The endurance of seemingly forgotten memories, according to both Freud and Ricoeur, depend on the very condition of being forgotten, undisturbed and buried (Draisma 182-3). The existence of the past, which is thought to have been forgotten, can be defined as resistance against forgetting, and its re-remembering can only be possible with "recognition" and the "permanence of the image". Thus, it can be argued that it is possible to remember almost all only through the act of forgetting. Ricoeur comments on Martin Heidegger, who claims: "Just as waiting is possible on the ground of expectation, memory/remembering (Erinnerung) is only possible on the ground of forgetting". It is also possible to remember as long as there are traces that survive in

the memory (Ricoeur 486). Ricoeur, as mentioned above, claims that remembering is dependent upon imagination and creativity because of its reshaping property. The imaginative power of remembering can provide confrontation with what is traumatic or repressed so that overcoming that frustrating experience becomes possible.

It is important to note here that Ricoeur does not treat amnesia or forgetting due to physical injuries as non-existent. In fact, he states that forgetting can be definitive and irreversible if serious physical damage to the brain takes place either because of age, illness, or accident. As I have explained above, not all acts of forgetting can be directly linked to the misfunctioning of the internal organs. It is possible to really observe how the mind works, how memories are created or what really happens when we talk about forgetting while it is possible to catalogue or visualize it in detail. The organ is the observable part while its internal functioning still remains an abstract phenomenon that can only be observed indirectly. That is indeed why Ricoeur insists on the fact that forgetting might not be destructive. The neurosciences cannot truly observe what happens when forgetting takes place but can only determine the part of the organ where forgetting occurs. Therefore, Ricoeur questions if it is really possible to definitively claim that an individual can lose all memory irreversibly in the cases of amnesia when there is no chance to truly observe the workings of the brain beyond the currently existing limits of knowledge and technology. It is therefore important to look at memory through the polarity between the struggle to remember and the need to forget. It is very important not to treat "the deficiencies stemming from forgetting" merely as "pathological forms, as dysfunctions, but as the shadowy underside of the bright region of memory, which binds us to what has passed before we remember it" (Ricoeur 21). While the deficiencies of memory constitute dangers of abuse, they also provide the chance for forgiveness by creating a space for a more collaborative discourse.

Ricoeur's notion of forgetting as a necessity for remembering also denotes an ethical function that enables coming to terms with the past creating a possibility of forgiveness for the possibility of living together. The past does not become an objective reality in the collective memory and is constantly reconstructed by society. Therefore, forgetting in an ethical sense can provide not an erasure but a confrontation or coming to terms with a society's traumatic past and the historicization of that past from unheard accounts to recognize the political silence and absence. Ricoeur argues that there might

be a possibility for happy forgetting just as there is a happy memory. Forgetting as explained previously is necessary for psychic preservation as each individual and community are limited in their ability to remember. There is a simple pleasure and joy within this act of remembering because it correlates with recognition, namely, the sustaining of the link with between past and present in immediate temporality. Ricoeur suggests that happy forgetting entails a similar kind of pleasure in the reversal of remembering since it provides a sense of reconciliation with the collective historical burden of pain and trauma:

> If memory is in fact a capacity, the power of remembering (faire-me´moire), it is more fundamentally a figure of care, that basic anthropological structure of our historical condition. In memory-as-care we hold ourselves open to the past, we remain concerned about it. Would there not then be a supreme form of forgetting, as a disposition and a way of being in the world, which would be insouciance, carefreeness? Cares, care, no more would be said of them, as at the end of a psychoanalysis that Freud would define as "terminable." (Ricoeur 505).

Happy forgetting does not entail the simple brushing off of the great historical traumas or injustices such as wars, Auschwitz, and etc. but a necessary and productive suspension from overthinking the effect of past upon the present and future. The tradition of "Western" thought has developed with the aim of remembering the past and evaluating its effects on the present and future. Because of this, history or the personal experience of the past cannot be evaluated critically as they are not isolated from each other. Ricoeur's happy forgetting connotes a productive possibility in lifting this correlation to evaluate and comprehend each temporality on its own to better understand the function of memory in history. Ricoeur further explains that when collectively traumatic events such as war and violence are repressed, forced to be forgotten or completely subverted by the state or politically dominant power groups, the concerned memory practices and narratives turn into "the trap" where "higher powers take over this emplotment and impose a canonical narrative by means of intimidation or seduction, fear or flattery (…) stripping the social actors of their original power to recount their actions themselves" (Ricoeur 448). In the novels I will discuss in the upcoming chapters, the memory narratives of political and religious leaders such as Indira Gandhi and Gazhali turn memory practices and acts of commemoration into power apparatuses to dominate the historical narrative. Ricoeur criticizes the state's claim for truth and objective for either remembering everything

or completely forgetting to hold and sustain power. That is why Ricoeur insists on the limits of remembering especially when remembering serves an ideology. The act of forgetting, therefore, can explain the collective dimension of the practices of what is accepted to be remembered from which the present is shaped and constructed. In other words, "memory is more of a frame than content; it is always a trump card, a set of strategies, a phenomenon that is more valuable in the way it is used than in its existence" (Nora 10). Since memory is only "capable of taking up a limited amount of information" amongst the "abundance of impressions, dates, or facts", forgetting provides the production of new memories and the revival of important and significant points from mere details (Erll 146-7). Ricoeur also draws attention to the mutual constructive relationship between memory and forgetting that enables "an eschatology of forgiveness" (Kenny 208). Forgiveness suggests the releasing of the subject from the act to renew mutual remembrance and the possibility for a future without the overwhelming intermingling of the past with the present. Also, coming to terms with the past or past traumas depends on this act of forgetting and forgiving. This does not denote a simple turning away or the complete repression of trauma but rather its acknowledgement and acceptance within the present temporality to look for new ways of dealing with pain and suffering.

## 2.2 Astrid Erll's Definition of Memory

Astrid Erll in *Memory in Culture* offers multidimensional definitions of memory, claiming that it is impossible to think of the workings memory either only in a physical neurological pattern or only in the social and cultural sphere. Due to the rising amount of research and interest in memory studies, the terminology has become extremely diverse and, in some cases, confusing because of its intricacy and interdisciplinarity. Therefore, Erll chooses from the pool of terminology those that are widely accepted and appropriates them to his own approach to memory and its relation to culture and identity. In doing so, she takes up Ricoeur's ideas on memory and forgetting and develops them within the context of culture and literature. She claims that fragmentary remembering and forgetting contribute to the analysis of cultural and historical representations of past within literary texts. Erll claims that Ricoeur's philosophical work on memory can enrich the understanding of the relationship between memory and literature by offering insightful information on ethics of memory. Erll begins with

a comprehensive definition of what memory is and how it works as a neurological activity explained by Rainer Sinz:

> Memory is the learning-dependent storage of ontogenetically acquired information. This information is integrated selectively and, in a species specific manner into the phylogenetic neuronal structures and can be retrieved at any given time, meaning that it can be made available for situation-appropriate behavior. Generally formulated, memory is based on conditioned changes of the transfer properties in the neuronal 'network' whereby under specific circumstances the neuromotoric signals and behavior patterns corresponding to the system modifications (engrams) can completely or partially be reproduced (Sinz qtd. in Erll 88).

According to Sinz's definition, memory acts as an archive or storage where information acquired through the senses and experience is stored sporadically. This information, in return, can be selectively combined via neurons through the transference in neuronal pathways to be used in a particular "situation appropriate behaviour", namely, a moment of recollection or remembering. Remembering requires the activation of neurons and neural connections for the information to be transferred through neural pathways to be remembered. However, while this information is combined and transferred, it is transformed and, in a sense, reconnected in a slightly different manner than the original moment of sensual experience. Neural networks direct small particles called "engrams", which are the psychic effect or impression that an event leaves on the nervous system to different parts of the brain and stores them in different ways. Therefore, the process of remembering is not the reappearance or reproduction of the experience in its original form, but the collection of a "new, emergent entity – the recollective experience of the remember – that differs from either of its constituents" emerges, through which different versions of past events can be arranged and juxtaposed (Schacter 70). Remembering is a process, of which memories are the results, and memories are observable only through the process of remembering. Remembering can also be triggered through these engrams and retrieval cues - the trigger mechanisms that activate the process of remembering- in the process. Remembering can also be activated through sociocultural cues such as books, songs, myths or "emotional, cognitive, and motivational" generated within that context (Erll 87). It is also important to note here that remembering highly depends on making associations that traverse time and its limits. Namely, according to Laplanche and

Pontalis, memory is "organized not only according to chronology, but also to chains of association which cut across time" thus it has the tendency to skip "years or stretches temporal distance" (Butt 49-50). Remembering is accepted as an ability because it depends on the continuous modification of the stored data that will be used in the required situation and a set of contextual factors, which are constantly changing. These definitions on memory offered by different critiques is analysed and then developed by Erll in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding on the workings of episodic remembering and forgetting.

Erll, through offering a detailed neurobiological process of remembering, stresses the constructed nature of memory. Remembering, as explained above, includes the remodelling of dispersed data in a new organizing schema. Erll defines memory as a reconstruction of past images and events within a subjective order through the ability of remembering. These past images are not "objective of past perceptions, even less of a past reality" but "subjective, highly selective reconstructions" (Erll 8). Memory, she repeats, is a selective remembering process through which information is selected subjectively within a specific moment of recalling. This act of organizing could be wilful in the case of someone who is trying to remember an event of impact, or it could be unconscious and involuntary through associative memory, which is the evoking of memories through sensual stimulants. The discussion and comprehension of memory, according to Erll, denies the "homogenization of vastly different objects" and the representation or creation of memory in fiction can reveal the "individual mental processes, […] debates about the past" from a newer perspective (Erll 6). According to Erll, understanding the act of remembering means that memory's truth can be questioned and challenged because remembering requires remodelling. Memories are accepted to be untrustworthy because they are "highly selective reconstructions, dependent on the situation in which they are recalled" (Erll 8). Erll, much like Ricoeur, assumes that this can lead to false memory creation where the recollection, despite being fabricated, seems to be corresponding to what is thought to be real or experienced. Ricoeur despite this danger also argues that the productivity and opportunity lies within the creative or remodelled versions of memory as well as false memory. Similar to Ricoeur, Erll claims that the fabricated embodiment of memory allows for a connection between past and present, and the comprehension of "the web of temporal change within which our lives are caught up, and (at least indirectly) the

future perspectives toward which that change is flowing" (Erll 43). For Erll, acknowledging the fallibility of memory means becoming more careful about all kinds of discourses and cultural practices formed out of that memory culture. Moreover, the fabricated nature of memories allows memories to be comprehended as a cultural and social phenomenon that preserves its value in every format for the critical understanding of the cumulation of national, social, and cultural knowledge.

The processes of remembering, according to Erll, also takes place on the level of culture as much as that of the individual because the individual memories are also shaped by the subject's interaction with social structures and relationships. The ability of self- expression, and self-definition depend on the integration into collective social systems, such as language, customs and traditions, which are the basis of communication and access to knowledge through our interaction with other people. This, in return, shapes the way we make sense of and experience the present temporality. Thus, the access to individual memories and the ability to make sense of them depends on the social interaction within a community since it forms the "all-encompassing horizon in which our perception and memory are embedded" (Erll 15). This mutual interaction is collected under the term "cultural memory" which provides the mental, material and social structures within which experience is embedded, constructed, interpreted and passed on. Memory is a kind of switchboard which organizes experience both prospectively and retrospectively: Prospectively, cultural memory is the source of schemata which already pre-form experience, that is, which decide what will even enter the individual's consciousness and how this information will be further processed. Memory as an apparatus of selection and schematization is thus the very condition for gaining experiences. But it is only retrospectively, through cultural remembering, that we create experience as an interpretation of events that guides future action (Erll 112). The involvement within the intra-group communication creates a collective pool of shared information, which, in time, transforms into collective memories that allow everyone within the body of the society to remember and apprehend past events. The cumulation of this collective data is the "overarching complex of memory" through which "the connections between many single, seemingly disparate cultural phenomena become evident (Erll 7). Therefore, the process of remembering is transmitted into the cultural dimension where traditions are created and it becomes possible to speak of a "'nation's memory', a 'religious

community's memory', or even of 'literature's memory' (which, according to Renate Lachmann, is its intertextuality)" (Erll 2).

Erll explains that the relationship between memory and culture was first introduced by Maurice Halbwachs who referred to cultural memory as collective and social memory. Collective memory is either the working of the individual memory within a sociocultural environment or it consists of the "shared versions of the past, which results through interaction, communication, media, and institutions within small social groups as well as large cultural communities" (Erll 14-15). It is important to note the distinction between "collective" memory and "collected" memory. Collected refers to the individual memory shaped through social and cultural schemata and to the remembering process that is aided through culturally coded information. Collective memory, however, is the construction and representation of a shared past through the medium of symbols, media, social institutions, and practices (Erll 98). This distinction also denotes the way we refer to memory on the textual and linguistic levels. Erll denotes two tropes for referring to cultural memory: metonymy and metaphor. We refer to memory metonymically when it "is conceived of as an individual act, when the focus is on the shaping force that sociocultural surroundings exert on organic memory – that is, when we speak of 'memory as a phenomenon of culture'" (Erll 97). When we indicate memory metaphorically, we "speak of the 'memory of culture', 'a society remembering' or the 'memory of literature'" which are "linguistic images for the organized archiving of documents, for the establishment of official commemoration days, or for the artistic process of intertextuality – in short for 'culture as a phenomenon of memory'" (ibid.). In this case memory is the representative symbol for the body of historical, cultural, and social information that is used to construct the image of a shared past according to the "present knowledge and needs" that constitutes the collective memory (Erll 3).

Cultural memory is open to every dialectic of remembering and forgetting and is in a constant state of development (Nora 19). Cultural memory refers to specific time periods which may differ between communities (Halbwachs 55). Different communities go through different selection and interpretation processes that determine what will be remembered as significant. Therefore, the elements of reminiscence differ for each community and they each create different images in the collective

consciousness. This means that different communities that exist within the same time period may construct different memory traces. Therefore, a single event affecting different societies at the same time might generate many forms of collective consciousness and memory formations where identical events might be remembered differently. Erll argues that each group of society refers and relates to past events in a "constructive, evaluative and self-referential" manner which produces divergent forms of reference points for the past (Erll 109). She theorizes about three main cultural memory systems with which communities articulate their shared past. The first one is "collective-autobiographical memory" which is the collective remembering process of the shared past through which "group identities are created, the experience of time is culturally shaped, and shared systems of values and norms are established" (Erll 106-7). The second is the "collective-semantic memory" which refers to the storage and organization of knowledge and its symbolic representation and techniques of storage and organization in the social context. The third one is the "collective-procedural memory" and includes the "uncontrolled recurrence of bodies of knowledge and forms of expression" that is the "implicit, non-intentional side of the explicit forms of collective memory", and it refers to the "ways of dealing with the past which are not conscious or capable of becoming conscious on the social level" (Erll 108). Procedural memory is closely tied to symbolic forms and practices that can be observed in media, art, or social behavior. It is important to question how history is remembered and interpreted through these collectively constructed memories and consider which memories are included, and which are excluded in the process of selection. We can also talk about shared memories that depend on communication and dialogue and include the collection of multiple perspectives or versions of the past in a collective whole. This ensures the functioning of personal memory. The individual dimension of memory is undeniable; but in the formation of memory, the relationship of individuals with social groups can also form and shape shared memory.

### 2.2.1 Episodic Remembering and Forgetting

Since remembering is initiated through "retrieval cues", memories evoked through these cues might appear in episodic forms. These memories are called "episodic or autobiographical memories". Episodic memories are, as Erll agrees,

> the conscious recollection of a personal experience that contains information on what has happened and also where and when it happened. Recollection from episodic memory also implies a kind of first-person subjectivity that has been termed autonoetic consciousness (Pause and Ricoeur 2013).

Episodic memories contain a subjective awareness over the remembered past experiences and they belong to the past, not the present, which is called "autonoetic consciousness". This includes for the subject who does the remembering to relive the past moment and narrativize it in the form of episodes or scenes which makes the preservation of the knowledge and detail of the lived experience possible. Episodic memories are comprised of all the lived experience and require a subjective feeling of recalling that is time and context specific. They depend on restructuring the lived experience according to the remembered order they happened in and their meaning through the personal perspective of the person who experienced them. It brings forward memories in the form of "episodes" or scenes that are then coded into meaning through "subjective colouring" and are therefore affective (Erll 84). As Erll stresses, Markowitsch also claims that episodic memories depend on the subject's evaluation of the events according to their emotional significance and therefore these memories require "a synchronization of cognitive, fact-like portions of an event and of a corresponding emotional flavoring" to refer "to the self and evaluate the event with respect to the self and the social environment" (Erll 278). For Erll episodic memories are distinctive because of this affective aspect. Memories are not indivisible entities stored as coherent units to be recalled as a whole but are fragmented parts whose meaning depend on the subject. Episodic memories enable a subject's conscious perception of their notion of "self" and its continuity according to their lived experience (Erll 85). They are also self-referential in the way that the recalling process decides what experience becomes the consciously recalled memory.

It is through episodic remembering that the individual can situate him/herself within the cultural context and social framework of norms and regulations so that s/he can become a responsible individual. Episodic memories determine the subject's temporal situation within the processes of social exchange which, in return, organizes the memory structure and denotes the understanding of the self (Welzer 290). The subject's decisions that may seem independent of social interaction with social and cultural markers or institutions are in fact shaped or guided by these very institutions.

The condition of existence is, therefore, marked by this line between individual autonomy and self- awareness within the social context. Episodic memory

> takes over the task of synthesizing this [condition of existence] and creating a continuity between the two sides, one which we are not even aware of, so that we can constantly be sure of an apparently unchanging ego— across all times and all situations. This ego (and everything that we refer to as our identity, which we draw from our life history and the past of the memory community to which we belong) is in a way a self-mis-understanding, albeit a necessary and meaningful one (Welzer in Erll and Nünning 290-1).

Episodic memories are further essential for establishing a necessary sense of self trust in human reasoning and gathering information to turn it into knowledge. The self-reflexivity of episodic remembering asserts the individual's access to making truth claims by providing memory episodes of what might have happened in the past that affects the present moment of discourse and communication. Episodic memories denote the subject's indispensable ties with his social, historical, and cultural temporality but also produce a seemingly independent representation of the individual, a misleading yet necessary one for making sense of the self and the context it is situated in. Welzer claims that "sociality and individuality are insofar not opposites, but rather determine one another", and understanding episodic remembering means being able to reflect upon this relationship (Welzer 291).

Erll sees memory as the result of not wholesome remembering but also forgetting. Her emphasis on forgetting as an integral part of memory is mostly based on Ricoeur's work summarized in the section above. In order to demonstrate the function and significance of forgetting in cultural practices Erll draws from Ricoeur's notions of forgetting and appropriates them into her research. Erll, too, claims "forgetting is the very condition for remembering" since it provides mental flexibility in making sense of the past and obtaining more sensible connections between past, present and future without the overaccumulation of former details that would only erase the possibility of finding meaning and significance (Erll 9). Forgetting is, in general, the loss, displacement or modification of information from the memory which could either be immediate and spontaneous or gradual. However, forgetting is not equal to the complete erasure of the past experience stored as data. On the contrary, nothing is truly forgotten but rather stored in less accessible parts of the mind, within the long-term

memory. Forgetting is also a "cue-dependent phenomenon, reflecting the failure of retrieval of perfectly intact trace information" (Tulving 74). Forgetting denotes the absence of retrieval cues initiating the remembering process, which results in the failure of reorganizing the stored data of experience into a remembered format. Most common and accepted versions of forgetting include cue-dependent forgetting, organically caused forgetting, interference, and trace decay. Cue- dependent forgetting that occurs in the absence of necessary cues or stimuli present in the moment of the lived experience, induces the failure of memory formation. Organic causes for forgetting include physical damage to the brain, illnesses that affect the brain such as Alzheimer's, amnesia, or aging. Interference forgetting denotes the confusion and disruption in the moment of remembering where differently encoded information and experience clash for priority according to their recentness. Trace decay refers to the gradual and automatic fading of memories due to the lack of use of traces and cues in relation to that memory.

Recent research on these different versions of forgetting denotes that these are reflections of the failure of data retrieval and do not denote complete forgetting. Similar to what Ricoeur argues, for Erll forgetting is not the complete erasure of information but alterations with partial erasure made on the stored information. Without actually losing the information that is stored as memory, the ability to forget acts as a marker for the memory's accessible range and its potential carrying capacity. The past can either be preserved and constructed through the recollection of the trace information or it can be rebuilt from its remnants and shadows - from what has been forgotten. Forgetting, in this sense, is an elaborate plot construction where the elimination of certain events is inevitable for a meaningful end-product to emerge (Kearney 9). In fact, it is through forgetting that the engrams or memory traces mentioned above are also activated. Forgetting in most cases denotes a temporary partition from the lived experience, and the very experience of forgetting may force the subject towards remembrance by cueing them emotionally or cognitively. Erll stresses the importance of forgetting in memory studies since the lived experience is transformed through forgetting as much as remembering since "the functions of forgetting within cognitive and social systems are at least as important as those of remembering. Memory studies has reconstructed the intellectual history of forgetting" (Erll 9). Similar to what Ricoeur exemplifies, the remembering that is cued by

forgetting can reappear as episodic memory or can be brought to the surface as repressed memory with clinical or professional help. Erll agrees with Ricoeur and further mentions that forgetting, despite its importance, is unobservable or rather only observable through absences, silences and gaps or mistakes and misrememberings that act as cues. The tropes of forgetting possess an imaginative quality since forgetting also includes refilling, reformatting, and reshaping as remembering process. Forgetting is also seen as a threat to truth claims and obtaining of knowledge just as it demonstrates the frailty of memory. However, as Ricoeur also insists, remembering everything as they actually were, is evidently impossible but even if it were not, memories would not be anything other than jumbled up facts without any determining factor of significance or meaning. Forgetting, therefore, "is not the frailties of memory but the return of experience to imaginative re-elaboration" (Erll 249).

Memory can only work through traces of absences. Erll states that the "main function of memory is forgetting, that is, 'preventing the system from blocking itself with the concretion of the results of earlier observations'" where remembering becomes the "exception rather than the rule" (Erll 60-1). For Erll, forgetting has immense social, historical, and cultural significance because it can question and challenge the body of knowledge and truth that is taken for granted and juxtapose them with what has been sidelined. Forgetting on a cultural level promotes the emergence of "new information, new challenges, and new ideas to face the present and future" (Assmann 98).

### 2.2.2 Memory and Literature

In addition to the body of academic of work on memory in the fields of natural and social sciences, literature in general and literary criticism and discussions are engaged with memory studies. Erll is interested in the function of memory in cultural practices such as literature and arts as her studies mostly focus upon literature and culture. There are many literary forms that deal with the workings of memory and its fragility. Through the act of narrativization, which is distinct from other "symbol systems of cultural memory, such as history, religion, and myth", memories become meaningful and that is why there exists a strong link between literature and memory (Erll 145). The metaphorical and evocative language of literature can reveal the links between certain messages, images, unnoticed relations, and causalities within memories and

experience as well as their interpretation. In fact, according to Erll, literature and literary studies are "at [their] very heart, memory studies" because literature makes it possible to engage critically with memory and with its reinterpretation (Erll 77). Literature also makes the workings of memory observable either by the imitating process of recalling through language and stylistic devices or by obtaining an intertextual level where it refers to historiography, memorials, rituals, and discourses of the past (Erll 153). Therefore, the transparency of the memory process enables its criticism instead of unquestioned acceptance. Literature integrates multiple versions of representing the past and memory, and can juxtapose "divergent and contested memories and create mnemonic multiperspectivity" to connect "in a single space, the manifold discrete parlances about the past" (Erll 150-1). Literature can also produce and reproduce memory as much as representing it. It can address what has been forgotten, misremembered, repressed, unintentional and help to reconstruct the seemingly absent information. Erll explains this link between literature and memory in terms of creativity and productivity like Ricoeur:

> Literature actualizes elements which previously were not – or could not be – perceived, articulated, and remembered in the social sphere. Through the operation of selection, literature can create new, surprising, and otherwise inaccessible archives of cultural memory: Elements from various memory systems and things remembered and forgotten by different groups are brought together in the literary text (Erll 153).

Memory is renewed through literature as much as literature is affected by memory through the deconstruction of the border between what is forgotten and remembered. Literary narratives that deal closely with memory represent the "fragility and distortion" (Erll 79) of each narrative form to "foreground the ways in which memories are constructed" (Neumann 337). The linguistic flexibility in literary texts enables these distortions to be coded "into aesthetic forms" so that we recognize how knowledge, or facts, in general, are loaded with "meaning" via language and cultural teachings (ibid). Consequently, a dynamic relationship occurs between the act of remembering and reading that affects and changes the ways of thinking on the relationship between memory and text.

This dynamic relationship between the text and memory is reflected through the problematization of memory formation which is called "meta-memories" by

Neumann. These meta-memories provide the transparency, on the one hand, for how personal memories are formed and, on the other, how this formation process can help to question how remembering begins and what lies at its centre. Neumann claims that especially in contemporary fictions "narrative instances often actively interpret, re-interpret, and continually re-create the individual past and the identity built on this past in the act of narration" (Neumann 338). Literary texts sheds light on the different layers of remembering. This, in return, helps to resurface, shape, or even create memories out of the narration process. Such texts offer re-imaginings and reinterpretations of the past through the insertion of personal or collective memories of the past which are often ambiguous and fragmentary. However, their incongruity displays the "polyvalence, indeed the elusiveness, of past experiences" that offer critical "insight into the factual conditions of the past" as well as "into current schemes of interpretation" in talking about a "usable past" (Neumann 338).

Other than representing and critiquing memory processes, literary texts also possess memories themselves. Lachmann and Erll define intertextuality within the text as the text's memories. The incorporation of different knowledge systems within a literary piece in the form of intertextuality become the memory of the text, revealing that, much like human memory, each literary text is somehow relational to its precursor. According to them, texts "participate, repeat, and constitute acts of memory. Within this site of intertexts, the literary text becomes "a memory place" through the "transformatory procedures" employed "either covertly or ludically and demonstratively" (Lachmann 305). This intertextuality also includes reference to literary genres that contribute to the construction of literature's memory. The reference to genres is defined as "memory genres" or "genre memories" by Erll (Erll 74). According to Erll, the intertextual reference to genre can happen through different genres:

> First, the historical novel, different forms of 'life writing' (Saunders 2008), and testimony (A. Assmann 2006a), but also more traditional and less openly memory-related genres, such as comedy, pastoral poetry and the romance, can be understood as generators, media and products of cultural memory. A second aspect of the relationship between genre and memory is that the realization of a genre requires a 'readers' memory'. Only when authors and recipients of a mnemonic community share the knowledge of genre conventions (and suspect, for example, that at the end of a detective novel the murder case will be solved) can one speak of

> the existence of a genre. Third, certain genres, such as biography, comedy or tragedy, are the source of conventionalized, generic schemata for the coding of versions of the past (Erll 74).

According to Erll, since each genre represents different historical periods and cultures, they also carry the memory of that specific time and period, which shapes the historical imagination. Furthermore, the reader's initial engagement with the literary text occurs through genre, with which the reader orients their expectations concerning how the text will deliver its message. This expectation is shaped through what Erll calls "genre schemata",

> so that, for example, we expect death at the end of a tragedy, and a wedding at the end of a comedy […] The Bildungsroman, the adventure novel, and the spiritual autobiography, for instance, provide models of individual development, which rememberers tend to fall back on when they want to explain the course of their lives […] The epic, for example, was long a core pattern when it came to explaining the origin and uniqueness of an ethnic group. In nineteenth-century Europe, the historical novel became a dominant memory genre which represented the course of history and helped shape national identities (Erll 147-8).

The mixing of these different genres within the literary text forms the memory of the text by incorporating different cultural and historical conventions and knowledge by either adding to the meaning of the text or subverting and deconstructing it. The reference to conventional genres within the text might provide "familiar and meaningful patterns of representation for experiences that would otherwise be hard to interpret" (Erll 148). However, the same intertextuality can produce new genres by challenging the meaning and function of the existing genre.

The literary text as a memory place offers transference between the literary and the non-literary. The literary text can contain any kind of knowledge but also knowledge that has been lost or disregarded. The incorporation of different knowledge systems allows for the reconstruction of the "unofficial or arcane traditions" and "the forgotten or repressed", providing space for the intermingling of different kinds of truth (Lachmann 306). The revival of any kind of knowledge and experience that has been silenced, rejected, or deemed irrelevant is possible in the form of memory within the literary space. According to Erll, this can be established in texts through five modes of representation: "experiential, monumental, historicizing, antagonistic and "prominent reflexive mode". In the experiential mode, the emphasis falls upon the "past as lived

through experience" and they usually engage with the elaboration of episodic memories (Erll 158). This mode of "literary remembering" usually includes the

> 'personal voice' generated by first- person narration; addressing the reader in the intimate way typical of face-to-face communication; the use of the more immediate present tense; lengthy passages focalised by an 'experiencing I' in order to convey embodied, seemingly immediate experience; circumstantial realism, a very detailed presentation of everyday life in the past (the effet de réel turns into an effet de mémoire); and, finally, the representation of everyday ways of speaking (sociolects, slang, and so on) (Erll 159).

The fluctuations within the act of remembering, the simultaneity and immediacy of the past mixed with the present and "the linguistic specificity" are imparted through the experiential mode (ibid.). This mode also represents the narrator's unreliability that results from partial remembering while retelling the lived or shared past and the generational memories. Rushdie, especially in *Midnight's Children* and *in Two Years Eight Months Twenty Eight Nights* makes use of the experiential mode to emphasize the importance of personal accounts of memory in comprehending the individual's place within a constantly changing multicultural world, whose history is distorted through traumatic events such as colonialism, religious zeal, and war. The monumental mode, on the other hand, presents the past "as mythical" while the historicizing mode conveys "literary events and persons as if they were objects of scholarly historiography" (Erll 158). In the antagonistic mode, on the other hand, the act of remembering either provides alternative versions of the past to "represent [marginalized] identity-groups and their versions of the past" as in the case of postcolonial writings and rewritings or just the opposite by entailing "negative stereotyping" and "biased perspectives" that promote the dominant or hegemonic systems of knowledge or validate the "memories of a certain group" while rejecting alternative and conflicting versions and memory cultures (Erll 159). Finally, the prominent reflexive modes aim to highlight the "processes and problems of remembering, for instance, by explicit narratorial comments on the workings of memory, metaphors of memory, the juxtaposition of different versions of the past (narrated or focalized), and also by highly experimental narrative forms" (Erll 159). Erll claims that that by coming up with "flexible categories of a context-sensitive" narrative which "take into consideration the historically and culturally variable contents, forms, media, practices, and ideologies of cultural memory, and orients its

narratological analysis accordingly" it is possible to "enrich the text- centred analysis" by evaluating the cultural and historical significance of memory processes and their reflections in literature.

These modes suggest that literary texts can incorporate different representations and meanings, but they can also produce and carry newer meanings through memory. In the novels I will be looking at, two versions of the antagonistic mode prevail. These modes serve to incorporate the memories and experiences of minority groups and form alternative memories and knowledge systems in the narratives. Also, the "prominent reflexive mode" is often found in historiographic metafiction and postcolonial writings such as Rushdie's. In both novels that are the subject of this study, the narrator draw attention to their unreliability, forgetfulness, and partial remembering that shape the narrative and its progression.

The unity of these studies is critical for understanding, first, the connection between memory and literature and the different representations of memory practices within them and, second, to detangle the socio-political, cultural and historical significance of memory within postcolonial and postmodern narratives such as Rushdie's *Midnight's Children and Two Years Eight Months and Twenty Eight Nights*. For Rushdie, too, memory accounts for the revival of alternative truths and voices that might have been lost without it.

# CHAPTER 3

## MEMORY AND FORGETTING IN SALMAN RUSHDIE'S *MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN*

Salman Rushdie's most acclaimed novel *Midnight's Children*, which was written in 1981 and was the winner of the special Booker prize of 1993, continues to attract critical attention due to its celebration of simultaneity, multiplicity, and non-absolutism, which is represented through Rushdie's well-known phantasmagorical storytelling. The narrative progression within the novel is torn between two versions of the history of India spanning from 1947 to the 1960s, one version being Saleem's personal accounts and the other being Rushdie's historical additions to the official version of events. The disintegration and disconnection between what is remembered by the individual and what really happens are elaborated through the representation of memory and all kinds of memory processes including forgetting. According to Ricoeur and Erll the act of remembering is the subjective selection and reordering of lived experience, it cannot be flawless, and forgetting or misremembering is an inevitable condition of memory. As it has been mentioned in the previous chapter, this flaw in the formation of memories carries immense productivity as the continual re-reading of the past and its interpretative relationship with the present provides an opportunity to reinterpret and reposition life, history, and identity outside the given worldviews and forms. The imaginative quality of memory acts plays a significant role in Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*. Rushdie presents the shortcomings of memory as a productive method for the re-evaluation of culture, history and identity. Thus, Rushdie's exploration of memory, its shortcomings together with forgetting in *Midnight's Children* challenges the official accounts of history and essentialist notions of identity and nation by embracing the cultural diversity of the multicultural India represented through memory. Memory in the novel enables the construction of diverse realities that challenge the monologic understanding of reality. Rushdie's stylistic fragmentation works as a recitation for the absence of any ultimate truths and reference

points where the multiplicity of imagined worlds, imagined realities becomes a tool for liberation "from the crude 'facts' of history" (Droogan 213).

Memory is the representative symbol for the body of historical, cultural, and social information and accumulation of knowledge and a legitimate "form of history" and can reflect what has been neglected or excluded (Nicol 126). Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* engages critically with memory by integrating multiple versions of what has been forgotten, misremembered, repressed, or unnoticed to reconstruct the seemingly absent information. In the novel the reader follows Saleem Sinai's memories that belong not only to him but also to his ancestors and his Indian heritage. Saleem, as the "juggler of facts" attempts to capture and "contain everything" that has happened before him and that is happening to and around him to create an alternative version of India that is different from the official records. He attempts to represent the versatility of the Indian histories and voices by embracing the subverted retelling of political, social, and personal occurrings in India which are in direct contrast with the monologic authority of political power controlling history and historical narratives. Saleem, who is born at the exact moment when India gains independence from British rule, possesses magical powers along with other children born at midnight. These children with special powers who signify cultural and historical pluralism are imprisoned and "sterilized" by an oppressive government that is represented by the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi who favours an indivisible and homogenous version of India as opposed to the pluralistic one offered by the midnight children. Thus, Saleem's efforts to recollect each and every event of India through his own memories reflects the struggle to protect these alternative versions of truth against a totalizing version. Rushdie makes sure the reader notices the mistakes and distortions within the narrative while also showing these signals of unreliability disclose the diverse possibilities and realities of India and Indian identity. These individual perspectives sustained through memory in the "chutnified" narrative bring together the "shared interpretations of the past, but also incompatible memories of the shared collective past" that "mark the undeniable plurality of memory creation and the characteristic stratification of memory cultures" while also challenging the "idea that there is a prevailing, unifying, and binding memory" (Neumann 339).

In *Midnight's Children*[1] Rushdie formulates a hybrid narrative space in which cultural and individual history are depicted as the weaving together of seemingly disparate memories that point to the existence of excluded, untold and unheard instances that are as equally valuable and viable as a part of official national history and culture. The lengthy narrative of disparate memories Saleem brings together displays what Ricoeur calls an "exercise of memory" (Kearney 9). The exercise of memory creates an opportunity to tell an alternative history with more variables that can become more relatable by minority groups who share a similar past whose foundational incidents are not officially acknowledged. Saleem's narrativization through the act of remembering is an exercise of memory which facilitates the meaningful interpretation of the connection between the past and present India experienced differently by each character in the novel. However, each act of memory inevitably contains mistakes since the perception of lived experience is always bound to be incomplete and partial. These gaps in memory are constantly highlighted by the unreliable autodiegetic narrator Saleem who misremembers dates and historical facts. Saleem becomes obsessed with these gaps and errors in his memory and constantly reminds the reader of his fragmentary perception and understanding of things:

> Does one error invalidate the entire fabric? Am I so far gone, in my desperate need for meaning, that I'm prepared to distort everything- to rewrite the whole history of my times purely in order to place myself in a central role? Today, in my confusion I can't judge. I'll have to leave it to others. For me, there can be no going back; I must finish what I've started, even if, inevitably, what I finish turns out not to be what I began… (*Midnight* 230).

The progression of the narrative Saleem weaves out of his memories depends on the selection and modification of the past events into a newer representational form that diverts from chronology and even the accuracy of the actual event. This new product of memory represents the "individual vision of time and history as well as space and place" that combines antagonistic modes of historical and cultural knowledge (Butt 49-50). Memory, as Ricoeur and Erll both stress, cannot produce a flawless account of the previous events and is, therefore, an imaginative and productive ability. In fact, its vulnerability shows that history- which is also a product of memory- is not the perfect and accurate representation of truth but an interpretation of the past events. The

[1] In this chapter I have used the abbreviation of "Midnight" for Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*.

meaning Saleem desperately seeks in his narrative comes from his interaction with his memories which bring together conflicting versions of the past to celebrate the untold histories of the Indian nation that he is a part of. The importance does not lie in telling what has happened but rather in the significance the individual attributes to the events. Saleem insists on the importance of continuing his act of remembering and telling regardless of these errors and the visibly transformed outcome because it holds tremendous "value in the creation of a more inclusive historical product" (Dhar 100). This value also rests in the ability to question the historical knowledge available to the individual and to trust memory for the expression and uncovering of the alternative imaginings and possibilities of the past.

Ricoeur and Erll suggest that the errors in memory provide equally valuable and viable insight into historical facts as they offer diversity of interpretation and recreation of the past. This is mirrored in Saleem's effort to remember and record everything through a process he calls the "chutnification" of history which contains the "conflicting descriptions of events" and rejects the "claims to an omniscient and unitary vision" in "describ[ing] the history of India" (Su 558). This symbolic chutnification process is described to be an immortalization of memories by giving them a "shape and form" through the "change [in] the flavour in degree, but not in kind" with inevitable distortions so that "the world may taste the pickles of history" that "possess the authentic taste of truth" (*Midnight* 642-44). We can think of this pickling process as a symbolic form of remembering since the pickled product- time and memory- emerges out of a selection process combined with errors and distortions and instances of forgetting. This act of preservation through the complex remembering process suggests that "we remake reality every time we think and experience it" in the same way. "Pickling mixes and makes anew" (Giles 183). The body of memory which is collected and organized with all its variables by Saleem is a new presence which is different from its initial components just like the chutney that is transformed into something after the pickling process despite having the same ingredients. The partially liquid and partially solid form of the chutney can be taken as a symbol for Rushdie's celebration of heterogeneity in terms of the histories of different cultures and groups of people. Chutnification is a way of preserving the individual memories and collective memories of the Indian nation and also of reclaiming a version of "India as a space of constant cultural and political transformations, in particular India's struggle with its

myriad cultures, communities, religions, languages, and classes" and it "is, indeed, a process of preserving these transformations, and, ironically, modifying these "transformations" in the process of preserving them" (Butt 39). The transformative quality of chutney mirrors the transformative and imaginative quality of memory that brings forth the existence of different and new realities and possibilities that do not appear in history. Saleem also mentions that the "pickle-fumes heavily oppressive in the heat, stimulate the juices of memory, accentuating similarities and differences between now and then" (*Midnight* 230). The changing taste and the smell in the pickling process symbolizes the transformation of the past experience into a new form in the act of remembering and signals the possible emergence of forgotten events of significance through the intermingling of past and present within the narrative. It is through this association that Saleem wishes to produce a compact and complete whole out of the fragments of individual and national memories and claims for an "all-knowing memory, which encompasses most of the lives of mother and grandfather grandmother and everyone else" (*Midnight* 116). He wants to put "everything in [his] head, down to the last detail" (17) by "tell[ing] in the proper order" (538) but ends up admitting that "already, already there are fadings, and gaps; it will be necessary to improvise on occasion" (*Midnight* 536). While the act of remembering is the only means for Saleem to make sense of his past and present experience, it is precisely his inability to arrive at the intended narrative order and form that creates "a unique narrative that is meant to supersede a dominant, hegemonic conception of history" (Butt 41). This, however, does not mean that Rushdie brushes off history or trust in historical narratives in the light of personal memories. On the contrary, what he seems to suggest is the importance of being critical of what is presented as history by recognizing the value of memory and remembering with all its possible fallibilities in speaking for those realities that are silent in historical records.

Ricoeur and Erll argue that fragments of memory can produce meaningful information in the evaluation of individual experience. Since memory is not an infinite source it is vital that remembering occurs through episodes or fragments for the comprehension of lived experience. In *Midnight*, Saleem's desire to produce an all-encompassing narrative that immortalizes the Indian nation via his memories is juxtaposed with his continuous failure at remembering and recording everything. This juxtaposition is symbolized by the "perforated sheet" that becomes an integral part in Saleem's and

his ancestors' lives. The perforated sheet is first mentioned in the novel when Aadam Aziz visits his future wife, Nassem Ghani, to inspect her ailments. Since Naseem lives in a purdah and is forbidden to be seen by other males, her father only allows Aadam to see her through a hole in the middle of a sheet. Aadam Aziz is only allowed to see sick parts of Naseem's body through the hole in the sheet without ever getting to see her entire body or face, which creates "a badly- fitting collage of" Naseem's picture in his mind (*Midnight* 26). Aadam's partial visioning of Naseem underneath the perforated sheet is symbolic. Aadam can only form an idea of Naseem from the bits and pieces presented to him which may never correspond to the reality. Aadam can only produce fragmentary knowledge from the partial information presented to him and yet it is exactly this fragmented image of Naseem that he falls in love with. Faced with the impossibility of producing wholesome image, Aadam and then later Saleem turns to building out of fragments even if that might be misleading. In doing so Aadam Aziz attempts "to reconnect himself in time and space", to reconnect his childhood self and childhood India with the current self and space he occupies (White 22). However, he only possesses fragments of those memories. He sees himself and Nassem only through that fragmentary knowledge which leaves them "stranded in a black hole of cultural and national space" (ibid.). He, like Saleem, wishes to reconcile the memories of old India with the one he knows by attempting to rewrite Naseem into the culture and history he is familiar with, piece by piece. Saleem's dependence on his memories that are distorted, which might also form another distorted or erroneous narrative work, follows this symbolic pattern of trusting bits and pieces in the absence of wholes taken up by his grandfather Aadam Aziz. Much earlier in his narrative Saleem says:

> Consumed multitudes are jostling and shoving inside me; and guided only by the memory of a large white bedsheet with a roughly circular hole some seven inches in diameter cut into the centre, clutching at the dream of that holey, mutilated square of linen, which is my talisman, my open-sesame, I must commence the business of remaking my life from the point at which it really began (*Midnight* 4)

Saleem's willing adoption of the perforated sheet as a personal heirloom and a talisman suggests that since nothing exists outside of these fragments of memory, it is best to welcome and celebrate it to give meaning to the lived experience that defines Saleem's notion of India and the Indian identity. Much like Aadam and Naseem, Salem is

"condemned [Saleem] to see [his] own life- its meanings, its structures- in fragments" (*Midnight* 143). The perforated sheet possesses a symbolic significance since it reflects the perception of reality only through small perspectives and limited understanding. The initial comprehension, being only fragmentary, is then encoded either as a partial, "erroneous" or fragmented memory. However, if each fragment represents a specific memory, we can assume that Rushdie brings together multiple versions of reality to contend the potential for heterogeneity within the Indian culture and heritage which survives through memory fragments. The symbolic hole in the middle of the sheet is mirrored by the intentional distortions and omissions in the heart of Saleem's narrative. These gaps and omissions within the narrative provide productive potential for undermining the homogeneity of official history that might omit and silence the voice of minority groups. In that sense, fragmentary memories build up a diverse and polyvocal narrative where there is more than one version of the truth in terms of history. The antilinear narrative that depends on errors of memory can reappropriate homogeneity into diversity. Saleem admits that "making oneself grotesque" is necessary in dealing with "the teeming of multitudes" (*Midnigh*t 146). For Saleem's narrative to contain multitudes it must become fragmented because both the present and the past can only be observed or seen through parts similar to the one in the sheet. His narrative that depends on this fragmentary memory, despite his need to convince the prospective reader/listener of the fullness and wholeness of the said narrative, can never become as complete and encompassing as he wishes. What Saleem does not immediately realize is that his memory errors and fragmentary remembering are what allow for the elasticity of the narrative he is weaving. Within that narrative it becomes possible for Saleem to have different mother/father figures such as Ahmed and Amina or Methwold and Vanita. While Ahmed and Amina Sinai are the representatives of the middle-class Indian culture, Methwold, a British settler/landowner, who has an affair with Vanita, wife of the street entertainer Wee Willie Winkie, represents India's connection with the colonialist Empire. Saleem, does not belong to either of these categories and willingly chooses to be multicultural by remembering fragments from the past of his possible parents. In doing so, he finally admits "that his perception and understanding of things could be no more than fragmentary" (Dhar 100). However, as Ricouer and Erll emphasizes, this act of filling in the gaps depends on a reshaping, rereading, and reconstructing of the past and his memories instead of the act of

factualizing, which creates a more open and fluid relationship with the past as well as with the written product.

In *Midnight's Children* Salman Rushdie forms an innovative counter-memory that questions and challenges the socially established dominant culture and historical production through Saleem Sinai's multivocal autobiographical narrative. As Erll suggests, literary texts provide freedom to bring together contradictory versions of memory and thus, produce a polyphonic structure. Within this structure, the representation of what is unnoticed or excluded becomes possible. In *Midnight's Children* Saleem, draws attention to the multivocal structure of the narrative he produces. He claims to be a "swallower of lives" with "multitudes jostling and shoving" inside him, which enables him to share the memories of his ancestors and to become "handcuffed to [the] history" of the Indian nation (*Midnight* 3-4). The integration of culturally disparate memory versions becomes possible through this multivocal narrator who gives voice to the untold stories of different groups of people from different economic and cultural backgrounds and brings together items that are marginalized. This pluralism mirrored in Saleem's attempts to turn his memories into a wholesome narrative is juxtaposed with the figure of the Widow, Indira Gandhi, who represents the monolithic notion of "India is Indira and Indira is India" (*Midnight* 587). Equating the nation with "Indira" problematizes the singularizing tendencies of nationalist discourses used by politicians who focus on essentialist and wholistic ideas of a nation that reduces difference into sameness. The transformation of Indira Gandhi into the villain figure of the Widow serves to problematize the political bigotry of oneness as opposed to pluralism, mistrust in individual memory as a legitimate historical source and hence the need to erase and sterilize what is inhomogeneous to replace it with a centralized power that has no tolerance for alternative narratives. Saleem's depiction of Indira Gandhi's hair which has a "centre parting that is "white on one side and black on the other" repeatedly shows Indira Gandhi's efforts to "impose a very particular and homogeneous religious nationalism upon one of the largest and most diverse collectives in the world" (Su 552). The white part of her hair represents the "public, visible, documented, a matter for historians" while the black part is" secret macabre untold" which is what Saleem presents as an alternative to Gandhi's version of truth and reality (Rushdie qtd. Dhar 104). The centre- parting of Gandhi's hair as black and white represents Gandhi's wish to compartmentalize

history and historical information into reductionist divisions by suppressing the memories of the minorities by establishing her religious and political dogma through political power and privilege. This reductionism is mirrored in the brutality of the Emergency state which also "had a white part- public, visible, documented, a matter for historians- and a black part which, being secret macabre untold, must be a matter for us" (*Midnight* 588). The predominant power structure wishes to undo the memory practices of the suppressed group by rejecting their narrative of suffering. The antagonistic mode, Erll defines in her studies, here displays, on the one hand, the negative stereotyping of the minority groups by Indira Gandhi, and on the other, the subversion of the negative stereotyping by the construction of alternative narratives via remembering. The lived experience of violence and trauma can be confronted and mourned by the memory practices of the suppressed groups to subvert the "visible, documented" narratives of the government. While Saleem's memories provide a detailed perspective of India with its complex multiplicity and hybridity, Indira Gandhi's wishes to exchange that hybridity with singularity and homogeneity suggest the dangerous naturalizing tendencies of political power over both significant narratives of memory and the pluralism of beliefs and identities. It is only through Saleem's memories, however partial, traumatized, and distorted, that the collective experience of oppression and injustice of the Indian nation under Indira's Gandhi's governance is revived and observed. The collective trauma of the Emergency State and the imprisonment of the midnight children are deemed invisible and therefore unreal by the Indian government.

Erll suggests that the "coding of knowledge about the past occurs […] within the framework of a symbolic form, or a symbol system" that produces different modes of remembering identical past events" (Erll 104). Especially, collective traumas and sufferings can be coded into different symbol systems for mnemonic representation and each form of remembering might carry valuable information. In *Midnight* the fragments of memory that carry the evidence of trauma possess productive power for the challenging of the narratives of political power figures. Saleem's disintegrating body and memory become the only visible and viable evidence to produce a counter narrative, namely a symbol system for memory. The practice of memory allows for

the comparison between what Saleem remembers about the Emergency State[2] and what Gandhi allowed for documentation. This comparison brings up alternative versions of history recorded by memory that go against the historical records:

> Such things happen. Statistics may set my arrest in context; although there is considerable disagreement about the number of 'political' prisoners taken during the Emergency, either thirty thousand or quarter of a million persons certainly lost their freedom. The Widow said: 'It is only a small percentage of the population of India.' All sorts of things happen during an Emergency … Test- and hysterectomized, the children of midnight were denied the possibility of reproducing themselves … but that was only a side effect, because they were truly extraordinary doctors, and they drained us of more than that: hope, too, was excised (*Midnight* 606-13).

The oppression of the central political power is represented by Gandhi's constant attempts to exchange multiculturalism with a totalizing interpretation of reality. Gandhi's oppressiveness during the State of Emergency results not only in physical damage but also in serious mental disillusionment about the future possibility of a secular India. As a political leader, Indira assumes that peace and order can only be achieved by reducing plurality into purity through eliminating difference and forcing both religious and cultural intolerance as the natural order. Indira Gandhi's drastic downsizing of the number of political prisoners and her brushing off the fact that she has deprived those people from their freedom shows that Gandhi's narrative of nation and politics attempts to erase the oppositions or marginalized voices. Indira Gandhi or the Widow's worldview suggests that "Indians are only capable of worshipping one God" and they must "worship our Lady like a god" (*Midnight* 611). Gandhi overlooks the multicultural environment of the India she wishes to control and aims to eradicate this multiculturalism and pluralism by trying to sterilize the midnight children from their magical powers. These magical powers, which are all unique to their hosts, represent the unity of a tolerant group that consists of people from different economic, religious and cultural backgrounds and a significant part of Indian cultural and historical temporality that would have been othered and decentralized from historical narratives if it were not for Saleem's memories. While Indira Gandhi's notion of both religious and historical purity is dangerously reductionist, Rushdie, in providing

[2] Rushdie refers to the Emergency State in India between 1975-1977 declared by the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi that cancelled the elections and suspended civil liberties.

alternative historical narratives of the silenced groups or events through the use of memory within the novel, deconstructs the univocality of history and the historical writing as a grand narrative. As Erll notes, remembering as a creative act builds the connection between "past, present and future in a meaningful way" and provide "temporal orientation" that allows for the interpretation of "historical occurences […] entwined with and accompanied by stories" and "their changing meanings" (Erll 147). In that regard, Saleem's access to this lived experience of the Emergency State is highly important since that specific act of remembering enables Saleem to form a coherent connection between past and present, which allows for the elaboration of the temporal change within India and to comment on this change by forming a narrative out of memory.

As mentioned before, Ricoeur and Erll claim that remembering involves the selection and recollection of "isolated data of our past experience" in order to "gain insight into the dynamics of cultural memory" (Erll 146). The errors and gaps that might occur during the remembering process facilitate "interpretive practices" that take into account differences inherent in every culture and society. In *Midnight* this is exemplified by Saleem's constant extradiegetic comments on his errors and slippages of memory in his narrative. His comments show that he is acknowledging the fallibility of memory to produce a memory narrative of his nation that includes cultural, religious, and political differences. In fact, it could be argued that misremembering combined with episodic remembering are the drives that urge Saleem to produce an alternative narrative of the nation. Especially, in terms of episodic remembering, the imaginative power of memory enables the reproduction of past knowledge that is marginalized or silenced. Thus, Saleem despite

> tearing myself apart, can't even agree with myself, talking arguing like a wild fellow, cracking up, memory going, yes, memory plunging into chasms and being swallowed by the dark, only fragments remain, none of it makes sense any more! […] Facts, as remembered. To the best of one's ability (*Midnight* 589).

When the memory practices of the predominant government serve their own ideology by suppressing the memories of violence and promoting the public practices of memory and commemoration, the recording and sharing of the memories of minority groups such as the midnight children disclose the productive power of all forms of

remembering since memory practices denote, as Ricoeur suggests, truthfulness in alluding to past experience. Rushdie's novel suggests that the act of remembering can be productive for accessing historical data that would be forgotten otherwise. However, Rushdie also seems to show that acknowledging the fallibility of memory means producing narratives that are careful about all kinds of discourses and cultural practices formed out of memory culture. With the aid of memories, Saleem can situate himself along with the other silenced groups within the cultural context and social framework of norms and regulations. Erll claims that the same past events can vary in meaning and quality since they can be evaluated and remembered with great difference. Because there are different modes of remembering, the past is a "continually […] re-constructed and re-presented" product, and the opposition between history and memory becomes inadequate for the representation of heterogeneity within cultural and historical data (Erll 7). Thus, what Saleem does eventually produces "a fundamentally different mode of historical discourse" that fulfils the historical, cultural, and ethical responsibility of recognizing the plurality of voices and perspectives within a certain temporality (Butt 41). This plurality of voices and perspectives are presented through an anti-linear narrative that problematizes the historical object of "creating a coherent view of the past [as] disinterested obligation" (Dhar 93). In the novel Rushdie uses the language of fairy tales in presenting the Pakistan election fraud:

> The next morning, the two badmashes of the Combined Opposition Party awoke to find themselves back in their own beds; but when they had dressed, they opened the door of their chamber to find two of the biggest soldiers in Pakistan outside it, standing beautifully with crossed rifles, barring the exit. The badmashes shouted and wheedled, but the soldiers stayed in position until polls were closed; then they quietly disappeared … They ranted on -death of democracy, autocracy-tyranny- until he smiled gently, gently and said, 'My friends, yesterday my daughter was betrothed to Zafar Zulfikar; soon, I hope, my other girl will wed our President's own dear son. Think, then what dishonor for me, what scandal on my name, if even one vote were cast in Kif against my future relative… And we all lived happily… at any rate, even without the traditional last-sentence fiction of fairytales, my story does indeed end in fantasy; because when Basic Democrats had done their duty, the newspapers- Jang, Dawn, Pakistan Times- announced a crushing victory for the President's Muslim League over the Mader-i-Millat's Combined Opposition Party; thus proving to me that I have been only the humblest of jugglers-with-facts; and that in a country where the truth is what is

> instructed to be, reality quite literally ceases to exist, so that everything becomes possible except what we are told is the case (*Midnight* 452-3).

Rushdie's specific allusion to the well-known folk tale collection *One Thousand and One Nights*, as in the quote and throughout the novel by Saleem's self-association with the Scheherazade (teller of tales in the folk tale collection) can be attributed to the flexible form of the fairy tale that does not depend on chronology and historical or factual accuracy. As opposed to the historical writings Rushdie challenges, fairy tales, because of their fictional quality, do not follow a strict timeline and depart from the ordinary by the incorporation of magical and extraordinary beings within the narrative space. Especially *One Thousand and One Nights*, to which Rushdie alludes in Midnight and later on in *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty Eight Nights*, follows an anti-linear and ahistorical narrative structure without making any truth claims. Instead, the folk tale collection is the product of many tongues and many different perspectives since it is not the work of one author but bringing together of many different stories told in an expanded time span and location. The well-known opening phrase "Once upon a time" signal the possible mixing of fact and fiction to foreshadow the presence of endless possibilities, perspectives and voices embedded within the narrative. *One Thousand and One Nights* is not concerned with objectivity or to be more exact, with producing a fully completed, finalized and coherent narrative. Thus, Rushdie's choice of fairy tale in representing the memories of the election is significant. Rushdie adopts the fluid form of the folk tale collection and reshapes the structure of the novels analyzed in this thesis in order to produce a heterogenous narrative space that can both challenge and hold together conflicting ideas and values. Rushdie subverts the objectivity and authority assigned to official documentation by re-writing it, with the help of memories. The monologic voice of the authority is subverted by a more cultural and traditional voice that incorporates what is remembered by various other culture groups that have no political power and centrality as the ones who officialize historical documents as facts. Memories narrated in a fairy-tale format integrate the opposing views and conflicting voices without the privileging of voices and realities that comprise the diversity cultures. Within this inclusive and polyvocal narrative events are not forced down as facts and truths but rather the attention of the reader is directed at how the bigger portion of history and the entire fabric of truth are shaped, constructed, and distorted by those who possess political

power. The mixing of fact and fantasy in the quoted passage through the act of remembering indicates that the generally acknowledged historical truth actually incorporates what the political power figures, historians or historical institutions deem visible and subordinate certain voices and cultural practices. Rushdie shows that without the memories of different culture groups, the state gains authority and power to hide unethical and unjust practices of strategic marriages, silencing the oppositions and manipulation of the people's will to eradicate any possible opposition, and consequently eradicating a culture's past traumas and sufferings. The fact that reality is controlled and fabricated by central authorities indicates the inevitable distortions and exclusions embedded in official history. The memories of minorities give insight into what is truly remembered as a culture's history and should be recognized as cultural records (Neumann 339). Thus, Saleem's reliance on his memories in the formation of a counter-history of India with all its myriad voices, perspectives and cultures undermines the monologic tendencies of official record keeping and the exclusivity of history- writing.

Another example for this is the retelling of the war between Bangladesh and Pakistan through what Saleem remembers when he joins the army. Saleem witnesses "many things which were not true, which were not possible, because our boys would not could not have behaved so badly […] we saw the intelligentsia of the city being massacred by the hundred […] there were slit throats being buried in unmarked graves […] lady doctors were being bayoneted before they were raped, and raped again before they were shot" (*Midnigh*t 524). Memories about the war present the silenced accounts of unrecorded violence performed by the Pakistani soldiers. The absence of these violent acts within historical narratives of the war suggests that "the authority of all of our representations of the past may be somewhat questionable" and that no history or historical record is innocent (Booker 983). The violence of the jihad, which is mostly excluded from the official historical records, is re-embedded into the narrative with the aid of memories. As Ricoeur suggests, the violence behind founding events, such as the religious war carried out with the aim of preserving religious and national purity between India and Pakistan, legitimize violence through silencing or undermining its force upon the communal and individual within the historical representations by deeming it as the natural condition of wars. The act of remembering has the potential to show that violence is legitimized, and the sufferings of war and trauma are being

undermined for both sides in the long run. The explicit dependence on the power of memory serves to undermine the political and ideological power that tends to diminish the personal and national suffering. What Rushdie represents through Saleem and the Pakistani soldiers' both witnessing the climax of violence and fight in the city and the shared visions of trauma and suffering of war in the Sundarbans is a version of shared memory where the communication of unaccounted events of violence and pain are "[integrated] and [calibrated] [by the fusing] of different perspectives of those who remember" (Erll 60). The reality Saleem communicates in the form of shared memory is quite different from the reality that is controlled and fabricated by those who are in power. Memory work especially in this passage voices the silenced accounts of violence and the political strife for power to shed light on the inevitable distortions and exclusions that are embedded in official history. Saleem's narration of his memories directs the attention of the reader to how the bigger portion of history and the entire fabric of truth are shaped, constructed, and distorted by those who possess political power. Through the embodiment of personal accounts in the form of remembering it becomes possible to talk about the physical and ideological damage of violence upon the multicultural Indian nation and the individual. Misremembering and forgetting are productive elements for providing alternate truths to "deconstruct the monopoly of chronological history or even a notion of singular history" (Butt 41).

A subject's understanding of the self is constructed by their memory, which determines the subject's interaction with their social, political and historical temporality. Throughout Salman Rushdie's *Midnight*, it is possible to observe the clashes of multiple identities within one nation and the effort to embrace this multiplicity within one individual. Within the novel, the representation and comprehension of the national and individual identity are determined by the uncovering of "episodic memories" that belong not only to Saleem's confusion of the genealogical past but also to the whole Indian nation. These "episodes" of memory are pieced together by Saleem so that he can situate himself within the multicultural and tumultuous social and political context of India and assume responsibility to display and negotiate untold remnants and stories of others. Therefore, the pluralism of identities reflected by the episodic remembering of Saleem becomes the manifestation of both the "imagination of an India that can never be bound by notions of culture as a single sphere" and the dismissal of a "monolithic sense of Indian-ness" that promotes a single and unified definition of the

self (Butt 45). Saleem's identity is contingent on his episodic memories, which he attempts to collect and "pickle". Thus, his identity becomes open to reconstruction and reinterpretation, while being "at once plural and partial" (ibid). Saleem's self-definition throughout the narrative is bound with his self-invented motto of "To understand just one life, you have to swallow the world" (*Midnight* 145), manifesting his reliance on the fragments of memory that belong to diverse identities, nationalities, and classes such as the British father William Methwold and poverty-stricken Indian mother Vanita as well as the Kashmiri family of the Azizs. Both Ricouer and Erll stress that memory makes it possible to reconstitute belonging by recreating a coherent and meaningful representation of the fragments or "episodes of memory". In *Midnight*, Saleem's porous identity is shaped through the amalgamation of fragments of memory that belong to the Aziz/Sinai family. Saleem confesses later in the narrative that Mary Pereira's swaps him with Shiva who is the true owner of the title of "midnight's child", Nehru's letters and Ramram Seth's prophecy. With this confession we learn that Saleem has "eyes as blue as Kashmiri sky" just like the blue eyes as that of Methwold's and "a nose as dramatic as a Kashmiri grandfather's-which was also the nose of a grandmother from France" (*Midnight* 157). The physical connection with both his birth parents and adoptive parents indicate that Saleem determines and rebuilds his lineage through "connecting [his] memories to a complex cultural past" that of Azizs, Sinais, and the midnight children (Wexler 148). The understanding of personal and national identity is based on the interwoven memory patterns. The mixing of these different and often unaccounted versions of the past enables Saleem to travel in between different temporal zones, connecting the past and the present, and to construct a multicultural and liminal identity that is open to refashioning. As both Ricoeur and Erll state, remembering, and especially episodic remembering, requires an active search and selection process through which the individual finds the opportunity to comprehend and reconcile different variations of the past that constitutes the self. In short, in the process of episodic remembering the individual has the potential to choose between various memory fragments or traces, which prevents the identity from becoming fixed and unchangeable.

In *Midnight*, Rushdie employs a narrator who actively decides to be a part of the Aziz/Sinai family while acknowledging his colonial roots. The selection of memories that predate Saleem's birth and belong not to his birth parents but to his adoptive

parents shows that a new identity is built upon multiplicity. As Damian Grant and Eva Roa White argue, Saleem achieves rebirth through these memories where he "undergo[es] a more complex process of renewal, involving not only rebirth, but reconception" by adopting different races and nationalities (White 24). Droogan also states that

> In a post-traditional world with no recourse to any ultimate or essential notions or values, people can only ever be what it is their memories tell them they are, an accumulation of their past experience. Understanding and knowledge can only be arrived at through context, to know a thing in itself, all the history and collective imaginings that have gone into creating it must themselves be understood. Hence, exactly half the chronological time covered in *Midnight's Children* (thirty-one out of sixty-two years) exists before Saleem's birth and is told as family memory (Droogan 208).

Self- knowledge and recognition cannot be separated from the accumulation of memories. Saleem can make sense of who he is only when he is recounting his memories of different people that he sees himself tied with. As he claims to inherit these memories, he inherits his hybrid identity. This is symbolized through Saleem's inheritance of the dramatic "cyranose" of Aadam Aziz which is "comparable only to the trunk of the elephant headed god Ganesh", without which "who would ever have believed [Saleem] to be truly my mother's son, my grandfather's grandson" (*Midnight* 9). The same nose that provides Saleem with the necessary sensitivity to create great pickles- also a symbol directly associated with the process of remembering- is presented to be hereditary evidence for his origins. The nose is inherited from Indian Vanita and British William Methwold (the birth parents) but also from Aadam Aziz who is not his real grandparent. The nose is the physical representation of hybridity as it is said to be inherited from not just the mixture of two different cultures but of many: a grandmother from France, father from England and mother from India with the Aziz/Sinai upbringing. The fact that Saleem actively decides from which family he "inherits" his nose "demonstrates that his origins are chosen" instead of naturally or biologically given (Kane 96). Despite the absence of any true genetical link between the noses of Aadam and Saleem, "their noses are linked" in their connection to memories and "receptivity" to history that "foreshadows Saleem's telepathic sinuses" (Kortenaar, "Allegory of History" 53). The nose offers a connection between memory, history, and identity through the acknowledgment of historical forces and the "world

of progress made by human beings" by both grandfather and grandson (ibid.). According to Ricoeur and Erll, the re-definition of identity cannot take place without episodic remembering which produces meaningful information out of dispersed parts. In the novel, Saleem must rely upon these dispersed memories in order to accept and understand the pluralism within himself. To fill "in the gaps in [his] knowledge" (*Midnight* 17) and to "retrieve the bits and pieces of himself" (17), Saleem must integrate "the shards of memory" (White 21). Rushdie suggests that identity is the site of ongoing transformation and a collection of possibilities. Memory, even if it is fragmented, becomes the source of information and meaning. Saleem's nicknames such as "Snotnose, Stainface, Baldy, Sniffer, Buddha and even Piece-of-the-Moon" reflect the different names and identities Saleem incorporates in the absence of any historical narrative that can produce an equally valid and inclusive identity (*Midnight* 423). The recollection of these names that are the representative of Saleem's past, heritage, and his connection to his family and India mirrors the dynamism of the Indian nation which splits into different names as Pakistan and Bangladesh, and undergoes constant change and transformation. Saleem's surname, which is a reference to different historical, traditional and cultural markers such as "Ibn Sina, master magician, Sufi adept; and also Sin the moon, the ancient god of Hadhramaut, with his own mode of connection … but Sin is also the letter S, as sinous as a snake; serpents lie coiled within the name" shows the fluidity of Saleem's identity that is connected not only to one but many other cultures, places and histories (*Midnight* 3). The names as both markers of dynamism and history suggest that "people can only ever be what it is their memories tell them they are, an accumulation of their past experience" (Droogan 148).

The preoccupation with names and the years covered as family history long before Saleem even existed also mirror the unstable and liminal positionality of identity. Saleem, to incorporate different identities by tracing down generations of memories, struggles to arrive at a fully unified and stable definition of identity and discovers the opportunity in multiplicity. While the memories of the tales and family stories he collects from Aadam Aziz and the boatman Tai display a contradiction between the "current political situation" in India and Bangladesh and "Saleem's heritage", the memories and traumas of diverse voices find equal expression (Wexler 145). Ricoeur states that the mixing of different memories is important for the preservation of hybrid

cultures and the transformation of the individual within that culture. The coming together of different patterns and fragments of memories through episodic remembering enables Saleem to produce a hybrid identity. Within the novel this is also achieved by Rushdie's deconstruction of binary oppositions through celebrating the mixing of memory fragments in the exploration of the volatility of identity. In *Midnight* the seemingly irreconcilable parts within the individual are brought together by memories. For example, the seemingly antagonistic relationship between Saleem and Shiva is problematized since their fates are closely tied to each other from the moment of their birth. Because of Mary's swapping of babies, both Saleem and Shiva end up living each other's life and taking each other's name. If we remember Saleem's emphasis on naming, and how his many names determine his hybridized identity, we can assume that Shiva is an indispensable part of who Saleem is, because as much as "Saleem" is his name "Shiva" is also another name intended for him. Although Saleem admits "having been pushing Shiva" from the space of his narratives and memories, the moment of Saleem's birth which is "handcuffed" to the history of India is depicted and made meaningful by Ramram Seth's prophecy of "knees and a nose, a nose and knees" which emphasizes the impossibility of Saleem's separation from Shiva as a polar opposite (*Midnight* 568). The synecdoche for both Saleem and Shiva – as nose and knees – suggests that like the parts that belong to a single body and ensure its movement, Saleem and Shiva both act as parts of a multitudinous identity. The dualistic opposition between Saleem and Shiva is further eradicated by Saleem's "fall" and Shiva's rise, through which Shiva manages to "[look] down from commanding heights" whereas Saleem becomes the "slum-dweller" (*Midnight* 569). The pattern of replacement and exchange between Saleem and Shiva shows that the "ability of the self to be transformed into something that was formerly alien to itself interrogates the boundary between self and other, challenging the validity of even that fundamental duality" (Booker 980). In that sense, the self is not purely one thing or another but a collection of possibilities and transformations that is shaped through not only individual but also collective memories within a multicultural society.

The multifarious identities of Saleem are based on equally multifarious episodes of memory. Saleem as the "container of multitudes" and "swallower of lives" collects diverse fragments of memory from all over India to make sense of his liminal identity. This liminal identity is constituted of fragments of memory through which "things -

even people […] [leak] into each other" (*Midnight* 25). The incorporation of memories and histories of diverse cultures and people grant porousness that subverts the stability of identity. With each recollection of memory that comes from different religions such as Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity, with different father and mother figures such as William Methwold and Vanita, Aadam Aziz, Ahmed and Amina Sinai as well as with the connection to the thoughts and memories of other midnight children, Saleem "encapsulates in his equivocal personal heritage the ambiguous identity of India itself", the plurality of which is symbolized in his disintegrating body (Wilson 60). Saleem states:

> I have begun to crack all over like an old jug- that my poor body, singular, unlovely, buffeted by too much history, subjected to drainage above and drained below, mutilated by doors, brained by spittoons, has started coming apart at the seams …. In short, I am literally disintegrating … I spend my time at the great work of preserving. Memory, as well as fruit, is being saved from the corruption of clocks (*Midnight* 43-44).

The willingness to incorporate memories into the celebration of multiplicity and hybridity, however, becomes an unlikely task since heterogeneity cannot be collected in one single identity. The impossibility of containing numerous different narratives, memories, and histories in another heterogenous and yet one singular body and identity is acknowledged through the disintegrating body of Saleem. Saleem, to build an alternative identity and "transcend and heal the psychic wound of the physical alienation from India" attempts to "recover enough of these shards (White 12). Neither his body nor his mind can possibly incorporate the multitudes of memory and reconstruct an identity that properly belongs to one single place and culture. As I have mentioned above, Ricoeur and Erll emphasize the impossibility of remembering everything and stress the importance of relying on fragments to make sense of the constantly changing and evolving identity. In *Midnight*, rebuilding a purely Indian identity by reconstructing "the whole of India from their memories is bound to fail because they cannot possibly contain or even recreate "the multitudes" of India from their small and private collection of memory shards" (ibid.). The cracks, therefore, symbolize the disintegration of this imagined Indian identity that is mirrored in the cracks of Saleem's body. Rushdie, however, celebrates this condition of being fragmented since it defies pre-assigned and essentialist notions of identity and grants the ability to transgress the borders of public/private and inside/outside. Saleem's

disintegrating body which is doomed to "eventually crumble into (approximately) six hundred and thirty million particles of anonymous, and necessarily oblivious dust" suggests that identity can be rewritten through episodes of memory (*Midnight* 43). As Erll notes, representation of memory within literature produces a fictional space where multiple identities can be reconstructed through the symbolic reconstruction of various forms of memory. In *Midnight* Saleem's disintegration into dust in the number of Indian population "allows the voices [the unheard] to escape and be heard" which "also allows the fragments to take on a life of their own" (Rege 167). Identity is an unfinished product that contains a multiplicity of memories, religions, and cultures.

When Saleem loses his memory temporarily after he is hit by a bomb during the war in the Sundarbans, he is permitted the "the double-edged luxury of nostalgia". He finally reconnects with his past "reclaiming everything, all of it, all lost histories" but his own name "refuses to return" to him (*Midnight* 509). Forgetting provides Saleem with the ultimate connection with his cultural and historical past and a moment of unburdening from the traumas of the war and the state of chaos in India, but it also blocks him from connecting with his own memories and the cumulation of the individual perception of himself, which leads to temporary anonymity and othering:

> None of them [Saleem and the soldiers] knew how long this period lasted, because in the Sundarbans time followed unknown laws, but at last the day came when they looked at each other and realized they were becoming transparent, that it was possible to see through their bodies, not clearly as yet, but cloudily, like staring through mango-juice. In their alarm they understood that this was the last and worst of the jungle's tricks, that by giving them their heart's desire it was fooling them into using up their dreams, so that as their dream-life seeped out of them they became as hollow and translucent as glass (*Midnight* 512).

The temporary disconnection from his roots and temporality symbolized in the gradual fading away of Saleem and the other soldiers suggests that it is impossible to escape the past since the "core, a notion of self […] is reliant on memory and experience" (Droogan 148). In the forest, the soldiers are literally being threatened with fading away without their memories since they no longer know who they really are. However, it is only through this state of forgetting that they realize they can never be one simple person but must accept the conflicting thoughts and identities within them. The timeless and borderless space of Sundarbans, where "incomprehensibly labyrinthine

salt-water channels over-towered by the cathedral-arching trees", drains the memories of the soldiers and fills them with terrifying nightmares and disturbing illusions of the crimes, small or big, that they have committed (*Midnight* 505). The mystical jungle becomes the place where the soldiers confront their memories and grasp self-recognition, which depends upon the reconciliation with conflicting memories. After having to acknowledge the inhuman and cruel demands of the monologic ideology they have been defending, Saleem decides to embrace his hybridity and immortalize the memories of a multicultural India through a more inclusive narrative of memory. As Julian Droogan argues, Saleem begins retelling the stories of his parents "because he was reclaiming everything... all lost histories, all the myriad complex processes that go to make a man" (*Midnight* 509) and is reborn "into his own historical, provisional and poorly understood self […] confused once more as to the nature of his identity and inhabiting a universe barren of any sacred centre" (Droogan 207). The reconstruction of identity is linked with reconciling and negotiating with all kinds of memories no matter how disturbing or conflicting they may be. Saleem finally understands that his individuality lies in the accumulation of memories that carry his identity across time, place, and culture. Forgetting, therefore, also grants the ability to overcome trauma and guilt and achieving a state of forgiveness. Saleem's experience within the marginal space of the Sundarbans enables him to make sense of traumatic events and see the meaninglessness embedded in the violence and suffering of war and generally in all history. In fact, as Ricoeur claims, without the loss of the trace, full erasure of memory is not possible. What Saleem seems to have experienced within the timeless and borderless space of the Sundarbans is a temporary loss of memory that enables him to critically engage with his traumatic experience and restore his hybrid identity through the acknowledgement of his cumulating memories. This is also evident in the nickname he attains during his amnesia. During the state of amnesia Saleem refers to himself in the third person as the "Buddha" which reflects the disconnection of Saleem from his memories and consequently his identity:

> But I insist: not I. He. He, the buddha. Who until the snake, would remain not Saleem; who, in spite of running- from, was still separated from his past; although he clutched, in his limpet fist, a certain silver spittoon […] Only the buddha left his ears (one good, one already bad) unstopped; as though he alone were willing to bear the retribution of the jungle, as though he were bowing his head before the inevitability of his guilt (*Midnight* 502-510)

The Buddha, a symbolic and sacred being in Indian tradition, stands for an enlightened person who possesses extensive knowledge and reincarnates as different people within a single body. By assuming the identity of the buddha and temporarily casting aside the self he is familiar with, Saleem comes to terms with the trauma of losing his parents, the violence he witnesses, his "incestuous" love for his sister and every other memory of guilt and trauma that he experiences. The disconnection from history and memory demonstrates that forgetting provides self- forgiveness and peace while bringing together the seemingly conflicting facts and identities. As Ricoeur argues forgetting enables reconciliation with what has been difficult or painful for the indidividual to accept. In that sense, forgetting provides Saleem with the ability to deal with another trauma, that of the Emergency State where the other midnight children along with him suffer drainages and sterilizations. Saleem defines this forgetting as "merciful" and states that

> Nothing can induce me to remember the conversational techniques of that humourless, uniformed pair; there is no chutney or pickle capable of unlocking the doors behind which I have locked those days! No, I have forgotten, I cannot will not say how they made me spill the beans […] And more than talk: under the influence of their unnameable- forgotten- pressures (*Midnight* 605).

Achieving recognition through painful memories requires forgetting since it provides the opportunity to deal with difficult personal experiences. The critical engagement with the traumatic memory is enabled through forgetting as it offers the flexibility of self-expression. The selective dimension in this memory practice also creates a strategy of negotiation expediting the confrontation and coming to terms with the traumatic event. In the end Saleem can build a narrative of memory that encapsulates what is "Too painful" to "recall" since the act of forgetting grants protection from the immediate memory of pain and leads to remembrance where trauma can be expressed (*Midnight* 610). In *Midnight* Saleem first "forget[s] the rest. -No! – No" only to "very well, remember" (*Midnigh*t 610). The temporary withdrawal from the pain of lived experience enables Saleem to construct a meaningful narrative in order to make sense of losing his magical powers, namely, his unique form of self-expression and power of multivocality. Forgetting provides an alternative perspective that exposes "a universe barren of any sacred centre" where only the hybrid and porous identity possesses the potential to confront the nation's traumas and the historicization of that

past from unheard accounts to recognize political silence and absence (Droogan 148). Rushdie seems to celebrate the fragmented and unfixed state of identity that comes out of the mixture of memories that offer "greater the variety of insight" and "more angles by which he can interrogate realities" (Grekowicz 22).

Rushdie in *Midnight* displays that the novel, other than representing processes of memory, can possess and create memory and memory sites through intertextual references to different arts, knowledge systems and genres. As Erll argues, literature can be considered as "an act of memory" since it "inscribes itself in a memory space made up of texts, and it sketches out a memory space into which earlier texts are gradually absorbed and transformed" (Erll 73). The different layers of intertextuality within the novel, while exposing the relation of one single text to its precursors and descendants, also displays that each text can formulate new sites and traditions of memory by transforming its form and meaning through intertextual references. One way this is displayed in *Midnight* is Rushdie's reference to the Bildungsroman genre. The conventional genre, which was popular especially in the 19th century, mainly deals with "the process of a person's intellectual and social maturation […] and in turn, its typical plot structure of development became a powerful and persistent cultural model for the understanding of? an individual's coming-of-age" where the individual forms a unified identity and discovers their place within the society (Erll 148). *Midnight*, on the surface, undertakes a similar endeavour in showing Saleem's intellectual and social development from his childhood to his death. The novel is divided into three "books" which depict different epochs of maturity and recognition in Saleem's life. The novel opens this way:

> I was born in the city of Bombay … once upon a time. No, that won't do, there's no getting away from the date; I was born in Doctor Narlikar's Nursing Home on August 15th, 1947. And the time? The time matters, too. Well then: at the stroke of midnight, as a matter of fact […] I must commence the business of remaking my life from the point at which it really began, some thirty-two years before anything as obvious, as present, as my clock-ridden, crime-stained birth (emphasis in the original, *Midnight* 1-2).

This kind of narration undermines the tradition of chronology in the genre of the Bildungsroman. The opening pages of the book initially suggest that historical accuracy and chronological timeline are key elements in Saleem's self-narrated

autobiography. However, Rushdie suggests that such order and accuracy do not determine the narrative's truth and viability because "in a country where the truth is what is instructed to be, reality quite literally ceases to exist, so that everything becomes possible except what we are told is the case" (*Midnight* 453). In that case, realism and the chronological order that is significant to the traditional Bildungsroman genre are subverted to expose "the fictionality, the constructedness, of the metaphors and narrative conventions implied in national history" (Kortenaar, "Allegory of History" 51). Book One, which promises Saleem's birth, begins with the history of Saleem's parents, preceding his birth by thirty years. Saleem, however, instead of following a specific chronology and history, constantly creates "a new father for [him]self" and cannot provide his idea of an autobiography without including all the variables within history and memory (*Midnight* 403). This reversal of the traditional progression of the Bildungsroman is commented on by Padma: "'To me it's a crazy way of telling your life story,' she cries, 'if you can't even get to where your father met your mother'" (*Midnight* 45). Padma's comment suggests that there is no moment of origin in the traditional sense for Saleem, and instead, what is presented is an "alternate genealogy that represents a rejection of genealogy and of the project of national history" (Kortenaar, "Allegory of History" 51). In the end of the narrative, Saleem cannot form a unified identity but gets "sucked into the annihilating whirlpool of the multitudes" without living or dying in peace and, consequently, without ever fulfilling the promise of true belonging to one single place or identity (*Midnight* 647). The meaning of the genre is subverted by Rushdie to show that identity is exposed to constant change and redefinition within an equally changing and evolving cultural and historical context. Rushdie's subverts the Bildungsroman genre by not providing any sense of finality and closure in terms of individual development and adaptation into the culturally set rules. In fact, he shows that those rules do not even exist in the first place. He shows that at instances where historical and chronological accuracy cannot properly portray the effect of political and historical events on the individual, memory becomes a significant tool to negotiate between the conflicting parts of [self]" and "reconnect the […] India of the mind" to the experienced in the present (White 20). In other words, the subversion of the genre of the Bildungsroman produces a new memory genre that recognizes the "dissatisfaction with national history and a rejection of the Indian nation-state itself as the bastard product of England's violation of the

subcontinent" while acknowledging the multi-layered and fictitious nature of all narratives (Kortenaar, "Allegory of History" 52).

Another element of what Erll calls genre of memory within *Midnight* is the intertextual reference to a painting called "The Boyhood of Raleigh" by Sir John Everett Millais painted in 1870. The painting is mentioned many times within the novel. It is placed in Saleem's childhood room, hangs above his crib and is referred to as the "fisherman's pointing finger" with which Saleem begins to narrate his childhood:

> The fisherman's pointing finger: unforgettable focal point of the picture which hung on a sky-blue wall in Buckingham Villa, directly above the sky-blue crib in which, as Baby Saleem, midnight's child, I spent my earliest days. The young Raleigh-and who else?-sat, framed in teak, at the feet of an old, gnarled, net-mending sailor-did he have a walrus moustache?-whose right arm, fully extended, stretched out towards a watery horizon, while his liquid tales rippled around the fascinated ears of Raleigh-and who else? Because there was certainly another boy in the picture, sitting cross-legged in frilly collar and button-down tunic… and now a memory comes back to me: of a birthday party in which a proud mother and an equally proud ayah dressed a child with a gargantuan nose in just such a collar, just such a tunic. A tailor sat in a sky-blue room, beneath the pointing finger, and copied the attire of the English milords (*Midnight* 166).

The power of the painting in *Midnight*, as Neil Ten Kortenaar argues, comes from the rewriting and subversion of a colonial and imperial "text to […] the postcolonial riposte" (Kortenaar, "Show and Tell" 106). Again, with the intertextual reference, Rushdie manages to produce a cultural meaning that is opposed to the colonialist ideology, present in the subtext of the painting. Neil Ten Kortenaar explains this by firstly decoding the true meaning of the original painting and its conversion to word form from image form which he calls a "reverse ekphrasis". According to Kortenaar the meaning of the painting comes from its title, without which what the painting refers to or means is not decipherable. The painting depicts no action or "a heroic deed, or a scene familiar from history or travel to far climates" other than "the emphatic gesture of pointing" and "the boy dreaming" (Kortenaar "Show and Tell"107). The meaning loaded into the painting through the title eventually evokes that the "setting of the painting is England and the sailor is pointing west to the New World" and is depicting "the moment when the young Raleigh first conceived the dream of making history: the sailor's stories of the New World will inspire the boy to go himself in search of El

Dorado in the voyage that the adult Raleigh will later record in The Discovery of Guiana" through the "origin always comes after the end and owes all its significance to the end" (Korteneaar "Show and Tell" 108). The finger of the sailor is pointing to an unknown space dreamt by the boys, a place they will first imagine and then conquer. Thus, what the tale of the sailor is shaped outside his will, and according to the dreams of the boys. This story is represented within the title that is loaded with cultural and historical meaning projected into the painting by the viewer. In *Midnight*, the same painting is depicted with immense detail but with some modifications and errors to the original. Saleem remembers the sailor to be a fisherman gathering his nets, forgets if there was another boy sitting beside the fisherman and misremembers other small details in the setting of the painting. This is also mirrored in his confusion as to the meaning of the painting. He questions with eyes following the fisherman's pointing finger, "eyes straining at the horizon, beyond which lay my future, perhaps; my special doom, […] because the finger pointed even further than that shimmering horizon, it pointed beyond teak frame, across a brief expanse of sky-blue wall, driving my eyes towards another frame, in which my inescapable destiny hung" (*Midnight* 167). Instead of simply following that finger and gazing at the boys, Saleem projects new meanings to the pointing finger and erases the existing subtext of exploration provided by the original painting. Rushdie, by rewriting the sailor as a fisherman rewrites the original title of the painting. This change breaks the painting "down into discrete parts" so that reader does not remember the original painting, but remembers the one Rushdie has constructed (Kortenaar "Show and Tell" 116). Rushdie, in doing so, subverts the cultural memory of colonialism and imperial ambition within the original reference by turning it into one of ambivalence and polyvalence. While the finger in Millais's painting provides a fixed point of destination, the finger of the fisherman in Saleem's version points to the multiplicity of decisions, views, and narratives. As Kortenaar argues, the image of the finger is scattered across the novel as "the mosque's long pointing finger" (*Midnight* 394), the pointing finger of a black cloud (82), Saleem's own mutilated finger (144), the long finger of the peninsula of Bombay itself (105), Evie Burns's "Finger, chewed off nail and all" (227), Amina's (113), Dr. Narlikar's (156), Padma's (142), and betel juice stains in the shape of a finger (45) and the "longlost finger" between Saleem's legs (142) breaking the original unity and meaning of the painting into different other meanings, memories and narratives (Kortenaar

"Show and Tell 116). The memory of imperialism within the intertextual reference is transformed into a critique of it in Rushdie's novel, forming a counter genre of memory. The text, therefore, produces a response to cultural memory by coming up with its own memory loaded with new signifiers and meanings.

Throughout *Midnight's Children* Saleem insists on "Memory's truth" that "selects, eliminates, alters, exaggerates, minimizes, glorifies, and vilifies also; but in the end it creates its own reality, its heterogenous but usually coherent version of events", which makes the trust in personal memories imminent (*Midnight* 292). The flawed but dynamic quality of memory and remembering allows for heterogeneity rather than homogeneity, which makes the inclusion of what is silenced or marginalized possible in the novel. Looking at the complex process of remembering offers a multidimensional perspective for understanding the cultural, social, and historical position within a specific place and time "in the absence of reliable histories of an oppressed and colonized people" (Nicol 126). Meaning becomes constructed or deconstructed by memory to contradict and challenge the grand historical narrative forms and display that no event can be the perfect recounting of facts. Finally, forgetting is treated critically and ethically since it has the potential to preserve an alternative truth by replacing the common knowledge systems with the partial and impartial data to rebuild what has been lost or misrepresented. As Ricoeur and Erll argue, memory becomes a productive source when evaluated with all its frailties. In *Midnight's Children* Rushdie uses memory and all its shortcomings to reinterpret the past and critically engage with its effects in present. The imaginative quality of memory allows for the negotiation and reconciliation of conflicting views, truths and cultures in *Midnight's Children*. The reconstruction of Indian culture with all its myriad forms and embracing of a multicultural identity is sustained through the work of memory. But also, the representation of Saleem as a narrator who is anxious to "end up meaning- yes, meaning- something" (*Midnight* 4) and to "give shape and form- that is to say meaning" to his "thirty jars and a jar" (*Midnight* 644) by depending on memory suggests Rushdie's gradual move from the "orthodox models of the postcolonial that reject essentialist notions of cultural belonging", the need for some kind of truth and meaning, towards a "space of potentiality […] [which] embodies imagination's power to envisage a better world" (Wilson et al. 7-9). Even in this earlier postcolonial novel, Rushdie implicitly warns against the abstraction of the relationship

of between memory, identity and belonging to show that even hybrid and multicultural identities, be it individual or collective, might still be in need of an anchor around which the condition of plurality can be experienced and understood critically. In short, Rushdie seems to suggest that while deconstruction of grand narratives and monologic view of reality is a useful approach for the representation and recentring of the marginalized or silenced voices and perspectives, it is also necessary to acknowledge that the same device might "gradually come to signify a specific set of philosophical ideas, thematic foci and aesthetic devices" (Huber 1). Rushdie, just like Saleem who wishes to render memory immortal in his jars, attempts to protect and maintain the magical elements in the representation of reality through memory so that it becomes possible to critique the postmodern and postcolonial discourses in a nonhierarchical and fluid space. This attitude of Rushdie is further developed in his more recent novel *Two Years Eight Months Twenty Eight Nights*, which will be analysed in detail in the following chapter. The next chapter will look at the function of memory in Rushdie's *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights* to track the changes in his method in analyzing the connection between memory, narrative and identity.

# CHAPTER 4

## MEMORY AND FORGETTING IN SALMAN RUSHDIE'S TWO YEARS EIGHT MONTHS TWENTY EIGHT NIGHTS

Salman Rushdie's *Two Years Eight Months Twenty Eight Nights*, which was published in 2015, represents the clash between reason and religion, society and individual and the conflict of belonging. Resembling *Midnight's Children*'s fantastical storytelling which interweaves different histories and memories together, *Two Years Eight Months Twenty Eight Nights*[3] adopts the Chinese box storytelling technique where each story leads to other narratives without true completion. The novel possesses a kaleidoscopic structure where conflicting perspectives and memories are voiced simultaneously producing an epic of the contemporary era with new definitions of knowledge and identity. Because the novel lacks any traditional form of linearity and order it will be useful, at this point, to provide a detailed summary of the significant events and characters that will be mentioned in the following analysis.

The novel depicts the war between mankind and magical beings called jinns that invade the earth when a rift opens between the human world and the world of magic. This war that takes place in present day New York and lasts 1001 nights, which is also the duration in the title of the novel, namely, two years, eight months, and twenty-eight nights. This duration of two years, eight months and twenty-eight nights is named as the "time of strangenesses" or just "strangenesses" which display the supernatural occurrences and the shift in the balance between good and evil, reason and religion, myth and reality, magic and non-magic, past and present. The time of strangenesses are portrayed within a frame narrative which denotes a philosophical conundrum between rationality and mysticism. To do so, Rushdie alludes to two famous philosophers from the 12th century: Ibn Rushd and Al-Gazhali and their works.

[3] Rushdie's novel *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights* will be shortened as *Two Years* in the rest of this chapter for the sake of practical use.

Rushdie alludes to the work of Al-Gazhali's named Incoherence of the Philosophers and then to Ibn- Rushd's Incoherence of Incoherence which was written as a response to Al-Gazhali's work. Throughout the novel, although Rushdie explicitly refers to the body of philosophical work, he fictionalizes the arguments of these philosophical texts and the attitudes of their authors. Rushdie turns the real-life philosophers, who lived centuries apart from each other, into ardently arguing characters in order to represent the clash of reason and belief. This clash is mirrored in the battle between mankind and the dark jinns who invade the world in the time of strangenesses. The queen of the jinns who is named Lightning Princess Dunia wishes to save the world from the invasion of these dark jinns and collaborates with her half-jinn, half human children on earth. Dunia as a jinn is depicted to be exceptional among the other jinns because she is capable of "the high noble sentiments" such as "selflessness, devotion, and so on" while the other jinns are only "capable of the lower emotions —anger, resentment, vindictiveness, possessiveness, lust (especially lust)" (*Two Years* 73). Thus, she is depicted to be curious about the human life and emotions unlike any of her kind. Because of that she, much before the events of strangenesses that transpire in the present, visits earth in the 12$^{th}$ century and falls in love with the philosopher Ibn Rushd. The half-jinn half human children are the consequence of Ibn Rushd and Dunia's union in Moorish Spain. The children are named as Duniazat, children of the world, and distinguished by the absence of their earlobes in the novel. These children, because they are half human half jinn, hold magical powers, to which they gain access through memory, like the midnight children. The magical children within the novel are all migrant and hybrid characters who have come to live in New York, from different parts of India. One of the children, Mr. Geronimo, who was born in Bombay as an illegitimate child to a gay priest, works as a gardener in New York. His separation from his roots in Bombay is mirrored in his sudden separation from the ground by two and a half inches in the time of strangenesses. The other magic children is Jimmy Kapoor and Hugo Casterbridge. Jimmy who is also an Indian immigrant, wakes up to find his superhero creation brought to life in the strangenesses and Hugo who is a British celloist who is kidnapped by dark jinn because of her relation to Dunia[4] . The magical abilities of the children, coupled with those of their ancestor Dunia, is used to

[4] Among these chacaters only Dunia and Geronimo are depicted with detailed background stories in *Two Years* and that is why I will mainly refer to them in the analysis of memory in my thesis.

battle legions of dark jinn. While the dark jinns are portrayed to be the disciples of Al-Gazhali and his beliefs the hybrid children of Dunia are portrayed as the disciples of Ibn Rushd and his reconciliatory thought system. However, Rushdie by drawing this parallelism attempts to display, as it will be discussed in this chapter, that no dichotomy or contradiction can ever be as simple and binary as they seem. At the end of the novel Dunia and her offspring manage to defeat the dark jinns. Their story of success is then historicized by an unknown extradiegetic narrator in the future. In order to make the history understandable to the current evolved society, this ambiguous narrator from the future claims to have learnt and translated the language of the the magical children who live in 2010s.

Memory in *Two Years* functions to represent the complex and interdependent relationship between reason and religion to form a narrative that depends on questions and positions rather than answers and centres. At the very centre of the novel lies the meeting of magic, mysticism, and reason through acts of memory that celebrates plurality and diversity in terms of history and identity that is also present in *Midnight. Two Years,* when read in relation to *Midnight,* it seems to follow a similar pattern with it. However, in *Two Years,* as I will explain in this chapter, Rushdie attempts to formulate a narrative structure that is reconstructive rather than deconstructive, by navigating memory acts, in responding to the rapid uncertainty and anxiety in the wake of a rapidly globalizing contemporaneity. In *Two Years* Rushdie implies the need for a cultural and social anchor that does not necessarily denote prioritization of any values or a single type of subjectivity to deal with the temporal shifts of the 21st century. These changes, which inspire and alter Rushdie's writing style, have begun with the "change in the political climate after the end of the Cold- War" and continued with

> the rise of fundamentalism, 9/11 and its aftermath, technological advances and the life-changing influences of globalisation, a neo-liberal hypercapitalism gone rampant and the dissolution of economic optimism in the course of global financial crisis, the spreading of the awareness of the finiteness of resources and the global challenge of climate change (Huber 5).

For Rushdie, 21st century denotes constant dislocation, displacement and deconstruction which cannot be tackled with similar responses or attitudes. *Two Years* is Rushdie's call for a "rerooting" that mimics the "generative, networking potential"

of memory in the representation of "polycentric identities" that are "neither directly determined nor exhausted" by the conflicting ideas and cultures that shape subjectivity (Wilson et al. 13). This idea of rerooting moves beyond the existing postcolonial and postmodern emphasis on routes and roots that explores the experience of migration and diaspora, towards the "new mobile spaces offered by cosmopolitan travel" and the rising necessity of "holding onto" memory in a constantly shifting world (Wilson et al. 3). In the age of post-truth where meaning and truth have become more referential, as part of the unending simulacra, memory seems to be one of the sources that provide a new tool of navigation and reparation. Rushdie's use of memory shows a break away from the postmodern "to new conceptual and geographical ground, a strong revisionist mode, and a sense of potentially uncharted territory" (ibid.). Memory, in *Two Years,* becomes the route for belonging and responsibility for the individual and collective understanding of culture and history. Thus, Rushdie's bringing together of conflicting systems through memory challenges the prioritization of one discourse in its claim to truth and meaning as well as the notion of a stable and unchanging identity. In doing so, the intertextuality woven into the layers of narrative within the novel serve to question the existing historical and cultural dogmas about nation, belonging and identity and produce an alternative culture and history accounted by memory.

*Two Years* which deals with the issues of migrancy, hybridity and belonging through the intertextual references that display the dynamic diachrony of memories. As discussed in the second chapter, Erll argues that "through intertextuality literature 'remembers itself'" along with previous historical narratives and memories belonging to different places and times (Erll 70). According to her, the intertextuality within the work is the "practice of memory" pointing to "the idea of an inner-literary memory" that simultaneously incorporates the memories of different cultures and histories and reshapes or subverts them by its own specific response. In other words, the intertextuality within the literary space can challenge and reshape our present ideas about the past realities and overcome the "ontological gap between fiction and reality postulated in theory" by integrating "imagined elements into their versions of the past" (Erll 165). In *Two Years,* as in *Midnight's Children*, Rushdie provides intertextual references from different sources, such as paintings, fairy tales, poems, and novels, in order to provide a reimagination of Indian culture and identity that has moved beyond the existing representations. Rushdie provides three epigraphs, which correspond to

the novel's celebration of polysemy, ambiguity and positionality. The first epigraph is *Los Caprichos no:43*, a painted by Francisco de Goya in 1799. Similar to "The Boyhood of Raleigh" in *Midnight* Rushdie chooses a painting that finds meaning through its textual annexation. On the left corner of the painting there lies a desk with papers and pen on the top, with the title of the painting embellished on the side of it. The inscription reads: "El sueno de la razon produce monstrous" meaning "The sleep of reason brings forth monsters". As an addition to this inscription within the painting Goya, adds another caption "in Prado etching that reads 'Fantasy abandoned by reason produces impossible monsters: united with her, she is the mother of the arts and the origin of their marvels.'" (*Two Years* 1). The painting depicts a man who is peacefully sleeping over the pens and papers on the desk while being attacked by bats and owls. There is another figure at the centre of the painting, sitting right behind the sleeping man, with eyes wide open and staring directly at the viewer. Goya's painting displays the effect of the conflict between imagination and reason on artistic inspiration and reflects the praise of reason in the prevention of evil in the Enlightenment. However, the addition of Goya shows that artistic vision cannot be complete without imagination and belief in the extraordinary. The artistic product appears when reason and imagination are combined since the complete avowal of imagination is equally detrimental.

Goya's painting, as an intertextual reference, mirrors the main argument of Rushdie's novel and the narrative style he follows. The narrative style Rushdie follows throughout the novel in developing his argument over the productive power of polysemy, fragmented perception and memory, resembles the one Goya employs in the painting and the additional information provided in the form of writing. In short, Goya too, by labelling the painting as "The sleep of reason brings forth monsters" seems to encourage the total abandonment of fantasy and the extraordinary for the sake of progress. However, with the part he adds that reads "united with her [imagination and fantasy], she is the mother of the arts and the origin of their marvels" he suggests that privileging of one ideology can never be productive and progressive. Similarly, the extradiegetic narrator in Two Years interrupts the storyline from time to time to "sing praise" for the utopic community, who have completely abandoned fantasy and imagination for the sake of "motor cars, electronics […], peace, prosperity, understanding, wisdom, goodness, and truth" and who are constantly thriving,

extremely happy because they have become "reasonable" (*Two Years* 286). According to the narrator the complete abandonment of fantasy and turn to science makes the emergence of a fully "contend" and liberalist society. However, despite the exclamations of happiness and greatness we learn that this new city is "colourless"and its people are "fiercely consummated" with "discontinued" sensualities and thoughts (*Two Years* 284). The epilogue of the novel, which will be further discussed in the following paragraphs, informs the reader that the complete division of human world from that of the jinns (the world of magic and fantasy) results in the replacement of fantasy and imagination with strict reason and rationality:

> That was the hinge moment, when the door from the past, where lay what we used to be, swung shut once and for all, and the door to the present, leading to what we have become, opened like the stone gateway to a treasure cave, perhaps even Sesame itself […] from that day to this, no member of the upper world, Peristan, Fairyland, has ever been seen on this lower soil, the earth, our home. So, […] we no longer dreamt (*Two Years* 281-6).

While Rushdie, like Goya, seems to encourage the complete abandonment of fantasy for the sake of reason, especially, in the final pages of the novel, he shows that without such imagination and belief in the extraordinary, the emergence and development of true empathy and freedom for cultural and humanitarian progress is never possible. In the absence of imagination, the "people" of the utopic society "are one" without any divergence or plurality in the perspectives (*Two Years* 285). If we remember how both Ricoeur and Erll insist on the imaginative power of memory in the understanding of the collective cultures and identity, it becomes possible to claim that Rushdie shows the impossibility of comprehending and reclaiming identity in the absence of such imagination as identity construction and cultural belonging depend on the construction of memories. With the intertextual reference he also questions the possibility of true freedom and freedom of expression in the absence of plurality and ambiguity of choices. Erll suggests that the use of intertextual reference within the symbolic space of the literary text generates a "polyvalent and interdiscursive form of representation" of new "horizons of meaning" that produce cultural memory that does not necessarily correspond to the current reality (Erll 165). Instead, the intertextuality could transform the existing cultural memory and construct an alternative social and cultural truth. In that sense, with the intertextual reference to the painting, Rushdie shows that cultural,

political, and social progress occur only when conflicting ideologies, histories and views coexist without polarization. He wishes to form a narrative that does not prioritize any voice but accommodate all without didacticism. The turn from the magical reflected in the intertextual layer, which is constantly protected and maintained in *Midnight*, while being critiqued by Rushdie here, also implies the questioning of the primacy of literature in the expression of plurality. Rushdie, while acknowledging the power of literature in incorporating different memories and discourses also challenges the postmodern thought that insists on its primacy. This same train of thought is also evident in the other epigraphs he chooses from different literary figures. One is from the poet George Szirtes and his comments on fairy tales: "One is not a "believer" in fairy tales. There is no theology, no body of dogma, no ritual, no institution, no expectation for a form of behavior. They are about the unexpectedness and mutability of the world" (*Two Years* 2). As Erll suggests, the intertextuality within the text contributes to individual and cultural remembering of known texts and genres such as fairy tales. As I have discussed in the previous chapter, fairy tales are genres where fact and fiction come together without hierarchy and chronology. Szirtes too emphasizes the anti-dogmatic space of fairy tales and the emergence of multiple truths and realities. Here, the reference to Szirtes reflects what Rushdie aims to achieve in *Two Years*, namely forming a narrative that can incorporate and the challenge different and often contradictory ideologies and philosophies without taking the side of one. That way, Rushdie can produce a new cultural memory that urges the reader to question even the seemingly innocent and polyvocal texts. This attitude of positionality in the formation of cultural memory through intertextuality is also reflected in the third epigraph taken from Calvino: "Instead of making myself write the book I ought to write, the novel that was expected of me, I conjured up the book I myself would have liked to read, the sort by an unknown writer, from another age and another country, discovered in an attic" (*Two Years* 2). The reference displays Rushdie's refusal of didacticism in the literary work he produces. The space of the novel, according to the intertextual references, is for telling stories, forming memories, and representing conflicting opinions without the confirmation of one truth but including in all truths. The intertextual references within the novel "take on a critical and reflexive function in memory culture" since Rushdie attempts to produce, what Erll calls, a "renewal of memory" where artistic creation produces "selective and

constructive" relationship with the past (Erll 79). What Rushdie wishes, in short, is a form of literature that reveals its own limitations as well as strengths in building a heterogenous cultural space.

Another example for the intertextuality within *Two Years* is Rushdie's allusion to the fairy tale genre through the famous Middle Eastern folk tale collection *Arabian Nights*, also known as *One Thousand and One Nights*. In *Midnight* Rushdie uses the same allusion to *One Thousand and One Nights* to criticize the objectivity of grand narratives and to suggest the primacy of literature in constructing a complex heterogeneous space. Here, however, as I will explain, the intertextual reference undermines even the primacy of literature. The title of the novel "two years, eight months and twenty-eight nights" equals to, as explained at the beginning of this chapter, one thousand and one nights, a direct reference to the title of the folk tale collection. Rushdie's careful matching of the title of this novel with that of the folk tale collection implies Rushdie's effort to integrate the heterogeneous form of fairy tales into his own artistic product. In doing so, he forms an alternative discourse to talk about the dichotomies of good and evil, past and present, reason and mysticism. The numerical parallelism between *One Thousand and One Nights* and *Two Years* is displayed by the repetition of the number for different items such as the "the thousand and one acre of La Incoroenza", Mr. Geronimo's land (*Two Years* 39), Stanford Bliss's superstition of always tipping someone "one hundred and one dollars" (40), the duration of the strangenesses "which lasted for two years, eight months, and twenty-eight nights, which is to say, one thousand nights and one night more" (4). Moreover, the duration of Ibn Rushd's exile is of the same length: "the mark of shame was wiped off the old philosopher's brow, […] two years eight months and twenty-eight nights after his exile" (12). The promise of a peaceful future is prophesized to come after "a thousand and one years" by Ibn Rushd" (58). Rushdie, in alluding to the folk tale collection, adopts the title "One Thousand and One Nights" instead of "Arabian Nights" to challenge the nuances of western orientalism inscribed within the title that popularized with Antione Galland's translation of the folk tale collection. One Thousand and One Nights was first translated into French by Galland between 1704 and 1717 and it was through this translation the tales gained popularity across Europe. He translated the tales under the title of "Arabian Nights". Galland's translation diverts from the original text in terms of tone and style. The initial aim of his translation was

to introduce an unknown literary tradition to Europe for entertainment. To do so Galland oversimplified complex messages and euphemized pessimistic tones of the tale which resulted in the exoticization of the Eastern land and culture through the increased references to the magical elements and the strangeness of the setting. The translation of the fairy tale collection provided an Orientalist image of the middle east as an unknown, mystical and partly irrational. The work of translation with its title "Arabian Nights", according to Irwin, includes superficial Oriental settings and hyperboles that tend to devalue the complex representations of the traditions and histories of different cultures (Irwin 245). Rushdie deconstructs the memory of orientalism embedded in the accepted "English" title by adopting the original title of the collection. The imperial understanding of "East as the opposition of West" is subverted by the parallelisms drawn between "the multicultural past of the Nights" and "the pluralistic nature of Rushdie's fiction" (Michalkiewicz 111). Connecting the name to tipping points of history within the novel, he manages to reshape "the individual memory" and the collective memory, showing that no narrative is superior to or more viable than the other (Erll 169). Furthermore, there is a direct reference to *One Thousand and One Nights*, with a detailed explanation of the form and content of the collection:

> There was a Persian book called Hazar Afsaneh, or *One Thousand and One Stories*, which had been translated into Arabic. In the Arabic version there were fewer than one thousand and one stories but the action was spread over one thousand nights, or because round numbers were ugly, one thousand nights and one night more. He had not seen the book but several of its stories had been told to him at court. The story of the fisherman and the jinni appealed to him, not so much for its fantastic elements (the jinni from the lamp, the magic talking fishes, the bewitched prince who was half man and half marble), but for its technical beauty, the way stories were enfolded within other stories and contained, folded within themselves, yet other stories, so that the story became a true mirror of life, Ibn Rushd thought, in which all our stories contain the stories of others and are themselves contained within larger grand narratives, the histories of our families, or homelands, or beliefs. More beautiful even than the stories of within stories was the story of the storyteller, a princess called Shahrazad or Scheherazade, who told her tales to a murderous husband to prevent herself from being executed. Stories told against death, to civilize a barbarian (*Two Years* 10-11).

The intertextual reference to the tales in *Two Years* exposes the complex and multi-layered narrative structure and their richness in the representation of Eastern culture

and tradition. The reference made about the "stories within stories" that become "a true mirror of life" within *One Thousand and One Nights* serves to define the microcosm of *Two Years* which is formed out of intermingling narratives that form a polyvalent space. The intertextuality in *Two Years* allows for the change in the perception and reception of the original text, which in return reconstructs the meaning of the novel. In other words, as Erll suggests, the intertextual reference here, "already pre-forms our encounter with reality; and then helps re-shape experience into […] memories" (Erll 169). The novel provides the memory of the original text it alludes to and displays that the power of the narrative comes from the multiplicity of voices and perspectives. Rushdie's direct reference to *One Thousand and One Nights* helps deconstructing the memory of orientalism in the alluded text. This, in return, shows that giving voice to unheard stories and histories without prioritization is vital to produce an alternative cultural memory that can reflect the multiplicity and polyvalence within the individual and the society. The allusion to the anti-linear and unhierarchical form of the tale collection implies Rushdie's wish to "abandon this [opposition between fact and fiction] false opposition, which neglects the possibility of more imaginative" use of the interdiscursive narrative (Le Guin 2015). The focus is upon the way of storytelling and the storyteller since the narratives can inscribe themselves "in a memory space made up of texts, and [they sketch] out a memory space" into which the earlier version of *One Thousand and One Nights* is "gradually absorbed and transformed" (Erll 73). The intertextuality within the novel generates its own memory out of the interaction with precursor texts such as the One Thousand and One Nights folk tale collection to achieve the coexistence of different narratives without any hierarchy.

Another example of Rushdie's use of intertextuality is his representation of the dichotomy between rationality and religion via philosophical discourse. Rushdie elaborates the philosophical argument between rationality and mysticism by fictionalizing Andalusian philosopher Ibn Rushd and Persian theologian Al-Ghazali. The contradictory worldviews of each philosopher are portrayed through the imaginary conversation with each other within the fictional space of the novel:

> 'Ghazali', he [Ibn Rushd] murmured soundlessly, "can that possibly be you?"

> ‘It wasn’t enough that you tried and failed to demolish my work when you were alive,’ the other [Al-Ghazali] replied. ‘Now, it would appear, you think you can do better after death.’
>
> Ibn Rushd pulled together the shards of his being. ‘The barriers of distance and time no longer pose a problem,’ he greeted his foe, ‘so we may begin to discuss matters in the proper way, courteously as to the person, ferociously as to the thought.’” (*Two Years* 57).

With the help of intertextuality, these two philosophers are brought together in fiction which allows for the critical evaluation of the well- known argument of religion and science. By reinventing and rewriting the dual opposition between rationality and religion Rushdie creates an alternative collective memory that collates together conflicting arguments. The feud between Ibn Rushd and Al-Ghazali shows that the “various genres and modes of discourse” and “pluralist heritage” in conveying the construction of meaning is “made from the formlessness of conflicting” ideas” (Mukherjee 12):

> ‘Let us think of the human race as if were a single human being,’ Ibn Rushd proposed. ‘A child understands nothing, and clings to faith because it lacks knowledge. The battle between reason and superstition may be seen as mankind’s long adolescence, and the triumph of reason will be its coming of age. It is not that God does not exist but that like any proud parent he awaits the day when his child can stand on its own two feet, make its own way in the world, and be free of its dependence upon him.’
> ‘As long as you argue from God,’ Ghazali replied, ‘as long as you feebly try to reconcile the rational and the sacred, you will never defeat me. Why don’t you just admit you’re an unbeliever and we can take it from here […] The followers of truth know that it is reason and science that are the juvenilia of the human mind. Faith is our gift from God and reason is our adolescent rebellion against it’ (*Two Years* 57-8).

Throughout the novel Ghazali stands for the indisputability of God and God’s power, and therefore the absolutism of religion, while Ibn Rushd provides the counterargument of reason and logic and the attempt to reconcile “the word of God” with that of science. This imaginary conversation between Ibn Rushd and Al-Ghazali is an allusion to Al-Ghazali’s work *Incoherence of the Philosophers* and Ibn Rushd’s *Inchorence of Incoherence* which is a response to Ghazali’s writings in the 12th century. These two treatises exist as philosophical documents to which Rushdie directly refers to in portraying the argument between fictional versions of Ibn Rushd and Al-Ghazali. Al-Ghazali’s *Incoherence of the Philosophers* offers a comprehensive

discussion of causality and claims that the miracles reported within the *Qur'an* can be true and likely just as they can be untrue and fictional because there is no way to prove either option. If, Ghazali claims, "their possibility is acknowledged, a Muslim philosopher who accepts the authority of revelation must also admit that the prophets performed these miracles and that the narrative in revelation is truthful" (Griffel 2020). Ibn Rushd's Inchorence of Incoherence provides a direct response to the arguments within Incoherence of the Philosophers. Ibn Rusdh in Inchorence of Incoherence claims that "God's existence can be demonstrated through a complex argument from Aristotelian physics" (Ben Ahmed 2021). As opposed to Ghazali who argues that we can prove the existence of God because we cannot disprove it, Ibn Rushd believes that physical evidence can be produced to prove God's existence with rationality. Ibn Rushd further adds that God does not interfere with the specific creation acts in the world as he is a pure and stable mind and cannot partake in becoming. This argument is labelled to be heretical by Ghazali since it pictures God a figure who "does not know the particulars" (ibid.). However, Rushdie does not include any allusion to these arguments of the philosophical works but only to the titles and reimagines the messages of these works in *Two Years*. Throughout the novel, the imaginary conversation between the philosophers are provided in the form memories that belong to the historical archives of the ambiguous extradiegetic narrator who recounts every event of the strangenesses. This extradiegetic narrator paints a fundamentalist picture of Al-Ghazali as Ghazali is represented to be unleashing terror to gather believers. However, according to Craşovan "Al-Ghazali's views of the relationship between knowledge, reality and language are treated as incoherent and irrational" although the actual writings are "strikingly modern" as his views are associated with "the philosophy of Kant and Wittgenstein, in regarding the expression of mystical experience, as "a divine vision of the world […] which is inexpressible in any innerworldly language" (Crasovan 32). As I have briefly discussed above, the actual argument of Incoherence of the Philosophers does not betray any fundamentalism, but it is an attempt on Al-Ghazali's side to explain his train of logic. Most of the reviews of *Two Years* mistakenly connect the complete rejection of religion for science, directly with Salman Rushdie's early found atheism and his attempt "to fill up that emptied God-chamber with other dreams" in his writings. However, it is important to note that it is the extradiegetic narrator who claims that Ghazali is monstrous not

Rushdie himself. Rushdie continuously hints that it's the narrator's own way of telling the story by constantly claiming that "this is how we think of it [the history of their ancestors including the discussions between Ibn Rushd and Al-Ghazali] now" (*Two Years* 20), this is the way "we explore and narrate our history" (208), "this is the story of our ancestors as we choose to tell it" (220). Rushdie while providing the intertextual references to the works of the two philosophers, does not change either the names of the philosophers or the works, expecting the reader to realize that none of the works are as monologic as they are depicted to be by the extradiegetic narrator. Rushdie produces a counternarrative that rejects the dogmatism of either argument. In doing so, he shows that as a narrative and a text, if not questioned, both religion and science can become restrictive and dogmatic. The intertextual references to the theologies of Ghazali and Ibn Rushd suggest that being a non-believer does not erase the existence of the religious discourse or its "truth"fullness for those who believe. Such a comment shows, on Rushdie's side, that the complete dismissal of the spiritual discourse is not very different from the "repressive orthodoxies promoted throughout human history by 'the apostles of purity, those who have claimed to possess a total explanation, have wrought havoc among mere mixed-up human beings'" (Ranasinha 52). Rushdie's represents reason and mysticism not as a dichotomy but as narratives that could complement each other. As discussed above, the ending of the novel reveals that a world without an alternative to rationality is nothing but an "emptied God-chamber" which cannot be filled up "with other dreams" ("In God We Trust" 317). The intertextuality in Rushdie's work produces an alternative cultural memory cite that criticizes the prioritization of a single discourse. As Erll suggests, with intertextual references different texts can be remembered and reinterpreted to signify new meanings. Similarly, Rushdie by making a reference to philosophical discourse, an alternative form of cultural and historical memory is formed.

According to Ricoeur and Erll, the past events can be remembered in various forms since the lived experience in the past can be encoded differently within a symbol system. This act of memory provides diversity in the interpretation and recreation of the past. The multi-layered narrative of *Two Years* creates an original counter- memory that challenges the dominance of historical production. As Erll says, within literary texts different memories can be combined in a polyphonic structure and the narrator of the text can produce memories. This is represented by Rushdie's constant reference

to the tension between memory and history writing in *Two Years*. As discussed previously in this chapter, there is an unidentified extradiegetic narrator who claims, "This is a story from our past, from a time so remote that we argue, sometimes, about whether we should call it history or mythology" (*Two Years* 207). The narrator, like Saleem Sinai from Midnight's Children, wishes for order and completion since it is a "historical record" and complains about how it has "degenerated from the status of a factual account towards the condition of legend, speculation of fiction" (*Two Years* 281). In order to challenge and deconstruct the authority of historical texts and to provide memory as an equally valuable information system despite its fallibility, Rushdie produces an ambivalent narrator who on the one hand is disturbed by the "fallible memory" and the possibility of the inclusion of "made-up stories into the record" (*Two Years* 20) and on the other, insists that "it's too late to do anything about it and that "this is the story of our ancestors as we choose to tell it" despite knowing "that gaps in the record are immense" (281). The narrator, like Saleem, who wishes to remember and incorporate all the dates and historical details because s/he is producing a historical record. However, his/her records repeatedly draw attention to the possible mistakes in the memory. The process of historical writing is criticized for its homogenizing tendencies that might leave out critical information and representation that could be key for a culture's past. This is displayed by the ambivalent narrator who values the gaps in the memory, remembering only bits and pieces because in the end only memory enables "recounting a tale about the actual" although it might include what is "imaginary" (*Two Years* 208). When it is considered that this narrator is from a future where reason and peace reign, the value given to all narratives of memory as viable sources of history suggests the embracing of "contradiction, privileging the plural over the singular, the polyphonic over the monologic" (Booker 978). Rushdie's emphasis on history being another narrative serves to challenge all systems of dual oppositions "by demonstrating that the apparent polar opposites are in fact interchangeable and mutually interdependent" (Booker 978). The narrator, while claiming for the multiplicity of voices and accepting "how treacherous history is" (220), also slips into the trap of being equally exclusive in the narrative s/he constructs by stressing this is "how we choose to tell it" (20) revealing that what is included in or excluded from a narrative is determined by the teller. In producing such an ambivalent approach Rushdie wishes to acknowledge the danger of all narratives and to redefine

the textual memory of historical narratives as more aware of its reliance on memory and exclusive tendencies. The cultural memory that surrounds the history genre attaches great importance to accuracy which is deliberately pointed out and challenged by Rushdie to show it should not only "be read for its accuracy" since accuracy "is not easy to determine when it comes to history" (Nicol 126). History writing includes,

> Half- truths, ignorance, deceptions, false trails, errors and lies and buried somewhere in between all of that, the truth, in which it is easy to lose faith, of which it is consequently easy to say, it's a chimera, there's no such thing, everything is relative, one man's absolute belief is another man's fairytale; but about which we insist, we insist most emphatically, that it is too important an idea to give up to the relativity merchants. Truth exists […] in her illustrious memory we refuse to allow truth to become 'truth'. We may not know what it is but it is out there (*Two Years* 220).

Through the narrator's refusal of the authority of history in its claim to absolute truth Rushdie destabilizes history-writing and "problematizes so simple an opposition as that between the true and the false, the real and the not-real" (Booker 990). As Ricoeur and Erll claim, memory enables the construction of diverse realities that challenge the monologic understanding of reality. The flaw in the formation of memories carries immense productivity as the continual re-reading of the past, and its interpretative relationship with the present provides an opportunity to reinterpret and reposition history outside the given worldviews and forms. Rushdie, through the use of memory, remakes history and suggests that freedom of speech is dependent on the freedom to challenge, change and subvert the narrative and bend its power to "make meaning in a public sphere" (Eaglestone 6). Such meaning making, in return, has the potential to influence individual and collective memory and how these are shaped through literature that "assimilate, embody, alter, and transmit patterns for encoding experience" (Erll 170).

The novel suggests, in fact, that memory, however partial, becomes the source for the emergence of a new culture, and a narrative of the nation, and that it should be recognized with all its complexity. This new nation in the future mentioned in detail in the epilogue of the novel, forms its own identity out of the collective trauma of the strangenesses and the war between the humans and jinns. However, Rushdie in forming a new nation and national memory in his fiction also criticizes the privilege that can be assigned to certain narratives and meaning making systems because they

proved pragmatic and powerful in history. The unidentified representative of this future collective consciousness claims that they have been able to form a cultural and national identity that is based on "reason, tolerance, magnanimity, knowledge and restraint" by dismissing anything and everything that is magical, mystical and extraordinary, namely, things that cannot be explained through reason and science since it is with reason the war has ended and status quo is restored (*Two Years* 283). While this collective 'we' of peace and reason acknowledges the importance of memory in understanding and shaping their present temporality, they also dismiss the idea that the incomplete and even fantastical perspectives provide viable insight in the meaning making process in a "jostling" world:

> We take pride in saying that we have become reasonable people. We are aware that conflict was for a long time the defining narrative of our species, but we have shown that the narrative can be changed. The differences between us, of race, place tongue and custom, these differences no longer divide us. They interest and engage us. […] we accept you all; and meanings jostling in the street, rubbing shoulders with other meanings, the friction birthing new meanings unmeant by the meaners who parented them; and factories, schools, places of entertainment and ill repute, our metropolis, thrive, thrive! […] But something befell us when the worlds were sealed off from each other […] the greater 'we' which we have all become, stopped happening. We no longer dreamt. It may be that this time those slits and holes were closed so tightly that nothing at all could leak through, not even the drips of fairy magic; the heaven-dew, which according to legend fell into our sleeping eyes and allowed us our nocturnal fantasies. Now in sleep there was only darkness. […] We read you in ancient books […] sometimes we wish for the dreams to return. Sometimes, for we have not wholly rid ourselves of perversity, we long for nightmares (*Two Years* 286).

As Ricoeur suggests, historical archives cannot mediate the immediacy, productivity and, most importantly, the ability of recognition that is embedded in memory. The immediate recognition within happy memory when "transmuted into [historical] writing, melts away into the mass of archival documents" (Ricoeur 497). Historical narratives, according to Ricoeur, "can expand, complete, correct, even refute the testimony of memory regarding the past" but "cannot abolish it" because "memory remains the guardian of the ultimate dialectic constitutive of the pastness of the past, namely, the relation between the "no longer," which marks its character of being elapsed, abolished, superseded" (Ricoeur 498). According to this notion, while the memory of the strangenesses enables the future generation to build a multicultural and

tolerant society, the distance produced by the narrative of history disconnects them from the "happy" memory and leaves out the significance of some alternative perspectives and narratives. The nation of the future, in commemorating the violence in their past, acknowledge their origin to be complex and ambivalent, ironically, without understanding the centrality of ambivalence in creating multivocal and imaginative narratives. Unlike their half human, half jinn ancestors, they dispose of "magic" instead of embracing it. Rushdie suggests that even narratives that seem innocent and claim positionality rather than centrality possess the danger to be privileged and prioritized. That is indeed why Rushdie argues for the imaginative and productive power of fragmented and impartial memory since its positionality enables the co-mingling of different versions and voices of the past without ever becoming complete, authoritative, and reducing many into "one" (*Two Years* 285). The active discourse between memory and history "may well shed light on the broader question of reconciling with a "divided" home/land in which the new cartographies of land and culture pose a challenge to the new generation on both sides of the border as to how to reinvent their cultural and national identity" (Butt 51). Rushdie's critical engagement with memory allows for the generation of a mutual relationship between narrative and memory to show that the interdiscursive interpretation of memories "shape our ideas about history and thus contribute to the formation of cultural memory" (Erll 80).

Memory shapes a subject's conception of the self and determines how that subject engages with the social, political, and historical temporality which he does not originally belong to. Like *Midnight's Children, Two Years* deals with liminal and ambiguous identities that are dislocated and disconnected from their homelands after their families migrate to New York. The cultural upbringing of characters such as Dunia and Geronimo provide them with hybrid identities. They all live in New York but come from different places. But they are hybrid in a literal sense since they are half human and half jinn because they are also the offspring of the jinn princess Dunia and the philosopher Ibn Rushd. Rushdie portrays the struggle of these individuals to belong in a new place and culture and to negotiate the memories of their childhood with their current temporality. However, while they attempt to make sense of their hybridity by remembering the episodes of memories from their early childhood, they are nonetheless disconnected from the memory of their true magical origins. In other words, the fragments of memory from their past culture and homeland, while

providing a metaphorical link between the culture they originally belong to and the culture they struggle to belong to, do not prove sufficient for truly making sense of and accepting their multifarious and liminal identities. They are presented initially as disconnected from the knowledge of their magical powers because they possess no memory of their heritage. Because they are disconnected from their histories, they must "discover it or invent it" through memory as it is "the cornerstone of identity" (Parameswaran 51). The remembering process of their magical origins, which begins with the strangenesses, enables them to "construct for themselves new 'innerscapes' or landscapes of the mind" that bring together "different severances of the self" (White 10). The processes of memory in *Two Years* offer the construction of an "internal dialogue between the conflicting hybrid parts that constitute the identity [of the] migrant" (ibid.). These identities that are split from their past can only make sense of their hybridity through memories by reimagining a self that is not restricted to a single origin but is the product of many. One example for this is Dunia, the princess of jinns, is the queen of the jinn the "Sky Princess" who lives in Mount Qaf in Peristan but then moves back and forth between earth and Peristan without ever truly belonging in either one of them. She is depicted as the "exception among the jinnia" (*Two Years* 60) contradicting with her kind and "exhausting the sympathy of her people" (145). Dunia's moves between worlds symbolize the movement between various identities without ever feeling any sense of belonging. Possessing no knowledge of her history, Dunia's origins flicker between that of Indra, Zeus, Thor, or Yoruba goddess Oya without ever settling. Very much like Saleem, Dunia chooses to select and construct her own origin story through her memories. In an effort to remember, she "searched the worlds between the worlds, the layers between the layers, looking for the ruined gateways, trying to reopen them. She had been an archaeologist of the buried past, excavating the lost, broken, clogged pathways, always hoping to find a way through" (257). The episodic memory "emerges from a process of choosing, connecting, and constituting", from all that has become "unusable, obsolete, or foreign" (Erll 35). Similarly, the episodes of memory Dunia wishes to uncover produces an act of diachronic meaning making. Dunia, by the act of remembering, realizes that she is both a magical being with immense strength but also a human capable of love:

> The memory of others […] showed her not only that she was becoming more human but […] a thing in and of itself, […] herself as she truly was-

> neither the sixteen year old-waif who had materialized at Ibn Rushd's door, nor this replicant of lost love, but her royal self in all its glory (*Two Years* 157).

Memories produce an opportunity to come to terms with doubleness and plurality by cultivating the co-existence of "contradictory things at the same time without either transcending or repressing that contradiction" (White 10). The royal self of Dunia is constructed out of memories of "smoke" with edges "blurred" and "smudged", namely, without completion and finality (*Two Years* 156). This plurality is also mirrored in the name she chooses for herself; Dunia and Dunyazad "being translated, is 'the people of the world'" (11). This also suggests that Dunia's self-knowledge is derived from her interaction with the collective, namely her children on earth, who help her remember that she belongs not only to the realm of magic but to that of human. Therefore, her act of love that connects her with her past and present can be depicted as a memory act because the self is intricately bound up with the "public realm of history" and the momentum it provides (Walder 46). Identity constructed by memory becomes the cite of ongoing transformation and the "drastic changes that the self can undergo in the course of life" (Booker 980) to reconciliate between the "repertoire of missed opportunities, alternative options, and unused chances" (Erll 35).

Memory is the sole productive source of constructing a selfhood and making sense of that self within a specific time and culture. Since identity is an imagined reality, people can only understand themselves as "sediments of history, […] through a constant interpretive interpretation of their" past (Droogan 209). In the absence of such memories, the connection between the self and the society is broken where the individual experiences alienation. In *Two Years*, Geronimo Manezes, who is born as "Raphael Hieronymus Manezes in Bandra, Bombay" as the "illegitimate son of a firebrand Catholic priest" transforms into "Geronimo" "in American mouths" (26-8). While the long name given Geronimo at birth symbolizes his hybrid origins and his identity that depends on different beliefs and cultures, his quick liking of the Americanized version of his name suggests the disconnection Geronimo experiences from his memories preventing him from understanding the historical and cultural meaning attached to his name, and himself. Geronimo experiences a spatial and temporal dislocation from his identity because he "had a poor memory, and so, much of his childhood was lost" and that was "his whole childhood right there" (27). As

Ricoeur suggests, total erasure of memories pertaining to identity is "never complete" since traces of the original always remain, in memory" (Walder 34). Thus, making sense of the self depends on making sense of the "internal chronotopic relationships between the present self and the past self within the innerscapes of the mind" (White 11). This suggests, of course, the centrality of memory and even partial memory in coming to terms with issues of belonging and identification. Mr. Geronimo remembers small fragments of the Bombay of his childhood and wishes to belong to that Bombay identity that he can only remember in fragments. A reality where he can find belonging only exists in the form of memory. Interestingly, fragments of memory, in the case of Geronimo, both "express alienation" and a sense of replenishment that "rebuttress[es] [his] sense of identity by consolidating" his ties with known parts of history (Walder 29). Thus, he "travel[s] within the space time continuum" for a psychic relief in found the moments he can remember fragments from his past (White 12). And yet Geronimo still feels "newly inauthentic" with a pang "he recognized as alienation, the sensation of not belonging any more to a part of oneself" (*Two Years* 33). He cannot immediately forge a productive and healthy connection with his current spatial and temporal condition because he cannot reconnect with his magical origins. As stated by both Ricoeur and Erll, remembering, and particularly episodic remembering, necessitates an active search and selection process through which it becomes possible to unite various versions of the past that make up the self. Briefly said, the acceptance of a flexible self occurs when the connection between different fragments of memory is established. This active selection process for Geronimo does not take place until after he is reminded of his magical being. Geronimos's ontological struggle and initial disability to piece together his memories of Bombay with that of magical ones is symbolized in his levitation during the time of strangenesses. Mr. Geronimo's feet no longer touch the ground and the gap between him and the ground increases every day. Geronimo's metaphorical disconnection from his magical roots is transformed into a literal disconnection from physical roots. He is deeply troubled by this condition and wishes to

> *sink down towards the earth so that my feet touch the solid ground again, […] let me belong again to that faraway place I left so long ago, from which I am alienated, and which has forgotten me, in which I am an alien now even though it was the place where I began, let me belong again, walk those streets knowing they are mine, knowing that my story is a part*

> *of the story of those streets, even though it isn't, let it be so* (emphasis in the original *Two Years* 149).

His inability to connect with all the versions of his past is mirrored in his severance from gravity, and his desire to connect with the earth and produce a new life from the depths of that foundation reflects his need to remember his past. The imagery of roots and earth suggests that the individual connection with his temporality is closely connected to his ability to make sense of the past. Establishing a spatial and individual belonging depends on the recollection of intertwined memory patterns. Like Saleem, however, Geronimo, by moving between different temporal zones, and fusing these various and frequently unacknowledged magical versions of the past, comes to terms with his hybridity. Geronimo as a hybrid subject, oscillates between "the familiar (yet fractured) cycles of family, occupation, and leisure in the new homeland" and the "increasing multiplicity of identities available" to him (Walder 29). On the one hand, he remembers an Indian self that connects him to the plurality of Indian existence and on the other, he beings to remember the "untold family history" whose origins are "in twelfth century Spain" and includes "conversions, expulsions, intermarriages, wanderings, illegitimate children, jinn, a mythical matriarch called Dunia" (*Two Years* 33). His meeting with Dunia enables him to recollect his magical origins as he remembers the stories of Peristan and lobless ears. This meeting, in return, bridges what is "(unconsciously) remembered and (consciously) recalled" (Walder 29). Thus, Geronimo opens himself to the imaginative power of memory and discovers the "secret self whose existence he had not previously suspected" (223). Geronimo, in remembering fragments of memory, acknowledges that belonging is conditioned by the embracing of plurality and liminality. He manages to embrace plurality by claiming that if "the [untold family] story is true" he is "a little bit of everything" (33-4). In return, he revisits Bombay in an attempt to reconcile his memories and his current temporality with the

> new knowledge that until that day he had known nothing, not only about the world but about himself, and his place in it. But now he knew something; not everything, but it was a start. He had to begin again and he knew where he wanted to do it and had asked Dunia to return him to this place, to attempt his first cure (*Two Years* 218).

Memory is the condition for individual identity and responsibility" since "through remembering […] individuals experience the continuity of their selves and are able to

orient themselves on the basis of previous experience in the world (Erll 85). Self-awareness is inextricably linked to the body of accumulating memory. Only by recalling these memories of the various places and peoples can Geronimo make sense of who he is. Reimagining the space within memory he forms a dynamic relationship with his past and his current self. The persistence of hybrid cultures and the evolution of a hybrid individual within that culture depend on the blending of different layers of memory. Through episodic remembering, Geronimo acknowledges his hybrid identity and manages to "[earn] his gravity, and c[ome] down to earth" (223). He, "embodies the act of remembering so as to give meaning to the remembered self (or selves) of the past" (Walder 41-2).

In *Two Years* Rushdie criticizes the prioritization of all kinds of discourse, including literary discourse. According to Rushdie literary narrative should sustain its ambivalent position by never explicitly prioritizing one single perspective, ideology or thought. With the constant use of intertextuality, Rushdie loads the narrative space with a memory culture that reflects the constructed nature of all texts but also their potential danger in claiming power and authority. The function of intertextuality within the novel is to provide a narrative of memory that displays the dynamism, ambivalence, and change in the understanding of migration, colonialism, identity and belonging. Rushdie uses the textual space to resemble that of memory in the sense that he reassembles and redefines the precursor texts in order to provide alternative narratives of history and culture. He also makes use of the tropes of memory to display the imaginative redevelopment process that transforms spatial and temporal experience. The process of remembering denotes the emergence of an altered and unique form of the collected lived experience instead of the reappearance or reproduction of the lived experience in its original form and allows for the rearrangement and juxtaposition of different versions of the past. Memories on a cultural and individual level promote the emergence of alternative knowledge, questions, and approaches to face the changes within the individual and collective. Furthermore, the use of memory in *Two Years* denotes the constructed nature of identity that is "dependent upon personal history and memory" and the negotiation of "many histories, memories, or 'worlds' within" the individual (Walder 28). Self-knowledge is closely connected with memory since it is through memory that the creative revising and reshaping of the identity becomes possible. Memory enables the

bridging of the gap between the individual and collective memories so that an ethically responsible identity can be formed. Rushdie, in providing hybrid identities in *Two Years* shows that the possibility of belonging and identification is enabled through the memory acts that define a subject's social and political interaction with the present.

# CHAPTER 5

## CONCLUSION

This thesis set out with the aim of studying Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights* in terms of memory, episodic remembering, forgetting and memory of intertextuality to show that in these novels memory because of its frailties becomes a creative and productive tool for reconsidering the concepts of culture, nation, and identity. A close reading of these novels shows the value Rushdie attaches to all memory processes in order to understand the temporality the subject is positioned in. Memory enables the subject to make sense of the historical events and situate his/her identity by forming a dynamic relationship between the past knowledge and the present experience. Rushdie creates multi-layered narratives in *Midnight's Children* and *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights* by using memories to celebrate simultaneity, plurality, and non-absolutism. Reading these novels offers a chance to observe Rushdie's creation of a fictional memory, a textual space where many histories and stories are collated, to subvert the authority of grand narratives.

Initially, the concepts of memory, episodic remembering and forgetting by Paul Ricoeur and Astrid Erll have been examined. According to Ricoeur, memory is imaginative and creative because it includes the process of selection and the reconstruction of past knowledge within a subjective order. These past images are reassembled constructions that do not directly equal objective reflections of past perceptions. The process of remembering displays the emergence of an altered and unique form of the collected lived experience instead of the reproduction of the lived experience in its original form. This fabricated embodiment of memory allows the subject to view the past and the present within a dynamic relationship. In other words, Ricoeur shows that remembering is not just a passive sentimentality, but it requires an active activity and effort. For him, memory can be viewed as a type of knowledge

made up of the imaginative transformation of fragmented and distorted data through a productive rethinking. While the experience of forgetting is unavoidable and serves as the primary motivation for remembering, memory stands for endurance and survival as a type of precaution against forgetting. Moreover, Ricoeur argues for the productivity of forgetting. According to him, viewing forgetting as a necessary component of remembering and memory formation allows for the critical viewing of cultural and historical accumulation of past information. A fresh knowledge over the epistemology of history and narrative is gained through the physical and philosophical phenomenon of forgetting. He adds that forgetting actually "designates the undetected character of the perseverance of memories, their withdrawal from the vigilance of consciousness" (Ricoeur 440).

Similarly, Astrid Erll, drawing from the studies of Ricoeur, claims that remembering denotes an active selection process through which the individual makes sense of the self and the contemporary conditions s/he is situated within. Memory is an action, an effort, rather than a passive acceptance of the traces of the past. Memories can only be observed through the remembering process that depends on the selection and reconstruction of sensual data. It is crucial to realize that remembering heavily depends on creating connections across space and time. Since memories are constructed through selection and reinterpretation of information stored in the brain, Erll suggests that remembering mostly occurs through episodes or fragments. This is, as discussed before, called episodic remembering. Episodic memories are recollections that include bits and pieces of significant information stored in the form of cues. All of the lived experience is included in episodic memories, which demand a personal, context- and time-specific emotion of recalling. Moreover, like Ricoeur, Erll argues that memories can also be the fabrications that rise out of forgetting or misremembering. In fact, forgetting acts as a prerequisite for remembering since it prevents the overaccumulation of former data. Forgetting denotes, like remembering, an elaborate plot construction where the elimination of certain events is inevitable for a meaningful end-product to emerge. Forgetting challenges what is generally accepted as fact and the emergence of alternative knowledge, questions, and approaches to face the present and the future. The fabricated nature of memories allows them to be comprehended as a cultural and social phenomenon that preserves the national, social, and cultural knowledge. Forgetting transforms experience through an imaginative redevelopment

process. Erll, in her studies of memory examines the close connection between memory and narrative. According to Erll, the understanding of cultural and historical representations of the past found in literary writings is aided by fragmentary remembering and forgetting. Erll argues that work on memory helps deepen our understanding of how memory and literature interact. She claims that other than being sources of representation for memory, literature itself can possess or produce its own memory. The intertextual references within the text are the memories of the text. Intertextuality, the merging of many knowledge systems inside a literary work, reveals that each literary text, much like human memory, is related to its predecessor in some way. The intertextuality within a literary narrative displays that while literary texts may comment on existing cultural representations and meanings, they can also generate and transmit newer forms of cultural and historical meanings through memory. Transference between the literary and the non-literary is possible when using the literary text as a memory location.

Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights* are exemplary of the connection between narrative and memory. In *Midnight's Children*, by embracing the cultural richness of the multicultural India reflected via memory, Rushdie's investigation of memory, its flaws, and forgetfulness questions official versions of history and essentialist concepts of identity and country. The building of many realities that contradict the monologic view of reality is made possible in the novel through memory. Because memory and remembering are imperfect but dynamic, they allow for heterogeneity rather than uniformity, which allows for the inclusion of what is suppressed or ignored in the novel. Understanding the intricate process of memory provides a multifaceted viewpoint for comprehending the cultural, social, and historical position within a particular place and time. In *Midnight's Children*, the creative aspect of memory enables the negotiation of opposing viewpoints, facts, and civilizations. The process of memory sustains the restoration of Indian culture in all of its manifestations and the embrace of a multicultural identity.

In *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights* Rushdie critiques the primacy of all forms of discourse. Rushdie contends that a literary narrative should maintain its equivocal stance by never clearly giving preference to one particular viewpoint,

ideology, or school of thought. Rushdie fills the narrative space with a memory culture that represents the manufactured character of all texts but also their potential danger in claiming power and authority through his continual use of intertextuality. Intertextuality serves the purpose of providing a memory narrative that illustrates the dynamism, ambiguity, and change in the concept of migration, colonialism, identity, and belonging in the novel. Additionally, the tropes of memory illustrate the process of creative rebuilding that modifies the spatial and temporal experience of a migrant identity. Rearranging various interpretations of the past signifies the formation of a change in the representation and understanding of the collective lived experience. Since memory allows for the creative revision and molding of identity, self-knowledge and memory are intimately related. Memory makes it possible to close the gap between personal and communal memories, allowing for the development of a complex identity. Rushdie demonstrates in *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights* that the memory that characterizes a subject's social and political relationship with the present provides the possibility of belonging and cultural identification.

Looking at Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and *Two Years Eight Months Twenty Eight Nights*, it can be concluded that the use of memory is critical for Rushdie's interpretation of culture, history, and identity. Rushdie seems to favour the literary narrative and its ability to represent conflicting ideologies, different cultures and histories in *Midnight's Children*. In fact, it is implied that literature is the only available source for criticizing monologic discourses and providing a polysemic form of representation. However, Rushdie's attitude towards literature changes in *Two Years Eight Months Twenty Eight Nights*. Although it is evident that he still believes in literature's ability to instil cultural change, he implies that treating literature as the only source of polysemic and polyvocal representation results in its prioritization. What Rushdie wishes to show through *Two Years Eight Months Twenty Eight Nights* is that literature can also distort and abuse information to serve a specific ideology and this danger should be recognized by the reader and the writer. In fact, as I have explained in the previous chapter, 21st century reflects a shift from the primacy of literature that is brought forward by postmodernism since the postmodern "endeavour to disrupt, to alienate and to subvert" can equally become what literature wishes to avoid and abolish (Huber 4). Furthermore, it should be kept in mind that postmodern and postcolonial studies has recently become "relevant to topical issues such as post-

apartheid South Africa, Muslim diasporic communities, eco-environmentalism and post-communism" which are not only concerns of the literary but of the social, historical, and political that denotes the inevitable undermining of the primacy of literary as the most viable and applicable source of criticism and representation (Wilson et al. 14). Rushdie mirrors this shift in his change of style which suggests that our contemporary age requires readers who are as willing to question the authority of literature as much as they are ready to suspend their disbelief.

As this study draws to a close, it calls for more research on how fictional representations shape and alter cultural memory. Especially, the use of intertextuality can be analysed as part of memory culture in Rushdie's works. Rushdie in employing intertextuality, makes significant alterations to the form and meaning of the works he is alluding to, wanting his reader to form a dynamic relationship with the narrative he forms and the other external narrative he is referring to. The reader is forced to question the message, and the given discourse of the alluded text through its changed version and become aware of the various meaning making processes that take place in each work of art. This might, in return, alter and challenge the set cultural forms of thinking. Therefore, it is important to do more research on intertextuality as a contributor to cultural memory.

As far as the future of memory studies is concerned, the most promising area of research might include the mutual relationship of memory with emotions and feelings. As examined in the introductory chapter of this study, memory can be activated by the subject's emotional response to certain experiences and traumas and equally, memory can evoke diverse feelings within the individual and the collective. Looking at this relationship might be fruitful in finding out if memory premediates empathy and responsibility within the subject for the critical evaluation of cultural values and various identities. Also, the return to affect studies can promote more critical response mechanisms against the "impact of globalization and the pervasiveness of the neo-imperial ideologies" that could be embedded in collective memories and discourses (Wilson et al. 8). This, in return, helps the memory studies to engage with ethico-political practices in order to reconceptualize and responsibly deal with "implications of citizenship, civilized conversation, 'conviviality' and heightened political responsibilities" (Wilson et al. 6).

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# APPENDICES

## A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu tez, Salman Rüşdi'nin *Geceyarısı Çocukları* (1981) ve *İki Yıl Sekiz Ay Yirmi Sekiz Gece* (2015) adlı eserlerinde bellek, unutuş ve epizodik hatırlamanın yaratıcı ve üretken bir eylem olarak ele alınmasını Paul Ricoeur ve Astrid Erll'in çalışmalarından yararlanarak incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Tez, Rüşdi'nin milliyetçilik, aidiyet ve benlik hakkındaki dogmaları eleştirmek için belleği inceleyişine ve gerçekliğin monolojik görüşüne meydan okuyan alternatif bir kültürel anlatı oluşturmak için metinlerarasılığı kullanmasına bakacaktır. Bu romanlar analiz için seçilmiştir çünkü Rüşdi'nin *Geceyarısı Çocukları* ve *İki Yıl Sekiz Ay Yirmi Sekiz Gece* romanlarında tarihsel gerçekliğin herkes tarafından farklı algılanabileceğini ve bu farklı bakış açılarının kabul gören bilimsel tarih kaynaklarındaki bilgiler kadar geçerli ve önemli olduğunu çünkü bu bilgilerin azınlık benliklerinin oluşmasında büyük etkisi olduğunu belleği ön planda tutarak yansıtmaktadır. *Geceyarısı Çocukları ve İki Yıl Sekiz Ay Yirmi Sekiz Gece* tüm bellek eylemlerinin yaratıcı gücünü sembolize etmektedir. Rüşdi, *Geceyarısı Çocukları*nda, bellek eylemlerince sembolize edilen kültürel ve tarihsel çoğulculuğu ve belirsizliğin önemini vurguluyor ve farklı gerçekliklerin mevcudiyetinde mutlak gerçeklerin veya referans noktalarının olmadığını iddia ediyor. *İki Yıl Sekiz Ay Yirmi Sekiz Gece* yüzeysel okunduğunda bilim ve edebiyatın çoklu gerçekliğin karmaşık dokusunu diğer tüm anlatı türlerinden daha iyi temsil ettiğini savunuyor gibi görünüyor. Ancak, Rüşdi aslında gerçekliğin tek bir söylem veya anlatı hâkimiyet sürdüğünde kültürel, tarihsel, felsefi ve insani ilerlemenin gerçekleşmesinin imkânsız olduğunu ve tam tersi, bu ilerlemelerin olması adına birbiriyle çatışan farklı anlatıların bir arada olmasının insanoğlunu çağdaşlığa bir adım daha yaklaştırabildiğine inanıyor.

Bu çalışmanın temel kuramsal temelini Paul Ricoeur'ün *Hafıza, Tarih, Unutuş* (2004) ve Astrid Erll'in *Memory in Culture* (2011) kitaplarındaki bellek, unutuş ve epizodik hatırlama tanımları oluşturmaktadır. Bu iki Rüşdi romanındaki anlatı, parçalı hatırlama ve unutuşun temsili kullanılarak geliştirildiğinden, bu terimlerin temelini ve gelişimini Ricoeur ve Erll tarafından sağlanan hermenötik ve kültürel bakış açısıyla irdelemek romanları anlamaya yardımcı olacaktır. Bellekle ilgili unutuş ve unutkanlık kavramları ağırlıklı olarak Ricoeur'ün *Hafıza, Tarih, Unutuş*'undan, kültürel bellek ve hatırlama kavramları ise Astrid Erll'in *Memory in Culture* adlı kitabından alınacaktır. Bu çalışmalar, zayıflıkları ve güvenilmezlikleri nedeniyle genellikle bellek uygulamalarının geçerliliğini reddeden mevcut bellek çalışmalarından farklıdır. Ricoeur ve Erll, belleği güvenilmezliği nedeniyle eleştiren Yunan geleneğinden ve aynı geleneği takip eden daha sonraki bellek kavramlarından saparak, belleğin geçmişi anlamak ve keşfetmek için elimizdeki tek araç olduğunu savunuyorlar. Çalışmaları, bellek çalışmalarındaki güvenilmezlik kavramını çürüterek bellek ve tarih arasındaki geleneksel karşıtlığı reddediyor. İddiaları, belleğin, tarihsel olarak önemli olaylara ve felaketlere alternatif açıklamalar sunabilmesi nedeniyle, tarihin dışında bırakılan bakış açılarının çokluğunu analiz etmek için uygun bir yöntem olduğudur. Bellek, tarihe ilişkin daha kapsayıcı içgörüler üretebilir ve karmaşık tarihsel olayların kavranmasına anlam verebilir. Böylece, bellek tarih olarak kabul edilir, çünkü bellek olmadan geçmişe doğrudan erişim mümkün değildir.

Paul Ricoeur ve Astrid Erll farklı iliği ve eğitim altyapılarına sahip olsalar da, çalışmalarında belleğin yaratıcı ve üretken niteliği konusunda hemfikirdirler. Paul Ricoeur'ün çalışma alanı felsefe ve tarih üzerine yoğunlaşmaktadır. Bu nedenle, belleğe bakışındaki yaklaşım yöntemi, belleğin tarih ve siyasetteki felsefi ve hermenötik işlevini ön planda tutmaktadır. Astrid Erll'ün temel çalışma alanı ise edebiyat ve edebiyat tarihidir. Bellek üzerine çalışması, disiplinler arası bir yaklaşımı benimsemekte ve tüm sanat ve edebiyat biçimlerinde belleğin önemini analiz ederken kültürel, tarihsel ve edebi yaklaşımları bir araya getirmektedir. Ricoeur ve Erll'in çalışmalarını sentezlememin sebebi, iki uzmanın da, Rüşdi'nin eserlerinde örneklenen bellek çalışmalarının kimlik, toplum, kültür ve tarihsel zamansallığı anlamada ve yorumlamadaki önemini ortaya koyarak birbirlerini tamamlamasıdır. Ricoeur *Hafıza, Tarih, Unutuş* adlı kitabında, Platon'dan Halbwachs'a kadar olan bellek teorilerine

kendi eleştirel yaklaşımını, unutma ve hatırlama gibi kavramları hermenötik bir yaklaşımla açıklığa kavuşturmak amacıyla irdelemektedir. Ricoeur belleği tarihin epistemolojisi ve insanoğlunun tarihsel durumunun hermenötiği ile ilişkilendirir. Ricoeur için bellek, tarihsel arşivleri ve olayları analiz ederken etik bir anlayış geliştirmek için gereklidir. Bunu yaparken, unutmanın ve diğer bellek uygulamalarının varoluşsal, felsefi ve etik gücünü savunur. Unutmak aynı zamanda alternatif bir gerçeği korumak anlamına gelir ve farklı ulusların travmatik geçmişlerinden daha yeni bir ulus ve kimlik anlatısı inşa etmek için Holokost ve savaş gibi travmatik olaylarla nasıl başa çıktıklarını anlamaya yardımcı olur. Ricoeur'ün *Hafıza, Tarih, Unutuş* kitabı, unutmanın hafızanın ayrılmaz bir parçası olduğuna ve hem bireysel hem de ulusal, politik kimlik anlayışları için önemli olduğuna dair daha odaklı bir okuma sağlar. Astrid Erll ise, *Memory in Culture* adlı kitabında belli başlı bellek çalışmalarını harmanlayarak bellek kavramını kapsamlı bir şekilde işlemektedir. Aslında, epizodik hatırlama ve unutmaya ilişkin analizi, Ricoeur'ün hafıza ve unutmaya ilişkin fikirleriyle bağlantılı olarak geliştirilmiştir. Erll, epizodik hatırlama ve unutuş üzerine argümanını oluştururken Ricoeur'ün *Hafıza, Tarih, Unutuş* kitabına bir bölüm bile ayırmıştır. Erll, insanlar olarak dış dünyayı algılayışımızın çoğunun belirli bellek edimlerine bağlı olduğunu göstermek için belleğin kültürel yönüne odaklanmaktadır. Bireyi ve toplumu etkileyen farklı hatırlama biçimleri ve bunun sanat ve edebiyattaki yansımaları üzerine çalışmaktadır. Erll ayrıca, belleği bireysel ve kolektif kimliği şekillendiren ampirik bilginin kaynağı olarak işlev gördüğünü iddia ederek, kimlik ve bellek arasındaki yakın ilişkiyi de incelemektedir. Ricoeur'ün belleği imgesel güç biçiminde yorumsal olarak yeniden değerlendirmesi Erll'in sanat ve edebiyatla bağlantılı bellek uygulamaları analiziyle birleştiğinde, Rüşdi'nin belleğin farklı temsilleri ve yorumlamaları üzerine genişleyen romanlarını okumak için çok verimli bir okuma sağlamaktadır.

Bu tez için seçtiğim romanlar, Rüşdi'nin bellek ve anlatı arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemesinin örnek temsilleridir. Rüşdi'nin *Geceyarısı Çocukları* ve *İki Yıl Sekiz Ay Yirmi Sekiz Gece* adlı eserleri, öznenin konumlandığı gerçekliğin geçmişe olan bağıntısını anlamlandırmak için belleğin temsilini ve her türlü bellek sürecinin canlılığını ele almaktadır. Rüşdi bu romanlarda, eşzamanlılığın, çoğulluğun ve mutlakiyetsizliğin kutlanmasına yol açan çok katmanlı anlatılar inşa etmek için

anlatıcılar tarafında yeniden inşa edilen dağınık hatırlama anları ve geçmişten bağlantısız görüntüler sunmaktadır. Bu romanlara bakmak, birçok post-modern ve sömürge sonrası yazıda belleğin neden merkezi bir önem taşıma eğiliminde olduğunu anlamak için bir fırsat sunmaktadır. Rüşdi röportajlarının birçoğunda temel anlatılara meydan okuduğu farklı geçmişlerin ve hikâyelerin harmanlandığı metinsel bir alan olan kurgusal bellek inşasının önemini vurgulamaktadır. Rüşdi'ye göre hatırlamak kabullenmesi güç gerçeklerden ve olgulardan kaçmaktan çok daha doğru ve iyi bir seçenektir. Bu nedenle hatırlama eylemleri tarihi belge ve metinlerin dışında kalan veya buralardan çıkarılan tüm alternatif gerçekleri yansıtan ön yargısız bir anlatım oluşturmaktadır. Bellek bunun için mükemmel bir araçtır çünkü tez de anlatıldığı üzere aktif bir mekanizmadır. Rüşdi bunu vurgulamak için bellek parçalarını, yani her zaman çok doğru veya eksiksiz olmayabilecek geçmiş olayların ve deneyimlerin anlık görüntülerini, görünüşte eksiksiz tarihsel gerçekler ve bilgilerle yan yana getirmektedir. Bunu yaparken de kaçınılmaz olarak içinde barındırdığı bu bellek parçalarının tarihsel bir ürün olarak geçmişi sorgulamak için bir dinamizm ortaya çıkardığını göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Rüşdi'nin bellek eylemlerini kullanması, gerçekliğin merkezileştirilmiş versiyonlarına karşı çıkan yeni dünyalar ve yeni gerçeklikler üretmeyi sağlamaktadır. Belleğin temsili ve yorumlanmasıyla bu en açık şekilde Rüşdi'nin *Geceyarısı Çocukları* ve *İki Yıl Sekiz Ay Yirmi Sekiz Gece* romanlarında gözlemlenmektedir.

Salman Rüşdi'nin 1981'de yazdığı ve 1993'te Booker of the Booker özel ödülünü kazanan en beğenilen romanı *Geceyarısı Çocukları*, aynı zamanda birinci şahıs anlatıcı olan başkahraman Salem Sinai'nin kendi hayat hikâyesini anlattığı büyülü gerçekçi bir romandır. Saleem Sinai hayatının Hint ulusunun tarihiyle iç içe olduğunu düşünmekte ve kendi yaşamının doğru versiyonunu kaydedebilmek için ulusun, halkının ve sayısız kültürün önemli olaylarını anlatması gerektiğini tekrar etmektedir. Roman boyunca okuyucu, Saleem Sinai ile birlikte onun çoğu zaman parçalanmış, çarpıtılmış veya kaybolduğu iddia edilen anılarının peşine düşmektedir. Anıların karmaşık bir şekilde tasarlanmış ayrışması, algı, kimlik, ulus ve aidiyet hakkında önemli soruları gündeme getirmeye hizmet etmektedir. Saleem gerçeklerin hokkabazı olarak, resmi kayıtlardan farklı alternatif bir Hindistan versiyonu yaratmak için geçmiş olayları ve kendisinin ve çevresindekilerin başına gelen her şeyi yakalamaya kayıt altına almaya çalışmaktadır.

Saleem, tüm bu hikâyeleri kendi anlatısında toplama girişimini tarihin "turşulanması" olarak adlandırmaktadır. Hindistan'daki siyasi, sosyal ve kişisel olayların dağınık ve çeşitli yeniden anlatımı, tarihsel gerçek olarak kabul edilen şeyin yekpare versiyonuyla çelişen, çoğulluğun alt üst edilmiş bir anlatısını oluşturmaktadır.

Rüşdi'nin 2015 romanı *İki Yıl Sekiz Ay Yirmi Sekiz Gece* ise büyülü gerçekçilik ve mitik anlatının bir karışımı olması bakımından *Geceyarısı Çocukları* ile benzerlik göstermektedir. Roman, günümüz New York'unda geçmekte ve insan dünyası ile ismi Peristan olan sihirli dünya arasındaki uçurumun açılması sonucunda Büyük İfrit Zumurrud liderliğindeki karanlık ruhların insan dünyasını işgalini ele almaktadır. Romanın başlığı, romanda bahsi geçen insanlar ve cinler arasında 1001 gece süren savaşın uzunluğuna atıfta bulunmaktadır. İnsanlığı kurtarmak için cinlerin kraliçesi Şimşek Prensesi Dunia, karanlık cinlere karşı savaşmak için insan dünyasındaki büyülü çocuklarını bir araya getirmek istemektedir. Sihirli güçlere sahip olan bu yarı insan yarı cin çocuklar Dunia ile onun âşık olduğu filozof İbn-Rüşd'ün çocuklarıdır. Dunia ve İbn-Rüşd arasındaki bu ilişki günümüz New York'unda meydana gelen olaylardan çok önce geçmektedir. Tıpkı Rüşdi'nin *Geceyarısı Çocukları*ndaki büyülü güçlere sahip gece yarısı çocukları gibi, bu yarı cin yarı insan çocuklar dünyayı kurtarabilecekleri sihirli güçlere sahiptir. Bu büyülü çocuklar aracılığıyla temsil edilen sihir ve aklın beklenmedik birleşimi, dogmatizme veya homojenliğe gerek kalmayacak daha iyi bir gelecek için çeşitliliği, çoğulluğu ve umudu yansıtmaktadır. Çocuklar büyülü güçlerine, melez kimliklerini ve çok kültürlü tarihlerini hatırlama yoluyla kabul ederek erişim kazanmaktadırlar. Aynı zamanda, erdem ve kötülük arasındaki rekabet, iki karşıt figür olan akılcı düşünür İbn-Rüşd ve dindar ilahiyatçı Gazhalinin yaptığı hatırlama eylemleri etrafında şekillenmektedir. İnanç konusundaki çelişkili görüşleri yazmış oldukları eserler üzerinden tartışmaları sayesinde hayali bir konuşma üzerinden okuyucuya aktarılmaktadır. Bellek, geçmiş felsefi yaklaşımları günümüzün post-modern dünya anlayışı akışıyla ilişkilendirme işlevi görmektedir.

Robert Eaglestone, 1990'lı yıllardan itibaren bellek çalışmalarına artan ilgi ve odaklanmayı, belleğin insanı köklerine, geçmişine ve çevresine bağlamaktadır ve geçmişe olan bağımızın tamamen bellek üzerinden oluştuğunu irdelemektedir. Eaglestone, belleğin, geçmişi ve onun yaşanan şimdiki zaman üzerindeki etkisini

anlamlandırmamızı sağlayarak kendi kimlik duygumuzu yaşanan gerçekliğe ve zamansallığa bağlayan önemli bir araç olduğuna işaret etmektedir. Bellek çalışmalarındaki hareket ve dinamizm, bellek hakkında artan akademik, bilimsel ve sosyal ilgiye ve belleğe yönelik araştırmaların ciddi seviyede artmasıyla başlamıştır. Kilby ve Rowland, belleğe dönüşün, tarih ve bilim gibi üst anlatıların evrensellik, bütünsellik ve nesnellik iddialarının post-modernizm ile birlikte sorgulanması ve çürütülmesine bağlamaktadırlar. Sömürgecilik sonrası ve soykırım üzerine çalışmalar, travma çalışmaları, kimlik siyaseti, etik çalışmaları, adalet ve siyaset gibi bellek üzerinden inceleme yapan yayın sayısındaki artış da bellek çalışmalarının günümüz anlamlandırmadaki önemine işaret etmektedir. Benzer şekilde Astrid Erll, *Memory in Culture* adlı kitabında bellek patlamasını yirmi yıllık süre içindeki tarihsel dönüşümler, medya teknolojilerindeki dönüşümler ve akademi içindeki dönüşümlere bağlamaktadır. Erll, İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Nazi Soykırımı gibi yıkıcı tarihsel olaylara doğrudan tanık olmayan ikinci veya üçüncü nesillerin bu kritik olaylara erişiminin bellek tarafından şekillendirilen film, şiir, roman, resim veya film gibi ögeler olmadan mümkün olmayabileceğini söylemektedir. Soğuk Savaş'ın ve Sovyetler Birliği'nin sona ermesi, sömürgecilikten kurtulma ve göçün başlamasıyla birlikte odak noktasının etnik ve diasporik anılara kaydığını, böylece azınlık grupların tarihsel anlatının anlattığının aksine kendi anılarını ön plana çıkararak tarih içinde temsili bir sese sahip olduklarını eklemektedir. Erll, 11 Eylül darbesiyle belleğin etik çıkarımlarla siyasi arenaya girdiğini ileri sürmektedir. Erll, medya teknolojisindeki dönüşümler açısından, bilginin öğrenilmesi veya hatırlanması yerine pasif olarak saklanması nedeniyle kültürel amnezi ile sonuçlanan büyük ölçüde veri depolayabilen hızla gelişen teknolojik cihazlardan bahsetmektedir. Buna ek olarak, geçmişin tüm medya biçimlerinde temsili, geçmiş hakkında düşünme biçimimizi tanımlama ve kontrol etme eğiliminde olan farklı ırk, yaş veya cinsiyet gruplarını temsil etme biçimleri açısından sorunludur. Son olarak Erll, 80'lerin post yapısalcı ve post modern hareketlerini içeren akademik değişimlerden de bahsetmektedir. Bu hareketler, tarih yazımını, mutlak nesnellik ve evrensellik iddiasında bulunamayacak bir insan yapısı olarak belirlemiştir. Erll'e göre bellek çalışmaları, geçmişin doğal olarak meydana gelen bir fenomen yerine bir insan yapısı olarak değerlendirilmesinde ısrar etmektedir. Bellek çalışmaları multidisipliner olduğundan, unutma ve hatırlama gibi bellek bileşenlerine atıfta bulunurken, bunların her alanda çok farklı bir anlama gelebileceğini her zaman

göz önünde bulundurarak terim ve başlıkların özel anlamlarının farkında olmak gerekmektedir. Bununla birlikte, bu farkı kabul etmek, daha önce farklı olarak tasarlanan fenomenler arasındaki (bazen işlevsel, bazen analojik, bazen metaforik) ilişkileri kabul ederek bellek çalışmalarına bütünleştirici bir güç vermektedir (Erll 99). Geçmiş, şimdiki zaman ve gelecek arasındaki dinamik ilişkinin değişen sosyokültürel bağlamlar üzerindeki etkisi, bellek çalışmalarının odak noktasıdır. 1990'ların hafıza patlamasıyla, hafızayı kültürel, sosyal, tarihsel, psikolojik ve edebi araştırmaların merkezine yerleştiren çok disiplinli ve çok boyutlu bir bakış açısıyla bakmak mümkün hale gelmiştir.

Bellek, duyularımızdan gelen izlenimleri ihtiyaçlarımız, beklentilerimiz ve hedeflerimiz doğrultusunda değiştiren ve dönüştüren psikolojik bir deneyim olmanın yanı sıra hem uyum sağlamak hem de hayatta kalmak için bir araçtır. Bu iki boyutu nedeniyle bellek, psikolojinin yanı sıra nöroloji, psikiyatri, biyoloji, fizyoloji, genetik gibi bilim dallarının da ilgisini çeken bir konudur. Her çalışma alanı, belleğin işlevleri ve sınırları hakkında çeşitli açıklamalar ve tanımlar sunar. Örneğin psikolojide bellek, ilkel psişik olayları (duyum ve duyuların sinir dokusu üzerindeki izleri) ve öğrenme, eğitim ve otomatik alışkanlıklar gibi aktivitelerden sorumlu yeni sinirsel bağlantılar kurmaktan sorumlu olan daha yüksek sinirsel aktiviteyi içeren karmaşık bir psişik fenomen olarak açıklanır. Jean Laplanche, Jean-Bertrand Pontalis ve Sigfried Kracauer gibi psikologlar, belleğin kronolojik olarak düzenlenmiş bir arşiv ve veri depolama işlevi görürken, aynı zamanda çağrışımsal yönü nedeniyle düzlemsel zaman anlayışının dışına çıkabilen eğilimini de vurguladıklarına dikkat çekmektedirler. Bu, duyusal veya psişik uyarıcıların, geçmiş bir olay olarak depolanan şeylerle anlık ilişkilendirmeler yapmak için belleği tetikleyebileceği anlamına gelmektedir. Bunu yaparken, hatırlama eylemi tarihleri, saatleri ve yeri ve bazen de gerçek olayın doğruluğunu atlayabilmektedir. Sinirbilimciler, belleğin öğrenmeyi ve düşünmeyi bir beyin aktivitesi olarak şekillendirdiğini belirtmekte ve belleğin sadece bir görüntü arşivi değil, verileri saklama ve geri alma yeteneği olduğunu da vurgulamaktadır. Gerald M. Edelman ve Giulio Tononi, belleğin sadece bir arşiv olmadığını; beynin bir performansın tekrarına izin verecek şekilde dinamiklerini nasıl değiştirdiğini yansıtmakta olduğunu belirtmektedir.

Bellek, dinamizmi nedeniyle sosyal bilimlerde olduğu kadar tarih ve edebiyatta da çokça araştırılan bir konudur. Aslında, geçmiş ile bugün arasında bir köprü olarak tarih, geçmişte olup bitenlerin ve bunun anlam oluşturma açısından bugünü olduğu kadar geleceği de nasıl etkilediğinin bir açıklama aracı haline gelmesi için belleğe ihtiyaç duymaktadır çünkü tarih de bir gözlem ve deneyimin söze yansıtılmasına dayanmaktadır. Crane tarihin metinsel boyutunda temsilinin hatıralar aracılığıyla filtrelendiğini iddia etmektedir. Tarih ve bellek söz konusu olduğunda, bir kültürel hafıza biçimi olarak tarih yazımı konusundaki son tartışmalarda nesnellik ve güvenilirlik sorunu ortaya çıkmaktadır. Erll'e göre, tarih araştırmaları alanındaki pek çok kişi bireysel zihinsel süreçler, mitler, anıtlar, geçmişle ilgili tartışmalar, otobiyografiler ve benzerlerinin tarihsel kaynak olarak uygunluğunu sorgulasa da, belleği tarihten ve bireysel hatırlamadan ayırmak imkânsızdır. Tarih, nesnellik ve evrensellik iddia etse de tarihsel üretimin tarihçilerin seçimine sıkı sıkıya bağlı olduğu ve dağınık geçmiş olayların belirli materyalleri kaçınılmaz olarak dışlayarak yorumlamak zorunda kaldığı da göz ününde bulundurulmalıdır. Bu tez de Rüşdi'nin romanlarını kullanarak bahsi geçen bellek tarih, kültür ve edebiyat ilişkisini incelemiştir.

Rüşdi'nin romanlarındaki bellek yansımalarını irdelemek için Paul Ricoeur ve Astrid Erll'in bellek, epizodik hatırlama ve unutma kavramları incelenmektedir. Ricoeur'e göre bellek, bilgilerin öznel bir şekilde seçilip yeniden yapılandırılması sürecini içerdiği için imgesel ve yaratıcıdır. Bu geçmiş imgeler, geçmiş algıların nesnel yansımalarına doğrudan eşit olmayan yeniden bir araya getirilmiş yapılardır. Hatırlama süreci, yaşanan deneyimin orijinal haliyle yeniden üretilmesi yerine, toplanan deneyimin değiştirilmiş ve benzersiz bir biçiminin ortaya çıkışını göstermektedir. Belleğin bu düzenlemesi, öznenin geçmişi ve şimdiyi dinamik bir ilişki içinde görmesini mümkün kılmaktadır. Başka bir deyişle, Ricoeur hatırlamanın sadece pasif bir duygusallık olmadığını, tam tersine, aktif bir aktivite ve çaba gerektirdiğini savunmaktadır. Ona göre bellek, bütünselliği olmayan verilerin düşünme yoluyla üretken dönüşümünden oluşan bir bilgi türü olarak görülebilir. Unutma deneyimi kaçınılmazken ve hatırlama için birincil motivasyon görevi görürken, bellek, unutmaya karşı bir tür önlem olarak dayanıklılık ve hayatta kalma anlamına gelmektedir. Dahası, Ricoeur unutmanın üretkenliğini savunur. Ona göre

unutmayı, hatırlamanın ve bellek oluşumunun gerekli bir bileşeni olarak görmek, geçmiş bilgilerin kültürel ve tarihsel birikimine eleştirel bir bakış sağlamaktadır. Tarihin ve anlatının epistemolojisi üzerine taze bir bilgi, unutmanın fiziksel ve felsefi olgusu aracılığıyla elde edilir. Unutmanın aslında anıların kalıcılığının fark edilmeyen karakterini, onların bilincin uyanıklığından geri çekilmesini belirlediğini eklemiştir. Benzer şekilde Astrid Erll, Ricoeur'ün çalışmalarından yola çıkarak hatırlamanın, bireyin benliğini ve içinde bulunduğu güncel koşulları anlamlandırdığı aktif bir seçim sürecini ifade ettiğini iddia etmektedir. Bellek, geçmişin izlerinin edilgen bir kabulü olmaktan ziyade bir eylem, bir çabadır. Anılar, duygusal verilerin seçilip yeniden yapılandırılmasına bağlı olan hatırlama süreciyle gözlemlenebilmektedir. Hatırlamanın büyük ölçüde zaman ve mekân arasında bağlantılar kurmaya bağlı olduğunu fark etmek çok önemlidir. Anılar, beyinde depolanan bilgilerin seçilmesi ve yeniden yorumlanması yoluyla inşa edildiğinden, Erll, hatırlamanın çoğunlukla bölümler veya parçalar aracılığıyla gerçekleştiğini öne sürmektedir. Bu, daha önce tartışıldığı gibi, epizodik hatırlama olarak adlandırılır. Epizodik anılar, ipuçları şeklinde saklanan önemli bilgilerin parçalarını ve parçalarını içeren hatıralardır. Yaşanan deneyimin tamamı, kişisel, bağlama ve zamana özgü bir hatırlama duygusu talep eden epizodik anılara dahil edilir. Dahası, Ricoeur gibi Erll, hatıraların unutmaktan ya da yanlış hatırlamaktan kaynaklanan uydurmalar da olabileceğini savunur. Ancak aslında unutmak, eski verilerin aşırı birikimini engellediği için hatırlamanın ön koşuludur.

Unutmak, tıpkı hatırlamak gibi, anlamlı bir nihai ürünün ortaya çıkması için belirli olayların ortadan kaldırılmasının kaçınılmaz olduğu ayrıntılı bir olay örgüsünü ifade eder. Anıların yapay ve oluşturulmuş doğası, onların ulusal, sosyal ve kültürel birikimi koruyan kültürel ve sosyal bir olgu olarak anlaşılmasını sağlamaktadır. Unutmak, yaratıcı bir yeniden geliştirme süreci aracılığıyla deneyimi dönüştürür. Erll, bellek üzerine yaptığı çalışmalarda, bellek ile anlatı arasındaki yakın ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Erll'e göre, edebi yazılarda bulunan geçmişin kültürel ve tarihsel temsillerinin anlaşılmasına parça parça hatırlama ve unutma yardımcı olmaktadır. Erll, hafıza üzerine çalışmanın, hafıza ve edebiyatın etkileşimine dair anlayışımızı derinleştirmeye yardımcı olduğunu savunmaktadır. Belleğin temsil kaynakları olmanın dışında, edebiyatın kendisinin kendi belleğine sahip olabileceğini veya kendi belleğini

üretebileceğini de iddia etmektedir. Metin içindeki metinlerarası göndermeler, metnin hatıralarını oluşturmaktadır. Bir edebi eserde birçok bilgi sisteminin birleşmesi olan metinlerarasılık, insan hafızası gibi her edebi metnin bir şekilde selefiyle ilişkili olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Edebi bir anlatıdaki metinlerarasılık, edebi metinlerin mevcut kültürel temsiller ve anlamlar hakkında yorum yaparken, aynı zamanda kültürel ve tarihsel anlamların daha yeni biçimlerini bellek yoluyla üretip iletebildiklerini göstermektedir. Edebi olanla olmayan arasındaki aktarım, edebî metnin bir hafıza yeri olarak kullanılmasıyla mümkündür.

Salman Rüşdi'nin *Geceyarısı Çocukları* ve *İki Yıl Sekiz Ay Yirmi Sekiz Gece* adlı romanlarında anlatı ve bellek arasındaki bağlantının bir örneğidir. *Geceyarısı Çocukları*nda Hindistan'ın kültürel zenginliğinin bellek yoluyla yansıtılan bellek kusurları ve unutkanlık araştırması, tarihin resmi versiyonlarını ve özcü kimlik ve ülke kavramlarını da sorgulamaktadır. Monolojik gerçeklik anlayışıyla çelişen pek çok gerçekliğin inşası romanda bellek aracılığıyla mümkün olmaktadır. Hafıza ve hatırlama kusurlu ama dinamik olduğu için, tekdüzelikten ziyade heterojenliğe izin verir, bu da romanda bastırılan veya görmezden gelinen her anlatının dahil edilmesine izin vermektedir. Karmaşık bellek sürecini anlamak, belirli bir yer ve zaman içindeki kültürel, sosyal ve tarihsel konumu anlamak için çok yönlü bir bakış açısı sağlamaktadır. *Geceyarısı Çocukları*nda belleğin yaratıcı yönü, karşıt bakış açıları, gerçekler ve medeniyetler arasında uzlaşma sağlamaktadır. Bellek süreci, Hint kültürünün tüm tezahürleriyle restorasyonunu ve çok kültürlü bir kimliğin sürdürülmesine yardımcı olmaktadır.

*İki Yıl Sekiz Ay Yirmi Sekiz Gece*de Rüşdi, her türlü söylemin ve anlatının üstünlüğünü eleştirmektedir. Rüşdi, edebi anlatının belirli bir bakış açısına, ideolojiye veya düşünce okuluna asla açıkça tercih vermeyerek muğlak duruşunu sürdürmesi gerektiğini iddia etmektedir. Rüşdi, anlatı alanını, tüm metinlerin imal edilmiş karakterini temsil eden bir bellek kültürüyle doldurmakta, ancak aynı zamanda sürekli metinlerarasılık kullanımı yoluyla edebi metinlerin de güç ve otorite talep etme tehlikesini hakkında da uyarmaktadır. Metinlerarasılık, romandaki göç, sömürgecilik, kimlik ve aidiyet kavramlarındaki dinamizmi, muğlaklığı ve değişimi örnekleyen bir bellek anlatısı sağlama amacına hizmet etmektedir. Ek olarak, bellek mecazları, bir göçmen

kimliğinin mekânsal ve zamansal deneyimini değiştiren yaratıcı yeniden inşa sürecini göstermektedir. Geçmişin çeşitli yorumlarının yeniden düzenlenmesi, kolektif yaşanmış deneyimin temsilinde ve anlayışında bir değişimin oluşmasına işaret etmektedir. Bellek, kimliğin yaratıcı bir şekilde gözden geçirilmesine ve şekillendirilmesine izin verdiğinden, kendini tanıma ile yakından ilişkilidir. Bellek, ahlaki açıdan gelişmiş bir kimliğin yetişmesine izin vererek, kişisel ve topluluk bellekleri arasındaki boşluğu kapatmayı mümkün kılar. Rüşdi, *İki Yıl Sekiz Ay Yirmi Sekiz Gece*de bir öznenin şimdiyle olan sosyal ve politik ilişkisini karakterize eden belleğin aidiyet ve kültürel özdeşleşme imkânı sağladığını gösteriyor.

Rüşdi'nin *Geceyarısı Çocukları* ve *İki Yıl Sekiz Ay Yirmi Sekiz Gece* romanlarına bakıldığında, Rüşdi'nin kültür, tarih ve kimlik yorumu için bellek kullanımının kritik olduğu sonucuna varılabilir. Rüşdi *Geceyarısı Çocukları*nda edebi anlatıyı ve onun çelişen ideolojileri, farklı kültürleri ve tarihleri temsil etme yeteneğini tercih ediyor gibi görünüyor. Aslında, edebiyatın monolojik söylemleri eleştirmek ve çok anlamlı bir temsil biçimi sağlamak için mevcut tek kaynak olduğu ima edilmektedir. Ancak *İki Yıl Sekiz Ay Yirmi Sekiz Gece*de Rüşdi'nin edebiyata karşı tavrı değişmiştir. Hâlâ edebiyatın kültürel değişimi aşılama yeteneğine inandığı açık olsa da, edebiyatı tek çokanlamlı ve çoksesli temsil kaynağı olarak ele almanın onun üstünlüğünü savunabileceğini ve bunun da edebiyatı bir güç mekanizması haline getirebileceği hakkında uyarmaktadır. Rüşdi'nin *İki Yıl Sekiz Ay Yirmi Sekiz Gece*de göstermek istediği şey, edebiyatın belirli bir ideolojiye hizmet etmek için bilgiyi çarpıtıp kötüye kullanabileceği ve bu tehlikenin hem okuyucu hem de yazar tarafından fark edilmesi gerektiğidir. Onun üslup değişikliği, çağımızın, inançsızlıklarını askıya almaya hazır olması kadar edebiyatın otoritesini de sorgulamaya istekli okuyuculara ihtiyaç duyduğunu göstermektedir.

Umarım çalışmam, kurmaca temsillerin kültürel belleği nasıl şekillendirdiği ve değiştirdiği konusunda daha fazla araştırma yapma fırsatı sunmuştur. Özellikle metinlerarasılığın kullanımı Rüşdi'nin eserlerinde bellek kültürünün bir parçası olarak incelenebilir. Rüşdi, metinlerarasılığı kullanırken gönderme yaptığı eserlerin biçim ve anlamında önemli değişiklikler yapmakta, okuyucunun oluşturduğu anlatı ve gönderme yaptığı diğer dışsal anlatı ile dinamik bir ilişki kurmasını istemektedir.

Okuyucu, anılan metnin değiştirilen biçimiyle mesajı ve verili söylemi sorgulamaya ve her sanat eserinde yer alan çeşitli anlamlandırma süreçlerinin farkına varmaya zorlanmaktadır. Bu, karşılığında, yerleşik kültürel düşünce biçimlerini değiştirebilir ve bunlara meydan okuyabilir. Bu nedenle, kültürel belleğe bir katkı olarak metinlerarasılık üzerine daha fazla araştırma yapılması önemlidir.

Bellek çalışmalarının geleceği söz konusu olduğunda, en umut verici araştırma alanı, belleğin duygu ve hislerle karşılıklı ilişkisini içerebilir. Bu çalışmanın giriş bölümünde incelendiği gibi, bellek, öznenin belirli deneyimlere ve travmalara verdiği duygusal tepkilerle harekete geçirilebilir ve aynı şekilde hafıza, bireyde ve kolektifte çeşitli duygular uyandırabilir. Bu ilişkiye bakmak, kültürel değerlerin ve hatıraların eleştirel bir şekilde değerlendirilmesi için belleğin özne içindeki empati ve sorumluluğa öncülük edip etmediğini bulmak açısından verimli olabilir.

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